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Ecumenical Patriarch to pay pilgrimage to Mt. Athos next week



The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, will pay a pilgrimage to Mt. Athos, the semi-autonomous monastic community in northern Greece, early next week - his seventh such visit as Ecumenical Patriarch to Orthodoxy's most important center of monasticism.

As the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew will visit the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi for the first time, arriving on Monday, Oct. 21.

In a related development, the Ecumenical Patriarch con-celebrated a Divine Liturgy on Sunday at the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George, on the occasion of the 800-year anniversary of the consecration of Sava the Enlightener by Patriarch Manuel I of Constantinople, as the first Archbishop of the Autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church.

The Mother Church honored the historic landmark for the Serbian Church and the brotherly relations between the two.

Among the faithful attending the service was the general consul of the Ukraine in the Bosphorus metropolis, Olesandr Gaman, with His All Holiness later touching on the weekend decision by the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece to recognize autocephaly for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – roughly a year after the Ecumenical Patriarchate granted the Tomos of Autocephaly to the Kiev Patriarchate.

The Ecumenical Patriarch referred to a «historic decision», one that recognizes the Patriarchate's exclusive right to grant the Tomos of Autocephaly when required, as well as the actual recognition of Autocephaly by the Holy Church of Greece.