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Historic visit of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi



The Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi was the latest destination in the Ecumenical Patriarch's itinerary on Monday morning, as His All Holiness Bartholomew I continued his official visit to the semi-autonomous monastic community in northern Greece - Orthodoxy's most important center of monasticism.

The Ecumenical Patriarch returned to the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi for the first time in 30 years, as he last visited the second in hierarchy Athonite Monastery as the Patriarchate's then Metropolitan of Philadelphia and Chalcedon.

The Patriarch was welcomed in millennia-old Byzantine ecclesiastical tradition by the Elder Archimandrite Ephraim, the Monastery's Abbot, along with several other Athonite Elders, Metropolitans and Hieromonks at the Monastery's main entrance.

The civil governor of Mt. Athos, Athanasios Martinos, was also present during the Ecumenical Patriarch's welcome at Vatopedi, along with Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Antonis Diamataris and the heads the regional police, coast guard and fire brigade services.

A holy procession led by the Ecumenical Patriarch entered the Monastery's Catholicos, the main part of Cathedral, where a Doxology service was celebrated.

Afterwards, the Elder Ephraim officially addressed and welcomed Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I.