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Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew delivers moving address at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, 60 Years after his graduation



On the morning of Wednesday, 28 October, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visited the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, where he laid a few flowers at the tomb of his friend, the late Pope Francis.

His All-Holiness was welcomed by the Cardinal Archpriest of the Basilica, His Eminence Rolandas Makrickas, who guided him through the magnificent ancient church in the Eternal City.

The Ecumenical Patriarch offered prayers before the historic Byzantine icon of the Theotokos holding the Christ Child, known as Salus Populi Romani (Protectress of the Roman People), which is enshrined in the chapel bearing its name and is venerated as the protectress of Rome.

The Patriarch then proceeded on foot to the nearby Pontifical Oriental Institute of

the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, from which he graduated in 1966.

He was welcomed by the President of the Institute, Fr Sunny Thomas Kokkaravalayil, together with members of its academic faculty.

On the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Patriarch's election to the Ecumenical Throne and his visit to the Institute, a small exhibition had been organised, tracing his journey from Imbros to Halki, then to Rome, and ultimately to the Ecumenical Throne.

In the Institute's Great Hall, in the presence of Cardinals, Bishops, professors and students, the Institute's administration warmly welcomed the Ecumenical Patriarch, who delivered a moving address entitled: "From the Orientale to the Throne of St Andrew: A Canonist's Confession."

In the early afternoon, His All-Holiness and his esteemed entourage departed for Constantinople.

Photographs: Nikos Papachristou

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