

An archpastoral visit on the 125th anniversary of Archangel Michael Parish on the Cote d'Azur



The year 2019 marks the 125th anniversary of the Russian parish of Archangel Michael on Cannes, France, one that has a rich history—and a questionable fate.

Joining the jubilee celebrations on November 20 was His Grace Bishop Nicholas of Manhattan, Vicar of His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and Deputy Secretary of the Synod of Bishops. Upon arriving to the municipally-owned church of St Roc, rented by the ROCOR parish, Vladyka Nikolai performed all-night vigil, joined by Fr Antony Odaysky, parish Rector, and Fr Mark Lopnevs, as well as Protopriest Peter Holodny from Moscow and Priest Evgeny Nikitin of the Church of the Mother of God “Joy of All Who Sorrow” in Menton, France.

On the feast day itself, November 21, Priest Gontrane Poussou of the French-language parish in neighboring Grasse, and Protodeacon Ioan Buzdugan from St Nicholas Cathedral in Nice arrived for Liturgy. Despite the work-day, there was a

large number of worshipers present.

The following day, Vladyka Nikolai visited the ancient Lerins Abbey on St Honorat Island off the coast of Cannes, where he venerated the relics of the saint and read an akathist to him. He was given an excursion through the monastery and viewed Holy Trinity Church, which is offered to the Russian Orthodox community for services on the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

That same day, a concert was given at St Roc Church by the Jerusalem Vocal Ensemble under the direction of the parish's Anna Kobrina, who has been organizing a series of concerts in this jubilee year. The events draw the interest of the French populace who thereby learn about Orthodox Christianity and are offered the opportunity to find answers to their spiritual questions in talks with the clergymen as they enjoy post-concert refreshments. This time, they were able to talk to a hierarch as well.

On Sunday, a second hierarchal Liturgy was celebrated at the church, after which the parish-school children gave a hand-crafted gift to Vladyka Nikolai as a memento.

A large trapeza luncheon was then offered, featuring dishes of various national cuisines prepared by the parishioners.

On Monday, November 25, Bishop Nicholas departed home to New York.

— Source: synod.com