

Handful of ancient, junior Orthodox Churches celebrate Christmas on Tuesday, based on the Julian calendar



The Patriarchate of Jerusalem on Tuesday celebrated Christmas, as the Patriarchate follows the Julian calendar for its ecclesiastical year.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Most Godly Beatitude Theophilos III, on Monday evening officiated at a Great Vespers Service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

In his sermon, the Patriarch referred to the controversial issue of the sale of Church properties within Jerusalem's old quarter, as well as to the prolific charitable work by the Orthodox Church to reverse the emigration of Christians from the Holy City.

In Moscow, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness Kirill, issued his Christmas Day message, as the Russian Church celebrates the birth of the Lord and Savior Jesus based on the Julian calendar, noting that "...the Lord was not born in a royal palace, but in a humble cave, in abject poverty."

In a reference to the situation in Orthodoxy today, Kirill added that "...those of us who belong to the Church are called upon to exceed our conflicts and disagreements."

In Georgia, the Primate of the Orthodox Church in the country, His Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II, referred to the difficult times faced by the Caucasus country, in his Christmas message, calling on the faithful to reinforce their love in the Lord, their faith in the Church and country, and to help their neighbors.

Finally, hundreds of Orthodox faithful gathered in the northern Montenegro town of Žabljak to celebrate Christmas, which is celebrated by the Serbian Orthodox Church based on the Julian calendar.

The faithful attended a Great Vespers Service amid a snow storm and sub-minus temperatures, while also defiantly singing patriotic Serbian songs, days after the Montenegro Parliament passed a controversial law that the Orthodox Church in the small Adriatic country considers as a direct threat to its properties and relics.