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## **Visiting Russian President Putin received by Patriarch of Antioch and All the East John X in Damascus**



The visiting president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, this week visited the Damascus -based Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East, accompanied by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

The two leaders were received by the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, His Beatitude Patriarch John X, along with other eminent hierarchs and reverend priests of the Patriarchate, at the St Mary's – or Mariamite – Cathedral, where a prayer for

peace was held.

Afterwards, His Beatitude John welcomed the two prominent guests and the accompanying delegation at the Patriarchal reception hall, where he gifted the Russian president an icon of the Apostles Peter and Paul. On his part, Putin presented the Patriarch with an icon of the Theotokos, the Virgin Mary.

The Cathedral of St. Mary's is one of the oldest Greek Orthodox Churches in the Levant, dating to the 2nd century AD.