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FIRST RUSSIAN CHURCH CONSECRATED IN THE PHILIPPINES



The Orthodox faithful of the Philippines experienced a unique joy over the weekend, as His Eminence Metropolitan Paul of Manila and Hanoi consecrated the first parish of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Philippines.



The Metropolitan celebrated the great rite of consecration of the Church of St. Seraphim of Sarov in the city of Makalangote on the island of Mindanao on Saturday, February 22, followed by the first Divine Liturgy in the newly-consecrated church, reports the Khanti-Mansiisk Metropolia.

His Eminence was concelebrated by clergy from throughout the Philippines-Vietnam Diocese and a deacon from the Khanti-Mansiisk Metropolia.



Subdeacon Nicholas Salgado of the Church of St. Seraphim was ordained to the diaconate during the Liturgy.

At the end of the service, Met. Paul addressed the gathered faithful, saying: “Dear brothers and sisters, I cordially and sincerely welcome you on this special day for all of us. Today we specifically asked the Lord to send us His Divine grace and sanctify this church, to be present here always, so that everyone who comes to this church would be united with God in prayer and in the sacraments!”



“I am sure that the Church foundation being laid today will be strong and reliable, like this church, the first and so far only one in the history of this diocese, built and consecrated according to the great rite. I think that a good start has been made and the construction of churches on our Philippine soil will continue,” he later said.
“I congratulate everyone on this event—for this event is not only for our village and not only for the Philippines—it is a celebration for the whole of universal Orthodoxy, the true Orthodox Catholic Church! I would like to present this church with an icon of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we brought from Russia, so that the Risen Lord can show everyone the way to salvation. God bless everyone!” His Eminence concluded.



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The St. Seraphim parish community converted to Orthodoxy from the Independent Philippine Church—a breakaway Catholic group—in 2015 as a result of the conversion of Fr. Moses Cahilig, now a priest of the Philippines-Vietnam Diocese. For a long time, services were held in a bamboo hut without walls, until construction began in 2017. The church was built with the active participation of Russian benefactors and the hard work of the local faithful.
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