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PATRIARCH KIRILL TO BLESS MOSCOW WITH TENDERNESS ICON OF THEOTOKOS BEFORE WHICH ST. SERAPHIM PRAYED AND REPOSED



Russia currently has more than 2,300 confirmed cases of coronavirus infections, with 17 deaths, the majority of which are in the capital city of Moscow.

On Friday, April 3, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia will travel throughout Moscow, blessing the city with the Tenderness Icon of the Mother of God that personally belonged to the great St. Seraphim of Sarov, before which he was praying when he reposed.

Taking the icon around the city, the Patriarch will bring the icon from its place of “residence” in the St. Vladimir Church in the Patriarchal residence to the Theophany Cathedral in Elokhov in Moscow, reports Patriarchia.ru.

The holy procession will begin at 4:00 PM, with the Patriarch and the icon arriving at Theophany Cathedral at 6:00 PM, where the Matins for the feast of the Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos will be served.

The entrance of the icon into the cathedral and the Matins service will be broadcast live on Orthodox TV channels in Russia.

His Holiness calls on the faithful of the Russian Church to join in the procession by reading the Akathist to the Mother of God with the addition of a prayer for deliverance from harmful plague at 4:00 PM.

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The Tenderness Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos was discovered by St. Seraphim of Sarov in the Sarov forests. He called it the “Joy of all joys.” He kept the icon in his cell, and it was before this icon that he reposed in the Lord on January 2/14, 1833.

After a joint repentance prayer and blessing, St. Seraphim would usually anoint those who came to him for spiritual advice and consolation with oil from the lamp that burned before the holy icon.

After the repose of St. Seraphim, the icon was transferred to the Diveyevo Convent, becoming the monastery’s main sacred item. Believers would travel hundreds and thousands of kilometers on foot to venerate the icon.

In1927, the convent was closed and the icon was secretly removed and guarded by pious people for decades. In June 1991, the icon was given to His Holiness Patriarch Alexei II, and it is now kept int the Patriarchal residence, being brought out once a year on the feast of the Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos in the 5th week of Lent.

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