

RUSSIAN CHURCH “IN NO HURRY” TO RECOGNIZE AUTHENTICITY OF ROMANOV REMAINS



The Russian Orthodox Church is in no rush to recognize the authenticity of the remains of the Royal Martyrs found near Ekaterinburg, His Grace Bishop Evgeny of Ekaterinburg said at a press conference on Saturday.

Earlier, Evgeny Pchelov, an associate professor of the Historical and Archival Institute of the Russian Orthodox University for the Humanities who participated in the Russian Church’s historical and documentary examination of the remains found at Ganina Yama, told RIA-Novosti that the complex of studies confirmed the authenticity of the remains. As Pchelov explained, it was possible to restore a fairly complete picture of what happened in the days leading up and after the murder of the Royal Family. Some specific questions remained he said, but “the main picture is clarified.”

As early as July 2018, the Investigative Committee had already concluded that the remains are authentic.

“I was able to communicate with people from the investigative committee,” Bp. Evgeny said on Saturday. “There are quite a lot of arguments and evidence that these really are the royal remains. There are also so many questions that remain unanswered.”

And as Bp. Evgeny noted, Patriarch Kirill has said that the Church is in no hurry to make a certain decision by a certain date. “We will wait for these questions to be answered. They’re not some artifact,” Bp. Evgeny said.

“This is a matter of principle for us, these are holy people, these are people who have played a significant role in the spiritual life of our people and in the state, so the Church is not in a hurry,” the newly-appointed hierarch of Ekaterinburg said, adding that the Church will recognize the remains when “there is not an ounce of doubt.”

Since the resumption of the investigation in 2015, investigators have undertaken a wide range of activity, including about 37 different forensic examinations. More than 2,000 historical sources were also analyzed.

The Investigative Committee said in July that “on the basis of numerous examinations, the investigation concluded that the remains belong to Nicholas II, his family, and persons from their entourage.”

At the same time, the department noted that, “excluding the possibility of a double interpretation of certain circumstances related to this murder, other examinations necessary for the investigation are continuing.”

Paul Gilbert of tsarnichols.org notes that the investigation also “intends to identify all those involved in the execution and qualify their actions in accordance with the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.” As Gilbert notes, whereas the murderers enjoyed a “celebrity” status in the Soviet Union, if they are found guilty of regicide, “then lawmakers and historians will be forced to rewrite history.”

“To now find them guilty of their crime a century later, this then clears the way for the names of streets, squares and buildings named in their ‘honour’ of these criminals to be changed, and the removal of any monuments and memorials from the Russian landscape,” Gilbert writes.

A grave with nine bodies was found on Staraya Koptyakovskaya Road near Ekaterinburg in July 1991. The remains were identified as those of Emperor Nicholas II, his 46-year-old wife Alexandra Fyodorovna, their daughters Olga, 22, Tatiana, 21, and Anastasia, 17, and their servants Eugene Botkin, 53, Anna Demidova, 40, Alexei Trupp, 62, and Ivan Kharitonov, 48.

Members of the imperial family were buried at a sepulcher of the Peter and Paul Cathedral in St. Petersburg.

The remains of two more people were discovered during archaeological excavation works 70 meters south of the first grave on July 26, 2007. The remains have still not been buried, but numerous expert analyses indicate that the remains were most likely those of Tsarevich Alexei and his sister Maria.

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