

## **The Antiochian Vicariate in Russia organized a camp for the Antiochian youth with the title “A Pilgrim on the Paths of the Lord”**



With the blessing of His Beatitude Patriarch John X, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East and under the generous patronage of His Eminence Metropolitan Niphon Saykali, the Representative of the Church of Antioch at the Patriarchate of Moscow and All Russia.

The Antiochian Vicariate in Russia organized a camp for the Antiochian youth with the title “A Pilgrim on the Paths of the Lord”, on March 6 to 8, 2021.

Antiochian young people currently living in Russia to complete their studies in Moscow and St. Petersburg, coming originally from most dioceses of the Antiochian See (Damascus – Lattakia – Homs – Hama – Horan – Baghdad), gathered at The Holy Trinity Lavra in the Monastery of St. Sergius of Radonezh..

The camp was inaugurated with a Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Antiochian

Metochion in central Moscow with the presence and blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Niphon. After a welcome address to the participants at the Antiochian Vicariate, His Eminence Niphon had an interesting talk with the young people about religion and society, which he enriched with vivid testimonies from his life experiences, having spent more than 60 years in Russia. Everyone gathered for an agape hosted by His Eminence, while singing chants and spiritual hymns.

The meeting was attended by His Excellency the Consul of Lebanon, Mr. Roderigue El-Khoury.

After that, the young participants spent three days in the Lavra of the Holy Trinity, during which they visited the monastery's museums and churches and got acquainted with the spiritual, cultural, and historical treasures of the Russian people. They also had the blessing to venerate all the relics in the monastery, especially those of Saint Sergius of Radonezh (Founder of the Lavra). They participated in the Divine Liturgy and shared meals with the students of the Spiritual Academy.

In the name of the Russian Orthodox Church, Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, the secretary for inter-Orthodox relations of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow patriarchate, delivered a welcome speech to the Antiochian youth on behalf of His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, whereby he conveyed patriarchal blessing for this camp and spoke about the relationship between the Antiochian and Russian Churches.

The camp also included various spiritual talks via the Zoom app that shed light on life matters for young people away from home. His Eminence Anthony Al-Soury, Metropolitan of Zahle, Baalbek, and their dependencies lectured on "Repentance and the New Life" and His Grace Gregory Khoury, Bishop of the Emirates gave a "Casual conversation on Prayer".

In a joyful and familiar atmosphere, with many activities including sessions, songs, games, activities, competitions, and evening gatherings, the Antiochian youth spent during their stay abroad three unforgettable days of the cold Russian winter. They left the Holy Trinity Lavra, with memories of splendid moments and warm feelings, keeping in mind the words of Saint Paul in these special Antiochian days: "Do not quench the Spirit", in the hope of meeting again.

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