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News in Brief



Yesterday’s meeting between members of a Church of Greece-affiliated committee of dialogue, with the Education Minister, Kostas Gavroglu, proved fruitless.
According to reports that emerged after the meeting, this specific round of talks may have reached an impasse.
Members of the committee have also previously stressed that certain issues, such as the payroll regime for Orthodox clerics in Greece, are beyond its mandate, in the talks with the government. As such, these matters lie with jurisdiction of the Church’s hierarchy.
The apparent impasse has merely added to heightened concerns expressed by the association representing Orthodox clerics in Greece.
The association is holding a general assembly tomorrow, Thursday, at a cathedral in central Athens.

Meanwhile, beyond Greece’s borders, Migration Policy Minister Dimitris Vitsas is in Istanbul this week to attend the sixth Budapest Process dialogue on migration issues.
On the margins of the meeting, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholemew I received Vitsas at the Patriarchate. located in the Fanari district of the metropolis called Constantinople until 1923.

Afterwards, Vitsas warmly referred to the Patriarch, whom he called a very wise man, whose opinions and activities carry significant weight.

In other news, His Beatitude Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania, officiated at a Church service on Sunday, Feb. 17, at the Resurrection Cathedral in Tirana, where he also delivered the sermon. Anastasios reminded the congregation that the Lenten Triodion has commenced, a period of particular devoutness for the Eastern Orthodox faithful.

Archbishop Job of Telmessos has been appointed as the new dean of the Institute of Post-graduate Studies of Orthodox Theology, which is housed at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, a center located outside Geneva, Switzerland.
Archbishop Job succeeds Prof. Vlassios Fidas at the post, who resigned after serving for several years as dean, and after a significant tenure.

Elsewhere, the Church has opened a soup kitchen for the needy in the Russian city of Penza, offering meals for up to 60 people a day.
Local Orthodox hierarch Nikolai Groshev announced the creation of a charitable institution, called the “Source of Charity”, that will undertake various social services in the specific Russian region.

In Romania, His Beatitude Daniel, the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, this week expressed his appreciation for all the faithful, which as he said, support the spiritual and material activities of the Romanian Church.
Speaking in Bucharest, he said the Romanian Orthodox Church allocated 24 million euros in 2018 for various charities.

An ecclesiastical music workshop was recently held in Ohio, in the US Midwest, with the blessing of His Grace, Bishop Irinej, on behalf of the Diocese of Eastern America of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

A memorial service was held this week on the one-year anniversary of the death Dobri Dimitrov Dobrev, better known as Grandpa Dobri, a Bulgarian ascetic who walked some 20 kilometers each day to sit or stand in front of the Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky in Sofia, in order to collect money for charitable causes.

The Orthodox Metropolis of the Baltics held a grammar school level competition on religion recently, at the Sts Constantine and Helen Cathedral.

His Divine Beatitude, Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Theodore II, accompanied by Metropolitan of Congo-Brazzaville and Gabon Panteleimon, on

Tuesday visited the St. Efstratios orphanage in the city of Dolisie.

Finally, the Georgian Orthodox Church sent a delegation to Abu Dhabi earlier this month for an international inter-faith gathering entitled “Global Conference for Human Fraternity”, an event that attended by various religious leaders.