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Serbian Patriarch receives Russian astronauts



His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Porfirije received Russian astronauts Sergei Kud-Sverchkov and Anastasia Stepanova in the Patriarchal Palace in Belgrade on 24 June 2021.

The Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church in a cordial atmosphere led an extremely interesting conversation with Russian astronauts about many aspects of man's departure and stay in space. The Patriarch Porfirije conveyed to the guests his personal impression that he recognizes the elements of monastic life in the organization and way of life of the cosmonauts in the International Space Station. "In the spiritual life, we notice that the farther a person is from people and the world, the more he feels love for others and realizes how much he needs others. So, by discovering and knowing the universe, we are certainly getting closer to each other", Serbian Patriarch Porfirije said.

Astronaut Sergei Kud-Sverchkov, guided by personal experience, confirmed this thought of His Holiness Porfirije, emphasizing that even when a person is so far from the Earth and people, he feels a strong and unbreakable connection with them. He discovered that during the cosmonaut's stay in the space station, in addition to good health, knowledge and skills, great spiritual strength is also needed in order to successfully fulfill the set goals.

On this topic, Patriarch Porfirije mentioned that in some way a parallel can be made between the monastic life in the monastery and the stay of astronauts in the space

station; “Just as the monks in the monastery are separated from the world and are directed at each other, so is the case with astronauts who live and work for a long time in a limited space where they can maintain peace and harmony in relationships thanks to prayerful silence.”

Astronaut Sergei stated that astronauts realize the deeper meaning and value of togetherness during their stay in the space station.

The audience was attended by the director of the PE Serbia Post, Mr. Zoran Djordjevic; President of the Unity Foundation, Mrs. Alena Kuzmenko; coordinator of



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