

Historic visit to Lithuania by Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I



The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew I, continued a historic official and pastoral visit this week to the Baltic country of Lithuania.

One of the highlights of the visit was the signing of an agreement defining and encouraging closer ties and cooperation in areas of common interest. His All Holiness signed the agreement on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Ingrida Simonite.

The Ecumenical Patriarch also cited the prospect of cooperation for the establishment of an Exarchate in Lithuania.

In a statement, His All-Holiness noted that “...this is also the will of Orthodox priests and faithful in your country. As mentioned in the Agreement of Cooperation, we support the aspirations of both the group of Lithuanian Orthodox priests and believers representing various other ethnic communities in Lithuania to follow their conscience and to restore historical justice by practicing their faith in a church under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.”

On her part, the Lithuanian premier thanked and welcomed the Ecumenical Patriarch on his first visit to the country, referring to a historic visit, while adding that she had the opportunity to personally thank the shepherd of the Mother Church for his attention to the situation of the Orthodox Church in Lithuania.

The Ecumenical Patriarch also laid a wreath at the monument of the fallen in the Struggle for Lithuanian Independence, and later officiated at a Trisagion prayer service for the repose of the souls of the fallen.