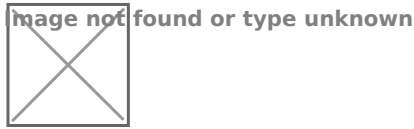


Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visits Finland



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew departed on Friday, 8 September 2023, from Constantinople, for an official visit to Finland and then to Estonia, responding to official invitations, in order to preside over the anniversary events for the 100 years since the granting of Autonomy to these two Orthodox Churches.

On Friday evening, the Patriarch arrived in Helsinki where he was received at the airport by Archbishop Leo of Helsinki and All Finland, Foreign Ministry's Head of Protocol Mika Koskinen, the Ambassador of Greece Ms. Natalia Karageorgou, the Ambassador of Turkey Mr. Deniz Çakar, the Honorary Ambassador of Finland to Estonia Mr. Aleksi Härkönen, Archdeacon Andreas Salminen and Secretary theologian Jelisei Heikkilä.

As part of His All-Holiness' visit to Finland, The Ecumenical Patriarch will preside over the Divine Liturgy at the Dormition of the Theotokos Cathedral in Helsinki, while he will have a special meeting with the President of the Republic of Finland, the Ambassadors of Greece and Turkey, with the religious leaders of the country and other official persons, as well, he will visit parishes, institutions, the Orthodox youth camp in Kaunisniemi, and the Orthodox Chapel at Somainen Correctional Institution in Helsinki, where he will bless the Orthodox believers.

For the second stop of his visit, in Estonia, where he will arrive on 12 September 2023, the Patriarch will lead an outdoor Divine Liturgy in the town of Värskä, while he will have special meetings with the President of the Republic of Estonia, the Prime Minister of the country, and the Speaker of the Parliament, The Minister of Foreign Affairs and The Minister of the Interior, the Ambassadors of Turkey and Greece, representatives of the other Christian Churches, the Mayor of Tallinn and other officials. His All-Holiness will also attend the official event of the country's National Post Office, during which commemorative stamps for the centenary of the Autonomous Orthodox Church of Estonia will be presented. Besides the country's capital, Tallinn, His All-Holiness will also visit the cities of Tartu, Värskä, Valga, Pärnu, and Hiiumaa where he will meet and bless the holy clergy and Orthodox faithful.

The Patriarchal Escort consists of His Eminence Metropolitan Athenagoras of Kydonia, His Eminence Metropolitan Vissarion of Spain and Portugal, His Eminence Metropolitan Gregorios of Peristeri, The Grand Ecclesiarch Archimandrite Aetios, Director of the Personal Patriarchal Office, Deacon Father Alexandros, Archivist of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the Grand Syncellus Archimandrite Iakovos, Director of the English Office, Mr. Nikolaos-Georgios Papachristou, Director of the Patriarchal Press and Communications Office, as well as Mr. Petros Bazgarlo, one of the Secretaries of the Patriarchate.

His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Apostolos of Derkoi was appointed the Patriarch's Locum Tenens, and escorted His All-Holiness to the Airport in Constantinople, together with the Grand Protosyncellus Archimandrite Theodoros.

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