



## Patriarch Kirill led the bringing of the icon of the Holy Trinity, painted by the Venerable Andrei Rublev, to the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius



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On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, the eve of the Feast of the Holy Trinity (Pentecost), His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' presided over the meeting of the icon of the Holy and Life-Giving Trinity, painted by the Monk Andrei Rublev, in the Holy Trinity Sergius Lavra, and celebrated the All-Night Vigil in the Trinity Cathedral of the monastery.

Before the beginning of the All-Night Vigil, His Holiness, accompanied by His Eminence the Bishops and the brethren of the Lavra, led the procession to the Holy Gates, in front of which the icon of the Most Holy Trinity by St Andrew Rublev, which had been brought earlier, was installed in a special tent on Krasnogorsk Square, **according to the** Press Service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

To the chanting of the Magnificat of Pentecost, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill entered the tent, where he bowed to the icon, after which the clergy lifted it on their shoulders. The procession with the icon proceeded to the Trinity Cathedral of the Lavra.

In the Trinity Cathedral the icon was installed in its historical place, to the right of the royal gates.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church venerated the installed icon and the relics of St Sergius of Radonezh, after which he addressed the audience with the Primacy Word:

"I cordially congratulate you on this great event. It is a happiness for all of us to participate in what is happening now: the icon of the Most Holy Trinity is returning to its home. When it was taken out of Lavra, when the monastery was desecrated, those evil people probably could not have imagined that the time would come not only for the return of the holy icon to the place where it had originally been, but also for the revival of faith in our people in general. And if there was no revival of faith, there would not have been this bringing of the icon of the Holy Trinity. For all this we should thank God, because before our eyes a great miracle of shaming the godless idea, which at one time captured the consciousness of the majority of our people, has taken place. The idea of apostasy, which affected the souls and consciousness of people and turned them away from God. But now the return of the shrines testifies to a profound change in the life of our people - the revival of Orthodoxy in Holy Rus'.

In honour of this event, I bless to name this day The Day of bringing the wonder-working icon of the Holy Trinity to the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius and to hold annual polyelaion services.

Indeed, this event should not leave our memory, especially those who witnessed it, but should be imprinted in our Church history. For all of us, it is another sign of God's presence in the life of our people, our country and each of us.

Strengthened by these Divine miracles, let us keep the Orthodox faith, bring up our children and grandchildren in it, and strengthen the foundations of personal, family, social and state life, which were created by our pious predecessors, the holy righteous people of God, our reverend and God-bearing fathers and holy mothers. Let us hope that this event, which undoubtedly represents the Divine will and a Divine miracle, will strengthen faith in many and, perhaps, convert many to Christ. May God grant that this may be so, and that people may recognise and accept these miracles as a sign of God's presence in our lives.

I congratulate you all on a great historical spiritual event of the return of the icon of the Holy Trinity to your home! Amen."

Then the All-Night Vigil began. His Holiness was joined by: Metropolitan Pavel of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Patriarchal Vicar of the Moscow Metropolis; Metropolitan Grigory of Voskresensk, Administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate, First Vicar of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' for Moscow, Vicar of the Novospassky Stavropegial Monastery; Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations; Metropolitan Nikandr of Naro-Fominsk, Chairman of the Financial and Economic Department of the Moscow Patriarchate; Metropolitan Feognost of Kashira, Chairman of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism, Vicar of the Don Stavropegial Monastery; Metropolitan Sergius of Singapore and South-East Asia; Bishop Kirill of Sergiev Posad and Dmitrov, Vicar of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius and Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy; Bishop Alexii of Ramenskoye, Personal Secretary of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill; Archimandrite Jeremiah (Solovyov), a resident of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius; Archimandrite Alipiy (Kastalsky-Borozdin), a resident of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius; Archimandrite Zakharia (Shkurikhin), a resident of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius; residents of the monastery in the holy orders.

Bishop Stefan of Remezia, representative of the Patriarch of Serbia to the Moscow Patriarchal Throne, prayed in the Altar.

The patriarchal service was attended by: Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on Construction and Housing and Communal Services S.A. Pakhomov; Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation S.G. Obryvalin; Head of the Sergiev Posad City District of the Moscow Region M.Y. Tokarev; First Deputy Director General of JSC "Russian Railways" V.V. Mikhailov; Acting Director General of the Art and Production Enterprise of the Russian Orthodox Church "Sofrino" A.V. Potemkin.

The hymns of the All-Night Vigil were sung by the choir of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius under the direction of Hieromonk Nestor (Volkov).

The service was broadcast live on the Soyuz and Spas TV channels, as well as on the official website of the Russian Orthodox Church <http://www.patriarchia.ru/>.

At the end of the All-Night Vigil, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill delivered a sermon.

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The decision to return the icon "Trinity" by St Andrew Rublev to its historical place in the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius was made by the Russian President Vladimir Putin in May 2023.

The icon of the Holy Trinity was painted by a holy iconographer in the first half of the 15th century for the local row of the iconostasis of the Trinity Cathedral at the request of the Monk Nikon of Radonezh - the disciple and successor of the Monk Sergius of Radonezh. The image became an ideal of artistic expression of the Christian dogma of the One and Triune God. As early as 1551, at the Stoglav Council convened by Tsar Ivan the Terrible, the icon was recognised as a model for depicting the Holy Trinity.

Having been in the Trinity Cathedral for half a millennium, in 1929, by order of the People's Commissariat of Education of the RSFSR, the relic was transferred to the State Tretyakov Gallery. Being a masterpiece of Old Russian art, the Holy Trinity became one of the main exhibits of the museum. A copy created by restorer Nikolai Baranov was placed in the iconostasis of the church [at the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius]. Almost a hundred years later, on 17 and 18 July 2022, on the day of commemoration of the Venerable Andrei Rublev and the 600th anniversary of the discovery of the relics of the Venerable Sergius of Radonezh, Rublev's original icon was brought to the Trinity Cathedral for temporary veneration which became a landmark event in the life of the Lavra.

In the summer of 2023, the Holy Trinity Sergius Lavra and the State Tretyakov Gallery concluded an agreement on the transfer of the icon of the Holy Trinity to the Lavra. Since 5 January of this year the relic has been temporarily located in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. Previously, since 1997, the faithful had the opportunity to venerate the icon once a year on the Holy Trinity Day in the Church of St Nicholas in Tolmachy in Moscow.

Now, the holy icon will be available for public veneration at all times: the Trinity Cathedral of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius is an active church, where daily services are held: brotherly prayer services, Divine Liturgies, prayer services with an akathist to the Mother of God and to St. Sergius of Radonezh.

Those who wish can also study the icon using augmented reality: for this purpose RIA Novosti together with the monastery created the app "Sergiev Lavra. Guide" («Сергиева Лавра. Путеводитель») for IOS and Android. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, ten stands with the image of the icon and a QR code leading to the page of the application, which allows to study the icon in details, were installed in the territory of the monastery. To do this it will be necessary to take a picture of the original, any list or reproduction of the shrine with the camera of a smartphone in the application. Those who do not have the opportunity to photograph the icon will be able to use a special two-dimensional mode of the application, which already presents its digital image with an interactive description.

The app will familiarise the user with the Old Testament story of "the Hospitality of Abraham", reveal the symbolism of the colours, the meaning of the composition and elements of the icon. The app also contains a list of iconographic terms, fragments of the audio guide to the monastery and episodes of the joint art-historical podcast of RIA "Novosti" and the Holy Trinity Lavra of Sergius "The Road to Lavra".

Those who wish will be able to hear the chants of the Lavra choir in the app.

Hieromonk Nektariy (Sokolov), editor-in-chief of the publishing houses "Ladan" and "Trinity School", and Hieromonk Nikifor (Isakov), head of the Lavra icon painting workshop, provided expert support in creating the app.

The holy icon was delivered to Sergiev Posad on specialised transport designed for professional transportation of works of art and equipped with a climate box with a shock absorption system. In the church, the relic is placed in a specially made stationary casket, which maintains the necessary climate for the preservation of the icon. The icon case is equipped with a system of automatic control and maintenance of temperature and humidity conditions, as well as armoured glass covered with protective layers, including those against ultraviolet rays.

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