

UOCC Delegation to the Ecumenical Patriarchate

ISTANBUL, TURKEY – On Sunday, February 15, 2015, at the invitation and



The church of St. Stephen is located in the district of Yesilkioy along the Marmara Sea about 11 km west of the city centre of Istanbul, Turkey.

blessing of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada were invited to serve the Divine Liturgy at the church of St. Stephen in the Yesilkioy district of Istanbul, Turkey. This day was also the feast day of the Meeting of the Lord according to the Julian calendar. They were accom-



panied by Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Vissarion (Komzias) who holds the title of Hierokyriax, or Grand Preacher, of the Ecumenical Throne and the Dean of the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate has provided this church for the sizeable Ukrainian Orthodox community residing in Istanbul, Turkey.

His Grace Bishop Ilarion of Edmonton and the Western Eparchy and His Grace Bishop Andriy of the Eastern Eparchy.

His Grace Bishop Ilarion together with His Grace Bishop Andriy and Very Reverend Victor Lakusta concelebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Rt. Rev. Vissarion chanting the responses.



(right to left) Chancellor Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Victor Lakusta, Bishop Ilarion, Bishop Andriy.



The Ukrainian congregation of St. Stephen's church in Istanbul together with UOCC delegation members. *Front row:* Consistory Board member Dr. Peter Kondra, Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Victor Lakusta, Bishop Andriy, congregation member, Bishop Ilarion, congregation member, Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Vissarion.

Many faithful were in attendance including the Acting Consul General of Ukraine and all were overwhelmed by the participation of the UOCC clergy and delegation members at their Divine Liturgy.

The community graciously hosted the UOCC delegation in the church auditorium and expressed their affection for Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Vissarion



Bishop Andriy reads the Gospel reading for the Feast Day of the Meeting of the Lord.

for conducting services for them and for the Ecumenical Patriarchate for designating St. Stephen's as a church where Ukrainian Orthodox could gather to worship in a language familiar to them.

The community was eager to hear about the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada, the reasons for the delegation's visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the imminent visit to Kyiv, Ukraine.



UOCC Chancellor Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Victor Lakusta holds the Gospel Book for veneration.



Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Vissarion invited the UOCC delegation to a farewell luncheon. During this time, he described his post graduate studies in St. Petersburg Theological Academy. There he developed a passion for Slavic liturgical music and rites as well as learned to speak Ukrainian. He exhibited a profound understanding of the political and ecclesiastical issues in Ukraine.

Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Vissarion

*-UOCC Delegation members
Dr. Peter M. Kondra
and Mr. Vasyl' Balan
February 15, 2015*



The interior of the church of St. Stephen. This church is located in the district of Yesilkioy along the Marmara Sea about 11 km west of the city centre of Istanbul, Turkey. Before the rapid increase of Istanbul's population in the 1970s, Yesilkioy was a village and a sea resort. Before 1926 it was called Saint Stephen. The ship carrying the relics of St. Stephen, the First Martyr, from Constantinople to Rome was forced to stop here because of a storm. The relics were taken to a church until the sea calmed down, giving the name to the church and to the village. Built on the site of an earlier half-underground church, St. Stephen's was renovated in 1845.



The interior of the church of St. Stephen.



The iconostasis at the church of St. Stephen.