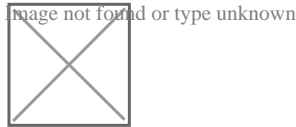


Ecumenical Patriarchate purchases ancient church

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One of the world's oldest churches was purchased by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the ecclesiastical center of the world's 300 million Orthodox Christians. The Byzantine Basmelekler Church (also known as the Taksiyarhon Church) was purchased on September 10.



The Turkish Hurriyet Daily News reported that the Başmelekler Church was built in 789 by Byzantine Emperor Constantine Porphyrogennetos. The church, which is located in Trilye, a seaside village near Istanbul in Turkey, was put up for sale by owner Teksen Construction for \$400,000 back in 2007. According to Metropolitan Elpidophoros Lambriniadis who facilitated the details of the purchase, the Istanbul-based Patriarchate completed the purchase of the church, now the Church of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, and that it is no longer derelict.

«There are three keys to the gate,» Lambriniadis said. «We hold two of the keys and gave the Kumyaka village the remaining key so that those who wish to visit the church would not be turned away.» Lambriniadis said the patriarchate is planning to restore the church as soon as possible. «We wish to restore this historical structure to its past glory so that it can take its place among the other wonderful

historical buildings that adorn our city of Bursa,» he said. Kумыака village head Ramiz Batmaz said the fact that Lambriniadis gave them a key to the church shows the patriarchate's trust in them. «From now on we will control the visits to the church and help our guests,» he said.

The church still has vaults situated on four walls and an ascending dome, a plan that has been used since early Christianity. Two other examples of this plan also existed in Istanbul, according to reports. Istanbul is the modern seat of one of Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is the surviving legacy of a religious empire that dominated the affairs of Christians worldwide for more than 1,000 years.

Source: www.pappaspost.com/