

New Armenian Cathedral Opens in Moscow

By [Ashley Perezluha](#)

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A priest stands before the church after the consecration ceremony.

On Tuesday, a new cathedral and church complex of the Armenian Apostolic Church was opened in Moscow on Trifonovskaya Ulitsa near Marina Roshcha metro station. The church is the largest branch of the Armenian Apostolic Church outside of Armenia.

The opening ceremony was attended by guests from diverse religious communities such as Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church, and representatives of the board of Muftis of Russia, the Buddhist Sangha and the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia.

"Rising from the heart of Russia, the church complex will be the spiritual and cultural center in the lives of those who — regardless of nationality — consider themselves bearers of Christian and human values," said Bishop Yezras Nersisyan, head of the New Nakhichevan and Russian Diocese, said in a press release

The Armenian church complex was created from a community effort that relied entirely on donations from benefactors, including Samvel Karapetyan, the president of the Tashir group of companies; Ruben Vardanyan, chairman of the managing board of Sberbank; Ruben Grigoryan, president of Rutsog-Invest; and Vitaly Grigoryants, president of Arch Limited.

"I believe in basic human values and the fact that projects like this one bring together a large number of people from different spheres, nationalities, cultures and ages," Ruben Vardanyan said. Samvel Karapetyan, another benefactor of the church, commented: "We are delighted that today we have the opportunity to promote the spiritual education and the preservation of cultural values [in the Armenian community]."

The new church is intended to serve Moscow's sizeable Armenian community. While the official 2010 census recorded only slightly more than 100,000 Armenians living in the capital, community members say there may in fact be as many as half a million Armenians in the city. The cathedral complex is only the fourth functioning Armenian Apostolic church in the city of Moscow, though a number of churches were destroyed or confiscated during the Soviet period.

The church complex has been under construction for eight years. In 2004, Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexei II attended the laying of the foundation of the church complex, which was blessed by the Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II.

The church complex includes a main cathedral, a chapel of the Holy Cross, an educational complex and a residential building for the head of the Armenian church complex, as well as an underground church museum and exhibition hall, a symbolic friendship spring monument and memorial plates.

The main cathedral can hold more than a thousand people and has an underground and aboveground parking area for up to 300 cars. The total land area of the complex takes up 1.3 hectares, and the building area encompasses 25 thousand square meters.

The first divine liturgy in the church complex will be held Sept. 22 in the cathedral at 24 Trifonovskaya Ulitsa. For more information, see the website of the Russian and New Nakhichevan Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church at armenianchurch.ru.

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