

200 New Churches for the Moscow Suburbs in 2010



It has been announced in Moscow that in 2010 the Russian Orthodox Church is planning to build approximately 200 churches in the Moscow suburbs. In order to meet the urgent need for churches in the dormitory suburbs, they will be erected according to the same standard prefabricated pattern. The report from the RIA Novosti news agency explained that in this way Muscovites will no longer have to travel to central Moscow to get to church. The agency reported that it should only take six months to erect each one.

Although 25,000 churches have been reopened, restored or built in the Russian Orthodox Church in the last twenty years, this number caters for only a few of the 100 million Orthodox baptised over that time. As in another period of mass baptisms, the fourth century, the masses who belong to the Russian Orthodox Church remain to a large extent unChurched. For example, it was announced last week that only 4% of Orthodox in Russia are actually keeping Lent strictly and only 33% are keeping Lent to some extent.

Although over three churches have been opened by the Russian Orthodox Church every day for the last 20 years, the real number required after the catastrophic Soviet period is ten times higher. At least the dormitory suburbs of Moscow will now to some extent be catered for. At present there is only one church for every 10,000 inhabitants in those suburbs - a chronic situation.