

Pastoral Visit to Australia

AT THE request of His Eminence, Bishop Chrysostomos of Sydney and New South Wales, and with the blessing of our First Hierarchy, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone made a pastoral visit, with God's help, to Sydney, in faraway Australia, in order, among other things, to take part in the Feast Day celebration of our Cathedral of the Holy Unmercenarities Cosmas and Damian. He arrived in the capital by air on Friday, October 27, 2007 (Old Style).

Bishop Ambrose Liturgized at the Church of the Holy Unmercenarities on two consecutive Sundays (October 29 and November 5, 2007 [Old Style]), and also on the Feast Day of the Holy Unmercenarities, Wednesday, November 1, 2007 (Old Style), with a large throng of faithful—mostly of Greek descent—in attendance.



Also participating were Father John Younan, who has recently been serving as Rector of the Church, and the Reverend Archpriest Dragan Saracevic, who was received by Bishop Ambrose into our Holy Synod, in accordance with the pertinent decision of our Standing Holy Synod (First Session/October 10, 2007 [Old Style]).

Father Dragan hitherto belonged to the Australian Diocese of the Serbian Patriarchate, but walled himself off from it for reasons of faith and righteousness. He is a sober and remarkable clergyman, and anti-ecumenical in his convictions. He has now been appointed temporary Rector of the Church of the Holy Unmercenarities, since Father John is leaving for Canada.



During his short stay in Australia, Bishop Ambrose also had the opportunity to consult with the parish council regarding longstanding problems facing the community and to work on finding solutions; to

visit the homes of many of our Greek brethren among the pious flock there, offering them spiritual consolation and support; and to visit the Russian clergyman, Hieromonk John (Smelic), who has aligned himself with His Eminence, Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tauris, since, among other factors, the latter did not accept

the union between the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate.

Bishop Ambrose returned to Greece by air on the morning of Monday, November 6, 2007 (Old Style), after yet another fruitful and arduous ecclesiastical mission, which, by the Grace of God, was crowned with success.

