

Pastoral Visit to Australia

During the last ten days of October and the first ten days of November (Old Style), His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, *Locum Tenens* of our Diocese in Australia, made a pastoral visit to Australia, Singapore, and New Zealand.

On Tuesday, October 19, 2011 (Old Style), His Grace arrived by air in Singapore, the first stop on his journey, where he was informed by our Priest, Father Demetrios Sithuraj-Ponraj, about the current state of our mission in Southeast Asia. Recently, several catechumens were baptized in Malaysia, and a number of other natives have also expressed interest. Bishop Ambrose was able to meet with our faithful in Singapore.



His Grace then flew to Melbourne, Australia, on Friday, October 22 (Old Style), where our Priest, Father Stylianos Papadopoulos, offered him hospitality in his home.



On Saturday, Bishop Ambrose celebrated a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Martyrs of Vilnius, which belongs to our Sister Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. He was assisted by the Church's Rector, Hieromonk Andrew (Erastov), and Father Stylianos Papadopoulos, with some fifty pious

faithful in attendance.

That afternoon, His Grace took part in Great Vespers at the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Stephen of Dečani, along with the Church's Rector, Father Zvonimir Jović.

On Sunday, October 24 (Old Style), Bishop Ambrose celebrated a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at our Church of the Dormition of the The-



otokos, together with its Rector, Father Stylianos Papadopoulos, with the participation of many faithful.

On Tuesday, October 26 (Old Style), His Grace flew to New Zealand, where he remained for three days with the few parishioners belonging to our small community near Auckland, which is served by Father Paul Vermaak. There, he baptized a catechumen in the sea.

On Saturday, October 30 (Old Style), Bishop Ambrose flew to Sydney, Australia, where, the next day, he celebrated the Divine Liturgy at our Church of the Holy Unmercenary Cosmas and Damian. That afternoon, following Vespers in honor of the Patron Saints of the Church, His Grace performed the Mystery of Holy Unction.



On Monday, November 1 (Old Style), Bishop Ambrose celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the Patronal Feast of the same Church, together with Archpriest Dragan Saracevic. Around one hundred faithful were in attendance. After the Liturgy, a procession was made through the streets around the Church.



His Grace next went by road to Canberra on Wednesday, November 3 (Old Style), where he stayed at the Monastery of St. Sava of Serbia, known as “New Kalenic.” Over the next few days, he held various meetings with representatives of ecclesiastical and other organizations.



On Friday afternoon, November 5 (Old Style) Bishop Ambrose visited the Serbian Church of St. George, located in the center of the country’s capital, where he served Vespers and met with parishioners.

On Saturday, November 6 (Old Style), the Bishop liturgized in the Monastery of St. Sava’s splendid *Katholikon*, together with Fathers Dragan Saracevic and Zvonimir Jović, and assisted by Protodeacon Basil Yakimov (ROCA). At this time, he ordained Nebojsa Mirkovic a Deacon. Deacon Father Nebojsa, a pious Serb, is a spiritual son of Father Dragan, married, and distinguished by his fervent zeal for Orthodoxy. His Grace also ordained another Serbian man Subdeacon.



After the festal meal, the General Assembly of the legal entity of our Diocese in Australia was convened.

On Sunday, November 7 (Old Style), Bishop Ambrose celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Unmercenaries in Sydney, as he also did the following two days, on the commemorations of the Bodiless Powers (Monday) and of St. Nectarios (Tuesday).

On Wednesday, November 10 (Old Style), His Grace flew to Singapore, and from there to Athens, where he arrived on the morning of Friday, November 12 (Old Style), giving thanks to God for the success of this latest lengthy and arduous journey, for the strengthening of our flock and the advancement of the ecclesiastical work of our Holy Synod at the ends of the earth.