

Pastoral Visit to Canada

From Thursday, March 15, to Tuesday, March 20, 2012 (New Style), His Eminence, Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna, Exarch in America for the Holy Synod in Resistance, and His Grace, Bishop Auxentios of Photike, assistant to the Exarch, visited two of our Canadian parishes in Toronto, Ontario: the Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene Greek Orthodox Church and the Holy Archangel Michael Serbian Orthodox Church. They were joined on the weekend, March 17 and 18, by Archimandrite Akakios, Abbot of the St. Gregory Palamas Monastery in Etna, CA—headquarters of the Exarchate—and Hierodeacon Father Photii, one of the monastery Deacons.

On Friday, Compline, with the Third *Stasis* of the Salutations to the *Theotokos*, was celebrated at the Greek parish, followed on Saturday by Matins and the Divine Liturgy, served by Father Demetrios Sarlakes from our Exarchate parish of the Holy Ascension in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Hegumen Father Sofronije from the Serbian parish in Toronto, with the two Hierarchs in prayerful attendance. A wonderful meal was served by the ladies of the community in the Church Hall, following the Liturgy.

On Sunday, an Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Holy Archangel Michael parish (*see Archbishop Chrysostomos, in the first of the following photographs, at the entrance service—Ἀκολουθεία τοῦ Καιροῦ—assisted, at left, by Deacon Father Photii and, at right, by Deacon Father Peter Bushunow*). Father Peter, together with his Diakonissa, sister, and niece, travelled from our Exarchate parish of the Holy Ascension in Rochester, NY, to participate in the weekend activities in Toronto. Archbishop Chrysostomos served as first celebrant with Bishop Auxentios, with the Very Reverend Father Andreja Dimitrijević and Hegumen Father Sofronije, who serve the parish, Archimandrite Akakios, and the aforementioned Deacons concelebrating.

Chanters from the Greek parish and the choir of the Holy Archangel Michael Church sang beautifully in Greek, English, Slavonic, and Serbian, lending a pan-Orthodox flavor to the services. The services were followed by a superb fasting meal, prepared by the parish sisterhood, after which



Deacon Father Peter Bushunow, who is a physician and serves on the faculty of the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and the Reverend Mother Agapia, Superior of the Convent of St. Nicholas in Cleveland, NY, under the jurisdiction of our Sister Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (Metropolitan Agafangel), offered a few words to those present.

During their visit, His Grace, Bishop Auxentios and Archimandrite Father Akakios spoke at a short seminar held at the spacious Church hall of the Holy Archangel Michael Church on Saturday afternoon, March 17, just prior to Vespers. They presented papers related to the witness of our Synod in Resistance. His Grace delivered a decisive lecture entitled, “The Criteria of Ecclesiastical Struggle,” which was very enthusiastically received, and Father Akakios gave a short but very insightful talk on resistance and its relationship to repentance. The presentations were attended by a number of



visitors from other Churches, who expressed the hope that seminars of this kind would be repeated. In response to a great many requests, the talks at the seminar will appear on the English-language website of the Holy Synod.

Mr. Milan Malobabic and Mr. Themistocles Papadopoulos, Presidents of our Serbian and Greek parishes in Toronto, are to be commended for their tireless efforts in making the visit of the Hierarchs and the associated seminar and other activities such a success. As well, the kind ladies from the sis-

terhoods of both parishes deserve the gratitude of all who attended these remarkable and heart-warming events for their hard work and the exceptional meals and refreshments that they provided. Also to be thanked for their warm and extraordinary personal hospitality are Mr. Philip Nicol and his extended family, who offered elegant accommodations and kindness to the visiting monastic clergy.

Below, additional photos from the visit: the conclusion of Liturgy; l. to r., Archbishop Chrysostomos and Bishop Auxentios; seminar.





