

CONCELEBRATION OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS IN SOFIA, BULGARIA

On Tuesday, August 15, 2012 (Old Style), the Cathedral of the Dormition of the Theotokos (*Bogoroditsa*) in Sofia, Bulgaria, the spiritual center of our Sister Church, the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, under His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza, celebrated its patronal Feast.

For the Feast, His Grace, Bishop Klemes (Clement) of Gardikion, accompanied by Subdeacon Cyprian Koutsoliakos, travelled to Sofia as a representative of the Holy Synod in Resistance, of which he is Secretary. They arrived in Sofia on Sunday evening, August 13 (Old Style), and were lodged at the comfortable Episcopal residence, which is situated near the beautiful Cathedral.

• **On Monday** morning, August 14, His Grace, Bishop Klemes visited the Convent of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos at Knyazhevo, near Sofia, where there are some 60 nuns in residence. At the convent, he was received with honor, venerated the convent Chapels, delivered words of spiritual edification to the Sisterhood, and was given a tour of its various buildings, with special attention to the truly impressive publishing and iconographic facilities and productions of the convent.

• **In the** late afternoon, Vespers and Matins were celebrated together, as the Slavic *Typikon* appoints, in the Cathedral Church of



the Dormition in Sofia. His Eminence, Bishop Photii presided, with the participation of His Grace, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, as well



as many Presbyters, Deacons, Subdeacons, and a large crowd of the faithful. As a representative of our Sister Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, under Metropolitan Agafangel, the Very Reverend Father Roman Kravets, from Voronezh, Russia, also took part.

• **On Tuesday** morning, after the vesting of the Bishops and that of the clergy, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated. A huge number of



people communed, from three Chalices, for more than half an hour. After the conclusion of the contrite and, at the same time, majestic sacred Mystery of the Liturgy, a Service of Supplication and a procession around the Cathedral took place. Afterwards, once more inside the Cathedral, following the singing of “Many Years” to the Bishops, His Grace, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, at the request of the ruling Hierarchy, His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza, delivered a short festal homily. A banquet for the clergy followed at a local restaurant.



• **His Grace**, Bishop Klemes, with his entourage, returned by air to Greece late the same afternoon, thankful to God and the All-Immaculate Theotokos for this most recent blessing of concelebration with our Bulgarian Old Calendarist brethren.

