

## Pastoral Visit to Kenya

**Y**et another pastoral visit by His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone took place, by the Grace of God, to the ecclesiastical communities of our Holy Synod's mission in Kenya. His Grace travelled with the Kenyan Hieromonk Father Poimen, a brother of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, for the latter's installation as the Superior of the newly established Monastery of the Dormition of the *Theotokos* in this East African country.

His Grace, Bishop Ambrose and Father Poimen arrived by airplane in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, during the early morning hours of the Eve of the Feast of Theophany, January 5, 2014 (Old Style), where there awaited them the local clergy, led by Protopresbyters Father John Njagi and Father James Waruinge, as well as many faithful. They journeyed from there to the Embu District, reaching the partly built Monastery of the Dormition, where, the next morning, the Service of the Blessing of Water for the inauguration of its activities was held, its Superior, Hieromonk Poimen, having spent three and a half years at the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina in Phyle, Greece, in preparation for this moment. There are already two novices in residence with him.



On the Sunday of Theophany, January 6, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose, together with Father Poimen, visited the Convent of St. George, where, at the Church of the Holy Apostle Andrew, following the Matins service

for the Feast, the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great was celebrated, with the rest of the local clergy (six Priests and two Deacons) concelebrating. Also present, aside from the 19-member sisterhood of the convent, under Abbess Mother Christonymphe, was a large group of the faithful. All of the services for the



Feast, the Divine Liturgy, and the Great Blessing of the Waters were celebrated in their entirety for the first time in the local Kikuyu dialect, to the joy of the people. The translation was accomplished by the Sisterhood of the Convent, which is also translating the *Oktoechos* (already two Tones have been translated). At the end of the Service and the *Agape* Meal, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose held a discussion with the local clergy, as well as the Ecclesiastical Council of our mission in Kenya.

On Monday, January 7, the Feast of St. John the Baptist and Forerunner, His Grace celebrated Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Archangel Michael in Kathangariri, together with other clergy, afterward visiting the Hermitage of the Holy Three Hierarchs, where Hieromonk Father Theophan Muturi, who trained in Greece, dwells, having returned several years ago to his native city in Kenya.



On Tuesday, January 8, on the twenty-first anniversary of his Consecration, Bishop Ambrose celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Kanja, after which he also gathered with the local



clergy. Later, His Grace celebrated the blessing of the foundation stone of the new Chapel at the Monastery of the Dormition of the *Theotokos*, in the presence of its founder and benefactor, the physician Dr. John Thiogo, the son of one of the Priests in our Kenyan mission and a pious member of the Church.

On Wednesday, January 9, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose, with his entourage, visited the school that was also founded by Dr. Thiogo, where about 200 students are enrolled. His Grace spoke with the teaching staff and with the students, to whom he distributed small gifts.



He then went to inspect and bless the new land acquired at the Convent of St. George, which has been sufficiently planted, so as to cover the needs of the Sisterhood, but for which 5,500 Euros is owed, a debt that, with the aid of any Orthodox Christians who can help, must be paid off.

On Friday, January 10, Bishop Ambrose returned to the capital of Nairobi with Father James, where they visited the Church of the Protection

of the *Theotokos*, and met with the faithful, leaving the same evening by airplane for Athens, by way of Cairo.

This newest missionary visit, attending to the inauguration of the activities of the new Monastery and the needs of the Convent, which has been in operation for some years now, as well as looking after the parishes, clergy, and faithful, was richly blessed. May it bear analogous spiritual fruits!

