

The Foundation of a Mission in the Togolese Republic by the Holy Diocese of Luni, Italy

Following a period of preparation, during which Archdeacon Father Paul—a Brother of the Monastery of St. Seraphim of Sarov, in Pistoia, Italy—worked with great love and commitment, His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni, our Synod’s Exarch in Italy, went to Togo for ten days in order officially to found an Orthodox Mission in that country with the laying of the foundation stone of a Church dedicated to the Holy

Chief Apostles Peter and Paul (with parish annexes), as well as the foundation stone of a medical clinic, “New Life,” which would cover a serious deficiency in the area of the village of Knpala, not far from where the capital city of Lomé’s new airport is to be built.



Bishop Silvano departed from Italy on 10/23 June, 2014, accompanied by his personal secretary, Reader Ambrogio Caziuc. They were met at the Togo airport by Archdeacon Father Paul, a native of the country, and by representatives of the population.

During the first days of his sojourn, the Bishop took steps to ensure the legal recognition of the Italian Exarchate of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece by the Togolese Republic. In this way, the ownership of the area where the Mission will be created was definitively regulated and its foundations will be legal entities of Togo.

Bishop Silvano was received by the President of the Republic, who then accompanied him to his appointed meeting with the Prime Minister, since the Chief of State had promised to attend the swearing-in

of another African President. The discussion with the Prime Minister lasted about an hour, and the Bishop received the assurance that the Orthodox Mission will receive every possible assistance, in part because the government is very concerned about the indiscriminate proliferation of sects resulting from the many blunders and scandals that have occurred within the Roman Catholic Church.

The next day, Bishop Silvano met with the Minister of Territorial Administration and the Chief of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the absence of the Minister.

The first meeting with the local population of the village of Knpala, where, for the most part, animism still holds sway, was quite moving, as the villagers showed the Bishop warmth and respect.



On June 18/July 1, the commemoration of the Holy Martyr Leontios, the Bishop blessed and laid the foundation stones of the Church and medical clinic. The regional Prefect was present, representing the government, as was the traditional “King” of the region, who, after the Prefect, made a speech filled with ancestral wisdom, calling upon the people to “put away the idols.”

At the end of his sojourn, the Bishop, very tired and worn out, but truly glad and filled with zeal for the great work of evangelization and philanthropy that lies ahead (the population is very poor), and not discouraged by the difficulties, returned to Italy, leaving behind Archdeacon Father Paul in Togo until the end of July to direct the commencement of work and the excavation of a deep well, which will supply the region with drinking water.

