

Pastoral Visit to the Congo

From June 24 through July 12, 2014 (Old Style), His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, *Locum Tenens* of the Holy Metropolis of Kananga (Democratic Republic of the Congo), belonging to the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece, made another pastoral visit to the large missionary communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo, in central Africa.

Despite the particularly unpropitious and, for the most part, primitive conditions in these regions, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose, by the Grace of God:

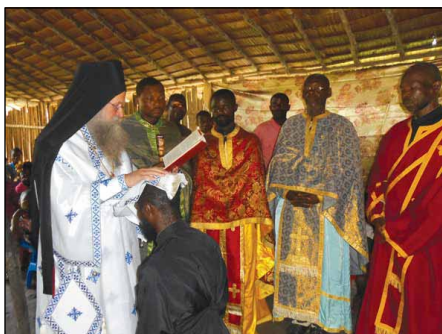
1) liturgized at the Churches of the Venerable Forerunner (in Kinshasa), the Holy Apostles (in Kananga), St. Nicholas (in Nganza), Sts. Peter and Paul (in Mbandaka), and St. George (in Brazzaville);



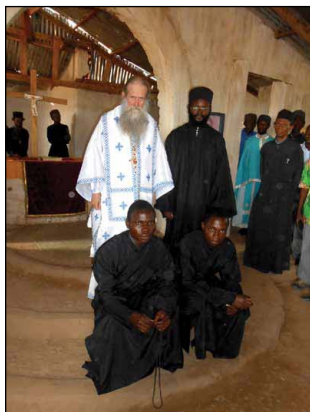
2) ordained two Priests and one Deacon for Kinshasa, one Priest for the region of Mbuji-Mayi, two Priest and one Deacon for Kananga, and three Priests and one Deacon for the Équateur (Equator) province, so that the clergy now numbers a total of thirty-eight Priests and eight Deacons;



3) visited the newly founded Mission in the Équateur province (the provincial capital of which is Mbandaka), where, with his assistance, a plot of land was bought for the building of a Church and Mission Center; this is the first time an Orthodox Bishop has visited the province, and within three years of an Orthodox presence in the area, more than one thousand natives have been baptized, the majority of whom live in and around Bolomba, a journey of three days from the provincial capital;



4) held lengthy gatherings with the clergy, baptized children, counseled and consoled people in their troubles, and, in general, took measures for the better organization of the Mission;

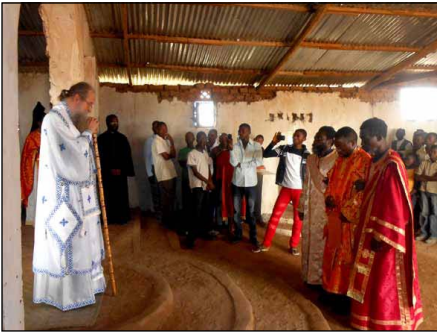


5) clothed as novices two young postulants, who are the first members of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity under construction in Kananga, under the direction of Archimandrite Mark; and

6) took pains for the completion of the Church of the Annunciation of the *Theotokos*, in the Republic of the Congo.

This pastoral visit was a particularly arduous and hazardous one, but also richly blessed for the strengthening and support of clergy and laity.

Apart from your prayers, we ask that anyone who is able please contribute to this blessed missionary work for the dissemination and consolidation of True Orthodoxy, since there is enormous need, given the lack of building material, liturgical books, Icons, vestments, and ecclesiastical objects in general. All contributions, whether in the form of



money or commodities, are greatly appreciated and put to proper use. Likewise, the assistance of those with knowledge of French, which is the official language of the two Congoes, would be particularly helpful for the accomplishment of the necessary translation work for the Mission. Those who are interested in giving their assistance are asked to contact His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone (e-mail: ambrose@hsir.org).

