

AT THE LAND OF THE PYGMIES

His Grace Panteleimon, Bishop of Congo-Brazzaville and Gabon, paid a pastoral visit to the Parish Community of the Holy Forerunner – St. Nicholas in the town of Impfondo in the Northern Congo from 20th – 23rd October 2016, accompanied by the Reverend Sergios Mabelemo, Parish Priest of the Parish Community of the Resurrection of the Lord in Brazzaville.

On Friday 21st October the Bishop went to the tropical forest where the Pygmies live and who have embraced the Orthodox faith. During his visit with the members of the tribe – most of whose members at this time of severe rains are in the depths of the tropical forests looking for food – His Grace had the joy of lengthy communication with them. He also handed over a large amount of salt, soap, toothbrushes, toothpastes, razor blades and matches, all of which are essential for their hunting way of life, as well as stationery and sweets for the little children.

On Saturday 22nd October, he had long collaboration with the person in charge of the building works of the Holy Diocese, Mr. Romeo Gomez, who will soon be completing the final work on the newly constructed Holy Parish Church of the Forerunner-St Nicholas.

He also paid a courtesy visit to the Mayor of the town of Impfondo, the Honourable Mr. Clotaire Maniobo, who expressed the joy of the local community for the building of the first Orthodox Church in the town, defining it as “a jewel for the town”.

On Sunday 23rd October he conducted the Divine Liturgy and preached the homily in the rented house which is being used temporarily as a place of worship until the inauguration of the above-mentioned church.

A meeting followed with the members of the Parish Council regarding the organization of the ceremony of the inauguration, after which His Grace left by air for Pointe-Noire, via Brazzaville.