

HIS GRACE THE BISHOP OF CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE IN GABON

On the night of 16th February 2015, His Grace Panteleimon together with the Reverend Fr Maximos Oumba, Hierarchal Vicar General, arrived in Libreville, the capital of Gabon, the second country belonging to the jurisdiction of the Holy Diocese of Congo-Brazzaville, to visit the small Orthodox community in the city.

The next day, 17th February, His Grace met with His Excellency Mr. Dimitri Kurakov, Ambassador of Russia to Gabon, an old acquaintance from his tenure in Alexandria, as well as with the Honorable Consul of Serbia, Mr. Moncilo Radunovic Mombo.

He was then welcomed by His Excellency Mr. Guy Bertrand Mapangou, Minister of the Interior, Public Safety and Immigration, in charge of Church matters, with whom he discussed the outcome of the submitted applications for official recognition of the Orthodox Church by the country and the issuing of a license to build the first Orthodox Church in the capital. The minister announced the acceptance of both applications by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Gabon and gave assurance on the issuing of the relative documents, looking forward to a productive presence of Orthodoxy in the country, as he said characteristically. There was also a lengthy discussion on the problem of the destructive presence of religious sects, some of which illegally call themselves "orthodox" or "catholic-orthodox".

The following day, 18th February, the Bishop had the joy of personal communication with Orthodox faithful Christians. In the afternoon of the same day he conducted the Divine Liturgy and preached the homily at the home of the Honorable Consul of Serbia, attended by locals, Russians, Serbs, Lebanese and Syrian faithful. He gave each one the 2015 calendar of the Holy Diocese of Brazzaville and Gabon and passed on the paternal prayers, blessings and unreserved interest of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa.

Finally, on the morning of 19th February he returned by air to the city of Pointe-Noire in the Congo.