

INSTALLATION OF NEW PARISH PRIEST IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY OF BRAZZAVILLE

On Saturday 7th November 2015, His Grace Panteleimon, Bishop of Congo-Brazzaville and Gabon travelled to the capital of the Congo, Brazzaville, to visit the Parish Community of the Resurrection of the Lord.

After Vespers, a lengthy meeting between the Bishop and the Members of the Parish Community was held, to collectively appoint the new Parish Priest of the Church, following the passing of the late Fr Bernard Diafouka who had served there for twenty years. The Bishop justifiably proposed Fr Sergio Mabelemo, till recently the Parish Priest of the Parish of the Forerunner – St Nicholas in the city of Impfondo, an educated, married priest, who was ordained to the diaconate in 2001 by the late Metropolitan Timotheos of Central Africa and in 2011 was ordained as priest by the Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria, His Eminence Gabriel of Leontopolis, who was then Bishop of Mareotis, by the Venerable Order of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria. The proposal was unanimously and enthusiastically accepted.

On Sunday 8th November, His Grace conducted the Divine Liturgy and preached the homily at the Holy Church of the Resurrection of the Lord, prior to the end of which a memorial was sung for the repose of the late Metropolitan Timotheos (Kontomerkos) Metropolitan of Central Africa, who was the Hierarch of Congo-Brazzaville when it still belonged to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Central Africa.

He presented the new parish Priest to the faithful, who validated the collective decision with applause and traditional songs. The Honorable Mr. Seraphin Bhalat, Chairman of the Parish Council, expressed the joy and gratitude of the faithful for the choice of the most suitable priest to minister in the Parish Community of the country's capital, and spoke of the historic journey of the Orthodox presence in Congo-Brazzaville, as he is one of the first indigenous brothers to have embraced Orthodoxy. He also thanked the honorary Consul General of Greece in the Congo, Mr. Nikolaos Perris and his wife Mrs. Stavroula Perris, for their essential contribution to and valuable support of the progress of the local church.

A festive reception followed in the adjacent parish hall, and a private meeting was held between the Bishop and the Readers and members of the choir of the Church, at the end of which he departed by air for the See of the Diocese in Point-Noire.