

THE FIRST EVER BLESSING OF THE WATER IN THE CONGO RIVER IN CENTRAL AFRICA

The great Feast of Theophany was celebrated with piety and solemnity in the Holy Diocese of Brazzaville and Gabon. His Grace Panteleimon conducted the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy and the celebration of the Greater Sanctification at the Holy Church of the Resurrection of the Lord in Brazzaville, after which with special permission, a procession was held through the streets of the capital, which ended on the banks of the Congo River.

There, the Orthodox Christians prayerfully experienced for the very first time in the history of the local Church, the ceremony of the submersion of the Precious Cross in the waters of the Congo River, the second largest river in the world in water volume (41, 800 cubic metres per second) after the Amazon River in South America.

On the banks His Grace preached the homily, analyzing the theological significance of this Feast, as well as the historic consecration and interpretation of the ceremony of the submersion of the Precious Cross and the blessing of the waters. In conclusion he passed on the festive paternal prayers and blessings of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, and thanked the country's authorities for the respect shown to the Orthodox Church.

Present at the ceremony were representatives of His Excellency the President of the Republic, of His Excellency the Governor of Brazzaville, the Security Forces and many faithful.