

❖ METROPOLIS OF OROPOS AND FILI

✦ Kenya Mission

“Go ye and teach all nations”

## Missionary and Pastoral Visit to Kenya\*

During the last ten days of January, according to the Church Calendar, with God’s help His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian made a very fruitful missionary journey to our Orthodox communities in Kenya, Africa, motivated by sacrificial love and zeal for the progress of the Orthodox witness in this

country, which he had also visited fourteen years previously, for the funeral of Metropolitan George (Gaduna), a truly Apostolic Hierarchy.

Also taking part in this new missionary visit were His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni and two lay brothers in Christ, spiritual sons of His Eminence.

On 23 January 2001 (Old Style), the visitors arrived by air in the capital of the country, Nairobi, where they were welcomed by our two Episcopal Representatives, Protopresbyters James Waruinge and John Njue Njagi, together with several Faithful. This was followed by a gathering of clergy at Father James’ house, to which members of the so-called “African Orthodox Church of Kenya” also came. They placed themselves under the jurisdiction of our mission, after severing their ties with Niphon Kingundu, the disgraced former Metropolitan of Kenya.

The following day, Met-





ropolitan Cyprian and his entourage visited Thogoto, where a *Trisagion* was served over the grave of the sainted Metropolitan George. The delegation from Greece also visited Churches in the area and the parish of St. Eleutherios in Rironi, which boasts of the largest Orthodox Church in the country. Along with its rector, Father John Gakera, it has now placed itself under the *Omophorion* of our Metropolitan.

On 26 January 2001 (Old Style), the Greek delegation arrived in the district of Embu, Western Kenya, where they visited the first African monastic institution for women, the Convent of St. George. The convent, under Mother Christonymphe, which numbers five sisters, is still in the process of spiritual formation, and some construction work remains to be done. The presence of the Metropolitan was vital for the formal blessing of this work, which is now imminent, and also for its future progress and expansion.

His Eminence visited parishes in the area of Mount Kenya, where the Faithful, with their Priests, expressed gracious feelings of joy and enthusiasm in their typical and traditional African fashion.

On 28 January 2001 (Old Style), Metropolitan Cyprian celebrated the Divine Liturgy



at the Convent of St. George, in which many of our clergy participated.

On Sunday, 29 January 2001 (Old Style), the spacious stone Church of the Holy Apostle Paul, in Kaanja, Embu, was Consecrated. Ten Priests and one Deacon concelebrated with Metropolitan Cyprian, who performed the Consecration, and Bishop

Ambrose. Many hundreds of Orthodox Faithful took part in the services. They watched the entire Consecration ceremony with the utmost reverence and participated with fervor in the compunctionate Divine Liturgy in their beautiful Church, which was now Consecrated. Fragments of the Relics of the Holy Great Martyr Charalambos, the Holy Monk-Martyrs of Chozeva, and the Holy Great Martyr Theodore the Commander were placed in the Holy Table.

In the course of this pastoral visit, Metropolitan Cyprian received into his jurisdiction, in keeping with proper canonical order and according to individual circumstances, a total of four Priests who had come from the uncanonical group of the former bishop Niphon, and in this way peace was restored to the troubled life of the Eparchy. Furthermore, His Eminence had the special gift and joy of teaching, guiding, counseling, encouraging, blessing, and hallowing clergy and lay people in their difficult struggle to uphold the Christian confession and way of life, in the midst of many difficult local quirks, adversities, and problems.

The delegation returned to Greece, by the Grace of the Lord, on 31 January 2001 (Old Style), after stopping for a short while in Cairo, Egypt, where they met with a small community of our Orthodox Faithful. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated in our *Metochion* there, and the Metropolitan and those with him visited the ancient Monastery of St. Makarios in Sketis, Nitria.

\* Source: *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 300 (January-February 2001), pp. 12-13.