

Pastoral Visit to South Ossetia

For the Feast of the Nativity, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, *Locum Tenens* of the Holy Diocese of Alania, once again travelled to South Ossetia, in the Caucasus.

On Christmas Eve, in Tskhinvali, the capital of this small country, His Grace liturgized at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity of the Theotokos, where he also celebrated the All-Night Vigil for the great Feast of the Nativity of Christ our Savior, assisted by Fathers Yakov Khetagourov and Georgi Djoev. Despite the bitter cold, an enormous throng of faithful—between two and three thousand people!—gathered for this Feast of the Lord.



The next day, Sunday, December 26, 2011 (Old Style), Bishop Ambrose celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of Sts. Constantine and Helen, located in the same city, together with its Rector, Archpriest



Father Alexey Aristinov.

During this peaceful visit, His Grace dealt with various local ecclesiastical matters and problems, confessed the faithful, and visited the Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, which is under construction in Znauri (where, incidentally, he was interviewed by a television station). He also visited old and historic Churches and monuments, which are in need of renovation. In particular, he discussed the possibility of monks and nuns taking up residence in ancient monasteries, and also the prospect of ordaining new clergy.

During his return trip to Greece, Bishop Ambrose held meetings in Moscow with clergy of the Patriarchate who have shown interest in issues of the Faith and of Orthodox Resistance, and also undertook a pilgrimage to the historical Churches of the Kremlin, where, as is well known, the sacred and incorrupt Relics of those Metropolitans of Moscow who were Saints are preserved.

