

Pastoral Visit to South Ossetia, in the Caucasus, on the Occasion of the Feast of the Dormition of the *Theotokos*

In mid-August, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, as *Locum Tenens* of the Holy Diocese of Alania, made yet another pastoral visit to South Ossetia, this time for the Feast Day of the Dormition of the *Theotokos*.



During his sojourn, he liturgized and delivered a sermon at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity of the *Theotokos* on Sunday, August 13 (Old Style), and again on Tuesday, August 15 (Old Style), for the Feast of the Dormition. On Sunday, August 20 (Old Style), he celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of Sts. Constantine and Helen with the local clergy (three Priests and one Deacon).



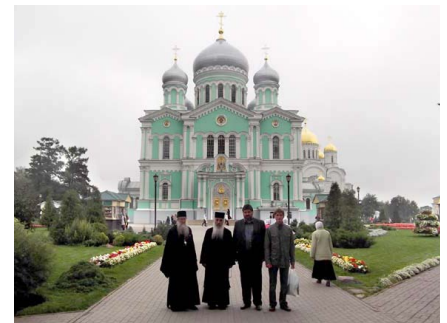
His Grace visited various regions in the country and met with the faithful, many of whom he confessed, in preparation for the Great Feast of the Mother of God. He then visited the wooden Church of the Dormi-



tion of the *Theotokos* in the village of Znauri, which Church is nearing completion. Here, he oversaw the work being done and celebrated a Service of Supplication.



While in that region, Bishop Ambrose also visited old and historic Churches and met with government representatives for the purpose of bringing about their renovation, which is urgently needed; he inspected possible sites for the foundation—or re-foundation—of a monastery and a convent; he met with prospective monks and nuns; and, for the first time, he visited the Churches and a convent in Ahalgori, the only region in this small state that belongs to the jurisdiction of the Georgian Patriarchate.



Back in Tskhinvali, His Grace performed the Blessing of the Waters for the beginning of the new school year at the Orthodox school. He also met with the military chaplain who belongs to the Moscow Patriarchate to discuss matters of common concern.

On his return journey, by way of Russia, Bishop Ambrose visited various places of pilgrimage in Moscow, as well as the Convent of Diveyevo, where the Relics of St. Seraphim of Sarov are preserved.

