

Hierarchical Visit to the Cathedral Parish of the Holy Nativity of the *Theotokos* in Portland, Oregon

On Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3 (April 19 and 20, Old Style), His Grace, the Right Reverend Auxentios, newly enthroned Bishop of the Diocese of Etna and Portland, visited the Cathedral of the Holy Nativity of the *Theotokos* in Portland, Oregon, where he celebrated Vespers and Matins, following the Slavic custom, on Saturday evening and an Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning.

This small, humble parish was originally given the status of a Cathedral under a former ecclesiastical jurisdiction to which it belonged, a status that was maintained when it entered into the jurisdiction of the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece (*Ekklesia G.O.Ch. Hellados*). After the union of our Holy Synod in Resistance with the Church of the G.O.C. of Greece, it was decided to preserve that designation and to add to the Etna (California) See the See of Portland, as well, resulting in the Diocese of Etna and Portland.

Thus it was that His Grace was especially anxious to visit the community, following his enthronement at the St. Gregory Palamas Monastery in Etna only one week ago, and to meet the faithful in the second city of his double See. His Grace was accompanied by His Eminence, Metropolitan Moses of Toronto, former ruling Hierarch of Portland (prior to Bishop Sergios, recently retired from the See), who was on the West Coast for Bishop Auxentios' enthronement.

The two Bishops concelebrated the Divine Liturgy, with His Grace, Bishop Auxentios as chief celebrant, together with Archimandrite Akakios, Abbot of the St. Gregory Palamas Monastery, and one of the monastery Deacons, Father Photii, who accompanied His Grace, as well as Protopresbyter Constantine Parr and his assistant, Father Photios Cooper, the two married clergy who serve the parish, and Subdeacon James Kalbasky. Father Jerome Zubricky, visiting Portland with his wife, Presbyteria Mary, from the small parish of Sts. Cyprian and Justina in Etna, also served. The services were chanted with contrition and care by the *Protopsaltes* (Chief Cantor) of the Cathedral, Reader John Peter Presson, with an assistant. His Grace was delighted to see a number of children present for the service, noting that “they are the future of the Church” and commending the community for its good order and the exemplary good behavior of the children—quite rare in parishes today. (*See, below, some of the clergy and gathered faithful, following the Divine Liturgy.*)

After the Liturgy, a very nice *Agape* meal was held in the church basement, during which Father Constantine presented His Grace with a beautifully executed Icon of St. Ignatios of Antioch, painted by Father Photios, in an exquisitely crafted *kiot* (Icon box). On his return to Etna, Bishop Auxentios noted how moved he was by the pious and humble atmosphere of the parish and the inimitable kindness and honor shown him and our monastery clergy.

St. Gregory Palamas Monastery

