

## Precious Vial Offered to the Diocese of Luni (Italy)\*

**O**n the Sunday of Orthodoxy, 6/19 March 2006, His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni received an offering of extraordinary importance at the Church of the Holy Martyrs and Confessors in the Twentieth Century in Pistoia, Italy.



A **priceless** vial containing blood of the Holy Child-Martyr Modestinos, who was martyred around the middle of the third century together with the well-known St. Lavrentios the Archdeacon, was given to the Orthodox Eparchy of Pistoia by a recently-deceased Roman Catholic woman of noble parentage. The vial was found in the eighteenth century in the Saint's tomb in the catacombs of Rome's Campo Verano cemetery, where St. Lavrentios and other Holy Martyrs of the same period are buried. It is well known that during that era of persecutions, there was a custom of placing a portion of the Martyrs' blood alongside their bodies, following the model of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

**This precious** vial containing the blood of the Martyr was given to the donor's family by Pope Gregory XVI himself in 1825, around one-hundred years after it was found in the tomb of the Holy Martyr Modestinos.

**The seal** placed on the vial at the time of its discovery remains unbroken, and the vial is accompanied by an official certification of the authenticity of the Martyr's blood.

**His Eminence**, Bishop Silvano formally received this sacred treasure and displayed it for veneration by the Faithful. The *Apolytikion* and *Kontakion* were chanted, composed by His Eminence himself specially for this occasion, and the yearly prayerful commemoration of this holy event was resolved upon.

**This great** blessing is of symbolic and stirring significance. The blood of the Holy Martyrs constitutes the foundation of our Holy Church, abolishes demonic error, and is a reminder of the sacrificial duty of the Orthodox to Christ our Savior, Who shed His All-Holy blood for the life and salvation of the world.



### Episcopal Visit

**On the** Second Sunday of Great Lent, the Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas, 6 March 2006 (Old Style), His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone celebrated Liturgy at the Church of



the Holy Martyrs and Confessors of the Orthodox Faith in the Twentieth Century, in Pistoia, Italy, where he had gone in order to participate in the annual meeting with the legal representative of our Orthodox Eparchy in this country.

His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni was present, but did not concelebrate owing to ill health.

Taking part were Priests and Deacons of the Eparchy, as well as clergy from our Sister Old Calendar Church of Romania, with the presence of many of the pious Orthodox Faithful.



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Source: *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 331 (March-April 2006), pp. 283, 277.