

## Orthodox Mission to Haiti

**B**y the Grace of our Lord, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, with synodal approval, responded to the request of the Reverend Father Gregory Williams, from the U.S.A., to travel to Haiti to ordain a Priest for the Orthodox missionary community in that country.



The Orthodox Mission in Haiti, a very poor but beautiful country on an island in the Caribbean Sea in Central America, has existed for a number of years, thanks to the tireless efforts of Father Gregory Williams, a Priest of our Sister Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA).

After the union of the ROCA with the Patriarchate of Moscow in June of last year, two Priests in the mission in Haiti accepted the union. However, one Deacon, Father Ambrose Noel, and almost the total native Orthodox population did not accept the union, but, along with Father Gregory Williams, who was responsible for the missions, retreated to the “Temporary Higher Ecclesiastical Administration” of the remnant of the ROCA under His Eminence, Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tavis—the sole Bishop of the ROCA who would not accept union with Moscow. Thus, pressing pastoral needs made necessary the im-



mediate Ordination of Deacon Ambrose to the rank of Presbyter. Haiti is a French-speaking region, and there being no Hierarch from Bishop Agafangel's Synod able to go to Haiti, Father Gregory Williams, with the permission and blessing of his ecclesiastical superiors, asked for the special assistance of Bishop Ambrose, who is fluent in French.

On Friday, May 3, 2008 (Old Style), Bishop Ambrose ordained Deacon Ambrose Noel at the Church of St. Dorothea of Kashin in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. Father Gregory also took part in the ceremony, in the presence of many faithful. Father Ambrose stems from the first roots of the Haitian mission and is distinguished by his manifest piety and spiritual uprightness. He is also in charge of the small missionary school in Haiti.



On the Sunday of the Paralytic, May 5, 2008 (Old Style), an Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated at Cynatier, near the city of Jacmel, where the Haitian Orthodox Mission has established a temporary Church and a school in which 400 children study. The school is considered the best in the region and operates independently on donations from America. His Grace, Bishop Ambrose liturgized with the two Priests, Father Gregory and Father Ambrose, in the presence of a hundred or more faithful, in an atmosphere of contrition and spiritual joy.

The Orthodox Mission in Haiti is entering into a new period of renewal, and we thank our Lord that he has made us worthy to contribute by this blessed service of love and unity.

