



THE DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD
SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF EASTERN AMERICA

ЕПАРХИЈСКИ УПРАВНИ ОДБОР
СРПСКЕ ПРАВОСЛАВНЕ ЕПАРХИЈЕ ИСТОЧНОАМЕРИЧКЕ

DAB No. 123
June 10, 2020

To: All Church-School Congregations, Mission Parishes, Circles of Serbian Sisters and Institutions of the Eastern American Diocese

Subject: The Demolition of the Monastery of St. Basil at Briska Gora

*Very Reverend, Reverend and Venerable Clergy,
Church-School Congregation Executive Board Presidents and Members,
Mission Parish Trustees,
Dear Fathers, Sisters and Brothers in Christ,*

Earlier this morning, the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral of the Serbian Orthodox Church reported that the current regime in Republic of Montenegro, already known for its anti-Church engagements, resumed its actions against the Serbian Orthodox Church by demolishing the newly rebuilt and refurbished *konak*, monastic residence at the Monastery of Saint Basil at Briska Gora, dedicated only one month ago.

1. http://www.spc.rs/eng/montenegro_new_monastery_near_ulcinj_dedicated_st_basil_ostrog
2. <https://mitropolija.com/2020/06/10/rezimski-rat-protiv-svetog-vasilija-ostroskog-u-toku-je-rusenje-konaka-njegovog-manastira-kod-ulcinja/>
3. <https://mitropolija.com/2020/06/10/i-dacu-svakome-od-vas-po-djelima-vasim-svjeze-rusevine-konaka-manastira-svetog-vasilija-ostroskog-kod-ulcinja-foto/>

His Eminence Amfilohije, Archbishop of Cetinje, Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral condemned this act of violence and vandalism as an “unprecedented crime” and called upon fraternal love and harmony of all, regardless of whether they are of the Orthodox faith or not.

In addition, the regime in the Republic of Montenegro has not abandoned the idea of demolishing the Baptistery in Tivat, which was erected last year. A heavy presence of police forces have been spotted in the vicinity of the Baptistery this morning, which coincided with the Briska demolition and caused a gathering of faithful of the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral, resolved to defend this sanctuary.

1. <https://mitropolija.com/2020/06/10/pojacano-prisustvo-policije-u-tivtu-gradjani-se-okupljaju-kod-krstionice/>

With this in mind, We have deemed it appropriate to issue the following:

APPEAL

To all Diocesan Clergy, Church-School Congregations, Mission Parishes,
Circles of Serbian Sisters and Institutions of the Eastern American Diocese

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to join the Serbian American Leadership Conference (SALC) which has called for unified action regarding the anti-church activities of the Government of Montenegro, **by contacting your local representatives** in Congress, whom you can access through the central Congressional switchboard at **202.225.3121**.

Your message must be courteous, succinct and void of any unnecessary discussion. As it is necessary to present a plausible solution, the following background information is important:

The Montenegrin law on religion of December 27, 2019 effectively allows that government to confiscate churches and monasteries in Montenegro.

The US State Department views this as an internal matter for Montenegro, given it is a NATO member.

However, the US Foreign Aid Budget includes \$2 million of our taxpayer funds to aid Montenegro's 1,000 soldier Army to meet NATO requirement. The appropriation will need to be approved by the House and Senate.

Therefore, your message should be:

I request that Representative _____ vote against any appropriation or aid to the Republic of Montenegro. It has passed a law which confiscates property, churches and monasteries belonging to the Serbian Orthodox Church. I am a member of the _____ Serbian Orthodox Church in _____.

The above is for your information and implementation as deemed appropriate.

With Archpastoral blessings,

+IRINEJ
Bishop of Eastern America
President, Diocesan Administrative Board

