

Patriarch Irinej of Serbia celebrates his name day



On 23 August 2019, His Beatitude Patriarch Irinej of Serbia celebrates his patron saint: Hieromartyr Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons.

Patriarch Irinej was born on 28 August 1930 in Vidova near Čačak, Kingdom of Yugoslavia. His Beatitude is the 45th Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodox Serbs, since 22 January 2010.

His full title is His Holiness the Archbishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci, and Serbian Patriarch Irinej. He served as the Bishop of Niš between 1975 and 2010.

Irinej was born Miroslav Gavrilović (Мирослав Гавриловић, pronounced [mǐroslau gavrǐːlouitɕ]). After graduating from high school, he enrolled and completed the Orthodox seminary in Prizren (the Serbian Orthodox Seminary of Prizren). He then enrolled the University of Belgrade's Theological Faculty and served in the army

after graduating.

After military service, he was tonsured a monk in 1959 in Rakovica monastery, receiving the monastic name of Irinej (from Ancient Greek: Εἰρηναῖος; Irenaeus).

He was a professor at the Prizren Seminary and completed postgraduate studies in Athens. In 1969, he was appointed a head of the monastic school at Ostrog monastery. He later returned to Prizren, where he was appointed Rector of the Prizren Seminary in 1969.

In May 1974, Irinej was elected Vicar Bishop of Moravica and consecrated by Serbian Patriarch German II. In May 1975, he was elected Bishop of Niš and enthroned in the Holy Trinity Cathedral (in Niš) on 15 June 1975. Irinej headed the Niš eparchy for the next 35 years.

On January 22, 2010, he was elected the 45th Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, after the death of previous Serbian Patriarch Pavle.

He was one of the three candidates with the most votes from the 45 bishops eligible in the Serbian Orthodox Church, along with former locum tenens (interim leader) Amfilohije Radović and Irinej Bulović.

In the final phase, his name was pulled from a sealed envelope. In this way, the Serbian Orthodox Church believes the patriarch is elected by divine intervention, sidelining human interests.

He was enthroned on 23 January 2010 in Belgrade's St. Michael's Cathedral. Irinej was formally enthroned to the ancient throne of the Serbian Patriarch in the Patriarchal Monastery of Peć on 3 October 2010.

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