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EXCLUSIVE: Metropolitan Bishop of Montenegro arrested after conducting Palm Sunday service, as authorities step up unprecedented persecution of Orthodox Church – (PHOTOS + VIDEOS)



The Metropolitan Bishop of Montenegro and the Littoral, His Eminence Amphilochios, along with another five clerics was arrested by Montenegro police on Sunday, Palm Sunday with the Orthodox liturgical calendar, and held for five hours before being released.

The latest eyebrow-raising attack on religious freedom in the small Adriatic country came on the pretense of a **Palm Sunday** service being officiated with worshipers, with authorities claiming that public health guidelines to prevent exposure to the **coronavirus** pandemic were not adhered to.

Conversely, according to sources that spoke to the *Orthodoxia News Agency*, all guidelines were strictly followed by the Orthodox Church of Montenegro at the specific Divine Liturgy service.

The unprecedented action took place on holy ground, and specifically at the early-Christian era basilica of Zlatica, near the capital of **Podgorica**, which today functions as an important monastic compound.

Worshipers at the monastery said the same guidelines were followed that are in place for supermarkets and bakeries in the predominately Eastern Orthodox nation.

The development comes after the current **Montenegro** government passed a controversial law late last year – ratified in January – which envisions the confiscation of religious institutions' properties and relics if the latter cannot prove ownership prior to the establishment of the post-WWI Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

The Orthodox Church in Montenegro, and its mother Church, the **Serbian Patriarchate**, have bitterly denounced and protested the law as primarily aimed at harming the Orthodox Church in the country.

In a statement at a nearly police precinct, His Eminence emphasized the meaning and significance of Palm Sunday, without showing the slightest annoyance. In fact, **Amphilochios** blessed the police officers and expressed his best wishes for the forthcoming **Holy and Great Easter**.







https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/video-1586691769.mp4

https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/video-1586690244.mp4







