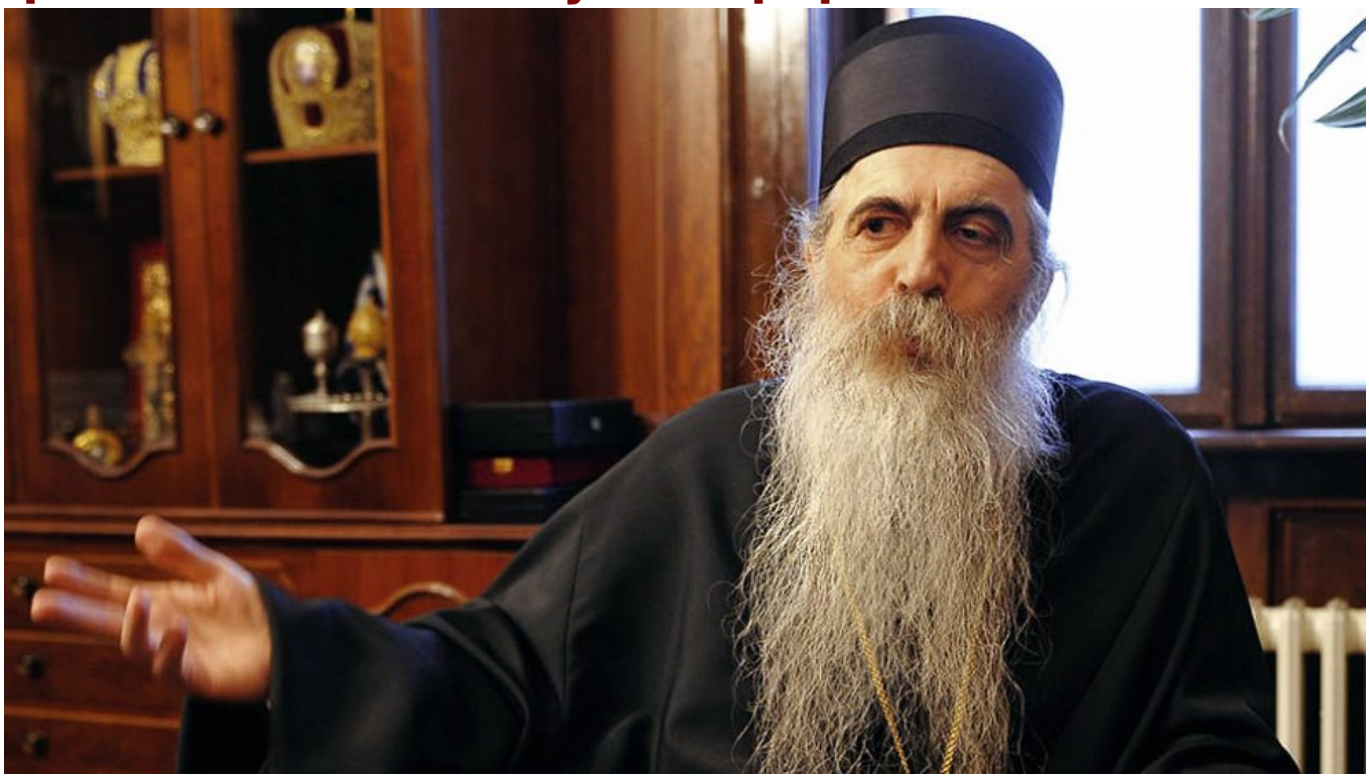
03/05/2020

His Grace Irinej, Bishop of Backa: Answers to the questions of the daily newspaper “Danas”



Regarding the article “Respect for the privacy and use of personal data provided by the Law” published in the daily “Danas”, on 28th April, 2020, the integral answer of His Grace to the questions of the journalist of this newspaper Jelena Tasic has been conveyed here:

To Mrs Jelena Tasic, journalist of the newspaper “Danas”
Belgrade
Subject: Answers to the questions posed on 26th April 2020.

Respectable Mrs Tasic,

Regarding your e-mail written on 26th April this year, I am afraid you can’t be informed about the first three questions you have posed because it would damage the legal rights of privacy and use of personal data and at the same time the dignity of the personalities you have shown the interest in could be jeopardized.

However, I will be glad to answer your two last questions.

* What is your comment on the criticism of your statements and the attitude in the

Serbian Orthodox Church Paschal Encyclical that the faithful, following the prescribed measures, should regularly and actively visit churches during the feasts – did this in any way affect the course of the pandemic in Serbia and the health situation in Serbia and the health situation in the Church?

As it has always been so far, at every call of the Church and its bishops, on the one hand, there have always been some criticism, and on the other, praise and gratitude for the attitude expressed. So it is in this case. I can speak only of my own experience and situation in the Diocese of Backa about the views expressed and the attitude of our entire Church in the circumstances and the impact on the epidemic in Serbia. Our invitation to the clergy and the faithful to pray more fervently to God, to apply all the protection measures prescribed by the Government of Serbia, and to take the opportunity to go to the holy churches when it is not curlfew, since churches have been open all the time, has clearly been fruitful, since, according to all official indications, in the territory of Vojvodina, during the epidemic, the number of corona virus infected people is the lowest. The conclusion is clear: Holy Liturgy and Holy Communion, with respect for protection measures, has never been, nor can be, the cause of the spread of the epidemic.

* Will the pandemic postpone the regular convocation of the Holy Assembly of Bishops in May?

Most likely it will, until all the necessary conditions for the convocation of the Holy Assembly of Bishops have not been met, the most important of which is the termination of the epidemic, the opening of the borders and possibility of travelling.

Irinej, Bishop of Backa

Translated into English by Sanja Simic de Graaf

— Source: Diocese of Backa & spc.rs