

BULGARIAN GOV'T ALLOCATES \$1.5 MILLION+ FOR RESTORATION AND COMPLETION OF CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES



The Bulgarian government has allocated more than \$1.5 million to repair, restore, and complete churches and monasteries throughout the country.

Out of the \$1,546,130 (2.5 million Bulgarian lev), funds were earmarked for restoration work at the Bachkovo and Troyan Monasteries and for the renovation of St. John the Baptist Monastery in the village of Zhablyano, St. Petka Church in Ruse, and the Church of the Holy Spirit in the village of Benkovski, reports Dobrotoliubie.

Prime Minister Boyko Borisov earlier announced in June during a visit to Rila Monastery that the government would allocate funds to the Bachkovo and Troyan Monasteries. He also announced an allocation of \$1 million to Rila Monastery at that time.

Financial assistance was also allocated for repair work at the Metropolitan Church in Sofia, the Old Metropolitan Church in Lovech, and the Church of St. Andrew the First-Called in Sofia, and for the continuing construction of the Churches of St. Stephen and the Church of the Holy Annunciation in Sofia.

“A very great day is approaching—Christmas, and in this pandemic, in this financial and economic crisis, people’s trust in God is extremely important,” said Prime Minister Boyko Borisov, adamant that the Bulgarian government always acts in the name of God and Bulgarian citizens.

The government will ensure that the people will be able to spend Christmas at church and with their families, Borisov emphasized.

His Grace Bishop Polycarp of Belogradchik thanked the Prime Minister on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Neofit and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

Bp. Polycarp also thanked the government for not closing churches during the pandemic.

“People were really strengthened in their hope by going to church, communicating with God, with the clergy, and thus more easily overcoming these upheavals—physical and spiritual and mental,” the bishop said.

“The Church saved us from Ottoman slavery. We can do everything with discipline. It depends on us, but I can’t come with the police and close the churches,” Borisov said during the first wave of the pandemic in April.

In 2017 and 2018, the Bulgarian government allocated nearly \$300,000 for repairs to the Church of Sts. Onuphrius, Damascene, and All the Gabrovo Martyrs in Gabrovo. In 2014 and 2019, the government allocated funds for Zographou Monastery on Mt. Athos, and in May of last year, the Sofia City Council allocated \$114,000 to renovate 3 churches.

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