

250 years since the death of the Bishop of Gornji Karlovac Danilo Jaksic



February 9, 2021, marks the 250th anniversary of the death of Bishop Danilo (Jaksic) of blessed repose, a confessor of the Orthodox faith and a hard worker in the Vineyard of the Lord in the Diocese of Karlovac from 1751 to 1771.

Bishop Danilo was born in the pious home of the Jaksics, to father Mileta and mother Stojana, on Christmas 1715 in Srpske Moravice. As a boy, he went to the Gomirje monastery. It seems that at that time the spiritual life in Gomirje was at its height. In a charter placed in an apple under the cross on the bell tower of the Plaski Cathedral on August 30, 1763, Bishop Danilo said of himself: I am learning the divine scriptures in the monastery of Gomirje. [1] From his young days, both in Gomirje and in Plaski, he was with Bishop Danilo (Ljubotina), from whom he seems to have learned the most. As early as 1748, Patriarch Arsenije IV wanted to elect him Bishop. During the engagement of the Uniate Bishop Teofil in Plaski, hieromonk Danilo went to the parish in Sjenicak. Immediately upon his arrival in Plaski, Bishop Pavle (Nenadovic) took him to the Bishop's Palace. He was of great help to him there, and he accompanied him everywhere in the Diocese of Gornji Karlovac. When Bishop Pavle went to the Assembly in 1748, he appointed hieromonk Danilo as his exarch. A year later, Pavle (Nenadovic) was elected Metropolitan of Karlovci. Thereupon he elevated hieromonk Daniel to the rank of archimandrite. At that time, Bishop Aleksije (Andrejevic) of Kostajnica-Zrinopolje died, so archimandrite Danilo (Jaksic) was entrusted the administration of both dioceses. In 1750, regions Lika and Krbava were separated from the Diocese of Kostajnica-Zrinopolje and annexed to the Diocese of Karlovac-Primorje, and the abolished Diocese of Sjeverin

was annexed to the Diocese of Kostajnica-Zrinopolje. At that time, Danilo (Jaksic) was elected Bishop of Gornji Karlovac, and Arsenije (Teofanović), abbot of the Grabovac monastery, was elected Bishop of Kostajnica-Zrinopolje-Sjeverin. Immediately after the arrival of the imperial confirmation, Danilo (Jaksic) was consecrated in the monastery of Rakovac on November 4, 1751. He was enthroned in Plaski on August 19 of the same year [2]

Bishop Jaksic paid great attention to the monastery of Gomirje. He gave it books and vestments. He founded an icon-painting school in the Gomirje monastery, in which local bpys were taught by Simeon Baltic, a monk from Hopovo. In 1764, Luka Niksic, Jovan Grbic and Djordje Misljenovic were instructed in iconography at the Baltic school. [3]

He founded a seminary in Medak. There he began to build a new palace, school and church, which he failed to finish during his lifetime. After his death, the diocesan property in Medak was forcibly sold to the state. An officer's quarters have been located in the courtyard. Before his death, he partially finished the school building and one department of the seminary functioned inside it. In Plaski he built a house next to the palace for the priests to spend the night. He erected a cathedral church dedicated to the Presentation of the Most Holy Mother of God in Plaski, which was consecrated on August 30, 1763. He transferred the earthly remains of Bishop Danilo (Ljubotina) from the old wooden church in Plaski to the new Cathedral church.

Bishop Danilo was a noble man. Priest Manojlo Grbic mentions one of his letters from Vienna in 1759, in which he recommends to his deputy abbot Aleksic to help poor neighbors to plow gardens. Count Hadik praises Bishop Danilo in a confidential report to Vienna from the Assembly in 1769.

Bishop Danilo endured hard times because of the loss of the Zumberak area for the Orthodox Church. The people also felt offended because Vienna hindered his election as Metropolitan of Karlovci. This was commented on in the Diocese, and some priests were imprisoned. The parish priest of Plaski, Ilija Latas, was also imprisoned. Bishop Danilo himself was accused of disturbing the people. In 1770, on the feast of the Holy Prophet Elijah, he went to Trieste for the second time to reconcile Serbs and Greeks. Upon his return from Vienna, he went to Medak, where he completed the Bishop's Palace and school. From Medak, Bishop Danilo set off across Kosinje to Plaski, from where he wrote to the monk Janic (Milojevic) on November 12, 1770, stating: I came here yesterday, and as I was going, God granted it that I should not stop on the road; on my right foot I wore no boots or socks, and on my left I hardly wore any. The last letter written on January 24, 1771,

by Bishop Jaksic was sent to the abbot of Gomirje, Aleksic, in which he states: I had a fever last night, and God knows how it will end. [4]

Three days later, Bishop Danilo died peacefully in his best strength at the age of fifty-five, on January 27 according to the old calendar, and on February 9 according to the new calendar, in 1771, in his residence in Plaski. It was recorded in the Metropolitanate that Jaksic died of angina. [5] He was buried in his endowment in the crypt of the Cathedral church in Plaski, next to Bishop Danilo (Ljubotina).

According to the words of the Karlovac archpriest Manojlo Grbic from 1891, the people still call this bishop "Saint Bishop Jaksic", and of all the other bishops, he remained in the most beautiful memory of our people. [6] Bishop Danilo of Gornji Karlovac lived a strictly monastic life. He fasted constantly according to the monks' rules; he never ate meat as a monk. He spent very little on himself, so even from his very small incomes – he left behind beautiful endowments, which immortalized his name and memory for many centuries.

Deacon Budimir Kokotovic

[1] Stevan Kosanovic, About the church in Plaski, Srpski Sion, Sremski Karlovci 1903, p. 654.

[2] See: Sava Bishop of Sumadija, Serbian hierarchs from 9th to 20th century, p. 158.

[3] Milan Radeka, Bishop Danilo Jaksic (1715-1771) and his time, IX, Belgrade 1966, p. 77.

[4] Manojlo Grbic, Bishops of Karlovac, (Second book), Karlovac 1891., p. 160.

[5] Ibidem, p. 161.

[6] M.Grbc, second book, 1891, p. 161.

[7] Ibidem, p. 163.



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