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## **Patriarch Porfirije meets with the leaders of the Democratic Front**



His Holiness Porfirije, Serbian Patriarch received Mr. Andrija Mandic and Mr. Milan Knezevic, leaders of the Democratic Front coalition in the Republic of Montenegro at the Patriarchal Residence in Belgrade.

Welcoming the guests, His Holiness Patriarch pointed out that the Church highly appreciates their personal sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice made by their relatives, together with all our faithful people and others who opposed lawlessness, in the fight against the unjust and discriminatory Law on Freedom of Religion. The resistance of our people to the attempt to seize shrines and other church property has merged with the struggle to preserve the identity, the Orthodox faith, the Serbian national name and culture. Everything that our people in Montenegro in those months, led by the Church, did is amazing.

The guests congratulated His Holiness Porfirije on the election to the throne of the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church and expressed satisfaction that now as Patriarch, and earlier as Metropolitan of Zagreb and Ljubljana, he always supports and expresses concern for the position of the Serbian Orthodox people in the Republic of Montenegro. They especially thanked the Patriarch for informing the public with the key and in all respects historical role that Patriarch Irinej and

Metropolitan Amfilohije of blessed repose, together with other Serbian bishops, played in initiating the Christian people's resistance and, in the end, peacefully resolving the antagonisms resulting from the imposition of an unjust law.

The Serbian Primate emphasized that he sees emphasizing the somewhat neglected role of his predecessor of blessed repose in the peaceful and favorable resolution of the crisis as his own obligation, especially having in mind that he had long talks with Patriarch Irinej about the position of the Serbian Church and Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija. so also, in Montenegro, and that on these issues, he inherits in everything the position which the Church has already established through the Assembly and the Synod.

Leaders of the Democratic Front informed the Patriarch about the determination of the coalition they represent to take further political and legislative activities after satisfactory amendments to the Law on Freedom of Religion, which will, in accordance with European and good practice in Serbia, determine the importance and role of the Serbian Orthodox Church. in modern Montenegrin society, not neglecting the equal position of other traditional Churches and religious communities.

The interlocutors agreed that free expression at the upcoming census in the Republic of Montenegro is of the most vital importance for both the Serbian Orthodox Church and the state, expressing confidence that this important event, for the first time since World War II, will take place in a democratic atmosphere.



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## Saint Joseph the Hesychast



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