05/07/2021

AFTER 60 YEARS, CHURCH RECEIVES BACK FOUR CHURCHES SEIZED BY COMMUNISTS IN MONTENEGRO



After six decades of injustice, the Metropolis of Montenegro and the Littoral of the Serbian Orthodox Church will be officially re-registered as the owner of the four churches on the resort island of Aman Sveti Stefan near the coastal town of Budva.

The presidents of the board of directors of Budva Riviera and Sveti Stefan Hotels, the companies that have managed the resort island since 2019, expressed yesterday their willingness to return to the churches to the ownership of the Serbian Orthodox Church, reports the Metropolis of Montenegro.

The churches on the island are dedicated to St. Stephen the Protomartyr, the Transfer of the Relics of St. Stephen, St. Alexander Nevsky, and the Transfiguration of the Lord. The island is named for the Church of St. Stephen, built in 1464.

Under communist rule, the island was nationalized and turned into a luxury resort,

with the churches being registered to the hotel company.

Dragana Kažanegra Stanišić of Sveti Stefan Hotels noted that the Metropolis has already been taking care of and maintaining the churches anyways, including serving Liturgies there.

“I have not only professional, but also personal satisfaction and a moral obligation to correct this injustice,” Stanišić said. “In the 1960s, my grandfather, Igumen Boris Kažanegra, tried to prevent what happened later. He warned about the laws, about the demolition of the St. Alexander Nevsky Church, and then the registration of the churches as social property.”

The Metropolis brought a case in 2010 to annul the communists’ nationalization of the island 60 years ago and formally return the four churches, which are attached to Praskvica Monastery in nearby Budva, though the matter was suspended.

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