

Decani Monastery Relief Fund, Inc. USA

### **My fifth pilgrimage to Kosovo/Metohija**

Beloved in Christ our Lord,

May our Gracious God always bless you and ever shine His Luminous Face upon you!

I will make my fifth pilgrimage to Kosovo/Metohija during the last week in June and the first week of July, 2009.

The Decani Monastery Relief Fund must continue to offer assistance because so many people there are still greatly in need. For this reason I once again appeal to you, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, and beseech you to continue to support these worthy souls through our fund. Our first and foremost duty as Christians is to obey Christ's command to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. This is how we show our love for God Who has so richly blessed us. We now have this great opportunity to demonstrate our love for God and our willingness to walk in the way of His Son, Jesus, by providing ongoing aid and support to our long suffering brothers and sisters in Kosovo/Metohija.

Despite recent economic woes, America remains richly blessed. Even in these relatively difficult economic times, we continue to enjoy advantages that are the envy of much of the rest of the world. Americans who are poor, who have lost their jobs or their homes, can tap into a social "safety net" that provides them with the basic essentials for survival. Few other societies routinely provide such assistance for their citizens. As a last resort for our destitute and most needy, we have soup kitchens and homeless shelters established in nearly every city and town. We have welfare programs that retrain the jobless for new occupational opportunities. We have headstart programs to assist the children of the poorest Americans so they can catch up educationally with their more fortunate peers. Americans can know hard times but we are always shielded from the extremes of destitution and desperation by the system of assistance programs we have created.

This is not the situation in Kosovo/Metohija. Many, many people in the region remain unable to provide themselves and their families with even one adequate meal per day. For this reason His Grace, Bishop Artemije and Bishop Teodosije have supported three soup kitchens in the region. The Decani Fund offers continuing assistance to these.

Further, a growing number of Serbians remain displaced from their former homes. These persons are now living in "containers" (the small housing units provided to the homeless by KFOR). The Fund provides additional aid to these dispossessed souls.

While in the region this year, I expect to visit at least a dozen villages. I hope to be able to offer Christian love to many people on behalf of all who continue to offer support through their generous donations to the Fund. These needy individuals and families have no one else but us to alleviate the ongoing hardship into which their lives have fallen.

They have none of the social safety net programs we Americans take for granted. We are, quite literally, their “last, best hope”.

Please send whatever donation you are able to make at this time to:

Decani Monastery Relief Fund  
+Very Rev. Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes  
2618 West Bannock Street  
Boise, ID 83702  
USA

As always, we shall remember you in prayer. We ask also that you pray for us.

Thank you!

Your brothers and sisters in Christ our Lord,  
+Very Rev. Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes, President  
His Grace, Bishop Teodosije, First Vice President  
Hieromonk (Father) Sava, Second Vice President  
Lois Fletcher, Secretary  
Gioia Maria Frahm, Treasurer