



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHL
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 0047

Sabato 23.01.2010

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI TO HIS HOLINESS IRINEJ, NEWLY-ELECTED PATRIARCH OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI TO HIS HOLINESS IRINEJ, NEWLY-ELECTED PATRIARCH OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH *To His Holiness Irinej*

Archbishop of Peč

Metropolitan of Belgrade Karlovci

Patriarch of Serbia

I was glad to learn of your election as Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church and I pray that the Lord may grant you abundant gifts of grace and wisdom for the fulfilment of your high responsibilities in the service of the Church and the people entrusted to you.

You succeed Patriarch Pavle, our brother of happy memory, who was a Pastor both fervent and esteemed, and who bequeathed to you a spiritual inheritance that is rich and profound. As a great pastor and spiritual father, he effectively guided the Church and maintained its unity in the face of many challenges. I feel bound to express my appreciation of his example of fidelity to the Lord and of his many gestures of openness towards the Catholic Church.

I therefore pray that the Lord will grant Your Holiness the inner strength to consolidate the unity and spiritual growth of the Serbian Orthodox Church, as well as to build up the fraternal bonds with other Churches and ecclesial communities. Let me assure you of the closeness of the Catholic Church and of her commitment to the promotion of fraternal relations and theological dialogue, in order that those obstacles which still impede full communion between us may be overcome. May the Lord bless our common efforts in this regard, so that the disciples of Christ may again be united witnesses before the whole world to his salvific love.

From the Vatican, 22 January 2010

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI
