

## *Fra Mića Stojić:*

*Živjeli su onako kako ih je njihov Božanski Učitelj učio. Svjesni svega, uzdignute glave, pošli su i u smrt.*



*Razgovarao: fra Antonio Musa*

Svskog proljeća mi hercegovački franjevci sjećamo se 66-orice naše braće koji su stradali u Drugome svjetskome ratu i poraću. Krivica im je bila što su Kristovi i što su kao franjevački redovnici bili protivnici bezbožne komunističke ideologije. U ovome korizmeno-uskrsnom broju, o 77. godišnjici njihovih stradanja, razgovarali smo s fra Miljenkom Mićom Stojićem, vicepostulatorom postupa mučeništva, koji se u ime Hercegovačke franjevačke provincije skrbi da naša braća budu jednom uzdignuti na čast oltara i od Crkve proglašena mučenicima.

Fra Mića, obilježili smo ove veljače 77. obljetnicu ubojstva fratara na Širokome Brijegu, Mostaru, diljem Hercegovine i domovine. Intenzivno se bavite time što se tada zapravo dogodilo. Kakvi su osjećaji u Vama ovih dana?

Čovjek je u isto vrijeme tužan i ponosan na našu pobijenu braću. Tuga dolazi odatle što su na neljudski način prekinuti ti životi, što im nisu dali u miru umrijeti ili što im

nisu dali do kraja razviti darove koje im je Bog dao. Prisjetimo se da je prosječna dob ubijenih, njih 66, bila tek 41 godina. Nosili su na plećima svoju Provinciju i svoj narod htijući im dati još mnogo toga. Svjesni svega uzdignute glave, onako kako ih je Božanski Učitelj učio, pošli su u smrt. Zbog toga je čovjek ponosan. Pobjedili su u onom trenutku kada su ovi drugi mislili da su ih konačno pobjedili. Dokaz tomu je i mnoštvo duhovnih zvanja na Širokom Brijegu odmah nakon rata, dokaz tomu je i živa svijest u puku Božjem o veličini ili mučeništvu pobijenih hercegovačkih franjevaca.

**Vicepostulatura postupka mučeništva »Fra Leo Petrović i 65 subraće« djeluje već 15-ak godina. Koji su njezini ciljevi, što je dosada postignuto i što još treba učiniti?**

Zadaća Vicepostulature je istražiti sve što se može glede jugokomunističkog ubojstva hercegovačkih franjevaca. Treba pronaći još žive svjedoke, treba pronaći sve moguće dokumente, treba jednostavno dokazati da su ubijeni iz mržnje prema vjeri i da su svoje ubojstvo prihvatili na kršćanski način. I tek tada taj događaj postaje mučeništ-

vo. Pritom vicepostulator ne smije ništa hotimično dodavati što bi im moglo ići u korist ili hotimično nešto skriti što im ne ide u korist. On jednostavno mora predstaviti istinu onakva kakva ona jest. Zbog toga se i on mora moliti za to, a i drugi svojom molitvom trebaju pomoći.

Trenutno smo na kraju ovoga prvoga istražnog dijela. Osim pronađenih dokumenata i prikupljenih svjedočenja, u samostanskoj crkvi na Širokom Brijegu pokopali smo i novopronađenih 6 posmrtnih ostataka ubijenih hercegovačkih franjevaca, tako da danas znamo za posljednje počivalište 37 naših fratara.

Čim Uprava Provincije dadne zeleno svjetlo, podnijet ćemo dokaze mjesnom biskupu da bi postupak mučeništva počeo na biskupijskoj razini i naša pobijena braća postali slugama Božjima.

**Kakav je stav Božjeg puka prema mučeništvu naših fratara? Koliko je snažna duhovna povezanost naše pobijene braće s iskustvom žive Crkve, s duhovnim životom vjernika?**

Da bi se nekoga proglasilo mučnikom potreban je tzv. vox populi ili glas puka. Od samoga početka

on je bio živ ovdje na Širokom Brijegu i svugdje tamo gdje su ubijani, kao i o onima koji su negdje jednostavno nestali. Tako su vjernici došli ovdje na Širokom Brijegu na ratno sklonište čim su čuli da su fratri tu ubijeni i zapaljeni. Naravno, vojska ih je smjesta pokupila, ali se oni nisu dali smesti. Trajalo je to sve do pada jugokomunizma.

Danas se vjernici mole na njihovoj grobnici u samostanskoj crkvi na Širokom Brijegu po čitav dan, ne samo nakon sv. misa. Osobito je lijepo vidjeti kako se moli mladež koja ide u srednju školu u blizini ili se vraća s nastave. Jedino bih volio da nam malo više svjedoče o doživljenim milostima po molitvi za zagovor naše pobijene braće. Uče se još svemu tomu, previše je jugokomunizam branio javno očitovanje vjere. Također, ni današnje vrijeme nije svemu tomu naklono.

Što je to u svjedočanstvu fra Lea Petrovića i njegove i naše braće što i danas nadahnjuje? I što je ono što njih čini jedinstvenima u povijesti tolikih stradanja u Crkvi i u našem narodu?

Oni nisu ubijeni zbog nekih svojih pogrešaka ili stavova, ubijeni su zbog simbola Širokog Brijega. Taj naš samostan marom prethodnika koji su 1846. došli na голу ledinu predstavljao je vjersko, domoljubno i kulturno središte ne samo svoga kraja i Hercegovine, nego i čitave hrvatske domovine. Dolazila su tu učiti i odgajati se djeca iz raznih krajeva. Izlazili su odatle kao osvjeđeni vjernici i domoljubi. Naravno, bilo je i suprotnih primjera, zlo uvijek nastoji omesti dobro. Upalilo je to signal bezbožnom jugokomunizmu da treba utrnuti takvo svjetlo. I prevarili su se u tomu. Ne samo da je tada sve odjeknulo nadaleko i da su morali lagati zbog čega su to učinili, nego sve odjekuje i danas diljem svijeta. Mnogi hodočasni-

ci iz Svetišta Kraljice Mira navrate i na Široki Brijeg baš zbog naše ubijene braće. Prepoznali su njihovu veličinu i to nose u svoje krajeve da bi od toga mogli živjeti.

Nedavno je grob naših fratara u širokobriješkoj crkvi posjetio i generalni ministar Franjevačkog Reda fra Massimo Fusarelli. Kako je bilo ugostiti nasljednika sv. Franje i dovesti ga ondje gdje su naša braća krvlju istkala svoje franjevačke zavjete? Što vam je kazao o. General?

Drago nam je bilo da je General došao u naš samostan. Osobito nam je bilo drago kada smo saznali da je poglavito došao zbog naše ubijene braće. Čuo je o tome i htio je vidjeti gdje se to dogodilo i pomoliti se na tim mjestima. Očito je nosio u duši onu ljubav Sv. Franje prema mučeništvu, kao i stvarnost mnogih franjevaca danas po svijetu. Progone ih, progone njihov vjerni puk, ali se oni ne daju. Izrazio je divljenje našoj braći na životnoj borbi kroz različite režime i na snalažljivosti te sve usporedio s borbom franjevaca u Svetoj Zemlji. Podupro je i Vicepostulaturu u njezinu radu izrazivši želju da pobijena braća što prije budu uzdignuta na čast oltara.

Poznata je stvar da je proces otkrivanja istine o našoj braći doprinio i otkrivanju istine o stradanjima našeg naroda u cjelini. U svim vašim nastojanjima oko prenošenja istine dobivate li podršku kako crkvenih, tako i civilnih vlasti u našoj domovini?

Bogu sam zahvalan da su puk i naši pobijeni fratri zajedno i u otkrivanju istine o njihovom stradanju, kao što su bili zajedno u životu. Na početku smo otkrivali istinu i posmrtnu ostatke naše pobijene braće, ali su pobijeni vjerni članovi puka Božjega ostajali po strani jer Vicepostulatura to ne može činiti. No, došli smo na namisao utemeljiti po pojedinim općinama neko povjerenstvo koje bi se time bavilo. Zamisao se lijepo razvijala tako da smo napravili i koordinaciju tih povjerenstava, pokrenuli Groblje mira na Bilima te nastavili djelovati u Odjelu HNS-a za Drugi svjetski rat i poraće.

Postavljajući one križeve na Groblju mira ujedno popisujemo pobijene tako da ćemo na kraju svega imati prilično točan broj koliko je Hrvata katolika tada ubijeno s ove strane granice gdje su kršteni.

*Generalni ministar Franjevačkog reda fra Massimo Fusarelli u posjeti skloništu podno širokobriješke crkve gdje su ubijena naša braća.*



## Razgovor: fra Miljenko 'Mića' Stojić

Sav ovaj posao do sada je neviđen u našem narodu tako da u isto vrijeme gradimo i razvijamo tu namisao u prostoru i u srcima ljudi. Dobronamjerni na svim razinama i crkvene i društvene vlasti izlaze nam u susret. Spomenuo bih tu ponajprije Komisiju HBK i BK BiH za hrvatski martirologij na čelu s biskupom dr. Jurom Bogdanom te Hrvatski narodni sabor BiH na čelu s dr. Draganom Čovićem.

Vicepostulatura je i jedan od poticatelja osnivanja Groblja mira, središnjeg komemorativnog mjesta hrvatskih žrtava u BiH. Što nam možete kazati o ovome projektu, o nastanku i planovima za budućnost?

Djelomično sam već odgovorio na ovo pitanje. Dodajmo još da smo do sada uspjeli ograditi taj prostor, sagraditi i posvetiti crkvu Sv. Josipu, postaviti i elektrificirati zvonu, pokopati 154 posmrtna ostatka nepoznatih ubijenih, postaviti 227 križeva za crkvene i 2.120 križeva za civilne osobe... S radovima naravno nastavljamo i dalje tako da do kolovoza, kada se obilježava Europski dan sjećanja na žrtve totalitarizama (komunizma, nacionalsocijalizma i fašizma) namjeravamo postaviti još oko 5.000 križeva. Na dovršetku ovoga pothvata trebalo bi ih biti oko 50.000. Sve je najlakše pratiti preko portala grobljemira.info.

Namislili za budućnost zaista ima dosta, ali ne bih nešto opširnije o tomu. »Protegnut« ćemo se onoliko koliko nam pokrivač bude dug. Zahvalio bih ovom prilikom svima koji su nam do sada svojim novčanim priložima pomogli u svemu ovome. Među njima su i neki iz SAD-a i Kanade.

Na jednom ste mjestu kazali da na Groblju mira »mrtvi oživljuju žive«. To zvuči vrlo duboko i pjesnički izražajno. Što ste time željeli istaknuti? Nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata i poraća kraj u koji spadaju Bile gdje je



Groblje mira jednostavno je opustio. Ljudi su protjerani ili su morali odseliti zbog zlosilja i neimaštine. Ali su im ostali posjedi. Primjećujemo da su se pojavom Groblja mira stali vraćati u te krajeve, naročito otkada smo počeli proširivati pristupnu cestu. Promet je odjedanput postao življi. Ljudi stanuju negdje drugdje, ovdje obrađuju zemlju. Čvrsto sam uvjeren da će biti i pravih povrataka, još samo da asfaltiramo cestu od Širokog Brijega do Bila. U Domovinskom ratu ona je, pak, predstavljala izlaz u slobodu opkoljenom Mostaru i srednjoj Bosni.

Usporedo s ovim događa se i »nutarnji povratak«. Stalno netko dolazi na Groblje mira, posebno neradnim danima. Mladima se priča o tomu što se to nekada davno događalo, oni tu dolaze i uče se pravoj povijesti. Groblje mira postaje, dakle, središte duhovne obnove čitavog hrvatskog naroda i obnove ovoga kraja.

U našoj domovini, s obje strane granice, i danas se često čuju pozivi na ona vremena u kojima je bilo poželjno ljude progoniti zbog njihove vjere. Pa i od strane onih koji

su službeni predstavnici javnoga života čuje se da su vremena kad se svećenike ubijalo bila »dobra stara vremena«. Ideologija je promijenila odijelo, ali ćud joj je ostala ista. U tako zagađenom javnom prostoru, što je nama vjernicima činiti? Na što nas poziva primjer naših fratara?

Jugokomunistička ideologija je propala ideologija, jedno od suvremenih zlosilja jer je utemeljena na zlu. Priznao je to čak i Europski parlament kada je 2019. konačno komunizam stavio uz bok nacionalsocijalizma i fašizma. Odupirali su se tomu njegovi pristaše, sve uzalud. Zlo uvijek ima svoj kraj.

Zbog toga se mi danas ne bismo smjeli i trebali nešto posebno uzrujavati. Zla će uvijek biti, u ovom ili onom obliku. Nama je samo živjeti svoju ljudskost i svoje kršćanstvo do kraja i zacijelo ćemo pobijediti. Kazuje nam to i primjer naše pobijene braće. O njima se još i danas govori i govorit će se do kraja svijeta i vijeka, skupljat će se činjenice o njihovom životu i radu, dok ovi drugi životare tek u povijesnim knjigama kao očit primjer kakav ne treba biti u životu.

Brojni naši čitatelji redovito posjećuju domovinu, osobito u ljetnim mjesecima. Neki od njih su posjetili i mjesta stradanja naših fratara. Želimo i ovim razgovorom potaknuti i druge da to učine. Kako je najbolje doći do vas i dogovoriti posjet Vicepostulaturi i središnjem žrtvoslovnom mjestu na Širokome Brijegu? .

Najlakše je to učiniti preko e-adrese [info@gospin-brig.info](mailto:info@gospin-brig.info) koja predstavlja naš samostan s njegovim sustavom prihvata hodočasnika. Mnogo toga o Širokom Brijegu i što se točno na njemu događalo može se pronaći preko portala [www.gospin-brig.info](http://www.gospin-brig.info) i [www.pobijeni.info](http://www.pobijeni.info). .

Čekamo samo da prođu ova nesretna vremena ove stvarne ili nestvarne pošasti pa da Široki Brijeg ponovno živne. Dolaze čak i njegovi protivnici jer se žele sami uvjeriti zbog čega tolike priče o tom mjestu. .

Na koncu, uz zahvalu na svemu što činite, obećavamo vam molitve da Crkva prepozna žrtvu naše braće, a Vas molimo da molite za nas. Što je vaša poruka našim čitateljima u ovome vremenu korizme i danima kada se sjećamo svojih žrtava? .

Hvala Vam na obećanju molitve. Ona je uistinu potrebna u ovakvim i sličnim stvarima. Uvjerio sam se dosta puta u to na raznim stvarima koje sam radio. Kada su sva vrata bila zatvorena, svi naumi na podu, nakon molitve sve je ponovno počelo teći kako treba. Tako je i sada u Vicepostulaturi. Bog nas vodi prema cilju, samo ako mu to dopustimo. .

Ujedno bi to predstavljalo i poruku čitateljima. Neka naša najdublja molitva bude: »Bože, pokaži mi put«. I taj put će se zacijelo pronaći. A budemo li mu crtali što nam i kako treba, piši propalo. .

## Raspon Trenutka

*fra Janko Bubalo*

*Kap*

*po kap*

*Kapa Povijest*

*U rumeni ponor Vječnosti.*

*A Brijeg moj umiva stopala svoja*

*U ruju Pepela bratskog i Zore.*

*Hrast, oškropljen krvlju, i Gospa,*

*Ona u plavom, širokobriješka,*

*Nad Brijegom na straži stoje.*

*Prijatelj, koji to nije,*

*Koji podločava cvjetove moje*

*I moje kamenje*

*I stopala zemlje,*

*Savija trubu od korova i*

*Zločobno mi prijeti žderanjem djece.*

*I, nerođene!*

*No, moji su snovi troplet*

*Odinja, sunca i trave!*

*Budućnost se rascvjetava ko bokun naranče*

*U ruci nevinih zemlje Hercegovine. Jer:*

*Vrijeme je žrvanj u kojem i ono se melje*

*I truje se sokovima brašenice svoje.*

*U mojoj zemlji cvijet je na Kamenu začat!*

*Na njegovu dlanu Hrast i Gospa stoje,*

*Nad posvećenim Pepelom vjetrove lome.*

*A, vrijeme kaplje*

*u beskraju.*

# A Conversation with fra Miljenko Mića Stojić

Vice-Postulator for the Martyrdom Cause of fra Leo Petrović, and 65 of His Fellow Franciscan Friars, killed by Communist in 1945.

Coducted by fra Antonio Musa

*Memorijalno središte "Groblje Mira", središnje žrtvoslovno mjesto hrvatskih žrtava u BiH.*

*"Cemetery of peace", memorial cemetery for all Croatian war victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*



This February, we have marked the 77th anniversary of the killing of our friars in Široki Brijeg, Mostar, Hercegovina, and across our homeland. You are intensively engaged in discovering exactly what happened at that time. What emotions are your feeling these days?

A person is, at the same time, both sad, and proud of our brothers who were killed. The feeling of sadness comes from the fact that our fellow brothers' lives were cut short in so inhuman a manner - that they did not allow them to die in a peaceful manner, or that they were not allowed to fully develop the gifts God gave them. Keep in mind, that the average age of those slain - 66 of them - was only 41 years. They bore on their shoulders, both, their Province, and their People. They desired to gift them much more. Aware of all, with heads raised high, they went to their deaths in the manner that our Divine Teacher taught them. For this reason, one must be proud. They were victorious in the very moment when those who slew them thought that they were finally victorious over them. A proof of that

is that there were many subsequent religious vocations in Široki Brijeg after the war. A further proof is the fact that the People of God have a living awareness of the exalted state of martyrdom of these liquidated Hercegovinian Franciscans.

The Vicepostulature investigating the martyrdom of Fra Leo Petrović, and that of 65 of his fellow friars, has been dealing with this cause for the past 15 years. What are the goals of the Vice-Postulator's Office? What has been accomplished thus far? What more must be done?

The task of the Office of the Vice-Postulator is to investigate all that it can regarding the murders of the Hercegovinian Franciscans by the Jugo-Communists. We need to find witnesses who are still alive, we need to find all possible documents relating to their liquidation, simply put, we must also establish that the friars were killed out of pure hatred towards our Faith, and that our friars went to their deaths in a true Christian manner. It is only then, that this vicious deed can be designated a martyrdom. In keeping with

this, the Vice-Postulator may not intentionally add anything to the facts which would be of benefit to their cause, or, intentionally, hide, or fail to report anything which acts against benefit to their cause. Simply put, the Vice-Postulator must present the truth as it is. Hence, the Vice-Postulator must pray to that end, and others, too, must aid him with their prayers.

Presently, we are at the end of the first phase of our investigations. Other than the sources we have uncovered, and the witness-statements we have accumulated, we have buried in our church in Široki Brijeg the newly-found remains of six of our Hercegovinian Franciscan brothers who were killed, thus, as of the present, we know the final resting place of 37 of our fellow friars. As soon as the Administration of our Franciscan Province gives us the green light, we will take the results of our investigation to the local Bishop so that the cause for having our friars declared to be "Martyrs for the Faith," can begin at the Diocesan level, and that our brothers can be declared "Servants of God."

What is the stance of the People of God towards the mar-tyrdom of our friars? How strong is the spiritual connection of our slain brothers with the experience of the living Church - with the spiritual life of our faithful?

In order for one to be declared a martyr, there must be what is known as vox populi, that is, "the voice of the people." From the very start, that voice was strong, and alive here in Široki Brijeg, as well as in the very places where they were slain, and in the places where their burial sites are unknown. Thus, the Faithful came here to Široki Brijeg, to the bomb shelter, as soon as they heard that the friars had been slain, and their bodies burned. Of course, the army cornered them, but they did not allow themselves to be deterred. This response on the part of the People of God continued until the very fall of the Jugo-Communist State. Today, throughout the day, not only during the time of daily Mass, the Faithful come to our monastery church to pray for our slain brothers at their burial site. It is especially nice to see high school students stopping by to pray. I would only wish that they would more easily share any received answers to their prayers which they raised to our slain brothers. They are still learning to do so. Sadly, Jugo-Communism strongly prevented open declarations of belief. Also, even today, society is not too inclined to utter such declarations openly.

What is it in the witness given by fra Leo Petrović, and his - and our - brothers that inspires us today? And, what is it that makes them unique in the history of so many other persecutions in the Church, and in our own People?

They were not slain because of any personal errors, or their views. They were slain because of the symbol that is Široki Brijeg. This, our mon-

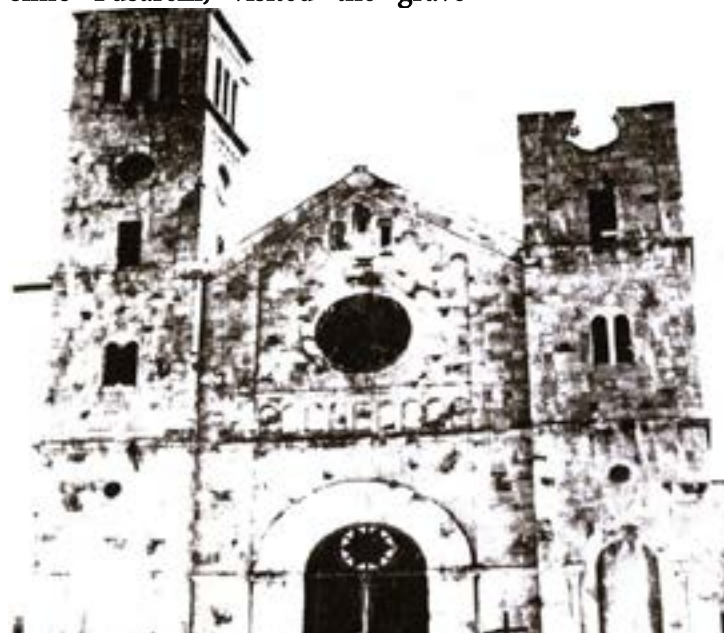
astery, through the zeal of our predecessors who arrived here in 1846, to nothing but a bare field, and which now represents a religious, patriotic, and cultural center, not only for their own birthplace, and for all of Hercegovina, but also for all our Croatian Homeland. Children from various parts came here to learn and for their betterment. They left Široki Brijeg as firm believers, and patriots. Naturally, there were some opposite examples: evil always endeavors to sweep away that which is good. This lit the signal to the atheistic Jugo-Communists convincing them that they must die out the light of that signal. But, they deceived themselves in that regard. Not only this their effort resound far and wide, which forced them to create lies as to why they carried out their evil deeds, but it continues to resound across the entire world to this day.

Many pilgrims who come to the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace, make a stop in Široki Brijeg especially to pay their respects to our slain brothers. They recognize the greatness of our slain brothers, and they carry their story to all parts of the world so that they might thereby live.

Recently, the Minister General of our Franciscan Order, fra Massimo Fusarelli, visited the grave

of our slain friars in our church in Široki Brijeg. How did it feel thost the successor to Saint Francis, and to bring him to the place where the blood of our slain brothers drained their very Franciscan vows from their bodies? What was said by our Father General?

We were really pleased that he came to our monastery. It was especially dear to us to learn that he specifically came to pay homage to our slain brothers. He heard about their slaying, and, he wished to see where this unfolded, and to pray for them in each of those places. Clearly, Father General carries in his soul the same love St. Francis had toward martyrs, as well as the reality facing many Franciscans in various parts of the world. They are persecuted, their faithful flocks are persecuted, yet, they do not give in. Father General expressed admiration for our brothers in their battles against various regimes, and for their adaptability. He compared such battles to those that took place in the Holy Land. He also expressed support for the Office of the Vice-Postulator, and its work. He expressed the hope, and wish, that our slain brothers would be raised to the Altar of Saint-hood as quickly as possible.



*Crkva na Širokom Brijegu nakon okončanja borbi u proljeće 1945.*

*The church where our friars were killed at the end of the WW2.*

The process of discovering the truth about our slain brothers, is commonly known, and it has also resulted in the uncovering the truth about the sufferings and persecutions of our People as well. In all your efforts to reveal this truth, are you receiving support in your efforts from both, Church officials, as well as those from the Government?

I am grateful to God that our faithful, as well as our slain brothers, remain united even now, as they were in life, in the effort of discovering the full truth concerning their sufferings. At the start of this process, we began to reveal the truth of what happened, as well as collect the earthly remains of our slain brothers; however, our loyal members of the People of God, remained unaddressed. This is so, since the Office of the Vice-Postulator cannot carry out that function. However, we hit up-on the idea of creating a commission across individual Counties, which would address the problem of those People of God who were also slain by the Jugo-Communists. The idea took root, such that we created a mechanism for coordinating the work of these commissions. We also moved to establish Peace Cemetery on Bilima, and continued to work with the Office of HNS, dealing with the Second World War, and its aftermath. By placing the grave markers in Peace Cemetery, we, at the same time, create a register of those who were slain. When this work is concluded, we will then have a reasonably accurate number of our Croatian Catholics who were slain, on this side of the boundary where they were baptized.

This entire task, at present, remains largely unknown among the people. Thus, we are, at the same time, building, and spreading that, though at all levels. Both our Church officials, and those of our Government, are assisting us in that effort. In that

regard, let me mention the HBK, and the BK BiH Commissions dealing with Croatian Martyrology. The Commission is headed by Bishop Jure Bogdan, as well as the Croatian Peoples' Parliament, headed by Dragan Čović.

The Office of the Vice-Postulator is also one of the initiators of the Peace Cemetery, the central place commemorating our Croatian victims in Bosnia and Hercegovina. What can you tell us about this project, about its start, and plans for its future?

I already gave partial answer to that question. Let me add: up to the present, we have succeeded in marking that space, building, and consecrating the church dedicated to St. Joseph, erecting, and mechanizing the bell tower and its bells, burying the remains of 154 of those who remain unknown, erecting 227 grave markers for religious and clergy, and 2,120 grave markers for civilians. Of course, we continue with the work to be done. Hence, in August, when the European Memorial Day of Remembrance is marked, commemorating the victims of Totalitarianism, (Communism, National Socialism, and Fascism), we plan to place 5,000 grave markers. When this process reaches its conclusion, there will be at least 50,000 additional such Crosses, that is, grave markers. All this information can be viewed over the website: [grobjemira.info](http://grobjemira.info). Future ideas are in abundance, but, at this point, I will not say much more. We will stretch as far as the blanket covering allows. I wish to thank all those who aided us financially to carry out this work, including some from the USA, and Canada.

You pointed out somewhere that the "dead are resuscitated to life" in Peace Cemetery. This thought is truly deep, and is expressed quite poetically. What did you wish to stress by using that phrase?

Following the Second World War, and its aftermath, the area where the Peace Cemetery is located, was largely abandoned. The people were forced to move, or else, they had to move because of force against them, or for lack of sustenance. Nonetheless, their ancestral homestead remained. We have noticed that with the establishment of Peace Cemetery, people began to return to that area, especially since we began to widen the road approaching the site. Traffic, suddenly, began to increase. Many live somewhere else, but they work their ancestral land here. I am firmly convinced that there will soon be true returnees to their ancestral homes. All that needs to be done is to complete the asphalted road from Široki Brijeg, to Bila. During the Homeland War of the 90's, that road represented an exit to freedom from beseiged Mostar, and central Bosnia. Parallel to this, what is also happening is an "internal return." People are always coming to visit in the Peace Cemetery - especially when not working. Stories of what happened long ago are related to the youth. The youth, in turn, come to the cemetery and, thereby, begin to learn real history. Peace Cemetery, thereby becomes a center of spiritual renewal for our entire Croatian People, and a renewal for this area, as well.

On both sides of the border of our homeland, even today, we often hear an echo of the past when it was considered desirable to persecute people because of their faith. Even some who are official governmental representatives of the people can be heard to express a longing for "the good old days" when priests were persecuted and slain. Ideology has changed its attire; however, its character and temperament remains the same. In such a polluted public atmosphere, what can we, who believe, do? What are we called to do by the example of our brother friars?



*Provincijal fra Miljenko i fratri na mjestu stradanja širokobrijeških franjevac / Fr. Miljenko, provincial minister and other friars at the place where our brothers were killed...*

The Jugo-Communist ideology is a failed ideology. It is a contemporary evil force because it is founded on pure evil. Even the European Parliament acknowledged this when, in 2019, it classified Communism as being at the same level as National Socialism [Nazi], and Fascism. Adherents of that ideology resisted that declaration, but to no avail. Evil always meets its ultimate end. Today, we, therefore, need not distress ourselves on that account. There will always be evil in one form or another. It is for us to live our humanity, and our Christianity, to its fullest, and, in the end, we will be victorious.

The example of our slain brothers clearly points to this. They are still spoken of today, and will continue to be spoken of until the very end of the world. Facts about their lives, and work, will be collected and gathered, while their persecutors, will only find life in historical books, and, they will be depicted as examples of how one is not to live or act.

Many of our readers visit the homeland on a regular basis, especially

during the Summer months. Some of them have visited the place where our brothers were slain. With this conversation, we hope to encourage others to do so. What is the best way to contact you, and to arrange to visit the Office of the Vice-Postulator, and the actual martyrdom site in Široki Brijeg?

The easiest way to do so is by way of e-mail. The e-mail address is as follows: [info@gospin-brig.info](mailto:info@gospin-brig.info). This e-mail address leads one to our monastery, and to the services available to pilgrims. Much information about Široki Brijeg, and all that took place there, can be found on our portal: [www.gospin-brig.info](http://www.gospin-brig.info), or at the following: [www.pobijeni.info](http://www.pobijeni.info). We await the day when this real, or unreal, awful pestilence is over, and when Široki Brijeg will once again see its life revived. In fact, even our adversaries come here because they wish to learn why so much is reported about this place of martyrdom.

In conclusion, along with our thanks for all that you are doing, we prom-

ise to pray for you, and ask that you also pray for us. Meanwhile, what message do you wish to convey to our readers during this Lenten Time, and in these days when we remember our fallen brothers?

Thank you for your promise of prayers. Prayer is truly necessary for this, and similar tasks. I was often convinced of the need for prayer in the various tasks that I was called to do. When all doors seemed to be closed, when all our intentions fell to the ground, all began to flow as it should, once we prayed. This is so, even now, with our work as Vice-Postulator. God leads us to our goal, if we only allow Him to do so. This, at the same time, can serve as advice to your readers.

Let our deepest, and most sincere prayer be: "Lord, show me the way!" And, that path will, for certain, be found. However, if we lay out the path, and tell Him what we think we need, then, in such a case, write down that all has failed.



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