



The Holy See

***LETTER OF JOHN PAUL II
TO ARCHBISHOP FRANCO PERKO OF BELGRADE,
PRESIDENT OF THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA***

*To my Venerable Brother
The Most Reverend Franco Perko
Archbishop of Belgrade
President of the Episcopal Conference
of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*

Every day I follow with deep sorrow the worsening humanitarian tragedy in the various regions of Yugoslavia, especially in Kosovo. With special affection I am particularly close to the Pastors and faithful of the Catholic communities, as well as to all the people of good will who are making every effort to help those suffering most at this time by being deprived of the affection of their loved ones, being forcefully driven from their homes and being unjustly compelled to live far from their own land.

At the same time, I would like to assure you and all the Bishops of Yugoslavia that this Apostolic See will continue its efforts for peace, so that these peoples, particularly those of Kosovo, the victims of such tragedy, may be spared further suffering.

Finally, all national and international leaders must be reminded that the way of dialogue is always possible and that this way can always lead to honourable solutions by the parties, with respect for the men and women of the same land, who are all children of the same Father in heaven.

At so tragic a time, this is also the prayer of the whole Church, which is closer to you than ever, unanimously asking the Lord to make the star of peace rise soon over your beloved land, with respect for the rights of all God's creatures.

With these sentiments, Venerable Brother, I give my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all the Bishops of Yugoslavia.

From the Vatican, 19 April 1999.

JOHN PAUL II

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