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### Summary

#### **SVETOZAR KOSTIĆ, ARCHPRIEST OF JABLANICA DISTRICT 1925-1946**

Svetozar Kostić is one of the forgotten characters of the history of the town of Lebane. Although born in Leskovac, in 1879, he spent most of his archpriesthood in Lebane. A theologian by education, he also worked as a school teacher, a religious teacher, a priest and an archpriest of the Jablanica district from 1925 to 1946. What we should value the most was his work for the good of the people of the Jablanica district. While working as a school teacher at the village of Retkocer, he initiated the foundation of an undercommittee of the Princess Ljubica Society in 1903. In 1907, the Bishop of Niš appointed him priest at the village of Slišana. The very next year he founded a marksman club, which was named „King Petar I“. Svetozar Kostić was one of the few who could comprehend the geographic position of the Upper Jablanica region on the Serbian Turkish border, and he did all he could to build it up and strengthen it. When he became the archpriest of the Jablanica district in 1925, he continued the efforts of his predecessors, this time as a Head of the Undercommittee of Saint Sava Temple Society the branch of which was founded in Lebane by Vasa T. Popović in 1921. He was awarded several times. The first time, he was awarded the Red Sash by the Bishop Nikanor of Niš in 1919. Then, in 1925 he was promoted archpriest by the bishop Dositej of Niš and finally, in 1928 he was presented with the Medal of Saint Sava of the IV rank by Minister of Religion Dragiša Cvetković, for special achievements in the fields of education and culture. What he did is of great importance for the history of Lebane, namely the printing of the so called Church Views, where he recorded the historic facts about the churches in the Jablanica district, and numerous legends from the region, as well. Thanks to this great man, we can now enjoy the rich archives of the church of Saint John the Baptist in Lebane.

**Keywords:** *Svetozar Kostić, Lebane, Leskovac, St. Jovan church, vicarage of the Jablanica district.*