

# Οι φίλοι του Τσαμαντά για τον Άγιο Γεώργιο



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Ms Fanny Palli-Petralia  
Alternate Minister  
Ministry of Culture  
20-22 Bouboulinas St.,  
068 82 Athens  
Greece

Dear Minister

I am writing in order to express concern regarding the rapid deterioration of the meta-Byzantine church of St. George, the only building to remain of what was once the monastery of Kamitseni. This church is located close to the village of Tsamantas in the region of Epirus (prefecture of Thesprotia), northwestern Greece.

As the convenor of a recent academic workshop (September 2005) on [Common European Heritage](#) the theme of which was the economic and cultural revitalisation of the community of Tsamantas I was able to invite a small but distinguished team of international experts to visit this historic site. These respected individuals (now known as the Friends of Tsamantas) were amazed by the artistic beauty of St George's, but also saddened by its present neglected state.

The church's roof was inadequately repaired a few years ago, and is now leaking badly, damaging the

building structurally and destroying the glorious and irreplaceable wall paintings. As a consequence, St George's an invaluable cultural asset for the Mount Mourgana locality is in danger of collapsing and thus being lost for ever. At the very least, its roof must be repaired as a matter of urgency.

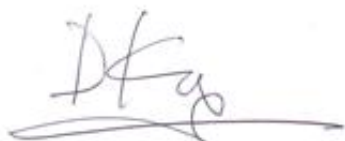
The Friends of Tsamantas wish to alert the relevant authorities including those within its diasporic community to the vulnerability of this endangered site, and to solicit aid for its preservation. We are aware that there are many historic churches in the region (as well as in the rest of Greece) that are in need of expensive repairs; we also know that funding from state coffers is limited. But, due to the state of the building, time is running out; and furthermore, unemployment in the community is high, so repairing and maintaining the building would generate valuable work opportunities, as well as keeping alive dying skills such as roof slating and stone masonry.

The estimated cost of re-slating the roof of St. George's is just over 100,000. However, it is known that at least one emigre Tsamantiotes, residing in the United States, is willing to contribute substantially to these costs, though only if the entire project is transparent and accountable, unhindered by the bureaucratic practices of the Greek state.

We would be grateful if the Ministry of Culture, in association with the Byzantine Eforia in Ioannina and the local administration of Thesprotia, would consider initiating a project to save St. George's. We, the Friends of Tsamantas, are keen to assist in any fundraising process and to lend support in any other way that we can.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



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