

## Erna And Isak Mezan At A Religious Collective Wedding Organized By The Joint



This is a religious collective wedding organized by the Joint, in which six couples from Sofia and Plovdiv, who had not been married according to the Jewish law, remarried. The event took place in Pancharevo. On the left is my daughter Ema, on the right is her husband Isak, who married before a registrar in 1975. The other participants in the ritual were Yosif and Mati Madzhar, Victoria and Mois Benbasat from Plovdiv and Reni and Robert Djerasi, Morits and Rozi Mashiyah and another couple from Sofia. We, from the Plovdiv 'Shalom' made three kilos of marzipan, which we took to the ritual. We filled two buses with people from Plovdiv and travelled to Sofia. On the back of the photo there is some writing in pen: 'Emi and Izako - religious wedding 15.05.2002.'

My daughter was born in 1953. She was raised to feel Jewish and we celebrated both the Jewish and the Bulgarian holidays at home. She married a Jew, Isak Mezan, who was a chemist. My husband insisted on that, while I didn't. He had started feeling part of the Jewish community. He didn't have any relatives and my relatives became his. He went to Israel twice and liked to say, 'It will be nice if Emi married a Jew.' He wanted that and so did I, although I am happy with my marriage to a Bulgarian. Emi met Isak at a wedding and then married him.

They have two children: Victor, born in 1976 and Robert, born in 1980. Victor studies macroeconomics and Robert studies management. They are both very active in the Jewish community. Victor is already engaged to a Jewish girl, Eva Mashiyah.

My daughter graduated in dentistry and works as a dentist in Plovdiv. She is very active in the Shalom organization now. She is a member of the Consistory board. Ema ran the restored Sunday school for 16 years. We started with only six or seven children and their numbers increased over the years. We restored WIZO. We started celebrating the holidays. In 1988 we organized a celebration for Purim for the first time. Then we celebrated Rosh Hashanah, Chanukkah and Pesach. The community got so used to celebrating the holidays together that now we can't make them celebrate them at their houses too.