



Gracanica Herald

Гласник Грачаница

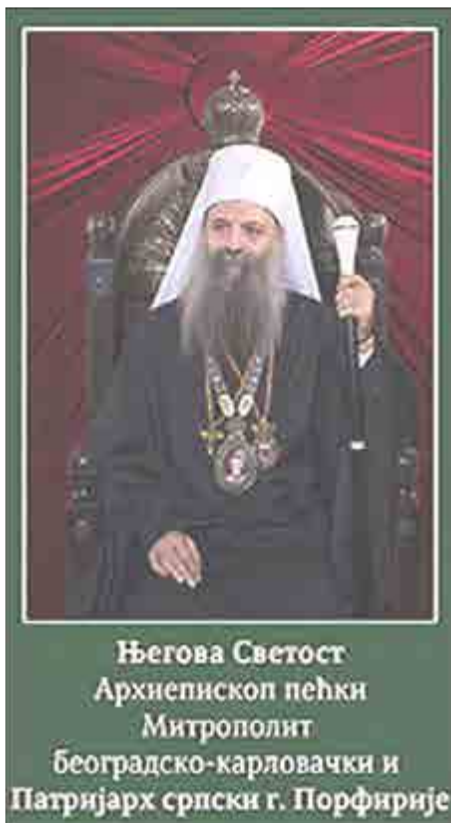
Pascha—Васкрс 2024



**Saint John the Baptist Serbian
Orthodox Cathedral
Pascha - Васкрс 2024**

**900 Baker Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
Telephone 415-567-5869
Email: father.gordic@gmail.com**

- Easter Message from Holy Assembly of Serbian Bishops
- Easter Message from His Grace Bishop Maxim
 - Easter Message by Fr. Djurica Gordic
 - Easter Message from Parish Board President Stan Grgich
 - Easter Message from Sisterhood President Liliana Perazich
 - Parish Council 2024
- Financial Secretary report by B. Djordjevic
 - Treasurer Report by Z. Lukic
 - 2023 Donations
 - Cathedral Slava 2023
 - Church Property Projects
 - The communique of the Holy Assembly of Bishops 2024
- Visit to Platina Monastery by S. Miskovic
 - Savindan 2024
 - Stewardship Reflection
 - Obituaries
 - Events 2024
- Living out the Incarnation in our Lives by B. Djordjevic
 - Save the date 2024



Српска Православна Црква
својој духовној деци о Васкрсу 2024. године

ПОРФИРИЈЕ

по милости Божјој

православни Архиепископ пећки,
Митрополит београдско-карловачки и
Патријарх српски, са свим архијерејима
Српске Православне Цркве – свештенству,
монаштву и свим синовима и кћерима наше
свете Цркве: благодат, милост и мир од Бога
Оца, и Господа нашега Исуса Христа, и
Духа Светога, уз радосни васкршњи
поздрав:

ХРИСТОС ВАСКРСЕ!

*Када си сишао к
смрти, Животе
бесмртни,
тада си умртно ад
блистањем
Божанства,
а када си умрле од
праискони васкрсао,
све силе небеске Ти
клицаху:*

*Животодавче, Христе
Боже наш, слава
Теби!*

Изговарајући смело и непоколебиво
речи ове богонадахнуте химне, придружимо
се светим праоцима, патријарсима,
пророцима, апостолима, мученицима,
преподобнима, праведницима,
исповедницима и учитељима вере, као и
свим анђелским хоровима, који данас на
небесима славе свето и животодавно
Васкрсење Господње! Похитајмо и ми са
женама мирносицама ка празном гробу
Христовом, да и ми чујемо речи анђеоске,
испуњене непролазном радошћу:

„Време плачу престаде; не плачите
него Васкрсење апостолима јавите!”

Ваистину, несталоше сузе са лица
оних који су били под влашћу смрти,
испуњена је нада свих верујућих и утешена
су срца оних који су туговали. „Нека се
весели небо и нека се радује земља! Христос
васкрсе и живот царује!” – победоносно
одзвањају небом и земљом у векове векова
благовестујуће речи светог Јована
Златоуста, великог проповедника Цркве
Васкрслога Христа.

Драга наша децо духовна, све
свештене књиге Старог и Новог Завета
упућују на истину, истину о Васкрсењу.
Богонадахнути псалмопојац Давид
пророкује о страдању и Васкрсењу
Христовом овим речима:

„Колике си ми показао невоље многе
и зле

и повративши се оживео си ме
и из бездана земље опет си ме
извео” (Пс. 70, 20).

Велики старозаветни пророк Исаија,
кога богоносни Оци Цркве с правом зову
старозаветним јеванђелистом, унапред јасно
види страдање и Васкрсење Христово и
записује: „А он болести наше носи и немоћи
наше узео на себе, а ми мишљасмо да је
рањен, да га Бог бије и мучи. Али он би
рањен за наше преступе, избијен за наша
безакоња; казна беше на њему нашега мира
ради и раном његовом ми се исцелисмо. [...] И
би метнут међу злочинце, а сâм носи
грехе многих и за злочинце се моли” (Ис. 53,
4 – 5 и 12).

Заједно са великим Исаијом, на
тајанствен и задивљујући начин, и ми
постајемо сведоци свега овога што се нас
ради збило. И не само да смо сведоци него
бивамо и учесници ове чудесне тајне
славећи данас Празник над празницима.

Зато се у овај велики и светли дан радујемо Истини, радујемо се јер је смрт побеђена у сусрету са Живим, Оваплоћеним Богом. Уосталом, није чудно што народ на нашем Југу Васкрс често назива Великдан, а у Грчкој Ламбри, што ће рећи Светли Дан. Све што чинимо добра ради, сваки труд, прегнуће и самопрегор, свака жртва, свака суза и сваки поднети бол добили су смисао у вечности тријумфом живота над смрћу, Васкрсењем Господњим. Ипак, и у ове сверадосне празничне дане сведоци смо да око нас одјекује неутешни плач мајки за пострадалом децом, деце за пострадалим родитељима, браћом и сестрама, жена за изгинулим мужевима, и тај плач раздире груди припадника многих народа, а међу њима и нашега, српског народа. Насиље се врши и мимо ратова, јер у времену у којем живимо ни одсуство рата – а рат је, нажалост, вазда ту – није гарант истинског мира; злочини и насиље су постали део свакодневице. Жене, којима је Господ дао част да буду прве благовеснице Његовог Васкрсења, најчешће су жртве насиља. Кроз страдања жена страдају и целе породице. Деца су, на жалост и срамоту света који се лицемерно хвали „демократијом” и „људским правима”, жртве злочина и у рату и у миру. Уза све то, ми људи смо све више безвољни и апатични, себични и равнодушни према туђој невољи, према страдању ближњих, па се с правом можемо запитати: није ли већ наступила гнусоба опустошења о којој говори свети пророк Данило? Другим речима, не живимо ли већ увелико не у такозваном постхришћанском свету већ у антихришћанском или, штавише, антихристовском свету, свету без вере, морала и начела?

Човек данашњице вапи: Господе, зашто си нас оставио? Али, истом човеку данашњице Бог би могао да узврати питањем: Човече, зашто си оставио другог човека? Где је твој ближњи? Самим тим, где сам за тебе Ја, Творац, Спаситељ и једини вечни и прави Пријатељ и Добротвор твој?

Син Божји Оваплоћени, Господ Исус Христос, Спаситељ и Избавитељ наш, Који је страдао за многе, за све, укључујући и оне који Га мрзе, и даље страда за нас кроз сва наша страдања. На свом крстоносном путу и ми, народ српски, носећи крст свој, носимо и Крст Христов. Понели смо га и у Првом светском рату када смо, у односу на број наших сународника, били највећи страдалници света. Наш крстоносни ход се

наставио и у Другом светском рату, када су, у злогласној и срамној Независној Држави Хрватској, прављени логори чак и за нашу децу у којима су деца умирала од глади, студени, болести и злостављања. Само су код нас, у окупираној Србији, под митраљеским мецима немачких нациста после школских часова умирале чете ђака у једном дану. Страдали смо у сваком засеоку, селу, граду. Истинитост тога страдања нису морале да потврђују наметнуте аморалне резолуције: њих су сведочила сама страдања, без лажних сведока у лицу непосредних потомака и посредних следбеника извршилаца стварног геноцида.

Као пастири словеснога стада Христовог, са жаљењем подсећамо све на чињеницу да је свет у коме живимо заборавио геноцид над српским народом у двадесетом столећу, као и у вековима који су му претходили. Свако друго брдо на местима где живе Срби својеврсна је Голгота.

Теши нас и успокојава чињеница да припадамо народу који је у годинама мира, које су долазиле после страшних времена смрти, следећи Јеванђељу Васкрслога Христа на коме је утемељен, праштао дужницима својим, а са припадницима других народа желео и настојао да изгради бољу и заједничку будућност. Због тога данас снажно подижемо свој глас и указујемо на апсолутну неистину и покушај небивалог историјског ревизионизма, у коме се настоји да простом инверзијом српски народ, жртва вишеструких геноцида и етничког чишћења, буде проглашен за починиоца геноцида. Не умањујемо размере злочина у Сребреници, али, као православни Срби, не прећуткујемо ни злочине над српским народом у околини Сребренице. Нажалост, на те злочине по српским селима у којима су затиране целе породице и који су се континуирано дешавали од 1992. до 1995. године, не обазире се предлагачи резолуција. По њима, постоји ексклузивно право на жртву и бол због исте. По нама, све невинне жртве су невинне жртве, биле оне муслиманске или хрватске или пак српске, што „мудро” прећуткују савремени ревизионисти и непријатељи историјске истине, који својим наметањем ексклузивног права на бол и жртве, остављају свима нама који живимо на овим просторима камен спотицања за будућност.

У природи створеног бића је садржана његова повезаност са светом, са природом, односно са земљом на којој живи,

која је његова колевка, дом и место погребља. Косово и Метохија су и наша колевка и наш дом. На Косову и Метохији, у Старој Србији, налазе се наши живи и наши покојници. Мртвих нема. Ми смо Црква живих. Ми смо хришћански народ, народ Голготе и Васкрсења. Ми смо народ хришћанског идентитета израженог кроз задужбине, које чине најгушћи молитвени венац храмова на свету, венац који смо исплели на Косову и Метохији. И то је истина што на гори стоји! Ту се преплићу наша прошлост, садашњост и будућност. Јер, ова света и крстоваскрсна земља за нас није обична територија него управо она света земља из које ће се пробудити и васкрснути наше „поље сухих костију“. Треба да се увек молимо и да будемо уз нашу страдалну браћу и сестре на Косову и Метохији, који су живи израз наде, љубави, трајања и претрајавања у Распетом и Васкрслом Христу Господу, уз њих који су мета насиља само зато што су православни хришћани, православни Срби, што су своји на своме. Они живе у такозваном миру, у „миру“ у којем нема слободе, у „миру“ у којем има само страха и неправде. Опет смо, као и много пута раније, суочени са недаћама и притисцима, али су нам свагда на уму речи светог пророка Наума: „Ако и јесу у сили и много их има, опет ће се исећи и проћи“ (Наум 1, 12).

Господ наш Исус Христос, Који је принео Себе на жртву, једном за свагда, за живот света, како би понео грехе многих, наш Емануил, што значи *Са нама је Бог*, није нас никада до сада заборавио нити оставио. Њему се у ове свете дане обраћамо коленопреклоном молитвом да заштити, спасе, помилује и сачува род наш православни од свих пошаста, неправди и насиља. У том молитвеном сусрету са Њим, Живим Богом, Васкрслим, верујемо и знамо да свака трагичност постаје простор наде и смисла, док без Њега свуда царују, без обзира у какве хаљине били одевени, безнађе и бесмисао. Ово представља један од највећих изазова нашег времена, наспрам којег ми хришћани, као они који су сателесници Оваплоћеног Смисла и Речи, морамо стајати чврсто и непоколебиво, сведочећи да постоје прави Пут, Истина и Живот – наспрам лажних.

Стога вас позивамо, драга децо духовна, да неуморно негујемо, што значи да молитвено и трудољубиво изражавамо,

легитимну и природну потребу за народним јединством. То наше народно јединство остварујемо под омофором Светог Саве, у Цркви Христа, Бога Живога, чије Распеће и Васкрсење српски православни народ проживљава и иконизује у свом ходу кроз историју. Света Црква Христова темељни је дом сваког нашег овоземаљског пребивалишта и не познаје границе. Ко може да одреди границе Васкрсења и живота на којима се темељи наша Црква? Реч је Христова: „Ја сам васкрсење и живот. Ко верује у мене, ако и умре, живеће. И свако ко живи и верује у мене, неће умрети вавек“ (Јов. 11, 25 – 26). Стога, старајмо се да благодатно и богослужбено ураћамо у Тајну Крста и Васкрсења Христовог, да љубимо једни друге као што Христос љуби нас. „А када се ово распадљиво обуче у нераспадљивост, и ово смртно обуче у бесмртност, онда ће се испунити она реч што је написана: Победа прождре смрт (І Кор. 15, 54), и утрће Господ сузе са свакога лица, и срамоту народа својега укинуће са све земље“ (Ис. 25, 8).

Христос васкрсе!

Дано у Патријаршији српској у Београду, о Васкрсу 2024. године

Ваши молитвеници пред Васкрслим Господом:

Архиепископ пећки, Митрополит београдско-карловачки
и Патријарх српски ПОРФИРИЈЕ

Митрополит дабробосански ХРИЗОСТОМ
Митрополит црногорско-приморски
ЈОАНИКИЈЕ

Епископ сремски ВАСИЛИЈЕ
Епископ бањалучки ЈЕФРЕМ
Епископ будимски ЛУКИЈАН
Епископ банатски НИКАНОР
Епископ новиграчаничко-
средњезападноамерички ЛОНГИН
Епископ канадски МИТРОФАН
Епископ бачки ИРИНЕЈ
Епископ британско-скандинавски
ДОСИТЕЈ
Епископ жички ЈУСТИН

Епископ врањски ПАХОМИЈЕ
 Епископ шумадијски ЈОВАН
 Епископ браничевски ИГЊАТИЈЕ
 Епископ зворничко-тузлански ФОТИЈЕ
 Епископ милешевски АТАНАСИЈЕ
 Епископ диселдорфски и немачки
 ГРИГОРИЈЕ
 Епископ рашко-призренски ТЕОДОСИЈЕ
 Епископ западноамерички МАКСИМ
 Епископ горњокарловачки ГЕРАСИМ
 Епископ источноамерички ИРИНЕЈ
 Епископ крушевачки ДАВИД
 Епископ славонски ЈОВАН
 Епископ аустријско-швајцарски АНДРЕЈ
 Епископ бихаћко-петровачки СЕРГИЈЕ
 Епископ тимочки ИЛАРИОН
 Епископ нишки АРСЕНИЈЕ
 Епископ буеносајрески и јужно-
 централноамерички КИРИЛО
 Епископ Митрополије аустралијско-
 новозеландске СИЛУАН
 Епископ далматински НИКОДИМ
 Епископ осечко-пољски и барањски
 ХЕРУВИМ
 Епископ ваљевски ИСИХИЈЕ
 Епископ будимљанско-никшићки
 МЕТОДИЈЕ
 Епископ захумско-херцеговачки
 ДИМИТРИЈЕ
 Епископ шабачки ЈЕРОТЕЈ
 Епископ западноевропски ЈУСТИН

Викарни Епископ ремезијански СТЕФАН
 Викарни Епископ мохачки ДАМАСКИН
 Викарни Епископ марчански САВА
 Викарни Епископ хумски ЈОВАН
 Викарни Епископ хвостански АЛЕКСЕЈ
 Викарни Епископ новобрдски ИЛАРИОН
 Викарни Епископ јегарски НЕКТАРИЈЕ
 Викарни Епископ липљански ДОСИТЕЈ
 Викарни Епископ топлички ПЕТАР

Умировљени Епископ зворничко-
 тузлански ВАСИЛИЈЕ
 Умировљени Епископ канадски ГЕОРГИЈЕ
 Умировљени Епископ средњоевропски
 КОНСТАНТИН
 Умировљени Епископ славонски САВА
 Умировљени Епископ милешевски
 ФИЛАРЕТ
 Умировљени Епископ нишки ЈОВАН



The Serbian Orthodox Church to her spiritual children at Pascha, 2024

PORFIRIJE

By the Grace of God
 Orthodox Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of
 Belgrade-Karlovci, and Serbian Patriarch,
 with all the Hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox
 Church to all the clergy, monastics, and all the
 sons and daughters of our Holy Church: grace,
 mercy, and peace from God the Father, and
 our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit,
 with the joyous Paschal greeting:

Christ is Risen!

*“When You descended into death,
 O Life immortal,
 You slayed Hades with the splendor of Your Divinity;
 and when from the depths You raised the dead,
 all the powers of heaven cried out to You:
 O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to You.”
 (Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone-2)*

Boldly and unwaveringly proclaim-
 ing the words of this divinely inspired hymn,
 let us join the holy forefathers, patriarchs,
 prophets, apostles, martyrs, venerable ones,
 righteous ones, confessors, and teachers of the
 faith, as well as all the angelic choirs, who
 today in heaven celebrate the holy and life-
 giving Resurrection of the Lord! Let us also
 hasten with the myrrh-bearing women to the
 empty tomb of Christ so that we too can hear
 the words of the angel, filled with eternal joy:

*"The time for sorrow is passed; weep not;
but announce the Resurrection to the
Apostles!"*

Indeed, tears have disappeared from the faces of those who were under the power of death, the hope of all believers has been fulfilled, and the hearts of those who mourn have been comforted. "Let the heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad!" Christ is risen, and life reigns!" - resound the victorious words of St. John Chrysostom, the great preacher of the Church of the Risen Christ, through heaven and earth forever and ever.

Our dear spiritual children, all sacred books of the Old and New Testament point to the truth of the Resurrection. The divinely inspired psalmist David prophesied about the suffering and Resurrection of Christ in these words:

*"How great and evil are the afflictions You showed me,
and You returned and made me live;
and You raised me up again from the depths of the earth." (Psalm 70 (71):20)*

The great Old Testament prophet Isaiah, whom the God-bearing Fathers of the Church rightly call the Old Testament evangelist, clearly sees in advance the suffering and Resurrection of Christ, and writes: *"Surely, he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.---
Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death" (Isaiah 53:4-5, 12)*

Together with the great Isaiah, mysteriously and amazingly, we also become witnesses of all this that has happened for our sake. And we are not only witnesses but also participants in this miraculous mystery, celebrating the Feast of Feasts today. That is why we rejoice in the Truth on this excellent and bright day: death has been defeated in encountering the Living, Incarnate God. After all, it is not strange that people in our South often call

Easter *Velikdan* [Great Day], and in Greece, *Lambri* meaning Bright Day. Everything we do for the sake of good, every toil, sacrifice, and self-immolation, every sacrifice, every tear, and every pain endured gains meaning in eternity through the triumph of life over death, through the Resurrection of the Lord.

The man of today cries out: Lord, why have you forsaken us? But, to the same man today, God could reply with the question: Why did you leave your brother? Where is your neighbor? Therefore, where am I, your Creator, your Savior, and your only eternal and true Friend and Benefactor?

The Son of God Incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, Who suffered for many, for all, including those who hate Him, continues to suffer for us through all our sufferings. On our cross-bearing path we, the Serbian people, bear our cross and the Cross of Christ. We bore it in World War I when, in relation to our population, we suffered more than any other country in the world. Our cross-bearing path continued in World War II, when, in the infamous and shameful Independent State of Croatia, camps were built even for our children, where the children died of hunger, cold, disease, and abuse. Only in our country, in occupied Serbia, were whole classes of students killed in one day by the machine gun bullets of the German Nazis after school hours. We suffered in every hamlet, village, city. The truth of that suffering did not have to be confirmed by imposed amoral resolutions: they were witnessed by the suffering itself, without false witnesses in the form of direct descendants and indirect followers of the perpetrators of the actual genocide.

Christ is Risen!

Given at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade at Pascha 2024.

Your intercessors before the Resurrected Christ:

Archbishop of Pec,
Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and
Serbian Patriarch PORFIRIJE

Metropolitan of Dabro-Bosna **CHRYSTOSTOM**
 Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Coastlands
JOANIKIJE

Bishop of Srem **VASILIJE**
 Bishop of Banja Luka **JEFREM**
 Bishop of Budim **LUKIJAN**
 Bishop of Banat **NIKANOR**
 Bishop of New Gracanica-Midwestern America
LONGIN

Bishop of Canada **MITROPHAN**
 Bishop of Backa **IRINEJ**
 Bishop of Great Britain and Scandinavia
DOSITEJ

Bishop of Zicha **JUSTIN**
 Bishop of Vranje **PAHOMIJE**
 Bishop of Sumadija **JOVAN**
 Bishop of Branicevo **IGNATIJE**
 Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla **FOTIJE**
 Bishop of Mileseva **ATANASIJE**
 Bishop of Düsseldorf and Germany
GRIGORIJE

Bishop of Ras and Prizren **TEODOSIJE**
 Bishop of Western America **MAXIM**
 Bishop of Gornji Karlovac **GERASIM**
 Bishop of Eastern America **IRINEJ**
 Bishop of Krusevac **DAVID**
 Bishop of Slavonia **JOVAN**
 Bishop of Austria and Switzerland **ANDREJ**
 Bishop of Bihac-Petrovac **SERGIJE**
 Bishop of Timok **ILARION**

Bishop of Nis **ARSENIJE**
 Bishop of Buenos Aires and South-Central
 America **KIRILO**
 Bishop of Australia and New Zealand
 Metropolitanate **SILUAN**
 Bishop of Dalmatia **NIKODIM**
 Bishop of Osek-Polje and Baranja **HERUVIM**
 Bishop of Valjevo **ISIHIJE**
 Bishop of Budim and Niksic **METODIJE**
 Bishop of Zahumlje and Hercegovina
DIMITRIJE

Bishop of Sabac **JEROTEJ**
 Bishop of Western Europe **JUSTIN**

Vicar Bishop of Remezijan **STEFAN**
 Vicar Bishop of Mohac **DAMASKIN**
 Vicar Bishop of Marcha **SAVA**

Vicar Bishop of Hum **JOVAN**
 Vicar Bishop of Hvostan **ALEKSEI**
 Vicar Bishop of Novo Brdo **ILARION**
 Vicar Bishop of Jegarski **NEKTARIJE**
 Vicar Bishop of Lipljane **DOSITEJ**
 Vicar Bishop of Toplica **PETAR**

Retired Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla **VASILIJE**
 Retired Bishop of Canada **GEORGIJE**
 Retired Bishop of Central Europe **KONSTAN-**
TIN
 Retired Bishop of Slavonija **SAVA**
 Retired Bishop of Mileseva **FILARET**
 Retired Bishop of Nis **JOVAN**

[Path of Orthodoxy translation]



Serbian Bishops at the Divine Liturgy at St. Sava Cathedral in Belgrade



Serbian Bishops with HRH Aleksandar Karadjordjevic

*By the Grace of God Orthodox Bishop of Western America
Grace, Peace, and Mercy of the Resurrected Savior Christ!*

The most dear ones in the Lord,

Today marks a day of joy and triumph and the festival of festivals. It's a day of joy for the entire world, yet it holds special significance for the Orthodox Church. More than any other church or denomination, Orthodoxy centers its life and thought on the event of the Lord's Resurrection. Indeed, Orthodoxy is the quintessential Church of the Resurrection.

How could the feast of feasts fail to evangelize the people of our era? Regardless of their status—be they oppressed or oppressors, wealthy or impoverished, powerful or powerless—they might feel, more acutely than at any previous point in history, a universal threat of total annihilation. This peril manifests in various forms: as weapons of mass destruction, as diseases beyond the control of science, or as the erosion and loss of human freedom at the hands of the very technological civilization humanity has built.

In spite of all, we extend our heartfelt episcopal blessing to all the faithful of our Diocese, and we declare the most profound, significant, and hopeful message in history, exclaiming: **Do not fear, brethren!**

CHRIST IS RISEN!



At the Holy Pascha of our Lord, 2024

Your Intercessor before the Resurrected Christ

*Благодану Божијом, Православни Епископ Зайагноамерички
Благодан, мир и милост од Васкрслоја Сјаса Христја!*

Најдражи у Господу,

Данас је дан радости и тријумфа и славље над слављима. То је дан радости за цео свет, али има посебан значај за Православну Цркву. Више него било која друга црква или деноминација, Православље заснива свој живот и мисао на догађај Васкрсења Господњег. Заиста, Православље је суштинска Црква Васкрсења.

Како би славље над слављима могло да не евангелизује људе нашег доба? Без обзира на њихов статус – били они угњетавани или угњетачи, богати или сиромашни, моћни или слаби – могли би да осећају, јасније него било када у претходној историји, свеопшту претњу уништења. Ова опасност се манифестује у различитим облицима: као оружја масовног уништења, као болести које су изван контроле науке, или као ерозија и губитак људске слободе од стране управо технолошке цивилизације коју је човечанство изградило.

Упркос свему, ми шаљемо наш искрени епископски благослов на све вернике наше Епархије и још једном узглашавамо најдубљу, најзначајнију и најнапоноснију поруку у историји, кличући: **Не бојте се, браћо!**

ХРИСТОС ВАСКРСЕ!



О Светој Пасхи Господњој, 2024. године

Ваш молитвеник пред Васкрслим Христом

Драга браћо и сестре ,

*И ушавши у гроб, видеше младића
обучена
у белу хаљину где седи са десне
стране и уплашише се. А он им рече:
Не плашите се!
Исуса тражите
Назарећанина, распетог. Устаде,
није овде;
ево места где га положише (Мк 16,
5 – 6).*

Радујемо се данас, драга браћо и сестре, радујемо се и прослављамо Празник над празницима, Васкрсење Господа и Спаса нашега Исуса Христа из мртвих. Радујемо се и прослављамо зато што смо, као некада жене мирносице, чули речи анђела: „Не плашите се!” Радујемо се и прослављамо Васкрсење Господа Христа јер нам више од осам столећа Бели анђео са фреске у Милешеви Светога Саве показује на празан гроб и говори: „Устаде, није овде!” Радујемо се јер нас упркос свим приликама и неприликама прате крупне и мирне рашке очи Белог анђела – најлепше, највољеније и најславније фреске створене у нашем роду – говорећи нам да Исус Назарећанин, на крст Распети, устаде из гроба.

***ХРИСТОС ВАСКРСЕ!
ВАИСТИНУ ВАСКРСЕ!***

Ваш молитвеник пред Васкрслим
Господом,
Протојереј Ђурица Гордић

Dear brothers and sisters,

*And entering the tomb, they saw a young
man clothed in a long white robe sitting
on the right side; and they were
alarmed.
But he said to them, “Do not be
alarmed.
You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was
crucified.
He is risen! He is not here.
See the place where they laid Him.
(St. Mark 16, 5-6)*

Let us rejoice, our dear spiritual children, let us rejoice and celebrate the Feast of feasts, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the dead. We rejoice and celebrate because we, as the myrrhbearing women of old, have heard the words of the angel: “Do not be afraid!” We rejoice and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Christ as for more than eight centuries the white angel of the famous frescoes in the Mileseva monastery of Saint Sava has been pointing to the empty tomb and telling us: “He is risen, He is not here!” Let us rejoice because despite all circumstances and difficulties we are accompanied by the deep and peaceful “Old Serbian” eyes of the White angel – the most beautiful, the most beloved and the most glorious frescoes created in our nation- telling us that Jesus of Nazareth, crucified on the cross, is risen from the tomb.

***CHRIST IS RISEN!
INDEED HE IS RISEN!***

In humble prayer, yours in the
resurrected Lord
Protopresbyter Djurica Gordic



Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many write about rebirth on this day of Christ rising. But with the world coming out of COVID it means a whole lot more. It was really dark times then, we could not attend church or gather with loved ones. But we are now in the light, gathering once again as a church community and in the company of those we appreciate and enjoy. Let us rejoice with the breaking of spring time, growth and beauty.

This spring as you till in your backyard gardens and sow seeds of tomatoes, green beans please give some consideration of how you can cultivate life within our church community of St. John's. Can you give a hour here or there to help out in any way? Can you volunteer to help during a banquet? Can you attend a regular meeting once in a while. Can you assist father with a project? It helps us all maybe not in a tangible way but spirituality. It's a warm feeling that we receive, and in return send that feeling out to others. It's a win win. I hope you and your families have a blessed year going forward. All the signs point that way.

Sincerely,
Stan Grgich
Parish Council President

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Hristos Voskrese!

As Easter is upon us, we extend our warmest greetings to each and every one of you. This season of renewal and hope fills our hearts with joy as we come together to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord.

In the spirit of sisterhood, let us reflect on the profound significance of Easter and the boundless love that it represents.

As we gather with our families and loved ones, let us also remember those who may be experiencing hardship or loneliness. May our hearts be open to extending a hand of friendship and a message of hope to all who seek solace in this blessed season. Let us reach out to one another with kindness and understanding, offering support and encouragement to those in need.

May the memory of our loved ones who have passed bring us comfort and strength, reminding us of the eternal bonds that unite us in faith and love. Let us carry their legacy forward with grace and gratitude, honoring their lives through acts of kindness and compassion along with our faith and traditions.

On behalf of the St. Sophia Sisterhood Board, we wish you a blessed and joyous Easter filled with love and peace.

With warm regards,

Liliana Perazich, Marija Gordic, Melody Key and Blage Zelalich



St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral
Executive and Auditing Boards
Elected at the Annual Parish Assembly



2024 Parish Council

PRESIDENT:	Stan Grgich
415.308.0799	stangrgich@gmail.com
VICE-PRESIDENT:	Micaelee Ellswythe
510.378.4876	micaelee@sbcglobal.net
RECORDING SECRETARY:	Predrag Milovac
650.796.0404	milovacp@yahoo.com
TREASURER:	Zarija Lukic
510.517.8451	Zarija@gmail.com
FINANCIAL SECRETARY:	Blagoje Djordjevic
617.678.6035	bzdjordje@gmail.com

Members: Bob Medan, Stevan Davidovich, Paul Vuksich, Predrag Narancic,
Nadine Radovich, Paul Bunjevic, Zarija Lukic, Stanislav Miskovic

AUDIT BOARD: John Lambright, Dushan Medan, Dan Grgich

Dear St. John's parishioners,
Christ is Risen!

I have been serving as Financial Secretary of St. John's Serbian Orthodox Church since 2018. I would like to thank you all for your patience and support over the years. I would also like to thank Treasurer Zarija Lukić, President Stan Grgich, Stevan Davidovich, John Lambright, Micaelee Ellswythe, and Fr. Djurica Gordić for their encouragement and advice. The rote passing of the seasons of the past had turned to some of the most tumultuous years that our parish and the world has seen in the past few decades, but despite the tribulations and challenges our community has persevered. To give you all a perspective on how our church has done over the years some information is provided below.

Charitable giving in our parish is as follows:

	2019		2022	2023	2024 (forecast)
Holidays and Feasts	\$29,324		\$25,972	\$26,631	\$27,000
General Giving	\$73,064		\$43,921	\$84,609	\$87,000
Tudor + Bookstore	\$9,425		\$17,940	\$15,907	\$16,400
Non-religious Events	\$29,923		\$5,509	\$7,496	\$7,700

Other metrics of note are:

	2019		2022	2023
Number of Households Giving	155		113	127
Number of Donations Given	749		852	831
Church membership (paid)	29		31	12

While the holidays often bring great crowds, an important metric of general health is how we do on the quieter Sundays. Average weekly contributions outside of holidays and feast days was about \$1,219 in 2023, slightly exceeding pre-pandemic levels of giving now. However, church membership was down in 2023, with only 12 parishioners paying membership fees, down from 50 ten years ago in 2014. While many of you give much of what you have to our parish, the \$60 membership fee is a formal expression of your fiduciary commitment to the community.

An important aspect of being a parishioner is financial commitment and contribution to one's spiritual home. This is not just an unpleasant reality but a religious calling. While we are not bound to the letter of the law, where the ancient Hebrews tithing literally meant giving a tenth of their wealth to the temple (Deut. 14:22 - Thou shalt truly give a tenth of all the increase of thy seed that the field bringeth forth year by year), we ought to give as much as we are able. Christ himself was not shy to preach on matters of money, most notably the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30).

Our parish finances are healthy, however, greater stewardship on the part of parishioners will go a long way in fortifying the foundations of our community and preserving this inheritance of ours for our children's children. In addition to maintaining our community, greater resources will allow us to further beautify our church as well as provide for more opportunities for our community to flourish and grow. Just as Hilandar and Dečani were built with great expense and sacrifice, only to yield an immortal fruit of spiritual and cultural wealth, let us have our temple here of St. John's reflect that glorious legacy.

Your brother in Christ,
Blagoje Djordjević,
Financial Secretary

Financial Secretary

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Christ is Risen!

Last year marked a period of significant facility enhancements, and I'm excited to extend an invitation to all of you to experience the transformed Rectory Building firsthand. This endeavor was not only long overdue but also extensive in scope, with a considerable investment totaling \$110k. At the forefront of this project was the imperative to upgrade our two restrooms to meet The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance standards. This initiative builds upon our previous efforts to enhance accessibility, including the installation of a ramp to the Rectory, ensuring wheelchair accessibility to the building.

Such renovation of the restrooms necessitated a complete overhaul, involving the demolition of the original structures, reconfiguration of walls, and overhaul of piping infrastructure to accommodate expanded facilities. The new restrooms have enlarged dimensions and have windows added, providing the natural light. In tandem with these essential upgrades, we seized the opportunity to implement additional improvements. This includes the installation of advanced furnaces, reducing utility costs through enhanced technology. Furthermore, outdated windows have been replaced with energy-efficient alternatives. The functionality of the small kitchen has also been enhanced. Finally, the small hall has undergone thoughtful redesigns, aligning it with modern aesthetic and functionality.

On the income side, contributions from parishioners – including charitable donations, purchases, and event sales – amounted to \$145k in 2023, which is approximately the same as in 2018 or 2019. Expenses have however increased by tens of percent, as you are all aware of the inflation jump, we've all been dealing with in recent years. Luckily, we are able to supplement these contributions with the rental income from two apartments and parking which amounted to \$119k, as well as stock investments which yielded \$20k. Only for this reason, we are not in a dire financial situation, and we are able to continue all of our operations.

On the expenditure side, our total outlay for 2023 reached \$317k, with \$110k allocated towards the mentioned Small Hall improvements. Within this figure, essential operational costs include the compensation for our dedicated priest, totaling \$89k. This comprehensive sum encompasses not only salary but also factors in payroll taxes, workers' compensation insurance, medical coverage, retirement benefits, and other associated expenses. Utility expenses amounted to \$25k, while property taxes stood at \$13k, and Homeowners Association fees for rental apartments accounted for \$10k. Additionally, property insurance totaled \$16k, with contributions to the Diocese totaling \$16k. Liturgical expenses amounted to \$8k, with office-related costs reaching \$4k. The costs associated with sales, encompassing items such as candles and event-related expenses, totaled \$9k. Finally, we allocated \$3k towards charitable donations.

It is important to highlight that our priest is the sole paid individual within our non-profit organization. All other members of the Board serve on a voluntary basis, including our esteemed President, Stan Grgich. Notably, Stan not only fulfills his presidential duties but also serves as the primary contractor for repairs, the master chef behind our events, and overall, the main stay of our Cathedral's operations. The only duty he is not yet performing is being the lead singer at the New Year's Dance.

As we look ahead, poised to celebrate the 70th anniversary of our Cathedral this year, it's essential to reflect on the incredible legacy left by preceding generations. They painstakingly erected and meticulously maintained this edifice solely through contributions for more than a half a century. Their dedication underscores the profound sense of community and commitment that has defined our Cathedral throughout its history. It is now our duty to uphold and honor this legacy, ensuring that our Cathedral continues to inspire and guide the Serbian Orthodox community in the years to come.

Yours Sincerely,
Zarija Lukić, Parish Council Treasurer

Small Hall and Bathrooms after renovations



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As you can see from the photos, the small hall with kitchen and bathrooms is completely remodeled! Plan your next event, celebration, slava, birthday or just gathering with friends and family in our newly remodeled small hall. It looks great and it's available for rent.

A lot of work took place to make it like this. Thanks to Stan Grgich for working, organizing and supervising, Steve and Misha Grgich for donating electrical work, Melody Key for sponsoring tile work in bathrooms and choosing the right colors, our Sisterhood, Bob Medan for drawing plans, and all of you who contributed to this project!

**St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral Board would like
to express gratefulness for your donations,
which enable our Church to successfully continue the mission of
spreading the Word of God unto the salvation of the
faithful and parishioners!**

List of 2023 donors to our cathedral

Crtis Adair	Jozo & Katarina Dujmovic
Rosanda Amerine	Micaelee Ellswythe
Elena Andrews	Robert Fowler
Zachary Antovich	Zlatana & Moris Gadzo
Vesna Arsic	Slobodan & Margaret Galeb
Lana Bakisian	Joe Gardner
Nancy Bjeletich	Miloran & +Teresa Golubovich
Mary Bogdanovic	Dan Grgich
Dejan Bunjevic	Stan Grgich
Protinica Ljiljana Bunjevic	Denise Hale
Pavle Bunjevic	Olivera Haney
Blage Carabarin	Bozidarka Hasic
Jasminka Chenich-Gabrie	Vera Hill
Rodney Ciganovic	Ksenija Lakovic
Jovanka & Miodrag Vujkovic	Dragan & Aleksandra Ilic
Beatrice Collis	Dr. Irena Ilic
Mirela Cukovich	Nebojsa & Mikica Iric
Neda Cvijetic	William Ivancovich
Stevan Davidovich	Branislav & Jasminka Jakovljevic
William Davidovich	Karen Juve-Jaich
Tony & Daliborka Defranceschi	Elia Kentera
Janine Demarco	Melody & Charles Key
Zoran Dimitrijevic	Aleksandar & Reed Kojic
Aleksandar & Olivera Djordjevic	Aleksandar & Jelena Kolicich
Blagoje Djordjevic	Andria Kosich
Milan Djordjevic	+Don & Bitsy Kosovac
Nikola Djordjevic	Zoran & Sanja Kovacevic
Kathleen Djordjevic	John Lambright
+Miroslav Djordjevic	Mildred Lepava
Mira Djuric	Ikonija Lopez
Marko Duchich	Danilo & Nevenka Maksimovic

Pauna Maksimovic	Vojo & Vera Sredanovich
Zeljka & Paun Maksimovic	Greg & Helen Stepanicich
Danica Medan	Ivana & Vladimir Stojanovic
Dushan & Gigi Medan	Ann Tepovich
John & Jelena Medan	Mika Tesic
Robert & Mira Medan	Slavka Thomson
Raul & Maria Mendez	Daniel Tomasevich
Diana Mihailovich	Zivorad Tomic
Djordje & Aleksandra Milic	Anatoly Varfolomeev
Theodroe Miljevic	Dusica Vasic
Chris & Peggy Milosovich	Ljubomir Velickovich
Danica Milosovich	Walter Willere
Predrag & Mila Milovac	Daniel Visnich
Mirjana Misic	George and Lori Vukceovich
Stanislav Miskovic	Radmila Vukceovich
Perry Narancic	Nenad & Jelena Vukicevic
Karen & Vaso Novakovic	Paul Vuksic
Mila Pantovich	Melan Jaich
Aleksandra & Ian Parker	Jonathan & Tea York
Branislav & Liliana Perazich	+George and Helen Zakhour
Willian & Brigita Perazich	Mille Zakula
Beverly & Mihajlo Petrovic	Steven D. Zakula
Svetislav Petrovic	Bogdan Zelalich
Dragan & Divna Pjesivac	Nevena Zivanovic
Jelena Pjesevic-Grbovic	
Richard & Sandra Pollack	
Theodore Polovina	
Brian Popovac	
George & Marina Postich	
Nedeljka Price	
Ronald & Mildred Radakovich	
Celeste & John Radanovich	
Nadine Radovich	
Alison Rodal	
Anita Rowe	
Tina Sankoff	
Ana Schnake	
Donald Sever	
Sister Serafima Savhcanko	
Branka Soraic	

Cathedral Slava Celebration, October 1, 2023

On Sunday, October 1, 2023, the clergy and parishioners from San Francisco and the surrounding area joyfully welcomed His Grace Bishop Maxim, to celebrate together the feast of the conception of St. John the Baptist to whom our Cathedral is dedicated. The slava celebration began with the evening service on Saturday, and continued Sunday morning, with the matins followed by Hierarchical Divine liturgy. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Vasilije Cvijanović, dean of San Francisco deanery and parish priest in Moraga, protopresbyter Vidoslav Vujasin, parish priest in Saratoga and protopresbyter Đurica Gordić, parish priest in San Francisco, co-served to His Grace Bishop Maxim

The Holy Liturgy was attended by many parishioners, both from San Francisco and neighboring parishes. At the small entrance, His Eminence Bishop Maxim elevated parish priest Đurica Gordić to the rank of protopresbyter - stavrophor. After putting of the cross on Fr. Djurica, His Grace said; "Dear father Đurica, dear brothers and sisters, on this solemn day today, we fulfilled the blessing of the Holy Synod of Bishops, and promoted our protopresbyter father Đurica to the highest honor that our Serbian church bestows on a priest, which is the honor, right and blessing of wearing the venerable cross on his chest, as a sign of the Church's love for him and appreciation of his service to the church, from his childhood to this day, and from this day, God willing, to eternity. Father Djurica, may this highest recognition of our Church be an incentive for you to continue sacrificially serving the people in this region, the people who live in this bay area and in this city that is full of challenges, to help them orient themselves towards Christ and His Kingdom and to live a life worthy of the age to come. May this elevation of the Holy Hierarchical Synod, the highest recognition of our Serbian Orthodox Church bestowed on those who serve in the

altar in ministry of a priesthood be inspiration for father Djurica and his sacrificial ministry to people of this parish and of this city. Axios" After the end of the Holy Bishop's Liturgy and the cutting of the slava bread, a festive banquet was held in the crowded church hall.

At the banquet, Father Đurica thanked His Grace Bishop Maxim for his promotion and promised to serve God and the people with even more zeal. He also called on the faithful to remember all the parishioners who are no longer with us, and who built this beautiful church in San Francisco 69 years ago. The president of the parish council, Stanko Grgić, as well as the president of the circle of sisters, Ljiljana Perazić, thanked Bishop Maxim for his spiritual care, and all who participated in the slava celebration. Slava Banquet meal was prepared by Dusan and Gigi Medan, slava zito was made by Mirela Cukovic and her daughter Milena and flower arrangements for the church was prepared by Danica Medan and Nadine Radovich.





Cathedral Slava
Celebration Photos

Фотографије са
славског банкета





Слава Саборног храма Светог Јована Крститеља у Сан Франциску

У недељу 1. октобра 2023. године, свештенство и парохијани из Сан Франциска и околине су са радошћу дочекали Преосвећеног Епископа Максима, да заједно прославе празник зачећа Св. Јована Крститеља и храмовну славу Саборног храма.

Обележавање славе започето је вечерњом службом у суботу, а настављено у недељу ујутру, јутрењем и светом Архијерејском литургијом. Преосвећеном епископу Максиму саслуживали су протојереј ставрофор Василије Цвијановић, архијерејски намесник и парох у Мораги, протојереј Видослав Вујасин, парох у Саратоги и протојереј Ђурица Гордић, парох у Сан Франциску.

Светој Литургији је присуствовао велики број парохијана, како из Сан Франциска, тако и из суседних парохија. На малом входу Његово Преосвештенство Епископ Максим је произвео месног пароха Ђурицу Гордића у чин протојереја ставрофора.

Том приликом је рекао; “Драги оче Ђурица, драга браћо и сестре, у овај свечани данашњи дан, испунили смо благослов Светог Архијерејског Синода, и нашег протојереја оца Ђурицу унапредили у највише одликовање које наша српска црква додељује једном свештенику, а то је част, право и благослов ношења часнога крста на његовим прсима. Као знак љубави Цркве према њему и уважавања његовог служења цркви, од малих ногу па до данашњег дана, и од данашњег дана, ако Бог да, до вечности. Оче Ђурица нек ти ово највише признање наше Цркве буде подстрек да и даље жртвено служиш народу у овоме крају, народу који живи у овом заливу и у овом граду који је пун изазова, да им помажеш да се оријентишу према Христу и Царству Његовом и да живе живот достојан

будућега века. По завршетку Свете Архијерејске Литургије и резања славског колача, у препуној црквеној сали је приређен свечани банкет.

О. Ђурица се на банкету захвалио Преосвећеном Епископу Максиму на унапређењу и обећао да ће са још више жара служити Богу и народу. Позвао је и вернике да се сете свих парохијана који више нису са нама, а потрудили су се да ми данас имамо овај лепи храм у Сан Франциску.

Епископу Максиму су се захвалили на духовном старању и председник парохијског савета Станко Гргић, као и председница кола сестара Љиљана Перацић. Славски банкет су припремили Ђиђи и Душан Медан, славски колач и жито су направиле Мирела Ђуковић и њена ћерка Милена, а цветне аранжмане су припремиле Даница Медан и Надин Радовић.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are embarking on a project close to our hearts – to gild the crosses atop our church's spires. These crosses have stood as beacons of hope and symbols of our unwavering Orthodox faith for generations. However, time has taken its toll, and they now require restoration. Gold leafing these crosses isn't just about cosmetic enhancement. It's about revitalizing the very essence of our church, imbuing it with renewed radiance and majesty. The gleaming gold will catch the sunlight, casting a luminous glow over our community, symbolizing the enduring light of our faith. We invite you to be a part of this noble endeavor. Your generous contribution will not only help us restore these crosses but will also leave an indelible mark on the heart of our congregation for years to come. Your support, whether big or small, will make a difference. Together, let's continue to build a sanctuary where all are welcomed, embraced, and inspired by the beauty of our shared beliefs.

Thank you for considering our appeal. May your kindness and generosity be rewarded tenfold.



Holy Cross on parish building has already been fixed and refinished with gold leafing. Our caretaker Yavor Aleksandrov and Dimitri assisted Stan in installing it back on it's place.



Stan Grgich is not afraid of heights!



20 years ago, +Mita and +Zlata Postich sponsored the refurbishing and gold leafing of all crosses on our cathedral. Due to San Francisco weather, wind, rain, and humidity, as you can see from the photos of the top cupola cross, damage is evident. We will celebrate 70 years of our Cathedral this year and our church board decided to fix the damage. This is very costly and we are seeking donations. The estimated cost for 6 crosses is over \$10,000.

Please consider sponsoring the fixing and gold leafing of the crosses!

His Grace Bishop LONGIN visited and served in our Cathedral on February 11th, 2024.

On the same day we held 40 day memorial for +Cil Grgich. Grgich family prepared very nice memorial luncheon following the Divine Liturgy and Memorial.

In the afternoon His Grace Bishop Longin visited Serbian Cemetery at Colma and served memorial for +Fr. Dusan Bunjevic and +Teresa Golubovic.



On February 10, 2024 Saratoga Parish hosted fundraising event benefiting completion of the landscaping and preparing for consecration of the newly built church.





Public Announcement of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church

Public Announcement from the Regular Session Held at the Saint Sava Cathedral in Belgrade, May 14-18, 2024.

The regular session of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church for the year 2024, originally scheduled to be ceremoniously inaugurated at the Great Lavra of the Peć Patriarchate—the historic, eight-century-old seat of the Serbian Archbishops and Patriarchs—commenced instead with an episcopal liturgy and invocation of the Holy Spirit at the Saint Sava Memorial Cathedral in Vračar, Belgrade, on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. This change was necessitated by the humiliating and shameful decision of the Pristina authorities to deny entry to His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Porfirije and other bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church into the territory of Kosovo and Metohija.

The liturgy was led by His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije, with the assistance of present bishops from Serbia and the diaspora, as well as all auxiliary bishops. On the same day, in the crypt of the Saint Sava Memorial Cathedral, under the arches of the chapel dedicated to the Kosovo martyr Prince Lazar, the Assembly began its work under the chairmanship of His Holiness, with the participation of diocesan bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, except for Bishop Mitrofan of Canada, who was absent due to health reasons.

At the start of the first working session, His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije addressed the attending bishops with a greeting full of Easter joy, yet also contextualized by the unpleasant events of the previous day. On this occasion, from its first session, the Assembly issued a statement appealing to all international bodies in Kosovo and Metohija to do everything within their power to stop the flagrant violations of human rights and fundamental

freedoms of the Serbian people.

The Assembly considers the issue of Kosovo and Metohija the most important topic discussed, as our Church and its people have been subjected to great pressures, attacks, and an uncertain future in the martyred Kosovo and Metohija for years. Therefore, we reiterate our support for the Diocese of Raška-Prizren, which, together with the stavropegial patriarchal monastery in Peć, represents a firm support for our people and their survival.

With the greatest concern, we note that today the Kosovo authorities undoubtedly aim to deny the basic rights of our people and Church, all to build an ethnically Albanian society. In light of this situation, the Assembly maintains its previous unanimous stance that the problems in Kosovo and Metohija must be resolved exclusively through dialogue, based on respect for UN Security Council Resolution 1244 and international charters that guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia in this region. Although our Church is not directly involved in the political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, we cannot remain indifferent to the worsening developments and rightfully expect our positions and concerns for our faithful and holy sites to be respected in this process.

In this context, besides establishing a functional Community of Serb Municipalities, it is particularly necessary to enhance the institutional and security protection of our holy sites through a special protection mechanism, in line with some existing models in Europe and based on previous agreements, which Pristina, unfortunately, increasingly fails to respect and implement. Such protection should preserve the legal status, property rights of our Church, and freedom of religion.

The Assembly continued its work the following day, focusing on the suffering of our people and their struggle to preserve their spiritual, cultural, and national identity, as well as mere survival, both today and in other historical moments. The painful issues of Kosovo

and Metohija, Jasenovac, and other massacre sites and killing fields in the so-called NDH, as well as Srebrenica in our days, remain a constant “thorn in the flesh” of our Church. Therefore, the Church today raises its voice again, pointing out the falsehoods in the domestic and global public space, aimed at historical revisionism intended to legitimize unprecedented historical inversion. According to this inversion, Orthodox Serbs, victims of multiple genocides and ethnic cleansing, are to be declared not only perpetrators but also executors of genocide.

The Assembly listened to and analyzed reports on the work of the Holy Synod, diocesan bishops, the Great Church Court, the Patriarchal Administrative Board, the Patriarchal Library, the Museum and Archives of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the charitable foundation “Philanthropy,” and other foundations, institutions, and services of the Serbian Orthodox Church over the past year.

The Assembly, with paternal attention and care, considered ways to improve the spiritual life and organization of our Church abroad. In this spirit, four new dioceses were established in Europe. By dividing the British-Scandinavian Diocese, the Scandinavian Diocese, headquartered in Stockholm, was formed, with the current British-Scandinavian Bishop Dositej as its bishop, and the British-Irish Diocese, headquartered in London, with the current auxiliary Bishop Nektarije as its bishop. By dividing the Austrian-Swiss Diocese, the Austrian Diocese, headquartered in Vienna, was formed, temporarily administered by Bishop Irinej of Bačka, and the Swiss Diocese, headquartered in Zurich, with the current Bishop Andrej as its bishop. The Assembly also approved new statutes for our dioceses in the USA and for the Düsseldorf-German Diocese.

The Assembly further considered pastoral and missionary needs and reviewed proposals from several bishops for the election and appointment of auxiliary bishops for their dioceses. Four new bishops were elected: Archimandrite Tikhon (Rakićević), abbot of Studenica Monastery, was elected as Bishop of Moravica; Hieromonk Nikon (Cvjetićanin), a monk of Kovilj Monastery, was elected as Bishop of Jenopolje; Protosynchellos Paisije (Đerković), abbot of Cetinje Monastery, was elected as Bishop of Diokleia; and Archimandrite Serafim (Baltić), a cleric of the New Gracanica-Midwestern American Diocese, was elected as Bishop of Kostajnica.

The Assembly also addressed the organization of our local Church and amendments to the SPC Constitution concerning the titles of diocesan bishops. Special attention was given to church education, reviewing the status of Serbian Orthodox seminaries, their curricula, and ways to improve them. A special Assembly commission was formed for this purpose. Protopresbyter Dejan Krstić and Protopresbyter Blagoje Rajković were appointed as rectors of the seminaries of Saint Cyril and Methodius in Niš and Saint Peter of Cetinje in Cetinje, respectively.

The Assembly also focused on the spiritual and geopolitical consequences of the conflicts in Ukraine and Palestine. On this occasion, the Assembly once again raised its voice to protect the disenfranchised, the hungry, and the displaced innocent victims, appealing to relevant international institutions to move from words about justice to concrete actions of justice, mercy, and peacemaking.

Highlighting the enormous significance of theology, virtuous life, and the writing activity in the service of witnessing the faith of Saint Justin of Ćelije (Popović) for the spiritual growth of the Serbian people and Orthodox people in general, the Assembly prayerfully marked three significant anniversaries dedicated to him on Sunday, May 19: 130 years since his birth, 45 years since his repose, and 15 years since the inclusion of his name among the saints of the Orthodox Church. In addition to commemorating Saint Justin, the Assembly fathers also remembered two other significant figures from the recent past of our local Church—Patriarch Pavle of Serbia, marking the fifteenth anniversary of his repose, and Metropolitan Irinej of New Gracanica, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of his passing. Both were great laborers in the work of national and church reconciliation and unity.

During the Assembly, a meeting of the Central Body for the completion of the construction of the Saint Sava Memorial Temple in Vračar was held. On this occasion, the body presented its report on all the work carried out in the past year, the donations received from pious people and our state, and the remaining necessary work.

In the Holy Synod, the mandate ended for Metropolitan Joanikije of Montenegro and the Littoral and Bishop Irinej of Bačka, who will be deputy members for the next year. Bishop Ignjatije of Braničevo and Bishop Gerasim of Gornji Karlovac remain members for the remaining one-year term, and new members elected for the upcoming two-year term are Bishop Fotije of Zvornik-Tuzla and Bishop Teodosije of Raška-Prizren.

Trip to St. Herman of Alaska and St. Xenia Monasteries

By Stanislav Miskovic

Христос Вскрсе!

Dear brothers and sisters,
Christ is Risen!

Here we are – a joyous triumph of life and resurrection of our Lord. With it, a small tradition has been developing in Bay Area parishes in the first week of Easter. It is kind and good and brings a lot of smiles. It is about being together during anxious times of crucifixion, together in the services celebrating salvation, and together again traveling to spread the word.

“And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” Mathew 28:5-7



Our journey begins in the dead of night. It is still and quiet. There is no one outside. Light of day is far.

We woke up quietly and set on our path, threading roads as lightly as when we walked on cobble stones of Mount Athos for the first morning services. Gravity of darkness is real, but hearts are joyous. This will be a podvig. Lord is with us!

As we make our way to the North Bay, the time of the first meeting is closing. The miracle of dawn – it breaks at the industrial sculpture of the Carquinez Bridge. Sea under us is perfectly calm. Newly born light is uncovering a spectacular view. Couple of boats cutting through the morning mist. Fishermen! They are on their way too. Ahead of us are beautiful rolling hills of Solano County.

Then, passing by some cows who were calmly going about their day grazing, and there we are – the rendezvous point. We all made it in time, Fr. Djurica, Sasha, Zarija and I, happy to see each other and what is ahead of us. Serbian banter stars, it will be a lot of fun from here onwards.

But where are we going? Fr. Djurica asked us to deliver some supplies and share the glory of Easter with our monastic brothers and sisters. We are on our way to the St. Xenia skete and St. Herman of Alaska monastery in Platina, CA. Time is tight, we are expected there at 9 AM for the morning prayers and agape meal. Vladyka Maksim is also there, and when His Grace is expecting we better be flying.

And flying we did – as miles quickly passed by, Sasha taught us about genes and micro cosmos, Zarija talked about macro cosmos and poked some fun at beans and at some toponyms in Sasha's region having to do something with grandmothers. It's a long story ... Father Djurica kept us sensible, telling us how the monastery and the skete came into the Serbian Orthodox Church. Long story short, it was a search for Orthodoxy of the late Fr. Serafim Rose and Fr. Herman Podmoshensky. After Fr. Serafim's passing in 1982., Fr. Herman became the abbot (iguman) and his ways seemed "Serbian-like", so Russian ROCOR Church, Greek Orthodox Church, and Serbian Orthodox Church joined for a brotherly consultation in year 2000 and agreed that the best place for the monastery is with "Serbians".

The story of the monastery is truly a testament to God's glory and podvig of a pure monastic piety: Fr. Serafim Rose was seeking God for most of his young adulthood. Having come from a western protestant background, then Eugene Rose went through a lot. If your soul is asking what is so special about Orthodoxy, or whether you could discover God by reason and by other paths, or you are leaning towards "it's enough to be good even if I'm not too sure about God", Fr. Serafim's life and work will provide great answers. He searched through the hippie movement, through several oriental religions and philosophies to the point of learning several languages fluently, he went through personal identity tribulations and even a complete departure from God – falling into despair and complete loss of meaning. Fr. Serafim would later say: "I was in hell. I know what hell is." This all started to change when young Eugene stepped into a liturgy at the Sobor church of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) and met vладыка St. John Maximovich of Shanghai and San Francisco. Having recognized a God seeker in the scholarly Eugene, Vladyka engaged him in publishing activity and creation of the St. Herman Press. Vladyka blessed this work, which would later pierce through the Iron Curtain and help restore faith and bring hope to Soviet Russia. To this day, St. Herman Press is the main source of income of the monastery and its brotherhood. The monastery of St. Herman of Alaska happened a couple of years later in 1968., when Fr. Serafim decided to recluse from San Francisco and work on his salvation in asceticism of the wilderness of northern California. There he lived in a tiny wooden cabin with see-through walls, in the mountain where winters get well below freezing and summers get scorching hot above 100 F.

Time flew by and after driving at the wonderfully scenic State Route 36, we all kept our eyes open to spot a tricky exit to the St. Xenia skete. Turning somewhat hesitantly, we saw the windmill which the sisters had built a year before. Their goofy playful German shepherd was there to welcome us too. It was so joyous to see Mother Dorothea and the sisterhood again. Swift as they are, they had quickly set up refreshments around us. Vladyka Maxim and Fr. Vasilije were there already. A lot of smiles and "Hristos voskrese" being announced joyously many times. Joy being in the monastery in the early morning! We were shown how sisters completed a small chapel dedicated to keeping the icon of the Mother of God. Last year we sang the Pashal troparion there in front of what was to-be an altar; this year a proper iconostasis stood there and Fr. Vasilije and Fr. Djurica performed a small moleban.



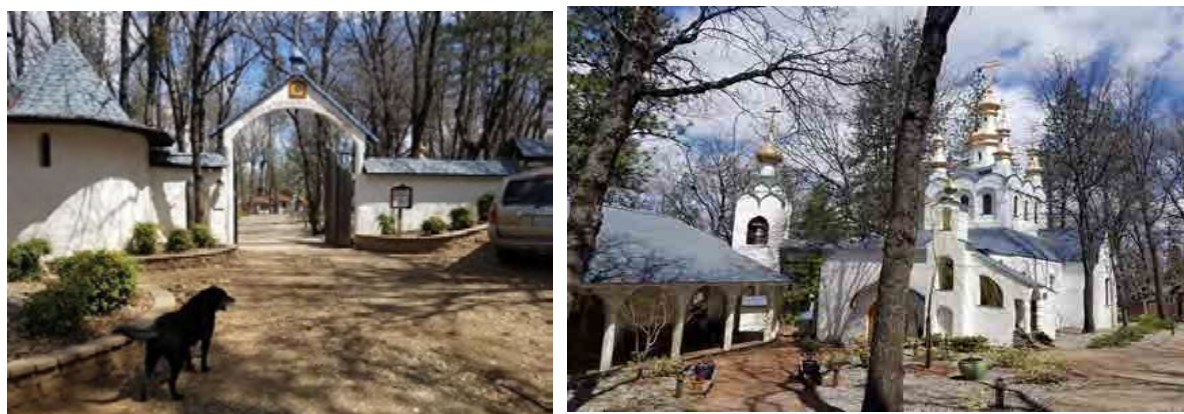
Guest house and a new chapel at St Xenia Skete

Walking through some leftover snow, we then saw the main church. Sisters have a small fresco wall there with St. Xenia and several other women saints. The style of iconography is so pure and innocent, like certain Georgian icons, peaceful, child-like and beautiful!



Inside the main church of the St. Xenia Skete

Next, we headed to St. Herman's monastery for a short service and an agape meal with Vladyka. Brotherhood welcomed us and the sisters at the church. The church is surreal as if it landed in the mountains of California from Tolstoy's era Russia. It is just incredible what the brotherhood managed to build with their own hands coming to this wilderness – a magnificent white church with many golden teardrop domes. We had some time to soak up that beauty as Fr. Damascene provided some refreshments in front of the church - in a form of slivovitz! And we were all home ...



Entrance and the church of the St. Herman of Alaska monastery

“Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.” Luke 24:30-31



During lunch, Vladyka Maksim shared some thoughts and spiritual advice with us: The unique state of soul during singing in liturgies and how it is very different than talking and reading, how it brings words more from the heart and spirit than from intellect. He also shared Apostle Paul's message on the ultimate importance of love in our faith, especially in these challenging post COVID, post isolation times when people have been away from each other and could not even share sobornost in churches. Vladyka warned us about challenges of relying on technology indiscriminately and how it cannot replace togetherness in services or in personal lives. With many advantages that technology can bring, such as accessibility of learning and communicating with each other, it is just not a replacement for human contact. This drew on a number of references by St. Maximus the Confessor.

After lunch, we asked Fr. Nikolai to let us visit Fr. Serafim's cell. We spent some time venerating at the plateau where Fr. Serafim rests. Fr. Nikolai then explained that the plateau is where the first "church" was in the monastery. Before the church building was completed, brothers would join there, carry icons or put them on trees, and serve liturgy in the open. Close by, up the hill is Fr. Serafim's cell and some 30 ft from it a bell. Whoever wanted to see Fr. Serafim would line up and ring that bell. If the voice came from the cell, the visitor was invited to proceed. It's being done even today as people approach the cell. Each time I visit this small cabin, I'm completely in awe with how piously Fr. Serafim lived. The cell is no more than 60 – 65 square feet (5 – 6 square meters). Boards of the outside walls have see-through gaps between them. Last year when we were there, it was cold on the mountain and absolutely freezing inside the cell. There is a small writing desk where Fr. Serafim wrote all his works. On its side is a bed. Behind the desk there is a wall with a number of icons and photos, many of which of the Elders of Optina, the place and monastics that Fr. Serafim loved fondly. Under the icons there is what looks like an army crate which was converted to a small wardrobe. And finally, there is a nook with books. That's it, there is nothing else.



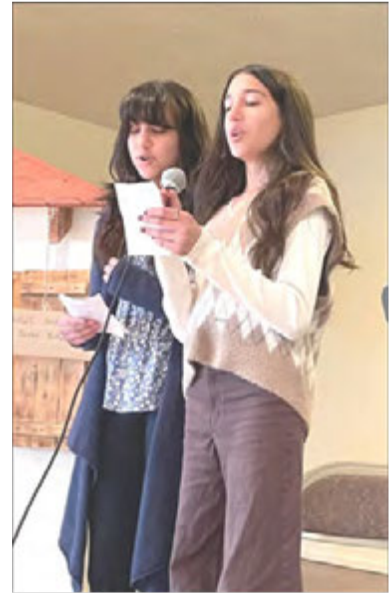
While looking at the wall of icons, something incredible happened: Sasha recognized St. Sebastian of Optina and Karaganda. He learned about the saint some ten years before when in a strange twist of fate he was given a book about the Elder Sebastian. Then, we realized that we were at the monastery on the day of St. Sebastian. And then, Fr. Nikolai said: I was working on that exact book here many years ago and I translated it to English. The story went full circle there in Fr. Serafim's tiny cell. It is a beautiful coincidence and a testament to the importance of the St. Herman Press and the work that the brotherhood is doing.



By the time we visited the bookstore, it was time to slowly head back home. Saying farewell and looking forward to our next visit, we shared hugs with the brotherhood and our brother Ivan who is iskushenik there. Kiza the dog snuck in for some more cuddles and we were on our way. Looking forward for you to join us next year on the pilgrimage to Platina.

With Love in Christ,
Stanislav Miskovic with Fr. Djurica Gordic, Dr. Sasha Vasilijic and Dr. Zarija Lukic

Savindan Celebration Прослава Савиндана January 28, 2024



St. Sava celebration was held on January 28, 2024.

Aster the Divine Liturgy and cutting of the Slava Bread we had short but beautiful program in our church hall.

Our young parishioners, Adrian Alexandrov, Sofia Maksimovic, Natalia Maksimovic, Anya Maksimovic, Mia Lukic and Senka Lukic participated in the program reciting, singing and playing beautiful poems and songs dedicated to St. Sava.

Vladimir Rajkovic cooked chevaps, Pauna Maksimovic, protinica Marija Gordic and Ajumi Lukic prepared very testy lunch for all. Mirela Cukovic with her daughter Milena prepared beautiful slava bread and zito.

With God's help in the years to come, we will have more children to participate in the program.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SERBIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL?

We ask that you too might consider being part of efforts by doing the following:

Worship With Us – whether you are a parish member or even an occasional visitor, you are part of our parish family, and when you pray with us you help to strengthen and encourage us.

Spread the Word – tell your family, friends, and about Saint John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral and invite them to come and visit us. A personal invitation is the number one way the Church grows. Tell a friend to “Come and see!”

Pledge Your Support – you can help us grow by pledging your financial support. Even if you are not a full-time or even part-time member, your financial assistance can help make a difference. Our parish has many needs, and we are steadily growing, and we are always in need of more resources to preserve and maintain our church temple, which is beautiful and lasting testimony to the generous donations of our members and supporters.

Pray For Us – remember us in your prayers, asking that the Lord strengthen, help, and direct us according to His divine will.

WHAT IS A PLEDGE?

A pledge is simply a commitment that families make each year to their parish. The commitment is in 3 parts: an amount of money promised to be given during the year, an amount of time promised to work on parish activities, and the use of specific talents with

which you have been blessed to aid the parish.

WHY SHOULD I PLEDGE?

There are several important reasons to commit to and fulfill a pledge. The first is very straightforward – each year the parish council must make a budget for the coming year to be presented and approved at the General Parish Meeting. The pledges received serve as the primary source of income planning. As the ministries and expenses of the parish are enabled by the parish giving, the pledges form the basis of planning for parish activities in the coming year.

The second, and perhaps most important reason to pledge, is concerned with the individual. Giving, like attendance at the divine services, is an important aspect to our worship as Orthodox Christians. Should we miss a liturgy, our church family will take note and lovingly wonder why we weren't there. In the same way, the Pledge Card serves to solidify our financial and time commitments and aids us as a reminder should we slowdown in fulfilling our promised giving.

The third and last reason to pledge is that it forces us to address this important facet of worship in a disciplined and thoughtful manner. As in every other aspect of life, when we promise something and fulfill it, we grow as individuals. Likewise, when we make promises to God – and fulfill them- we grow our faith and our confidence before God. We intuitively know the truth of St. James: “faith without works is dead.” God honors promises made and kept.



Commemorating the Living and the Departed during Divine Liturgy

The Orthodox remember our living and departed loved ones in our daily prayers, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox. We also provide the names of our loved ones to our parish priest for commemoration during Divine Liturgy.

For our Orthodox loved ones, these prayers occur during the Proskomedia, or the service of preparation before the actual Divine Liturgy begins. The priest takes out particles of prosphora for the living saying, "Remember, O Lord, thy servant..." and for the

reposed, "Remember, O Lord, the soul of thy servant..." As St. Symeon of Thessaloniki writes "...because it (the particle) is placed near the eucharistic Bread, when that becomes the Body of Christ in the course of the Liturgy, the particle too is immediately sanctified. And when it is placed in the Chalice, it is united with the holy Blood. That is why it transmits divine grace to the soul of the one for whom it is offered. So a spiritual communion takes place (between that person and Christ). If (the person commemorated) is among the godly, or those who have sinned but then repented, that person receives the communion of the Holy Spirit invisibly in his soul."

This is a mystery, something we cannot fully comprehend, and yet we believe the truth of it completely. Referring specifically to commemorations for the departed (which also applies clearly to the commemorations for the living), St. John Damascene writes: "The mystics and witnesses of the Word—the disciples and Apostles of the Savior sent round the world—ordained the commemoration of the departed faithful during the Dreadful and Immaculate and Life-giving Mysteries. Truly and very incontrovertibly the Apostolic and Catholic Church has done this to the present throughout the world and will continue to do so until its end. This they (the Apostles) inaugurated not thoughtlessly or at all in vain."

St. John Chrysostom adds: "Not by accident did the holy Apostles decree that the departed would be commemorated in the presence of the awesome Mysteries. They knew that there is much to be gained from that, much benefit."

From the life of St. Philaret of Moscow, we learn of the following remarkable account: A certain priest was particularly diligent in praying for the dead whose names were given to him to be remembered at the Liturgy. He used to copy out these names into his private notebook and pray for them all his life. The names accumulated, and eventually his notebook contained so many thousands of names that he was forced to divide it into sections and take up one section a day.

It so happened that he fell into some sin which threatened him with losing his priestly rank. The matter reached Metropolitan Philaret. As the Metropolitan was about to sign a resolution stating that the priest should be removed from his duties, he suddenly felt his hand grow heavy. He thus postponed signing the document until the following day. That night he had a dream wherein he saw a great crowd assembled under his windows. In the crowd there were people of all ages and walks of life. The crowd was agitated and finally addressed to the Metropolitan some kind of plea. "What do you need?" asked the Bishop, "and who are you?" - We are departed souls and have come to you to plead for our priest. Do not remove him from his office." Philaret, greatly impressed by this dream, was unable to forget it after he awoke. He had the accused priest brought before him. "What good deeds have you done? Tell me," asked the Metropolitan. "None, my Lord," the priest answered, "I deserve being punished." "Do you pray for the departed?" asked the Metropolitan. "Well, yes, my Lord, always; it is a rule with me always to remember all whose names are handed to me, and I always take out parts of the prosphora for all of them, so much that my parishioners have begun complaining that my proskomedia is longer than the Liturgy itself. But I cannot do otherwise." The Metropolitan limited himself to transferring the priest to another parish, having first explained to him who it was that had interceded for him."

St. John Maximovich relates the following, regarding the importance of commemorations at Divine Liturgy:

Before the opening of the relics of St. Theodosius of Chernigov (1896), the priest who had revested the relics sat down exhausted near the relics and dozed off. As he was sleeping, the hierarch appeared to him and said, "Thank you for laboring on my behalf. I also ask that when you serve the Liturgy, You commemorate my parents," and he gave their names, Priest Nikita and Maria. "How is it that you, a holy hierarch, are asking my prayers, when you stand at the throne of Heaven and grant people God's mercy?" asked the priest. "That is true," replied the Saint, "but the offering at the Divine Liturgy is more powerful than my prayers."

Abundant grace flows from the Divine Liturgy. We are given the opportunity to participate by way of submitting for commemoration the names of our dearly loved living and departed. We indicate if our loved ones are Orthodox or non-Orthodox so that the priest can know who he should include in the Proskomedia. But all receive prayer.



Celia "Cil" Grgich Obituary July 15, 1923—December 27, 2023

Celia "Cil" Grgich (nee Pavich) passed away on December 27, 2023. Born July 15, 1923 to Serbian immigrant parents, Cil grew up in a close-knit Serbian enclave in Steubenville, Ohio. Her early days were filled with hardship due to her father's early demise yet her memories were of laugh-out-loud moments and innocent mischief with childhood pals that became lifelong friends or relatives.

After her marriage to Nick Grgich in February 1946, they started a family in San Francisco and settled in Daly City where they raised their four sons. She was devoted to her Serbian Orthodox faith as a founding member of St. John's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral where she served her church community as a multi-term Past-President and active member of the St. Sophia Sisterhood. Her legacy includes 50 years of fellowship and volunteer service at Camp Saint Sava dedicated to preserving Serbian Orthodox and cultural traditions for hundreds of kids from parishes throughout Western America.

Cil loved a good bargain (especially a mystery Kohl's scratch-off coupon) on clothes and accessories - those that were not returned – that she would combine with items from her bursting closets into stylish outfits she crafted as much for a doctor's appointment as for a special occasion. She relished discovering garage sale kitsch to fill the home she and Nick built in Sonoma in 1973. No outing was complete without a picking up a kitchen gadget, romance novel or clock followed by a cherished lunch out.

Of course, her legacy would not be the same had she not, as a young woman, met the love of her life, Nick Grgich. Partners in marriage, dance, and life for over 65 years until his death in 2011 – theirs was a special love marked with a sense of humor and devoted friendship. Her heart always beat a little faster when he was near. Cil is predeceased by her parents, Mike and Anna, as well as her siblings, Maryann "Maci" Vignovich and Stanko Pavich along with her Grgich in-laws and their spouses. She was preceded in death by her beloved niece, Joanne (Fred) Wolfinger in Ohio. Cil leaves her sons Steve (Natasha), Stan, Dan (Sharon) and Mitch (Cathy) and grandchildren Kyle (Krystle), Kaia (Nikola Kordic), Nick and Michael (Eunmi) and great-grandchildren, Olivia and Carter Grgich and Nova Kordic. She is survived by her godchildren, Ann and George Tepovich and her devoted caregivers Griselda & Araceli Hernandez who provided 24/7 competent compassionate care for over four years.

The family who became friends and the many friends who became family, will miss her active presence in their lives. Each have wonderful memories to hold close, and in the coming years each will realize the impact she had on them is beyond measure. Having Cil as a mother, mother-in-law, aunt, Baba, great-grandmother, godmother, mentor, and loving friend will always be valued. Cil enjoyed a "family-first" life that made her happy, a heart full of dreams that found their way true, and a lot of good friends along the way. The endless memories shared with her will sustain us for the rest of our lives.



Cil's 100th Birthday celebration in Sonoma

Danilo Don Kosovac
February 16, 1934—December 26, 2023



Don E. Kosovac, USAF Colonel, retired, of San Rafael, CA, passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by his family on December 26th, 2023. He was born into a Serbian immigrant family residing in Indiana Harbor (East Chicago) on February 16, 1934. He spent his youth as the youngest child of four to Danica Tatalovich (Kosovac) and Drago Kosovac. He moved west to attend the University of California, Berkeley, where he became a loyal Golden Bear. He studied Architecture and General Education while also fulfilling his commitment to the Air Force ROTC program. In addition, he was a member of the Phi Kappa Alpha fraternity and continued his faith and love of music singing in the choir at St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in San Francisco.

Upon graduation in 1958, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and entered active duty at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. He met his “Yellow Rose of Texas”, Caroline (Bitsy) Bachofen, and they married in the Hill Country at her beloved family home, Pleasure Hill. During Don’s 30 years of active duty, he held numerous assignments, notably as a navigator in Vietnam, an instructor of navigation at the Air Force Academy, and lastly as the U.S. Defense/Air Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Prague, the former Czechoslovakia. While stationed at the Academy, he earned his Master’s of Arts in Education at the University of Denver.

Beyond Don’s esteemed military career, he spent his life as the patriarch of his family. He built two family ski cabins in Colorado and Lake Tahoe where he taught his children and grandchildren his love for skiing. He spent many mornings with his apron around his waist flipping his famous Swedish pancakes for his family. He also served as the “quarterback” of a four-decade long tailgate cheering on the Cal football team. In retirement, he and Bitsy continued a life of travel, he earned a contractor’s license, and taught carpentry classes at Laney College. He continued to give to his church community as President of the church board and to sing in the church choir with his beautiful bass sound. As a Cal alumnus, he gave generously of his time and resources to the Class of 1958 gift to the Mark Twain Papers at UC Berkeley and created the Danica and Drago Kosovac Prize, a scholarship for students researching Serbian/Montenegrin culture.

Don is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Caroline “Bitsy” Kosovac; three daughters and son-in-law’s, Cris (Todd) Adair, Diane (Brian) McKone, and Natalie (Chris) Kosovac; six grandchildren, Max, Jessica, Quinn (Emma), Sydney, Joseph, and Caroline; several nieces and nephews; and Kumovi. Preceding him in death were his parents Danica and Drago, and his 3 siblings, Helen, Mike, and Jeanne.

At Ease to dear Colonel, our loving husband, dad, and grandpa.
Ziveli! Go Bears!



Teresa Maria Golubovich
August 3, 1929 – October 4, 2023

Teresa passed away peacefully with dignity and grace, just as she lived her life, at home surrounded by family on October 4th.

Teresa was born in the barrio of Miraflores in Lima, Peru on August 3, 1929, daughter to Alfredo and Esther Figueroa. She was the 4th of 8 children: Eleazar, Alfredo, Gloria, Teresa, Violeta, Rosario (Charo), Camilo and Julio (Gringo). Her father, Alfredo, was a very successful businessman and a first-generation Peruvian whose parents had migrated from Spain in the late 1800s.

Teresa enjoyed her youth in Lima in a house full of laughter and very well supported until, when she was 15, her father Alfredo unexpectedly died.

She eventually decided to pursue a career through secretarial school. She decided to travel to the United States, taking her skills to the offices of New York where she worked as a secretary for one of Bank of America's vice presidents in the international department.

After spending six months in New York she paid a visit to San Francisco before her planned return to Lima. The decision to come to San Francisco would change her life forever.

During her time in the city, she met her soon to be husband, Milorad V. Golubovich from Yugoslavia.

They fell in love and were engaged in 1962. On February 17, 1963, they married at St John's Serbian Orthodox Church in San Francisco, settling down in Menlo Park by 1964.

Continuing with her career path, Teresa spent several years at Syntax as a Senior Secretary. Roles followed at Stanford Law where she was a Translator of Papers for professors and then at Xerox as Administrative Assistant. She finished her career at Telesensory Systems where she was Manager of International Sales and Marketing for Latin America.

Teresa's passions included gardening, dancing, music, reading, knitting, sewing and traveling. Her greatest joys were spent with family.

She is survived by her loving husband Milorad, children Paul (Deanne) and Liliana (Branko).

A loving and devoted grandmother, she was forever surrounded by her grandchildren: Elena, Cristina, Luka and Anya. And embraced being a grandmother to Bella, Paul's stepdaughter and Caroline (Coco), Paul's niece.



18th Annual Humanitarian Banquet

By Pavle Bunjevic

On Sunday, November 12, 2023, the Four Circles of Serbian Sisters of the Bay Area of the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church hosted their 18th Annual Humanitarian Banquet at Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church in Moraga. This year's event was chaired by the KSS of Holy Trinity with their President Dorothy Zakula Pratte. The wonderful members and friends of our Serbian community from around the entire Bay Area were able to make this event a great success by raising over \$38,000. We had approximately 100 people in attendance, who were able to hear from those that directly delivered the monetary support to those that were in need.

There are many people to thank and without their support and hard work, we would not have been able to raise such a large amount of money. First, a big thank you to our wonderful sisters of St. George, St. John the Baptist, Holy Trinity, and St. Archangel Michael. Without their dedication, hard work, and love for their church and this great cause, we would not have been able to provide the monetary support over the years to those that are less fortunate. Second, many thanks to our Bishop Maksim and clergy for their spiritual support in providing us the strength to organize this special event. Third, a special thank you to our world class chef, Ron Pratte and his crew. Fourth, a special thank you to Danka Petrovic Poore for donating the wine. Fifth, many thanks to Aleksandra Milic for the centerpiece decorations. Sixth, a special thank you to ISKRA Choir for singing. Seventh, a very special thank you to the Mladost Folklore Group for a wonderful performance. Eighth, a big thank you to the KSS' of San Francisco and Oakland for the desserts, and the KSS of Saratoga for the hors d'oeuvres.

We look forward to another successful event this year that will be hosted by the KSS of Saratoga. Date to be announced. We look forward to having you join us for our 19th Annual Humanitarian Banquet.

Once again, a big thank you to Dorothy Zakula Pratte and all the Sisters of Holy Trinity, along with their parish priest, Fr. Vasilije, for hosting such a wonderful event. May God always bless you and watch over you.



The Mladost Folklore Group and The ISKRA Etno Group Concert

On Saturday, March 16, 2024, The Mladost Folklore Group of the Bay Area Serbian Orthodox Churches and The ISKRA Etno Group hosted a concert titled "An Evening of Folk Songs and Dance" at St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in San Francisco. It was a very special evening as attendees were presented with wonderful performances of songs and dances from Serbia. Many thanks to those who attended and for all that made it a success. A special thank you to Fr. Djurica and Church Board of St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral for providing us the use of the church hall.

U subotu vece, 16.marta ove godine u svecanoj sali nase crkve, Iskra Etno, vokalno- instrumentalna grupa je odrzala koncert posvecen sedmogodisnjici svog rada i postojanja. Naime, Iskra Etno grupa osnovana je 2014. godine od strane Gordane Mihajlovic i Nene Lovre i okuplja kako izvodjace iz razlicitih delova San Francisko zaliva tako i povezuje izvodjace razlicitih generacija. Iskra Etno ponosno radi na predstavljanju srpske, slovenske i balkanske muzike na ovim prostorima a pored ovog delovanja radi i na ocuvanju tradicije i jezika Srbije i Balkana. Rad grupe prepoznat je kao veoma znacaj doprinos kulturnom i socijalnom zivotu srpske zajednice u Kaliforniji i sire.

Svaki koncert odlikuje se jedinstveno odabranim repertoarom koji za temu ima uvek poseban dogadjaj ili secanje sto kulturnog, tradicionalnog tako i istorijskog segmenta srpskog nasledja. Dokaz tome bila su i dva poslednja koncerta ove grupe. Koncertom na godisnjem humanitarnom banketu Kola Srpskih Sestara, kroz posebno odabran muzicki program zahvalili smo se svim nasim majkama i sestrama osnivacima Kola Srpskih Sestara kao i svim precima koji su dali zivot tokom Prvog Svetskog rata a na koje danasnje generacije ne smeju zaboraviti i moraju biti ponosni.

Koncert odrzan u nasoj sali ovoga marta, pored proslavljanja godisnjice Iskre Etno podsetio je i publiku na Martovsko secanje koje je posveceno novijim stradanjima srpskog naroda na Kosovu i Metohiji. Clanovi grupe nosili su ovom prilikom bros u obliku kosovskog bozura i izveli kako tradicionalne numere sa KiM : "Gusta mi magla padnala", "Ej dragi, dragi" tako i numere skorijeg datuma poput "Suze Kosova" stavljajuci akcenat i na taj nacin na vaznost ocuvanja secanja na ove dogadjaje. I na kraju veceri, s obzirom da je povod svakog koncerta Iskre Etno pored svega i druzenje, jacanje i povezivanje zajednice, zapevala se pesma "Veseli se srpski rode" i zajedno sa folklornim ansamblom "Mladost" pod vodstvom Pavla Bunjevica, igralo se kolo do kasno u noc.

Do sledece prilike i novih radosnih i vaznih dogadjaja,
Iskra Etno vas pozdravlja i cestita Vaskrs: Hristos Vaskrse! Vaistinu Vaskrse!
Aleksandra Milic



Living out the Incarnation in our Lives

One of the foundational beliefs of the Orthodox Christian faith is that of the incarnation, which we acknowledge every time we say the Creed, that we believe in “One Lord Jesus Christ... who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.” We believe that he is fully man and fully God, not a mystical, incorporeal being like the Monophysites declared nor imperfectly divine like the Arians and Nestorians believed. This is an essential truth for us and one that we should embody in our lived lives as Orthodox Christians. The goal of the incarnation was firstly and most clearly articulated by St. Athanasius of Alexandria, who said that “God became what we are so that he might make what he is... Christ became made man that we might be made God.”

The incarnation makes itself relevant on the grandest scales of human experience, where Christ is not only the God of Eternity but also the God of History. While all humans have been imperfect and fallen in their lives, we do not believe that history is a sequence of accidents that culminate in our present experience, that is a form of hubris that is unbefitting an Orthodox Christian. Every step of creation, from when the light was cleaved from darkness (Genesis 1), to the prophets and the scribes, through the reigns of the pharaohs and the Caesars, was divinely intended towards the incarnation of Jesus Christ the Son of God. However, this divine march did not end with the resurrection of Christ; we celebrate every Easter, but continued on through the apostles unto the saints, through the conflicts of emperors and the tribulations of oppression, unto the turmoil and ambiguity of modernity. But we should not be uncertain in our beliefs, we should confidently see the will of God guiding us. Even if we feel that he is testing and punishing us, it is towards salvation. In the Greek Septuagint, which we follow for the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for “punish” – *yasar*, was translated into Greek as *paideuo*, which means to educate, discipline, where *pais/paidos* means child. But the crux of the matter is we should not divide – “secularize” – our lives from our Christian beliefs, but rather “baptize” our experiences with the lived truth of the incarnation, seeing and seeking out the divine in our lives.

It may almost feel easier to see the works of God in the cosmic feats and the great events of

history, but the incarnation teaches us that the embodiment of the divine is also a very personal reality. This skepticism St. Athanasius himself addresses in opposition to the philosophers of the Greeks, who deemed the incarnation a silly, unbecoming concept, saying “if it is fitting for him to come into the cosmos and to be made known in the universe, it would also be fitting for him to appear in a human body and that it should be illumined and moved by him. For the human race is part of the whole; and if the part is unsuitable to be his instrument towards the knowledge of his divinity, it would be most absurd that he should be made known even through the whole cosmos.” Christ was fully man, and while He did not sin as we do nor submit himself to the passions, He did experience the real joys, pains, and temptations that we do every day of our lives. He shared in the joys of a wedding, where he turned water into wine (John 2), he wept for Jerusalem (Luke 19), he raged at those that would turn his temple into a den of thieves (Matthew 21), and sorrowed for the trial to face him in the garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26). He who commands the cosmos also has full knowledge and empathy for our daily inconveniences, joys, and struggles. “He endured the insults of human beings, that we might inherit incorruptibility,” said St. Athanasius. However, we are not God and we are not even perfectly human. That is why one of the most fruitful ways we can exercise our faith is to pray to the saints and study their lives. It is why we pray to the Mother of God, a fallen human like us, but one who accepted God perfectly, that we may imitate her devotion and bring God into our hearts.

Among us today is a temptation to mysticize and philosophize away the banalities of our lives and sometimes to even look with shame and embarrassment at the historical path taken by the Church. This is not the way. We should not be like the Origenists, who believed we were to discard the corrupt, mortal experience like the “garments of skin” that God gave to Adam and Eve to cover up their shame (Genesis 3). We should not be prideful in ourselves and our faith and heritage, but we should be confident that it was handed down to us not just by our ancestors in blood and faith but also from the hands of God himself. Sometimes we take a dichotomous interpretation to questions of faith and scripture, giving a literal and spiritual interpretation to the Word, what some call cataphatic versus apophatic theology. However, we should never forsake one for the other and we should strive for a unified vision of our faith that

as perfectly couples them together as we can in our own, fallen way, epectactically (St. Gregory of Nyssa) reach for the perfect union of worldly and divine as found in the incarnation of Christ. We are sojourners in this life, we seek the Kingdom of God, but while its glory may make it seem like a city on a hill, in the clouds, the Kingdom is already among us is for us to realize and to actualize (Luke 17). We are a community with a strong sense of identity, one that some might deem distracting from our Christian calling. While it is often cited St. Paul's statement that there is neither Greek nor Jew (Galatians 3), he also very clearly described the tribes of man as branches of tree (Romans 11). In the end times, we do not shed our mortal coil but find it reconstituted (Ezekiel 37), when all join together in the most perfect of liturgies, where "a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Revelations 7). The incarnation rerevealed God's commitment to his creation, that there is "the root of Jesse, who shall rise to rule over the nations, and in him the nations will places their hopes" (Isaiah 11).

So, let us remind ourselves of the creed of the incarnation in our daily lives, to see the divine and spiritual and the banal and basic. Christ became man to heal the corruption of the world and ultimately to remove us from Death's grasp, he did not come to world to rescue us from it but rather to perfect us. Let us not fall for the temptations of the world, to fall prey to sophistic temptations that seek not perfect our humanity to sunder us from it, false beliefs that lead us to the lived death of nihilism. Let us not take for granted the small ways that the divine has touched us in our lives, whether in the small kindnesses we share or the odd folk tradition that helps keep us anchored to the Church and Christ, for in such ways we can reflect the truth of the incarnation in our lives.

Your brother in Christ,
Blagoje Djordjević

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church,
Moraga**

Parish Slava, June 23 2024

(No Divine Liturgy in our Cathedral)

Colma Chapel and FSBS Slava

August 24, 2024

Divine Liturgy 10:00AM

DIOCESAN DAYS 2024

in conjunction with the

DIOCESAN ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Alhambra, California

Labor Day Weekend

St. John the Baptist Cathedral Slava

Celebrating 70 years of our Cathedral

October 6, 2024

Divine Liturgy 10:30AM

Moraga Food Festival

October 12, 2024

**Holy Archangel Michael Serbian Orthodox
Church, Saratoga**

Church Slava

November 24 2024

Divine Liturgy 10:00AM



Protopresbyter Djurica Gordic - Cathedral Dean, Parish Priest

The Gracanica Herald is regular publication of Saint John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in San Francisco, California. The purpose of the **Herald** is to educate faithful members and parishioners in the teaching of the Orthodox Faith and Tradition in order to assist in their commitment to Christ and His Church. In addition, the **Herald** keeps our parishioners informed as to the activities taking place at the parish and other news of interest to our community.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members and parishioners for their help and support of **Saint John's Cathedral**.

If any parishioner or member has news of either religious or social interest that they would like to have published in the Gracanica Herald please mail it to: 900 Baker Street San Francisco, California, 94115 or e-mail to ***stjohnsoc@yahoo.com***