



Gracanica Herald

Гласник Грачаница

Pascha—Васкрс 2018



Христос
Васкрсе из
мртвих, смрћу
смрт уништи и
онима који су у
гробовима
живот дарова!

Christ is risen
from the dead,
trampling down
death by death,
and on those in
the tombs
bestowing life!

ХРИСТОС ВАСКРСЕ! ВАИСТИНУ ВАСКРСЕ!



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***

Saturday, May 19, 2018



The poster features a blue background. In the top left corner is the United States flag, and in the top right corner is the Serbian flag. In the center, a red silhouette of the map of Serbia contains the text "serbian festival" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font. Below the map, there is a row of four images showing Serbian food: a slice of layered flatbread (sarma), a plate of dumplings (pittva), a plate of fried meatballs (kugol), and a plate of rolled-up dumplings (pittva).

Hosted by St. John the Baptist
Serbian Orthodox Cathedral
900 Baker Street, San Francisco

From 12:00pm until 9:00pm
FREE ADMISSION !!!

VRBICA VRBIŠĆA 2018



Гласник Грачаница *Gracanica Herald*

**Saint John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral
Pascha - Васкрс 2018**

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The Serbian Orthodox Church to her spiritual children at Pascha, 2018

+IRINEJ

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!

We have completed the time of the Great and Holy Lent, during which in daily services with repentance, confession and tearful prayers we co-suffered with our Lord, accompanied Him on the way of the Cross leading to the Resurrection, and chanted gratefully: "Glory to thy long-suffering, O Lord!" We have lived through His voluntary suffering, humiliation, spitting and death

on the Cross so that we may today, by God's immeasurable mercy, welcome Christ's glorious Resurrection. By participating in these events we live through them, overcoming death and every sadness; for just as without death there is no Resurrection, so likewise without spiritual struggle carried out in hope and long-suffering there is no consolation. That is why we worship and give thanks to the Lord risen from the dead, because He has made us, His faithful people, worthy to be communicants of his miraculous works, feeling in our souls the new life that conquers all tribulations.

Let us celebrate today's bright Feast Day with joy, our dear spiritual children, for its grace and light come not from the Sun, nor from angels, but rather they come from the Unapproachable Light which dispels the darkness, and the eyes of the people see all the beauty and harmony of God's world. Only in this Light can we clearly see the meaning of the existence of mankind and of the world in honor, which belongs to them as God has ordained. On this day we are reminded and counseled together with our God-bearing fathers of Christ's Church that the cause and goal of creation is God. Each of us, as God's co-worker, is responsible not only for ourself and our people, but for all people and all nations, for all of God's creation. This is the universal human philosophy by which our faith has lived and worked through the ages, demonstrating what today is now called "ecological consciousness." Therefore, on today's Feast Day, which is an oasis of peace and joy, we are doing a spiritual review, arming ourselves with hope so that, with the help of God's full arsenal that is found in the Church, we may endure all tribulations and all temptations, drawing strength from the Lord Who encourages us with these words: "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) The Resurrection is the greatest victory over evil, sin and death, which reminds us that we have the possibility and duty to stand up against every spiritual fall and against everything that prevents us from walking towards the good. Let us not despair, but rather let us hope in the Lord, so that we may receive God's grace and help in every struggle. Faith in the Resurrected God-Man reveals the cure for the increasing depression found in the modern world. According to the words of St. Theophan the Recluse, it gives us

the possibility to “see over sin and suffering” with our spiritual eyes. If we sin according to our weaknesses, the Holy Gospel tells us: Arise, O you who sleeps – in sin – arise and resurrect from the dead – with repentance – and Christ will enlighten you. (cf. Ephesians 5:14)

The Lord Himself out of His exceedingly great mercy and love towards us takes upon Himself a wondrous ascetic feat – He becomes the God-Man, born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation, so that He might be “delivered up because of our offenses, and raised for our justification” (Romans 4:25), to return everything to its original harmony and to return to us the joy of gazing upon His face. So then our justification is our deification in Christ Jesus, and our joy is the eternal joy and hope of the Resurrection, upon which is established the Christian creed of faith, which brings with itself the greatest gift: the victory of life over death. The Incarnation, as the beginning of the economy of the salvation of mankind in the Resurrection, accomplishes the final fulfillment of the saving work which is constantly celebrated by the Orthodox Church every Sunday. According to the golden-winged words of the Saintly Bishop Nikolai, this annual cycle in which we live is not “only a listing of the dead”, but rather it is always the open dynamism of life, which goes to meet Christ Who is coming. This is why he who belongs to Christ and calls himself a Christian is freed from death, for the Lord Himself assures us of this: “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he may die, yet he shall live.” (John 11:25) With these words He gives us hope for the true life which is the joy of our faith. From them we understand that His Resurrection is our resurrection, for Christ by his death destroys death, giving us eternal life.

This blessed life, life with all the saints, begins here and now on earth. Joy and peace begin here in this life for everyone who fills his or her soul with the eternal word of God and forgives everyone for everything. There is no one today, believing or non-believing, who would not want to participate in true joy, at least for even a moment. But peace and joy are to be found nowhere. All around is hopelessness, the soul is drenched with personal desires and wishes stemming from self-love and selfish living, leading to spiritual death and its consequences, aimlessness

and negligence of eternal salvation.

We are witnesses of a general alienation and destruction, foremost in families, where community between spouses is increasingly destabilized, and the mutual disrespect between parents leaves an indelible wound on the souls of the children. We cannot seek our rights by violating the rights of others. We have forgotten that it is necessary to respect oneself and the holiness of one’s own body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit (cf. Corinthians 6:19), so that we may come to the true measure of everything transient, respect our neighbor and his freedom, the holiness of all and the common good, as well as one’s personal needs.

Therefore, our spiritual children, respect and safeguard the holiness of marriage, for it is the foundation of a healthy and unbreakable family. In love guard the mystery of life sanctified by God Himself. May true faithfulness and mutual forgiveness adorn our every family, which is a domestic Church. Abortion, the greatest crime of our century, unfortunately, is present even among our people, for according to the statistics, the population in Serbia declines every year equivalent to that of a small town. Every conception, birth, and every human being in the light of Christ’s Resurrection is a gift from God which has eternal meaning and is born for eternity. Setting before you, dear brothers and sisters, these temptations of all mankind, we, with paternal love ask you to conduct yourselves in a sound and responsible way, redeeming soberly and in peace the time of your lives “because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:11) Let us pray to the Lord that peace may reign in places where it has been banished, firstly, in our hearts and our homes, but also in the entire suffering world!

We Christians do not hate this world and its people. We firmly walk upon this earth with our eyes raised towards heaven. Respecting all human accomplishments, we want all to be sanctified with God’s grace and power, for the Lord tells us: “You are the light of the world.” (Matthew 5:14) Rejoice with the Paschal joy, for the Lord wishes “that your joy may be full.” (I John 1:4) Victory with Christ, accomplished through grace and our efforts to follow God’s commandments, is certain. It is when a person is born of water and the Spirit that his resurrection begins. This is the central point of eternal existence, which gathers together all the ele-

ments by which we arrive at knowledge of self and knowledge of God. Knowing Truth, real Truth, is faith in the Resurrection and the joy of the Resurrection.

In these bright days of our joy, we do not forget human pain, sorrow and suffering. We do not forget the sick, old and infirm, those in poverty, in exile and in misery, persecuted and expelled from their homesteads. We pray with faith and hope that God will erase every tear from their faces. (cf. Revelation 7:17) We incessantly co-suffer with our clergy and monastics, faithful people and children in Kosovo and Metohija, who are our conscience and without whom Serbian spiritual conscience would be weak and void. Encouraged by your strength and decisiveness, we always offer prayers on our knees that you may endure and that the Kosovo Oath will become a bridge between heavenly and earthly Serbia. We dare not, because of injustice, give in nor take fright, but instead we choose the Heavenly Kingdom along with the Holy Tsar Lazar, who offered a sacrifice just as you offer it today.

Injustice and misuse of the goods of this world did not bypass our greatly suffering but never crushed and humiliated people who, by the grace of God, will next year celebrate eight hundred years of autocephaly of the Church and state. This gives us self-confidence and confirmation that we are a people led by saints: Saint Simeon, Saint Sava and Saint King Stefan the first-crowned. They have forever planted the Serbian people on the cornerstone of the foundation, on the Resurrected Christ Himself.

We call upon all our sons and daughters, the spiritual children of our Church, who live on all continents, with whom we are united in prayer, to rejoice together in Christ's Resurrection. This resurrection calls upon us to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:3)

Wishing you every true good, forgiving one another, we invoke the grace, peace and power of the Resurrected Christ, so that we may with one mouth and one heart joyfully exclaim:

Christ is Risen!

Given at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade on Pascha 2018.

Your intercessors before the Resurrected Christ:

**Archbishop of Pec,
Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and
Serbian Patriarch IRINEJ**

Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Coastlands **AMPHILOHIJE**

Metropolitan of Zagreb and Ljubljana **PORFIRIJE**

Metropolitan of Dabro-Bosna **CHRYSOSTOM**

Bishop of Sabac **LAVRENTIJE**

Bishop of Srem **VASILJE**

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 **DOS-
ITEJ**

Bishop of Western Europe **LUKA**

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 Budimlje and Niksic **JOANIKIJE**

Bishop of Zahumlje and Hercegovina
GRIGORIJE

Bishop of Valjevo **MILUTIN**

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 Australia and New Zealand Metropolitanate **SILUAN**
Bishop of Dalmatia **NIKODIM**

Vicar Bishop of Moravica **ANTONIJE**
Vicar Bishop of Diokleia **KIRIL**

THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF OCHRID:

Archbishop of Ochrid and Metropolitan of Skoplje **JOVAN**
Bishop of Polog and Kumanovo **JOAKIM**
Bishop of Bregalnica **MARKO**
Vicar Bishop of Stobi **DAVID**

[Path of Orthodoxy translation]



Српска Православна Црква својој духовној
деци
о Васкрсу 2018. године

Иринеј

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!

Испуни се време вишенедељног Часног
поста у коме смо на свакодневним богослужењима –
покајањем, исповешћу и сузним молитвама –
састрадавали са Господом нашим, пратили
крстоваскрсни пут и благодарно клицали: „Слава
дуготрпљењу Твоме, Господе!“ Проживљавали смо
добровољна страдања, понижења, пљувања и крсну
смрт, да бисмо данас, по неизмерној милости Божјој,
дочекали Христово славно Васкрсење. Учествојући у
овим догађајима, ми кроз њих и живимо,
превазилазећи смрт и сваку жалост; јер као што без
смрти нема Васкрсења, тако ни без подвига са надом
и трпљењем нема утехе. Зато се поклањамо и
благодаримо Господу Васкрслом из мртвих, јер је нас,

верне Своје, удостојио да будемо причасници Његових чудесних дела, осећајући у нашој души нов живот који побеђује све невоље.

Радосно прослављајмо данашњи светли празник, драга наша децо духовна, јер његова благодат и светлост не долазе од Сунца, нити од анђелâ, већ од неприступне светлости којом се разгони тама и очи људске сагледавају сву лепоту и склад Божјег света. Само у тој светлости може се јасно сагледати смисао постојања човека и света у достојанству које им по Божјем назначењу припада. На овај дан се, заједно са богоносним оцима Цркве Христове, подсећамо и опомињемо да се узрок и циљ тварне егзистенције налази у Богу. Као сарадник Божји, човек је одговоран не само за себе и свој народ, него за све људе и за све народе, за свеукупну Божју творевину. То је свечовечанска философија којом наша вера живи и делује кроз векове, пројављујући оно што се данас модерно назива „еколошком свешћу“. Зато на данашњи Празник, који јесте оаза мира и радости, ми вршимо духовну смотру, наоружавајући се надом да бисмо уз помоћ свеоружја Божјег, које је у Цркви, издржали све тешкоће и сва искушења, црпећи снагу од Господа који нас храбри речима: „Не бојте се, Ја сам победио свет“ (Јн 16, 33). Васкрсење јесте највећа победа над злом, грехом и смрћу, која нас подсећа да и ми имамо могућност и обавезу да се успротивимо сваком духовном паду и свему што нас онемогућава у идењу за добром, да не очајавамо него да наду своју положимо на Господа, да бисмо добили Божју благодат и помоћ у свакој тешкоћи. Вера у Васкрслог Богочовека пројављује лековитост пред стихијом пораста депресивности у савременом свету, јер нам, по речима светог Теофана Затворника, дарује могућност да духовним очима „гледамо преко греха и патње“. Ако ли по слабости грешимо, свето Јеванђеље нам поручује: Устани ти који спаваш – у греху – устани и васкрсни из мртвих – покајањем – и обасјаће те Христос (ср. Еф 5, 14).

Како би све довео у првобитни склад и нама људима вратио радост од гледања лица Његова, Сâм Господ из превеликог милосрђа и љубави према нама

узима на Себе чудесни подвиг – постаје Богочовек, родивши се од Духа Светога и Марије Дјеве ради нас људи и ради нашега спасења, и „би предан за грехе наше и устале за оправдање наше“ (Рим 4, 25). Дакле, оправдање наше јесте обожење у Христу Исусу, а радост наша јесте вечна радост и нада Васкрсења, на коме се темељи Символ хришћанске вере, а које собом доноси највећи дар: победу живота над смрћу. Очовечење као почетак домостроја спасења рода људског у Васкрсењу остварује коначно испуњење спасоносног дела које Православна Црква сваке недеље непрекидно прославља. Тако годишњи круг у коме постојимо, по златокрилим речима светог Владике Николаја, није „само једна читуља мртвих“, већ увек отворени динамизам живота који иде у сусрет Христу Који долази. Зато, ко је Христов и назива се хришћанином ослобођен је смрти, јер нас Сâм Господ у то уверава: „Ја сам васкрсење и живот; ко верује у Мене, ако и умре, живеће“ (Јн 11, 25). Овим речима Он нам даје наду на истински живот који је радост наше вере; из њих разумемо да је Његово Васкрсење – наше васкрсење, јер Христос смрћу смрт уништи, дарујући нама живот вечни.

Тај блажени живот, живот са свима светима, почиње већ овде на земљи. За свакога ко душу своју испуни вечном речју Божјом и опрости свима за све, радост и мир почињу овде, у овом животу. Нема човека данас, био он верник или неверник, који не би желео бар за тренутак да учествује у истинској радости. Али, мира и радости ниоткуда. Свуда безизлаз, душа опатуљена у личним тежњама и жељама које производе из самољубља и саможивости, што доводи до духовне смрти која има за последицу бесциљност и немарност за вечно спасење.

Сведоци смо свеопштег отуђења и раздора, најпре у самој породици, где је заједница међу супружницима све нестабилнија, а међусобно непоштовање родитеља оставља неизбрисиву рану на дечјим душама. Не можемо тражити своја права угрожавајући туђа. Заборављамо да је неопходно поштовати себе и светињу свога тела које је храм Духа Светога (Кор 6, 19), како бисмо могли наћи праву меру

свега пролазног, поштовати ближњег, његову слободу, светињу општег и заједничког добра, као и личних потреба.

Стога, децо наша духовна, поштујте и чувајте светињу брака, јер је она темељ здраве и неразориве породице. Чувајте у љубави тајну живота коју је осветио Сâм Бог. Искрена верност и узајамно праштање нека красе сваку нашу породицу која је домаћа Црква. Чедоморство, највећи злочин овога века, нажалост, присутно је и у нашем народу: према статистичким подацима, сваке године у Србији нестаје читав један град. У светлости Христовог Васкрсења свако зачеће, рођење и свако људско биће јесу дар Божји који има вечни смисао и рађа се за вечност. Износећи пред вас, драга браћо и сестре, искушења читавог човечанства, у очинској љубави молимо вас да се здраво и одговорно владате, искупљујући трезвено и у миру време свога живота „јер су дани зли“ (Еф 5, 16). Помолимо се Господу да завлада мир свуда одакле је протеран, на првом месту у нашим срцима и нашим домовима, али и у целом многострадалном свету!

Ми хришћани не презиремо овај свет и људе. Ми чврсто ходамо на земљи, очију подигнутих ка небу. Поштујући сва људска достигнућа, желимо да се све освети благодаћу и силом Божјом, јер нам Господ поручује: „Ви сте светлост свету“ (Мт 5, 14). Радуйте се пасхалном радосту, јер Господ жели „да радост наша буде потпуна“ (1. Јн 1, 4). Сигурна је победа са Христом која се постиже благодаћу и нашим трудом да одржимо заповести Божје. Када се човек роди водом и Духом, тада почиње његово васкрсење, које је централна тачка вечнобитија, у коју се сабирају сви елементи помоћу којих долазимо до себепознања и богопознања. Познање Истине, стварне Истине, јесте вера у Васкрсење и радост Васкрсења.

У светлим данима наше радости, ми не заборављамо људски бол, патње и страдања. Не заборављамо ни болесне, старе и изнемогле, оне у сиромаштву, избеглиштву и беди, прогнане и изгнане са

својих огњишта. Са вером и надом молимо се да Бог обрише сваку сузу са лица њихових (в. Отк 7, 17). Непрестано састрадавамо са свештенством и монашвом, са нашим верним народом и децом Косова и Метохије, који су наша савест и без којих је српска духовна свест слаба и ништавна. Окрепљени вашом снагом и одлучношћу, непрестано приносимо коленопреклоне молитве да истрајете и да нам свима Косовски Завет буде мост између небеске и земаљске Србије. Ми не смемо због неправде клонути, не смемо се уплашити, већ се одредити за Царство небеско са светим кнезом Лазаром, који је принео жртву као и ви што данас приносите.

Неправда и злоупотреба добара овога света није мимоишла наш многострадални, али никада погажени и понижени народ који, милошћу Божјом, прославља догодине осам векова самосталности Цркве и државе. То нам даје поуздање и потврду да смо ми народ вођен светима – светим Симеоном, Светим Савом и светим краљем Стефаном Првовенчаним – који за свагда српски народ утемељише на крајеугаоном камену, Васкрслом Христу.

Обраћамо се свим нашим синовима и кћерима, духовној деци наше Цркве, која живе на свим континентима, са којима смо молитвено сједињени, да се са нама радују Васкрсењу Христовом, које нас позива да у љубави и слози, једни са другима, чувамо „јединство духа свезом мира“ (Еф 4, 3).

Желећи вам свако истинско добро, опростивши једни другима, призивамо благодат, мир и силу Васкрслога Христа, да бисмо могли једним устима и једним срцем да кличемо радосно:

Христос васкрсе!

Дано у Патријаршији српској у Београду, о Васкрсу 2018. године.

Ваши молитвеници пред Васкрслим Христом:

**АРХИЕПИСКОП ПЕЋКИ,
МИТРОПОЛИТ БЕОГРАДСКО-КАРЛОВАЧКИ**

И ПАТРИЈАРХ СРПСКИ **ИРИНЕЈ**

Митрополит црногорско-приморски **АМФИЛОХИЈЕ**

Митрополит загребачко-љубљански **ПОРФИРИЈЕ**

Митрополит добробосански **ХРИЗОСТОМ**

Епископ шабачки **ЛАВРЕНТИЈЕ**

Епископ сремски **ВАСИЛИЈЕ**

Епископ бањалучки **ЈЕФРЕМ**

Епископ будимски **ЛУКИЈАН**

Епископ банатски **НИКАНОР**

Епископ новограчаничко-средњезападноамерички

ЛОНГИН

Епископ канадски **МИТРОФАН**

Епископ бачки **ИРИНЕЈ**

Епископ британско-скандинавски **ДОСИТЕЈ**

Епископ западноевропски **ЛУКА**

Епископ жички **ЈУСТИН**

Епископ врањски **ПАХОМИЈЕ**

Епископ шумадијски **ЈОВАН**

Епископ браничевски **ИГЊАТИЈЕ**

Епископ зворничко-тузлански **ФОТИЈЕ**

Епископ милешевски **АТАНАСИЈЕ**

Епископ будимљанско-никшићки **ЈОАНИКИЈЕ**

Епископ захумско-херцеговачки **ГРИГОРИЈЕ**

Епископ ваљевски **МИЛУТИН**

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 Митрополије аустралијско-новозеландске

СИЛУАН

Епископ далматински **НИКОДИМ**

Викарни Епископ моравички **АНТОНИЈЕ**

Викарни Епископ диоклијски **КИРИЛО**

ОХРИДСКА АРХИЕПИСКОПИЈА:

Архиепископ охридски и Митрополит скопски **ЈОВАН**

Епископ полошко-кумановски **ЈОАКИМ**

Епископ брегалнички **МАРКО**

Викарни Епископ стобијски **ДАВИД**



Христос Васкрсе!
Christ Is Risen!

Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America

1621 West Garvey Avenue

Alhambra, CA 91803

626 289 9061 • 626 284 1484 (fax)

E-mail: info@westsrbdio.org

www.westsrbdio.org



**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,

I wholeheartedly greet you on the most and all-joyous Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, with a wish that your entire lives may be a sign of resurrectional victory and gratitude, and that on our faces the goodness of Eternal life may always shine.

In the Feast above all Feasts we have entered into a new reality, a different reasoning and power, because "death has been destroyed by death." Christ has descended into the lower regions of Hades, and having overcome death, He has abolished it, bearing all signs of victory, and gifting us with New life in Him.

The Resurrection calls us also, people of the 21st century, to come out of our tombs, that is, out of the shell of selfish living, and that we stop looking only for "ours," and rather have hope in Him who has brought us from death to life.

He justifies this life and makes present the Future Life, "of the world to come," which is already given to us in the Liturgy of the Church.

I greet you with the most joyous salutation:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

At the Holy Pascha of our Lord, 2018



Your Intercessor before the Resurrected Christ

**Благодаћу Божијом Православни
епископ Западноамерички
Благодат, мир и милост од
Васкрслога Спаса Христа**

Најдражи у Господу,

Срдачно вам упућујем честитке за сверадосне Празнике Васкрсења Господа Бога и Спаса нашега Исуса Христа, уз жељу да Вам наступајуће време буде у знаку васкрсне победе и благодарности и да на нашим лицима свагда сија благољепије Будућег века.

Са Празником над празницима ушли смо у нову стварност, другачију логику и силу јер "смрт је побеђена смрћу". Христос је сишао у дубине Ада и, савладавши смрт, изишао носећи знамења победе, дарујући свима нови живот у Њему.

Васкрс нас позива да и ми, људи 21. века, изађемо из љуштуре себичног живљења, имајући наду у Онога који нас је превео из смрти у живот.

Васкрсење оправдава и садашњи живот и оприсутњује Будући век, који нам је већ дарован у Литургији Цркве.

Поздрављам вас сверадосним ускликом:

ХРИСТОС ВАСКРСЕ!

О Светој Пасхи Господњој, 2018. године



Ваш молитвеник пред Васкрслим Христом

St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral

Executive and Auditing Boards

Elected at the Annual Parish Assembly December 3rd, 2017



2018 CHURCH BOARD

PRESIDENT:

650.455.2144

VICE-PRESIDENT:

415.308-0799

RECORDING SECRETARY:

650.796.0404

TREASURER:

415.713.1950

FINANCIAL SECRETARY:

650.315.6156

Bob Medan

Robertmedan@earthlink.net

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Predrag Milovac

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Luka Erceg

lerceg@erceg.net

George Postich

george.postich@gmail.com

Blagoje Djordjevic, 2nd Financial Secretary

Members: Micaelee Ellswythe, Stevan Davidovich, Don Kosovac,

Jovica Maksimovic, Paul Bunjevic, Zarija Lukic,

AUDIT BOARD: John Lambright, Dushan Medan, Dan Grgich

“
**Анђео запеваше благодатној, Радуј се
Пречиста Дјево, и опет кажем Радуј се!
Твој Син Васкрсе тридневно из гроба, и
мртве подиже, Људи веселите се!**

**"The angel cried to the Lady full of grace: Re-
joice, O pure Virgin. Again I say: Rejoice. Your
Son is risen from His three days in the tomb.
With Himself He has raised all the dead.
Rejoice, all people."**

Црквени песник овим речима изражава свеопшту радост због чудесног догађаја—Васкрсења Христовог. Од стварања света, ништа се важније није догодило у Космосу од овог светог чина. Свети Николај Жички и Охридски каже: *Христово Васкрсење донело је човечанству темељну промену, равну стварању света.* Познавши и осеивши ово апостол Павле узвикује: *Старо прође, све ново постаде!* (2. Кор. 5,17)

Због тога нас, драга браћо и сестре, Света Црква позива да се кроз пост, покајање, исповест и причешће припремимо да прославимо Васкрсење Господње као крај свега *старог* у нама и наш улазак у *ново*. Размислимо о себи и свом односу према Богу. Његово Васкрсење је наша нада, наше спасење и одговор на живот и страдање. Васкрсење Христово је наша утеха и остварење наших надања.

Христос Васкрсе због свих и отвори рај који је припремљен свима нама! Христос Васкрсе због свих и за све! Славимо Његово славно Васкрсење и запевајмо са Православном Васељеном: ***Васкрсење Твоје Христе Спасе, Анђели певају на небесима, и нас на земљи удостоји да Те славио чистом Срцем!***

Свима вама драги парохијани честитамо најрадоснији празник са традиционалним поздравом:

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

Ваш молитвеник пред Васкрслим
Господом,
Протојереј Ђурица Гордић
Са парохијским саветом

The Church hymnographer with these words expresses the universal joy because of the miraculous event - the Resurrection of Christ. Since the creation of the world, nothing more important than this event took place in the Cosmos. St. Nikolai of Zicha and Ohrid says: *"Christ's Resurrection brought to humankind a fundamental change, equal to the creation of the world.* Knowing and feeling this, the Apostle Paul, exclaims: *"All things have passed away; behold all things have become new."* (II Cor. 5:17)

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, the Holy Church invites us through fasting, repentance, confession and Communion to prepare to celebrate the Resurrection as the end of everything "old" in us and our entrance into the "new". Let us think about ourselves and our relationship with God. His Resurrection is our hope, our salvation, and the response to our living and suffering. Christ's Resurrection is our comfort as well as the comfort of all suffering and God-desiring souls. May this be the message which, during this Resurrection Feast, we will adapt and place into our hearts.

Christ is risen because of all of us, and opened Paradise which is prepared for those who follow him. Christ is risen because of all and for all! Let's glorify His glorious Resurrection and sing with the Orthodox universe: ***"Your Resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the Angels in heaven sing. Enable us on earth to glorify You in purity of heart."***

All of you, dear parishioners, we greet with on this Glorious Feast with the traditional greeting:

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

In humble prayer, yours in the
Resurrected Lord
Protopresbyter Djurica Gordic
With Cathedral Parish Council



Dear Parishioners of St. John: Hristos Voskrese!

Pascha offers all of us an opportunity to reflect on our spiritual lives and our connection to God and by extension, our church.

This past year, we were fortunate to have His Grace Bishop Maxim visit our Church on two occasions, including our Krsna Slava. Our Liturgies are being celebrated with good attendance with many new faces each week. The choir has performed without fail every week with tireless dedication and commitment. Father Djurica has worked to bring together a dedicated group of teachers to invigorate our Sunday school, which now flourishes with many young attendees. Our Sunday lunches have been successful and brought us all together in fellowship, which is good for both body and soul.

The Board has worked to implement and complete many projects to improve our Church facilities during this past year. A fundraising effort provided us with the ability to reimagine our front garden and beautify it with new plants, benches and lighting. Our roof repair saga has come to an end after 35 years with the completion of repairs to our church cupolas and interior painting. The hall kitchen was upgraded in many ways, including new stoves and ovens and stainless steel surrounds, lighting and painting. This was a joint effort undertaken with our St. Sophia Sisterhood and the tireless work of our building crew.

We are happy to report that our church is on firm financial footing with many events contributing to our coffers. We enjoyed celebrating New Year's with a large and festive crowd, followed by our second annual food festival. Our Easter, Krsna Slava and Christmas celebrations were very well attended and brought us together to help prepare food, host our guests and enjoy the company of others, including our neighbors, fellow clergy and members of our sister parishes. We have also implemented a new bookkeeping system that has been such a success our Diocese has adopted it for use in all parishes.

Our small parish continues to grow, albeit at a slow pace and has done much to provide a welcome and nurturing environment for all. This is not something that any one person can take credit for, but reflects on our culture and values developed over time that has made our Cathedral what it is today.

We are fortunate to have many people who serve tirelessly to make our church function as it does. Without their hard work and love of God and each other, it would not be possible. We look forward to serving the spiritual needs of our parishioners for many years to come.

CHRIST IS RISEN! HRISTOS VOSKRESE!

Sincerely,
Bob Medan
Parish Council President

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!

Easter Greetings from the St. Sophia Sisterhood to all St. John's Parishioners! May your day be filled with the brightness and glory of Easter.

Reflecting this year on the good work our Sisterhood brings to St. John's makes me feel proud and honored to be a member. We continually try to contribute our time and talents to refreshing the physical aspects of St. John's. It's noble work! This year we will contribute \$7000 to the recently updated kitchen. That is remarkable and is reflective not only of our work ethic, but equally to our dedication to our church family.



Additionally, this year, we will host a Parastos for all members who have never had one. Surprisingly, there are many members who have passed but had no one in their family to remember them with a Parastos. They either had no living family or were the only ones familiar with our traditions and beliefs. When we settle on a date this Fall, I hope you will join us in remembering our members. Thank you Protonica Bunjevic for coming up with this idea; you will honor so many with your kind intentions. On the same day, we will dedicate a Memorial Garden in the front of the church to honor all our members who have been called to the Lord. It is a fitting, and beautiful, perpetual remembrance for our Sisters. Thank you, Lil Perazich and Melody Key for volunteering to chair the creation of the Memorial Garden.

We were humbled late last year to learn of Renee Ciganovic's posthumous donation to the Sisterhood. Renee remembered the Sisterhood in her will. Such generosity makes me stop and realize how essential and treasured our small community of women are to those around us. The many small things we do seem to grow into many great memories and of people remembering us.

St. Sophia Sisterhood hopes the glory of Easter Sunday carries forward through the entire year for you, your families, and all you hold dear.

Hristos Voskrese!

Tina Milinovich

Saint Sophia Sisterhood President

Sayings of the Ascetics of the

Orthodox Church

God and Us

Happiness

1. How mistaken are those people who seek happiness outside of themselves, in foreign lands and journeys, in riches and glory, in great possessions and pleasures, in diversions and vain things, which have a bitter end! In the same thing to construct the tower of happiness outside of ourselves as it is to build a house in a place that is consistently shaken by earthquakes. Happiness is found within ourselves, and blessed is the man who has understood this. Happiness is a pure heart, for such a heart becomes the throne of God. Thus says Christ of those who have pure hearts: "I will visit them, and will walk in them, and I will be a God to them, and they will be my people." (II Cor. 6:16) What can be lacking to them? Nothing, nothing at all! For they have the greatest good in their hearts: God Himself! (St. Nektarios of Aegina, Path to Happiness, 1)
2. The soul that loves God has its rest in God and in God alone. In all the paths that men walk in in the world, they do not attain peace until they draw nigh to hope in God. (St. Isaac the Syrian, Homily 56, 89)

Truth

1. Truth is not a thought, not a word, not a relationship between things, not a law. Truth is a Person. It is a Being which exceeds all beings and gives life to all. If you seek truth with love and for the sake of love, she will reveal the light of His face to you inasmuch as you are able to bear it without being burned. (St. Nicholas of Serbia, Thoughts on Good and Evil)

How does God relate to us?

1. God loves us more than a father, mother, friend, or any else could love, and even more than we are able to love ourselves. (St. John Chrysostom)
2. A certain monk told me that when he was very sick, his mother said to his father, "How our little boy is suffering. I would gladly give myself to be cut up into pieces if that would ease his suffering." Such is the love of God for people. He pitied people so much that he wanted to suffer for them, like their own mother, and even more. But no one can understand this great love without the grace of the Holy Spirit. (St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, IX.10)
3. The Lord loves all people, but He loves those who seek Him even more. To his chosen ones the Lord gives such great grace that for love they forsake the whole earth, the whole world, and their souls burn with desire that all people might be saved and see the glory of the Lord. (St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, IX.8)

How to Come to Know God

1. If a person wants to get an idea about the pyramids of Egypt, he must either trust those who have been in immediate proximity to the pyramids, or he must get next to them himself. There is no third option. In the same way a person can get an impression of God: He must either trust those who have stood and stand in immediate proximity to God, or he must take pains to come into such proximity himself. (St. Nicholas of Serbia, Thoughts on Good and Evil)
2. As it is impossible to verbally describe the sweetness of honey to one who has never tasted honey, so the goodness of God cannot be clearly communicated by way of teaching if we ourselves are not able to penetrate into the goodness of the Lord by our own experience. (St. Basil the Great, Conversations on the Psalms, 29)

3. Many rich and powerful men would pay dearly to see the Lord or His Most Pure Mother, but God does not appear in riches, but in the humble heart... Every one of the poorest men can be humbles and come to know God. It need neither money nor reputation to come to know God, but only humility. (St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, I.11,21)
4. No matter how much we may study, it is not possible to come to know God unless we live according to His commandments, for God is not know by science, but by the Holy Spirit. Many philosophers and learned men came to the belief that God exists, but they did not know God. It is one thing to belief that God exists and another to know Him. If someone has come to know God by the Holy Spirit, his soul will burn with love for God day and night, and his soul cannot be bound to any earthly thing. (St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, VIII.3)

How do We Relate to God?

1. Always have the fear of God in your heart, and remember that God is always with you, everywhere, whether you are walking or sitting. (St. Gennadius of Constantinople, The Golden Chain, 14)
2. Having God, fear nothing, but cast all of your care upon Him, and He will take care of you. Believe undoubtingly, and God will help you according to His mercy. (St. Barsanuphius the Great, Instructions, 166)
3. You must love every man with your whole soul, but put your hope in the one God, and serve Him alone. For as long as He is protecting us and our friends (the angels) are helping us, our enemies (the demons) cannot inflict evil upon us. But when He forsakes us, the also our friends turn away from us, and our enemies receive power over us. (St. Maximus Confessor, Chapters on Love, 4.95)
4. If a man has no worries about himself at all for the sake of love toward God and the working of good deeds, knowing that God is taking care of him, this is a true and wise hope. But if a man takes care of his own business and turns to God in prayer only when misfortunes come upon him which are beyond his power, and then he begins to hope in God, such a hope is vain and false. A true hope seeks only the Kingdom of God... the heart can have no peace until it obtains such a hope. This hope pacifies the heart and produces joy within it. (St. Seraphim of Sarov, Works, 4)

God takes care of everyone

1. Do not say, "this happened by chance, while this came to be of itself." In all that exists there is nothing disorderly, nothing indefinite, nothing without purpose, nothing by chance ... How many hairs are on your head? God will not forget one of them. Do you see how nothing, even the smallest thing, escapes the gaze of God? (St. Basil the Great)
2. It is an indubitable truth that the highest Divine Providence arranges all of creation. God considers all things beforehand and takes care for all things. This is the Divine fatherly care of which the blessed apostle Peter speaks: "Cast all of your cares upon Him, because He is concerned for you." (I Pet. 5:7) (St. Elias Minjatos. Sermon on the Great Fast,
3. The purpose of God's Providence is to unite, by means of right faith and spiritual love, people who have been separated by evil. To this end the Savior also suffered for us, "in order to gather together the children of God who were scattered." (John 11:52) (St. Maximus Confessor, Chapters of Love, 4.17)

Never let someone tell you that Kosovo is Lost

By Stevan Davidovich

It was around 3pm, the 26th of Feb, 2018 that I crossed into Kosovo from Montenegro during a major snow storm. I was driving a Toyota 4x4 and had 4-wheel drive engaged. At times I could not see 10 feet in front of me. It was impossible to know where the border was since 10Km separate the Montenegro and Kosovo checkpoints. The border between Montenegro and Kosovo is still in dispute. Some will say that it just got resolved. That is not true. All that has been resolved, is the process Montenegro and Kosovo will use to resolve the border. This process could take years or decades.



Next to me was Marko Urosevic', a graduate student, who completes his Master's from the Theological Faculty in Belgrade in a few months. The trip had a limited objective. I wanted to see the current life of monks in the monasteries of Pec' and Decani as well as Serbian people living in the nearby Albanian dominant region.

I am well aware of the seven centuries of conflict in the region. It was in 1346 that the Serbian Church was elevated to a Patriarchate, with its see at Pec. At that time, King Stefan Dusan, (the son of King Stefan of Decani) was proclaimed Emperor of Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and Albanians. A true multi-ethnic empire at its peak. 672 years later, I hear voices in America that the future role of Serbian life in the region is lost. What I found are an amazing collection of contradictions. A struggle between hope and despair, saint and sinner, peace and war, trust and betrayal.

As we stopped at a guard station to enter the Pec'



Monastery, a Kosovo Policeman, of Albanian ethnicity, approached the car. As I handed my American passport to the policeman, he was so excited that he came to attention and gave me a

salute as a tribute to Americans. We were greeted by a Nun at Pec'. She recommended that we proceed to Decani, before it got too dark since they had accommodations for men. About 30 minutes later we passed through two very serious KFOR (NATO) secured checkpoints as the sun had set for the day. The checkpoints were run by Italian and Austrian soldiers, whom I befriended and thanked the next day. Over the summer the soldiers broke up an attack staged by four Albanian Jihadists. Upon our arrival Fr. Petar,

a monk, welcomed us. They provided us an evening meal and rooms to sleep.



Next morning, we joined the monks for morning services and breakfast. After breakfast, I spoke in detail with Fr. Issac about my trip objectives. Fr. Issac coordinates relief operations in the area. He recommended that I visit the Serbian enclave of Gorazhdec, about 5 Km south-east of Pec'. He contacted Fr. Nenad, the local priest of our arrival. When we arrived Fr. Nenad, his wife and son Pavle, welcomed us into his home, located next to the local church. We talked in detail for over two hours.

Fr. Nenad explained that there were about 100 Serbian families in Gorazhdec with a population of about 350 surrounded by Albanians. They lived in daily despair. They are under constant pressure to sell their land and homes. Most of the families look for ways for their children to move out of the area for opportunity. I reviewed his electric bill and calculated that he pays \$0.82 per KWhr, 3 to



5 times more than in the US. He gave us a tour of the local church and school for about 75 children who attend. About 25 are in High School that runs in the afternoon and the

primary school which runs in the morning. The teachers are sent from Serbia and receive a salary increase of 150 Euros per month for teaching in Kosovo. Fr. Nenad's only source of income is that of being a teacher at the school. He showed us a security camera system that was a gift from the West that monitors the interior and exterior of the church and school.



Upon my return to Decani, we were able to join the monks for evening prayer followed by dinner. After dinner, Abbot Sava, who had just come from Belgrade, wanted to see me. He speaks excellent English and we talked till 10:40pm. The man had such a wide breath of understanding, it is impossible for me to find the words to express this. He could comprehend and convey the plight of Serbians living in the enclaves, and still outline the geo-political forces working throughout Kosovo. He claimed that

the population of Serbs on the Eastern side of Kosovo is about 10 times larger than the western side that I visited. He pointed out that despite the current plight of the Serbian people, that the current stale-mate is probably in the best interest for both Europe and Serbian interests. His reasoning is beyond the scope of this simple summary, but his words left me compelled to look at the bigger picture.

The next day, after morning prayers and breakfast, we brushed the snow off our car to return to Pec'. Fr. Petar



came to me and was determined to show us something in the church. I did not know what he wanted to show us. We walked inside the church and he entered the altar. He

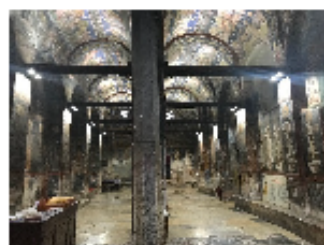
came out with set of keys and proceeded to the sarcophagus of King Stefan of Decani.

He removed a cloth covering the sarcophagus, revealing a metal cover with four locks. He opened the four locks and removed the metal cover followed by a glass cover that was under the metal cover. Right in front of me were the relics of St. Stephan of Decani, who started building the church in 1327. I saw his hands crossed over this chest and his gold wedding ring on his right ring finger.



I was overwhelmed. I started to pray in what appeared to be a random collection of thoughts, but as I slowed down my thinking, I could feel a sense of calm and realization that I did not need to worry about stating my prayers, they were already known. I lost track of time, and when I stood up, I noticed the flood of tears on my face. I was moved in ways that I cannot explain. The strength of the Serbian Christian Spirit is ever present.

When we returned to Pec', the same Nun gave us a tour of the four churches in the most bitter cold. Pec' was founded before Decani and had many additions over the

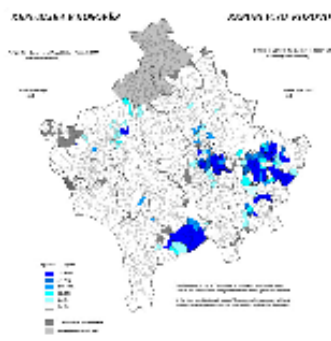


13th and 14th centuries. Both monasteries had a steady flow of foreign visitors. Norwegian, French, Japanese, German, etc. It was pointed out that many foreigners visit the sites because they are considered UNESCO historical sites.

As I crossed back into Montenegro, three hours later, I knew that I experienced something profound. I have been thinking about what happened to me and its meaning. One can dwell on the suffering of people in the region, but Serbs have suffered in the region for over six centuries. Why should we believe that this suffering is any worse than the past? At the end of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, over 90% of the clergy were either killed or exiled. Yet less than a century, the Russian Orthodox Church has become the largest Orthodox community in Eastern Orthodoxy. The Jewish people were killed and exiled out of Israel, multiple times, yet today they live and prosper in Israel.

I try to explain to my American friends, that Kosovo to the Serb is what Jerusalem is to the Jew. This trip validated my claim. Our spiritual legacy is intertwined into the fabric of the region. Its paradoxes are there to encourage our faith, not diminish it. As I looked upon the relics of King Stefan of Decani, tormented in life, and realized that his son finished building the church after his father was removed from power and martyred, to become the Emperor of the largest multi-ethnic empire of the region of the time tells me that there are forces much greater than those we can understand with our rational minds, or those of politicians, diplomats or soldiers.

It is for these reasons that the wisdom of Abbot Sava made me look at the situation from a much larger view, while the words of Fr. Nenad gave me the roadmap I was seeking. No one can say that



Kosovo is lost. When I told Fr. Nenad I was struggling to figure out how to help. He looked at me said, "you are helping right now." I said how? "You are coming here and talking to us and letting us know that we are not forgotten." Kosovo will never be lost, if we just go there and talk to the people and visit our churches. I realized that the money we send and material items we provide does help, but what the people in the region seek the most, is the knowledge that they are not forgotten. This is the challenge for those of us who live in the diaspora.

St. Sophia Sisterhood – 2018

By Tina Milinovich

On February 11, 2018 St. Sophia Sisterhood hosted their 65th Valentine's Day luncheon. The event was well attended; those joining were both long-time supporters, or surprisingly, new to the event. We are grateful our members are bringing friends and family to this event. The afternoon is even more lively with new faces.

We certainly enjoyed shopping Sara Mireles' fabulous O! La La! lipsticks and makeup selection as well selecting treasures from our two jewelry vendors, Lana Tomitch and Debbie Pullizzano. Their jewelry is handmade and very popular at the luncheon. All vendors return a portion of their sales to the Sisterhood; we are grateful for their contributions and hope they will return.



Many thank you's are necessary as this event does take a little extra effort to setup and execute. Lil Perazich, the food was delicious and well received. Marina Medan, thank you for the spectacular desserts; your works of art get better every year. Marie Derr, thank you for the generous and wide range of wines for the silent auction. Many ladies returned home – very happy! Bitsy, Blage & Sergio and Gigi, we are grateful for the help in setting up, serving and shutting down. Our members go the extra mile for this event. Thank you for always pitching in! A special thank you to Bob Fowler, who does not hesitate when asked to play piano during social hour. Finally, to all the ladies that bring enough home baked goods to fill two tables of sale items – Thank you!

We hope to see you next year!



St. Sophia Sisterhood



From our Sunday School

By Marija Stevanovic

St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral's Sunday School has been engaging children willing to learn Serbian language through literature and performing arts about Serbian culture, tradition, and Serbian Orthodox faith. One of the main motives for our monthly gatherings is to promote community building of young learners who showed interest in reach Serbian heritage. So far, we were able to accommodate children who have basic knowledge of Serbian language, as well as the ones with advanced skills, if not proficient, in speaking, reading and writing of Serbian Cyrillic alphabet. We continuously work toward the excellence in understanding different aspects of Serbian heritage and will strive to achieve the best outcomes.



Недељна Школа при храму Светог Јована Крститеља у Сан Француску окупља децу заинтересовану за учење српског језика кроз упознавање литературе и креативне уметности у српској култури, традицији и српској православној вери. Један од главних мотива за наша месечна окупљања јесу промовисање заједнице младих полазника који показују интерес за богато српско наслеђе. До сада, били смо у могућности да сарађујемо како са децом са основним познавањем српског језика тако и са онима напредним, ако не и одличним, вештинама у говору, читању и писању српског ћириличног писма. Континуирано радимо на усавршавању у разумевању различитих аспеката српског наслеђа и трудићемо се да дамо наш максимални допринос томе.





The Feast of St. Sava, the Great Archbishop, Enlightener, and Teacher, was celebrated at St. John the Baptist Cathedral on Sunday, January 28, 2018. The day's festivities began with the Divine Liturgy followed by the Blessing of the Festal Bread, a Slava Banquet, and a program of poem recitations and musical presentations by the children of the Cathedral





Stewardship Reflection
CHRIST IS RISEN!
INDEED HE IS RISEN!
4/8/18
Christ Is Risen!
Indeed He Is Risen!

Throughout the Lenten Season and the Liturgical Year, we reflect on Christ's death, His Resurrection and the hope of personal Salvation. But, this will take effort and if we think forty days of Lent was a challenge, difficult or an adjustment, let's consider what our effort needs to be during this temporary earthly time. Every day must focus on God's glory and pleasing Him! The best way to live for God is through Stewardship - providing our Time, Talents and Treasures in all that we do. Glory be to God! Let us prepare to stand before Him and be accountable.

Христос Вакрсе - Ваистину Вакрсе

Кроз сезону Великог Поста и током Литургијске године, теме као што су Христова смрт, Вакресење и нада у вечно спасење је нешто са чим се стално сусрећемо. Да би се све ово схватило и поставило у праксу није само довољно да се пости четрдесет дана. Често овај пост доживимо као изазов, потешкоћу али ово није само за време поста него се са овим сусрећемо током целог нашег живота. Сваког дана се морамо присетити Божије славе и хвалити Бога.

Најбољи начин да се ово уради јесте кроз Старатељство - приносећи наше Таленте, Време и Новце. Нека је слава Господу за све.

Да Господ да, да спремни дочекамо Сташни и Праведни Суд Господњи.



НЕДЕЉА ПРАВОСЛАВЉА У САН ФРАНЦИСКУ

Евхаријстиско славље Недеље православља 25. фебруара 2018. године у Сан Франциску увеличано је Светом архијерејском литургијом коју је служио Његово преосвештенство епископ Господин Максим са парохијским свештеником протојерејем Ђурицом Гордићем. Литургији је присуствовао велики број верника парохије при храму Светог Јована Крститеља у Сан Франциску који су примили Свету тајну причешћа.



Преосвећени Епископ Максим је беседио на тему Недеље православља и говорио о значају иконе и иконографије у духовном узрастању верника и хришћанском животу. Парох Ђурица Гордић се захвалио Преосвећеном Епископу Максиму на духовном старању и бризи за све нас.

После Свете литургије у црквеној сали уприличена је трпеза љубави, коју је за ову прилику припремила породица чтеца Луке Ерцега, који је такође благајник парохијског савета. Лука је недавно имао веома трауматичан здравствени проблем. У знак захвалности свима који су пружили подршку кроз молитву за његово оздрављење, Лука је поздравио присутне и говорио о значају заједнице за све вернике. Том приликом Лука је огласио отварање новог фонда за унапређење заједнице и рада са децом и омладином у који је са својом породицом приложио почетну суму новца.

The Eucharistic celebration of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, February 25, 2018 in San Francisco was elevated by Hierarchical Divine Liturgy served by His Grace Bishop Maxim with parish priest Fr. Djurica Gordic. Divine Liturgy was well attended, and many parishioners received Holy Eucharist.

His Grace Bishop Maxim delivered a sermon on the topic of Sunday of Orthodoxy, underlining the importance of icons and iconography in the spiritual life of every Christian. Fr. Djurica Gordic used this opportunity to thank His Grace Bishop Maxim for spiritual guidance and visit to St. John's parish.

After the Divine Liturgy in the church hall, there was lunch, prepared for this occasion by reader Luka Erceg and his family. Luka is treasurer of our parish council. Luka recently had a very traumatic health issue. As a thank you to all who gave support through the prayers, Luka greeted everyone and he talked about the importance of the community. Also, he announced the opening of the new Community fund which will be used for the benefit of our parishioners of all ages, and he donated seed money.

In the evening hours, His Grace Bishop Maxim and Fr. Djurica attended Pan-Orthodox vespers service at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church on Brotherhood Way in San Francisco.

12th Annual Humanitarian Banquet

On Sunday, November 12, 2017, the Four Circles of Serbian Sisters of the Bay Area of the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church hosted their 12th 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 Pratte and our Protinica Ljiljana Bunjevic as Honorary Chair. 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 \$40,000. We had approximately 120 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's, Ron and Dorothy Pratte and their staff, for making a wonderful lunch that everybody enjoyed.

Fourth, a special thank you to Danka Petrovic Poore for donating all the wine. Fifth, a special thank you to Bob Fowler for the wonderful recital. Sixth, a big thank you to the KSS of Saratoga for the hors d'oeuvres, the KSS of SF and Oakland for the desserts, and Svetlana Milojevic for the centerpieces. Finally, a big thank you to Steve Davidovich for his annual financial report and audit on the accounting of our Humanitarian Fund.

We look forward to another successful event this year that will be hosted by the KSS of St. George and St. John the Baptist on Sunday-December 6, 2018. Please mark this date on your calendar and we look forward to having you join us for our 13th Annual Humanitarian Banquet.



60th Wedding Anniversary of Prota Dusan and Protinica Ljiljana Bunjevic

On Saturday-February 3, 2018, Prota Dusan and Protinica Ljiljana Bunjevic celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary at St. Archangel Michael Serbian Orthodox Church in Saratoga with family, kumovi and friends.

They were married on February 2, 1958 in Chicago, Illinois at Christ the Savior Serbian Orthodox Church. As they remember, it was a very cold sunny day with snow on the ground.

As they celebrate 60 beautiful years together, their love and devotion to each other and their family is a rare example of commitment and loyalty to the essence of true love. We can say that the foundation of their love and devotion is built upon their love and faith in God, love of family, love of friends, love of community, and love of laughter.

As they continue on their love story journey, may the blessings of God give them many more years of true love and happiness.

Ziveli i Mnogaja Ljeta!!!



Cathedral Slava October 1, 2017

Слава нашег саборног храма, зачеће светог Јована Крститеља, обележена је светом арихерејском литургијом коју је служио Преосвећени епископ Максим, уз саслуживање оца Слободана Јовића, оца Василија Цвијановића, оца Зорана Савића и оца Ђурице Гордића. Славски колач и жито је припремила Мирела Ћуковић са својом породицом, на чему јој се искрено захваљујемо! У току славског банкета Преосвећени Епископ Максим је уручио Архијерејске Грамате признања Божићу Бобу Лазићу, за дугогодишњи пожртвовани рад при нашој парохији, и Стевану Давидовићу за вишегодишње служење на црквеном одбору. Славски банкет је припремила Жељка Максимовић уз помоћ парохијанки.



His Grece Bishop Maxim celebrated our Krsna slava with us, on October 1, 2018. During the banquet His Grace Bishop Maxim awarded Bob Lazic and Stevan Davidovich with Eiscopal Gramatas, for their dedication and generosity, serving as tutors and board member over the years. Beautiful Slavksi kolac and zito were prepared by Mirela Cukovic. Lunch was prepared by Zeljka Maksimovic and our parishoners.

Serbian food festival held by our parish on May 20, 2017 was a great success!

Many people attended and enjoyed traditional Serbian food such as roasted pork and lamb, gibanica, cevapi, sarma, sopska salata and homemade pastries.

In behalf organizing committee, as a chairman, I would like to thank all of you who worked hard and made this event a great success

This year again, on May 19, 2018 we are hosting Third Annual Food Festival. Please join us!



Who does the best job when it comes to cevaps? Come and find out!!!



Hard to decide: lamb or pork?!
Try both!



Best kitchen crew on the West Coast!

When attending liturgy at our parish you may notice that not only do we worship in English and Serbian, but we also use Church Slavonic, which is the historical language of liturgical music and prayer in our Church as well as others such as the Russian and Bulgarian jurisdictions. Subtle differences can be heard, for example *Tebje, Gospodi* in Church Slavonic as opposed to *Tebi, Gospode* in Serbian. Greater differences can be noticed if we consider longer prayers, such as the first sentence of the Lord's Prayer:

Church Slavonic: Оче наш, иже јеси на небесјех, да свјатитсја имја Твоје, да приидет царствіе Твоје, да будет волја Твоја, јакѡ на небеси и на земљи.

Serbian: Оче наш, који си на небесима, да се свети име Твоје, да дође царство Твоје, да буде волја Твоја, [kao na nebu i na zemlji].

It should be clear that these are related languages. Both are of the Slavic language group, with Church Slavonic being to Serbian and Russian like Latin is to French and Spanish, though closer. How Church Slavonic came to be is a testament to one of the greatest historical triumphs of the Orthodox faith, the Conversion of the Slavs. However, why we still use Church Slavonic even today is an important witness to the Orthodox mind. We should value, preserve, and pass on that which has been given to us, to honor the traditions and practices of those who committed themselves to God so that we may take on their likeness. By means of this earthly inheritance, we can give ourselves "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you," (1 Peter 1:4).

The codification of the Church Slavonic language began from a petition by a Moravian prince, seated in what is now the Czech Republic, St. Rastislav (from whom St. Sava is said to have received his birth name, Rastko) to Byzantine Emperor Michael III and the Patriarch St. Photius in 862, saying:

людѣмъ нашимъ поганьства ся отвѣрғшимъ, и по христіанескъ ся законъ дрѣжащимъ, оучителя не имамъ такового, иже бы нѣ въ свои јазыкъ истоую вероу христіанскоую сказаль, да быша и инѣ страны того зряще подобилися намъ. То послаи намъ, владыко, епископа и оучителя такового. Отъ васъ бо на вся страны вьсегда добрый законъ исходитъ.

Our people, having cast off paganism and conducting themselves according to Christian law, have no such teacher who would explain the true Christian faith to us in our own tongue, so that even the countries here, seeing this, might emulate us. So send us, Master, such a bishop and teacher. For always, into all countries, the good law flows from you.

The Life of Constantine, 9th Century

At this time, Rastislav's people, Slavonic speakers, were seeking to defend themselves from the ever more oppressive influence of the Franks who sought to overwhelm and dominate his people,

not just politically but also culturally and spiritually, to assimilate them into their Latin-Germanic dominion. To address this concern, the Emperor and Patriarch picked two brothers uniquely suited to the task, Constantine (who would take on the monastic name Cyril shortly before his death) and Methodius.

They were born in the city of Thessalonica and there is the possibility that their father may have been of Slavic stock himself, as many Slavs had migrated to that area. It is said that Cyril and Methodius already knew Slavonic even before their fated mission. Cyril, the younger brother, a philosopher and student of St. Photius, came to learn Arabic and Hebrew as well and was sent on diplomatic missions to the Middle East by the Emperor. Later, in 860, he was asked to go to Ukraine on a missionary expedition to the Khazars, who were converting to Judaism. His brother, Methodius, served as a military officer in the province of Macedonia for 10 years after which he withdrew to a monastery on Mt. Olympus.

Tradition says that Cyril devised an alphabet for the Slavs and first codified their language through translations of sacred texts from Greek, primarily the lectionary (daily readings) and the Gos-



pels. Historically the oldest texts are written in a script known as Glagolitic (*glagoljica*), which looks quite different. A comparison of Glagolitic and Church Slavonic scripts for the first sentence of the Lord's Prayer:

Glagolitic: Ձտակն բռնա՝ ճոճն յգն բն բլբլան . Ծեհ համբարտարուհ չափ տղայն . Ծեհ լրանելով Վահագնայ տղայն
 Ծեհ լսողներս ուղարկ տղայն . Խնք բն բլբլան . Ք բն Ռեզավն

Cyrillic: ОУЧЕ НАШЕ, ИЖЕ ЕСТЬ НА НЕБЕСѢХЪ, ДА СЛАВНѢЕША ИМЯ ТВОЕ: ДА ПРИДЕШЪ ЦАРСТВОЕ ТВОЕ:
ДА БЛАЖЕНЪ БОГА ТВОЕ, ІАКО НА НЕБЕСИ, И НА ЗЕМЛИ. (ѡ, ѡ=ja, ѣ=je, ї=i, џ=u)

Cyril is believed to have devised both the Glagolitic and Cyrillic alphabets, but Cyrillic would come to dominate, with Glagolitic only continuing past the Middle Ages on the Adriatic coast, primarily in Croatia.

Cyrillic is essentially the Greek alphabet with a few additional letters, just like Latin is a modified Greek alphabet and Greek is a modified Phoenician alphabet. Why then the creation of such an unusual script? Some scholars suggest that Cyril was inspired by the alphabets of other languages, such as Armenian, Samaritan, or Coptic. However, we have an enigmatic reference to potentially another means of writing lost to time according to a 10th century Bulgarian monk by the name of Hrabr. “For previously the Slavs had no books, but by means of marks and slashes they read and divined, being pagans:”
 Прежде убо словене не имеху книгъ, но чртами и резами чтеху и гатааху, погани суще.

Cyril and Methodius would face great opposition from the Frankish clergy, despite the brothers having the support of both popes Nicholas I and Adrian II. Technically the Slavs, at least those living in Rastislav's domain, were under the jurisdiction of the Western church. This influence can even be seen in some Old Church Slavonic texts where the syntax of some texts seems to follow Latin a bit more closely than the Greek, or the use of the word *meša* instead of *liturgija* or *služba*, being derived from the same word as Latin *mass* (*missa*). The Franks claimed that liturgy could only be served in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew but that was condemned as heretical. However, they eventually managed to expel Cyril and Methodius' disciples soon after their deaths. These disciples continued their work first in the Bulgarian Empire, primarily in Preslav and Ohrid, and then would go on to the lands of Serbia and Russia.

The historical path of Church Slavonic in its Serbian form is relatively complicated. Old Church Slavonic is attested to in manuscripts that reflect different local dialects, or recensions. Likewise, historical linguists believe that Slavonic was a language very much in flux at the time, much like English would be during the Great Vowel Shift of the later Middle Ages. A distinct, Serbo-Slavonic recension, *srpskoslovenski*, can clearly be found by the 13th century, for example in the language of the *Life of St. Simeon* (Stefan Nemanja), believed to have been penned by St. Sava and his brother Stefan Prvovenčani themselves. Unfortunately, the Turkish conquest greatly suppressed all intellectual and literary activity among the Serbs and that was further exacerbated by the erasure of Serbian Church governance by the Greek Church in Istanbul. This oppression eventually led to the great migrations northward into Austrian territories. However, the Austrians were not much more tolerant of the Slavonic traditions than the Franks of centuries prior, outlawing the use of any Slavic language education. Luckily for the Serbs they had ready access to resources and support from Russia. Teachers came with books in Russian and Church Slavonic, and through these would come a curious shift in the Serbian usage of Church Slavonic. This influence would result in the adoption of Russian Church Slavonic, *ruskocrkvenoslovenski*, and this is the form that we still use today. Where St. Sava wrote *svetii* for “holy,” we now say *svjatii* in our prayers per Russian influence. Other simple examples would be *veki vekъ* going to *veki vekov*, *človek* to *čelovek*, or *ime* to *imja*. A simple grammatical example would be plural of the past participle of *srpskoslovenski* (also in Modern Serbian) *bili*, *bile*, *bila* reducing to just one gender of *bili*, as it does in Modern Russian.

Having compared Church Slavonic to Serbian and discussed its inception, one might raise the question, why bother with Church Slavonic at all? Is not the Orthodox Church supposed to only serve in the vernacular, unlike the Catholic Church which supposedly only served in Latin until Vatican II? Language is a much more finicky and complicated thing than we think, even in the context of such a histor-

ically unusually monolingual and monocultural country such as the United States. Even a small country like Serbia has great dialectal and linguistic variation, with Ijekavski in the West vs Ekavski in the rest, Torlački in the South-East, Hungarian and Aromanian/Vlach in the North and Albanian in the South (depending on whose map you consider). Were it not for decades of formal education to normalize language for us in addition to mass internal migration, each city would speak its own dialect let alone language. The use of language in history, including in the Orthodox world, is even more complicated. To understand the use of Church Slavonic today we should first try to understand the use of language in the Orthodox Church in history.

The Orthodox Church early on adopted Greek as its official language. However, this itself is not really an example of adopting the vernacular as we think of it, for several reasons. Written and formal Greek at the time was not really spoken Greek per se. Consider this example: the adoption of accent marks in Greek (e.g., α, á, à, ã) for tones is traditionally attributed to Aristophanes of Byzantium, who wrote around 200 BC. The reason for this is that after the creation of the Alexandrian Empires many people started speaking Greek for whom the language was not native, so the language shifted from a tonal base (like Chinese or Finnish) to stress base (like most modern European language), and using accent marks he wished to it make easier to speak correctly. That does not even consider changes in vocabulary and phonetics, and that was 200 years before Christ and at least 300 years from earliest manuscripts preserved from Christian sources. An analogous situation is that of English, where we use spelling conventions from as far back as the 14th century AD, the time of Chaucer (that is why the *gh* in *enough*, *night*, and *ghost* all sound different). At least by the 6th century AD students in Constantinople, over two centuries before Cyril and Methodius, had to learn ‘proper’ Greek from textbooks just like we use today. It is quite likely that the Greek that Cyril and Methodius spoke in the market and maybe even in the court was a good deal different from that in which they prayed and wrote. By the 10th century AD spoken Greek looked much more like Modern Greek than Ancient Greek, and this would have been spoken by some of our saints like Symeon the New Theologian, Gregory Palamas, and Mark of Ephesus. A written example of this language is the epic saga about Digenes Akritas. However, written documents and prayers of the time used Classical Greek. Personal correspondences by saints of the time are written in Classical Greek, and often in a surprisingly high style that matched that of Thucydides or Democritus.

Thus, diglossia, meaning the use of two languages, was actually the norm and not the exception for the Orthodox Church of the Byzantines. Likewise, the Orthodox Church has always been tolerant of multilingual diversity, given that at the very least Coptic, Georgian, Armenian, Aramaic, and Syriac, as well as perhaps a plethora of other languages, sadly lost to history, were used in liturgical practices, all within the confines of the officially Latin/Greek Roman Empire. This reality gave us many scripturally multilingual saints, such as the Desert Fathers of Egypt or St. Ephraim the Syrian. The only reason this diversity ever ended was due to the Arabic invasions and subsequent Islamization of the Middle East and North Africa. If anything, this tolerance and diversity lends a certain sense of irony to our immediate situation, whereby exclusive use of English would actually be in opposition to the practice of the culturally and linguistically diverse Orthodox nation of the Byzantines. On the other hand, the primary successor to Byzantium, Russia, the third Rome, continued this linguistic diversity to some extent herself.

A notable testament to linguistic diversity in Orthodox worship is the account of the pilgrimage of Egeria, a Latin-speaking woman who visited the Holy Land in the late 4th century AD, recorded in her letter *Peregrinatio* or *Itinerarium Egeriae*. At one point she notes during a liturgy that the bishop would speak in Greek (*episcopus... grece loquitur*) and then a priest would follow in Syriac (*presbyter, qui episcopo grece dicente siriste interpretatur*), a third at least in Latin for her and her fellow Latinate pilgrims (*alii... qui latine exponunt eis*). These were people who would have personally known of and maybe even served with the great Fathers of the Early Church, such as saints John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, and Gregory the Theologian. It’s even quite possible that the bishop overseeing that specific liturgy which Egeria attended was St. Cyril of Jerusalem himself. Another example, St. Gregory the Dialogist served himself in at least Latin and Greek, and he may even have originally penned the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts in Latin first (known as *Missa Praesantificatorum* in the West). Such multilingualism would continue, even among the Slavs who arrived to the Christian faith much later. Not only in cities nearer to Constantinople, such as Kiev, would one hear Greek as well as other languages, but even in cities at the end of the known world, such as Novgorod, where one group of singers would chant in

Greek and another in Slavonic. St. Sava himself at times was said to have served alternatively in both languages.

The idea that liturgy should only be served in official vernacular of the land is also not necessarily biblical. If Jesus spoke Aramaic with disciples, for them he would have recited scripture in Hebrew. Likewise, the Jewish temple service itself of the time would have been in Hebrew. The Jews of Alexandria, who spoke Greek better than Hebrew let alone Aramaic, attended synagogues in Hebrew. Most significantly, however, is the experience of Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit himself and the official founding of the Church in the world:

Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

Acts 2:2-11

This is the closest we get to the "linguistic question" in scripture, and note it says that by the Holy Spirit each man heard one another speaking in their language of home in which they were born. The descent of the Holy Spirit did not cause everyone speak and understand Aramaic, the predominant language of the Jerusalem, nor Latin or Greek, the languages of the political realm, but rather to understand in the language of their birth. This leads to the question, what is the language we are born into? For some of us, English is our primary language because we were raised in an English-speaking environment. Some of us grew up speaking Serbian or another language at home but learned a different language in school. Others grew up in one language for part of their lives and now use English in their current lives. We are not intrinsically born with a language, it is learned. What language we are born into, then, for each person, may be better interpreted as the language of kinship, or the language closest to their hearts.

Church Slavonic is a beautiful language that can nourish our hearts in many ways. In his later work *The House of the Father*, Fr. George Florovsky discuss what exactly it means for the Church to be *catholic*, that is, universal/*saborna*. The Orthodox Church is universal not only in that it embraces and can embrace the faithful of any nation, it is also universal in time. The Church of today is the same Church as that of our ancestors as well as the Church of our descendants. In a practical sense, knowing Church Slavonic allows us to go to Holy Virgin Cathedral and to pray with our Orthodox brethren there as well as to pray in a church in Sofia or Kiev. But in a deeper sense, by praying in Church Slavonic we are able to pray not only with those next to us but to pray along with those before us, with our ancestors who carried their traditions, language, and crosses in much more difficult times than our own. We are literally saying the same words as saints Cyril and Methodius and St. Sava when we say the Lord's Prayer in Slavonic. If we meditate on that fact we can use it as a portal into a deeper appreciation of what the Church is and how we as individuals can go beyond ourselves and become part of the body of Christ. This is also true for Greek and may be the case one day for English, a few centuries from now. In addition, the sense of separation from the vernacular allows us to step into another world, to strive in heart toward godliness, as the Church is ultimately not of this world. As we say in church, *svjataja svjatim, svetinje svetima, holy things for the holy*. But the Church is both an eternal and historical entity, and to deny the historical route of our faith and our martyr-ancestors would be in a way to deny the Church itself.

The most dangerous aspect of arguing that we ought only to pray in the vernacular, only in English or Serbian, is that it effectively denies the historic reality of the Orthodox Church. As shown above, almost all the saints spoke in one language and prayed in another. To argue that we are not

keeping the faith today because we are using ‘strange tongues’ in church is effectively to argue that the majority of the saints of the Orthodox Church for at least the past 1500 years were not keeping the faith themselves because they too, including saints like St. John of Damascus, St. Gregory Palamas, or St. Sava, prayed in one language but communicated on the street in another. There is no greater hubris and danger to our salvation than to put ourselves in opposition to the spirit of the saints. An analogous temptation of the modern mind is to say that the Church was compromised by the “Peace of Constantine.” A proper, Orthodox interpretation of this historical moment is to say that the Church was freed from persecution and oppression, as say all the saints. Our funny dresses, our unrealistic icons, and our use of ‘strange languages,’ are a product of and testament to Holy Tradition in its most ordinary sense. However, on the other side, there is no salvific magic in using Church Slavonic or Ancient Greek, it is not key to our salvation. We need to make sure we “first clean the inside of the cup” (Matt. 23:26) and then the outside, as we cannot be saved by outward expressions of our faith without an inner disposition centered on Christ. Nevertheless, the attitude that we are to keep the traditions handed down to us by our ancestors and the saints is one that naturally inclines itself to the use of heritage languages as we do.

One criticism of our approach is that it limits the ability for the Orthodox faith to spread in non-Orthodox lands such as the United States. In some sense this is true: Americans do not understand Church Slavonic and unfortunately Serbs and Serbian-Americans do not understand Church Slavonic well enough themselves. However, evangelism should not mean the abandonment of who we are and our ancestry, to which language is inexorably tied. If that was the case, did our ancestors fail as Orthodox Christians because they did not switch from Slavonic to Turkish or German during their captivity? In their commentaries on the Old Testament, the saints praise Daniel, the three holy children of the furnace, and other examples from the Babylonian Captivity for keeping the traditions of their ancestors and for loving their homeland. Are we now to say that the Jews in Babylon were bad stewards of the faith because they did not switch to Akkadian from Hebrew?

On a practical level, however, all major cities have at least one English language Orthodox parish, most other churches are bilingual, and almost all important texts of the Orthodox Faith have been authoritatively translated into English. If anything, multilingualism only helps us grow as people. The Ancient Roman poet Quintus Ennius said he had three hearts because he could speak three languages: *Quintus Ennius tria corda habere sese dicebat, quod loqui Graece et Osce et Latine sciret*, (Attic Nights 17.17, Aulus Gellius). On a deeper level, preserving the language and traditions handed down to us allows us to evangelize American society more profoundly, to make America Orthodox and not Orthodox American. America is a nation with young roots, but rather than grow deeper this rootlessness has only grown worse in recent decades and is likely a reason for the greater fragmentation of our society today. A culture, a community, a family, that is authentically based in the Orthodox faith will have roots that stretch back thousands of years, through all the winds and turns of our ancestors all the way back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. People who convert to the Orthodox faith are invited to become “grafted into” the Church (Romans 11:17) and to not only participate in our holy inheritance but to sanctify their own. This is exactly what the Slavs did, that is how a pre-Christian tradition became one of our most important Serbian Orthodox traditions, the Slava. By sincerely holding onto these ancient practices we can be “city on a hill” (Matt. 5:14) for our non-Orthodox neighbors on how to structure and live out their lives in faith.

One thing we are indeed guilty of is not teaching and propagating the Church Slavonic language in addition to Serbian. We need to be teaching and actively learning these languages. Even English needs to be taught in school to be used in an articulate way. Why not Church Slavonic too, at least within the confines of our parish? We should be encouraging and supporting one another in these endeavors, not doing what’s easiest or pursuing the lowest common denominator. We encourage you all to pick up the liturgy books we have in the pews and to follow along in the liturgy, especially what the choir says, since their words are your words. At St. John’s we are especially blessed to have such a talented choir and we should follow along in song and speech (or off-pitch mumbling, as the author himself does). After a few times you’d be surprised at how easy it is to follow along, it just requires a little effort to get started. For over a thousand years our ancestors have kept alive their traditions and their language, surviving and persevering against all odds and terrible persecution. Why should we not continue for another thousand?



Saint John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral
Саборни Храм Светог Јована Крститеља

Parish Report for Year 2016
To the Diocesan Annual Assembly – September 2, 2017

The year of our Lord 2017, at St. John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Cathedral parish was filled with the grace, mercy and love of God, with many blessed events.

It is our pleasure to report to you, Your Grace, dear fathers and members of the Diocesan Assembly, the work that has been accomplished this past year through the good deeds and hard work of many and the upcoming projects that still require our attention.

The memorial garden that was recently completed helped transform the Church's front entry and side areas into beautiful and easily maintainable landscapes that are a pleasure to look at and use little water. Benches were also installed to provide a comfortable area to rest and contemplate.

We took the opportunity to remodel our ground floor apartment next door at 918 Baker St. The kitchen was completely remodeled and the living space was enhanced with new windows, flooring and paint. It is currently rented out and enjoyed by a new tenant.

Before Pascha we completed the project in conjunction with our St. Sophia Sisterhood and it included the painting of our hall kitchen, upgrading the light fixtures, installing of new stainless steel stove surrounds, and putting in a new fire suppression system. It has also been our desire to reconfigure the coatroom closet and ticket booth in the main hall into our new bookstore and display area. Our continuing saga of repairing our leaky roofs is alive and well in 2017 as it was 25 years ago. This winter has given us ample opportunity to find out where the leaks are coming from and how to fix them. With Gods help, the leaks will be a thing of the past.

We at St. John's have been blessed with many who work tirelessly on behalf of the Church, serve on our Board, attend our meetings, chair our events, and do the many things that keep the lights on and the doors open each and every Sunday with a choir ready to sing. We are thankful to those who have helped us complete our past projects through their donations and hard work and look forward to completing many more.

Our congregation has approximately 150 parishioners around the San Francisco Bay area. This number is slowly growing, since young Serbian professionals are moving to this area for work in software/computer industry.

Among our parishioners, for year of 2016 there are 56 members and 26 families as stewards (most members are stewards). The Parish council does not aggressively solicit membership or stewardship dues, but continues to encourage their active role in attending church services, participate in sacraments and support of our parish activities. The average Sunday attendance is 40-60 parishioners. The results of serving this community can be reflected in the following services:

87 Divine Liturgies,
6 baptisms,
4 funerals,
25 home blessings, and
28 family slava services.

We continue to have religious education lectures once a month following Saturday vesper service. Sunday school is prepared for new school year. Sunday School is held every other Sunday, in order to have better participation, since many children have sport activities at their schools. Last year we had 15 children ages 5-10. Sunday school organizes field trips for kids, sponsored by our parish.

There is a strong working collaboration and relationship between the Priest and the Board in guiding and coordinating our auxiliary organizations, such as St. Sophia Sisterhood, Sunday School and St. John's Choir.

Respectfully Yours in Christ,
Fr. Djurica Gordic, Parish Priest
Bob Medan, Parish Council President

New Years Celebration, January 13, 2018





Fixing a leak on church roof through cupolas was not a easy task, but thanks to Stan Grgich, Dusan, Aleksandar, Tomislav and George Medan, it's fixed! One by one, they raised cupolas and sealed the roof, so no more leaks on the church roof!



His Eminence Metrpolital Joseph of Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America visited our Cathedral with a group of pilgrims from Los Angeles. We hosted lunch for them in our church hall. They were very pleased with our church and hospitality.



His Grace Bishop Kirilo, vicar for South America visited our Cathedral and First Serbian Benevolent Society museum and chapel at Colma. Our parish hosted dinner where Bishop Kirilo talked about church life and our people in South America.

**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!**

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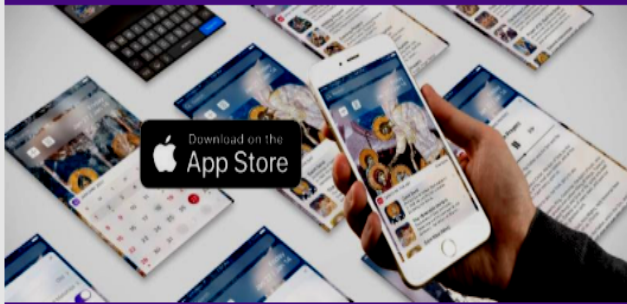
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Fr. Djurica Gordic

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Recommending the OrthoPrax App Bishop Maxim of Serbian Western Diocese

Technology is so omnipresent in the 21st century that we must consider whether it has become the very reality of life itself. It is difficult and arduous to decide how best to consider it both authentically and critically. By using different apps as a tool, people believe that Orthodoxy can become ingrained in our everyday life. At the same time, we know that even the most developed mobile app can't replace the Church. So what would be an "ideal" ecclesial mobile app? Maybe you can consider *OrthoPrax*.

OrthoPrax® is the ultimate Christian Orthodox calendar, prayer book, and guide with 3,500+ curated icons, daily prayers, and readings to help you experience and enjoy the liturgical cycle of the Church. Developed by the group of Orthodox laymen, it contains a wealth of information on the saints, far more than any other app you've seen. In-app purchases provide access to rich textual and audio content such as *The Prologue of Ohrid* by St. Nikolai of Serbia. But, you might ask, what of it?

This app is enhanced by a number of harmoniously organized features. Let's take a look at some of the most prominent. In a nutshell, calendar and lives of the saints (most comprehensive collection of saints for each day), biblical readings, beautiful daily and occasional prayers (morning, evening, pre-communion, etc.), most comprehensive collection of curated icons (3,500+) in high quality images (multiple icons per saint and feast day where available), words of wisdom from Church fathers, ecumenical teachers, and inspiration from ascetical fathers—all that you can take with you on your iPhone at all times. Put it simply, this is one of the most in-depth works I have seen in an app, arranging an astonishing back-end infrastructure for Orthodox content.

The real jewel here is the entire St Nikolai's *Prologue* both as full text (the lives of the saints, hymns of praise, reflection, contemplation and homily) and in audio format—brought alive with Fr. Norman Kosanovic's broadcast voice right on your device. This holistic compendium of Orthodox tradition would require dozens of large pricy books. This points to the real intent of this initiative.

The OrthoPrax App on your mobile device is very user-friendly "thesaurus" and the easiest way to access the day's Bible readings prescribed by the typicon of the Church. The wealth of information (fasting rules, lectionary, tone of week, hagiography, troparia, etc.) is organized in a systematic way, easy to read typeface, which can be enlarged. If I'm traveling, there is no better way to carry the Church's prescribed Scripture and devotional reading, since it has all the necessary prayers and I don't have to take a library with me. The calendar is adjustable to select any day of the year (so if you're on the New Calendar, you don't have to go forward thirteen days to look at the Old one). You can change from old calendar to new. In addition, it supports Greek, Antiochian, Russian and OCA specifics regarding the saints and calendar. The App also lets you lookup fasting guidelines for each day. For the lives of the saints, it usually shares several saints per day with biographies that are extensive, while their icons are included as thumbnail images.

I see the developer continues to grow the app and add more and more contents (readings, sayings, lives of the saints, etc.). Soon, the app will allow you to receive notifications of prayers, reflections, texts of homilies, a calendar of events, so you will be able to keep track of all your schedules. (I would love to have fasting and holiday alert feature!) Very soon it will provide access to documents of the Church councils and institutional information of the Orthodox Church.

In our time, such an App is especially important. Today's lifestyle, fueled by technology, introduces another kind of communication, mainly due to the urges of modern "digital" life (and its symptoms: absence of patience, instant gratification, everything being supposed to happen *now*, etc.). As OrthoPrax developers indicate, their focus is "on the pathway to Orthodoxy, and to help you experience it in an easily accessible manner." With that clarification, our understanding of mobile apps arena can really be refined and we should be grateful for the neatest and most elegant apps on the market. This is the most attractive mobile app put forward during the last decade. It generates excitement because it raises the possibility of a new approach to the digital world with a redeeming effect of great significance.

Download on the App Store:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/orthoprax/id1078949915>

Developer Website:

<http://www.icxclife.com>



Будимо мудри и безазлени

Међу вуковима опстати овци је тешко, али није немогуће, јер нам Господ каже на који начин ми можемо и међу вуковима опстати као овце Његове. А то је: да будемо мудри као змије и безазлени као голубови. Мудрост ће нас сачувати да не постанемо плен, да нас вуци не раскину, односно да нас непријатељи не онемогуће. А безазленост и доброта ће нас сачувати да ми не постанемо вуци.

Треба имати, дакле, мудрост. Развијати мудрост Богом дану, све више и више, а паралелно са тим развијати и доброту. Јер, мудрост без доброте прелази у злоћу, а безазленост без мудрости прелази у глупост. Ни једно ни друго више, него да будемо “мудри као змије, а безазлени као голубови”.

“И мене су гонили, и вас ће гонити”, говори Господ. С тим морамо бити начисто и припремити се да и при том останемо онако како треба, какви су и преци наши били: људи Божији, народ Божији. И онда, кад дође крај живота нашега, ући ћемо у радост блаженства Царства Небескога. То и јесте смисао и циљ нашег живота. Бог вас благословио! **Патријарх Српски Г. Павле**

Поуке оца Тадеја

Каквим се мислима бавимо таквог смо и расположења па нам је и цео живот такав. Ако се бавимо немирним мислима, ако стално бринемо шта ће да се деси уместо да учинимо шта можемо и препустимо се Божијој руци, онда ће и живот да нам буде једна секирација и на људе ћемо преносити такво расположење. А уколико се трудимо да свим својим бићем па и мислима предамо себе Богу онда ћемо живети радујући се. И цео живот ће нам проћи више у радости него у “бедаку”.

Свети Оци кажу: ако се одбаци предлог духова злобе, победа је добијена без борбе. Они су то из искуства говорили.

О НАРОДНОМ СРПСКОМ ПОЗДРАВУ И ОТПОЗДРАВУ

– „ПОМОЗИ БОГ“ И „БОГ ТИ ПОМОГАО!“ –

Св. Владика Николај Велимировић

Опште познати и општеупотребљавани поздрав код српског народа јесте: Помози Бог! То је познато. Познато је то чак и странцима. Кад је турски председник долазио у Београд и у Крагујевац, он је поздравио масу народа на станицама, српским поздравом и на српском језику: Помози Бог! Кад је бивши председник чехословачке државе, г. Бенеш посетио нашу престоницу, он је поздравио војску и народ на српском језику са Помози Бог! Истим поздравом поздравио је недавно шеф француских ратника окупљени народ свуда од Београда до Кајмакчалана.

Међутим, искусили смо у више прилика, да се тај класични српски поздрав изобичајава и заборавља код наше омладине. У више прилика при доласку на неку црквену свечаност ми смо поздрављали школску децу са Помози Бог! на што су деца ћутала (јер нису умели да одговоре), или пак одговарала са: Добар дан! и Здраво! И тако доживљавамо једну аномалију, да оно што је код нас добро – странци цене и држе, а ми сами заборављамо и одбацујемо.

Ово непријатно искуство побуђује нас да распишемо свештенству Жичке епархије следеће:

1. Нека се свештеници сами што чешће у сусрету с људима служе овим поздравом: Помози Бог! Нека то нарочито чине кад ословљавају масе и групе народа.
 2. Нека свештеници поучавају своје парохијане, а нарочито омладину како сеоску тако и варошку, особито школску, да се служе овим добрим поздравом.
 3. Нека свештеници, вероучитељи приме ово к срцу и науче ђаке, да на поздрав: Помози Бог! одговарају: Бог ти помогао!
- Тамо где световна лица предају веронауку, нека надлежни пароси упознају их са овим нашим расписом и подејствују, да се и они потруде у овој ствари у истом правцу.

On Fasting by His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh, Greek Orthodox Church

Fasting, in our days, has become one of the most neglected spiritual values. Because of misunderstandings regarding the nature of fasting, because of confused and reversed priorities in its use, many of today's Orthodox Christians fast very little, or disregard fasting altogether.

The Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church which is scheduled to be convened in the near future has placed the problem of fasting as one of the first items on its agenda. It is hoped that through this Council the age-old practice of the Church to use fasting as one of the important means of spiritual growth will regain its proper place in the life of the Church.

Fasting was practiced by the Lord Himself. After prayer and fasting for forty days in the wilderness, the Lord victoriously faced the temptations of the devil (Matthew 4:1--11). The Lord himself asked the disciples to use fasting as an important spiritual weapon to achieve spiritual victories (Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29; Luke 2:37). The example of the Lord was followed by His disciples (Acts 14:23; 27:9; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 2 Corinthians 6:5, 11:27, etc.). What is fasting? Why is it so important? Why does fasting precede such important feasts such as Easter and Christmas?

The importance of fasting depends on its meaning. Many of the Fathers have written on fasting. Among others, St. Basil has left us with most inspired comments on fasting. St. Basil tells us that fasting is not abstaining from food only; it is first of all, abstaining from sin. Grounded in the teaching of the Fathers, the Church in its hymnology describes fasting as the mother of chastity and prudence, as the accuser of sin and as the advocate of repentance, the life worthy of angels and the salvation of humans (The Lenten Triodion, trans. Kallistos Ware, London 1978, p. 195). Fasting becomes all of these when observed in the proper spirit.

First of all, fasting is abstinence from food. By detaching us from earthly goods and realities, fasting has a liberating effect on us and makes us worthy of the life of the spirit, a life similar to that of angels. Second, fasting, as abstinence from bad habits and sin, is the mother of Christian virtues, the mother of sound and wholesome thinking; it allows us to establish the proper priority between the material and spiritual, giving priority to the spiritual.

Fasting is the advocate of repentance. Adam and Eve disobeyed God; they refused to fast from the forbidden fruit. They became slaves of their own desires. But now through fasting, through obedience to the rules of the Church regarding the use of spiritual and material goods, we may return to the life in Paradise, a life of communion with God. Thus, fasting is a means of salvation, this salvation being a life we live in accordance with the Divine will, in communion with God.

Because of the liberating effect of fasting, both material and spiritual, the Church has connected fasting with the celebration of the major feasts of our tradition. Easter is, of course, our main feast. It is the "feast of feasts." It is the feast of our liberation from the bondage of sin, from corrupted nature, from death. For on that day, through His Resurrection from the dead, Christ has raised us "from death to life, and from earth to heaven" (Resurrection Canon), Christ, "our new Passover," has taken us away from the land of slavery, sin and death, to the promised land of freedom, bliss and glory; from our sinful condition to resurrected life.

It is most appropriate to prepare for this celebration through a liberating fast, both material and spiritual. This is the profound meaning that fasting takes during the Great Lent. Let us allow ourselves to take advantage of the spiritual riches of the Church. Let us use the precious messianic gifts offered to us through its sacramental life, through its celebrations of the central mysteries of our salvation in Christ. Let us use the spiritual weapons,

"to fight the good fight, to walk the way of fasting, to crush the heads of the invisible dragons, to prove ourselves victorious over sin, and without condemnation to reach our goal of worshipping the Holy Resurrection"

Prayer of the Presanctified Liturgy

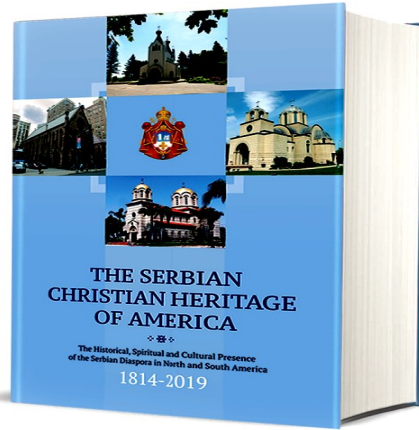
This is the challenge of the Great Lent: to use fasting to obtain the resurrected life, to unite with the Risen Lord. Who could refuse to accept this challenge?

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On behalf of the Episcopal Council

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