“Let us be renewed by the Resurrection.”
Conciliarity on the Light of Day
An Interview with His Grace Bishop Maxim of Western America

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COVER: Fresco, Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church, Butte, Montana
Editorial

Our True Home

It’s only natural for us to want to defend ourselves. And what better defense is there than the word of God? It is reassuring when we find words from Scriptures – even better when they are words spoken by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ – which support our argument. There are numerous examples of people taking the word of God and distorting them in order to support their claim for whatever reason. One such example - believe it or not - is for not having to go to church.

I’ve always found it peculiar – and it happened once again not too long ago - when someone will come quoting Scripture in the attempt to prove that one doesn’t need the Church in order to pray to God. Though our Serbian people are indeed God-fearing and God-loving we have a reputation of not being that consistent in church attendance. I once had someone tell me they love the church and come regularly. Very quickly they clarified their statement by saying they don’t come every Sunday; “I’m not a fanatic” was the explanation. I pray to God at home was the explanation I received not too long ago and going to church doesn’t prove anything. Moreover, they added, it’s even in the Bible: “But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly” (Matt. 6:6). That’s all you need. There’s no mention of the church or even having to leave your home.

Of course, it’s true. If you want to pray all you have to do is just that – pray! The Apostle Paul doesn’t even say “when” but tells us to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17) – to never stop praying! But the Church of Christ and the Divine Liturgy, not to mention the entire liturgical cycle of services, is more than just closing ourselves in our rooms and telling God our problems. It’s serving God. It’s worshiping Him together with the angelic hosts (prayer of the Little Entrance), a meeting between heaven and earth, man and God and, of course, the ultimate meeting we are all granted of being able to partake of His Holy Body and Precious Blood through the Holy Mystery of Communion. This encounter of ours with God is only given us in Church during the holiest service of the Divine Liturgy.

What’s more, going to church in order to attend and participate at the liturgy requires a certain level of discipline. It’s more than just “whenever we feel like it”. Rather, let us not forget that of the seven days in the week one of them is the Lord’s. This discipline is also something required of us. After all, didn’t the Lord command His Disciples to go and preach the good news to the whole world, making “disciples” of all nations?

I’ll admit what I find most intriguing in such discussions is that they come from people who tend to be the hardest workers in the parish. At times they’re the ones who spend most of their time in the kitchen helping, working, cooking, and serving.

If the church isn’t really that important and we can pray in our rooms, why do we give so much of our time and money and energy working for the good of the church? Why do we donate to the church? Perchance, in the end – while we have plenty of rooms in our homes to close ourselves off for prayer – we only have one church and it’s only when we are in that one room and space we call our parish church that we truly feel most at home, for it is the “Father’s House”, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and the Body of Christ our Savior.

Fr. Milovan Katanic
Let us celebrate today, dear brothers and sisters, our Lord God, “For He has visited and redeemed His people” (St. Luke 1:68) and with the light of His Resurrection He enlightens the entire universe! Let us glorify our Lord “who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised for our justification”. (Romans 4:25) Let us glorify our Lord Who, having become a man for us, has died so that by His Resurrection he could open to us doors of new life! For all of us who have been baptized into Christ, in Christ we have died to the old man, so that resurrected, reborn, renewed in Him, we can live with Him forever. (cf. Romans 6:8) Christ is risen from the dead and has become the Firstborn of the dead (cf. I Corinthians 15:20), so that we too who have died in Adam, may be made alive in Christ, becoming a new creation.

That is why we, on this bright Day, sing the song of victory to Him Who has conquered the power of death, to Him Who has conquered the seeming wisdom of the wise men of this world and by His Resurrection has saved those who believe in Him. (cf. I Corinthians 1:21) We have seen the fulfillment of the words of the prophets and together with the Apostle Paul we say: “We have come to know the love of Christ which surpasses understanding and have been filled with all the fullness of God.” (Eph. 3:19) For just as the power of death, after the Fall of the first parents of mankind into sin, entered into this world, so likewise Christ the Lord, as the New Adam, has received the wounds of sin upon Himself, voluntarily, and died for us and destroyed the power of death and has returned man to his original glory. That is why we through the Resurrection learn the meaning and goal of God’s creation, for the Lord has brought everything from non-existence into existence so that it could eternally and without corruption live in Christ, His Only-begotten Son. Saint Maxim the Confessor being inspired by God teaches that we are born into the body, by baptism we are reborn, and by the Resurrection we are eternally born in Christ Who, as the First-Born of the dead, renews the entire creation and bestows upon it immortality. By His Resurrection Christ unites this world with paradise, and in paradise He receives before everyone else the repentant thief, giving us all hope that our living in repentance is not in vain. In celebrating the resurrection of Christ, we are celebrating and singing the miraculous Mystery of God Who created us to be eternal partakers of the Divine nature, that is, of Divine life, in His Son, the Incarnate, Crucified and Resurrected Christ the Lord. (cf. II Peter 1:4)

Before Christ’s Resurrection, all went after death into the dark regions of hades, where there is no one to glorify God, and in that way the senselessness of death kept all of creation in chains. (cf. Psalm 6:6; Isaiah 38:18) Christ God descends into the lower regions of hades and destroys the eternal chains that kept everything locked up. (Paschal Canon, Ode 6) Hades was emptied, and our Lord brings our forebears and the righteous ones out into the light of new life. Since then death is only a dream. It no longer signifies the end, but rather the door into eternal life in Christ. That is why the Apostle Paul boldly exclaims: “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:21)

Having purified all our senses with fasting, let us look at the unapproachable light of the Resurrection; let us look at Christ Who shines in our hearts! Forgive each other of everything, let us be renewed by the Resurrection into the new life! Let
Let us live with the Resurrected Christ so that we already in this life may experience others and ourselves as One Body, One Church of God!

us live with the Resurrected Christ so that we already in this life may experience others and ourselves as One Body, One Church of God! Even though we live in a difficult time, full of unforeseen events and tragedies, we must not, following the example of the ancient Christians, stop rejoicing, and with Christ’s love we must love not only each other, but our enemies also, so that nothing separates us from the way of life which was granted to us by Christ Himself. Our Lord teaches us that if we do not forgive each other, we will not be forgiven, and if we judge, we are already judged. Without forgiving and without seeing our own transgressions towards our neighbors, friends and enemies, we will not be able to receive the light of the Resurrection, nor will we become the recipients of the hope of eternal life where there is no fear, sighing nor sadness. Let us not fear this world, brothers and sisters, for Christ has conquered this world! Let us fear only leaving the light for darkness, and leaving the joy of God’s Kingdom, by which we should live here and now, for the sake of worldly ideologies, bitterness, disunity, hatred and violence! We Christians are not afraid of death; rather we bless those who persecute us. We deeply believe that we are not of this world even though we live in it. Christ, the Eternal Pascha, has opened to us the doors of God’s Kingdom, which is our true fatherland, and we in this world are only passengers who are traveling through time and space, witnessing to Christ with our life. Let us, therefore, never forget in Whom we are baptized and for Whom we live, so that our life’s race is not futile and that our hope is not placed in empty and vain idols of this world and age. (cf. Galatians 2:2)

Our dear spiritual children let us not neglect love! For precisely according to our mutual love everyone will recognize us as Christ’s disciples. (cf. St. John 13:35) Let us be co-sufferers with those who suffer, let us weep with those who are weeping and let us comfort them with hope in the Lord! Let not our service to God be as a new edition of pharisaic external faith in God! For what reward will we receive? Let us sacrifice for our neighbor! Let us give to those in need! Let us glorify God with humility and with the words of the repentant publican who was forgiven and justified! The people of God today are dispersed throughout the world, but that which unites us and makes us One Church is not a transient ideology of this world, but a deep consciousness that we are united in Christ, in Whom we are baptized and of Whom we partake in the Eucharist, Holy Communion. Let us therefore make every effort that those who have not come to know the light of Christ’s teaching may see in us the way and recognize in us true successors of the apostles and saints of Christ! The entire Serbian people looks in this spirit to St. Sava, who unmistakably has shown us the way of Christ as the only way of life. The shrines of the Nemanjic’s have shone for centuries as lighthouses in the fog of our history, directing us to the all-encompassing spiritual horizons of God’s Kingdom, which is not of this world, but a deep consciousness that we are not of this world which lies in evil.

On this bright Feast Day, with our prayers we most especially remember all persecuted Serbs, who already for two decades have not been able to go back to their homes, but also those who remain living on their ancestral homesteads, who together with their shepherds are enduring threats and pressure just because they are Serbs.

We are especially concerned about our brothers and sisters in Kosovo and Metohija. They live and glorify God on Serbian land, from time immemorial, and continue to witness the mystery of Christ’s suffering and Resurrection. How many times have our people suffered, but again with God’s power, have risen and renewed, continuing to walk on the path of Christ! Our holy shrines, and in particular our Kosovo-Metohija shrines, where the holy relics of many of our God pleasing saints rest and upon which is imprinted the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection, indeed teach us this the best. Throughout the centuries our churches, monasteries, villages and cities have suffered, but we have rebuilt them again, having rebuilt ourselves as the living Church of God. That is why instead of crying and sobbing, let us sing the song of victory, for in the light of the Resurrection the cross that we bear is not a symbol of humiliation and shame but a symbol of new dignity and glory. Kosovo and Metohija for us Serbs and for all Orthodox Christians is not only a geographical territory, but above all, it is a spiritual territory that connects us all regardless of where we might be living. Following the Kosovo testament of the Holy Prince Lazar, we cannot forget that the heavenly Kingdom is our ultimate ideal and eternal goal, while everything earthly is perishable and temporary.

Christians today suffer throughout the world, especially those in the Near East and Ukraine. May the example of their faith and their suffering be an encouragement and testimony for us that the Lord will never leave His Church and that the grace of God multiplies where suffering has increased! We cannot forget that the Lord Christ Himself together with the Most Holy Virgin and the Righteous Joseph fled to Egypt to escape Herod’s violence and in this way showed us that we are strangers in this world which lies in evil.

There is, dear brothers and sisters, much bitterness and sadness among our people after all those difficult years of temptation through which we have gone and through which we are going now. But, we in no way should fall into despair. For when he suffers the Christian repents even more before God, and at the same time he rejoices for he knows that the Lord will not overlook a heart filled with hope. That is why we pray to God, our dear spiritual children, that He save us from hatred and evil deeds, and that He may teach us to love with the love with which he has loved this world. If we are able to recognize the pain and suffering of our neighbors and repent of...
Conciliarity on the Light of Day

“The nature of the Church will always be for us an open book in which the Holy Spirit turns the pages.”

Introduction

In his interview “Conciliarity on the Light of Day” for the newspaper Politika (May 4, 2016), Bishop Maxim of Western America replies to current issues on the occasion of the summoning of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church on the Island of Crete to be held in June of this year.

Bishop Maxim’s answers are permeated with a deep consciousness of the Church’s conciliarity, its inner unity which is guided by the Holy Spirit, but at the same time the differences in opinions in approaching current social challenges and issues. They in no way question the unity of the Church, but approach the issues pragmatically in a historical framework. The Church as a community is beyond our everyday, horizontal manner of thinking and approaching problems, that is, as the living Body of Christ it is conscious of the historical framework in which it finds itself, exceeding our thinking and discussions and has in mind the all-saving and redemptive power of the grace of God for, as the Apostles said upon concluding the council in Jerusalem, “it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us...”.

Orthodox Christians are invited to participate in the work of the Great Council through their fervent prayers for the well reasoning of the Hierarchs of the Holy Orthodox Church. The Church of Christ is one great council (Εκκλησία) and so each Orthodox Christian should be for a synodal, conciliar life in the Church of Christ. The Great Council will end its work on June 27th of this year when it will communicate the result of its work and decisions for the good of the Church of God, that is, the clergy and people. —Ed.

An interview with His Grace Bishop Maxim of Western America

Question: Why is a Pan-Orthodox Council being called at this time, after so long, and what thematics will the Orthodox Churches convey to the world?

The historical fate of all Orthodox Churches without exception over the prior centuries has at times repressed a conciliar practice of broader proportions. Thus, the upcoming “Holy and Great Council” has immeasurable significance for the renewing of the conciliarity and canonical self-consciousness in our Church. Conciliarity (or synodality) is not an epithet of the Church. In its very being and existence it is “synodos,” or assembly. In addition, one should not overlook the charismatic character of an Ecumenical council, which is more of an extraordinary ad hoc event, rather than an institutionalized reality. In this “world,” in which divisive powers rule, the Church through the Council calls for a unified attempt of a dynamic preservation of the ontological unity and communal witnessing of love.
Since some of the themes of the agenda of the Holy and Great Council sound anachronistic (the fast, calendar, marital restrictions, autonomy, diaspora, mission, etc.), it is no wonder that some argue the real shortcomings in those texts particularly is that they are overly “contractual.” Important topics resist a “contractual” existence. Nevertheless, we believe that the Council will address contemporary problems and challenges, send a message to the youth, look back at biomedical technology, family crises, the ignoring of religious identity in the process of integration, terrorism, defense of persecuted Christians, sympathy with the supporters of other religious traditions, etc. It would be frightening if we do not consider the tumultuous life we find ourselves in.

At times we forget how important, and sufficient it is, to assemble and serve the Liturgy. The Church does not save us through words or actions but by its true being.

**Question: How will the faithful from parishes in, for instance, Vranje or America, “interpret” the message of the world Orthodox summit?**

Councils serve to establish and guarantee communion among local Churches within one Church “in the ecumene”—to instill hope in salvation from death. What is the significance and what are the consequences of this Council—the post-conciliar period will show, since the process of acceptance of the Council and its decisions may take time, depending on the vitality of the ecclesial body, and the work of the local bishops among the people.

With this occasion I wish to correct the statement that “the world’s Orthodox summit” is assembling in Crete. The Council (even an Ecumenical one) does not stand above the Church, it does not rule over it, rather it serves the people of God—the Church, from whence it draws its authority, importance and infallibility. The Church is above the Ecumenical councils and uses them as an organ for the interpretation of divine Revelation.

**Question: The Orthodox world often seems, paradoxically speaking, disunited-united. What do you envision of this relationship following this Council?**

The impression of unity in disunity comes for the most part from the tendency of ethno-phyletism in the majority of the local Churches. This has led to some autocephalous Churches operating with a certain self-sufficiency and isolation, and the atrophy of conciliarity on an ecumenical level. Thus, in many Western churches histories our ecclesiology is portrayed as a unity of ethnic churches, based on political and state principles. Such a version finds no comparison in Eastern tradition... It is likely that following the “Council of Crete” councils will be held more frequently, but not as some “universal structure” of a permanent nature. It can be a new beginning in experiencing and studying contemporary organization in light of the conciliar Church Tradition, all with the aim of achieving its theanthropic mission in today’s world, on both a local and ecumenical level. In other words, beneath the phenomenon of a Council we must uncover its ontology and then put it into practice. The Church has a very tame nature, in that it exceeds all of our calculations and studies.

**Question: If Orthodox have preserved unity without such Councils, why do they need it now and is it under the pressure of globalization?**

Substantial unity, as we have already stated, has been preserved, but the crisis of unity splashes the shores of many autocephalous Churches. Namely, even though every local Church is “universal” and in no way truncated, the Church “throughout the world” should be manifested as a community of Churches. Since the structure of the Church (its identity, authority, ministries, etc.) represents, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, an event of a free communion, then unity, to which Christ calls us, is not some established uniformity in an institutionalized sense. The nature of the Church will always be for us an open book in which the Holy Spirit turns the pages.

The question of globalization can be answered with a counter question: if the Church is the messenger of the cosmic message of salvation in Christ is it not therefore global? The very term “ecumenical” refers to a global character. Of course there are differences, but this moment is critical even if the topics are out-of-date. Delighted by the opportunities presented, I believe that the Council in the scope of its discussions and, eventually, with the content of its message will touch upon and address the most important existential, social, and even political issues.

**Question: Or is about establishing “firm leadership” in the East, which will be in response to similar leadership of the Catholic Church?**

Quoting an Athonite elder: “It is a divinely sacred and holy thing for the first in rank among the Orthodox Churches to be robed in the cloak of weakness.” Namely, among all others the Ecumenical patriarch today, together with the Antiochian, finds himself in the most unenviable position. I am obligated to say that the conciliar leadership of the Orthodox Church has not served as a weapon of rule over the Church.

In my humble opinion, it is not an issue of a “game of thrones” but of a unified rush to the Tomb of the Resurrection. A great human element exists therein, but we must recall the image of the Apostles Peter and John as they “ran together” to Christ’s Tomb after His Resurrection, whereby St. Gregory the Theologian characterized their run as a “good competition”. If you recognize some of the “Eastern” leaders-runners in this, then you will have grasped the point. It is precisely the Council’s “dialectic” that has driven out the idea of a supreme rule of one over many. Each gathering of the Synod is opened with a prayer of the invocation of the Holy Spirit who unites all Christians in the body of Christ on both a local and universal level simultaneously. What determines an ancient Apostolic Canon is a balance, that is, mutual respect in the Holy Spirit who unites all Christians in the body of Christ on both a local and universal level simultaneously. What determines an ancient Apostolic Canon is a balance, that is, mutual respect in relations between bishops with the first (presiding) bishop, while the conciliarity (synodality) of all the bishops is emphasized at the same time, in their pastoring and organizing of the entire Church.

**Question: There are indications that the Antiochian Church will not participate in the work of the Council, as well as the decision of the Georgian Church to reject one of the doc-**

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“Councils serve to establish and guarantee communion among local Churches within one Church “in the ecumene”—to instill hope in salvation from death.”

...ments, which will be presented for approval. Can such actions endanger the convening of the Council, its significance and the unity among Orthodox Churches in general?

The Council will be an expression of unity inasmuch as it does not close its eyes to the real problems, and if it succeeds, for instance, in a conciliar manner to heal the divisions or problems in relations between Jerusalem and Antioch, Serbia and Romania, Russia and Constantinople, etc., without prejudicing the decisions. Each local Church lives in the reality of the Future age with its own dynamic, thus it is to be expected that in different geographic and political regions different views exist regarding different issues. This, however, must not be an obstacle for the general effort that the universal and unaltered evangelical message be communicated “with one mouth and one heart.” I am afraid that some individuals are too comfortably reclined in the armchair of conservatism. But history provides a lesson: It is indicative that Polycarp, the famous Bishop of Smyrna, at about the year 155 visited his Roman fellow brother Anicetus to discuss with him the disputable issue of the date of Pascha. Although they did not agree in all things, imagine, they nonetheless served the Liturgy together after which Polycarp returned to Smyrna—to his martyrdom.

The Holy Eucharist also heals unseen wounds. I sincerely hope the Council will do the same. In the history of the Church, every heresy or schismatic division inspired the activation of the healthy ecclesial powers for the healing of divisive tendencies in the body of Christ, with the final goal of preserving unity. The Council can succeed in drawing light even from something that is so narrow and dark as schism.

**Question:** The Pope recently met with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, then with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. Can we expect from the upcoming Council specific steps towards the improvement in relations between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches?

Those historic meetings witness to the opportunities for sincere dialogue, based on theological principles of the first millen-nium. For instance, the basic principle of St. Cyprian of Carthage states that each bishop, not only the Roman, sits at the throne of the Apostle Peter. This does not mean that all bishops are equal, but that they are equally successors of the full assembly of Apostles. Cyprian understands “Cathedra Petri” not in relation to the universal Church but in relation to each local Church headed by a bishop.

These meetings have a soteriological and therapeutic aspect. We regret the loss of unity with the Western churches, as it is also a consequence of our sinfulness. A true Christian knows that that loss occurred against God’s will. The goal of the council was the healing of the ill human condition and community. This undeniable soteriological perspective of the conciliar institution is explained by the fact that only in the Church can we find true therapy, since Christ is the only true Physician. This historic succession and tradition of healing, which makes up the heart and core of the biblical and patristic tradition and conciliar system, should help us in solving the painful issue of schism.

**Question:** Does this mean – ecumenism, a change in the calendar, is a renunciation of Orthodoxy as is seen by those who oppose the current manner in communicating with Catholics?

There are faithful who worry about the “only thing needed” and with confidence look to those with pastoral accountability to face challenges. A sectarian approach exists and it has a *raison d’être* in introducing the confusions. Out of “ecumenism” they make a sensation that has success with one group of people and with their rebelliousness it only brings further discord and chaos to the world’s turmoil. The Serbian Orthodox Church is truly ecumenical while preserving its calendar is not reluctant to speak with all. It contributes to the existential explanation of contemporary problems which are anthropological, cosmological, cultural-civilizational and others. Synodality as an essential characteristic of the Church can also be a useful basis and prototype for the ecumenical movement. Our Church is not moving towards a legalistic and narrow confessionalistic framework.

**Question:** Who will represent the Serbian Orthodox Church at this Council?

The gathering of the first hierarchs, without the fullness of each local Church or without the overall assembly of its hierarchs, does not decide on behalf of others, for in that case it would operate as a collective papacy. According to the ancient practice the heads of the autocephalous Churches are invited to attend with a certain number of their bishops. This is far from the ideal number – all active canonical bishops should participate in the Council. The Church in the region of Serbia and “Serbian and coastal lands” (an expression of St. Sava) is called to nominate 24 of its bishops.

At the Liturgy, which will be served in Crete, the Orthodox—as an assembly of people around the hierarchs and clergy—will preserve and express in history the icon of Pentecost and the Future world which exceeds mortal division, thanks to its unity and recapitulation in Christ. That Future age is the Church’s force of gravity.

*Source: Politika, May 4, 2016, pp. 1 & 8*

**Historical Information Regarding the Ecumenical Councils:**

*How many Ecumenical Councils have been held until now?*

There have been seven Ecumenical Councils.

*When was the last Ecumenical Council?*

It was held September 24 to October 13, 787 in Nicaea.

*List of the Ecumenical Councils:*

- **First** Ecumenical Council – Nicaea (May-June 325)
- **Second** Ecumenical Council – Constantinople (May-July 381)
- **Third** Ecumenical Council – Ephesus (June-July, 431)
- **Fourth** Ecumenical Council – Chalcedon (October-November, 451)
- **Fifth** Ecumenical Council – Second Constantinople (May-June, 553)
- **Sixth** Ecumenical Council – Third Constantinople (November 680-September 681)
- **Seventh** Ecumenical Council – Second Nicaea (September-October 787)
Holy Assembly of Bishops begins with the Holy Hierarchical Liturgy at the Patriarchate of Pec

His Holiness Irinej, Serbian Patriarch, officiated the Holy Hierarchical Liturgy with the conciliar concelebration of the hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church at the Patriarchate of Pec on 14 May 2016. They all gathered on the occasion of the beginning of the regular session of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Following the Holy Liturgy the rite of the Invocation of the Holy Spirit was performed for the blessed and successful work of the Assembly. His Eminence Metropolitan Amfilohije held a speech, after which he served on the monastery’s cemetery a commemoration for abbesses and nuns of blessed repose of the Great Laura of the Patriarchate of Pec.

COMMUNIQUE OF THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH HELD IN BELGRADE MAY 14-25, 2016

The regular meeting of the Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church began at the Patriarchate of Pec monastery with the joint serving of the holy hierarchical Divine Liturgy and the invocation of the Holy Spirit and continued in Prizren with the rite of consecration of the renovated Prizren Seminary. Afterward, all regular meetings, under the presidency of His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej, were held in Belgrade. Participating in the Assembly were all diocesan hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church with the exception of Bishop Lavrentije of Sabac who, out of justifiable reasons, was not able to attend.

The most important theme of this year’s Assembly was preparation of the Serbian Orthodox Church to take part in the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, to meet this June in Crete. Regarding this forthcoming pan Orthodox Council, the Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, adopted a document expressing their principle position on all major issues to be discussed and decided upon at the Great Council.

Also of importance was the decision of the Assembly that in good time – meaning soon – preparation begin for the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the independence of the Serbian Orthodox Church (1219-2019), in cooperation with the authorities of Serbia and Republika Srpska and all relative and cultural institutions of the Serbian people. At the same time, the Assembly was pleased to learn from Metropolitan Amphilohije of Montenegro and the Coastlands, of the successful preparations already in place for the 1,000th anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Jovan Vladimir, King of Serbia, which will take place in September of this year in the city of Bar and besides the Patriarch and hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church invitations will be sent to high delegations of all Orthodox Churches. The Order of King Jovan Vladimir has been established, to be awarded to confessors of faith and sufferers in the faith.

As in previous years, the Assembly took into consideration church education, as well as the mission of the Church in general, both internal and external. Protopresbyter Gojko Perovic, the current acting rector of the St. Petar of Cetinje Seminary in Cetinje, was elected Rector of the aforementioned Seminary. The Library of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate in Belgrade was given status of the main library in the entire region of the Serbian Orthodox Church. With sadness it was noted that there are still, here and there, schools where religious education is unlawfully discriminated against, even though in general the situation is favorable.

It was noted that the relations between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Sister Orthodox Churches are exceptionally good, fully in the spirit of the Church’s unity and conciliarity, with one unfortunate exception – the Romanian Patriarchate, whose bishops and clergy for years now - in a non-canonical manner and not in the spirit of brotherly love - enter in the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Eastern Serbia, particularly in the Timok region. After many past addresses and appeals, unfortunately unsuccessful thus far, the Assembly has once more called upon the Romanian Church to immediately cease this practice which is destructive for the church; otherwise, the problem will be
**Patriarch Bartholomew Sends Letter of Support to Serbian Patriarch**

His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew addressed a letter of support to His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej and the Serbian Orthodox Church for the fire which engulfed the St. Sava Church in New York. With expressions of fraternal compassion, Patriarch Bartholomew noted that it is “an historical church in the United States of America in which the honorable Serbian and Orthodox Christians in the New World have continually glorified the One True God of our fathers”.

At the same time, His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, expressed his hope and conveyed his prayerful wishes that this magnificent church quickly be rebuilt and that in the future it continue to gather the faithful and honorable people in even greater numbers in glory of the Triune God.

**Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York Sends Condolences to Bishop Mitrophan**

His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, sent condolences to His Grace Bishop Mitrophan of Eastern America of the Serbian Orthodox Church on the tragic fire which destroyed St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in New York.

In his letter, His Eminence expressed empathy with the Serbian Orthodox community in New York, whose cathedral burned on Holy Pascha. Vladyka Metropolitan offered any necessary aid and fraternal support in ministering to the Serbian Orthodox flock.

**Metropolitan Tikhon Offers Prayers After Fire at NYC’s Serbian Cathedral**

On Bright Monday, May 2, 2016, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, first hierarch of the Orthodox Church in America, sent a letter to His Grace, Serbian Orthodox Bishop Mitrophan, offering prayers and concern in the wake of a four-alarm fire that engulfed Saint Sava.
Fire Destroys St. Sava Cathedral

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it will continue to provide sanctuary to the people of New York City, and all people of good will, who are in need of spiritual and material support.

The St. Sava community extends its heartfelt thanks to the church officials and individuals of many denominations, who immediately rushed to our aid with their physical presence, communications, offers of support, and prayers. Despite the destruction that has befallen the St. Sava community, the church will continue religious services at our West 25th Street site as soon as our premises are safe. We deeply appreciate the outpouring of support from the community, including the generous offers from other religious denominations to make their houses of worship available during this time of transition and renewal. Scheduling updates will be provided on our website.

Our Love for all of you was dramatically justified by your presence, and your kind and encouraging words. We are humbled by your love and concern for us in our great hour of need. Your overwhelming offers of moral and material support are helping us to endure our pain, and strengthen our resolve to proceed with our foundational mission of good will and love for all people, everywhere.

Our Media Contact is media@stsavanyc.org. Donations to St. Sava Cathedral should ONLY be sent via PayPal on our website at StSavaNYC.org. Checks may be sent directly to: St. Sava Cathedral, 20 West 26th Street, New York, NY 10010.

Starting from Sunday, May 22, 2016, until further notice, religious services will be held at 10:00 a.m. at the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, at 440 West 21st St, New York, NY 10011 (entrance on 21st Street, between 9th and 10th Avenues). We will resume religious services at our West 25th Street site, as soon as the premises are safe.

Metropolitan Joseph Offers After Tragic Cathedral Fire

His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph, along with the bishops, clergy, Archdiocese Board of Trustees, and faithful of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, share our prayers and love with His Grace Bishop Mitrophan and all the faithful of the Serbian Orthodox Archdiocese as they deal with the tragedy of the fire that destroyed St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in New York City. As we just finished celebrating the Holy Fire of the empty tomb of our risen Lord and Savior, a different, terrible fire destroying this historic cathedral in Manhattan. May our risen Lord and Savior grant peace and healing to the Cathedral community as they move forward and begin anew.

Messages of Support

Continued from Page 10

Orthodox Cathedral near West 25th Street and Broadway in New York City.

“With great sadness we learned of the tragic fire at the historic and beloved Saint Sava’s Cathedral in New York City,” Metropolitan Tikhon wrote to Bishop Mitrophan. “Please accept my personal expression of sadness and grief over this tremendous loss to the Serbian Orthodox community and to all the Orthodox in New York City. “In this time of tragedy, I open my arms to Your Grace and your community to offer whatever assistance we can provide,” Metropolitan Tikhon continued. “With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, the Orthodox Church in America’s Holy Protection Cathedral in New York City and its priest, Archimandrite Christopher Calin, are prepared to host your community and provide fully for a temporary home for Your Grace and the faithful of Saint Sava’s. “I pray that Your Grace and the community of Saint Sava’s will find a measure of relief in our Lord’s Pascha, and I pray that our Lord’s Resurrection will give you the strength to lead your community through this difficult moment,” Metropolitan Tikhon concluded.

Metropolitan Joseph Offers After Tragic Cathedral Fire

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Palm Sunday in Niagara Falls


During Divine Liturgy, His Grace bestowed upon Fr. Dejan Obradovic the dignity of Archpriest. He thanked Fr. Dejan for his efforts in the vineyard of The Lord, and in Shadeland Church Camp and reminded him that this award should inspire him to even greater efforts. At the Liturgy many believers partook from Holy Communion on this great Feast. Our Bishop gave a beautiful sermon on English and Serbian about the meaning of Christ Entering in Jerusalem and about His passion.

The Vespers Service was served in St. George Church as well. Guest priests that attended were Fr. Stevan Stojisavljevic, Fr. Vojislav Pavlovic, Fr. Milojko Dmitric, and Fr. Djuro Samac, all from Hamilton. Fr. Vasilije Gavrilovic came from Milton, Ontario. Fr. Goran Gojkovic came from Kitchener, Ontario. Fr. Cornel Sirzica came from the Romanian Orthodox Church in Niagara Falls, ON. The evening’s guest speaker was Fr. Goran Gojkovic from Kitchener, ON.

The evening concluded with a fantastic meal hosted by the St George Serbian Orthodox Church prepared by KSS Mala Gospojina. His Grace Bishop Mitrofan greeted everyone in the full Church Hall asking everyone to stay in unity and in good effort to be always together.

Holy Trinity Kolo in Pittsburgh hosts Lenten Program

On Saturday, April 2, the Holy Trinity Cathedral Kolo Sestara of Pittsburgh extended an invitation to all Eastern Diocese Kolos to join us for a luncheon and book presentation as part of our Great Lenten journey. The delicious luncheon was donated and prepared by Amelia Opacic, Danielle Opacic, Maria Stanojevic and Olga Dimitrijevic. Proceeds from the luncheon were donated to Monastery Marcha.

The book selected was “Beginning to Pray” by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom. Metropolitan Bloom was born in Switzerland where his father was a Russian Diplomat and then later fled Russia with his family during the Russian/Soviet revolution. He became a medical doctor, served in a French Hospital during WWII and also the French underground. After obtaining French citizenship he became a monk, and was ordained in 1948.

Proto Stevo Rocknag of Saint Sava Church of McKeesport, led the fervent book discussion. Some salient points of discussion included prayer is an encounter and relationship with God, the Jesus prayer is the best prayer to point us in the direction of God, management of time that we spend in prayer, and how to address God: search for the name you want to call God; if you have no name for Him, do not be surprised that He does not hear you when you call.

In attendance were host parish priest, Proto Rajko Kosic of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Millie Radovick, president of Holy Trinity Cathedral Kolo and the KSS Federation of the Eastern Diocese and several members of the Pittsburgh, Aliquippa and McKeesport parishes. All participants were inspired by the wonderful fellowship and thought provoking discussion. Special thanks to Proto Stevo Rocknag for his spiritual reflections as we continue our Great Lenten journey.
addressed at the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, and in the event that this anti-canonical practice continue even after the Council – the Serbian Orthodox Church, with sincere pain but for the good of the Church – will be forced to cut all liturgical and canonical relations with the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Relations with other Christian churches and communities as well as the Jewish and Islamic communities of Serbia, are traditionally good, which, unfortunately, cannot be said of relations with the extreme circles in the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as relations with similar circles in the Islamic communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Islamic communities in Serbia.

Relations between the Church and state is developing with signs of good will and cooperation in terms of the separation of Church and state. Of particular importance is the support from the Committee for cooperation between churches and religious institutions at the Ministry of Justice towards both the Serbian Orthodox Church and all other traditional churches and religious institutions. The Assembly awaits this body be returned the status of Ministry of religious affairs. It was noted that the religious service in the Serbian Army, as well as the armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is on the rise.

There are, unfortunately, problems and unresolved issues. Therefore, the Assembly expected that the process of restitution of unjustly confiscated church property in Serbia to be accelerated and fully completed. The Assembly once again calls on the competent authorities to return to the Church parish books of records confiscated in 1946, allegedly for the reason of copying them. Similarly, the Assembly, for the umpteenth time, reiterates its position that the remains of the Serbian and world giant Nikola Tesla do not deserve to be a museum piece but that they be decently buried in a suitable place near the Temple of Saint Sava, as Vuk and Dositej are buried in front of the Cathedral church in Belgrade.

The Assembly fathers noted that the position of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the southern Serbian region is still very difficult even though there are signs of hope and reasons to be optimistic, such as the trouble-free work of the Prizren Seminary and recognition of the property rights of Dechani Monastery. The state in the region, unfortunately, is equally filled with difficulties and sufferings: in Croatia the ustasha-minded chauvinists rant against the Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian people; in the Bosnia-Hercegovina Federation constant pressure is in place, to the level of open discrimination; Montenegro is preparing a law which not only does not recognize the status of the Church and identity but is threaten with open persecution, while its government proclaims the Serbian Orthodox Church as public enemy number one, seemingly in the spirit of their “democratic and Euro-Atlantic orientation”; in the Republic of Macedonia show trials against Archbishop Jovan and the Ohrid Archbishopric are still active.

The Assembly, naturally, expressed its solidarity with all Orthodox and heterodox Christians, as well as Muslims, who are suffering and being killed in the Middle East. Also, the Assembly prayerfully calls for a quick end to the mindless conflict between brothers of one faith and one blood in the Ukraine.

The Holy Assembly of Bishops held a joint meeting with the central board for the construction of the St. Sava Monument Church in Vračar and their report regarding their work completing the interior of the church was accepted.

Reports were heard and accepted from the Holy Synod, the Patriarchate executive board, the Great ecclesiastical court, the humanitarian organization “Covekol-jublje”, the pilgrimage agency “Dobrocin-stvo” and other bodies and organizations, as well as reports from the hierarchs regarding their work during the course of the previous year.

The scope of the work of the Jasenovac Committee was expanded: in the future it will deal with all victims of the Serbian Church and Serbian people during World War II.

It was regretfully discovered, based on the reports from all of the dioceses, that the “white plague”, as a sin and national suicide on delay, pillages the Serbian people all the more. A detailed report regarding the fire at the St. Sava Church in New York was regretfully accepted.

Miliwo Novakovic, the defrocked hieromonk Maksim, Artemije’s false “chor-episkopos of Novobrodo and Pannonia”, is excommunicated from the church community.

The current Bishop of Eastern America, Bishop Mitrophan, is elected bishop of the vacant diocese of Canada, the current Bishop of Australia and New Zealand, Bishop Irinej, is elected as bishop of Eastern America and Protosindjel Siluan (Mrakic), of the Pustinja Monastery in the Diocese of Valjevo is elected Bishop of Australia.

Elected as vicar of the Diocese of Montenegro and the Coastlands, with the title, “Bishop of Dioctetia”, is Archimandrite Kirilo (Bojovic), currently engaged in the Diocese of Buenos Aires and South America.

The current Bishop of Nis, Bishop Jovan, has been relieved of his duties as diocesan bishop per his request. Bishop Teodosije of Ras and Prizren will serve as administrator of the Diocese of Nis while the Diocese of Dabrobsna will continue to be administered by Bishop Grigorije of Zahum and Herzegovina, Bishop Joaniikije of Budim and Niksic will administer the Diocese of Milesevo.

Members of the Holy Synod in its new composition are: Bishop Irinej of Backa, Bishop Justin of Zica, Bishop Potije of Dalmatia and Bishop Teodosije of Ras and Prizren, alternate members are Metropolitan Amphilohije of Montenegro and the Coastlands and Bishop Lavrentije of Sabac.

Submitted by Bishop Irinej of Backa, Spokesman for the Serbian Orthodox Church
our sins, our efforts will not be in vain, but will be unto our salvation and eternal life.

With prayers we greet our brothers and sisters who live around the world and we call them to turn to each other, gathered under the wings of our Church and in that way to continue worthily to witness to who they are and to what faith and what people they belong.

Let us safeguard the holiness of marriage and family, raising our children in faith and fear of God and purity, without forgetting that the family is a “domestic Church” and a foundation of Christian community! Let us regularly participate in the Eucharistic gatherings, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ and in this way becoming One Body of Christ, a chosen People, the Church of the Living God! Let us not forget that it is our calling after the Holy Liturgy to witness in word and in deed to this miraculous Mystery which continues with faith and love, before all those who love us as well as before those who hate us, in short in every time and place. For the Christian our whole life is a continuing liturgical paschal joy. He who lives by it will not see in another person a stranger; instead, he will recognize in every person the image of our Lord, Who wants all to be saved. Bearing witness to the joyous news that Christ is truly risen is our daily duty for the Lord calls us by His Holy Spirit not to close ourselves in, but rather to bring others into that joy, and to show them the only way to salvation. The Risen Christ calls us not to be a scandal but a light to the world. When we are ready to admit our sins and to correct ourselves in humility we are not being humiliated but we are showing that the Spirit of God dwells in us.

We especially wish to convey to you that on the feast day of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the completion of Christ’s economy of salvation of the world and mankind, in June of this year, on the Apostolic feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the completion of Christ’s economy, the Holy Church will be convened. It is the duty of all of us to pray that this spiritually exceptional event of the Holy Spirit will be a veritable confirmation of the unshakable unity of the Holy Orthodox Church in the faith once and for all delivered to the saints (cf. Hebrew 3), which means to all true Christians, that it may be a call to all who in believe in Christ to again be one in the only Savior and our Lord, in fulfillment of His prayer “that all may be one,” in accordance with the example of the unity of the Holy Trinity, the One and Only God, that the world may believe (cf. St. John 17:18-24), that they may be witnesses to the joy of salvation through the Cross and Resurrection, the greatest gift of the God of love, before all people, all nations and every created thing, but above all that this great pan-Orthodox Council be a part of the eternal Good News of the Church about the Kingdom of God as the meaning of everything that exists – in one word, that it be to the glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Living and True God.

Let us not forget, dear brothers and sisters, that we are called, wherever we may be and whatever we are doing, to be peacemakers and in so doing to witness to God Who grants us peace and is our Peace. Even though we are distinct from each other, we can never overlook the fact that we are all created in the image of God and that we are called to be one in Christ. That is why it is necessary to give a hand to him who stumbles instead of pushing him into a deeper perdition. Likewise, we should visit the sick and care for them and to those that are lost we need to show the right path. In doing so, we will have the Lord manifested in our works, Who Himself told us to be the light of the world. But above all else our spiritual children, may our life be a constant thanksgiving to God for everything and for all! For what else and what greater offering can we offer to the Resurrected Christ, Who brings us from darkness to the light of knowledge and from death into life eternal? Therefore, together with the angels and with all the saints in heaven, and together with our brothers and sisters on earth, let us sing the victorious song and in festal joy greet each other with the greeting:

Christ is Risen!

Given at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade at Pascha, 2016.

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 PORFIRJE

Bishop of Sabac: LAURENTIJJE

Bishop of Srem: VASILIJE

Bishop of Banja Luka JEFREM

Bishop of Budim: LUKIJAN

Bishop of Banat: NIKANOR

Bishop of New Gracanica-Midwestern America LONGIN

Bishop of Eastern America: MITROPHAN

Bishop of Backa: IRINEJ

Bishop of Great Britain and Scandinavia: DOSITEJ

Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla: CHRYSOSTOM

Bishop of Osijek and Baranja: LUKIJAN

Bishop of Western Europe: LUKA

Bishop of Zicha: JUSTIN

Bishop of Vranje: PAHOMIJE

Bishop of Sumadija: JOVAN

Bishop of Branicevo: IGNATIJE

Bishop of Dalmatia: FOTIJE

Bishop of Bihar and Petrovac: ATANASIJJE

Bishop of Budimlje and Niksic: JOANIKIJE

Bishop of Zahumlje and Hercegovina: GRIGORIJE

Bishop of Valjevo: MILUTIN

Bishop of Belgrade: MITROPHAN

Bishop of Nis: JOVAN

Bishop of Western America: MAXIM

Bishop of Gornji Karlovac: GERASIM

Bishop of Australia and New Zealand: IRINEJ

Bishop of Krusevac: DAVID

Bishop of Slavonia: JOVAN

Bishop of Austria and Switzerland: ANDREJ

Bishop of Central Europe: SERGIJE

Bishop of Timok: ILARION

Retired Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla: VASILIJE

Retired Bishop of Canada: GEORGIJE

Retired Bishop of Zahumlje and Hercegovina: ATANASIJJE

Retired Bishop of Central Europe: CONSTANTINE

Retired Bishop of Slavonia: SAVA

Retired Bishop of Mileseva: FILARET

Vicar Bishop of Moravica: ANTONIJE

Vicar Bishop of Toplica: ARSENJE

Vicar Bishop of Jegar: JERONIM

THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIACONE OF OCRHRID:

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]
The word catechism (κατηχέω, meaning - to teach orally) derives from the Greek language. It refers to a summary or exposition of teachings (doctrine) and serves as a learning introduction to the Mysteries (Sacraments) traditionally used in catechesis, or Christian religious teaching of children and adults. The book No Faith is More Beautiful than the Christian Faith, written by Bishop Danilo Krstich of blessed memory, and then Hieromonk Amfilohije Radovich, now Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Coastlands accomplishes that and more. The book shows the Faith as the path on which an encounter takes place between Orthodox Christians (those reading the book particularly) and God; our encounter with God as the response to His call. The book is highly recommended. It was published in Serbian in 1982, and for the first time, Sebastian Press of the Western American Diocese, published it in English and it is available for purchase at: www.westsrbdio.org.

No Faith Is More Beautiful Than The Christian Faith

Bishop DANilo KRSTICH
Hieromonk AMFILOHIJE RADOVICH
Belgrade 1982

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Revelation In The New Testament

How does the New Testament begin?
The New Testament begins with the genealogy according to the flesh of Christ the Lord and His Nativity. The Archangel Gabriel announced the good news of His Nativity, greeting the Most Holy Virgin with the heavenly greeting: “Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women!”

Who ruled the land of Judea (Israel) at the time Christ was born on earth?
Judea was ruled by King Herod, who was a subordinate of the Roman Caesar Augustus.

What were the names of the parents of the Most Holy Theotokos Mary?
Their names were Joachim and Anna. Their names are remembered at the end of every Liturgy. The feast of Saints Joachim and Anna is celebrated the day following the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos. This is September 9 (or September 22, when the Old Calendar date is celebrated on the New Calendar).

What happened at the Annunciation?
Annunciation — this is the feast when we celebrate the coming of Archangel Gabriel to announce the good news to the Theotokos that she will conceive from the Holy Spirit (without a man), and give birth to the Son of God as a Son of Man, with the name Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary gave her consent only after questioning the Archangel, because she had made a secret covenant with God always to remain a virgin. And this was known only to God, to her apparent husband, and to herself. She knew from the Scriptures that the devil can appear in the form of a radiant angel, so she was not gullible like her fore-mother Eve.

On the feast of the Annunciation, the Theotokos rectified Eve’s sin of disobedience with her own obedience. Eve exercised her free choice for evil, to the delight of the devil, but the Theotokos exercised her free choice for sacred service to God and humbly exclaimed: “Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord; may it be to me according to your word!” The Annunciation is celebrated on March 25 (April 7 when the Old Calendar date is celebrated on the New Calendar).

Where was the Savior born?
He was born in Judea, in a city named Bethlehem, not far from Jerusalem, as foretold by the Prophets of old.

What does the name “Jesus” mean?
The name Jesus was given from heaven and revealed by the words of the Archangel Gabriel directed to the pure Virgin Mary: “And you shall call his name Jesus.” This is the name exalted above every name without which no man nor creature can be saved. The name Jesus means Savior.

Who was the first to visit and recognize the newborn Christ God?
Those were the three Wise Men from the East. They were following a star never seen before. And the light of that wondrous star came to stand over the cave in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. They recognized in Him the King of Heaven, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. The Wise Men gave Christ gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

What did the angels in heaven sing at the birth of the God-Man?
They sang the joyous song: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will.”

Who were those Wise Men from the East?
The Wise Men were learned men who studied the stars and foretold the future by them.

What did the devious King Herod ask of the Wise Men?
Herod asked that they come back and inform him of the exact location of the newborn Christ, King of Heaven, so that he could kill Him. However, the Wise Men returned by another route, not wanting to obey his command.

Where did the righteous Joseph and the Theotokos Mary go with the infant Christ?
They secretly escaped to Egypt to be safe from Herod. While trying to kill the young Christ, Herod killed fourteen thousand innocent children of Bethlehem. Those were the first martyrs for Christ and the first sacred harvest for the Kingdom of Heaven, Christ’s Kingdom of unending life and joy.

Who was the righteous elder Simeon?
God had revealed to the righteous elder Simeon that he would not die until he sees Christ the Savior. When this happened, he received the Christ child into his hands, and thus he is also called the “God-receiver.” The feast dedicated to this event is the Meeting of the Lord, and is celebrated on February 2 (February 15 when the

Continued on Page 16
Book Review by V. Rev. Stavrophor Rade Merick

The Enduring Legacy of the Serbian People

by V. Rev. Dr. Zivojin Jakovljevic

Publisher: Rascian School. 2015. 72 pages.

One of the great challenges facing the Serbian Orthodox people living outside of the Serbian homelands is teaching their children, many of whom may not speak Serbian or have ever seen Serbia, about that very special and beautiful style of Orthodox Christianity that is often called Svetosavlje. This specifically Serbian style of Orthodoxy, which can be traced back to the work of Saint Sava, is composed of many facets: Serbian customs and traditions, history and legends, epic poetry and music, folk tales, fables and sayings, and of course, personalities who are admired and held up as examples to be followed. All these are deeply imbued with the riches of their heritage and to make those riches their own.

That Committee’s chairman, the V. Rev. Dr. Zivojin Jakovljevic, Ph.D., has authored two wonderful books aimed at older elementary and middle school students to help meet this need. The first, The Heritage of Saint Sava, was published in 2012 to wide acclaim. That hard-cover book, now out of print, gave a short introduction to the life and work of six Serbian saints: St. Simeon the Myrrh-Flowing, St. Sava, St. Petka of Decani, St. Czar Lazar of Kosovo, St. Basil of Ostrog and St. Petka. Each chapter included a short life of the saint and his or her importance and impact on the Serbian people, a vocabulary section explaining certain words or terms which may be unfamiliar to the student, a brief synopsis of the objectives of the lesson and how the student can apply what is learned from the saint’s life to his or her own life, and a number of exercises designed to reinforce the messages of the saint’s life and to encourage the student to think about how the student can put those messages and virtues into practice. The book had many full color illustrations that add to its effectiveness. In response to public demand, Father Jakovljevic is working on a revised and improved edition.

The second book in this series by the same author is entitled The Enduring Legacy of the Serbian People, published in 2015. This volume goes beyond the biographical emphasis of the first volume by including not only stories of some Serbian saints, but also about significant Serbian customs and traditions, historical events, and values prized among the Serbian people such as family, honesty, honor and hospitality. The seven chapters include: the Krsna Slava—Family Patron Saint; the famous Three-handed Icon of the Mother of God; the Holy Martyrs of the Turkish Yoke Iguman Paisije and Deacon Avakum; the Bridge on the Drina, which gives an overview of Serbian life under Turkish domination, including the “blood tax”; Serbian Christmas Customs and Traditions; the Life and Work of the Saintly Bishop Nicholai of Ohrid and Zica; and Family and Honesty Among the Serbs.

This book follows the same general organization as the first, with clearly stated objectives for each lesson, a list of vocabulary words, and several engaging exercises and activities designed to help students understand the main points of the presentation and see how those characteristics and values can be cultivated in one’s own life. However, lessons learned from the publication of the first volume have improved the overall layout and attractiveness of this volume significantly. While also a hardcover and about the same dimensions, this new volume has nearly twice as many pages. The photos and illustrations, again in full color, are quite varied and appealing, and serve to supplement the text well. The arrangement of the pages, with text boxes set off in color, is visually pleasing and makes for greater clarity. The highlighting of vocabulary words in the text will encourage the reader to refer back to the vocabulary list for explanations of new words. Graphically it has a very polished and professional look that will invite students to delve deeper into its content and hold their attention. The exercises will help reinforce the main points and messages of each chapter, and will engage the students’ interest.

In all, The Enduring Legacy of the Serbian People belongs in every Serbian Orthodox church school, where it will be a welcome supplement to our religious education classes. It will enhance our children’s appreciation for the great legacy of piety, wisdom and ethics which is their birthright as Serbian Orthodox Christians, and hopefully it will instill in them a desire to learn more about their Serbian heritage and culture, and to make it an important aspect of the their lives.

Orthodox Catechism

Continued from Page 15

Old Calendar date is celebrated on the New Calendar).

Why was the Christ child taken to the Jerusalem Temple when He was eight days old?

According to the Law of Moses, every newborn male had to be circumcised. Circumcision was the sign of the Old Testament covenant with God. Christ was circumcised to show that He did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them. The circumcision also witnessed to the fact that He is truly man, not only God. Having fulfilled the Law, the Lord left for us a spiritual circumcision, a circumcision of the heart — the holy mystery of Baptism, for which the physical circumcision was only a preparation. The Circumcision of Christ is celebrated on January 1 (January 14 when the Old Calendar date is celebrated on the New Calendar).
Our View

The Youth Pages of The Path of Orthodoxy

The Path of Orthodoxy  Spring 2016 • 17

“Singing songs of praise to God, according to Holy Scripture, were sung first by the cherubim and seraphim around God’s throne. When man was created, a new dimension was added to God’s world. Mankind began to use the human voice to communicate with God. Nothing can replace or come close to that, which alone can glorify God.

That’s why the Children’s Choir Festival – “The Crown of Tones” - that was sponsored by St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Merrillville, Indiana on March 12th, is a cause for great joy. For what is more beautiful than to hear children’s voices singing praises to God. Their sweetness and purity is unmistakable.

Though there are many children’s choirs in the Serbian church throughout North America, we believe this is the first time a festival was dedicated to them. How did this begin?

When Protinica Vesna Matic of St. Sava’s met Ivana Stankovic, she knew she had found someone that Fr. Marko and she needed to organize a children’s choir. “She was an experienced choir director who has a passion for music.” Ivana added, “When I hear the voices of a children’s choir, it is to me like the ‘pulsing of the veins of the church and its potential. Children are tomorrow’s generation.”

As Protinica Vesna and Ivana worked together and as they succeeded to attract and train a group of children who wanted to learn, the idea of organizing a festival of children’s choirs was the next step. Ivana explained, “My entire life is music. I grew up with four generations of musicians surrounding me. And I have organized many choir festivals in the Zicha Diocese.” Protinica Vesna said listening to Ivana reminded her of the wonderful uplifting feeling she had when she attended local choir concerts in Serbia. “I wished to have our Serbian community here experience the richness of choral music. It has a special beauty when it comes from children, and we never had a festival before.”

So the festival took place and featured more than 100 children singing a variety of songs and playing instruments that celebrated our rich Serbian religious and cultural heritage. A zabava followed the festival for guests to enjoy.

Youth choirs from churches around the Midwest shared their talents including St. Sava Serbian Church, Merrillville, IN; St. George Serbian Church, Schererville, IN; Kornelije Stanković of St. George Serbian Church, East Chicago, IN; Brankići of Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Chicago, IL; and St. Sava Serbian Cathedral, Milwaukee, WI. The youth orchestra Gračanica from New Gračanica, Third Lake, IL also performed. We know that the choirs are indebted to their parish priests and parents. And we support Protinica Vesna’s prayer, “I hope God gives us strength and ability to organize many more children’s concerts and festivals in the future.”

Following is a short history of the six choirs that participated along with the children’s orchestra:

Saint Sava Children’s Choir, Merrillville, Indiana began it’s work in December of 2015. It aims to gather children who have a love for music and an interest to learn the language and culture
Our View

Essays Written by the Youth of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America

St. Nicholai of Zicha Oratorical Festival is an annual oratorical contest in which the youth of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America in each diocese, ages 14-18, are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the Orthodox faith, their writing, and oratorical skills in the English language.

The featured essay below was written by Tatiana Radunovic from New Gracanica and the Midwestern American Diocese in 2015 competition.

The theme was “As Orthodox Christians, what does the Cross mean to us?”

Biography:

Tatiana Radunovic grew up attending St. Nikola Serbian Orthodox Church which is now located in Brookfield, Illinois. Tatiana participated in traditional Serbian folklore dancing for 11 years at St. Nikola. She is currently attending Carthage College to pursue a career in Occupational therapy.

What the Cross means to Orthodox Christians?

Last year was my junior year of high school, one of the most difficult years of any teenager to go through, because of the gruesome stress of the ACT. I walked in the classroom saying Oće Naš under my breath, with two brojanicas on my wrist and a cross hanging around my neck. I have been dreading this day since freshman year, but like my Baba says, “always know that God is with you”. So I thought, “God, I know You are here, and You know I did my best preparing for this exam but I don’t know this answer.” Gripping my cross with all my might, I asked him A through D, what was the answer until I got to C and ray of light landed right on my desk. Even though some people might think I’m crazy, for me this story represents how much our God is trustworthy. I believe in One God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God the Son, Jesus Christ, became a man, died on the cross and rose from the dead, so that we (as Christians and believers) may be able to live in Heaven for eternity. The cross is a symbol representing Jesus’ strength, bravery, wisdom, love, kindness and sacrifice. As a Christian and believer I wear my cross proudly around my neck every single day, because when I do, I feel strong, brave, wise, and kind. I feel loved and loving. I can feel that God is with me, by my side every step of the way, which makes me a Christian. But I am not just a Christian, I am an Orthodox Christian and one way to differentiate the two is by the way we cross ourselves. By placing our first three fingers to a point, we are saying that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are the three divine persons – the Holy Trinity, of one divine essence – One God. Alongside, the last two fingers placed side by side on our palms represent two natures, human and divine, of one person of Jesus Christ. Placing this hand position on the forehead symbolizes the Father, then from the forehead to the navel is for the Son, and the right then left shoulder come together for the Holy Spirit. Right to left just as Jesus sits on the right hand of the Father. We have the whole divine action in the form of a cross. We as Orthodox Christians recognize this as a very important tradition, with just an action of our fingers coming together, by bringing the cross on to ourselves and praying, we make a statement of our faith, we ask God for a blessing, we are allowing and creating a path connecting God to us, because we are believers.

The Orthodox people were believers of Jesus from the start, the first Christian Church to ever exist. They did not create their own church as some kind of a protest, but they accepted with faith and love to become the Church by the Holy Spirit. The Greek definition states orthos means “right” or “true” and doxa translates to “glory”. When these two definitions come together, they become “the true worship”. Our true faith is proclaimed and recognized by our true worship. The core of our worship is praise and thanksgiving. As Orthodox Christians we believe in the truth – that there is only one truth revealed to us by God. Moreover, we believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Truth. He is in communion both with the Father and the Holy Spirit and with us. We, Orthodox Christians, are His Body – the Church. Since we have a personal relationship with Him, we never change our beliefs, because He is always the same. In the course of time, we may change styles of architecture, church music melodies or local customs, because people from different cultures express the faith in different ways, but all of us Orthodox Christians share the same faith, the same truth, the same Church, the same God. This is also reflected in the form of our cross, the original cross, the cross that Jesus was nailed to, the cross Jesus died on, for us and for our salvation, the cross that proved Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, the cross which led us all to eternity. We have kept the shortest bar of the cross that Jesus was nailed to, for us and for our salvation, the cross that proved Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, the cross which led us all to eternity. We have kept the shortest bar of the cross that Jesus was nailed to, for us and for our salvation, the cross that proved Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, the cross which led us all to eternity. We have kept the shortest bar of

Youth Committee of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South American announces Eleventh Annual Youth Conference

With the Blessing of the Episcopal Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, the Youth Ministry Committee is pleased to announce the Eleventh Annual Youth Conference to be held in Indianapolis, IN from Wednesday, June 22 through Sunday, June 26, 2016. The theme of this year’s conference is “Orthodoxy, Race to the Truth”. The conference is open to all high school students. Students are eligible from the summer prior to 9th grade through the summer following 12th grade.

Continuing our effort to provide a variety of experiences for our youth, the facility we have selected for this year’s conference is Marian University in Indianapolis, Indiana. The college is an excellent location that has all the amenities that we need to have a successful conference full of spiritual and social activities.

This youth conference is an excellent opportunity for parishes in North and South America to send teenagers for spiritual fulfillment and fellowship with like-minded
of their ancestors. During rehearsals, much emphasis is put on development of the children’s voices. We spend time on musical literacy, learning notes and musical terminology, as well as development of the feeling for the melody, the rhythm and the dynamics of the music. It has appeared at Church functions, as well as throughout the region. Ivana Stankovic accompanied at times by Vasilije Vasko Stankovic on guitar directs the choir.

**St. Sava Orthodox School Choir, Milwaukee** is made up of K3 through 8th grade students of St. Sava Orthodox School in Milwaukee. The choir sings for religious and cultural events, including weekday liturgies, school and church slava celebrations, and folklore concerts. In 2015, they performed as a part of the national Junior Choir at the SSF Choral Festival in Milwaukee.

The Crown of Tones  
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**Tatjana Radunovic Essay**  
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the cross, representing the sign that was on the cross: “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews”. We have kept the middle bar, where Jesus had his hands nailed down, unable to move for hours. And, finally, we have kept the last slanted bar, which represents the bar that held Jesus’ feet up, slanted to the right, as his life was slipping away so did his feet, which made it slanted and pointing straight to the thief on Jesus’ right who sincerely repented of his sinful life, during his last breaths and pleaded to be forgiven. The merciful and loving Jesus forgave him everything and welcomed him into heaven. This original cross teaches us and reminds us of everything our Orthodox Christian faith is about and proclaims it to the entire world.

In a crowd full of people we would be recognized by the way we cross ourselves, by the crosses hanging around our necks. However, we should be also recognized by the way we believe, think, speak, act, and treat each other. Orthodoxy is not all about the symbols and representations, but by how we act, towards God, towards each other and towards everybody and everything God created, including our enemies.

**Essays of other youth from New Gracanica and the Midwest American Diocese were featured in Winter 2016 issue of The Path.**

Youth Committee Announces Conference  
Continued from Page 18

Youth. The conference will include presentations and discussions related to important topics that our youth face every day. Recreational and fellowship events will enable our youth to interact with other high school students from throughout North and South America.

We hope that each parish will provide the financial means necessary to send representatives to the youth conference. There is NO LIMIT to the number of participants each parish can send. Each teenager will be required to provide a $175 registration fee as well as transportation to Indianapolis, Indiana. The Central Church Council will pay all room and board costs.

This year all registrations will be submitted online through the following site. Please complete the online form for each representative you are sending to the conference.

**Registration Form:**  
[http://goo.gl/forms/kOj165GtgK](http://goo.gl/forms/kOj165GtgK)

All registrations must be received no later than June 15, 2016. It is very important that your completed registration be submitted by this date so that the coordinators can prepare for the conference logistics.

Please feel free to contact Chris Radanovich if you have any questions about the conference. His home telephone number is (717) 303-3611 and email is: chrisrad@mindspring.com.

We are very excited to have the opportunity to facilitate this event. We hope you will support the future of the church by sending youth from your parish to the conference.

**The Youth Ministry Committee**
Наш истински дом

Природна је жеља за одбраном. А има ли боље одбране од речи Божије? Потврдно и уверљиво је када нађемо речи из Библије – а боље још уколико су то речи које је изговорио Христос Спаситељ –које ће подржавати наш аргумент. Много је примера људи који узимају речи Божије мењајући им значење у циљу подршке њиховим верујењима, из било којег разлога. Један такав пример – веровали или не! – користи се као изговор за неодлазак у Цркву.

Увек није било чудно, а слично се догодило недавно, када би неки цитирали Библију како и простима у могућност да се молимо Богу. Црква, па чак ни одлазак из дома. Ко ће доћи, али убрзо потом је објаснио да он не у Цркву и да редовно у њу долази, али убрзо потом је објаснио да он не у Цркву и да редовно у њу долази, али убрзо потом је објаснио да он, уствари, не долази сваке недеље, ето, "није фанатик". "Молим се Богу у мајој кући", и додаје, "редовно идење и учешће у богослужењима не оштетује ништа". Шта више, додао је он, чак и стих из Библије то потврђује: "А ти када се молиш, уђи у кијет свој, и затвориш врата своја, помоли се Одцу своме који је у тајности: и Отац твој који види тајно, узвратиће теби јавно" (Матеј 6, 6). То је све што молимо Богу. Не помиње се Црква, па чак ни одлазак из дома.

Истина је, наравно, уколико човек жели да се моли, он би требало да уради само то, тј. да се моли

Богу! Свети Апостол Павле не каже 'када' да се молимо, већ каже "молите се без престanka" (1 Солунцима 5,17). Али Црква Христова и Света Литургија, а да не помињемо сва дневна богослужења, више су од самозатварања у собу где износили наше проблеме Богу. Црква је служење Богу: богослужење заједно са свима Светима и свим апостолима. Она је сједињење неба и земље, Бога и човека, и наравно, онај највећи дар који нам Христос дарује у Светој тајни Пречесића – своје Свето Тело и Пречасну Кров. Овај су уствари са Господом и причешће даје нам се само у Светој Литургији.

Поред тога, одлазак у Цркву, као и активно учешће у Светој Литургији, захтева одређену дисциплину. Та дисциплина је више од погрешног мишљења 'идем када осећам да треба да идем'. Не заборавимо да један од седам дана у недељи припада Господу Богу нашем. Ова дисциплина је нешто што се од нас тражи. На крају, зар није Господ заповедио својим ученицима да иду и проповедају Јеванђеље по целом свету учићи све народе?

Признајем да оно што је најзагонетније је уствари чињеница да горе наведени неоправдан изговор долазе уствари од оних који највише служе у Цркви. Повремено они су ти који проводе највише времена у кућама помажући, радећи, кувајући и служећи.

Ако Црква није толико важна и ако се можемо молити сами у својим собама, зашто онда одвајамо толико времена, новца и енергије радићи за добро Цркве? Защо дајемо прилог Цркви? И на крају, док зиеста имамо доста соба у својим домовима да себе затварамо у њима на молитву, ни имамо само једну Цркву, и само када смо у њој својој 'соби' и простору, можемо је истински назвати парохијском Црквом и да се заиста осећамо као у своме Дому, јер је она "Очев дом", Обиталиште Духа Светога и Тело Христе Спаситеља.

Протојереј Милован Катанић
Прославимо данас, драга браћо и сестре, Господа Бога наше, “Који походи и избави народ Свој” (Лк 1,68) и светлошћу Васкрсења Свога просветли сву васељену! Прославимо Господа који, поставши човек нас ради, претрпе смрт да би нам Васкрсењем Својим отворио двери новога живота! Јер, сви који се у Христа крстисмо, у Христу умримо старом човеку, да бисмо васкрснути, препорођени, обновљени у Њему, и живели са Њим заувек (Рим 6,8). Христос устаде из мртвих и постаде Првенац од уснулих (1. Кор 15,20), те и ми који умиремо у Адаму, бивамо оживљени у Христу, постајући нова твар.

Зато у овај светли Дан појемо победне песме Ономе Који победи силу смрти, Ономе Који порази привидну мудрост мудраца овога света и својим Васкрсењем спасе оне који у Њега верују (1. Кор 1,21). Видесмо испуњење речи пророчких и заједно с Апостолом Павлом кличемо: “Познасмо љубав Христову која превазилази разум и испунисмо се пуноћом Божјом” (Еф 3, 19). Јер, као што сила смрти, после пада прародитељâ рода људског у грех, уђе у овај свет, тако Господ Христос, као Нови Адам, прими на Себе ране настале због греха, вољно, нас ради, претрпе смрт, уништи њену силу и врати човеку његову првобитну красоту. Зато кроз Васкрсење познајемо смисао и циљ Божјег стварања, јер Господ приведе све из небића у биће да би вечно и непропадљиво живело у Христу, Јединородном Сину Његовом.

Свети Максим Исповедник нас богонадахнуто учи да се телесним рођењем родисмо, у крштењу се препорођисмо, а Васкрсењем се вечно рођући у Христу, Који, као Прворођени из мртвих, обновљава васелу твар и да јој непропадљивост. Васкрсењем Својим Христос сједињује овај свет и рај, а у рај пре свих других прима покаяњог разбојника, дајући свима нама наду да наше живљење у покајању није узалудно. Славећи Васкрсење Христово, славимо и певамо чудесну Тајну Бога који нас је створио да у Сину Његовом, Оваплоћеном, Распетом и Васкрслом Христу Спаситељу, вечно будемо причасници божанске природе, односно божанског живота (ср. 2. Пет 1,4).

До Христовог Васкрсења, сви су после смрти одлазили у мрачне просторе ада, у коме нема никога да Бога слави, и тако бессмица смрти држао у оковима сву творевину (ср. Пс 6,6; Ис 38,18). Христос Бог силази у дубине живота у љубине ада и вериге вечне које су држеле тамо свезане, бивају скршени (ирмос 6. песме канона). Ад бива испражњен, а Господ наш изводи прародитеље и праведнике у светлост новога живота. Смрт је од тада само сан. Она више не означава крај већ врата вечнога живота у Христу. Зато и Апостол Павле одважно кличе: “Мени је Христос живот, а смрт добитак” (Фил 1, 21).

Очистивши чула светим постом, узгађајмо неприступну светлост Васкрсења, узгађајмо Христа који је био у Адаму, у њему живели и на њему смрт је узгађена, а у Христу нема смрти. Узгађајмо узгађајући се на древне хришћане, да престанемо да се радујемо и Христовом љубављу волимо, и то не само једни друге као Једино Тело, Једну Цркву Божју! Након навалих часова смрти, престанемо да се спремимо на будући смрти, и то не само људи, а нити већ и непријатеље. Након Васкрсења Христова, Бог дарује нам непропадљивост живота који је дарован нам у Христу, Који наси једно тело, једну Цркву Божју. У Христу, нећемо бојати смрти, ни шта она није дана вечности, ни страха, ни туге. Узгађајмо његов живот, узгађајмо Христа, јер је Наш Примао смрт дана у наше срца, узгађајмо његову светлост, јер истина је постао светлост! Узгађајмо се од овога света, узгађајмо се на живот, како наси оживимо у Христу, како наси оживимо у света који је његов, и света који је непропадљив. Зато истина је у Христу, како наси оживимо у света који је његов, како наси оживимо у света који је непропадљив и непропадљивност смрти, бивају скршени (ирмос 6. песме канона). Узгађајмо се од овога света, узгађајмо се на живот, како наси оживимо у Христу, како наси оживимо у света који је његов, како наси оживимо у света који је непропадљив. Зато истина је у Христу, како наси оживимо у света који је његов, како наси оживимо у света који је непропадљив и непропадљивност смрти.
Саборност на светлости дана

Уводна Реч

Епископ западноамерички Г. Максим у свом интервјуу за дневни лист Политика, који је преузет и штампан у овом броју Стазе Православља са његовим благословом, одговара на актуелна питања поводом одржавања Светог и Великог Сабора Православне Цркве на острву Криту у јуну месецу ове године.

Одговори Епископа Максима прожети су дубоком свешћу о саборности Цркве, њеном унутарњем јединству и вођењем Духом Светим, али и истовремено разноликошушилије у приступу решавању савремених друштвених изазова и питања. Они ни у ком случају не доводе у питање јединство Цркве, већ прагматички приступају питањима историјских оквира. Црква као заједница је изнад свакодневног и хоризонталног размишљања и приступа проблемима, тј. она као живо Тело Христово свесна историјских оквира, али је надмашује наша размишљања и дискусије и има у виду свеснавајучу и обновитељску силу и благодат Божију. Јер “изволи се Духу Светоме и нама... “ рекоше Свети Апостоли по завршетку сабора у Јерусалиму. Православни хришћани позвани су да учествују у раду Великог Сабора својим усрдним молитвама за благоразумије Архијереја Свете Православне Цркве. Црква Христова јесте један велики сабор (Еккултур) те би отуда и сваки православни хришћанин требао да буде за синодалности и живот у Цркви Христовој. Сабор ће завршити свој рад 27. јуна ове године када ће обзнати своје резултате и одлуке на корист Цркве Божије, тј. народови и свештенства.

Интервју са Епископом Г. Максимом

Питање: Како ће верник у некој парохији, рецимо у Врању или код вас у Америци, "прочитати" поруке светског православног врха?

Сабори служе да васпоставе и гарантују заједништво међу локалним Црквама унутар једне Цркве "по васељени" – да упију нађу у спасење од смрти. Они ни у ком случају не доводе у питање јединство Цркве, већ прагматички приступају питањима историјских оквира. Црква Христова и јесте један велики сабор (Еккултур) те би отуда и сваки православни хришћанин требало да буде за синодалности и живот у Цркви Христовој. Сабор ће завршити свој рад 27. јуна ове године када ће обзнати своје резултате и одлуке на корист Цркве Божије, тј. народови и свештенства.

време потисне саборска прекса ширих размера. Стога предстојећи "Свети и Велики Сабор" има непроценљив значај за обнову саборног и канонског самосазања у нашој Цркви. Саборност (или синодалност) није епитет Цркве. Она је у самом свом бићу и постојању "синодос", заједница. Уз то, не треба превидети харизматски карактер једног Васељенског сабора који је био више један ванредни ad hoc догађај, неголи институционална реалност. У овом „свету“, у коме владају разједињујуће сили, Црква кроз Сабор позива на заједничку покушај динамичког очувања онтопошког јединства и заједничко сведочење љубави.

С обзиром да неке од тема Дневног реда Светог и Великог Сабора звуче анахроно (пост, календар, брачне сметње, аутономија, дијаспора, мисија итд.), не чуди дека постоје гласови који указују на реалне недостатке у овим текстовима, тј. што су они претерано "уговаране". Праве теме се опира уласку у "уговорени" живот. Ипак, верујемо да ће се Сабор позабавити проблемима и изазовима данашњег дана, упућући поруку омладини, осврнути се на биомедицинску технологију, кризу породице, игнорисање верског идентитета у процесима интеграција, тероризам, стати у одбрану прогоњених хришћана, саосећајући и са патњама присталица других верских традиција, итд. Страшно ће бити ако не будемо размишљали о животу у коме се као људи налазимо сви помало пометени. Понекад заборављамо колико је важно, па и довољно, сабрати се и служити Литургију. Црква не спасава речима или акцијама него својим истинским бићем.
није нека устаљена униформисаност јединства, на које нас позива Христос, Духа, догађај слободне заједнице, тада ипак Црква "по васељени" Црква "католичанска" и ни у чему није Црква. Наиме, иако је свака помесна запљускује обале многих аутокефалних већ, јесте очувано, али криза јединства подлегло глобализацији?

Уполагајући нешто веома онда прећи на праксу. Другим речима, испод феноменологије помесном тако и на васељенском плану. мисије у данашњем свету, како на остваривању њене богочовечанске Природа Цркве поседује нешто веома јединства без оваквих Сабора, зашто им је он потребан сада и да ли се то "критског Сабора" Сабор држати редовније, али не као нека "универзална структура" која bi imala перманентни карактер. Може то бити нови почетак у доживљавању и проучавању карактера. Може то бити нови почетак "структура" која би имала перманентни редовније, али не као нека "универзална структура" која би имала перманентни карактер. Може то бити нови почетак у доживљавању и проучавању карактера. Може то бити нови почетак "структура" која би имала перманентни редовније, али не као нека "морална структура" која би имала првобитни карактер. Може то бити нови почетак у доживљавању и проучавању карактера. Може то бити нови почетак "структура" која би имала перманентни редовније, али не као нека "хибридна структура" која би имала прве комаде у доживљању и проучавању карактера.

Питање: Православни свет често изгледа, парадоксално говорећи, разједињено-уједињен. Какву форму изгледа, парадоксално говорећи, "светски православни врх". Сабор (чак ни Васељенски) не стоји изнад Цркве, нема власти над њом, него служи народ Божији – Црку, одакле црпі свој ауторитет, важност и непогрешивост.

Црква је изнад Васељенских сабора и користи их као орган за тумачење божанско-ориентисаног.
Саборност на светлости дана
Наступак са 23. стр.

свака јеретичка или расколничка подела подстица је и активирање здравих црквених сила ради лећења разделяјућих тенденција у телу Цркве, са коначним циљем очувања јединства. Сабор може успети да извучи светлост чак и из нега тако суженог и мрачног као што је раскол.

Питање: Папа се недавно састао са московским патријархом Кирилом, а потом и са васељенским Вардлом и епископом. Да ли се од предстојећег Сабора могу очекивати конкретни кораци ка унапређењу односа између Православних и Римокатоличке Цркве?

Ти историјски сусрети сведоче о могућностима за искрен дијалог, на основу теолошких начела првог миленијума. На пример, темељни принцип Св. Киријана Картагенског гласи да сваки епископ, а не само римски, седи на катедри Апостола Петра. Ово не значи само да су сви епископи једнаки, већ и то да су једнаки прејемници целокупног сабора Апостола. Киријан разуме „Петрову катедру“ не у односу на универсалну Цркву већ у односу на сваку локалну Цркву на челу са епископом.

Ови сусрети имају сотироношни и терапетски аспект. Жалимо због губитка јединства са западним црквама, јер је то последица и наше греховности. Истински хришћани знају да је до тога губитка дошло против воље Божије. Циљ сабора је био и исцелење оболеле људске личности и заједнице. Ова непорезива сотироношка перспектива саборске установе објашњава се чињеницом да се једино у Цркви налази истинска терапија, пошто је Христос једини Лекар. То историјско прејемство и предање исцелења, које чини срце и језгро библијског и отачког предања саборског система, треба да нам помогне у решавању болног питања раскола.

Питање: Да ли то значи — екуменизам, промену календара, одустајање од Православља како га виде они који се против садашњег начину комуникације са католичанима?

Постоје верници који брину о „једином што је потребно“ и с поверењем гледају на оне који пастирски одговорно сучељавају изазове. Постоји и секташки приступ који у уношењу пометаче које су се поменули види свој "raison d'etre". Од "екуменизма" праве сензацију која код једног броја људи уживи приличан успех и својом битковошћу само уносе раздор и хаос у већ постојећи метеј света. Српска Православна Црква је истински икуменска, притом чува свој календар и не устручава се да разговара са било киме. Она дaje свој допринос енгустеницијалном појашњењу савремених антрополошких, космолошких, културно-цивилизационих и других проблема. Синодалност као суштинска својост Цркве, може да буде корисна основа и прототип и за екуменски покрет. Наша Црква се не креће у легалистичким и уским конфесионалистичким оквирима.

Питање: Ко ће представљати СПЦ на овом Сабору?

Сабрање предстатаоља, без пуноће сваке помене Цркве или без укупног сабора њене јерархије, не одлучује у име других, јер би у том случају то било облик колективног папства. Према древној прaksi позишују се поглавари аутокефалних Цркава до доћи са једним бројем својих епископа. То је далеко од идеалног броја — на Сабору би требало да учествују сви активни канонски епископи. Црква на простору Србије и "српских и поморских земаља" (израз Светога Саве) позвана је да из свога епископата изабере 24 епископа.

У Литургији која ће се служити на Криту, Православни ће као сабрање народа око епископа и превишира изузети и изразити у историји икону Педесетинце и Будућег света који превазилази смртну распарочност, захваљујући свом јединству и утевљење у Христу. Тај Будући век јесте градитачке сила Цркве.

Извор: лист Политика, 4. мај 2016, стр. 1 и 8
Саопштење за јавност Светог Архијерејског Сабора

Саопштење за јавност Светог Архијерејског Сабора Српске Православне Цркве са редовног заседања одржаног у Призрену и Београду од 14. до 25. маја 2016. године

Редовно заседање Светог Архијерејског Сабора Српске Православне Цркве започето је у манастиру Џун ове године на острву Криту. Архијерејски Сабор Православне Цркве, сазван на овооде одседања, одлучивати ће на Великом Сабору. Најважнија тема овогодишњег заседања Сабора била је усвојена текст који изражава његов свеправославним Сабором Српске Патријаршије.


Његове Светости Патријарха г. Иринеја одржаване су, у Патријаршији српској у Београду, под председништвом Председника Светог Архијерејског Сабора Православне Цркве. Наставак на 28. стр.

Извор: spc.rs
У Острогу прослављен празник Светог Василија, Литургију служили Митрополити Амфилохије, Сербије из Украјине и Епископ Јоаникије

Празник Светог Василија Острошког Чудотворца (12/5) молитвено и свечано је прослављен у Манастиру Острог уз молитвено учешће више хиљада вјерника.

Централиот Светом архијерејском Литургијом на платоу испред Горњег манастира началство вршено је Архиепископ његовио цетињски Митрополит црногорско-приморски и игуман островији господин Амфилохије, а саслуживали су му Митрополит тернопољски и кременечки из Украјинске Православне Цркве Московског патријархата господин Сергије и Епископ будимљанско-нишки господин Јоаникије, као и многобројно свештенство и свештеномонаштво Српске и Руске Православне Цркве.

Светој Литургији у свећеницији троји вјерницима присуствовали су и познати српски редитељ Немања Емир Кустурица и познати руски спортиста, некадашњи првак свијета у боксу а сада посланик Руске Думе Николај Сергејевич Валујев.

Након читања Светог Јеванђеља архијерејском бесједом присуствивали се обратно Епископ Јоаникије који је, између остalog казао да није случајно што празник Светог Василија Острошког сваке године прослављamo након празника Вакресења Христовог.

Велики броj вјерника причесто се Тијелом и Крвљу Господа Исуса Христа, а потом је Митрополит Амфилохије са саслуживцима благословиво и преломиво славски колач.

Затим се архијерастичком бесједом обратно саслуживцима и сабранима ријечима да данишњи сабор посвећен на она сабрања око Господа прије двије хиљаде година.

Митрополит Амфилохије је потом госту из Украјине уручио икону Светог Василија Острошког на дар и подсетио да је против чега се бори Свети Василије у 17. вијеку, да се сада против тога бори народ Божији у Украјини.

Такође, иконом Светог Василија Острошког дарио је и Епископа Јоаникија и пожелио му да га Свети Василије крији и храни да одоли сваком злу и подарив здравље и спасење народу Будимљанско-нишки епархије.

Митрополит Амфилохије је иконом дарио и познатог руског спортиста Николаја Сергејевича Валујева. Након Литургије обављено је освећење манастирске пекаре.

Извор: http://www.svetigora.com
Српски православни Саборни храм Светог Саве у Њујорку, архитектонско благо које је заведено у националном регистру историјских места и као обележје Њујорка, трагично је настрадао у пожару у недељу, 1. маја 2016. године, на Васкрс, најсветији дан источноправославних хришћана.

Разлог пожара је под истрагом. По најпре чувеног архитекте Ричарда Апчона, црква је грађена почетком од 1842. године, а освећена је 1855. године као капела Свете Тројице, све док није продата српској заједници 1943. године. Чувена списатељица Едит Вартон венчала се у овој цркви, а Никола Тесла, светски познат научник и изумитељ, обележен је ту бронзаним бистом, која је чудом преживела пожар без трага оштећења. До данас је православна заједница потрошила 4,5 милиона долара да би обновила и уредила овај комплекс, који је наставио да служи потребама парохијана и заједнице у рату и мир, жалости и радости.

Српска заједница пати због губитка своје једине цркве у Њујорку, готског архитектонског драгуља из раног 19. века. Ми смо благодарни Богу јер никто није повређен и што су животи сачувани, пошто се овде неколико часова пре пожара 700 парохијана окупило на Васкршњој служби. Изражавамо своју дубоку захвалност члановима Ватрогасне службе и Полицијске службе Њујорка на њиховом брзом и херојском одну, а што ћемо заувек похранити у својим срцима и молитвама. Ми такође захваљујемо Канцеларији Градоначелника и нашим суграђанима и комицијама на њиховом сасвим.

Планови за обнову Саборне цркве су спремни, да би наставили да пружамо уточиште људима Њујорка и свим људима добра воље којима је потребна духовна и материјална подршка.

Заједница Светог Саве искрено захваљује црквеним великодостојницима и појединцима из многих вероисповести који су одмах претекли у помоћ својим личним присуством, писмима, понудама подршке и молитвама. Упркос уништењу које је задесило заједницу Светог Саве, црква ће наставити верску службу на поседу у нашој 25. Западној улици која је у претекли временом вештаца и комаха, ако ћемо одмах и у свому одлучном и великодушном сарадњи да приведемо службу као клац за њихову веру и присуством и радошћу, која ће нам биће памћена и споменута као кваст нашег дома.

Нескривени је наша љубав према свима вама који сте нам помогли вашим присуством и топлим и охрабрујућим речима. Ми смо понизи таје ваше љубави и присуства наше репорту, који је био у нашој четвори и на наш крај одгонство којим је нам било у врхунцу наших срцених и материјалних подршка вама.

Нескривени је наша љубав према свима вама који сте нам помогли вашим присуством и топлим и охрабрујућим речима. Ми смо понизи таје ваше љубави и присуства наше репорту, који је био у нашој четвори и на наш крај одгонство којим је нам било у врхунцу наших срцених и материјалних подршка вама.

Богослужење ће се одржати у недељу, 8. маја 2016. године у 10. ујутро у Calvary Episcopal Church, 277 Park Avenue South (corner of 21st Street), NYC.

За више информација посетите званичну веб страницу парохије Св. Саве у Њујорку: http://stsavany.org

Извор: Источноамеричка епархија (превод – Информативна

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Саопштење за јавност
Наставак 25. стр.

таква антиканонска активност буде настављена, Српска Православна Црква ће – са искреним болом, али Цркве ради – бити приморана да прекине литургијско и канонско општење са Румунским Православним Црковом. Одини са другим хришћанским Цркама и заједницама, као и са Јеврејском заједницом и Исламском заједницом у Србији, традиционално су добри и коректни, што се, нажалост, никада не може рећи за односе са екстремистичким круговима у Римокатоличкој Цркви у Хрватској и у Јужноамеричкој.

Однос Цркве и државе у Србији развија се у знаку добротворне подршке Управе за сарадњу са Црквама и верским заједницама, као и са јеврејском, исламском, римокатоличком, унијском и другим хришћанским заједницама у Србији. Одини са другим хришћанским Цркама и заједницама, као и са Јеврејском заједницом и Исламском Црквом у Београду.

Нема лепше вере од хришћанске
Епископ Данило Јеромонах Амфилохије

ОТКРИВЕЊЕ У НОВОМ ЗАВЕТУ

Како почиње Нови завет?

Нови завет почиње родословом по телу Господа Христа и Његовим Рођењем. Његово Рођење благословених на свету службу Богу и смирено зло и на радост ђавола, а Богородица је употреби своју слободу на свету службу Богу и смирено зло и на радост ђавола. Зато није била лаковерна, као наша Светог Ангела. Зато није била лаковерна, као наша Светог Ангела.

Како су се звали родитељи Пресвете Богородице Марије?

Звали су се Јоаким и Ана. Њихова имена спомињемо на крају сваке Литургије. Празник Марије?

Како почиње Нови завет?

Шта је тражио лукави цар Ирод од Мудраца?

Шта је тражио лукави цар Ирод од Мудраца?

Шта значи име Исус?

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Шта значи име Исус?
Кога живимо, да наша животна трка не би била узалудна и да наша нада не буде нада у празне и сујетне идоле овога света и века (ср. Гал 2,2)!

Део наша духовна, не занемаримо љубав! Јер, управо по нашој међусобној љубави сви ће нас препознати као Христове ученике (Јн 13,35). Будимо сапатници онима који страдају, плачемо са онима који плачу и тешимо их надом у Господа! Нека наше служење Богу не буде ново издање фарисејске спољашње побожности! Какву ћемо она награду прими? Жртвујмо се за ближње! Дајмо ономе ко нема! Смирено славимо се и боље славимо Бога речима покајаног цариника који замахе. Сладање и кровопроливност, котора се умножила, вероватно је имала у знаку Крста и Васкрсења. Страдали су вековима називне Цркве и манастира, наша села и градови, али смо их опет обновили, обновљајући свој ум и ствари, као живу Цркву Божију. Зато, уместо плакања и ридања певајмо победну песму, јер у светлости Васкрсења, крст који носимо није знак понижења и срамоте, већ новог достојанства и света.

Ипак, најбоље смисле све које нас сједињује и чини Једном Цркву Бога речима покајаног цариника који замахе. Сладање и кровопроливност, котора се умножила, вероватно је имала у знаку Крста и Васкрсења. Страдали су вековима називне Цркве и манастира, наша села и градови, али смо их опет обновили, обновљајући свој ум и ствари, као живу Цркву Божију. Зато, уместо плакања и ридања певајмо победну песму, јер у светлости Васкрсења, крст који носимо није знак понижења и срамоте, већ новог достојанства и света.

Сведене на освојеним земљама и нижама и разуђући Срби, који већ две деценије не могу да врате у своје домаћинство, ни один не могу и не smeћu поделити и страдања и неправде овосветских духовних настава које је сватица Цара Небеског и сватица Христове Цркве указујући нам на свеобухватање и припомени светога духовног простора који нас све повезује, само географски појам већ, изнад свега, у знаку Крста и Васкрсења. Светолазаревско Косово и Метохија, за нас Срби.
Православни Катихизис
Наставак са 29. стр.

Кроз хришћански свет

Уснуш у Господу кнез Александар Карађорђевић

Кнез Александар, син Кнеза Намесника Павла и Кињењи Олге Карађорђевићи, рођен је 13. августа 1924. године у Ваљеву у Великој Британији. Чукунут Вожда Карађорђа, потомак је и руске царске лозе Романова, кнежевске лозе Демидова, као и грчких данских краљева и кнежева. Према породичном правилнику Краљевског Дома од 1930. године, носио је титулу Кнез од Јужославије.

Школовао се у Итону. Учествовао је у Другом светском рату као пилот добровољца РАФ-а и имао 1000 сати борбеног лета. После Другог светског рата настанио се у Парижу. Из првог брака са Кињењи Маријом Пијом од Сање има синове Димитрија, Михајла, Ђерђа и Јелену. Из другог брака са Кињењи Барбаром од Исаковога царства има сина Михајла. Од 2000. године, у настојању да надокнади изгубљене деценије, интензивно је долазио у Србију. Године 2007. обишао је Косово и Метохију, прешао преко југословенског народу.

Његова писма, саопштења и разговори сабране су у четири књиге. Био је потпредседник Управног одбора Западноевропске епархије СПЦ, обновитељ, Витешког реда Змаја и покровитељ Центра за истраживање православног монархија. Кнез Александар Карађорђевић биће сахрањен у породичној гробници на Опленцу.

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