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Easter [Pascha] in the Liturgical Year

Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemann

In the center of our liturgical life, in the very center of that time which we measure as year, we find the feast of Christ’s Resurrection. What is Resurrection? Resurrection is the appearance in this world, completely dominated by time and therefore by death, of a life that will have no end. The one who rose again from the dead does not die anymore. In this world of ours, not somewhere else, not in a world that we do not know at all, but in our world, there appeared one morning Someone who is beyond death and yet in our time. This meaning of Christ’s Resurrection, this great joy, is the central theme of Christianity and it has been preserved in its purity by the Orthodox Church. There is much truth expressed by those who say that the real central theme of Orthodoxy, the center of all its experience, the frame of reference of everything else, is the Resurrection of Christ.

The center, the day, that gives meaning to all days and therefore to all time, is that yearly commemoration of Christ’s Resurrection at Easter. This is always the end and the beginning. We are always living after Easter, and we are always going toward Easter. Easter is the earliest Christian feast. The whole tone and meaning of the liturgical life of the Church is contained in Easter, together with the subsequent fifty-day period, which culminates in the feast of the Pentecost, the coming down of Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. This unique Easter celebration is reflected every week in the Christian Sunday, which we call in Russian “Voskresenie” (Resurrection Day). If only you would take some time to read the texts of Sunday Matins you would realize, though it may seem strange to you, that every Sunday we have a little Easter. I say “Little Easter,” but it is really “Great Easter.” Every week the Church comes to the same central experience: “Having seen Thy Resurrection...” Every Saturday night when the priest carries the Gospel from the altar to the center of the church, after he has read the Gospel of the Resurrection, the same fundamental fact of our Christian faith is proclaimed: Christ is risen! St. Paul says: “If Christ is not risen, then your faith is in vain.” There is nothing else to believe. This is the real center, and it is only in reference to Easter as the end of all natural time and the beginning of the new time in which we as Christians have to live that we can understand the whole liturgical year. If you open a calendar, you will find all our Sundays are called Sundays after Pentecost, and Pentecost itself is fifty days after Easter. Pentecost is the fulfillment of Easter. Christ ascended into heaven and sent down His Holy Spirit. When He sent down His Holy Spirit into the world, a new society was instituted, a body of people, whose life, though it remained of this world and was shared in its life, took on a new meaning. This new meaning comes directly from Christ’s Resurrection. We are no longer people who are living in time as in a meaningless process, which makes us first old and then ends in our disappearance. We are given not only a new meaning in life, but even death itself has acquired a new significance. In the Troparion at Easter we say, “He trampled down death by death.” We do not say that He trampled down death by the Resurrection, but by death. A Christian still faces death as a decomposition of the body, as an end; yet in Christ, in the Church, because of Easter, because of Pentecost, death is no longer just the end but it is the beginning also. It is not something meaningless which therefore gives a meaningless taste to all of life. Death means entering into the Easter of the Lord. This is the basic tone, the basic melody of the liturgical year of the Christian Church. Christianity is, first of all, the proclamation in this world of Christ’s Resurrection. Orthodox spirituality is paschal in its inner content, and the real content of the Church life is joy. We speak of feasts; the feast is the expression of joyfulness of Christianity.

The only real thing, especially in the child’s world, which the child accepts easily, is precisely joy. We have made our Christianity so adult, so serious, so sad, so solemn that we have almost emptied it of that joy. Yet Christ Himself said, “Unless you become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of God.” To become as a child in Christ’s terms means to be capable of that spiritual joy of which an adult is almost completely incapable. To enter into that communion with things, with nature, with other people without suspicion of fear or frustration. We often use the term “grace.” But what is grace? Charisma in Greek means not only grace but also joy. “And I will give you the joy that no one will take away from you...” If I stress this point so much, it is because I am sure that, if we have a message to our own people, it is that message of Easter joy which finds its climax on Easter night. When we stand at the door of the church and the priest has said, “Christ Is Risen,” then the night becomes in the terms of St. Gregory of Nyssa, “lighter than the day.” This is the secret strength, the real root of Christian experience. Only within the framework of this joy can we understand everything else.

(Excerpts from the lecture “The Sanctification of Life” on the Third Annual Church School Conference sponsored by the Metropolitan Council Religious Education Committee, July 1963.)
We have completed the time of the Great and Holy Lent, during which in daily services with repentance, confession and tearful prayers we co-suffered with our Lord, accompanied Him on the way of the Cross leading to the Resurrection, and chanted gratefully: “Glory to thy long-suffering, O Lord!” We have lived through His voluntary suffering, humiliation, spitting and death on the Cross so that we may today, by God’s immeasurable mercy, welcome Christ’s glorious Resurrection. By participating in these events we live through them, overcoming death and every sadness; for just as without death there is no Resurrection, so likewise without spiritual struggle carried out in hope and long-suffering there is no consolation. That is why we worship and give thanks to the Lord risen from the dead, because He has made us, His faithful people, worthy to be communicants of His miraculous works, feeling in our souls the new life that conquers all tribulations.

Let us celebrate today’s bright Feast Day with joy, our dear spiritual children, for its grace and light come not from the Sun, nor from angels, but rather they come from the Unapproachable Light which dispels the darkness, and the eyes of the people see all the beauty and harmony of God’s world. Only in this Light can we clearly see the meaning of the existence of mankind and of the world in honor, which belongs to them as God has ordained. On this day we are reminded and counseled together with our God-bearing fathers of Christ’s Church that the cause and goal of creation is God. Each of us, as God’s co-worker, is responsible not only for ourselves and our people, but for all people and all nations, for all of God’s creation. This is the universal human philosophy by which our faith has lived and worked through the ages, demonstrating what today is called “ecological consciousness.” Therefore, on today’s Feast Day, which is an oasis of peace and joy, we are doing a spiritual review, arming ourselves with hope so that, with the help of God’s full arsenal that is found in the Church, we may endure all tribulations and all temptations, drawing strength from the Lord Who encourages us with these words: “But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) The Resurrection is the greatest victory over evil, sin and death, which reminds us that we have the possibility and duty to stand up against every spiritual fall and against everything that prevents us from walking towards the good. Let us not despair, but rather let us hope in the Lord, so that we may receive God’s grace and help in every struggle. Faith in the Resurrected God-Man reveals the cure for the increasing depression found in the modern world. According to the words of St. Theophan the Recluse, it gives us the possibility to “see over sin and suffering” with our spiritual eyes. If we sin according to our weaknesses, the Holy Gospel tells us: Arise, O you who sleep – in sin – arise and resurrect from the dead – with repentance – and Christ will enlighten you. (cf. Ephesians 5:14)

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

This blessed life, life with all the saints, begins here and now on earth. Joy and peace begin here in this life for everyone who fills his or her soul with the eternal word of God and forgives everyone for everything. There is no one today, believing or non-believing, who would not want to participate in true joy, at least for...
Christ is risen from the dead! Today the whole creation, heaven and earth and the deepest abysses of the earth are filled with joy. Let the whole universe celebrate the resurrection by which we are strengthened.

even a moment. But peace and joy are to be found nowhere. All around is hopelessness, the soul is drenched with personal desires and wishes stemming from self-love and selfish living, leading to spiritual death and its consequences, aimlessness and negligence of eternal salvation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Christ is Risen!

Given at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade on Pascha 2018. Your intercessors before the Resurrected Christ:

Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karloveci and Serbian Patriarch IRINEJ
Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Coastlands AMPHILOHIE
Metropolitan of Zagreb and Ljubljana PORFIRIJE
Metropolitan of Dabro-Bosna CHRYSOSTOM
Bishop of Sabac LAVRENTIJE
Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla FOTIJE
Bishop of Mileseva ATANASIJE
Bishop of Budimlje and Niksic IGNATIJE
Bishop of Gornji Karlovac VASILIJE
Bishop of Western America MITROPHAN
Bishop of Backa IRINEJ
Bishop of Great Britain and Scandinavia DOSITEJ
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Bishop of Zica JUSTIN
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Bishop of Ras and Prizren TEODOSIJE
Bishop of Western America MAXIM
Bishop of Gornji Karlovac GERSAMIS
Bishop of Eastern America IRINEJ
Bishop of Krusevac DAVID
Bishop of Slavonia JOVAN
Bishop of Austria and Switzerland ANDREJ
Bishop of Bihać-Petrovac SERGIJE
Bishop of Timok ILARION
Bishop of Nis ARSENIJE
Bishop of Australia and New Zealand Metropolitanate SILUAN
Bishop of Dalmatia NIKODIM
Vicar Bishop of Moravica ANTONIJE
Vicar Bishop of Dioklea KIRIL

THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF OCHRID:
Archbishop of Ochrid and Metropolitan of Skopje JOVAN
Bishop of Polog and Kumanovo JOAKIM
Bishop of Bregalnica MARKO
Vicar Bishop of Stobi DAVID

[Path of Orthodoxy translation]
For the Serbian people and the Serbian state the status of Kosovo is an issue of elementary identity and integrity: identity - in the sense that Serbian self-understanding is determined in the normative sphere in which the Testament of Kosovo and ethics of Vidovdan certainly fall; integrity – not only in the sense of a territorial integrity and sovereignty but integrity in its ability of self-sustainability. For this reason Kosovo is a vital issue of Serbian state and national organism, or: an organic issue of Serbian state and national vitality. Confronting the problem of Kosovo as a people and state we are crucified between a brutal reality (a military capture of Kosovo and Metohija by NATO as an ally of the rebellious Albanians in this Serbian province) and the normative sanctity (the significance of Kosovo in the church-national tradition). This complexity must take into consideration in order for us to understand the problem and formulate a reply, and not that under the pressure of reality resolve the Kosovo problem “now or never” (historical phenomena are characterized by long duration!) nor that “all or nothing” be played out under the pressure of normativity (gambling with fate is not an expression of sobriety). A prudent answer (which does not exclude “emotions” since they also have a rational significance) should be sought in a confrontation with all the structural elements of this complex issue. The problem is resolved through some “agreement between Serbs and Albanians”, for the bastion of Kosmet Albanians is projected and confirmed by Washington, London and Brussels. I should admit now, it is much easier disqualifying each suggestion than saying what to do, simply because many of the elements necessary for decision making are not in our power. Thus, when one does not know what one should do it is very important to know what one must not do.

1. A complex reality
The current complex historical reality of Kosovo and Metohija represents a unique and very complex problem for the Serbian people and Serbian state. Unique – meaning that for us this is a unique and monolithic problem, and subsequently often appears to be unresolvable. Complex – meaning it consists of many important separate issues of which each has many specific moments. Then, in order to deal with such a complex problem, we need to explain it structurally in detail and then resolve what is possible in the given circumstances. The structural moments of the Kosovo issue must be the subject not only
of the political but also an expertise analysis, that we might formulate our vision of the so-called “comprehensive normalized relationship” for which we are now being forced. Namely, an important aspect is the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of the Serbian state underwritten by the UN Resolution 1244. Regardless of the “factual state” – this legal fact is capital and needs to be activated in all ways. It is quite legitimate to refer to the fact that the historical, cultural and religious self-awareness of the Serbian people (Serbian identity) is largely oriented around Kosovo. In Kosovo and Metohija there is an extremely important and open church question, in terms of Serbian and world cultural and historical heritage and in terms of property of the Serbian Orthodox Church. In addition, there is no need to present any models (not even the monastic community of Mount Athos), especially not by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but a unique solution should be sought (of course, under the basic assumption of complete security). Kosovo and Metohija is a very serious and real military and security issue. In that sense, we need to suppress any attempt of militarily strengthening the Kosmet Albanians and to seek guarantees from international institutions. Any action from the Serb side would be unreasonable and would strengthen the Albanian factor in the region, because this factor has clearly proven to us unfriendly. It is impossible to circumvent the numerous economic issues in Kosovo and Metohija: usurped property (private, church, state), investments and loans at the expense of Serbia, energy, natural resources, resources, trade, communications. “Kosovo” as a Serbian and international problem is also a complex legal issue, and in Kosmet there is a countless list of unresolved legal issues of the expense of Serbs (usurpation from all kinds of property to the bare existence). Not only due to the fact that the ethical aspects of the law are irreducible, but also because traditionally Serbs see Kosovo as a moral issue. After all, it is a matter of elementary civilization not accepting violence to have priority over law and justice. All this puts us in front of the question of trans-generational responsibility - historical responsibility before the past and for the future. Therefore, when a “comprehensive normalization of relations” is sought, these and many other issues should be included, and there is no sense in talking about “normalization” if justice has been suspended and priority given to might.

Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija should build a legitimate self-governing form (this could be the “community of Serb municipalities”) and legalize their own authentic interests similar to those of Albanian separatists who have realized their interests with the help of foreign assistance, and this should be done by us at a suitable time. For this we need determination, readiness and persistence, precisely those qualities that must be possessed by the one who defends his life and the freedom and dignity of his neighbors, ideals for which the realization does not require any additional legitimacy. Where there is a struggle for freedom (recognition and unification) people do not need any special justification and explanation.

II. “Normalization” as acceptance of abnormal circumstances

The reference framework of our discussion and reflections on the topic of Kosovo and Metohija contains as a moment of pressure to the attitude of the Euro-Atlantic structures that Serbia’s membership in the European Union (which is officially a foreign policy priority of Serbia) is conditioned by a “legally binding document” between Serbia and the Pristina administration of Albanian separatists, a document that is the result of the “normalization process” and which represents a “full normalization of relations” between Serbia and Kosovo Albanian. It goes on to point out that Serbia is not required to express a formal “recognition of the independence” of Albanian Kosovo in a legally binding agreement. However, the terms “legally binding document” and “full normalization of relations” not only mean the “recognition of independence” of the temporarily occupied territory (recognition from Serbia is sought because it is its occupied territory), rather these terms conceal that a blackmail is in question: inasmuch as membership in the European Union, for vital reasons, is a priority to Serbia, then Serbia will not be able to realize this vital priority unless it recognize the independence of the occupied part of its territory. Serbia should allegedly decide on this freely and independently, while it is in fact blackmail (and that is “credible” because it comes after a violent military change in the legal order and the factual situation).

This blackmail is undertaken by the countries that are authors of the Security Council Resolution 1244, with which are confirmed the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the SFR of Yugoslavia.

There is no sense in talking about “normalization” if justice has been suspended and priority given to might.

Visoki Decani Monastery, XIV Century

... there is no sense in talking about “normalization” if justice has been suspended and priority given to might.

Continued on P. 8
of justice. It is consequential then that the power that suspends justice would proceed with blackmail in order to legalize the consequences of violence. Therefore, it should be noted that everything that is happening in Kosovo and Metohija is happening in extraordinary circumstances of the foreign occupation, and foreign occupation, by definition, must be treated as temporary regardless of the length of time. It is this state of affairs (the presence of foreign troops occupying the territory of Kosovo and Metohija) that results in the inability of the executive power of the Republic of Serbia to implement the constitution and law in that territory. Now, Serbia is asked to recognize its own damages as a consequence of the “right of the mightier” as its own interest. All others who have recognized “Kosovo” have actually recognized their policies and their interests, hence themselves, and therefore that is not a true recognition. It is, in fact, an ex-post recognition of the already achieved intention to seize a part of Serbian territory. The violently established state of affairs is not valid until the one upon whom violence was committed does not give their consent. That is precisely why in the normative sense Serbia’s recognition is of the most importance, but for Serbia it would be recognition of its own defeat, whose accomplice would become Serbia itself. Only then would the defeat of law receive its legitimacy on whose back would be the defeat of Serbia. When people do not know what they should do, then they must know what they should by no means do: in no way or form should the legalization of the forcible seizure of Kosovo and Metohija be recognized.

When people do not know what they should do, then they must know what they should by no means do: in no way or form should the legalization of the forcible seizure of Kosovo and Metohija be recognized.

III. Normativity

As it is not realistic that we can now enter the battlefield, it is imperative that we never and under no circumstances leave the normative field - the field of justice and morals, ideals and the values of free and responsible people. Regarding Kosovo and Metohija, many normative issues are presented before us, which, as individuals and as a community, must be taken into account. These issues are legal, moral, traditional, valuable, and they are all essential for the identity of the Serbian people, for their self-understanding and self-assertion and they have an active function in the building up of the state and society.

The awareness that we belong to a particular historical community and that our responsibility is trans-generational and the awareness of the moral unity of historical time (which we cannot renounce) are the foundation of our historical responsibility (and also an ethic of historical responsibility). Historical responsibility requires that in concrete situations it has its own position, its own perspective as an

significance of important historical events is that they give us a valuable orientation and supportive points with which we see the supra-historical meaning. On the foundation of the heroic and sacrificial Vidovdan of Kosovo, the ideals of the Vidovdan ethics were built, namely justice and humanity, self-sacrifice and suffering, repentance and forgiveness, tolerance and generosity, which in fact are the ethics of a Christian culture, and therefore the ethics of Sacrifice. The Vidovdan sacrifice testifies to a total and radical realism which confronts us with the brutal concretization of history. Sacrifice is the sublimation of history. The historical truth is neither logical nor universal, but is an event and unique. The event of exalted sacrifice has the significance of the presence of holiness and gives meaning to the history; it becomes the truth of historical time. Readiness for sacrifice of course does not imply a glorification of sacrificing as value in itself, for the value of the sacrifice is in its purity and purpose. The meaning and purpose of history must be the salvation and improvement of life otherwise what would remain would be the frivolous duration of physical time. Kosovo’s Vidovdan and Jasenovac are unique paradigms of sacrifice which allow us to understand events as our history. What history is for one people is what they see in their own history. Our view of our own history allows us not only to endure the brutality of history, but also to understand and accept history. For the Serbian people who are small in number
but want to be great in character history is already a suffering because of that reason. Sacrifice is the most important memorial that illuminates that which has happened in history. Sacrifice and suffering (namely the experience of historically surviving suffering, the historical experience of border situations, victory and the defeat, glory and destruction) have an epistemic meaning as they enable the understanding of history. Hence the hermeneutical significance of the suffering people for the understanding of history, inasmuch as we are able to observe historical events from the perspective of sacrifice.

Truth from the perspective of Sacrifice as a subject is essentially different from the one who is disqualified as a moral being is portrayed as being subjected to unjust violence.

Therefore in Kosovo and Metohija we need to defend normativity - law instead of violence, truth instead of lies, justice instead of kidnapping, tradition instead of future illusions. One of the requirements for defending normativity is memory. Historical memory as a premise of historical knowledge and historical self-awareness, as concern for the points of support of national identity in the course of history, is also necessary because of the collective awareness of the past and orientation in the future. Before, on a social plan, a structural amnesia is imposed on us as an extinguishing of selected points in memory (damnatio memoriae, “condemnation of memory”). A prerequisite of today’s critical historical knowledge and historical self-awareness is to research the structures of social memory and memory as well as to discover the techniques of deformation of memory and memory. Producing a need of being released from history - which is in fact the nullifying of identity - has the dramatic consequence of forgetting one’s identity.

It is impermissible to interpret the Kosovo Testament banally and disparagingly as the Kosovo “myth” in terms of an archaic and phantasmagoric ballast one needs to be freed from. The myth is a sacred story of sacred events, a myth in social life brings holiness and thus builds self-evident normative in society, establishes and explains norms of social behavior. The myth has the function to make sense in the history of a society. For Schelling it was not history of a nation that creates its myths, but the other way around: the myths of a nation determine its customs and history, the myth is even the fate of a nation, just as man’s character is his destiny. The Kosovo myth is a transformation (epic, historical, existential) of the dramatic and unbearable historical event into meaning, which becomes operational orientation in history.

The Kosovo myth, that is the Kosovo testament, is a vowed foothold for the normativity and the sense of historical existence of the Serbian people that satisfies the need for orientation in order to respondin accordance with the national character to the historical reality and to preserve and consolidate identity through historical fractures. The Kosovo myth, like myths in general, tells us that the value system as a normative assumption of the state and society is not created by the state but that its origin is in the moral and religious sphere which comes from religious and ethical traditions, therefore these traditions are socially binding. Individuals cannot produce a normative structure of a society without the value categories of the sacred, which are evidenced in the axiom of the sociality. So, in Kosovo and Metohija, we need to defend that which is sacred to us and thus it has the power to produce the norm and meaning of our historical character.

IV. Conclusion

The complex problem of Kosovo and Metohija should be explained on the structural elements and then resolved them persistently, patiently and for as long as necessary. The “legally binding agreement on the overall normalization of relations” (this is the same or worse than recogni-

The courage and responsibility of historical existence obliges us to an axiomatic decision that Kosovo and Jasenovac are an important and irreplaceable part of our identity, which no one can take away from us, - unless we give it away.

Gracanica Monastery, XIV century

truth from the perspective of violence that seeks a victim as an object. Violence by stigmatization constructs a sacrifice as an object and thus rationalizes its actions and demonizes the sacrifice and thus conceals the sacredness of the sacrifice. It conceals its own nature: contemporary Violence, as a modernization of barbarism and new absolutism, uses a myth-creating justification of violence by constructing guilt. The stigmatization of the Serbian people as an attempt to annul its identity and impose guilt on it as a means of dominance, the stigma that we felt on our skin during the last civil war and was often used as anti-Serbian propaganda from the time of WWI, is actually a technique by which the marked object (the Serbian nation) is first pushed out of the field of morality, and then is expelled from the field of law:
On the Second Day of Pascha

†His Holiness Patriarch Pavle

“I congratulate you on today’s feast, the second day of the resurrection of the Son of God, which is celebrated for seven days, that is, for a whole week, and every Sunday throughout the year, because the resurrection of the Son of God is the most important event in the Economy of our salvation that He established. With His whole life on earth as God-Man, He established the Economy of our salvation.

Already, with His coming into this world as the Almighty God, He had no other place to be born in, not in any house, nor in any home, but in a cave. His suffering began when Herod persecuted Him, and he had to flee to Egypt with His mother and his stepfather Joseph. Likewise, as a carpenter, for thirty years until His baptism in the Jordan, He lived just like us, with hands covered with blisters. And so on, from the time He was baptized in the Jordan to His going into the desert where He was tempted by the devil, and furthermore, during His ministry, when the faithful did not accept Him as the Son of God, even though they had seen both His works and His miracles. In the end, they seized Him and crucified Him on the cross, God, even though they had seen both His faithfulness and His miracles. In the end, they seized Him and crucified Him on the cross, and He died on it. He does everything for our salvation, and out of love for us, so that we too may be saved, and earn on this earth a blessed life in our true fatherland, that is, the Kingdom of Heaven. Furthermore, out of His infinite love, He endured for our sake, but also due to His endless divine power, He was resurrected. He alone is the One Who raised Himself from the dead, and thus secured eternal life for us as well – if we make ourselves worthy of it with our faith in Him, and our life according to that faith; not only in words, then, but also in deeds, to strive each day as God expects and asks from us.

The Holy Apostle Paul says that the resurrection is the chief event in the history of salvation. “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is also in vain (1 Cor. 14:15). But Christ did rise, and here the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles were ready to lay their lives down for this faith that they preached to all people, and that is preached to us today as well. By this faith may we live and be made worthy of the Kingdom of God. Of course, it is not easy for us humans to believe this. The way we are in our families: how much hatred, how much animosity, how much misery is found in the family where loved ones are bound by blood to each other; not to mention in international affairs, and the misfortunes of war that have befallen us, too! God so loved the world, us humans the way we are, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son that anyone who believes in Him would not perish, but have life eternal. And the Son of God came willingly to suffer for us, the way we are. Therefore, always keep in mind His death on the cross for us and our salvation, and His glorious resurrection. We will come before Him, and He will determine whether we have deserved eternal blessedness in the kingdom of heaven, what “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,” (1 Cor. 2:9) or we deserved eternal torments, where “their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44). Let us keep this before our eyes always, and we will preserve ourselves from all evil toward our loved ones, and our people, and the whole world. Thus, indeed, we will be found worthy of the Kingdom of God for which He has created us.

Happy feast day to you and all the following days. Christ is Risen!

Sermon at the Divine Liturgy, April 15/2, 1996, Monastery of the Holy Archangel Michael Rakovitsa, near Belgrade

“No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” They asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as Isaiah the prophet said.” Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Who are you? And he said, “I baptize in water, but among you he who is to come, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.” (John 1:18-28)
The regular annual Assembly of the Diocese of Canada was held February 2-3, 2018 in Windsor. The faithful of the Assumption of the Most Holy Theotokos Church-School Congregation were hosts, led by V. Rev. Milan Jovanovic and Church Board President Vladimir Pribojan. They warmly welcomed His Grace Bishop Mitrophan of Canada, the clergy, presidents and delegates of all the church-school congregations of the Diocese of Canada. The Diocesan Assembly, under the presidency of Bishop Mitrophan, acted in four committees and representatives from all church school congregations and diocesan bodies took part in the assembly. Resolutions of the Clergy and Laity were unanimously drafted and accepted.

**Stewardship Focus**

**Why you need to focus on Stewardship – it’s personal!**

During the Lenten season, we begin with the Triodion, which references desire, humility, return, judgment & forgiveness. All key areas to prepare for Great Lent and the hope of Salvation and the Eternal Kingdom.

My very first conversation about Stewardship was in the 90’s and, initially, I thought that it was all about money – making a commitment to a specific project or event. My parish Priest guided me with Christ’s words, the sayings of the Holy Fathers and Scriptural references and I learned Stewardship truly is a balance of Time, Talents & Treasures. Through an investment of time and understanding, I experienced Stewardship as transformational and impactful to my life as an Orthodox Christian. The Holy Fathers say:

*For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body. According to what he has done, good or bad. And so, while there is time, hurry to use this time unto your Salvation! Live in the way you want death to find you and you will not be deprived of Eternal Salvation.*

We know Him if we keep His Commandments! What we ask of God, we receive if we keep the Commandments and do those things that are pleasing to God.

Stewardship provides the opportunity to return to our faith and especially during the Lenten season, a chance to return to Him!

For the past few years, I have prepared more for Great Lent. This has been a transformational experience as it has helped me to understand Stewardship from an Orthodox perspective and ensure that I identify areas of improvement. Available in your Church bookstore or at [www.ancientfaith.com](http://www.ancientfaith.com) you can purchase *A Pocket Prayer Book for Orthodox Christians* from the Antiochian Archdiocese. Not only is this an excellent resource for prayers, but also includes a section called Self Examination. It summarizes each of the 10 Command-
 Funeral of Protojerej-Stavorphor Stevan Stepanov

The Serbian Orthodox Church lost a devoted, faithful, and loving servant in this world with the passing of Protojerej-Stavorphor Stevan Stepanov on February 24, 2018, at his home in Medina, Ohio. From February 1973 until his retirement in August 2014, †Proto Stevan served the Serbian Orthodox Church as pastor of the Holy Prophet Elijah in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. He returned to his beloved Sveti Ilija a final time for his funeral and burial on February 27-28, 2018.

The funeral proceedings began with visitation in the St. Elijah Church on the afternoon of February 27. Per his wishes, †Proto Stevan was arrayed in priestly robes that had once belonged to one of his predecessors at the parish, †Protojerej-Stavorphor Vlastimir Tomich of blessed memory. Hundreds of faithful and friends came throughout the visitation and services to pay their final respects to †Proto Stevan and to offer prayers and support to his devoted wife, Protinica Ana, his daughter Ivana and husband Tony, his son Murko and wife Inna, and his grandsons Alexander, Dimitri, Roman, and Stevan. At the family’s request, during the visitation a recording of †Proto Stevan singing liturgical songs with his St. Elijah Serbian Church Choir played over the church’s sound system, offering a testament to the distinct and rich musical talents †Proto Stevan shared so freely with so many during his life.

Shortly before the start of the funeral service on the evening of February 27, the “Tsar Lazar Male Choir” of the greater Pittsburgh area ascended to the church’s loft to sing selections in memory of †Proto Stevan who founded the Choir in the early 1990s. Among their selections, directed by George Milosh, was “Skazi mi Gospodi” (“Tell me, Lord”), by V. Dudnik -- one of the first songs †Proto Stevan taught the choir in its earliest days.

The funeral service for a priest began at 7:00 PM on February 27 with the arrival of His Grace, Bishop Irinej of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Eastern America. Meeting him in the temple were over twenty priests and deacons, hailing from around the Diocese’s Pittsburgh Deanery as well as from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Florida, Massachusetts, Ohio, and elsewhere. Among them were two sons of the St. Elijah parish whom †Proto Stevan had supported in following their own priestly callings, Protjerej-Stavorphor Rade Obsenica (pastor of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church of Monroe, Michigan) and Protjerej-Stavorphor Dr. Rodney Torbic (retired pastor of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church of Carmichaels (Masontown), Pennsylvania). Responses to the funeral service were sung by the St. Elijah Serbian Church Choir with the support of visiting singers from other parishes; Kathy Loverich directed the choir.

At the end of the funeral service, a loving and moving eulogy was delivered to the full church by Protjerej-Stavorphor Dr. Milos Vesin of St. Archangel Michael Serbian Orthodox Church in Lansing, Illinois. Proto Milos recalled †Proto Stevan as a deacon and as his teacher of religion during Proto Milos’s youth in Novi Sad in the 1960s. He shared a story of how †Proto Stevan brought his entire religion class to have its lesson at the hospital where the young Milos was recovering from an illness, so as not to deprive Milos of his chance to learn the faith. It was in that moment, Proto Milos said, that he decided that he wanted to devote his life to serving God, just as †Proto Stevan did. Proto Milos concluded by thanking †Proto Stevan’s family for supporting †Proto Stevan’s service to God and the faithful, reminding all present of the great sacrifices that clergy families make as part of that service, as well as the rich rewards that God offers to those who make those sacrifices. Proto Milos added that †Proto Stevan’s death was being commemorated not only in Aliquippa, but also in Novi Sad, where †Proto was still remembered as an eminent and devoted servant of the church -- nearly 50 years after he left there for America.

The funeral proceedings continued on the morning of February 28, with the service of the Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts celebrated by His Grace, Bishop Irinej and visiting clergy. Once again, dozens of priests and two deacons participated in the service, while the faithful filled the church for a second day. Responses were again sung by the St. Elijah Serbian Church Choir, with cantoring by Milan Damljanovic of Cleveland, Ohio and several of the visiting clergy, including Protjerej-Stavorphor Aleksandar Vlajkovic of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of Boston, Massachusetts, Protjerej-Stavorphor Rajko Kosic of Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Protjerej-Stavorphor Dragan Zaric of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church of Clearwater, Florida, and Protjerej George Veselinovic of St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church of Monroeville, Pennsylvania. Additionally, several men of the St. Elijah parish who had served †Proto Stevan as altar boys and had been ordained as Readers with his support, guidance, and encouragement offered readings of the psalms during the service.

During the liturgy, His Grace, Bishop Irinej offered an eloquent and warm eulogy of †Proto Stevan, which emphasized the loving and gentle nature that pervaded †Proto’s service to his flock. His Grace described †Proto’s life and spirit as “blagoljepije,” a blessed beauty or gentle beauty that can only be understood as a gift from God. He went on to offer sympathy, love, and support to †Proto’s family and his grieving church family. His words as archpastor and father of the diocese provided great comfort to those assembled.

A pomen began immediately after the end of the liturgy, during which His Grace and each priest present commended the soul of †Proto Stevan into the Mansions of the Righteous. Following the pomen, Father Branislav Golic, the current pastor of the St. Elijah parish, offered yet another eulogy of †Proto Stevan, which recounted †Proto’s life and his service to the St. Elijah parish.
Following the burial, all clergy and faithful were invited to the St. Elijah Center for the daca. After the meal, remembrances of †Proto Stevan were offered on behalf of several parish organizations, including the altar boys, the Mother’s Club, the Cornerstone Men’s Club, the Kolo Srpskih Sestara “Sveta Petka,” the St. Elijah Choir, and the parish’s executive board. Proto Milos Vesin also delivered messages from two of †Proto Stevan’s oldest and dearest friends, Dr. Dimitrije Stefanovic of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and Protorej-Stavrofor Marko Todorovic, Episcopal Deputy of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of New Gracanica-Midwestern America and retired parish priest of St. Nikola Serbian Orthodox Church of Cudahy, Wisconsin. Finally, Protinica Ana Stepanov addressed all present with memories of her husband, sharing some humorous, poignant, and loving insights about †Proto and his service to the church, as well as about his final earthly days.

Truly, †Proto Stevan’s service to the St. Elijah parish and to the Serbian Orthodox Church at large will be ever memorable. Appropriately, his funeral services were served with great dignity and reverence, just as he always served the Divine Services himself.

May †Proto Stevan be given rest in Abraham’s Bosom, and may his memory be eternal!

Sunday of Orthodoxy in Jackson

Saint Sava Church in Jackson, California, was blessed on February 24th, the eve of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, in the year of the Lord 2018 with new lights for its wall paintings. This event coincided with the arrival of Mr. Miloje Milinković, iconographer. In the afternoon hours, the church was packed with people eager to ask the iconographer various questions regarding his sacred artwork. The majority of those people were not members of the parish, but they had a great respect and interest in our church art. This was a great opportunity for them to learn more about the Orthodox iconography in general, about the iconographic program at Saint Sava Church, about the life and work of one Orthodox iconographer, as well as about the historical, liturgical and theological context of church art. After this exciting and dynamic discussion, Vespers was served and the people present had an opportunity to experience the living participation and role of the church wall art in Orthodox worship.

The next morning, another significant and joyful day in the rich history of the first Serbian Orthodox church in North America began. Mr. Larry Angier, a native Jacksonian, and renowned photography artist was baptized and christmated and then he partook of the Holy Communion. The godfather at the baptism was already-mentioned Mr. Miloje, whose artwork is known in America, Serbia and Greece. Larry recorded by his artistic eye and photo camera and in turn, it drew him near to the Orthodox faith and Church. For many years, he was devoutly learning about Orthodox Christianity, regularly attending church services and enthusiastically photographing all important moments in the life of this blessed parish, but they had a great respect and interest in our church art. This was a great opportunity for them to learn more about the iconographic program at Saint Sava Church, about the life and work of one Orthodox iconographer, as well as about the historical, liturgical and theological context of church art. After this exciting and dynamic discussion, Vespers was served and the people present had an opportunity to experience the living participation and role of the church wall art in Orthodox worship.

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The clergy of the Diocese of New Gracanica-Midwest America gathered on Friday, March 23, 2018 at New Gracanica Monastery in Third Lake, Illinois, for the annual clergy confession and clergy conference, held in conjunction with the annual Diocesan assembly.

The Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts was served by the monastery clergy. The clergy in attendance sang the responses at the Divine Liturgy, together with the participation of the clergy choir led by V. Rev. Milos Vesin, professor at the St. Sava School of Theology.

His Grace Bishop Longin welcomed all the clergy and the guest lecturer and spoke of the significance of this gathering. V. Rev. Stavrophor Rade Obsenica led the symposium. The theme of the talk was Stewardship in church life, entitled “Everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded” (Luke 12:48).

The speaker spoke eloquently and presented the essence of stewardship in the Church, citing the many successful attempts of church-school congregations. Essentially, it is good deed and faith without good deeds is not fruitful. The presentation stimulated the clergy to promote stewardship in their parishes. A discussion ensued during which the speaker answered all the questions based on many years of experience.

In his address Bishop Longin spoke of the state of the diocese which is stable and church life continues at a normal rate. He is satisfied with the pastoral work of the clergy and hopes that it will continue to be satisfactory in the future. He also stressed the significance of children being active in church life and hopes priests will dedicate more of their time in work with the youth. He also spoke of the need for uniformity in the administrative work of the church and parish. He noted that we must keep to the Uniform Rules and Regulation of church school congregations which was adopted at the Church Sabor. Regarding parish by-laws they must be in compliance with the Uniform Rules and Regulations and they can contain some norms of a local character.

Fr. Radomir Plavsic spoke about Saints – Martyrs who served in these areas. He noted their contribution to the development of church life and the sacrifice they offered on the altar of the church and faithful people.

At four o’clock in the afternoon an Akathist was served. Besides the clergy, parish delegates were also present. The clergy confession took place during the Akathist. Confessors were Archimandrite Thomas Kazich, the spiritual father of the monastery and Fr. Bogdan Zjalic, retired priest from Chisholm, Minnesota. Dinner was served after the Akathist.

The Assembly continued which included the financial report submitted by Mara Milanovic. Ilija Potkonjak submitted the Audit board report. The 2018 budget was approved.

V. Rev. Dragan Petrovic submitted his report as Youth Director. Last year’s winter retreat had 150 participants at New Gracanica. A part of this report was also the oratorical festival. There were three participants who are received with thunderous applause. The winner of the 2018 Oratorical Festival was 14 year old Petar Petrovic. He is...
RESOLUTIONS OF THE EASTERN DIACOSE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
IN THE NAME OF THE HOLY AND LIFEGIVING TRINITY!

WHEREAS, the clergy, monastics, and representatives of the people of God, ordained and elected members to the Annual Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Eastern America, Serbian Orthodox Church, have gathered together at the church of the Holy Great and Victorious Martyr George in the God-protected city of Clearwater, Florida on February 16 and 17, in the year of our Lord 2018.

Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am Holy' (Lev. 19:2).

Today, when we celebrate the memory of the Venerable Isidore of Pelusium, the Holy Spirit has gathered us in the community of the Body of Christ that He might bring us closer to our Heavenly Father. Having announced the fullness of God’s Church, gathered around our Bishop, Father and Archpastor IRINEJ, we greet the fullness of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the person of His Holiness, the Archbishop of Pech, Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci, and Serbian Patriarch IRINEJ.

We give thanks to Almighty God for the gift of living in this country, where, in the true sense of the word, we may rejoice in our unity among Orthodox Christians of other jurisdictions. Preserving the inner unity of our own parishes and following the example of our Bishop, every day we have the opportunity to share in the lives of other Orthodox people and their traditions, such that in gathering we experience the fullness of the words of the Apostle that “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). That is why, here and now, we pray together that the Lord strengthens the faith of Orthodox Christians and guides us on the road to unity.

We thank Almighty God also for His daily visitation to His people! This year, we have been abundantly blessed by the mercy that has flowed throughout all of Orthodoxy, particularly upon us, through the revelation of the incorrupt remains of St. Mardarije of Libertyville and All America. In the year in which we commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of St. Mardarije’s arrival in North America, the Lord has once again shown us this Saint as a further witness of His word. In July of 2017, the magnificent celebration at the Monastery of St. Sava in Libertyville, which St. Mardarije both built with his own hands and built himself in it, marked the jubilee of St. Mardarije’s arrival as a missionary. This was yet another occasion of the announcement of the universality and unity, not only within the Serbian Church, but among the entire Orthodox Church. “God is wonderful in His saints” (Ps. 67:36).

From this place, we greet His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Alexander, Heir to the Throne, and his wife, Princess Katherine. We have them in our daily prayers, asking that the Lord strengthen and uphold them in their labors for the benefit of our people in the Fatherland. Repeatedly, in the course of the preceding year, they and other members of the House of Karageorge, visited our Diocese and our Bishop. Their sense of responsibility toward their own people encourages them to organize our people in the Diaspora for the sake of helping our relatives and friends in the land of our forbearers. Additionally, His Royal Highness invests considerable effort to represent our culture and traditions to others, drawing them in and encouraging other peoples, engendering a desire to help those for whom help is essential. The Royal Family’s years of experience in this field of charity confirms God’s blessings on them. God grant them Many Years!

We also greet His Grace Longin, Bishop of New Grachanica and Midwestern America, and His Grace Kirilo, Bishop of Diocletia. We greet His Grace Maxim, Bishop of Western America and the Orthodox Institute of Saints Sebastian and Mardarije. This year, for the first time, we have had the opportunity to reap the fruits of their labors in our Eastern American Diocese. From February 13th to 15th, the clergy and faithful of North and South America had the occasion to discuss the challenges facing Christians today, in the spirit of Holy Tradition and ethos of the Orthodox Church.

WHEREAS it is with great concern for the survival of our people in their centuries-old hearth and homeland that we express our support for His Grace Teodosije, Bishop of the Rashka and Prizren Diocese, and all who carefully follow the events related to the survival of our southern province, Kosovo and Metohija, and the salvation of their inhabitants and holy places;

WHEREAS the powers of this world continue to press all the more, we pray to the Lord that those who will bear the responsibility before God and His people throughout history, will act in wisdom in these difficult times both for our land and for our people as a whole; and

WHEREAS it is with a heavy heart that we express our condolences to the family, and, as such, to all the Serbian people, for the tragic loss of Oliver Ivanovic. May his memory be eternal.

THE Path of Orthodoxy Spring 2018 • 15

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
THAT with great hope in the Risen Lord, the fruits of his noble work may be of benefit to the Serbian nation, most notably in our province of Kosovo and Metohija.

The Church of God is not of this world. Because of that, it will suffer all things until the Second Coming of Christ. In spite of the fact that we live in a land where we are not directly threatened by the dangers of war, persecution and hunger, our Diocese and the whole of the Serbian Church is wounded by the fire which devastated our Pro-Cathedral, the temple dedicated to St. Sava in New York City. By the grace of God, in this short period from Pascha, 2016, after the tragic fire, a great deal of work has been done in preparation for its renovation. Through the efforts of our Bishop Irinej, Protopresbyter-Stavrophor Dr. Zivojin Jakovljevic, Dean of the Cathedral Church; Architect S. Don Zivkovic, Project Executive for the renovation; the Board of Trustees and the Building Committee, and the whole Church of God, in the premier city of the world, New York;

WHEREAS, the ruins left by the fire have been cleaned and preparations for the continuation of work are underway, and Almighty God has declared His mercy in our midst, and has shown us that He is always among us;

WHEREAS during the cleaning beneath the Holy Altar, the Holy Relics, sealed in the Holy Table, were found unharmed: We thank all who, through their prayers, expertise and means continue to aid us in the resurrection of our Cathedral; and

WHEREAS we must never forget the love of our Orthodox brethren in New York who during this difficult time came to our aid.

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THE Path of Orthodoxy Spring 2018 • 15
Church congratulates all the above-mentioned parishes on their meaningful jubilee, wishing them many fruitful years in their life in Christ as they continue to witness to their faithful and to their surrounding communities the Truth of Holy Orthodoxy.

The Church of God is a living organism, which breathes by the Holy Spirit and is expanding, is witnessed to us through the works of love of our people, seen in building construction. New churches are being constructed to the glory of God in Orlando, FL and Atlanta, GA. The end is in sight for the completion of the churches in Miami and North Port, FL. Additionally, in the course of the year, there was a groundbreaking for a chapel to be dedicated to the Holy Bishop Nicholai in Columbus, OH which will be the first in America to be built in the style of Njegosh’s chapel on Lovchen. The parish home in Clearwater, FL was also built and blessed this year, and in the following year, the frescoes in Charlotte, NC will be blessed.

WHEREAS we are grateful to all those who successfully have organized this important type of fraternal gathering, especially to the Federation of Circles of Serbian Sisters of our Diocese;

WHEREAS we desire to note the first Family Day, which was held at New Marcha Monastery in Richfield, OH, and the first issue of our Children’s Magazine, published in Serbian and English languages, which became available just before the Feast of the Nativity of Christ; and

WHEREAS Vidovdan, the feast of extraordinary importance for the Serbian people, will in the future be celebrated at the Deanery level, for the benefit of our youth and all the Serbian faithful of each Deanery.

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Stewardship Focus
Continued from P. 11

ments with questions about our daily lives. Set aside a few hours to seriously review these, reflect upon them and take notes as you prepare for Confession. For example, the 2nd Commandment references not having graven images or idols. This may include our typical definition but what about vanity, the daily cup of coffee or a compulsive attachment to social media? The 4th Commandment says that we should keep the Sabbath Day holy. Do I attend Church consistently or stay home to catch up on work and a few loads of laundry? Do I use this blessed day for family and fellowship? The 8th Commandment states that we should not steal. This extends to charity and asks if we are living within our

WHEREAS these three examples are the foundation of our Christian stewardship, principles by which the Church has lived in this world for two millennia.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT our faithful are called to uphold and donate to their Church communities the foundational gifts of time, talent and treasure, transforming their communities based on the Stewardship mandate given to us by our Creator.

The Assembly gratefully acknowledges the local Church of God, the Diocese of Eastern America, with its predecessors, expresses its deepest gratitude to its worthy pastors in the Lord’s field who have, in the past year, retired from active parochial service: Protopresbyter-Stavrophor Dr. Rodney Torbic and Protopresbyter-Stavrophor Djordje Mileusnic. Those who are acquainted with these exemplary priests are familiar with their dedicated witness to the Risen Christ. In addition, this Assembly also expresses most sincere appreciation to Protopresbyter-Stavrophor Rade Merick for his diligent work and leading the Resolutions Committee for over 25 years. Many years, dear Fathers!

The Assembly expresses its deepest gratitude to the Parish of St. George in Clearwater and to its priest, Protopresbyter-Stavrophor Dragan Lj. Zaric, dean of the St. Petersburg Deanery, for their hospitality and care on behalf of those who gathered both for the Institute and for the Assembly. It was a great joy to be in their midst, and we pray the Lord makes us worthy of such communion in His eternal community.

Sunday of Orthodoxy in Jackson
Continued from P. 14

aily patron saint or Slava — Saint Sebastian of Jackson. In this way, after less than three years since the canonization of Saint Sebastian, the Patron of the City of Jackson, there is already the second family celebrating him as their Slava and Mr. Lazar Angier is the first Jackson-born person doing it.

Providentially, thus, on the Sunday of Holy Icons or Images, the wall icons of Saint Sava Church shone forth in the new light and a living, human icon of God, under the patronage of his godfather the iconographer, became a member of the Holy Church of God, the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the Pillar and Foundation of the Truth. The lunch after Liturgy was celebrated in the Fellowship Building and then, in the evening, the clergy and parishioners of Saint Sava Church participated also in the Pan-Orthodox Vesper service in the Holy Archangel Gabriel Church of the Antiochian Patriarchate in Angels Camp, California. The American-born priest who gave the sermon shared with everybody what late Matushka Julianna Schmemman, the wife of the priest and professor Alexander Schmemman, told him when he was a student: “We the immigrants have brought Orthodoxy to America — now it is up to you to bring America to Orthodoxy.” The first step to this, he added, is to bring ourselves and our lives to the Holy Orthodoxy, which is the faith of true freedom, true beauty, true joy and true life. At the dinner served after the Vespers, everybody sang to Mr. Lazar Angier and we join them now once again:

Many Years!

David C. Batrich
National Director of Stewardship for the Serbian Orthodox Church of North & South America
President, Chicago Synergy
What's true about truth?
Truth is, surprisingly, a difficult word to describe and interpret.

An Essay by Petar Petrovic (winner) of St. Nicholas Church in Indianapolis Indiana

When this essay’s theme was released, I did not understand the difficulty of the seemingly simple assignment. I heard the topic and, quite frankly, was a little disappointed. But after doing my research I found out that truth was a word that some philosophers would spend their whole lives trying to define. Scientists would spend their whole lives looking for the truth in specific areas. Theologians, on the other hand, would spend their whole life teaching about the truth. After realizing this, I became dumbfounded on what this frequently used word really meant.

To understand truth as a whole, one first needs to see its definition/translation in the dictionary and in modern day society. The Webster dictionary describes the word truth as “conformity with fact or reality.”. The modern day translation of truth is the product of what we put together from our society, culture, and what history tells us. This is relativism, “the doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute”. This can come to us in plenteous disguises, positive and negative; social media, school, church, the Internet, etc.

Relativism is a key component to see the cause of misconceptions of truth. The following miraculous quote from a miraculous man, St. Anthony the Great, exemplifies relativism. St. Anthony said “a time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him, saying, You are mad; you are not like us.” The truth and knowledge of their society thinking a mad person is normal, makes them believe that a normal person is mad. What does this tell us? This tells us that we are that society - in that truth means what its modern definition tells us it means and not what it actually is.

Relativism is where misconceptions form but what truth is - comes from one sentence spoken by Jesus Christ. The sentence is from John 14:6: “I am the way, the truth, and the life”. Because Greek is considered to be one of the most precise languages and the language in which this particular quote and most of the New Testament were written, I first asked my spiritual father, who is Greek, how you say truth in Greek and what it means. He replied stating, “The word for truth in Greek is “ἀλήθεια,” which means “the state of being evident”. Being Serbian, I also know that in my mother tongue, as well as in other Slavic languages, the word for truth, “истина,” means something that always remains the same, unchanging. But there are two kinds of truths, one being “a truth” and another being “the truth.” “A truth” can be anything, as simple as “the sky is blue,” and there are many of them. But on the contrary, “the Truth” is one and only, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And for all the truths in the world, their true meaning and purpose can be understood only in the light of the Truth. This Truth does not change with time for “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

When preparing for this essay, I repeatedly posed the question «what is truth», not realizing I was asking the wrong question. Truth is divine, truth is perfect, truth is in me and you, and truth is not just truth but also the way and the life. Truth is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So the question should never be: what is truth, but rather: who is truth!

Annual Assembly Diocese of New Gracanica Midwest America
Continued from P. 14

from St. Nicholas Church in Indianapolis Indiana, where he serves in the altar and is a chanter in church. He is constantly making an effort to be a good Orthodox Christian and is very proud (protective) of being Serbian- in fact, for one of his school project he even wrote a hip-hop song about the suffering of the Serbian people in Kosovo. He is an accomplished tennis player – one of the best in the nation in his age group, and the best in the state of Indiana. He wants to become a professional tennis player. This was his first time speaking in public. His talk is included below.

Fr. Thomas Kazich submitted a report on behalf of the Christian Education Committee. Fr. Kazich is also editor of “The Observer” and “Little Falcons” which contribute greatly to education in the diocese.

A report from the Kolo Sestara was submitted by President Mira Adeljkovic, read by vice president Vickie Petric Dorsey. As always, the Sisters were active in all aspects of diocesan life.

Finally, Fr. Milos read the Assembly Resolutions in both languages.


The assembly ended with a prayer and the blessing of Bishop Longin. All was holy and honorable and acceptable to gracious God.

V. Rev. Stavrophor Nedeljko Lunich, Dean of the Chicago Deanery
Why can there only be one Church?
The unity of the Church inevitably follows from the unity of the Person of the God–Man Christ as her Head. The Church is the Body of Christ and it can only be single and indivisible. All her members, encompassed by one and the same grace of the Holy Spirit through the Holy Mysteries and the holy virtues in organic unity, comprise one Body, and witness to one faith, which unite them with one another and with the Most Holy Trinity. From there the dividing of the Church is a matter of impossibility. The Church has never been divided, nor can it be, but there has been and will be separation from the Church. Various heretics and schismatics at various times separated and fell away from the one and only indivisible Church of Christ, and thereby ceased to be members of the Church. Thus the first to fall away were the Gnostics, then the followers of the heretic Arians, then the Pneumatomachi or followers of Macedonius, then the Monophysites, and the Iconoclasts, and the followers of Barlaam, the Messalians, and many others.

When did the Roman patriarchate separate from the Orthodox Church, and why?
The separation of the Roman patriarchate from the Orthodox Church occurred in the 11th century (1054 A.D.). Until that time not only the East but the West also belonged to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ. The reason for the separation was the introduction of various innovations in the West into the teaching of the undivided Church (the Filioque, the absolute primacy of the Pope and the infallibility of the Pope, the inquisition and indulgences, created grace, purgatory, the abolition of the Epiclesis—the invocation of the Holy Spirit at the Divine Liturgy, and later, the introduction of new non-Orthodox doctrines concerning the Mother of God, the elimination of fasting, etc.).

The Protestants separated in turn from Roman Catholicism in the 16th century, and in time disintegrated into many church communities and sects. The chasm between Orthodoxy and the Latin West became particularly acute after the coming of the Crusaders to the East in the beginning of the 13th Century, and the establishment of a Latin kingdom in Constantinople (1204 AD). The western occupiers desecrated many shrines in the East, and even trampled upon our Holy Communion in the chalice. The result was a chilling of that mutual, centuries-old brotherly love that held us in unity.

What were the main centers of the Christian world during the first millennium of the Church’s history?
They were the local churches founded by the apostles. The most significant were the apostolic sees of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Rome and Constantinople. For a long time the Roman patriarchate had a primacy of honor among all the other churches. But when the Roman Patriarchate separated itself, the four undivided Orthodox patriarchates generated new local Orthodox churches. From the time of the Emperor Constantine, the Church of Constantinople gained particular significance because it was the capital of the great Roman-Byzantine Empire. Constantinople over time gave birth and illumined with the light of the Gospel many surrounding peoples, particularly the Slavic nations.

Who were the saintly brothers Cyril and Methodius?
They were the teachers and illuminators of the Slavs. Holy Patriarch Photius of Constantinople sent them to Prince Rastislav of Moravia to preach the Gospel to the Slavs. They created the Slavonic alphabet and translated the Gospel and other holy texts to the Slavonic language. They were persecuted by German Latin priests who claimed that the Gospel can only be preached in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Their disciples banished from Moravia established a spiritual center and school in Ohrid, from where Christian enlightenment spread to all Slavic peoples. The more significant disciples of the saintly brothers are Ss. Clement of Ohrid and Naum, Sava Gorazd and Angelarius.

When did the Serbs receive the Orthodox faith?
The Serbs received Orthodoxy during the time of Prince Mutimir (867 AD). That was the first baptism of the Serbs. After that the Ss. Cyril and Methodius and their disciples had a great illuminating influence on the Serbs. The first Serbian martyr was Holy King Jovan Vladimir, whose relics lay in Elbasan (Albania.)

Who continued with the work of the saintly brothers and their disciples?
Their work was continued by three fearless ascetics: the Venerable John of Rila, Gabriel of Lesnovo and Prochorus of Pchinja, and following them the Venerable Joachim of Osogov. By their labors and lives they confirmed the Orthodox faith among the Serbs and Bulgarians, as well as among other Balkan clans.
Реч Уредника

Смисао Празника у Хришћанству
Протојереј Александар Шмеман

Шта празнују Хришћани? Јер, ако је истина да човек најбоље и најјасније себе изражава управо кроз празнување празника, кроз празничну радост, ако је истина да је вера према свега радовања Богу и стога празник, онда је и Хришћанство много закле схватити кроз његову радост и празнике, него кроз апстрактне догматичке и богословске дефиниције.

Хришћанство је од самих својих почетака оваплоћивало и изражавало своју веру, своје схватане света и осећања живота кроз то ткаве својих празника које собом буквално обули читаву годину. Може се без искриветог превучиљавања рећи да Хришћани живе од празника до празника, као и да та празници духовним смислом боје свеколико време, односно след годишњих обда јесен, зиму, пролеће и лето.

Неретко се чују присути о негативној страни хришћанских празника, то јест да су они праћени пијанчени, нерадом и таме слично. Но, суштину било је појаве морао процењивати не по њеном искривљавању, већ по њеном правом смислу и назначењу. Стога се и о хришћанским празницима може говорити увек из перспективе њиховог изворног смисла: шта заиста језу хришћански празници и како би их требало празновати. Тако ће нам тада у светлу тог њиховог позитивног смисла бити могуће да истински критикујемо увек могућа искривљивања и одступања од правилног празновања хришћанских празника.

Нема бољега увода у тему хришћанских празника од разматрања огог празника који је Православна Црква одувек сматрала „празником над призракима“ и који је одувек представљао своесобоуну и неупоредиву радост за све Хришћане. Тај Празник јесте Пасха или Васкрс. Хришћани су тај празник прихватили од старих Јевреја, код којих је он представљао главни религијски догађај читаве године. И опет се показује да ништа боље не открива хришћански смисао празника Пасхе као његова веза како позитивна, тако и негативна са његовим старојеврејским придоброђем (празником). Имање је видно да је Христос постругао управо у дане старојеврејске Пасхе и да та поударност са јеванђелске тачке гледиша није била нимало случајна. У чему је смисао тога поударности? Шта су то празновали стари Јевреји и зашто је апостол Павле назвао Христа нашим Пасхом: „Јер Пасха наша, Христос“ писе он „заклан беше за нас“.

Одлазишћући на ова понашања могу постепено узасмо у једно целошно схватане света које ма колико се чинило архаичним свемременим човеку са свом његовом технолошком, том његовом користољубивом приступом свему и покриваном схватаном животом устари одлазићу наконшто иошто ето вечно, неутицајно, најважније и најдулбже у људској души. Са те тачке гледиша суштински је важно схватити управо тог поступени развој, разрастање и образовање читавих слојева различитих смисова у празновању Пасхе.

Прва фаза је укорењена још у њемадском животу старих Јевреја, у време када они још нису обрађивали земљу, већ су само угајали споку. Пасха се у том периоду јавља као радост због рађања нових животиња. Отуда је и најстарији обред који је везан за Пасху обред приношења на жртвовани јагњета у знак благодарности Богу. Тако је настао првобитни обред јеврејске Пасхе обред жртвоприношења пасхалног јагњета.

Следећа фаза је освајање земље Ханаанске после чега су стари Јевреји почели да обрађују земљу. Пасха је тада почела да задобија нови смисао. Она је постала празник којим се прослављало пролећно обновљење природе, празник коначног тромилума живота. Но све се то још једно било везано исклучиво за природу и живот човека у природи и природам.

Затим се јавља и почење да се разраства трећа сада већ историјска димензија Пасхе. После природе долази историја, јер човек не живи само у природном времену, већ и времену историјском, у историјском процуки који собом даје смисао природности, гледиштима и будућности и који даје смисао животу не само појединачном човеку, већ и животу свих људа, животу човечанства.

На неколико столећа пре Христа празник Пасхе је за Јевреје постао празник којим су сваке године прославили свој излазак из Египта, своје четрдесетгодишње путање по пустињи, ослобођење од Јопста и, коначно, свој улазак у Обећану Земљу.

Наставак на 30. стр.
Српска Православна Црква својој духовној дечи
о Васкрсу 2018. године

†Иринеј

по милиости Божјој Православни Архиепископ Николаје Митрополит Владислава и Патријарх српски, са свим архијерејима Српске Православне Цркве – свештенству, монаштву и свим синовима и кћерима наше Свете Цркве: благодат, милост и мир од Бога Оца, и Господа нашега Исуса Христа, и Духа Светога, у радосни васкрсни поздрав:

Христос васкрсе!

Испунити се време вишенаедног Часног поста у коме смо на свакодневним божанствима – покаяњем, исповеду и сушним молитвама – састанули са Господом нашим, пратили хришћански пут и благодарно клицали: „Слава дуготрпљењу Твоме, Господе!“ Проживљавали смо добровољна страдања, понижења, плачу и крсну смрт, да бисмо данас, по неизмерној милости Божој, дочекали Христово славно Васкрсење. Очењујући у овим догађајима, ми кроз њих и живимо, превазилазећи смрт и сваку жалост; јер као што без смрти нема Васкрсења, тако ни без подвига – устани и васкрсни из мртвих – покајањем – и обасјаће те Христос (ср. Еф 5, 14).

Греху – устани и васкрсни из мртвих – покајањем – и обасјаће те Христос.

Али, мира и радости нетоци. Свуда безизлаз, душа опатуљена у немарности, што дава у животу смрти, смрт и немарност. Да не очајавамо него да наду своју положимо на Господа, да се успротивимо сваком духовном паду и свему што нас онемогућава у над злом, грехом и смрћу, која нас подсећа да и ми имамо могућност и обавезу "Не бојте се, Ја сам победио свет" (Јн 16, 33). Васкрсење јесте највећа победа – састрадавали са Господом нашем, пратили крстоваскрсни пут и благодарно клицали: „Слава дуготрпљењу Твоме, Господе!“ Проживљавали смо добровољна страдања, понижења, плачу и крсну смрт, да бисмо данас, по неизмерној милости Божој, дочекали Христово славно Васкрсење.


Наставак на 30. стр. THE PATH OF ORTHODOXY SPRING 2018 • 21
А што Га је држала три дана, држала Га је по допушењу самог Господа Христа. Речи: није било могуће (о̇κι τον διαντών), показују, вели свети Златоуст, да је Христос сам и допусто смрти да Га задржи, и да се сама смрт, држећи Га, страшно мучила и ужасно страдала (καθότι ούκ ην δυνατόν κατέσχεν αυτόν ο θανάτος, καταδέχεσθαι, καταδεχω), јер је Он тако васкрс ко да већ више неће устасати. Посто је Богочовек Христос по самој природи свога Божанства васкрс и живот, Он није могао не васкрснути своје мртво тело, које је самом смрћу својом разорило смрт.

Васкрсње Господа Христа било је сасвим природно за његову Богочовечанску личност, јер су и човечанска душа његова, и човечанско тело његово, били иностасно сјединени са Божанском Иностаси његовом, а то значи: са вештиным Живо- том, и са свим оним што је божанско и бескрајно. Зато је Он за души својој говорио: Власт имам положити је и трећи дан устати; а за тело своје: Развалите га, и за три дана ћу га подигнути. Нема догађаја, само у Еванђељу већ и у историји рода људског, који је тако сило, тако неодољиво, тако непоречно посведочен као васкрсње Христово. Јер је Хришћанство, у својој целокупној историској стварности, историској моћи и свемоћи, засновано на факту Христовог васкрсња, а то значи: на вечној Личности Богочовека Христа.

Сва многовековна, и непрекидно чудотворна, историја Хришћанства сведочи о томе. Јер ако има догађаја, на који се могу свести сви догађаји из живота Господа Христа, и Апостола, и уопште свеколиког Хришћанства, онда је тај догађај васкрсње Христово. Исто тако, ако има истине, на коју се могу свести све истине еванђелске, онда је та истина васкрсње Христово. Јер Хришћанство, у својој целокупној историској стварности, историској мочи и свемоћи, засновано на факту Христовог васкрсња, а то значи: на вечној Личности Богочовека Христа. Ево идем у Јерусалим, и Син човечији биће предан појединостим тих догађаја:

И страдање, и смрт, и васкрсње потребни су и неопходни у богочовечанском домостроя спасења рода људског; неопходни по закону безмерне љубави Божанске, којом живи неопходно по закону безмерне потребно тренутку историске стварности. И то неминовна неопходност његове Божанчовечке личности, постало је у Васкрсње Господа Христа, које је најпре било логичка објављује: По васкрсњу ја идем пред вама у Галилеју. Ево идемо у Јерусалим, и Син човечији биће предан појединостима тих догађаја: страдања, смрти и васкрсња. Да би потребу овога донекле убијену бити и трећи дан устати да Њему и васкрсња, тврдећи изрично овога тројства: страдања, смрти и у васкрсњу љубави Божанске, којом живи неопходно по закону безмерне мртав својим телом, Спаситељ се показао јачи од смрти, јер по сили своје Богочовечке личности Господ Исус није могао не васкрснути. Иако стварно устаће људске, и убиће га, и трећи дан предаће се Син човечији у руке богочовечанском делом, или догађајем, или мишљу, Личности Богочовека, која се ниједним обличем, или догађајем, или мишљу, не исцрпљује потпуно, него је увек сва, са свима свима.

Њим и у гробу, те га смрт није могла задржати у своме царству као свој плен. Христос је васкрс, јер смрт није било могуће да га држи у својој власти (καθότι ούκ ην δυνατόν κατέσχεν αυτόν ο θανάτος, καταδέχεσθαι, καταδεχω). Јер по сили своје Богочовечке личности Господ Исус није могао не васкрснути. Иако стварно устаће људске, и убиће га, и трећи дан предаће се Син човечији у руке богочовечанском делом, или догађајем, или мишљу, Личности Богочовека, која се ниједним обличем, или догађајем, или мишљу, не исцрпљује потпуно, него је увек сва, са свима свима.
Господ наређује ученицима својим. Тако, после свог Преображења објаснити и Личност његову и дело његовог васкрсења као на догађај који још за живота на земљи указивао на стос, и сва дела његова, и целокупно његовог васкрсења. Без васкрсења све Богочовекове истине су истине његове, сви догађаји еванђелски. Јер Христова, све истине његове, све речи своје потпуно објашњење сва чуда тек у васкрсењу Христовом добијају јасан и лик Христов и дело његово. Васкресење Христовог постаје чаробно новозаветна чуда, онда је то чудо чуда, на које се могу свести сва стварност васкрсења Христова. И још: ако свести све истине еванђелске, онда је та тај догађај васкрсење Христово. Исто уопште свеколиког Хришћанства, онда живота Господа Христа, и Апостола, и на који се могу свести сви догађаји из сваковековне, и непрекидно васкрсења и тајна спасења Тајна Спаситељевог.

Након васкрсења Христовог, постаје вечно живог и животворног некњижевни, неуки, сиромашни? Да новозаветне вере, они људи прости, силом и мудрошћу, како би они Спаситељ није њих испунио божанском иду на смрт за Њега? А да васкрсли васкрслог Господа, и онако радосно силно и мудро проповедају и исповедају своје сили и мудрости, да онако неустрашиво, бегунце, скупио и дао им смелости, свеживотном силом и чудотворном и као такав ученике своје испунио уопште. Да Господ Исус није васкрсао, нити икоји хришћански подвиг? Једном речју: да ма ког хришћанина за ма који Испоснике за подвиг испосништва, Бесребрнике за подвиг бесребрништва, Подвижнике за подвиг подвижништва, и Исповеднике за подвиг исповедништва, и стога вечно животог и животворног некњижевни, неуки, сиромашни? Да новозаветне вере, они људи прости, силом и мудрошћу, како би они Спаситељ није њих испунио божанском иду на смрт за Њега? А да васкрсли васкрслог Господа...
З а српски народ и за државу Србију статус Косова и Метохије је питање елементарног идентитета и интегритета: идентитета – у смислу да је српско саморазумијевање одређено нормативном сфером у коју свакако спадају косовски завјет и видовданска етика; интегритета – не само у смислу територијалног интегритета и суверенитета него и интегритета као способности самоодржања. Због тога је Косово витално питање српског држavnог и националног организма, или: органско питање српске државне и националне виталности. У суочењу с проблемом Косова као народ и држава разапети смо између бруталне реалности (војно отимање Косова и Метохије од стране NATO као савезника побуњених Албанаца у овој српској покрајини) и нормативне светости (значај Косова у црквено-народном предању). Ова комплексност мора да се узме у обзир да бисмо разумјели проблем и формулисали одговор, а не да бисмо под притиском реалности рјешавали косовски проблем “сад или никад” (историјске појаве означавају се некада дугачко време) нити да бисмо под притиском нормативности одиграли “све или ништа” (коцкање са судбином није израз трезвености). Разборит одговор (а он не искључује ни „емоције“ јер и оне имају рационалан смисао) треба тражити у суочењу са свим структурним елементима овог компликованог problema. Проблем се ни не рјешава неким „договором Срба и Албанаца“, јер тврђаву косметских Албанаца.

Његош (ГВ 987): „О К осово, градно судилиште.“

Косово и Метохија: између бруталне реалности и нормативне светости
пројектују и утврђују Вашингтон, Лондон, Брисел. Одмах да призам, много је лакше дискутирати сваки предлог него рећи шта да се ради, и то првобитно због тога што многи елементи неопходни за одлучивање нису у нашој власти. Нова када се не зна шта треба чинити веома је важно знати шта не треба чинити.

1. Комплексна реалност

Садашња комплексна историјска реалност Косова и Метохије представља за српски народ и српску државу један јединствен и веома сложен проблем. Јединствен – значи да је за нас то уникалан и монолитан проблем, па нам због тога често изгледа нерешив. Сложен – то значи да се састоји од великог броја важних посебних питања, од којих свако има много специјалних моментана. Онда да бисмо се позабавили тако сложеним проблемом треба га детаљно структурално разложити и потом рјешавати оно што је у датим околностима могуће. Структурални моменти косметодског проблема треба да буду предмет не само политичког него и делатне стручне анализе, да бисмо тако формулисао наше виђење тзв. „свеобухватне нормализације односа“ на коју нас сада приручују. Наиме, важан аспект је територијалитет и суверенитет државе Србије заједном Резолуцијом Уједињених нација 1244. Како год да је тзв. „фактичко стање“ – ова права чиненица је капитална и треба је на све начине активирати. Сасвим је логично позвати се на чиненицу да је историјска, културна и вјерска самосвјест српског народа за своје интересе реализовала уз страну своје територије. Србија о томе треба да учинимо и ми. За то су потребне одлуке, спротив посебних разлога приоритет чланство у Европској унији (а то је званично спољнополитички приоритет Србије) успостављено „правно обавезујућим документом“ између Србије и приштинске администрације албанских сепаратиста, документом који је резултат „процеса нормализације“ и који претпоставља „пуну нормализацију односа“ између Србије и албанског Косова. Притом се истиче да се од Србије не тражи да у праву обавезујућем споразуму изрази формално „признање независности“ албанског Косова. Међутим, изрази „правно обавезујући документ“ и „пун нормализација односа“ не само да значе управо „признање независности“ привремено окупирани територије (признање се од Србије и тражи јер је то њена окупирана територија), него ови изрази прикривају да је овдје у питању уцјена: уколико је за Србију из виталних разлога приоритет чланство у Европској унији, онда тај витални приоритет Србија неће моћи да реализује ако не призна независност окупираних дијела своје територије. Србија о томе треба да одлучи наводно својој воли и самосталности, а у питању је заправо уцјена (и то „крећићиља“, јер долази након насилије војне промјене правог поретка и фактичког стања). Ову уцјenu предузимајем земље које су аутори Резолуције Савjeta
Нише и ни у којој форми не треба признати легализовање насиљног отимања Косова и Метохије

бржевност 1244 којом су потврђена права јачег призна као свој интерес. Этичко утицанство (и такође једну етику историјске одговорности). Историјска одговорност налазе у се у конкретној ситуацији има своје становништве, поступака као оријентација у простору и времену. Уопште узев, да би се оријентисао у простору и времену једна свака себи гради менталну (когнитивну) мапу стварности; наше представе стварности су у типично функционалне, и то су сврховите. Овај перспективизам не значи остање у својим провинцијалним становима (у затвореном и некомуникаблном идентитету), али реалност изграђени су идеали

Манастир Сопоћани, XIII век

Историјска одговорност и

гледаност и, наиме правда и

изграђени су идеали

привремена без обзира на дужину

територијалног интегритета СР Југославије тј. Републике Србије, и то након што је Србија војно онемогућена да као држава врши ефективну контролу над територијом и становништвом на привремено окупираних дјелу своје територије. Гајан суверенитета и територијалног интегритета Србије на Косову и Метохији су Резолуцијом 1244 постала Уједињене нације, али на Косову и Метохији су Резолуцијом територијалног интегритета Србије територије. Гарант суверенитета и привремених права и морала, идеала и врху великих историјских догађаја састоји се у праву и одговорности (и такође једну етику историјског

насиља. Зато треба истаћи да све

угрозили своју историјску идентитет и своје интересе, па дакле сами себе, те стога то и није право признање. То је заправо накнадно призnanje већ извршено намјере да се Србије отмени дипломатско стање није валидно све док онај над којим је почињено насиље не да свој пристанак. Управо због тога је у нормативнонасилно отимање Косова и Метохије. Форми не треба признати легализовање има значење присуства нереда, који су политички обавезују насиља у унаводно угодно интегришућоуопштности о чијем контексту смисла уопште не одлучујемо (бити интегрисан у Европску унију предочава се као бити прикључан на инфузију у неком сигурном инкубатору). Перспективизам подразумијева вољу и способност да се сопствено становништве учини притиском и релевантним, да се своја перспектива уназначује, наиме учини таквом да је и други „мора” узети у обзир.

Историјска одговорност и интегритет историјског времена (наш окруплст је се насловао „Косово и Метохија: јуче, данас, сутра”) сугеришу да нас историјски догађаји обавезују. Храброст и одговорност историјског постојања обавезује нас на аксисоматску одлуку да су Косово и Јасеновац важан постојања обавезује и други.ervations ставове о чијем контексту смисла, који нам нико не може одузети; – укоњко ма гу ми не дами. Аксиоматски значај важних историјских догађаја састоји се у томе што нам они дају врху великих оријентације и тачке ослонца у којима видимо надисторијски смисао. На темељу витецког и жртвених косовском видовдана изграђени су идеали видовданске етике, наиме правда и човјечност, самопожртвовање и стра

Историјска одговорност и интегритет историјског времена (наш окруплст је се насловао „Косово и Метохија: јуче, данас, сутра”) сугеришу да нас историјски догађаји обавезују. Храброст и одговорност историјског постојања обавезује нас на аксисоматску одлуку да су Косово и Јасеновац важан постојања обавезује и други.ervations ставове о чијем контексту смисла, који нам нико не може одузети; – укоњко ма гу ми не дами. Аксиоматски значај важних историјских догађаја састоји се у томе што нам они дају врху великих оријентације и тачке ослонца у којима видимо надисторијски смисао. На темељу витецког и жртвених косовском видовдана изграђени су идеали видовданске етике, наиме правда и човјечност, самопожртвовање и стра

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Наш поглед на сопствену историју омогућава нам не само да бруталност историје поднесемо него и да историју разумијемо и прихватимо.

данашњег критичког историјског знања и историјске самосвијести. Производна потребе за ослобађањем од историје, што је заправо пражњење идентитета, има и даматичну последицу заборав идентитета.

Недопустиво је Јовановић завјет бана сењског и појеративно тумачити као косовски „мит” у смислу архичног и фантазмагорског баласта којег треба прихватити као нормативну претпоставку друштва и вјерских и етичких традиција, па су и религиозној сфери која долази из и дређавског карактера реаговало на ову постаје свето и због тога има снагу значиљивоста која је на начин евиденције обавезујуће. Људске индивидуе не могу прихватити као комплексан и дуготрајан процес који мора да обухвати и дакле, на Косову и Метохији треба да бранимо оно што је за нас свето и због тога има снагу да произведи норму и смисао нашем историјском карактеру.

4. Закључак

Комплексни проблем Косова и Метохије треба разложити на структуре елементе и она ове рјешавати упорно, стрпљиво и онолико дуго колико је потребно. „Правно обавезујући споразум треба схватити као комплексан и онезбиљан јер зависи од структуре и렝а и форма које је на начин евиденције обавезујуће. Људске индивидуе не могу прихватити као комплексан и дуготрајан процес који мора да обухвати и дакле, на Косову и Метохији треба да бранимо оно што је за нас свето и због тога има снагу да произведи норму и смисао нашем историјском карактеру.
Упокојио се у Господу Протојереј-ставрофор Стеван Степанов

Протојереј-ставрофор Стеван Степанов је уснуо у Господу 24. фебруара 2018. г. у породичном дому у Медини, Охао, где је живео са својом протинicom Аном после умирућа са парохије Светог пророка Илије у Аликви, Пенсиливија, где је служио верно, часно, одано и са највећим примером служитеља Одтара Божијег, више од четрдесет година.

Протојереј Стеван иза себе оставља свој животна сапунтицу и помагача у служби Цркве, протиницу Ану са кћерком Иваном и њеним супругом Тонијем, сином Марком и његовом супругом Ином, унучадима Александром, Димитријем, Романом и Стеваном.

Помен за Проту је служен у уторак, 27. фебруара, а наредног дана, тј. у среду, Света Литургија Пређесећећих Дарова и опело, а потом полагање, односно, сахрање његовог тела на парохијском гробљу у Аликви.

На Светој Литургији је настављено са пратењем ставрофора о. Бранислава Гојића, који је истичући љубав, подстрекле на пастирску посету у болници, где је због болести утисак где још као младиц доживео Србије као ђакона, поделио је своје утиске где је још као младић доживео пастирску бригу од Проте тиме што га је посетио у болници, где је због болести лежао опорављајући се, са групом ученика и тако водио час у његовом присуству те да, иако у болници, не би пропустио веронаук. Проту Милоша још тада као младић, та пажња и љубав, су подстражиле на пастирску службу у Цркви Божијој. Парохијски свештеник о. Бранислав Гојић истичући својим словом тома нам наводе пример служитеља Олтара Божијег, верно, часно, одано и са највећим љубавима.

Вести из Цркве

Новообјављени служебник за Свету и Божанску Литургију Светог Јована Златоуста

Издавачка кућа Епархије западноамерички Севастијан Прес објавила је нови превод Свете Литургије на енглеском језику у редакцији Епископа др Максима (Васиљевића)

Нови превод Свете Литургије на енглеском језику у редакцији Превозећеног Епископа западноамеричког др Максима (Васиљевића) објављен је у квалитетном издању у четворобојној штампи. У питању је исправљени превод на енглеском језику на основу веројатних превода који су били у досадашњој употреби, у појединачним штампаним грчким, енглеским и црковенословенским службеницима. Узимани су у обзир сви ранији преводи ради превреде таоности богослужбеног израза, или већ самог чина, и сходно томе су исправљани.

У овом издању Епископа Максима користи се савремени енглески језик, а поредак Литургије следи поредак заступљен у грчким и словенским службеницима који одаражују византијско богослужбено предање. У додатку се доноси подробно објашњење архијерејске Литургије. Издавач истиче изглед новог издања: поред тога што је штампано у колору, илустровано је иконама и фрескама знаменитог живописца протопресвитера Стаматиса Скилиса.
Српска Православна Црква својој духовној дени о Васкрсу 2018. године

Наставак са 21. стр.

Ми хришћани не претрпимо овај свет и људе. Ми често ходимо на земљу, очују подигнутих ка небу. Поштујући сва људска достигнућа, желимо да се све освети благодаћу и силом Божјом, јер нас Господ поручио: „Ваља светlost свету“ (Мт 5, 14). Радујте се пасхалном радошћу, јер Господ жели „да радост наша буде потпуна“ (1. Јп 1, 4). Сугриња је победа са Христом који се постиже благодаћу и нашем трудом да држимо заповести Божје. Када се човек роди водом и Духом, тада почиње његово вакресење, које је централна тачка вечности, у коју се сабирају сви елементи помоћу којих долазимо до себепознавања и богопознавања. Познање Истине, стварне Истине, јесте већ у Вакресењу и радост Вакресења.

У светлим данима наше радости, ми не заборављамо људску бол, патње и страдање. Не заборављамо ни бољесне, старе и изнемогле, оне у сиромаштву, избеглицама и беди, проплане и изгнане са својих огњишта. Са вером и надом молимо се да Бог обрише сваку сукобу са лица њихових (в. Отк 7, 17). Непрестано садрживамо са свештенистом и монаштвом, са нашим верним народом и децом Косова и Метохије, који су наша савест и без којих је српска духовна свет слаба и нишава. Окрепљени вашим снагом и одлукошћу, непрестано приносимо коловрским молитвама да истрате и да нам свима Косовски завет буде мост између небеске и земалске Србије. Ми не смемо заборавити колико смо неправедни, не смемо се улапати, већ се определићи за Царство небеско са светим кнезом Лазаром, који је принео жртву као и ви што данас.

Неправда и злоупотреба добара овога света није мимовала наш многострадални, али никада погађени и понижењи народ који, милошћу Божјом, прославља догове осам векова самосталности Цркве и државе. То нам даје поудење и потврду да смо и народ војних светића – светим Сионеом, светим Савом и светим краљем Стефаном Правовећим – који за свагда српски народ утешељивше на крајевању камену, Вакресном Христу.

Обраћамо се свим нашим синовима и кћерима, духовној деци наше Цркве, која живе на свим континентима, са којима смо молитвене сједињени, да се са нам радују Васкресењу Христовом, који нас позива да живе у љубави и слободи, једин страстима, чувамо „јединство духа свезом мира“ (Еф 4, 3).

Жељећи вам свако истинско добро, опростивш једин другима, признајући благодат, мир и силу Вакреслога Христа, да бисмо могли јединим устима и јединим срцем да кличемо радосно:

Христос вакресе!

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

Списао Празника у Хришћанству

Наставак са 20. стр.

Но, сви ти догађаји у проповеди и учењу странозвечних пророка постепено прерастају свој придобити и ограничен сисаса задобиојању универсални карактер. Празник Пасхи је, тако, постао празник људске историје, празник радости те историје и његова кретања од ропства ка слободи, од жалоста ка радости, од злобе глада и лутања по пустињи ка светлању и плодовима Обећане Земље.

Тако су и прибора, и историја, и, коначно, на год у пазар Царства Божијег, Царства мира и љубави, слободе и срете постепено сједињили у празнику Пасхи, који је на тај начин постао својеврсни символ самог живота човековога у његову јасновидашњи домаћинству ка добром и радосном крају. Тријумф прозела предобожава коначни тријумф кохозма, јако сећање на некадашње ослобођење од ропства прераста у очувилање крајења и пуне слободе, а в једино и друго заједно откривају и подржавају коначни смисао свега што постоји.

Све то је била макар по идее, по својој ослици Пасха у време Христова. Тако постоје јасно што се Пасха наша у алм самом средишту људских догађаја, зашто је све оно у шта верујемо дакле, као што Господ је хтео да обезбеди тај израз, што се чини, што представља израз предбијења, предбијење историје, предбијење времена и догађаја, што представља израз предбијења историје, предбијење времена и догађаја. Зато је Христос и назван Пасхом, јер је Његова крена смрт која се збрила у дане јеврејске Пасхи представљала коначну испучујењу његових догађаја, предбијење, предбијење историје, предбијење времена и догађаја. Зато је Христос и назван Пасхом, јер је Његова крена смрт која се збрила у дане јеврејске Пасхи представљала коначну испучујењу његових догађаја, предбијење, предбијење историје, предбијење времена и догађаја. Зато је Христос и назван Пасхом, јер је Његова крена смрт која се збрила у дане јеврејске Пасхи представљала коначну испучујењу његових догађаја, предбијење, предбијење историје, предбијење времена и догађаја. Зато је Христос и назван Пасхом, јер је Његова крена смрт која се збрила у дане јеврејске Пасхи представљала коначну испучујењу његових догађаја, предбијење, предбијење историје, предбијење времена и догађаја.
Православни Катихизис

Нема лепше вере од хришћанске
Епископ Данило
Иеромонах Амфилохије

Зашто Црква може бити само једна?
Једносто Цркве неминовно следи из јединства Личности Боговечев Христа, као њене Главе. Црква је Тело Христово, а оно може бити само једно и недељиво. Сви њени чланови, обухваћени једном истом благодату Светога Духа кроз Свете Тајне, сачињавају једно Тело, и исповедају једну веру, која их зближава међусобно и са Пресветом Тројцом. Отуда је разделила Црква ствар немогућа. Разделила Црква никада није било, нити га може бити, а бивала су и биваће одвајања од Цркве. Од једне једине неразделице Цркве Христове у разна времена одвојили су се и отпали разни Епископи, који су се временом распадали у четири и четири столица. Дуго времена је Римски епископ имао првенство части међу свима осталим Црквама. Но када се Римска патријаршија одвојила, четири нераздвојиве православне Патријаршије родиле су нове православне помесне Цркве. Од времена цара Константина особити значај је стекла Цариградска црква, зато што је Цариград био престоница великог Ромејско-византијског царства. Цариград је временом духовно родио и просветио светлошћу Еванђеља многе околне народе, особито словенске. Ко су били света браћа Кирил и Методије? Они су били словенски училићи и просветитељи. Упутили их је Моравски кнез Растиславу Свети патријарх Фотије цариградски да проповедају Еванђеље Словенима. Они су створили словенску азбуку и преводили Еванђеље и друге свете списе на словенски језик. Прогонили су их немачки латински свештеници који су виновници да се Еванђеље може проповедати само на јеврејском, грчком и латинском. Њихови протерани ученици су основали у Охриду духовни центар и школу, одакле се проширила хришћанска просвета на све словенске народе. Најзначајнији ученици Цркве браће били су такозвани Петочисленици: Свети Климент Охридски и Наум, Сава, Горазд и Свете браће били су такозвани Петочисленици: Свети Климент Охридски и Наум, Сава, Горазд и Ангеларије.

Кад су Срби примили веру православну?
Примили су је за време кнеза Мутимира (867. г.). За време кнеза Мутимира је било прво покрштавање Срба. Потом су велики просветитељски утицај на Србе извршили Свети Кирило и Методије, и њихови ученици. Први просветитељски утицај на Србе извршили су све словенске народе. Најзначајнији ученици Цркве браће биле су такозвани Петочисленици: Свети Кирило и Методије, Свети Климент Охридски и Наум, Сава, Горазд и Ангеларије.

Који су били главни центри хришћанске просвете на току првог миленијума историје Цркве?
То су биле оне помесне Цркве које су Апостоли основали. Најзначајнији Јерусалимска и Александријска, Антиохијска и Римска и Цариградска Апостолска столица. Дуго времена је Римски епископ имао првенство части међу свима осталим Црквама. Но када се Римска патријаршија одвојила, четири нераздвојиве православне Патријаршије родиле су нове православне помесне Цркве. Од времена цара Константина особити значај је стекла Цариградска црква, зато што је Цариград био престоница великог Ромејско-византијског царства. Цариград је временом духовно родио и просветио светлошћу Еванђеља многе околне народе, особито словенске. Ко су били света браћа Кирил и Методије? Они су били словенски училићи и просветитељи. Упутили их је Моравски кнез Растиславу Свети патријарх Фотије цариградски да проповедају Еванђеље Словенима. Они су створили словенску азбуку и преводили Еванђеље и друге свете списе на словенски језик. Прогонили су их немачки латински свештеници који су тврдили да се Еванђеље може проповедати само на јеврејском, грчком и латинском. Њихови протерани ученици су основали у Охриду духовни центар и школу, одакле се проширила хришћанска просвета на све словенске народе. Најзначајнији ученици Цркве браће биле су такозвани Петочисленици: Свети Кирило и Методије, Свети Климент Охридски и Наум, Сава, Горазд и Ангеларије.