

THE SERB

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300 Stryker Avenue, Joliet, Illinois 60436
Тел/Phone: (815) 741-1023 www.stgeorgejoliet.org Факс/Fax: (815) 741-1883



Mir Boziji Hristos se Rodi
Peace from God Christ is Born

Christos Gennatai ! Doxasate! (Greek)
Христос Рождается! Славите Его! (Russian)
Hristos se Naște! Măriți-L! (Romanian)

The Serb
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St. George Serbian Orthodox Church

Protojerej-stavrofor Aleksandar Bugarin, parish priest

300 Stryker Avenue, Joliet, Illinois 60436

Office: (815) 741-1023; Fax: (815) 741-1883

Priest's Cell: 913-558-5031 abugarin@kc.rr.com Hall:(815) 725-5502; Catering: (815) 207-0737

www.stgeorgejoliet.org

Serb Publication Staff

Editor Fr Aleksandar Bugarin

Organization News Reports

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The Church news-letter Editor assumes responsibility and the right to reject, delete and rewrite any part or all of the articles submitted for the publication. Any news of the social interest should be submitted to the Editor. No articles will be considered that are submitted unsigned and/or improperly identified.

Mir Boziji Hristos se rodi Peace of God Christ is born!

*“From a Virgin didst Thou come, not as an ambassador, nor as an angel,
but the very Lord Himself incarnate, and didst save me, the whole man.
Wherefore, I cry to Thee: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!”*

Christ is Born! Truly He is Born!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The joy of our Lord’s Nativity never ceases to bring us a feeling of love and peace. Truly, as during the actual event of our Lord’s birth, the angels sing at the celebration of the coming of Christ to the earth, which He did in order to save man from sin, conquer death and grant eternal life. Could there be greater joy, dear brothers and sisters?

Our Lord comes in humility, taking on flesh and becoming Man, “not as an ambassador, nor angel, but the very Lord Himself incarnate.” Glory to Him who has shown us this path of humility by His power!

As we celebrate this glorious feast, we also thank God for the upcoming celebration of 800 years of Autocephaly of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Our Father and Enlightener St. Sava brought to fruition the independence of our Church in the fulness of time, with the blessing of God and with the conciliarity of the entire Orthodox Christian Church, just as the coming of the Savior occurred at the appointed time, being neither forced nor unnatural. We will celebrate this anniversary this year, and we ask of all our faithful people to pray to the Lord our God to keep our unity strong and to participate in this unique anniversary in the life of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

May the newly born Christ-Child grant us peace and love as we celebrate His Nativity and enter into the new jubilee year for our Church and Nation, granting us everlasting faith, hope and love.

Christ is Born! Happy New Year 2019!

With the blessing of God,
+L O N G I N

Bishop of New Gracanica and Midwestern America

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From your priests’ desk:

The 2019 wall calendars are available in the narthex, one per family for free. Every calendar has a nice Orthodox ikon on it and if you like it, you can frame it at the end of year, if not you can burn it in your fireplace together with your last year’s badnjak branch, old bulletins, Pentecost wreath or any other sacred item which you have in your home, rather than just throw it in the trash. You can bring old slava candles to church and burn them. Theophany water should be prayerfully used during the year and not just saved. By the time new Theophany water comes, you can mix it with the last years.

Please keep the Nativity Fast until the Feast of Nativity and receive the Mysteries, especially on the Feast of Nativity. Let us remind ourselves that members/stewards in good

standing are not just the one who pay their financial obligations but who are active in worship and church life and who receive the Mysteries regularly.

Reminder: During the Memorial Service in church, all faithful receive a candle to hold. Every candle has a plastic or foil cup in the middle to prevent wax from dripping on the floor or on clothing. Please, please hold your candles straight and make sure your child/children are doing the same so that wax does not drop on the floor or church furnishings. Hvala.

When our college students leave their homes to study outside of their parishes, they should look for the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at their new campuses. OCF is the official collegiate campus ministry program

under the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. OCF transforms the lives of college students in the United States and Canada by guiding them along the path to Jesus Christ through His Church, cultivating a campus community of worship, witness, service, fellowship and education. Most of the bigger Colleges and Universities have organized OCF. Students, look for the OCF when you move in the campuses and parents please encourage your children to stay connected with their Orthodox church, OCF and /or local Orthodox church. Please let Fr Aleksandar know if you need more info about OCF and/or contact of the local Orthodox church in the town that your child is going to school.

Krsna Slava Day (Patron Saint) is a very important feast day in the lives of Orthodox Serbs. Slava is represented with festal bread-kolac, cooked wheat - koljivo or zito, it depends on how you learned, both are fine, and a Slava Candle. On Slava Day people should attend church service and pray for the living and the deceased family members. It is appropriate to have a pomen for your deceased family members and of course to prepare to receive holy communion. Kolac and koljivo (zito) can be brought to church for blessing or the priest will come to your home. Slava is a day of spiritual reflection and not just a day of enjoying food. If Slava Day falls during fasting season or on Wednesday or Friday during the year, the food should be Lenten.

Occasionally we see dates in religious books, bulletin or calendars like June 4 / 17 or September 1 /14 and we may get confused about why we have two dates. The first number is the church calendar date and the second is the date according to our old Julian calendar, which is always 13 days behind. The celebration of the Birth of Christ Jesus is December 25 /January 7. This means the church calendar states the Nativity of Christ is December 25, which is true but for us who follow the Julian calendar December 25 is actually January 7, again because we are 13 days behind.

Fr Aleksandar will start the blessing of homes in our parish on the eve of Theophany. For the blessing of your home you should have a church candle and a bowl half filled with water placed on a table. If you have a hand censer and would like the priest to use it, place it on the table. A list of the names of the living members

of the family may be placed by the bowl. You can also light your vigil lamp - kandilo during the service. After the blessing of your home, please save the water and you can mix it with your last year holy water if you still have some. Use Theophany water during the year; it is a spiritual medicine when you use it with faith. Before you consume the Theophany water please say a prayer.

Prayer before Partaking Holy Water

O Lord, my God, may Thy holy gift and Thy holy water be for the remission of my sins, for the enlightenment of my mind, for the strengthening of my soul and body, for the health of my soul and body, for conquering of my passions and infirmities, according to Thy mercy that hath no limit, through the prayers of Thy Most Pure Mother and all Thy saints. Amen.

From Nativity on Jan. 7 until the eve of Theophany, Jan. 18 is a fast-free period. The Church lets us enjoy the feast and eat all the food we love. Remember this isn't the time for us to neglect our spiritual life. On the Feast of Theophany, Jan. 19, which is a major holy day, we are invited to partake of the Holy Mystery of Communion. Some might say, "I did not fast, I cannot take communion." If the Church tells us not to physically fast then why would we question it? We have enough time of the year when we should physically fast, but we all ought to practice spiritual fasting

The traditional Serbian Orthodox greeting for the Nativity season is Christ is Born and the reply is Indeed He is Born or Truly He is Born. In Serbian it is Hristos se rodi and the reply is Voistinu se rodi or you may hear sometimes Vaistinu se rodi, which means the same.

Many Slavic people such as Russians and Ukrainians say Christ is Born, Glorify Him! Either all together or one person would say Christ is Born and another Glorify Him. The Christmas greeting in Greek is Christ is Born, give glory! Again, either just one person or two with Christ is Born and reply Give glory. The Christmas greeting is used from the day of the Nativity of Christ until the Apodosis or Leave-taking of the Feast which is January 13.

Culture classes on Wednesday night, whenever possible, are doing well and they turned to be more for adults instead of youth and parents as originally planned. This is great and it is turning into an adult spiritual education group which is beneficial for the parish. Please make time to attend it whenever you are available. **Note for the parents:** Bringing your child/children to church, church school and other activities such as folklore, dances and culture classes will bring the church youth together and they will make friends which usually last for the rest of their lives. It is not like it used to be that all of them lived close, finished the same grade school and graduated the same High School so they knew each other. Today people live all over the area and children don't really know each other well, other than their family and cousins. When the time for their marriage comes and when they need kumovi either for a weddings or baptism, they will not be friends with the youth from their church and they will ask their siblings or cousins to be kumovi. This is fine but it is not the tradition among Orthodox Serbs. Kumovi should be picked out of long-time friends and not blood relatives. At least it was the tradition for many, many generations among Orthodox Serbs.

Serbian Christmas words:

Badnjak: A Yule Log. The branch of an oak tree is blessed in church and brought home on Christmas eve. Some people burn it in the fire place and some save it by the slava ikon in their ikon corner

Nativity Services:

Friday, January 4 – Royal Hours at 10 am, confession to follow

Saturday, January 5 – Vespers / confession at 5 pm

Sunday, January 6 – Divine Liturgy at 10 am; Nativity Vespers at 1 pm; Nativity Compline & Matins at 6 pm; Blessing of Badnjak (Yule Log) in hall, refreshments

Monday, January 7 – Christmas, Divine Liturgy at 10 am

Tuesday, January 8 – Synaxis of the Theotokos, Divine Liturgy at 9 am

Wednesday, January 9 – St Stephen the Firstmartyr, Divine Liturgy at 9 am

Cesnica (chesnitca): A traditional Christmas bread with a coin inside. It is broken/cut before the meal on Christmas and the one who gets the coin in his/her piece will be lucky for the rest of the year. In some Balkan areas, cesnica is made as a regular bread from wheat flour, some make it with wheat and corn flours and in Vojvodina (northern Serbia) it is similar to a baklava with filo dough, ground walnuts, raisins, sugar or honey and chopped dry figs. The host of the house will buy back a coin from the cesnica and save the coin for next year. It is usually saved inside the frame of the slava ikon.

Orasi: Walnuts in the bowl. The host will throw one in each corner of the room.

Sveca (svecha): A candle lit for the Christmas Eve dinner and tomorrow for Christmas lunch.

Slama: Straw. The host of the house will bring the straw inside the house and spread it around and on the table under the cloth where the Christmas eve and Christmas lunch will be served. Christ was born in the manger and laid on straw.

Pecenica (pechenitsa): a roasted suckling piglet with an apple in its mouth and it is the main dish for the Christmas lunch. In some areas it is whole lamb or turkey, goose or even a big rooster roasted with its head. If it is poultry, a walnut is placed in the mouth.

Polozajnik (polozhaynik): the first male visitor in the house. He is greeted with a symbolic gift



Mystery and History Collide on Christmas



by Regis Martin –

When we consider the Christmas Miracle, it is worth recalling the fact that Joseph does not at once repudiate his betrothed, despite his discovery that she is pregnant with another's child. It is an astonishing development. How painfully bewildering it must have been for him, however, to try and account for a conception for which he was not at all responsible. Still, for all that Joseph is entitled to collect in the way of punitive damages, including death by stoning, he refuses to go that route, resolving instead "to divorce her quietly."

At which point, of course, an angel of the Lord intervenes, advising Joseph in a dream not to heed the counsel of fear, nor to give way to the demands of justice, but to welcome Mary into his home. How so? *Because the Child she bears is the Son of the living God.* On whom, following his unforeseen descent into the flesh of the most pure Virgin, Joseph will be asked to confer the blessed name, Jesus, which means *Savior*. So that having come among us to rescue the least and the lost, he is entitled not only to bear the sacred Name, but to express in his very *being-for-others* the utter *invocability* of God himself. In other words, it is now possible for mankind to call directly upon God; no longer do we need to deal with his ministers at a discreet distance. For God really is among us. *Emmanuel*. He is in our midst.

Only this God saves us from being afraid of the world and from anxiety before the emptiness of life.

Here the saintly Joseph, in making so generous and heroic a provision for Mary, reveals his true greatness, which is far more than a kind heart and a selfless spirit. It is rather the memory of the promise delivered to God's people that he, Joseph, as a true son of David, longs to see fulfilled. Thanks to so lively and profound a sense of memory, Joseph will open the door of hope to the world. Vistas of limitless promise will loom before us. Mankind will not need to grope in the darkness any longer, nor grovel in the dust beneath the tyranny of death. God will have truly shown himself as one of us because of the magnanimity of one man who opened his home and his heart to the Mystery.

Great little one! whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.
~ Richard Crashaw

Nevertheless, how great a distance it must be for God to come down to earth in order that he might encamp about us. And the differences separating us remain, as Kierkegaard reminds us, infinite and qualitative. God—to unpack the metaphysics of Exodus 3—is he who is; and we, and everything else, are all that is not. So, God hurls himself into human history in order that everything might begin anew. “Christ is not ‘something’ alongside but ‘something inside,’” exclaims Luigi Giussani. For all the varied vibrations that touch our lives, reaching right down to the very wellsprings of thought and action, the Incarnate Word has come to embrace everything, positively avid to assume and redeem the whole nine yards of human existence.

What does Christ want of us? Only permission to deepen our consciousness of his presence; and then, having captured our attention, to proceed to enrich our lives with the strength and palpability of a continuing presence. “Awareness of the Mystery present,” says Giussani, “makes our life a constant stream of novelty. With the acknowledgement of this dramatic presence, with this presence in which the divinity dwells in the flesh, something new ‘begins’—today, at eleven o’clock, at one o’clock, at six, at ten; tomorrow at three, or at four. At any moment at all, something new begins.”

What could possibly be more appealing than the prospect, endlessly and wondrously repeated, of beginning over and over again? But it cannot happen without Christ. Without that unique saving presence, he brings to each passing moment—the *kairos* of eternity bursting through the clouds of mere *kronos*—we cannot begin anything. Certainly not the great adventure of creatures made in God’s image. “We cannot sustain love for ourselves,” warns Giussani, “unless Christ is a presence, as a mother is a presence for her child. Unless Christ is a presence now—now! —I cannot love myself now and I cannot love you now.”

Why so pandemic a resistance to having God in our midst?

So why have so many, especially in our own time, refused? Why so pandemic a resistance to having God in our midst? Indeed, why such disdain for God’s holy Mother, the very one who, says Hopkins, “Gave God’s infinity / Welcome in womb and breast / Birth, milk, and all the rest...”?

Who can account for so massive and methodic a dismissal of the central event of human history? An event, moreover, of such shattering importance that unless it is true, it hardly matters what is true. Our lives are lost in a vast and terrible sea of nihilism. “With the advent of Christ,” writes Romano Guardini, “man confronted a decision which placed him on a new level of existence ... man’s existence took on an earnestness which classical antiquity never knew.... This earnestness did not spring from a human maturity; it sprang from a call which each person received from God through Christ. With this call the person opened his eyes, he was awakened for the first time in his life.” And who knows? —maybe the whole post-modern malaise is that we no longer wish to open our eyes, preferring self-inflicted blindness to belief in Christ.

What could be greater than to allow oneself to be embraced by the arms of the Incarnate God?

In any final reckoning of motive, it seems to me, such impacted hostility amounts to a failure of magnanimity, a virtue whose exercise dear Saint Joseph brought to the highest pitch of perfection. And what is magnanimity? It is the desire always and everywhere to aspire to greatness, and thus to despise and reject all that is mediocre. It is to open our eyes to behold the Eternal Child coming into our midst in order to bestow the grace of salvation. What could be greater than to allow oneself to be embraced by the arms of the Incarnate God? And then to extend that enfleshment to others, to a world thirsting for truth that you can really see and smell, taste and touch. “I am only a man,” says the poet Czeslaw Milosz. “I need visible signs. / I tire easily, building the stairway of abstraction.”

Could there be any vocation worthier than this: That Christ's presence continues in one's own life? And then to carry Christ to others?

O, like a tiny cradle,
Could thy heart become,
God would on earth again
Be born an infant son.
~ Angelus Silesius

Resistance to so ennobling an endeavor was *the* defining sin of that movement of so-called Enlightenment thought that arose more than two centuries ago. Fallout continues to infect the culture, especially in its operative refusal to admit even the possibility of God revealing himself as a human being.

But is it really true that God is somehow intrinsically unable to show himself in human history? Pray, what is the point of being God if you can't visit your own potty little world? Yes, even if you have to suspend a law or two of the universe to pull it off. [Actually, He didn't. As C.S. Lewis so brilliantly explained, God did not suspend the laws He created but took a short-cut working descending into His creation.] It is the Eternal Child for whom all creation cries. A world fallen and defiled awaits rebirth. And from the ashes Christ tells us it shall arise.

Merry Christmas everyone....



St. George Serbian Orthodox Church School Congregation Report from the Executive Board Winter 2018

Scholarship Update: We had one additional scholarship awardee for the 2018 school year (for a total of 5 scholarships awarded). Congratulations to University student Theodore Prieboy for being awarded a scholarship! We wish you a blessed and fruitful school year. We also thank the American Serbian Social Club for their generous donation to the Scholarship Fund. **Social Center's Upper Level Main Dining Hall Air Conditioner:** As of the Lifeline event held on a hot and humid day in mid-September, it appeared the air conditioner is still not working properly. Our HVAC provider is planning to bring the manufacturer of the equipment to inspect it once the weather warms up.

Water Damage in One of the Church's Classrooms: The radiators have been repaired. Now that they have been repaired, we can address flooring replacement (which has been previously approved). The church board will be pursuing bids for different types of flooring like carpeting, carpet squares, and/or waterproof vinyl.

Hall Internet / TV Upgrade: An internet-speed upgrade for the hall has been implemented to accommodate multiple Wi-Fi users during events. In addition, we have updated our standard-definition TV package to high-definition (HDTV) for the upstairs and downstairs bars. We have also added HDTV programming for our new projector in the main hall. If you attended the Annual Assembly, you likely saw it live and in action.

AV System (indoor) and LED Sign (outdoor) for the Hall: Both projects are up and running.

We thank the Zubic family for additional donations as follows: • Access Point for the upstairs bar to improve internet connectivity • Subwoofer for the AV system • Labor for rewiring of the electrical panel on the stage as it was not to code • Access point for the outdoor LED sign • Labor for changing the wiring for the LED sign and adding a ground and a new breaker. Now, the sign runs at 220V which is more efficient. We thank the Dauer family for their additional donation as follows: • Subwoofer for the AV system

The only thing left for these projects is training of the Hall Management staff.

Donations on our Church Website: On our church's website, in the "Donate" section (<https://stgeorgejoliet.org/donate.html>), you can submit a one-time or recurring donation online using a credit card or PayPal.

Should you use this method for a donation: • Please ensure to specify the reason for your donation (i.e. Stewardship, Pomen/Litany, Church Slava, Christmas, Pascha, etc.) so that it can be accounted for properly • Please note that there is a convenience fee to use this service, so the church will not receive 100% of a donation made online.

Should you use this service to pay your stewardship online: • Only what is deposited to the church will be credited to your stewardship account. • Currently, the fee is 2.9% + \$.30 per transaction. For example, if your stewardship amount is \$300.00, you would need to donate \$309.00 to cover the fees ensuring your stewardship donation equals \$300.00. • (Note: We are currently working to get a lower, charity rate, but it has not been achieved yet.)

Thank you as always for your support of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church in Joliet.

Knox Box for the Church: It has been installed to assist authorities in emergency situations in a nondestructive manner.

Church Bell Malfunction: One of the church bells had been malfunctioning and has been repaired.

Donations Given: We provided donations to the following charities:

- \$500.00 to Lifeline Chicago for their event held at our hall in Joliet in September 2018.
- \$100.00 to IOCC for their "Day of Sharing" held on November 18, 2018
- \$100.00 to Will County Center for Community Concerns (WCCCC) requesting a donation for their Holiday Food Basket program which provides each family in need with a complete holiday dinner as well as a second box filled with groceries. They provide each child with a warm winter coat, a hat, a scarf, a pair of gloves, and a toy. The food baskets and gifts are distributed at a festive holiday celebration where they serve holiday treats and the children visit with Santa.

SNF Bowling Tournament: Since it is a good fundraiser for our church (when we hosted it in 2016, we realized a significant profit), we recommend our church and our local SNF Lodge # 97 place a bid for a future SNF Bowling Tournament which is typically held on Columbus Day weekend. We feel we need a chairperson(s) in place in order to place the bid. We have received one volunteer so far to be a cochairperson, Nancy Cora. Thank you, Nancy! We need a volunteer to be a second co-chairperson. If you would like to co-chair the event along with Nancy, please contact any church board member or someone from SNF Lodge # 97 as soon as possible.

Memorial Donations: A friendly reminder to our parishioners that in the event of someone's passing, if there is a memorial donation made to the church, the funds will be used at the church's discretion. If the donor would like to specify the donation (e.g. speak to the Parish Priest about something needed for the church or the altar), the memorial donation should be made to the family, and the family can communicate the donation wishes to the church board.

Hall Management and Church Janitor Positions: The 2-year term for the hall, kitchen, and bar managers as well as the church janitor had been set to expire at the end of December 2018 but were extended for one month as the applications and letters of intent for the next term will be addressed at the January 2019 church board meeting.

Annual Assembly: The Annual Assembly was held on Sunday 12/9/18. We thank the parishioners and stewards who attended, provided input, and voted at the meeting. We thank the outgoing Church

Board Members for their hard work throughout 2018. We congratulate the 2019 Church Board Members and wish them much success in the coming year. They are:

Parish Priest: Fr. Aleksandar Bugarin Secretary: Kathy Petkovich President: Dr. Howard Grundy
Treasurer: Vicki Dorsey 1st Vice President: Bonnie Dauer Financial Secretary: Susan Kljaich 2nd Vice
President: Nick Malinovich

Wardens / Members-at-Large: John Dauer, Don Grubisich, Dave Laketa, Steve Malinovich, Phil Rowe,
and Gayle Shimek Auditors: Edythe Miller, Rebecca Prieboy, and Millie Rowe Nominating Committee:
Dan Dorsey, Tana Petrich, Mike Cora, Pete Petkovich, and Christine Book

Actions from the 2018 Annual Assembly (from the Hall Improvement Committee Presentation): 1. Obtain conceptual drawings for the remodel of both the interior and exterior of the hall from Healy, Bender & Associates. 2. Publish hall hours of operation. The committee strongly recommended 3 days a week (2 daytime and 1 evening), 4 hours per day. 3. Partner with a 3rd party catering service to offer a higher-end catering package in addition to current offerings (pending legal review).

Thank you! • On behalf of the Executive board, we sincerely thank Fr. Alex for his spiritual guidance and priestly service since he joined us this past August. • We also thank the co-chairs, Bonnie Dauer and Michelle Efatoski, and the entire committee for their work on the 90th Anniversary Celebration. It was a beautiful day filled with memories!

We greatly appreciate the continual support we receive from our Parishioners and Stewards including your time, talents, and treasures!

Upcoming Events—Save the Dates Scholarship Banquet: It will be scheduled for Spring of 2019.



This year, our Sveti Sava celebration will be on the Feast of Sveti Sava on Sunday, January 27. After the divine liturgy, there will be a blessing of festal bread and koljivo in the hall, lunch and a children's program. Please mark your calendars, and plan to attend this important event!

Why Orthodox Christians are not Cremated *by Fr. John Touloumes*

Cremation (burning the bodies of those who have died to the point of ashes) is a practice which is being "sold" as a cost-effective, space-conservative alternative to traditional burial of the body. Throughout her history, however, the Orthodox Church has prohibited this practice. But, as in many areas of the Faith, we must take the time to learn why the Church takes such a position. In doing so, we not only grow in our own knowledge of the Lord and His Church, but we are better prepared to answer questions others ask us about our Orthodox Christian Faith.

The following passage is drawn from the Orthodox journal, "*Life Transfigured*" a publication of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, and from "*Contemporary Moral Issues*" by Father Stanley Harakas.

Compiled by Father John Touloumes

A Growing Practice & Problem

In our country, cremation is increasingly being practiced. In part this is due to the influence of Oriental religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, and to the rise of neo-paganism. But it is also a result of the eroding of traditional beliefs among non-Orthodox Christians. In many Christian denominations — or at least among their liberal preachers — it is no longer necessary to believe in the "empty tomb," in Christ's physical Resurrection. These teachers call the "empty tomb" a myth and reduce all the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus to merely spiritual experiences. The Orthodox conviction that the Son of God was also truly Man and was raised in His whole human nature — body and soul — explains the Church's traditional rejection of cremation, a practice which is diametrically opposed to the expectation of the resurrection of the dead in Christ. If the Resurrection is merely a legend or a beautiful metaphor, then as Saint Paul writes, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain" (1 Cor. 15.17)

The Church's Historical Foundations

The Church throughout her entire history has stressed the importance of understanding that Jesus was born with an actual human body with the same attributes and needs of any other human body, which upon being crucified died the same death that every other body has died. Three days later, the Resurrection included His human body.

Through all this Jesus makes abundantly clear that the whole of our humanity — body as well as soul — has been called to salvation and eternal life. All of human nature has been raised by Christ's Ascension to the right hand of the Father. Jesus gave us many proofs of this, but it is seen most clearly in Christ's appearance to Thomas. In his "Commentary on Saint John," Saint Cyril of Alexandria writes:

"What need was there for the showing of His hands and side, if in accordance with the depravity of some, He did not rise with His own flesh? If He wanted His disciples to believe differently concerning Him, why did He not rather appear in a different and by

putting the form of the flesh to shame, draw them towards a different understanding? But it was more important that He show Himself carefully at that time so that they should believe in the future resurrection of the flesh."

Saint Cyril adds that the Body of Christ had to be raised in order to vanquish death and destroy the power of corruption. Christ's body, which Saint Thomas proved through touching to be real, gives clear witness to the future resurrection of our own bodies.

In God's Image

The human person is created in the image and likeness of God. When we are baptized it is not only the soul which becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit, but also the Body. When we receive Holy Communion, we take the real Body and Blood of Christ into our bodies. In the mysteries of Chrismation and Holy Unction it is our bodies which are anointed with Holy Chrism. Particularly clear proof of the sanctity of the body is given by those saints such as Saints Spyridon, Paraskevi, Savas, Gerasimos and Dionysios, whose bodies remain incorrupt centuries after their physical deaths. The Church knows innumerable accounts of healing occurring upon being blessed with the relics of a saint. These men and women lived the life in Christ so fully that not only were their souls taken to heaven but their bodies retain the sanctity and healing power of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Example of Holy Friday

The future resurrection of the believer's soul and body, according to the truth which Christ revealed, dictates the nature of Orthodox traditions concerning the body at death. In an Orthodox funeral, "the mourners gather" as the "myrrhbearers to provide the last ministry to the Christian body in preparation for the Resurrection." Anyone who has attended the Orthodox Great Friday services knows the sequence following Christ's death: Joseph of Arimethea goes at great personal risk to beg Pilate for the body of Jesus. As our icons show, the Theotokos, Nicodemos, John the Apostle and the Myrrhbearing Women helped Joseph, covering the Most Precious Body with tears.

How We Care for the Body

The Church has unequivocally taught since Christ's Crucifixion that the proper way to treat the dead is a reverent burial of the body in the context of a proper Church funeral and prayers for those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. We sing hymns and psalms to escort the dead on their way and to express gratitude to God for their life and death. We wrap the body in a new shroud, symbolizing the new dress of incorruption the person is destined to receive. We pour myrrh and oil on the body as we do at baptism. We accompany this with incense and candles, showing our belief that the person has been liberated from darkness and is going to the true Light. We place the body in the grave towards the east, denoting the Resurrection to come. We weep in our grief, but not unrestrainedly, as we know what happiness is to come.

The Process of Death

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15.55). Death is neither a finality nor it is merely an evolutionary step. The Church in her wisdom commemorates saints on the day they died in this life, calling it their day of birth into eternal life in heaven. A Christian death means eternal life with Christ, where at the Last Judgement body and soul will be reunited and glorified together.

The Bridal Chamber

A radiantly beautiful verse from the Orthros of Pascha concerning Christ's bodily Resurrection from the grave encompasses the blessed hope He has given to each of us, saying:

"Today, as from a Bridal Chamber Christ has shown forth from the Tomb and filled the women with joy, saying: Proclaim the glad tidings to the Apostles!"

The Broad Picture

Acceptance of cremation, therefore, would represent a radical departure from an established practice for which there seems to be no adequate reason to institute a change. The argument that cemeteries waste space does not stand in a nation as immense as our own, especially when the universality of modern transportation makes burial sites away from urban centers easily accessible. The skyrocketing cost of burial is not seen at this time as a compelling reason to sanction cremation, for the Church does not ask that funerals be extravagant and costly, but that a certain amount of respect be maintained for the human body that was once the temple of a human soul. Thus the Church, due to a pastoral concern for the preservation of right beliefs and right practice within the Tradition of the Fathers, and out of a sense of reverence for its departed, must continue its opposition to this practice. Each Orthodox Christian should know that since cremation is prohibited by the canons [rules of the Church], those who insist on their own cremation will not be permitted a funeral in the Church. Naturally, an exception occurs when the Church is confronted with the case of some accident or natural disaster where cremation is necessary to guard the health of the living. In these special situations, the Church allows cremation of Orthodox people with prior episcopal permission and only by "economia."

Pregnancy & Newborns

Pregnancy

One of the greatest gifts God has given us is to become co-creators with Him. When a husband and wife are ready and God wills, the fruit of their love brings forth life—another human being—a baby. From the moment of conception, we honor this life with caring and nurturance. In addition to physical and emotional support, the couple and the baby need spiritual support primarily through prayer. Please inform the priest of your pregnancy so he may include you and your unborn child in the preparation prayers (Proskomidia) before the Divine Liturgy. Pregnant women are encouraged to attend the liturgical services and to receive the sacraments.

Some couples may have difficulty becoming pregnant. Several therapies exist to assist pregnancy. However, not all are in accordance with Orthodox Christian ethical teaching. Please consult your priest for guidance and special prayers for conceiving a child.

Birth

By God's grace, soon the time will come for your baby to be born. Amongst all the excitement, remember to call the priest when the baby is born. He can come and visit you in the hospital or at home to offer special prayers for the mother and child. In the event of a miscarriage, the priest can visit you for counseling and offer special prayers for healing.

Naming

One of the beautiful traditions lost in antiquity is the naming of the child on the eighth day after birth. This practice was based on the Jewish rite that Jesus Himself experienced with His parents (as recorded in Luke 2:21). Recently, priests and parents have resurrected this prayer service. For convenience, it can be done with birthing prayers or at another time. Much care and thought should go into naming your child. Giving him/her the name of a saint is a noble tradition. This connects them to a spiritual patron who will pray for them and also provides a concrete example of the Christian life. Some families name children after grandparents. Some will not name their child until baptism. Others have the godparents name the child. Although these are also noble, there is no basis for these practices in the church canons. Some children are given a family name and a saint's name. This is perfectly acceptable.

40 Day Churching

On the fortieth day after birth, the mother and child are invited to the church temple for a prayer service to reunite the mother and unite the child to the faith community. This practice is also based on the ancient Jewish rite and experienced by Jesus and His mother, Mary (recorded in Luke 2:22-40). Ages ago it took nearly six weeks for a mother to recover from giving birth. This time was also spent bonding with the newborn child. Mother and child did not travel outside the home until both were strong enough. The first place they went was to the temple/church. Today, a mother can recover much more quickly. If she is able, she is encouraged to attend church services but should refrain from receiving Holy Communion until after the 40 Day Churching. This 10 minute service should be scheduled ahead of time on either a Sunday or weekday near the 40th day. Please consult your priest for further details.

Adoption

Whether or not parents are able to conceive children of their own, adoption is an acceptable and noble practice for Orthodox Christians. There is a service of adoption for parents and children which can be prayed privately or publicly depending the family's wishes.

Miscarriage or Stillbirth

In the unfortunate event of miscarriage, much grief and emotion can result for parents especially the mother of the child. The priest can be called to provide spiritual comfort and to read a special prayer for

the parents and the deceased child. Great care should be taken, if possible, to inter the remains of the child. The mother is still encouraged to come to the temple for the 40 Day Churching so she may be prayerfully reunited with the community of faith.

Crisis Pregnancy

A child is a gift of God to a husband and wife and should be received with great care and thankfulness. Unmarried men and women should not fornicate (sexual foreplay and intercourse) as it is clearly condemned in Mosaic Law and the letters of St. Paul. However, if a woman becomes pregnant unexpectedly, at this time, both the father and the mother must take responsibility for the nurturance and care of their child. Abortion, the deliberate and willful actions taken to end the life of a baby in the womb of the mother, is sinful and wrong. The Orthodox Church has always condemned this practice. If circumstances exist that make carrying the baby to term difficult, the priest and numerous agencies are ready to help the mother.



90th Anniversary Celebration Committee Report Hristos se rodi

On November 4, 2018, the St. George Congregation celebrated its 90th anniversary with a Holy Hierarchical Liturgy and banquet. 266 reservations were made, 14 of which were children's meals. Of those 266, 5 people were unable to attend. Dunav Tamburitza orchestra, donated by the Starceвич family, played in the bar during the cocktail hour and after the event. They also played on the dais during dinner. Scrapbooks, a slide projector and pictures were on display in the main hall for those in attendance to peruse.

Leading up to the event, 142 bricks were purchased by the church congregation and friends to commemorate events and people of the church. The bricks were laid in a path on the East side of the property from the mosaic to the bell tower. A donation made in the memory of +Michael Klajich offset the cost of landscaping the pathway. The Starceвич family donated their time and labor in cleaning up and restoring the base of the bell tower. Event favors of bookmarks and prayer cards were purchased and donated by the St. George Cultural Club. Medallions, favors for the church stewards, were hand forged by Peter Laketa and donated by the Laketa and Jovanovich families. A historical reflection booklet was

created by Father Ned Lunich and Michelle Efatoski. We received three full-page, three half-page and 34 partial page sponsorships which more than covered the cost of printing. There were many other, sizeable donations in the form of sponsorships, all of which we are extremely grateful for.

Invitations: Bill & Marty Seemann; Portion of Church Beautification: Howard & Sandy Grundy and Sophia Komadina Peters in memory of +Smiljana Grundy; Champagne Toast: Dan & Vicki Dorsey & Patty Mancke; Brick Paver Appeal Mailing: Radovan & Darlene Jovanovich, Dan & Becky Prieboy & Family, Craig & Chrissy Vercelote and Family; Portion of Luncheon Meal: John & Bonnie Dauer Family; Floral Table Decorations: Michael & Nancy Cora; Portion of Chair Covers: Ertan & Michelle Efatoski

After a cocktail hour with passed appetizers, His Grace, Bishop LONGIN and Father Aleks Bugarin opened the event with a prayer. A plated dinner of either a beef tenderloin stack, brick chicken Francaise, vegetarian polenta stack or chicken fingers for the children were served. After dinner, welcome greetings were given by the co-chairs, Michelle Efatoski and Bonnie Dauer. The past presidents and clergy were toasted as well as the entire congregation. Church School Board

president, Dr. Howard Grundy greeted the assembly. Steve Malinovich, on behalf of himself and his wife Delores thanked the congregation for honoring them as kumovi for the event. In his remarks, Steve reminded those in attendance that membership means more than just attendance and encouraged everyone to get involved with the different organizations and events of the Church. Father Aleks Bugarin then presented him and Delores with an ikon of St. George as a gift from the congregation. It was noted that the oldest member of the congregation, Milovan Kisich was in attendance as well as the youngest, Emma Eric. Founding members in attendance were Radovan Jovanovich and Genevieve Ostoich.

As Dean of the Chicago Deanery, Father Ned Lunich addressed the assembly and recognized the accomplishments of the parish during his tenure as parish priest. Father Aleks Bugarin gave his greetings followed by His Grace, Bishop LONGIN. After his remarks, His Grace awarded Vicki Petrich Dorsey, Sophie Anderson and Steve Malinovich with The Medal of St. Mardarije for their various works and dedication to St. George and the Diocese. He then presented Michelle

Efatoski and Bonnie Dauer with a Gramata to recognize their works for St. George.

Mita Topalovich choir sang Blagoslovi Duse Moya Gospoda by Pavel Chesnokov and Za Cast I slavu Srbije (Splet Cetnickih Borbenih Pjesama) by Slobodan Zelich. John Dauer then took a group photo of everyone in attendance. We hope everyone enjoyed themselves and look forward to celebrating the 100th.

Sincerely, Bonnie Dauer & Michelle Efatoski Co-Chairs, 90th Anniversary Committee,



Савест – глас Божији у човеку

Врло често ћемо у свакодневном животу чути како за некога кажемо да је савестан, а за неког да је несавестан. Обично то разумемо као неку врсту ревности, поштеног односа према раду, марљивост и сличне особине. Међутим, савест је нешто много озбиљније, суштинскије. Савест је печат Бога живог у човеку.

Господ нам је дао Закон, Свето Писмо, животно откровење. Али, пре свега тога Господ је удахнуо у човека Свој глас, Божанствени глас који се назива савест. Савест је попут функције наше душе и она, наравно, много говори човеку. Када човек поступа по моралном закону, по закону који је од Бога, онда савест то одобрава. Супротно, када човек нарушава закон Божији, поступа против закона, природно, савест га разобличава. Међутим, човек поседује и вољу. По својој вољи човек некад пренебрегава тај глас савести и поступа супротно.

Савест нам је дата од Бога. Она постоји исто као разум, који је такође човеку урођен. Исто тако, човеку је дат интелект, воља. Постоје још неке функције, попут религиозних осећања у човеку. Она су хармонична са нашом душом, савешћу и разумом.

Човек тражи смисао свог живота. И наравно, човеку је дато, од рођења, преко васпитања које треба родитељи да му усаде. Даље га васпитава школа и свакодневни живот који је у сталној спреси. На тај начин човек упија све оно што га окружује, васпитава се. Наравно, савест је овде руководилац, попут полицајца који указује шта је добро, а шта лоше.

Дешава се, међутим, да поред поред таквог гласа Божијег у себи, човек ипак поступа супротно. Опет, много зависи од васпитања човека. Можда и од предака, гена, од средине у којој је одрастао. Поступци његови у многоме зависе од тога. Да ли је неко одрастао у благочестивој породици, да ли је добро припремљен за живот. Јасно је да се тада труди да чује глас савести.

Међутим, када савест ћути у човеку, када се не одазива, то говори да је човек угушио савест. То је већ страст. Он је завистан од страсти. Ради се о плодовима моралног понашања и ако човек систематично живи аморално, то постаје навика, страст. Таква особа не чује глас савести. У том случају понашање човеково је потпуно изопачено. Оно му, наравно, много штети.

Поступци његови бивају рђави, доводе до нарушавања закона. Тада га поправља само казна, спољашња. Са друге стране, често можемо чути да има оних који „живети мирне савести“; оне који кажу: „моја савест је чиста“. Наравно, када особа чини добре поступке, савест одобрава његово деловање. Међутим, у односу на његов начин васпитања човек се понаша или позитивно, или негативно.

Обавезно треба имати на уму духовни живот. Свакодневни живот је, безусловно, у складу са Промислом Божијим. Ако човек живи молитвом, он живи Промислом Божијим. На њега делује благодат Божија, садејство Анђела Чуvara. Свака крштена особа има свог Анђела Чуvara који њиме руководи. Али, сама светост Анђела не даје довољно да би се човек приближио Богу, не улива му довољно у душу добра дела, поступке и понашање. Дешава се, човек не чује Анђела. Анђео може говорити, али уколико је човеково душевно стање такво, он га неће чути. Много је чешће да на човека утичу тамне силе. У случајевима када човек не чује глас Анђела, наступа зла сила. Окружују га бесови. Што је човек чистији, ближе Богу, зле силе су слабије. Али, када човек губи везу са Богом, губи молитву, тада га ђаво наводи на свакакве зле намере и поступке.

Зато, нека би Господ дао да свако заиста живи онако како Господ од њега жели. Господ нам увек жели добро. Човек је створен за доброту, благодотворца и блаженство твари. Трудимо се да живимо онако како Господ од нас тражи, јер Господ воли човека. Дао нам је могућност да живимо милосрдно, благочестиво, у славу Божију. Уколико сами то желимо, и трудимо се, улажемо напоре, наравно, добијамо милост од Бога и избегавамо страшне последице. Здравље нам је попут драгоценог дара Божијег. Нека би Господ дао да сви ојачају у добру. *Схиархимандрит Илиј (Ноздрин)*

Remember Your Church this Christmas with your generous donation!

Сетите се ваше цркве овога Божића са вашим великодушним прилогом!

Исповест није „карта за причешћивање“

Колико често се треба причешћивати? Како се припремити за причест? Да ли су исповед и пост обавезан услов за примање Светих Дарова? Да ли је неопходан тродневни пост пред причешће, ако се човек причешћује сваке недеље? Та важна питања за сваког православног верника испуњавају нашу литургијску праксу.

Правило тродневног поста пред причешће ни у каквим канонима и правилима Цркве једноставно не постоји. Постоји традиција, која се формирала при Синодалној епохи, када су се људи јако ретко причешћивали. Тада су постојали разни рокови поста: три дана, три недеље, например. Данас, за човека, који живи квалитетним црквеним животом, нарочито ако он пости постове које је Црква установила, (а њих је, као што знате, у нашем календару довољно много), нема потребе

налагати оном који жели често да се причешћује, некакве додатне постове.

Са духовником такође је неопходно размотрити и питање о исповеди пред причешће. У данашње време постоје различите парадигме: постоји општа исповест, мада то, наравно није норма, исповест мора бити лична. Ипак, у савременим условима, питање о међусобним односима исповести и евхаристије није сасвим једноставно.

Многи схватају исповест као својеврсну „карту за причешће“. Као резултат тога, недељом ујутро може се у храму видети чудан натпис: „Они, који се не причешћују, стоје за време Литургије у централном делу храма, а они, који желе да се причесте, целу службу треба да простоје у бочном делу, где се врши исповед и у најбољем случају само у тренутку изношења Путира, ослобађају се таквог стајања у реду.“

Причешће које је тесно везано са исповедањем управо углавном је типично у руској и српској цркви док у другим Помесним Црквама таквих традиција нема. На пример, у грчким црквама, људи се, као по правилу, причешћују без исповеди, а исповест се претворила у ретку појаву.

Али исповест није важна само ради тога да би се човеку допустило причешће. Исповест је важна ради тога да би човек спознао своје грехе, извео некакве анализе пред лицем Бога и пред лицем

свештеника. Исповест сама по себи показује на њега одређено преображавајуће дејство. Али исповест не сједињује човека са Христом, како се то дешава при Евхаристији „Тајном над Тајнама.“ Све Црквене Тајне међусобно су повезане, и не могу се „вештачки супротстављати“.

На пример, неки људи мисле, да је потребно једном годишње помазати се јелејем, чак иако нисте болесни, зато што се у Тајни јелеосвећења опраштају заборављени греси. А неки чак и сматрају да Тајна јелеосвећења „испуњава“ Тајну исповести! А то не постоји! Ако се човек исповедио од свег срца онда, чини ми се, њему се опраштају сви греси, и свештеник у разрешној молитви управо о томе и говори. У томе се састоји исцељујућа и спасоносна Тајна исповести. Али исповест, сама по себи, не може заменити Евхаристију, зато што Евхаристија као Тајна над Тајнама и средиште црквеног живота хришћанина, не замењује друге Тајне“.

Тakoђе је значајно питање колико је душекорисно одређивати забрану причешћа, епитимијом. То је, наравно, могуће у случају, ако је свештеник уверен, да ће таква казна уродити плодом, и као коначан резултат, приближити човека Богу, а не да га удаљи. Данас се често дешава, да човек, услед такве забране, налази испред могућности да оде од Цркве.

Митрополит Иларион (Алфејев)

Богојављење

„Бог се јави - Заиста се Бог јави“

Ко потопаи гордост, непослушност, себичност и сваку нечистоту старога, грешнога човека, а он уздигне смирење и кротост, послушност и љубав. Ко умре себи, а оживи Богу (Рим. 6). Једном речју: ко себе сахрани као грешник и поново се роди као праведник, - тај ће остварити онај пример, који му је дао Христос Својим Крштењем у води Јорданској.

Данас, 6./19. јануара Српска Православна Црква слави велики хришћански празник Богојављење, један од петнаест најзначајнијих празника. Данас православни једни друге, а и сав народ Божји, поздрављају древним поздравом „Бог се јави - Заиста се Бог јави“. Свети Јован Златоуст је о данашњем празнику, поред осталог рекао: „Хоћу да празнујем, љубљени, и оран сам да светкујем. Јер је свето Богојављење печат празника и врата светковине...“. Понекад се овај празник назива и Просвећење јер је Господ Исус Христос својим крштењем у Јордану осветио, учинио светом не само воду у овој реци, него и сву воду уопште, па и сву материју, сву творевину Божју. Данас се у свим светим храмовина после Свете Литургије освећује вода.

Пролог: Када Господ Исус беше навршио тридесет година од Свог телесног рођења, Он отпоче Свој учитељски и спаситељски посао. И сам, почетак почетка ознаменова крштењем на Јордану. Свети Кирил Јерусалимски вели: "Почетак света вода, почетак Јеванђеља Јордан". При крштењу Господа у води објавила се свету она тајна која се у Старом Завету наговештавала, о којој се у старом Мисиру и Индији само баснословило, тј. тајна божанске Свете Тројице. Отац се јавио чувству слуха, Дух се јавио чувству вида, а Син се јавио уз то још и чувству додира. Отац је изрекао Своје сведочанство о Сину. Син се крстио у води а Дух Свети у виду голуба лебдео је над водом. А када Јован Крститељ засведочи и рече о Христу: "Гле, Јагње Божије које узима на се гријехе свијета" (*Јн 1, 29*) и када он погрузи и крсти Господа у Јордану, тиме се показа и мисија Христова у свету и пут нашега спасења. Наиме: Господ узео на се грехе рода човечјег и под њима умре (погружење) и оживе (излазак из воде); и ми морамо умрети као стари греховни човек и оживети као очишћени, обновљени и препорођени. Ово је Спаситељ, и ово је пут спасења. Празник Богојављења (Теофанија, грчки) просвећује показујући нам Бога као Тројицу једнобитну и неразделну. То је једно. И друго: јер се свако од нас крштењем у води просвећује тиме што постаје усиновљен од Оца Светлости, заслугом Сина и силом Духа Светога.

И јавиће се слава Господња, и свако ће тело видети. Јер уста Господња (тако) говорише (Ис. 40, 5). У давна времена Господ је обећао јавити се у слави великој. Људи чули, па заборавили. Но Господ није заборавио реч Своју. Јер су речи Господње као куле камене, које се не руше. Господ је обећао доћи, но Он није дошао онда кад нам је најмање потребан, него онда кад нам је највише потребан. Док год је Господа могао заменити пророк, или ангел, дотле је Господ слао пророке и ангеле место Себе. Но када је порасло зло у свету тако, да га ни ангел није могао својом светлошћу сагорети, нити пророк својом речју умањити, тада је Господ испунио Своје давнашње обећање и јавио се на земљи. Но како се јавио Господ у слави? У неописаној смирености и послушности. Тако, да су ангели Његови изгледали светлији и пророци Његови већи од Њега. Кад су се на Јордану показали пророк и Господар, пророк је више падао у очи него Господар. Јован Претеча изгледао је чуднији и већи него Христос Господ. Са две тешке завесе заклопио је био Христос Своју славу и величину: са телом човечјим и са смиреношћу. Зато Га људи нису ни приметили нити познали, док су очи свих небеских сила биле упрте у Њега више него у сав створени свет. Обучен у истинско тело и у истинску смиреност Господ Исус дође из Галилеје на Јордан ка Јовану, да се крсти од њега. (Омилије)

У време оно дође Исус из Галилеје на Јордан ка Јовану, да се крсти од њега. А Јован Му се опираше говорећи: ја треба да будем од тебе крштен, а ти ли долазиш к мени? Јован је познао Христа, али није познао Његов план спасења. И сад се открива јединствена сцена у историји људској: да се Бог надмеће у смирењу са човеком! Јован крштава грешнике ради покајања. Међутим, њему прилази безгрешни, који нема за шта да се каје и захтева да се и Он крсти. Јован, јачи духовном силом од свих смртних људи око себе, наједанпут познаје у Христу Јачега од себе. И, пре него што Га је видео, Јован је већ знао, да је Он дошао на земљу и да је међу људима. *Међу вама стоји кога ви не знате* (Јов. 1, 26). Но тек када је стао лицем с Њим, он Га је познао и указао људима прстом на Њега: *гле, јагње Божје!* Чим Га је свети Јован видео, Он је могао мислити, да је његова улога као Претече завршена, и рећи, као негда праведни Симеон: *сад отпусти с миром слугу свога Господе* (Лк. 2, 29), или као што је сам Јован доцније једном приликом рекао: *Он треба да расте а ја да се умањујем* (Јов. 3, 30). Али не; место да се деси то што Јован мисли и очекује, њему Христос задаје један неочекиван задатак. Увршћен међу грешне људе, безгрешни Христос тражи од Јована, да овај учини с Њим што је чинио и с другима, то јест, да Га крсти у реци као што је крштавао и друге. Јованово опирање томе сасвим је разумљиво смртним људима. Ах, страшно је, браћо, увести у воду чистијег од воде! Страшно и престрашно створењу спустити руку своју на главу Створитеља. Како ће се усудити човек од праха и пепела ставити руку на Онога коме су херувими подножје ногама Његовим! (Омилије)

Крштење Господа названо је Богојављењем зато што је у њему тако очигледно јавио себе једини истинити Бог, у Тројици прослављани: Бог Отац - гласом са неба, Бог Син оваплоћени - крштењем, Бог Дух Свети - силаском на Крштаваног. Ту је објављена и тајна односа Лица Прасвете Тројице. Бог Дух Свети од Оца исходи и на Сину почива, премда и не исходи од Њега. Овде је показано да је Оваплоћење, као домострој спасења, извршено оваплоћеним Богом Сином, уз саприсуство Духа

Светог и Бога Оца. Објављено је да је спасење могуће једино у Господу Исусу Христу, благодаћу Светог Духа, по благовољењу Оца. Све хришћанске тајне сијају овде својом божанственом светлошћу и просвећују умове и срца оних који са вером проводе овај велики празник. Приђите, потецимо умом горе и погрузимо се у сагледавање тајни нашег спасења певајући: *"Док си се крштавао у Јордану, Господе, јавило се прослављење Тројице, јавило се спасење наше од Тројице устројено, које нас тројично спасава"*. (Св.Т.Затворник, Мисли за сваки дан у години)

Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by Saint John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine "those who sat in darkness," and "in the region of the shadow of death" (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of Saint Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and Saint Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. Saint John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but "to bury human sin by water," to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify "the nature of water" and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Undivided. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.

You are the Voice of Christ in a Changing World



The base from which we serve as the Voice of Christ in a Changing World is the parish. A strong parish provides opportunities for sharing the Good News of Christ, for welcoming those that are searching for a spiritual home, and a base from which we are sent out into the world. The parish also provides a place for worship, community and education in the faith. To be stewards of the Gospel, we need to be stewards of our parish. This requires the vision and inspiration to see the parish, not as it is, but as it could be. We are called to offer ourselves and our treasure to make our local church all that it can be.

YOU ARE THE VOICE OF CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD



We live in a physical world that places great value on material possessions. Material possessions and wealth may bring power and status. But wealth and possessions can be fleeting. Circumstances change. It is the voice of Jesus Christ and the truth of His Gospel that remain constant. In our spiritual relationship with our Creator, we realize that we are called to be good stewards of His creation. And as stewards of His Gospel, we are called to use our material, worldly possessions to meet the needs of others.

ST. GEORGE KOLO NEWS

In November, the Diocesan KSS Convention was held at New Gracanica. In attendance were Nadine Paukstys, Helen Malinovich, Danielle Serdar and Vicki Dorsey. Vicki will remain on the Diocesan board as 2nd VP, while Danielle will assist with bylaws and Helen on auditing. Nice to see some additional involvement from our Joliet kolo at the Diocese level.

Pitas Available

In November, a group of Kolo sisters made posno cherry and apple pitas as a fundraiser. They are available for sale so please see Helen or Danielle if you would like to buy some for the holidays and beyond. They are frozen and ready to be baked at your convenience.

Badnje Veče

Christmas is right around the corner so this is a reminder to sisters to bring a food item for the Badnje Veče celebration. As always please bring any posno foods you would like to share. This could include items such as desserts, salads, pogacas, jams, nuts, chips, dip, salsa, veggies, bakalar, etc.

The Kolo Christmas Luncheon will be held January 13th at Merichka's Restaurant starting at 12:30. All parishioners are welcome to attend. See additional insert in this issue of the Serb for more info.

The Kolo Annual Meeting will be held on February 3rd after liturgy in the lower level of the church. Members, please attend so we can have a quorum and elect officers for the coming year. To all our sisters, don't forget, consider taking a position on the board!

Lifeline

Last September, thanks to our generous parishioners, we held our most successful Lifeline fundraiser. Already, the funds are being put to great use. Below are letters of appreciation from Lifeline and a representative of the Princess for the first completed project. As the weeks continue, we'll continue to keep you apprised of how your generosity is helping others.

Dear Kolo Sisters,

Lifeline Chicago is proud to report another successful project has been completed thanks to your hard work. Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj Home for children without parental care is an orphanage and shelter for abused children. The building is in the Brace Jerkovic residential area of Belgrade, and was built as an orphanage/shelter in 1988, over 30 yrs ago. Currently there are 49 children residing there and 12 shelter children who stay from 6 months to a year.

The building is in desperate need of major repairs. They have plumbing and drainage issues, in need of new windows, updated heating and air, bathrooms remodeling etc. The staff expressed their primary concern was the staircase used daily by the children and staff. The lead paint was peeling off, there was no lighting making it dangerous at night and loose electrical wires were hanging throughout the stairwell. Lastly the treacherous wire railing was an additional hazard.

The children and staff of JJ Zmaj send their appreciation to the kolo sisters. Thanks to your tireless efforts and generosity they have a new and safe stairwell.

*Kind regards,
Lifeline Chicago
Melanie Sever
Treasurer*

Dear Sisters,

On behalf of HRH Crown Princess Katherine I would like to thank so much for your generosity and readiness to help us with valuable project at Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj orphanage in Belgrade. Thanks to your support we were able to paint the walls, fix the lighting, paint and fix staircase from the ground floor to the second floor.

We sincerely hope we will have your support for our future projects, too, through Lifeline Chicago Humanitarian Organization.

Yours sincerely,

Biljana Dankov

Welcome to our newest Kolo member, Sandy Grundy. So glad to have you a part of our group.

Millie Rowe, we are so thankful to see you back in church following surgery. You were missed!

PEACE OF GOD! CHRIST IS BORN!

MAY EVERYONE HAVE A HEALTHY, BLESSED, AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!



The Saint George Kolo Invites All Parishioners
To Our

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Date: January 13, 2019

Time: 12:30pm

Merichka's Restaurant
604 Theodore St
Crest Hill, IL

\$24.00 per person

Please R.S.V.P. by January 8 to:
Nadine Paukstys 708-707-4963
Danielle Serdar 630-709-7437



GREETINGS FROM S. S. S. MITA TOPALOVICH CHOIR WINTER 2018



THANK YOU

As we reflect on the past year, we thank our Directress Alexandra Starceвич, our Assistant Directress Sophie Anderson, and our Junior Choir Directress, Kathy Petkovich. Thank you for putting up with us during rehearsals, services, and performances. Alex and Kathy, thank you for teaching Mitas and the Junior Choir (respectively) new and exciting music. Last but not least, thanks to all of you for your very hard work and dedication!

ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday, December 5, 2018. We elected officers for the coming year, and we wish them much success! The 2019 officers are:

President: Kathy Petkovich

1st VP: Nancy Cora

2nd VP: Chrissy Verelote

Recording Secretary: Darlene Jovanovich

Corresponding Secretary: Alex Starceвич

Treasurer: Suzanne Condon

Reporter: Michelle Efatoski

Sergeants at arms:

- Mike Cora
- Jack Book, Jr.
- John Dauer

Librarians: All choir members who are students

Sunshine Person: Sophie Anderson



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Memorial Day Weekend 2019 (May 24 - 26, 2019):** The SSS Stevan Sijacki Choir of Milwaukee, Wisconsin will be hosting the SSF Festival! Stay tuned ...
- **Saturday, November 3, 2019:** The SSS Mita Topalovich Choir of Joliet will host a Fall Concert. We are currently in the process of inviting a guest choir. Stay tuned ...

Have we mentioned that you are always welcome to join us?
We'd love to have you sing with us!

Thank you as always for your support.

We wish you a blessed and peaceful Nativity Fast.

MIR BOŽJI—HRISTOS SE RODI! GOD'S PEACE—CHRIST IS BORN!

90TH ANNIVERSARY
DONATIONS

5,000.00

John Dauer Family

1,500.00

Howard/Sandy Grundy

1,000.00

Steve/Delores Malinovich
Ely Grubisich

600.00

Nadine O'Leary/Josh Potts
Alexandra/Sam Starcevich

500.00

Roseanne Angelovich
Susan Kljaich

250.00

Fr. Ned Lunich
Circle of Serbian Sisters
George Enich
Michael/Carol Bilder
Drs. Nadine/Michael Keer
Dr. Janice E/Wm. C.
Taylor, III
Karen Zaloudek

200.00

Sophie Anderson
Michael/Nancy Cora
Helen/Nick Malinovich
Millie O'Leary

100.00

Stevan Iacsin
Steva/Draginja Lukin
Jonathan/Laura Cora
Nicholas Cora
Fr. Nikolaj/Popadija Kostur

Paul/Nancy Laketa
Natalie/Kristopher
McDonough

Milan Milinkovic
Zoran Milutinovic
Fr. Uros Ocokoljich

Annette O'Leary
Joseph Jr./Josephine
Orlovich

Fr. Deacon Milan/Snezana
Popovic

Phil/Millie Rowe
Paul/Gayle Shimek
Reenie/Roger Trizna
Dan/Nada Zubic

75.00

Genevieve Ostoich
Danielle Serdar

50.00

Ryan/Mirjana Dorsey
Eric/Wendy Mancke
Mary Ann/Ernie Pinne
Melissa/Nick Sreckovic
Al/Janice Supica
Vera Vranic/Maria Michels
Bill/Pat Zakavec
David/Bosa Goodale
Michael Ciganovich
Art Schumann

40.00

Fr. Aleks/Gordana Bugarin
Cvita Babich
Vaso Mrkajic

30.00

Sandy Burcenski
Nadine Paukstys
Jandrija Bjelobaba

25.00

Anka Laketa
Katherine Bjekich Gordon
Stevan/Nicole Petkovich

20.00

Pam Zibert
Milovan Kisich

Kindly let Vicki know if
there are any corrections.
Thank you.