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Rt. Reverend Bishop Maxim
Protopresbyter Stavrophor Nikola Ceko, *Editors*

Contributors:
Fr Nicola Ceko, Fr Ilija Balach, Fr Blasko Paraklis, Fr Bratislav Krsic,
Hieromonk Damascene, Fr Steven Tumbas, Fr Norman Kosanovic, Hieromonk Jovan,
Sandra Ceko, Daniel McCay, Fr Luke Hartung, Fr Russel Radoicich

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Address all correspondence to:
Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America
1621 West Garvey Avenue
Alhambra, California 91803
Email: info@westsrbdio.org
Website: <http://www.westsrbdio.org>

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Greetings from His Grace, Bishop Maxim

"RECEIVING ONE ANOTHER AS JESUS CHRIST RECEIVED US TO THE GLORY OF GOD"

(Romans 15, 7)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, our Children in the Lord. By God's loving Providence, again this year we are gathered to celebrate the 13th Diocesan Days of our Western American Diocese. Welcoming you with profound joy and regard, I wholeheartedly offer prayerful wishes and blessings for this God-pleasing assembly of love in the spirit of this year's theme "Receive one another as Jesus Christ received us to the Glory of God" (Romans 15:7). My dearest in Christ, what do these



words mean to us today at a very decisive time in our country and in our lives? As Orthodox Christians, we believe that Christ Himself, the "Eternal Son of God, has become the Center of the all-encompassing heavenly and earthly drama of creation and salvation, and the Protagonist of this drama." How did Christ receive us and what does it mean to receive one another? The usual answer we give to this question is tolerance. But the One "Who has raised man to heaven by His humanity and has lowered heaven to earth by His Divinity" received us within Himself and became one with us. This is the true meaning of "receiving" - I receive him within me and I become one with him—like receiving food, which becomes assimilated into our body, is transformed and becomes one body with us.

We tangibly manifest this truth of receiving one another by celebrating the administrative unity of our Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America. This decision of our Holy Bishops was inspired by brotherly love and this spirit of receiving one another! This gift from God, among many others that we have been blessed to receive, is undoubtedly His Will to provide us with growing faith and the firm knowledge that He wants us to be united in Him. To be in one accord, and of one voice, is to have hearts authentically united in following our Lord and embracing each other in Truth. Therefore, let us not be deceived by life's burdens that can be overwhelming at times, placing our priorities in disorder. We

are all well aware of the current economic crisis that has had a tremendous impact on our daily life. Besides struggling to maintain our lifestyle and to provide for our family needs, we should never separate that effort from our spiritual reality and well being. Anthropologically speaking, man is viewed as *a whole psychosomatic being meant to be in God's likeness, realized in history, here and now, together with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit and of man's freedom and love.* The Eucharist as a *praxis* (act and action) and

as *koinonia* (community and communion) of cosmic dimensions, offers us the revelation of the true essence of our physical and moral life. A truly healthy person is one whose pulse is rhythmical with the Church and its Eucharistic life. As I have said before, ecclesial communion is the only place of true relationship and otherness, the context where our authentic efforts and customs find their meaning.

Grateful with a radiant joy, we continue to see development and growth throughout our Diocese in so many ways. This 2009 Diocesan Annual contains much information about our life events that have taken place during the year, and every household should have it as a testimony of our unified efforts to receive one another to the glory of God! We are blessed by having established two new missionary parishes; witnessing three ordinations to the Holy Priesthood; Seeing the tremendous progress at our Monastery Sretenje (please come to see it!); and the tireless publishing work of St. Herman's Monastery and St. Paisius Monastery with their ongoing construction of the new church. Your support is of enormous importance, and we are most grateful to each and every one of you for the sacrificial love that you are showing in offering a helping hand. May we all be united in our prayers, seeking the guidance and blessings of the Holy Trinity upon everything we do, today at our assembly, and always!

Bp Maxim

Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America

ОДЛУКА
СВЕТОГ
АРХИЈЕРЕЈСКОГ
САБОРА О
АРОНДАЦИЈИ
ЕПАРХИЈАTHE DECISION
OF THE HOLY
ASSEMBLY
OF BISHOPS ON
REDISTRIBUTION
OF DIOCESES

Свети архијерејски сабор, у седници својој од 21. маја 2009. године – под АСбр. 49/зап. 147, донео је ову одлуку:

На основу члана 16. Устава Српске православне цркве, а на утврђени предлог Епископског савета Српске православне цркве у Северној и Јужној Америци и два члана Светог архијерејског сабора (Његовог Преосвештенства Епископа жичког Господина Хризостома и Његовог Преосвештенства Епископа бачког Господина Иринеја), извршити арондацију постојећих епархија Српске православне цркве: Средњезападноамеричке, Источноамеричке, Западноамеричке и Канадске Српске православне цркве у Сједињеним Америчким Државама и Канади; и Епархије за Америку и Канаду Митрополије новограчаничке, са извесним преименовањима њихових назива и премештањем њихових седишта, тако да канонско подручје Српске православне цркве на територији Северне и Јужне Америке сада чини:

Митрополија либертивилско-чикашка, са седиштем у манастиру Светога Саве у Либертивилу (обухвата манастир Светога Саве у Либерти-

in accordance with Article 16 of the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and upon the recommendation of the Episcopal Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America and two additional members of the Holy Assembly of Bishops (His Grace, Bishop Chrysostom of Zhicha and His Grace, Bishop Irinej of Bachka), the of the Holy Assembly of Bishops rendered the decision to restructure the existing dioceses: Midwestern America, Eastern America, Western America and Canada of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada; and the Dioceses for America and Canada of the Metropolitanate of New Gracanica, in ceratin instances renaming them and moving their Diocesan Sees. Therefore, the canonical territory of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America now consists of the following:

The Metropolitanate of Libertyville-Chicago, with its See at St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville (comprised of St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville, Illinois and the Holy Resurrection Cathedral Church with its three parishes), whose Metropolitan shall be president of the Episcopal and Central Church

вилу и Саборну цркву Васкрсења Христовог са три припадајуће јој парохије у Чикагу), чији ће Митрополит бити председник Епископског савета Српске православне цркве у Северној и Јужној Америци, као и Црквенонародног сабора и Централног савета, и *ex officio* представник Српске православне цркве на подручју Северне и Јужне Америке.

Епархија новограчаничко-средњезападноамеричка, са седиштем у манастиру Новој Грачаници (обухвата све парохије које се налазе у Чикагу – сем горе поменуте цркве Васкрсења Христовог – и другим државама Средњег Запада Америке из састава досадашње Епархије средњезападноамеричке Српске православне цркве, као и све црквеношколске општине, парохије и манастире досадашње Епархије за Америку и Канаду Митрополије новограчаничке на подручју досадашње Епархије средњезападноамеричке).

Епархија источноамеричка, са седиштем у Питсбургу/Марсу (обухвата све парохије садашње Епархије источноамеричке Српске православне цркве и парохије, црквено-школске општине и манастире досадашње Епархије за Америку и Канаду Митрополије новограчаничке на подручју садашње Епархије источноамеричке).

Епархија западноамеричка, са седиштем у Лос Анђелесу/Алхамбри (обухвата све парохије садашње Епархије западноамеричке Српске православне цркве и парохије и црквено-школске општине досадашње Епархије за Америку и Канаду Митрополије новограчаничке на подручју садашње Епархије западноамеричке).

Епархија канадска, са седиштем у Торонту/манастиру Милтону (обухвата све парохије садашње Епархије канадске Српске православне цркве и парохије и црквено-школске општине досадашње Епархије за Америку и Канаду Митрополије новограчаничке на подручју Канаде).

Овим се утолико мења и допуњује члан 8. тачка 1) текста Устава Српске православне цркве у Северној и Јужној Америци, чиме престаје важење досадашњих назива „Митрополија средњезападноамеричка“ и „Епархија за Америку и Канаду Митрополије новограчаничке“, и у исто време разграничавају све ове новоарондиране епархије Српске православне цркве у Северној и Јужној Америци.

Исто тако, овим се утолико мења и допуњује члан 15. Устава Српске православне цркве.

Епископски Савет Српске Православне Цркве
у Северној и Јужној Америци

Councils and of the Church-Laity Assembly, and thereby the *ex officio* representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church on that territory.

The Diocese of New Gracanica-Midwestern America, with its See at New Gracanica Monastery (comprised of all the church school congregations, parishes and monasteries in Chicago - with the exception of the aforementioned Holy Resurrection Cathedral – and of the other states of the previous Metropolitanate of Midwestern American, as well as all the church-school congregations, parishes and monasteries of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of the previous Metropolitanate of Midwestern America).

The Diocese of Eastern America, with its See in Pittsburgh/Mars (comprised of all parishes the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the current Eastern American Diocese and the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of Eastern America)

The Diocese of Western America, with its See in Los Angeles/Alhambra (comprised of all the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the current Western American Diocese and the Church-School Congregations, and Parishes of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of Western America).

The Diocese of Canada, with its See in Toronto/Monastery Milton (comprised of all the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the current Canadian Diocese and the Church-School Congregations and Parishes of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of Canada).

With this decision on restructuring, inasmuch as it alters and amends Article 8 of the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, the previous titles “Metropolitanate of Midwestern America” and “Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate” cease to exist, and the new borders for these Dioceses of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America are established.

With this change, Article 15 of the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church is also revised.

The Episcopal Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church
in North and South America

"UNITED, WE CELEBRATE THE ALL-HOLY SPIRIT!"

On the Unity of the Church

Bishop Atanasije Yevtich



Towards the beginning of 1991, when the Holy Synod (Patriarch German was already bedridden, as Patriarch Pavle is today) decided by the grace of God, with Serbian seriousness and pastoral responsibility, that our unfortunate church schism in America should be resolved and surpassed, we wrote that the Diaspora has for a long time been the most complex problem of the entirety of Orthodoxy, and for that reason it has been included on the agenda of the future Great Council of the Orthodox Church. We also said at that time that the experience of Diaspora in the Church, either with the Jews in the Old Testament or with the Christians in the New, that is to say the Church, is not something evil in itself. It is an unavoidable and at the same time a providential challenge for God's Israel, both the old and the new, that is, for the Jewish people and the Church of Christ. The Diaspora reminds all of us, as the community of the people of God in history moving on the path towards the Heavenly Kingdom, of the traveling and crucified status of the Church in this world and age: "we are in the world but we are not of this world"; we are in the House of God, but the Dispensation – the building up of the House of God which is the Church – is still in progress and continuing. God's Kingdom is already present in the Church, but as Christians we are also simultaneously still on the path towards the Kingdom, the Heavenly Homeland of us all.

The Diaspora poses to the Orthodox Church two important questions: the question of verification of our correct ecclesiological understanding, our living experience of the Church, and the question of the mission of the Church in the world. In recent times the Diaspora has reminded us, and in its own

way has compelled us, to not forget the important mission of Orthodoxy in the modern world, which is possible only by coming out of our narrow nationalistic frameworks in which we are threatened by the dan-

ger of isolation. The Diaspora in the West was and still remains a missionary territory of Orthodoxy. Especially, North and South America still remain missionary territories.

The Diaspora presents a vital problem of Orthodox Ecclesiology to all the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches – one which we have apparently, under the influence of recent world and national political history, begun to forget about. Namely, that the fundamental organizational principle of the ancient Church of the East – the Church was born in the East and the Gospels were spread through out the world from the East, as St. Basil the Great and the Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council remind us – was always geographical; not by nationality or state, but regional, local, that is, concretely lived. When, in the last few centuries, we hear the word "Local Church", we usually understand this as "national Church" (or even as certain Catholic theologians will maliciously say: "state Church"). In the ancient Church, however, the Local Church meant the Church of the respective place – of the city, territory, or land, regardless of the nationality, race or color of the faithful who live there. This understanding had two important consequences. Firstly, from this derived one of the foundational and unchangeable canons of the ancient Church, formulated at the First Ecumenical Council in Canon 8: "Two Bishops cannot be in one city", but only one (see the 35th Apostolic Canon and the 16th Canon of the First-second council). That one bishop in one city (usually including its vi-

cinity) was bishop of all the faithful of that city and area, with no regard to ethnic or other make-up...

In the centuries-old history of the Orthodox Church and of the Orthodox Churches, dioceses never overlapped, nor were they coexisting on the same geographical territory. The establishment of two or more Diocesan Churches in the same city or same area would be ecclesiological nonsense, for that would be a denial of the fact that the Church of God is One and undivided. There were exceptions in rare instances, for example in the seventh century when the Archbishop of Cyprus, because of an invasion by barbarians, fled together with his clergy and people to the region of Asia Minor, to Kizik (near the Dardanelles), and they organized themselves as a separate Church on the territory of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, but this was permitted only until the liberation of Cyprus, which occurred soon afterwards. Or another instance, modeled after the former, when the Serbian Church allowed Russian refugees to organize themselves with their clergy and people on the territory of the Serbian Patriarchate (with headquarters in Sremski Karlovci).

In our proposal of 1991 aimed at overcoming the schism in America, written and adopted at that time with the blessings of the Holy Synod, it was suggested and was accepted by the Assembly that liturgical fellowship, canonical-eucharistic concelebration and communion be reestablished in the Diaspora, but that the overlapping of parishes and Dioceses should remain only temporarily, that is, that administrative unity would not be reestablished immediately. From this we could not have and should not have concluded that this state of affairs, which was allowed to continue in our Diaspora only through extreme pastoral economia, should be made permanent and considered normal. On the contrary, that status should have been resolved long ago, and full canonical and administrative unity should have been established through a restructuring of the Dioceses, that is, that parishes in one particular region, in one episcopal unit – Diocese, be under one Bishop who is in liturgical and canonical unity with the other Orthodox Bishops (in this case of our Autocephalous Serbian Church, until a restructuring and a grace-filled liturgical and canonical-administrative unity on a pan-Orthodox level is established geographically, and not according to the “nationality principle”).

Thanks be to God, and due to the continuing efforts

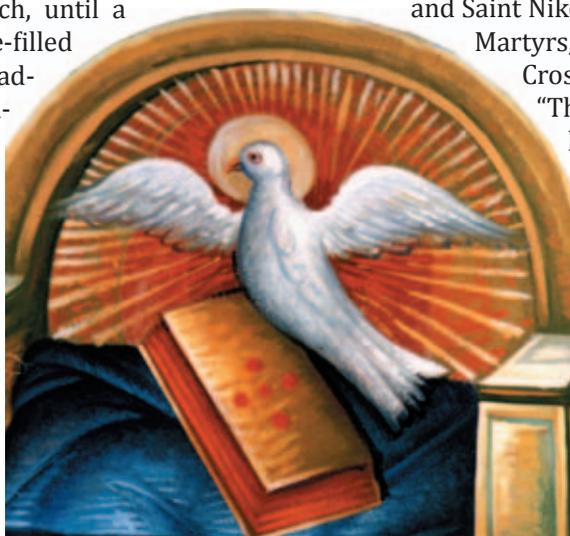
of our Holy Patriarch and Assembly, just this May at the Holy Assembly of Bishops of our Church, on the feast day of St. John the Evangelist and Theologian, 21/8 May, this liturgical-canonical and administrative unity was finally realized, and we should thank with all our hearts, souls and minds our Chief Shepherd Christ the Savior and the Inspirer the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, that this was accepted by all of our Bishops, both those in America and all the rest of the members of the Holy Assembly of Bishops.

There never was, and especially now, there is no serious ecclesiastical, Orthodox, nor Serbian reason that the previous temporary state of disunion – of not being under one Bishop in one region – should last any longer. Anyone who would bring into question the ecclesiological, the church-strengthening value of this decision by this year’s Assembly, would only demonstrate their petty, narrow-minded, personal or group fearfulness and self-centeredness, their un-Christian and anti-church intolerance and, in the final analysis, their church-destroying hatred for their brothers. The soul-destroying schism, as the Holy Abba Justin with tears and prayerful lamentations used to call it, the schism which brought poison and drowning to the souls of our brothers of the same faith and blood, is over and done with, and no trace of it can be allowed to remain.

In this year’s unified and unanimous decision of the entire Assembly of Bishops there is no “victory” or “defeat”, there are no “victors” or “vanquished”, for it demonstrates a church-building consciousness, an Orthodox conscience and a brotherly and salvific love in Christ our Savior towards all.

Our brethren Serbs in America, truly ecclesiastically and Orthodox, by this church-building unity and love, by the act and deed of their full unity in Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father and for our salvation, are also giving an example to the other Orthodox Christians. For, as St. Bishop Nikolai said in America itself back in the 50’s, a day is coming when the full unity and missionary activity of Orthodoxy in the New World will be made manifest to us all. And this truly ecclesial and missionary activity has appeared through this event in America and in the Church of Saint Sava and Saint Nikolai, in the Church of the New Martyrs, Hierarchs and faithful of our Cross-bearing people.

“This is the day of Resurrection, let us be illumined by the feast; Let us embrace each other. Let us call ‘Brothers!’ even those who until now have hated us! Let us forgive all by the Resurrection!”





And also our brethren the Russians recently created this unity (except for a small number of individuals, or little groups poisoned with hate), and we Serbs helped them in attaining this, for we became for them a model of reconciliation and unity. God grant that we may be a model to the other Orthodox manifesting the conciliar-catholic nature of the Orthodox Church of God, which by its full liturgical-canonical unity reveals its Liturgical and Missionary essence in the unity of the faith and in the communion of the Holy Spirit, as we confess at the Divine Liturgy before the Communion of all in the Heavenly Bread and the Cup of Life Eternal.

According to the God-inspired Psalmist: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity!" It is then that we all may with one mouth and one heart glorify and hymn the all-honorable Name of the Holy Trinity, the Eternal Assembly – the Archetype of the Unity of the Church. And it is then that we all may commune from the One Bread and One Cup, and thus visibly confess and announce that we are living members of the One Body of Christ the God-man and Savior of us all and of the entire world (1 Cor. 10: 16-17).

By the way, we would add that at this Holy Assembly the oneness of spirit and of mind of the Fathers of our Church was revealed in that there was no

more unnecessary mention of the inappropriate questions of the so-called "old" and "new" ways of serving, for at the meeting it was said that we all serve the one and same Divine Service, even though there might be variations in certain details, as there always have been and there are in the living and life-creating Church of Christ from the East throughout the ages, just as there is one Gospel of Christ even though there are four Evangelists, and in them, just as in the Orthodox Liturgies – and there are four of them as well – there appears a polyphonic symphony and a symphonic polyphony of the Holy Pentecostal, fiery spirit-filled Grace of the Spirit, the Comforter of the Church, Who "calls all to unity."

The unity of the Church, in a grace-filled unity of concelebration and communion in the Divine Eucharist, and a canonical unity of administration, where "all things are done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40), from Pentecost to today, and from Jerusalem to America, was always a gift and event of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit – in the Church of the Apostles and Fathers, of the Martyrs and faithful successors of the Lamb of God, Whose Church is the Body of the God-Man, Community in One Spirit, the House of the Living God, the Pillar and Foundation of Truth, of salvation, of Resurrection, of Life eternal.

Holy Pentecost, 2009

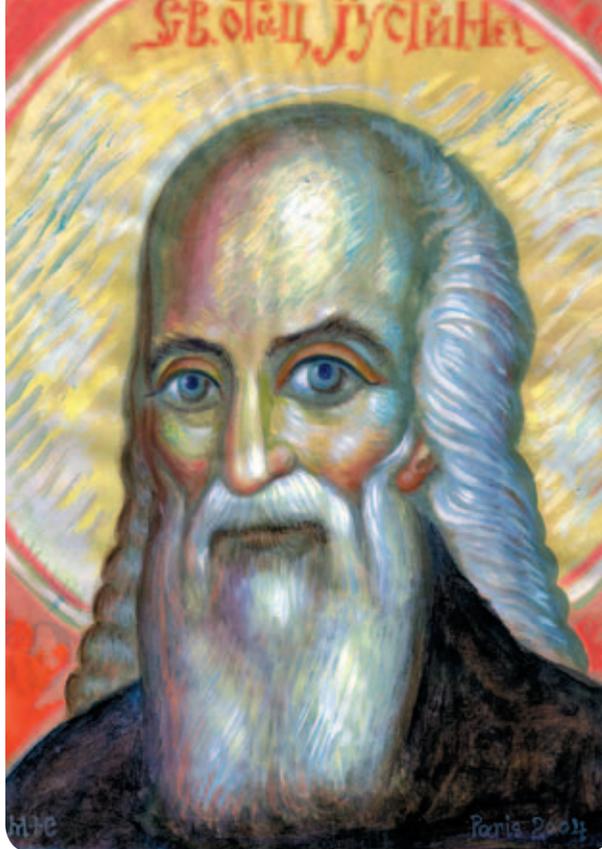
THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPOSE OF ARCHIMANDRITE JUSTIN POPOVIC

March 25/April 7, 2009, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos, marked thirty-five years since the repose of Archimandrite Justin (Popovich) of Chelije, Serbia. On that day, over two thousand believers gathered at Chelije Monastery, where Abba Justin had served as spiritual father and where his relics are interred, in order to honor and glorify his holy memory.

Although his name has not yet been formally entered into the list of saints, Fr. Justin has for many years been venerated as a saint in his native Serbia and throughout the world. Many icons of him have been painted in anticipation of his glorification by the Church; and for Orthodox Christians, especially in his homeland, it has long seemed right and natural to refer to him as “St. Justin Popovich.”

Together with his mentor St. Nikolai (Velimirovich) of Zhicha (glorified by the Serbian Orthodox Church in 2003), Fr. Justin was the most outstanding figure of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the twentieth century. Like St. Nikolai, Fr. Justin was an eloquent preacher, a zealous disseminator of the Orthodox Faith, and a profound spiritual writer known for his faithfulness to the teaching of the Holy Fathers.

For Fr. Justin, as for all true theologians of the Church, theology was never divorced from life. He



immersed himself in the services of the Church, centered his existence on prayer, and practiced the ascetic life of a true monk; and it was out of such a way of life that his grace-filled words of teaching poured forth. Because he lived the life of the ancient Fathers of the Church, and because he humbled his mind before theirs, looking to them as would a devoted and obedient son, Fr. Justin acquired the mind of the Fathers and, ultimately, was vouchsafed to be ranked among them. It is significant that he began his 1,850-page magnum opus, *The Dogmatics of the Orthodox Church*, with the words of his beloved St. John Damascene, “I shall say nothing of my own.” Being careful not to exalt his own opinions above the consensus of the Fathers, Fr. Justin has provided Orthodox Christians of today with a pure wellspring of Patristic teaching.

Fr. Justin is remembered as a bold and fearless defender of the Truth of the Orthodox Faith. He be-





lieved that Orthodox Christianity, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, Ecumenical Councils, Patristic writings, Lives of Saints, and the liturgical life of the Church, has the answers to all the social, political, and moral problems, all the philosophical and ideological perplexities, and all the existential dilemmas of the modern world.

The constant theme of Fr. Justin's preaching and writing was that God became man in Jesus Christ. For Fr. Justin, all of creation and all of history were centered in this one ineffable Reality—the Reality of the God-man—a miracle greater than God's fashioning of the entire universe. Having offered his entire being to Christ and abiding in Him, Fr. Justin lived in the Light of the God-man. It was this experience, this inviolable conviction in his soul that the God-man lives and leads His followers into personal, everlasting union with Himself, that enabled Fr. Justin to speak words of power and of life, words that could impart faith to hearts languishing in fear and doubt. This experience further enabled him to pass on the teaching of the Scriptures and the Fathers not only in a faithful and honest manner, but also in

new and highly creative ways. Often he coined new theological terms and expressions in order to help convey the mysteries of our Faith, all the time realizing that these mysteries are ultimately beyond words. Just as each human person is created unique by God, so also the Holy Fathers—including contemporary ones like Fr. Justin—express the same unchanging Truth in ways that are unique to each of them.

The holiness of Fr. Justin's life, rooted as it was in the experience of Christ, was revealed by God through miracles during his earthly sojourn, and it continues to shine forth after his repose. The miracles that continue to occur through his heavenly intercessions make his oft-repeated designation, "St. Justin Popovich," seem all the more fitting. It is his effectual prayer from heaven as much as the memory of his righteous and holy life that continues to draw thousands of people to Chelije Monastery, and that inspires Orthodox Christians throughout the world to call out from their hearts, "Holy Father Justin, pray to God for us!"

Hieromonk Damascene





THE CHURCH COMMUNITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 2009 OF THE WESTERN AMERICAN DIOCESE

Our annual assembly of the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church was held at the St. Petka parish in San Marcos, California, who's fine food and hospitality made the work of our assembly possible. Presiding in all parts of the event was His Grace Bishop MAXIM who paternally encouraged all to continue in growth in the love of God, expressed one to another

and to all, developing our faith and virtue and witnessing through good works and deeds.

Fr. Paul Tarazi Th.d was the keynote speaker for the event. Fr. Tarazi teaches biblical Hebrew and is a scriptural professor at St Vladimirs Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York, and at Holy Cross Seminary in Brookline, Massachusetts, and at St John of Damascus institute in Balamand, Lebanon. The gathering began on Thursday Feb. 12th with meetings for the clergy and the Circle of Serbian Sisters. Fr. Tarazi, gave an inspirational address to the clergy on the topic of "Priest as Pastor." Lively discussion followed, and the day was concluded with Vespers and an evening meal together.

On Friday, February 13, the official assembly began with the Invocation of the Holy Spirit. The meeting followed with reports from all the parishes, committees, and offices of the diocese with an accounting of last years expenditures and the adopting of a new budget. Fr. Tarazi again addressed the group on the topic of "The Church Community in the New Testament". His speech helped us to better reflect the proto-Christian pattern in the current day and age. And to mirror this citizenship in The Kingdom



in our administrative, educational, financial, and philanthropic work in all our parishes throughout the diocese.

A special treat for the annual assembly was the St Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival Essay Presentations. Youth from our Diocese gave enlivened speeches to the assembly on faith based topics. The presenters were; Alexander Berger, Elizabetha Kasic, and Jelena Tasic. The high level of clear theological articulation of our Orthodox Christian faith was

a witness in itself to the life of The Church in our diocese. Job well done to all.

Saturday's beautiful liturgy was filled with the grace of the ordination to the Holy Priesthood of Hierodeacon Hilarion from St Herman of Alaska Monastery. A trip to visit the new Monastery Sretenje was followed by a feast as we finished the work of our Diocesan Annual Assembly for 2009. The Assembly will be held in Las Vegas in 2010.





“THE CHURCH COMMUNITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT”

FR. PAUL TARAZI SPEAKS
AT THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

This Grace Bishop Maxim convened the 2009 Diocesan Annual Assembly of the Western American Diocese at St. Petka Church in San

Marcos on Thursday, February 12, with the clergy seminar and meeting. The annual assembly was in session until Saturday, February 14. The keynote speaker for this gathering of God’s Church in the Western States was Fr. Paul Tarazi, Th.D. He is a professor of Old Testament at St Vladimir’s Seminary, where he teaches courses in the full range of scriptural studies in Old and New Testament and Biblical Hebrew. He also teaches at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, and at St. John of Damascus Institute in Balamand, Lebanon.

Fr. Paul gave two lectures on the topic of “The Church Community in the New Testament;” his presentations were rooted in the Scriptures. He pointed out that the Greek word for “Church,” *ekklesia*, is a translation of the Hebrew word *qaha*. This is in turn related to *qara*, which means “to call” in Hebrew. Thus, the Church of Christ consists in those



who are called. We cannot say that we are called ones without saying that there is One Who calls us. Every day we as members of the Church must act as those who have been called by God. This means living a life of obedience, in submission to the spiritual directives of the Church and those called to "lead"

Her members, i.e. shepherds. The application of the shepherd image to God in the Old Testament is embedded in the living piety of Israel; the piety that depicts God as the Shepherd Who goes before his flock: "O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness" (Psalm 68:7). Fr. Paul made a reference here to the agricultural image of the shepherd who walks in front of his flock and speaks to his sheep in a law voice and they recognize it and follow him. In the Old Testament we also see that when

the shepherds become unfaithful, God visits them, and takes over the office of shepherd; He gathers His scattered flock community and feeds them.

In the New Testament our Lord Jesus Christ used the term or image of shepherd (*poimen* in Greek) quite frequently. *Poimen* - shepherd is synonymous with *episkopos*, i.e. bishop or overseer. This title is given to Christ, the only True Shepherd: "For you were like sheep going astray, but have not returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls." (1 Peter 2:25) Christ as the true shepherd feeds His sheep by His teachings, but He will also separate the sheep from the goats at the last judgment (cf. Matthew 25:31-46). This image of *poimen*, shepherd, is not solely applied to Christ, but equally to bishops and presbyters. The image of *flock* for the faithful is also very powerful in that it conveys the truth that each member is not isolated, living for himself, but rather a part of community, i.e. Eucharistic community gathered around Christ the True Shepherd.

Each parish community, liturgical by its nature, is called to answer to our innermost needs, i.e. to make our relationship with one another a collective one. God created us to live in communion with one another and with Him. This of course does not lessen the moral responsibility of the individual, but on the contrary, it introduces them into the Divine plan

of salvation via community, i.e. the Church community in the New Testament.

Fr. Paul pointed out that each community by its own nature is *open* to outsiders whom Christ may be calling to join His flock. We are not the community of God unless we are open to receiving those with-



out. Thus, our faith is not a personal affair; rather it has a corporate dimension, i.e. a communal aspect and interdependence.

With his presentation, Fr. Paul raised awareness about the Church community in the New Testament. The foremost functions of each community are to be one around the Lord; to build up the Body of Christ with great responsibility on the local community level. This responsibility of each community member rests in the Biblical words, "Be Ye Holy as I Am Holy" – said the Lord.



2009 ST. NIKOLAI OF ZICHA ORATORICAL FESTIVAL



St. Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival is a triennial oratorical competition in which the youth of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, ages 14-18, are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the Orthodox faith, writing and oratorical skills in the English language. The first festival competition takes place on the diocesan level. Here each participant submits an essay on the particular theme selected by the Youth Ministry of the Serbian Orthodox Church in South and North America. The panel of judges selects the three best-written essays and these three winners are then invited to the Diocesan Annual Assembly where they, in the presence of all delegates, deliver their oration. Ultimately, the winner of this competition goes on to represent the diocese at the National Oratorical Festival that takes place during the triennial Sabor.

The theme for the 2009 St. Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival was: *"LIFE and SALVATION: Why Being Orthodox in Today's World is Crucial!"* Of the dozen or more submitted essays, the judges selected the following three which were written by the following youth: Alexander Berger from St. Andrew the Fool for Christ parish, Redding, CA; Jelena Tasic from St. Steven's Cathedral, Alhambra, CA; and Elizabetha Kasic from St. George parish, San Diego, CA. These three young and enthusiastic students delivered their orations on Friday evening, February 13, at St. Petka, the hosting parish of 2009 Diocesan Annual Assembly. Each contestant spoke eloquently by bringing his or her knowledge of the faith before the audience. They also showed a deep insight into today's spiritually impoverished world pointing out that our only salvation is Jesus Christ.

Jelena Tasic who took the third place wrote: *"In today's world there are many trials and tribulations that we face. Society has challenged the faith of the people in the world because there are many tempta-*

tions from the adverse powers of the devil that must be constantly fought copiously and constantly. God's interminable love for us provides us with assistance through these trying obstacles."

The opening words of Elizabetha Kasic, the second place contestant, were: *"For us fellow Christians, there is no more important question to reflect on than the question of salvation. For me as an Orthodox Christian teen, this question is answered through the love and support of the Orthodox Church which I attend. This answer is nothing new. My Orthodox Church has been proclaiming it for over two millennia. Salvation is the union with the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – One God in Trinity."*

Alexander Berger took first place in the competition and will represent the Western American Diocese at the National competition scheduled to take place during the triennial Sabor in Canton, OH. Alexander's oratorical skills captured the audience as he delivered his well thought-out essay. He stated... *"The image of God in us is more than a mere imitation of Christ, in the western sense of the phrase, but rather a true union with the life of God in love. This process of becoming like God is known as Theosis and is at the center of everything we do and believe as orthodox Christians. God became incarnate so that we might regain our original likeness to God. As it says in the troparion of the forefeast of the Nativity, "Christ is born to raise up the image that of old had fallen..."* With the blessing of His Grace Bishop Maxim, the Department of Christian Education awarded each contestant with a scholarship. The delegates of the annual assembly and guests were delighted to have met and heard these three youth representatives of our diocese.

May our Lord, through the prayers of St. Nikolai of Zicha bless our young people and grant us wisdom and guidance in continued ministry to them.

Carried by the wings of Divine love and songs of praise across the ocean

STUDENT CHOIR OF THE FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE



SAN FRANCISCO • LOS ANGELES • CHICAGO • BOSTON • NEW YORK

Carried by the wings of Divine love and songs of praise across the ocean, the students' choir from the Faculty (School) of Orthodox Theology of the University of Belgrade led by their professor of Liturgics, Dr. Nenad Milosevic, arrived on August 26th of this year in Los Angeles, California.

Their nearly month-long visit was filled with concert performances, visits to new places, common prayer, Eucharistic gatherings, spiritual renewal, and meeting clergy and faithful people throughout North America. At the heartfelt invitation of His Grace Bishop Maxim of the Western American Diocese, his guests began their journey that turned out to be one of the most memorable events of their student seminarian days. The members of the Choir are students chosen because of their love for divine services and the beauty of their musical expression at the cantor's stand of the School's St. John the Theologian Chapel. The Dean of the School formed the choir in the beginning of 2007. The Choir's obligation is to render responses during worship services in the Church. It fosters the chanting of folk Serbian Church hymns, singing of multipart Rus-

sian melodies, and the tradition of Byzantine church music by following the typicon of Holy Mount Athos. Along with daily participation in worship services in the School's chapel, the choir has participated by invitation in the celebration of great feasts in some dioceses of the Serbian Orthodox Church by responding during Divine Liturgies and all-night vigils. Their first appearance was at a scholarly presentation honoring St. Sava at the Faculty in 2007. The Choir consists of about twenty students. These young theologians desire to transfer their musical interest into our church and national heritage, which from ancient times did not use musical notation to pass on its traditions. Serbian medieval music (which shares many similarities with Byzantine structures) achieved its greatest height in the milieu of Mount Athos at Hilandar Monastery. This aspect of the choir's repertoire is supplemented by newer compositions of Serbian, Russian, Bulgarian, and American musicians. Similar to the steward from the Gospel who from his treasure takes out old and new, so these students showed to their audiences in California, Nevada, Arizona, Illinois, New York and Pennsylvania that it is possible for ancient



and modern to exist in harmony. They also showed that an Orthodox choir cannot neglect its past. The rhythm and dynamics with which these young men sang portray the potential of Orthodoxy's authentic inheritance. A new era has brought a great number of compositions from various singing traditions. This is a logical consequence of the dynamic world in which we live, where new sounds represent the pulse of various times and places (e.g. Russia, Bulgaria, etc.). Having all this in mind, choir members presented to their audience a repertoire based on compositions of foreign and domestic authors. Besides an interesting spiritual effect, these performances abound in original musical-rhythmic solutions as well as unexpected dynamics and tone colors. The choir shares the goal of all authentic artistic creators in Orthodoxy: to bring a fresh interpretation to compositions from all epochs and places. The bishop arrived with his honored guests on the eve of August 26th at St. Steven's cathedral where the local clergy and laity welcomed them and served doxology. In the first few days of their stay, while they traveled to Sacramento, the guests had an opportunity to explore the sun filled scenery and beauty of the New continent. On August 28th they responded to the Hierarchical Liturgy at the Assumption (Dormition) of the Most Holy Mother of

God Church. This vibrant parish received many blessings this day: the opportunity to gather for the Eucharist around two hierarchs, to celebrate their church feast day, to witness and participate in the ordination to the priesthood of Protodeacon William Weir, to present an evening concert, and meet many local Orthodox clergy. The concert at the Assumption of the Most Holy Theotokos parish followed the Paraklisis to the Most Holy Mother of God and the cutting of the Slava kolach. The performance was a repertoire of folk Serbian Church hymns, multi-part Russian melodies, and traditional Byzantine church music.

On Friday morning and afternoon the students visited St. Herman of Alaska monastery in Platina, California. In the evening the guests arrived in Jackson, California, where the annual Diocesan Days celebration was already in full swing. This annual event of the Western American Diocese traditionally takes place on Labor Day weekend, and always in Jackson, the home of St. Sava church, the oldest Serbian Orthodox Church in North America build in 1894. St. Sava church is now home to the earthly remains of Fr. Sebastian Dabovich, the first American born Orthodox priest. The weekend gathering was marked by the common goal, the goal set forth as the theme of the Diocesan Days: Growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). The students' choir sang responses to all the services and gave two spiritually uplifting concerts, one on Saturday evening and a shorter selection on Sunday during the banquet. Professor Nenad Milosevic gave a lecture on Friday on the theme: "The Manner of Accomplishing the Holy Mysteries", generating a deep reflection and dialogue by all present. His Grace Bishop Joanikije gave a lecture during the parent-teacher conference. His message was to continually and affirmatively be open to the grace of



our Lord. He also on several occasions reiterated the message of His Holiness Patriarch Pavle, whom he saw before his arrival to America, that we should continue loving God and His Church, to love and live our Orthodox Faith, and to live in unity supporting each other. His Grace Bishop Maxim gave a homily on Sunday on the Gospel of St. Matthew 18:23-33, urging the faithful to heed the Gospel of the day, to live as members of Christ's Body, His Holy Church, encouraging us to forgive each other seventy times seven.

On Sunday evening, August 31, His Grace Maxim and His Grace Joanikije, professor Nenad and the students choir left Jackson for San Francisco. There, at the Russian Cathedral of Joy of All Who Sorrow, in the presence of four hierarchs, Bishop Kiril, Bishop Benjamin, Bishop Maxim and Bishop Joanikije and their Royal Highnesses, Prince Alexander and Princess Katherine Karadjordjevic, they sang a rich selection of Russian, Serbian and Byzantine hymns. The choir continued from San Francisco to Las Vegas, Nevada, then to Phoenix Arizona, to St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox monastery, St. Paisius Serbian Orthodox Monastery, San Diego and Escondido, California. On Saturday, September 6th, the hierarchs and students' choir celebrated Divine Liturgy at the newly established monastery of the Meeting of our Lord in Escondido. The Liturgy was celebrated outside, since the newly built chapel could not accommodate all present. The choir sang responses during the Liturgy, creating an atmosphere of fellowship with God. Following the Liturgy the hierarchs, clergy, choir and faithful proceeded toward the dining area singing troparia and hymns as is the custom in monasteries. The reading from the lives of saints permeated God's creation leading to magnificent praise. A small selection of hymns and folk songs was performed by the choir and diocesan deacon Nenad Radakovic. Later that day, the choir gave another concert at St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church.

On Sunday, September 7th, the choir gave two concerts, one at St. Steven's Cathedral in afternoon hours and the other later that evening at St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral.

Three days later the choir arrived in Chicago. Here too they had a very busy schedule. They visited St. Sava School of Theology in Libertyville and the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Chicago, Illinois. Over two hundred Orthodox faithful were seated in Holy Resurrection Cathedral what proved to be a very memorable event. The local parishioners were blessed with the presence of Metropolitan Christopher, Bishop Joanikije from Serbia, Bishop Longin and Bishop Maxim. Several of their guests were

clergy representing many of the Orthodox jurisdictions in the Chicago area.

The following day they participated in the Liturgy at St. Sava Cathedral in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on the Feast Day of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist and gave a concert that evening.

Without a break, the next stop for the choir was St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, New York. There they sang the responses to a Hierarchical Liturgy celebrated by His Grace Bishop Maxim. Following the Liturgy, the seminary's dean, Fr. John Breck, welcomed his guests, after which they gave a concert. The Seminary is located in the Crestwood neighborhood of Yonkers, New York, in suburban Westchester County, close to nature but only thirty minutes by car or train from the rich cultural and educational resources of New York City. The eleven-acre seminary campus is crowned by the beautiful chapel, dedicated in 1983. The next stop was St. Sava Cathedral in New York City. From New York the choir continued on its way to St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. The last day of their tour in America was at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary in Brookline, near Boston, where they gave yet another spiritually uplifting concert on Tuesday, September 16.

Later that evening a second concert was performed at St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The choir returned to Serbia enriched spiritually by sharing in the Orthodox Christian faith they found in America, having deposited their contribution into the treasury of its musical development and growth. As with everything in the Church of Christ we labor and pray for a fruitful season, so it is with this tour of our young theologians. We prayerfully await the fruit to start growing, with our prayers and reflection continually watering the soil upon which the musical seeds have been sown.



CHALCEDON'S CHRISTOLOGY: THEOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Who do people say I AM?

True God and True Man: Chalcedon's Christology in a Postmodern World

A lecture delivered by His Grace Bishop Maxim on March 19, 2009 at Loyola Marymount University on the topic "Who do people say I am? True God and True Man: Chalcedon's Christology in a Postmodern World." Bishop Maxim was the featured speaker along with Archbishop Hovnan of the Armenian Church, Western Diocese. The symposium was sponsored by the Huffington Ecumenical Institute.



Preface

Chalcedonian Christology is a quintessential ingredient of the continuing liturgical-dogmatic-ethical life of the Church. Ever since then, the Church has constantly re-received and transmitted this Christological truth—"one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ". In fact one can go even further and make the point that the Chalcedonian definition of Christ entailed not only a vertical perspective (consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead), but also a horizontal perspective of the people of Israel to which Jesus belonged as Man (consubstantial with us according to Manhood). Without any doubt, Chalcedon brought about a helpful integration of 'theology' and 'economy', of transcendence and immanence. Being God, and belonging to

a certain historical era and generation, Christ accepted what was the de facto human context as his own context. Thus Christology inevitably implies Ecclesiology and even Sociology.

For these reasons I propose to deal with my subject in the following way: First, I will try to point out Chalcedon's major theological issues in the historical life of the Church. Second, we will look at the present day situation and see what opportunities these issues provide for the Churches and society. Finally, we will also try to identify ways in which the Chalcedonian Christology can operate today with its theological, historical and cultural dimensions. Without going into the subtle, nuanced formulations of Chalcedon's Definition—for this is the most beautiful dogmatic/doctrinal text of all Ecumenical Councils—we will attempt to present the significance of Chalcedon in a way that is accessible to a wider audience.

I A Quick Look at History

It is not possible for this presentation to offer a detailed historical analysis of the Concilium universale Chalcedonense (=Fourth Ecumenical Council),

which, given its importance, deserves a separate monograph. That Council, held in the city of Chalcedon, near Constantinople, in 451, is one of the seven ecumenical councils accepted by the Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, and many Protestant Christian churches. However, it is the first Council not recognized by any of the Oriental Orthodox churches, in spite of the fact that it was designed to heal the growing Christological division. The Chalcedonian creed was written amid controversy between the western, eastern and oriental churches over the meaning of the Incarnation. We must, however, know a few historical facts.

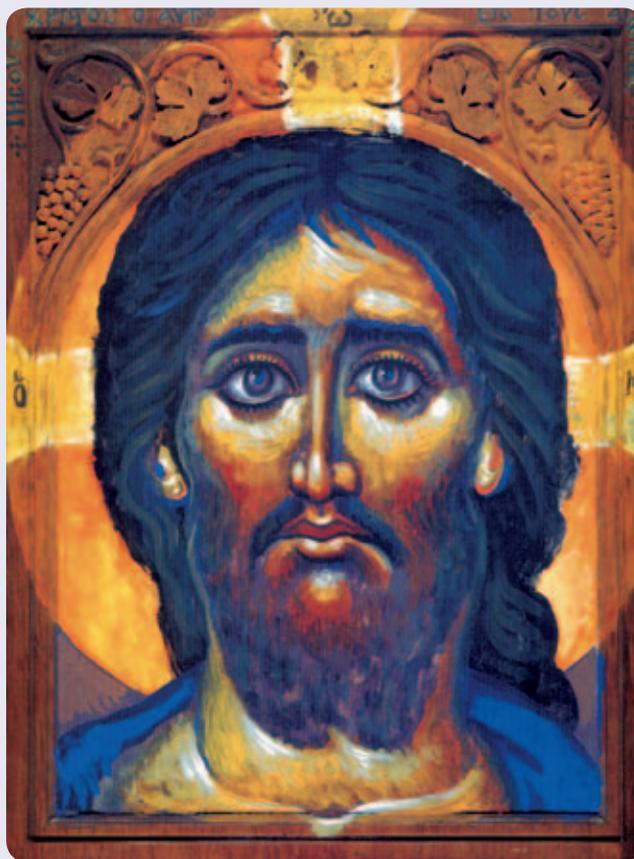
1. The Council of Chalcedon was a courageous and quick response to the “Robber Synod” of 449, and was aimed at overturning its decisions. That gathering, dubbed the “Robber Synod” by Pope Leo of Rome, had articulated an extreme Alexandrian Christology. The bishops at Chalcedon disclaimed the council of 449 and deposed Patriarch Dioscorus of Alexandria for his role in that gathering.

2. It is commonly held that the Council of Chalcedon was more or less a ‘Cyrillian’ Council; it followed his theology and thus continues the Third Ecumenical Council.

The Chalcedonian Definition includes the main expressions from the Formula of concordance in 433. It also uses Flavian’s homologia, and the Tomos of Pope Leo. So it is a synthesis of Alexandrine, Antiochian and western Christological elements in the Definition, but this synthesis was produced completely within the framework of Cyril’s Christology.

3. However, we must not forget that Chalcedon’s principal aim was to condemn monophysitism and to exclude the possibility of an asymmetrical monophysite interpretation of Cyrillian Christology.

The Fathers of the Council could have chosen either the formula ‘out of two natures’ (ἐκ δύο φύσεων) or the formula ‘in two natures’ (ἐν δύο φύσεσιν), and



they chose the latter. The reason for this was that the Cyrillian formula ἐκ δύο φύσεων did not clearly indicate the existence of a full humanity after the union.

In addition, Dioscorus had used this formula at the Council of 449, which had rehabilitated the monophysite Eutyches. Thus, when the Fathers of Chalcedon had to choose between ‘Dioscorus, who denied the two natures in Christ, [and] Leo, who argued that there are two natures’, they unanimously chose the latter, and this led them to adopt the expression ἐν δύο φύσεσιν.

4. But the latter developments have also made the entire matter even more complicated for the following reason:

The distinction between φύσις and ὑπόστασις, affirmed at the Council, was too new and revolutionary in the theology of incarnation to not provoke different interpretations and misunderstandings. The Council’s definition thus gave rise to a couple of persistent questions, which have bedeviled theologians up to the present day. One of the problems lied in the fact that Eastern Mesopotamia did not possess Greek conceptual tools. They could not understand what the Council’s distinction was between nature and person/hypostasis.

Those who rejected Chalcedon—namely, the anti-Chalcedonian ‘monophysites’—thought that the Christologies of Cyril and Chalcedon were incompatible. According to them, there was no distinction between nature and person/hypostasis, at least on the level of economy, hence their dismay at the Council, which had ostensibly restored the heresy of Nestorius by attributing two natures to Christ.

We cannot now investigate their reasons for opposing the Council in details. We know that when the Definition was to be signed, unfortunately the bishops from Alexandria—although they accepted the faith—did not put their signatures. They simply stated “we don’t have our patriarch”. He should sign it

first and then us. When we come back to Alexandria we will elect one and let him sign it first. There were those who were disingenuously hiding behind this in order to avoid signing the definitions of Chalcedon. When they got back to Alexandria, the schism occurred because the Orthodox elected their own bishop Proterius, while the other party elected another. That's how the schism took place, and how the monophysite Church emerged. It happened initially in Alexandria, then in Antioch, Jerusalem and Ethiopia. These are the four Churches: the Coptic in Egypt, the Ethiopian, the Syrian in Syria and India and the Armenian Church with its roots in Lebanon.

The creed became standard orthodox doctrine, while the Coptic church of Alexandria dissented, holding to Cyril's formula of the oneness of Christ's nature as the incarnation of God the Word (μια φύσις του Θεου Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη). This church felt that this understanding required that the creed should have stated that Christ be acknowledged 'from two natures' rather than 'in two natures'. This miaphysite position, often known as "Monophysitism", formed the basis for the distinction of what we call the Oriental Orthodox churches – the Coptic church of Egypt and Ethiopia and the "Jacobite" churches of Syria and Armenia. Over the last 30 years, however, the miaphysite position has been accepted as a mere restatement of orthodox belief by the Eastern Orthodox Church and by the Roman Catholic Church.

// Theological significance

So to the question: what is the existential meaning of its Christology-related to the problem of the overcoming of death—we can answer by analyzing the four adverbs of the Definition: ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.

Fr John Meyendorff holds that these "four negative adverbs, while they condemned the two contrary heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, excluded any pretention to explain fully in human terms the very mystery of the incarnation". It is true that this Creed, being an extraordinary theological and philosophical achievement, does not exhaust the whole truth; neither does it detract from the personal character of this revelation. These verbal confessions refer to the living Person of Christ, and the Church through them 'receives' above all a Person and not ideas. However, beyond this apophatical aspect, they offer a solid basis for further theological meaning. Metropolitan John Zizioulas, in his lucid study, "Created' and 'Uncreated': The Existential Significance of

Chalcedonian Christology" elaborated the meaning of two of these words: ἀσυγχύτως (without confusion) and ἀδιαρέτως (without division).

Let us try here to see the significance of ἀτρέπτως, unchangeably and ἀχωρίστως, inseparably. The first of these adverbs ἀτρέπτως means that, in Christ—theologically, anthropologically, cosmologically and ecclesiologically—there was no change between the two natures, per se. The essence of the natures (so to speak) did not change. Their otherness is completely respected and preserved. So, anthropologically, man remains completely man, and not god, and vice versa; cosmologically, the created nature remains created, and not uncreated, and vice versa. On the other hand, ἀδιαρέτως refers to such a union, being perfect and absolute, where nothing can separate them because of the hypostatic union (as opposed to "union of natures"). By preserving the two natures after the Incarnation, Chalcedon safeguarded the precious concept of otherness! We shall see below how important this aspect is for us today. Speaking existentially in terms of person and nature, Chalcedon affirmed both unitatis and alteritas, communion and otherness. This is the accomplishment of these apophatic formulations.

Chalcedon provided the Church with a terminology capable of protecting the faith from both Nestorian and monophysite aberrations. By stating that the one person of Christ is one hypostasis, it demonstrated its determined opposition to Nestorianism. On the other hand, by saying that this hypostasis is known in two natures, not only in a divine but also in a human nature, it showed that it is unacceptable to confuse Christ's natures, to jeopardize his consubstantiality with the Father and with us, or to undermine the fullness and integrity of his humanity after the union. The Theanthropic "bogocovecanska" reality of Christ does not represent a mere episode of human history but the ontological basis of its salvation.

/// Postmodern Cultural and Existential Significance

Chalcedonian Oros [Definition] presents Christ as the Savior of the world, as a cosmic Christ. However, it is not because Jesus Christ brought a model of morality or a teaching for humanity; it is because He himself incarnates the overcoming of death, because, in his own Person, the created from now on lives eternally. This was a profoundly eucharistic approach to the Chalcedonian Christology, since the reception of Christ by the people of God always

takes place in the event of communion. Eucharist was not of course the focus of Chalcedon. But it is widely admitted that the Eucharist occupies the central place in Christology.

1. So, we deal here with the existential meaning of Chalcedon: Who is Christ? What is Christ for me (per me). It is critical for the theology to regain its existential meaning and purpose, and to cease from being alien to the agonizing questions of contemporary man.

The problem lies in the fact that, because of alien theological terms that we have adopted without much discernment, contemporary man's answer to the Lord's question: "what do men say about who I am?", is either, A) that Christ is of no interest to him because He cannot help him out of his miseries, or, B) that Christ has placed upon him an unbearable burden which has completely weighed him down. Very few are those who recognize Christ today as "meek and of a humble heart", or as the good Samaritan—being "consubstantial with us according to Manhood"—who "pours oil and wine over man's wounds". Maybe Christ loved sinners 'more' than others.

Our ecclesial communities should expand Christ's prayer at Gethsemane to the whole world, offering themselves to the world instead of imposing themselves on it.

We live in an age of individualism. In our so-called civilization, everyone thinks only of himself; this attitude is not limited to the "secular" world, but is also present among Christians. Individualism has crept in and each one of us tries to be reconciled with God by himself, on his own. He forgets his brother or looks at him as an object of his criticism and blame and forgets that the meaning of the spiritual life, the fulfillment of our salvation, exists in this receiving of our brother.

2. CHALCEDON AND THE INCULTURATION OF THE GOSPEL. But in spite of this general wisdom of Chalcedon's Christology—which we must always bear in mind—its theological content acquired, over the course of history, a very important sense. This sense is mainly associated with the life of the Church as manifested in culture, in arts (iconography, architecture), and in parish life (cf. Yannaras on transformative power of this truth)... One can go even further and conclude that Chalcedonian (and of course Post-Chalcedonian) Christology influenced the whole process of the inculturation of the Gospel. One can speak about the "cultural" epistemology proposed by Chalcedon which has an indisputably "incarnational" basis.

3. CONTEXTUAL MANIFESTATION. So, what is the contextual manifestation of the eternal Christological/dogmatic content(s) of Chalcedon? History has offered various responses to it, and we note just a few: the Russian Christology of kenosis, so evident in iconography; the Theanthropic Christology of fr Justin Popovic, the "asymmetrical Christology" of George Florovsky, or the "Pneumatologically conditioned Christology" of John Zizioulas... On the basis of this Christology, for instance, St. Gregory Palamas develops an authentic and real hesychast anthropology. Only Christ is the key which enables us to come to God without losing ourselves—our otherness. He enables human self-realization without destroying the God in us and without abolishing the human. The Mystery of Christ is not just a dogma of our Faith but also a great gift of God—the Way in which God, as the Land of the Living (Psalm 26:15), gives Himself to man and accepts man in Himself, without abolishing either.

As St Maximus stated, "for the Word of God (Christ) and God wants always and in all things to accomplish the mystery of His embodiment." All the above mentioned Christological expressions are faithful to Chalcedon, because they are also grounded on the four adverbs (ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως). Inculturation inevitably involves the Incarnation of Christ, be it in forms other than, and in addition to, the historical one. "Always and in all things" (continuously and everywhere) indicates that there is no race and no culture to which the Word of God can be unrelated. It is critical for the Logos (both the eternal Word and the theological word) to regain existential meaning and purpose.

4. LOGOS INSEPARABLY CONNECTED WITH PNEUMA. Yet, what makes this "true God and True Man" (θεὸς ἀληθῶς καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἀληθῶς) an inclusive corporate personality, that is, Someone who takes part in all human agonies and weaknesses. It is another divine person, about which Chalcedon doesn't speak—the Holy Spirit who works with Christ. Christ relates to people's culture by the Holy Spirit, because Logos is inseparably connected with Pneuma. For now, we can say that "the Spirit allows Christ to enter again and again in every culture and assume it by purifying it, that is, by placing it in the light (or one might say under the judgment) of what is ultimately meaningful as it is revealed in Christ." Theology must not simply speak about God, but invite people to His Body, for Christ is not an individual, conceivable in isolation: He is "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom 8.29).

So, communion with the personal being of God through Christ in the Spirit is the primary service which the Church can render to every person and to all humanity in the modern world.

5. AN “EXISTENTIAL” CHRIST. With the help of these theological principles, drawn from a study of Chalcedon’s Christology, we can make the following points in regard to the arts. We should emphasize that Orthodox iconography depicts Christ as a full man, as opposed to the monophysite depiction! This God-man realism was also applied in architecture, as Hagia Sophia in Constantinople testifies. Within this broader theological and existential context, Christian art went beyond the dilemma of anthropological maximalism or minimalism or beyond any symmetry in Christology! This is expressed throughout Byzantine architecture and iconography (Hagia Sophia, Pantokrator, Hora ton zoonton etc.).

So, a Byzantine icon of Jesus Christ always indicates Christ’s eternity (as the Pantokrator, “the Same through all Ages”), but, at the same time, the expression in Christ’s face (gaze, eyes...) reveals his participation in human agonies and weaknesses. Gazing at Him we might say that this is an “existential” Christ Who, having become man, lives through the antinomies of human existence, through time and difficulties, through passions and suffering. This is a Christ Who does not wish to be separated from human beings; He is descending to their level, taking upon Himself all human troubles and conditions (la condition humaine—the human condition)—everything except sin. In the Orthodox iconographic depiction of Christ’s face (eyes), we can see a complete sympathy for us humans, which culminated in the Cross and in the Resurrection.

6. TRUE SENSE OF BEING HUMAN. Our postmodern time demands a respect for otherness (personal distinctiveness and identity)! However, this otherness remains in tragic isolation; nothing is as dreadful as the “other” without the inseparable union with somebody else. How can the Chalcedonian dogma help in this situation?

Respect for otherness is ‘covered’ with four Chalcedonian terms: ἀσυγχύτως, ἀδιαρέτως, ἀτρέπτως (unchangeably) and ἀχωρίστως (inseparably). Being inseparably united with us, Christ of Chalcedon identifies Himself with all of us. Not only does He simply bear man’s infirmities but also He takes on responsibility for all these. He took this responsibility on the Cross exactly because He was the one who was paying for the sins of others. He did not simply bear the infirmities of others but He paid for them. And, what is valid for Christ is valid for all of us.

This leads us to the next important aspect of this unchangeable and inseparable unity. We, too, are invited to ‘receive one another.’ What does it mean to receive our brother? Simply to tolerate him? Because this is the point where many times we stop. This is not the meaning of ‘receiving.’ Receiving means I receive him within me and I become one with him—like receiving food. And what happens when we receive food? One element of its nature becomes part of our body. It is assimilated by our body, transformed and becomes one body with us. I tried to make this section a bit more succinct. A definition of ‘receiving’ and an example of human relations might help.

7. Chalcedon doesn’t address the ecclesiological dimension of the Mystery of Christ. However, Christ is inseparably connected with the Church, which is supposed to be the body of Christ, the very presence of the Divine gift to the world in each place. In our particular situation today, our divided Churches are called to receive from one another and indeed to simply receive one another. This raises all sorts of fundamental ecclesiological questions, since the highest point of unity in this context is that of mutual ecclesial recognition and not simply agreement on doctrine.

It now seems only to be a matter of when, rather than of if, the restoration of full communion between our Churches, which has been sadly interrupted for centuries, will occur.

Concluding Remarks

In this presentation, we tried first to identify ways in which the Chalcedonian Christology could operate today. It is obvious that there are different Christological approaches among the Churches today concerning the application of this Chalcedonian model. Yet, there are positive developments which allow us to hope that this model can be of use today. In concluding, let me be more specific. There are so many fields in which Christology can be realized, in order to curtail the prevailing individualism in society, to overcome Hindu-inspired spiritualism, to curb the growing psychologism, to transform the culture, and to answer questions of bioethics and modern biotechnology.

I believe that the Chalcedonian Christology is holistic and not totalitarian. Christ appeared with his “parousia” (presence, visitation), and not with his ousia, by springing from an event of communion. The consequences are really astonishing. It is Triadic Grace in action: when we say Χριστός, we mean the “anointed one”, anointed of the Father by the Holy Spirit.

Where can this Christology be helpful? Pluralism is a tremendous opportunity. Instead of having one uniform Christology (e.g. patristic), we should cultivate a vision of the Christological transformation of the world in a Neoplatonic way; that is what Neo-Chalcedonianism offers in order to fulfill and clarify the Fourth Ecumenical Council. The Chalcedonian view of Christ contains many elements that can be helpful for our situation, if we view them theologically and make proper use of them. I believe these are the crucial points where this vision can help modern man:

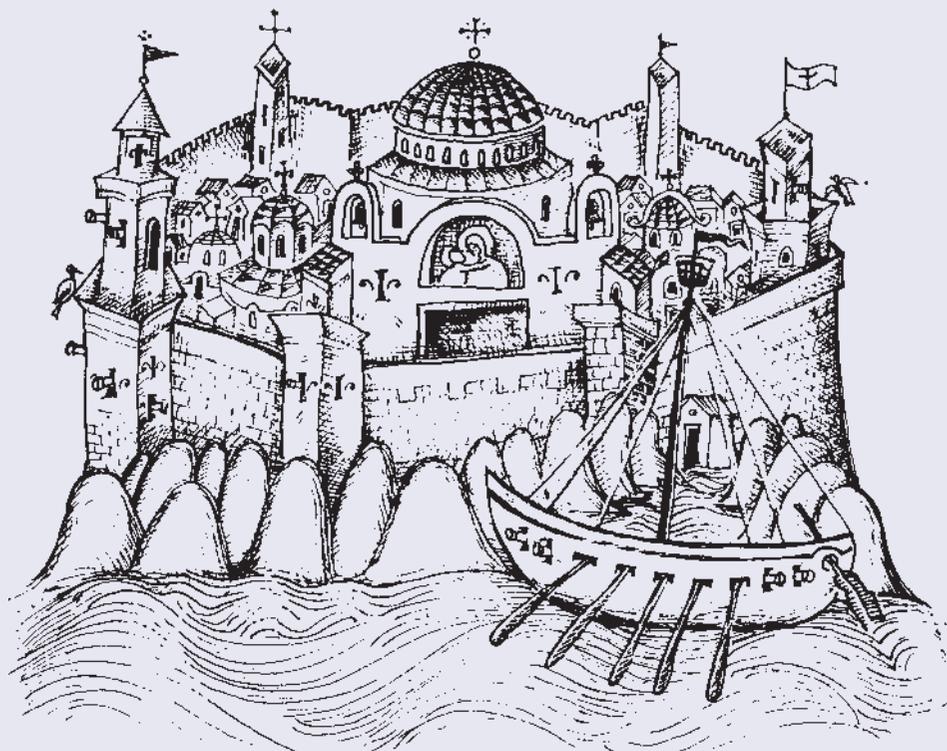
1. Individualism.
2. Instead of Spiritualism we have a Theanthropic realism *Богочовечански реализам*; Christ as the Church, *Hora ton zoonton*: to see, hear, feel, touch, and know Him! (The first epistle of John, which contains this eschatological orientation, begins with the triumphant proclamation that “the life was made manifest, and we saw it...,” “that which we have seen and heard,” “that which we have looked upon and touched with our hands,” etc.)
3. Psychologism.
4. Cult, ritual, *Sacrus and sanctus* = Liturgy. *Hagia Sophia* as a master work of Chalcedonian Christology. There are aspects of Church life that are so deeply bound to this Christological Definition that they cannot operate without reference to the Chalcedonian vision, such as hymnography, iconography, architecture...
5. Cosmic ecology: The central point of our Faith is Christ as the Land of the Living, as the Living Space,

which God was well pleased to give us in order that we may live eternally in Him, with Him, around Him, before Him, together with Him, and with one another. In our times, humanity faces many problems, including greater and greater ecological problems, which threaten human living space. Thus, this topic of Christ as the Land of the Living is very pertinent for today.

6. Asceticism: self-denial (*αυταπαρνησις*). Nobody is as personal, nor as unique as Paul who said: “it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2,20)

7. Prophecy: Christ’s presence is always a judgment, “krisis of this world” (Gospel of John).

The word of the Church ought to be the word of love, of the “kenosis” or “self-emptying” of the Cross, and of understanding. It is a Christological message that should strike the existential “chord” of man, of which he has so much need in the tragic dead-ends of this life. Beyond biochemistry, He existentially strikes our inner chord, our genes, the *logoi* of beings, as St Maximus says (beginning with Chalcedon, he developed an amazing Christology). Modern man, our neighbor, is fiercely tried and gripped by anxiety in the face of an uncertain future. He needs an outstretched hand; he needs to be opened toward communion and community. This opening of man to God—the opening of history to the Future, of earth to Heaven – is the message of Chalcedon. It should also be our message and our faith.





SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY CELEBRATED IN LOS ANGELES BY THE CANONICAL BISHOPS OF THE WEST COAST

As hundreds of Orthodox faithful gathered in worship to share their common faith and to commemorate the restoration of the holy icons, three hierarchs of the Canonical Orthodox Christian Bishops of the West Coast of America celebrated the Divine Liturgy at Saint Nicholas Antiochian Cathedral in Los Angeles, Sunday 8/2009.

Present for this year's celebration of the Sunday of Orthodoxy were His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, His Grace, Bishop Joseph of the Antiochian Diocese of Los Angeles and the West, and His Grace, Bishop Maxim of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America, together with their deans, clergy and members of their respective flocks. His Grace, Bishop Benjamin of the Orthodox Church of America's Diocese of the West had planned to be there but at the last moment was unable to attend. His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos preached the homily on the celebration of the day's gathering, focusing on two themes: the ancient destruction of icons, and the modern destruction of "icon" - humanity created according to God's image.

"Iconoclasm is nothing less than the destruction of the True Faith," he said. "We cannot protect Orthodoxy if we do not protect its dogmas. Our Faith is thoroughly modern while adhering to its ancient

traditions. If we do not venerate icons, then we are not worthy of the name 'Orthodox Christian.'"

His Eminence then went on to speak of the icons "made of flesh and blood" saying, "We must learn to love and do good to the less-fortunate, which was preached by the Apostles. We do not have God's love if we do not help one another; He became human to reach out to the oppressed. We cannot confess our Faith in words alone; we must recognize God's living and breathing icons."

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, the hierarchs led the traditional procession of icons around the Cathedral, along with the serving and visiting clergy. The hierarchs then led the reading of the Synodikon as well as the Creed, along with the entire congregation. Following the services, lunch was served in the main hall followed by a youth rally for all the young teens that attended.

Each year on the first Sunday of Great Lent, Orthodox hierarchs, clergy and faithful from many jurisdictions gather in cathedrals and churches throughout the world to commemorate the restoration of holy icons which was first celebrated in 843 A.D. in Constantinople. The annual tradition has become a powerful expression of the unity of the Orthodox Church, which proclaims with one voice, "the faith of the Apostles; the faith of the Fathers; the faith which has established the universe."





2009 WESTERN DIOCESE LENTEN CLERGY RETREAT

His Grace Bishop Maxim and the clergy of the Western Diocese gathered on March 17 and 18, 2009, at the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God Church in Irvine, CA, for prayer, confession, fellowship and an emotional presentation entitled, "A Piece of Bread for Our Brothers and Sisters in Kosovo & Metohija" by V. Rev. Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes. Fr. Nektarios is the parish priest of Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Boise, Idaho and he is the director of the Decani Monastery Relief Fund, which, according to their publication, "solicits donations worldwide via the Internet. All money donated is immediately transferred from Boise to the Decani Monastery in Kosovo where the resident monks distribute it to the direct benefit of Serbian individuals and families living in the war-ravaged communities of Kosovo & Metohija." Fr. Nektarios has been to Kosovo four times and is preparing for a fifth visit in the summer of 2009.

On Tuesday evening March 17, following Vespers and dinner, the parish host Fr. Blasko Paraklis introduced Fr. Nektarios to the audience of over thirty clergy and lay people and he asked everyone to place a piece of bread from dinner in front of them while he distributed a DVD entitled "Document of Suffering: Kosovo & Metohija 1998-2007," and an informational pamphlet on the suffering and martyrdom of two Serbian Orthodox monks in Kosovo in 1999. After a few opening remarks, Fr. Nektarios referred to the bread in front of everyone and said that when he asked people over there what they wanted, they told him simply "some bread, an icon and our blessings." Fr. Nektarios added that he brings wallet-sized paper icon prints to distribute on his trips and when he runs out, even adults who were not able to receive one cry; then, he spoke without a break for two hours, emotionally recount-

ing some of the more heart-wrenching and also uplifting stories from his four trips to Kosovo. Some highlights include:

- After the people there fed him fish and bread they often did not have for themselves, Fr. Nektarios came back to America and lost thirty pounds because he hurt so much in his heart for the people who gave him their food.
- He could never get used to having six bodyguards and exclaimed, "I don't need bodyguards. I work for Christ. I have angels!"
- He reported that Decani Monastery has sustained six separate rocket attacks and remains standing.
- Even though he can't communicate with Bishop Teodosije (Lipljan), Fr. Nektarios says they understand each other through the Holy Spirit!
- On a visit to a group of children, Bishop Teodosije's eyes welled up with tears as he said, 'Father, I forgot the candy for the children. Please don't ever let me forget the candy again.'
- A nineteen-year-old Kosovo student was sponsored to attend a university in the western U.S. He would routinely turn off unused lights in his host family's house, telling them his family in Kosovo would have one hour of electricity per day and service was usually interrupted even during that hour.
- When Serbian Orthodox clergy hold funerals, Albanian Muslims often throw rocks throughout the service and later desecrate the graves.

Fr. Nektarios concluded with a passionate appeal for continued help, acknowledging how much was given to Bishop Teodosije on his U.S. visit in 2008 for the people of Kosovo and reminding his audience that as bad as the economy is for Americans, it just makes it worse for the suffering people there.

Decani Monastery Relief Fund, Inc.

V. Rev. Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes

2618 West Bannock Street • Boise, Idaho 83702-4705

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH TODAY

Katina Kay Kostoulas, Ph.D.

April 4, 2009, Jackson, California

Women hold a special role in the Church as mothers and protectors and preservers of culture and religion in the rearing of the children in the Orthodox home. This is the most important role of the Orthodox Woman in the Church today.

I will take a lifespan approach to the spiritual development of children—that is from conception through birth, infancy, early, middle and later childhood, adolescence, and the separation and individuation process of young adulthood. I will take a developmental approach to spiritual development, basing my ideas on psychoanalytic and psychological theories that correspond to writings of such Orthodox Church Fathers as St. Theophan the Recluse and Elder Porphyrios of Athens, who were both ascetic thinkers of our times steeped in the tradition of the Jesus Prayer and Monastic life, but aware of the particular difficulties of contemporary Orthodox Christians in the modern age.

Discipline Is Teaching

God as our Father disciplines us to teach us life's lessons and to further our spiritual growth. As parents we discipline our children to teach, train and educate rather than to punish.

According to Father Stanley Harrakas, in his book, *Contemporary Moral Issues Facing the Orthodox Christian Today*, there are four pillars on which moral development rests. The first pillar involves right action: that is—do not kill, do not steal, bear false witness. The second pillar involves right teaching or correct beliefs, which is the premise of Orthodox Christianity as the correct way of praise and worship by definition. The third pillar is how to use reasoning about moral issues when two are in conflict, such as when saving a life or obeying the law are placed in opposition to one another.

The fourth pillar has to do with Koinonia or Community fellowship.



From Conception to Infancy through Early Childhood

The family is the hub of the spiritual life.

The mother is the heart of the home and bears the responsibility for creating a prayerful and spiritual atmosphere in the home. Christian upbringing according to St. Theophan preserves the Grace of Baptism, while a guardian angel protects the child from the moment of Baptism. Frequent Holy Communion, according to St. Theophan, calms the mind and nerves, brings peace and also heals the body of the infant. According to both the Saint and the Elder, the spirit of faith and piety of the parents is the most important means for the preservation, upbringing and strengthening of the life of Grace in children. **“A child’s upbringing starts at the moment of conception”**

- Porphyrios (*Wounded by Love*, 2002)

Middle Childhood: The age of reason

Judgment and reasoning of right and wrong and learning from lives of the saints, parables, and stories is now possible. The Orthodox mother as teacher of values and builder of character during the middle school years involves first and foremost her example leading a prayerful, almsgiving, Christian Life.



Anger Management and Temper Tantrums in Middle Childhood

The expression of anger as aggression against someone or something is something children learn overtime to verbalize rather than resort to physical means of solving disputes and disagreements.

Although fasting is a bodily discipline, it trains the child to delay pleasure and is a valuable life lesson as long as it is done voluntarily by the child and within the child's capacity...

Children can carry not only their own anger but uncontained and unresolved anger from their mothers projected into them unconsciously.

When children receive enough love and nurture, their conscience is less severe and punitive and they internalize loving and guiding parents who they can run to with problems rather than harsh task masters quick to punish and slow to listen.

Adolescence/Young Adulthood

The years of adolescence (13-20) and the young adult (20-30) herald the age of the passions with the onset of puberty in adolescence and the temptations of the world such as sex and drugs.

Kahlil Gibran¹, Catholic, Lebanese poet and theologian, wrote a beautiful poem on children in his classic work *The Prophet*,

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.



You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor carries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,

and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.

Conclusions

As Elder Porphyrios has told us, (pgs.196)

"What saves and makes for good children is the life of the parents in the home. The parents need to devote themselves to the love of God. They need to become saints in their relation to their children through their mildness, patience and love. They need to make a new start every day, with a fresh outlook, renewed enthusiasm and love for their children. And the joy that will come to them, the holiness that will visit them, will shower grace on their children.

A child needs to be surrounded by people who pray and pray ardently.

A mother should not be satisfied by giving her child a physical caress, but should also coddle it with the caress of prayer. In the depths of its soul the child sense the spiritual caress that its mother conveys to it and is drawn to her. It feels security and certainty when its mother mystically embraces it with constant, intense and fervent prayer and releases it from whatever is oppressing it.

MISSIONS 2009

This year His Grace Bishop Maxim established two new Missions in our Diocese

On Saturday, December 27, the Serbian community in Boise, Idaho received, for the first time, His Grace Bishop Maxim, accompanied by Rev. Protopresbyter Fr. Blasko Paraklis, who together celebrated Liturgy in Serbian for a congregation composed largely of Serbian refugees from Krajina and Republika Srpska. Idaho's nickname is the Gem State because it is one of only two places in the world where star garnets can be found, and the state seems to have become a jewel of refuge for many of our people. Idaho, admitted to the Union on 3 July 1890 as the 43rd state, is located in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States of America. According to the United States Census Bureau, in 2007 the population of Idaho was 1,499,402. Its largest city and capital is Boise where residents call themselves "Idahoans." The state motto is *Esto Perpetua* (Latin for "Let it be forever").

Particularly poignant about the state motto for the new Idahoans who came from the far reaches of the former Republics of Yugoslavia is that, because they have lost everything, they know that their stay in Idaho will, indeed, be lasting. Even though Boise has become a haven, there are still deep and terrifying memories of the events that caused them to relocate so far from their homeland. The exodus out of Krajina in 1995 was one of the most shameful modern human tragedies of the final years of the 20th century. It was sudden, unexpected and inhumane. With very little warning, for some a matter of hours and others a matter of minutes, they grabbed personal belongings and fled, while their homes were shot at and burned. What policy can justify the ethnic cleansing of the Serbs from Krajina, the place they had called home for centuries? Risking their lives, dug the remains of family members out of the cemetery, not willing to leave them behind in





fear that their tombs would be desecrated or destroyed—as was known to happen to many. The flight of Krajina's Serbian population was well documented as a procession of families, with tractors, carts drawn by old horses, donkeys and in many cases, people—not soldiers! This human river included infants and the elderly, the sick and the infirmed, and headed to Serbia and to locations unknown. It is beyond imagination to comprehend the suffering, pain, humiliation, and fear that lasted for days and weeks. Some were killed en route and left without a burial; some starved, some died from sickness due to the lack medicine. Mothers, not knowing what morning would bring, slept with their babies under the tractor wagons at night. Those fortunate enough to have relatives in Serbia, ended up with them. But hundreds of thousands more ended up in refugee camps which were ill-

equipped to accommodate the unexpected masses. Most of the refugees from Krajina who are now in Idaho spent some time in Kosovo where they experienced a second tragedy – NATO bombs. Those fortunate enough to survive were able to come from Kosovo to Boise, Idaho.

For spiritual healing, it was a tremendous blessing for these new Idahoans from Krajina and Republika Srpska to participate in the historical occasion of the first visit of a Serbian Orthodox Bishop to Idaho. His Grace Bishop Maxim served a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at 10:00AM, and some 70 people actively attended and participated in this Eucharistic event. Following Holy Liturgy, lunch was served. The host parish, Greek Orthodox Parish of Saints Constantine and Helen and Fr. Nektarije Serfes were extremely hospitable. He presented a gift to Bishop Maxim, and also invited the Serbian Community to join his parish and participate in the sacramental life of the Church. Fr. Nektarios Serfes, the founder and the leader of the Decani Charitable Fund, is a great friend of the Serbian people. He spoke about the tremendous need in Kosovo and Metohija and called upon the Serbian faithful to attend the services more frequently. He promised a service for Christmas according to the Old Calendar, January 7.

A meeting was held in the church hall after lunch in which all parishioners introduced themselves to one another. The next gathering was January 31, 2009 when Fr. Blasko served the Divine Liturgy, observed a traditional St. Sava celebration and held an assembly with the parishioners to discuss the future of this missionary parish.



The faithful were overjoyed with the Bishop's arch pastoral visit, signifying the beginning of a more active Church life for them in their city of Boise. His Grace Bishop Maxim's visit served not only as a blessing for their new home, but as the link to their lost homeland, and more importantly, as a beacon of hope that faith is the one thing that you can forever carry with you.

The highlight of the whole trip was the creation of a new mission parish dedicated to the Holy Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Another missionary parish founded by His Grace Bishop Maxim this year is in Colorado Springs. According to Fr. Radovan Petrovic, the parish priest in Denver, the first immigrant Serbs came to Colorado at the beginning of the 19th Century. They settled mostly in the cities of Pueblo and Denver, and some of them in the vicinity of Colorado Springs. Initiated by Serbs and Russians, a church was founded in the early decades of the 19th century in Calhan located ten miles from Colorado Springs. It is well known



His Grace Bishop Maxim continues the apostolic missionary work in our diocese for the prosperity of Christ's Church and benefit of all God's thirsty souls.

It should be noted that at the end of each of the Gospel narratives, Jesus gives the disciples a mission, which also extends to us, to go out into the nations and bring the Gospel message to all those who have need of hearing it. And let us be clear, the whole world is literally dying to hear the word of God. People in all walks of life, by whatever means they see right, try to fill a void in their souls with some kind of meaning, purpose, theology, or sometimes drugs and alcohol, in an attempt to satisfy a craving they cannot understand—a void that can only be filled with the Word of God. Without Christ they remain the "walking dead," frustrated by their efforts to fill the void on their own. The Church is the ambassador of the royal priesthood, of the Good Samaritan, touching the wounds of others and fulfilling Christ's words: "As you have done it to the least of these my brethren, so you have done it to Me."



that, Nikola Tesla had his lab in Colorado Springs and the city had power free of charge. The city honored Tesla by establishing a museum which was moved to New York City in 2006.

The new wave of Serbian immigrants took place at the end of the 1990's when about forty refugee families from various parts of the Former Yugoslavia settled in Colorado Springs and expressed a desire to form a parish. His Grace Bishop Maxim visited Colorado Springs for the first time in December of 2007. In January of 2009, he came for the third time, served the vespers service and soon afterwards established a missionary parish dedicated to The Annunciation of the Mother of God. Fr. Radovan Petrovic of Denver was appointed the parish administrator.



HISTORIC EVENT FOR THE PARISH
IN DENVER, COLORADO

ИСТОРИЈСКИ ДОГАЂАЈ ЗА ПРАВОСЛАВЉЕ У КОЛОРАДУ

Православни Срби су почели да насељавају државу Колорадо, још крајем 19 века. Претежно су радили у жељезарама и рудницима. Од момента када су се доселили на ове просторе, код Срба се родила потреба да имају своју цркву. Тада још није постојала српска јурисдикција на овом континенту, тако да су Срби били приморани, да заједно са другим православним народима, оснивају и граде православне цркве. Тако су заживеле православне цркве у Глобвилу, Пуеблу, Калахану и Литлтону. У свим овим црквама једни од главних оснивача били су српски имигранти, и скоро све ове цркве су носиле називе Српско-Руске православне цркве. Међутим, током времена Срби у овим црквама су постали мањина, тако да данас све те цркве припадају Америчкој Православној Цркви. И данас постоји велики број Срба који похађају ове и друге православне цркве широм Колорада.

Прецизних података о броју православних Срба у Колораду није било све до 1999. године, када је већа група Срба, насилно расељених са својих опгњишта из Хрватске и БиХ, дошла и населила ове просторе. Исте године је Западноамеричка епархија предузела прве кораке на успостављању мисије у Денверу и околини. Тадашњи епископ Јован је у децембру 1999. г. издао повељу о оснивању мисионарске парохије у Денверу, посвећеној Светом Јовану Крститељу. У току наредних неколико година ова млада мисионарска парохија је прошла кроз много потешкоћа и проблема. Народ се трудио и хватао у коштац са искушењима на која је наилазио. Уз Божију помоћ и уз напоре свештеника и парохијана заједно ова парохија је изашла на „прави пут“. У међувремену, трудом свештеника Радована Петровића, малена српска заједница у Колорадо Спрингсу добила је статус мисионарске парохије. Епископ Западноамерички је у више наврата посетио мисије у Денверу и Колорадо Спрингсу и уверио се у духовни напредак верника.

Два тренутка од историјског значаја за денверску мисију догодила су се у току само једне године: прелазак са мисионарског на парохијски ста-



тус и куповина црквеног објекта. 26. јуна. 2009. када је закључен уговор о куповини црквеног објекта у Лејквуду (западном предграђу Денвера). Целокупна парохија се искрено обрадовала овој новости и са нестрпљењем очекује дан када ће ова црква бити реновирана, освећена и стављена у употребу као Српска Православна црква. Закључивању уговора присуствовали су председник Борис Југовић, подпредседници Миле Панић и Вера Видовић, јереј Радован Петровић и Цвијан Кањерић парохијанин. По закључивању уговора г. Борис Југовић изјавио: „Ово је велики дан за нас и велики успех наше парохије. Није то успех појединаца нити садашњег Одбора цркве, већ је успех и плод рада свих оних који су ову цркву водили и помагали током ових десет година. Свима њима ми данас дугујемо захвалост“... Истог дана преузети су кључеви цркве и документ о власништву. Свештеник Радован је такође истакао овај велики и историјски моменат у животу парохије и Срба у Колораду уопште, али је подсетио да тек предстоје велики изазови везани за планове, реновирање објекта, као и опремање цркве потребним инвентаром, и обезбеђивање финансијских средстава, с обзиром да је црквени рачун прилично исцрпљен.

Западноамеричка Епархија жели пуно успеха верницима Цркве у Денверу. Уз помоћ Божију и молитвама Светог Претече Господњег као и уз помоћ свих добрих људи надамо брзом успеху.

“THE DIVINE GRACE WHICH ALWAYS HEALS THAT WHICH IS INFIRM... ORDAINS THE MOST PIOUS DEACON TO BE A PRIEST...”

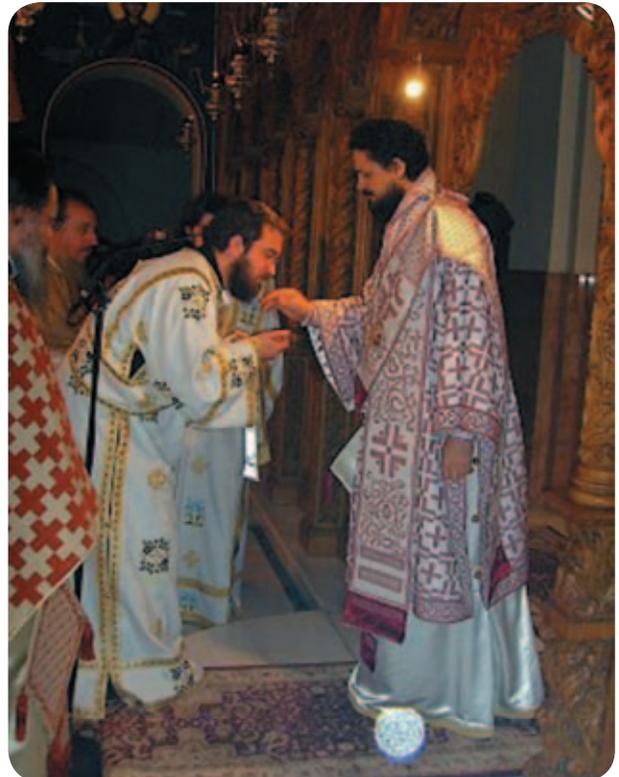
Three Ordinations to the Holy Priesthood

On Sunday, February 22, 2009, His Grace, Bishop Maxim ordained the servant of God, Deacon Gregory Edwards, to the holy priesthood at church of St. George the Great-martyr in Panorama, Greece. Among the seven priests serving with His Grace were the newly-ordained’s father-in-law, the Very Reverend Fr. Joseph Copeland, a priest in the Antiochian Archdiocese, as well as Fr. Gregory’s spiritual father, Fr. Spyridon, a Greek priest in Thessaloniki. Much of the local Serbian community came to the Ordination, most of them students who study at the University in Thessaloniki. Raised an Episcopalian near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Fr. Gregory discovered Orthodoxy while studying at Brown University. By graduation he had converted to the Orthodox Faith and made up his mind to follow his calling to the priesthood. Fr.

Gregory came into the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church of North and South America in 2006 with the blessing of His Grace, Bishop Longin, who at the time was the Administrator of the Diocese. He was ordained to the diaconate by His Grace, Bishop Maxim in Belgrade, Serbia in December of 2007.

Fr. Gregory has a B.A. in Religious Studies from the Brown University (Providence, RI) and is currently a student at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki where he is working on his PhD in New Testament with Professor Petros Vasiliadis.

Fr. Gregory, his wife Pelagia, and their three, beautiful newborn triplets live in Thessaloniki and hope one-day to return to the Western American Diocese to begin a life of service to God and His Holy Church.





After 18 years of faithful service to the Church, the Protodeacon William Weir of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary Serbian Orthodox Church in Fair Oaks, California was ordained to the holy priesthood by His Grace, Bishop Maxim of the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church of North and South America. Celebrating with Bishop Maxim were His Grace, Bishop Joanikije of Budimlje and Niksic, as well as many of the clergy of the diocese who had travelled to participate in the event. Among them was Fr. William's Godfather, Protopresbyter Miladin Garic, as well as

several members of the local Orthodox clergy from the Sacramento area. The Ordination day, August 28, 2008, at the Slava celebration of the Assumption of The Virgin Mary Church in Fair Oaks. Chanting by the Belgrade Theological Choir and their Professor, Nenad Milosevic, made the Hierarchical Liturgy and Ordination especially moving. In attendance were Fr. William's wife, Popadija Mary Anne, his Godmother, Protinica Nina Garic, his sister and brother-in-law, Karen and John Bracken and several of his Kumovi.

Fr. William is a retired Colonel in the Judge Advocate General's Corps and a retired professor of Business Law. He received his B.A. from the University of North Carolina – Wilmington, a MA from Central Michigan University – Honolulu, HI, and a Juris Doctor from Akron University – Akron, OH. He received his theological training at St. Tikhon's Seminary where he is currently serving on the Board of Trustees.





On Saturday, February 1/14, 2009, the last day of the Diocesan Assembly, Hierodeacon Hilarion of the St. Herman of Alaska Monastery (Platina, California) was ordained to the holy priesthood by His Grace Bishop Maxim at the St. Petka Serbian Orthodox Church in San Marcos, California. Fr. Hilarion converted to the Orthodox Faith at the St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church in Kansas City, Missouri. He entered the monastic life in 1998, and was ordained to the holy diaconate at the St. Paisius Monastery in Safford, Arizona, by His Grace Bishop Jovan in 2000. Since 2001 he has been at the St. Herman Monastery in Platina, where he was tonsured as a stavrophore monk the Sunday

before his priestly ordination. At his ordination in San Marcos, fourteen priests concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with Bishop Maxim. Among the faithful attending the ordination was Hieromonk Hilarion's daughter, Sister Jelena, a nun of the St. Paisius Monastery in Safford. Fr. Hilarion's ordination was an event of great rejoicing for all the churches and monasteries in our Diocese.



ОСВЕЋЕНИ ТЕМЕЉИ ЦРКВЕ СВ. СИМЕОНА У ЛАС ВЕГАСУ, НЕВАДА



равославни народ наш у Лас Вегасу је на-
покон дочекао тај дуго чекани дан. Толи-
ко година труда око пројектовања, при-
купљања помоћи, чекања на дозволе надлеж-
них... И кад је стрпљења понестајало, премда не
и вере, дошао је тај 21. децембар 2008. г. Тога
дана Епископ Западноамерички г. Максим је
служио Свету Литургију у парохији Светога Си-
меона Мироточивог у Лас Вегасу, и освештао
темеље будућег велелепног Храма. Епископу су

саслуживали игуман Манастира Тврдош, Сава, о.
Урош Тодоровић, о. Василије Соколовић и Клив-
ленда. о. Лазар Васиљевић, јеромонах Јован и Ђа-
кон Озрен Тодоровић. Мноштво народа из овога
града, са децом обученом у народну ношњу, ра-
дносно је певало на служби Божијој, и молитвено
суделовало у освештању темеља. После Литур-
гије, на темељима, новоизливиеној плочи цркве,
чин је почео читањем Повеље о полагању каме-
на темељца, коју су потписали епископ, свеште-





ник Урош, архитекта Отон Урбан и председник одбора Млађан Грујичић. Потом су следиле молитве, појање тропара, псалама, освећење водиче, места за крст, четири стране цркве, па потом полагање повеље и самог камена, и на крају благослов народа. Као круну свега епископ Максим је протојереја Уроша Тодоровића одликовао



правом ношења напрсног крста. У црквеној сали је потом уследио свечани и богати ручак, а на лицима верника је сијала нескривена радост и нада ће овај симболичан почетак значити почетак и њихове духовне обнове и уграђивања у Храм Божији.





WE WELCOME ALL TO CELEBRATE THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAINT SAVA CHURCH IN LOS ANGELES – SAN GABRIEL

St. Sava parish of San Gabriel will celebrate its 100 years of existence on October 2nd and 3rd, 2010. This occasion inspires parishioners to look back with justifiable pride at what has been accomplished and to look forward with hope at what is yet to come. St. Sava parish is fortunate to have two churches, the St. Sava Church built in 1910 at the Serbian cemetery in Los Angeles, and the new St. Sava Church built in 1984 in San Gabriel. If one considers history, it must be said, St. Sava Church marks the beginning of the Orthodox faith and Serbian culture in Los Angeles. Being the oldest organized Church in Southern California, this Jubilee of St. Sava parish will also draw the attention of other Orthodox jurisdictions in Western America. Church records show that the early settlers of Los Angeles immigrated primarily from Montenegro, Boka and Hercegovina. Through the years at St.

Sava, the parish was enlarged by immigrants from other areas of the former Yugoslavia, i.e., Serbia, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Lika, etc.





Many stories can be told about the faith, labor of love, inspiration, dreams and commitments of St. Sava parishioners. One of those is a story of how the St. Sava Church at the cemetery was built with very modest means. Most immigrants worked as com-

mon laborers for small wages. Not being able to pay the artist for Altar Icons, parishioners used their paper Slava Icons to complete the Iconostas themselves. Another story tells of the time when Church members realized that the project of building the new St. Sava Church in San Gabriel would cost 3 million dollars, and they formed a construction committee to act as a general contractor. The Church was built for less than half of the projected price. It is the story of a miracle that 2 million dollars were raised for the Church interior and its majestic mosaic made by the famous Italian artist Sirio Tonelli. Another story can be told of how St. Sava Church Hall was built in 1963 at the time when the split happened in the Serbian Orthodox Church of America. There are also stories of remodeling the old St. Sava Church and the St. Sava Church Hall in San Gabriel.

All of these stories reflect the deep appreciation of the St. Sava parishioners for their Orthodox faith and Serbian culture. They are an expression of the beauty and goodness of each St. Sava member, of the stewards and parishioners involved. They point out a perfect story to live by, the story of love. And for my own story, I have been proud to have the opportunity to serve St. Sava parish for the past 30 years.

Proto-Stavr. Fr. Petar Jovanovic



“THEREFORE RECEIVE ONE ANOTHER,
JUST AS CHRIST ALSO RECEIVED US,
TO THE GLORY OF GOD”

The Ministry of the Circle of Serbian Sisters of the Western American Diocese

The Diocesan Kolo Sestara was established on December 6, 1986. The hard work and effort that our sisters put forth has blossomed into fruit that has strengthened this significant branch of the Western American Diocesan Vine. These sisters worked for the Church, considering it a blessing to do so, for one purpose: to glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The goal of the Kolo Sestara is to work together in unity for our Western American Diocese. The unity of the Church is one of free will, united in Truth and Love of God. This unity was not established by any human authority, but by God alone. Unity in the Church is essential to live a Christian Life. Many sisters, from 1986 to the present day, have been involved in the works and deeds of the Kolo Sestara. Coming from approximately twelve different parishes, this work of the Church unites us unto the Glory of God.

We were united once again at our Annual Lenten Retreat, which takes place during the fifth week of Great Lent. This year's topic was "The Role of a Woman and Mother in the Orthodox Church," presented by Dr. Katarina Kostoulas. It provided great spiritual enrichment. Mindful of the needs of others, and grateful for the blessing bestowed upon us, our sisters make charitable contributions to support both St. Paisius and St. Herman's Monasteries. Some of the good works from our sisters involve making charitable contributions, sending proceeds to Kosovo in Serbia, holding fundraisers for our Church Summer Camp in Jackson, volunteering their time and effort to work during the camp season, and teaching children our Orthodox Faith and the importance of unity in the Church.

The Diocesan KSS Talent Show takes place in August each year, featuring Serbian good, music, and kolo dancing. It is a wonderful opportunity to continue our Serbian customs. Serbian and American cultural differences are embraced, just as both are accepted by Christ for the glory of God. "Receive one another; just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7). Keeping our faith, our customs, and our language helps bring us closer to one another, and thus closer to the Glory of God.

Our sisters are good stewards, teachers, readers, singers, and officers, but most of all, the best cooks! In order to assist others and support their own parishes, they prepare luncheons, banquets, and a host of other events for parishioners. The Serbian people have a

saying, "Radi onako kako Bog radi..." which means, "Do as God does." God's nature knows only the law of God, the law of giving. In order to find true joy in Christ, we must learn how to give—of which our sisters' actions continuously remind us. Our sisters are joyful givers.

Thus, in the spirit of giving, our sisters sponsor a Penny Drive. This is an incredibly important mission, raising funds that provide the necessities for our suffering mothers and orphans in Kosovo, Serbia. Each parish has been asked to collect pennies from their parishioners in order to help us with this mission. "What good can pennies possibly do?" one may ask.

There was a rich man, who would pick up a penny, hold it up and smile, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure. How absurd! What need did this wealthy man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up? Someone asked him why he was so happy upon picking up a penny. He responded, "Each penny reads 'In God We Trust!' and if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin. Whenever I find a coin, I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to notice it. God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust Him. Who am I to pass it by? When I see a coin, I pray. I stop to see if my trust is in God that moment. I pick the coin up as a response to God that I do trust in Him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me. Fortunate for me, God is patient and pennies are plentiful!"

We all must remember to "...Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may hold onto eternal life" (Tim. 6:17-19).

The ministry of the Circle of Serbian Sisters of the Western American Diocese has proven that hard work, effort combined with love and unity will strengthen our faith, heritage and culture. Who among us, at the dread judgment seat of Christ, would not want to hear those most cherished words from our Lord: "Well done, my good and faithful servant?"



WOMEN'S LENTEN RETREAT 2009

The fifth week of Great Lent always marks the Annual Orthodox Women's retreat up in Jackson, CA. This year, from April 14-16, I had the pleasure of spending the weekend with my wonderful Orthodox sisters: Mira Babich, Diana Cucuk-Brkic, Nada Repajic, Vida Chenich., and Snjezana Dekic along with Orthodox women from many other parishes.

This year's theme was "The Role of Women in the Orthodox Church Today". We traveled to Jackson on Friday evening to celebrate The Akathist To The Mother of God. Father Steve Tumbus served, assisted by Proto Deacon Tom. Saint Sava Church was beautiful; we could still smell the fresh paint from

the completed interior. For those who had prepared, confessions were taken and we returned to Saint Sava Mission for dinner, greetings and introductions to the weekend itinerary.

On Saturday, His Grace Bishop Maxim served Holy Liturgy. Praying together with so many Orthodox women is a powerful and affecting experience that brought us closer together that morning. Many of us were moved to joyful tears. A hearty brunch was waiting for us to nourish our bodies and minds as preparation for the wonderful lecture to come.

Our featured speaker was Katina Kay Kostoulas, Ph.D who spoke to us on "The Role of Women in the Orthodox Church Today". Dr. Kostoulas explained

that women are faced with an awesome task for, “the mother is the heart of the home and bears the responsibility for creating a prayerful and spiritual atmosphere in the home” We do this with the support of loving husbands and the love and guidance of extended family. She presented information from an Orthodox Christian Parenting perspective and took us through the life span of our children through young adults. She shared so much rich and thoughtful information—specifically how our behavior affects our children. A story from Tolstoy made a powerful example for how this happens. This story called, “The Old Grandfather and the Grandson” goes as follows: The grandfather had become very old. His legs wouldn’t go, his eyes didn’t see, his ears didn’t hear, he had no teeth. And when he ate the food dripped from his mouth. The son and daughter-in-law stopped setting a place for him at the table and gave him supper in back of the stove. Once they brought dinner down to him in a cup. The old man wanted to move the cup and dropped and broke it. The daughter-in-law began to grumble at the old man for spoiling everything in the house and breaking the cups and said that she would now give him dinner in a dishpan. The old man only sighed and said nothing. Once the husband and the wife were staying at home and watching their small son playing on the floor with some wooden planks: he was building something. The father asked, “What are you doing, Misha?” And Misha said; “Dear Father, I am making a dishpan so that when you and dear Mother become old, you may be fed from this dishpan.” The husband and wife looked at one another and began to weep. They became ashamed of so offending the old man, and from then on, seated him at the table and waited on him. Children learn moral reasoning, values, right action—all essential in our children’s spiritual development from us.

Our time given to our children cannot be replaced and it is never too late to begin doing better. Dr. Kostoulas cites Elder Porphyrios for wisdom on this point, who said, “What saves and makes for good children is the life of the parents in the home. The parents need to devote themselves to the love of God. They need to become saints in their relation to their children through their mildness, patience and love. They need to make a new start every day, with a fresh outlook, renewed enthusiasm and love for their children. And the joy that will come to them, the holiness that will visit them, will shower grace on their children.”

As mothers, this talk hit hard and we felt empowered to learn more about our faith and live more by our faith to give to our children, grandchildren or others needing support.

The afternoon was a wonderful opportunity to learn from Popadija Radmila how to make Kolac and the beautiful decoration that adorns this bread. She made wheat, wine barrels, doves, crosses, flowers, roses and more -. I still have my dove!

Part of joy of the weekend was spending time with old friends and making new dear friends. We all are on our own paths, and yet, when we slow down, we see God in each one of us and are reminded that we need to help each other reach salvation. I can’t think of a better time spent among my friends.

As has been our tradition, on Sunday we got up early, packed up, said our goodbyes to the other women at the retreat and headed to San Francisco to The Holy Virgin Cathedral to venerate the relics of Holy Hierarch John, Wonderworker of Shanghai and San Francisco. To encounter so many holy relics and Icons in one place is such a moving experience; I can only encourage every one of you to visit this holy place.

Time went by quickly on the long drive home. Our connections deepened as we discussed and processed all we had learned, went over fun times, and planned for next year. I know for some a “women’s retreat” sounds a bit too ‘churchy’, but it really is not. In fact, it is just the nourishment we need to come back refreshed to our regular lives of raising families, work, and spending time in our social circles to be a bit more grounded, maybe even wise, in remembering to slow down just a little to honor that part in ourselves that is good and to see the good in everyone else.

See you next year!



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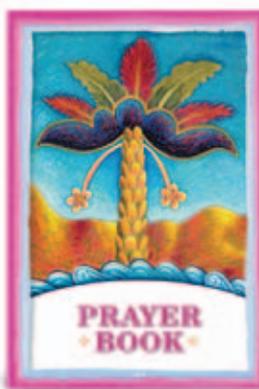
In today's electronic age one would think that books would be superseded, but not so according to the recent finding. Great titles are still selling and people are still reading. With books, as with almost everything in today's market, we face many choices. Some people read for entertainment, some to quench the thirst for knowledge, while others read for spiritual growth. The latter readers are certainly aided by the publishing activity of the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Sebastian Press is the name given to their publishing department that in a short time has added a few new titles.

Energetic and missionary and an astute bishop of this diocese, His Grace Dr. Maxim believes that the written word is one of the ways to reach out to people, to teach them, and bring them closer to Christ. "As Saint Basil the Great once observed: "Words by their nature fly; therefore, the writer needs letters to catch them before they fly away". We as Orthodox are obliged to record those significant theological and spiritual words and works of our modern times. Our publishing activity aims at the inculturation of the Orthodox ethos and mentality within modernity and vice versa, focusing on existential human needs in the light of Christ's Incarnation and Resurrection. We need a successful interpretative transmission of the tradition by Church Fathers which can be achieved through a process of explicating the old concepts into contemporary concepts, among others – through written books", said his Grace Dr.

Maxim.

His Grace wants to continue the publishing activity in his Diocese making new titles available to children, young adults, families, and all those eager to dive into reflective pastoral and theological thoughts of contemporary theologians and pastors, as well as of those of the Church's antiquity.

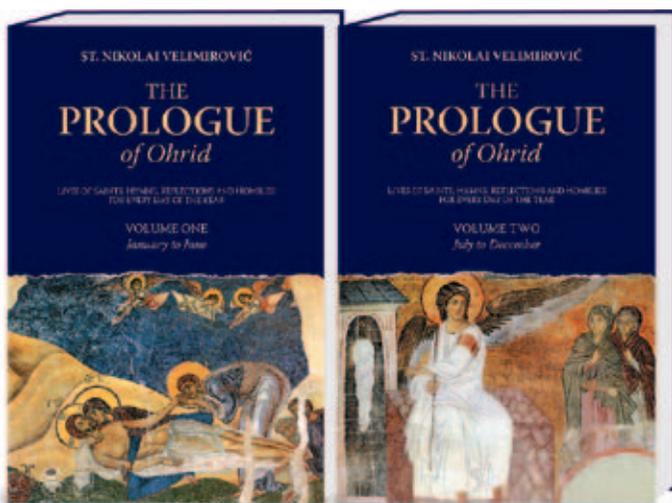
Here we present a few titles of Sebastian Press that can easily be viewed at <http://www.westsrbdio.org/>.



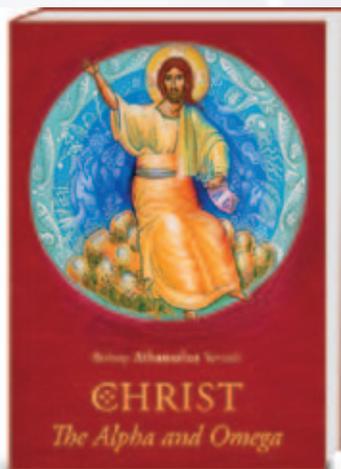
Prayer Book, is a beautiful pocket-size, full-color English-language prayer book; it contains prayers commonly used by Orthodox Christians, lists of Scriptural Commandments, brief articles on the precepts of Faith, proper conduct in church, and the meaning and practice of prayer. It is adorned with

striking icons and illustrations by Fr. Stamatis Skliris, a parish priest in Athens who is a renowned iconographer and a writer and lecturer on Byzantine iconography.

The Prologue of Ohrid, by Saint Nicholai of Zica, is a complete and unabridged English translation of St. Nikolai's Prologue which has become a much loved spiritual classic for Orthodox Christians worldwide.



An inspirational source-book of the Orthodox Faith, it contains within its pages a summation of the Church's wisdom and Her experience of sanctity through the Grace of Jesus Christ. The lives of Saints, Hymns, Reflections, and Homilies are presented for every day of the year.

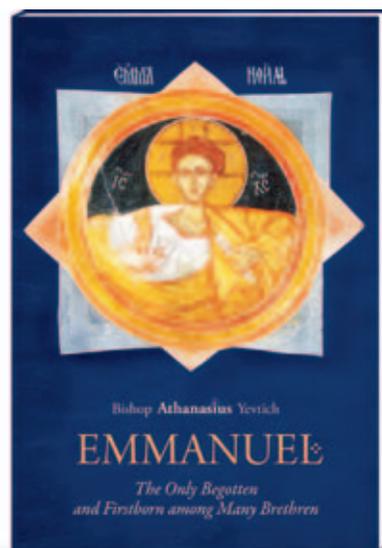


Christ, The Alpha and Omega is an anthology of Bishop Athanasius' articles which have appeared in Serbian, Greek, French, English and Russian. Focusing on themes central to Christian patristic Triadology, Ecclesiology and Anthropology, the book reveals the ultimate purpose of man and the uni-

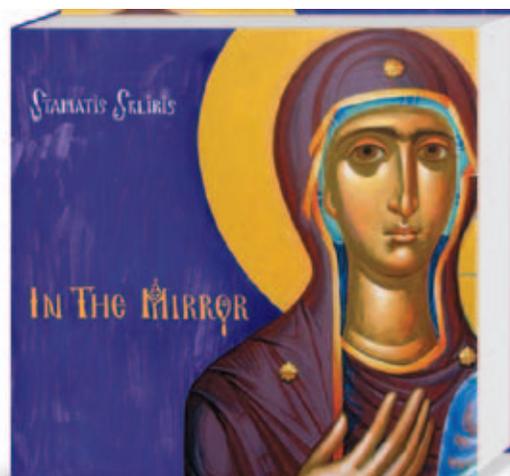
verse, and speaks of how each of us can realize this purpose within the divine-human community of the Orthodox Church. Bishop Athanasius' (1938) thought combines adherence to the teaching of the Church Fathers with a vibrant faith and a profound experience of Christ in the Church. He is one of the most renowned and respected theologians in the Orthodox Church today.

In **Emmanuel**, the second anthology of Bishop Athanasius' articles to appear in English, His Grace explores themes of Orthodox Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, and Gnoseology. How can we know Who God is? How can we know who we are, as human persons created in His image and likeness? How can we become one with Him? Bishop

Athanasius examines these and other foundational questions in depth in this volume, drawing from a wealth of Scriptural and patristic sources. In discussing diverse theological subjects, he always returns to his overarching theme: the communion that man can have with God through Jesus Christ the God-man, within Christ's Church and above all in the Holy Eucharist. His exquisite and unique way of engaging the reader in mutual dialogue, with the living Eucharistic experience permeating his every thought, instills in the reader a burning desire for that communion.



In the Mirror, A Collection of Iconographic Essays and Illustrations by Fr. Stamatis Skliris. In the Mirror is an anthology of his articles, now translated into English, in which he combines adherence to the teachings of the Church Fathers with a vibrant expression of faith through the experience of Christ in the Church. The book is adorned with more than 200 of his striking icons and illustrations. Fr. Stamatis is one example of a syncretical Neopatristic approach in the arts. He articulates a dialogue with modern art by evaluating the brush strokes of Van Gogh, Cézanne, Monet's colors, Matisse's forms, Picasso's Cubism, and Post-modernism. Stamatis re-

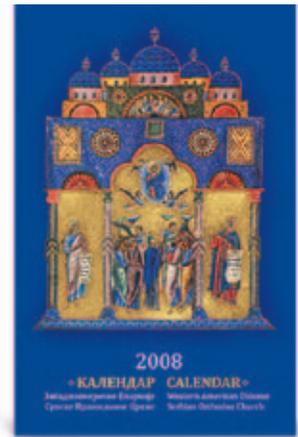


minds us of the times when Church had the ability to shape the culture. He is authentically postmodern, because he employs purely artistic criteria; he does not ready-made solutions from the iconographic past; he researches everything anew; a strong experimental sense is at his disposal, and he combines strictly traditional elements with those that are modern; e.g., *The Mighty Protectress* (Theotokos) is strongly traditional, but Christ has the movement, the colors, and brush deposits of modern, expressionist art. Although he basically employs a dark Byzantine under-painting, adding to it light “accents” (illuminations), he still plays with colors in such an impressionist manner that his work gains a “non-determinism of color”; he leaves sections of his painting uncolored and then treats these sections in an unpredictable manner with an eagerness to play and not to make use of the calligraphy that is usual in iconography.

2009 Annual, Dedicated to the celebration of the Administrative unity of Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, this Annual highlights the Diocesan Days and the life of the Western American Diocese. It includes the report on 30th anniversary of the Repose of Fr Justin Popovic, as well as numerous articles and relevant writings on missions, ordinations, consecrations, monastic life, new releases in the Western American Diocese, including the directory of parishes and diocesan ministry departments.

A New Illustrated, full-color 2010 pocket size **CALENDAR**

This high quality, bilingual (English and Serbian) pocket size 2010 calendar with exceptional graphic design is profusely illustrated, with daily and special prayers, a directory of the Western American Diocese of the SOC, a schedule of events, and space for personal notes throughout, is indispensable for an organized Christian living.



In preparation for publishing are the following titles:

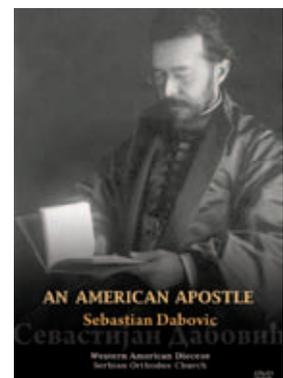
The Sailor of the Heaven, by Fr. Stamatis Skliris and Marko Rupnik. An interview of two artists, theologians and clergymen, Orthodox and Roman Catholic. They answer 20 questions about contemporary Christian art asked by Protopresbyter Dr. Radovan Bigovic.

Collected works of Archimandrite Sebastian Dabovich (3 volumes).

Holiness and Otherness, an anthology of Bishop Maxim’s theological articles.

The Explanation of the First, Second and Third Epistle of St. John the Theologian, by Archimandrite Justin Popovic.

Man of God-Man Christ, by Archimandrite Justin Popovic.



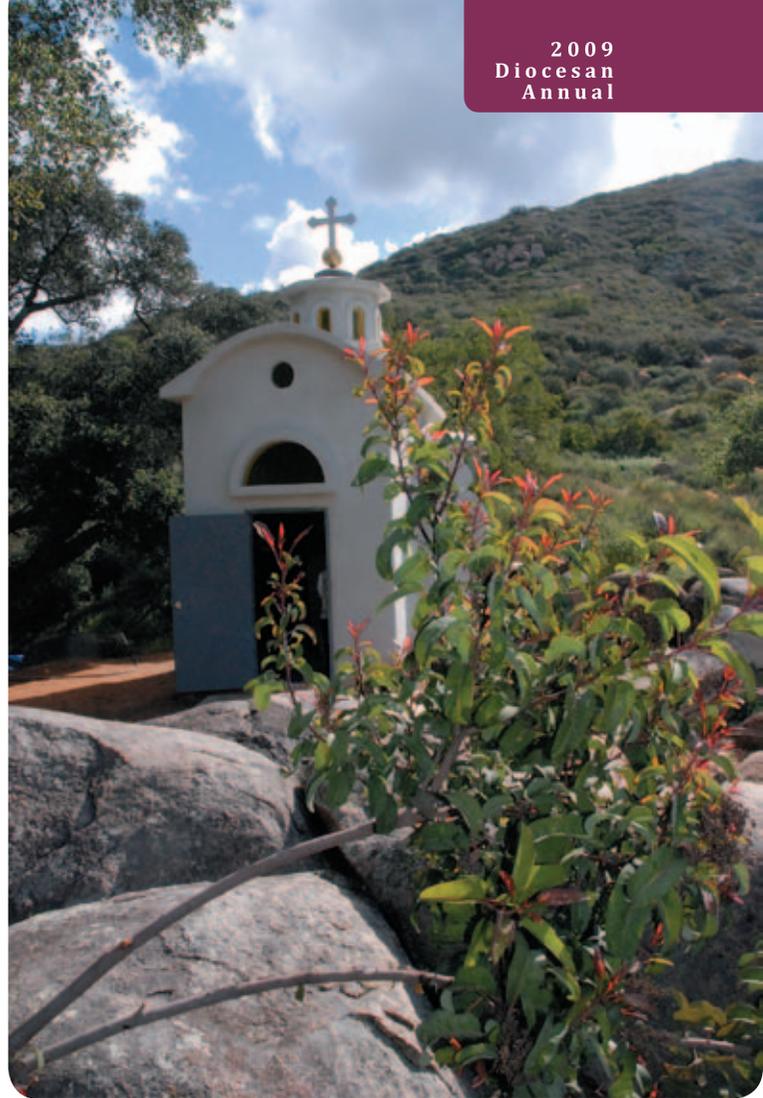
MONASTERY OF THE MEETING OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

"If you want to be perfect, go, sell all your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." (Mt. 19:21)

In the tradition of the monastic spirit, our Monastery of the Meeting of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gives us another opportunity to better experience and understand the ascetic life. Although the monastic life, with its physical withdrawal from the world to the desert, began in the middle of the third century, Christian monasticism took its practical roots in the early fourth century. Most notable during the early years of monasticism was St. Anthony the Great of Egypt, a founding father of eremitical (reclusive) monasticism. During the second millennium, Mt. Athos in Greece appeared as the center of Orthodox monasticism. In the Orthodox Christian tradition, monasticism is often called the 'barometer of the spiritual life of the Church.' So great has the influence of and appreciation for this way of life been, that its existence and status have been equated with those of the Church as a whole. As the monastic life flourishes, so flourishes the Church.

The word 'monastery' is derived from the Greek word 'monasterios' (from 'monazein', to live alone). 'Monastery' denotes the building, or complex of buildings, that houses a room reserved for prayer as well as domestic quarters and workplace(s) of monastics (monks or nuns), and whether living in community or alone as hermits.

What is difficult to the world is approached with dedication in the monastic life. In his/her spiritual life, the monastic simply tries to do what every Christian should try to do, and that is to live according to God's commandments. The fundamental principles of monasticism are not different from those of the lives of all the faithful. This is especially



apparent in the history of the early Church, before monasticism appeared.

The innermost spiritual sense of Orthodox Monasticism is revealed in *joyful mourning*. This paradoxical phrase denotes a spiritual state in which a monastic in his/her prayer grieves for the sins of the world and at the same time experiences the regenerating spiritual joy of Christ's forgiveness and resurrection. A monastic dies in order to live, he/she forgets himself/herself in order to find his/her real self in God, and he/she becomes ignorant of worldly knowledge in order to attain real spiritual wisdom which is given only to the humble ones.

Orthodox monasticism has always been associated with stillness and silence, seen primarily as an internal rather than an external state. External silence, however, is sought in order to attain more easily inner stillness of mind. What better place to achieve this than in the serene hillsides east of Escondido, CA where our monastery is located, situated among ancient oaks as sentinels guarding God's precious creation. In vigilant contemplation under the shade of these canopies and alongside the soothing sound of the meandering stream, the monks of this monastery can totally devote themselves to God.

Thanks to the generosity of land donors Ratko and Jovanka Djekic, the monks have a quiet place to live and better know themselves, fighting their passions more deeply and purifying their hearts more fully, to be found worthy of beholding God. It is in this setting that monks pray for the world and us constantly.

In this coenobitic community, everything will be shared: living quarters, food, work, prayer, common efforts, cares, struggles and achievements. For this spiritual haven to become a reality, great effort is required by the Faithful of our Diocese to provide the infrastructure and buildings for this monastery. The Master Plan for these 17 acres calls for a monastery church, monastic dormitories, reception center, retreat center with guest sleeping quarters, and workshops. Planned agricultural areas include a vineyard and orchard, as well as a poultry coop, beehives, and fishpond. Many of the Faithful have joyfully visited the monastery for prayer and picnics leaving spiritually refreshed. With God's help, this monastery will continue to grow as a spiritual magnet in Southern California.

Thanks to many volunteers, among work accomplished to date is cleaning up the property, the construction of a small chapel and cabin, and planting new trees. In the immediate future, the bridge over the stream needs to be rebuilt. Technical investigations are planned soon so that a final Master Plan can be submitted to the County for review.

We give glory to God for being able to add one more

monastery to the growing number on this continent. Everyone is encouraged to be part of this growth by contributing funds, materials, and their time to make this monastery a spiritual jewel that will enlighten our lives. For further information or to offer a donation, call the Diocesan office at 626 - 289 9061.

The Meeting of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple, Commemorated on February 15 (February 2)

Forty days after Christ was born, he was presented to God in the Jerusalem Temple according to the Mosaic Law. At this time as well his mother Mary underwent the ritual purification and offered the sacrifices as prescribed in the Law. Thus, forty days after the birth of Christ, the Church celebrates the feast of the presentation called the **Meeting** (or **Presentation** or **Reception**) of the Lord.

The meeting of Christ by the elder Simeon and the prophetess Anna (*Lk 2:22-36*) is the main event of the feast of Christ's presentation in the Temple. It was "revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (*Lk 2:26*) and, inspired by the same Spirit, he came to the Temple where he met the new-born Messiah, took him in his arms and said the words which are now chanted each evening at the end of the Vesper service:

Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for mine eyes have seen Your salvation





which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for the revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel (Lk 2:29-32).

At this time, Simeon predicted that Jesus would be the “sign which is spoken against” and that he would cause “the fall and the rising of many in Israel.” He also foretold Mary’s sufferings because of her son (Luke 22:34-35). Anna also was present and, giving thanks to God “she spoke of Jesus to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem” (Lk 2:38).

In the service of the feast of the **Meeting of the Lord**, the fact emphasized is that Christ, the Son and Word of God through whom the world was created, now is held as an infant in Simeon’s hands; this same Son of God, the Giver of the Law, now himself fulfills the Law, carried in arms as a human child.

Receive him, O Simeon, whom Moses on Mount Sinai beheld in the darkness as the Giver of the Law. Receive him as a babe now obeying the Law. For he it is of whom the Law and the Prophets have spoken, incarnate for our sake and saving humankind. Come let us adore him! (Vesper verse of the Feast)

The celebration of the Meeting of the Lord in the Church is not merely a historical commemoration. Inspired by the same Holy Spirit as Simeon, and led by the same Spirit into the Church of the Messiah, the members of the Church also can claim their own “meeting” with the Lord, and so also can witness that they too can “depart in peace” since their eyes have seen the salvation of God in the person of his Christ. *Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace! From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those who sat in darkness! Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder; you accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls who grants us the resurrection. (Troparion).*



OUR LITURGICAL WINE

At the Annual Diocesan Days celebration in September of 2005, during his inaugural visit to the historic St. Sava Church in Jackson, California, the first Serbian Orthodox Church in the Western hemisphere, His Grace Bishop Maxim tasted some of the renowned Amador County wines and promptly suggested that the Western American Diocese produce its own wine for liturgical use. He stated that this wine should be full-bodied, yet mellow and aromatic and slightly sweet to the taste.

Wine grapes were introduced to this part of the Sierra Nevada Foothills (45 miles Southeast of Sacramento and 90 miles Southwest of Lake Tahoe) during the 1850s Gold Rush, when fortune-seeking prospectors brought rootstock with them from their Mediterranean homelands. Some of the vineyards planted during that time have survived to the present day. The region is well known for its French Syrah and Italian Barbera wine grapes and internationally recognized for its Zinfandel. For years, the Zinfandel variety was believed to be native to America; however, recent DNA studies have revealed its origin to be the Dalmatian Coast!

Fr. Stephen Tumbas, parish priest of St. Sava Church in Jackson and a winemaker himself (Tumbas Vineyards, Shenandoah Valley), offered his God-given talents back to our Lord and His Holy Church in an invaluable example of stewardship. Fr. Stephen explained: "Not knowing exactly what would be involved, I agreed to take on the project. The first batch of wine was produced in 2006 from aromatic Black Muscat and Zinfandel grapes that

were harvested late to obtain higher sugar content. The 2007 vintage will be a combination of Syrah and Black Muscat grapes."

Sebastian Wine was first offered at the Divine Liturgy during Diocesan Days in Jackson in September 2007. This soft, sweet and well-perfumed wine has been distributed throughout the Western American Diocese. It is believed that this is the first time in the history of the Serbian Orthodox Church in America that it is producing its own wine for celebration of the Eucharist.

Sebastian Wine: The Second Vintage

This year's liturgical wine will be slightly different from the last. In response to requests from several priests and parishes, we are adding a little more fruit sugar concentrate to the blend before bottling. This will make the wine sweeter to the taste. We are also changing the base of the blend from Zinfandel to Syrah. We believe that this will make the wine a bit more full-bodied. Finally, our wine will bear a new label created by Fr. Stamatis, the Greek priest and iconographer, whose work can be seen throughout this Annual and on most of the communiqués from the Western American Diocese.

Bottled in July we plan to have the wine ready for distribution by the late fall. Our production total is the same as last year: two sixty-gallon barrels that will yield 120 cases of 375 ml bottles. At the present time, this is sufficient wine for the entire year for our diocese, as well as for a few churches in other dioceses.



This wine is offered to all parishes throughout the country.

If you are interested in a sample, please contact the Diocese office at 626-289-9061 or email westdiocese@earthlink.net

RADIO MINISTRY

The Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church began broadcasting over the radio on Pentecost, June 14, 1997. With new technological advances, particularly the development of digital audio and internet broadcasting, the radio ministry evolved into our current podcasts made available through the internet. Podcasting began to catch hold in late 2004, though the ability to distribute audio files so such easily and to a much wider audience. We believe that our podcast ministry is of great importance as through this new technology, it is now available to everyone, everywhere, through our website. We are especially pleased to often receive favorable comments about our podcasts.

Just recently we have started a new project with the highly acclaimed and widely recognized actress Mirjana Jokovic. She is a faithful Serbian Orthodox actress who works and lives in Los Angeles. We have invited her to help us with her ideas and talents to enrich our audio database through the recordings of very important church literature. Since its beginning, the radio program and subsequently our podcasts have had followed one basic format: A sermon by our Bishop on a feast which is to be celebrated the following week. Sometimes sermons by others are read. This is followed by readings from Prologue of Ohrid by Saint Nikolai Velimirovic, for saints that are celebrated during upcoming week. The programs then continue with Educational material on a range of topics, such as how to celebrate feast days, the slava and other traditions connected with our holidays. Readings from Serbian Literature, which are read from time to time usually in English have become popular.

Spiritual music is a crucial part of our podcasts. Finally, at the conclusion of every broadcast we try to present current news. from our Western Diocese, The Serbian Orthodox Church, Orthodoxy in general, and especially news from Kosovo and Metohija.

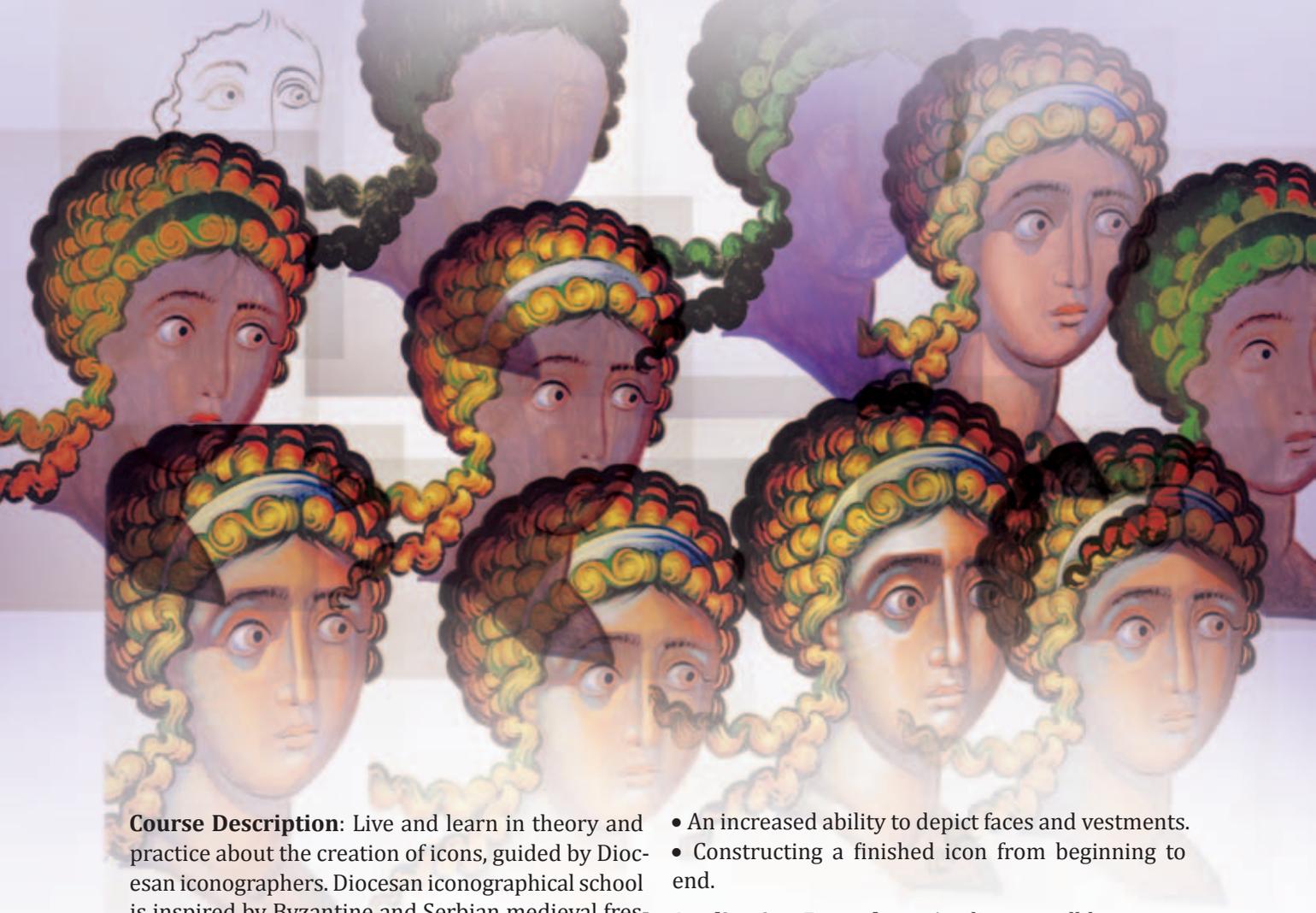
In addition to our regular format we broadcast special shows. In these shows we inform our listeners about important events that are taking place in our Diocese. (Diocesan Days, An-

nual Assembly, honorable visits of our guests.) We prepare special programs for great Feast Days such as Christmas, Pascha, Saint Sava and Vidovdan. In 2008 we presented a lecture and interview with Bishop Atanasije. We also interviewed Bishop Porfirije who was an honored guest during Diocesan Days 2007. Radio program featured lectures by a recognized Orthodox bishops, theologians and professors, like Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, Metropolitan Nikitas of Dardanelles, Bishop Irinej of Australia, Bishop Teodosije of Lipljan (Kosovo), Fr Thomas Hopko and Prof. Bosko Bojovic. We will continue to work on keeping the podcasts on the internet. Anyone may subscribe to our podcast program and we encourage you to do so.



DIOCESAN ICONOGRAPHY STUDIO

“Icon: A Two-Month Theory and Practice Workshop” Saint Steven’s Orthodox Cathedral



Course Description: Live and learn in theory and practice about the creation of icons, guided by Diocesan iconographers. Diocesan iconographical school is inspired by Byzantine and Serbian medieval fresco painting and by Fr. **Stamatis**, a famous parish priest, iconographer and medical doctor from Athens, Greece, who is well-known throughout Europe for his iconography. Our teachers impart their creative, Patristic knowledge of Icon illustrating to aspiring Iconographers and help them to more fully develop their potential. The intensive course will follow the schedule below.

Course Benefits and Objectives:

- Develop a deep practical knowledge of Byzantine Iconography.
- To be able to paint hand-painted icons and wall-paintings.

- An increased ability to depict faces and vestments.
- Constructing a finished icon from beginning to end.

Application Procedure: Applicants will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, and are strongly encouraged to apply early as space is very limited. Applications will be subject to a selection process which will give special preference to aspiring Iconographers within the local region, and especially within the Western American Serbian Diocese. A \$400 enrollment fee will be required to cover course costs and materials. Once accepted into the program, the fee will be non-refundable. Please make payment to the Western American Serbian Diocese in the form of a check and send to: 2541 Crestline Terrace, Alhambra, California, 91803

Week One

Introducing the basic techniques of iconography (colors, material, styles)

ANY PROPOSAL FOR TEACHING ICON-PAINTING must avoid the two extremes we mentioned: it must not ignore the dimension of portraiture of the icon, and risk becoming a monophysitic art like that of the Copts, but neither should it be reduced to a mere portrait, having no connection with the freedom of the eternal Kingdom of God. For this reason, the icon-painter must allow himself to experience all the stages that Christian icon-painting went through during its evolution. He has to acquire a timeless view and a criterion of what constitutes Orthodoxy in icon-painting, and he must not confine himself to any one period, trend, technique or school.

It will help him greatly to engage in the thought processes of the first centuries of Christianity, when the first choices were being made and the first crucial steps taken, from the Hellenistic mummy portraits such as those of Fayum towards the first icons made in encaustic, the majority of which are preserved at the Monastery at Sinai. Next, he should study the exquisite illuminated manuscripts made after the Iconoclastic period, the unrivalled mosaics of the eleventh century, and, finally, the monument of Sopotsani, supremely relevant in this context, in which the classical Greek concept exists alongside advanced Byzantine techniques of illumination, furnishing the contemporary icon-painter with a standard and a criterion for affirming the tangible world and sensible beauty on the one hand, and on the other the eschatological transfiguration and liberation of all things from the limitations of created being. In addition, he should study the whole system of illuminations in icons, that by the fourteenth century had been fully established.

In studying the history of iconography, the painter should also find a criterion that enables him to assess the degree to which considerations of portraiture, along with all the other elements of iconography, entered into each work and period. A perusal of the history of icon-painting using this criterion would help the painter to gain insights which could be very fruitful in his own personal work.

In any case, the contemporary icon-painter should avoid intense formalism of line, and rediscover the fluent, rich, spontaneous color of Byzantine art; moreover, he should gradually introduce into his work the element of portraiture, not in order to be more artistic, but as a way to portray in a genuinely Orthodox fashion the dogma of the Incarnation of

the Son of God, that is, God's assuming of a form that, in being tangible and human, is an affirmation of each particular thing that belongs to sensible humanity.

ICONOGRAPHY ACHIEVES REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE DIALECTIC

between two elements. The first is the design of the icon. The icon uses design to depict all the historical elements of a saint's life which express the personal relationship with Christ and his fellow-beings, established during his historical life and earthly existence.

Next, illuminating the saint with the light special to Byzantine painting (which all the other affiliated arts have, to a greater or lesser extent, adopted), endows biological existence, depicted by the design, with all the elements of freedom and release from the limitations of biological existence within created space and time. We must point out here that, in the dialectic between history and the eschaton, in other words, between the created and the uncreated, depicted in the icon, design and light (or created and uncreated), do not participate on an equal basis. As Fr. Florovsky speaks of unequal Christology (in the sense that the one hypostasis of the pre-eternal Son and Word of God assumes, through the Incarnation, human nature and hypostasizes it, without there being two equal hypostases, one divine and one human, joined in an equal partnership), so too iconography does not combine two ways of being that co-exist as equals, but lays the emphasis firmly on eschatology.

Week Two

Open individual practice

Week Three

How to draw Byzantine proportions successively.

Knowing the elements of the face and body

Drawing and painting facial features and faces

In order to break free from a specific model and to create his own design for the icon he intends to paint, the painter must have a thorough knowledge of the proportions of the human face. The view that the Byzantine icon distorts nature is plainly wrong. The most important works in this tradition have been studied and reveal a profound knowledge of nature, its proportions and its harmonies of color and shape (for example, the naked Christ in the icon of the Baptism at Dafni has the classic proportion of head to body, that is, 1:8, while the combination of colors in the works of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are found in nature).

a) The icon-painter, therefore, can start his design with an oval shape, broader at the top and narrower at the bottom, which is typical of the human face.

b) Next, he divides this into three equal parts, top to bottom: the upper part is the forehead, the middle gives the proportions of the nose, while below is the space between nose and chin.

c) Within this shape he situates the eyes and the mouth, the ears and hair, then the neck, then the rest of the body, always guided by an accurate and profound knowledge of the proportions of the anatomy.

d) It goes without saying that he keeps in mind the vision the Church has of each saint, how the Church conceives the face of Saint Anthony, for example, and in front of him he must have more than one icon of the saint to consult.

Week Four

Open individual practice.

Week Five

Illuminating icons with a Byzantine-style lighting Studying and applying the function and purpose of the light Studying and applying the range of lighting styles

At this stage,, the iconographer covers the space between the outline of the face with the Byzantine „proplasma“ (primer), a relatively dark color, olive-green or brown.

The next step, using dark colors, he draws in the lines of the body, as in the original design. Finally, he illuminates each area with the particular light found in Byzantine painting. The special quality of this light consists in the following:

a) It tends to illuminate the whole face centrally rather than one-sidedly, leaving a narrow border of unpainted primer round the outside which blends with and emphasizes the outline of the face, thereby causing the whole to be more stylized.

b) At the point where the light meets the primer, there is not such a gradual transition from lighter to darker shadings as in the works of the

Renaissance, which were painted using the technique of „sfumato“. The transition from one shade to another must be staggered so that the surface covered by each added layer of lighter color is clearly outlined. The illumination, that is, of the face and the other areas must be „quantized“ (to borrow the terminology of modern physics), in the sense that each of the additional layers must be clearly demarcated. As regards the strokes of the brush on the painting, the light must illuminate only those parts of the anatomy that really exist (i.e., the nose, the arches of the eyebrows, the cheekbones, the dome of the forehead, etc.) and the spaces in between should be left in half-light.

c) Shadows, where they exist, tend to be on the periphery, are the same color and shade, are not added afterwards but are part of the darker primer which is put on first and is not covered over, where there are shadows, by the additional lighter layers of paint. The parts of the anatomy are never shadowed; for example, they are never found on the forehead or the cheekbones. These factors constitute crucial and radical differences between Byzantine illumination and Renaissance chiaroscuro, in which shadows are added afterwards in brushstrokes of different color-shadings, delicately graduated and the result of naturally occurring optical phenomena, so that they are allowed to fall on the anatomical features.

d) Finally, areas of most definition are picked out with strong, fine, almost white lines. When the naturalistic design has been illuminated in the particular Byzantine style described, the work takes on a different character, akin to that of Byzantine art. The „quantization“ of light functions impressionistically, giving us the sense that the face in the painting is bright with an intense but naturalistic light.

This figurative technique creates an impressionism of color and light, and also functions expressionistically, since it accentuates and stylizes the outline and some of the inner lines, and gives special emphasis to the area around the eyes, which lends expression to a face.

This technique leads the work out of the sphere of naturalness and gives it the transcendental character of an icon.



Western American Diocese

THE DIRECTORY OF THE WESTERN AMERICAN DIOCESE

THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP MAXIM

Episcopal Headquarters

1621 West Garvey Avenue, Alhambra,
California 91803
Office (626) 289-9061
Fax (626) 284-1484
E-mail: westdiocese@earthlink.net
www.westsrbdio.org

OFFICE OF CHANCELLOR

Assistant Chancellor: Hieromonk Jovan Babic
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Phone (626) 288-1977

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Rev. Protopresbyter Blasko Paraklis, Administrator
Phone: (949) 830-5480
24236 Olivera Dr. Mission Viejo, CA 92691
E-mail: frparaklis@aol.com
Mr. Boban Krajisnik, *Board President*
Phone: (907) 333-1264
2408 Tulane St., Anchorage, AK 99504

ARIZONA

BISBEE

ST. STEPHEN NEMANJA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

216 Park Avenue,
P.O. Box 5666, Bisbee AZ 85603
Rev. Presbyter Stevan Gagic, Administrator
Phone: (480) 661-0815
10744 N. 119th Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85259
Mr. Sam Sorich, Parish President
Phone: (520) 249-7196

PHOENIX

ST. SAVA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

4436 East McKinley Street, Phoenix, AZ 85008
Office: (602) 275-7360, fax (602) 275-4112
**V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor
Janko Trbovic, Parish Priest**
Phone: (480) 949-9475
1631 N. Sunset Drive, Tempe, AZ 85281
E-mail: jtrbovic@hotmail.com

ST. NIKOLA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

11640 N. 16th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85020
Phone: (602) 943-0941
Rev. Stanislav Duric, Parish Priest
Phone (602) 323 7807
1122 East Potter Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85024
e-mail: stanislavduric@hotmail.com

CALIFORNIA

ALHAMBRA

ST. STEVEN'S SERBIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

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Office: (626) 284-9100, Fax: (626) 281-5045
Website: www.saintstevens.org
**V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor
Nikola Ceko, Cathedral Dean**
Phone: (626) 284-9100
(Church Address)
E-mail: frnicholas@saintstevens.org

Rev. Presbyterian Norman Kosanovich

Phone: (626) 284-9100
5417-A Sultana Avenue, Temple City, CA 91780
E-mail: fnorman@saintstevens.org

THE VENERABLE PETER OF KORISH CHAPEL

2541 Crestline Terrace, Alhambra, California 91803

ANGELES CAMP

ST. BASIL OF OSTROG SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION

P.O. Box 673, Altaville, CA 95521
930 N. Main Street, Angeles Camp, CA 95222
Phone: (209) 736-2340

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor

Miladin Garic, Administrator
Phone: (916) 966-1999
6723 Will Rogers Dr., Fair Oaks, CA 95628

ARCADIA

CHRIST THE SAVIOR SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1424 S. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007-7923
Office: (626) 445-2370, Fax: (626) 445-2323
Cell: (626) 975-1966

V. Rev. Borislav Jegarski, Parish Priest

P.O. Box 1044, Arcadia, CA 91077

FAIR OAKS

**ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

7777 Sunset Avenue, Fair Oaks, CA 95628
Office: (916) 966-5438, Fax: (916) 966-5235

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Dane Popovic, Parish Priest

Phone: (916) 966-6276
(Church Address)

E-mail: father_dane@yahoo.com

Rev. Presbyter William Wier

Phone: (916) 488-0827
2911 Morse Ave, Sacramento, CA 95821

FRESNO

ST. PETER THE APOSTLE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

3502 North First St. Fresno, CA 93726
Office: (559) 227-5565, Fax (559) 227-0501
E-mail: stpeter2937@sbcglobal.net

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor

George Gligich, Parish Priest

Phone: (559) 325-8528
2343 E. Birch, Fresno, CA 93720

Parish deacons:

V. Rev. Protodeacon Brad Matthews

Phone: (559) 897-7319
1101 6th Ave Dr., Kingsburg, CA 93631
E-mail: brad_matthews@att.net

Rev. Deacon Norman Shultz

Phone: (559) 999-9402
455 E. Nees #147, Fresno, CA 93720

JACKSON

ST. SAVA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

724 North Main Street, P.O. Box 1243 Jackson, CA 95642
Office: (209) 223-2700

Rev. Presbyter Stephen Tumbas, Parish Priest

Phone: (209) 245-3142
P.O. Box 246, Plymouth, CA 95669
E-mail: Tumbas@mindspring.com

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Miladin Garich,

Phone: (916) 966-1999
6723 Will Rogers Dr., Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Rev. Deacon Triva Pavlov, Parish Deacon

Phone: (209) 223-4640
P.O. Box 594, Jackson, CA 95642
E-mail: frtriva@sbcglobal.net

MORAGA

HOLY TRINITY SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1700 School St., Moraga, CA 94556
Office: (925) 376-5982

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor

Vasilije Cvijanovic, Parish Priest

Phone: (925) 935-5526
1454 Whitecliff Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94595
E-mail: vcvijanovic@astound.net

OAKLAND

ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

94-9th., Oakland, CA 94607-4702

Phone: (510) 836-0591

V. Rev. Stavrophor Dusan Bunjevic, Administrator

29 Topaz Way, San Francisco, CA 94131

Phone: 415-641-5087

Email: protad@aol.com

ORANGE COUNTY

NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

2148 Michelson Drive Irvine, CA 92612

Office: (949) 830-5480

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Blasko Paraklis, Parish Priest

Phone: (949) 830-5480

24236 Olivera Dr. Mission Viejo, CA 92691

E-mail: frparaklis@aol.com

REDDING

**ST. ANDREW FOOL-FOR-CHRIST SERBIAN
ORTHODOX MISSION**

1865 Diamond Street, Anderson, CA 96007

www.standrewfoolforchrist.org

Rev. Presbyter Michael Boyle, Parish Priest

Phone: (530) 241-3660

953 South St., Redding, CA 96001

E-mail: frmichael.boyle@gmail.com

Rev. Deacon Philip Mayer, Parish Deacon

22645 Old 44 Dr. Palo Cedro, CA 96073

Phone: (530) 547-4912

E-mail: dnphilipm@aim.com

SAN DIEGO

ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

3025 Denver Street, San Diego CA 92117

Phone: (619) 276-5827, Fax: (619) 275-4476

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Bratislav

Bratso Krsic, Parish Priest

E-mail: frbratso@aol.com

Rev. Deacon Paul Germain, Parish Deacon

287 Sneath Way, Alpine, CA 91901

Phone: 619-659-9504

E-mail: pgermain@cox.net

SAN FRANCISCO

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

www.sjsoc.org

900 Baker St., San Francisco, CA 94115-3811

Office: (415) 567-5869, Fax: (415) 567-5855

V. Rev. Djurica Gordic, Parish Priest

910 Baker St., San Francisco, CA 94115

E-mail: stjohsoc@yahoo.com

SAN GABRIEL

ST. SAVA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1640 South San Gabriel Blvd, San Gabriel CA 91776

Phone: (626) 288-7343

www.saintsavachurchla.org

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor

Petar Jovanovich, Parish Priest

1637 S. Gladys Avenue, San Gabriel CA 91776

Phone: (626) 288-1977

E-mail: stsava@sbcglobal.net

ST. SAVA CHURCH AT CEMETERY
4355 Second Street, East Los Angeles, CA 90022
V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Petar Jovanovich

SAN MARCOS

ST. PETKA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
1854 Knob Hill Road, San Marcos, CA 92069
Phone: (760) 743-2178, Fax (760)743-0513
V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Milan Vukovic, Parish Priest
Phone: (760) 744-4829, Fax (760)744-5474
819 Wulff Street, San Marcos, CA 92069

SARATOGA

ST. ARCHANGEL MICHAEL SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
18870 Allendale Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070-5239
Phone: (408) 867-4876, Fax: (408) 867-0421
V. Rev. Slobodan Jovic, Parish Priest
Email: jovic45@hotmail.com

SERBIAN CEMETERY'S CHAPEL OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY

1801 Hillside Blvd, Colma, CA 94014
Phone at Cemetery is 650-755-2453
(fax) 650-755-1631
Rev. Djurica Gordic, Parish Priest
E-mail: stjohsoc@yahoo.com

COLORADO

DENVER

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION
9305 W. Cedar Ave, Lakewood, CO 80226
P.O. BOX 24899, Denver, CO 80224
Rev. Presbyter Radovan Petrovic, Parish Priest
5219 S. Delaware St. #103
Englewood, CO 80110
303-730-2975; cell (773) 865-4636
E-mail: rev.radovanpetrovic@hotmail.com

COLORADO SPRINGS

ANNUNCIATION TO THE MOTHER OF GOD SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION PARISH
Rev. Presbyter Radovan Petrovic, Administrator
4055 Autumn Heights Unit-F
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
303-730-2975; cell (773) 865-4636
E-mail: rev.radovanpetrovic@hotmail.com

HAWAII

HONOLULU

ST. LAZAR SERBIAN ORTHODOX PARISH
P.O. Box 23173
HONOLULU, HI 96823-3173
Dragan Ijacic, Board President
808 393-7995, 808 306-4932
V. Rev. Protopresbyter Blasko Paraklis and Hieromonk Jovan Babic, Administrators
Phone: 949 830-5480
E-mail: serbianorthodoxhawaii@hotmail.com
E-mail: frparaklis@aol.com

IDAHO

BOISE

HOLY RESURRECTION SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION
Rev. Protopresbyter Blasko Paraklis, Administrator
Phone: (949) 830-5480
24236 Olivera Dr. Mission Viejo, CA 92691
E-mail: frparaklis@aol.com
Cedo Borak, Board President
9998 Glen Ellyn St., Boise, ID 83704

MONTANA

BUTTE

HOLY TRINITY SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
2100 Continental Drive, Butte, MT 59701
Phone: (406) 723-7889
www.holytrinitybutte.org
Rev. Presbyter Russell Radoicich, Parish Priest
Email: rradoici@yahoo.com
Rev. Deacon Theophan Wiese, Parish Deacon
707 N. Wallace Ave., Bozeman, MT 59715

NEVADA

LAS VEGAS

ST. SIMEON MIROTOCIVI SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
3950 S. Jones Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89103
Phone: (702) 367-7783, Fax (702) 248-7333
V. Rev. Protopresbyter Uros Todorovic, Parish Priest
Phone: (702) 657-9137
5649 Guiding Star Cir, North Las Vegas, NV 89031
Rev. Deacon Ozren Todorovic, Parish Deacon
5649 Guiding Star Cir, North Las Vegas, NV 89031
E-mail: ozrentodorovic@hotmail.com

RENO

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION PARISH

Mailing Address: 2868-Vista Bl. 124/132, Sparks, NV 89434
Physical Address: 3835 Glen Street, Reno, NV 89502
Phone: (775) 786-7328
Rev. James Barfield
E-mail: frjames_barfield@yahoo.com

OREGON

PORTLAND

ST. STEPHEN ARCHDEACON AND PROTOMARTYR SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
11447 SE. 27 Ave, Milwaukie, OR 97222
Rev. Presbyter Nikola Todorovic, Parish Priest
Home Phone: (503) 653-4071
Cell Phone: (503) 381-1271
Office Phone: (503) 292-7170
11509 SE 27th Ave. Unit B, Milwaukie OR 97222
E-mail: svesteniktodorovic@yahoo.com

EUGENE

ST. JOHN THE WONDERWORKER SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION
304 Blair Blvd, Eugene, OR 97402
Phone: (541) 484-5810
Rev. Presbyter David Lubliner, Parish Priest
Phone: (541) 341-4500
Email: dlubliner@msn.com
Rev. Deacon Stephen Dyer, Parish Deacon
Phone: (541) 242-6844
1075 Cheshire Ave, Eugene, OR 97402
Email: stephendyer@msn.com

THE DALLES

THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS SERBIAN ORTHODOX MISSION

1520 Weber St., The Dalles, OR 97058
Rev. Presbyter Luke Hartung, Parish Priest
Phone: (541) 296-7956
E-mail: frluke@dormitionorthodoxchurch.org
www.dormitionorthodoxchurch.org

WASHINGTON

SEATTLE

ST. SAVA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
14916 239th Pl., S. East, Issaquah, WA 98027
Phone: (425) 391-2240
www.stsavachurch-nw.org

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Ilija Balach, Parish Priest
Phone: (425) 255-9144, Fax (425) 793-4229
15614 SE 179th St. Renton, WA 98058
E-mail: ebalach@comcast.net

UTAH

SALT LAKE CITY

ST. ARCHANGEL MICHAEL SERBIAN ORTHODOX PARISH
1606 South 1000 West, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84104
V. Rev. Protopresbyter Blasko Paraklis, Administrator
Phone: (949) 830-5480
Email: frparaklis@aol.com

MONASTERIES

ALASKA

ST. NILUS SERBIAN ORTHODOX SKETE
P.O. Box 18 Ouzinkie, AK 99644

ST. ARCHANGEL MICHAEL SERBIAN ORTHODOX SKETE
P.O. Box 90 Ouzinkie, AK 99644

ARIZONA

**SAINT PAISIUS SERBIAN ORTHODOX
WOMAN'S MONASTERY**

P.O. Box 1075, Safford, AZ 85548
10250 S. Sky Blue Road, Safford, AZ 85546
Rev. Mother Abbess Michaila
Phone: (928) 348-4900, Fax: (928) 348-4902
E-mail: stpaisius@aznexus.net

CALIFORNIA

**SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA SERBIAN ORTHODOX
MEN'S MONASTERY**

10 Beegum Gorge Road, P.O. Box 70, Platina CA 96076
Phone: (530) 352-4430, Fax (530) 352-4432
V. Rev. Hieromonk Abbot Gerasim
E-mail: stherman@stherman.com

ST. XENIA SERBIAN ORTHODOX SKETE
P.O. Box 260 Wildwood, CA 96076
Abbess Dorothea

MONASTERY OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD

Escondido, CA
Phone: (760) 917-0534
Hieromonk Nektarije (Radovanovic)
1854 Knob Hill Road, San Marcos, CA 92069

RETIRED CLERGY

- V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Velimir Petakovic
Phone: (760) 489-5024
3335 Mary Lane, Escondido, CA 92025
Phone/Fax (760) 489-6251
- V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Miladin Garich
Phone: (916) 966-1999
6723 Will Rogers Dr. Fair Oaks, CA 95628
1272 East La Costa Place, Chandler, AZ 85249-8782
- V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Ilija Dajkovic
Phone: (626) 446-4501
6558 N. Golden Ave., Arcadia, CA 91006
- V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Bozidar Draskovic,
Phone: (760) 930-4313
7175 Surfbird Circle, Carlsbad, CA 92011
E-mail: njegos@roadrunner.com
- V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor Budimir Andjelich
Phone: (925) 743-1306
149 Valle Verde Ct., Danville CA 94526

DIOCESAN DEPARTMENTS AND MINISTRIES

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604 Broadway, Jackson, CA 95642
Summer Camp Mailing Address:
1621 West Garvey Avenue, Alhambra, CA 91803

SAINT SAVA MISSION AND RETREAT CENTER

- Rev. Presbyter Steven Tumbas, *Director*
- Chris Passaro, *Facility Manager*
604 Broadway, Jackson, CA 95642
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 965 Jackson CA 95642

CAMPUS MINISTRY AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (OCF)

Rev. Presbyter Norman Kosanovich
1621 West Garvey Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803

RADIO MINISTRY

1621 West Garvey Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803
Editor: Hieromonk Jovan Babic
Phone: (626) 289-9061
www.westsrbdio.org/audio/index.html
E-mail: westdiocese@earthlink.net

"SEBASTIAN" PRESS AND BOOKSTORE

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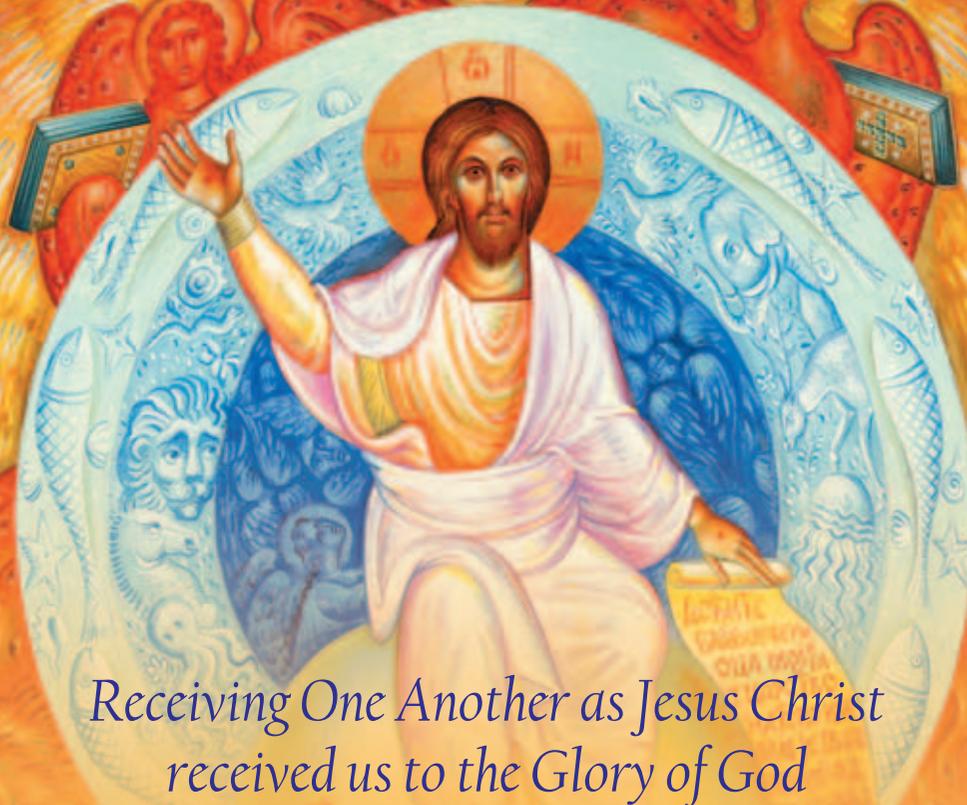
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V. Rev. Protopresbyter Borislav Jegarski
Obren Gerich

DIOCESAN CIRCLE OF SERBIAN SISTERS

V. Rev. Protopresbyter Stavrophor
Petar Jovanovic, *Spiritual Advisor*
Mrs. Tanja Skundric, *President*
Phone: (949) 362-4149

Diocesan 2009 Days



*Receiving One Another as Jesus Christ
received us to the Glory of God*

(Romans 15, 7)

His Grace Bishop MAXIM cordially invites you to the

13th Annual Diocesan Days gathering

*Celebrating the Administrative Unity
of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America*

Come and spend a Weekend
of spiritual and social activities
for all ages with the Clergy,
Monastics and Faithful from all of
the Parishes and Monasteries
throughout our Western Diocese

Guest Speaker
His Grace Bishop
Justin of Timok
(Serbia)



Diocesan 2009 Days



Schedule for Diocesan Days 2009

Friday, September 4th, 2009

- 1:00 PM Clergy Luncheon and Conference, "Cast your nets into the deep" (Luke 5:4)
- 6:00 PM Vespers at the St. Sava Mission
- 7:00 PM Dinner with an Interactive Discussion with Rt. Rev. Bishop Justin
"Our call: Orthodox Evangelism and Lay Missionary Labor
on Modern American Culture" (presenter: Fr David Lubliner)
- 8:00-10:00 PM Evening Program and Fellowship

Saturday, September 5th, 2009

- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy at the Mission
- 11:00 AM Memorial Service at St Sava Church
- 11:30 AM Barbeque Lunch, picnic with live music from Orchestras Braca and Srma
- 1:30 PM KSS semi-annual meeting
- 3:00-4:30 PM Parent / Teacher Conference „From Stormy Sea of Life to Your Tranquil Haven“
- 12:30-5:30 PM Open Swimming
- 4:30-5:30 PM Youth Rally for Teens
- 6:00 PM Great Vespers at the Mission
- 7:00 PM Dinner with live music and dancing
- 10:30 PM Closing

Sunday, September 6th, 2009

- 9:00 AM Resurrection Matins at the Mission
- 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy at the Mission
- 12:30 AM Banquet in the St Sava Mission Hall
Keynote Address: Bishop Justin of Timok
- 2:00-5:00 PM Open Swimming
- 2:30-5:00 PM Live Music and Dancing
- 5:00 PM Closing

Hotel information:

Best Western Amador Inn, 200 S. Hwy 49 (209) 223-0211
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When calling the hotel, ask for the Diocesan days rate.