
THE VOICE

of St. George

St. George Parish is a pan-Orthodox parish; we always welcome visitors and inquirers

WINTER 2008

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| | |
|--|----|
| Christmas Message | 2 |
| Saint Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles | 3 |
| Paul and His Letters | 5 |
| Hagiography of St. Paul | 7 |
| 2,000th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ST PAUL | 8 |
| Christmas Message from Father Bratso | 9 |
| St. Sava of Serbia | 10 |
| Notes From the President | 12 |
| St. George Serbian Orthodox Church - 2009 Calendar | 13 |
| St. George Fundraising Committee (FRC) | 13 |
| CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM 2009 | 15 |
| Religious Education Report Winter 2008 | 16 |
| Helping Hands | 16 |
| St. George Stewards—2009 | 18 |
| Stole Report for January 1 – December 4, 2008 | 19 |
| Our Stewards/Volunteers | 20 |
| St. George's Inaugural Cevap Challenge | 21 |
| IOCC Event in Los Angeles | 23 |
| Kolyva or Wheat (Koljivo) Recipe | 26 |
| Thank you, everyone! | 27 |
| Serbian Basketball Stars Visit Children In Kosovo and Metohija | 28 |

So this is Christmas. And what have you done? Another year over. And a new one just begun... Well, Mr. Songwriter, Many of us are feeling a bit scared and a lot frustrated...layoffs, recession, deflation, foreclosures, death, taxes, delays, bailouts, bankruptcies, AIDS, war, flying shoes... But wait, this is Christmas, time for hope and renewal. Time to remember the faith of the wise men who trekked for two years to find the Christ Child to bring him gold, frankincense, and myrrh—the most precious of gifts. Time to remember the faith of the humble shepherds who went to find the Christ Child when they were told by angels: Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men, the Savior is born. Time to remember the faith of Joseph who took Mary as his wife, knowing she was expecting a child he was told was the Christ. And time to remember the centuries of hard times that followed for the faithful after Jesus Christ's birth, death, and resurrection (read about St. Paul and the early Christians in this issue). Now here we are more than 2,000 years later, grumbling about our fading economy and declining country... *So this is Christmas. And what have you done?* Well, isn't it time to put your faith in action, giving freely of your time, talent, and treasure (that's stewardship!)? Isn't it time to claim the victory Jesus Christ won for us? *Another year over. And a new one just begun...* Let's make 2009 the year we, in faith, put Jesus Christ at the center of our lives.—Marsha Jovanovic

+BARTHOLOMEW
By the Mercy of God
Archbishop of Constantinople, New
Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch
To the Plenitude of the Church
Grace, peace and mercy from the
Savior Christ, born in Bethlehem

Beloved brethren and children in the Lord:

The great and sacred day of Christmas has dawned, the metropolis and mother of all feasts, inviting each of us to spiritual uplifting and encounter with the Ancient of Days, who became an infant for us.

As St. John of Damascus underlines:

"By the grace of God the Father, the only begotten Son and divine Word of God, who is in the bosom of the Father and the Holy Spirit, the pre-eternal and perfect God, who is without beginning, condescends to us as His servants, becoming fully human and achieves that which is newer than new, the only new thing under the sun." (On the Orthodox Faith)

This incarnation of the Son of God is not merely symbolical, like the other incarnations of the numerous gods in mythology; it is reality, a truly new reality, the only new thing under the sun, which occurred at a specific historical moment in the reign of the Emperor Octavian Augustus some 746 years (according to new astronomical data) since the establishment of Rome, in the midst of a specific people, from the house and line of David (Luke 2.4), in a specific place, namely Bethlehem of Judaea, with a very specific purpose: "He became human in order that we might become divine," in accordance with the succinct expression of Athanasius the Great. (On the Divine Incarnation 54)

The event of incarnation of God's Word grants us the opportunity to reach the extreme limits of our nature, which are identified neither with the "good and beautiful" of the ancient Greeks and

"justice" of the philosophers, nor with the tranquility of Buddhist "nirvana" and the transcendental "fate" or so-called "karma" by means of the reputedly continuous changes in the form of life, nor again with any "harmony" of supposedly contradictory elements of some imaginary "living force" and anything else like these. Rather, it is the ontological transcendence of corruption and death through Christ, our integration into His divine life and glory, and our union by grace through Him with the Father in the Holy Spirit. These are our ultimate limits: personal union with the Trinitarian God! And Christ's nativity does not



promise any vague blessedness or abstract eternity; it places "in our hands" the potential of personal participation in God's sacred life and love in an endless progression. It grants us the possibility not only "of receiving adoption" (Gal. 4.5) but also of becoming "partakers of divine nature." (2 Peter 1.4).

Of course, amid the global confusion and crisis of our time, these truths have a strange echo. Most people's hope, resting on worldly "deities," is falsified on a daily basis in the most terrible ways. The human person is humiliated and crushed

by numbers, machines, computers, stock markets, and diverse flags of vain ideological opportunism. Nature is blasphemed; the environment groans; young people despair and protest against the injustice of the present and the uncertainty of the future. "Darkness, clouds, storms and noise" (Deut. 4.11) prevail in our world, giving the impression that even the light of hope that dawns in Bethlehem is threatened with extinction and the angelic hymn of universal joy - "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to all people" (Luke 2.14) - is in danger of being overcome. Nevertheless, the Church calls everyone to sober attention, re-evaluation of priorities in life, and pursuit of divine traces and value in every other person of respect toward the image of God. Indeed, the Church will not cease to proclaim - with all the strength acquired by its two millennia of experience - that the child that lies in the manger of Bethlehem is "the hope of all ends of the earth," the Word and purpose of life, redemption sent by God to His people, namely to the whole world.

We share this good news with much love from the martyric Throne of the Great Church of Christ in Constantinople, proclaiming it to all children of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to every person that thirsts for Christ, invoking upon all of you the mercy, peace and grace of God, together with the saving gift of the only-begotten Son of God, who came down from the

heavens - for us and for our salvation - and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, becoming human. To Him belong the glory, power, honor and worship, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, to the ages.

At the Phanar, Christmas 2008
Fervent supplicant to God for all
Bartholomew, Archbishop of
Constantinople, New Rome and
Ecumenical Patriarch

Saint Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles

St. Paul's significance in the history of Christianity can hardly be underestimated: an indefatigable missionary, the first interpreter of the Good News of Jesus Christ to the Gentile world, he is also the author of more New Testament books than any other writer.

Background. When we first meet him in the Book of Acts (7:58-8:1) it is as Saul; and later, Acts 13:9 describes him as "Saul, who is also called Paul." As a Jew he bore the name of Israel's first king (1 Samuel 9:2, 17); but as a free citizen of the Empire, he also bore a Roman name. Many Jews of this period in history had two names, one Semitic and the other Greek or Roman. A child of the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1; Philippians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 11:22), Paul proudly identified himself as an "Israelite" and a "Hebrew born of Hebrews, as to the law a Pharisee" (Philippians 3:5) "extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers" who excelled his peers "in Judaism" (Galatians 1:14). But he was also proud to be "a Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city" (Acts 21:39). Tarsus was a Hellenized city, famous for its university, theatre, art school and gymnasium. It became the capital of the province of Cilicia during Pompey's reorganization of Roman Asia Minor in 66 BC. Later on, Mark Antony – famous as Cleopatra's lover – granted freedom and Roman citizenship to the people of Tarsus. In an age when most of the people living within the boundaries of the Pax Romana were slaves, Paul was born a free citizen of the Empire.

St. Paul was "educated strictly according to the law of our fathers" at the rabbinical school conducted in Jerusalem by the great rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Gamaliel was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, "a teacher of the law respected by all the people" (Acts 5:34). Although Gamaliel is depicted in the New Testament as lenient towards Christians (Acts 5:33-39), his disciple Saul was active in the earliest persecutions of Christianity and attended the stoning of St. Stephen the deacon and first Christian

martyr (Acts 7:58). Paul "persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women" (Acts 22:4).

Conversion. Intent on exterminating the new faith, Paul sought to travel to Damascus to undertake the persecution of Christians there. It was during his trip from Jerusalem to Damascus in Syria that his life would take a crucial turn when he



encountered the risen Jesus in a searing vision of light that left him temporarily blind. This experience was revolutionary, engendering a complete transformation and redirection of his life. As a result of this "revelation" (Galatians 1:12), Saul, the bloodthirsty persecutor of Christianity converted to the faith he once hated, was baptized by Ananias and received into the Church of Damascus, the very community he had set out to suppress (Acts 9:10-31). From this moment on, he became a "slave of Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:1) and in that slavery discovered "the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Romans 8:21).

Luke recounts this Damascus experience three times in the Book of Acts: once in the narrative, Acts 9:3-19; and twice, in speeches, before a crowd in Jerusalem (22:6-16) and before Festus and King Agrippa (26:12-18).

Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any that belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

While I was on my way and approaching Damascus, about noon, I saw a great light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that suddenly shone around me and my companions. When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' I answered, asking, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord answered, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet! I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you to serve and testify to the things you have seen. I will rescue you from your people and the Gentiles – to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of their sins and a place among those who are being made holy by faith in Me.' This vision of the glory of God - what later theologians and saints will call the uncreated light - is the call by which Paul becomes the Apostle to the Gentiles, the greatest missionary in the history of Christianity. It is through his missionary efforts that Christianity, originally a sect of Judaism, becomes a world religion.

Preaching, Missionary Journeys and the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem .

After his encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus and baptism at the hands of Ananias, Paul tells us in his letter to the Galatians that he "went away at once into Arabia," spending time in the desert wastes before returning to Damascus, where he remained for three years (1:17-18). By the time of his return to Damascus, the essentials of his teaching were crystal clear: God's promise to Abraham has been fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus. The risen Jesus is the climax of history for He is both the Messiah, the Christ, and "the power and wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24). Teaching in the synagogues in Damascus

that Jesus “is the Son of God,” his preaching proved so controversial that there were plots to kill him. He escaped Damascus by being lowered over the city walls in a basket at night (Acts 9:19-25).

Three years after his conversion, Paul journeyed to Jerusalem to meet with Peter and stayed with him for fifteen days. “But I did not see any other apostle except James, the Lord’s brother” (Galatians 1:18-19). In Acts 9:26-30 Luke describes the suspicion with which the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem greeted Paul and that it was Barnabas who secured Paul’s acceptance. From Jerusalem, Paul returned to Syria and ultimately went to its capital, Antioch, the third city in the empire after Rome itself and Alexandria in Egypt.

It had been in Antioch of Syria that followers of the Way had first been called Christians (Acts 11:26) and it was this community that would commission Paul and Barnabas as missionaries (Acts 13:1-3). Luke organizes Paul’s missionary activity into three segments or journeys. Paul’s missionary journeys cover roughly 46-58AD, the most active years of his life, as he evangelized Greece and Asia Minor. Paul’s first missionary journey is recounted by Luke in Acts 13:3-14:28 and lasted for three years, probably from 46 to 49AD.

However, Paul’s message created controversy wherever he went. Initially preaching and teaching in the synagogues of the various cities they visited, it was in Antioch of Pisidia that the conflict led Paul and Barnabas to declare that they were now “turning to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46). This decision, to preach not only to the Jews but to all peoples, marks a decisive turning point in the history of Christianity. From that moment on the message of Jesus, the crucified yet risen Messiah, was clearly open to everyone and this was understood by Paul and Barnabas to be the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures (Acts 13:47-48). God had “opened the door of faith for the Gentiles” (Acts 14:27).

But it was in Antioch of Pisidia that Paul and Barnabas soon found themselves in conflict with other teachers in the Church, “believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees” (Acts 15:5), men “from Judea” who were teaching that “unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1). When this leads to “no small dissension and debate, Paul, Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem” to consult “the apostles and presbyters” about the status of Gentile converts and whether or not it was necessary for them to conform to the Mosaic covenant (Acts 15:1-5). This visit leads to the council of Jerusalem (circa 49-50AD). This council was to be a paradigmatic event in the life of the Church, the pattern for ecumenical councils yet to be called in the centuries to come. At this council there was “much debate” as Paul and Barnabas presented their Gospel before the assembled community, which included “James, Peter and John” who were “acknowledged” as “leaders” and “pillars” of the Church (Galatians 2:1-10). According to Acts 15:6-21, it was Peter’s voice that carried the day in favor of Paul and Barnabas. But it was James, speaking on behalf of all, who announced the decision of the council: circumcision is not obligatory for salvation.

After the council of Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas go their separate ways: Barnabas taking John Mark and sailing to Cyprus, Paul choosing Silas and traveling throughout Syria and Cilicia “strengthening the churches” (Acts 15:36-41).

In the decade to come, Paul was to embark on two more missionary journeys, the second one from 50 to 53AD and the third and final missionary journey lasting six years, from 53 to 59 AD. During these journeys Paul would travel throughout the ancient Mediterranean world, preaching and teaching, establishing new churches everywhere he went. His Letters leave a trail of churches founded and/or nurtured by him: Ephesus, Corinth, Thessaloniki, Philippi. He preached in Athens and was to die in Rome, the intellectual and political cen-

ters of the Empire.

Paul’s letters are the oldest Christian documents that we have. Most modern scholars believe that Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians is the first book of the New Testament to be written, sometime in 52AD. His

letters are also the largest collection of writings by any one person in the New Testament. In modern Bibles, they are placed in order of their length, with the longest letter, that to the Romans, being first and then followed by letters to individuals (Timothy, Titus and Philemon) last. Paul’s letters are exactly that: letters, occasional writings meant to deal with specific issues in the churches to which he addressed them. They are not systematic theological treatises in the modern sense. And yet, they have provided rich and deep theological insights that have never been surpassed in the Church’s history.



Imprisonment and Final Years. It is during his last visit to Jerusalem “to visit James” (Acts 21:18) that Paul is arrested near the Temple after a small riot and taken by a Roman tribune before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council. Paul defends himself before the Sanhedrin by playing on the dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees and their conflict over the resurrection. After a plot to assassinate Paul is discovered, Paul’s case is transferred to Antonius Felix, the procurator of Judea, who keeps him in prison for two years, expecting a bribe. When Felix’s successor, Festus, arrives on the scene, Paul appeals his case to Caesar, requesting a trial in Rome by virtue of his Roman citizenship. “You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you will go,” Festus replied (Acts 25:12). Paul’s journey to Rome was to be an eventful one that included shipwreck.

The Book of Acts closes with Paul under house arrest in Rome still carrying out his ministry of teaching and preaching – faithful to his Master to the end.

During his thirty-year ministry as an apostle what had Paul suffered for the sake of the Gospel? Already in 2 Corinthians, Paul describes some of what he endured to preach the Good News of Jesus risen from the dead: “Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked. For a night and a day I was adrift at sea. On frequent journeys, I was in danger from rivers, from bandits, from my own people, from Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the wilderness, in danger at sea, in danger from false brethren; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches” (11:24-29).

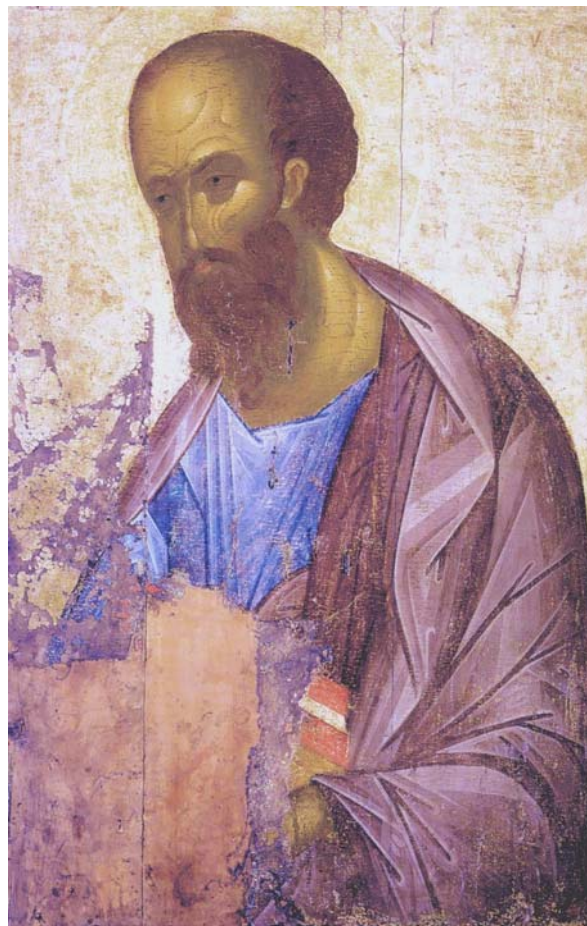
Eusebius, the 4th century bishop of Caesarea who is often called the first Church historian, records that the apostle Paul was executed in Rome during the persecution of the emperor and madman, Nero. Nero’s persecution of Christians lasted for four years, from 64 to 68AD. It was also during this persecution that the apostle Peter was executed. As a Roman citizen entitled to a quick death, Paul was beheaded. St. Gregory the Great, the 6th century pope, wrote that Paul’s execution took place on the left bank of the Tiber River on the Via Ostiensis, the road to the port of Ostia, and is buried under the main altar of the basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

Paul and His Letters

Paul was a latecomer to the movement within first-century-A.D. Judaism that espoused a belief in Jesus as the long awaited Messiah of God, and this fact was destined to hang over his head as a sword of Damocles throughout his life. It is for this reason that a great deal of his writings are devoted to defending the stature of his apostleship as being equal to that of the other apostles. Understandably, both his apostleship and his teaching about Jesus were questioned; he constantly had to defend the truth of his “gospel,” which he referred to as “the gospel.”

Paul, the Pharisee, was well reared and drilled in the scriptures, and well able to debate with anyone about their content and meaning. But what was the point he made that convinced the “pillars” of the plausibility of his “gospel,” even if it did not make them enthusiastic in adopting it? In all probability – and in historical research this is the most one can hope for – it must have been what had triggered the turning point in his life: the experience of conversion that turned him into defender, builder and servant of the church he had at first set out to bring to extinction.

So Paul was on a “sacred” mission to subdue the emerging community of people who believed in the Messiahship of Jesus. While pursuing his goal at Damascus he was aghast at the stubbornness of at least some of them. Either they were “blind” to the content of scripture, or they were “seeing” something in it that justified their position. This would have prompted Paul to take a second look at the book of Isaiah, that mini-scripture telling the story of God with his city Jerusalem, the story ending with the establishment of the heavenly Jerusalem.



Apostle St Paul, an icon painted by St Andrei Rublyov, circa 1410

This is the Messianic book par excellence, replete with Messianic prophecies, and Paul must have been struck by the repeated descriptions of the ‘ebed Yahweh (the servant of the Lord) in the “Book of the Consolation of Israel” (Is 40-55) that announces the “good news” of the rebuilding of God’s city, Jerusalem. Reflections on these passages would then have led him to “see” clearly that the shameful “defeat” of Jesus on the cross was actually an integral part of God’s plan of salvation which God would implement in his city.

Taken from The New Testament: An Introduction, Vol. I, Paul and Mark written by Paul Nadim Tarazi

IMPORTANT
Mark your calendars!
Sunday, January 18, 2009
Annual Stewardship Meeting
Please, plan on attending
Thank you!

St. Paul on his ministry

God, with his mercy, gave us this work to do, so we don't give up. But we have turned away from secret and shameful ways. We use no trickery, and we do not change the teaching of God. We teach the truth plainly, showing everyone who we are. Then they can know in their hearts what kind of people we are in God's sight.

If the Good News that we preach is hidden, it is hidden only to those who are lost. The devil who rules this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe. They cannot see the light of the Good News—the Good News about the glory of Christ, who is exactly like God. We do not preach about ourselves, but we preach that Jesus Christ is Lord and that we are your servants for Jesus. God once said, "Let the light shine out of the darkness!" This is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts by letting us know the glory of God that is in the face of Christ.

We have this treasure from God, but we are like clay jars that hold the treasure. This shows that the great power is from God, not from us. We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We do not know what to do, but we do not give up the hope of living. We are persecuted, but God does not leave us. We are hurt sometimes, but we are not destroyed. We carry the death of Jesus in our own bodies so that the life of Jesus can also be seen in our bodies. We are alive, but for Jesus we are always in danger of death so that the life of Jesus can be seen in our bodies that die. So death is working in us, but life is working in you.

It is written in the Scriptures, "I believed, so I spoke." Our faith is like this, too. We believe, and so we speak. God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, and we know that God will also raise us with Jesus. God will bring us together with you, and we will stand before him. All these things are for you. And so the grace of God that is being given to more and more people will bring increasing thanks to God for his glory.

So we do not give up. Our physical body is becoming older and weaker, but our spirit inside us is made new every day. We have small troubles for a while now, but they are helping us gain an eternal glory that is much greater than the troubles. We set our eyes not on what we see but on what we cannot see. What we see will last only a short time, but what we cannot see will last forever.

Second Letter to the Corinthians 4

St. Paul on Imitating Christ's Humility

If there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no account, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2: 1-11

St. Paul on the New Life in Christ

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3: 17

St. Paul on 'The Greatest Gift'

I may speak in different languages of people or even angels. But if I do not have love, I am only a noisy bell or a crashing cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy. I may understand all the secret things of God and have all knowledge, and I may have faith so great I can move mountains. But even with all these things, if I do not have love, then I am nothing. I may give away everything I have, and I may even give my body as an offering to be burned. But I gain nothing if I do not have love.

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not get upset with others. Love does not count up wrongs that have been done. Love takes no pleasure in evil but rejoices over the truth. Love patiently accepts all things. It always trusts, always hopes, and always endures.

Love never ends. There are gifts of prophecy, but they will be ended. There are gifts of speaking in different languages, but those gifts will stop. There is the gift of knowledge, but it will come to an end. The reason is that our knowledge and our ability to prophesy are not perfect. But when perfection comes, the things that are not perfect will end.

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I stopped those childish ways. It is the same with us. Now we see a dim reflection, as if we were looking into a mirror, but then we shall see clearly. Now I know only a part, but then I will know fully, as God has known me.

So these three things continue forever: faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is love.

First Letter to the Corinthians 13

Hagiography of St. Paul, the Apostle

Of all the apostles, Paul stands out as the one who was the traveler par excellence. His journeys through the length and breadth of the ancient world are nothing short of remarkable and given the difficulties of traveling in these times, let alone the animosity and danger he faced trying to convert populations to the new faith, it is a credit to the endurance and tenacity of the man that he accomplished as much as he did. Paul, originally Saul, was born in Tarsus in what is now southern Turkey. He is traditionally represented as a stocky little man, with a bald head and a grey, bushy beard. He studied Jewish law in Jerusalem under the famous rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). He and his parents were Roman citizens, having special rights and privileges. Roman citizens could not be imprisoned without a trial nor could they be scourged or crucified. His Roman citizenship saved Paul many times during his ministry. He made three great missionary journeys before being arrested in Jerusalem and taken to Rome where he was beheaded in AD 62.

Saul witnessed the stoning and death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and guarded the clothes of his executioners (Acts 7:58). He then started persecuting the Christians and imprisoned many of them (Acts 8:3). The followers of Jesus Christ were regarded as heretics by the Pharisees. The persecution in Jerusalem caused the believers to disperse abroad and preach the Word everywhere they went (Acts 8:4).

Saul planned to persecute Christians even abroad. He obtained letters to the synagogues in Damascus from the high priest in Jerusalem, and set out to bring Christians bound from there to Jerusalem. On the road to Damascus the most famous conversion in the history of Christianity took place, described in Acts, chapters 9, 22 and 26. At midday, light shone down suddenly from heaven, encompassing Saul. He heard Jesus Christ's voice, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" This man who hated

Christ and all Christians capitulated in the front of the living God. Then Jesus told him to go into Damascus, and there he would be told what to do. Paul became blind and did not eat or drink for three days. In Damascus, the Lord sent a disciple called Ananias to him, who restored his vision, filled him with the Holy Spirit and baptized him. (After his conversion, Saul is mentioned in the Bible by his Latin name, Paul.) He then began to preach about Jesus in the synagogues in Damascus. The Jews wanted to kill him, but he escaped with the help of some Christians who lowered him in a basket from the top of the city wall.

Paul went away to Arabia for a period of time, then returned to Damascus (Gal. 1:17), and after three years journeyed to Jerusalem (Gal. 1:18). The disciples there did not trust him, knowing he had previously persecuted Christians, but Barnabas took him to the apostles who were staying in Jerusalem at that time (Gal. 1:18-19, Acts 9:26-27). Paul preached boldly in Jerusalem, but after 15 days had to flee again, this time to Tarsus (Acts 9:29-30).

In Antioch, the capital of Syria then, Gentiles were turning to Jesus Christ, and the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas there to instruct these new believers. Barnabas in turn took Paul from Tarsus to be his companion (Acts 11:19-25). The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26). Christians in Antioch sent relief funds by Barnabas and Paul back to Christians in Judea (Acts 11:27-30). They returned with young John Mark, Barnabas' nephew from there (Acts 12:25).

The New Testament contains fourteen epistles written by Paul to Christian congregations and individuals: Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews.

See map on p. 8 of St. Paul's journeys.

2,000th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ST PAUL

Alhambra, CA - On Tuesday, November 28th, His Grace, Bishop Maxim and the St. Steven's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of the Western American Diocese hosted this very special Pan-Orthodox Gathering in Commemoration of the 2,000th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Paul. The days events began with the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at 10am. The hierarchs, clergy and faithful from around the South California area attended and participated in this special event. The group was honored to have as the Homilist and Guest Speaker the Very Rev. Fr. Paul Nadim Tarazi, ThD.

Following the Holy Liturgy, approximately 300 guests enjoyed hors d'ouvres and refreshments while they listened to the presentation about St. Paul given by Fr. Paul Tarazi. Following the lecture, our Hierarchs, together with the clergy and their wives, enjoyed a special luncheon followed by a brief meeting.



Christmas Message from Father Bratso

Dear Beloved Stewards and Friends of St. George Parish:

On this wonderful celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I greet you with love in the joy of the Good News that Bethlehem's shepherds received on that blessed and holy night. After announcing the

birth of the Son of God, the angels filled the dark sky with light, rejoicing and proclaiming, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, good will among men" (Luke 2:14).

When Christ was born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, God showed his care and favor for all humankind and His creation. By His Incarnation (Christ's birth in the flesh) He became like us in everything except for sin. This is why Christ was able to share in our suffering, know

our condition, and redeem us from our sins (Hebrews 2:17).

As we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord, we can be assured of the universal importance of this miraculous event. This is undoubtedly true in terms of our redemption through the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ. But it is also true in terms of the conditions of our world, in times past, present, and future. Into a world that moans under the burden of sin, a world that is filled with the darkness of insecurity and the shadow of terror and death, our Lord has brought us the peace of God. This coming of this peace was foretold in the Old Testament by the Prophet Isaiah who announced that the "Prince of Peace" would establish His rule and an "endless peace" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

As we gather this Nativity Season and pray to our Lord "for the peace from above and the peace of the whole world," I invite you to open your hearts to His Divine presence and allow Him to bring peace to our hearts and minds. We can be assured that the Prince of Peace – Jesus Christ our Lord, has entered this world and our human condition, that He is in our midst, and that He is guiding us on a most sure and certain path of eternal peace and life.

It is my ardent prayer this Nativity season that we all welcome Jesus – our new born King and Savior into our homes, hearts, and lives. May He grant us to know His name and that we may call upon His name freely and enter into His presence boldly.

May you and your loved ones share the abundance of the Christmas season throughout the New Year!

With all my love in our New Born King – Prince of Peace.

Fr. Bratso Krsic and Family

Cities where the Apostle Paul Preached

| | |
|--|---|
| Antioch: the capital of ancient Syria, the eastern capital of the Roman Empire, the modern Antakya in southern Turkey | Lystra: a city of the ancient province of Lycaonia in Asia Minor, near Konya |
| Antioch in Pisidia: near the border of ancient Pisidia, in Yalvac, a few miles southwest from modern Aksehir, Turkey | Miletus: a coastal city of ancient Ionia, c 30 miles (50 kms) south of Ephesus, and c 70 miles (100 kms) south of modern Izmir, Turkey |
| Athens: the greatest city of classical Greece, capital of modern Greece | Paphos: a town in south-western Cyprus on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea |
| Berea: a city of ancient Macedonia, modern Veria in Greece | Perga: or Perge, the capital of ancient Pamphylia in Asia Minor during the Roman period, a few miles north of modern Antalya, Turkey |
| Caesarea: a seaport of ancient Palestine, capital of the Roman province, modern Tel Aviv-Yafo in Israel. Not to be confused with Kayseri - Caeserea in Turkey | Philippi: a city of ancient Macedonia, near modern Kavala, Greece |
| Corinth: a city of ancient Greece, near modern Corinth, southern Greece | Rome: the capital of the Roman Empire and Italy, located on the Tiber River |
| Damascus: a city of ancient Syria, capital of modern Syria | Salamis: a town located on the east end of Cyprus, 3 miles north-west of modern Famagusta |
| Derbe: an ancient city in south-eastern Asia Minor, modern Turkey, near Konya | Tarsus: a city of ancient Cilicia on the river Cnydus near the Mediterranean Sea, near Adana in southern Turkey |
| Ephesus: a town on the western coast of Asia Minor, c 40 miles (70 kms) south of modern Izmir, Turkey | Thessalonica: a coastal city of ancient Macedonia, modern Szaloniki in northeastern Greece |
| Iconium: capital of the ancient province of Lycaonia in Asia Minor, modern Konya in Turkey | Troas: on the coast of northern Asia Minor, modern Turkey, near Canakkale |
| Jerusalem: it was the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah and the place of the temple of God, the capital of modern Israel | Tyre: a city on the central coast of ancient Phoenicia, modern Sur in southern Lebanon |

St. Sava of Serbia Enlightener and First Archbishop of the Serbs (+1235) - January 27

You were a guide to the way of life, a first hierarch and a teacher, you came and enlightened your homeland, O Sava, and gave it rebirth by the Holy Spirit. You planted your children like olive trees in the spiritual paradise. O, Equal to the Apostles and Saints, pray to Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

Troparion, tone 3

The son of Stefan Nemanja, the great Serbian national leader, he was born in 1169. As a young man he yearned for the spiritual life, which led him to flee to the Holy Mountain, where he became a monk and with rare zeal followed all the ascetic practices. Nemanja followed his son's example and himself went to the Holy Mountain, where he lived and ended his days as the monk Simeon.

Sava obtained the independence of the Serbian Church from the Emperor and the Patriarch, and became its first archbishop. He, together with his father, built the monastery of Hilandar and after that many other monasteries, churches and schools throughout the land of Serbia. He traveled to the Holy Land on two occasions, on pilgrimage to the holy places there. He made peace among his brothers, who were in conflict over their rights, and also between the Serbs and their neighbors.

In creating the Serbian Church, he created the Serbian state and Serbian culture along with it. He brought peace to all the Balkan peoples, working for the good of all, for which he was venerated and loved by all on the Balkan peninsula. He gave a Christian soul to the people of Serbia, which survived the fall of the Serbian state.

He died in Trnovo in the reign of King Asen, being taken ill after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Theophany in 1236. King Vladislav took his body to

Mileseva, whence Sinan Pasha removed it, burning it at Vracar in Belgrade on April 27th, 1594.

Prologue from Ohrid, St. Bishop Nikolaj (of Zhicha)

Artist, Healer, Lawmaker, Writer and Builder

SAINT SAVA was involved "in many things and his foot walked everywhere and his steps were good; he touched many details, and every touch of his was like medicine; he thought about many things, and every of his views turned into Icon of Saint Sava magnificent work."

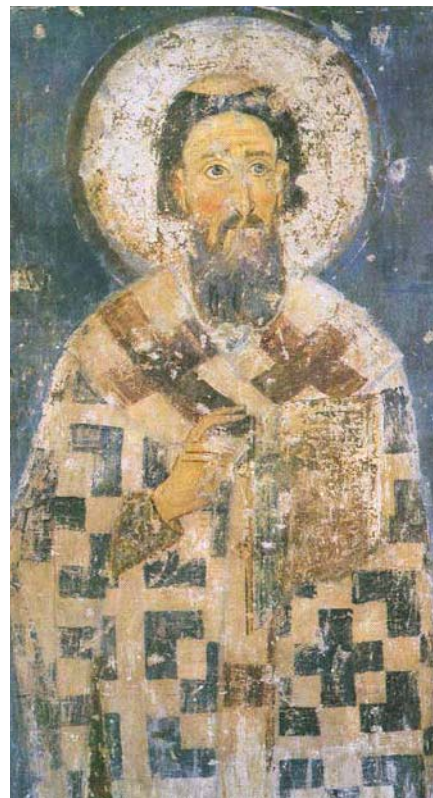
His artistic spirit can be found from Typics of Hilandar to his "Service to Saint Simeon till the Life of Nemanja". Service to Saint Simeon is by its nature poetry of the soul of Saint Sava. In that way, Saint Sava made an influence on artistic spirit of Serbian people. All writers of Sava's biography mentioned his closeness to art, and when they were describing his voluntary work in Serbia, on Holy Mountain, in Constantinople, in Thessaloniki and in Palestine.

Wherever he walked, he was not in contact with builders and painters only, but with scribes and their inspirations, as he was, while traveling, collecting the church artifacts and giving them as gifts to his hosts or monasteries in his country.

In Hilandar and Studenica, Saint Sava established hospitals and wrote rules for them; in that way, he was the first medical writer, health worker and health-rules maker. Serbian schools not just in Serbia, but abroad as well, accepted Saint Sava as their patron saint, and they celebrate him.

The legacy of St Sava lives on in the Orthodox Church traditions of the Slavic nations. He is associated with the introduction of the Jerusalem Typikon as the basis for Slavic Monastic Rules. The Serbian Hilandar monastery on Mt. Athos lives by the Typikon of St Sava to this day. Editions of The Rudder (a col-

lection of church canons) of St Sava, with commentary by Alexis Aristines, are the most widely disseminated in the Russian Church. In 1270 the first copy of The Rudder of St Sava was sent from Bulgaria to Metropolitan Cyril of Kiev. From this was copied one of the most ancient of the Russian Rudders, the Ryzan Rudder of 1284. It in turn was the source for a printed Rudder published in 1653, and since that time often reprinted by the Russian Church. Such was the legacy of St Sava to the canonical treasury of Orthodoxy.



Synaxis of Theotokos - January 8

A synaxis (Greek: assembly, synod), in the Byzantine tradition is a feast on which we honour those saints who are connected with the saints or mystery celebrated on the previous day. Thus, for example, on the day after the Nativity of the Mother of God, we celebrate the feast of her parents, Joachim and Ann; the day after the Theophany, we celebrate the feast of Saint John the Baptist; the day after the Presentation of our Lord, we commemorate Saints Simeon and Anne, the prophetess; and, after the Annuntiation, we celebrate the feast of Saint Gabriel the Archangel. Similarly on the day after the Nativity of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, we celebrate the Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos.

The Church established this feast to draw our attention to Christ's Holy Mother and to give us an opportunity to praise Her after the birth of her Divine Son. In addition, the feast reminds us of the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt to save the Divine Infant from the massacre of innocent children ordered by King Herod after the departure of the Magi, as described in the Holy Gospel read in the Holy and Divine Liturgy (Mt. 2:13-23).

According to the Sacred Tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church on Synaxis, that is on the day after certain feast days, the clergy of a given region gathered in a larger city and together with the bishop concelebrate the Holy and Divine Liturgy, after which they usually had a regional convention (synod).

From The Liturgical Year of the Byzantine-Slavonic Rite

St Stephen - January 9

The holy, glorious, all-laudable Apostle Stephen the Protomartyr was an early Christian convert from among the Hellenistic Jews, one of the original seven deacons ordained by the Apostles, and the first martyr of the Orthodox Church. The Church remembers the martyrdom of St. Stephen on January 9, and the translations of his relics on August 14.

St. Stephen was a Jew living in the Hellenic provinces, related to the Apostle Paul and one of the first seven deacons ordained by the Apostles to serve the Church in Jerusalem (thus making him an archdeacon). The Holy Spirit worked powerfully through his faith, enabling him to perform many miracles and always defeat the Jews who would dispute with him. The Jews in their hatred of St. Stephen lied about him to the people. But St. Stephen with his face illumined reminded the people of the miracles God had worked through him and even rebuked the Jews for killing the innocent Christ.

The people were enraged by what they thought was blasphemy and “gnashed their teeth” at Stephen. It was then that he saw his Christ in the heavens and declared it so. Hearing this, the Jews took him outside the city and stoned him to death, with his kinsman Saul (later St. Paul) holding their coats while they did it. Afar off on a hill was the Virgin Mary and St. John the Theologian who witnessed this first martyrdom for the Son of God and prayed for him while he was being stoned. This occurred about a year after the first Pentecost.

After the Jews stoned St. Stephen, they left his body at the foothill of the city for two days to be eaten by dogs. But on the second night, Gamaliel—teacher of the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Barnabas—came and moved the body to his own land in Capharganda. Nicodemus, who died while weeping at this grave, was also buried there along with Gamaliel's godson Abibus and Gamaliel himself upon his repose.

After many years the memory of St. Stephen's burial place had left the minds of men, until 415 when Gamaliel appeared three times to Father Lucian, priest at Capharganda. He revealed to Fr. Lucian the place of his burial and everything about it. Fr. Lucian received the blessing of the Patriarch to exhume the saints from their grave where a strong, sweet fragrance filled the cave.

St. Stephen's relics were translated to Zion and honorably buried, and many of

the sick were healed by his relics. The other three relics were placed inside a church atop the cave on a hill. Eventually, his relics were translated to Constantinople.

OrthodoxWiki.org

St Basil - January 14

Basil of Caesarea, also called Saint Basil the Great (c. 330 – January 1, 379) (Greek: Άγιος Βασίλειος ο Μέγας; Latin: Basilius), was the Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). He was an influential 4th century Christian theologian and monastic. Theologically, Basil was a supporter of the Nicene faction of the church, in opposition to the Arians on one side and the Apollinarians on the other. His ability to balance his theological convictions with his political connections made Basil a powerful advocate for the Nicene position.

In addition to his work as a theologian, Basil was known for his care of the poor and underprivileged. Basil established guidelines for monastic life which focus on community life, liturgical prayer and manual labor. Together with Saint Pachomius he is remembered as a father of communal monasticism in Eastern Christianity. He is considered a saint by the traditions of both Eastern and Western Christianity.

Basil, Gregory Nazianzus, and Basil's brother Gregory of Nyssa are collectively referred to as the Cappadocian Fathers. The Eastern Orthodox Church and Eastern Catholic Churches have given him, together with Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom, the title of Great Hierarch, while the Roman Catholic Church has named him a Doctor of the Church. He is also referred to as "the revealer of heavenly mysteries" (Ouranophantor).

Wikipedia.org

Notes From the President

Choosing a topic to write about every few months is always a challenge for me. I start thinking about the next issue of the Voice long before it is due and then procrastinate even starting it. Does anyone read what I have written, do they find the article humorous, boring, does anyone even care what I have to say?

I love to read so writing an article should be a breeze. I appreciate a well written book, a short story in one of my "over 40" woman's magazines, and yes, even a far-fetched story that I read in the National Enquirer while standing in line at the grocery store. I try to read the newspaper every morning, not from cover to cover like my Father does, but in my Speedy Gonzalez abbreviated version. And I also try to read the entire issue of the Voice before the next issue comes to me in the mail, gearing myself up to make the next article stimulating, not controversial and yet suitable for a church publication.

I admire people that can share their experiences in life by telling an entertaining story. To some of you, it comes natural. To others, like me, it is a struggle. I'm the one that can share a recipe that I have just discovered, or know where celebrities are dining and vacationing, and of

course, know what the latest shoe trend will be. And it goes without say that any of our Priests cherish an opportunity to help us navigate our way through life by reciting a story from the Bible.

Many of you know the story I am about to share, but many may not. I hope that this will inspire you as it has me.

Father Bratso called me a few weeks ago to share the sad news about the death of a young woman in our Serbian community. She had recently immigrated to the United States with her husband and two young adult sons. Father Bratso, along with Father Milan from St. Petka, were making a plea to our church community to help this family with the burial of their wife and mother. I was visiting my parents (Milovan and Jelena Petric) at the time of Father Bratso's call and shared the news with them. My parents felt an immediate connection to the family, having immigrated to the United States themselves at a young age. My parents had purchased two burial plots in Ocean-side when they arrived in San Diego over 40 years ago. After hearing the story about the young woman, they decided that they would donate the burial plots to the family. Many of you also chose to step forward and assist this family in their time of grief.

There are many other stories that I could share with you where our church community has come together to support each other. Perhaps if I sharpen my skills as a writer, I can put an interesting twist on each story and start a new career.

As I write my last article as President, I'd like to thank everyone for your support and guidance these past two years. It has been a wonderful, challenging experience and I feel honored to have been given the opportunity to serve you. I especially want to recognize and acknowledge my very dear friends and fellow Executive Board members: Vldan Trifunovich; Dobrila Undheim; Simona Trifunovich; Milos Belcevic; Christine Grba; and Tina Zivkovic.

I'd also like to thank the remaining members of the St. George Board, along with Father Bratso Krsic, Deacon Paul Germain, as well as the various organizations at St. George for their continued support: Morava, Choir, AOF and Kolo. A special thanks to Marsha Jovanovic, the editor of the *Voice of St. George*. Each has contributed countless hours to ensure the continued spiritual growth of St. George.

Lydia Petric Rhoads



St. George Serbian Orthodox Church - 2009 Calendar

| JANUARY | | |
|---|-------|---|
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - KOLO | | |
| Tuesday | 6 | Badnja Vece |
| Wednesday | 7 | Bozic/Nativity |
| Sunday | 18 | Annual Stewardship Meeting |
| Sunday | 25 | St. Sava Celebration |
| FEBRUARY | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - AOF | | |
| Thursday-Friday | 12-14 | Diocesan Annual Assembly- St. Petka |
| MARCH | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - CHOIR | | |
| Sunday | 1 | Forgiveness/Cheese-Fare Sunday |
| Monday | 2 | First Day of the Great Lent |
| APRIL | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - FRC | | |
| Sunday | 5 | Quarterly Stewardship Meeting Diocesan Sunday |
| Saturday | 11 | Lazarus Saturday |
| Sunday | 12 | Palm Sunday - Cveti |
| Thursday | 16 | Great and Holy Thursday |
| Friday | 17 | Great and Holy Friday |
| Saturday | 18 | Midnight Matins |
| Sunday | 19 | Pascha |
| MAY | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - KOLO | | |
| Sunday | 3 | Slava |
| Sunday | 10 | Mother's Day |
| JUNE | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - CHOIR | | |
| Monday | 15 | Apostle's Fast Begins |
| Sunday | 21 | Father's Day |
| Sunday | 28 | St. Great Martyr Prince Lazar All Serbian Martyrs - Vidovdan |
| JULY | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - MORAVA | | |
| Friday-Sunday | 17-19 | Morava Folkfest |
| Sunday | 19 | Quarterly Stewardship Meeting; |
| Sunday | 19-8 | Summer Camp Begins |
| AUGUST | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - AOF | | |
| Friday | 14 | Dormition Fast Begins |
| SEPTEMBER | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - KOLO | | |
| Friday-Sunday | 5-7 | Diocesan Weekend in Jackson Church Closed |
| Saturday | 12-13 | Festival |
| Sunday | 20 | KOLO Slava /Church School Begin |
| OCTOBER | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - MORAVA | | |
| Saturday | 17 | St. Stefan and Jelena (Stiljanovic) |
| NOVEMBER | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - CHOIR | | |
| Sunday | 1 | Quarterly Stewardship Meeting Stewardship Sunday |
| Sunday | 26 | Thanksgiving Day |
| Friday | 27-6 | Nativity Fast |
| DECEMBER | | |
| SUNDAY LUNCHEON/EVENT DUTIES - AOF | | |
| DATES & LUNCHEON SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE | | |

St. George Fundraising Committee (FRC)

The St. George Fundraising Committee (FRC) was recently formed in April 2008 at the request of the church board to help explore options for raising money for the remodel of St. George's Church Hall (or as we like to envision it, the Serbian Community & Cultural Center). Several key organizers of the February/March 2008 Kosovo rallies were approached to be a part of the FRC, upon the request of Rade Plavsich, who was instrumental in setting up the FRC. Jennifer Milanovich was nominated for President, Dragan Radic was nominated for Vice President, and Lindsay Boyce was nominated for Secretary. The position of Treasurer remains unfilled.

History. The FRC held several meetings since being organized at the end of April, mainly to assemble a potential list of stewards/parishioners/Serbians and research various fundraising avenues. Weekly meetings were held through June to discuss objectives and options for raising money for this vital and worthwhile remodeling project. Over the summer months, the discussions went dormant because action couldn't be taken while people were away on vacation. Additional time was given to dedicate to Jackson's Diocesan Days and the very successful Serbian Festival in September before further progress could be made.

Professional Fundraising Groups- Helping Hand. A great deal of consideration went into researching the possible use of professional church fundraising organizations to assist with St. George's internal group efforts. A decision was made by FRC that a professional fundraising organization, RSI, would be the most economical and useful fundraising organization to work with as they had previous experience working with Greek Orthodox Churches. On June 2, 2008 a meeting to consider whether the board would approve the hiring of RSI occurred. The response from the Church Board after this June 2nd meeting was that the board was not sure about hiring an outside resource to assist with fundraising endeavors, mainly because they need more time for consideration and want to become better educated about professional fundraisers. Also the decision was made that if the board decided to back the idea, the Stewards of St. George would still need to approve the budget to hire the RSI.

Miraculous October. Upon reconsidering the RSI option that the FRC proposed, St. George's Church Board decided to allow the FRC to present the idea to the Stewards for approval during the Quarterly Stewardship Meeting: Sun, Oct 12, 2008. A majority vote would decide whether to utilize the RSI service or not. As FRC President, I had my work cut out for me to present this idea before the Stewards, because utilizing outside consultants is a somewhat 'foreign' concept for St. George and Serbians in general and would cost some money. I thought my chances might be slim to gain approval but had faith that God's will would be done regarding this matter. As Gandhi said, "It is for us to

make the effort. The rest is in God's Hands."

Miracle 1: Two days before the meeting, which I was to present this idea before the Stewards, RSI contacted me, saying they offered a new program for smaller churches to make their service more affordable and in addition would provide printed materials and a video to promote the fundraising campaign efforts. This was the first 'break' that FRC got- a reduction of cost for the service from \$28.5K consulting fee only to \$19.5K including some print work and a video in addition to the consulting/assistance.

Miracle 2: The Stewards and the Board both started out a bit skeptical to the idea of using RSI; however, by the end of the discussion, had overwhelmingly voted to support the use of a professional fundraising group to assist St. George with raising close to \$1.3 Million needed to complete the remodeling project for the church hall.

Praise be to God, the FRC was now officially on our way to starting the fundraising campaign with the help of a team of experts.

Timeline and Looking Forward to 2009. Since it is already late in 2008, the fundraising campaign won't be 'officially launched' until January 2009. In the meantime, RSI will be meeting with our FRC and Church Board to start planning the overall fundraising campaign and organizing and training volunteer teams.

Donations will continue to be collected through 2011, based upon 3 year promissory commitments. The FRC team and I are very excited to be starting this dynamic phase for St. George's fundraising efforts. We have faith that our parishioners and stewards are ready to support this community effort to build a strong, vibrant, Serbian communal environment that our children's children can be proud of and enjoy for years to come.

Below are some points for consideration put before the Stewards in October.

Question: What does a professional fundraiser get paid to do?

Analogy: Think of hiring a professional fundraiser as a Teacher-Student relationship

- Map out 'lesson plan' to fit church needs/ desired goals
- Get 'students'- aka church volunteers involved & working in various teams
- Help identify various project leaders/ teams of volunteers for shared learning and involvement
- Get entire 'class room' of parishioners actively involved so church community has ownership in project goals and working towards a common goal
- Inspire action
- Keep everyone on task & track how well overall campaign is doing
- Help with transitional period during 3 yrs after initial campaign, when collecting on promissory donations, etc.

What a professional consultant does NOT DO: make calls, write letters, or directly collect money themselves. Just like in a class room, teachers give assignments, but don't do the homework for students. And, just like a good teacher, professional fundraisers guide and help parishioners/volunteers, giving them every chance for success.

Which would you rather be—home schooled or go to UCSD?

Question: Why choose RSI?

After researching various professional fundraising groups and calling individual client references, FRC chose RSI because they are the MOST SUCCESSFUL fundraising company, at the BEST PRICE, with DIRECT ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FUNDRAISING experience.

Question: What is the cost?

All this experience and success doesn't come for free. It's just like paying for your child's education; it can be seen as an investment in the future, giving the best chance for success.

RSI management = \$19.5K; paid in 10 payments of \$1,950/month.

This cost includes project coordination, printed materials, video, and bridge program for 3 years after the campaign to help collect on pledges.

What is the cost of NOT doing hiring RSI or outside help?

We are currently experiencing one of the worst economic times in 50 years. Raising \$1.3M from the small ~600 family San Diego church community in any environment would be a challenge, but it's especially challenging now. If we do a typical in-house campaign with stewardship and the economy at such a low, then what can we anticipate or expect?

- 2003-2004 in-house:
- ~ \$12K-15K for design direct mail piece=\$50K raised (3-4x return on investment ROI)
- 2008-2009 RSI estimate
- \$19.5K for counseling; printed materials/ video =possible \$480K to \$1.3Mill (25-67x ROI)

Jennifer Milanovich, FRC chair

Please help us...

When you move, inform our church office about your new address and contact information change.

Also, would you like to be on our email list (keep in mind that you will be receiving two or three emails a week).

Questions? Call the church office at: 619-276-5827 or e-mail Father Bratso at frbratso@sbcglobal.net

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM 2009

GIVING OUR GIFTS WITH FAITH IN CHRIST

The 2009 Stewardship Ministry theme is "Giving our Gifts with Faith in Christ." It takes faith to trust that God will continue to provide for our needs.

- The disciples feared the thought of feeding the crowd; they had nowhere near enough food, they said.
- But what is offered to Christ is multiplied and becomes an overabundance.

SCRIPTURES ON STEWARDSHIP. Return to God His Own Gifts

No one shall appear before the Lord empty-handed, but each of you with as much as he can give, in proportion to the blessings which the Lord, God has bestowed on you. (Deut. 16:10, 16-17)

WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP GIVING. You may fulfill your commitment in the manner that suits you best. Since small, regular contributions are easier to manage, it is suggested that your contribution be calculated on a weekly basis.

Our goal for 2009 is to meet our operating budget by our stewardship commitment alone.

STEWARDS ARE PARISHIONERS IN GOOD STANDING. A Stewardship Commitment or pledge qualifies husband and wife for married couples and single adults as stewards. Family members over 18 years of age, who are employed, should make their own Stewardship Commitment.

Stewards are considered parishioners in good standing with the Parish and may vote and seek elective office in the parish.

NEW STEWARDS. Orthodox Christians, who wish to become parishioners in good standing in our Parish, may become Stewards of St. George Serbian

Orthodox Church by calling the Church Office for information and making a Stewardship Commitment of time, talent, and treasure for the current year.

CHRIST MULTIPLIES OUR GIFTS

Proportionate Giving. The Old Testament laid down the standard of giving a tithe (more than 10% of one's income) back to God. This provides us with the example: giving should be in proportion to our income. Stewardship is returning to God a fair proportion of the resources He has given to us. The more we are

should be a priority for every Orthodox Christian and performed on a regular and consistent basis.

Consider how your expenditures on personal entertainment compare with your Stewardship pledge. Is your Stewardship simply a token donation? Or is your Stewardship pledge a meaningful response to Christ's request of you?

MONEY ENABLES MINISTRY.

Money is a necessary tool for ministry. The Church's mission of salvation and evangelism depends directly on your generosity, which supports our Parish and Diocese.

Our Stewardship giving supports all the Parish Ministries and the entire operating budget.

We should not depend on special affairs to meet our budget. The growth of our Faith and its dissemination is our own personal responsibility. Stewardship places the responsibility where it belongs, directly upon us.

Your Stewardship is vital to our Church to:

- Keep in Touch With You
- Maintain our Buildings
- Provide for Those Who Serve Us
- Worship and Educate
- Support the National Church

In making a decision, keep in mind that the expenses of our Parish increase every year. In order to meet our expenses and grow in ministry, Stewards should strive to increase their commitment annually. Also, as Jesus taught us that giving should be done quietly, generously and out of the sight of others, your Stewardship Commitment is kept in confidence. If you wish to revise your commitment during the year for any reason, you may notify the Church Office.

•MIRACLE OF LOAVES AND FISH•



given, the more is expected of us. "Everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required." (Lk. 12:48)

Giving Regularly. St. Paul tells us: "On the first day of every week, each of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income." (1 Cor. 16:2) Each Sunday, we should prepare to make our Stewardship contribution to the Church in accordance with the Lord's generosity to us personally. Supporting the Church

Religious Education Report Winter 2008

As we approach the Nativity of our Lord, what immediately comes to mind is of course our children. We read about Christ, born of a Virgin and cared for by His loving Mother and His guardian, the elderly Joseph. It is the family, both the extended Church family as well as our own families, which are so vital to developing and maintaining a Christ centered world view. Hence, we continue to offer the chance for families to gather together to learn and seek God's word through His Holy Orthodox Church.

Our plans for the year included having three levels of classes to meet the needs of all age groups. Now that we are in November, we are experiencing very low attendance and have not been able to form the teen class at all. As families struggle to decide between Church, soccer, homework, football, etc. our challenge remains as parents and Orthodox Christians, that of commitment to God for a couple of hours, one day a week. When the book of our life is opened at judgment day, what will we answer when asked about how we educated our children in the mysteries of God and His commandments? Something we all need to consider and pray about daily.

However, we continue to hold classes for any children who come and with joy we offer whatever we know as part of this

vital ministry in our Church. Please see below for our upcoming holiday schedule, with our second annual Christmas play and the ever popular St. Sava program. Please encourage your children to attend.

- Annual Children's Christmas Play
January 6, 2009
- Rehearsals begin on December 28 and will be held during class time
- Annual Children's St. Sava Program
January 25, 2009
- Rehearsals begin on January 11 and will be held during class time

Fr. Bratso is still having regular Bible study classes every Wednesday in the Parish Center. These sessions are both informative, fun and a great way for adults and children to learn more about the Orthodox faith. Attendance has been growing and we thank Father for all his time, effort and wisdom.

On behalf of our dedicated teachers, we thank you for your support and welcome any and all help in the classroom and with activities.

Wishing you a most blessed Nativity Celebration and look forward to seeing you all at St. George!

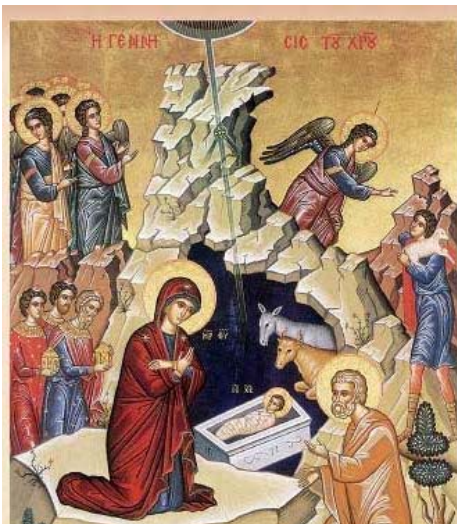
In Christ our Lord,

Deacon Paul Germain

Helping Hands

On Saturday, November 29, 2008, we piled into the car and set off for Carl's Jr. in San Ysidro to meet with our fellow Orthodox brothers and sisters. We gathered together as part of a missionary trip to stucco one of the houses that was built last summer by Project Mexico, which was located south of Tijuana, Mexico. Mr. Mike Applegate, Worktrip Coordinator for Project Mexico, discussed our plans for the day and instructed us on how to cross the border. Before departing, Fr. Simeon Corona said a short prayer for our journey and blessed us all.

The members of our crew were Fr. Bratso Krsic, Fr. Norman Kosanovich, Fr. Simeon Corona, Presbyter Joy Corona, Carl Corona, Deacon Paul Germain, Djakonitsa Natalija Germain, Oksana Germain, Kaija Germain, Mira Jovanovic, Jelena Jovanovic and Nemanja Selezan. We piled into three cars and drove to a Chevron to get Mexican car insurance. After crossing the border we noticed a tall, red fence that was built to divide the United States from Mexico.



*Сретан Божић
и свако добро у новој години*

**МНО БОЖИЊИ,
ХРИСТОС СЕ РОДИ!**

Beside the fence we spotted runners, who were trying to illegally cross into the US. The fence stretched for miles and we wondered how many people dared to attempt climbing it. After driving some distance, through a sewer hole and over rocky roads, we finally arrived at St. Innocent's Orphanage so that we could gather the necessary supplies.

Mike gave us an orientation on the precautions we had to take when we arrived at the house and informed us about the family we were going to help. After orientation and loading the trucks, we headed down the bumpy dirt road towards the work site. The 2 mile trip took us about 15 to 20 minutes because of their poor condition. Upon arrival, we noticed how very different they lived from us. We noticed that there was trash everywhere, the house was very small, the water was contaminated and it was very dirty. They had electricity, but did not have any bathroom except for a pit in the dirt. They have no running water in the house and they keep their water in a barrel. There are five dogs, three of which are puppies. Inside the house, all we could see was one room with a small refrigerator and a tattered couch. It was a very sad sight to us.

It was time to get to work! Mike gave us assignments for mixing stucco, sifting sand and spreading stucco on the walls. It was very hard work, but everyone worked as a team together to get it done. Even the small children who lived in the house, together with their cousin, helped us with all of our jobs. Michelle, the youngest of them is four years old and her brother Brenden is seven years old along with their cousin Miguel, who is ten years old. Despite their living conditions, the children were happy, cheerful and very friendly. After six hours of work, the project was finally finished and it looked great. The family was extremely happy and thankful and they invited us to a Mexican breakfast at their house!

The feeling of helping other people in need made a great impression on us. We now understand how the Mexican people live as compared to how we live in the



US. The family that we helped was very fortunate to have the house that Project Mexico had built for them, because many people there live in much worse conditions. The experience helped us appreciate what we have even more and not take it for granted. We thank God for this wonderful opportunity to help and for what He does for us. We pray for the family, that God blesses them always. We hope to have more experiences with Project Mexico to help more families in need.

With Love in Christ,

Oksana and Kaija Germain

*Hristos
se rodi!
Vaistinu
se rodi!*

Dear Fellow Stewards and Supporters of St. George:

We would like to thank you for your timely response to our Stewardship efforts for the upcoming year.

Please, know that we have received 59 cards so far.

We are looking forward to receiving the rest of the cards in order for us to plan our parish ministries for 2009.

For your information we have provided here the list of 2009 stewards as of November 30th, 2009.

If we have forgotten your name or perhaps have misspelled it, please, let us know (619-276-5827) and we will make the correction immediately.

Thank you and may our Lord bless you and your family!

St. George Stewards—2009

- Alemany, Arturo & Linda
- Andolsek, Tonska
- Arturo, Linda & Lazar
- Aud, Matthew & Laurie
- Belceвич, Milos
- Denton, Natalie
- Drakulich, Persida
- Draskovich, Proto Bozidar & Bozana
- Freeman, Lillian
- Gleb, Gavrilov & Svetlana G.
- Germain & Family, Dcn. Paul
- Gregovich, Ljubica
- Grijakovich, Vladimir
- Hyduke, David
- Irick, Olga
- Jojic & Family, M/M Vesko
- Jovanovic, Martha
- Jovanovic, Milivoj & Verica
- Kennedy & Family, Ken
- Kinach, Alex & Seka
- Kostic, Tordis
- Krsic, Fr. Bratso & Lisa
- Leff, Dylan
- Leff, Kathryn Thickstun
- Lukic, Milos
- Lukich Family
- Markley, Nada & Scott
- Melnick, Pauline & Stanley
- Mijailovic, Goran & Christine
- Mikler, Zora
- Milanovich, Jennifer
- Milasinovic, Zeljko & Marija
- Milicevic, James & Melanie
- Miljkovic & Family, M/M Miodrag
- Milovancev, Mira & Miroslav
- Mrja, Millie
- Nedic, Sava & Spomenka
- Novakovic, Drago & Dana
- Papac, Wayne & Sandie
- Petric, Alex
- Petrich, Milovan & Jelena
- Plavsich, Milan & Ljubica
- Popovich, Dolly
- Popovich, Ella
- Pugh, Zachary & Milica
- Purlia, Savo & Gloria
- Radjenovic, Mirjana & Milica
- Radovanovic, Dragoslav & Ljiljana
- Rhoads, Lydia & Howard
- Savchuk, Nikolai & Olga
- Serdar, Sophie
- Smith & Family, Zorana
- Srbich, Dr. & Mrs. Alexander
- Undheim Family
- Vlastic, Milorad & Vladanka
- Vlasovich, Milanka
- Vukotich, Danica
- Vukotich, Stefan
- Vulovich, Filip

THE BELL

I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child (John 1:12)

I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)

I am united with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17)

I am bought with a price (1 Cor 6:19-20)

I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph. 1:1)

I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am the salt & light of the earth (Matt 5:13-14)

I am a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27)

I am free forever from condemnation (Rom. 8: 1-2)

I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant (Phil 3:20)

I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8: 31 -34)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Cor 5:17-21)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)

I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom 8: 35-39)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God (2 Cor 1:21-22)

I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8: 28)

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)

I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph. 3: 12)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4: 13)

I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15: 1-5)

I am God's temple (1 Cor. 3: 16). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2: 10)

I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).. I have been justified (Romans 5:1)

I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship (Eph. 2:10)

I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected. (Phil. 1:

5)

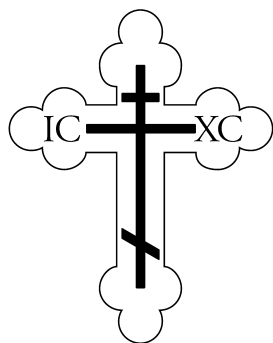
I have been redeemed and forgiven (Col 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child (Eph 1:5)

I belong to God

Do you know

Who you are?

Stole Report for January 1 – December 4, 2008



Funerals

Grant, O, Lord, Memory Eternal to:

- Milanka Trosich
- Mary Trosich
- Minnie Thomas (No funeral)
- Vasilije Dlakic
- Bogdan Jojic
- Vera Kosanovic Popovic
- Michael Bosnak

Weddings

O, Lord our God, crown them with glory and honor! – God grant you many years!

- Dragan Draskovic & Julie Rothenberger
- Alexander Levitin & Kirsten Schaefer
- Les Lambert & Mara Bosnak
- Milos Nedic & Karen Steward
- Emil Tuniyants & Deana Konstantinovna Pentsakova
- Boris Ilic & Chelsea Johnson
- James Vaso Milicevic & Melanie Melanija Karan
- Dragan Milojevic & Arleen Simbulan
- Tomas Jovanovic & Vesna Milenkovic
- Nikola Jeffrey Cox & Aleksandra Drecun

Baptisms-Christmation.

Servant of God ___ is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit! God grant you many years!

- Nikola Konstantin Zecevic
- Mihajlo Plavsic
- Alexander Paul Draskovic
- Nicolas Dragojlovic
- Alexandra Anya Tavakoli
- Kareri Michelle Stewart
- Arturo Martinovich
- Dane Austin Gaynor
- Ryan Michael Williams
- Maja Vuletic
- Marina Ema Pugh
- Elliott Mikala Osegueda
- Chelsea Jeanne Johnson
- Nikolina Constantinovna Gleboff
- Nikola Jeffrey Cox

Vera Popovic Memorial Fund

Thanks to your generous support we were able to assist the Popovic family with funeral arrangements for their mom, Vera. She fell asleep in the Lord (died) on Sunday, October 12th. Vera was a resident of San Diego. She is survived by her husband and two sons, 16 and 19 years old. Vera and her family came to the USA five years ago as refugees. The 16 year old son is currently in high school and the 19 year old had been staying at home to care for his sick mother.

Her husband, Petar, currently has a job on the housekeeping staff at a local hotel and earns very little money. Due to their situation and lack of funds, we appealed to you via e-mails and by the word of mouth to send a \$20.00 (or more) tax deductible donation to St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, 3025 Denver St., San Diego, CA 92117, in order for the family to move forward and help them with the funeral arrangements.

We are happy to report that Jelena and Milan Petric donated a grave at the Eternal Hills Cemetery in Escondido and that your donations (from St. George and St. Petka parishioners and friends) were able to cover all other funeral arrangements.

As of Dec. 2, 2008, we have \$2,500.00 left in Vera Popovic Memorial Fund. Thank you very much! May our Lord bless you and your family and may He grant memory eternal to Vera.



James Milicevic & Melanie Karan



Hristos se Rodi!
 Season's Greetings
 2009
 from the
 St. George Choir &
 Serbian Singing Society

Our Stewards/Volunteers

In addition to all hard working members of the Church Board, KSS – Women's auxiliary, Choir, Tutori, Sunday School staff, Morava staff members, The Voice editor, and other committees, we now have few regular volunteers in the church office and grounds.



Stefan Miljkovic volunteered over 40 hours in the month of November. He is pictured here during his graduation from highschool.

comes everyday always ready to lend a helping hand with cookies and drinks? Thank you ladies so very much!

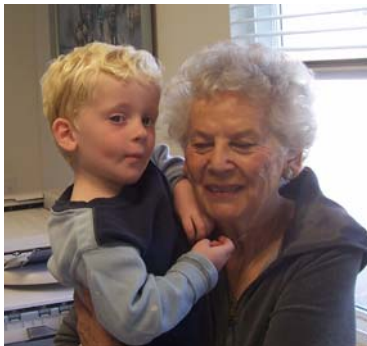
On Tuesday, December 2, 2008, **John Vukotich** planted the remaining parts of the olive tree that was removed two years ago because of the construction from its original spot, behind the hall. The tree is now planted in the parish house garden. The original olive tree was planted by John's dad some 30 years ago. Thank you John!



Our newest church office volunteer is **Melanie Milicevich**. (see Melanie with her new husband in photo on p. 19).

Thanks to everyone!

Desanka Mitrovich and **Dorothy (Danica) Vukotich** faithfully come to the church office to assist Fr. Bratso every Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am – 1pm. Ooops, our youngest volunteer **Luka Krsic**



St. George's Inaugural Cevap Challenge

Serbian's love to be the best at everything they do and think that there is no one that could top whatever 'it' is that they do best; no news here. Serbs as a nation also take great pride in their culinary expertise. So what Serb could resist a cevap cooking challenge? Birds gotta fly, bees gotta make honey, and Serbs gotta grill great cevap in a friendly competition against their fellow men (and women).

November 1, 2008, a particularly beautiful, warm San Diego day, kicked off St. George's first ever Cevap Challenge, an event highly anticipation by participants, judges, and crowds alike. Nine talented cevap challengers entered the contest, to be judged by 5 distinguished cevap 'experts' and the parishioners of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church. The atmosphere was lively, casual, and friendly—so much you could feel the good will and fellowship in the air. The 'low pressure' atmosphere belied the hard work and preparation that the organizers and challengers put into their preparation for this event. Cooking cevap is serious business and national pride and family recipes were on the line. Everyone had a slightly different take on what makes for a good cevap, but as one parishioner said, trying to translate a Serbian joke: "It's not just the spices, meat, & technique that make for a good cevap; the lady of the house has to be beautiful and the man of the house has to be smart too!"

The "Cevap Challenge" was the brain child of St. George Serbian Church Board Vice President, Dobrila Undheim, who during July's Annual Morava Folk Fest, observed a very heated and detailed discussion between two male friends about what it takes to make a good cevap. Their level of detail about meat preparation and recipes and the passion that they displayed for BBQing cevap gave Dobrila the inspiration to create the "Cevap Challenge" and decide in a public venue who has the best cevap.

Basic rules and set up for the cevap challenge:

1. Challengers must be 21yrs or older (although plenty of 'helpers' were well under 10 yrs old)
2. Challengers are to prepare 5 lbs of meat ahead of time and bring to site for rolling and grilling
3. Challengers may have one assistant (some interpreted this as 2-3 kids = 1 adult assistant ?)

4. Challengers are expected to grill 5 cevap for each of the judges first, then grill all the remaining meat after the official judging for the dinner guests

5. Aprons, BBQ, and coals will be provided (a 'team' meat grinder was also available)

Entry fee for challengers was \$25. Potential to win \$250 & the title of 'Cevap Champion 2008'!

Each of the competitors had color codes and matching toothpicks even; however, the judges were not allowed to know even the color code; their judging was totally blind. Contestants were assigned a secret number by an event organizer that wasn't judging, and then pieces of the cevap were presented to the judges with the assigned numbers, which were used for voting/ranking the cevap. This ensured that there was no personal bias, especially when you consider that Serbs have a habit of sticking together and one of the judges was critiquing his own brother's cevap! There was also a popular vote, so that all dinner guests and general public could participate in judging and voting for their favorite cevap (or 'drug' in some cases).

The nine competitors were:

Dragan Radic (Blue); Valdan Trifunovich (Yellow); Milan Jezdic-Miletic (Red); Bernadette Skaljic (Pink); Dusan Selezan (Orange); Nenad Pantelic (Green); Zoran Vladislavljevic (Black); Father Bratso Krsic (Purple); & Bosko Kresovich (White)

The five judges were:

Nemanja Selezan; Dr. Radmila Kazanegra; Dragan Batakovic; Sanda Stevovic; Ilija Skendzic.

The contestants had different ideas of what made their cevap so special and the judges as well had unique ideas about what makes a good cevap. Zoran said it wasn't the garlic, salt, pepper, or spices, but the actual mix of meat that really counts, and he wanted to show the 'true Beograd cevap style' because different former 'Yugo' regions claim to prepare the only authentic cevap. Milan was very technical in his description, saying the base meat should be beef made up from 50% shoulder, 40% neck, 10% stomach because the cevap needs to be a little 'tough' and then pork or lamb or both could also be added to the base beef. Milan also made mention that cevap originated with Turkish Ottoman occupation and was adopted (and adapted) by the Serbians to suit their own tastes and utilize local spices to make it a national food.



Nada also suggested that the meat mix itself was the most important component to a great cevap, saying that beef should be the main meat, with mixtures of lamb and of course spices. Nada had a not-so-secret ingredient: Budweiser beer— a little for the cook and a little for the cevap! Dragan suggested that not only do different regions vary in their cevap recipes but any recipe also can vary in number of times the meat is ground (softer consistency), size of cevap (juicier but longer to cook), and the way you grill versus pan fry. His cevap was a variation on a Bosnian cevap style, which many claim to be the 'most authentic' style of cevap preparation in former Yugoslavia and Dragan also used a special blend of pure beef. Bosko suggested that the spices were vital and what helped set his cevap apart from the rest. He had traveled to the Old Country and saw what types of spices were used there and brought some back to use in his own recipes. He also mentioned it was important for the coals to be very hot in order to cook cevap because too much flame can burn the cevap. Dusan mentioned that the blend of meat and spices are the key to a winning cevap, in addition to the age of and type of meat used (younger better). Bernadette, the

only woman and Filipino competing, mentioned that her Serbian Mother-in-Law taught her to make cevaps, and she has perfected her technique since the Christening of her son when she first tried cooking Serbian style cevaps. As a lady of true integrity, she didn't want to be judged on the pink color of her toothpicks but rather the quality of her cevap (which by the way were the most tender consistency of all the challengers, maybe because of her high tech looking Eberle brand meat grinder). Father Bratso was keenly focused for such a typically low key man of the cloth. He didn't mention any particular recipe or spices, only that as a child, he had been a keen observer of cevap preparation in Krajina where he grew up, and that love should be in the ingredients, seasoned with prayer, which is maybe why his cevaps were given consistent high marks with both judges and parishioners. Vladan was the comic relief of the challenge, suggesting that he got his cevap recipe off the internet and that he had never made a cevap before in his life, which after watching his unique 'plastic coke bottle' funnel contraption for pushing the meat mix through with his finger to shape the cevap meat, I was beginning to believe. Vladan also had the most fun trash talking the competition, all in good natured fun, ribbing Dragan about having a Chinese cevap recipe, since cat was a special ingredient, and that his own cevaps contained 'goat meat'. He also suggested that Bosko may have actually brought Hormel breakfast links to the competition.

Judge Rada suggested that she was qualified to judge cevaps because she ate so many of them over the years and that a good cevap is a combination of both art and technique. The mix of meat is important: it should be tender/soft with good spices and flavor, and she prefers spicy taste, to enhance and not overpower the taste of the meat, although traditional cevaps in her mind are not spicy. The size and shape of the cevap is also important, as is the consistency of the meat, which should not fall apart after grilling. This is all part of the art of making a great cevap. Judge Sanda also said that she was qualified because she had tasted so many cevaps during her lifetime and felt that the competition was fierce and that the challengers better "bring it". She felt a good traditional cevap should not be too spicy hot because the flavor of the meat was the most important, so the spices should be blended very well. Her advice for the contestant was to prepare their cevap with love and to stay true to their own style and taste preference because there is not right or wrong way to make a cevap and challengers should keep their own family traditions alive. Sanda admitted that cevap

judging was subjective; however, she would try to be as objective as possible to honor the best cevap.

As the evening progressed, the coals got hotter, and the crowds rolled in to witness the 9 contestants grilling around the open pit fires, laughing and helping each other in fellowship. Serbian music played in the background while people lined up to get their plates of food to go along with the cevaps: meat burek, kupus salata, diced onions, kajmak, French bread, kolace, and coffee/Serbian desserts. Dinner guests received one cevap from each contestant to taste and vote for, using the slip of paper with all 9 challenger names and pencils that were provided on tables. Ballots were collected and tabulated by the chair for the popular vote, Robert Undheim. By the time the winners were announced, St. George's church hall was packed and buzzing with excitement. All challengers were lined up behind the judging table to await their fate. The top 3 places were announced in descending order, with 3rd place announced first, and the popular vote announced before the judges vote, as to build on the anticipation of hearing the name of the ultimate Cevap Champion. People applauded all challengers but went wild when both the top popular vote and judge's vote winners were announced. The two top winners: Bosko Kresovich and Zoran Vladisavljevic celebrated ecstatically, and even a few tears of joy could be seen in 'tough' BBQ grill master, Bosko's eyes. Yes, it means that much to win!

Popular Vote:

1st place: Zoran Vladisavljevic

2nd place (3-way tie): Father Bratso Krsic, Milan Jezdic-Miletic, & Bosko Kresovich

3rd place: Dusan Selezan

Judges Vote:

1st place: Bosko Kresovich

2nd place: Father Bratso

3rd place: Dragan Radic

When asked earlier in the evening what he thought his chances of winning were, Bosko said, "If the people are hungry, I'll win. If not, I'll lose." I guess the people and judges were hungry for what his cevaps had to offer! He did have what at times appeared to be 1/2 of St. George's parish children surrounding and helping him during his preparation, so some of their magic might have rubbed off on him. Bosko showed that American Serbs can represent and preserve the authentic cevap!



Zoran started off his preparation in a very laid back style, typical of Beograders, drinking beer with a good looking female assistant by his side, waiting for the other competitors to start before getting his crew moving. His secret weapon: a winning attitude and Baba Natalja's cooking lessons, may her memory be eternal! When asked earlier if he thought he'd win, Zoran replied, "Hell ya Girl! I wouldn't be here otherwise." Zoran, you made your Baba proud!

Regardless of the 'formula' for making a good cevap, the end result was 9 flavorful, delicious cevaps for all to enjoy and a magical, family friendly event to be enjoyed by the entire church community. Who would've thought a little piece of BBQ'd meat would have such an effect on a whole community, but that is the mystery of the mystical, mythical, & mighty Serbian cevap!

Congratulations to both 2008 Cevap Champions: Bosko Kresovich by Judges Vote and Zoran Vladisavljevic by Popular Vote; to all cevap contestants who entered the challenge and provided such tasty cevaps; to the 5 judges for lending their expert taste buds; to Dobrila Undheim for brainstorming & chairing the entire event; to all organizers who beautifully executed this event; to Deyan Petakovich for being the event EMCEE; to Ilija Zkendzic for both judging and chairing kitchen with his wife Ljilja; to Boban Marjanovic for providing the musical soundtrack for the cevap challenge; and to parishioners and the public for attending and witnessing the glory that is the Cevap Challenge.

Reported & written by Jennifer Milanovich

Another Successful Annual International Orthodox Christian Charities - IOCC Event in Los Angeles

On Sunday, November 23 of this year, Saint Steven's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral was host to the annual Los Angeles IOCC charity benefit.

The host bishop, His Grace Maxim, welcomed a few hundred faithful from throughout Southern California, and extended his warm welcome to the Serbian Orthodox bishop of Australia and New Zealand, His Grace Irinej.

From 1992 to this day, the IOCC has implemented over \$275 million in relief and development programs in 33 countries around the world. The IOCC was founded sixteen years ago as the official humanitarian aid agency of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA).

His Grace Irinej is a great supporter and well-known advocate of the IOCC. "I'm letting people know the daily reality for children in Kosovo is to go to school under armed escort," said the Serbian American bishop who is originally from Ohio and was once an IOCC employee. "We must be that ray of hope for those children even in the simplest provision of school books and school kits," he said.

Since 1993, the IOCC has provided more than \$75 million in emergency relief and development programs to the former Yugoslavia, and is currently hosting a special speaking tour featuring his Grace Bishop Irinej. More events featuring Bishop Irinej are scheduled for Steelton, Pennsylvania and Detroit, Michigan. The IOCC announced recently that every gift made to Kosovo would be matched up to \$100,000 through the generosity of Bishop Irinej and the faithful of his diocese and the John G. Rangos Sr. Family Charitable Foundation.

All gifts earmarked for Kosovo will go toward IOCC's broader goal of providing \$500,000 in assistance to Kosovo

and for aid to some of the approximately 225,000 people who remain displaced from the region. IOCC aims to expand efforts to provide educational programs, sustainable agricultural training, and other projects that provide employment and stimulate wider regional cooperation in Kosovo.

Jasmina Boulanger led the Sunday night event at St. Steven's Cathedral. She eloquently introduced evening performers and speakers: Lisa Xanthos, IOCC Los Angeles Metropolitan Committee Chair, pianist Oksana Germain, violinist Kaiya Germain, Branislav Radakovic, a renowned baritone, IOCC director of development, Dan Christopoulos, Sasha Alexander Ponti, a Serbian American actress with her husband Eduardo Ponti, and the guest speaker, His Grace Bishop Irinej.

"It is my distinct honor to welcome you all on behalf of the Philanthropic entity that is very dear and so close to my heart," said his Grace Irinej as he proceeded to reiterate the fact that the IOCC acronym has come to mean for so many people life and love in and of itself.

Today IOCC is one of the top five charitable organizations in the world. Events such as the Los Angeles one make this possible. It is through the generosity and faith in action that the lives of many stricken by poverty and desperate circumstances are changed for better. The IOCC helps people move from desperate conditions to hope and economic self-sufficiency. It is through advocates such as his Grace Bishop Irinej and those gathered on Sunday evening at St. Steven's Cathedral that the work and mission of IOCC continues.

To become an IOCC advocate and to help in providing assistance to families in Kosovo and the Balkans, visit www.iocc.org, call IOCC toll free at 1-877-803-4622, or mail a check or money order payable to "IOCC" and write "Kosovo" in the memo line to: IOCC, P.O. Box 630225, Baltimore, Md. 21263-0225.

His Grace Bishop Irinej Rallies Orthodox Faithful on Behalf of Kosovo

Baltimore, MD — International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), which since 1993 has provided more than \$75 million in emergency relief and development programs to the former Yugoslavia, is currently hosting a special speaking tour featuring his Grace Bishop Irinej of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Australia and New Zealand.

Bishop Irinej is rallying American Orthodox faithful on behalf of families living in the isolated enclaves of Kosovo. "I'm letting people know the daily reality for children in Kosovo is to go to school under armed escort," said the Serbian American bishop who is originally from Ohio and was once an IOCC employee. "We must be that ray of hope for those children even in the simplest provision of school books and school kits," he said.

IOCC fundraising events featuring Bishop Irinej were held recently in Minneapolis, Seattle, and Los Angeles for IOCC's emergency and long term development projects, including Kosovo. More events featuring Bishop Irinej are scheduled for Steelton, Pennsylvania and Detroit, Michigan. IOCC announced recently that every gift made to Kosovo would be matched up to \$100,000 through the generosity of Bishop Irinej and the faithful of his diocese and The John G. Rangos Sr. Family Charitable Foundation.

All gifts earmarked for Kosovo will go toward IOCC's broader goal of providing \$500,000 in assistance to Kosovo and for aid to some of the approximately 225,000 people who remain displaced from the region. IOCC aims to expand efforts to provide educational programs, sustainable agricultural training and other projects that provide employment and stimulate wider regional cooperation in Kosovo.

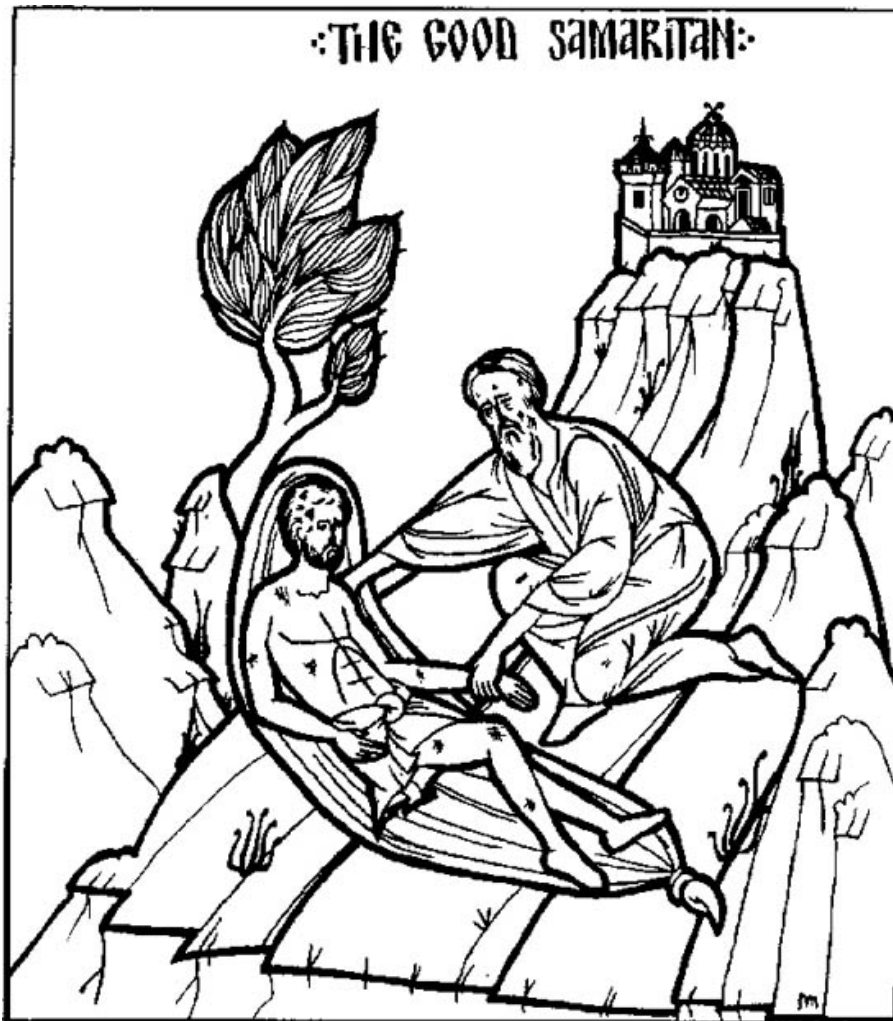
To help in providing assistance to families in Kosovo and the Balkans, visit

www.iocc.org, call IOCC toll free at 1-877-803-4622, or mail a check or money order payable to "IOCC" and write "Kosovo" in the memo line to: IOCC, P.O. Box 630225, Baltimore, Md. 21263-0225.

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"The IOCC acronym has come to mean for so many people life and love in and of itself." Bishop Irinej



The Mission of IOCC is to respond to the call of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Minister to those who are suffering and are in need throughout the world, sharing with them God's Gifts of Food, Shelter, Economic Self-Sufficiency and Hope.

Together with IOCC, I, _____, can follow Jesus' teachings on helping the poor and needy. Like in the Parable about the Good Samaritan, I can show love towards needy people by helping them and praying for them.

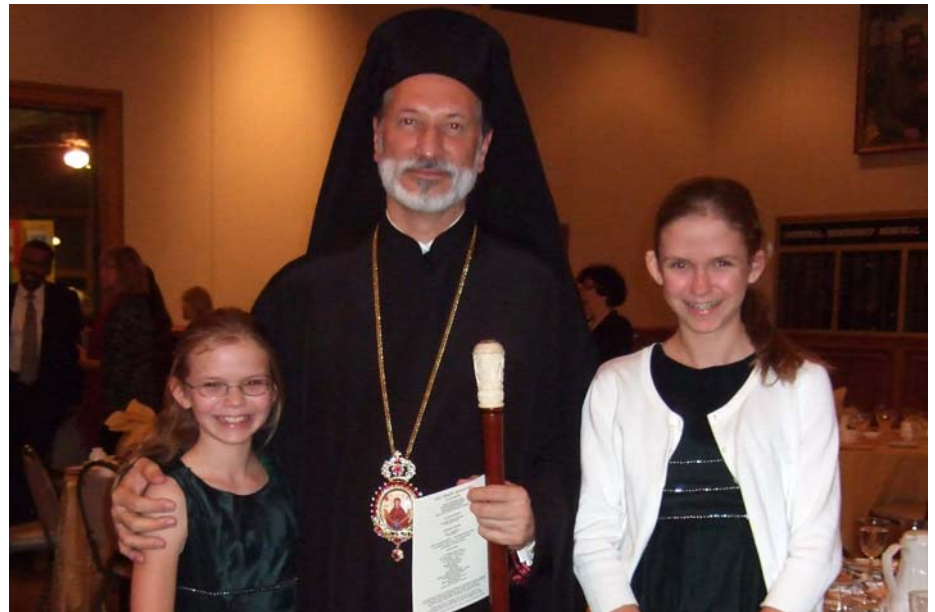


Germain Sisters Musical Update

On Saturday, October 4, 2008, Oksana won the first prize Gold Medal in piano performance at the regional California International Young Artists MusicFest 2008 Competition at Cal State San Marcos. This was her second Gold Medal win in this solo piano competition, but the first one in the more advanced age category. As a Gold Medalist, she was invited to perform in the MusicFest 2008 Winner's Concert the following weekend at California Center for the Arts in Escondido. The well-attended concert was professionally staged and recorded. It was a wonderful experience for Oksana.



In early November, Oksana was one of three MusicFest Gold Medalists who performed in an outreach event for the competition at the Women's Club of Escondido. Oksana presented a 20 minute solo program, performing pieces by Bach, Beethoven, Debussy and Moszkowski. In addition to her family, Oksana was happy to have Fr. Bratso, Protinica Lisa, and Alex and Seka Kinach there to share the experience with!



Kaija and Oksana with Bishop Irinej at the IOCC fundraising event at St. Stephen's in LA

Oksana's next musical adventure will be her favorite annual event: competing in the 2009 MTAC Concerto Competition with hopes to qualify again as a finalist in the San Diego Symphony's Hot Shots competition. She is preparing the second movement of St. Saens Concerto No.2 for these competitions.

Kaija and Oksana were invited to play at an IOCC charity event at St. Stevens Cathedral in Los Angeles on Saturday, November 23. The girls were honored to be able to participate in such a wonderful cause. Kaija performed Felix Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto with Oksana accompanying on piano. They were blessed to have a standing ovation of over 200 people. But most of all, Oksana and Kaija received blessings from our beloved Hierarchs, His Grace Bishop Maxim, His Grace Bishop Irinej and His Grace Bishop Joseph (Antiochian Archdiocese). Our family thanks God for these wonderful opportunities and experiences.



Fr. Bratso, Protinica Lisa, Alex and Seka Kinach with Oksana at the CIYAC Outreach Concert at the Women's Club of Escondido

Kolyva or Wheat (Koljivo) Recipe

- 1 Cup wheat
- 4 quarts water

Boil wheat berries until tender (approximately 2 hours, depending on type of wheat). Drain in colander, spread out on clean toweling (not terrycloth), cover with another towel and roll up to blot thoroughly. Depending upon how it is prepared, the wheat may be used immediately or spread out to dry further.

Ground walnuts or almonds, white or dark raisins (about 1 cup), sesame seeds, pomegranate seeds, cinnamon (about 5 dashes), ¼ tsp. cumin powder, etc., may be mixed into dry wheat before decorating.

Decorating Variations:

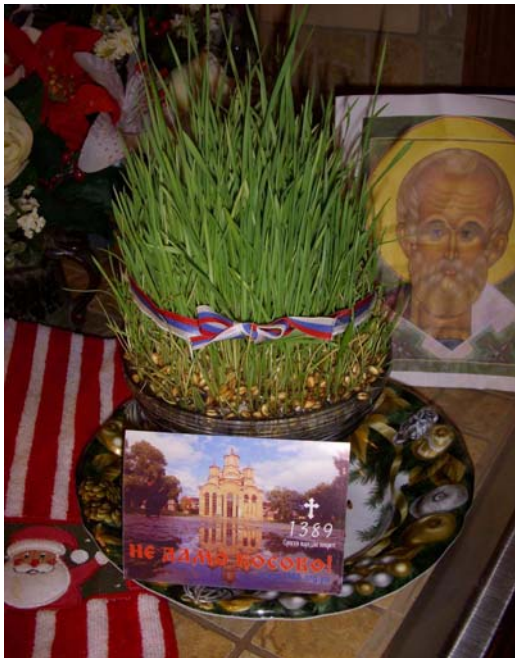
1. Put mixed wheat into bowl and smooth the top. Cover with finely chopped walnuts. Make a slight indentation in the form of a cross and fill with raisins, pomegranate seeds, or other such fruit. The bowl may be decorated as desired. At serving time, add granulated sugar to taste (approximately ¼ cup), mix well and serve.
2. Mound mixed dry wheat on plate or platter. Cover with a ¼ inch layer or either finely ground walnuts or almonds, or flour which has been browned in a dry skillet. Sift confectioner's sugar over all, covering completely. Decorate with Jordan almonds, silver decors, etc., as desired.

Decorating Notes:

It is traditional to form a Cross on the kolyva, and also to put a candle in it for the Memorial Service. If using small silver decors to make the Cross or other formal decoration, one may cut the desired shape out of adhesive tape (white), lay it, sticky side up, on a plate, and sprinkle the silver decors on the tape to cover the tape form. This may then be laid carefully over the powdered sugar. It should be removed before serving.

In plain kolyva as prepared in decorating variation #1, honey may be used to sweeten instead of, or in addition to, sugar.





Merry Christmas
& Happy New
Year!

St. George Circle
of Serbian
Sisters—Kolo

The Hymn of St. Paul

Facing danger at sea
and fearful persecution, you
became a chosen vessel
of the Savior.

By your sermons you
enlightened the nations and to
the Athenians you revealed
the unknown God. Teacher of
the nations, St. Paul the
Apostle, protector of us all,
keep us who honor you safe
from every trial and danger.



Peace on Earth
Good Will to All People!

MORAVA FOLKLORE
ENSEMBLE

Fr. Bratso encourages you to:

- Send your e-mail address to: frbratso@sbcglobal.net if you would like to be placed on a church information email list so that you get updated announcements of important changes or events during the month between monthly and quarterly mailings.
- Let him know when people are sick so that he can call or visit them if they want him to do so, and add their names to the weekly prayer list.
- Call him at any time; with questions, with concerns, with suggestions. If it's important to you, it's important to him!

Our Bookstore has many items on sale!

Don't forget to shop in our church bookstore. We have many items: gold crosses, gold chains, prayer books, books on various topics, tapes, video tapes, DVDs, icons, prayer ropes, etc.

Stewardship Pledges

Did you forget to submit your stewardship card or perhaps misplaced it somewhere, or do you simply need some more offering envelopes? Call our church office 619-276-5827 and we will immediately send you a stewardship card/s and envelopes.

To consider...

"Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love." *Ephesians 4:1-2*

Thank you, everyone!

Fr. Bratso would like to thank all of our stewards, Executive Church Board members, and supporters for the many ways you bring Gospel values into your homes, workplaces, and civic communities. "Well done good and faithful servant..." God bless you all! We appreciate you all!

Serbian Basketball Stars Visit Children In Kosovo and Metohija

September 12, 2008 - Belgrade, Serbia (IOCC) - His Grace Bishop Teodosije of Lipljan hosted Serb basketball stars Vlade Divac and Dragan Tarlac on a two-day visit to Kosovo and Metohija September 8-9, 2008. The delegation visited children as they began the new school year and provided shirts, hats and basketballs donated by Adidas through the Peja Stojakovic Children's Foundation. The trip to Kosovo and Metohija was organized by International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) in cooperation with His Grace Bishop Teodosije and included the participation of IOCC Executive Director & CEO Constantine M. Triantafilou.

The delegation made stops in Serb enclaves in Kosovo and Metohija, including Banje, Osojane, Gorazdevac and Velika Hoca villages where they also viewed projects that have been implemented by IOCC and the Visoki Decani Monastery with the support of the basketball players and donors from the United States.

"This is the greatest thing that could happen for these children," said Miroslav Kovacevic, the Director of the Elementary School in Banje. "This visit will encourage the children in the coming months and years. Sports help the children to forget about the situation they are living in."

Banje, a small village in a remote part of the Srbica Municipality, is home to about 400 Serbs. Through support from Vlade Divac, IOCC provided a computer center and generator for the children of the elementary school. In Gorazdevac, hundreds of children were on hand at the elementary school to receive gifts and autographs from the basketball players. The school has undergone renovations including installation of new windows for the ground floor. During the visit, IOCC also committed to completing the remaining windows on the first floor, while the Visoki Decani Monastery will replace the flooring throughout the school.

Former NBA Chicago Bulls player, Dragan Tarlac, signs an autograph during a recent visit to schools in Kosovo and Metohija. Tarlac was accompanied by NBA All Star Vlade Divac and International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) Executive Director & CEO Constantine M. Triantafilou as they toured IOCC development projects throughout Kosovo. (photo credit: IOCC Serbia)

"It is amazing to see the smiles of the children who are living under such difficult circumstances," said Vlade Divac. "The work that is being done by Bishop Teodosije and IOCC is critical for the survival of these people."

In the village of Velika Hoca in southwestern Kosovo, the group toured a community center that was completed by IOCC, a monastic winery that has recently been expanded with the support of Dragan Tarlac and the local elementary school where IOCC has also installed a new computer center and repaired the floors, doors, roof and wall around the schoolyard.

"The strong will shown by the people who have chosen to remain in Kosovo and to have their kids go to school there is an inspiring thing to see," reflected Dragan Tarlac, who has visited Kosovo and Metohija numerous times over the past couple of years. "The positive thinking that they display in facing the challenges in Kosovo always makes me happy."

In addition to the clothing that was distributed during the visit, Peja Stojakovic has also provided a 40 foot container of food to assist the people of Kosovo and Metohija. The container is expected to be delivered in the coming weeks.

The trip began with a visit to the Studenica Monastery in Serbia, and included visits to the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate in Pec and the Visoki Decani Monastery.

Recently, IOCC announced an initiative to provide half a million dollars in assistance to Kosovo and Metohija for the expansion of agricultural projects that



provide employment and foster inter-ethnic cooperation. The initiative will also provide assistance to schools and create educational and recreational programs. The John G. Rangos Sr. Family Charitable Foundation and His Grace Irinej (Dobrijevic), Bishop of Australia and New Zealand of the Serbian Orthodox Church have committed to match each dollar raised up to \$100,000 for the projects.

IOCC, founded in 1992 as the official humanitarian aid agency of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), has implemented over \$275 million in relief and development programs in 33 countries around the world.

Kings Plus: Q&A with Vlade Divac

With the Kings planning to retire Vlade Divac's No. 21 jersey during the March 31 game against the New Orleans Hornets, The Bee contacted the iconic former Kings center in his native Serbia. In a late-night conversation, the always accommodating Divac discussed the retirement festivities, offered thoughts on his position with the Serbian government, and chatted about his children and his former team. He also revealed details about a shocking new hobby – snow skiing. Here are excerpts from the conversation:

Congratulations on the jersey retirement. Personally, I thought it should have happened sooner.

I'm just humbled. When I look back on my career, playing in Sacramento, that was my brightest moment. Sometimes I think about the first practice I had there. Now we're talking about jersey retirement. Amazing.

Well, you turned 40 this year. It happens to everyone, even the greats.

Believe me, I know (laughs).

So take me through your last few years. You played 15 games with the Lakers in 2004-05 before retiring because of back problems, then spent two seasons as the general manager of Real Madrid. Was that the "European" adventure you had hoped? You often talked of exposing your three children to European culture.

Yes, yes. Madrid was good. The kids learned another life, and they learned Spanish. (Wife) Ana and I don't speak as well, but we can understand it. Then we came back to Belgrade last September after what, 19 years away? Unbelievable. It is just good to be back with family and friends, especially for my kids.

But politics? You swore you wouldn't touch the stuff. What is your official title, and what are your duties?

I'm vice (or deputy) prime minister in charge of sports and humanitarian interests, and for Serbs living abroad. I have an office in Belgrade in the government building. But I also founded the Humanitarian Organization Divac (HOD). We are trying to solve the refugee problem (and partnering with the Serbian government and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). We have almost 7,000 refugees living in the camps, more than in any other country in Europe. We buy empty houses in villages and cities, and find refugees to live in them. We interview them. The whole thing. We have placed 50 families. We want to find houses for another 400.

Is the political and economic climate in Serbia improving? What about the infrastructure? When I was in Belgrade before the 2004 Athens Olympics, the buildings that were bombed in the U.S. air assault in 1999 were still in disrepair.

The majority of them are fixed. One of them is still ruined, but somebody bought that land and is going to build a hotel. It's slow, but the people are resilient.

What about rumors that you are considering running for the presidency of Serbia? Your good friend Peja Stojakovic, by the way, believes it's inevitable.

(Laughs.) Maybe in the future. Not right now. Boris Tadic is starting his second term, and he is leading the country in a positive direction. Right now the only campaign I am running is for presidency of the Serbian Olympic Committee. I was named as a candidate, and I think I will be approved on Feb. 24. I hope.

What is your campaign platform?

Serbia is a basketball country, and then soccer. Lately we are having a lot of success in swimming and tennis. Next year also, Belgrade gets an ATP tournament. But we have to build new stadiums, arenas, tennis courts. After the war, everything was destroyed.

It sounds like you're too busy to do much sightseeing. Do you return to the United

States very often? I didn't see you at a Kings game last season or hear of any Vlade sightings at Staples Center.

My days are so crazy. I get up in the morning, take the kids to school and never stop. But I watch some of the games on television – the ones we get. We don't have as much choice as you do.

What has struck you about the Kings, other than their attendance problems?

Entering the weekend, they ranked 29th and haven't had a single sellout. Fan interest hasn't been this lukewarm since 1997-98, the season before you signed, Chris Webber was acquired, Jason Williams was drafted, and Peja defied his father and opted to join the Kings rather than resume his career in the Greek League.

Ailene Voisin, Sacramento Bee, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008

Defender Neven Subotic ditches United States to play for Serbia

BELGRADE, Serbia — Borussia Dortmund defender Neven Subotic has decided to play international football for Serbia instead of the United States.

Serbia coach Radomir Antic said Friday the Bosnian-born Subotic, who holds an American passport and has played for the United States at under-17 level, has opted to join Serbia's senior national team.

Antic plans to pair the 20-year-old Subotic with Manchester United's Nemanja Vidic in the centre of Serbia's defence in next year's World Cup qualifiers. He is expected to make his debut in a friendly against Cyprus in February.

Subotic, who has scored five goals for Borussia this season in the German Bundesliga, has been linked with a move to Napoli in the Italian Serie A during the January transfer window.

Cavic, Jankovic Elected as Best Serbian Athletes in 2008

Serbia's top swimmer Milorad Cavic and best female tennis player Jelena Jankovic were on Saturday elected best athletes of the year in the Balkan country.

Cavic and Jankovic received the honor in a ceremony organized by the Serbian Olympic Committee in Belgrade.

Cavic, 24-year-old, won two gold and two silver medals this year, including a second place finish at the Beijing Olympics.

Jankovic, 23-year-old, won four WTA titles and first took over the No. 1 ranking on Aug. 11 and then again ascended to that height on Oct. 6. She has held the top ranking for a total of 12 weeks.

The Serbian men's water polo team was declared the most successful men's team for the sixth consecutive year. The team won three medals: gold at the World League, silver at the European championship, and bronze at the Olympic Games in Beijing.

As for women's teams, the national volleyball squad was declared the best after they qualified for the Olympics for the first time in history of Serbian volleyball for women.

The best disabled athletes are table tennis player Borislava Peric-Rankovic and track-and-field competitor Drazenko Mitrovic, who won silver and bronze respectively at the Paralympic Games in Beijing.

2008-12-21 11:18:13 Xinhua

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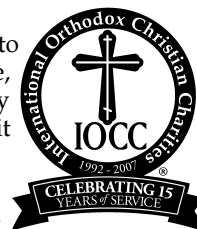
Give a Gift of Love This Christmas



As your family prepares for the Feast of the Nativity, please remember your brothers and sisters in need. The feast of Christmas is for all people as it ushers in new hope and new life. The good news first announced by the Angel to the shepherds can continue echoing this Christmas as we exchange these gifts of love with the "least of our brethren."

Your support of IOCC brings life-sustaining programs to children and families suffering from war, poverty, disease, man-made and natural disasters. May you and yours enjoy the true nature of the Christmas feast this year. Please share it with others by supporting the work of IOCC.

IOCC • P.O. Box 630225 • Baltimore, MD 21263-0225
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INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES



*Happy
New Year
2009*

Misha Jovanovic



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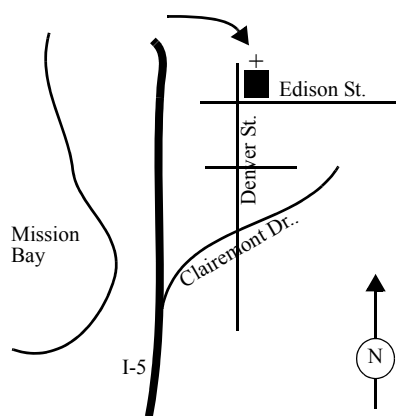
misha@mishatours.com



Schedule of Services January 2009

Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:30am; Saturdays – Vespers 6pm

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Sunday, January 4 | Father's Day; Divine Liturgy 10:30am |
| Tuesday, January 6 | Christmas Eve Vigil 7pm; Blessing of the Badnjak and Fellowship |
| Wednesday, January 7 | Nativity of our Lord/Christmas – Divine Liturgy 10am |
| Thursday, January 8 | Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos – Divine Liturgy 10am |
| Friday, January 9 | Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen – Divine Liturgy 10am |
| Sunday, January 11 | Holy 14,000 Infants of Bethlehem – Divine Liturgy 10:30am |
| Wednesday, January 14 | Circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ St. Basil the Great, Julian Calendar New Year – Divine Liturgy 10am |
| Sunday, January 18 | Holy Cross Day – Divine Liturgy 10:30am, Parish Annual Assembly |
| Monday, January 19 | Theophany (Bogojavljenje) Divine Liturgy and the Great Blessing of Water 10am |
| Tuesday, January 20 | Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John Divine Liturgy 10am |
| Sunday, January 25 | Divine Liturgy 10:30am St. Sava Celebration and the Blessing of the Kolach/Program |
| Tuesday, January 27 | St. Sava Feast Day – Divine Liturgy 10am |



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