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# THE POKROV MAGAZINE

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1



CHRIST IS BORN, GLORIFY YE HIM. CHRIST FROM HEAVEN, GO YE OUT TO MEET HIM.

# THE POKROV MAGAZINE

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## Nativity Letter from Metropolitan Longin

All nations of the world joyfully celebrate the Nativity, dear brothers and sisters. There is no greater joy, especially for us Serbs, than the glad tidings of the birth of Jesus Christ. He came among us to unite us with God, to bring us into kinship and harmony with Him, as Saint Bishop Nikolaj said. Bishop Rade, through the words of Abbot Stefan, beautifully sings about this:

*There is no day without the sight of the eye,  
Nor true glory without the Nativity!  
I celebrated the Nativity in Bethlehem,  
I celebrated it on Mount Athos,  
I celebrated it in Holy Kiev,  
But this celebration stood out,  
With simplicity and joy:  
What I love most,  
Is that everything should be toasted to!*

The birth of Christ is the greatest Event and Miracle in the history of heaven and earth; the greatest Mystery of all worlds and ages. This unprecedented, unrepeatable, and unique Event, which surpasses even the creation of the world itself, occurred over two thousand years ago in Bethlehem of Judea.

The eternal God becomes true man—not a vision or an illusion, but a real human being like us—taking upon Himself the entirety of human nature. He is born as a small Child, grows, eats, drinks, works, tires, sleeps and wakes as a man, cries and sympathizes with sinners, rejoices in our joys, dies on the Cross, but also gloriously resurrects as God, opening the doors of eternity to all. Through the Nativity, God visibly shows His love for humanity, and we become aware that we are beloved beings. This is a family Holiday: God Himself was born and came into the world through a Nazareth family. The entire New Testament can be summed up in one sentence: Christ taught us to call the Creator Father, to address Him as "Our Father"!



May these words of comfort and hope resonate in our overly busy and increasingly less spiritual world: Jesus Christ is Lord! May the celebration of Jesus Christ's birth bring encouragement in faith, comfort to the soul, and joy to life. From the Mystery of Christmas, we pass on the Gospel message proclaimed that night: Do not be afraid; we bring you great joy! What other message does the Glorious Nativity of Christ bring us? God's peace, love, and forgiveness—God's forgiveness to us and forgiveness among people. Peace in the soul, peace with God, peace with our neighbors; peace in the city, in the family, the parish, the diocese, and all places where Serbs live, especially in the crucified Kosovo and Metohija.

**CHRIST IS BORN!**

## ~ VALUE ~

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.” (Luke 12: 6-8)

Inevitably, from time to time, we think about the value of the things around us, things that make up our lives. We think of people that surround us, their value to us and our value to them. Ultimately, we think of ourselves and our own worth. What is the value of an object that might get purchased some time between Thanksgiving and Christmas? Sellers reduce its price, yet they make a profit. No need to worry about them.



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But what is the value of that discounted object in our own life? Will the time spent on the object, or with the object, be traded for the time that could have been spent with family or friends, with fellow icons of God? Or will the object contribute to a better relationship with family and friends?

Depending on how we have defined the value of the people around us, we will either subject inanimate objects to the relationship with those people, or we will prioritize inanimate objects over living beings, fellow icons of God, and thus reduce their value and diminish relationships with them. Also, we might have a wrong idea of our own worth and succumb to the temptation of thinking that an object will increase it, or that our own submission to a dead object will somehow increase our own worth, our value.

Almost daily we observe the suffering of human beings around the world. We cannot but wonder about the value of their lives. Evidently, their lives have no value to those who choose to oppress them. If we are Christians then the lives of those people have value for us. But we sit helplessly here, far away from their place of suffering, and wonder how long before the Lord avenge the blood of the innocent.

Hence the reminder of the verses above. We are worth more than sparrows. Sparrows were bought and sold for pennies – and were not forgotten. We were bought with the Blood of Christ. What greater price could God have paid for our lives except the life of His only Son? Now let us place ourselves in the position of the redeemed and adopted children of God so we can better understand the value of things and people and ourselves. If the hairs of our head are numbered so are the cries and tears of the suffering, as are our cries and tears shed for them in prayer for deliverance.

Our position and our manner of existence will define our value. In the right place we are worth more than

the universe itself. Even the hairs of our head are numbered. In the wrong place, to the world around us, we are worth less than the two pennies we will spend on some kind of a sparrow of our day and age. We put ourselves in the right place, in the presence of God by fulfilling His commandments. One of them says that we have to confess Him before men so He will confess us before the angels of God. How do we confess Him in this world we live in? At this point in time by prioritizing people over things. By prioritizing God Himself over people, because without Him our relationships with people will easily slide downward and end up in the realm of things instead of eternal existence.

If we buy things, let us use those things to improve relationships with our near ones, to dismiss outstanding debts, real or perceived, and to improve the flow of love. If we are praying for ourselves, our near and dear ones, and those suffering in every corner of the world, let us do so with knowledge that all of hairs on our and their heads are already numbered and that all tears will be wiped away from their eyes. Let us remember the hope of resurrection so we not spiral downward into a worldly mindset like those who have no hope.

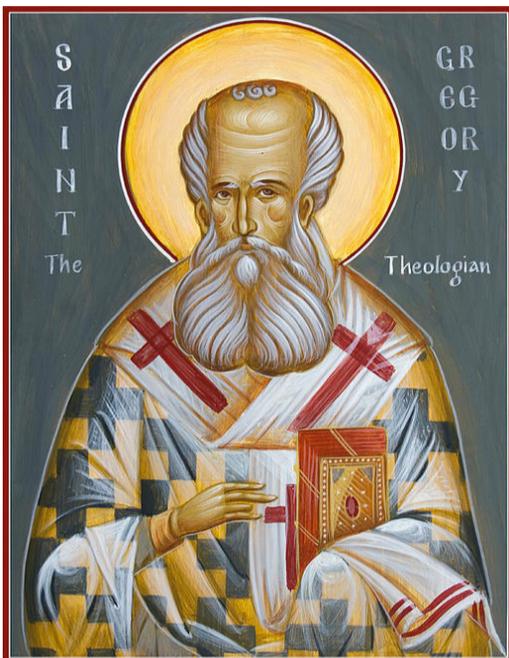
Let us trade that sparrow, give and receive that item, communicate with our near ones and utter that word of prayer all in the name of the Lord Who restores all things and gives all things their true value. By doing so, among many other things we could do, we will confess Him before men and He will confess us before His angels. If we give in to greed, selfishness, despair and wrath we will be denying Him, and His providential presence in this world, before men and He will have to likewise deny us before His angels, as strangers who have made themselves lose all value.

### **Bishop Serafim (Baltic)**



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## GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS ON THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

ORATION 38, DELIVERED AROUND CHRISTMAS IN CONSTANTINOPLE  
IN THE YEAR 380.

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“Grace is given not to them who speak [their faith] but to those who live their faith.”

Gregory of Nazianzus

Christ is born, glorify ye Him. Christ from heaven, go ye out to meet Him. Christ on earth; be ye exalted. Sing unto the Lord all the whole earth; and that I may join both in one word, Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, for Him Who is of heaven and then of earth. Christ in the flesh, rejoice with trembling and with joy; with trembling because of your sins, with joy because of your hope. Christ of a Virgin; O ye Matrons live as Virgins, that ye may be Mothers of Christ. Who doth not worship Him That is from the beginning? Who doth not glorify Him That is the Last? Again the darkness is past; again Light is made; again Egypt is punished with darkness; again Israel is enlightened by a pillar. The people that sat in the darkness of ignorance, let it see the Great Light of full knowledge. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. The letter gives way, the Spirit comes to the front. The shadows flee away, the Truth comes in upon them. Melchisedec is concluded. He that was without Mother becomes without Father (without Mother of His former state, without Father of His second). The laws of nature are upset; the world above must be filled. Christ commands it, let us not set ourselves against Him. O clap your hands together all ye people, because unto us a Child is born, and

a Son given unto us, Whose Government is upon His shoulder (for with the Cross it is raised up), and His Name is called The Angel of the Great Counsel of the Father. Let John cry, Prepare ye the way of the Lord: I too will cry the power of this Day. He Who is not carnal is Incarnate; the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, Jesus Christ the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Let the Jews be offended, let the Greeks deride; let heretics talk till their tongues ache. Then shall they believe, when they see Him ascending up into heaven; and if not then, yet when they see Him coming out of heaven and sitting as Judge. Of these on a future occasion; for the present the Festival is the Theophany or Birthday, for it is called both, two titles being given to the one thing. For God was manifested to man by birth. On the one hand Being, and eternally Being, of the Eternal Being, above cause and word, for there was no word before The Word; and on the other hand for our sakes also Becoming, that He Who gives us our being might also give us our Well-being, or rather might restore us by His Incarnation, when we had by wickedness fallen from wellbeing. The name Theophany is given to it in reference to the Manifestation, and that of Birthday in respect of His Birth.

# Christmas Eve and Christmas Traditions:

Come, then, let us observe the Feast. Truly wondrous is the whole chronicle of the Nativity. For this day the ancient slavery is ended, the devil confounded, the demons take to flight, the power of death is broken, paradise is unlocked, the curse is taken away, sin is removed from us, error driven out, truth has been brought back, the speech of kindness diffused, and spreads on every side, a heavenly way of life has been 'in planted on the earth, angels communicate with men without fear, and men now hold speech with angels. **ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM**

## NATIVITY EVE:

**VESPER SERVICE** - On Nativity Eve, Serbian Orthodox Christians come together for the cheerful Vespers service. At these services the Old Testament prophecies of Christ's birth are chanted, emphasizing the prophecy of Micah which foretells Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Saviour, and the prophecies of Isaiah about the appearance and character of the Messiah:

*The Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel, which translated is, God with us (Is 7.14-15).*

*God is with us, understand all ye nations, and submit yourselves, for God is with us (Is 8.9).*

This very beautiful service, full of hymns and prayers, commemorates the Nativity of Christ and is followed by the blessing of the badnjak. Thus, the feast of Christmas is the celebration of the world's salvation through the Son of God who became man for our sake that, through him, we might ourselves become divine, sons of God the Father by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit in us.

**BADNJAK (YULE LOG TREE)** – On Nativity Eve Day early in the morning, the head (domaćin) of the household goes into the close woods to cut down an oak tree. The tree, called the badnjak, symbolizes the Yule log and prosperity. It's blessed and brought home with prayers to ensure prosperity for the household.

**CHRISTMAS STRAW** – After the badnjak is brought inside, straw with corn and other offerings are spread over the house floor to represent the humble birth of Christ in a crib. Children playfully imitate chicks in the straw, creating a joyful atmosphere.



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**CHRISTMAS EVE DINNER** – A special fasting meal is prepared with diverse dishes, including bread, fish, and beans. The meal is preceded by prayers and blessings, with family members singing the Nativity Troparion. After dinner, young people visit friends, sing carols, and celebrate.

**POLAŽAJNIK** – The first person to visit the house on Nativity is the polažajnik, a figure of good fortune. He greets the family with “Christ is Born” and participates in rituals around the fire, making sparks to represent blessings of health, wealth, and prosperity.

**CHESNITCA CHRISTMAS BREAD** – Various loaves of bread are prepared, the most significant being the česnica, which is broken at the start of the Christmas meal. A coin hidden inside brings luck and prosperity to the one who finds it.

**VERTEP** – Another custom is the vertep, where boys carry a model of the Nativity scene and go from house to house, singing Nativity hymns and reciting verses celebrating Christ’s birth.

**DETINJCI, MATERICE, AND OCI (SERBIAN MOTHER’S, FATHER’S, CHILDREN’S DAY)** – These three Sundays leading up to Nativity are days of gift-giving, each focusing on a different group. On Detinjci, children give gifts to adults, on Materice, mothers are given presents, and on Oci, fathers receive gifts. Tying and untying family members in exchange for small gifts symbolizes love, unity, and respect.

Serbs celebrate Nativity on January 7th, according to the Julian calendar, marking the holiday with rich traditions that focus on family, community, and the hope for prosperity in the coming year. Each ritual, from the cutting of the badnjak to the breaking of the česnica, holds deep symbolic meaning, reflecting the unity and faith that is central to Serbian Orthodox culture.

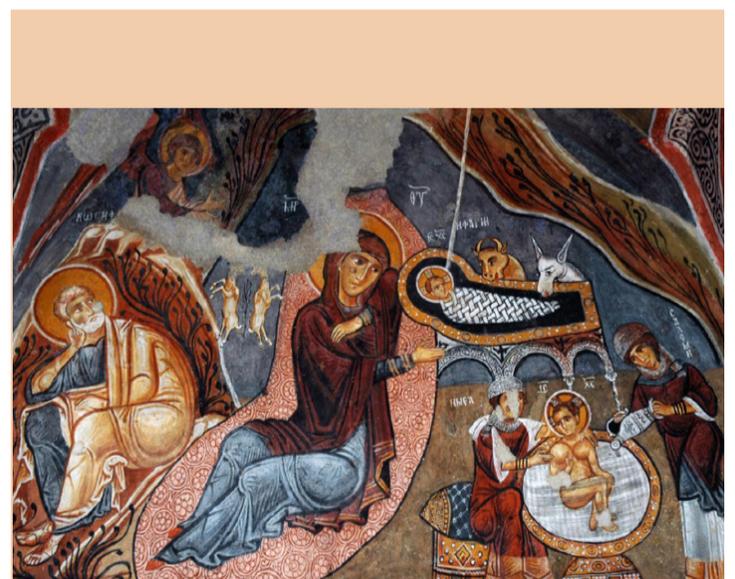
**Miroslav Sretenovic**



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## THE LORD'S PRAYER

The best prayer that we use at home and in church is the Lord's Prayer. It is called by that name because our Lord Jesus Christ communicated it to His disciples as a model prayer.

**Q. How do we read the Lord's prayer in the Gospel? (Matt. 6:5-13)**

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN. HALLOWED BE THY NAME, THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD, AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US, AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL, FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

**Q. What is the content of the Lord's prayer?**

**A.** First, the invocation or salutation, then seven petitions, and finally the glorification.

**Q. Why do we not say "My Father"?**

**A.** The only uncreated but begotten Son of God Jesus Christ has the right to call God "My Father," but we who are created and adopted sons and daughters of God through the loving sacrifice of Christ are honored to call His Father our Father (John 1:12).

**Q. Is there any other reason for calling God our Father?**

**A.** Yes, a great social reason. Christ wanted us to love each other as brothers. But only those who recognize one father can be regarded as brothers.

**Q. That is to say: When we call God our Father, we consequently call each other: "Our brothers." Is it not so?**

**A.** Perfectly so. There is no brotherhood without a common fatherhood.

**Q. Why do we not call God: "Our Creator"?**

**A.** Because God is the Creator of all things, but He is more than the Creator, indeed, He is the Father of those who are reborn by the Holy Spirit and thereby made "Children of God." For they are no more mere creatures but children.

**Q. Why do we say: "Who art in heaven?"**

**A.** Because the eternal abode of the true God is in heaven, beyond time and space, and not limited to earth as the false gods of idol-worshippers, nature worshippers, or men-worshippers.

## ***THE FIRST PETITION***

**Q.** What is our first petition in the Lord's Prayer?

**A.** "Hallowed be Thy name.

**Q.** What do we request in this petition?

**A.** We ask God's help that His name may be respected by men and kept holy above all other names in the world. In the Old Testament, when God was known only as Creator and Judge, men were forbidden "to take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." But through the new law of love we are obliged to do much more beyond that. We must establish in our own life and everywhere around us the veneration of the most holy name of our Father, and even to die for that name, as Christian martyrs died.

## ***THE SECOND PETITION***

**Q.** What is our second petition in the Lord's prayer?

**A.** "Thy Kingdom come."

**Q.** What do we ask for in this petition?

**A.** We ask God's help that the heavenly Kingdom of the Holy Trinity in Unity be established in our souls, in our families, in our nation, and in the whole world.

**Q.** Can we say it more explicitly?

**A.** As the Holy Father and Holy Son and Holy Spirit are one eternal harmony, peace, power and glory, even so we wish that our mind and heart and will may be one, like our divine original of which our souls are the image. Thus that which is in the original may be in the image, too.

**Q.** How can we know that the Kingdom of God has come?

**A.** The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom.14:17). When we see this realized in our souls, and also among men around us, then we may be sure that the Kingdom of God has come.

## ***THE THIRD PETITION***

**Q.** What is the third petition in the Lord's Prayer?

**A.** "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**Q.** What do we want by this petition?

**A.** We ask God's help that we may stop vacillating between God and Satan, between good and evil, and that by flatly rejecting Satan's will, we may wholly surrender to our Father's will, as our Lord Jesus Christ did while praying in Gethsemane: "Thy will be done and not Mine."

**Q.** Why do we say: "as it is in heaven"?

**A.** Because in heaven the angels and the saints whole-heartedly and joyfully obey the will of God. God's will is then their will, which makes them eternally happy. And that is what we ask for ourselves on earth as well.

## ***THE FOURTH PETITION***

**Q.** What is the fourth petition in the Lord's prayer?

**A.** "Give us this day our daily bread."

**Q.** What do we want by this petition?

**A.** First, we confess by it that without God's power and mercy we are unable to keep ourselves alive even for one single day; second, since we may die any day, we ask God to save us from the foolishness of accumulating riches for a distant future, while our neigh-

bors may be dying for want of daily bread. In other words, we ask God to give us neither less nor more than we need.

### Q. What kind of bread is meant here?

A. Two kinds: the physical and the spiritual. For we cannot get either without God's grace and mercy. The physical bread is grown from the earth, and the spiritual comes from heaven. The first is for the body, the second for the soul. About the physical bread Christ said: "Man shall not live by bread alone" (Matt. 4:4); and, about the spiritual bread He said: "I am the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die" (John 6:51). Thus our principal daily bread is Christ Himself, and the other is added to it.

## THE FIFTH PETITION

### Q. What is the fifth petition in the Lord's prayer?

A. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

### Q. What do we want by this petition?

A. We are asking God's help that we may be ready to forgive our neighbor's trespasses against us, and accordingly, that He may forgive our trespasses. For it is also said from the same lips: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses" (Matt. 6:14-15).

## THE SIXTH PETITION

### Q. What is the sixth petition in the Lord's prayer?

A. "And lead us not into temptation."

### Q. What do we want by this petition?

A. We are asking God to remember our human weakness and not to try us by heavy afflictions for our edification, nor to allow the devil to tempt us to our destruction.

### Q. What is the difference between God's

### trying us and the devil's tempting us?

A. A very great difference indeed. For when God tries us by losses or sufferings, He is doing it in order to strengthen our virtues, as a piece of iron is put into the fire to become steel. The devil, on the contrary, tempts us by some sin or vice with the intention to make us worse, impure, weaker, and finally to separate us from God and destroy us altogether.

## THE SEVENTH PETITION

### Q. What is the seventh petition in the Lord's prayer?

A. "But deliver us from evil."

### Q. What do we want by this petition?

A. We are asking God's help to liberate us from evil doings and from evildoers. It is as if we were praying: Prevent us, O Father, from doing evil, and protect us from evildoers.

### Q. Who is the greatest evildoer from whom we are praying to God to deliver us?

A. Satan. All sins and other subsequent evils originate in Satan. Therefore we, by this petition, are chiefly imploring our God, Who is light and love, to deliver us from the evil one, who is darkness and hatred itself.

## THE GLORIFICATION

### Q. What is the ending of the Lord's prayer?

A. It is the glorification, or doxology, as follows: "For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

### Q. What do we express by this glorification?

A. We express our faith in God as the most powerful and glorious King, who alone can fulfill all our petitions. Therefore we praise Him, we glorify Him, we love Him.

### Q. What is the meaning of the word "Amen"?

A. “Amen” is one of God’s names. The Lord spoke to St. John: “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and the true witness, the beginning of the Creation” (Rev. 3:14). We finish every prayer and every praise of God with this name: Amen. It is as much as to say: God, or Truth. Also in performing an oath we finish with “Amen”, meaning: what I say is true, as the Truth, or as God.

*Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, The faith of the Saints. A catechism, 74-79.*



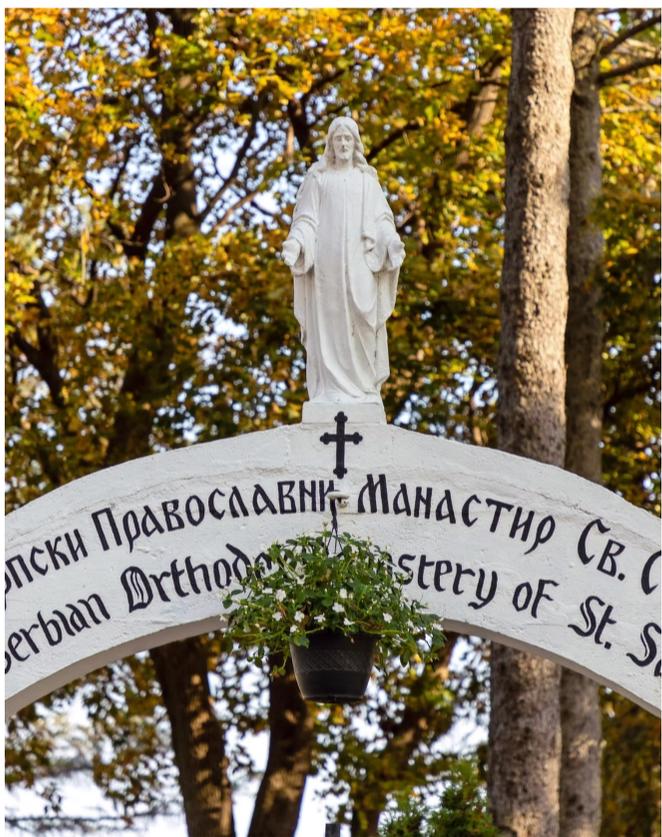
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SAINT VLADIKA  
NIKOLAJ  
VELIMIROVICH  
AT ST. SAVA  
MONASTERY IN  
LIBERTYVILLE, IL

# SAINT SAVA SERBIAN ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY – THE SPIRITUAL EMBASSY OF THE SERBIAN PEOPLE IN THE DIASPORA



SAINT SAVA  
SERBIAN ORTHODOX  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY



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Monastery in Libertyville, a place which St. Mardarije blessed with tears of prayer to St. Sava and all the saints. This sole higher education institution of the Serbian Orthodox Church has been, and remains, a beacon that supports the mission of our Holy Church throughout the Diaspora and back in the homeland.

In 2025, as the Serbian Orthodox Church celebrates 100 years since the founding of the St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville, we reflect on the role of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology, our spiritual embassy, in the life and mission of the Serbian Orthodox Church beyond the homeland. Each year, this institution enriches the Church's mission and testimony, guiding us to continue to follow the path of St. Sava, which leads to eternal Life. This path, neither easy nor wide, has always been narrow and paved with trials that draw a person into the embrace of Christ. Over time and across distances, the Serbian Orthodox Church has faced various trials, yet the joy of every God-seeker lies in knowing that the Church has matured and resolutely overcome these challenges. The

Throughout human history, influential states have established embassies in other countries to represent their people, protect their interests, and foster friendships and cooperation. These embassies quickly became significant representatives of nations and protectors of national interests, signifying a country's and nation's maturity. In this historical context, the small Serbian nation, by God's will and providence, elevated this concept by building a spiritual embassy—the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology in Libertyville—which has illuminated and enlightened God's people for nearly four decades.

The Serbian people have long been a suffering people, bearing the cross of their trials in the spirit of Gospel witness. Wherever Serbian communities found themselves outside their homeland's borders, their priority was to build churches to preserve their faith and, through Gospel testimony, follow the path of St. Sava faithfully. After settling in the United States and founding their magnificent temples, wise spiritual representatives of the Serbian Church and people established an important spiritual embassy at the St. Sava



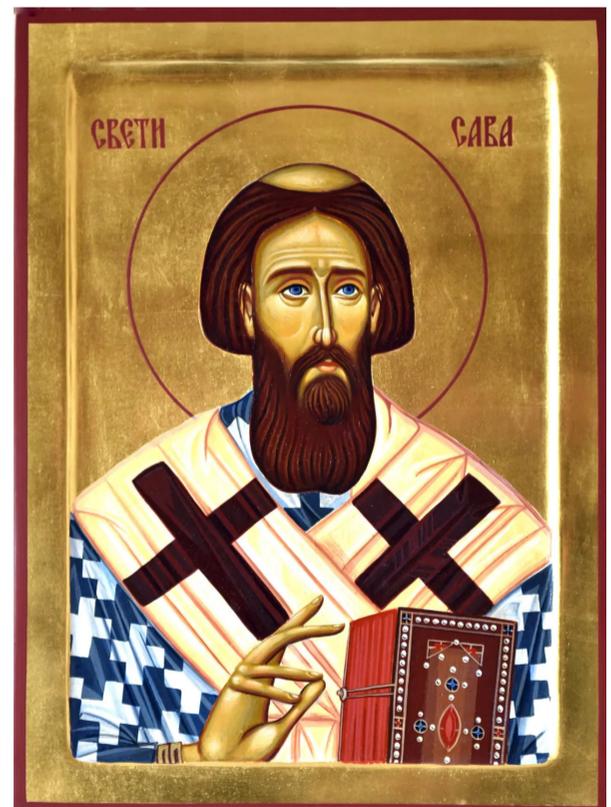
experience of Church life shows that we should not fear trials and problems but face them with faith and Christian love.

The celebration of the 100th anniversary of the St. Sava Monastery cannot be envisioned without emphasizing the significance of this institution's role in preserving the spiritual awareness of Orthodox believers and the Serbian people. Since its founding in 1986, the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology in Libertyville has made progress under challenging conditions, reflecting the resilience of our people in the Diaspora. No great work comes without suffering and the cross, as evident in the sacrifices made by those who believed in this vital higher education institution of the Serbian Orthodox Church. When we look at the wisdom of the Serbian Orthodox Church's hierarchs in establishing this higher education institution, three essential components stand out: Vision, Pastoral-Missionary work in the Lord's vineyard, and Education.

The vision and work of the Serbian Orthodox Church's devout hierarchs were evident in their determination to create an institution that would educate clergy in North, Central, and South America, enabling new generations of ministers to meet the challenges of missionary work and enlighten Orthodox believers. This endeavor required the founding of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology —no small feat. The foundation on which the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology is built is the God-Man Christ, who affirms all our efforts in the Church's mission. As St. Paul said, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth" (1 Cor. 3:6-7).

This vision of service and dedication to preserving Church Tradition inspires the determination and sacrifice of many individuals who have contributed through their work and love to the growth of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology. Their commitment to pastoral-missionary work in the Lord's vineyard has led to the formation of clergy who, over the 39 years of the School's existence, have enhanced the Church's missionary and educational efforts across North and South America.

Pastoral-missionary work reflects the character and commitment of young theologians who, upon completing their studies in Orthodox theology, take on serious missionary challenges in serving the Holy Church and God's people. Through their love for witnessing the Gospel of Christ and spiritual strength gained from daily worship at the St. Sava and New Gracanica monasteries, ordained students of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology have shaped and continue to shape the spiritual





FATHER ALEKSANDAR NOVAKOVIC

life of Orthodox believers worldwide. A key element in maintaining the unity of our Holy Church in the USA, Canada, and beyond is the testimony of these ordained students, who have embraced the call to be messengers of the path that leads to eternal Life.

Education was another cornerstone for the founding of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology in 1986. The theological education offered is rooted in building the image of God in man, as we believe that humanity is created in the image and likeness of God. The educational process at our School is based on the preservation of Holy Tradition, offering students the opportunity to embark on a lifelong study of Orthodox theology. Theological education is not confined to time or completed by simply fulfilling academic programs; it is, in essence, a sacrifice and effort that, through the Holy Spirit, brings success and fruits in witnessing within the Church of God. Over the 39 years of its history, the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology has produced over 100 clergy, as well as educators and iconographers within the Serbian Orthodox Church. This process continues and will endure, aiming to educate young people who will, through their love of theology, grow in wisdom and be prepared to confront the challenges they encounter in the mission of the Church.



ST. SAVA SCHOOL OF THEOLGY CLERGY ASSEMBLY

One of the primary goals of theological education is to cultivate knowledge that finds its fulfillment in wisdom. Today, we strive not to reduce education to mere information, as modern society often does, but to learn from the God-Man Christ and become heralds of God's wisdom.

Reflecting on the significance and work of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology, we offer words of encouragement and gratitude to students, teachers, and the faithful with the words of the Gospel: "You are the light of the world; a city on a hill cannot be hidden" (Mt. 5:14).



PATRIARCH'S PORFIRIJE VISIT

**V. Rev. Dr. Aleksandar Novakovic**  
Dean of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology



## SAINT MARDARIJE AND THE CENTENNIAL OF SAINT SAVA MONASTERY IN LIBERTYVILLE

The Saint Sava Monastery was founded in 1923 by Saint Mardarije, the first Serbian bishop of America and Canada, and dedicated to Saint Sava, the first Serbian educator and teacher. The monastery estate spans 40 hectares of wooded land and includes a church, a children's camp building, a picnic pavilion, a bishop's residence, and auxiliary facilities. The monastery church is adorned with stunning frescoes and icons and is open to all visitors and worshippers for prayer and services. Furthermore, the monastery serves as a center of Orthodox Christian spirituality and education, hosting numerous seminars, workshops, and festivals throughout the year. Saint Sava Monastery is the oldest Serbian monastery in America and the seat of the Serbian New Gracanica Metropolitanate and the Midwest American Diocese. The monastery is a serene and welcoming place, making it an excellent destination for anyone interested in learning about the history and traditions of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Saint Mardarije, the first Serbian bishop of America and Canada, was born on December 22, 1889, as Stanko Uskoković in the village of Kornet near Podgorica. He completed primary school in Cetinje, where he also began secondary school, later continuing in Belgrade. He left secondary school in the fifth grade and entered the Studenica Monastery, where he received monastic tonsure with the blessing of Bishop Sava of Žiča and was ordained a deacon in 1906. He began his seminary studies in Zhytomyr, completing them in Chişinău in 1911. During these studies, he published a collection of his sermons. He then attended the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, graduating in 1916. In Saint Petersburg, he also studied law and was elected a professor at a Slavic high school. As a theology student, he visited camps of Slavic prisoners from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Russian Orthodox Church sent Hieromonk Mardarije to the United States in 1917 to organize the Serbian Orthodox Church there. In America, he headed the Serbian Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church and was elected bishop at the All-American Council in Cleveland. However, Archimandrite Mardarije refused to be consecrated as bishop without the knowledge and consent of the Serbian Orthodox Church in his homeland. He returned to Serbia, becoming the abbot of the Rakovica Monastery and rector of the monastic school located there. He remained in Rakovica until early 1923, when he returned to America as the administrator of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of America and Canada.

The Serbian clergy of America and Canada held a meeting with the people in Gary, Indiana, from February 8 to 29, 1923. The meeting was presided over by Archimandrite Mardarije, who opposed the interference of other Orthodox Churches in Serbian affairs.



The Yugoslav Kingdom's Consul General confirmed in writing that Archimandrite Mardarije had successfully united and reconciled all Serbian clergy in America. They recognized him as their leader, established the diocesan consistory, launched the publication of the "Serbian Church" journal, and began administratively organizing church-school congregations. Archimandrite Mardarije Uskoković remained the administrator until his election as the first Serbian bishop in the United States. His election found him in very poor health. He was consecrated as a bishop in Belgrade on April 25, 1926, by Patriarch Dimitrije, Bishop Danilo of Dalmatia-Istria, and Bishop Serafim of Zletovo-Strumica. Gordon Paddock, the chargé d'affaires of the American Embassy, attended the liturgy and consecration.

Bishop Mardarije arrived at his diocese in New York in July of the same year. He sent his first report to Patriarch Dimitrije in early September 1926. In his first pastoral letter to the clergy and the people, he praised all those who had worked for the benefit of the Serbian Church in America, mentioning those who had passed away. Despite his severe illness, Bishop Mardarije worked tirelessly. He convened the First Church Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church in America at the Saint Sava Monastery in Libertyville, delivering his fourth archpastoral letter on September 1, 1927. The decisions of this council were based on a resolution adopted in Chicago on May 29, 1927. Bishop Mardarije passed away on December 12, 1935, and was buried six days later at the Saint Sava Monastery in Libertyville, which he had built with the Serbian people through immense effort. Recently, Bishop Mardarije, the Bishop of America and Canada, was canonized, and his holy relics were revealed.

The land on which the Saint Sava Monastery in Libertyville was built was purchased by Bishop Mardarije Uskoković in 1923. Due to the monastery's construction, Bishop Mardarije endured many sacrifices, leading to a saying among American Serbs: "He builds a church while starving." During the Great Depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s, Serbian scientist Mihajlo Pupin (1854–1935) provided financial assistance for the monastery's construction. At the time of its completion, the monastery became the seat of the newly established Serbian Orthodox Diocese of America and Canada and hosted the first Serbian Church-People's Assembly from September 1 to 5, 1927. The monastery church, described as "the first string to touch the Serbian heart" by Saint Bishop Nikolaj, was built in 1926. It was designed by Russian architect Alexei Zaharov in the old Novgorod style, reflecting the wishes of Saint Mardarije, who had studied in Russia. The monastery church features one central dome and twelve smaller ones, symbolizing Christ and His apostles.

Over the past century, the Saint Sava Monastery, with its brotherhood and community, has been a beacon of spirituality and education. Generations of monks, students, children, brothers, and sisters in Christ have passed through its doors during times of prosperity, crises, and wars. The Libertyville Monastery has remained steadfast in its mission to serve faithful Orthodox Serbs and the world. In honor of the upcoming significant jubilee, a book is being prepared, covering not only the past century but also the time preceding the monastery's construction and the founding of the first Serbian diocese in America. The book will reveal the origins of the Saint Sava Monastery, the challenges it faced, its achievements, and the impact it has had on the lives of many people and communities.

**Rev. Dr. Mile Subotić**



# PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP AND CHILDHOOD TRAUMA



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Early interactions between a caregiver and a child influence how one masters the skill of self-regulation. Children from families with reliable sources of comfort and strength have a lifetime advantage. Different characters from different people would have different impacts on a child, but most children are captivated by a friendly expression and individual displays. Children choose one particular adult during their growth with whom a natural communication system develops, thus creating a primary attachment bond. Children from a background of more responsive adults develop a more profound attachment that would result in the child developing healthy ways of responding to people around him or her.

Even though attachment does not have to be reciprocal, it is vital for children's development since most of them pick some of the behaviors and how they relate with other people. Some of the characterizing behaviors of attachment are that of children seeking proximity to the attachment figure when facing some issues upset or threatened. A secure attachment to a parent provides a child with a necessary sense of security and foundation. Failing to develop such a relationship results in an individual expending a great deal of developmental energy as the person searches for stability and security. Children who grow up without such forms of attachments grow fearful, resulting in their lessened willingness to seek out or learn from new experiences. The attachment provides a secure base for a child that would provide a haven, thus promoting self-reliance and instilling a sense of sympathy and helpfulness to those in distress. Learning of the existence of the parent-child relationship is essential for professionals who would then educate people on the need to forge some relationship with their children that would help them develop some of the best behavior. Besides, attachment is not only for the development of behaviors but also for relating with other people that would aid the development of an individual. An example is that most children found to have committed crimes or have delinquent behaviors are mainly from families that did not develop a strong sense of attachment to them, thus seeking other means of finding their ways within so-

Understanding child development is essential for understanding the relationships and behaviors the child develops. The relationship between the child and the parent is essential during child development, and the existence of problems or cutting the relationship prematurely may result in the child experiencing difficulties relating with other people or developing some unwanted behaviors.

Parent-child attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond connecting the child and the parent that develops across time and space. Every human being experiences some form of attachment to one or both parents as they grow up, and breaking the attachment may have some consequential effects on the child's development. As we get to the world, we scream to announce our presence, and someone immediately engages us in some of the most basic functions. Humans are profoundly social creatures where they live in places that are good for them and have other human beings. The growth of an individual entails learning to take care of oneself, but the initial lesson one learns as self-care is that of the one who is cared for.

ciety. It therefore presents the daunting task of ensuring that children have the necessary base for development that would result in their development to some of the best people around the world.

Children do not have a choice of who their parents are nor understand that sometimes their parents pass through some events that distract them, whereas some parents' behaviors may have little to do with the child. Children, therefore, have to take responsibility for organizing themselves in ways that ensure survival in the families they have. Adults may have a choice of moving out or turning for help, while children have none since, in most cases, parents are the authorities within the family. Most children go through many things that they are afraid to share because they think that their parents will get back at them. Children start focusing their energies on not thinking about what has happened and neglect the feeling of the residues of terror and panic in their bodies. Such scenarios are evident in children from families with problems that traumatize the child, and the child that keeps them would later explode.

Childhood trauma has profound psychological, physiological, and sociological effects on a child that may contribute to lasting adverse effects on health and well-being. Since infants' reactions to trauma may be different from adults, as well as their inability to verbalize their reactions to the occurring events, people usually neglect and assume that young age protects a child from the impact of traumatic experiences. As highlighted in the readings, children cannot tolerate knowing what they have experienced, thus failing to understand that their anger or terror has anything to do with that experience. The loyalty children have to their caregivers, even upon abuse, makes it hard for children to understand what they are experiencing since children develop the need for attachment even if the source of comfort is the source of terror.

An example is the case of adults who have domestic violence and file for restraining orders but would, later on, let in their abusers because of their attachment to them. However, some people do not forget some of the events and would keep them thus hampering their development even if they did not understand the events at the time. When one develops and understands the source of terror, it becomes hard to trust other people because of the events the individual has witnessed.

**V. Rev. Aleksandar Savic, LPC, MA**



## Kansas City: No place like it!

The Parish of St. George in the Kansas City Area has had a long presence in the United States. It was officially founded in 1906 but the community predates this date. The first Serbian immigrant to come to Kansas was a man named Stojan Stipanovic in 1898 from the city of Ogulin-Gorski Kotar. Most of the immigrants that came 1898-1918 were from Serbian lands within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, such as Lika, Kordun, Banija, Vojvodina, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Hercegovina, and Gorski Kotar. Due to many political and socio-economic changes going on in the Empire and in the United States, Serbian men made a trek across the ocean to find work in the United States. The Kansas City area attracted many Serbs because of the meat-packing houses that needed workers. The local Irish population who worked there went on strike, and the owners brought in foreign workers who didn't speak the language but were willing to get the job done. These jobs that didn't require a higher education became a passage for many Serbs (and non-Serbs) to come to Kansas City. This was true with Stojan Stipanovic. He soon brought his wife Ana over to the States, being the first Serbian to settle in Kansas City. Together Stojan and Ana opened a boarding house call "Burt." This house allowed many Serbs to find sanctuary and a supportive community in a strange new land.



Eventually, a large Serbian community assembled in Kansas City. A local tragedy brought the community even closer together in January of 1904. A young man by the name of Iso Vujnovic died in a work accident only a few months after arriving from Divoselo, Lika. The local Serbian community took care of his funeral at the "Burt" boarding house in the West Bottoms in Kansas City, KS. On April, 4th of that same year, local Serbs formed the St. George Serbian Orthodox Brotherhood No. 59. They connected with the Serbian Orthodox Unity Srbobran that would later be called the Serbian National Federation. Burt house eventually became the center for Serbian culture and language. In 1905 Fr. Paja Radosavljevic, a priest from South Chicago visited Kansas City Serbs five times to serve liturgy and perform other rites. On April 18, 1906, the Charter of Kansas was obtained for the new St. George Serbian Orthodox Church in Kansas City, KS. It was not only a parish for Serbs, but also for Russians, Greeks, Romanians, and Carpatho-Russians. It was Kansas City's first Orthodox parish. The first full time priest was Fr. Teofil Stefanovic. At this time the Serbian Missions of America were under the Russian Orthodox Church, under the omophorion of St. Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow and North

America. Overseeing the Serbian missions at that time was St. Sebastian Dabovich. This parish was certainly blessed to be led by two great saints. When World War I came along, many men who volunteered and returned to Serbia to fight for their country against the Axis powers. From 1917 to 1956 there was a total of 18 priests who served in St. George Serbian Orthodox Church. One of the priests of that time, Fr. Bogoljub Gakovic, returned to Plaski, Yugoslavia, and was subsequently martyred by the Ustase forces in the Jadovno/Gospic prison camp. He has been canonized as a priest martyr and the Kansas City we continually pray to him for his holy intercession. Another saint that visited St. George was St. Mardarije of Libertyville and of North America. His first canonical visit to Kansas City was in December of 1926 as Bishop. A black and white photograph of his visit hangs in the parish hall to this day. At that time he had been appointed the head of the Serbian diocese of North America with the blessing of both the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church.



In 1918, after St. Sebastian retired to Serbia, St. Mardarije was appointed by the All-Russian Council to head the Serbian Mission in America. Then the Serbian Orthodox Church appointed and consecrated St. Mardarije to head the newly created Serbian Orthodox Diocese in the United States in 1921. With this St. George Parish of Kansas City joined the Serbian Orthodox diocese and in 1924 moved to their second location on Strawberry Hill in Kansas City, Ks. The new building would serve as the home for St. George from 1924-2006. In 1924 the property was purchased. In 1925 St. Mardarije as an archimandrite would come to bless the corner stone of the Church. In 1926 St. George parish was officially consecrated. After World War II, a new wave of immigrants came to the United States, including Kansas City. In this wave was Fr. Milan Bajich. He would come to be the longest serving priest in St. George history, from 1956 to 1995, bringing much-needed stability to the Kansas City parish.

Like many places in the Serbian Church in America, the post war world was one of change and challenges. The division in the Serbian Church in America was also felt in Kansas City. St. Michael's Serbian Orthodox Church would open up in Kansas City, KS, under Bishop Dionisije. Glory to God in 1992 that division was healed by Patriarch Pavle of Serbia and these two parishes have since merged back into one parish. At the end of the 20th century, another chapter started at St. George. Fr. Milan Bajich had retired and a new priest, Fr. Aleksandar Bugarin would be the spiritual leader from 1995 till 2018. The war in former Yugoslavia created a wave of new immigrants and refugees. The parish of St. George, headed by Fr. Aleksandar Bugarin, would go above and beyond to help many Serbian people who had been displaced.

As time went on, the location in Strawberry Hill located on Bethany and Lowell St. became too small for the growing congregation. With much blood, sweat, and tears, the parish decided to move to a bigger location. The move led the parish to Lenexa, in Johnson County, which is South of Kansas City. And, glory be to God, in 2006,



the late Metropolitan Christopher (Kovacevic) would consecrate the Lenexa church location. It would be the first time a bishop had consecrated a church building for St. George. Previous times it was performed by priests. This marked another chapter of history for St. George parish in Kansas City. The parish grew not just with new Serbian immigrants and the old immigration but with people seeking the Truth of the Gospel, handed down from the Apostles, that only the Orthodox Church can provide.

Currently St. George Serbian Orthodox parish is being served by Fr. Radomir Plavsic.

### **100 YEARS FAITHFUL SERVICE OF THE KOLO OF SERBIAN SISTERS AT ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN LENEXA, KANSAS.**

On Oct 26-27, 2024, St. George Serbian Orthodox Church in Lenexa, Kansas celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Kolo of Serbian Sisters and its Slava - St. Petka the Serb. His Eminence Metropolitan Kyr Longin of Midwestern America and Archbishop of New Gracanica and Chicago attended the weekend's prayerful and joyous celebration. Parish Priest Fr. Radomir Plavsic served Saturday night vespers with protodeacon Milovan (Gogic) who had accompanied His Eminence to Kansas, and deacon Joseph (Henre). Following Vespers, a short parastos (memorial service) was served for all of the deceased Kolo members of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church. Immediately after the parastos a great blessing was bestowed on St. George Serbian Orthodox parish when Metropolitan Longin and hieromonk Alexii (Altshcul), abbot of Holy Archangel Michael Skete in Weatherby, MO, tonsured to the small schema novice Sister Elizabeth of the Mother of God, Seeker of the Lost convent in Kansas City, MO. She received the monastic small schema with the name of Mother Mardarija, in honor of St. Mardarije of Libertyville and of All North America. May St. Mardarije protect her and her sisterhood! In attendance were protopriest Sasa Petrovic of St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church in Omaha, NE; protopriest Djordje Veselinovic of St. Demetrius Serbian Orthodox Church in Des Moines, IA; and Father Turbo Qualls of St. Mary of Egypt Serbian Orthodox Church in Kansas City, MO. On Oct 27th, on St. Petka's feast day, Metropolitan Kyr Longin served a hierarchical liturgy with Fr. Radomir Plavsic, Fr. Sasa Petrovic, Fr. Djordje Veselinovic, Hieromonk Alexii, Fr. Turbo Qualls, Protodeacon Milovan Gogic, and Deacon Joseph Henre. Joining the parishioners of St. George parish were their sister parishes from Omaha, Des Moines; Kansas City MO; and Weatherby, MO. Following Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Longin blessed a newly-fashioned Golgotha Cross gifted by the Kolo to the church in honor of their 100th Anniversary. His Eminence then cut the Slava Kolach in honor of St. Petka Paraskeva with Kolo President Patricia Milosevich and Kuma Beverly Sobotka.



**HIS EMINENCE KYR LONGIN GAVE A SERMON TO THE PACKED CHURCH, SAYING:**

*“It was a great joy to serve liturgy here at St. George to celebrate the 100 year anniversary and slava of the Kolo and to pray with all of you for all the departed members of the Kolo of the St. George and St. Michael churches. Glory to God these two kolos are now one. I greet all of the sisters with the feast of St. Petka Paraskeva from the bottom of my heart and pray to the Theotokos and*

*St. Petka to be with you and watch over you. Many sources indicate that she was of Serbian background and her relics were a long time in Belgrade, and many prayers have been said before her relics which are now in Romania. Saints are godly people and we can freely say they are without nationality - even though they belonged to a specific country. The more saints in a nation, the closer that nation is to God and the more blessed they are, and the more consecrated. These holy people, good people, who hold onto the Gospel, redeem their people, glorify their nation, and consecrate that nation. That is why it is always joyous and dear when we have a saint from our country”*

Following the uplifting words of Metropolitan Longin, on behalf of the St. George parish, parish priest Fr. Radomir Plavsic gifted a new Panagia to His Eminence in honor of his elevation to the rank of Metropolitan and Archbishop, and also congratulated His Eminence on his upcoming names-day of St. Longinus the Centurion. Before everyone venerated the cross and collected the antidoron, a group picture of the Kolo members was taken with His Eminence and clergy. An agape festal banquet was held after liturgy in the parish hall. Speeches were given by His Eminence Kyr Longin, Fr. Radomir, Kolo President Patricia Milosevich, Parish Board President Petar Bajich, Kuma Beverly Sobotka, and Deacon Joseph Henre. A letter by Diocesan Kolo President Jane Katic was read congratulating the Kolo on their 100th anniversary.

**Rev. Radomir Plavsic**



## TWO-STEPPING WITH CHRIST: MY JOURNEY OF FAITH



My heart sings with joy at the opportunity to share a few words about my journey with Christ. My name is Tanja Milanovic, and I am a child of God, born and raised in the great state of Austin, Texas. When I was younger, we did not have a Serbian Orthodox community like we do today. I remember attending services at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church. There, a Russian, Greek, or sometimes Serbian priest would serve the liturgy. I always longed for friends and a place to call home. My parents, Branko and Sladjana Milanovic, did their best to bring the Serbian community together for various occasions—Slava, birthdays, New Year’s—and for that, I am deeply grateful.

The first time I truly experienced God in fellowship, at least as I remember it, was at Camp Gračanica. That experience left such a profound impact on my life that I can honestly say it shaped me into who I am today. I was blessed to have cousins, kumovi, and siblings to attend with, so it wasn’t as though I was going

into this intimidating experience alone, but it still was intimidating. As I grew older, I began to reflect more on the meaning of life—What was I supposed to do? What is my purpose? Who is God, and why do I long for Him?

When I went off to college, as is common with many young people, I strayed from the church. I still tried to attend services, but it just wasn’t the same. With regret, it became difficult to remain a practicing Orthodox Christian. I was lost. Most of my friends didn’t feel like friends, and I struggled with a deep sense of loneliness. It was a strange time, and I survived as best I could. However, I never stopped praying. It has always been a habit for me, since childhood, to pray before I sleep—even if it was just, “Hi God, it’s me.” For that, I am incredibly grateful.

After completing my education, I felt drawn once more to Gračanica for the Winter Youth Retreat. I came as a helper, and the theme that year was “Take Refuge.” I had the privilege of sitting with monks and priests, listening to their wisdom. Their message was clear: cultivate a place of refuge in my heart, seek shelter in God, and glorify Him in all things. The following year, I dedicated myself to personal growth through fasting, prayer, and regular attendance at church services, incorporating the spiritual practices I had learned at camp. I also joined the Youth Department, where I found a renewed sense of purpose in helping to lay the foundation for the most important part of our diocese—the youth.

Through this journey, I built meaningful relationships with Fr. Bojan Banović, Fr. Alexei, Fr. Constantine, Popadija Xenia, Fr. Sergije, Vladika Serafim, and Metropolitan Longin. Later that year, I had the privilege of visiting Fr. Alexei at the Holy Archangel Michael and All Angels Skete, and I was invited to attend the Church Slava for St. Petka in Nashville with Fr. Bojan and Popadija Ljubinka. Slowly but surely, my circle of friends and my sense of community became centered around Orthodox people. All of this began at camp. The connections and friendships I made there have been invaluable to me, and each person I met taught me something important about carrying my cross.



At the beginning of 2024, through the grace of God and with the blessing of Fr. Dragoljub Popović, the dean of our church, I was appointed as the chairwoman of the Youth Group at St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church. Our mission remains unchanged: to bring high school and college students together in fellowship with God. As our community continues to grow and we embark on the journey of building a church, I hope to preserve these precious moments with the youth in our parish. One day, we will all look back on this time and shed joyful tears, grateful for having fought in the name of the Lord!

I frequently remind myself that all we're doing is two-stepping our way through life with Christ: two steps forward, one step back, with a big Alleluia at the end! Though, to be honest, sometimes I feel like I'm dancing with two left feet, tripping all over the place. Thankfully, the dance continues—because I'm holding God's hand the whole way. I know it's the Lenten season and I probably shouldn't be dancing, but I couldn't help myself—I'm a southern girl from a southern world. This year, we are blessed to host another Winter Youth Retreat. By God's grace, our applications were filled within the first week of opening the link—Glory to God! There is a deep thirst for community, prayer, and communion among the youth. The work being done by the youth department is not only incredible, but also abundantly fruitful. With your prayers and support, we are building something truly special—creating opportunities and experiences like never before.

We also invite anyone who feels the need for more in their life to join us—bring your talents, and be with us as we continue this journey of faith.

**Tanja Milanovic, MBA**

**Chairwoman of the Youth Group**

**St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church in Austin, Texas**

## ORDER OF ST. MARDARIJE TO FR. TOM (KAZICH)

Father Tom (Kazich), former Director of Religious Education of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of New Gracanica Midwestern America, received the order of St. Mardarije as a firm recognition of his love and missionary apostolic efforts for our Serbian Orthodox Church. At the Diocesan Kolo Slava celebration on August 28, 2024, Gary native, Fr. Tom, son of †Frank and †Sophie Kazich, was presented with the Order of St. Mardarije by Metropolitan Longin. The following letter was read at the presentation:

**Dear Fr. Tom,**

These words of the Psalmist David come to mind when we ponder on your work for our Holy Church over more than the last half century. Called to the service of God at a young age, you began your studies of Theology at St. Vladimir's Seminary under the guidance of well-known teachers of theology in the 20th Century. By their example, their fiery zeal was conveyed to you to spread the Good News of Christ to our Serbian Orthodox People and beyond. For over 33 years, you have been the editor of "The Diocesan Observer", the official news organ of our Diocese. You informed our faithful of the most important events in our Church. People with joy received that newspaper in order to be informed of that which was happening throughout the Diocese and the Orthodox Church in general. Every morning from before dawn, you could be found in your office preparing the Observer for print. Along with this God-pleasing task, you also edited and published "Little Falcons", conveying the teachings of the Faith, as well as our Serbian traditions and customs, to our youth. You did this with such love and self-sacrifice. When one travels to other Orthodox Churches in the United States, Little Falcons can be found on the bookshelves of every church school. This complimented your decades-long work in serving our Diocese as the Director of Religious Education.





Seeing your talents, wealth of knowledge and publishing capabilities, you continued to serve the wider Serbian Church community as an editor for “The Path of Orthodoxy”, yet still maintaining your duties in the Diocese, and for many years serving as the Abbot of New Gracanica Monastery. Dear Father, our Lord blessed you with many talents, for which you never looked for a reward, only support to better serve Christ’s Church. We believe that God knows all of your efforts and will reward you a hundred-fold for your sacrifices and care. We thank you for everything you have done on behalf of our entire Diocese, as well as our predecessors and all the members of our Diocese and the Serbian Orthodox Church at large. So, we too, wish to recognize your love, care and missionary and apostolic efforts for our Serbian Orthodox Church. Therefore, we bestow upon you the greatest award of our Diocese, the Order of St. Mardarije in the First Degree, asking that God bless you with good health and peace as you retire from your publishing activities and concentrate solely on your monastic and priestly life. May God protect and preserve you for many, many years!

With gratitude and God’s blessing,

†LONGIN

# YOU(TH) MATTERS



## *Unus Christianus nullus Christianus*

As significant as it is, this ancient Christian saying remains obscure. Even less known yet of interest is the name of Tertullian, the author of this wise sentence who lived in ancient Carthage (today's Tunis in Africa) more than 1700 years ago. It is obvious that for him Christ became the meaning of life, and he was the first ever to write essays about the Christian faith in Latin. Thanks to the conveniences of modern civilization, today it is possible to simply surf internet libraries to learn of his character and work, as well as about his delusions in the interpretation of some questions of our faith.

Regardless of the fact that we ourselves are an integral part of a society in which any information older than a week is considered part of the “distant” past and therefore forgotten, the saying “one Christian, no Christian” speaks of the unique experience of the Christian life that Tertullian was an ardent supporter. Tertullian’s saying “one Christian, no Christian” is a confirmation of his awareness that no one can live as an isolated Christian and that man cannot be saved alone.

The Christian life aims at building the spiritual growth of an individual who is ready to accept that the Gospel is joyful and good news that confirms the biblical story of Christ’s resurrection from the dead. It is an event for which it is worth firing one’s whole being. The sacrifice is all the more significant if we take into account that the Gospel story emphasizes that the Lord sacrificed himself for the

“life of the world” (John 6:51).

The orthodox spiritual growth already starts in one’s household, which we define as the “domestic Church.” That first step in faith and the formation of the inner world is the work of God the Creator, parent and child. If the scientific theory is correct that a child’s character is formed by the age of 5 at the latest, then this early period is the most important for building an Orthodox perception of the world and the mission of the Church.

The joint prayer of parents and children before going to bed, making the sign of the cross, and the lifestyle of parents (and family in general) according to Christian principles are essentials of the life of every “domestic church”. Given that children imitate the habits, movements and attitudes of their parents, in that case the parent’s responsibility is even greater for the actions done in front of the child, be their words, deeds or even thoughts.

Education based on the Gospel becomes more challenging, since the role of the Church and its sphere of activity in our daily life in modern society is reduced to a minimum. Sunday as the Lord’s day and the day of gathering of the faithful in the church for worship is under pressure from various other extracurricular activities. Fun is very easy to find in the abundance of secular activities that surround us and where, most often unconsciously, the role of the Church in the individual’s life is diminished.

It is not possible to reduce one’s church life to just one day a week, because it will bring a sense of insecurity and even misunderstanding (confusion) to the young person about the “unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8) hidden in the Church. Various statistics, moreover, indicate that the disinterest of young people in the Church is on the rise, while the interest in various spiritual, sometimes “exotic” experiences, has occupied the young person of modern life.

The mission of the Church is always current. In its essence, it strives for a holistic (holy) way of life because the Spirit of God being holy himself guides it through every difficult condition and temptations of this world. It finds meaning in Christ’s call that God is the perfect being and that we should strive to be “perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect (Mt. 5:48)”. Christian life is accepting Christ as our life’s role-model and facing the reality of our fallen nature, even as we accept that with every failure God’s love combined with our spiritual efforts (podvig) will lift us up to gain communion with God.

The mission of the Church reminds us that it is an arena of spiritual struggle but also of consolation, a ship of salvation that perceives Christ as the only safe harbor. It preaches Jesus’



compassion and love for the mankind. The New Testament stories are always relevant as they bring Christ's humanity closer to us. God is compassionate towards everyone; He does not ignore human suffering.

Moreover, Jesus heals the torments of all kinds of needy people, most often at their cry. He answered the prayers of the Canaanite woman (Mark 5), who had a strong faith that only the gentle touch of Christ's garment would give her healing from the torment she was patiently bearing for twelve years.

Consequently, in order to give them a taste of Orthodoxy, it is necessary to devote quality time to young people. I believe it is of the utmost importance to listen to and try to understand the challenges they face and may not be able to handle. The challenges of modern man are, in essence, of a spiritual nature and require a careful (spiritual) approach. The question of identity is extremely strong among young people and to answer that question requires patience.

Last but not least, young people should be included in the dynamics of the Church in the form of various activities, so that they themselves become active participants in substantive life of the Church. The basis of church life, however, springs from the event of the Divine Liturgy, which is a work of "many", headed by a priest. The Divine Liturgy confirms that a person, if he/she is alienated from God and the Church, does not have the capacity to save (heal) himself/herself. In this way, the saying that one Christian is no Christian is confirmed as true.

Any additional activity, in essence, that springs from a prayerful attitude will be a creative signal that even among young people, their trust in the Lord, the Savior of the world, will rise and multiply like the yeast of bread dough.

Dn Jovan Anicic,  
Youth Ministry



## Past Sunday's Hierarchal Services

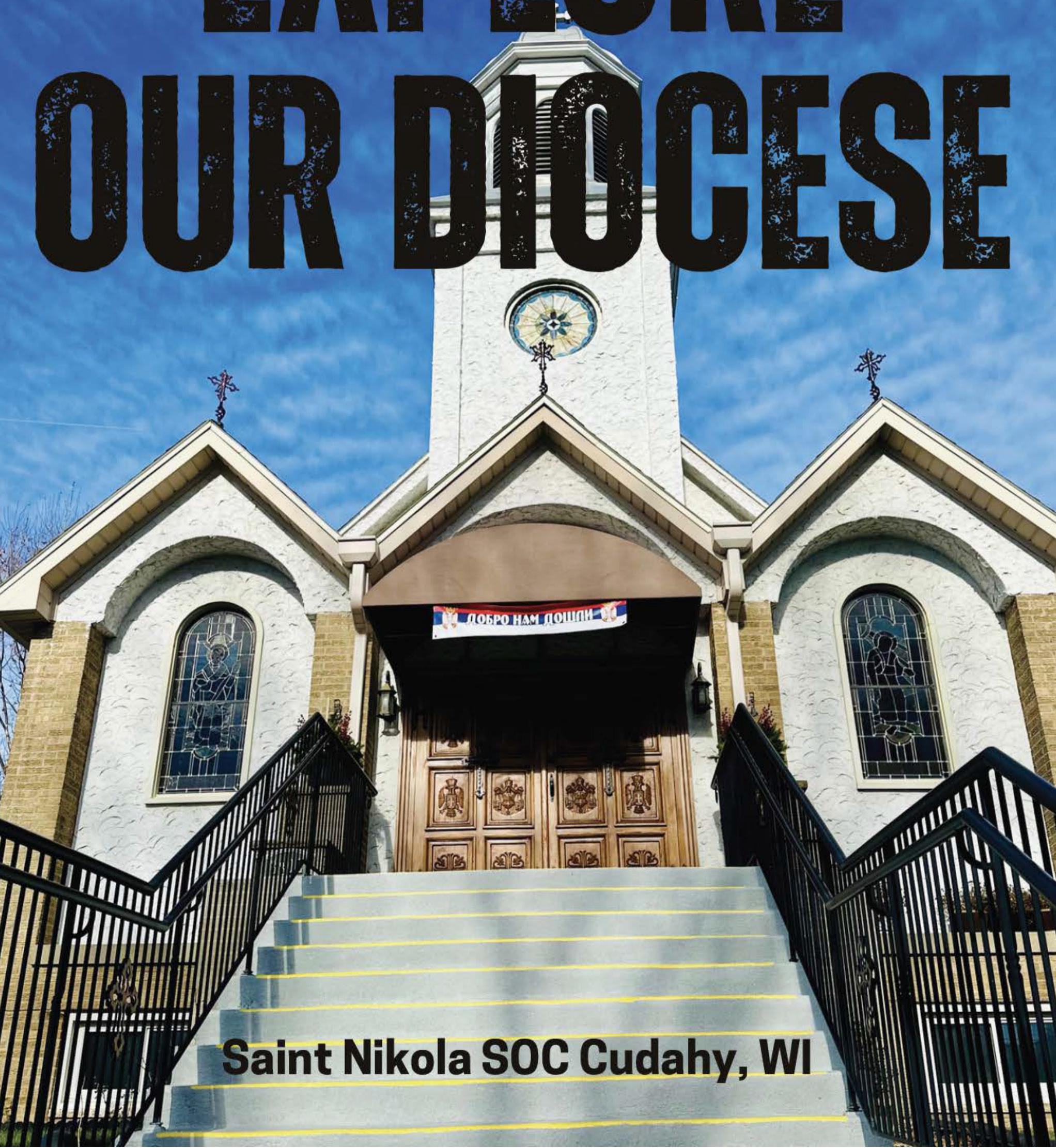
### METROPOLITAN LONGIN KRKO

- NOVEMBER 3, 2024 – 19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT GEORGE SOC, LENEXA, KS
  
- NOVEMBER 8, 2024 – HOLY GREAT-MARTYR DEMETRIUS  
ST. SAVA MONASTERY, LIBERTYVILLE, IL
  
- NOVEMBER 10, 2024 – 20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT DEMETRIUS, AKRON, OH
  
- NOVEMBER 17, 2024 – 21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT ARCHANGEL MICHAEL, LANSING, IL
  
- NOVEMBER 21, 2024 – SYNAXIS OF THE ARCHANGEL MI-  
CHAEL AND OTHER BODYLESS POWERS  
SAINT SAVA MONASTERY, LIBERTYVILLE, IL
  
- NOVEMBER 24, 2024 – 22ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT STEFAN OF DECANI, WARREN, MI
  
- DECEMBER 1, 2024 – 23RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT ELIJAH SOC, MERRILLVILLE IN
  
- DECEMBER 4, 2024 – THE ENTRY INTO THE TEMPLE OF  
THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD  
NEW GRACANICA MONASTERY, LAKE VILLA, IL
  
- DECEMBER 8, 2024 – 24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
ST. NICHOLAS SOC, CUDAHY, WI
  
- DECEMBER 12, 2024 – SAINT MARDARIJE'S DAY  
HIERARCHICAL
  
- DECEMBER 15, 2024 – 25TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
HOLY RESURRECTION SOC, CHICAGO, IL
  
- DECEMBER 19, 2024 – SAINT NICHOLAS THE WONDER-  
WORKER OF MYRA  
NEW GRACANICA MONASTERY
  
- DECEMBER 22, 2024 – 26TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT NIKOLA, LYONS, IL
  
- DECEMBER 29, 2024 – 27TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
MALA GOSPOJINA, NEW CARLISLE, IN

### BISHOP SERAFIM BALTIC

- NOVEMBER 3, 2024 – 19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
MONASTERY KARLOVAC, SERBIA
  
- NOVEMBER 8, 2024 – HOLY GREAT-MARTYR DEMETRIUS  
THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD  
NEW GRACANICA MONASTERY, LAKE VILLA, IL
  
- NOVEMBER 10, 2024 – 20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT DEMETRIUS, DES MOINES, IA
  
- NOVEMBER 17, 2024 – 21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT SAVA SOC, MERRILLVILLE, IN
  
- NOVEMBER 21, 2024 – SYNAXIS OF THE ARCHANGEL MI-  
CHAEL AND OTHER BODYLESS POWERS  
SAINT SAVA MONASTERY, LIBERTYVILLE, IL
  
- NOVEMBER 24, 2024 – 22ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
HOLY RESURRECTION CATHEDRAL, CHICAGO, IL
  
- DECEMBER 1, 2024 – 23RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SAINT GEORGE SOC, STATE ST. RACINE, WI
  
- DECEMBER 4, 2024 – THE ENTRY INTO THE TEMPLE OF  
THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD  
ST. BASIL OF OSTROG SOC, LAKE FOREST, IL
  
- DECEMBER 8, 2024 – 24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD  
NEW GRACANICA MONASTERY, LAKE VILLA, IL
  
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- DECEMBER 29, 2024 – 27TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD  
NEW GRACANICA MONASTERY, LAKE VILLA, IL

# EXPLORE OUR DIOCESE



**Saint Nikola SOC Cudahy, WI**

THE POKROV MAGAZINE

NO 1

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L O N G I N

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