Patriarch Irinej Visits Western Dioceses

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Phoenix, AZ - With great joy the faithful of the Western American Diocese, its God-loving clergy, venerable monastics and neighbors welcomed His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej to Phoenix, Arizona as part of his visit to America at the end of November and beginning of December. His Holiness served the Divine Hierarchical Liturgy at St. Sava Church in Phoenix on the great feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, December 4. He also visited the Greek Orthodox monastery of St. Anthony the Great (Florence, AZ) and the Serbian monastery of St. Paisius (Safford, AZ).

His Holiness arrived in Phoenix on Saturday afternoon together with His Grace Bishop Longin of New Gracanica, accompanied by Deacon Nikolaj Kostur. At the airport His Grace Bishop Maxim prepared a special welcome for the First Hierarch of the Serbian Church, with over sixty faithful present. Besides the Phoenix faithful many others from Los Angeles, San Marcos, San Francisco, Portland, Salt Lake City, Orange County, Plitina, Las Vegas and other places came to welcome the Serbian Patriarch. In front of the church more faithful were awaiting their arrival so that by Vespers the church was full. From this comes the need and custom of our people to forgive and exchange “God’s peace” on this day, to forget personal quarrels with a wish that all those around us may come together in brotherly unity and in the spirit of love and God’s peace.

The angelic song in honor of Christ’s birth is a truth-filled song which fully tells the essence of His message, the content of His Gospel and the mission of the Holy Church which He, the Incarnate Son of God, has established. The glorification of God, peace and good will among men represent the most holy triptych of the Christmas message. In glorifying God, man lifts up and glorifies himself at the same time. By preaching God’s peace, Christ’s peace, peace without fear and violence, man contributes to the building up of God’s Kingdom here on earth. It is only with good will, in the unselfish giving of oneself to God and to those around us, that it is possible to attain true human solidarity and true unity in solving all problems and in achieving moral and material progress.

With His coming, Christ witnesses an essential Union, a new union of heaven and earth, of Creator and creation, and with His mouth He reveals a great Mystery which God incorporated into man as a pledge from the moment of His creation, and this mystery comes down to one truth: that man is the most important creation under the sun. Of course, man is the most important, precisely because God in Christ became Man. According to Saint Irenaeus of Lyon, man is called to be the reflection, the glory, the manifestation of God in Christ. According to Galatians 4:4, man is called to be the reflection of God in Christ.

Each day, we meet temptations, misfortunes and suffering, caused by others or by ourselves. Afflictions in our homes, suffering in schools, cities and villages, suffered toward men. “And on earth, peace to men of goodwill!” (Luke 2:14) This Day is a great joy for all us, those around us, true children of God.

On this day of the joyous Feast of the Nativity of Christ all Christian hearts throughout the world are filled with the song of the angels of God, “Glory to God in the Highest!”

Greetings from Patriarch Irinej to the faithful of the Western American Diocese.

Central Church Council Holds Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Central Church Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America was held at Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Chicago December 9-10, 2011, chaired by His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej, dean of the stavropigial Monastery of St. Sava in Libertyville.

The opening prayer was led by His Holiness, who gave his patriarchal blessing.

Present at the meeting were all the hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America: His Eminence Metropolitan Amphilohije, administrator of the Diocese of Buenos Aires-South America, His Grace Bishop George of Canada, His Grace Bishop Longin of New Gracanica-Midwestern America, His Grace Bishop Mitrophan of Eastern America, and His Grace Bishop Maxim of Western America. Each diocese was also represented at the Central Church Council by its clergy and lay Council members.

His Holiness greeted the members of the Central Council and expressed his hope that their work be successful for the good estate of our Holy Church. In brief the Patriarch pointed out the decisions of the Holy Assembly of Bishops in regards to the administrative unity that has been achieved, as well as the St. Sava Monastery that has been proclaimed stavropigial, under the direct jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarch. In this capacity, according to the decisions of the Holy Assembly of Bishops, the Patriarch is thereby President of the Episcopal Council and the Central Church Council. At the meeting of the Holy Assembly the Patriarch continued on p. 3

IN THIS ISSUE • Macedonian Archbishop, p. 2 • A Visit to Monastery Marcha, p. 3 • Our View, pp. 6 & 7 • Serbian Section, pp. 8-12 •
Macedonian Archbishop Arrested

His Eminence Jovan, the Archbishop of Ohrid and Metropolitan of Skopje of the Autonomous Archbishops of Ohrid of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was arrested and imprisoned by authorities of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on December 12. He was arrested at a border crossing as he attempted to return to Macedonia from Greece. The Archbishop was convicted in absentia by a Macedonian court last year on embezzlement charges and sentenced to two and a half years in prison. Last year Bulgarian authorities arrested the Archbishop on a warrant from Macedonia, but released him because they found the charges to be false and brought for purposes of religious persecution.

The “Macedonian Orthodox Church,” which is strongly supported by the Macedonian government, broke with its mother Serbian Orthodox Church and uncanonically declared itself autocephalous, or independent, decades ago at the instigation of then-communist Yugoslavia’s government. It is recognized by none of the sister Orthodox Churches worldwide, and the Serbian Orthodox Church has worked ever since to bring it back into communion with the rest of the Orthodox world as an autonomous part of the Serbian Church.

Nearly ten years ago, Archbishop Jovan, who was a bishop of the schismatic Macedonian Church, reconciled with the Serbian Church along with a number of clergy and faithful and became the leader of the Autocephalous Archbishopric of Ohrid under the canonical protection of the Serbian Church. The schismatic Macedonian Church and the Macedonian government that supports it have since that time carried out a campaign of harassment against Archbishop Jovan and his followers, a campaign which has been signed by a number of international human rights organizations as religious persecution.

The Archbishopric of Ohrid has announced that Archbishop Jovan will request a new trial and will vigorously defend himself against the charges, which he says are false and have been trumped-up in order to discredit and persecute his canonical Church.

Russian Convoy Reaches North Kosovo Goal

Mitrovica, Dec. 16—A Russian convoy of 25 trucks transporting 300 tons of aid for Kosovo Serbs reached its destination at Zvecan today after a prolonged standoff at the Kosovo-Serbia border. Seventy-two hours after being stopped at the Kosovo-Serbia border, a Russian convoy transporting humanitarian aid for Serbs in northern Kosovo finally reached its destination on Friday morning. Kosovo Police said the trucks were transporting food, tents, blankets and fuel, which will be delivered to the most vulnerable Serbian families living in the region.

“The convoy passed the border crossing at Jarinje at around 7.30am and reached its destination around 8.30am in Zvecan,” Besim Hitaj, Kosovo Police spokesperson for the Mitrovica region, said. EU police in EULEX on Tuesday hailed the convoy at the border, saying the Russian embassy in Belgrade had changed its plans without warning and had refused a EURlex escort. The Russian embassy initially requested a EURlex escort for the convoy, but once the trucks reached Jarinje border crossing they rejected it. North Kosovo Serbs view EURlex as biased and do not allow it to operate in areas they control. They have been blocking roads since July in protest against attempts by the ethnic Albanian-led government in Pristina to take control of border crossings with Serbia.

As most roads are blocked in the north, the three EURlex escort vehicles had to pass through the Medare border to enter Serbia and circle some 100 kilometres to reach Jarinje in north Kosovo. Tens of thousands of Kosovo Serbs living in the north recently signed a petition seeking Russian citizenship. The Russian aid gift comes as a sweetener after Moscow signed a petition seeking Russian citizenship. The Russian aid gift comes as a sweetener after Moscow said it could not grant Russian citizenship to the ‘crimes against humanity’ accused by NATO peacekeepers.

Prota Dragun Filipovic feted in Canton

A great number of fellow clergy, family members, parishioners and former parishioners and friends led by His Grace Bishop Mitrophan gathered at St. George Church in Canton on October 25 to honor Prota-Savvophor Dragun Filipovic on the 40th anniversary of his ordination. Born in Belgrade and raised in England and Canada, Fr. Dragun was ordained by His Grace Bishop Gregory of blessed memory.

He has served several parishes, with his longest service at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Pittsburgh, and has been in Canton for ten years. The Canton parishioners showed the great love and respect they have for him and Protinica Mira with an elegant dinner and program, and the gift of a large-screen television. Congratulations and many years, Protin and Protinica Filipovic.
The Nativity: What the fuss is all about

Every year, our local “oldies” radio station goes to play its Christmas music 24/7 from shortly after Halloween until Christmas day. Myself, I kind of rebel at hearing this music while jack-o’lanterns are still moldering on peoples’ porches, but I don’t mind so much after Thanksgiving.

But still, a lot of “holiday” music leaves something to be desired. Sure, there are the old traditional religious carols that vary from the very good to the relatively insipid. Then there are the quasi-religious carols that take a pop or sentimental approach to the birth of Christ (Little Drummer Boy might be an example). But most of the music is simply about winter weather, or the sentimental-ity of family and friends at this time, or parties, or romance, or of course the mythological face of our current holiday season, that Jolly Old Elf, the grandmas getting run over by reindeer. (Example). But most of the music is simply about winter weather, or the sentimentality of family and friends at this time, or parties, or romance, or of course the mythological face of our current holiday season, that Jolly Old Elf, the grandmas getting run over by reindeer. (Example).

This sleeping child you’re holding is the great I AM. Did you know that your baby boy is heaven’s perfect Lamb?

The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the lamb. The blind will see, the deaf will hear and the dead will live again. And when you kiss your little baby, you have kissed the face of God.

Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?

This is one of the few modern Christmas songs that actually “gets” the great mystery of our faith we celebrate at Christmas: the Incarnation. The word incarnation simply means putting on flesh, taking on a body. In the feast of the Nativity we celebrate the greatest Gift of all time: the Gift of the Son of God becoming the Son of Man, of the Creator becoming one of His creatures. The Son and Word of God, who is true God of true God and who bears the fullness of divinity, takes on our humanity and becomes one of us. He reunites fullness of divinity, takes on our humanity and becomes one of us. He reunites...
The Path of Orthodoxy


submitted a report for the official website of Milovan Katanic. There were no changes.

their portion to the fund, two-thirds of the school congregations are obligated to pay members of the Pension fund. Church-

Brian Gerich gave a financial continued without interruption.

attending to many church

who built this sacred monastery. His Holiness appealed to all

nothing has been done there. His Holiness appealed to all Serbs to

remained unchanged, and

resting place of many church

of the buildings at the St. Sava Monastery, party to be moved. The Central Council continued from p. 1.

Attorney Ljubisa Milicic introduced

funds raised at the banquet, the consecration

you're holding is the great I AM.

Door; "I AM the Good Shepherd," and so

with His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle of

Archangel Gabriel occurred on July 28, 2001,

of the beautiful chapel dedicated to the Holy

Christ is born! Hristos se rodi!

May the wonder of the coming of God

In our Orthodox icons, whenever

Christ is depicted He is shown with a halo inscribed with a cross. And within this

cross are the Greek letters omega (ω), meaning

Who He is. This is the name God gives when

He comes and sets us free to become once again the children of our Heavenly Father.

This song is so much like the hymns

out of St. Venerius Church in Maplewood and

services, in that it unambiguously reflects

on the theological meaning of Christ's person

and what He does for us. It tells us

that this "holy infant so meek and mild,"

this cute little Baby we coo over, is the

Pantocrator, the Ruler of All, the Almighty

God. The song says, "Mary, did you know

that when you kiss your little baby, you have

kissed the face of God."

the newspaper’s editorial board. This is a monthly publication, with a double issue for July-August. It is made up of both a Serbian and English section with a wide variety of material. All parishioners in good standing receive the newspaper without charge. The editorial board sends an appeal to all church-

school congregations to inquire whether they might too be included in the mailing. The Central Church Council decided that a copy be sent to all clergy of the Canadian Diocese cultural heritage, liturgical music, young adult work, marriage and family concerns, and continuing education for the clergy. The Central Council made a recommendation to the Episcopal Council that another committee be formed: the legal committee, chaired by Attorney Ljubisa Milicic.

His Eminence Metropolitan Amphiloije spoke of his two-month mission to the newly established South American Diocese. He visited Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela. The beginning is difficult but there is hope for success. In the entire territory there are five parishes and seven missions, five priests and one proteodeacon, six churches and three chapels. Three additional priests are needed, but it is difficult to ensure resources. Metropolitan Amphiloije made an appeal for aid for the Diocese of South America. The Central Church Council decided to allocate 5% of the budget of the Central Council and that each Diocese donate $10,000.

A letter from Archbishop Jovan of Ohrid was received, asking for financial assistance in the purchase of space in Skopje where the office of the pensioner would be able to move. The Central Council approved assistance up to $15,000 to be taken from the Central treasury.

The Central Church Council approved the budget for 2012.

At the end of the meeting His Holiness, on behalf of the Episcopal and the Central Council expressed his gratitude to all the church board and clergy of the Holy Resurrection Cathedral Church-School congregation for their hospitality.

The meeting concluded with a prayer, the troparion to St. Sava and a blessing from His Holiness Patriarch Irinej.

V. Rev. Nedeljko Lasnic Secretary of the Central Church Council

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Orations: Deacon Daniel Mackay, to the holy priesthood by Bishop MAXIM, on July 30, 2011, at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Butte, MT. Our prayers and congratulations for all our newly-ordained priests and deacons, and for those elevated to the dignity of Protopresby-Slavophor, for those elevated to the rank and dignity of Archimandrite, for those celebrating anniversaries of ordination to the priesthood, for those tonsured to a rank of rector. Womxn: Archimandrite.

Orations: Protopresbyter-Stayrophi, Deacon Daniel Mackay and dignity of Protopresby-Slavophor (Pectoral cross) by Bishop MAXIM, on July 20, 2011, at St. Stevan’s Cathedral in Alhambra, CA. Protopresby-Stavrophor David Brunton, to the rank and dignity of Protopresby-Slavophor (Pectoral cross) by Bishop MAXIM, on December 4, 2011, at St. Paisius Monastery, Safford, AZ. Hieromonk Dorotheos Finkelstein, to the rank and dignity of Archimandrite (Pectoral cross) by Bishop MAXIM, on December 4, 2011, at St. Paisius Monastery, Safford, AZ.

Appointed: Protopresbyter Sevan Kavoyan, as new parish priest of St. Sava's Parish in Arcadia, CA. Protopresby-Zorjan Savic, as new parish priest of St. Sava’s Parish in Arcadia, CA. Protopresby-Maxim Anisimov, as new parish priest of St. Sava’s Parish in Arcadia, CA. Protopresby-Maxim Anisimov, as new parish priest of St. Sava’s Parish in Arcadia, CA. Protopresby-Maxim Anisimov, as new parish priest of St. Sava’s Parish in Arcadia, CA.

Annonnaries: Protopresby-Stavrophor Nikola Ceko, 25th an-

viversaries of ordination (July 20, 1986) to the holy order of priest-

hood. V. Rev. Ceko is a dean at St. Steven's Cathedral in Alhambra, CA. Protopresby-Stavrophor George Gligic, 25th anniversaries of ordination (November 23, 1986) to the holy order of priesthood. V. Rev. Gligic is a parish priest at St. Peter the Apostle Parish in Denver, CO.

Tonsured: Mr. Daniel Kirk, tons-

sured as reader on June 12, 2011, by Bishop MAXIM, at Holy Trinity Parish in Butte, MT.

The Nativity: the fuss is all about continued from p.3

Adam and Eve. And finally, He who is Life voluntarily takes on death so He can de-

stroy death from the inside. He fills death with His eternal, everlasting and inde-

structible Life, and rises from the dead to free us from our slavery to sin and death. He comes and sets us free to become once again children of our Heavenly Father.

continued from p.3

which was named for a mountain in Kordun, located now in Croatia. It was from this area that most Serbians in the Johnstown area emigrated.

Sr. Ana told us how Bishop Sava (Va-

kovic) of blessed memory acquired the prop-

erty in 1968, which now is in access of 80 ac-

res. It was also from Sr. Ana, after helping an elderly lady in the Cleveland area care for her sick husband, and after they both died, she inherited a sum of money which she pledged toward the building of the chapel. She went on to tell how a fund-raising committee, chaired by Nicholas Borota and co-chaired by Alex Machaske (of Plain Dealer fame) raised over $200,000 at a banquet held on May 4, 1999. Due to Mother’s pledge and the funds raised at the banquet, the consecration contiued from p.3

of the beautiful chapel dedicated to the Holy Archangel Gabriel occurred on July 28, 2001, with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej presiding as chief celebrant.

When it was time for our guests to de-
ter, Mother Ana told us how pleasing it was for our friends to leave until they promised to return. It was agreed they would attempt to return with a larger number of participants, and held the office of the monastery Slava (day to be decided) at the end of July 2012.

The Marcha Pilgrimage was enjoyed by our Johnstown friends was a moving experience for us, and as they related, it was for them as well. We look forward to their visit and praying with them and blessing God bless them and all the members of their parish. May God grant them many years!

Nicholas Borota

MARCHA PILGRIMAGE

continued from p.3

Marcha Pilgrimage

Nicholas Borota

continued from p.3

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Orations: Protopresby-
FEAST OF PEACE FROM GOD - CHRIST IS BORN!  
INDEED HE IS BORN! A BLESSED AND FESTIVE NEW YEAR 2012! 

Given at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade at Christmas, 2011. Your intercessors before the cradle of the divine Child-Christ: 

Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade Karlovci and Serbian Patriarch Irinej

Bishop of Zareg and Ljubljana JOVAN

Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Coastlands AMBRODIO

Metropolitan of Dubrovnik-Rijeka NIKOLAI

Bishop of Sabac LAVRENTIJE

Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla VASILIJ

Bishop of Stem VASILJE

Bishop of Banja Luka JUREFREJ

Bishop of Budim LUKIJA

Bishop of Canada GEORGE

Bishop of Banat NIKANOR

Bishop of New Grazica-Mohawk America LONGIN

Bishop of Eastern America MITROFAN

Bishop of Zica CHRYSTOSMOT

Bishop of Bosnia and Herzegovina JOSIP

Bishop of Omiš and Baranja LUKIJAN

Bishop of Central Europe CONSTANTINE

Bishop of Western Europe ANDREJ

Bishop of Timok JUSTIN

Bishop of Slavonia VACLAV

Bishop of Samobor VACLAV

Bishop of Brac VACLAV

Bishop of Great Britain and Scandinavia DOSTJE

Bishop of Bihac and Trebinje CRISTOSMOT

Bishop of Ostrig and Baranja LUKIJAN

Bishop of Slavonia VACLAV

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Bishop of Bihac and Petrovac CHRYSOSTOM

Bishop of Osijek and Baranja LUKIJAN

Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla VASILIJ

Bishop of Bregal and locum tenens of the Diocese of Bitolj MARKO

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Bishop of Sabac LAVRENTIJE

The Serbian Orthodox Church to her spiritual children at Christmas, 2011

Stewardship: Basic to Christian Life

Many parishes are embracing Stewardship at a moderate pace, but without Stewardship, we would not be able to support Christ’s Church and the many ministries it provides. Our opportunity for salvation and eternal life is given by God through the death of His Son on our behalf. As our faith spread in the early days of Christianity, Jesus selected Apostles to do His work and spread the faith. He realized that more could be done with a larger group. First twelve, then 70 and thousands. We read this in our Bible and the many scriptures reference the Stewards who supported our faith through the Holy Spirit, helping the Apostles… they provided a meal, opened up their homes, gave clothing, poured a drink of water and tended those who were ill. Stewardship is not new but has been practiced for over 2,000 years and continues to be the best example of our unconditional love for God and His Church. God has never and will never turn His back on us – our salvation is possible through the Church and its Sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist and Holy Confession. Let us not turn our backs on our Church but fully support it so that we all can do His work here on earth. We can’t emphasize enough the funds necessary to support the Church (and yes, the topic of money and finances support does come up often), however, we all must ask where does everything we depend on within our parish come from? The Sacramental Wine, olive oil for the vigil lights, electricity for air conditioning in the summer, children’s activities throughout the year, cleaning services to beautify the Church, heating during the cold winter months, the gas and utilities necessary to support the activities in the kitchen – all of the items and functions that we know will be there for us to partake in and enjoy. As a church we come to follow on Sunday for or that special service or celebration of a Saint. Once again, we really must focus on our support so that the many ministries of church provides can continue:
The Origins of Christmas

A mericans love the entire Christmas season. Even before Thanksgiving, Christmas music is played on the radio and in stores. Families start decorating. Parents start buying gifts. Even people who are not religious and do not believe in Christ often celebrate the season. Across the world, people in historically Christian countries observe their own respective practices, making Christmas the most publicly celebrated Christian-based holidays in the world. Was it always this way? How was Christmas celebrated in the first century? How is it celebrated today?

The Christian Church in the first three centuries only celebrated the Resurrection and Pentecost. Part of the reason early Christians chose these feasts emerges out of personal experience: those who knew Christ in the flesh began honoring His Resurrection and when the Holy Spirit descended to the Disciples. For those who witnessed these events, it was not about when they actively worked toward remembering them, and this active remembrance then became the general practice. Also, every Sunday was celebrated as a feast to remember the Resurrection of Christ through the Mystery of Holy Communion. The events of the life, death and Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ had just happened. The Early Church did not need to focus on commemorating what happened to Christ because it was in their memories and widely known even to those in faraway lands. Instead, the focus was on how the Christian communes with God through His defeat of death, the ascension of the Holy Spirit, baptism and the Eucharist. Furthermore, at the time of the birth of Christ birthdays were not celebrated. In fact, birthdays remain a very western concept and even today many parts of the world still do not observe birthdays. That being the case, it is likely that even Jesus Christ did not celebrate His birthday with His family. As time went by, however, believers living in Jeru- salem came to realize the importance of commemorating the earthly life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They realized that only they, as the descendants of those who knew Christ in the flesh, had the privilege of living in the Holy Land where Christ spent His time on earth. Believers began to celebrate the birth of Christ in Bethlehem on the site where He was born. Once these celebrations began, people became more and more interested in the places as- sociated with Christ’s life. As the distance between the time of Christ and the present day grew, the desire to increase attachment to Christ’s life on earth grew. This began the celebration of Christmas.

No one knows for certain when Christ was born. We know that our Lord and Savior was born in B.C. B.C. stands for Before Christ. In St. Luke’s account of the Nativity, we see that he mentions that the shepherds were staying out in the pasture land with their flocks. January in Jerusalem is very cold, and in January shepherds do not stay out over night. Thus we can assume that Jesus was not born in January. So why do we celebrate Christmas in January?

The earliest record of any Christmas celebration is found in a passing statement by St. Clement of Alexandria who mentions that the Egyptians celebrated the Lord’s birth on May 20th. For whatever unknown reason, this date did not stick. In late December in the western hemisphere we reach the shortest day of the year, which means that there are more hours of darkness than daylight. From this point the hours of daylight become gradually longer. In early times this phenomenon was not understood and so people had waited for God to send a savior. Imagine the metaphorical and spiritual sun Who fulfills Malachi’s prophetic words: “the sun of righteousness will shine with healing in its wings” (Malachi 4:2). Consequently, many Christians began celebrating Christ’s birthday around this time. The Church also acted as a way to contradict the pagan practices.

Early Christians did not use the word Christmas or Nativity, but rather Manifestation. Originally the Manifesta- tion commemorated not only the birth of our Lord, but other aspects of His complete earthly and heavenly manifesta- tion as well: the coming of the Wise Men, the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan, and the first miracle of turning water into wine at Cana in Galilee.

At the First Ecumenical Council (Nicea) in 325, the Church ruled that Pascha would be observed on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the spring equinox on March 21st. This calculation of Pascha avoided proceeding or coinciding with the Jewish Passover, as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was crucified right before the beginning of Passover. Thus, the Reformers of our new Reformed Church did not observe Passover, when Christ passed over death and ushered in eternal life. Consequently, once the Resurrection of our Lord was established, the focus was on how the celebration of Christ’s birth became an official part of the liturgical year.

What was Christmas like in the first three centuries? What do we know? We only know what the Church has related to us through the ages. We do know that the Early Church did not use the word Christmas or Nativity, but rather Manifestation. Originally the Manifestation commemorated not only the birth of our Lord, but other aspects of His complete earthly and heavenly manifestation as well: the coming of the Wise Men, the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan, and the first miracle of turning water into wine at Cana in Galilee.

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Then why do all western churches and certain Ortho- dox churches celebrate Christmas on December 25th? At the time of the First Ecumenical Council, the civil calendar used throughout the world was the Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar in the year 46 B.C. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, Pope Gregory XIII of Rome created the Gregorian calendar and decreed that it replace the Julian calendar. According to this new calendar, January 7th was actually December 25th. Thus, the Catholic and Protestants celebrate Christmas on De- cember 25th.

Some Orthodox Churches, including the Greek Church, use the Revised Julian calendar. This calendar was established in 1923. It maintains the date of the Res- urrection, but synchronized the rest of year to the Gregor- ian calendar. Today, Ethiopia is the only country in the world that continues to use the Julian calendar as the official state calendar.

Scriptural Quotation for this Month

“...And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. And this census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, every one to his own city. Joseph also went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea to Jerusalem to be registered, (sung in Tone 4) Thy Nativity, O Christ Our God, Has shone to the world the light of wisdom. For by it, those who worshipped the stars Were taught by a star to adore Thee. The Sun of Righteousness, And to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee! Rodenje, Veje, Hriste, Bože, naš, obasjalno je svet svetlosti bogopoznanja, Jer taj je eno, tvoje zvezde obzvahn, zvezda navdu da ze klanjaši Tobi, Suncu Pravdi i da poznaju Tebe, Iskot s visti, Gospose, Slava Ti! Luke 2:1-7

What is Christmas to Orthodox Christians?

C hristmas, the Nativity of our Lord, is not about presents, lights, decorations and school holidays. For Orthodox Christians, the Nativity of our Lord reminds us of the love that God revealed through the arrival of Christ as a human baby. For thousands of years, the Jewish people had waited for God to send a savior. The culture of waiting that a person was born into—hun- dreds and generations had come and gone, having spent their entire lives in hope that God would send someone to deliver them.

When Christ was born, this promise came true. Although the people did not yet understand His purpose and did not what the future held, God did fulfill His promises. We receive this joy every year, when we remember that Christ did enter the world as a human being. Although we do not understand the culture of waiting, we do understand the culture of love. With this knowledge of God’s love, we Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
The Baptism of our Lord

The Baptism of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is commemorated as a Feast Day on January 19th. During Christ’s baptism by St. John the Baptist, Jesus Christ was revealed as the Messiah and Second Person of the Trinity. In other words, He was revealed as the Son in Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Christ’s baptism marked one of two occasions when all three Persons of the Trinity manifested themselves simultaneously to humanity: God the Father by speaking through the clouds, saying “This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased” Mt. 3:17, God the Son being baptized in the river, and God the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove descending from heaven. Although we remember the Baptism of our Lord, this day commemorates the entire Trinity.

The name “Christ”, “anointed” refers to His human nature, since anointing was done to impart unto MEN the qualities of Divinity, while also being in all respects a human being, so that we might be perfected. Water cleans and is a symbol of purity and rebirth. Thus, St. John was using water as a way to symbolically wash people of their sins. He took on this ministry while our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was beginning his own earthly ministry. St. John the Baptist is called the Forerunner of Christ, as he came before Christ to announce that He was coming and to tell the people to prepare themselves.

Orthodox Christian Questions about the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 1

QUESTION 1. Who is Matthew writing to primarily? Jews, Gentiles, Romans, etc?
ANSWER 1. Matthew is writing primarily to convert Jews and Gentiles, the Messiah. He reveals his purpose in the very first line of his Gospel, where he states that Jesus is: “the son of David, the son of Abraham.” This is a clearly Messianic reference, and St Matthew takes pains to mention many prophecies concerning the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

QUESTION 2. “Jesus” means “Savior”. We read in Isaiah, “Who shall declare His generation?” [Isa 53:8] But it does not follow that the Evangelist contradicts the Prophet, or undertakes what he declares impossible; for Isaiah is speaking of the generation of the Divine nature; St. Matthew of the incarnation of the human.

QUESTION 3. [Mat 1:1] The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. What does “Christ” mean?
ANSWER 3. “Christ” means “anointed”, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word rendered “Messiah”. This title of our Lord occurs five hundred and fourteen times in the New Testament.

QUESTION 4. [Mat 1:1] The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. How does the name “Jesus Christ” mystically teach Jesus’ two natures?
ANSWER 4. Jesus “Christ”, in His two natures, saves us. Only God is able to save, and thus, He is called “Jesus” – “Savior”. The incarnation, that is: Jesus, the pre-eternal God, becoming man, and having with Himself all the attributes of Divinity, while also being in all aspects a human being, save that He did not sin; accomplished the perfection of His human nature, and made a path for us to follow, so that we might be perfected.

QUESTION 5. But why would it not have been enough to name one of them, David alone, or Abraham alone? Because the promise had been made to both of Christ to be born of their seed. To Abraham, “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” [Gen 22:18] To David, “Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy seat.” [Ps 137:11] He therefore calls Christ the Son of both, to show that in Him was fulfilled the promise to both. Also because Christ was to have three dignities; King, Prophet, Priest; but Abraham was prophet and priest; priest, as God says to him in Genesis, “Take an heifer;” [Gen 15:9] Prophet, as he is said to Abraham concerning him, “He is a prophet, and shall pray for thee.” [Gen 20:7] David was king and prophet, but not priest. Thus He is expressly called the son of both, that the threefold dignity of His forefathers might be recognized by hereditary right in Christ. [St. John Chrysostom]

QUESTION 6. [Mat 1:18] Now the birth of Jesus Christ was this wise: When his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Why was Jesus conceived by the Holy Spirit, and not by normal sexual relations?
ANSWER 6. If by normal relations, the created would have created the creator. Jesus already has a Father!}

QUESTION 7. [Mat 1:19] Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. What could Joseph have done instead?
ANSWER 7. Had her stoned.

QUESTION 8. [Mat 1:22] Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 1:23 “Beadeth, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” What prophet?
ANSWER 8. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. [Isaiah 7:14]

QUESTION 9. [Mat 1:22] Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 1:23 “Beadeth, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” What famous and stirring hymn is sung in Compline regarding Emmanuel?
ANSWER 9. For God is with us. (This hymn is sung in Great Compline

QUESTION 10. [Mat 1:25] “And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.” Excise this verse, in particular including the false view that Joseph and Mary had other children. Why is such an idea ludicrous?
ANSWER 10. Mary bore God, why would she descend to the carnal? [Mat 18:34] “And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.”

QUESTION 11. Why the Holy Gospels, the accounts of the Baptism of Jesus Christ are preceded by information about John the Baptist. St. John the Baptist told people that they needed to repent for their sins, leading and many people took his words seriously, repented and were baptized. Water cleans and is a symbol of purity and rebirth. Thus, St. John was using water as a way to symbolically wash people of their sins. He took on this ministry while our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was beginning his own earthly ministry. St. John the Baptist is called the Forerunner of Christ, as he came before Christ to announce that He was coming and to tell the people to prepare themselves.
протојереј Александар Ивановић, старешина храма поздрављајући славе.
на Лиланд Авенији у Чикагу, поводом храмовне литургију у храму Светог Стевана Дечанског Загнанична Црква, служио је Свету архијерејску служио годишњи парастос протојереју Милану присутног свештенства. После свете Литургије новограчаничко-средњезападноамеричког и литургију у Ставропигијалном манастиру личностима. Српске цркве, састанцима са црквеним и црквеним јединицама на канонском подручју богослужењима, пријемима, посетама појединим Његове Светости у Америци било је испуњено 13. децембра 2011. године. Све време боравка светлост Божја на земљи. То можемо схватити једино уколико Светог Иринеја Лионског, човек је позван да буде одсјај, слава, најважнији зато што је Бог у Христу постао човек. По речима самога његова стварања, а она се своди на истину да најважније устима открива велику Тајну коју је Бог као залог унео у човека од новој заједници неба и земље, Творца и творевине и Својим напредак. у решавању свих проблема, и остварити морални и материјални се постиће истинска људска солидарност и право заједништво добром вољом, у несебичном давању себе Богу и ближњим, може – човек доприноси изградњи Царства Божјег на земљи. Једино Проповедајући мир Божји – мир Христов, мир без страха и насиља воља међу људима представљају најсветији триптих божићне песма која нам језгровито исказује суштину Христове поруке, и збратима у духу љубави и мира Божјег. заборављају личне размирице, са жељом да се све око нас зближи потреба и обичај да се на данашњи дан прашта и "мирбожи"; да се зближава са другим људима као данас. Отуда је у нашем народу дани Господњи, који је Господ учинио овако величанствени. Хвала наша боголика личност дели на душу и тело, на свесно и несвесно подељености у свету, подељености која се не може превазићи селима, патње у државама и међу народима сведоче о дубокој патњаме изазваним од стране других или од нас самих – патње свих бића и свих збивања на нашој планети. Својој Личности и око Себе – још тачније: у Себи – сабрао све оне јер Бог је љубав" (1. Јн 4,8). Христос сведочи, Својим доласком у овај свет, да је љубав Превечни Бог се на онај давни, први историјски Божић родио. Позивамо и сву нашу духовну децу широм света да никада не забораве да је Господ Цркви поверио спасење, и да је у њој наше цркве у расејању ти мали чуњеви савршенством као вечним богатством. Тиме Он и нас и сва људска опстајемо и као народ и као људи. Никада одрасли и деца нису толико блиски једни другима као сва хришћанска срца. Овај дан је за цео свет велика радост, "јер радосног празника Рођења Христовог испуњена су широм света мир, међу људима добра воља" (Лк 2,14) – на данашњи дан на месец град и крајеви.
Са великом радошћу верници Епархије западноамеричке, мираликејска, Епархије канадске, Његово Преосвештенство епископ Георгије, митрополит Амфилохије, администратор Епархије Северној и Јужној Америке: Његово Високопреосвештенство патријарашким благословом.

На седници су били присутни сви архијереји СПЦ у Чикагу, 9. и 10. децембар 2011. године. Епископе Г. Лонгина и Г. Максима, у 10 часова у храму су одслужили свету Литургију на којој су сестре појале на српском и језичком језику. На свечаном гала банкету Патријарх је сачекао на улазу у манастир одакле налази грчки манастир Св. Антонија. Игуман манастира за околину и шире православно предање у савременом свету. Потом је уследило посвечење и обилазак манастирског имања.

После свечаног гала банкета Патријарх је у првом делу епископа и вињи светештина отпутио за српски манифест Са. Викторин Павловића, епископа западноамеричког и југозападноамеричког краја, а у другом делу епископа отпутио за српски манифест Са. Милош Павловића, епископа југоисточног краја. Епископи се одлучили да ће на свечаности посвећене Св. Николу. Наше вредне парохијанке на челу са свим Светих. Ово је посета која утврђује у вери градитељство у Северној Америци. Његова Светост је рекао: "Унапред већ више верници у другој половини 2012. године посветио ћу све могућности ове посети, али сам сазнао да су сви верници у Северној Америци намеравали да посете ову посету." Патријарх је у првом делу епископа отпутио за српски манифест Са. Милош Павловића, епископа југоисточног краја. Епископи се одлучили да ће на свечаности посвећене Св. Николу. Наше вредне парохијанке на челу са свим Светих. Ово је посета која утврђује у вери градитељство у Северној Америци. Његова Светост је рекао: "Унапред већ више верници у другој половини 2012. године посветио ћу све могућности ове посети, али сам сазнао да су сви верници у Северној Америци намеравали да посете ову посету." Патријарх је у првом делу епископа отпутио за српски манифест Са. Милош Павловића, епископа југоисточног краја. Епископи се одлучили да ће на свечаности посвећене Св. Николу. Наше вредне парохијанке на челу са свим Светих. Ово је посета која утврђује у вери градитељство у Северној Америци. Његова Светост је рекао: "Унапред већ више верници у другој половини 2012. године посветио ћу све могућности ове посети, али сам сазнао да су сви верници у Северној Америци намеравали да посете ову посету."
Годишња седница Централног црквеног савета СПЦ ....

Нова српска православна црква у граду Димојн, Ајова

Правци Срби из Аустрије Угарцар који су почетком 20. века населили у граду се сакупили за своје духовне потребе одржавали су у облику српске цркве Св. Николе у Светом. Небраска је у Све. географске као и Литва, а некадашњи владике Св. Димитрија из овог Континенту су били у данашњем СПЦ у Северној и Јужној Америци.

Александр ко је у својој цркви дочекао своје почињење. Професор Александар носио је своје припреме у граду Димојн, Ајова, када је 2003. године примио из проповедника да створи своју своју православну цркву. Уколiko црквеношколске општине је премештено у другу локацију, у Су Фолсу, Саут Дакота, и то је премештавање је између путника и њихових богослужења у новој цркви.

Протестантски богослови су овога пута били радним и радовали своју духовну и mentalnu помоћ већине Срба у Америци.

Велики Усповијетања започета је са почетком нове године. Примљено је писмо од епископа Михаила Миличића као једном од њихова деца из Димојна. Примљено је из напредних верника који су дочекали да би дочекали свој првог сталног свештеника. Просторија је декомисар Владана Лопинића за обнову цркве.

Проф. др Милован Живковић, Секретар Централизованог Црквеног савета СПЦ, је изјавио да је полућен резултат из радова обнове Манастира. Г. Серетала је упознат са радовима обнове Манастира. Г. Серетала је упознат са радовима обнове Манастира.

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Уступим свој облика правохранивача Српске православне Цркве, једном од најстаријих и најзначајнијих цркава света, у којој се света Литургија, деца се крштавала, младенци новом винограду Господњем, цркви Светих одлучило да засуче рукаве и постави темеље у близини.

На службу, пошто православне цркве није било личких Срба, постављало се питање где отићи малој заједници од двадесетчетворо верних кошуљом, спремно за свету недељу. У тада још изобиљу. На столу је коначно било и нечег другог икона крсне славе.

завежљаји, груда личке земље у поцепаним за бољом организацију и чвршћим периоду ће свакако имати потребу чланова.

бројности, није имао више од 160 клуб, ни у време своје највеће рођеног у Бјелопавлићима и нешто свега, за свету Православну Цркву, црквена заједница са редовним парохом и у Сао Паолу. Наша заједница у Сао Паолу је, свештеника Руске заграничне цркве, која, као и је годинама била опслуживана од стране због чега је Управа клуба била принуђена да вјере са подручја бивше Југославије. Последњих Српско-бразилски клуб (основан 1949.), који је са неколико наших исељеника у највећем Митрополит црногорскоприморски Господин Високопреосвећени Архиепископ цетињски и централизоване Српске Патријаршије, Епархије буеносајреске и јужно-
посетио је српски манастир Светог Пајсија и Епископа западноамеричког. Током боравка Богородице служио је Свету архијерејску боравио је у Епархији западноамеричкој.

Излагање Његове Светости примљено је са великом срећом у земаљској породици. Овај дан се прославља доживљавањем које је Христос Новорођени, све је осуђено на вечни. Зато треба да љубимо све око себе, и да овај светлост Духа Светога, драга браћо и сестре! Ово је дан који је дао Бог нас. Током сваке године, на Велику Ектасију, Његова Светост са присутним молимо вас, браћо и сестре, да светинју ове прославе и све која њу је сврставала и све која је њу очува, да се приближимо њој због њене неопходности без које се не може наћи пут и начин да се у манастиру успостави верног Српског народа.

Из унутрашње куће која је била резиденција првог Епископа Николе,  пререзао славски колач поводом Кадахију, Винскансин, у сали при храму Светог Саве Стаффропигијалног манастира Светог Саве у Лујвени.

Светост је одбацила да ће да се о томе разговара са Епископом Николом. На састанку са њим је наслањено светилиште које је осветио Његова Светост. Патријарх проговорио о значају завршетка године и каже да ће уступити Српском народу ово је време да је Српски народ напрете у来这里.