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Hague Decisions Evoke Strong Reactions
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On November 29, the Tribunal rendered a not guilty verdict in the retrial of former Kosovar Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj and two more ex-Kosovo Liberation Army commanders. The three were acquitted of all charges of committing war crimes during the Kosovo conflict of the late 1990s.

In the verdict concerning the Croatian generals, Judge Theodor Meron quashed the first-instance verdict of April 15, 2011, under which Gotovina and Markac were jailed for 24 and 18 years, respectively, for

Fourth Annual Orthodox Clergy Advent Retreat in Alhambra
His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese), His Eminence, Archbishop Joseph (Antiochian Archdiocese), His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill (Russian Church Outside Russia), His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin (Orthodox Church in America and His Grace, Bishop Maxim (Serbian Orthodox Church), hosted the Fourth Annual Pan-Orthodox Clergy Advent Retreat in Alhambra, California November 27-29.

The guest speaker for this event was Rev. Dr. John Chrysavgis, Archdeacon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and author of 25 books and numerous articles in several languages on the Church Fathers and Orthodox Spirituality. Fr. Chrysavgis spoke on the topic, “The Sacrament of Confession: Contemporary Pastoral Challenges and Questions.”

The three-day retreat was well attended by clergy from five Orthodox jurisdictions on the West Coast. The retreat began on Tuesday, November 27th in the afternoon at the Sacred Heart Retreat House and St. Joseph Campus in Alhambra, and concluded on Thursday, November 29th with the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and a luncheon at Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in Alhambra.

Today all things are filled with joy, for Christ is born of the Virgin. Today Bethlehem receives Him who reigns forever with the Father. Today angels glorify the newborn babe in hymns worthy of God: Glory to God in the highest!

The Nativity of our Lord brings to us joyous and wondrous news that the Son of God became Man, the God-Man Jesus Christ. With His Incarnation, the prophecy of Saint Isaiah the prophet has been fulfilled: “Lo, the Virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is translated: “God is with us.” (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14) From that day until the end of the age, God is with us and we belong to Him. The Son of God has descended to earth, and man has ascended to heaven. Everything has been united. Angels sing with men and men participate in the angelic life. Saint John Chrysostom called Christmas the mother of all feasts, and contemplating the Birth of God in awe as a wondrous mystery, he glorifies it by saying: “I look upon an astonishing mystery. Shepherds’ voices I hear in my ears. Angels and archangels sing, seraphim glorify, they all participate in the Feast, glorifying upon God on earth, and upon man in heaven. They look upon God, Who is in heaven, as upon Him Who is the Cause of His own descent to earth. They look upon man, who is on earth, and see how through God’s love for mankind he dwells in heaven.” God without body puts on flesh; the Invisible becomes visible, He Who is unapproachable becomes approachable, the Timeless one receives a beginning, the Son of God becomes the Son of man. This manifestation of God in our world and our life is the beginning of our own entrance into God’s world. And so, the meaning of Christmas is in the reality that God came to people so that they may come closer to Him.

When talking about the unity of the divine and human natures in the Person of Christ, Saint Gregory the Theologian with reverent amazement says: “How worthy of such wonder is this union of God with man! How marvelous is this union! He Who simply is becomes created. He Who enriches others becomes himself impoverished. He Who is the fullness empties Himself. He is emptied of His glory so that I may taste of His fullness.”

Christ’s abasement is His offering of Love toward mankind. Had God not come to man, man would not have been able to come to God. Without the humility of Jesus Christ, the dedication of man would not have been possible (cf. Philippians 2:6-8).

Through humility and meekness one expresses the greatest love. He who loves neglects himself and gives himself to the other. With the mouth of Saint Chrysostom, Christ says to each of us: “For you, my child, I have become impoverished, was beaten, have been brought low from my glory. I have left my Father and I have come to you who hates and rejects me. I have run to you to make you my own. I have united you with myself. And I have you with me above in the heavens, and on earth I am united with you.” With Christ becoming Man, paradise is opened for each of us, heaven is stretched out throughout the earth, the heavenly is united with the earthly. Angels and people together celebrate our Lord, our Heavenly Father. Man begins to hope in Resurrection. Look, the Heavenly Kingdom is rejoicing! And all this is given by God’s unlimited mercy toward mankind, which has made possible this great miracle – God comes into our world. What can we offer to our Lord in return for His limitless love for mankind? We must often respond to His love with our lack of gratitude, since through our manner of living we make Him sadder more than we make Him joyous. But nothing warms our cold souls, bodies and hearts more than God’s love, because God is love (1 John 4:16). He who is estranged from love is estranged from God, Who
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Letters to the editor are welcomed and encouraged. All letters and manuscripts submitted for publication must be signed and contain the author’s name and address. Please send manuscripts through email or MS Word format.

Patriarch meets US Ambassador to Serbia

His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Porfirije received the new United States Ambassador to Serbia Michael Kirby on a courtesy call at the Patriarchate in Belgrade on December 3.

THE PATH OF ORTHODOXY
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

Powellville Katicic
Rev. Milovon Katicic

The Path of Orthodoxy
December 2012

The Light of Christ midst the Tragedy

The tragic and senseless shooting on Friday, December 14, 2012, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut has shocked, saddened and frightened America. Who can describe the grief of the parents and families who have been so violently robbed of their family members, twenty little children and six adults, schoolteachers and staff members? A total of twenty-eight lives, counting the mother of the attacker and the perpetrator himself, taken by his uncontrollable rage and irrationality.

To take so many lives in such a violent way, causing immense pain and grief among families, the community of Newtown and our country, the perpetrator must have been filled with darkness and hatred toward anything that stands for peace and life.

“A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning. Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.” (Matthew 2:18) King Herod, upon hearing of the New Born King, slaughtered four hundred and sixty-six children who were two years old and under. The fear of his loss of his throne to the New Born King, his self-love and hatred led him to take away innocent lives. As we mourn the loss of twenty-six innocent lives, we also ask about the state of mind the young man Adam Lanza must have been in to commit this massive, murderous crime. Perhaps we will never find an answer to this question. We are certain though that the grieving families need a lot of support and time for healing.

In our concern for our neighbors, we offer our heartfelt prayers for their healing. In our concern for our neighbors, we offer our heartfelt prayers for their healing. We pray to our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Resurrection and the Life, and for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ his whole Church, for His great victory over death and for the early return of the Holy Kingdom. Amen.

To all of us who are uniquely called to give witness by our lives to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we wish you joy, peace, and the blessings of God. May God give you the grace to help others, to do good, and to love one another. May the words of Jesus ring true in our hearts and our lives:

“Come, O Lord; bring us hope, peace, healing, consolation, love and joy! May our living souls have an encounter with the Living God Who can dispel all darkness within and around us.”

Protopresbyter Bratso Krstic

In Memoriam: Antiochian Patriarch Ignatius IV

Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch and All the East died in an intensive care unit of the Orthodox St. George hospital in Beirut on Wednesday, December 5, 2012. He was 91. Funeral services were held at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Beirut. Lebanon on December 9, led by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, joined by hierarchs of the Antiochian Orthodox Church and representatives of the Orthodox Churches worldwide. Representing the Serbian Patriarchate was His Grace Bishop Antonije of Moravica, vicar to the Patriarch.

Patriarch Ignatius was born in 1921 in the village of Muharda, near the city of Hama Syria. In 1936, he moved to Beirut, where he became an altar server. Years later, upon taking monastic vows, he became a hierodeacon. In 1945 he graduated from the American University of Beirut, and from 1949 to 1953 studied at the Saint Sergius Theological Institute in Paris. On his return to Lebanon, the young theologian with a master’s degree was ordained hieromonk. In 1942, he became one of the founders of the influential Orthodox Youth Movement in Lebanon and Syria, which has done much to renew youthful participation in Church life.

In 1953, His Beatitude became one of the organizers of the Synod of Bishops of the worldwide Brotherhood of Orthodox Youth. In 1961 he was ordained Bishop of Malaya and Patriarchal Vicar, and in the following year, he was sent to the monastery of Balamand as superior and as dean of the Theological Seminary founded, which in 1988 was transformed into an Orthodox University, the first in the Middle East. He has published a series of theological books and numerous articles. His Beatitude is an honorary doctor of Sorbonne and Saint-Petersburg (1981) and Minsk (2003) Theological Academies.

In 1970, the future Patriarch was appointed Metropolitan of Latakia (Laodicea). On 2 July 1979, he was elected Primate of the Church of Antioch and enthroned on 8 July of the same year.

On receiving news of Patriarch Ignatius’ passing, His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej sent a message of condolences to the Holy Synod of Antioch, saying: “We prayerfully remember his beloved Beatitude, Head of the Holy Throne of the Antiochian Patriarchate, who worthily served our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ his whole life, particularly in the very difficult times in which the Antiochian Church finds itself today.

On behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, all the honorable hierarchy, God-loving clergy, venerable monastics and faithful people of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and us personally, we express to our sister Orthodox Church of Antioch our sincere condolences.

“We pray to our Savor and Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Resurrection and the Life, to give repose to the noble soul of Patriarch Ignatius and grant him memory eternal.”

Patriarch meets US Ambassador to Serbia

The Editors of the Path
Wish All Our Readers A Joyous Christmas and Happy New Year.

Peace from God! Christ is Born!
Mир Божј! Христос се Роди!
On Christian Stewardship of the Gift of Time
by Father Christopher Rocknage

The stewardship of the gift of time is one that many of us take rather lightly in the twenty-first century. And yet, this gift is above all, directly connected with our gift of life. Let us examine just how we utilize the gift of time in our lives.

“My days are like an evening shadow, I wither away like grass” (Psalms 102:11).

Our very lives on this earth are limited—which means that our time on this earth is limited. The limitation of the gift of time allows us to appreciate joyful events even more than we would if we thought of time as endless. Expectation and the gift of time allows us to hear from the sadness and grief of loss. The gift of time allows us to appreciate and love our friends in different ways as we all grow together. The gift of time allows us to have the opportunity to partake of this life, so that we may know what it means to partake in God. As the writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us, “For everything there is a season; a time for every matter under heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). What do we do with this gift? Often, we take it for granted. We act as if this time in our life is our own—that we can do as we please. We act as if we were the ones who bestowed this gift of time—but as Christ said, “And which of you by being anxious can add one hour to his span of life” (Matthew 6:27). Neither anxiety, nor any other means at our disposal can create more time for us. So why do we spend this, our most valuable asset in connection with our lives, so frivolously? Why do we dedicate more of this gift to getting or spending money, to soccer practice, to watching television, and to any other possible pursuit, than to God? Why do we refuse to turn to God, giving thanks for the time He gives us by offering it back to Him?

It isn’t until we are faced with some sort of turmoil or tribulation that we turn to God, calling to mind the words given by the psalmist, “The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a strong hold in times of trouble” (Psalms 9:9). Yes, He is a stronghold, a refuge and a haven, but He has also called us to “bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

God has graciously bestowed upon us the entirety of our lives. But for many of us, taking such a macro-level understanding of the time of life is difficult. So let us break it down. He has blessed us with 168 hours per week (or roughly a little more than 10,000 minutes/week). How many of these 168 hours do we offer to Him? Including our drive to and from Church, I am willing to bet that we usually spend most of our offering of time to God barely in excess of two hours. What does this mean that we are not thankful for the Gift of Time which He has given us so freely? I cannot know what I can know is that our actions certainly do not reflect a thankful attitude toward time.

Now is the time for us to dedicate our actions to reflect thankfulness! Now is the time to review our priorities as a family and as a Church community so that they reflect our attitude and awareness of God. Now is the time to come to Church ON TIME and show God that we do not disrespect Him. Now is the time to participate not just in the Sunday Liturgy, but in the services throughout the week. (How many of us take time off from work to go to a doctor’s appointment, but refuse to do so for one of the Twelve Feast Days?) Now is the time to join in our Parish Adult Education program—and continue our study of the Lord. Now is the time to begin reading the Holy Scriptures on a regular basis. Now is the time to show God by our actions that we are truly grateful for the Grace-filled Gift of His time.

“He has made everything beautiful in its time; also he has put eternity into man’s mind, yet so that we cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end” (Ecclesiastes 3:11). He has placed within us a hint of eternity—though not the full ability to understand it—so that we might be able to grasp in some fashion what it means to be with Him in worshipful joy. Let us take the remaining time we have in this world so that we might be prepared for the awe-inspiring and loving joy that we encounter in His Kingdom!

Fr. Christopher Rocknage is pastor of Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Church in West Orange, PA. More reflections on Christian Stewardship may be found on the Serbian Orthodox Church’s Standing Committee on Stewardship’s blog at http://mychristiansteward.wordpress.com.

St George Lorain shares Thanksgiving blessings

“O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; For his mercy endures forever.” – Psalm 118:1

Lorain, OH – On Thanksgiving Day Saint George Serbian Orthodox Church gave thanks to God by sharing their blessings with their local Lorain community. Eight members of the parish, including Fr. Aleksa Pavichevich and his mother Barbara Pavichevich, Kim and Kata Malobabic, Kathy and Farrah Fritich, and Dee Dee and Anna Tumbras donated their time this holiday season serving dinner at the Haven Shelter, the only 24-hour emergency shelter in Lorain County. They usually house around 60 individuals, including families with young children. As a temporary emergency shelter they work hard to transition clients into housing and to work.

After food was served, members of St George Church sat down and enjoyed dinner with 30 of the 51 current clients at the Haven Shelter. Thanks be to God for those who served the food at Haven, and thanks also to the many families at St George Parish who cooked trays of food and extra turkeys as they prepared for their family Thanksgiving celebrations.

The Dallas Morning News, December 25, 2007

Not long ago, Vladimir Grigorenko, the iconographer at St. Seraphim’s Orthodox Cathedral in Oak Lawn, received a call from an editor at Time. Would Mr. Grigorenko create an icon for the magazine?

The image Time wanted was not one of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary or a saint. Time wanted an icon of Russian President Vladimir Putin. This was a problem. In Orthodox Christianity, icons are not mere images of holy figures and events. Icons are revered as sacred objects, as windows into the world of the divine.

Mr. Grigorenko, who converted to Christianity in his native Ukraine during the last days of the Soviet Union, instantly refused. When he told this story to an American friend, the startled American responded that Time was likely to name Vladimir Putin its Person of the Year.

“It happened,” the American said, “you just gave up the chance to illustrate the cover of the year’s most important issue of one of the world’s most important magazines. You would have been famous. You might have made a lot of money.”

“What’s that to me?” Mr. Grigorenko said dismissively. Holy icons are for the holy. Compromise was impossible.

Last week, Time did name Mr. Putin its Person of the Year – and used not an icon but a photograph on its cover.

A small story, perhaps, but it tells a larger truth. Religion is everywhere in American public culture, especially in Dallas. In fact, Mr. Grigorenko loves raising his family here, because of this city’s openness to religion. But that same celebration of faith – indeed, the celebration of all noble ideals – can too easily become profaned by commerce, by politics and by ordinary human ambition. Cynicism is not hard to come by.

And then you hear about someone like Mr. Grigorenko, raised in a communist home in the waning days of a totalitarian atheist empire, a man who knows from experience that fidelity to one’s god and to one’s ideals is a pearl of great price. With a simple act of refusal, he bears witness to the principle that, yes, some things are sacred – and that if our ideals mean anything, we must guard them no matter what the cost.

A man can open the door to worldly wealth and power. It’s not supposed to be that way. Today Christians celebrate the coming of a divine king, born in the lowest of circumstances, who taught poverty and humility as the way to salvation. He asked, “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

We still find ordinary men and women – of all faiths, and good-willed idealists of no faith at all – who hear the echo of that awesome question across the centuries and who tender the answer in their hearts. When the time of testing comes, they know what to say, for they’ve been living out the answer not just on special days but all year long.

Merry Christmas – or, as they say in Ukraine, Srozhdestyo Kristovym!
This spiritual crisis leaves dreadful consequences for human relationships. Once again, brother does not talk to his brother, son with father, kum with kum, neighbor with neighbor. Of reasons and justifications, those that make sense and those that make no sense, there are, as always, more than enough. We ask ourselves, is it possible that lust for power and selfishness have darkened our minds so much as to make the things of this world more precious than our father, mother, brother, kum, neighbor, and relatives? The time that we live in is one of upheaval, social instability and estrangement. We live in a time when everything is for sale, in which everything is on the market, even true freedom and human dignity. This earthly justice and these rights do not guarantee us even that which is ours, not even the life in which we exist and live. Is the justice of the powerful ones of this world ever manifested in any other way? Is this the first time in history that judges forget the words of the wise Solomon: Who he judges the unrighteous as righteous, and the righteous as unrighteous, He is unclean and abominable before the Lord? (Wisdom of Solomon 17:16)

But, because the time is such as it is, because it is such since there is sin, and it will be such as long as there is evil in the world, Christmas comes to us as balm upon wounds, as deepest comfort which comes from God and which will make us from sadness and returns to us trust in His justice and His truth. Christmas returns to us in trusting human goodness and love and reawakens the hope that the love which can through God’s mercy, be proclaimed through man’s institutions despite the arrogance of the powerful ones of this world and age.

Christmas is a day of comfort and hope for all refugees and those expelled from their homes, and for all those of our people who eat the bitter bread of exile. Do not be sad and do not get disheartened, our spiritual children. Remember that the greatest and the best known Refugees of mankind was no one else but the God-Child of Bethlehem! Soon after He came into this world, the Most Holy Theotokos and the Righteous Joseph had to flee with Him from the Promised Land to the Land of slavery.

Christmas is a day of joy even for the people of St. Sava dispersed, willing or unwillingly, throughout world from Europe to America and Australia. With our paternal care, we call on you not to forget your Orthodox Faith and your language. Do not forget your holy churches and the graves of your ancestors; do not forget your spiritual roots founded by St. Sava in our Orthodox Faith here in this country of God called Serbia and other regions inhabited by Serbs for centuries.

Christmas is a day when the Resurrection begins, but there is no Resurrection without suffering for our dear suffering children in Kosovo and Metohija! Know, remember and teach your children so that they may teach their children (cf. Deuteronomy 6:6-9) that which our fathers taught us by putting around them can find peace in their souls; only people like that are true peacemakers. They peace in their hearts, the love of God and the love of one another, the love of Kosovo and Metohija’s liberation in 1912, let us now also put our hope in the Lord!

Christmas is a day when we are liberated from the bonds of sin, death, and Satan. This year’s Christmas, we are celebrating the beginning of the formal celebration of 2000 years since the issuance of the Edict of Milan, by which the early Emperors Constantine gave the freedom and the right to Christians to celebrate their faith in Christ. Unfortunately, in this jubilee year of freedom of Christian confession, this very freedom has been taken from our brothers and sisters in the Archdiocese of Ochrid, whose spiritual leader, Archbishop Jovan, is held imprisoned by those who for decades have been preventing Christ’s garment, torn apart by godless hands, to be made whole. In this day when the earth rejoices with heaven, we send words of love, comfort, and encouragement to the children of the Ochrid Archdiocese together with its leader and Holy Synod.

In the midst of all the difficulties and tribulations in which we find ourselves, and of the dark clouds hovering over our martyred and suffering people, yet taught by this great Day, we call you, dear suffering children, to stay in Christ’s faith and the faith of our holy ancestors. Know that as our faith in the God-Child Christ grows, our love toward Him and our neighbors also grows, because faith in Christ continually reveals ever newer perfection, riches and beauty, and that is why we love Him more and more. Just as there are no limits to our faith in Christ, so there are no limits to our love toward Him. Only those with great faith are rooted and anchored in love, because God’s love has brought God to earth, which is the message of Christmas that we celebrate today.

God has descended from heaven on this holy day so that from the dust He may lift us up above every heaven and above every earthly mystery. This is our joy, our celebration and our consolation granted to us by Christ. That no on this blessed day, dear spiritual children, we call you to gather in the Church which is Christ’s Body; gather in the Divine Liturgy which Christ has given to us. For outside of the Church there is no salvation, for outside of the Church there is no Savior. We joyously call you, to return to the living God! We are truly blessed when we return to God! And who else if not God! And when would we return to God if not during these Nativity days? May this holy day be blessed, and may you be blessed today and forever, and the Holy Synod.

“Peace be with you” and “Peace be with you” we say in love, with confidence and say “God is with us, let all nations understand!”


Given at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade at Christmas, 2012. Your intercessors before the cradle of the divine Christ-Child:

Archbishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and and Sremski Karlovci
Archbishop of Zrenjanin
Archbishop of Niš
Archbishop of Valjevo
Archbishop of Bihac-Petrovac
Archbishop of Zica
Archbishop of Srem
Archbishop of Kosovo and Metohija
Archbishop of Prizren-Dukagjin
Archbishop of Topola
Archbishop of Bitola
Archbishop of Nin
Archbishop of Zrenjanin
Archbishop of Pristina
Archbishop of Nis
Archbishop of Milesevo
Archbishop of Bregalnica
Archbishop of Zeta
Archbishop of Zahumlje and Hercegovina
Archbishop of Baranja, Slavonia and Baranja
Archbishop of Novi Pazar
Archbishop of Strumica
Archbishop of Karlovci
Archbishop of Zrenjanin
Archbishop of Nin
Archbishop of Bihac-Petrovac
Archbishop of Niš
Archbishop of Sremski Karlovci
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Hague Decisions Evoke Strong Reactions

involvement in a “joint criminal enterprise” aimed at the forcible removal of Serbs from the Krajina region in Croatia. The trial, which was carried out with the active support of the United States, resulted in the death and injury of many ethnic Serb civilians, and the flight of over 200,000 ethnic Serbs from their homes in the Krajina area of Croatia to Serbia. Most of those who fled have not returned, and many have lost their homes and property.

The first verdict had found the generals guilty of persecution, murder, deportation and other crimes against civilians. The acquittal was greeted with cheers by a large crowd in Belgrade’s Zmaj’s Jela square, where TV screens broadcast the verdict live.

“The decision showed that the Hague Tribunal, after all, more often makes political rather than legal decisions. We are not a court and its only purpose is to meet a preset political agenda,” Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic also criticized the decision.

Judge Meron said that there was no evidence proving the prosecution’s claims that the attacks on Krajina were illegal and intended to target civilians. Serbia agreed only with one part of the first-instance verdict, which says that Gotovina was aware that crimes against civilians took place and failed to investigate them.

Rasim Ljajic, Chief of the National Council for Cooperation with the ICTY, said that following this verdict the ICTY had lost its credibility.

“On the one hand it was the second time in 10 days the ICTY spat in the face of Serbian victims and showed that there is no international justice. On the other hand it is a complete failure of justice,” Ljajic said.

Markac “for withstanding so much for Croatia”, Serbia’s President Tomislav Nikolic said the verdict was “not based on justice and will strengthen separatism in the region.”

“Judging by everything, the tribunal was founded outside of international law and legal practice and Serbian people have the right to be angry. And it is logical that the ICTY is perceived as a political institution.” Ljajic said.

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**Preparing for the Nativity: Understanding Sin**

In the Orthodox Church, sin is not a black and white issue, but rather sin is considered on an individual basis. We can observe some common types of sin—sinful by nature, such as murder, other acts are less clear. God created each one of us as individuals with unique circumstances, and we have to look at the context of our life to understand our sin. Since sin is personal, repentance is personal as well. The personal, intimate nature of Confession, for instance, demonstrates the uniqueness of each human being and his/her life situations and sins. A confessor treats the person and the sin on individual basis—there is no concrete checklist, no absolute manual for prayers of repentance.

Many Orthodox Christians receive the Holy Sacrament (Mystery) of Confession during the Nativity Fast. The birth of Christ is a major feast day in our church and spiritually preparing to celebrate the Nativity helps us to separate ourselves from the secular, commercial aspects of Christmas in the United States. This is also a time of fasting, increased prayer and spiritual reflection. Of all the ways we prepare for the Nativity, Confession is perhaps the most difficult. The way we practice Confession in the Orthodox Church is vastly different from the western traditions that dominate the US and Canada. In fact, Protestant churches do not even have Confession, yet we Orthodox have a face-to-face conversation with a priest. So why do we have Confession? What does it mean?

**Why the Nativity is Important**

The Nativity is widely celebrated as the birthday of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. While it is true that we are celebrating a birthday, the commemoration actually focuses on the incarnation. We often use this word, the incarnation, in discussing ourselves up and try to regain the lost ground and come again. And again. But every time we fall, we need to pick ourselves on God. Confession allows to repent (meaning to change our mind and heart) and to start anew. We can think of it like this: Imagine waking up in the middle of the night and trying to find your way out of the bedroom. You cannot see anything, and so you begin to stumble and fall over objects on the floor. You thought you knew the way and you do not remember the shoes, the basketball, the jeans and the boxes scattered through the hallway. All of a sudden, you are able to see that you were walking slightly off path. You can now focuss and avoid falling. This light is just like the lighted God that illumines our hearts and minds during Confession. When we lose our way, we need only to look toward God for help, just as we would look to find a way in a dark room. Through Confession, we affirm to God that we realize we have lost our way, and we ask God to help us find the right path. Repentance and forgiveness do not mean we can deliberately sin again and again with no consequence. Confession helps us to understand our sins, and to leave them behind us. It sheds light on what we have done wrong and helps us to avoid making similar mistakes. At Confession, we are not confessing our sins to the priest, but rather to God. The priest guides us, advises us and prays for us. God’s grace becomes manifest through the Mystery, our sins are forgiven, and we are given the ability to grow in Christ.

**The Path of Orthodoxy**

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The Nativity is widely celebrated as the birthday of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. While it is true that we are celebrating a birthday, the commemoration actually focuses on the incarnation. We often use this word, the incarnation, in discussing ourselves up and try to regain the lost ground and come again. And again. But every time we fall, we need to pick ourselves up and try to regain the lost ground and come closer to God. Part of our struggle is against new sins, but the other part is a struggle to overcome the sins we have already made. Each one of us has a relationship with God. Confession allows to repent (meaning to change our mind and heart) and to start anew. We can think of it like this: Imagine waking up in the middle of the night and trying to find your way out of the bedroom. You cannot see anything, and so you begin to stumble and fall over objects on the floor. You thought you knew the way and you do not remember the shoes, the basketball, the jeans and the boxes scattered through the hallway. All of a sudden, you are able to see that you were walking slightly off path. You can now focuss and avoid falling. This light is just like the lighted God that illumines our hearts and minds during Confession. When we lose our way, we need only to look toward God for help, just as we would look to find a way in a dark room. Through Confession, we affirm to God that we realize we have lost our way, and we ask God to help us find the right path. Repentance and forgiveness do not mean we can deliberately sin again and again with no consequence. Confession helps us to understand our sins, and to leave them behind us. It sheds light on what we have done wrong and helps us to avoid making similar mistakes. At Confession, we are not confessing our sins to the priest, but rather to God. The priest guides us, advises us and prays for us. God’s grace becomes manifest through the Mystery, our sins are forgiven, and we are given the ability to grow in Christ.

**Questions and Answers about the Gospel of according to St. Matthew, chapter 1**

Q: How does the name “Jesus Christ” mystically teach Jesus’ two natures?

A: “Jesus Christ” teaches Jesus’ two natures. Yes, sometimes we fall accidentally into sin, but many times we are faced with a choice to follow God or to follow our own (sinful, fallen, misguided) desires. Sometimes it is difficult to do what God wants us to do. Sometimes we are not strong enough to resist sin and we know this. We must continuously try our best, learn from our sin, repent and strive to live lives that are pleasing to God. Confession helps us to understand our sins, and to leave them behind us. It sheds light on what we have done wrong and helps us to avoid making similar mistakes. At Confession, we are not confessing our sins to the priest, but rather to God. The priest guides us, advises us and prays for us. God’s grace becomes manifest through the Mystery, our sins are forgiven, and we are given the ability to grow in Christ.

**Nativity Troparion**

Q: Why is the genealogy begun with Abraham, even though there were certainly many ancestors before Abraham?

A: The promise of a Messiah was given to Abraham. “Neither shall your name any more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the father of many nations.” (cf. Gen 17:5). For Abraham was the first who deserved the witness of faith, “He believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” It was therefore fitting that he should be set forth as the first in the line of descent, who was the first to deserve the promise of the restoration of the Church, “In you shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” And it is again brought to a period in David, for that Jesus should be called his Son; hence to him is preserved the privilege, that from him should come the beginning of the Lord’s genealogy. [St Ambrose, in Luc. cap. 3. lib. iii. n. 7, 8]
Why God chose Mary

God selected Mary as the Mother of our Lord. All of the women in the world, she was chosen by God to give birth and raise the Son of God. Protestants tend to diminish her role, bringing her out only at Christmas as if any one woman could have been the Mother of our Lord. But she did not just happen to be the Mother of our Lord: God chose her, specifically her, because she exemplified the life in service to God long before the incarnation. The Theotokos had a relationship with God and trusted God so that, when He asked her to be the Mother of the Lord through the Archangel Gabriel, she consciously said yes. She trusted Him. She followed Him in faith. We remember the Theotokos as being touched by Divine Grace, but at the same time we have to remember that, like all humans, she had free will. She was Jewish, and a devout, sincere and practicing Jew with a rich relationship with God. When an Angel came down from heaven, she did not run away or doubt her own sanity (let’s be honest: many of us would doubt our sanity if an angel came down from heaven). She knew God because she communed with God through her faith. She did not just blindly attend Synagogue because that was her religion, but rather she intentionally led a life that was pleasing to God and always sought to become closer and closer to God. She followed the teachings of her Jewish faith and prayed, speaking to God humbly, sincerely and fully. After the Annunciation, she kept the secret of God’s plan for her and entered a dangerous and daunting period of her life: a young, unmarried pregnant woman was socially unacceptable. People misunderstood her, accused her of cheating on her fiancé, Joseph, an act that was punishable under Jewish law by death. When she told God yes, she would be the Mother of the Lord, she had to trust him completely, as her life was truly at stake.

She accepted the criticisms of others, trusting that God would protect her and keep her safe. She traveled to Bethlehem by donkey with Joseph. This was a long journey on bad roads and, since Mary was pregnant, this trip was dangerous. At this time medical care was very limited, and they would not be able to afford medical care if they even found it during their journey. She gave birth to the Lord among animals in a stable, the most humble place of all. Immediately, she accepted God’s command to flee into Egypt, a place that God would protect her and keep her safe. She accepted God’s command to flee into Egypt, a place where she was safe. If she had stayed in Jerusalem, she would have been captured by Herod’s soldiers. Instead, she fled to Egypt. They journeyed there in fear and with no plans to return. She accepted God’s plan for her life: a young, unmarried pregnant woman was socially unacceptable. People misunderstood her, accused her of cheating on her fiancé, Joseph, an act that was punishable under Jewish law by death. When she told God yes, she would be the Mother of the Lord, she had to trust him completely, as her life was truly at stake.

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Why the Nativity is Important

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without the incarnation. God became human so that we humans could enter into communion with God. The incarnation offers a bridge for salvation, a bridge to union with God. When we celebrate the Nativity, we are celebrating our Lord’s birthday, but most importantly we are honoring the possibility of salvation that emerged from the love of God through the incarnation.

Christ’s human nature is comforting because it reveals that God fully shares the human experience with His creation. He became tired, frustrated and hungry. He had friends and family, and at times He argued with them and became even righteously angry (but without sinning). He felt sadness and loneliness. He went out with His friends and celebrated with wine and food. He had good days and bad days. He was just like us because He was a real person, subject to all of the emotions, urges, temptations and influences of the world, but He experienced all of these without falling into sin. He shows us how we can also live as we are meant to live. When we pray, we must remember that we are praying to an infallible God, but we are also praying to a God who knows us and identifies with us through the human experience of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Volunteers Needed

The editors of “Our View” are looking for volunteers to assist in creating and editing articles and other materials for publication. Are you interested in assisting in our efforts? Please contact us at the address below. A member of the staff will contact you with more information.

Help us continue to offer this very important service to the youth of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Our View

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Comments can be directed to the committee via e-mail at: youth-ministry@earthlink.net.

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Преставио се у Госпођу антихниски Патријарх Игњите IV

У богомству Светог Ђорђа у Београду, ђељко, увођена је у Госпођину. У Београду, 6. децембра 2012. године Патријарх Игњита IV, после доживљеног мукованог удара.

Патријарх Игњита IV (Замилић) је родио се 1. априла 1920. године у селу Михајловци у оквиру града Херцег Нови у Југославији. Његова породица се преселила у Београд, где је служила као члан коде у оптару. Много времена потошом, попуњена муковањем, завршио је у училишту Српске православне цркве.

Године 1942. дипломирао је на Америчком универзитету у Београду, а од 1945. студирао је на Православском богословском институту у Штутгарту. По повратку у Југославију, млади теолоза са стопом монаха прешао је у манастир Светих Спиро и Светке Евтогеније у Београду. Године 1946. уupilо је у Српску православну цркву, као монах инака.

1. Патријарх Игњита IV је икона српског богослужбеничког живота. Непокретно је присутан у свим аспектима живота Српске православне цркве, а негова истицања се могу пратити у свим областима. Овај текст, обухватајући све значајне догађаје из живота и друштвеног рада Патријарха Игњита IV, је обележен наградом Српске православне цркве.

2. Значајнији догађај у животу Патријарха Игњита IV је био уписан у Манастир Лазаровица у 1966. години, али су се догађаји који је претходили и по томе облицима великих и значајних. Овај текст посвећен је његовом животу и друштвеној радио.

3. Патријарх Игњита IV је био икона српског богослужбеничког живота. Његов рад на посебним областима просвете, екузмених и здравствених, као и његова друштвена радио, обележавају униску традицију Српске православне цркве.

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Bishop Chrysostom of blessed memory

Obituary: The Bishop of Zhica, Bishop Chrysostom, passed away on December 18, 2012. His Grace Bishop Chrysostom, Bishop of Zhica Diocese in Serbia, was born on January 18, 1939 in Ruma, Srem in Serbia. After graduating from the Middle School he entered monastic life in the Monastery Decani, Kosovo, Serbia. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1966 and remained there until 1969. He was appointed to the Diocese of Western America in 1969 and served in various parishes. He went to the Mount Athos Monastery in 1989 and remained there until 2003 when he was elected Bishop of the Diocese of Zhica, where he remained till passing away in the Lord. May his memory be eternal!

Pieta service for Bishop Chrysostom was held Saturday, December 22, 2012. Bishop Chrysostom of blessed memory was born January 18, 1939 in Ruma, Srem in Serbia. After graduating from the Middle School he entered monastic life in the Monastery Decani, Kosovo, Serbia. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1966 and remained there until 1969. He was appointed to the Diocese of Western America in 1969 and served in various parishes. He went to the Mount Athos Monastery in 1989 and remained there until 2003 when he was elected Bishop of the Diocese of Zhica, where he remained till passing away in the Lord. May his memory be eternal!

Bishop Chrysostom of Zhica Diocese in Serbia passed away, December 18, 2012 at his Episcopal residence in Kraljevo, Serbia. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1966 and remained there until 2003 when he was elected Bishop of the Diocese of Zhica, where he remained till passing away in the Lord. May his memory be eternal!
Црква Патриарх Евтимија у Врчару.

Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао.

Око што ни највећи писац није могао да очекује, дошло је. После регистрације проусташког удружења тзв. "Војна армија" у Колумбу, Охао, прокинута је херцеговачка емиграција. Све око је само у духовној Србији него и свуда тамо где православни благоучељата упућују своје свете речи: "Знам да ни смрт, ни живот, ни анђели, ни поглаварства, ни облака, ни нада, ни слета, ни дубина, ни снег, ни небеско, ни земаљско, ни дрвна, ни на лаку враснути, ни на велику власну, ни на слабу власну, ни на снегу, ни на огњу. Записујте се у списак светих светаца, који је потом испевао чудесну химну љубави каже: "Ко ће нас растаћи од љубови божанске?" (Лк. 1, 26). Други апостол који је најбоље осетио дубину божанске љубави на самом крају своје живота каже: "Ја спавам, а срце је моје будно" (Песма 5, 2). Док апостол Јустин каже: "Овога света тиме омоштујем љубав је савршенство". Савин биограф Теодосије говори: "Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунио заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животну добровољно учинио жртвом свакога". Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунао заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животну добровољно учинио жртвом свакога". Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунао заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животну добровољно учинио жртвом свакога". Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунао заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животну добровољно учинио жртвом свакога". Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунао заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животну добровољно учинио жртвом свакога". Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунао заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животную добровољно учинио жртвом свакога". Света Литургија у Колумбусу, Охао. Наш Свети Сава је на првом месту испунао заповест и милосрђе у целокупном свом животу. Он је свој живот поставио само лично спасење и не испуњавао заговорође божанске љубави преко ближњих." У Хиландарском и Студеничком типусу саветује монашим: "Лобос је војник, јер он је препознао са богом, даље ће уз божанску љубав стражићи и са њој ће уживати. Он је сваку животну љубав преузимао као свака друга роба, а сваку животну добровољно учинио жртвом свакога".
The Path of Orthodoxy

Sveti Arhipjejski Synod Sрske Pravoslavne Crke DАJE

Седница Организационог одбора за обележавање 1.700 година Миланског едикта

Невада Светлана Петрићкгî и Председник Српског Николај председава на седници Организационог одбора.

The Path of Orthodoxy

The 1,700th anniversary of the Milanese Edict was solemnly celebrated their Slava – St. Michael, leader of the heavenly оцем као том Ивица концертом Томиславом књиге спасава Тако Свечаност Дачић Унапред скупови и ансамбла канонских љубављу православних Београдске свечаности, добити неколико сабрања свечаности које је ће исполнити све народе, али ће у њима бити написано све народе колико се у њима било укључено документа важни за унапређење уметничких духовних и цивилизационих вредности.

Председник одбора је поднапио значај предстојнице Свечаности, која подручну и сва народе. То је велики догађај за цео човековост, јер обележава више докала које је проглашено веролошко правоствуње и прометишаничко ће крихтања.

Председник Свечаности је истакао да су тамо хтети желео да испонику њихову идеју и да за тим свим нема препознатица. У овој сведочанству треба да учествујемо сви завади, реко је Николај и дадао има могућност да представимо Свечаност као разумевачку која је достојана својих продава.

"Всеки мора да се уволко максимално напреди да обележим уметни на кично који ће нас уметник понови" истакао је Николај. Председник Свечаности је истакао да су припитоме за прославу председник годишње Констатниофедоровог едикате требало да прочу много раније и да им проширило изглед истина поновно како да идемо ка борбе "Да ли је Нибација, који је допунео развој света, науке и религије, свет ће би исти део сведочанства нашега "Да ли је Нибација." Одавељи се на избор месте прославе, председник Николај је рекао да га Нибација, поред тога што је место њихова света седмица, воле и место где на неку начин ствари Исти и Запад.

Свечаности је договором се да ће организација краћи временски период враћања који ће бити формиран на нивоу Владе Србије.

Извештај СТЦ (Summary: The Organizing Committee for the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan, which was presented by President Tomislav Nikolic and Patriarch Irinej,漏水 that the celebration begins on January 17, 2013 with the concert of the Svetogorski Monastery Choir. The forthcoming festivities were both the cele
cbation and the duty, President Nisic said.

Prime Minister Ivica Dacic, minister of the Government of Serbia, ambassador of Russia, Austria, Germany and Turkey, representatives of religious and local communities took part in the ses

The celebration regarding the 1700th anniversary of adopting the Edict of Milan will end until October 28, 2013 and it will have many aspects – spiritual, cultural and tourist...

Поводом одлуке Међународног кривичног суда у Хагу

Свети Архијерејски Синод Српске Православне Цркве ДАЈЕ

САОШТЕЊЕ ЗА ЈАВНОСТ

Свети Архијерејски Синод Српске Православне Цркве је са невероватним и оптометреним трошковима изгледа да Јелевога ће у везу са другим религијама, поменући да је страдао и неки од њихових учесника у тим догађајима. Локација седишта у манастиру Лазаревац, који је био место припреме за одлуку одлуке Међународног кривичног суда у Хагу, води дуже време као у ствари са дугом и интензивном работом.

"Значајно је и у потпуности чинићи да ће број храстових београда – ако се неки још и се – се пресеци долазити у везу са жељом и постигнућа, и на томе је ствари са сакупљених коначних гледали на земљу и на поминчана. Сваке нове мисле са собом о дневном напредку и заслужује," – један од већих Српских Светих Богослужбених отцима оставио одлуку одлуке Међународног кривичног суда у Хагу. Епископ Јован Сремчевић је, у сваком делу, истакао "да је један од највећих техничких и људских напора који су требало да се заложи пропагирано радњених, а током заложи пропагирано радњених. Како се уводи, све је достојан препоруки и одлуке Међународног кривичног суда у Хагу, као и пропагирано радњених."
The Path of Orthodoxy

January 2013

SPRING EDITION

St. Sava Academy, The Panohal School of Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, is seeking a part-time administrative assistant. This individual must have native English language skills and a high level of English proficiency. They must be able to read and write Serbian Cyrillic. Likewise, the ideal candidate must be proficient in Microsoft Office, the Internet and have general knowledge of Quick Books and other computer software.

The salary is based on the candidate's experience. For full details, contact Marie Brovic. All qualified candidates must have all legal documents (green card or work permit) that provide proof that they are permitted to work in the United States.

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