On Sunday, October 7, 2007 the Four Circles of Serbian Sisters of Northwest Indiana held their 15th annual humanitarian banquet. The Four Circles of Serbian Sisters of St. George the Great in Schererville, Indiana hosted this year’s banquet.

In order to make this year’s banquet a bigger success the presidents of each Circle began meeting during the summer months. Participating members were Sandy Sinovic from the St. Sava parish, Ljubina Rakonjac from the St. George parish and Mara Koster, the vice president from the St. Elijah parish with the president of the Circle of Sisters at the St. George parish in Schererville, Anka Orzegovic, who, as the host Circle, chaired the meetings. The host clergy V. Rev. Dragoljub Popovic and the other sisters met during these meetings in preparation for the fifteenth annual event.

If we are to judge by the number of attendees (approximately 300 parishioners) at this banquet and the amount collected than we would have to say that the Sisters succeeded this year as well since approximately $20,000 was raised at the banquet.

The Holy Hierarchal Divine Liturgy in the St. George the Great Martyr Church in Schererville was officiated by His Eminence Metropolitan Christopher, assisted by the host priest Fr. Dragoljub Popovic and Protodiacon Dr. Stanimir Spasovic. The Stefan Lastavica Church Choir made the liturgy truly divine in all things with their skillful and God pleasing singing.

After the liturgy the people went to the new church hall where parishioners from the other four parishes, together with their priests, were slowly arriving (St. George Schererville, St. George East Chicago, St. Sava and St. Elijah from Merrillville).

The guests were greeted by V. Rev. Dragoljub Popovic who, during his address, gave a report on his humanitarian mission in Republika Srpska this fall. He spoke of his concern to the people of Serbia of whom a large number are sick without any health care and therefore appealed to those in attendance that they learn more about this issue. He praised the work of the Serbian sisters and mentioned that they were worthy of emulation and esteem.

His Eminence Metropolitan Christopher gave special praise to the sisters and thanked them for their humanitarian work, beseeching them to continue their good work to the unfortunate. His Eminence reminded all of the work of the Sisters of Northwest Indiana.

 Unable to attend this banquet were His Grace Bishop of New Gracanica and the General Consul of Republica Srpska His Excellency Desko Nikitovic. Their greetings were read by Fr. Aleksandar Savic.

In the past fourteen years the sisters of these four Circle of Serbian Sisters collected and delivered to the hands of those most needy in Republika Srpska Krajina, Republika Srpska, Republic of Serbia and Kosovo and Metohija a little over $428,207. The hard working sisters collected another $20,000 which is yet to be distributed.

The writer of these lines once again expressed his sincere thanks to the Circle of Serbian Sisters and all those of good will who have in any which way helped during this banquet that it be a success. Special recognition goes to sister Mara Dobrjevic, one of the founders and leaders of this program.

Once again on this occasion, just as many times before, we can apply the beautiful words of our Serbian proverb: “Everything was beautiful and pleasant and acceptable to gracious God.”

V. Rev. Dragoljub Popovic

Clergy Brotherhood Board meets at Monastery Marcha

The Executive Board of the Serbian Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of North and South America met on October 25, 2007 at Monastery Marcha in Richfield, Ohio to organize and deal with matters of interest. His Grace Bishop Dr. Mitrophan, Diocesan Bishop of Eastern America, participated in the meeting out of His genuine concern for the Brotherhood. Protosbyer Djkjan Majstorovic, President of the Brotherhood, convened the meeting with a direct interest in increasing the involvement of clergy in the work of the Brotherhood.

Areas of interest addressed during the meeting included the publication of the 2008 Calendar, providing assistance to priests in the immigration process, focusing on the retirement needs of clergy, establishing a comprehensive data base of active and retired clergy and reviewing by-laws of the Brotherhood.

The meeting also focused on establishing a formal process for requests from theological students for financial assistance. A publication committee was asked to examine steps for the Brotherhood to begin publishing a book each year. The importance of the Clergy Messenger, the publication of the Brotherhood, was emphasized; as well as increasing the involvement of clergy in Canada and South America.

Additional Executive Board members participating in the meeting including those by conference call were: Protosbyer Stavrofor Rasko Trubizich, Protosbyer Stavrofor Rade Merick, Protosbyer Dr. Norman Torbic, Protomuzejnik Milan Katican, Reverend Father Darko Spasovic, Reverend Father Alexander Novakovich, Reverend Father Norman Kosanovich and Father Deacon Damjan Bracic. Protomuzejnik Dragomir Tuba joined the Board at the meeting site.

Mother Ana, Abbess of Monastery Marcha and Sister Anastasia were pleased to have the Executive Board with His Grace Bishop Dr. Mitrophan come to the monastery for the meeting.

The Brotherhood actively works to advance the work of the Serbian Orthodox Clergy in North and South America with the blessings of the Episcopal Council. The Brotherhood holds an annual seminar for the clergy, provides assistance and support in times of need to members

continued on p. 2
It is a concern of many of our priests and dedicated churchgoers, particularly those older in age, when they see that there are fewer and fewer young people today who are willing to become active in the life of our parishes. Those who have held these positions for many years, whether on the church board or the Circle of Serbian Sisters or any other church group, continue their devoted service, all while lamenting the fact that younger parishioners are unwilling to commit their time. It’s a situation found not only in a few, select parishes and particularly those older in age, when they see that there are fewer and fewer young families with those same busy schedules who have found time for church, but also to become active in the life of the parish. This is to say that although it is a situation faced by many communities throughout the United States, there is still an active and retired clergy. A day planner for purchase in most Serbian Orthodox Parishes is available in December. This calendar includes contact information for all parishes by diocese, and the clergy directory is a handy section helps keep track of appointments and to-do lists, and the spiral binding allows the Calendar to lie flat and open on your desk. The Brotherhood publishes an attractive and comprehensive calendar each year for use by Serbian Orthodox Churches and diocesan clergy in North and South America are members of the Brotherhood by virtue of their ordination.

Father Rodney Torbic

Brotherhood continued from p. 3 and demonstrates on-going concern for the welfare of clergy widows. When situations arise that require help from the Brotherhood including giving attention to suffering in Kosovo and elsewhere, the need is addressed.

The Brotherhood publishes an impactful and comprehensive calendar each year for use by Serbian Orthodox Churches and diocesan clergy in North and South America are members of the Brotherhood by virtue of their ordination.
Successful Stewardship

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, STEELTON, PA

Understanding and Practicing Stewardship: A Practical Approach

Part I

Introduction

While the idea of stewardship became a reality for St. Nicholas/Serbian Orthodox Church in Steelton, Pennsylvania, in October 2005, the groundwork was laid several years in advance. In three key factors motivated our church community to make the change from a dues structure to a stewardship program: (1) the strong spiritual guidance of our pastor, the Very Reverend Stavrophor Srboljub Lockovich, as reflected in the opening Biblical reference of this article, (2) the patient leadership and careful planning of our Church Board and its Stewardship Committee, and (3) the open minds and faithful hearts of our parishioners.

This article recounts the highlights of our experience and presents several of the key steps we took to achieve the change to stewardship.

Background

Upon the time of its origins in 1903, St. Nicholas Church had been sustained by the faithful through collection plates, annual dues, and special assessments—coupled with the hard work and dedicated service. For more than 50 years, we “passed the plate” each Sunday and only the total collection was noted. In 1957 these plate collections were replaced by weekly envelopes and an accounting system of individual member giving. Over time, the amount of the annual dues was noted several times in an effort to keep pace with expenses.

Like many other Orthodox Christian parishes, we raised additional money to supplement the annual budget. The most typical and frequent raisers were weekly bingo games and the annual Slavica banana book, which was the church anniversary, a variety of raffles, summer picnics or festivals, and annual cookie, meat, and produce sales. In 1967 when the congregation engaged contractors to design and build a new church complex, each church member was required to pay a special assessment in addition to their annual dues. In addition to their regular weekly church envelopes, members were encouraged to contribute through monthly building fund envelopes.

New responsibilities and occasional informal conversations about the need to consider alternative means to meet our financial and social obligations. We had always counted on a stable membership with a large pool of regular attenders. Our church was near the old church and could be ready to pitch in on any fund-raising projects at a moment’s notice. Even when the new church was built in a more distant location, volunteers were still available to run the weekly Bingo games and other fund-raising events. Over time, however, circumstances changed. Our aging population found it progressively more difficult to commit the time and energy needed to accomplish the various fund-raising projects. The time, priorities, and energies of our younger population were taken over by career and family responsibilities. Some young people and families also moved out of the area because of jobs, school and related commitments.

Why Stewardship?

We were mindful of the increasing urgency in the state- ment of His Grace, Bishop Mihirion about the need to introduce the concept of stewardship and implement it as a new way to support the churches of the Diocese. For several years, Fr. Srboljub reiterated to us the need to revisit and revise our way of supporting the church. The first milestone of this project was passed in March 2004. In 2004, he made “stewardship” the theme of his annual blessing of the homes of parishioners. Fr. Srboljub used the occasion to offer mini-sermons on the topic and to answer questions that arose from the street to the church and pavilion as well as the parking lot is awaiting painting.

Vasilije of Ostrog in Greensboro is in the finishing stages. The interior paint of the cupola and the narthex of the church have been dry walled and are awaiting painting. The next phase is the outer facade. In the meantime, the entrance from the street to the church and pavilion is expected to be paved. Once these projects have been completed a sidewalk around the church is being planned, as well as a sidewalk to the pavilion. Finally, plans are being made to plant trees and bushes around the church and pavement.

We remain hopeful and we pray to God for help that all of this might be completed and pass inspection by mid December so that we might make our plans for a small blessing service at the end of the year.

Of course, the entire project will not end here. Plans are being made to complete by next year’s Church Slava in May, among other things, installing the floor inside the church, constructing candle stands, and painting the great chandelier. The iconostasis is expected to arrive and be installed next July. Additionally, there is the possibility of painting frescoes in the altar.

Our faithful people in Greensboro and the surrounding areas, gathered in the church, with their donations and work are assisting in the construction of the church. Our community has no families that can give large amounts of money at once. All the donations that we have received from our parishioners have been literally bit-by-bit. From their crumbs, thanks to the yeast of the Holy Spirit, we have the bread that is our church. Of course, the entire project will not end here. Plans are being made to complete by next year’s Church Slava in May, among other things, installing the floor inside the church, constructing candle stands, and painting the great chandelier. The iconostasis is expected to arrive and be installed next July. Additionally, there is the possibility of painting frescoes in the altar.

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Once again, we wish to thank all the parishes of our Serbian Orthodox Church in this country that have come to our aid. Likewise, we call on other parishes and individuals to help us in this God pleasing act.

Fr. Dragjan Lj. Zaric

Most importantly he reminded us all we have is from God and we were only caretakers of the Lord’s resources.

Construction of the St. Vasilije of Ostrog Church in Greensboro

Greensboro, NC.—The construction of the church dedicated to St. Vasilije of Ostrog in Greensboro is in the finishing stages. The interior work is complete and has passed local inspection codes. The inside of the cupola and the narthex of the church have been dry walled and are awaiting painting.

The next phase is the outer facade. In the meantime, the entrance from the street to the church and pavilion is expected to be paved. Once these projects have been completed a sidewalk around the church is being planned, as well as a sidewalk to the pavilion. Finally, plans are being made to plant trees and bushes around the church and pavilion.

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Fr. Dragjan Lj. Zaric

To be continued in the next issue.
We come from all over the Eastern Diocese and from Canada; we are American-born; we are from Serbia; we are campers; we are counselors; we are parents and grandparents; we are clergy; we are SHADELAND!

Around 200 children, 30 volunteers and 16 staff came to Shadeland for this year’s camp season to enjoy fun, fellowship and faith. As usual, staff arrived earlier on Tuesday, July 10 to organize crafts, unpack equipment and stock the kitchen. It was also a time for our eleven counselors to meet and get to know one another and the senior camp staff. On Friday, His Grace Bishop Mitrophan, V. Rev. Dr. Rodney Torbic, and Camp Director Rev. Zivojin Jakovljevic held orientation for our counselors.

With months of preparation behind us, everyone was eager for the start of our first official week, which began on Sunday, July 15th.

Parents and campers were anxious to use the new dormitory, which was blessed at last year’s Diocesan Days weekend and completed last October. The $1000 square foot dormitory with two large bunk rooms and six private rooms for clergy and counselors was ready for occupation. Thanks to the generosity of the Eastern Region KSS, the great rooms in both dormitories were refurbished with new furniture. Certainly, there’s no roughing it for campers at Shadeland.

For this year’s camp season, the theme was “O Taste and See, Giving Thanks through the Liturgy.” With a wonderful curriculum prepared by the Standing Committee on Christian Education, our children got a better understanding on how the Divine Liturgy is closely connected to our daily lives in what we do and who we are. Once again campers were able to take home their curriculum books to share with their families.

Weekly directors were Fr. Rodney Torbic, Fr. Djokan Majstorovic, and Fr. Dejan Obradovic for Week 1, Fr. Rajko Kovic, Fr. Miladan Blagovevic, and Fr. Milan Pajic were here for Week 2, and for the final week of Camp, Fr. Aleksandr Vlajkovic and Fr. Dragan Zaric joined Fr. Milovan Katanic.

As is his custom, His Grace Bishop Mitrophan joined us each Tuesday for a visit with our campers. After taking a group picture, His Grace has a session with campers, which always reflects his love of teaching. Campers also had the opportunity to ask His Grace questions; some questions were related to our theme and others were more personal in nature. His Grace was happy to answer them all.

During Week 1, each afternoon during a little down time in the kitchen, Fr. Rodney and Fr. Djokan held religious education classes for the adult volunteers. A large part of the discussion revolved around raising children in a Christ-centered family.

Despite some rainy weather during the first two weeks, we still managed to have the group games, hikes, hayride and the ever-popular trip to Waldemeer. New activities for this year included a trip to a bowling alley, and on Monday night, we held a Shadeland style carnival. Campers made their own masks to wear and joined in typical carnie games. And what would a carnival be without funnel cakes, popcorn and other treats?

Yet, Shadeland isn’t just about hayrides and games, but more importantly it’s about faith. The active participation of our youth today leads directly to their desire to be involved and active in their Church community as adults. Our clergy and staff work to insure that religious education, prayer, daily services, and participation in the Sacraments of confession and communion are an integral part of the program. This is a large reason why the Shadeland experience is so important, because it is one way to keep our youth engaged, especially if they are not attending and participating in Church life regularly at home.

Our final week of Camp was Folklore Week. In addition to preparing for Sunday’s afternoon program, emphasis has also been placed on the participation of our campers in Sunday’s Divine Liturgy. This year our Camp Director Fr. Zivojin worked daily with the campers teaching them the responses and hymns in the Divine Liturgy. At Sunday’s Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, it was the Shadeland campers who sang many of the responses.

Tammie Week is not a typical week of camp, but for campers who attend it is definitely their Shadeland experience. It’s a week of dance, music, and controlled chaos. We are fortunate to
hearsals, during their free time campers took instruments out of their cases and played; others gathered and started to dance. Every year another unforgettable part of the Shadeland experience for the campers is our counselors. This past season, our counselors were a combination of former campers and seminarians from Libertyville. By the end of the four weeks the counselors managed to give their charges many happy memories to take home, while developing strong bonds with each other. Many thanks are due to former campers Amanda, Alexis, Dana, Jennifer, Nick, and seminarians Vaso, Drag, and Selimir for a great year. And where would we be without our equally dedicated volunteers, the moms, dads, and grandparents who come and work in the kitchen and grounds. They roll up their sleeves and with such enthusiasm do whatever is asked of them. Some have traveled from Boston, others from the Pittsburgh area, some from Canada, and our Ohio contingent came from the Canton and Cleveland congregations. We are so grateful for their support. Along with our volunteers, our camp nurses this year—Cathy Stupar, Desa Mrvos, and Nancy Generalovich—offered invaluable assistance. From dispensing medications to rendering first-aid, our campers and staff benefited from their compassion and care. Each of you—volunteers, staff, and clergy—contributed to the positive experience that continues to make Shadeland so memorable.

Finally, many thanks are extended to His Grace Bishop Mitrophan for his continued leadership and his love for the children of our Diocese, to Fr. Zivojin our director for his steady and thoughtful guidance, and the Shadeland Management Committee. Many thanks are due to the Eastern Region KSS which funds the Camp program and, in particular, to KSS president Millie Radovick and vice presidents Dee Dee Baskot and Martha Springborn; it is their year-round effort for St. Sava Camp that keeps the Shadeland experience going strong.

Lastly, you are invited to look at pictures taken by Camp mothers Lana Balach from Boston and Nancy Generalovich from Pittsburgh. Enjoy! Then, for the next camp season, come and experience what Shadeland is all about!
Did You Know...

By Amy Yurko

Saint Dimitrios

Icons of Saint Dimitrios are very common. He is often depicted on a horse or standing with a spear. But..."Did You Know:"  

- Dimitrios was the only son of the military, the commander of Theosarova in the early 4th century. As such, he was very cherished by his family and educated. Upon his father’s death, the Emperor Maximian appointed Dimitrios as the successor.  
- Maximian ordered Dimitrios to persecute and kill Christians. Instead, he openly preached the teachings of Christianity. As a result, he was arrested and thrown into prison. While praying in his cell, Dimitrios was spared to death by the soldiers.  
- The Holy Great Martyr was buried. His relics began producing the fragrance of myrrh. Soon, a small Church was erected on the site. Upon praying at the relics of St. Dimitrios, Leontius, a nobleman, was cured of an incurable disease. In tribute, Leontius replaced the small Church with a much larger one.

St. John Chrysostom (the Golden-Tongued), Patriarch of Constantinople

Commemorated 13/26 November

He was born in Antioch in the year 347, his father’s name being Secundus and his mother’s Anthusa. Studying Greek philosophy, John became disgusted with Hellenic name being Secundus and his mother’s Anthusa. Studying table works, wrote a rite for the Holy Liturgy, put heretics to the body in the Vatican in Rome. 

By John himself. When the patriarch ordained him, a shin gracing and also great suffering. When the time came for baptism, John was baptized by Meletius, Patriarch of Antioch, and, after that, his parents were also baptized. After their death, John became a monk and began to live in strict asceticism. He wrote a book: “On the Priesthood,” after which the holy Apostles John and Peter appeared to him, prophesying for him great service, great grace and also great suffering. When the time came for him to be ordained priest, an angel of God appeared at the same time to Patriarch Flavian (Meletius’s successor) and to John himself. When the patriarch ordained him, a shining white dove was seen above John’s head. Renowned for his wisdom, his asceticism and the power of his words, John was, at the desire of Emperor Arcadius, chosen as Patriarch of Constantinople. He governed the Church for six years as Patriarch with unequalled zeal and wisdom, purging the Church of simony, deposing many bishops who were Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria and the Empress Eudoxia, interpreted the Scriptures with his golden mind and tongue and left to the Church many precious books of sermons. The people glorified him; the jealous loathed him; the ungodly hated him. He spent three years in exile, and died on Holy Cross Day, September 14th, 407, in a place called Comana in Armenia. The holy Apostles John and Peter again appeared to him at the time of his death, and also the holy martyr Basiliscus, in whose church he received Communion for the last time. "Glory to God for everything" were his last words, and with them the soul of Chrysostom the Patriarch entered into Paradise. Of his relics, the head is preserved in the Church of the Dormition in Moscow, and the body in the Vatican in Rome.
the same learning experiences as last year. They first time, I had a wonderful time. This conference want to help. My favorite quote was mentioned by clergy were very nice and fun as well.”

church was beautiful. All of the chaperones and meeting new people from across the United States. The service was great, the food was good, and the many questions answered here, such as how to live enjoyed our contemplation talks. I learned a lot at meeting everyday enlightened and taught me about of the friends I have made here

More reflections

continued from the previous page enjoyed our contemplation talks. I learned a lot at this youth conference.”

Dimitrija Runjo, St. Nikola, Cudahy, WI

“I’d like to start off by saying that, this being my second youth conference was a blast. The topics that we discussed were really relevant to our teenage lives. My favorite discussion was “The Two Shall Become One.” It really made me realize how important it was to find the right person to spend your life with, by showing us which qualities were important and which were not. I wish I could have come last year so that I could have experienced this wonderful conference twice.”

Danielle Vucelich, St. Nicholas, Monroeville, PA

“My experience here was very enjoyable. I had a lot of fun meeting new friends that have many of the same interests and ideas as I do. I know that I will stay friends with the people that I met for a long time. This experience has also allowed me to grow in my faith. Some questions that I had were answered and I was able to learn more through the presentations. I had a great time.

Jelena Tasic, St. Stevens, Alhambra, CA

Father Stevo saying “Opportunity knocks on the door once and temptation leaps on the doorstep.” I will definitely come back next year to have the same experiences and learning opportunities that I have had at the first conference as well as this second!”

Nikole Vranesvic, St. Sava, McKeesport, PA

“The week that I spent at New Gracanica for the second youth conference was a blast. The topics that we discussed were really relevant to our teenage lives. My favorite discussion was “The Two Shall Become One.” It really made me realize how important it was to find the right person to spend your life with, by showing us which qualities were important and which were not. I wish I could have come last year so that I could have experienced this wonderful conference twice.”

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A. Not always. Often, young people who are interested in finding their path in life while also remaining close to God worry about how this will all be established. This actually shows health; for a young person does not show concern about his or her future. It reveals a certain indifference or carelessness, which could result in their becoming a good-for-nothing. Youth just need to be careful to control their anxiety, because the devil will try to destroy them with it, putting them in agony by keeping their rouses in constant tumult.

Yet people need to entrust themselves wholly to God. By doing so they will become peaceful, because the Good God, our loving Father, acts where we are humanly not able to act. It is not necessary for youths to rush about making childish decisions to follow in their lives. I know kids who really agonize and try to resolve all their problems quickly. In the end they get confused, leaving their solutions. For example, even before finishing college they totally stress out about their future, which causes them to lag behind in their studies. The end result is worse than if they had not been so hasty. It can’t happen all at once. Problems aren’t solved this way. Instead, they should resolve within themselves to give order to their lives. In other words, first they should be sure to get their diploma. Then they can find a job, or, in the case of young men, finish the military. And then, in peace and with the help of God, they can decide either to start a family (if they have decided on the married life) or go to a monastery (if they have chosen monasticism).

Therefore, I tell young people who are studying and have such worries—because what they’ll do with their lives has not matured within them yet—that they should continue with their studies; and that which grows within them over time, and gives them peace, that is what they should do with their lives. If they have a good disposition, God will help. Little by little it will become clear which life is for them—married or celibate in a monastery—and they will find rest.

From the book, “Hasten for a word from the Fathers…”

Our View is the official publication of The Serbian Orthodox Youth Ministry Committee and is a regular feature of The Path of Orthodoxy. Comments can be directed to the committee via e-mail at: youth-ministry@earthlink.net, or via regular mail at: The Serbian Orthodox Youth Ministry Committee, 260 Sue Drive, Hummelstown, PA 17036.