

THE SERB

A quarterly publication of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church

300 Stryker Avenue, Joliet, Illinois 60436

Phone: (815) 741-1023 www.stgeorgejoliet.org Fax: (815) 741-1883



Dedication of the Church of St. George the Great-Martyr - Djurdjic
November 16, 2016
Fall 2016

The Serb

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A publication of

St. George Serbian Orthodox Church

Rev. Nikolaj Kostur, *Parish Priest*

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The Church Bulletin Editor assumes responsibility and the right to reject, delete and rewrite any part or all of the articles submitted for the publication. Any news of the social interest should be submitted to the Editor. No articles will be considered that are submitted unsigned and/or improperly identified.

Cover Icon: Icon of Saint George, from a 14th century Constantinople workshop.
Exhibited in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens.

A Message from Fr. Nikolaj

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

-The Fourth Commandment of God, Exodus 20:8-11

We all know the Ten Commandments. We grew up with them, know their importance, instill them into our children, and make every attempt to follow them. However, when it comes to the Fourth Commandment about keeping the Lord's Day holy, we often forget it or remember it inasmuch as it suits our needs.

In the Old Testament, the Sabbath—or Saturday—was the day of rest, as it commemorated the Lord's rest after He created the world. In the New Testament, however, Sunday—or the Lord's Day—is the day of rest, in that Christ resurrected from the dead on that day and sanctified it as holy.

Of course, there are circumstances in which we must work. For example, if we live on a farm and need to feed our animals, if we are doing some other service for the good of others, or when our livelihood depends on it. After all, God wants us to do good, not be neglectful. But when we do something on the Lord's Day that is absolutely not essential or hurts our spiritual life, then we need to make a change. Often, high school kids are asked to work at their jobs on Sunday mornings, as they are on the bottom of the totem pole. It is one's religious right not to work on Sunday mornings. I had a job in retail after I finished Seminary. They would ask me to work Sundays, and I would always refuse. I explained to the manager that I was an Orthodox Christian, attend church services on Sunday mornings, and that it was strictly against my Faith to work on Sunday mornings during the Divine Liturgy. I explained that if need be, I could work after the Liturgy. So, in rare circumstances, I also worked on Sunday afternoons, but my beliefs were respected by the manager of the store.

As parents, we must remember that we are largely responsible for the salvation of our children. We are the ones that raise them in the faith and bring them to church and church school. Their spiritual formation is in our hands. Are we actually conscious of this? Are we doing anything about it? Are we willing to make a change if we haven't yet?

Sunday morning sports are destroying our children's lives. There is plenty of time during the week when our kids can play sports. Why organizations are pushing children sports on Sunday morning, I do not know. I do know, however, that it is our responsibility as parents to not take our children to these extracurricular activities when they are scheduled during Sunday Liturgy. You may not want to hear this, but by doing this, you are damaging your children. You may not

see it now, nor may you think it is effecting them or you at the present time, but it will bother you when they leave their Church, forget about God and go on paths foreign to the path of salvation. Do not make the mistake of jeopardizing your child's spiritual well-being. Not only will they suffer for it, but so will you. If, God forbid, something were to happen to your child during a Sunday sport activity which took place during the Divine Liturgy, a time for prayer, thanksgiving to God and Holy Communion, would you think to yourself on Monday morning: "I wish we would have gone to church instead of *this* happening?" If the answer is "yes", then it is time to make a change in your life.

Please, dear parents, bring your children to church school and Divine Liturgy on Sunday. Remember, this is the most important thing for them. The benefits they get from them will resonate through their entire lives—and most likely yours as well.

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Nikolaj Kostur". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small vertical line under the name.

Rev. Nikolaj Kostur
Parish Priest

Social Center Managerial Positions

Every two years, the three Managerial positions (General Manager, Bar Manager and Kitchen Manager) become open.

If anyone is interested, please write a letter of intent and submit to Fr. Nikolaj.

November 27 is the absolute deadline. The positions will be voted on at the December Regular Board Meeting. Job descriptions will be available at the Warden's Stand.



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October 2, 2016

Dear Members and Parishioners,

It is our pleasure to announce the celebration of the 88th Anniversary of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church in Joliet, scheduled for Sunday, November 6, 2016.

Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM. Responses will be sung by our Mita Topalovich Choir. A festive banquet will follow Divine Liturgy at our Social Center. Dinner will be served at approximately 12:30 p.m.

Our St. George *tamburasi* "Veselo Selo" will perform during the banquet and afterwards. Following the banquet we will have a program consisting of greetings and performances by our Junior Choir, Folklore, and Tambura group.

We ask all our parishioners and friends to reserve this day for our Church's celebration. Make sure you come with your family. There will be no admission charge, but donations will be accepted.

In Christ,

St. George Executive Board

Dr. Howard Grundy, President

Rev. Nikolaj Kostur, Parish Priest



ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

300 Stryker Avenue - Joliet, Illinois 60436
(phone) 815.741.1023 / (fax) 815.741.1883



OCTOBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sep 25 (Sep 12) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	Sep 26 (Sep 13) 6 PM - Vespers	Sep 27 (Sep 14) ELEVATION OF THE CROSS 9 AM - Divine Liturgy 6:30 PM - Akathist & Religious Education Fast: wine & oil	Sep 28 (Sep 15) Fast	Sep 29 (Sep 16) 7 PM - Bowling Tournament Meeting	Sep 30 (Sep 17) Fast	1 (Sep 18)
2 (Sep 19) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	3 (Sep 20)	4 (Sep 21)	5 (Sep 22) Fast	6 (Sep 23)	7 (Sep 24) Fast	8 (Sep 25) 5 PM - Vespers
9 (Sep 26) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 12 PM - Cultural Club Lunch & Trip to Dollinger Pumpkin Farm 12 PM - Church Board Meeting	10 (Sep 27)	11 (Sep 28)	12 (Sep 29) Fast	13 (Sep 30)	14 (Oct 1) Protection of the Theotokos Slava of New Gracanica Monastery 10 AM - Hierarchical Liturgy at New Gracanica Monastery 1 PM - Slava Banquet Fast: fish, wine, & oil	15 (Oct 2)
16 (Oct 3) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	17 (Oct 4)	18 (Oct 5)	19 (Oct 6) Fast	20 (Oct 7)	21 (Oct 8) SNF Bowling Tournament Fast	22 (Oct 9) SNF Bowling Tournament 5 PM - Vespers
23 (Oct 10) SNF Bowling Tournament ***9 AM - Divine Liturgy	24 (Oct 11)	25 (Oct 12) 6:30 PM - Akathist & Religious Education	26 (Oct 13) 6 PM - Vespers Fast	27 (Oct 14) St. Petka/Св. Петка 9 AM - Divine Liturgy	28 (Oct 15) Fast	29 (Oct 16) 5 PM - Vespers
30 (Oct 17) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 6 PM - Vespers	31 (Oct 18) St. Luke/Св. Лука 9 AM - Divine Liturgy	Nov 1 (Oct 19)	Nov 2 (Oct 20) Fast	Nov 3 (Oct 21)	Nov 4 (Oct 22) 6 PM - Vespers Fast	Nov 5 (Oct 23) Memorial Saturday/Задужење 9 AM - Divine Liturgy & Parastos 5 PM - Vespers

**ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**300 Stryker Avenue - Joliet, Illinois 60436
(phone) 815.741.1023 / (fax) 815.741.1883**NOVEMBER 2016**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Oct 30 (Oct 17) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 6 PM - Vespers	Oct 31 (Oct 18) St. Luke/Св. Лука 9 AM - Divine Liturgy	1 (Oct 19)	2 (Oct 20) Fast	3 (Oct 21)	4 (Oct 22) 6 PM - Vespers Fast	5 (Oct 23) Memorial Saturday/ Задушнице 9 AM - Divine Liturgy & Parastos 5 PM - Vespers
6 (Oct 24) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	7 (Oct 25) 6 PM - Vespers	8 (Oct 26) St. Demetrius/Св. Димитрије 9 PM - Divine Liturgy	9 (Oct 27) Fast	10 (Oct 28)	11 (Oct 29) Fast	12 (Oct 30)
13 (Oct 31) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 12 PM - Church Board Meeting 6 PM - Vespers	14 (Nov 1) Sts. Cosmas & Damian/Свети Козма и Дамјан 9 AM - Divine Liturgy	15 (Nov 2) 6 PM - Vespers	16 (Nov 3) St. George/Ђурђиц 9 AM - Divine Liturgy Fast	17 (Nov 4)	18 (Nov 5) Fast	19 (Nov 6) 5 PM - Vespers
20 (Nov 7) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 6 PM - Vespers	21 (Nov 8) Synaxis of the Archangel Michael 9 AM - Divine Liturgy	22 (Nov 9)	23 (Nov 10) Fast	24 (Nov 11)	25 (Nov 12) Fast	26 (Nov 13) 5 PM - Vespers
27 (Nov 14) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	28 (Nov 15) Beginning of the Nativity Fast Почетак Божићњег Поста Fast	29 (Nov 16) 6:30 PM - Akathist & Religious Education Fast	30 (Nov 17) Fast	Dec 1 (Nov 18) Fast	Dec 2 (Nov 19) Fast	Dec 3 (Nov 20) 5 PM - Vespers Fast: wine & oil

**ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**300 Stryker Avenue - Joliet, Illinois 60436
(phone) 815.741.1023 / (fax) 815.741.1883**DECEMBER 2016**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 27 (Nov 14) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	Nov 28 (Nov 15) Beginning of the Nativity Fast Почетак Божићњег Поста	Nov 29 (Nov 16) 6:30 PM - Akathist & Religious Education	Nov 30 (Nov 17)	1 (Nov 18)	2 (Nov 19)	3 (Nov 20) 5 PM - Vespers
	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast: wine & oil
4 (Nov 21) ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	5 (Nov 22)	6 (Nov 23)	7 (Nov 24)	8 (Nov 25) 7 PM - Board Meeting	9 (Nov 26)	10 (Nov 27)
Fast: fish, wine, & oil	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast: wine & oil
11 (Nov 28) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 12:30 PM - Parish Annual Assembly	12 (Nov 29) St. Mardarije of Libertyville ***10 AM - Divine Liturgy in Libertyville	13 (Nov 30)	14 (Dec 1)	15 (Dec 2)	16 (Dec 3)	17 (Dec 4)
Fast: wine & oil	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast: wine & oil
18 (Dec 5) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy 6 PM - Vespers	19 (Dec 6) St. Nicholas 9 AM - Divine Liturgy & Cutting of Kolaches	20 (Dec 7)	21 (Dec 8)	22 (Dec 9)	23 (Dec 10)	24 (Dec 11) 5 PM - Vespers
Fast: wine & oil	Fast: fish, wine, & oil	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast: wine & oil
25 (Dec 12) 10 AM - Divine Liturgy	26 (Dec 13)	27 (Dec 14)	28 (Dec 15)	29 (Dec 16)	30 (Dec 17)	31 (Dec 18) 5 PM - Vespers
Fast: wine & oil	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast: wine & oil

Altar Server Schedule

Note: All altar servers are encouraged to always come to the Altar for every service. However, since it isn't always possible, we hope that at least those on the schedule will come in when on the schedule. Please be in the Altar by 9:55am and do not put on your Altar Robe (Stihar) before getting a blessing from the priest.

Group 1 - Niko Vercelote & Daniel Schultz
October 9, October 30, November 20, December 11

Group 2 - Aleksandar Zubic & Lazar Kostur
October 16, November 6, November 27, December 18

Group 3 - Matthew Prieboy & Niko Stamenkovich
October 2, October 23, November 13, December 4, December 25

Epistle Reader Schedule

Aleksandar Zubic - October 16, November 6, November 27, December 18
Olivia Grubisich - October 2, October 23, November 13, December 4, December 25
Rachel Ferguson - October 9, October 30, November 20, December 11

ATTENTION PARENTS!!!

Please bring your children to participate in Church School and the Divine Liturgy!!! If you haven't signed them up yet for Church School, it is not too late!!!

Reasons to do so:

- 1) It's good for their spiritual growth.
- 2) It's fun and educational.
- 3) They can attend one of the Summer Diocesan Camps with a scholarship from our Church.
- 4) College Students that had good Church School attendance can receive a scholarship from the Church.
- 5) Do you really need to be convinced to educate your children about our Faith?

Parents – Important Notice

(This was a message of one of the priests of our Diocese to parents. The message is excellent and important. Please read it and act accordingly! -Fr. Nikolaj)

The children we have are a precious gift from God. The way we thank Him for this gift is by baptizing them into Christ. God gives them to us, and through baptism, we give them back to Him, raising them to be good people and obviously educating them in the Faith.

Following are a few practical things we would like you to consider.

Generally speaking, loving your children unconditionally as God loves us is the key. I'm sure everyone understands that buying them the newest thing out there is not the love we are talking about. Even though this is nice, offering ourselves to them wholly (our time first of all) and Holy (trying to be best examples we can be) is most important.

Expressing love to your wife while she is with child/pregnant is expressing love to your child. The wife should make an effort to express her love towards her husband which also the baby will feel.

Parents with babies and very little children please note, the best thing you can do for your child is to get your child used to being in church for services. Orthodox Christian services activate all five senses. This is crucial for the children during the first few years of their childhood. When hearing the singing, smelling the incense, tasting the Communion, touching/kissing icons, seeing the beauty (colorful icons, carved wood, gold and silver) of an Orthodox Church gets installed into their little souls, minds and hearts, and when they grow up and the roughness of this world hits, they know where to go for safety and to get relief.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

Now some practical advice. Please Bring them to church regularly, but please make every effort to teach them how to be in church. In other words, when they start being children as they are, gently take them out for a walk - and then when you feel they are ready to come back for a few more minutes, bring them back until they start being children again - then of course do the same as before. Even though you as a parent may not spend much time in church, and it may even seem like they are not spending much time in church, please know - you being a parent and doing the above mentioned is like being at the service from the beginning to the end for every minute of it.

Most importantly, bring them to partake of Holy Communion at every Divine Liturgy after they are baptized. Lie them on your right arm or put their back to your chest and your hand over their hands so that standing upright (or leaning a bit) they can take Communion and not grab on or hit

any of the Holy things. Also, there may come a period when they will resist taking communion. Don't force them, but bring them forth and let them at least pass by the Holy Chalice. After a few weeks or even a few months, try again.

Teach them how to pray - twice a day would be ideal, and using prayers from the Bible and/or a prayer books. Feel free to add (adopt) prayers which are appropriate for their age. Put icons in their room and make sure they face the icons when they pray – this will help them visualize, connect and concentrate. The best place would actually be a common area in the house where you have your home altar or Icon corner. Also teach them that your house is a small church as well. Once a week, however, all the small churches come together under one roof at a special building (the Church) in order to unite with God and all the other Orthodox Christians across the world by taking Holy Communion.

Also please note, regardless of the age of your child, whether a baby or a busy college student, if your child is unable or unwilling to pray - pray in their name.

Parents of 5 to 7-year-olds. Start teaching them slowly how to pray and fast in a specific way. Praying at a specific time and using specific prayers is very important. When they pray in the morning and in the evening, it becomes a habit after a while. That habit later on pushes you in a way to stand in front of your icons/home altar and talk to God. In other words, it leads a person to have a relationship with the best one to have a relationship with – God, our Heavenly Father. Fasting on the other hand teaches a child to control what the body wants and even needs. This practice can really help a teenager and young adult to whom much is offered, much of which is not good.

So, start at the age of five by teaching them not to eat anything before communion, but do give them something to drink. Then later on, teach them not to eat or drink before communion as we all practice. Around the age of seven, start teaching them to fast Wednesdays and Fridays, and then as the time goes on, teach them to fast one fasting season and then the other, until they are fasting Wednesdays and Fridays and all the four fasting seasons. Their body, mind, and soul will benefit from this.

It is also very important to start bringing them to confession around the age of seven. You should explain to them that whenever we do bad things, we make our soul dirty. Because our God doesn't want us to be dirty, He gives us a way to clean our soul by going to confession – just like we wash our body with water when it gets dirty. Our God did this because he doesn't want us to be sad and feel bad; he wants us to be happy and feel good. For specifics ask the priest.

For parents of children between the ages of 8 and 14 - hawks eye on them. Even though the internet is a very useful tool, the children at this curious age and stage can be exposed to so many disturbing things. Don't ever think they are too young to view or be infected by certain things. Also, make sure you make an extra effort to be, if not more technologically knowledgeable than them, at least as knowledgeable. Seek help and advice when necessary.

Example - Children watch inappropriate things in the hallways of elementary schools....
The internet can easily raise them in a way contradictory to the Faith. Also, their character can be formed by certain things they watch and read on the internet.

For parents of teenagers - guard them as much as you can. Give them freedom as much as possible, but don't push them because they can break easily and do things which you and them may regret. Also, try to keep yourself (through prayer and fasting) sane – this is probably the toughest time for the parents but also for the young adults. Many of the things our teenagers do, they can't help.

This stage will pass, and you will be the greatest again. We have all been there but we just forgot the details.

Parents of college students - pray for them, respect them, fast for them, go to church for them, remind them that you are always there no matter what, counsel them, but don't push them. Send them little notes and quotes to remind them who they are and what they stand for. Don't support them in anything they do which is opposite from what the Church teaches, but at the same time, don't love them any less.

Finally, let us always remember - when we can't, HE CAN! Don't hesitate to ask God for help.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

St. George Church-School Congregation

Annual Meeting

December 11, 2016

12:30 PM

St. George Church-School Congregation Report

October 2016

Over the past six months our Church Board has attended to many parish issues, carefully considering each action taken. Our Church Board has approved the following:

- ❖ Deacon Nenad gifted \$300.00 for his Paschal services
- ❖ Two banquet tickets purchased to support IOCC's Grand Banquet fundraiser
- ❖ Half page ad purchased for the SNF Basketball Tournament ad book
- ❖ New fryer purchased and paid for by Nick Malinovich
- ❖ Sam Starcevich removed damaged concrete by Church entrance
- ❖ Mosaic of St. George repaired
- ❖ Care packages sent to our college students before final exams
- ❖ Lenten Vespers hosted on Palm Sunday
- ❖ \$100.00 donation to Clergy Brotherhood for the Widow's Fund
- ❖ Summer Day Camp held June 13-14
- ❖ \$250.00 donation made to Lifeline
- ❖ Father Maximos Nnachette, a priest-monk from Nigeria, served and spoke in our Church about the challenges of Church life in Nigeria
- ❖ Small freezer purchased and placed in our Church for prosfora
- ❖ Serb Fest hosted at St. Joe's Park on July 24th
- ❖ Relics of St. George the Great Martyr gifted to our Church
- ❖ Purchased a lane sponsorship and trophy (if available) for the SNF Bowling Tournament in Joliet on October 21-23
- ❖ Purchased two tickets to the 100th Anniversary Gala of All Saints Greek Orthodox Church in Joliet
- ❖ Scholarships awarded to: Nikolas Zubic, Nina Starcevich, Eliya Prieboy, Theodore Prieboy, Peter Grubisich, Sam Grubisich, Eva Book, Eli Book, and Jelena Blagojevic

Father has presided at:

- Baptisms for Miriam Beyenne, Josephine Seeman, Theodore Troc
- Funeral Services for + Milka Grubisich, + Marko Bjekich, + Ed Stapinski, +Susan Gnatovich, +Mary Petrich

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Cora, Secretary

St. George Church School News

Welcome back!! Our church school year started on September 9, 2016. I want to welcome back our teachers: Diane Grubisich, Nada Zubic, Cheri Ferguson, Kathy Petkovich, and Nancy Cora. I would also like to thank the parents who said they would volunteer as substitute teachers. I will give all the teachers their names and contact information, and when a sub is needed, you will be contacted. If you prefer a certain grade, please let me know.

We have a total of 22 students registered so far this year. If you have not yet registered your child, please do so.

I would like to start a section of "Church School News." If any parents would like to share accomplishments of their children, please send me an e-mail. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you would like to see, just let me know.

Happy Birthday to the following students:

Bozana Blagojevic - Sept. 3rd
Natalia Blagojevic - Sept. 8th
Marina Schultz - Sept. 9th
Annaleise Bojovic - Sept. 22
Olivia Grubisich - Nov. 9th
Aodnan McGee - Nov. 25

If anyone has any questions, please call me on my cell phone: (815) 258-6910, home: 815/521-2972, or e-mail: gshimek47@aol.com.

Gayle Shimek
Superintendent

KOLO NEWS

This past August 7th, our annual Lifeline Fundraiser took place. Once again, this event was jointly sponsored by our Joliet Kolo, the Lansing Church Kolo and the Lansing Knjeginja Zorka Kolo. This year's fundraiser, called Kafana Lifeline, was held in Lansing, IL. The afternoon started off with lovely tamburitza music, great Serbian food, an inspiring Lifeline presentation and an entertaining live auction. This year we collectively raised over \$12,000 which will be used to help orphaned children in Serbia.

Thank you to EVERYONE who purchased raffle tickets, donated auction items, made monetary donations, donated food and to all who attended and made purchases at the Lifeline event. What a major team effort and accomplishment! None of this could have taken place without the generosity of our Kolo sisters and parishioners. YOU made this another successful fundraiser!

On August 21st, our Kolo celebrated Slava, The Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God. We had a great event with many parishioners in attendance which we so greatly appreciate. The parastos was held following liturgy as we remember all our deceased kolo sisters, who did so much for our organization. At the Social Center, Father Nikolaj commenced the banquet with the blessing of the kolac and koljivo and everyone in attendance enjoyed a lovely pork dinner and fellowship. Thanks to those who helped set up for the slava, prepare and serve food and clean up after the event. Most of all, thanks to all in attendance and for supporting your Kolo.

* * * * *

Our own Miss Sunshine, Genny Ostoich, has been getting out and about after a successful hip surgery. Gen, glad to see you back in church and at some of the recent church events.

Congratulations to parents Christina and Kevin Troc and grandparents Connie and Gerald Kinney on the birth of Theodore. Congrats to little Irene too on becoming a big sister.

Millie O'Leary has been back in Illinois for the summer months but will be heading back to Florida soon. As always, it was great seeing you. We'll miss you.

Zoran Nikitovic has been ill and we send our prayers for his continued recovery. Zoran is the son of Branka Nikitovic, who so generously helps our Kolo whenever asked.

The SNF Bowling Tournament is right around the corner. Although the Kolo as an organization does not have a specific role, we can do our part individually by volunteering to help during the event, baking and attending the festivities to support this church sponsored event.

Mark Those Calendars! The next Kolo meeting will be October 16 in the church lower level immediately following church services.

* * * * *

Finally, Another Convenient Means For You To Help Lifeline Throughout The Year!

Many of you make online purchases via the Amazon website. Did you know your Amazon purchases will allow you to support the Lifeline Humanitarian Organization Chicago every time you shop at no cost to you?

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the same prices, selection and shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. On your first login to smile.amazon.com, you will select Lifeline Humanitarian Organization Chicago as your favorite charity and a portion of your purchases go to Lifeline. It's that easy. Hope you give it a try next time you use Amazon. Another easy way to help further Lifeline's efforts.

NEW PARISH WEBSITE DESIGN

www.stgeorgejoliet.org

The parish website is the best way to stay updated on parish activities, at it is constantly being updated and reflects any changes to schedules or events.

Also, the new web page has convenient links for daily Bible Readings, Lives of the Saints and the Parish Calendar.

Please make the parish website a part of your daily internet routine!!!



GREETINGS FROM S. S. S. MITA TOPALOVICH CHOIR FALL 2016



SCHOOL'S IN SESSION

Best wishes to all of our students, both in Junior and Senior choir, for a successful school year! For those away at college, we miss you already and can't wait to see you again soon!

CHOIR PRACTICE RESUMES

We have resumed choir rehearsals after a lengthy and generous break. Feel free to join us for choir practice most Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm at the hall. If you'd like to sing with us, we recommend checking first with any choir member to ensure there is rehearsal that evening before making the trek to the hall. We hope to see you there!

SERBIAN SINGING FEDERATION (SSF) ANNUAL CONVENTION

The annual SSF Convention is being hosted by the Serbian Singing Society (SSS) Petar Krstic Choir of Steubenville, OH / Weirton, WV from 9/22/16 through 9/25/16. During the convention, the SSF Executive Board as well as delegates from SSF member choirs from the USA and Canada meet to discuss key issues and challenges affecting the organization both internationally and locally. Unfortunately, Mitas are unable to attend the convention this year, but we wish all of the delegates a fruitful meeting. You can learn more about the SSF via their website: www.serbiansingingfederation.org or via Facebook by searching "Serbian Singing Federation of America (USA & Canada)".



UPCOMING INVITATIONS TO PERFORM

Although Mitas are not hosting a fall concert this year, we have received an invitation to perform at a neighboring parish's fall concert. The host is the SSS Branko Radichevich choir (aka Brankies) from Holy Resurrection SOC of Chicago. (Date listed below.) We have also received an invitation to perform the Serbian presentation of "Christmas Around the World" at the Museum of Science and Industry. (Date listed below.) Our response to both events is pending at this time because we are ensuring that we have enough singers to perform. Have we mentioned that we are looking for more choir members??? :) Let's hope Mitas are able to give both Brankies and the Museum of Science and Industry positive responses to their invitations! Stay tuned... Either way, feel free to attend and enjoy both events / festivities and hope to see you there.

SAVE THE DATES

SSS Branko Radichevich Fall Concert
5701 N Redwood Dr.
Chicago, IL
Saturday 11/12/16

Serbian Presentation of
"Christmas Around the World"
Museum of Science and Industry
5700 S. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL
Sunday 11/27/16 at 2:45 pm



*Thank you as always for your support.
Have a great autumn and a fun school year!*

CAMP 2016

We had a good number of campers from our beautiful Church family attending this year.

Campers for teen week;

Niko Vercelote
Rachel Ferguson
Alex Zubic

First Week;

Emma Stamenkovich
Niko Stamenkovich

Second Week;

Elizabeth Laketa
Katarina Zubic
Marina Schultz
Andriana Nikitovic
Emilija Nikitovic
Aco Dimitrijevic

Camp helpers were; teen week counselor; Eliya Prieboy, Cherie Ferguson-Kitchen help, Nina Starcevich, helper

First week: Ryan Dorsey, Coordinator, Alex Starcevich-Music, David Dauer, Alex Zubic-counselors, Nina Starcevich, helper
Deborah and Milorad Stamenkovich-Kitchen

Second week: Anka Laketa, Gordana Jakovljevic-Kitchen, Rachel Ferguson, David Dauer, Nick Zubic, counselors. Nina Starcevich, helper

Alex Starcevich also came to camp for teen week and second week to direct for Liturgy.

Vicki Dorsey was present for the entire three weeks, back and forth, insuring the weeks were running as smooth as possible.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO MADE THIS 2016 CAMP SEASON POSSIBLE

Cultural Club News!!

Our Cultural Club kicked off the 2016-2017 school year by sponsoring our first fundraiser, The "Palacinke Bar". We sold 125 Palacinke in less than 30 minutes! Indeed a success!!!! There are so many Cultural Club members to thank for always going above and beyond for this committee: special thanks go to Popadija Katya, Nada Zubic, and Nancy Laketa for the delicious Palacinke. Our "Palacinka Bar" was such a huge success; we have scheduled another one on Sunday, October 30, 2016. This time, parishioners will be able to pre-order the palacinke. The palacinka order form is included in this issue of The Serb.

Also on our fall calendar is our annual trip to Dollinger Pumpkin Farm, which will take place on Sunday, October 9th. This is such a great time for our Sunday School Families. The memories made are priceless!

Looking to the weeks ahead, please mark your calendar for the upcoming Lenten Pancake Breakfast, which we will host on Sunday, December 4, 2016.

Our Cultural Club is very appreciative of the support we receive from our parishioners, and we are always looking for new members to join us. We are planning other events and activities for this coming school year, and we would love to have the input of our parish family as we prepare.

Respectfully,

Nancy Cora
Cultural Club President

Deb Stamenkovich
Cultural Club Secretary

St. George Serbian Orthodox Church
SNF Bowling Tournament Committee
300 Stryker Avenue
Joliet, Illinois 60436



8/12/2016

Dear St. George Parishioners,

We cordially invite you to become a sponsor of the 70th Annual Serb National Federation (SNF) Bowling Tournament **Pins Down in J-Town** to be hosted by our parish on October 21-23, 2016. We are so excited to be first-time hosts of an SNF Bowling Tournament! We in Joliet have a reputation of hosting fantastic golf tournaments and Serb Fests among other events, and we look forward to our community coming together again to volunteer and attend the festivities showing our gracious hospitality! It will truly be a terrific weekend for both participants and volunteers. Event details are available via Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1570661299902013/>, Twitter at <https://twitter.com/snfbowlingtown>, or Snapchat at <https://www.snapchat.com/add/snfbowlingtown>.

As a sponsor, you are helping to promote Serbian athletic events and social gatherings, and are giving the Joliet area a chance to get acquainted with Serbs and gain a better understanding of its culture, society and people. Your contribution will be used to cover the major costs like securing the bowling alley for tournament competition, purchasing trophies and lane sponsorship banners, booking musical entertainment, preparing food and drink for participants and guests from all over the US and Canada, and all other tournament activities. In return, we can offer you a fantastic opportunity to display your name on a lane sponsorship banner, have your name read as a trophy donor at the awards luncheon, or if you have a business, promote your company name to gain exposure in the Serbian community of the US and Canada. Or you may wish to honor a living friend or family member or memorialize a loved one who has passed.

Both lane sponsorships (in lieu of an ad book) and trophy sponsorships are available as shown in the enclosed forms as well as the instructions for submittal and payment. If you have any questions about trophies, please contact Ms. Tana Petrich at 512-350-9021 or via e-mail tjpetrich@gmail.com. Questions regarding lane sponsorship should be directed to Ms. Michelle Efatoski at 773-351-2150 or via email at snfbowlingtown@gmail.com.

Thank you very much for your consideration. We look forward to seeing you in October! If you have any questions about **Pins Down in J-Town** or would like to volunteer your time, talents, or treasures, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Dauer and Stephanie Jakovljevic
SNF Bowling Tournament Committee Co-chairpersons

70th Annual SNF Bowling Tournament Pins Down in J-Town SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



FRIDAY OCTOBER 21ST

Hall Hours 6 pm—11 pm

Welcome night

Pick up registration packets at the Hall

Music, Food, and Drinks available

Admission: Free

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22ND

Singles and Doubles Bowling at Joliet Town & Country Lanes at 2 pm

Hall Hours 5 pm—12 am

Food and Drinks available

Two Bands! Drina Tamburitza Orchestra in the bar and Orkestar Veseljak featuring Danny Danilovic in the main hall from 8pm—12 am

Admission for Registered Bowlers: Free

Admission for non-bowlers: \$10 (Ages 12 & under: Free)

Shuttles available between hotels and hall on Saturday night only

SUNDAY OCTOBER 23RD

Divine Liturgy at 9 am

Team Bowling at Joliet Town & Country Lanes at 11 am

Hall Hours 1 pm—6 pm

Awards Luncheon Buffet 2 pm

Admission for Registered Bowlers: Free

Banquet admission for non-bowlers: \$20 (Ages 12 & under: \$10)

Admission for non-bowlers (no banquet): Free

Music by: Prazna Flasa Tamburitza Orchestra

Food and Drinks available

BOWLING ALLEY ADDRESS:

Joliet Town & Country Lanes

2231 W Jefferson St.

Joliet, IL 60435

CHURCH HALL ADDRESS:

St. George Social Center

300 Stryker Ave.

Joliet, IL 60436

Please note that all hall events will be held in the lower level of our hall (west-side entrance).



Serb National Federation

70th Annual Bowling Tournament October 21-23, 2016

Important Entry Information

Hosts: St. George Serbian Orthodox Church and SNF Lodge 97 of Joliet, IL

Entry Fee Schedule:

*Junior Team Entry Fee Per Person (8-13 years of age)	\$20.00
*Team Entry Fee Per Person:	\$50.00
*Singles/Doubles Entry Fee Per Person:	\$75.00
*Singles/Doubles/Team Entry Fee Per Person:	\$100.00
<u>*Additional fee of \$25 for all non-SNF member/guests</u>	

Entry Fees include: Admission to Social Events, Lanes Fees, Transportation and Sunday Awards Luncheon.

Please note bowling shoes will be available upon request at the bowling alley during the tournament for an additional fee of \$1.00 per pair.

Entry Deadline: Friday, October 7, 2016

Entry forms must be received at the SNF Home Office by this date. Late entries may not be admitted to participate in the tournament.

Payment must accompany this entry form. All checks can be made payable to **“SNF Athletic Fund”**. There will be a \$40 charge for all NSF checks received. The SNF also accepts credit cards (American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa). To pay by credit card, please call the SNF Home Office at 412-458-5227. Any other questions can be directed to Adam Loverich. Adam can be reached via cell phone at 724-777-5171 or via e-mail at amloverich@gmail.com (preferred method).

All bowling events will take place at Joliet Town & Country Lanes 2231 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60435. Singles and doubles events begin at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, October 22. Team bowling will be held Sunday, October 23, beginning at 11am.

Hotels: Wyndham Hotel rate: \$99/night (815) 741-2100
101 McDonald Avenue Joliet, IL 60431

Hampton Inn rate: \$129/night (815) 725-2424
1521 Riverboat Center Joliet, IL 60436



Both hotels include breakfast. Please call the local number directly and ask for the “SNF Bowling Tournament” to receive the discounted rate.



**Serb National Federation
70th Annual Bowling Tournament
October 21-23, 2016**

Hosts: St. George Serbian Orthodox Church and SNF Lodge 97 of Joliet, IL

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Please complete all requested fields. To verify SNF membership, it is imperative that all bowlers' birthdates be included.

Singles/Doubles: (Bowlers must compete in both events). Sorry, no Juniors

	<u>Name & Amount Paid</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>	<u>Lodge #:</u>	<u>Policy No.</u>	<u>In team event?</u>	<u>Bowled with SNF in last 5 years?</u>	<u>Attending Banquet?</u>
1	\$						
2	\$						
1	\$						
2	\$						
1	\$						
2	\$						

Team Event: Teams may consist of all males, all females, or a mix. Mixed teams will compete in the Men's Division. Junior Teams may consist of both boys and girls and will compete against other Junior teams.

	<u>Name & Amount Paid</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>	<u>Lodge #:</u>	<u>Policy No.</u>	<u>Bowling singles & doubles?</u>	<u>Bowled with SNF in last 5 years?</u>	<u>Attending Banquet?</u>
1	\$						
2	\$						
3	\$						
4	\$						
5	\$						

Total Amount Paid: \$ _____ **Method of Payment:** Check _____ Credit Card _____

Team Captain Contact Information:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____

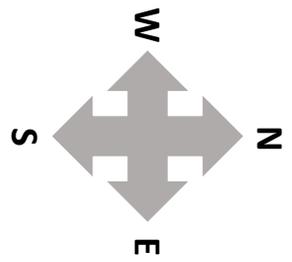
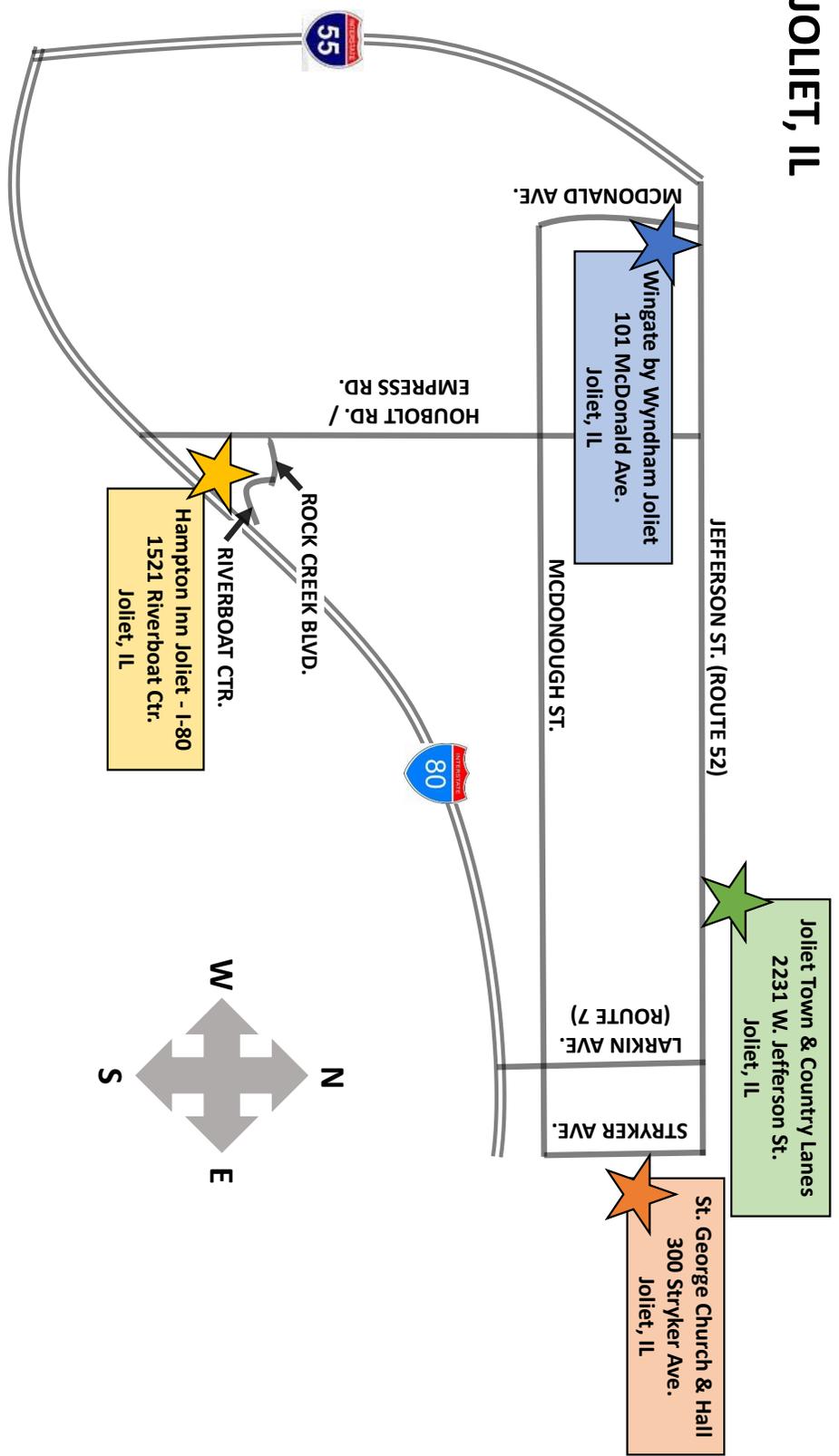
Unless otherwise noted, the primary method of contact will be via e-mail.

Please Mail, Fax, or E-mail completed entry form **by October 7, 2016** to:



Serb National Federation
 615 Iron City Dr. Ste. 302
 Pittsburgh, PA 15205
 Phone: 412-458-5227
 Fax: 412-875-5924
 E-mail: nwuchenich@snflife.org

S.N.F. BOWLING TOURNAMENT 2016 MAP JOLIET, IL



70th Annual SNF Bowling Tournament Pins Down in J-Town HELP NEEDED



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to work during the bowling tournament weekend October 21-23, 2016. The more volunteers we get, the shorter the shifts will be! And, if you want to bowl, your volunteering will not interfere with bowling. Some of you have already signed up to work, and for that, we are very grateful; thank you! For those who have not yet signed up for a shift, please contact one of the following individuals:

- For Ticket Sales, please contact Vicki Dorsey at 815-341-8381.
- For Kitchen Cooks, Kitchen Window, and Bakery Counter, please contact Gayle Shimek at 815-258-6910.
- For Bowler Check-in, Hall Admission, Lane Sponsorship Banner hanging and take down at the Hall, or Hall Clean-up, please contact Stephanie Jakovljevic at 815-342-9630 or via email at snfbowlingitown@gmail.com.

BAKERY NEEDED

We are also in need of bakery for Saturday and Sunday. If you can donate some bakery items for the bowling tournament weekend, it would greatly be appreciated. Please bring the bakery to the hall on Friday evening after 6 pm so that it can be packaged and priced appropriately for sale on Saturday and Sunday.

BOWLING COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

It's not too late to join the Bowling Tournament Committee! Please come to our next meeting on Thursday, October 6th at 7 pm at the hall.

BOWLERS NEEDED

We need bowlers to make our tournament a success! Please consider getting a bowling team together (5 bowlers), joining a duo for doubles bowling, or signing up for singles play. The singles and doubles event is Saturday, and team bowling is Sunday. So, in other words, you can bowl Saturday or Sunday or both days depending on what event(s) you register for. It's all up to you! Please keep in mind that you don't necessarily need to be an SNF member to bowl, but members will receive discounted entry fees. More details are available on the Official Entry Form. Copies of this form are available at the Warden's desk, in the Serb, and in the 9/21/16 issue of the Srbobran. The deadline to register to bowl is 10/7/16. Any questions or need a copy of the official entry form? Please feel free to contact us at snfbowlingitown@gmail.com or call Michelle Efatoski at 773-351-2150.

70th Annual SNF Bowling Tournament Pins Down in J-Town LANE SPONSORSHIP



Lane sponsorship information is shown below. Should you wish to be a lane sponsor for this tournament, please complete the form and submit payment by the **deadline date of 10/1/16**.



Full-Size Lane Sponsorship \$100.00
(1 Sponsor per Banner)

Half-Size Lane Sponsorship \$50.00
(2 Sponsors per Banner)

Quarter-Size Lane Sponsorship \$25.00
(4 Sponsors per Banner)

Lane Sponsor Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Number of Full-Size Lane Sponsorships _____ @ \$100.00

Number of Half-Size Lane Sponsorships _____ @ \$50.00

Number of Quarter-Size Lane Sponsorships _____ @ \$25.00 Total: _____

Checks should be made payable to **St. George Bowling** and can be mailed along with a completed copy of this form to:

Pins Down in J-Town Lane Sponsorship C/O Michelle Efatoski 1927 Trafalgar Dr. Romeoville, IL 60446

We sincerely thank you for your patronage!

CONCERNING BURNING

ARCHPRIEST LAWRENCE FARLEY

The burning of books is objectionable on principle. Indeed, whenever I hear of books being burnt, I always think of the famous quote by Heinrich Heine, who was born a Jew but converted to Christianity, and who died 1856. He said, “Where they burn books, in the end they will burn people.” (There is a fine irony in his far-sighted wisdom, since his books were among the many consigned to the flames by the Nazis in the 1930s.) The reason that book-burning is objectionable is that consigning something to the flames means not just its destruction, but many circumstances its renunciation, and asserts its total lack of value. And pretty much all books have value—even the books the contents of which we disagree with. We may disagree with the ideas some books contain, but the idea of a book itself—that is, offering ideas from one person to another—is valuable and good, for all books involve sharing and dialogue, and all human dialogue has value.

In the same way that burning books is bad, burning people is bad also. Put another way, cremation is not a part of our Christian Tradition. Asserting this flies in the face of much modern North American culture, where cremation is rapidly becoming the preferred method of dealing with the bodies of the dead, but Orthodoxy continues to make this assertion nonetheless. As far as the historic practice of the Church is concerned, cremation involves the burning of people.

Modern secular culture denies this. It says that people—human persons—are to be sharply differentiated from their bodies, so that cremation burns not the person, but the body of the person. The person—the real person—is identified with the soul, and this soul resides in the body in the same sort of way that a letter resides in an envelope. In the case of letters and envelopes, the envelope has no real and lasting function apart from the safe delivery of the letter, and after the letter is received, the envelope may be thrown away. After all, it is the letter which is of value, and it is the letter which we keep. In the same way, modern secularism holds that the soul is the real person, and the body only the temporary container or vehicle for the soul. When the soul departs from the body at death, the body has no more lasting value than the envelope has after the letter is removed. Both may be thrown away, or burned.

Over against this, the Church asserts that the body is not simply the container of the soul but, along with the soul, also partakes of the beauty and image of God. It is therefore not so much the case that we have bodies, but that we are bodies—as well as being souls and spirits. The body is made by God, and shares His image—not of course that God has two eyes and a nose and ears, but that the body’s beauty and grace have their source in God. And not only does the body partake of God’s grace in its creation, but also in its redemption, for it is the body which is baptized and chrismated, the body which receives the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, the body which will one day be raised to new immortal life at the final resurrection. In a word, the human body is holy, and is central to our total salvation. Like all holy things, it must be treated reverently. As said above, consigning something to the flames speaks of its lack of value. This practice made sense in paganism, for pagans denied that bodies had ultimate value (that was why the philosophical Athenians scoffed when St. Paul began asserting that bodies would rise

again; see Acts 17:32). Pagans could cremate and burn their dead and be consistent with their religious beliefs. Christians cannot, for Christians believe that the body has too much value to be consigned to the flames.

There are other problems as well with the present practice of cremation. For one thing, some in the funeral industry who promote cremation do not tell the whole truth about it. In particular, they fail to mention the truth that bones do not burn. Flesh burns, and hair burns, and fat burns, if the fire is hot enough. (When it does, it is not an edifying spectacle. Indeed, some people who have witnessed it have said that if many knew exactly what occurs in the process of cremating a body, they would not have gone through with it.) But bones do not burn, however hot the fire may be. What then is done with them after cremation? They are put through a grinder, and ground down to tiny bits. I am told that cleaning such grinders is not easy to do, and the bits from one body can get mixed the bits from another. Some have told me that talcum powder is sometimes added to make the bits look more like ashes. This of course is an attempt to hide from the truth that bones do not burn.

There are other problems as well. I have been present when the ashes were deposited in their designated place in burial grounds. Prayers were said for the departed, referring to the dead in personal terms, as a “who”. The worker from the funeral crematorium then came, bringing the ashes in a plastic bag. The departed had now become not a “who”, but a “what”, for the worker said, “Where would you like me to put it?” Note: not “him” or “her”, but “it”. The worker was not heartless, and I’m sure meant no disrespect. He was only doing his job, and stating the obvious: cremation had turned a person into a thing, something able to be carried in a plastic bag under one’s arm and stuffed into a small funerary cylinder. Cremation meant depersonalization.

Here then is the main difference between cremation and the historic burial practice of the Church—the latter alone does justice to the personhood of the departed and to the sanctity of human flesh. This is not to judge or condemn anyone who has allowed the cremation of loved ones, for we all do the best we can, and times of bereavement and grief are not the best times to relearn and rethink. But though the Church does not judge, it does offer a better way. We do the most honour to our beloved departed when we avoid cremation, when we commit them reverently in the ground. We need not burn the bodies of those we love. Instead, we place their bodies in the good earth, and their souls in the hands of the good Lord.

Source: pravmir.com

ПОРОДИЧНИ ЖИВОТ БЕЗ СКРУШЕНОСТИ ЈЕ ПАКАО

Једном је преподобни Антоније имао визију: цели свет заробљен у мрежи ђавола и ухваћен у његову замку. "Ко може да се ослободи из те мреже?" – са жалошћу је уздахнуо старац и добио одговор на своје питање: "Смиреномудрије спасава од ђавола, и његове сплетке не могу ни дотаћи човека кога краси та врлина".

Направили бисмо озбиљну грешку ако бисмо претпоставили да се оно што је откривено светом Антонију тиче само монаха, а не и благочестивих мирјана. У стварности, свеопшта хришћанска врлина смиреномудрија чува супружнике од многих препрека, које их чекају на заједничком путу.

Ево једног јарког примера демонске замке у коју упадају многе младе породице: жена почиње да сумња да је муж вара.

Њој се све време нешто чини, и она заборавља на руску изреку: "када ти се причињава - прекрсти се". Она не зна, а можда и неће да зна, да ђаво има посебну власт над човеком који се давно није причестио. У том случају, она почиње да верује да је оно што јој шапће ђаво заправо њена сопствена мисао.

А поред тога, како народ каже, свако на ствари гледа по мери сопствене искварености.

Сав садржај њиховог заједничког живота се своди на посао и изласке викендом са друштвом. За децу је још "рано" и све њене мисли су устремљене на њеног мужа, на себе и на то шта о њима мисле други људи. Таква непрекидна, горда, готово болесна опседнутост собом, у потпуности је природна за психички и духовно недовољно зрелу жену.

Муж на почетку лакомислено одбацује све то уз шалу, и да будемо потпуно искрени, њега забавља њена сумњичавост. Он у почетном периоду радосно замишља да је љубомора знак истинске љубави. Верује у ту замисао све док не почну да га нервирају свакодневне провере мобилног, мејла, Фејсбука, па чак и џепова.

А после се већ демон досети, и пошаље га на пословни пут, где се све те сумње заиста и остваре. Он се испрва супротставља изненадном искушењу, али после почиње да мисли: "она ионако сматра да сам гад..."

Тако ђаво разбија породице.

И све би могло бити сасвим другачије да је барем један од њих показао скрушеност - ту као дијамант многострану врлину, која нам омогућава да разумно сагледамо своје несавршенство и да заузврат, без повода, не трагамо за несавршенством у другима. Поред тога, скрушеност у нама буди благодарност према Богу и ближњима, за оно мало што ми имамо.

На жалост, породични психолози-консултанци, који се у наше време шире као печурке после кише, посматрају ову врлину као срамну слабост и ружни дефект душе.

У ствари, најбољи начин посрамити супруга за грешне мисли, па чак га и отвратити од реалног греха, је кротко и скрушено гајити поверење у њега, веровати му као што деца верују својим родитељима. Што се тиче мужа, њега би спасила скрушена снисходљивост. Тада не би озбиљно схватао неутемељене увреде своје жене, на начин на који родитељи не схватају озбиљно дрске глупости своје деце.

С друге стране, можемо искрено опростити ближњем свом његове грешке, само ако смо и ми сами смиренумудрено свесни својих недостатака и грешних мисли. У случају породичних проблема треба да имамо на уму да свог супруга или супругу сами бирамо, не примећујући, хотимично или нехотимично, њихове духовне недостатке.

Али савремени човек, одвојен од Цркве, бира други пут. Он се панично боји да опрости другоме, да призна своју првобитну погрешну претпоставку и покаже благонаклоност, чак и да је ту реч о томе да га је неко случајно нагазио на ногу, јер сумња да ће га исти следећи пут намерно ударити у врат.

Он или она учествују у психолошким тренинзима: "како да постанеш краљ/краљица", где их уче да главне привилегије монарха – осећај одговорности и кротки опроштај – замене за лукаво умеће манипулације "партнером" уз стално пребацивање кривице за своју несрећу на друге.

Као резултат свега тога, породични живот, окован демонским силама, претвара се у пакао самопотврђивања, сумњичавости и сладострашћа, које убрзо досади. У таквом породичном животу се сваки, па и мали, проблем претвара у повод за развод и попут куке качи за ђаволску мрежу.

Визија преподобног Антонија Великог нас не подсећа само на то да су правила духовног живота за монахе и мирјане једнака, већ и да су пакао и рај опипљиве појаве. Предукус и првог и другог, човек осећа сада и овде у земаљском и, конкретније, у породичном животу.

Узгред, постоје и супротни примери, када супружници скрушено праштају једно другом и када то за њих постаје добра навика.

Мислим да је свако од нас барем неколико пута у свом животу упознао такве породице у којима царује атмосфера спокоја, душевне топлоте и унутрашње слободе. Слободе од гордости, тојест од свих разноврсних замки, које су се показале преподобном Антонију Великом.

Свештеник Димитри Фетисов
Извор: pravoslavie.ru

Learning Gratitude

METROPOLITAN ANTHONY OF SOUROZH

The word “gratitude” and the sense of it run through all the Gospels and all the Epistles. When we think of those who wrote these epistles, and the Saints who after them repeated again and again this cry of gratitude to God, we must give thought to the way in which that is possible.

Every one of the Apostles suffered for the privilege, the grace of proclaiming the Gospel. Saint Paul describes what he had to endure in two passages of his Epistles to the Corinthians. There was not one moment in their lives which was not fraught with danger, and heavy with pain and suffering. And yet, at no moment did they hesitate to sing and proclaim their gratitude to God. Why, how could they?

If we think of ourselves — how often do we complain about our lives! And yet, can they be compared at all with the tragic lives of the Apostles or the first generations of Christians? — and indeed, of those who have been confessors of their faith in our century. Surely not! We accuse God of all that is painful, that is bitter, that is lacking in our life. I once had an occasion, at the end of a confession, to say to a person, “I can not give you absolution in God’s Name, because to receive absolution means that you are making your peace with God; and yet, all the confession was an act of accusation — all your sins, all your weaknesses, all that has gone wrong in your life has been His fault; before you receive His forgiveness you must declare that one and for all you forgive Him for the life you have had...”

I think this is something on which we must reflect, because if we only knew what God had done for us — and is doing, day after day — if we only knew our vocation, we would not treat life and God as we do. I remember meeting a priest some years ago in Russia, who had spent twenty years in prison and concentration camp; he sat before me, with luminous, shining eyes, full of wonder and gratitude, and he said. “Do you understand how wonderful God has been to me? How good He has been to me? In those tragic days when a priest was not allowed into a prison or camp, He chose me, an unworthy, inexperienced priest, and He sent me for twenty-six years to prison and to camp to be there as His witness to those people who needed Him most”. That is what he had brought from camp: and infinite gratitude to a God Who had chosen him to be His witness, chosen him to be the man who brings consolation, who gives strength, who allows joy to shine where only darkness could have prevailed...

And we — we live in a world which is not all darkness; even if we think of it as twilight, there is light in it. Each of us has so much — materially, spiritually, emotionally, in all possible ways; and all that is God’s gift. But also, the vocation which we have to go into the world, that is to all the places where our life leads us — our family, our place of work, among our friends — and to bring God into it. Yes — God Himself, His word, His love, His concern, His own attitude to men, women and children.

God became man; but man has abandoned Him, betrayed Him, renounced Him, mocked Him, misunderstood Him. And God came into the world to us, as Saint Paul says, while we were still His enemies in order to make friends of us. That is what we are called to be: those who go into

the world, the small world in which we live, and bring to everyone light and peace, and joy and hope.

That can be done only if we learn gratitude, if we learn the wonder which this priest expressed to me: the wonder of being sent into the darkest places of life to bring light, to be sent into the place where there is no hope, to bring unconquerable hope, be sent into the place where there is no love, to bring at least a flicker of love.

If we do this and we see how this message can be received, how people who are in the shadow suddenly see that light does shine in the darkness and that darkness cannot put it out — if we only could see that, we would be prepared to sing to God the hymns of gratitude which we find in the Psalms, in the Prophets, in the Apostles, in the martyrs, in the ascetics — all those who carried a cross so heavy — and did it with gratitude and joy. Amen.

Source: pravmir.com



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