

# ST. SAVA SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH MAY 2009 ANNOUNCEMENTS / NEWS – ОБЈАВЕ / НОВОСТИ

## Sanctity of Life

The Lord Jesus Christ emerged from the waters of Baptism, and heard the Word of the Father: "You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Lord's word to each and every human being, to each and every being which bears the image and can actualize the likeness of God, is the same: You are my beloved. It is the very Word of God who, by His incarnation and assumption of our whole life and our whole condition, affirms and blesses the ultimate value of every human person--and indeed of creation as a whole. He filled it with His own being, uniting us to Himself, making us His own Body, transfiguring and deifying our lives, and raising us up to God our Father. He affirms and fulfills us, not simply as individuals seeking happiness, but rather as persons with an infinite capacity to love and be loved, and thus fulfills us through His own divine personhood in communion.

Our life as human beings is not given to us to live autonomously and independently. This, however, is the great temptation: to deny our personhood, by the depersonalization of those around us, seeing them only as objects that are useful and give us pleasure, or are obstacles to be removed or overcome. This is the essence of our fallenness, our brokenness. With this comes the denial of God, and loss of spiritual consciousness. It has resulted in profound alienation and loneliness, a society plummeting into the abyss of nihilism and despair. There can be no sanctity of life when nothing is sacred, nothing is holy. Nor can there be any respect for persons in a society that accepts only autonomous individualism: there can be no love, only selfish gratification. This, of course, is delusion. We are mutually interdependent.

First as Christians, but even more so, as human beings, we must repent and turn to God and one another, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation. Only this will heal the soul. Only by confronting our bitterness and resentment, and finding forgiveness for those who have hurt us, can we be free from the rage that binds us in despair. Repentance is not about beating ourselves up for our errors and feeling guilty; that is a sin in and of itself! Guilt keeps us entombed in self-pity. All sin is some form of self-centeredness, selfishness. Repentance is the transformation of our minds and hearts as we turn away from our sin, and turn to God, and to one another. Repentance means to forgive. Forgiveness does not mean to justify someone's sin against us. When we resent and hold a grudge, we objectify the person who hurt us according to their action, and erect a barrier between us and them. And, we continue to beat ourselves up with their sin. To forgive means to overcome that barrier, and see that there is a person who, just like us, is hurt and broken, and to overlook the sin and embrace him or her in love. When we live in a state of repentance and reconciliation, we live in a communion of love, and overcome all the barriers that prevented us from fulfilling our own personhood.

All the sins against humanity, abortion, euthanasia, war, violence, and victimization of all kinds, are the results of depersonalization. Whether it is "the unwanted pregnancy", or worse, "the fetus" rather than "my son" or "my daughter;" whether it is "the enemy" rather than Joe or Harry (maybe Ahmed or Mohammed), the same depersonalization allows us to fulfill our own selfishness against the obstacle to my will. How many of our elderly, our parents and grandparents, live forgotten in isolation and loneliness? How many Afghan, Iraqi, Palestinian and American youths will we sacrifice to agonizing injuries and deaths for the sake of our political will? They are called "soldiers," or "enemy combatants" or "civilian casualties" or any variety of other euphemisms to deny their personhood. But ask their parents or children! Pro-war is NOT pro-life! God weeps for our callousness.

We have to extend a hand to those suffering from their sins, what ever they are. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven, save the one we refuse to accept forgiveness for. Abortion not only destroys the life of the infant; it rips the soul out of the mother (and the father!). It becomes a sin for which a woman torments herself for years, sinking deeper into despair and self-condemnation and self-hatred. But there is forgiveness, if only she will ask. We must seek out and embrace the veterans who have seen such horrors, and committed them. They need to be able to repent and accept forgiveness, so that their souls, their memories, and their lives, might be healed.

Most of all, we must restore the family: not just the nuclear family, but the multi-generational family which lives together, supports one another, and teaches each one what it means to be loved and to be a person. It teaches what forgiveness and reconciliation are. And it embraces and consoles the prodigals who have fallen. In this, the real sanctity of life is revealed, from pregnancy to old age. And in the multi-generational family each person finds value. This is the most important thing that we can possibly do.

The Blessed Mother Teresa said that the greatest poverty of the industrialized world is loneliness. Let us reach out to those isolated, alienated, alone, and in despair, finding in them someone most worthy of love; and in turn, we will find in ourselves that same love and value, and know indeed that God speaks to us in the depths of our souls, You are my beloved in whom I am well pleased.

With love in Christ,



**+JONAH**  
Archbishop of Washington and New York  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada – Orthodox Church of America

January 18, 2009

## **BESSINGS AND SACRAMENTS**

**Home Blessings:** Savo Jovic, Mile Kovacevic, George Luksetich, Tatjana Radic, Vesko Spiridonov, Douglas Yaguchi, Svetlana Yaguchi.

**Prayers for health of mother-to-be and baby:** Karen Yaguchi.

**Bless Business:** Katya Borisova.

**Healing Prayers & Holy Communion:** Dusan & Milanka Miladinovic.

**Healing Prayers:** Slobodan Novakovic.

**Slavas: St. Lazar:** Ranko Lazic, Bozidar Stajic.

**Funeral:** Vitomir Djurdjevic.

**Parastoses:** Vitomir Djurdjevic, Dragica Popovic, Mirko Spasojevic.

## **THANK YOU !**

**PASCHA MEAL PLANNERS / HELPERS:** Darko Hrle, Dragan Popovich, Slavica Stevanovic & Family, Branka Vujic & Family, KSS. **MUSIC:** Mile Kovacevic.

**LUNCH PREPARERS:** Cheryl Spasojevic & Family, Nada Jovcic & Family, Petra Djurdjevic & Family.

**CANDLE STAND RELOCATION PROJECT:** In addition to last month, for this month: Slavko Jankovic, Radenko Marusic, Mile Stevanovic.

**YARD WORK:** Slavko Jankovic, Djordje & Neven Kablar, Vojislav Kokeza, Cedo Marusic, Jovo Raco, Mile Stevanovic, Tihomir Tepsa, Nenad Vujic.

## **COMMITTEES**

We still need people to join the following committees. Won't you consider spending some of your time in God's service?

**STEWARDSHIP** - Douglas Yaguchi, 425 - 391 0832.

**BUILDING – PROPERTY MAINTENANCE** - Cedo Marusic, 425 – 917 2467.

**OUTREACH** - Darko Hrle, 425 – 831 5684.

## **CEMETERY:**

As you know there is an old Serbian Cemetery in Roslyn, WA. We are planning to go and clean up some brush and remove old fencing on May 30, 2009. Some people have already said they would help. If anyone else can come and help, let Fr. Ilija know by May 16. We will meet at St. Sava Church on May 30 and depart by carpool about 8:00 a.m. Bring garden cutting tools, shovels, rakes, hoes with you. After we finish we will have a parastos at the cemetery before departing the cemetery at about 3:00 p.m.

## **SUMMER CAMP – RETREAT**

St. John the Wonderworker Serbian Orthodox Church in Eugene, OR is organizing a Family Retreat at Sky Camp (SE of Eugene) July 27 through July 31, 2009. This is a camp for the whole family where there are activities for all ages in a setting of fellowship and worship. See enclosed flyer. Registration deadline is June 30, 2009.

## SPRING DANCE

Our Drina Folklore members are planning a spring dance with live music on May 2, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. after 6:00 p.m. Vespers. Please make a note on your calendars.

## STEWARDSHIP

We currently have 64 stewards for 2009. For the Glory of God, please acknowledge your support of St. Sava Church by filling out your stewardship card and mailing it in this month. Thank you!

Patricia Bache	Milanka Miladinovic
Carole Balach	Sava Milovanovic
Zarko Berberski	Sreten Nestic
Dragan Beribak	Gospava Nikolic
Risto Bozic	Slobodan Novakovic
Bronko Cekarmis	Vera Orlandic-Hodak
Dan Cekarmis	Sonja Orlovic
Gordana Cekarmis	Sava Pavlica
Penka Dringova	Judy Petrovic
Dragan Dukic	Danijel Plavsic
Nick Drzayich	Dragan Popovich
Bogdan & Georgiana Gavrilovic	Boyanne Popovich-Schmidt
Zoran Glisic	Aleksandra Radojevic
Darko Hrle	Vladimir Radojevic
Srdjan & Silvija Jakovljevic	Maria Radosavljevic
Cathy Jankovich	Alex Samsonov
Mike Jankovich	Jovica Spasic
Sam Jankovich	Cheryl Spasojevic
Radomir Jasika	Radoje Spasojevic
Savo Jovic	Goran Stankovic
Djordje Kablar	K. Stefanovic
Neven Kablar	Mile Stevanovic
Anna Kassianov	Dejan & Gordana Subotic
Vojislav Kokeza	Goran Trbic
Jasmina Kostic	Jovo Trbic
Mile Kovacevic	Andjelko Vasic
Ljiljana Luksetich	Nenad Vujic
Chris & Paula Macris	Mary Jane Vujovic
Mirko & Ana Mandic	Douglas Yaguchi
Cedo Marusic	Svetlana Yaguchi
Vjera Melton	Uros Zecevic
Dusan Miladinovic	Golub Zekanovic