

**THE WAY + ЈЕДИНИ ПУТ**  
**FEBRUARY 2015 BULLETIN**

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**WE INVITE YOU ALL DEAR PARISHIONERS AND FRIENDS TO OUR ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE AT OUR FELLOWSHIP HALL ON FEBRUARY 08<sup>TH</sup> 2015, AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY. WE ARE ALL SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF OUR CHURCH AND CHURCH BELONGS TO ALL OF US, THEREFORE, YOUR PRESENCE IS EXPECTED AND OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.**

**Nomination Committee Members – Чланови Номинационог Одбора:  
Fr. Predrag Bojovic, Dejan Subotic, Danijel Plavsic.**



"The Church is an earthly heaven in which the heavenly God dwells and moves." St. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (died 733)

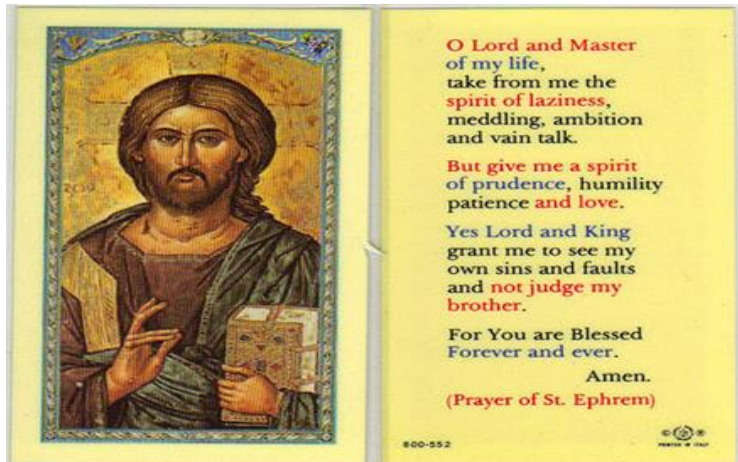
**ПОЗИВАМО ВАС ДРАГИ ПАРОХИЈАНИ И ПРИЈАТЕЉИ НА ГОДИШЊУ ПАРОХИЈСКУ СКУПШТИНУ КОЈА ЋЕ СЕ ОДРЖАТИ ПОСЛЕ СВЕТЕ ЛИТУРГИЈЕ 08. ФЕБРУАРА 2015. ГОДИНЕ. МИ СМО СВИ СИНОВИ И КЋЕРИ НАШЕ ЦРКВЕ И ОНА ПРИПАДА СВИМА НАМА ПОДЈЕДНАКО. СТОГА ЈЕ ВАШЕ ПРИСУСТВО ОЧЕКИВАНО И ОД ВЕЛИКОГ ЗНАЧАЈА!**

## THE GREAT LENT

Those people who belong to the Church merely out of habit or out of obedience to tradition usually view Great Lent only as a time of self-restriction. Theoretically, such an attitude toward Great Lent could be called negative. One must refrain from meat and dairy products, from dances and other forms of entertainment, and at some point during Great Lent one must go to Confession and Communion.

We encounter a different attitude toward Great Lent in those who belong to the Church not through pious inertia, but who seek a faith that is conscious and aware. Such people cannot but notice that during Great Lent, first and foremost, the very style of the Church's liturgical self-expression changes. It would be a mistake to see in this style merely an appeal addressed to us for repentance and correction, although without a doubt this enters into the thematic of the divine services during the time of Great Lent.

But the mission of the Church in the world does not consist of convicting people and calling them to correction. In principle, any one of the numerous systems of moral philosophy would be equal to such a task. Rather, the Church again and again reveals to us the fundamental truth of the New Testament revelation, which is contained in the following: To be a Christian means to experience the miracle of birth into a new life, and already here on earth to feel oneself to be a citizen of God's Kingdom, revealed to us by Christ. In accordance with this, Great Lent is for the Orthodox Christian, on the one hand, a time of radiant sorrow, and simultaneously with this, it is a difficult journey, marked by struggle, to the shining and beautiful goal of the feast of the Resurrection of Christ--Holy Pascha. Why have we called the time of Great Lent a time of radiant sorrow? We experience sorrow because we are conscious that we have departed from the



Father's house into a far country, that in our vain and distracted life we have not preserved the purity of our baptismal garment, in which we were clothed when we entered the Church. It is necessary to shake off that condition of numbness, those cobwebs of everyday life which suggest to us that the life of this world--which is in us and around us--is the only possible way of life. To yearn for another form of existence--the one revealed to us in the Gospel and in the experience of

the saints and ascetics--means to commune with that radiant sorrow which is the beginning of spiritual renewal.

This sorrow is radiant because we know that God accepts us who return to Him with the very same love and readiness to forgive with which the father accepted and forgave the prodigal son of the Gospel parable. Therefore, this mystical union of sorrow and hope, darkness and light,

becomes the central theme of the whole period of Great Lent. God made me His temple; but the temple needs cleansing and renewal, and I believe and hope that God will help me in this.

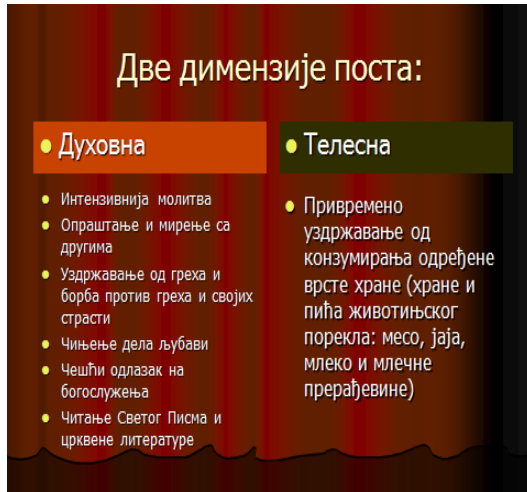
In the Vespers of Forgiveness Sunday, with which Great Lent begins, we hear the words of the Great Prokeimenon--words simultaneously of sorrow and hope. "Turn not Thy countenance away from Thy servant, for I am afflicted. Quickly hearken unto me, attend unto my soul and deliver it." Great Lent lasts for forty days. The journey of the chosen people from Egyptian slavery to the promised land lasted for forty years. Christ fasted in the wilderness for forty days before he went out to His service of the Word and Sacrifice. Being sinless Himself, he gave us an example of renewal through fasting. And for us this is a forty-day journey to the light of Holy Pascha, for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ is not simply a great feast or even the greatest of all the feasts of the Church year, but is the very essence and core of our faith. Without immutable faith that in Christ we are victors, not only over sin but also over the imaginary all-powerfulness of death, the preaching of the Gospel loses its meaning--for why bother to renew and regenerate that which is in any case doomed to death, disintegration and oblivion. It is for this reason, namely, the Apostle Paul says that "if Christ be not risen, then our faith is in vain" (see I Cor. 15:14). Each word of the Christian Good Tidings lives and breathes by the miracle of the Resurrection which is revealed to us through the exercise of faith, and the light of the approaching Pascha illumines the days of Great Lent.

### Fast Guidelines

Days	The Holy Canons specify	
<b>Weekdays</b> Clean Monday to Pascha (incl. Great Saturday)	<b>Abstinence</b> Meat Eggs and Dairy Fish Olive Oil Wine	<b>No Abstinence</b> Shellfish Fruit Vegetables
<b>Saturdays and Sundays</b> (except Great Saturday)	<b>Abstinence</b> Meat Eggs and Dairy Fish	<b>No Abstinence</b>  Shellfish Fruit Vegetables Olive Oil Wine
<b>Annunciation (Mar 25) and Palm Sunday</b>	<b>Abstinence</b> Meat Eggs and Dairy	<b>No Abstinence</b> Shellfish Fruit Vegetables Fish Olive Oil Wine

## Васкршњи Пост

Пост је уздржавање од одређене врсте хране (мрсне), као и од сваког облика грешних дела, помисли и жеља. Поред молитве, и свега што служи духовном животу, Свети Оци приписују и посту нарочиту важност. Они су посматрали тело и душу као једну целину и тако их и третирају у свим њиховим манифестацијама.



Душа делује на тело како животносно, тако и смртоносно, што у обратном случају исто и за тело значи. Нема остварења ни испуњења човекове личности ако све силе душе: разум, воља и осећање, као и тело узајамно не суделују. Али, то није могуће постићи без прихватања поста, и душевног и телесног. Пост не значи да се само уздржавамо од мрсне хране, већ у првој линији то је одрицање од злочестивих мисли, жеља и дела. Телесни пост је свакако неопходно помоћно средство за успешну борбу против страсти, нарочито против гордости која је корен сваког даљег зла. Тело које у греху има заједничко учешће са душом, треба са њом у и врлинама да има учешћа. Стваран пост је у првој линији уздржавање од сваке похотљивости. Утемељитељ хришћанског подвига, Спаситељ наш Исус Христос - Син Божји, уочи ступања у подвиг искупљења рода људског, укрепио је себе дуготрајним постом. И сви

подвижници, почињући да служе Господу, наоружавали су се постом и нису друкчије ступали на пут Крста но спроводећи пост.

Сада следи Васкршњи Пост (звани још Велики и Часни Пост) који треје 7 седмица. Он је поред Госпоинског поста најстрожији. Уље је дозвољено само суботом и недељом, као и на извесне празнике, док се осталим даним пости на води. Тако на пример, пост је на дан Светих Четрдесет Мученика разрешен на уље и вино. Употреба рибе, уља и вина дозвољена је на празник Цвети као и на Благовести, уколико не падају за време Страсне седмице.

***Велики пост је вријеме тражења смисла: смисла властитог професионалног живота као призива; смисла мог односа према другим особама; смисла и значаја пријатељства; смисла моје одговорности. Нема посла, нема призива који не би бар мало могао да буде «трансформисан», али не у смислу веће ефикасности или боље организације, већ у смислу људске вриједности. Овдје је потребан исти напор унутрашње организације свих наших односа, јер смо ми слободна људска бића, која су постала (често и не знајући) заробљеници система који прогресивно дехуманизује свијет. Ако наша вјера има неки смисао, он треба да обухвати живот у свој његовој комплексности. Хиљаде људи мисле да промјене долазе само споља, од револуција и промјене спољашњих услова. Ми хришћани треба да докажемо да у стварности све долази изнутра - из вјере и из живота сагласног са вјером. Када се Црква укључила у грчко-римски свијет, није жигосала ропство, није позивала на револуцију. Али њена вјера, њена нова визија човјека и живота, прогресивно су онемогућавале постојање ропства. Један од светих - а овдје се под светим подразумева човјек који своју вјеру увијек озбиљно узима - учиниће више за промјену свијета него хиљаде штампаних програма. Једини прави револуционар у овом свијету је - човјек светог живота.***

Сваки Хришћанин би пре почетка поста требао да поразговара са својим свештеником или духовником и утврди која врста поста одговара највише његовим духовним и физичким снагама. Не може свако да прими на себе строго правило уздржавања или да се лиши свега што му је потребно за олакшање немоћи. Овде спадају нарочито деца, стари, болесни, труднице и дојиље, као и они који обављају тешке физичке послове.

## БЛАГОСИЉАЊЕ ДОМОВА ОД БОГОЈАВЉЕЊА ДО ВАСКРСА

Благосиљање домова током богојављенског периода је дуга традиција наше Свете Православне Цркве, која у себи носи прелепо и садржајно значење. Након Ве- ликов водоосвећења на тај празник, обичај је да парохијски свештеник посети домове својих верника, доносећи са собом “благослов Јордана”. Свештеник про- износи свечане молитве, којима поново посвећујемо свој дом првобитној намени: да буде место у којем ће Исус Христос водити породицу по путу праведности. Будући да је ово време у нашој Цркви када се сећамо доласка Христовог и почетка Његовог служења када је сишао у Јордан да би Га крстио Св. Јован Претеча, пригодно је да Господ уђе у ово време и у наш дом и наше срце. Подсећа нас да се морамо “покајати, јер се приближило Царство Божије” (уп. Мт. 4, 17).

Православни хришћани морају запамтити да се све мора радити у славу Господњу. Зато наши домови, где проводимо велики део свог квалитетног времена са породицом, морају се редовно благосиљати и освећивати, оспо- собљујући нас да се боримо против сатанских искушења. Прописана молитва када се наши домови благосиљају на Богојављање дивно дочарава значај овог годишњег обреда: “Господе Спаситељу, истинита Свет- лости, Који си крштен у Јордану од Јована Крститеља, изволео си у кућу Зак- хејеву ући и спасење њему и целој кући његовој постати, Ти сам и сада оне који хоће овде да живе сачувај неповређене од ма каквог зла; благосиљајући њих и ово обиталиште, дајући им очишћење и телесно здравље, и испунивши њихове мо- литве које су на спасење и живот вечни.”



То освећење водике по домовима није само „пуки“ обичај, него насушна потреба самих верника, који осећају потребу да повремено буду освећени и очишћени кропљењем свете водике. Код православних Грка има доста породица које захтевају од својих свештеника, да неизоставно сваког месеца долазе и врше освећење воде по домовима. Наш народ је изгубио тај осећај светиње и потребе за светињом, те су стога многи престали да примају свештеника за водицу, а и они који га примају, често пута то нерадо чине.

Није добро да сва наша вера буде сведена само на обичај „свећења водике „, али није добро ни да тај благочестиви обичај одстранимо из нашег хришћанског живота. Свећење водике и њено коришћење, има свој пуни смисао и значај само уз држање и свих осталих прописа Цркве Православне о хришћанском духовном животу, као што су пост, молитва, милостиња, света Тајна покајања и исповести грехова, Прчешћа, и свега осталог, без чега нема спасења душе, ни остварења циља нашег постојања на земљи.

**ЈАВИТЕ СЕ ОЦУ ПРЕДРАГУ НА (224) 388-2605 ДА ЗАКАЖЕТЕ БЛАГОСИЉАЊЕ ВАШЕГ ДОМА!**

## ***Why Do We Have Our Homes Blessed?***

The Feast of Theophany (or Epiphany) commemorates the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. We know from the troparion of the day that "the Trinity was made manifest" to us. But there's more to it than this. "When Jesus descends into the depths of the river, there occurs a profound upheaval. It is not the one baptized who is purified, for he is spotless; but it is the water that is transfigured and illumined. This water, which was believed to be transparent and purifying, is in fact polluted, inhabited by evil spirits, servants of the old gods. ... By purifying the elements, by sanctifying matter, Jesus frees the cosmos from the powers of evil."

The Great Blessing of Water takes place at the end of that day's Liturgy. Since our homes cannot be brought to the Church, the Church - through the priest and cantor - go to the homes. There the service of blessing, which began in the church, is finished with the sprinkling of water in the home. Traditionally, in most Orthodox parishes, the priest personally visits all his parishioners each year to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the newly sanctified water of Theophany (January 6/13). By sanctifying our living quarters, our private place, we extend the grace of God to our individual dwellings.

We also bring the blessed water to our homes to use throughout the year to bless our homes and to drink whether we are ill or as part of our daily prayer life. "There are many occasions in family life when a sip of holy water can help to remind us of the blessing that was given 'to bestow sanctification', 'unto healing of soul and body', 'to be a fountain welling forth unto life eternal', as the priest prayed in the litany of Epiphany day."

### **Weaving Christ into Our Lives**

The blessing of homes by these holy waters maintains the spiritual association between the 'family church' and the parish, as well as again providing for the sharing of God's spiritual gifts. ... This annual blessing is not as elaborate as the blessing of the new dwelling, but because of this it should not be overlooked, for it is in this way that the grace of God is extended to individual dwellings."



If the priest comes to bless the home when the children are present, they have the opportunity to see the parish priest in a different and personal situation. If the priest permits, they can lead the way through the house, or hold a candle. They can show him their rooms or pets or favorite toys. They receive a blessing with water. For children, the house blessing shows the connection of the Church to the home. When the priest comes to bless our homes, he asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. What a wonderful way to begin the New Year!

**PLEASE CONTACT FATHER PREDRAG AT (224) 388-2605 TO SCHEDULE A BLESSING OF YOUR HOME!**

NEW PAGE IN OUR BULLETIN DEDICATED TO THE SUFFERING BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA)

# LET US NEVER FORGET SERBIAN KOSOVO & МЕТОHIЈА - НИКАДА НЕ ЗАБОРАВИМО СРПСКО КОСОВО И МЕТОХИЈУ

## PATRIARCHATE OF PEC

### The Mother Church of the Serbian Patriarchate

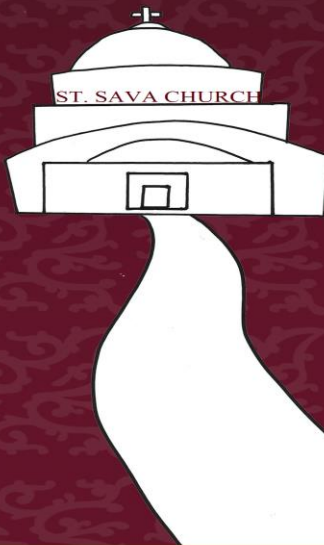


The Monastery of the Patriarchate of Pec is located at the very entrance of the Rugova gorge near Pec. The complex of the Pec churches is the spiritual seat and mausoleum of Serbian archbishops and patriarchs. The temple of the Holy Apostles was built by Archbishop Arsenije I in the third decade of the 13th century. He was also responsible for the painting of the church around 1260. Archbishop Nikodim built the temple of St. Dimitrije next to the northern side of the church of Holy Apostles between 1321 and 1324, while Archbishop Danilo II built the churches dedicated to Virgin Odigitrija and St. Nikola on its southern side. He also built the monumental parvis in the shape of a magnificent open porch in front of the western facades of the churches of St. Dimitrije, Holy Apostles and Holy Virgin Odigitrija. At the time of Patriarch Makarije, the elegant openings with dual arcades were walled up. An entire history of the styles of medieval wall painting can be seen on the walls of the Pec churches. The church of the Holy Apostles was also decorated around 1300, then around 1350 and 1375 and twice in the 17th century. The church of St. Dimitrije was painted for the first time at the time of Patriarch Joakinije, around 1345, and the new layer of frescoes was painted by Georgije Mitrofanovic around 1619-1620. The church of Holy Virgin Odigitrija was painted before 1337, while its parvis was painted in the 14th and 16th centuries. The church of St. Nikola was painted by painter Radul in 1673/1674.

As a result of severe Turkish repression Patriarch Arsenios III left Pec with several thousand Christian families and emigrated to southern Hungary at the end of 17th century. Despite pressure from the local Moslem population the monastery has been preserved until today. After the Second World War the Patriarchate of Pec was converted into a convent. Although this monastery jurisdictionally does not belong to the Diocese of Raska and Prizren it is nevertheless closely tied to the monasteries of the Diocese. As a stavropegic monastery it is directly under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch from Belgrade.



Today, the monastery is still one of the most important Serbian Orthodox centers in the Region with the sisterhood of 24 nuns. After the fire which was set by Albanian extremists in 1981 new residential quarters were erected. After the war 1998-1999 the monastery became an important center for the remaining Serbs in the area. At the moment in Pec town only these nuns remain. They live in everyday struggle to preserve this holy site and provide necessary humanitarian assistance to the neighboring Serb enclaves of Gorazdevac and Osojane. The monastery also owns the metochion of Budisavci, near Klina where two nuns remain under the constant KFOR protection.



# STEWARDSHIP 2015

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"A RICH MAN IS NOT  
ONE WHO HAS MUCH...  
...BUT ONE  
WHO GIVES MUCH  
FOR WHAT HE GIVES AWAY  
REMAINS HIS FOREVER."

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

**BECOME A STEWARD OF OUR PARISH!** *(Please fill out and send us back stewardship enrolment cards)*

**БУДИТЕ СТАРАТЕЉ НАШЕ ПАРОХИЈЕ!** *(Испуните и пошаљите нам достављене заветне картице)*



**Orthodox Christian Stewardship** is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith. Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to

whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed.



## Why do We Need the Church?

Many truths that form the foundation of the Christian faith are incomprehensible for the human consciousness. When the human mind, proud but limited, attempts to handle them in the plane of its own notions, then it distorts these God-revealed truths, and heresy appears. This is how the truth about the Holy Trinity was distorted in the early centuries of Christianity, and the doctrine of the nature of the Savior from the third through the seventh century. The doctrine of the Church is being distorted even in this time.

"Just believe and you are saved!" — This is the motto of Protestantism-based Christian denominations. But our Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples, the holy Apostles taught that salvation is a process of spiritual revival, where faith is the first step only. The Holy Scripture treats the teaching about salvation in a close, organic connection with the teaching about the Church, God's Kingdom amongst people, and it is impossible to separate one from another. That is why modern misconceptions of the Church are in their essence misunderstanding of the Christian doctrine of salvation of man.

Modern misconceptions of the Church can be divided into two groups. The first group will include those Christians who believe that Church is not needed for salvation, that man is saved by the faith alone, with absolutely no regard to the Church. Out of this understanding arises the doctrine of the "invisible church," popular among sectarians. It says that all believers, irrespective of their confessions, are members of one invisible church. Of course, if church is invisible, and thus insensible and inactive, it cannot be a means of salvation, and then it is merely a result of the existence of the faithful. The second group will include those Christians who would agree that Church might be useful, but, failing to understand Her nature, they believe that church can be created through human efforts, collusion and compromise. This group covers the champions of so-called ecumenical movement. Both groups share the denial of one true visible Church, in spite of the Savior's clear words, "***I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it***" (Matthew 16:18)

Because wrong opinions about the Church are so widespread, we the Orthodox Christians must establish in our minds the correct understanding of the Church, Her significance and necessity for the salvation of our souls.

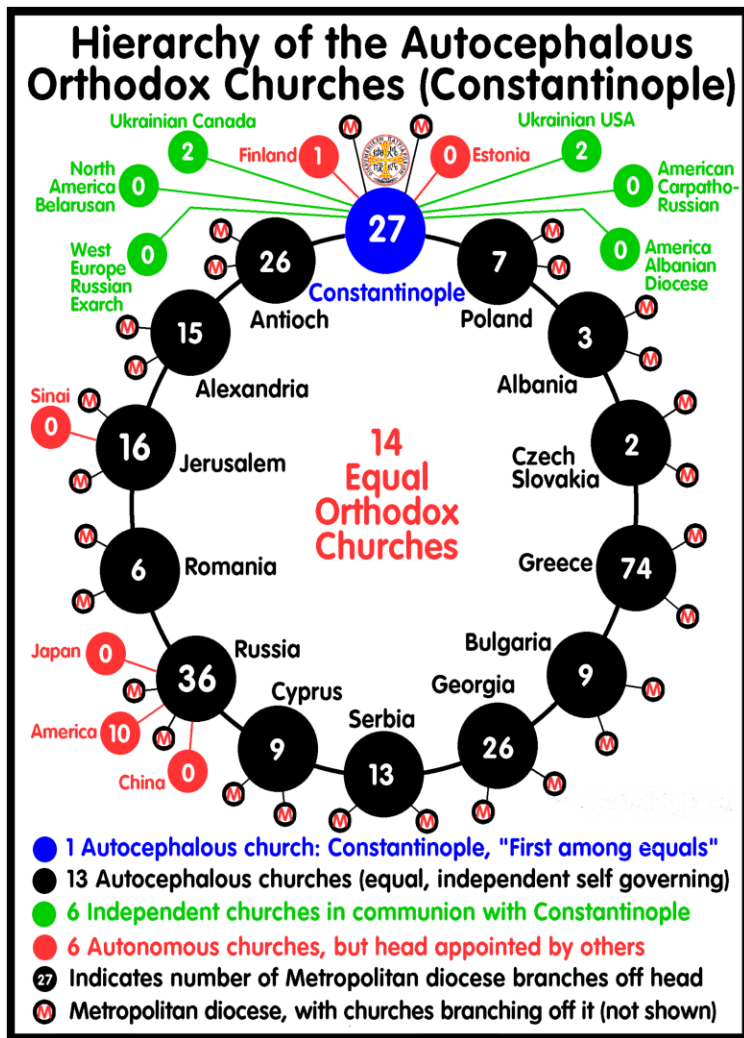
Evil, as well as sin, is a disintegrating, destructive power, although in this world it can struggle God in serried ranks. As opposed to evil, the Church is a miraculous realization of multi-unity, where things Divine, Spiritual and Heavenly join together with things human, material and worldly.

Unity is the principal feature of the Church. She is organically united per se, although She comprises many local churches and includes worldly and heavenly aspects. She is also united from outside, and there is no match for Her among heterodox confessions. Imaginatively speaking, She is one vineyard, one field, one tree, one vine, one mountain, one building, one flock, one family, one body. Jesus Christ gave the Church one teaching, one baptism, one Communion. The Church lives and becomes sanctified by one Spirit of God, She has one head, Christ. Unity of the Church was the subject of the High-Priest prayer of our Savior: "***That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us***" (John 17:21).

This unity of the Church is a reproduction of the tri-unity of the Persons in the Holy Trinity, and forms Her mysterious nature. That is why, when speaking about the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ often told parables, gave descriptive examples, in order to gradually reveal the diverse aspects of Her and the properties of this miraculous unity of numerous planes. We will use these images of the Gospel for the discussion of the nature of the Church.

The Church of Christ, although it exists in the world that lies in evil, has nothing in common with it. She has Her fence, or boundaries, that separate the sheep of Christ from the bad-tempered sheep and from the wolves. This is told in the parable of the Good Shepherd.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers... I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture... As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:1-5; 9, 15, 16). Clarity of Apostolic teaching, legislation, lineage of the apostolic succession, and the entire order of Church life comprise the obvious fence separating the Church from various religious groups.



The door of the parable is the Sacrament of Baptism, by the means of which the faithful become members of the Church. But there is also a door for the shepherds, which is the legitimate election and ordination. Usurpers of the shepherd's functions, who "climb up some other way" as it is put down in the parable, are thieves and robbers. The parable of the Good Shepherd stresses the idea of obedience for the sheep and self-sacrifice for the shepherds. Obedience is expressed through acceptance of the teaching of the Church, without critique and private opinion, and living Christian lives under the guidance of good shepherds. The sin of sectarians is, first of all, in their disobedience to the Church, their insubordination and riot. Protestantism is a very characteristic generic term for sectarians. The parable of the vine discloses the mysterious communion of the faithful with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Source of gifts of grace and spiritual revival.

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can*

*ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing"* (John 15:1, 4-5).

Whosoever arrogantly alienates oneself from the Church, becomes similar to a cut branch: not only it remains fruitless, but also it will undoubtedly dry up. The consciousness of unity with Christ in the Sacrament of communion should fill us with sense of utter gratitude. We draw our better intentions and powers from Him. He is the source of our spiritual life!

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## FEBRUARY 2015

MONTHLY BULLETIN



*“For where two or three have gathered together in my name, I am there in their midst.” Matthew 18:20*

*“Где су два или три сабрана у моје име  
Тамо сам и ја међу њима.” Матеј 18:20*