

**HOLY TRINITY
SERBIAN
ORTHODOX
CHURCH**

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The News of the Holy Trinity
is sent out monthly.

Please contact Father Ljubomir or the Church office
with any suggestions for
future articles. All ideas are
certainly welcome

Пут Крста - Вести Цркве Свете Тројице

The Way of the Cross— Holy Trinity News

www.serbianchurchstlouis.org

SEPTEMBER 2017

A PRIEST'S THOUGHTS ON DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, THE SOUL, YOUR BODY AND YOUR BRAIN

I was 19 years old the first time I had a panic attack. I was trying to go to sleep in my dorm room, when suddenly my heart began racing, my mind speeding forward, with what seemed like crazy, desperate thoughts. That was in the early 70's and the phrase "panic attack" had not been invented. What I did not know was that this was the beginning of a syndrome that would stay with me over the next 40 years. At times, it limited my life in terrible, embarrassing ways. I began a typical pattern of adjustment, in which I avoided various things that felt like "triggers." Sometimes it felt like everything and nothing was a trigger. It was also the beginning of a journey of self-education, driven both by repeated treatment failures as well as eventual success and freedom. I have been panic-free for about five years, though I do not assume that it cannot return.

Panic is not in your head. It is not a set of thoughts, even though it sets certain thoughts racing. My dog has panic attacks during thunderstorms (he's in the middle of one right now). He does not have a "set of thoughts." Panic is physical. It is, essentially, an "adrenalin storm," a cascade of chemicals that the body produces quite normally when it perceives immediate danger (the "fight or flight" syndrome). In that sense, panic is a gift from God. In the wrong situation (like trying to go to sleep), it feels like a gift from hell.

Though the advent of panic is unknown, people who suffer from anxiety and depression are far more vulnerable. Indeed, it is treated as a subset of anxiety. It can be the result of trauma or a delayed result from stress or other such things. The first attack, most often, just seems to come out of nowhere.

Panic is not your fault. Telling someone, "But there's nothing to be afraid of," is useless. The thoughts come after the attack has begun. It is more accurate to describe the "thoughts" accompanying panic as something other than "thoughts." They are not the result of reasoning or beliefs. They are the noise your brain makes when it has been hit with an adrenalin bath. The same thing is generally true about depression and anxiety. These mental experiences are also clearly physical states that can be described, measured and diagnosed. They are, however, physical states that involve the neurobiological system. As such, they produce thoughts, affect our emotions, and create other psycho/physical symptoms.

Continued from page 1

Somewhat problematic, I think, is the not infrequent distinction made between anxiety and depression as physical/medical problems and as so-called “spiritual” problems. There is no such distinction. We do not have “spiritual” problems that are not also physical problems, simply because we do not exist as some sort of divisible creatures. We could say that the whole thing is spiritual (including medicine). We do not have a “spiritual” life that is not connected with our body. We are human beings. Among the most torturous things I endured in my first year of suffering was having a group of well-meaning Christians gathered around me to cast out the demons, some of them convinced that there was some “unconfessed sin” in my life. I’m fortunate that my belief in God survived.

That said, healthy spiritual disciplines are an important part of the healing and recovery from these problems. If you search patristic material you may wonder where the references to depression and anxiety are. They are hidden in a word that is quite common: *acedia* (sometimes spelled “*accidie*”). It is described as the most difficult of all the passions and garnered the nickname “the noonday devil.” Here is a brief description from St. John Cassian:

He looks about anxiously this way and that, and sighs that none of the brethren come to see him, and often goes in and out of his cell, and frequently gazes up at the sun, as if it was too slow in setting, and so a kind of unreasonable confusion of mind takes possession of him like some foul darkness.

Gabriel Bunge, the Orthodox hermit and scholar on the works of Evagrius, offers this understanding of what he terms “despondency:”

Acedia manifests itself, then, as a type of slackening of the natural powers of the soul. Evagrius defines it in exactly the same way: Spiritual despondency is a slackness (*atonia*) of the soul, namely a limpness of the soul, which does not possess what is appropriate to its nature.

It interests me that modern discussions of anxiety and depression tend to alternate between a very physical account (“you have a chemical imbalance”) to very a psychological/emotional account (as in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy). The truth is that it is both/and. We do not have moods, thoughts and emotions that have no basis in the electrical chemical components of our brain. Our thinking and feeling is not detached from our body. However, our bodies are not unresponsive to our thoughts. The complex of our existence means that we can and should deal with our health in a manner that involves the whole person.

The fathers of the desert had no psychotropic medication. Their insights were drawn from what they did have. It must be borne in mind that suicide was not unknown among them (there are any number of stories that recall such things). It would be a mistake, therefore, to assume that they knew everything there was to know on the subject or that following their lead is always and entirely sufficient. It is not.

But they knew a lot. Much that they knew is buried beneath and within the terminology of desert asceticism. Just as *acedia* is largely the equivalent of anxiety and depression, so, many of the remedies are equally disguised. Humility is frequently described as important in overcoming *acedia*. Modern readers are left puzzled. How is being humble useful with depression? The humility they describe, of course, is deeply rooted in the discipline of confession. It is, in fact, the practice of “bearing a little shame.”

Modern research in Affect Theory has identified shame as the “master emotion,” and as a primary root of anxiety and depression. Of course, we live in a culture that, though riddled with shame, often treats it as a taboo topic. This is especially true for men. A book I read several years ago on male depression was aptly named, *The Problem Men Never Discuss*. If depression is taboo, shame is more so. The desert fathers attacked the Noonday Devil at its very roots, discovering that the “way up is the way down.” Following the path of Christ in His voluntary acceptance of the shame of the Cross, they discovered the freedom that comes when the very deepest of all wounds is healed. In that healing, they found true peace, the ability to love and forgive, and the place of the deep heart.

I recently watched an interview with Fr. Zacharias of Essex in which he said, “Only the work we do to find the deep heart remains with us beyond the grave.” That is knowledge that only comes from experience.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

Again, there are many who continue with a false distinction between psychological/emotional/physical/spiritual matters. This, I think, is a product of an inadequate understanding of our human makeup. The crippling pain of depression and anxiety are often helped greatly by current medications (SSRI's and the like). Sometimes they are life-savers. They are not, however, a "treatment" for depression and anxiety. They do not address its cause or provide healing. They simply make it bearable – and that's nothing to be despised.

The book, *Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives*, recounts the life and teachings of the Elder Thaddeus of V., a contemporary Serbian monastic. He battled with anxiety issues for many years, suffering two nervous breakdowns. He tried medications to no avail (of course it was at a time well before the current protocols). His story describes certain profound spiritual conclusions, including the radical acceptance of the providence of God, that eventually gave him peace. It is worth a read by anyone who struggles with these things – at the very least for an example of holiness in the midst of this terrible form of inner struggle.

A contemporary elder of Mt. Athos makes this observation:

The image which we can use to describe the relationship of soul and brain is the violin with the violinist. Just as even the best musician cannot make good music if the violin is broken or unstrung, in the same manner a man's behavior will not be whole (see 2 Tim 3:17) if his brain presents a certain disturbance, in which case the soul cannot be expressed correctly. It is precisely this disturbance of the brain that certain medicines help correct and so aid the soul in expressing itself correctly. (Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)

It is interesting that men in contemporary culture are so shame-averse. It is, of course painful to everyone at all times. However, the fear to go there requires courage – something our culture tends to praise. I have often been struck with astonishment at the courage of some very broken people, people whom others would consider "losers," who found a way to enter the darkest places, bear the unbearable, and return with a measure of wholeness. They are my heroes.

We are all Christians in the desert – and the desert is the landscape of our souls. The fathers of the desert found what everyone would find if they dared enter that place for the simple fact that they were humans in the same manner that we are. They did not enter the desert in order to "get away from things." They entered the desert in order to do battle with the deepest of things and the greatest of demons. They went there in order to avoid any distraction that might draw them away from the battle.

Our culture is full of distractions. However, the noonday devil has made his way into the cities and every corner of our culture. In some segments of American society, as many as 50 percent take some form of anxiety/depression medication. Again, this is not a cure. But it points to how widespread the battle has become.

St. Seraphim of Sarov famously said, "Acquire the Spirit of Peace, and a thousand souls around you will be saved." This is a work of courage in our day and time, one that requires wisdom and patience. Easy quips from the sidelines only belong to those who have never been there, or are afraid to admit it. I shudder when I hear someone describe medication as a "crutch." I've heard the same thing said of religion. Given how crippled we are, it makes little sense to despise crutches.

It is important to move beyond the stop-gap measures that simply "keep us going." There is a serious work of the heart to which the gospel calls us. St. Macarius observed:

The heart itself is but a small vessel, yet dragons are there, and there are also lions; there are poisonous beasts and all the treasures of evil. But there too is God, the angels, the life and the kingdom, the light and the apostles, the heavenly cities and the treasures of grace—all things are there. (H.43.7)

Fr. Stephen Freeman

Kolo Korner

Dear sisters in Christ!

We worked very hard for the past few months in preparation for one of our most challenging events of the year, our Serbfest. I must say it was a very beautiful sight to see with so many of you showing up and working together in great harmony, and for some of us it was a great learning experience as we watched masters at work. The result was that once again we produced the most delicious traditional Serbian food which was greatly enjoyed by our dedicated customers who not only look forward to our food but our warm hospitality and great Serbian tamburitza music.

This year we went one step further and proudly displayed banners showing our Serbian history and heritage, in hopes of educating those who are not of Serbian descent. We were able to show who we as a people are and where we came from. Thanks to the creativity of one of our youngest kolo members Lexi Micic who came up with this great idea I believe we achieved just that!

Thank you all for your dedication to your church and your kolo organization and everything you do! One can only hope that we paved the way and are setting the great example for our future generations to continue to follow in our footsteps. Hope you all got some well-deserved rest and are enjoying this perfect weather!

On a sad note. Our deepest sympathy go out to our youngest kolo member Lily Puhar and her entire family on passing of her father Branko Puha. Memory eternal!

Also, our deepest sympathy to our sister Marina Eddleman and her entire family on the passing of her daughter Maja Matrak. Memory eternal!

In closing, pray for our sick sisters and their family.

In Christ

Ljubica Acamovic

Kolo president

HOLY TRINITY SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH PICNIC AND SERBEST VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

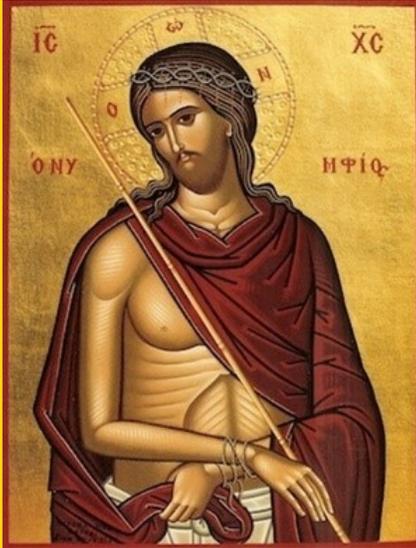
AT SYLVAN SPRINGS PARK, 300 Halsey Road, St. Louis, MO 63125

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD 10:00 am—???

**PLEASE BRING YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR FAVORITE
DISH TO SHARE FOR A RELAXING DAY OF FOOD, FUN
AND FRIENDSHIP!!**

CEVAPS, SOFT DRINKS, WATER, PLATES, NAPKINS AND UTENSILS WILL BE PROVIDED.





Задовољни у малом

Будимо задовољни малим, и бићемо увек богати. Бринимо се једино за одело и обућу, и добићемо и то, и далеко више од тог. Не по количини имовине, него по расположењу душе треба судити о богатству и сиромаштву. Сиромашнији је од свих онај који свагда жели више но што има и никада не може да заустави своју злу жељу. Стога, бежимо од среброљубља, тог виновника сиромаштине, упропаститеља душе, пријатеља пакла, непријатеља Небеског Царства. Ако хоћеш да будеш богат, презири богатство. И заиста, није богатство у имању богатства, него је богатство – не бринуте се о стицању богатства. Ако тако будемо водили себе, онда ћемо и овде на земљи бити богатији од свих богаташа, и тамо на небу наследићемо небеска блага. Богат је не онај коме много треба, него онај коме ништа не треба.

Бог хоће од нас: никада не желети да се има много, но исто тако не туговати када се има мало. У овоме свету сви ми живимо једно одређено време, и сви смо обучени у подједнако тело: стога ни богаташу никакве добити од сувишне имовине, ни сиромашу никакве штете од сиромаштине добити од сувишне имовине, ни сиромашу никакве штете од сиромаштине. Што се онда плашиш сиромаштва? А ти, зашто јуриш за богатством? Бојим се, одговараш ти, да ме нужда не примора да идем на туђа врата и просим. Често чујем да се многи чак и моле Богу, да не допусти да им икада буде потребна људска помоћ. Слушајући то, ја се смејем, јер такав страх доликује само деци.

У самој ствари нама је у свему сваки дан потребна међусобна људска помоћ. Зар не видиш да смо сви ми потребни један другоме? Војник занатлији, занатлија трговцу, трговац земљоделцу, роб господару, господар робу, сиромаш богаташу, богаташ сиромашу, просјак даваоцу милостиње, давалац милостиње просјаку. Да, прималац милостиње задовољава највећу потребу, већу од свих потреба. Јер када не би било просјака, много би било изгубљено за наше спасење, пошто не бисмо имали нашта трошити своју имовину. На тај начин и просјак који изгледа некориснији од свих, показује се кориснији од свих. Ако је тебе стид што ти је потребан други, онда ти једино остаје да умреш, јер ко се тога стиди, њему је немогуће и живети.

Сви смо ми дошљаци и најамници. Власништво постоји само по имену, а у самој ствари сви смо ми власници туђега. Нама припада само оно што пошаљемо испред себе у онај свет. Оно пак што се овде налази није наше и за живота нашег на земљи оно одлази од нас. Нама припада само оно што сачињава наше душевне подвиге: милостиња и човекољубље. Постарајмо се да њих стекнемо, и да они постану наше унутрашње, духовно имање. Ми немамо могућности да одлазећи из овог света понесемо са собом новце, али можемо понети милостињу. Њу и треба изнад свега да шаљемо испред себе у онај свет, да бисмо припремили себи обиталиште у вечним обитељима. Једино је врлина способна да нас прати у онај свет, једино врлина прелази у будући живот.

Није толико корисно одгајати сина учећи га занату и спољној науци помоћу којих се стиче новац, колико – научити га да презире новац. Ако желиш да га начиниш богатим, ти поступај тако. Богат је не онај коме треба много имања, и поседује много, него онај коме ништа не треба. Тако васпитавај свога сина, томе га учи; то је највеће богатство.

Немој се паштити да сина свог учиниш чувеним по световној учености и да му прибавиш славу, него се старај да га научиш да презире славу овога живота; то ће га учинити славнијим и чувенијим. Ово може постићи и сиромаш и богаташ; томе се може научити не од учитеља и од наука, него из Светога Писма.

Све што имамо, добили смо од Христа: од Њега имамо и само постојање, и живот, и дисање, и светлост, и ваздух, и земљу. Ако би нас Он лишио ма чега од тога, ми бисмо пропали и иструтели, пошто смо дошљаци и путници. Изрази: “моје” и “твоје”, само су празне речи, пошто уствари није тако. На пример: ако ти кућу назовеш својом, то је – празна реч, не одговара стварности, пошто Творцу припада и ваздух, и земља, и грађа, и ти сам који си кућу подигао, и све остало. Када и користиш кућу, она чак ни тада није твоја, не само због смрти која ти грози, него и пре смрти због пролазности ствари. Имајући то на уму непрестано, будимо богомудри и када добијамо и када губимо, и немојмо робовати предметима пролазним и који не припадају нама.

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Немој говорити: ја трошим своје и уживам своје. – Но то није твоје већ туђе. Велим: туђе, јер ти сам тако хоћеш; Бог жели да оно што је теби уручено ради браће, постане твоје; туђе постаје твојим када га ти употребљаваш на друге; а када га неумерено употребљаваш на себе, онда твоје постаје туђим. Ти немаш састрадалности и говориш да с правом употребљаваш своје за своје уживање; а ја баш зато и кажем да је оно туђе. Све твоје јесте заједничко – за тебе и твога ближњег; као што је заједничко – сунце, и ваздух, и земља, и све остало. Да будем јаснији: храна телесна, одређена уопште за све удове тела, ако буде приграбљена једним удом, она онда постаје туђа и за њега. Она не може да се свари и да храни, – отуда постаје туђа и за њега. А поставши заједничком, она постаје сопственост и његова и свих осталих удова.

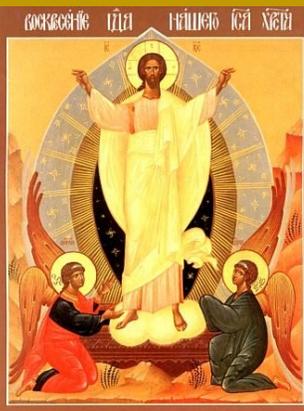
Исто је тако и са имањем: ако се ти један будеш користио њиме, онда ћеш доживети штету и ти, јер нећеш добити награду; ако га пак делиш са другима, тада ће оно више бити твоје, тада ћеш и добити користи од њега. Не видиш ли како руке служе, уста жваћу, а желудац прима храну; и желудац не каже: ја примам, и зато треба да је сву задржим код себе. – Не говори то ни ти односно имања. Ко прима, тај је дужан и да даје. Као што би желудац било рђаво да задржава храну у себи а да је не расподељује, јер би то нашкодило целом телу, тако је и за богаташе рђаво да своју имовину задржавају код себе, јер то упропашћује и њих саме и друге.

Такође, једино око прима светлост, али је не задржава у себи него осветљује цело тело, јер је њему неприродно задржавати светлост у себи док оно остаје оком. Ноздрве осећају мирис, али га не задржавају у себи него га предају мозгу, саопштавају мирис и желудцу и достављају пријатност целој човеку. Ноге једине ходају, али притом оне не само себе премештају него и цело тело преносе. Тако и ти не задржавај само за себе оно што ти је поверено, јер ћеш на тај начин нашкодити свима, а највише самоме себи. – Но то се може видети не само на удовима тела. Тако на пример: ковач, ако не хтедне својим занатом користити другима, он ће нанети штету и себи и другим занатима. Тако исто обућар, пекар и сваки други занатлија, ако не усхтедне другима давати производе свога заната, нашкодиће не само другима него преко других и себи.

Чудесан и јединствен пример обогаћења вечним богатством рода људског кроз сиромаштво, представља Господ Христос. Свети апостол благовести: Знате благодат Господа нашега Исуса Христа да, богат будући вас ради осиромаше, да се ви његовим сиромаштвом обогатите (2 Кор. 8, 9). Тиме свети апостол вели: представите себи благодат Божију, размислите о њој, удубите се у њену величину и огромност, и тада нећете поштедети ништа од своје имовине...

Ако не верујеш да сиромаштво производи богатство, онда се сети Господа свога, и више сумњати нећеш. У самој ствари, да Он није осиромаше, ти не би постао богаташ. Заиста је достојно дивљења: сиромаштво је обогатило богатство. А богатством свети апостол овде назива познање вере, очишћење грехова, оправдање, освећење и остала безбројна добра која нам је Христос даровао, и обећао даровати нам. И све је то стечено за нас помоћу сиромаштва. Каквог сиромаштва? Оваквог: Он прими тело, постаде човек и претрпе страдања; мада Он и не беше ничим дужан теби, већ ти беше дужан Њему.

Свети Јован Златоуст



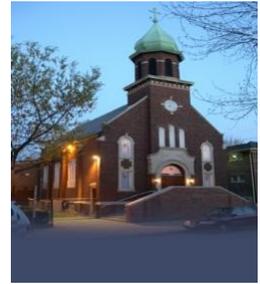
Memory Eternal! +Maja Matrak

Give rest, O Lord, to the soul of Thy servant who have fallen asleep!

Our hearts are filled with humility and appreciation for you, who comfort us during our recent sadness, expressing the sympathy and pain we all shared when Maja passes on. We thank each of you, for the condolences and prayers.

On behalf of the family,
Milan Matrak

Parish Announcements



Special Assembly meeting Sunday, Sept. 17th after Divine Liturgy. Please look-out for invitation for stewards in good standing to attend.

Coffee Hour Sponsors for August: Big thank you to the **Dean Jandrsevich Family, Chrissy & Calvin** from Michel Funeral Home & **Goran Kurtuma** for sponsoring coffee hour this month! **Items for sale:** Serbfest red V neck t-shirts 3 - 2 Dbl X - 5 - XL available at \$15 each

Happy Birthday to **Ljubica Krosnjar** on her 90th Birthday! Congratulations to **Kevin Klupe** 1st prize winner of 55" Samsung Smart TV & **Tina Paradowski** winner of 2 soccer tickets w/parking donated by our own **Adam Chkautovich**.

Thank you **Snezana Jarcevic** for wine for the altar.

A big thank you to our **Alexis Micic** for designing and hanging our beautiful new informative banners for Serbfest/Fish Fry. Thanks to our Choir for picking up the tab!

Congratulations to **Gospa and Dejan Karan** on their marriage! May god bless them with many children!

JOIN US FOR A PARISH TRIP SEPTEMBER 15-16 FOR THE SLAVA CELEBRATION AT HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL AND ALL SAINTS SKETE

Holy Archangel Michael and All Angels Skete is a men's monastic community and women's convent of St. Xenia Sisterhood in northwestern Missouri, about 4 hours drive from St. Louis.

Please contact the church office or Father Ljubomir before September 5th so we can make arrangements for hotel and transportation. We will leave Friday at noon and will return Saturday evening.

Parishioners will be responsible for the cost of their lodging and meals.

August Church Attendance

08/6/2017 – 80



08/13/17 – 78



08/20/17 – 65



08/27/17 – 82



Avg. - 78

Reflections on the Church

Fr. Thomas Hopko

Several people who commented on my letters and suggestions asked me for an example of how what goes on in our church today is a "pseudomorphosis" produced by confused interpretations and applications of church life in the past. I offer the following "scenario" as such an example.

An Orthodox bishop comes to a congregation in his diocese headed by a presbyter. He is greeted at the church door in the most solemn manner. He is wearing a decorated monastic mantia even though he may have never actually lived a monastic life, and never was, and is not now, under monastic obedience to anyone. His clothing is that of the Turkish period. He is wearing a Turkish judge's robe and hat, covered with a monastic veil.

After entering the church, the bishop is solemnly vested in clothing that was once worn by the Byzantine-Roman emperor. He puts on a sakkos (instead of a phelonion), a mitre and decorated crosses and medallions. He carries a staff, stands on an eagle rug and sits on a throne in the nave where the imperial authority used to sit. He may have long hair, the sign of secular authority in Byzantium that was given to the Christian clerics by the Turks, and later adopted in the Russian Empire.

In this solemn liturgical setting, the local pastor and the servers and singers are nervous and scared. They fear making mistakes that will incur the bishop's wrath. The people, for the most part, wonder what all this is about and why it is at all necessary. Some people enjoy it. Others endure it. Others stay home or go to another church on that day. Almost no one, including the clergy themselves, understand it.

At this liturgy, the vesting of the bishop and the entrance with the singing of many hymns and multiple intonations of "Many Years, Master (Eis polla eti, Despota)" and many repetitions of the Trisagion, with many petitions and blessings, goes on for a very long time. The scripture readings are read in ways that make them difficult, sometime even impossible to understand because of language, style of chanting, and noise from a clanging incenser with bells on it. There is no sermon explaining the scripture readings, or if there is, it has little or nothing to do with them. Multiple litanies are chanted, which include expulsions of catechumens who are either not there, or don't leave the gathering if they are. The Eucharistic Canon, which is the very heart and highpoint of the Orthodox Divine Liturgy, takes only a few minutes. How long it takes depends on the length of the singing. The bishop rushes through the prayers silently and quickly, if he even reads them at all. The faithful people hear only the ends of the sentences of the prayers which, by themselves, make no sense whatsoever.

During and after the liturgy, the bishop asserts his dignity, power and authority over those "under" him according to his understanding of later Byzantine teachings about "ecclesiastical hierarchies." He explains that he has powers and graces that others don't have. He says that he mediates these powers and graces to his "inferiors," i.e. to presbyters, through deacons and sub-deacons and readers, to the "lay people" who no longer have any Christian ministry whatsoever. All power, authority and grace, he teaches, rests in and is derived from the bishop alone, as it were "personally," by virtue of his ordination and consecration that is then theologically explained and defended in an anti-Protestant, counter-Reformation Roman Catholic manner that entered Orthodoxy after the 16th century. In this view, the priesthood is considered to be "one of the seven sacraments" understood as "visible signs conveying invisible graces" instituted by Christ.

Then, to further explain and enforce all of this, teachings of 2nd and 3rd century church fathers are quoted who, in a completely different setting and context, said striking things about the place and ministry of the bishop in the church. For example, St. Ignatius of Antioch will be quoted who said that nothing should be done in the church apart from the bishop who "holds the place of God" in the community, and is "God's icon." Or, as another example, St. Cyprian of Carthage is quoted as saying that the bishop is "another Christ."

Continued on page 9

Continued from page 8

Teachings about the position, authority and service of the bishop by such 4th, 5th and 6th century saints as Ambrose of Milan, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom and Gregory the Great are added to demonstrate the bishop's awesome character. When all of these things are mixed together without a proper understanding of their original meaning and purpose, both those that are truly Christian and Orthodox, and those that are from alien religious and cultural sources, we have a marvelous example of what Fr. Georges Florovsky called a "pseudomorphosis." This means that words, teachings, rites, symbols and even clothing that meant one thing in their original context come now to mean something completely different in their new setting. The whole thing is misunderstood and distorted, and the door is open to all sorts of conflict, confusion and chaos.

To complete my example, we can add that Orthodox people with virtually no knowledge of the Bible or Church history enter into the liturgical gathering. Some say, "Hey, this is the modern world. We now have democracy, with freedom, equality, liberty and justice for all women and men. What is going on here anyway?" While others say, "We are Orthodox Christians in a traditional, hierarchal church with sacraments, dogmas and canons. Everything in our church is from the Holy Spirit. We must obey the teachings, keep the traditions, enforce the laws and submit to our leaders." And others don't know what to think or say, including many who read the Bible, say their prayers, participate in the sacraments, take up their crosses and desire with all their hearts to serve God and their neighbors according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is the kind of thing that can happen, and does happen, today, not only in North America, but everywhere on earth where there are Orthodox people. I believe that our very existence as the Orthodox Church depends on our attempt to untangle and understand the elements that make up contemporary church life, and to do something about it. Discovering what that "something" is that we must "do about it" for the Church's fruitful life and mission in the world today depends on our common prayer, ascetical practice, study and discussion. But most of all, it depends on our willingness to face reality, both human and divine, and to do God's will, whatever it may be.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHURCH BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As a rule, I never name anyone when there are events like SerbFest and this year's festival is no exception. The history banners were a very nice addition, the weather cooperated, the food as always was excellent, the turnout was pretty good and I think it was enjoyed by everyone involved. To everyone involved I say thank you!

From year to year there are a few new faces who step forward and help and again I would invite anyone who can find the time and would like to help to please do so. There are at least a couple of months of preparation leading up to SerbFest and much of this preparation is done and or managed by some of our ladies we really shouldn't rely on but they do insist on helping. To these distinguished ladies we say thank you for everything you do.

These events which showcase our faith and culture are an important window for others to see. For those of you who have thoughts of how to improve this our annual holiday please let someone know. We are happy to listen to your thoughts.

Once again thank you all!

Dragan Acamovic
President

Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church
Српска Православна Црква Свете Тројице
September/септембар
2017 Calendar/Календар

Saturday 2	4:30 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Sunday 3	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy Света Литургија
Saturday 9	4:30 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Sunday 10	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy Света Литургија
Sunday 10	4:30 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Monday 11	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy – The Beheading Of the St John the Baptist and Forerunner Света Литургија – Усековање главе Свето Јована Крститеља
Saturday 16	4:30 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Sunday 17	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy Света Литургија
Wednesday 20	5:00 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Thursday 21	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy – The Nativity of Mother of God Света Литургија - Мала Госпојина
Saturday 23	4:30 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Sunday 24	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy Света Литургија
Tuesday 26	5:00 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење
Wednesday 27	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy - The Exaltation of the Precious and Life- giving Cross Света Литургија - Крстовдан
Saturday 30	4:30 p.m.	Vespers Вечерње Богослужење