



June 28, 2009
3rd Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Prophet Amos
Great-martyr Prince Lazar of Kosovo & Serbian Martyrs – Vidovdan
(Apostles' Fast)

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE TWO:

When You did descend to death, O Life Immortal, You did slay hell with the splendor of Your Godhead! And when from the depths You did raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: O Giver of Life! Christ our God! Glory to You!

Васкршњи тропар гл. 2:

Када си сишао у смрт, Животе Бесмртни, тада си ад умртвио светлошћу Божанства: а када си и умрле из доњих дубина васкрсао, све Силе Небеске клицаху: Животодавче, Христе Боже наш, слава Теби.

TROPARION TO THE GREAT-MARTYR LAZAR - TONE THREE:

Longing for the beauty of God's glory, you were found pleasing to Him while yet in the flesh and by good deeds multiplied the talents entrusted to you. Having suffered greatly, even to the shedding of your blood, you received the crown of martyrdom from Christ. By your prayers, O Lazar, entreat Him to save us who sing to you.

Тропар св. Великомученику Кнезу Лазару, глас 3.

Заволео си лепоту славе Божије, међу земнима си Му удио, и добијени талант добрим делима си удвостручио. Њему си се одужио подвигом до крви и плату за страдања твоја као мученик си примио од Христа Бога: Њега моли да спасе, нас који те песмама славимо, Свети Лазаре.

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE TWO:

Hell became afraid, O Almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb! The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with You! And the world, O my Savior, praises You forever.

Васкршњи кондак гл.2:

Васкрсао си из гроба Свемогући Спаситељу и Ад видевши чудо уплаши се, и мртви усташе. А творевина, видећи, радује се заједно с Тобом и Адам се весели: И свет, Спаситељу мој, прославља Те непрестано.

KONTAKION TO THE GREAT-MARTYR LAZAR – TONE EIGHT:

Your flock glorifies you as a valiant champion of true piety and a glorious martyr, O most-wise Lazar. Since you have boldness before Christ our God, entreat Him to grant peace to those who praise you, that we may cry: ‘Rejoice, O praise-worthy Lazar!’

Кондак св. муч. Кнезу Лазару, глас 8.

Као изврсног изабраника побожности и непостидног мученика за истину, славно и по дугу хвали те стадо твоје, богомудри. Пошто имаш смелост код Христа Бога, нама који те славимо смирење испроси, да ти кличемо: Радуј се, Свети Лазаре, свеславни!

HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

Кондак други, глас 6.

Непостидна заштитнице Хришћана, незаменљива пред Творцем Посреднице, не презри гласе мољења нас грешних, него као Блага притекни у помоћ нама који Ти са вером вапијемо: Пожури на молитву и похитај на умољавање, Богородице, свагдашња Заштитнице оних који те поштују.



EPISTLES & COMMENTARY

The Prokeimenon—Psalm 118: 14 in the Second Tone:

The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

Romans 5: 1-10

Brethren, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

For Vidovdan, Acts 12: 1-11

Brethren, now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover. Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying: "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. Then the angel said to him: "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals" and so he did. And he said to him: "Put on your garment and follow me." So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter had come to himself, he said: "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people." So when he had considered this he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

The Alleluia Verses – Psalm 20: 1, 9

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble! The name of the God of Jacob protect you! Save the the king, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call.

Epistle Commentary

Faith makes us at **peace with God**. The Greek word *pistis* can be translated both “faith” and “faithfulness.” Faith is the conviction that something is true; faithfulness is loyalty and obedience to God. Since neither faith nor righteousness originates in us but in our All-merciful God, true faith transforms our lives, making us God-like, bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It is not the Son alone who saves us from **wrath** that belongs to the Father alone. Rather, both wrath and salvation belong to all Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

GOSPELS & COMMENTARY

Matthew 6: 22-33

At that time, Jesus said to His disciples, “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

For Vidovdan, John 15: 17-16: 2

At that time Jesus said: “These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of this world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me, hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’ But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the

Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

Gospel Commentary

Jesus refers to things within the reach of the senses so that we might more easily grasp His teaching. We all understand the value of light in our lives. As the **eye** is the **lamp of the body**, so the mind is the spiritual eye of the soul: it illuminates the whole inner person. Keeping our spiritual eyes **good** – wholesome and pure – is fundamental to a Christian life. Calling us to be set free from anxiety about earthly things, Jesus directs us to **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**, secure in the faith that God will provide what is needed for our salvation.

SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

Reflection from *The Prologue* for June 15/28 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

It is not always easy to conquer the spirit of vanity and conceit in oneself. Only the great spiritual directors have succeeded in this, with God's grace above all, with constant vigilance over their souls, and with very delicate spiritual sensitivities and distinctions. Abba Nisteroes was once walking with one of his brethren. Suddenly they spotted a serpent on the road. The brother quickly moved aside, and the great Nisteroes fled after him. "Are you also afraid, father?" the monk asked Nisteroes. The elder replied: "No, my son, I am not afraid, but I had to flee—otherwise I would not have escaped the spirit of vanity." That is: "Had I remained in place, you would have been amazed at me, and from that I would have become vain!"

The Holy Prophet Amos

Amos was born in the village of Thecua near Bethlehem. Being of simple origin and life, Amos was a swineherd for a wealthy man of Jerusalem. But God, who does not regard a person by his outward appearance but rather by the purity of his heart, and who took both Moses and David from their sheep and appointed them leaders of the people, chose this Amos as one of His prophets. Amos rebuked King Uzziah and his pagan priests for idolatry and dissuaded the people from worshiping the golden calves in Bethel, teaching them to worship the One Living God. When the chief pagan priest, Amaziah, persecuted Amos, he prophesied that the Assyrians would conquer Israel, that they would slay the king and the sons of Amaziah, and that the Assyrian soldiers would defile Amaziah's wife before his eyes because he had led the people into adultery with idols. All of this later came to pass. The son of the pagan priest struck the prophet on the forehead with his staff so forcefully that he fell down. Barely alive, Amos was brought to his village of Thecua, where he surrendered his holy soul to God. Amos lived in the eighth century before Christ.

The Great-martyr Lazar, Prince of Serbia

Lazar was one of the Serbian noblemen who ruled the Serbian empire after the death of Tsar Dušan. After the death of Tsar Uroš, Patriarch Ephraim crowned Lazar as the Serbian Tsar. Lazar sent a delegation with the monk Isaiah to Constantinople to implore the patriarch to lift the anathema from the Serbian people. He fought against the Turkish powers on several occasions. Finally, on June 15/28, 1389, he clashed with the Turkish Emperor Amurat at Kosovo Polje [the Field of Blackbirds], where he was beheaded. His body was translated to and interred in Ravanica, the monastery he founded near Æuprija, and was later translated to [New] Ravanica in Srem, and from there, during the Second World War (1942), it was translated to Belgrade and placed in the Cathedral Church of the Holy Archangel Michael, where it rests today incorrupt, extending comfort and healing to all those who turn to him with prayer. St. Lazar restored the monasteries of Hilandar [Mount Athos] and Gornjak. He built Ravanica and Lazarica [in Kruševac] and was a benefactor of the Russian Monastery of St. Panteleimon [Mount Athos] as well as many other churches and monasteries.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE: 2009 Diocesan Summer Camp Week Three is Full!

Registrations will no longer be accepted for Camp Week Three that takes place from July 26 to August 1. Registrations are still being accepted for the week of July 12-18 and the week of July 19-25; forms can be downloaded from www.campstsava.org. Reverend clergy, please include this notice in your parish bulletin/announcements.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT to be part of the *Western American Diocese 2009 Annual*

Submit an ad or greeting form to the Diocesan office by June 15th for inclusion in the beautiful, full-color publication from our own Sebastian Press that will be available during the Diocesan Days weekend, September 4-6, 2009, at the St. Sava Mission in Jackson, CA.

Mark your calendars for Diocesan Days, September 4-6, 2009

Follow this link for information on the 13th Annual Diocesan Days:

http://www.westsrbdio.org/Diocesan_Days/Diocesan_Days_2009/xhtml/index.html

Historical Decision Concerning the Serbian Orthodox Church in North & South America

The Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, during its regular session on 21 May 2009, based on a recommendation of the Episcopal Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, relative to the restructuring of the existing Dioceses in North and South America, rendered the following decision confirming the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, according to which the Dioceses of our Church on that territory will be restructured:

1. THE METROPOLITANATE OF LIBERTYVILLE-CHICAGO, with its see at the

Monastery of St. Sava in Libertyville (encompassing the Monastery of St. Sava in Libertyville and the Cathedral Church of the Holy Resurrection with its three parishes), whose Metropolitan shall be the President of the Episcopal and Central Church Councils and the Clergy-Laity Assembly, and therefore the ex officio representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church on that territory.

2. THE DIOCESE OF NEW GRACANICA-MIDWESTERN AMERICA, with its see at the Monastery of New Gracanica (encompassing all the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries in Chicago - save the Holy Resurrection Cathedral - and the other Midwestern American States of the previous Metropolitanate of Midwestern American, as well as all of the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of the previous Metropolitanate of Midwestern America).

3. THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN AMERICA, with its see in Pittsburgh/Mars (encompassing all of the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the current Eastern American Diocese and the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of Eastern America).

4. THE DIOCESE OF WESTERN AMERICA, with its see in Los Angeles/Alhambra (encompassing all of the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the current Western American Diocese and the Church-School Congregations, and Parishes of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of Western America).

5. THE DIOCESE OF CANADA, with its see in Toronto/Milton (encompassing all of the Church-School Congregations, Parishes and Monasteries of the current Canadian Diocese and the Church-School Congregations and Parishes of the previous Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate on the territory of Canada). With this decision on the said redistribution, Article 8 of the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, and by it the previous titles "Metropolitanate of Midwestern America" and the "Diocese for America and Canada of the New Gracanica Metropolitanate" cease to exist, and the new borders for these Dioceses of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America are rendered effective.