

## Slava Celebration in Austintown, Ohio



The parish Slava is the Great Feast of Pentecost. The Slava celebration was iconic of the call to unity with the Holy Trinity, the Church, and its people in the feast of Pentecost in three ways.

The first was the celebration of the Great Feast of Pentecost with Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church on Laird Ave. in Youngstown OH. The church on Laird is historic as it is one of a few churches consecrated by St. Mardarije of Libertyville and All America; First Serbian Orthodox Bishop of America that is still in the possession of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The parishes on Laird and Racoon Rd. share this celebration in order to increase the bonds Christian love, fellowship and unity between the two parishes.

The second and third are expressed in the kontakion of Pentecost: "When the most High came down and confused the tongues, He divided the nations; But when he

distributed the tongues of fire He called all to unity. Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All-holy Spirit!"; and a quote from St. Ignatius of Antioch: "Wherever the bishop appears, there let the people be, even as wheresoever Christ Jesus is, there is the Church".

People and clergy gathered around His Grace Bishop Irinej, Serbian Orthodox Bishop of Eastern America, for this Slava celebration from Monastery St. Mark, Sheffield Lake, OH; Monastery New Marcha, Richfield, OH; St. Sava Cathedral, Parma, OH; St. Elijah, Warren OH; Holy Trinity, Laird Ave. Youngstown, OH; St. George, Hermitage, PA; Holy Resurrection, Steubenville, OH; and Holy Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ Russian Orthodox Church. Youngstown, OH.

His Grace Bishop Irinej concelebrated the Holy Hierarchical Liturgy with V. Rev. Archimandrite Leontije [Alavanja] (Monastery St. Mark), V. Rev. Protosindjel Sava [Medakovic] (temporary priest, Holy Trinity, Raccoon Rd.), V. Rev. Protonamesnik Bosko Stojanovic (Holy Trinity, Laird), Rev. Fr. Vedran Grabic (Hermitage), and V. Rev. Protodeacon Dr. Jovan Anicic (Diocesan Director of Christian Education).

A combined choir from both Holy Trinity Churches, St. George-Hermitage, and St. Sava Cathedral sang the responses to the liturgical services. Adam Vlainic of St. Sava Cathedral directed the combined choir.

His Grace Bishop Irinej gave an inspiring sermon the topic of the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life and the Breath of Life. He stated that the word used in Hebrew for breath, when God breathes life into Adam in Genesis, is also the same word for the Holy Spirit. The sermon emphasized that the Holy Spirit cannot be seen but much like the wind the Holy Spirit can be seen by the visible effects of Its action.

The Slava Cross procession was performed. The Holy Gospel was read at each point of the cross around the outside by His Grace Bishop Irinej, Fr. Michael Lillie (Nativity Russian Orthodox Church), Fr. Boško Stojanovic and Fr. Vedran Grabic read the Holy Gospels. Fr. Michael joined the celebration at the cross procession after celebrating Liturgy in his assigned parish.

After the procession His Grace blessed the kolivo and slavski kolac. The domacin (host), of the Slava. Stephen Bevan, his wife Vesna, and their daughter Mya passed down a portion of the kolac to Heather Jasmina Folkwein. Heather will serve as the domacin (host) for next year's slava celebration.

The liturgy was then concluded with the final blessing of His Grace Bishop Irinej and the veneration of the cross.

The celebration was continued in the parish hall with a delicious festal meal prepared by the parish's Circle of Serbian Sisters lead by their president Mira Popovic. During the meal the newly ordained parish priest, Fr. Stefan Djoric, of Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Church in Stubenville, OH joined the celebration.

His Grace Bishop Irinej was welcomed to the parish by the parish board president Mr. Gradimir Stanic and Fr. Sava during the festal meal. It was expressed to His Grace the extreme gratefulness of the parish for the efforts he undertook to come for the slava celebration of the parish. His Grace arrived in Youngstown in early hours of the morning due to His commitments in New York for the installment of new Greek Orthodox Archbishop Elpidorophoros on Saturday. His Grace stated that it was out of His paternal love and desire for fellowship with the faithful of his Diocese that he made these efforts.

His Grace concluded the festivities with the singing of folk songs with all those





