

## The Feast of the Nativity of Christ in New York & New Jersey



On Wednesday, January 6th, 2021, His Grace Bishop Irinej of Eastern America celebrated the Hierarchical Vesperal Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Conception of St. John the Baptist in Paterson, New Jersey. Concelebrating with the Bishop were Protopresbyter Djokan Majstorovic, Presbyter Lavrentije Soper and Protodeacon Milos Zdralic.

That evening, the Eve of the Nativity of Christ, Bishop Irinej was joined in the celebration of the Christmas Vigil by Protopresbyter Milan Dragovic and Protodeacon Milos Zdralic, for the New York Serbian Community of Saint Sava Cathedral at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander, Crown Princess Katherine and Prince Dushan join the faithful of the local community in worship.

Assisting the Bishop and concelebrating clergy in serving in the altar and chanting the responses were students of Theology, members of the Diocesan staff, and members of the St. Sava Cathedral Choir, together with Cathedral altar servers.

At the conclusion of the Vigil Service, and the blessing of the Badnjak (oak) branches, decoratively tied together with straw, the Badnjak – Yule Tree was brought into the church, where it was blessed and anointed with traditional greetings, to the singing of “Oj Badnjace, Badnjace” (“O Yule Tree, Yule Tree”).

Following the service, the Archpastoral Message of His Grace Bishop Irinej was read in both the Serbian and English languages.

The following day, on Christmas Day, January 7th, 2021, the Festal Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated by His Grace together with Protopresbyter Milan Dragovic and Protodeacon Milos Zdralic, for the New York Serbian Community of Saint Sava Cathedral at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church.

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, the Encyclical of the Holy Synod of Bishops was read in both Serbian and English.

Despite the present pandemic, which restricted our numbers, the many who came to the Festal Services of Christmas, were filled with happiness and fellowship in Christ, led by our Bishop and father, that imbued in everyone the joy of the Nativity of Christ!

Peace of God – Christ is Born!

Мир Божји – Христос се роди!































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