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MONUMENT TO ST. SYMEON THE MYRRH-GUSHER (STEFAN NEMANJA) UNVEILED IN BELGRADE (+VIDEO)



This is not just an act of unveiling a monument to our father, the creator of our state, a saint, and the one from whom it all began. This is an act of taking care of ourselves, our identity, what we have learned, what we know, and where we are going. Long live Serbia!” said Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić at the unveiling of a monument to Grand Prince Stefan Nemanja in Belgrade yesterday.

The 75-ft. high, 76-ton statue stands in the center of Belgrade, outside the old railroad station, depicting the father of the medieval Nemanji

Dynasty with a sword in his right hand and the charter of the Athonite Hilandar Monastery in his left, reports N1.

Instead of a typical pedestal, St. Symeon stands on a cracked Byzantine helmet, which was installed last May. Four large reliefs depict the lineage of the saint’s dynasty.

Stefan Nemanja (c. 1113-1199) was the Grand Prince of the Serbian Grand

Principality from 1166 to 1196 and is remembered for founding what evolved into the Serbian Empire, as well as the autocephalous Serbian Church. In 1196, he abdicated the throne and became a monk on Mt. Athos. Together with his son, St. Sava, the first Archbishop of the Serbian Church, he restored Hilandar monastery, the Athonite cradle of the Serbian Church. He is venerated as St. Symeon the Myrrh-Gusher, under the name he took in monasticism.

The new monument to the great statesman and saint is the work of Russian sculptor and academician Alexander Rukavishnikov.

It is “the great story about us (the Serbs), which is big, difficult because the story about us was often difficult. This monument is as beautiful as the story about us is beautiful... This monument is big because it’s the story about us, about who we were, where we were, what we did and what we are today and what we want to be,” President Vučić said at the opening ceremony.

The figure of St. Symeon dominates the St. Sava Square on which it stands and overlooks the massive St. Sava’s Cathedral.

“Standing here means repentance for all the years during which we forgot it, but also the awareness that we have finally discovered the root from which the most beautiful tree called Serbia originated,” the President said.

“Pray to God for us, Blessed Simeon, that your flock may be preserved inviolable! Glory to thee! Long live Serbia!” the President concluded his address.

Watch a video of the whole ceremony:

orthochristian.com