10/02/2019

Spectacular St. Sava Celebration in Washington



Over the weekend of February 2-3, 2019, the St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church community of Washington, DC celebrated St. Sava in a spectacular fashion. This two-day celebration was one for the history books in this parish, as it was dually the largest event the St. Luke parish has hosted in many years and the first time that allSerbian organizations in the greater Washington area came together to celebrate St. Sava in at least nine years.

The weekend began on Saturday, February 2 with our second annual Svetosavska Akademija celebration. The St. Luke community was especially honored to have many dignitaries in attendance, including His Grace our Bishop + Irinej of Eastern America, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Alexander and Princess Katherine of Serbia, His Excellency Djerdj Matkovic, Ambassador of Serbia and his wife Vera, Maryland Deputy Secretary of State Luis Borunda, The Honorable Jelena McWilliams, Chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and many other guests who traveled far and wide to attend this magnificent celebration.

After the introduction of our honored guests, St. Luke’s Serbian Singing Society

“Lira” led with the singing of the Lord’s Prayer (Oce Nas) and the National Anthems of Serbia, Republika Srpska and the United States. The opening portion of the evening concluded with Lira and the St. Luke Children’s Choir leading the crowd in the singing of Uskliknimo s Ljubavlju Svetitelju Savi – Ode to St. Sava. It was quite miraculous to hear the nearly 400 people in attendance singing along to honor our St. Sava. After this, welcoming remarks were provided by parish priest Rev. Dr. Vasilije Vranic and Milan Visnick, Vice President of the Parish Trusteeship.

Following the opening portion of the program, a scrumptious dinner prepared by the St. Luke Circle of Serbian Sisters “Mala Gospoinja” was served. During dinner, the Bay Strings Quartet provided musical interludes. Afterwards the program commenced, with remarks by many of the dignitaries in attendance and performances by Serbian Singing Society Lira, St. Luke Children’s Folklore Group, St. Luke Sunday School, St. Luke Children’s Choir, pianist Milica Sekulic, “Nikola Tesla” Serbian School, Serbian Cultural Center “Opancici”, “Serbiana” Chamber Ensemble, and “Prelo” folklore ensemble of St. Luke.

At the conclusion of the program, after His Grace led the audience in the singing of “Dostojno Jest” – the Hymn to the Mother of God, His Grace and Their Royal Highnesses led the audience in Kraljevo Kolo (or the King’s Kolo); hundreds packed the dance floor.

After a busy Saturday evening, the celebration continued on Sunday, February 3. The morning started with the Hierarchial Divine Liturgy served by His Grace Bishop Irinej, Fr. Vasilije Vranic, and Protodeacon Milos Zdralic. Their Royal Highnesses Prince Alexander and Princess Katherine were also in attendance. After the Liturgy, children from St. Luke presented their traditional recitations in honor of St. Sava, followed by a lunch hosted by the Circle of Serbian Sisters.

In all, the Washington-area Serbian community celebrated St. Sava in grand fashion over the course of this weekend. It was the first time in recent history that an event hosted by St. Luke church was “sold out”. Many parishioners of St. Luke worked diligently to ensure that this event was truly a success. Special thanks are due to event co-chairs Mark Rasevic and Ana Lojanica and their committee members Drina Vlastelic Rajic, Dobrila Nina Lojanica, and Fr. Vasije Vranic for their hard work in executing this event. The St. Luke community also wishes to thank all of those who participated and attended our Svetosavka Akademija event. If you missed it, we hope you are able to join us next year!

(Source: Eastern American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Chruch)