22/10/2021

CSS PATRONAL FEAST AND BEGINNING OF SCHOOL YEAR IN NEW YORK CITY



On Sunday, October 17, the 17th Sunday after Pentecost, the faithful of the Cathedral of St. Sava in New York City gathered around their hierarch and celebrated the Patronal Feast – Slava of the Circle of Serbian Sisters (CSS) – the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos and the beginning of the school year. Out of his great Achpastoral sense of love and concern for the faithful in New York City, His Grace Bishop Irinej of Eastern America, celebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with the concelebration of Economos Milan Dragovic, at St. Eleftherios Greek Orthodox Church in Manhattan.

Added to this double celebration was the Baptism of Luka Antic with the liturgical act of Chrismation at the hand of the His Grace Bishop Irinej. During the singing of “As many as have been baptized into Christ”, the Bishop invited the children who

were present to join the newly baptized and anointed Luke and his Godfather in the triple procession around the Gospel and the baptismal font, to the great joy of all present.

During the Divine Liturgy, the parable of the faith of the Canaanite woman was read from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew. His Grace Bishop Irinej then addressed a large number of present faithful and in his God-inspired sermon referred to the deeper meaning of the passage read from the Holy Gospel.

Interpreting the parable, Bishop Irinej asked the question: “What is the lesson of today’s gospel reading for all of us?” Answering the question, Bishop Irinej emphasized: “This parable is perfect for the first day of the school year because every person has a God-given intuition and must allow their intuition to speak. However, there a process in education that leads us from intuitive knowledge to cognitive knowledge. For us in the church, this process is not just education but enlightenment, so that we can enlighten our children, enlighten ourselves, and enlighten others. Namely, when we add light, we do not add something, but we add someone, we add Jesus Christ, Who is the light of this world. ”

Following the Prayer behind the Ambo, surrounded by children and faithful people, Bishop Irinej read the Prayer for the Beginning of the School Year. Following the prayer, the children had the opportunity to witness and partake of the blessing the *Slava* gifts of Wheat – *Koljivo*, wine, and Festal Bread – *Slavski kolach* and, to their great joy, turning the bread together. The children watched with delight as the Bishop and the hostess – *Kuma* of the *Slava*, Danijela Mijovic, broke the bread, and as Jelena Rabrenovic accepted to be the hostess for the following year, by receiving a quarter of the blessed bread from the hands of this year’s hostess.

Following the Divine Liturgy, Fr. Milan introduced the gathered faithful, the church school teachers for the New York parish, graduate theologians, Messrs. Srdjan Maksimovic and Nebojsa Varagic, as well as Mrs. Aleksandra Mihajlovic from Pancevo, an educator and lecturer of Serbian language and history from the virtual school “Sava”. Mrs. Mihajlovic also addressed all those present and briefly

presented her school program and the books she authored, which she plans to include in the aforementioned academic program.



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