

## U.S. NATIONAL *Prayer Breakfast*

by Milos Rastovic

*"Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 7:12, 22:37-40.*

People can better understand each other if they nurture a deeper relationship, trust and confidence among them. The National Prayer Breakfast attempts to strengthen the relationships and deeper understanding through our love of God.

On February 5 – 7, 2019, as a guest of Mike Doyle, U.S. Representative of 18th District of Pennsylvania, I was honored to attend the 67th Annual National Prayer Breakfast at the International Ballroom, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. On the first Thursday in February each year, members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives organize the National Prayer Breakfast in order to reaffirm their faith in God and encourage the power of prayer with others throughout the world. This year, there were more than 3,000 people from the United States present and from more than 130 countries in the world. Clergy, missionaries, businessmen, politicians, scientists, artists, athletes, teachers, students, doctors, and other professionals from the U.S. and the world gather together to build and develop their friendship and deepen their love for God, which can strengthen ties among nations and promote peace among them.

From the first National Prayer Breakfast in 1953 when President Dwight D. Eisenhower was present, American presidents have participated in the National Prayer Breakfast. This year, President Donald J. Trump appeared for the third time along with other representatives of the current administration including Vice-President Mike Pence, and Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo. Among the guests who were also present: Rabbi Ovadia Goldman, Executive Director, Chabad Community Center for Jewish Life and Learning; His Excellency Manuel Espina, Ambassador of Guatemala to the United States; and Gary Haugen, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, International Justice Mission.

On behalf of Republic of Serbia were Their Royal



Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Aleksandar and Crown Princess Katherine with Milos Rastovic, SNF Cultural Outreach Coordinator



The Mansion House of George Washington at Mount Vernon

Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander and Crown Princess Katherine Karadjordjevic among others. I enjoyed and was honored to pray at the table with people from different parts of the United States as well as international people such as Her Excellency Emily Haber, German Ambassador to the United States.

After a warm welcome message from The Honorable Christopher Coons, and James Lankford, U.S. Senators from Delaware and Oklahoma to all participants, we prayed to strengthen our ties with friends, neighbors, and nations. Throughout

the hall, there was a common feeling of tranquility of spirit and common spiritual voice for peace and understanding among people. During prayer and in later conversation, we found common commitments to the ultimate values of goodness and caring of one another. During the breakfast, music was performed by Chris Tomlin.

Keynote speaker Gary Haugen, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of International Justice Mission highlighted the need of "doing good" and "holy faithfulness of God." He said, "In order to pursue the good, we have to actually believe that the good will ultimately prevail...God worked through great heroes to bring waves of freedom, prosperity, and justice like the world had ever known...We all would readily agree that slavery is evil and should not be tolerated...But few of us may know that there are actually more people in slavery today than in any other time in history... If we all do our part, all of us, to raise our voices and to raise the resources, millions of God's children can note the freedom for which they are made."<sup>1</sup>

President Trump welcomed the faithful and all other leaders throughout the globe who "shared belief in the glory of God and the power of prayer."<sup>2</sup> He stressed that "there is no limit to what we can achieve if we follow the path of cooperation, compromise, and the common good...When we open our hearts to faith, we fill our hearts with love. America is a nation that believes in redemption. Every day, the people in this room demonstrate the power of faith to transform lives, heal communities, and lift up the forgotten. As part of our commitment to building a just and loving society, we must build a culture that cherishes the dignity and sanctity of innocent human life. All children, born and unborn, are made in the holy image of God. Every life is sacred, and every soul is a precious gift from Heaven."<sup>3</sup> The closing prayer was made by The Honorable Chris Coons and James Lankford.

The event runs three days during which attendees have meetings, seminars, and luncheons. For instance, one of the luncheons was dedicated to the representatives from the Balkan region at which they could introduce each other and develop relationships. I was present at the seminars and listened to the speakers discuss their life experience and faith.

If our life is based on love of God and care for

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1. The Christian Post, "National Prayer Breakfast keynote: Don't let 'tribal divisions' stop you from pursuing the good." <https://www.christianpost.com/news/national-prayer-breakfast-keynote-dont-let-tribal-divisions-stop-you-from-pursuing-the-good.html> February 7th, 2019.

2. The White House, "Remarks by President Trump at the 2019 National Prayer Breakfast:" <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-2019-national-prayer-breakfast/> March 14, 2019.

3. The White House, "Remarks by President Trump at the 2019 National Prayer Breakfast:" <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-2019-national-prayer-breakfast/> March 14, 2019.

## ► SRBO ON THE ROAD

Nancy Roknich and her daughter Andrea Beric recently spent some time in Las Vegas, staying at the Bellagio Hotel. "While there, we took a picture with the *American Srbobran* in the Bellagio Conservatory and Botanical Garden." Nancy is doing her part by sending this in for publication as she says she always enjoys "seeing where the Srbo goes next!" So do we, and we appreciate Nancy and Andrea taking the time to send it. They are both members of SNF Lodge 16 "King Peter II" in Merrillville, Indiana.



## CONVENTION INFORMATION

### Attention Lodge Officers:

A letter with information about the 2019 - 23rd SNF Quadrennial Convention, and election of delegates was sent to each Lodge on Friday, March 22, 2019. If your lodge officer or contact person does not receive a packet of information, please call the SNF Home Office at 412-458-5227. Thank you.

**NEXT ISSUE APRIL 17th**

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The Mansion House of George Washington at Mount Vernon



The Washington Tomb

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each other, our spirit will achieve the highest moral values of honesty, sincerity, and goodness. This commitment can be a great deed in our and others' lives. One of the great leaders, George Washington (1732 – 1799), the First President of the United States, expressed the necessity of God with the following words:

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Government; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow citizens of the United States at large..."

I had an opportunity to visit the home of George Washington and museum at Mount Vernon. It was interesting to see his whole property such as seed and green house, shoemaker's shop, blacksmith shop, botanical garden, salt house, kitchen, smokehouse, wash house, coach house, stable, ice house, slave cabin and other parts of the estate. In 1761, he gained full ownership of this property. In 1789, he



The Coach House

became the first President of the United States under the U.S. Constitution in New York, NY. After his presidency, he returned to his home at Mount Vernon in 1797. Two years later, he died at Mount Vernon on December 14. George Washington as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army and one of the writers of the Constitution made a great contribution to the founding of the United States. He was buried next to his wife Martha and other family members in the Tomb at Mount Vernon.



Sculptures of George Washington and his wife Martha with children at the Entrance of the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center at Mount Vernon