

National Prayer Breakfast

2018



THE CAPITOL HILL DOME



MILOS RASTOVIC, CULTURAL
OUTREACH COORDINATOR
OF THE SNF, AT CAPITOL HILL

by Milos Rastovic

On the first Thursday in February of each year, Members of the Congress of the United States of America organize the National Prayer Breakfast in order to reaffirm their faith in God and encourage the power of prayer with others throughout the world. Every year, the words of the Apostle Paul inspire attendants:

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

continued on page 8

79TH ANNUAL SNF BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT June 1-2 • Milwaukee, Wisconsin



SNF BASKETBALL NEWS Milwaukee's World Famous Cultural Center Gym

by MaryAnn Lindberg

With another tournament coming up in Milwaukee June 1-2, we thought we'd share some background on the gym that made St. Sava's famous.

In the 1970s the baby boom was in full swing and the St. Sava parish was expanding rapidly with young people. A new facility to host social gatherings and to pro-

vide space for youth activities was needed. Milan Damjanovich and Emil Prodanovich had returned from the SNF Basketball Tournament with \$1500 remaining from the travel account for the Milwaukee teams.

They presented this to the Board to help kick off fundraising for a new gymnasium so that Milwaukee could host tournaments and have a place for our youth to congregate. Milan, who was serving as Athletic Director at the time, also volunteered to serve as Chairman of the building

committee.

At the semi-annual meeting in July 1971, architects showed plans for the New Cultural Center, which would greatly expand the original school and administrative building constructed in the late 1950s. After the vote to proceed, Ilija Potkonjak became the first and youngest (at 11 years old) parishioner to donate, with a five-dollar gift. The blessing of the cornerstone took place on June 4, 1972. The main speaker at the

continued on page 15



NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST 2018

continued from page 1

On February 6 – 8, 2018, I was honored to attend the 66th Annual National Prayer Breakfast at the International Ballroom in the Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. as a guest of The Honorable Mike Doyle, U.S. Representative of the 14th District of Pennsylvania. This year there were more than 3,000 people from the United States and more than 140 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 Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States was present at the event, American presidents have participated in the National Prayer Breakfast. This year, Mr. Donald J. Trump appeared for the second time as President of the United States along with other representatives of the U.S. Administration such as Rex W. Tillerson, Secretary of State, and Jared Kushner, Senior Adviser to the President, along with his wife, Ivanka Trump. Other guests who were also present: Jeannette Kagame, First Lady of Rwanda; Major Scott Smiley, the first blind officer in the U.S. army; Rabbi Marvin Hier, Dean and Founder of Simon Wiesenthal Center; and the Honorable David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Program.

Representatives of the Republic of Serbia and the Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina were present along with H.E. Djerdj Matkovic, Serbian Ambassador to the United States; Ivica Dacic, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Government of the Republic of Serbia; Vladimir Marinkovic, Deputy Speaker of the Serbian National Assembly; Meho Mahmutovic, State Secretary of the Serbian Ministry of Health; Zeljka Cvijanovic, Prime Minister of the Republic of Srpska; and Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander and Crown Princess

Katherine Karadjordjevic. I enjoyed and was honored to pray at the table with The Honorable Mike Doyle, U.S. Representative of the 14th District of Pennsylvania, and other representatives from the United States, Russia, and Australia.

After welcome messages from The Honorable Charlie Crist and Randy Hultgren, U.S. Representatives from Florida and Illinois, we prayed to strengthen our ties with friends, neighbors, and nations. Throughout the hall, there was a common feeling of tranquility of spirit and a 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 Matthew West. Rabbi Marvin Hier, Dean and Founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, delivered the address calling on us: "The great blessing of life is every man's ability to turn the imposed fate he is born with into destiny; to convert life's seemingly unalterable challenges into God given opportunities" as Simon Wiesenthal did. He reminded participants of the deeds of Simon Wiesenthal and of the holocaust during World War II: "I'll always remember what he [Simon Wiesenthal] said at the celebration of his 90th birthday at the Imperial Hotel in Vienna. Hundreds of people attended the event and when he got up to speak he said, 'I never celebrate my birthday but today is different, you know why I'm here – I chose this hotel because it was Hitler's favorite and he and Himmler had permanent suites here, but I wanted to come here to show the world that his thousand year Third Reich is no more, but we, the survivors (the Jews) he wanted to exterminate are still here singing and dancing even in Hitler's favorite hotel!'"¹ He concluded with the following words: "May God allow each of us to reach our fullest potential by converting our fate into destiny for the betterment of mankind."

President Trump welcomed the faithful and all other leaders throughout the globe and stressed that "America is a

nation of believers, and together we are strengthened by the power of prayer." He reminded attendants that "faith is the central to American life and liberty. Our founders invoked our Creator four times in the Declaration of Independence... Our rights are not given to us by man; our rights come from our Creator. No matter what, no Earthly force can take those rights away...As long as we open our eyes to God's grace and open our hearts to God's love, and then America will forever be the land of the free, the home of the brave, and a light unto all nations."²

The keynote speaker, The Honorable Steve Scalise, U.S. Representative from Louisiana, highlighted his faith for God, which helped him to survive after being shot last year. During a practice for the congressional charity baseball game, he was shot and wounded on the field. The first thing that he had done was to pray: "I just started praying. I said, 'I'm going to put this in God's hands.'" Carson Wentz, a quarterback from the Philadelphia Eagles, also spoke about how his faith in God helped him to recover from a knee injury. The closing prayer was made by The Honorable Val Demings, U.S. Representative from Florida.

The National Prayer Breakfast is only one part of the event. The whole event runs three days, during which attendees have meetings, seminars, luncheons, and dinners. I was present at the Congressional Dinner where I met congressmen and other representatives from throughout the United States. A group from Pennsylvania sponsored a tour of Capitol Hill. At Capitol Hill I learned more about the history of the United States and struggles for U.S. independence. I enjoyed the stories about the founding fathers who led the American Revolution against the British Empire.

One of the luncheons was dedicated to the representatives from the Balkan region at which they could all meet each other. Representatives from Serbia and the Republic of Srpska were present at this luncheon where they had an opportunity to develop relationships with other

members of the region. The International Friend Group sponsored a panel with people who use phones and internet to spread the word about Jesus throughout the world. It was very inspirational to hear how people from different continents and countries speak once a week on-line about their faith and love of God, which helps them to build their own lives. If our life is based on love of God and care for 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.

The following words were expressed by some great leaders:

"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God...Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!" Abraham Lincoln

"In extracting the pure principles which Jesus thought, we should have to strip off the artificial vestments in which they have been muffled...there will be found remaining the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man." *Thomas Jefferson*

"No greater thing could come to our land today than a revival of the spirit of religion – a revival that would sweep through the homes of the Nation and stir the hearts of men and women of all faiths to a re-assertion of their belief in God and their dedication to His will for themselves and for their world. I doubt if there is any problem – social, political or economic – that would not melt away before the fire of such a spiritual awakening." *Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

1. Simon Wiesenthal Center. "Rabbi Marvin Hier: Only Clergy to Speak at National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C." <http://www.wiesenthal.com/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=IsKWLBpJLn-F&b=8776547&ct=15011963>. Downloaded on February 19, 2018.

2. White House. "Remarks by President Trump at 66th Annual National Prayer Breakfast." <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-66th-annual-national-prayer-breakfast/>. Downloaded on February 19, 2018.

**SNF THREE DAY
WEEKEND
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
JULY 20-22, 2018**

FISH FRY PLANNED

St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church will have a Fish Fry every Friday through April 7 from 12 PM to 6 PM at 901 Hartman Street, McKeesport, PA. The menu includes a fish sandwich for \$8, baked or fried fish or shrimp dinner for \$10. Dinners include Spanish rice, French fries or Haluski, coleslaw, coffee or tea and dessert for dine-in or take-out. Homemade soups, baked goods, nut rolls, palachinka and strudels will also be available. Call 412-664-0820 for more information. Proto Stevo Rocknage and the St. Sava Executive Board welcome everyone to join them at the Friday Fish Fry for good food and fellowship.



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FROM LEFT: VLADIMIR MARINKOVIC, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE SERBIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, MILOS RASTOVIC, CULTURAL OUTREACH COORDINATOR OF THE SNF, AND THE HONORABLE MIKE DOYLE, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE OF THE 14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IN PENNSYLVANIA



MILOS RASTOVIC, LEFT, WITH IVICA DACIC, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, AND H.E. DJERDJ MATKOVIC, AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA TO THE UNITED STATES

MOSAIC IN DOME OF ST. SAVA-VRACAR

Completed

BELGRADE – As reported on B92.net, the installation of the central composition of the mosaic on the inside of the 65-meter tall dome of the Church of St. Sava in Belgrade has been completed.

The mosaic depicts the Ascension of Jesus Christ. It was made in Moscow, a compilation of the work of 90 artists led by Nikolai Mukhin of the Russian Academy of the Arts. According to the report published on February 20, it took one year to complete. The mosaic weighs 40 tons and was delivered to Belgrade in special trucks. The value is at least 4 million euros, and was financed by Gazprom Neft, Russia's energy giant.

Although the mosaic will be officially

unveiled in the coming days by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, b92.net published photographs taken by Politika's photojournalist Zeljko Jovanovic.

The Cathedral Church of St. Sava in Belgrade's Vracar municipality is the largest Orthodox Church in Europe. Construction began in the 1930s on the site where occupying Ottoman Turks burned the relics of St. Sava (1175-1236) the founder and first patriarch of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church.

Link to photographs by Zeljko JOvanovic:
https://www.b92.net/eng/news/society.php?yyyy=2018&mm=02&dd=20&nav_id=103529

