



SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF CANADA  
ST. ARCHANGEL GABRIEL  
SERBIAN ORTHODOX PARISH, RICHMOND HILL, ONT.

СРПСКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЕПАРХИЈА КАНАДСКА  
СРПСКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ПАРОХИЈА  
СВ. АРХАНГЕЛА ГАВРИЛА, РИЧМОНД ХИЛ, ОНТ.



Issue 7, February 2021.

### Upcoming events:

Sunday Services at 8:30am and 10:00am (maximum 10 people)

Other days Service starts at 10:00am (maximum 10 people)

### Father Ljubo's note

Let us preserve our peace.

Dear brothers and sisters and dear parishioners,

It has been a year now since we have been hearing about the Covid 19 virus. No matter how we felt at the very beginning and at the first mention of this misfortune, I am sure that our opinion has by now changed. We can all agree that the mainstream media informs us in one and, it could be said, peculiar way, while from social media we hear and read about something completely different. Once again, it is up to us to seek out the truth. Let's read between the lines. I am of the opinion that it would be unreasonable and irresponsible to claim that the virus does not exist. Even some members of my extended family suffered from it: entire families were infected, but all, thank God, survived. The observance of the introduced measures was supposed to reduce the number of infected people, but the numbers have not changed for the better. At least that is what we have been told.

What can we do? We, for whom the Church is a part of life and an essential need, should respect the measures imposed by the authorities and at the same time strive to fulfill our Christian duties. Currently, a maximum of only ten people at a time are allowed in the chapel, regardless of its capacity, and we adhere to that limit. Thanks to our dear father Vasilije, who offered his help, we now serve two Divine Liturgies on Sundays. The first one starts at 8:30AM and the second at 10:00AM. This way we can accommodate twenty rather than just ten people. We also owe gratitude to the honest and good people, members of the Governing Board of our Parish, who invest their time and effort in the organization and fulfilment of everything that happens at our Church. They make and maintain the schedules, are on duty whenever needed, and find ways to meet each parishioner's needs and requests. I also thank all of you for your understanding and boundless patience. It is not easy to preserve one's peace. Unfortunately, we are also witnessing how some have lost their humility, or never really possessed it, and so they want to violate the prescribed measures by coming to the worship services unscheduled and unannounced, thus putting the parish in an awkward position. If, God forbid, the authorities happened to close-down our Church, these would simply go elsewhere, while we would be left with the consequences. Such a thing happened to an Orthodox community here recently.

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As for my pastoral visits, I leave it up to everyone to choose. Whoever is not afraid and wishes a priest to come over to their home, they should call me and I will come. I will not be calling anyone myself, because I do not want to cause any inconvenience to anyone. Some may be afraid, and yet it would be inconvenient for them to reject a priest. Hence, I will leave myself at the disposal of each of you.

We pray to the Lord to rectify this situation, that we return to a normal life, and that we may welcome the upcoming feast-days with less concern and more joy.

Protopriest Ljubomir Rajic

### President's Note

Peace from God!

"Here, the New Year is dawning on us. I would like to toast you on it. But I don't know how to toast it, when I see the dark clouds hovering over us, and not only hovering but descending on us?"

I began my address with these words of our martyr, Patriarch Varnava of blessed repose, spoken upon the Julian New Year of 1937 for several reasons. It is obvious that we are in dark times when the devil's disciples are trying at all costs to impose all rules of conduct and their value system. I am not even referring to pandemic situation here, when massive gatherings at a Costco are allowed, but not at our Church. Attacks on the family and everything that is traditional and moral are daily, and growing ever more intense. We have even arrived at the proposal in some of the highest political institutions on this planet to ban the use of words such as *mother, father, sister...* because these are not neutral enough. How could we ever turn *mother* into something neutral!?

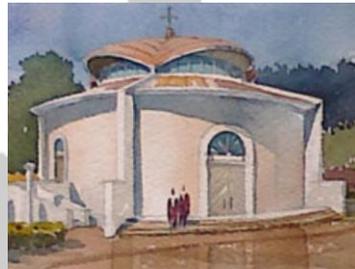
Another and equally important reason for these words of Patriarch Varnava is to understand that these are neither the first nor the most difficult times. As our forefathers would say "this will come to pass too", while our most important task at hand is to save our souls, honour and our families. We ought to gather at and hold on as firmly as possible to our Holy Church, which herself is a living testimony that even the most difficult tribulations can be overcome with a pure faith in the Lord our God. United we will more easily prevail over all these crises.

Although severely affected by the measures and prohibitions related to the pandemic, we are trying to function at our parish of St. Archangel Gabriel as best we can, while respecting the mentioned measures. Thanks to the efforts and the consideration of our priests, Father Ljubo and Father Vasilije (who, although retired, still comes to aid for our Parish), we have the ability to hold two Divine Liturgies every Sunday in order to accommodate as many faithful as possible to



come to Church and pray to God. Also, thanks to an exceptional group of volunteers and their efforts, we managed again this year to obtain and distribute the Badnjak (Yule log) branches on Christmas Eve day. Thank you all for helping your Church, because now we need all the help we can get.

With faith in God,  
Dragan Kosmajac  
President of the Governing Board



### Site Plan Update

Dear Brothers and Sisters – God's blessings!

Here is some good news in these troubled times. In early October of 2020 we submitted the completed documentation for the "Site Plan Approval" to the Richmond Hill City Planning Department. We hope that this will be the final version for this phase of the project and that after this documentation is reviewed, we will get the green light for the "Site Plan Agreement". As I have mentioned several times before, this is a contract with the city that we will build a church and arrange the landscape of the property according to the adopted documentation. At the same time, this is also the most complicated phase, because various city services have their own conditions, which, as we have seen, often require changes to be implemented. Especially since our property is in a zone that is subject to regulations for the protection of conservation areas (Toronto and Region Conservation Authority) due to the wetland directly behind our property.

I must repeat that when we signed this contract with the city of Richmond Hill, and in order to be able to submit the documentation for the building permit, we have also obliged ourselves to pay a deposit to the city as a guarantee that all external works will be completed according to the agreed upon documentation. The city of Richmond Hill will determine the amount of the deposit based on the estimate of works for the external installations and landscaping as per the submitted project. The deposit will be reimbursed to the parish once the city is satisfied that everything was done according to the contract.

With the hope that we are getting a step closer towards the construction of our long-awaited new church, we ask all brothers and sisters who want us to build a new place of worship to be more actively involved in the realization of our common plan and hope.

All the best to all,  
Vladimir Brkić



## Serbian School and Religious Education

Dear brothers and sisters, Christ is Born!

As it was reported in the September issue of our newsletter, with the easing of restrictions in the York region that month, we resumed with regular Sunday school classes for the youngest in our Church. Classes were held regularly after each Divine Liturgy on Sundays, with the prescribed precautions: all students wore masks on their faces and kept the prescribed distance. We continued with the Old Testament curriculum from where we left off in March, and we nearly completed the entire course until the introduction of the new restrictions on December 14th. Since then, we have not been able to hold classes. Also, since from the beginning of the new semester all children and their parents have been busy with online school work done from home, I did not want to burden them with any additional catechism lessons over the Internet. Of course, what has already been published on the website of our Parish is still available for all those interested to use at their discretion.

Unfortunately, this is the first time since we have begun with regular Sunday school at our parish that we did not mark St. Sava's day with a special event. In previous years, preparations for the play with recitations, playing of instruments, singing and dancing required a lot of effort from children and their parents, but every year upon St. Sava's day, the performances were always a major parish event where our children would show what they know and can do to the great delight of our parishioners. I am extremely sorry that we are prevented from doing it this time, but I hope that, with God's help, we will be able to make up next year for what we missed this year.

Nevertheless, in spite of these circumstances, I remind parents that it is important to ensure that their children keep reading biblical and other faith instructive stories, either in Serbian or English, using sources such as the "Orthodox Catechism in RS Schools" <https://www.vjeronauka.net/> and "Children's Bible Reader" <http://www.cbr.goarch.org>.

Anyone interested to learn more about our Sunday School for our youngest, or about the Youth Reading Club, please contact me directly at [zoranradisic@yahoo.com](mailto:zoranradisic@yahoo.com).

Yours in Christ,  
Zoran Radisic



Dear brothers and sisters,

This situation in which we are prevented from organizing lunches and other activities and events significantly reduces the revenue of the Parish, and thus we ask you all to help out:

- **One time** donations:
  - electronically by interac e-transfer via your online-banking services directed to [treasury@arhangelgavrilotoronto.com](mailto:treasury@arhangelgavrilotoronto.com)
  - by personal check, whether you bring it in person at church, or by mailing it to St. Archangel Gabriel Serbian Orthodox Church, 49 North Lake Rd, P.O. Box 2918, Richmond Hill, ON, L4E 1A8
- **Monthly**, by filling out one of the pre-authorization forms for automatic withdrawals from your account and bringing the form either in person to church or by mailing it to the address of our Parish.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Governing Board of St. Archangel Gabriel Parish in Richmond Hill

**The Parish Governing Board** would like to thank all supporters of St. Archangel Gabriel Serbian Orthodox Parish!

Your donation, monetary or in time volunteered, unselfish efforts and work with organizing events, is what helps us reach the next step in getting the building permit, maintaining the existing building and grounds and with God's help building of our church.

We need your ideas for events, discussions, fundraising and others.

You are very welcome to send it to [office@arhangelgavrilotoronto.com](mailto:office@arhangelgavrilotoronto.com)

For additional information you can visit our Parish Facebook page at [facebook](#) or on our website [www.arhangelgavrilotoronto.com](http://www.arhangelgavrilotoronto.com).

**IMPORTANT:**

- Services starts at 10:00am every Sunday and on Holydays
- Update your e-mail address or your friends to receive this Newsletter.
- Ask for your Tax Receipts to be e-mailed to you instead of being mailed.
- Confirm your mailing address and phone number, including mobile phone number if any changed in last 5 years.
- Thank you for considering the environment and saving money for papers, envelopes, stamps etc.

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