



ORTHODOX BISHOP OF WESTERN AMERICA
ПРАВОСЛАВНИ ЕПИСКОП ЗАПАДНОАМЕРИЧКИ
SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF WESTERN AMERICA

**TO THE CLERGY, MONASTICS, CHURCH-SCHOOL COMMUNITIES, AND THE
FAITHFUL OF THE ORTHODOX CANADIAN DIOCESE - THE SERBIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA**

Dear priests, members of Parish councils, faithful brothers and sisters in Christ!

With the blessing of His Holiness, Irinej, Serbian Patriarch and Administrator of the Diocese of Canada, it is my honor to address you on this exceptional occasion and share with you the most God-pleasing and most important news of the establishment of new feast days in the Calendar of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

As many of you may already know, the Holy Assembly of Hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church during its regular session on May 29, 2015, added the names of Bishop Mardarije (Uskokovich) of Libertyville, and Archimandrite Sebastian (Dabovich) of San Francisco and Jackson, clergymen and preachers of the Gospel, God-pleasing servants of holy life, and inspirers of many missionaries, to the Dyptich of Saints (Calendar of Saints) of the Orthodox Church. Glory to God! Once again, through the lives of these two saints, we see our Orthodox Church as a faith that produces holy persons, “enriches the world with saints” and insists on an ethos of holiness.

This is a wonderful blessing for all of us Orthodox Christians in America, and for the whole Orthodox Church throughout the world. When one thinks of the tremendous sacrifices that these two holy apostles made, and the many sorrows that they endured, one is especially gratified that they are now universally recognized as being among the Church’s luminaries. The feast of Holy Hierarch Mardarije will be celebrated on November 29/December 12, while that of Venerable Sebastian will be celebrated on November 17/30.

In agreement with the Episcopal Council of the Serbian Church in North and South America, the liturgical celebration of Holy Mardarije will be held in Chicago at the end of this year. The liturgical glorification of Holy Sebastian will be held at St Steven’s Cathedral in Alhambra, California, on September 5 and 6, 2015.

The Serbian Patriarch, His Holiness Irinej, is invited to lead the liturgical festivities, accompanied by the ruling hierarchs of the Orthodox Church in the USA, along with many civil dignitaries, special invited guests, and our faithful people.

It is an honor, dear Fathers and faithful, to be able to extend the invitation to prayerfully participate in this unique event on September 5 and 6 and celebrate these Serbian American Saints, commemorating the lives of Holy Enlighteners and Apostles of the Church in America.



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We believe that it is very important to live and act as one Church in North America, where the participation of priests and members of the Canadian Diocese in the life of our Church on this continent should be more visible and considerable. The celebration in Los Angeles is the first real opportunity to do that.

At the same time you are kindly asked to help in any way to encourage the clergy and faithful of your Diocese to respond to our invitation, thereby showing love for the New Saints as well as support the efforts of our Holy Serbian Church to celebrate the canonization of new Saints from our nation.

In the hope that you, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, will respond to our appeal and support this celebration by joining us at a most unique event and sharing in this great joy, please accept our gratitude in advance.

With love and esteem in Christ,

July 2, 2015, Los Angeles

Bishop Maxim of the Serbian Western American Diocese