

History of the St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church, Indianapolis, IN

The St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church of Indianapolis, Indiana was founded on March 12, 1950 by a committee of Serbian people meeting with Fr. Dushan Klipa of Sts. Peter and Paul Serbian Orthodox Church of South Bend, Indiana. The first Church officers were Milo Cvetkovich, President; Bob Medich, Vice-President; Sam Salatich, Secretary; Stojilko Yovanovich, Treasurer; and Marko Milatovich Sr. and Chet Tasich, Tutori. The first Church services were held in what was the Yugoslav National Home at 3626 West 16th Street, the gathering place for Serbian people from earlier times, but now converted to a Church and blessed by Rt. Rev. Bishop Dionisije. The first priest assigned to the parish was Father Zivojin Zdravkovich. Father Zdravkovich, a humble servant of God, served the parish faithfully and devotedly for 12 years. The Church which grew in membership over these many passing years, has had very able leadership with the following succeeding presidents: Milo Cvetkovich, Rade Popovich, Savo Kresojevich, Sam Salatich, Bob Medich, Mane Bubalo, Steve Petrovich, Vaso Kresojevich, Mita Garcev, Chet Tasich, Marko Radovanovich, Todor Stanjevich, Jim Tasich, Bob Foreman, Dorothy Milivojac, Mirko Milivojac, Steve Staletovich, Vera Schuster, Rick Suder, and currently Milan Milivojevic.

After Father Zdravkovich left the parish, the Church was served by the following Reverend Fathers: Rev. Vladimir Milinkovich, Very Rev. Dushan Petrovich, Rev. Stoiko Ilich, Very Rev. Varnava Jovanovich, Very Rev. Adrija Dimitrijevic, Rev. Borislav Yegarskij, Rev. Rade Filipovic, Rev. Radmilo Stokich, Rev. Mihailo Mikich, Rev. Alexander Mihajlovich, and currently Rev. Dragan Petrovic. The Church has been blessed by the services of these dedicated servants of God for our Holy Orthodox faith and our Serbian heritage.

As with all Christian churches, our Church has been fortunate to have the able and devoted support of our ladies' auxiliary organization, the Circle of Serbian Sisters, an organization actually founded in 1931, in the early days of our Serbian people coming to America and Indianapolis. The first president was Mary Petrovic, and through the years many other ladies have served to lead the Circle successfully as pillars of our Church and helped in the growth and progress of our parish.

The Church choir was founded in 1957 by the first Choir Director, Sam Salatich, a man very respected by all for his dedicated and loving work for our Church. The Church Choir was named the Yovan Duchich Choir by customarily taking the name of a famous Serbian writer, poet, and diplomat. Leadership was additionally placed in the hands of Choir Presidents, the first being Evelyn Petrovich. The Choir faithfully sings responses during the Holy Liturgy each Sunday and through the years has participated in choral concerts with fellow Serbian Orthodox Church Choirs nationally. The Choir also participates in local parish programs.

When the Church was founded in 1950, so was our first Church School, with teachers Steve Yerich, Dorothy Milivojac, and Yovanka Savich. Through the years the School has grown in number of students and teachers, as we strive to instill the meaning of the Holy Orthodox faith to all of our children. As part of Church School, we have established Serbian language classes and Serbian Folklore Dancing classes to help teach our children more about their rich Serbian culture and heritage.

The St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church parish is grateful to God Almighty and His Son, Lord Jesus Christ for its existence these past 50 and more years and will continue to serve Him and our Lord Jesus for many decades to come.