

## His Eminence +Christopher, Metropolitan of Libertyville-Chicago Fell Asleep in the Lord

Chicago, IL - On Wednesday, August 18, 2010, on the eve of the feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Old Calendar), His Eminence +Christopher, Metropolitan of Libertyville-Chicago, fell asleep in the Lord.

Funeral arrangements are forthcoming. Updates may be obtained from the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Eastern America website [here](http://www.easterndiocese.org/) <<http://www.easterndiocese.org/>> .

### **May his memory be eternal! Вечнаја памјат!**

From the [Holy Resurrection Cathedral web site](http://www.holyresurrectioncathedral.org/)  
<<http://www.sabornackva.org/news-events/metropolitan-christopher-reposes-in-thelord>> :

Born in Galveston, Texas, and baptized Velimir Kovacevich, the future Metropolitan Christopher was the ninth of twelve children of Serbian immigrant parents. After graduation from high school, he attended Nashotah House and graduated from St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Libertyville, Illinois. After marriage, he was ordained to the Diaconate and Priesthood. Continuing his education, he earned a B.A. (Philosophy), Master of Letters (History) at the University of Pittsburgh; the Master of Divinity from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, and completed courses and examinations for the doctorate at the Chicago Theological Seminary.

Father Velimir ministered to parishes in Pennsylvania and in Chicago, also serving as chaplain to four universities. He assisted his parishes to become bilingual in their worship and education programs, and at the same time he was active in the defense of unity and canonical order in his church during a period of schism. As a priest, he served as spiritual father, counselor, youth worker, administrator, educator, and, above all, in priestly ministry at the Holy Altar. Widowed in 1970, he is the father of four, as well as the grandfather of nine.

Elevated to the episcopate in 1978 by the Assembly of Bishops in Belgrade and tonsured with the monastic name of Christopher, he became the first American-born bishop to serve a diocese of his church in North America. As Bishop of Eastern America and Canada, he soon developed a diocesan-wide program in religious education. Active also in ecumenism, he has served on the joint commission of Orthodox and Roman Catholic bishops and on the Orthodox-Lutheran dialogue, and has represented his church at high levels in both the National and World Councils of Churches. In 1991, he was elevated to the rank of Metropolitan, thereby becoming Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the U.S. and Canada.

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The Serban Unity Congress is especially grieved. His Eminence has been supportive of the labors of the Serbian Unity Congress on behalf of the Serbian cause and that support was especially significant and personally active on two key and possibly fateful historical initiatives of the Serbian Unity Congress: a meeting with Secretary Albright and her staff in June 1999, when USA was just about to decide what to do with President Slobodan Milosevic and Serbia: and his subsequent and active participation at the



Sentandrea Sabor and its Declaration of Serbian unity of the opposition in the Homeland and in Diaspora. He was a sincerely devoted Serbian American who in the heart of his heart carried his love for the Serbian people and deep sadness for what took place between his two peoples (Serbs and Americans) during that difficult decade.

**May the Lord our God grant blessed repose and eternal rest to His Eminence Metropolitan Christopher.**