

Dear parishioners and friends of St. Jerome's!

This year Chicago will have its 100th grand celebration of Our Lady's greatest feast day: **Velika Gospa, Assumption Day**. The journey to August 15, 2006 began long ago; it has been a century-long, difficult but honorable pilgrimage. This year we remember in a special way the pioneering families who began celebrating Velika Gospa here – *even before they were able to found St. Jerome Croatian Parish in 1912*. Indeed, in a real sense, St. Jerome's foundation was built upon the determination of these pioneers to honor Mary on her great day. May their spirit give us new beginnings and new inspirations.



We invite you to participate in this year's events. We would be joyfully thankful if you would arrange to dedicate this holy day, August 15, 2006 for participating in our Procession, Mass and Festivities. This year, Mary's Assumption Day falls on a Tuesday. In Croatia it is a legal holiday. Here, however, we have to plan on taking the day off. Love and commitment always require some sacrifices.

- Our spiritual preparation starts with the **Novena**, beginning on Sunday, August 6 and continuing until Monday, August 14. Every evening the Masses will be at 7 p.m. Every Mass will feature a different priest and a new theme.
- The August 15th **Procession will begin at 10 a.m.** and will feature several knights of the "Sinjski Alkari," the famous horsemen in the Velika Gospa Procession of Sinj, Croatia. The Procession will include our schools, societies, clubs, 10 excellent marching bands (among whom will be the U.S. naval band) and hundreds of people like yourself who share in our community's spirit. To celebrate this 100th Procession, amazingly special fireworks are planned.
- As every year, we send you two raffle tickets (for a **Grand Prize of \$5,000**) that we hope you will sell or buy for yourself. The drawing will be at 10 p.m., August 15. Please return the filled-out coupons for the drawing and their payment to the Rectory. If you can sell more raffle tickets to friends and family, please contact our parish office at 312-842-1871.
- This will be a delicious celebration -- with many home-made specialties available, including barbecued lamb. A reminder: **please order whole or half lambs in advance.**
- Much entertainment, music and socializing await you! This year we will have many musical groups and singers for you to enjoy.
- Our parish has printed many beautiful postcards that you can get free from the parish office and mail to your family and friends as an invitation/reminder-to-come to these events.

*Looking forward to enjoying a great day with you,
we are your always-thankful Franciscan Friars,*

Fr. Joe Grbes & Fr. Ivan Strmecki

Chicago, July 2006