

## The Feast of Saint Seraphim

OUR PARISH CELEBRATES the memory of Saint Seraphim of Sarov on January 2 (repose) and on July 19 (glorification). Since our church bears the name of this magnificent and universally venerated Saint (and by extension, St. Seraphim is patron for each one of us), the day and evening before are kept with special solemnity and Paschal joy.

The celebration will begin at **6:15 PM, July 18**, with the serving of the festal Vigil. We are expecting His Grace, Vladyka Daniel (yes, Bishop of Santa Rosa!) to serve the Vigil.

The next morning, **Friday, July 19 we will gather at 9:30 AM** to welcome both Archbishop Benjamin and Bishop Daniel and begin the Divine Liturgy.

With joyful expectation, may the Lord grant that our entire parish come together—mystically joined to St. Seraphim through Jesus Christ—to specifically ask St. Seraphim to intercede for us as we glorify God “who is wonderful in His saints.” A luncheon will be served following the Divine Liturgy.

## Communion in Prayer with the Saints

THE CHURCH PRAYS for all who have died in the faith, asking forgiveness for their sins. For there is no man without sin, if he have lived even a single day upon earth (Job 14:5). If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). Therefore, no matter how righteous a man might be, when he departs from this world, the Church accompanies his departure with prayer for him to the Lord. Brethren, pray for us, the Holy Apostle Paul asks his spiritual children (1 Thes. 5:25).

At the same time, when the common voice of the Church testifies to the righteousness of the reposed person, Christians, apart from prayer for him, are taught by the good example of his life and place him as an example to be imitated. And when, further, the common conviction of the sanctity of the reposed person is confirmed by special testimonies, such as martyrdom, fearless confession, self-sacrificing service to the Church, the gift of healing, and especially when the Lord confirms the sanctity of the reposed person by miracles after his death when he is remembered in prayer—then the Church glorifies him in a special way.

How can the Church not glorify those whom the Lord Himself calls His *friends*? “Ye are my friends.... I have called you friends” (John 15:14-15), whom He has received in His heavenly mansions in fulfillment of the words: “Where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). When this happens, prayers for the forgiveness of the sins

of the departed one and for his repose cease; they give way to other forms of Church communion with him, namely: (a) the praising of his struggles in Christ, “since neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house” (Matt. 5:15); (b) petitions to him that he might pray for us, for the remission of our sins, for our moral advancement, and that he might help us in our spiritual needs and in our sorrows. It is said: “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth” (Rev. 14:13); and we indeed bless them. It is said: “And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them” (John 17:22); and we indeed give to them this glory, according to the Savior's commandment.

Likewise the Savior said: “Whosoever shall do the will of My Father Who is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother” (Matt. 12:50). Therefore, we also should receive a righteous man as a righteous man. If he is a brother for the Lord, then he should be such for us also. The saints are our spiritual brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers; and our love for them is expressed by communion in prayer with them.

The Apostle John wrote to the Christians: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). And in the Church this fellowship with the Apostles is not interrupted; it goes over with

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The Rector, Fr. Lawrence Margitich, may be reached at the Parish office phone, or at [Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net). He is available Tuesday-Saturday, from noon onwards each day.

### Parish Contacts

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them into the other realm of their existence, the heavenly realm.

The nearness of the saints to the Throne of the Lamb and the raising up by them of prayers for the Church on earth are depicted in the *Apocalypse of St. John the Theologian*: “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the Throne, and the beasts, and the elders—and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, who praised the Lord” (Rev. 5:11).

Communion in prayer with the saints is the realization in actual fact of the bond between Christians on earth and the Heavenly Church of which the Apostle speaks: “Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and the Church of the firstborn, who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the *spirits of the righteous made perfect*” (Heb. 12:22-23). The Sacred Scripture presents numerous examples of the fact that the righteous, while still living on earth, can see and hear and know much that is inaccessible to the ordinary understanding. All the more are these gifts present with them when they have put off the flesh and are in heaven. The Holy Apostle Peter saw into the heart of Ananias, according to the book of Acts (5:3).

...The saints, when still on earth, penetrated in spirit into the world above. Some of them saw choirs of angels, others were vouchsafed to behold the image of God (Isaiah, Ezekiel), and still others were exalted to the third heaven and heard there mystical,

unutterable words, as for example, the Holy Apostle Paul. All the more when they are in heaven, are they capable of knowing what is happening on earth and of hearing those who appeal to them, since the saints in heaven are equal unto the angels (Luke 20:36). ...The Apostle writes: “Now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor. 13:12). The Holy Church has always held the reaching of the invocation of the saints, being fully convinced that they intercede for us before God in heaven. ....St. Cyril of Jerusalem, explaining the Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem, remarks: “Then we also commemorate (in offering the Bloodless Sacrifice) those who have previously departed: first of all, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, so that by their prayers and intercession God might receive our petition.” Numerous are the testimonies of the Fathers and teachers of the Church, especially from the 4th century onwards, concerning the Church's veneration of the saints. But already from the beginning of the 2nd century there are direct indications in ancient Christian literature concerning faith in the prayer of the saints in heaven for their earthly brethren. The witnesses of the martyric death of St. Ignatius the God-bearer (beginning of the 2nd century) say: “Having returned home with tears, we had the all-night vigil.... Then, after sleeping a little, some of us suddenly saw blessed Ignatius standing and embracing us, and others likewise saw him praying for us.” Similar records, mentioning the prayers and intercession for us of the martyrs, are to be found in other accounts from the epoch of persecutions against Christians. —Fr. Michael Pomozansky

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**From Saint Porphyrios (reposed 1991):** “...enter into the light of Christ. The point is not to observe all the outward forms. The essence of the matter is for us to be with Christ; for our soul to wake up and love Christ and become holy. To abandon herself to divine eros. Thus He too will love us. Then the joy will be inalienable. That is what Christ wants most of all, to fill us with joy, because He is the well-spring of joy. This joy is a gift of Christ. In this joy, we will come to know Christ....These are the things our soul desires to acquire. If we prepare ourselves appropriately, grace will bestow them on us. It is not difficult. If we acquire grace, everything is easy, joyful, and a blessing from God. Divine grace is constantly knocking at the door of our soul and waiting for us to open, so that it can enter our thirsty heart and fill it. The fullness is Christ, our Holy Lady, the Holy Trinity. What marvellous things!” ☩



**A word from Barbara Owens, AKA Baklamama:**

I will be demonstrating, or rather, “revealing” my Baklava recipe to a small group of interested bakers on **Friday, July 8th at 9:30 AM.**

My intent is to get a few folks who are interested in learning my routine for Glendi purposes, not just personal use. It is so important to have some back-up personnel able to step up in all phases of Glendi in case of an emergency. Although I always have great help and support the weekend before Glendi to produce what we anticipate needing, I would feel much more comfortable having someone willing and able to take over in my absence (even though I anticipate being around for at least another 26 years). I would like to limit this “class” to six of us....there are four spaces left. We plan to meet in the Hall Kitchen at 9:30 AM and we will do the entire process from making the syrup, to clarifying the butter, grinding the nuts, assembling the trays, cutting, and baking, to the finished product. I will purchase the supplies, and we can all divide up the expenses. Everyone can take their finished tray home....or share with a partner. The class will probably be 4–5 hours. If you are interested in participating, please let me know by July 4th so the supplies can be purchased. The cost per tray will be around \$20. Yours in Christ, wishing you a Happy Glendi Time! — “Baklamama” Barbara Owens

**GLENDI 2016 BAKING SCHEDULE**

- Monday, July 25, 3 PM: Greek Twists (koulourakia)
- Tuesday, July 26, 3 PM: Soft Ginger Cookies
- Monday, August 1, 3 PM: Greek Tea Cakes (kourambiedes) and Bourbon Balls
- Tuesday, August 2, 3 PM: Pumpkin Banitsa Pastries
- Monday, August 8, 3 PM: Greek Honey Cakes (new item!)
- Tuesday, August 9, 3 PM: Soft Ginger Cookies
- Monday, August 15, 3 PM: Shortbread
- Tuesday, August 16, 3 PM: Lemon Bars
- Dates TBA: Poppy Seed Strudel



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**Statistics**

Only 57% of Orthodox Christians pray daily, according to a survey conducted by the **Pew Research Center**. What about the other 43%? The survey tells us that 19% pray only weekly, 8% only once or so during a month, and the rest, are not sure. Women pray more than men. Men and women with higher incomes pray far less than those with lower incomes. Only 61% of Orthodox Christians, according to the survey, have absolute belief in God, the rest are not entirely sure! Only 31% attend church weekly, while 54% attend only once per month. Sadly, of the Orthodox Christians who were surveyed for the study, only 27% of them say they rely on the Church for guidance on moral and ethical questions. Most claim that “right and wrong depend on the situation” (i.e. truth is relative). This is not surprising, since only 29% read the scriptures daily, and so few pray and attend Church frequently. 81% believe in Heaven, but, conveniently, only 59% accept that there will be a Hell. On various social issues, the majority of Orthodox Christians differ little from the ordinary non-Orthodox. These statistics are depressing. However, and thankfully, our parish has a better than 31% weekly attendance. —Fr. Lawrence

See [www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-tradition/orthodox-christian/](http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-tradition/orthodox-christian/)

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **FESTIVITIES** at the Geary St. Cathedral for the fiftieth anniversary of the Repose of St. John of SF include Vigil on July 1 at 6 PM and Divine Liturgy on Saturday, July 2 at 9 AM. See the following website for more info: [www.wadiocese.com/news\\_160413\\_1.html](http://www.wadiocese.com/news_160413_1.html)
- **PILGRIMAGE TO FORT ROSS, JULY 4th** Each year Orthodox faithful gather on July 4th for the Divine Liturgy and picnic at Fort Ross (the Independence Day Pilgrimage has been going on since the 1920s). It takes some effort to plan and get out to the Fort, especially on a holiday. What great spiritual benefit there is to commune at the Liturgy, giving thanks to God in a place of sanctity and natural beauty, where St. Innocent prayed. Independence Day can be a unique day of thanksgiving for our freedoms rather than just a long weekend's rest?
- **THE DEANERY CHURCH CAMP** gets underway at the St. Nicholas Ranch, Dunlap, CA. from July 3-9. This year the Basch and Svane families will attend the camp—adults to work as counselors and teachers, children to enjoy the activities of the camp.
- **THE REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK** distribution will take place on Wednesday, July 13. Volunteers: please arrive no later than 5 PM.
- **THE SENIOR AND RETIRED** Lunch fellowship meets on Thursday, July 14 at Noon.
- **THE KAZAN SKETE** will celebrate its Monastery Feast day of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, on Thursday, July 21. His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin will serve the Liturgy at 9:30 AM.
- **THE PARISH COUNCIL** will meet on Thursday, July 21 at 7 PM.
- **THE PARISH MEN'S GROUP** WILL go on a pilgrimage, Sunday, July 31 to attend Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Cathedral, followed by a SF Giants baseball game. The Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity begins at 9:30 AM. Following the Liturgy and lunch, there will be a short tour of the Cathedral, time permitting. Speak with either George Barsi or Tom Pellizzer to reserve your baseball tickets and a ride to SF.

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*THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT will be adopted by our parish of the Orthodox Church in America, per instruction of the Holy Synod of the OCA (each diocese, parish, institution and monastery will do the same). The Diocesan Hierarch can adjust the statement in conjunction with the considered needs and circumstances. St. Seraphim Orthodox Church and The Protection of the Holy Virgin Church are the property of the Parish of the Protection of the Holy Virgin, a non-profit church organization located in Santa Rosa, California. Due to sincerely held religious beliefs, documented in the Biblical, dogmatic and canonical documents of the Orthodox Church, we do not permit St. Seraphim Orthodox Church or The Protection of the Holy Virgin Church to be used for the following purposes: events, services or receptions related to non-Orthodox sacraments (including, but not limited to, baptisms, weddings or funerals); non-Orthodox worship services; and partisan political or social rallies. ☩*

## PARISH MINISTRIES

In the past three months or so the Bulletins and Announcements have highlighted various Parish Ministries. So far covered have been the work of the Myrrh-bearers (care for the reposed), Prospora Bakers, the Sisterhood, the Choir, Greeters, Ushers, Ride Ministry and the Floral Decoration team. The following are three very active Parish Ministries:

**Bookstore:** Our dedicated team keeps the bookstore stocked with most of the latest titles of Orthodox books, as well as all those books that are required reading for Catechumens. The Bookstore staff members alternate weeks so that no one has to work consecutive Sundays. Additional workers are needed and will be most welcome. Please talk with Bonnie or Vladimir.

**Library:** Helen Kinnamon and Lahana Tamara Singer have done a marvelous job of sorting, shelving and cataloging all the books online (there's a website address which they will give to you upon request). We have an excellent library and committed librarians. Additional volunteers are welcome.

**Redwood Empire Food Bank (REFB):** Our parish has partnered with the REFB to provide space once a month for food distribution, and staff to manage the distribution. On the second Wednesday of each month, about 4:30 PM or so, vegetables, fruits, canned goods, etc. are unloaded from a truck, and sorted according to direction of the REFB staff. Our parish provides about eight to ten individuals to help give food items to over one hundred needy people. And yes, additional volunteers are not only welcome, but very much needed. How to volunteer? Just show up at 4:30 PM, on the second Wednesday of the month. ☩

# PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## JULY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
						• 5 PM, Great Vespers
<b>3 - All Saints of North America</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal	<b>4 - Pilgrimage to Fort Ross</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy/ picnic at Fort Ross	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>  • <b>4 PM Children's Choir</b> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
<b>10 - St Anthony of Kiev</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>  • 9:30 AM, Parish Feast Day Liturgy at Sts. Peter and Paul on Stony Point	<b>13</b>  • 5 PM, Food Bank • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>14</b>  • 6 PM, Vespers for St. Vladimir	<b>15 - St. Vladimir</b> • 8:30 AM, Matins and Liturgy	<b>16</b>  • 11 AM, 40th Day for John Andronico  • 5 PM, Great Vespers and Matins
<b>17 - Royal Passion Bearers</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal • 12:45 PM, Sisterhood Mtg	<b>18</b>  • 6:15 PM, Vigil for St. Seraphim (Bishop Daniel to serve)	<b>19 - St. Seraphim Day</b> • 9:30 AM, Greeting of Bishops and Divine Liturgy	<b>20 - Prophet Elijah</b>  • 6 PM, Akathist to Prophet Elijah	<b>21</b>  • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, Feast of Kazan Icon at Skeete • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting	<b>22 - St. Mary Magdalene</b> • 9 AM, Memorial Divine Liturgy (Sakovich family)	<b>23</b>  • <b>4 PM, Children's Choir</b> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
<b>24 - Martyr Christina</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal • 1:30 PM, Vespers for St. Anna	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>  • 6 PM, Akathist to St. Panteleimon	<b>28 - Consecration Anniv.</b> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, anniversary church consecration	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  • 5 PM, Great Vespers and Matins
<b>31 - St. Germanus</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal (Men's Group in SF: Liturgy at Holy Trinity and Giants game)	<b>AUGUST 1</b> • 6 PM, Supplicatory C T B	<b>2</b> • 6 PM, Supplicatory	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>  • 6:15 PM, Vigil for Transfiguration	<b>6 - Transfiguration of Christ</b> • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, Children's Choir, blessing vineyard  • 5 PM, Great Vespers

• The previously scheduled visit of Bishop Daniel has been postponed from July 3 to the Feast of St. Seraphim on July 18 and 19. Archbishop Benjamin will also be present for the feast.