

FEAST OF THE PROTECTION

ON OCTOBER 1 THE ORTHODOX CHURCH celebrates the feast of the *Protection of the Mother of God*. Our parish is named after this feast day, and so we enthusiastically participate, anticipate, and spiritually delight in it. The origination of the feast is found in an event that took place in Constantinople, sometime in the mid-tenth century. It was during an attack of the City by barbarian Slavic tribes that a holy fool-for-Christ named Andrew beheld a vision of the Theotokos as the Service for deliverance was being offered in the Blakherni church. On that day, while the city of Constantinople was surrounded by enemy forces intent on destruction, Saint Andrew the fool-for-Christ said to St. Epiphanius: “Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?” And the enemy was mysteriously scattered, and the city and the people saved.

It may surprise us that we would celebrate a feast based on a vision seen by a man, known as a fool-for-Christ, so very long ago, in a land so far away, in a city no longer Christian. Of course, there have been many visions of the Mother of God praying for the world. Our own St. Seraphim saw the Theotokos on three separate occasions. However, on this feast of October 1 we do not celebrate the vision of St Andrew-the-fool-for-Christ seeing the Virgin holding her veil over the City, we celebrate the fact that what he saw was something about the church, the Body of Christ, something that we too experience when we pray together, or venerate a myrrh-streaming or miracle working icon of the Theotokos, or simply pray before

any of her icons: we experience the unbreakable and unending bond of the Church both visible and invisible, all the faithful as members of the Lord’s Holy Body, the Church. And it is also a confirmation that until the Coming of our Lord—and the resurrection and healing of all creation—all existence beyond the grave, of the righteous and the saints, is one untiring prayer, one ceaseless intercession and mediation, in love. When we sing at the Funeral and Panikhida that “their souls shall dwell with the blessed” this is what we mean. We have become used to imagining that the Holy Theotokos, and all the saints, all the deceased, the entire spiritual world in general—are somewhere over there, far away in the heavens, somehow “upstairs” while we are “downstairs.” It is unusual and even difficult for us to believe and the Mother of God and all the saints are so close to us that they can pray together with us in our churches. Do not let go of the chance, dear brethren, to make use of the Theotokos’ nearness, and to pray to Her with childish simplicity, loyalty and sincere faith, calling out to Her: “Rejoice, O our Joy, protect us from all evil with Thy most precious veil.” (*adapted*)

To celebrate the feast we will serve the Vigil on Wednesday evening, September 30, at 6:15 PM. The next day, the day of the Feast itself, and the anniversary of the founding of the parish in 1936, we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy, beginning at 9:30 AM. We are expecting His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin, and some area clergy to join us, too. Following the Divine Liturgy, there will be a festive meal.

CHURCH SCHOOL STARTS THIS SUNDAY

Niki Myles, Sarah Hamner and Anastasia Brodeur teach the Preschool in the Cottage Rooms (In front of the hall).

Vicky Basch teaches Kindergarten–Second Grade in the Cottage Rooms.

Gloria Collins teaches Third–Fifth Grade in the Library.

Meghan Inlow and Joseph Anderson teach Sixth–Eighth Grade upstairs in St. Seraphim.

Dana Ames and Garrett Hamner teach High School in the Protection of the Holy Virgin Church.

If you have any questions or need to register your kids, please call Glori at 849-6135 or email at gypsybootsie@att.net. We are all looking forward to starting back to teaching and learning with your children!

Parish of the Protection of the Holy Virgin
St. Seraphim of Sarov Church
90 Mountain View Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95407
Parish office phone: 707-584-9491
website: www.saintseraphim.com

Our Parish Secretary—Bobbi Griovski—may be reached at the Church office Mon., Tues. and Wed., 9 AM to Noon, at 584-9491. Fr. Lawrence Margitich may be reached at the Parish office phone, or at Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net. He is available Tuesday–Saturday, from noon onwards each day.

Parish Contacts

Fr. Michael Margitich, Pastor Emeritus	473-0314
Fr. John Schettig, Second Priest	318-1559
Fr. Theodor Svane, Intern Priest	(914) 282-0867
Serge Anderson, Parish Council Warden	291-7452
David Winterton, Treasurer	331-9085
Bonnie Alexander, Recording Secretary	338-4962
Kira Staykow, Sisterhood President	(415) 279-0353
Eleni Rose, Agape Meal Coordinator	480-6106
Debbie Buse, Hall Event Manager	696-4986

THINKING ABOUT GLENDI

I THANK GOD FOR BLESSING me to participate with all of you at Glendi. Yes, the work was demanding physically and mentally. This year the heat really added to the toil, especially for those working near BBQs, Gyro machines, the parking lot, the kitchen, and so forth. Nevertheless, what I saw when I walked around (my phone walking-meter logged three miles on Saturday) was not just a bunch of busy and tired looking parishioners, their family and friends (we thank our friends for helping). I saw hospitable, helpful and joyful Christian brothers and sisters working with each other, concerned for each other and happy to welcome and serve our guests. There's no "who worked harder" in any of this, since all of us seemed to work to our personal capacity. I always try to remember that when we offer our efforts to the Lord and each other, then the Lord fills in the gaps. He always completes that which is lacking, as one prayer says.

Having said all of that, I also want to make three other points: first, the Glendi happens because of all the work accomplished BEFORE the event. Hours and days of prep work go into it. I do hear some say that they wish Glendi was every other year—that won't work for a lot of reasons which I won't develop here. Some have said that they wish we didn't have it at all. I would be happy to listen to another idea for outreach (800+ people went into St Seraphim on Saturday).

Let's just say that the Glendi takes place for only two days, and most of us can manage to work hard for the good of church for a couple of days without our personal lives crashing down (well, most...).

Two out of 365 days is too much only if working for the church is too much. Let's recognize that for the organizing staff, and those who prepare baked goods, spanikopita, the baklava, the accounting and the grounds, the two days of Glendi are preceded and followed by **weeks of hard work**. And we must recognize that those who toil in the kitchen, the parking lot and the office don't "get out" and so don't really get to enjoy Glendi. Considering this—and this is my second point—it's important to allow ourselves the liberty and the creativity to shift jobs every year or two. Hopefully, this will have a good effect, and banish the thought that "oh, no; I can't take working parking another year!" So, think not about getting "out of Glendi" but working in an area that suits you and where you will enjoy the hard work.

Thirdly, Glendi is here to stay, that's pretty clear, not because we need the money for operating expenses—please note: not a penny of Glendi income is used for the operating expenses of the parish!—we don't need Glendi to keep our parish going! Rather, funds go towards the building costs, iconography, charity and capital expenses of Glendi equipment and repair. Glendi is here to stay not because of money, but because it is outreach to our community and an introduction to something about the Orthodox Church. Is the outreach effective? Joseph Gumper, who during Glendi greets every person he can, right there outside the doors of St. Seraphim, called me this week to tell me that hundreds of our visitors came in the festival happy, and left feeling welcomed and edified by the congregation here. Positive and grateful remarks were offered to Joseph about the food, the dancing, the grounds, the holiness of the church building and iconography, the talks by the docents and clergy and various conversations, the Vespers, concert and atmosphere of spiritual warmth and kindness of the workers. So, yes, outreach is working. We are investing in spiritual capital.

The Glendi is a marvelous coming together of the incredible talent (decorative, culinary, artistic, relational, organizational, muscle, visionary, theological, etc. etc), energy, color, ethnicity and personalities of our parishioners and their friends who worked. It's a joy to behold, and maybe we get a little tired, frustrated, cynical or jaded about it all, maybe at times we were not feeling all that spiritually warm—just physically hot, overcooked, tested—nevertheless, faith shone out even through all that, and I can assure you, our guests sensed that and the extraordinary nature of the event. To God be glory and thanks. My gratitude to each and everyone of you. —*Father Lawrence Margitich*

Fear and Parenting and Youth Ministry

September 21, 2015 by Elissa Bjeletich

As I'm preparing for an upcoming retreat in New Mexico, I've been thinking lately about how fear impacts parenting. This weekend, I heard a wonderful presentation from Fr. Timothy Pavlatos—as we raise up our children, he reminded us to “See the person, not the problem.” We sometimes focus on our children's behavior (and correcting it) rather than connecting with them as people and thoughtfully receiving the message that the behavior is sending. His message really resonated with me, as I've been thinking about how youth ministry can connect to each individual person (as Christ did). The Church is losing half of its youth, and this suggests that somehow, some of our children were not spiritually nourished by their life in the Church, or at least were not convinced that ours is a more rewarding path than others. We can look to Christ's example of how to ‘do’ ministry, and we find that He encounters us one at a time, right where we are, and offers us love and healing. Is that what our ministries do?

Or have we been distracted by our fear that the children will fall into certain behaviors and traps (alcohol and drug use, sex, poor academic performance and eventual poverty, even abandoning the faith) and spent our energy working on those issues instead? Have we focused on the person, or on the problems we see on the horizon?

If fear is driving our youth ministry and our parenting, then no wonder we find ourselves off the path. Fear is a terrible driver.

Our Lord does teach us that fear gets in the way of our ability to fulfill our calling, to do His work. Look at His interactions with Peter on the water:

And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!” And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. (Matt 14:28-32)

Had Peter no fear in him, he could have walked on water. Instead, his fear caused him to falter—and in his weakness, he called out to our Lord and was saved. Jesus always catches us when we fall.

We are called to co-create life with God and then to help nurture and steward that child of God into a fruitful

life in the Body of Christ. That's a tall order, and perhaps it requires a leap of faith to approach it. Maybe sometimes our fears get in the way and interrupt the miraculous work God is trying to do with our children.

But how can we help but fear for the future of our children? There are so many dangers in this modern world. They face challenges and temptations we never faced.

That may be true, but one of the problems with this modern culture is the way we think about troubles. Unsurprisingly, the American ethos on suffering is not very Orthodox.

I had the pleasure of meeting Fr. Peter [Protopriest Peter Perekrestov] at the Joy of All Who Sorrow Cathedral in San Francisco, and I enjoyed his article, *Suffering in Family Life*, in which he observes:

Suffering is an integral element of our existence here on earth. It is woven through every aspect of our life. One should speak about it, one should anticipate it, one should be prepared for it as much as possible, and one mustn't run away from it. Nowadays, sufferings, sorrows, misfortunes are regarded as some kind of evil to be resisted and avoided at all cost. People fear suffering. (One doctor-archpastor said that the fear of suffering at times exceeds suffering itself.) Life, we are told, should proceed smoothly, unhindered. Suffering and sorrows interfere with a life of well-being; they bother us. They are considered to be anomalies, injustices, not the result but the cause of man's wrongs. How could a good God allow it?! This way of thinking is instilled in our minds and hearts through the schools and mass media, especially here in the affluent West. As Orthodox Christians, our best defense against unconsciously assimilating this attitude is to understand the true meaning of suffering, as it is presented in the Orthodox Church.

Our culture has an obsessive fear of suffering, so rather than prepare ourselves (and importantly, our children) to endure and even benefit from suffering, we hide from it and tell ourselves that we can hold it at bay.

We irrationally attempt to create a life for our children in which they will not suffer, and then we suffer from the fear and anxiety because of course we know that they will suffer. It's our approach to pain that is backwards, and from it flows our fear, and that's getting in our way of doing God's work with the children He sends to us.

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **PICNIC TABLES:** A few weeks back we sent out a request for donations toward picnic tables. One very generous parishioner offered \$1000 towards purchase of new tables. We attempted to purchase tables prior to Glendi, but no one was carrying them (end of summer). Our purchase will take place when we find a bargain sale of good, long-lasting and well built tables. Many thanks to our donor.
- **FATHER THEODOR and Matushka Hanna** wish to express their thanks for the extremely nice car that was procured for them by a parishioner.
- **SAINT NICHOLAS CHURCH** in San Anselmo is hosting their annual Bazaar on Saturday, October 3, from 10:30 to 3 PM. Enjoy Slavic foods, handmade crafts, live music and the wonderful Choir Concert at 1 PM, Vespers at 4 PM. Not to be missed.
- **THE REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK** distribution will take place on Wednesday, October 7. Volunteers: please try to arrive by 5 PM.
- **PARISH COUNCIL:** Our meeting will take place on Thursday, October 8, at 7 PM.
- **SENIOR/RETIRED LUNCH:** Our monthly luncheon gathering of parish seniors and retired folk will take place on Thursday, Oct. 15, at Noon.
- **MASTER PLANNING MEETING:** Thursday, October 15 at 7 PM. We are discussing maintenance and related issues.
- **FATHER LAWRENCE** will be going on a short pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery in Wilkes Barre, PA. from October 22-26. While there he plans also to visit family.
- **ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, ABOUT 6 PM,** the Parish will welcome guests coming with the Redwood Gospel Mission **NOMADIC SHELTER** project. We expect maybe twenty homeless folks to be brought to the Parish Hall (please note: the homeless brothers and sisters coming to us will have been screened and must be clean from drugs and alcohol, are not predators or dangerous). Redwood Gospel Mission staff on hand at all times. Our parish will provide dinner, a meditation on the Gospel for the day, some light music entertainment, and a warm and safe place to sleep (the RGM brings clean and bed-bug free mats). The Nomadic Shelter is a program in which the Redwood Gospel Mission of Santa Rosa has partnered with thirty local church communities—each taking one night a month for the next four months—to provide a safe place for prescreened homeless folks (many of them women and children) to be brought by the Mission for the night. Arrival is expected about 6 PM, departure about 6:30 AM. Mission staff and parish volunteers will stay the night to care for the guests. The Parish Council unanimously approved our participation in the Nomadic Shelter program, and this will be our second time participating in it. This year we will host the guests on the evenings of October 22, Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving Day evening), December 24 (just to put us out of our comfort zone a little, in honor of the “inn where there was no room for the Savior to be born,” January 28, February 25 and March 24, the eve of Annunciation. Any questions about volunteering should be directed to Ambrose Ryan Inlow, the parish coordinator of the program at (707) 490-4700.
- **REMINDER FOR our Parish Church School Teachers and parents:** there will be a meeting/discussion on Thursday, October 29 at 7 PM, in the Parish Hall.
- **AN EIGHT PART SERIES** of Catechism will begin on Saturday, October 31. Classes will take place in the Protection Church.

CLASS ON CHURCH READING

OUR CHOIR MASTER, Nicolas Custer, will offer a four or five part course in Church Reading. This is a course designed to prepare those who are going to be reading during Church Services, for example, at the Hours before Liturgy, Vespers and Matins, during Lent, the Epistles, etc. The course will discuss liturgical books, the structure of some Divine Services and their meaning, and how to properly use the voice in reading. All are welcome to attend, but please keep in mind, this is not a course on how to “chant,” but one to prepare qualified men and women to read at Services. Class times: starting Saturday, October 3, 4 PM, and also at 4 PM on Saturdays: Oct. 17, 31 and November 14. Those who attend are asked to register, and to come to all the classes.

Please see or email Father Lawrence to register for this course.

October 10 Retreat *with Fr. Theodor Svane*



“The Orthodox Church in Norway”

*Her saints, history and
current situation*

October 10, 2015



Hours/Liturgy 8:40 AM

Followed by a snack



1st session—11:00 AM
to 12:30 PM (with a
short break)



Lunch 12:30 PM to
1:30 PM



2nd session - 1:30 PM
to 3:00 PM



HOLY ASSUMPTION
MONASTERY
1519 Washington St.
Calistoga, CA 94515
(707) 942-6244

<http://holvassumptionmonastery.com>

No Fee—donations accepted

Call Soon—Space is limited

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

OCTOBER 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			30 • 6:15 PM, Vigil for the Protection of the Theotokos	1 - Feast of the Protection • 9:30 AM, Greeting of Archbishop Benjamin and Divine Liturgy • Festal Meal	2	3 • 4 PM, Reader Course • 5 PM, Great Vespers
4 - Hieromartyr Hierotheos • 9 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	5	6 - St. Innocent	7 - Sts Sergius and Bacchus • 7 AM, Divine Liturgy • 5 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank • 6 PM, Vespers	8 • 6 PM, Vespers • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting	9 - St. Tikhon of Moscow	10 • 5 PM, Great Vespers
11 - Fathers of the 7th Council • 9 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	12 <i>[Fr. Theodor and family in WA until 10/23]</i>	13	14 - St. Paraskeva • 7 AM, Divine Liturgy <i>[Fr. Lawrence in SF at Diocesan Council Meeting all day]</i>	15 • Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship • 7 PM, Master Planning meeting	16	17 • 4 PM, Reader Course • 5 PM, Great Vespers
18 - St. Luke the Apostle • 9 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	19	20	21 - St. Hilarion the Great • 7 AM, Divine Liturgy • 6 PM, Vespers	22 <i>[Fr. Lawrence at St Tikhon's in PA until Monday, 10/26]</i> • 6 PM, Nomadic Shelter dinner	23	24 • 5 PM, Great Vespers
25 - St. Tabitha • 9 AM, Confessions • 10 AM, Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, Vespers for St. Demetrios	26 - St. Demetrios • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy	27	28 - St. Job of Pochaev • 7 AM, Divine Liturgy • 6 PM, Vespers	29 • 7 PM, Church School Teacher meeting	30	31 • 3:30 PM, Catechism • 4 PM, Reader Course • 5 PM, Great Vespers

• NOTE: Matins will be served before the Sunday Liturgy, 9 AM. Confession will also be offered at the same time.