

the sanctity of unborn life. The gathering begins at Civic Center Plaza in front of City Hall. The rally will be at the main stage from 12:30 to 1:30 PM. After the rally, the walk proceeds approximately 1.5 miles, from Civic Center Plaza down Market Street, to end at Justin Herman Plaza at the Embarcadero. For more information and a schedule of related pro-life events in the San Francisco Bay Area, visit [www.walkforlifewc.com](http://www.walkforlifewc.com)

- PIROSHKI ORDERS:

Just a reminder that we will be making Piroshki again this month on Saturday, January 16th. Lots of help will be needed to make the work go smoothly and quickly. If you are available to help at that time, please contact me at [bgriovski@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bgriovski@sbcglobal.net). —*Bobbi (Eugenia) Griovski*

- PROPHET MALACHI (5th Century BC):

His book was written probably between 433-400 BC. He speaks about the love of God towards His people, rebukes unbelief, reproaches the impious conduct of the priesthood of his time, and he opposes mixed marriages and divorces. The appearance of the Honorable Forerunner is heralded, who will prepare the way of Christ and prepare the people to receive Him. The coming judgement is also mentioned. He reposed in peace and was buried in the field of his ancestors. The priests of the time of the Prophet Malachi desecrated the altar of God, because they offered polluted bread as well as damaged and sick animals, which is why the Prophet conveyed to them the message of God, which is simultaneously a complaint and a call to repentance. He stresses the following: “For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction” (Mal. 2:7-8). He calls them to correct themselves, for this life is a time for repentance and a return to the path of God's commandments. “Take heed to the purity of your spirit... Repent and return to Me and I will be a protector to you, says the Lord of hosts.” Of course, those who place their hope in God and remain under His protection have nothing to fear, neither crisis nor temptation, because they receive Grace and strength from God, and so they remain calm, serene, peaceful and joyful. —*borrowed*

- POTLUCK AGAPE:

Sunday, January 17.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, January 3, 2016

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- TROPARION OF THE FOREFEAST, Tone Four:

Make ready, O Zebulon, and prepare thyself, O Nephthalim. O River Jordan, stand and leap for joy at receiving the Lord who cometh to be baptized. Rejoice, O Adam, with our first mother, hide not yourselves as in paradise of old. For, seeing us naked, He hath appeared, that He may clothe us with our first garment. Christ hath appeared, wishing to renew the whole of creation.

- KONTAKION OF THE FOREFEAST, Tone Four

When the Lord descended today into the waters of the Jordan, He cried aloud to John: ‘Do not be afraid to baptize me, For I am come to save Adam the first-formed man.’

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, Jan. 1: 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ and St. Basil  
5 PM, Great Vespers and Akathist for St. Seraphim of Sarov
- Saturday, Jan. 2: 9:30 AM, Greeting of Archbishop Benjamin and Divine Liturgy (festal lunch to follow)  
5 PM Great Vespers, Confessions
- Sunday, Jan. 3: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
11:45 AM, Church School  
Noon, Agape Meal
- Monday, Jan. 4: 5:30 PM, Panikhida for Barbara McMillian and Natalie Hansen  
6 PM, Royal Hours (Scripture and hymns)
- Tuesday, Jan. 5: 11 AM, Vespereal Liturgy for Theophany with Blessing of Water

6:15 PM, Matins for Theophany

- Wednesday, Jan. 6: Festal Matins, Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Water for Theophany

- FESTAL CONGRATULATIONS:

I congratulate all of you, dear parishioners, brothers and sisters in Christ, on the Feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov (Jan. 2), and thank you for the great kindness, faith, love and for the zeal with which you live your Christian life. I thank all those who labored hard to make our Feast so joyous and full. Our Venerable Father Seraphim was, and is, a human manifestation of God's love, joy and faith. While we may not pray for a thousand days and nights on a rock, as he did (which he did because he experienced God's light and transformation in his prayer), we can stay faithful in our own prayer rule each day and night. St. Seraphim was a healer and consoler for those sick and despondent—at the very least we ought to visit and intercede for those who are sick, despondent and lonely. St. Seraphim had the gift of disclosing and healing hidden sins in those who came to him. At least we should be examining and confessing our sins before our spiritual father and the Lord. There is much in our St. Seraphim to inspire and encourage us in the coming year.

- HOLY WATER OF THEOPHANY:

The practice of blessing water on the day of Christ's Baptism was already existent in the 3rd century. St. John Chrysostom calls this water *agiasma*—a holy thing. It has been known from ancient times that the Holy Water of Theophany does not go bad. This holy water is used to sprinkle and bless icons, liturgical articles, priestly vestments and crosses. It is also used to bless houses, food, automobiles and other articles. When received with faith, it has the power to cure both physical and spiritual infirmities. Although holy water cannot replace Holy Communion in any way, it can be taken by those who are deprived of the consolation of the Sacrament. During times of despondency, confusion and spiritual turmoil it offers tranquility and relief. For this reason Christians keep this blessed water in a special place in their homes and partake of it at any time. (The feast day of Theophany is also called *Epiphany*. Both terms indicate that God has revealed Himself to the world in Jesus the God and Man, and the Messiah, who teaches us to worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

- HOUSE BLESSINGS:

Please email or call Fr. Lawrence or Fr. John to schedule a house blessing. There is a sign up list at the door of the Church for house blessings on Jan. 6, 10 and 17. If you would like your home blessed on some other day and time, please call me. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- HERE'S HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HOUSE BLESSING:

1. Have a copy of the *Troparion of Theophany* so that you can sing with the priest.
2. The entire family should be present.
3. Have the following items at your Icon Corner or on a table: icon, oil lamp or candle, small bowl (cereal size is fine) for the Holy Water (I will bring some Water with me if you do not have any), list of names of your family, living and departed, clearly marked.
4. Turn off TVs and radios, video games and cell phones.
6. Teach your children the way to receive the blessing of the priest.

- WALK FOR LIFE in SF:

There are two particular days in American history that many Americans will identify as days that will live in infamy: Dec 7, 1941, and Sept. 11, 2001. But there is another infamous day, a day in which another war was launched, not nation against nation, but the strong against the weak and very small, the often fearful and confused against the unborn: a full blown war began on January 22, 1973, and since that date there have been over fifty million nameless unborn children who have been casualties, along with women, and men too, who have suffered in so many ways by being participants. Alas, also very many mercenary doctors who somehow think they are helping have contributed to this assault on the unborn. Ten, fifteen, twenty children die in school shootings or accidents—horrific, tragic. Fifty-million children aborted is a statistic, and a number beyond comprehension. What to do? One should participate in something positive. The Annual **2014 Walk for Life West Coast** will take place January 23 in San Francisco. It is the second largest gathering of its kind after the March for Life in Washington, DC, usually attracting more than 50,000 participants—and hopefully far more this year, considering the revelations about how Planned Parenthood operates came to light this year. Look for the *Orthodox Christians for Life* banner on the southeast corner of the Civic Center plaza, near the children's play structure, and join in the witness to