

San Francisco. It is the second largest gathering of its kind after the March for Life in Washington, DC, attracting more than 50,000 participants. Fr. Lawrence and Deacon Jeremiah are organizing rides to the event. For more information and a schedule of related pro-life events in the San Francisco Bay Area, visit www.walkforlifewc.com

• BAPTISM & CULTURAL WARFARE:

Everyone is sick of the “culture wars,” right? And if they are over, shouldn’t honesty require that Christians, of all people, just admit defeat and get on with being the church the best we can? I think it’s a bit more complicated than that, and ultimately I don’t think any “strategic withdrawal” or attack, for that matter, is really “the answer.” I say this in part because I consider “culture war” itself a slogan, a media-driven sound-bite that reduces the complexities of human life, sin, and faith to a phrase a reporter can ‘Google.’ The answer is the same as it has always been, and that is Christians should be engaged in spiritual warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil 24/7. Our calling as Christians is much more rigorous than any culture war I’ve seen in my lifetime. Baptism means you wear the uniform of Christ. If defending life and marriage are tiring, what of our daily struggle against sin? Any decision to defend life and marriage should not be that hard to make, since these are primordial goods: God created life and God created marriage [see Genesis]. (He didn’t create government bureaucracies.) The Christian’s duty to daily repentance and to carry the cross is likely more rigorous than any engagement in a contemporary culture war--unless the culture is violently anti-Christian, in which case carrying the cross may mean martyrdom, as it did for Ignatius of Antioch. The defense of life and marriage in our society is not so heavy a duty to bear (for many, it may involve minimally a mere voting choice). Becoming holy is the harder thing, but Christ’s grace is sufficient, if only we would continually seek him and be faithful in small things. If we desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, we will be persecuted. That’s what Paul wrote to Timothy (II Tim. 3:12) So, no matter what, do not be discouraged. We are in Good Company, for all who are persecuted for righteousness sake—theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He has already overcome the world.

—James M. Kushiner, *Touchstone* magazine

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, January 10, 2016

• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Seven:

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death; to the thief, Thou didst open Paradise. For the myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

• TROPARION OF THEOPHANY, Tone One:

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, and called Thee His beloved Son; and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His Word. O Christ, our God, Who hast revealed Thyself, and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

• KONTAKION OF THEOPHANY, Tone Four:

On this day Thou hast appeared unto the whole world, and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, is signed on us who sing Thy praise: and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light Unapproachable.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Jan. 9: 3:30 PM, Catechism—*On the Church & the Virgin*
4:30 PM, Panikhida (Elisabeta Bottu)
5 PM Great Vespers
- Sunday, Jan. 10: 8:45 AM, Matins
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
- Wednesday, Jan. 13: 5 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank
6 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, Jan. 14: 7 PM, Scripture Study Group, *McPherson home*

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- HOUSE BLESSINGS:

Please email or call Fr. Lawrence or Fr. John to schedule a house blessing. We are happy and honored to come to your home to renew it with the Holy Water of Theophany—just name the time and the day.

- PROSPHORA:

Your Commemoration Books await renewal for the new year at the Candle Desk. These books are for the priests to pray before the Divine Liturgy for those whose names you have listed. The *Prayer of Proskomedie* is extremely powerful and beneficial, as affirmed by Church tradition.

Proskomedie is the “service of preparation” of the bread and wine before the Liturgy. The bread that will become the Holy Eucharist is brought to the Altar on a tray, the *Diskos*. In the center is the bread—the Lamb—which will be changed by the Holy Spirit to the Body of Christ from which we commune. To the right is the particle in honor of the Virgin taken from another loaf; and to the left, particles for the nine ranks of saints from another loaf (Prophets, Apostles, Bishops, Martyrs, Monastics, Unmercenary Healers, St. Seraphim and others and St. John Chrysostom. Below the Lamb are particles of bread for the living and the departed, from two other loaves—included here are the Metropolitan, the Diocesan Bishop, and particles for all those names submitted by you.



The visual aid above—that of the *Diskos* and the particles, is an image of the Church, the Body of Christ: here is Christ and His Holy Mother on His right hand, the Saints, and the faithful, you and me and our spiritual family in Christ. After Holy Communion, all the particles are placed in the Chalice, immersed in the Precious Blood of Christ.

Because this is about Holy Communion and the Body of the Church, your lists of names should be divided between those who are Orthodox (in this life now, or departed this life) and those who are not. This is not to ignore the non-Orthodox, but to make clear that this is about Communion and the Church, which is the visible Body of Christ. The priests absolutely do pray for everyone listed. We should each have a duplicate book of names for our own use, and pray for those names we have listed each Saturday evening or Sunday and before coming to Church for the Divine Liturgy. I and the other priests are praying with you, not instead of you. —*Fr Lawrence*

- RETREAT IN SF:

Fr. Archimandrite Sergius (Boyer), the abbot of St. Tikhon’s Monastery in South Canaan, PA. will be visiting *Christ the Saviour Russian Orthodox Church* (OCA) at 12th and Anza on January 30, 2016, to lead a retreat entitled “Acquiring the Mind of Christ.” He will bring along with him for veneration the miracle-working and myrrh-streaming icon of St Anna, the Mother of the Theotokos. Schedule for the Retreat: Saturday, January 30, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy; breakfast; 11 AM, first talk; lunch; 2 PM, second talk; 4 PM, Vigil. See Flyer at the Candle desk.

- PIROSHKI ORDERS:

Just a reminder that we will be making Piroshki on Saturday, January 16. Lots of help will be needed to make the work go smoothly and quickly during this coming week. Prep will occur during this coming week; if you are available to help, please contact me at bgriovski@sbcglobal.net. You don’t need kitchen or cooking experience. We are happy to teach you, and there are many tasks. And even if you need to be seated there are plenty of things you can do to help. Place your orders for meat, cabbage, mushroom piroshki by **Sunday, January 10.**—*Bobbi (Eugenia) Griovski*

- ANNUAL MEETING:

The parish will hold the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 7, 2016, in accordance with the Parish By-laws. The meeting will begin after the Divine Liturgy at 12:30 PM or so—no Agape Meal will be served, so bring a lunch. Parish reports (budget, Church School Sisterhood, Glendi, etc.) will be distributed a week prior to the meeting.

- WALK FOR LIFE IN SF:

The **2016 Walk for Life—West Coast** will be held **January 23 in**