

And upon the third fatal decision, I crumbled inside, and made every effort to forget, and to tell myself it hadn't happened; that nobody died and I wasn't accessory to murder. I was willing to believe this, and to instead understand myself as a champion of rights, a steady and dependable partner, a good man, a good person. And this is the theory I held for decades, completely forgetting the other silent parties involved; those three silent ones, within the flesh of another, which were, one by one, preparing and becoming—and then were silenced forever. My sorrow for my three children has become complete; where at first it never existed. My tears have washed away the horror of what I did and, upon my knees, I have found peace. I look back on those years, when I sat in self-satisfied silence, and am amazed at what I was convinced was true, and how I misdirected my love and protection. I focused on the needs and rights of one while neglecting those of the other. My love was narrow and could have been larger, large enough to encompass everyone involved, but it was not. By God's holy mercy and through His forgiveness though, I have returned to my feet again; and in gratefulness and thanksgiving to Him, I march onward. —*Francis Spillane*

• VIRTUES:

There are many virtues that are required of a good Christian, but above all else he must pray; for nothing can ever be achieved without prayer. Otherwise he cannot find his way to God, he cannot grasp the truth, he cannot crucify the flesh with all its passions and desires, find the Light of Christ in his heart and be united to our Lord. Frequent prayer must precede all these things before they can be brought about. I say “frequent” because the perfection and the correctness of prayer is beyond our power. “For we know not what we should pray for as we ought,” says the Apostle Paul. Therefore we ought to pray often, to pray at all times, for this alone lies within our power and leads us to purity of prayer, which is the mother of all spiritual good. As St. Isaac the Syrian says: “Win the mother and she will bear you children,” so must you first of all attain the power of prayer, and then all other virtues will be easily practiced afterwards. All this is scarcely mentioned by those who have had no personal experience, but only a superficial knowledge of the most mysterious teaching of the Holy Fathers.

—*Excerpt from The Way of a Pilgrim*

• ANNUAL MEETING:

Sunday, February 11, at 12:30 PM. All nominations for Parish Council should be submitted by this Sunday. —*Fr. Lawrence*

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



## January 21, 2018 ~ Zacchaeus Sunday



• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Eight:

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One; Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

• TROPARION OF ST MAXIMOS, Tone Eight:

Guide of Orthodoxy, teacher of piety and holiness, luminary of the world, God inspired adornment of hierarchs, O wise Maximos by thy teachings thou hast enlightened all. O harp of the Spirit. Intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

• KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Eight:

By raising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam; Eve exults in Thy resurrection; and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O Greatly Merciful One.

• KONTAKION OF ST MAXIMOS, Tone Two:

Let us, O ye faithful, worthily acclaim the lover of the Trinity, great Maximos, who clearly taught the God inspired Faith, that Christ is to be

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glorified in two natures, wills and energies; and let us cry unto him: Rejoice, O herald of the Faith.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Jan. 20: 4 PM, Children's Choir Rehearsal  
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions  
6 PM, Talk on the Russian New Martyrs, with Fr. Ilya Gotlinski (Parish Hall)
- Sunday, Jan. 21: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
11:45 AM, Church School  
Noon, Agape Meal
- Wednesday, Jan. 24: 6 PM, Vespers/Potluck and Talk #2 by Garret Hamner on the book *Abolition of Man*

### • TALK ON THE NEW MARTYRS OF RUSSIA:

We have the pleasure this weekend to welcome Father Ilya Gotlinski from Holy Dormition Church (OCA) in Binghamton, NY. Following Great Vespers on Saturday, he will give a talk on the New Martyrs of Russia (that Feast is the last Sunday of January), a topic of great importance. All are invited to what will be a spiritually profitable and educational presentation.

### FOLLOW UP TO "ABOLITION OF MAN":

Last Wednesday Fr. Andrew Cuneo gave an outstanding talk on the book, *Abolition of Man*, by CS Lewis. The talk was very well-attended, with many guests from Santa Rosa's First Presbyterian Church. Garret Hamner will give a followup talk on the book, picking up where Fr. Andrew left off. Join us for Vespers at 6 PM, and then a potluck and talk at 6:30 PM. Garret is extremely well-versed in the works of CS Lewis, and will give an edifying presentation.

### • PARISH RETREAT, JANUARY 27:

Dear Parish Family: Please let me know if you would like to sign up for on-site childcare (children age 2+) for the upcoming marriage retreat on Saturday, 1/27. I am hoping to connect with each family as soon as possible so that I can plan accordingly. We will play games, do simple crafts, read stories, have quiet time in the afternoon, and play on the playground. All

children will need to bring a sack lunch and two snacks—one for morning and one for afternoon—a water bottle, and weather-appropriate clothing. Any parents with teens who would like to volunteer to help, please let me know! At this time, I can offer childcare for nine children besides my three. If there is a need for more, I will reach out to the SSPF community for another adult volunteer (who will have to be background checked and cleared unless you already have been in the last two years—see Fr. Lawrence). Please consider helping out if you can! Feel free to contact me with any questions. *Thank you, Sarah Hamner, 707-327-9906*

### • PARISH RETREAT / WALK FOR LIFE:

The Parish Retreat (Jan. 27, 9:30 AM) will be led by Fr. Timothy Pavlatos, who will speak on marriage, and is relevant for single and married alike. See the flyers in the Church. The *Walk for Life* takes place in SF, Jan. 27. See Deacon Jeremiah if you are interested in participating.

### • REMINDER FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL:

Parents or adult guardians are responsible for the safety and supervision of their children before, during and after Services, while playing in the Hall, the playground or the property. Young children may not roam the property without parental supervision. In addition, *children are not allowed to play in the vineyard, behind the Church School or Hall, or in the parking lots.* Parents, you are the playground monitors. —Fr. Lawrence and the Parish Council

### • WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN:

I imagine myself sitting at the dinner table and I am joined by three wonderful young people, now in their twenties. They are like olive plants around my table, as the psalmist says. When I sit in my prayer nook at night, I pray for these three people, my children. They are on my mind daily as I go about my business; I am concerned for their well-being and their eternal life. So many years ago, I first knew of them, and eons before this, they were known by God. To me they are only images now, memories that barely got started; but they are with God, I pray. When I had learned that they existed, each in their own time, I was a selfish boy, thinking of myself, and also fearful of how I would be perceived by others. I had also learned to be the "enlightened" boyfriend, to support the women in my life in whatever they decided was right for them. So when the decision came to stop a beating heart, I sat quietly, not in an innocent silence, but in tacit support. And when a second beating heart would be silenced, I continued in my silence.