

(remember His words, “it is finished” which also means “it is accomplished”). So that our love for the Lord can be given full expression, for He has “wrought salvation in the midst of the earth” as the Psalm says—we will celebrate the Vigil for the Cross next Saturday, March 10, at 5 PM. Near the end of the Vigil the Cross will be brought out of the Altar in a solemn procession so we can all venerate it singing “Before Thy Cross, we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection, we glorify.”

• SISTERHOOD MEETING:

Please join us after the Agape lunch at 12:45 PM in the Parish Hall for our Sisterhood Meeting, Sunday, March 11. The evolving *Sisterhood Changes Committee* has met a few times working on developing the new direction Fr. Lawrence has suggested for the Sisterhood. We need and welcome all feedback on the pros and cons of the proposed ideas we formed. It's important we take care of each other and take time to listen to any concerns through this transition. Any questions please contact me by phone at 415.279.0353 or by email at email kirastaykow@gmail.com—*Kira Staykow*

• LAZARUS SATURDAY:

The feast of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, which is the end of the Lent and the transition to Holy Week, is March 30 and 31. The unique, rather brief and joyful resurrection Matins—6:30 PM on Friday, March 30—will begin the celebration. The following morning, Saturday, March 31, at 9 AM, we will participate in the baptisms of the catechumens Maiah Lucas, Sarah Stewart, Hannah Prudhomme and Jordan Morgan. The Divine Liturgy will begin at 10 AM, and will be sung by the Children's Choir. Following the Liturgy, an Agape Meal—in honor of the newly-illuminated—will be prepared by those celebrating their own baptism on Lazarus Saturday.

• WORK PARTY AND PREP FOR HOLY WEEK:

Please join me in cleaning the church and polishing the brass and silver as we prepare for Holy Week and Pascha. We will begin to work on Friday, March 30 from 4–6 PM, and continue on Saturday, March 31 from 2–4:30 PM, with the clean up and decorating the church for Palm Sunday. Those who are interested in decorating with palms and flowers, please see Patricia Krueger or Denise Pellizzer. —*Fr. Lawrence*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 4, 2018

Second Sunday of Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas



• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Six:

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hades, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin granting life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: Glory to Thee.

• TROPARION OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS, Tone Eight:

O light of Orthodoxy, pillar and teacher of the Church, glory of monks and invincible protection of theologians, O Gregory, thou wonderworker, boast of Thessalonika, and preacher of grace, ever pray that our souls be saved.

• KONTAKION OF ST GREGORY, Tone Eight, Special Melody:

With one accord, we praise thee as the sacred and divine vessel of wisdom and clear trumpet of theology, O our righteous Father Gregory of divine speech. As a mind that standeth now before the Original Mind, do thou ever guide aright and lead our mind to Him, that we all may cry: Rejoice, O herald of grace divine.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 3: 3:30 PM, Catechism, *On the Priesthood*
5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, March 4: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape luncheon, spiritual talk
- Tues., March 6: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
- Wed., March 7: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
5 PM, Confessions
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, Meal and Spiritual Reading
- Thurs., March 8: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
6 PM, Vespers for the Forty Holy Martyrs
- Friday, March 9: 6 PM, Small Compline and Akathist

• POTLUCK AND A TALK:

Following Vespers this coming Saturday (and Saturday Vespers is always wonderful) we will have a special guest—Hieromonk Fr Seraphim (Aldea)—speaking to us about his monastery on the island of Mull <https://mullmonastery.com> off the coast of Scotland. Father Seraphim spoke at the meal following the Presanctified on the topic of prayer, the struggles we have as we try to pray, and the hope that even our weak and rote prayers are preparing a place for the Lord within the heart. Since Vespers ends about 6 PM, we will want to have a potluck dinner together as we listen to Fr Seraphim describe the establishment of the monastery on Mull. He has also agreed to give a spiritual talk on Sunday after the lunch. If the weather is pleasant, we can meet on the porch.

• ST. GREGORY PALAMAS—PREACHER OF GRACE:

The Holy Spirit is present in everything that exists, and present in us. We are living in an ocean of light, a coruscating, scintillating Ocean of Divine Light, and we are largely blind to it, we don't see it. We are living in it here and now. If God is everywhere present, and fills all things, we don't have any place to go to get to heaven, heaven is already present. It's already here.

Because our spiritual senses are atrophied by the Fall, we are not seeing as we should this ocean of God's light and life and love, and that blindness—which is not the Will of God for us—can make this life sometimes seem like a virtual hell. So to paraphrase St. Silouan, we must trust in God's uncreated deifying grace and His desire that all of us come to a saving knowledge of Him, and stand humbly before God in all the vicissitudes of this life, fearing not this illusion of hellish darkness and trusting in His presence as invisible, uncreated Light and warm all-embracing Love.... Our sins hold us to the nature of the fallen world so that the super-nature of Christ, which we are meant to attain by grace, cannot gracefully amalgamate with us, nor can we rise to it. The nature of the nous will rise, if it is free from the bonds of sin that paralyze us, that keep us bound to our pallet of passions. Then Christ frees our soul, frees our nous, frees our being from the paralysis of the passions, and from the fear of death. And then He says to us the healing words, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," and that is the liberating experience of the deifying grace experienced by the saints. So that is what St. Gregory gives us, that is what this feast on the Second Sunday of Lent puts before us, He gives us the vision that we are meant for this grace, that we are called to this experience, that this deifying grace is Christ's life for us. That the presence of God is around us, through us and in us, through Christ, And that if we are called to see God face to face, we have to create through grace a "face" to see Him. That is what this feast day is all about; and to the glory of God, may He grant it to each one of us. In the Name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

—*Brother Andrew Vincent Rossi, from a sermon preached at St. Seraphim, Second Sunday of Lent 2017*

• RETREAT AT HOLY TRINITY IN SF:

His Eminence, Archbishop Michael of NY, will be the speaker for a retreat at Holy Trinity on Van Ness and Green in SF, next Saturday, March 10. His topic is "The Gospel and the Gospels." Liturgy will be served at 8:30 AM, followed by breakfast and then the first of three talks. Call 415-673-8565 or email Fr. Kirill, frkirill@holy-trinity.org with questions or to register by mail or phone. <https://holy-trinity.org/events/2018-lenten-retreat>

• NEXT WEEKEND:

Next Sunday will be the third Sunday of Lent, which is dedicated to the Veneration of the Precious Cross. We Orthodox people love to venerate the Cross and to sing about what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on His Cross