

- CLEAN WEEK:

This week we fast as strictly as we can on the first three days of Lent. On Wednesday evening we will have an opportunity to receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Those who will receive are asked to prepare themselves by fasting (at least from noon), praying the *Prayers before Communion* and a recent confession. A priest will be available for confession from 5–6 PM, and then again throughout most of the Presanctified. Following the Presanctified there will be a meal in the Hall, along with a spiritual reading. We need spiritual sustenance if we are going to fast and pray more during Lent, so on Friday at 10:30 AM we will again have the Presanctified. In the evening at 6 PM the Parish Youth will chant Small Compline with a portion of the Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos.

- ON PRAYER:

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.

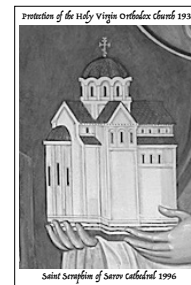
—from *The Way of a Pilgrim*

- CHURCH CLEANING:

All are invited to help clean the church during Lent (signing up or not), since with additional services keeping the Church clean is a priority.

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**March 10, 2019**

**Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise**



- 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.
- KONTAKION OF FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, Tone Six  
O Master, Guide to wisdom, Giver of prudent counsel, Instructor of the foolish and Champion of the poor, make firm my heart and grant it understanding. O Word of the Father, give me words, for see, I shall not stop my lips from crying out to Thee: I am fallen, on Thy compassion have mercy on me.

### ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 9: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy (in Protection)  
3:30 PM, Catechism (*On the Holy Eucharist*)  
4 PM, Children’s Choir Rehearsal

Protection of the Virgin Orthodox Church • 90 Mountain View Ave, Santa Rosa, CA.  
707-584-9491 • [Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net)

5 PM, Great Vespers & Confessions

- Sunday, March 10: 8:30 AM, Matins of the Resurrection  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
Noon, Agape Meal  
**1:15 PM, Vespers of Forgiveness ~ Lent begins**
- Mon./Tues./Thurs.: 8 AM, Matins  
Noon, Sixth Hour  
7 PM, Great Compline/Canon of St. Andrew
- Wed. March 13: 8 AM, Canon of St. Andrew  
Noon, Sixth Hour  
5–6 PM, Confession  
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified & Meal
- Friday, March 15: 10:30 AM, Liturgy of the Presanctified with  
Canon to St. Theodore the Recruit  
6 PM, Small Compline and *Akathist to the Theotokos*

• UPCOMING:

There will be no Church School this weekend due to the 1:15 PM Vespers. Next week also there will be no classes, since we will welcome Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishop Benjamin and Bishop Daniel for the Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Sunday of Orthodoxy. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy we will have a procession around St. Seraphim with the Holy Icons.

• FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:

On Sunday afternoon at 1:15 PM, we begin the Great Fast with *Forgiveness Sunday Vespers*, called that because at the conclusion of the Service, while the choir quietly sings Lenten and Paschal hymns, we ask and give forgiveness—one to each other. I have no doubt that every parishioner will be present at this unique service of common forgiveness, and we will all begin the journey to Pascha together. —*Fr. Lawrence*

• THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT — FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:

The last of the preparatory Sundays has two themes: it commemorates Adam's expulsion from Paradise, and it is also the Sunday of Forgiveness. There are obvious reasons why these two things should be brought to our attention as we stand on the threshold of the Great Fast. One of the primary images in the *Triodion* is that of the return to Paradise. Lent is a time when we weep with Adam and Eve before the closed gate of Eden, repenting with them for the sins that have deprived us of our free communion with God. But Lent is also a time when we are preparing to celebrate the saving event of Christ's death and rising, which has reopened Paradise to us once more (Luke 23:43). So sorrow for our exile in sin is tempered by hope of our re-entry into Paradise:

*O precious Paradise, unsurpassed in beauty, tabernacle built by God, unending gladness and delight, glory of the righteous, joy of the prophets, and dwelling of the saints, with the sound of thy leaves pray to the Maker of all: May He open unto me the gates which I closed by my transgression, and may He count me worthy to partake of the Tree of Life, and of the joy which was mine when I dwelt in thee before. [Hymn from Vespers].*

Note how the *Triodion* speaks here not of "Adam" but of "me": "May He open unto me the gates which I closed." Here, as throughout the *Triodion*, the events of sacred history are not treated as happenings in the distant past or future, but as experiences undergone by me here and now within the dimension of sacred time. The second theme, that of forgiveness, is emphasized in the Gospel reading for this Sunday (Matthew 6:14–21) and in the special **Ceremony of Mutual Forgiveness** at the end of Vespers on Sunday.... Before we enter the Lenten fast, we are reminded that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. A fast without mutual love is the fast of demons. As the commemoration of the ascetic saints on the previous Saturday has just made clear to us, we do not travel the road of Lent as isolated individuals but as members of a family. Our asceticism and fasting should not separate us from our fellow men but link us to them with ever stronger bonds. The Lenten ascetic is called to be a *man for others*. —From the forward to the *Lenten Triodion*