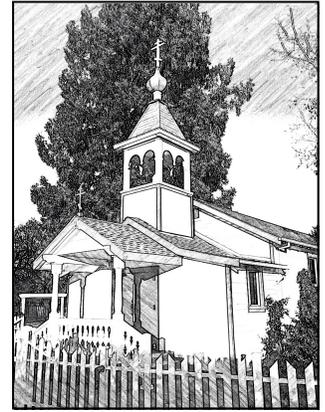


ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

March 19, 2016 - Veneration of the Precious Cross



- • 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 THE CROSS, Tone One:

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

- KONTAKION OF THE CROSS, Tone Seven:

The fiery sword no longer guards the gate of Eden, for in a strange and glorious way the wood of the Cross has quenched its flames. The sting of death and the victory of hades are now destroyed, for Thou art come, my Savior, crying unto those in hades: "Return again to Paradise."

- INSTEAD OF THE TRISAGION:

Before Thy Cross, we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 18: 9 AM, Retreat *On the Holy Icons*
5 PM, VIGIL, bringing out of the Precious Cross by Bishop Daniel
- Sunday, March 19: 10 AM, Greeting of Bishop Daniel and Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape luncheon in Hall
- Tues., March 21: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
- Wed., March 22: 8 AM, Lenten Matin
5 PM, Confessions
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, Meal and Spiritual Reading
- Thurs., March 23: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
6 PM, Nomadic Shelter

- Friday, March 24: 9 AM, Study of the *Ladder of Divine Ascent*
10:30 AM, Presanctified Liturgy, Prefeast of Annunciation
6:15 PM, Matins for Annunciation
- Saturday, March 25: 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy (Children’s Choir) for the Great Feast of Annunciation
3:30 PM, Catechism, on the *Mystery of Holy Unction*
5 PM, Great Vespers

- WELCOME, BISHOP DANIEL:

We rejoice to welcome Vlada Daniel, Bishop of Santa Rosa, for Services this weekend. Vigil on Saturday begins at 5 PM. This is a very special Vigil: it’s not particularly long, since there are no readings of the Old Testament, nor a blessing of bread, oil and wine. What makes it unique, besides having our bishop present—will be the solemn carrying out and veneration of the Precious Cross near the end of the service, as the choir is singing the processional “Holy God…” and “Before Thy Cross…” The next morning we will greet Bishop Daniel at 10 AM sharp. Please make an effort to be present BEFORE the bishop arrives, as it’s very impolite indeed for the hosts (that is us) to arrive after the guest of honor (Bishop Daniel).

- NOMADIC SHELTER:

On Thursday evening, March 23, our parish will host the final Nomadic Shelter of the season, welcoming guests in need from the Redwood Gospel Mission. Please see Ambrose Inlow if you are able to help with serving dinner and clean up.

- CONGRATULATIONS:

We congratulate Ambrose and Meghan Inlow who received the acceptance letter for study at St. Tikhon’s Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. Ambrose will be enrolled in a three-year program of theological and liturgical studies, with the goal of obtaining a Master of Divinity degree. Our parish will do its best to financially assist the Inlow family during their studies.

- BREAD AND WINE:

Dear Parish Members: I think that it is important that things are done in an orderly way in church. Our parish on the whole is very well behaved and orderly. There is a practice forming in our parish that I think is becoming a little disorderly. I have at times noticed that after communion some people dip the after communion bread into one of the little glasses of wine. I would have to say that this is an unusual practice that I have never seen in any other parish. This hasn’t been a problem until recently. What is happening now is that many people (and a lot of children) are hanging out around the table in order to do this—this creates a bottleneck. The preferred practice is to approach the table, take a few sips of wine, put the glass down and take one or two pieces of bread (I will ask the Altar servers to cut larger pieces of bread as well, since it is cut so small, and most of us end up taking a few pieces anyway). This is usually done quickly and in an orderly fashion **as there may be people waiting behind you**. Also, let me point out that there is a small bowl of *Antidoron* on the table. *Antidoron* meaning “instead of the Gifts” is bread cut from the loaf that will become the Holy Eucharist. It is considered blessed bread. This is why it is customary for those who are not receiving Holy Communion—yet have fasted from midnight

—to break their fast with this blessed *Antidoron*. I hope that this does not seem to be nit-picking; it's not a big deal, but maybe needs a little correcting. —*Sincerely, Matushka Ann*

- UNCTION AT STS. PETER AND PAUL:

Father Alexander Krassovsky has invited our clergy and faithful to participate in a “general unction” at Sts. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Church on Stony Point Rd, Monday, March 27 at 5 PM. “General Uction” in distinction to the Uction Services at our parish, are offered not only to the physically ill, but to any Orthodox Christian. Fr. Alexander reminds us in his invitation that if you plan to attend, Confession prior to the Service is required. Plan to make your confession by Saturday, March 25, or Sunday, March 26. Fr. Alexander also indicates that Holy Uction may only be received once a year, and not repeated in different parishes.

- CATECHISM ON HOLY UNCTION:

Those who will attend the Holy Uction at our sister parish on March 27 (details above) will also want to attend the class on this particular holy mystery, Saturday, March 25 at 3:30 PM, in the Parish Library.

- CHOIR REHEARSAL:

Note to all Choir members—our **30th Annual Fifth-Saturday-of-Lent Rehearsal** will be on Saturday, April 1. This rehearsal is mandatory, start and stop times TBD. —*Fr Lawrence*

- ATTENTION PARENTS!

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*

- SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS:

On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Services include a special veneration of the Cross, which prepares the faithful for the commemoration of the Crucifixion during Holy Week. ...[the feast] also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ. As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. ...As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers “planted” on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged. ...as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam’s gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree has condemnation been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall

never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal. ...At the Vigil of that day, after the Great Doxology, the Cross is brought in a solemn procession to the center of the church and remains there for the entire week—with a special rite of veneration following each service. It is noteworthy that the theme of the Cross which dominates the hymnology of that Sunday is developed in terms not of suffering but of victory and joy. More than that, the theme-songs (*irmoi*) of the Matins Canon ...is a paraphrase of the Paschal Canon “This is the day of resurrection, let us be illumined, O people...”

- THOUGHTS ON ANNUNCIATION—we celebrate the feast on March 24 and 25:

“*Genēthētō*, let it be done,” the verb used in both the Lord’s Prayer and the prayer of Jesus in the Garden is heard in today’s reading of the Gospel, and this time on the lips of Mary at the Annunciation of Gabriel: “be it done unto me according to thy word.” The Holy Spirit, according to the gospel of Luke, is the active agent in the Incarnation, but this action is not forced on a young Galilean woman. Her assent and cooperation were required by the very nature of salvation. The most significant fact about Mary was her consent to God’s invitation...When Mary said yes to the angel, she could hardly imagine all the things she was saying yes to, because the advance of holiness has to do with personal history. There’s a before and an after...*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a guide unto my steps. (Ps. 118) Thy word is a lamp.* It’s just a lamp. It sheds just enough light for the next step. It is not light at the end of the tunnel. It is light we hold in our hands. We light this lamp each day when we open the sacred text. That has to be, along with making coffee, the first thing you do every morning: light the lamp! Open the text! so it may guide our steps. It’s important that we do this every day. Here we take the mother of Jesus as the model for our own lives. Even as Simeon prophesied that Jesus was destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign of contradiction, the old man took care to warn Mary, “Yes, a sword will pass through your own soul also.” This prophesy was mainly fulfilled on Mount Calvary, where there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, loyally adhering to him unto the end. For this reason, we find Mary in the New Testament’s last mention of her, gathered with the other Christians in the upper room, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit. She threw in her lot with us, waiting in the upper room for the descent of the Holy Spirit. For the rest, she walked in faith, and thereby taught her Son to walk in faith. Gradually, day by day, the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. But at least at the beginning not much happened that was extraordinary. Indeed, Jesus seems so ordinary a Child that Mary and Joseph were quite stunned when, at age twelve, he suddenly asked them, “Do you not know that I must be about the things of my Father?” When Mary said yes to the angel, she did not see the distant scene. She did not foresee that day in the temple. She did not foresee the Cross under which she would stand with the other holy women to watch as the Lamb of God took away the sins of the world. Mary took one step at a time, God’s word being a lamp unto her feet, and a guide unto her path. She is our model in our own personal histories and our advance in holiness, for we, too, do not see the distant scene. When we walk with God, my brothers and sisters, there is only today. Let no one here, within range of my voice, promise themselves tomorrow, but only today. One step at a time; thy word is a lamp unto my feet... —*Fr. Patrick Reardon*

- NEW TITLES IN BOOKSTORE:

The Bookstore is pleased to offer a number of newly published books, particularly the WW II account, *Alexander Schmorell, Saint of the German Resistance*, by Elena Perekrestov, from San Francisco.