

ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 22, 2015 ~ St. John Climacus

quoting words from Psalm 67, the Paschal psalm of *Let God Arise*. In “leading captivity captive,” Paul was referring to raising the righteous out of captivity in Hades where they had been held captive by death awaiting their redemption.

The Vespertine Liturgy of the Blessed Sabbath is not a historical reenactment, or a reminiscence of events long past. It is the mystical re-member-ing and participation for us now, today, in the power and presence of those saving events. Because baptism is the participation in the death and resurrection of Christ and all that we just said, Holy Saturday has historically been the most perfect day for the baptism of catechumens. The catechumens, and indeed, all of us in the Church as well, receive the two-fold restoration and salvation given by God. First, the devil is cast away, we are united to Christ, and we enter the water of redemption, sanctification, purification, illumination, new birth and adoption to become a child of God and a temple of the Holy Spirit. This is the first resurrection. Then in due time at the Second Coming, the body will be raised from physical death itself, as did Christ who is the first fruits of them that have fallen asleep. This year we will baptize, God willing, Lars Noren, Miguel Castillo and Spencer Rhodes on Holy Saturday. Please keep those “preparing for Holy Illumination” in your prayers.

• SPEAKING TO THOSE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH:

How do we as a Church help bring those we meet into a living and dynamic relationship with Christ—one which, at the same time, is an experience of the Kingdom of God? We can be ever so welcoming and inclusive and affirmative, but if we fail to offer the often challenging moral vision and teaching of the Church to those who come through our doors, our churches will stagnate and eventually wither, like mainstream liberal Protestant denominations and progressive Roman Catholicism. What is alarming is how seductive an accommodation to the secular transvaluation of Christian values seems to be to some in the Church who measure authenticity by a warm, fuzzy kind of spirituality and relativizing ecclesiology. —*Father Andrew Morbey*

• TROPARION OF ST. JOHN, Tone One:

O John, our father, saint of God, thou wast revealed as a citizen of the desert, an angel in a body and worker of miracles. Through fasting, prayer and vigils thou hast received heavenly gifts of grace, and thou healest the sick and the souls of those that turn to thee with faith. Glory to Him who gave thee strength; glory to Him that crowned thee; glory to Him who through thee grants to all men healing.

• KONTAKION OF ST. JOHN, Tone Four:

Truly the Lord has set thee as a fixed star in the firmament of abstinence, giving light to the ends of the earth, O Father John, our teacher.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 21: 3:30 PM, Catechism: *On Holy Week*
5 PM, Vigil / Confessions
- Sunday, March 22: 9–10 AM, Confessions
10 AM, Divine Liturgy / 11:45 Church School
Noon, Agape luncheon in Hall
1:30 PM, Concert by *Carmina Chromatica* (no charge)
- Monday, March 23: 9 AM, Matins, Canon of St. Andrew of Crete,
with the *Life of St. Mary of Egypt*
- Tuesday, March 24: 6 PM, Matins for the Great Feast of Annunciation
- Wednesday, March 25: 5 PM, Vespertine Divine Liturgy for Annunciation,
meal to follow in Hall
- Thursday, March 26: 8 AM, Matins for Archangel Gabriel
Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship
- Friday, March 27: 6 PM, Matins of the *Akathist to the Theotokos*
- Saturday, March 28: 10:30 AM, Extended Choir Rehearsal
3:30 PM, Catechism
5 PM, Great Vespers

- WELCOME:

We welcome our guests and visitors this morning, especially Deacon Luke Fordice and family from Holy Resurrection Parish in Tacoma, WA.

- THIS WEEK:

As Great Lent progresses, it ebbs and flows with opportunities for worship and asceticism. The careful observer will notice that the fifth week of the Great Fast presents more opportunities for liturgical worship, and more variety, than other weeks. Starting on Monday morning we will sing the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, with the Life of St. Mary of Egypt (normally reserved for the fifth Thursday, but due to Annunciation it shifts back). On Tuesday we step into the light of the *Annunciation to the Theotokos* with a Festal Matins at 6 PM. On the next day, the day of the Feast, March 25, we will serve a Vespertal Liturgy beginning at 5 PM (prepare for Communion by fasting from noon. If you must arrive late, than have no hesitation to receive, if you have prepared—*come to Matins the evening before!*). On Friday at 6 PM we will sing the magnificent Akathist to the Theotokos with Matins for the Fifth Week!

- REMINDER:

His Eminence Vladyka Benjamin will come to serve Presanctified here for the Feast of St. Innocent of Alaska, on Tuesday, March 31 at 6:15 PM. He will return to us on April 13, to serve the Bright Monday Paschal Liturgy.

- CONFESSION:

During Great Lent, we intensify our spiritual work, fasting, works of mercy, prayers at home, prayers in Church, and we make an effort to keep a watch on our mind, heart and words as we prepare for Pascha. This is the work of repentance—a continual turning of our heart, thoughts, words, deeds and time to our loving Savior. Integral to repentance is Confession, and I invite each of you to come to Confession during these final weeks of Great Lent, in order to cleanse the image of God within. Don't delay—the Lord stands at the door and knocks. For those **over the age of seven** who wish to receive Holy Communion during Holy Week and Pascha, it is required to make a confession at least once in the three weeks before Holy Week. No Confessions will be heard after Holy Wednesday. Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of repentance (2

Cor. 6:2)—Holy Week is the time of the Lord's passion and there is no time then for confession. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- MYSTERY OF HOLY UNCTION:

I will be serving the healing Mystery of Holy Unction for the sick on Thursday, April 2, at 5 PM. This is a Service reserved for those who are baptized and chrismated in the Orthodox Church (i.e., not just an anointing with holy oil), those who are truly ill and those who have prepared themselves by prayer, a recent confession and fasting for four or five hours prior to the anointing (assuming the person is not too ill to fast). A number of parishioners have requested this Service, which is why it is being added to the schedule. If you are ill, and desire to be anointed, please see me about it so you may properly prepare. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- LAZARUS SATURDAY EVENTS:

Following the festal Liturgy for the Feast of the Raising of Lazarus on April 4, there will be a breakfast prepared by those baptized last year. All are invited. In the afternoon, starting about 2 PM or so, we will begin cleaning and decorating the Church in preparation for the Palm Sunday Vigil at 5 PM. Let Father Lawrence know that you are coming to help.

- BAPTISMS ON HOLY SATURDAY—1 PM, April 11:

Between Holy Friday and Pascha is the Great and Blessed Sabbath of Holy Saturday. We read in Genesis that God “blessed the seventh day” and then rested from all His work of creation. This “rest” in Genesis is a prefiguration of the “rest” of the Savior lying in the tomb on the Blessed Sabbath, Holy and Great Saturday. Our Savior, having said “it is finished” [meaning *accomplished, completed, consummated*] was laid in the tomb. What was accomplished and finished? St. Nicholas Cabasilas says that Christ broke down the three barriers that separated man from God: the barrier of nature by His incarnation, the barrier of sin by His death, and the barrier of death by His Resurrection. In His death He tramples down death, and in the tomb He harrows Hades: “O death, where is thy sting, O Hades, where is thy victory” wrote St. Paul (1 Cor 15:55), echoing the Prophet Hosea (Hos. 13:14). By His death, Jesus the Savior makes the “captivity” of death itself a captive, and fills even Hades with His ldivine ight. He took “captivity captive,” as St Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:8,