



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, April 22, 2018

Sunday of the Holy Myrrh-bearers

- TROPARION OF THE NOBLE JOSEPH, Tone Two:

The Noble Joseph, when he had taken down Thy most pure Body from the tree, wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices and placed it in a new tomb; but Thou didst rise on the third day, O Lord, granting the world great mercy.

- TROPARION OF THE MYRRH-BEARERS, Tone Two:

The angel came to the myrrh-bearing women at the tomb and said: Myrrh is meet for the dead; but Christ has shown Himself to be a stranger to corruption, so, proclaim: the Lord is risen! Granting the world great mercy.

- KONTAKION OF THE MYRRH-BEARERS, Tone Two:

Thou didst command the myrrh-bearers to rejoice, O Christ. By Thy resurrection, Thou didst stop the lamentation of Eve, O God. Thou didst command Thine apostles to preach: the Savior is risen.

- KONTAKION OF PASCHA, Tone Eight:

Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of Hades. And didst arise as victor, O Christ God, calling to the myrrh-bearing women: Rejoice; and giving peace unto Thine apostles, O Thou who dost grant resurrection to the fallen.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, April 21: 5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, April 22: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy / 11:45 AM Church School  
Noon, Agape luncheon  
1:15 PM, Vespers for Great Martyr George (in St. Seraphim)
- Mon., April 23: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Feast of the Great Martyr George (Protection Church)
- Wed., April 25: 6 PM, Vespers, followed by a potluck and followup discussion of *Silence*

- THIS WEEK—WEDNESDAY VESPERS, 6 PM:

The Diocese of the West is preparing a short video to be shown at the All American Council this coming July 23–27. All the other OCA Dioceses are also preparing videos. I expect a videographer working for Archbishop Benjamin to join us at Vespers on Wednesday, April 25 at 6 PM. We want our parish to be seen, in the few minutes that we are featured, in the best possible light. Of course, the frescoes and singing are always first class. However, what a sad sight it would be if our parish appeared in this video with only eight or ten worshippers present. I ask you to set aside a half-hour (add some time for traffic to get here) for Vespers on Wednesday, not to fill out the church only, but to pray and enjoy the fruits of the evening prayer. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- THE CHURCH:

One should not seek among others the truth that can be easily gotten from the Church. For in her, as in a rich treasury, the apostles have placed all that pertains to truth, so that everyone can drink this beverage of life. She is the door of life.” —*St. Irenaeus of Lyons (died about 202 AD)*

- SUNDAY AGAPE MEALS:

Earlier this week an email was inadvertently distributed to the SSPF (parish yahoo information list) regarding an increase in the requested donation (from \$5 to \$6) at the Sunday Agape Meal. The mistake was due to my forgetting that the Parish Council decided to address the issue of the increase at the February Annual Meeting. That item was also

inadvertently left off the meeting agenda. In any case, the Council and Martin the Treasurer are working with the 2018 Budget, approved by the Annual Meeting, and do not want to alter that budget. Our Treasurer assures us that other income (details given upon request) is sufficient to cover the cost of supplies, the janitor and food, the cost of which exceeds the donation income. I will remind you that the \$5 Agape Meal *donation* (it is just that) is not to cover the cost of the meal, but rather is requested to cover the cost of the janitorial cleanup each week. I apologize for the confusion. Parish Council minutes are recorded for a reason, and it’s helpful to us all if your pastor remembers to consult those minutes. —*Fr. Lawrence*

YOU ARE JOYFULLY INVITED TO ATTEND THE UNION OF  
*Hannah Prudhomme and Alexander Stameroff*  
in the Holy Sacrament of Marriage on on the 29th of April, 2018,  
at 3:00 PM  
at St. Seraphim Orthodox Cathedral  
Reception to follow in the Parish Hall, all are invited  
**Please RSVP at:** [anstameroff@comcast.net](mailto:anstameroff@comcast.net) by Sunday April 22  
to reserve a seat at the reception

- SISTERHOOD NEWS from Kira Staykow:

The Sisterhood will gather for a meeting on May 6, after the Agape Meal.

Also of interest: Matushka Esther will be assembling the Mother's Day baskets she gives for single mom's with young children. She is putting together five baskets this year and will be reaching out for help. More details about her project to follow.

We also are happy to announce one of the new directions the Sisterhood is taking is to make time for more social fellowship together. To honor our past Sisterhood President Lisa Wespiser, and wish her *bon voyage* as she moves to Idaho and a new job in June, we are gathering at Barbara Owens home on Friday, June 1 at 6 PM to share in a potluck of finger foods/appetizers. More details to follow on the going away gathering.

Also of interest: The role of the Sisterhood has a long history in the Orthodox Church. St Seraphim still has a Sisterhood, and this recent transition essentially makes the it one of our many ministries that serve our parish —instead of a group with elected officers leading it and serving our parish. As much as things change, they stay the same. Each and every one of us is called to serve our Lord and the Church in ways that allow God's love to shine through us, for the benefit of others. —*Kira Staykow*

- PARISH MINISTRIES—a reminder of our work:

On this second week after Pascha, we commemorate the Holy Myrrhbearing Women, St. Joseph and Nicodemus (see Mark 15:43 ff). On this day we also celebrate the institution of the Sacred Diaconate (as we hear in reading from Acts 6:1–7). The themes of service, offering, devotion to the Lord and His Church are clearly given to us today in these readings. So, it is only appropriate that we list our parish ministries here and give thanks to God for all those who labor with faith, love and diligence for the upbuilding of the Church of God. Perhaps those who are not yet committed to a ministry will also feel drawn to offer themselves to one of those listed below:

Parish Council (elected positions), Church Readers, Altar Servers, Adult Choir, Children's Choir, Sacristan and Assistants, Prospora baking, Sunday offerings, Candle Desk Attendants, Greeters, Ushers, Church Cleaning, Temple Floral Decorations, Vestment Care and Ironing, Tending of the Garden, Vineyard, Facilities Repair and Maintenance, Duplex Rental Manager, Sisterhood (which has a number of ministries of its own), Sunday Lunches, Senior/Retired Lunch Fellowship, Kitchen organization, Youth Coordinator (vacant), High School Coordinator (vacant), Young Adult Group, Mercy Meals for the Sick, Home Visits to shut-ins, Parish Hall Event Coordinator and Manager, Ride Ministry, Funeral Arrangements/Care for the Reposed, Photography (events, retreats, etc), Bookstore, Web Archivist (vacant), Parish Photo-directory phone list, Church School, Catechists, Women's Book Group, Library, Scrip Manager, Catholic Charities "St. Philaret Room" Liaison, Angels Unawares (Winter ministry), Redwood Empire Food Bank Distribution, Auditors (elected position), Church Office assistants, Glendi (?). What did we miss? **Please note that since Helen Kinnamon moved we need another librarian to assist Lahana.**

- A REMINDER and REQUEST:

Those who come forward to receive Holy Communion are asked to have made a recent confession (within the last four weeks at the most). When you do approach the Holy Chalice to receive the Mysteries, please do the following: **say your name** to the priest (this is a deeply spiritual act before God), open your mouth, slightly tilt your head back (*bowing your head forward does not work, considering the nature of gravity*), close your mouth around the spoon *rather than pulling away* with your lips or teeth, and allow the priest giving Holy Communion to remove the spoon. Please excuse the seeming crassness of the request, but when dealing with the All Holy Mysteries, we do not want to have an accident. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- OUR THOUGHTS AND WORDS DETERMINE OUR LIVES:

...on Pascha night, Orthodox Christians hear "Christ is Risen" literally hundreds of times, which not only brings much joy, but also an awareness of the new reality in Christ, that changes who we are and who we can become. There is something blessed and transformative about this repetition that continues throughout the Paschal season with Orthodox Christians greeting each other with the words, "Christ is Risen!" and responding with the affirmation, "Truly, He is Risen!" This set dialogue establishes a bond between two or more people and their common Lord. It also can serve as a caution against using any untoward or vulgar language, safeguarding over our verbal behavior. For if Christ is among us, who would think of speaking hatefully or uncharitably? Of course, this "verbal statement" is not a rule per se, but it is the premise upon which a number of powerful rules could be built. "Christ is risen! So I will forgive." "Christ is risen! So I will not be afraid!" "Christ is risen! So I will turn to the Risen Lord." And if I forgive, if I am not afraid, if I turn to my risen Lord, I will surely be at peace with Him. The Christian life always involves movement, following the Lord, walking with Him, asking, seeking, knocking, and eventually finding. In those areas where we need to work, in those areas where we procrastinate and need to become active, in those areas where we try to do it on our own and need to rely on the grace of Christ, let's tell our soul what we truly desire and how our Lord suggests that we acquire it. In doing so, we'll find more than a remedy for procrastination, we'll find that "pearl of great price," "the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world," the merciful Savior of our souls. —*Hieromonk Alexis (Trader)*

- SUNDAY OF THE HOLY MYRRH-BEARERS:

...The women came to anoint a body, a body that had ALREADY been anointed. What a strange thing to do. After all, as virtually every American mother assures her child the first time that he or she attends a funeral, the loved one isn't THERE! Only his body! If the seven myrrh-bearing women were to have heard our 21st century dismissal of the human body, they would have been astonished. Perhaps they would have assumed that we are pagans, like the philosophers who declared *soma sema* — "the body is a tomb" — and who cremated their dead to

allow the soul to escape that prison. But this was not the philosophy of our beloved myrrh-bearers. Mary Magdalene, when she saw the empty tomb, declared in grief, “They have taken away the LORD” and then asked “where have they taken him?” She didn’t ask, “where have they taken his body?” In her mind, and to the mind of the Jewish faithful (except for the confused Sadducees!), a person was embodied: they looked for not mere spiritual continuation after death, but for the reunion of soul with body, a resurrection! And so do we as Christians! “I look for the resurrection of the dead.” Physical things matter to God.... —*an excerpt from an article by Edith Humphreys, Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*

- WHO ARE THE MYRRH-BEARERS?

The Church commemorates seven myrrh-bearing women on the third Sunday of Pascha: Mary Magdalene (out of whom the Lord cast out seven demons. She was not a prostitute.), Mary, another Mary, Martha, Salome, Joanna, Susanna, as well as Righteous Joseph of Arimathea, whom we sing about as the “Noble Joseph” and Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin (ruling council) who asked Jesus about baptism (see John 3). The Gospels mention a “Mary the mother of Joses,” and “Mary the mother of James the less.” Who was this Mary? Blessed Theophylact, in his commentary on St. Luke 24, tells us that Mary—the mother of James and Joses—is the Theotokos. James and Joses were the children of the Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, from his deceased former wife, which makes the Theotokos their step-mother. The Evangelist Mark mentions the Mother of God by this other, more cryptic name, when he describes those who were near the Cross on Golgotha: “There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome” (Mark 15:40-41).

- A RECENT MIRACLE, from the Monastery of St. Elizabeth in Minsk:

I was offering people the products made by our convent—icons, church supplies and other beautiful works. There were many people since everyone wanted to buy some gifts for the coming great feast—Pascha. At one moment I saw two women standing not far from my counter. I understood that they wanted to ask me something but they were too confused. Finally, one of them coped with her embarrassment and decided to address me: “I am not Orthodox, I don’t know anything about your faith. Tell me, are there any saint doctors in your Church, who help people to be cured?” “Of course, there are. Here is one of them—St. Luke of Crimea, a surgeon, a genius doctor and our contemporary,” I replied and handed her a bottle of oil, consecrated on St. Luke’s holy relics. At the very moment she took the bottle, her hand started to bleed. Terrified she looked at her hand, at me, again at her bleeding hand and cried out. She was laughing and crying at the same time. To be honest, her friend and I were just shocked with what was going on. We began to look for a cloth to wipe her hand, but she refused, showed her hand to me and her friend and repeated only one phrase, “Do you see that it’s bleeding? You see?” Of course, we saw that and were totally confused. A bit later, the woman wiped her hand. There was no cut or wound on her hand that could bleed so heavily. Seeing wonder in our eyes, in which one could see a lot of questions, she explained everything: “I am sick. My blood is too thick. To thin the blood, doctors prescribed me to take the meds that have a bad effect on my heart. I did not know whether I should take them or not, and now I’ve got the answer to my question! I really thank your saint! I won’t take any pills! My blood is thin enough and doesn’t clot as the doctors said. I will be tested once again, and hopefully results will be different. Then they will prescribe me a more suitable course of treatment.” In front of my eyes, St. Luke made a sign for an unfaithful woman, who believed that a saint, unknown to her, would help her. “According to your faith let it be to you!”

—*Sister Natalia (Bunde), March 13, 2018*