

• WORDS OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM:

What funerals are for: The singing of psalms, the prayers, the assembling of the [spiritual] fathers and brethren—all this is not that you may weep and lament and afflict yourselves, but that you may render thanks to Him who has taken the departed. For as when men are called to some high office, multitudes with praises on their lips assemble to escort them at their departure to their stations, so do all with abundant praise join to send forward, as to greater honor, those of the pious who have departed.... Consider to whom the departed has gone and take comfort. He has gone where Paul is, and Peter; and the whole company of the saints. Consider how he shall arise, and with what glory and splendor.

• HOLY MYRRH-BEARER JOANNA:

Joanna the Myrrhbearer was the wife of Chouza (he was the steward-administrator of King Herod Antipas). She is listed as one of the women, along with Susanna, Mary Magdalene, and others, who “had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities” who accompanied Jesus and the Apostles, and “provided for Him from their substance” in Luke 8:2–3. In Luke 23:55–24:11, we have the story of how these same women went to the tomb of Christ as Myrrhbearers to finish the job of embalming Jesus’ body, which was hastily begun by Joseph and Nikodemus. They were perplexed when they found the tomb empty except for the grave clothes. An Angel appeared to them and proclaimed the Resurrection of the Lord. They believed and became the first evangelists of the risen Christ, and became “Apostles to the Apostles.” Although not mentioned by name, Joanna is most likely counted as one of the women who joined the disciples and Mary, the mother of the Lord, in the upper room in prayer. She was among the group of 120 who chose Matthias to fill the vacancy that was left by Judas, as well as being present on the Day of Pentecost. According to tradition, Joanna recovered the head of St. John the Forerunner after Herodias had disposed of it (Feb. 24). When Herodias had John beheaded, she cast the head out into an unclean place. Joanna took the head and buried it with honor on the Mount of Olives, on Herod’s land. Later, in the reign of Constantine the Great, the head was found. An ossuary has been discovered in Israel bearing the inscription, “Johanna, granddaughter of Theophilus, the High Priest.” Whether this is the same Joanna as the Myrrhbearer is unknown.

*Just as Joanna stood beside the tomb, So also she stands
beside the throne in the age to come. —Liturgical verse*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



May 12, 2019

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

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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, May 11: 5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, May 12: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
- Wed., May 15: 6 PM, Vespers
- Thurs., May 16: 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting

- RADONITSA 2019:

The “Day of Rejoicing” called *Radonitsa* in Slavonic, was celebrated this year on Tuesday, May 7 (always on the Tuesday after Bright Week). On this day clergy and faithful visit cemeteries to sing memorial hymns and bless the graves. Standing before the graves (usually a place of sorrow and loss), we joyfully announce the Good News that *Christ is risen*, and that by His death He destroyed the finality of death—for now death is the passover to eternal life and the well-marked way to resurrection of our bodies, which will take place when Christ comes again in glory, as we confess in the Creed. This is a day for rejoicing, not for grief. Deacon John and I began our festive county-wide procession at Pleasant Hill Cemetery at 10 AM, where we were met by three families who joined us in singing “Christ is risen” and the hymns of the Panikhida. Our next stop was Forestville’s venerable cemetery, with its many three-bar crosses marking the graves of reposed Orthodox Christians. There are also many graves of the founders of Forestville and their descendents (many related to Ron Parmenas Davis and Sam Coon). The *Radonitsa Choir* (Genevieve, Gretchen, Deacon John and myself) were happy to see Vicky, Nina Antipov’s daughter, who came, as she does every year, to the grave of her mother and other family members buried there, to pray for their repose. We pressed on toward Oak Mound Cemetery in Healdsburg, where we were met at Noon by Abbess Susanna and a number of Sisters, some faithful from Holy Dormition Church, and many of our parish members, children and clergy—about thirty or so. With Mother Susanna,

the Sisters and faithful singing the Paschal and Memorial Hymns, all the graves were blessed with Holy Water, as we commemorated a long list of names of those buried there. Following the service, Matushka Esther and others set up a table for a picnic. Being refreshed by prayer, fellowship and a festive lunch on what was a gloriously beautiful day, Deacon John, Fr. Nicholas and I then drove to Shiloh Cemetery in Windsor, where we were met by Ray Basch and Mother Seraphima. There we prayed for Carl Jacob, Reader Paul Byron, Solomon and Ned (Alla Keyes’ husband). We left Windsor and arrived, with Petar and Bobbi, at Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery just after 2 PM. We once again sang Paschal and Memorial Prayers at the graves of our faithful. We proceeded then to the old section of the cemetery, and located many graves which had three-bar crosses over them, asking the Lord to grant rest eternal to those interred there. Petar Griovski found the grave of Alexandra Sarkissian (buried there in 2003) after some serious and determined searching, and we concluded our memorial hymns for the “Day of Rejoicing” with a final singing of “Christ is risen.” We await the resurrection along with those who have gone before us. The word *cemetery* is derived from a Greek, and alludes to a “place of temporary sleep” since we shall all rise on the Last Day. A parish that actively and frequently prays for the departed is one that is filled with love for those who have gone before, and accordingly, knows its own destiny. Fr. John Breck wrote that “prayer transcends both time and space. As the work of the Holy Spirit within us, prayer unites us in a transcendent, eternal communion with the Holy Trinity and with all the faithful who have preceded us through death and into life beyond. We can and we must pray for them, for their salvation and for our own. We pray for them and request their intercession for the same reason the Church has always offered that prayer: because even now we are united with them in the eternal bond we know as ‘the communion of saints.’” Perhaps next year more of our faithful will join us at the cemeteries on Radonitsa. Mark your calendars now for that blessed day: **April 28, 2020.** —Fr. Lawrence

- CHURCH CLEANING SIGN-UP SHEET:

A new sign-up sheet has been posted on the Church bulletin board, next to the stairs. “O Lord, bless those who love the beauty of Thy House.”

- SAN ANSELMO SQUARE DANCE:

May 17, 7 PM. All are invited. See <https://stnicholasmarin.org/announcements/square-dance/>