

• THE AGE OF MORALITY:

...often we interpret the Golden Rule handed down to us by Christ in a shallow, superficial, and worldly way. We don't like to feel bad about ourselves, and so we don't want to say or do anything that could possibly make others feel bad about themselves. We even allow ourselves to believe that this is the essence of true Christian love and mercy.

But the love and mercy of Christ is not given in order to make us feel good about ourselves. It is given in order to bring us to saving repentance and humility, and thus to true spiritual health, peace, freedom, and joy. The love and mercy of Christ does not wish us to perish in bondage to our passions, but rather to free us from delusion and bring us into the light of the knowledge of God. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

It is therefore this love and mercy—this and no other—which every Christian must strive to acquire. It does not come easily nor quickly, nor in accordance with the wisdom and precepts of this world. It is founded upon prayer, as well as upon deep and sincere personal repentance, in accordance with the words of St. Paul: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Because without such repentance, we would only be moralizing hypocrites.

And without such repentance, the world itself would have no reason at all to believe a word that we say. If we are to claim that what the world calls freedom is actually slavery, and that what the world calls love is actually a misguided pity which can only bring further misery to the one beloved, then we had better first make absolutely certain that the true freedom and the true love of Christ can be seen shining in our every word and deed and thought. It is no good fighting the Devil on our own, without God. It is no good denouncing Anti-Christianity if we have not ourselves first become truly Christian. It is no good rejecting the man-god [which means, to put man before God], if we do not also set the God-man back in His rightful place—and above all, that means His rightful place in our own hearts. This is not about being correct. This is not even about being good. This is about being Christian. This is about becoming ourselves truly free, and thereby showing to the world what love truly means.

And love has only ever truly meant one thing: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Love has only ever meant the Cross. —*Hieromonk Gabriel, from a blog post*

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**July 14, 2019**

### Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Three:  
Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; for the Lord hath shown strength with His arm; He hath trampled down death by death; He hath become the first-born of the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of hell, and hath granted the world great mercy.
- TROPARION OF THE HOLY FATHERS, Tone Eight:  
Most glorified art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast established the Holy Fathers as luminous stars upon the earth, and through them didst guide us all to the true Faith. O Most Merciful One, glory be to Thee.
- KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Three:  
On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, leading us from the gates of death. On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices; with the prophets and patriarchs they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

- KONTAKION OF THE HOLY FATHERS, Tone Eight:

The preaching of the Apostles and the doctrines of the Fathers confirmed the one Faith in the Church. And wearing the garment of truth woven from theology on high, she rightly divideth and glorifieth the great mystery of piety.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, July 13: 9 AM, Work Party  
5 PM, Great Vespers and Confessions
- Sunday, July 14: *No Matins*  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
Noon, Agape Meal  
1:15 PM, Vespers for St. Vladimir of Kiev
- Tuesday, July 16: 5 PM, Welcome BBQ for the Diaconal Practicum Participants; 7 PM, Molioben
- Wednesday, July 17: 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy / Practicum  
5 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, July 18: 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy (in St. Seraphim and Protection) / Practicum  
**6:15 PM, Vigil for St. Seraphim**
- Friday, July 19: **9:30 AM, Greet Hierarchs / Divine Liturgy and Festal Agape Meal**  
Vespers for Prophet Elijah after lunch

- PARISH FEAST DAY:

Let us prepare for the Feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov on Thursday (Vigil at 6:15 PM) and Friday (9:30 AM), and as members of this holy parish, *all commune* and rejoice together at the Divine Liturgy on Friday morning.

- DIACONAL PRACTICUM:

Our Cathedral Parish will host participants and instructors for the OCA Diaconal Practicum training this coming week. We will welcome the deacons and deacon-hopefuls on Tuesday at a 5 PM BBQ, followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at 7 PM, with a keynote address by Archbishop Benjamin. His Grace, Bishop Daniel will also be with us. On Wednesday and

Thursday, the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 8:30 AM (on Thursday there will be concurrent Liturgies, one in the Protection and one in St. Seraphim), followed by meals and workshops. We need your help in preparing food, serving, cleaning and setting up for the next day. Please speak with Daphne Russell, Barbara Owens, Debbie Buse or Deacon John about how you can help.

- STEWARDSHIP:

Christian Stewardship is the practice of deliberate, planned, systematic and proportional giving of time, talent and treasure, based on the conviction these three things are a trust from God given to each person, to be wisely used in service for the benefit of all people, in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love and care for us, in recognition that God gives, and we are to be like God: conviction, service, gratitude. In other words, we give a proportion, a percentage, of what God has given us, as St. Paul said to do: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." (I Cor. 16:2). If we have wealth, we give a percentage out of that wealth to concretely demonstrate our gratitude to Jesus Christ. If we have little to give, we still give out of that little for the same reasons, and the Lord will increase it as only He can do. Stewardship is not a once a year event; not all about money, certainly not about dues or fundraising or even meeting our annual budget. Stewardship is about making choices, as individuals and in a community. It's about being faithful disciples, caring for and managing all God has given us: the commitment of time, talent and treasure. God gives, so we do too. Our financial resources are blessings from God. How we manage those finances can help us escape the trap of anxiety (and often selfishness). Failing to manage those resources finds us anxious, distracted and lacking in a concert way of giving thanks to God for His gifts to us. Words and actions go together. —*Fr Lawrence*

- CONSOLATION DURING PRAYER:

If we do not feel consolation during prayer, then something is wrong. It means we have to repent and correct ourselves in something. Some wrongly say that this happens because of the envy and wiles of the devil. In fact it is the Lord is saying to us, "I don't understand the way you are addressing Me." Prayer, just like Holy Communion—is a Sacrament. One has to prepare for it and have a clean conscience. —*St. Paisius of Athos, July 12*