

one's being (and thus also with one's intellect). The God of theology is a “Thou” — He is the living God of the Bible, the Absolute, certainly, but a personal Absolute with whom one can be on a “first-name basis” in prayer. — *Vladimir Lossky, Dogmatic Theology*

• ST. MARTIN OF TOURS AS A CATECHUMEN AND BISHOP:

Saint Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours, was born at Sabaria in Pannonia (modern Hungary) in 316. Since his father was a Roman officer, he also was obliged to serve in the army. Martin did so unwillingly, for he considered himself a soldier of Christ, though he was still a catechumen. At the gates of Amiens, he saw a beggar shivering in the severe winter cold, so he cut his cloak in two and gave half to the beggar. That night, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the saint wearing Martin's cloak. He heard the Savior say to the angels surrounding Him, “Martin is only a catechumen, but he has clothed Me with this garment.” The saint was baptized soon after this, and reluctantly remained in the army... He is regarded as the founder of monasticism in France. He conversed with angels, and had visions of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29) and of other saints. He is called the Merciful because of his generosity and care for the poor, and he received the grace to work miracles. After a life of devoted service to Christ and His Church, the saint fell ill at Candes, a village in his diocese, where he died on November 8, 397. He was buried three days later (his present Feast) at Tours. During the Middle Ages, many Western churches were dedicated to Saint Martin, including Saint Martin's in Canterbury, and Saint Martin-in-the-Fields in London. In 1008, a cathedral was built at Tours over the relics of Saint Martin. This cathedral was destroyed in 1793 during the French Revolution, together with the relics of Saint Martin and Saint Gregory of Tours.

• WORK PARTY AT CALISTOGA MONASTERY:

The Orthodox Church of the Redeemer in Los Altos is organizing a work party on Saturday, November 25, at the Monastery in Calistoga. Fr Deacon John Dibs, from the Redeemer parish, sent me an invitation for this work party, which coincides with the olive harvest at the monastery. The schedule is as follows: 9 to 11 AM—Morning work shift; 11 AM to 1 PM—Mid-day service, lunch, and a talk by Abbess Melania (for all pilgrims). Bring gloves and rakes. Lunch will be provided by the Monastery Sisterhood. You can optionally bring a dish to share. Contact: To sign up, call 707-942-6244.

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



November 12, 2017

Sts. John the Merciful & Martin of Tours



• 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 ST. JOHN THE MERCIFUL, Tone Eight:

In thy patience thou didst win thy reward, O righteous Father. Thou didst unceasingly persevere in prayer: thou didst love the poor, and didst provide for them bountifully. But intercede with Christ our God, O blessed John the almsgiver, that our souls be saved.

• KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Six:

When Christ God the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed Resurrection on the human race. He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life and the God of all.

- KONTAKION OF ST. JOHN, Tone Two:
Thou didst distribute thy wealth to the destitute, and hast now received heavenly riches, O John most wise. Wherefore, celebrating thy memory, we all honor thee, O namesake of almsgiving.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Nov. 11: 3:30 PM, Catechism, *On Sin*
5 PM, Great Vespers
6 PM, Young Adult Group
- Sunday, Nov. 12: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
- Wednesday, Nov. 15: 6 PM, Vespers, and beginning of the Nativity Fast
- Thursday, Nov. 16: 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting
- NATIVITY FAST—November 15–December 25:
St. Symeon of Thessaloniki (ca. A.D. 1381–1429) writes: The Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who—having fasted for forty days and forty nights—received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin the living Word—not written upon stone, but born, incarnate [taking flesh and blood] —and we will commune of His Divine Body. **November 15** marks the beginning of the Nativity Fast (40 days before Christmas). During the Fast we abstain from meat, dairy and eggs, anger, gossip and sometimes olive oil and wine. We also work to increase time in prayer and acts of mercy.
- RECEIVING CATECHUMENS:
On Sunday morning, November 19 at 9:30 AM, we will welcome new catechumens: Sarah Stewart, Hannah Prudhomme (close friend of Alex Stameroff), Sonya Elm with her two children Luke and Lilly. We bid farewell to Cathy Moyer, who has moved to SE, and will continue her catechesis at Holy Trinity Cathedral on Green Street.
- CONFESSIONS PRIOR TO DIVINE LITURGY:
Please be mindful that on Sunday morning confessions are heard from 9

AM until about 9:50 AM, after which the Divine Liturgy begins. A much more appropriate time to confess is before or during (when there is a priest available) or after Vespers on Saturdays. I am available for confessions on almost any weekday (except Monday) by appointment. —Fr. Lawrence

- FIFTH ANNUAL Families to Families Thanksgiving Dinner:
Just before the beginning of the Nativity Fast the Church gives us the *Parable of the Good Samaritan* to help us orient our fasting efforts to include not just abstinence and prayer, but works of mercy. We all know that God set apart the Jewish people to be those chosen people of God who would lead the way in God's work of rescuing His creation; the Gentiles were outside of this chosen group. The *Good Samaritan Parable* highlights this separation and union. In Christ there is no gap between the chosen, who knew God and His Law, and the rest of us, to whom the Law was not revealed because the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ have ended that separation. God is accessible to all in the Church, and because of what God has done for us, we have to ask ourselves: "What is my response to God's love for me and His love for all mankind?" We approach this question individually in a daily way, and as members of our church community. One simple response we have, organized by the parish, is to help provide Thanksgiving dinner for 100 Sonoma County families living in poverty. \$50.00 provides for a full Thanksgiving Dinner Food Box. If you, or your family, are not able to sponsor a full box, please consider sharing a box with other church members! In an effort to make this charity effort efficient we will be accepting monetary donations only (checks can be made out to St. Seraphim Church/charity). Help will be needed in putting together individual boxes (times to be announced). This effort is extremely appreciated and impactful. **If you have any questions please contact Amy Ramirez Margitich at fosasquatch@gmail.com or Serge Anderson at s.anderson4990@sbcglobal.net.**

- KNOWING GOD:
God is not the object of a science, and theology is differentiated radically from the thought of the philosophers: The theologian does not search for God as one searches for an object. He is overcome by him as one is overcome by a person. And it is because he has first been found by God, because God, one could say, has come to find him in the encounter of the revelation, that he can search for God, as one searches for a person with all