

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, December 8, 2013

St. Patapios of Egypt

peoples, the Great Light that has come into the world to enlighten those sitting in darkness! Already celebrating the Forefeast of the Nativity night that is bright as day, let us sing...with the whole Church, “Christ is born, give ye glory... Christ is on earth, let us be exalted. Sing unto the Lord all the earth...”[Nativity hymn]. —*Fr. Artemy Vladimirov*

- SILENCE WHEN TEMPTED TO GOSSIP:

When the door of the steam baths is continually left open, the heat inside rapidly escapes through it; likewise the soul, in its desire to say many things, dissipates its remembrance of God through the door of speech, even though everything it says may be good. Thereafter the intellect, though lacking appropriate ideas, pours out a welter of confused thoughts to anyone it meets, as it no longer has the Holy Spirit to keep its understanding free from fantasy. Ideas of value always shun verbosity, being foreign to confusion and fantasy. Timely silence, then, is precious, for it is nothing less than the mother of the wisest thoughts. —*St Diadochos of Photiki*

- PATIENCE:

Patience is a great thing, a great virtue. Christ said that if you don't have patience, you will lose your souls, and in order to gain your souls you must have patience. Patience is love, and without love you can't have patience. But it's a matter of faith. In reality, we are without faith, because we don't know how God works and frees us from difficulties and vexations...Our disposition to love God also contains within it a certain pain. When we wish to live spiritually we suffer pain because we need to sever every bond that links us to matter. But when we wish to satisfy ourselves or others, what we expend is love, an energy, a power of our soul. We need to take care about how and for whom we expend that energy.. —*St. Porphyrios, newly glorified, from the book*

Wounded by Love

- NEEDS AROUND THE PARISH:

Gutters on Hall and Protection Church need cleaning. Vineyard needs mowing. Lampadas in St. Seraphim need to be polished. Offerings of olive oil for the church lamps are appreciated. The closet in St. Seraphim needs rearranging. Please remember that our Parish has pledged to support a private room at the Catholic Charities Family Shelter; there is a dedicated offering box in the Narthex. Frescos in the dome for the following Prophets have NOT yet been commissioned: Malachai, Habbakuk, Moses, Jonah, Jeremiah, Joel and Zephaniah (Isaiah commissioned last week).

- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Seven:

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death; to the thief, Thou didst open Paradise. For the myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

- TROPARION OF ST. PATAPIOS OF EGYPT, Tone Four:

In thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Father; for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul since it is immortal. Wherefore, O righteous Patapios, thy spirit rejoiceth with the angels.

- KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Seven:

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. Hades is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry: the Savior has come to them that have faith. Enter, ye faithful, into the Resurrection.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Dec. 7: 10 AM, Advent Retreat at Holy Trinity Cathedral, SF
3:30 PM, Catechism / Church as Spiritual Hospital
5 PM, Great Vespers and Confessions
- Sunday, Dec. 8: 9 AM, Confessions
10 AM, Divine Liturgy

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- Tuesday, Dec. 10: Noon, Agape Meal
7 PM, Study Group at Veenis home
- Wednesday, Dec. 11: *Fr. Lawrence in SF all day at meeting*
6 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, Dec. 12: Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship (potluck)
6:15 PM, Great Vespers for St. Herman of Alaska
- Friday, Dec. 13: 8:30 AM, Matins and Divine Liturgy for St. Herman of Alaska

• HOLY COMMUNION:

We welcome our visitors and our guests this morning, and would remind them, as well as all Parish and Church members, that the reception of Holy Communion is reserved for Baptized and Chrismated Orthodox Christians. No Orthodox Christian should approach the Chalice to receive Holy Communion unless he or she has prepared by fasting, prayer (especially the “Pre-Communion Prayers”) and a recent participation in the Holy Sacrament of Confession. We confess our sins when our conscience dictates, but certainly, no less than once per month for those that receive Communion weekly. If you are a visitor to the Church, we most cordially invite you to our Sunday meal.

• FEAST OF ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA:

St. Herman is a monumentally important Saint for us—through his holy life, words and miracles, the Church in America is given a great witness of faith and true Orthodoxy. Accordingly, we will celebrate Great Vespers (with Lity—blessing of bread, wine and oil) on Thursday, December 12 at 6:15 PM. Matins and Liturgy for the feast will begin at 8:30 AM, Friday, December 13.

• NATIVITY PLAY~DEC. 21:

There is a slight change in the schedule for the children’s Christmas play on December 21. There will be no crafts session at 3 PM as originally planned. Instead, we will have the usual 5 PM Great Vespers, followed by a Potluck, organized by Catherine Carpenter. As dinner is wrapping up, Lara and Carmen Anderson will get the play underway. We expect a visit from St. Nicholas as well.

• UPCOMING BAPTISMS:

December 21, 10 AM, Baptism of baby Senira, daughter of Lula Andi and Brian Rainey. *December 29, 9 AM* (before Liturgy), Baptism of baby Elias, son of Marina and Evan Glanville.

• NATIVITY SERVICES:

Key Divine Services leading up to Christmas day:

- 12/23, Matins at 8 AM; Royal Hours at 6 PM
- 12/24, Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil at 11 AM, Matins at 6 PM
- 12/25, Divine Liturgy of Christmas Day, 9:30 AM

• A CHRISTMAS CAROL:

Charles Dickens’ beloved tale, *A Christmas Carol* will be presented by the St. Porphyrios Players, at Nativity of Christ Orthodox Church in Novato, Sunday, December 22 at 7 PM.

The closer we come to the end of the [Nativity] fast, the brighter the wondrous Bethlehem star is enkindled above our heads, proclaiming to the Magi the time of the Infant’s birth, and the place where He lay... The rays of this *rational* star (according to the holy fathers, this star was actually an angelic power, and not a dead astronomical body) illumine with their incorruptible, unfading light the twilight in the Cave—the rib cage encasing each of our hearts... The rays of this star bring the soul, which has but scarcely touched it, to inexplicable trembling and heavenly joy, the likes of which we shall not find here on this sinful world with its sensuous, quickly passing pleasures, disappearing like smoke. *I am ... the bright and morning star* (Rev. 22:16), testifies the Lord. *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give ... the morning star. He that hath an ear [to hear], let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches* (Rev. 2:26, 28–29). *Ye do well*, repeats the Apostle Peter, *that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts* (2 Pet. 1:19). The morning star is hidden prayer of the heart! It is made not with lips or fingers, but with the mind and heart; it turns all of man’s existence to the Lord, and places the disciple before the most radiant face of his Teacher... Illumined by the unwaning light of the Nativity star, let us pass...under the canopy of the very cave in Bethlehem... There He is, the Angel of Great Counsel, the King of the world, the Father of the age to come, as the “Old Testament Evangelist,” the holy Prophet Isaiah, exclaimed in prophetic, sober inebriation. There He is, the Yearning of the nations, the Expectation of all