

for following consists in choosing a path not in accordance with one's own will, but in accordance with the will of the one who leads. Whoever does not desire, through obedience and devotion to do the will of God, to sacrifice the delights of his soul is not a reliable follower of Christ. Even when he yearns for spiritual delights, exerting all his efforts toward the glimmering of light on the steep heights of Tabor, by this very fact he is still not accompanying the Lord to the saving Golgotha. What else can be said if he is drawing his soul's delights from the unpurified spring of fallen nature, and remains stubborn when Providence and grace approach to bar the way to its streams for the cleansing of his soul? The Lord Himself spoke His judgment about this to one man of this kind who expressed his desire to follow after Him, yet at the same time was drawn by the delights of parental love. No man, the Lord replied, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62).

It is evident that a man bound to temporal life cannot successfully follow Christ from the fact that the apostles who, even after such a long time nurtured by His teaching, and after so many miracles performed not only by Him, but also by themselves through His grace, turned from following Him to flight, when they encountered life's dangers on His path. That he who is bound to the good things of temporal life is not capable of following Christ is shown by the sorrowful experience presented by the youth in the Gospel. Although he wished to set out on the path to eternal life, and was called by Christ Himself to follow Him, he did not follow Him, but went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions (Matt. 19:22), and did not wish to part with them.

Finally, one who is bound to the body and its pleasures is obviously a poor follower of Christ, since—being pampered, burdened and paralyzed by them—he finds it difficult to ascend the mountain of the Lord; he would more eagerly turn back at the base of the mountain or doze among the flowers, and he is not far from plunging into the mire of unclean passions and lusts. Briefly put, since everything that exists within a son of Adam—as long as it has not been cleansed, or better, been newly created by Christ—is usually subject to passionate employment, he who wishes to be a true and faithful follower of Christ must forsake everything that he has appropriated to himself and that he loves, not in relation to its use, but in relation to his attachment to it. All this the Lord condensed in saying, "Let him deny himself." — *by St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, from a sermon dated 1835.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tone Five ~ September 18, 2011 Post-Feast of the Holy Cross

- TROPARION, Tone Five:

Let us the faithful praise and worship the Word, / co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, / to endure death / and to raise the dead, / by His glorious Resurrection.

- TROPARION OF THE CROSS, Tone One:

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

- KONTAKION OF THE CROSS, Tone Four:

O Thou Who wast lifted up of Thine own will on the Cross, bestow Thy mercies upon the new nation that bears Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad in Thy strength, granting them victories over their enemies, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

- INSTEAD OF THE TRISAGION:

Before Thy Cross, we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify. / Slavonic version: *Kres-tu tvo-e-mu po-kla-nya-yem-sa vla-dy-ko, ee svya-to-ye vos-kre-sye-ni-ye tvo-ye sla-vim.*

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Sept. 17: 9 AM, All-Parish *No-Glendi* Work-party
5 PM, Great Vespers, Confessions
- Sunday, Set. 18: 9 AM, Confessions until beginning of Liturgy

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- 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
- 11:30 AM, Church School
- 12:45 PM, Choir Rehearsal
- Tuesday, Sept. 20 : 6:30 PM, Study Group in Rohnert Park
- Wed., Sept. 21: 9 AM, Memorial Divine Liturgy / Great Martyr Evstathios
- 6 PM, Vespers
- Thurs., Set. 22: 9:30 AM, Kazan Skete—Divine Liturgy
- 6 PM, Akathist to St. Seraphim
- 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting**

- PARISH COUNCIL:

The September Meeting for the Parish Council is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 22, at 7 PM. We will meet in the back Church School room.

- TUESDAY EVENING STUDY GROUP:

The course being taught by Deacon Nicholas, “Orthodoxy and the Protestant Reformation,” will have its first session on Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 7 PM. The class meets in Rohnert Park. See Debi Shrimplin for more info.

- WOMEN'S BOOK STUDY:

Next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 5, at 7 PM. Book and location to be determined.

- PARISH FEAST DAY:

The Feast Day of our Parish will be celebrated with Vigil on Friday evening, September 30, 2011, at 6:30 PM. We expect His Grace Bishop Benjamin, Father Thomas Hopko, and our area clergy and choir singers to join us for this festive and important occasion. His Grace will preside at the Divine Liturgy, on Saturday, October 1, which begins at 9:30 AM. The Festive 75th Anniversary Banquet will follow. Reservations are \$30 for adults, and \$10 for children. You can make your reservations after the Divine Liturgy at the bookstore table outside. The Parish Feast is one of the central events in the life of a Parish and its Faithful. It is on that particular day, set aside as unique in the many days of feasts and saints, that we offer thanks to God for all things, but especially for giving us—here in Santa Rosa—the All-Holy Virgin as our guide, intercessor and protector. So many of our hymns begin with the line “O come, ye who love to keep the feasts,” calling, inviting and

reminding us to honor the special day. Other celebrations are all good and surely may be important, but they cannot compare with the day of the Parish Feast. October 1 is an opportunity to celebrate something holy and flowing with Grace, to draw close to and enter into the meaning and importance of the day, and to lay aside all earthly cares for a short time. How much we, as individuals and as a parish, need the respite from daily life and an entry into eternal life.

- FEAST OF ST. SYMEON OF VERHOTURSK, SEPT 24:

Father Joakim, from our Sister Parish in Calistoga (St. Symeon / ROCOR) has invited us to come to their Altar Feast. The Divine Liturgy will begin at 9 AM, presided by His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill. Come and let us show our Christian love and support for the brothers, sisters and venerable priest of that parish (a few blocks from the monastery).

- HARVEST FESTIVAL:

Saturday, September 24, from noon til 8 PM, at 1521 Rose Ave., Holy Dormition Orthodox Church. Music, food, games, crafts, dancing. For more information call 545-5688. www.holydormitionchurch.org

- ST. NICHOLAS BAZAAR:

Our Sister Parish in San Anselmo has invited us to join them for their 55th Annual Bazaar, taking place on Saturday, October 8, 2011. Enjoy crafts, Slavic foods, wonderful music and a rummage sale. This event serves as their primary fundraising effort for the year. One of the highlights each year is the choir concert, at 1 PM. This year's choir concert: “From the Hills of Northern California” will feature seven selections representing the liturgical and paraliturgical music of our beloved parishioner, friend and composer, Maia Aprahamian, who fell asleep in the Lord on May 31, 2011.

- DENYING ONESELF:

“Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself (Mark 8:34).” Why cannot one who desires to follow Christ stand on this path according to his own desire, without any other preliminary requirement? Why is self-denial required of him as a prerequisite? Obviously, because without this, the desire to follow after Christ would remain unrealizable. Actually, for one who is attached to the favorite notions of his own reasoning, this attachment hinders him from ascending on high and from believing Divine Truth: he is incapable of following Christ on the path of pure faith. Likewise, whoever does not forsake the desires of his own will cannot be a follower of Christ,