

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 20, 2012, Blind Man

come to hear the Elder. He communicates in a very simple manner—with a lively, yet sober humor—gained from four decades of ascetic struggle in the desert, immersed in the Orthodox Tradition. It may seem odd, yet he is able to concisely address our modern problems and questions, and convey the knowledge, lost to the non-Orthodox, that Christianity is not a religious or ethical system, but a personal experience of peace in union with God. His translator, Sister Joanna, has asked us to gather a list of ten or twenty questions from you to give to the Elder to answer. I invite you to send me your questions, and I will pass them on to Elder Pavlos. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- PART TWO: ORIGINS OF ICONOGRAPHY:

On **Wednesday, June 6**, at 7 PM, Catherine Ostling will continue her extremely interesting slide-show overview of how the early church created the iconographic forms we still use today. Catherine gave an engaging presentation two weeks ago, and those who missed it will want to benefit from Part Two.

- THE SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN:

The account teaches us an important lesson about the relationship between faith and evidence. We often think that if God gives us enough of the right kind of evidence, our faith will follow naturally and inevitably. But this Gospel account clearly contradicts this theory. Evidence is important (we don't have a blind faith), but it is not the final and decisive issue. Both the Pharisees and the Blind Man had the same abundance of evidence—yet they responded in totally different ways. The main obstacle to faith in Jesus is not insufficient evidence, but rather unwillingness to humble oneself before God and set aside intellectual pride which cannot fathom the mysteries of the Kingdom. While the formerly blind man gradually moves into the bright vision and clarity of faith, those who question and resist the sign, plunge further and further into the shadows of unbelief. The distinction made in the Gospel is not between those who are blind and those who see, but rather, between those who know that they are blind and those who claim that they see. And the controversy surrounding this miracle indicates that then as today, “people loved darkness rather than light” (John 3:19).

- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, 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.

- KONTAKION OF THE BLIND MAN, Tone Four:

Being blinded in the eyes of my soul, O Savior, I come unto Thee, O Christ, as did the man who was born blind. And in repentance I cry to Thee: of those in darkness art Thou the most radiant Light.

- KONTAKION OF PASCHA, Tone Eight:

Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst 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 19: 5 PM, Vespers / confessions
- Sunday, May 20: 9 AM, Confessions / 10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
11:30, Church School Classes  
Noon, Agape luncheon in Hall  
**12:45, Choir Rehearsal**
- Mon., May 21: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Sts. Constantine and Helen
- Tues., May 22: *Fr. Lawrence in Calistoga until 6 PM*  
7 PM, Matins for Leave-taking of Pascha
- Wed., May 23: 6:15 PM, Vigil for the *Ascension of our Lord*

- Thurs., May 24: 9 AM, Ascension Day Divine Liturgy  
6 PM, Vespers  
7 PM, Parish Council Meeting

- TUESDAY EVENING: LEAVE-TAKING OF HOLY PASCHA:

The very same hymns that were sung at the Paschal Matins (without the procession and the Liturgy) will be chanted one final time this season, at 7 PM on Tuesday, May 22. If you were unable to attend the midnight Pascha service, you will want to come and be spiritually nourished by the powerful hymns which celebrate the Lord's victory for us over death.

- ASCENSION DAY—St. Leo of Rome:

...dearly-beloved, throughout this time which elapsed between the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension, God's Providence intended to teach and to impress upon the eyes and hearts of His people that the Lord Jesus Christ is to be acknowledged to have risen just as truly as He was truly born, suffered, and died. And thus the blessed Apostles and all the disciples who, filled with fear at His death on the Cross and with uncertainty whether to believe in his Resurrection, were so fortified by the obvious truth, that when the Lord went up into heaven's heights, not only were they not affected with sadness, they were even filled with great joy. And truly great and beyond words was their cause for joy, when, in the sight of the holy gathering, the nature of humankind ascended above the dignity of all the creatures of heaven, to pass above the ranks of angels and to be raised beyond the height of the archangels, and to have no upward limit set to its ascent until it was received to sit enthroned with the Eternal Father, to share the glory of Him, to whose nature it was united in the Son. Since then **Christ's Ascension is our elevation, and the body's hope is summoned to where the glory of the head has already gone**, let us exult, best beloved, with fitting celebration and rejoice to offer dutiful thanks. For today not only are we confirmed as possessors of paradise, but in Christ we have even penetrated heaven's height, and by Christ's ineffable grace have gained abundantly, far beyond what we lost through the devil's envy. The poisonous enemy drove us from the bliss of our first home, but the Son of God has incorporated us in Himself and placed us at the right hand of the Father, with Whom He lives and reigns in the unity of the

Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

- MARIN GREEK FESTIVAL:

The annual Greek Festival at our sister Parish, Nativity of Christ in Novato, will be held on May 25, 26, 27. Check out their website at [www.nativityofchrist.org/festival/index.htm](http://www.nativityofchrist.org/festival/index.htm) or call at 415-883-1998. Tasty food, dancing and crafts.

- CELTIC FESTIVAL AT HOLY DORMITION:

The St. Michael's Celtic Festival will be held on **Saturday, May 26**, Noon to 8:30 PM—a full day of traditional music, dance, food, crafts, games and more! The Festival is put on by the parents, teachers and students of St. Michael's Orthodox School as a fundraiser for the school and a celebration of our life together. Neighbors and friends and Celtic music lovers are invited to the festival that features many fun activities: Scottish games, Celtic music, Scottish dancing, great BBQ, an Irish "Pub," crafts and more music. For more info see: <http://holydormitionchurch.org/celtic12.shtml>

- CHURCH SCHOOL—Last Class and Party:

The Church School classes will meet for the last time next Sunday, May 27. To mark the occasion, when class is over there will be a **Hot Dog Party** for the kids, with a bounce house for fun. Parents: your assistance will be needed. Please call Gloria Collins at 527-8803 if you have any questions.

- GLENDI MEETING—May 30:

It's not too early to start planning for our International Glendi Food Festival (Sept. 15/16). There's an organizational meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 30, at 6:30 PM. The church office receives numerous calls each week asking about the date of the event, so it appears that excitement is growing.

- ELDER PAVLOS OF SINAI—Monday, June 4:

On Monday evening, June 4, our parish will be blessed with a visit and talk by Elder Pavlos of the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. Father Pavlos is the confessor and senior monk of what is the Orthodox Church's oldest monastery. I have heard him speak two times now, and very much encourage all of you, whether young, old, parents, or single people, to