

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

Publican & Pharisee, February 5, 2012



• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone One:

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ; glory to Thy kingdom; glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

• TROPARION OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD, Tone One:

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, O Virgin Theotokos, for from thee hath risen the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those in darkness. Rejoice, also thou righteous Elder, as thou receivest in thine arms the Redeemer of our souls, who also granteth unto us the Resurrection.

• KONTAKION OF THE PUBLICAN & PHARISEE, Tone Four:

Let us flee the Pharisee's conceited vaunting; let us learn the Publican's humility, and cry with groans unto the Savior: Thou Who alone art swiftly reconciled, be gracious unto us.

• KONTAKION OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD, Tone One:

Thou Who hast sanctified by Thy birth a virgin womb and fittingly blessed the hands of Simeon, Thou art come, O Christ our God, and on this day hast saved us. Give peace to Thy commonwealth in time of battle and strengthen the Orthodox people whom thou hast loved, O thou who alone lovest mankind.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Sat., Feb. 4:                    3:30 PM, Catechism, on *Baptism, Part 2*  
    5 PM, Great Vespers & Confessions
- Sun., Feb. 5:                    9–10 AM, Confessions  
    10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
    11:30 AM, Church School  
    **12:30 PM, ANNUAL MEETING**
- Tues., Feb. 7:                    7 PM, Rohnert Park Study Group
- Wed., Feb. 8:                    6 PM, Daily Vespers
- Thurs., Feb. 9:                    6 PM, Akathist to St. Seraphim
- Fri., Feb. 10:                    6:30 PM, Benefit Dinner for St. Michael School
- Sat., Feb. 11:                    11 AM, Baptism (Fr. Alex from Vallejo using the Church for a family from there)  
    3:30 PM, Catechism on *How to Read the Scriptures*  
    5 PM, Great Vespers & Confessions

- ANNUAL MEETING TODAY:

Our meeting takes place directly after the Divine Liturgy. **Please bring a bag lunch, since no lunch will be served.** All of those who are “Communicants-in-good-standing” (Worship, Confess and Commune here, who regularly support the Parish, are at least 18 years of age), will be called upon to assemble, to receive reports on Parish life, to adopt a budget for 2012, to select members of the Parish Council, and to propose solutions to those issues which shall come regularly before them. Of course, all of these decisions are then reviewed and accepted by the Dean and are sent to the Bishop, who must confirm them with his blessing. To participate in this process is a great blessing, reminiscent of the assemblies of the early Church, gathered on the Lord’s Day in the presence of the Holy Apostles and of their successors to support the needs of the poor and to promote the spread of the Gospel. Let us all prepare ourselves with Confession and Holy Communion, being mindful of all that our Lord has done for us.

- YOUTH ACTIVITY PLANNING MEETING:

Parents of our high school-age children are invited to attend a meeting on Sunday, February 12, at 12:45, in the Parish hall. Topic: Creating Orthodox soul-strengthening, faith-building and friendship-bonding activities, camp-outs, and retreats for our parish teens. We won’t be discussing theology, theory, challenges or problems that confront our youth (that’s for the retreats, etc.). Fr. Lawrence will simply lead a planning session for the above-named activities for the year ahead, using our resources, those that the Diocese makes available to us, and those of our sister parishes.

- A NIGHT ON THE TOWN:

St. Michael’s Orthodox School and St. Seraphim Church will host a dinner/dance here in the new parish hall on the Fast Free Friday, February 10, at 6:30 PM as a benefit for St. Michael Orthodox School. Tickets are \$50, for dinner, drinks and dancing. Call Lara Anderson for reservations and tickets at 707-291-6856.

- UPCOMING LECTURE ON REPENTANCE:

Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church in Novato presents a talk by Father Deacon John Chryssavgis on the meaning of repentance. Fr. John is a deacon of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and currently serves as theological advisor to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I on ecological issues. He completed his doctoral studies in Patristics at the University of Oxford (1983). 9:30 AM Registration; 10:00 AM, 1st Session Begins; 12:00 PM Lunch; 1:00 PM, 2nd Session Begins; Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Christian Church 1110 Highland Drive, Novato, California. \$15.00 Registration (Students-\$10.00) includes Continental Breakfast and Lunch.

- LITURGY TIME/GOD’S TIME ON THE LORD’S DAY:

We have a full church for the Sunday Divine Liturgy, and for that we should all rejoice. At the beginning we hear that wonderful exclamation, telling us our goal, our heart’s desire and God’s gift to us: “Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...” It’s probably not necessary to say it, but, of course, ALL of the Divine Liturgy is important, not just the Communion “part.” Liturgy should not have “parts” that we allow ourselves to miss. Liturgy is corporate worship, meaning, we do it together with Christ, and in assembling together to hear “Blessed is the Kingdom...” we actually constitute the Church, the Body of Christ, God’s redeemed people. St. Peter the Apostle wrote that “you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” Here is a profound oneness in Christ, and something very precious in this fragmented world. Strive to arrive at the beginning of the Liturgy so that you will be as fully present then as much as at the time of Holy Communion. We need that time together and with God, hearing the Word in psalms, hymns, Beatitudes, Epistles, Gospels and homilies, in order to prepare ourselves for Holy Communion. If you are late, consider how late and why, and that it might be best not to receive Holy Communion that day. — *Fr. Lawrence*

- FORGIVENESS SUNDAY VESPERS – February 26, 1:15 PM:

In three weeks we will serve the Vespers of Forgiveness, right after the usual Sunday Agape Meal. The Service, which ushers in the Great Fast of Lent, begins at 1:15 PM. We will begin Vespers as usual, with the reading of Psalm 103, the Great Litany, and the various hymns of the day. After “O Joyous Light” we will sing the special “Great Prokimenon” “Turn not Thy countenance from Thy servant, for I am afflicted, hearken to me speedily, attend to my soul, and deliver it.” During that slow and compunctionate melody, the gold covers on all the icon stands will be changed to the Lenten purple—a royal and rich color, yet darker and more mournful too. From that point on we are in Great Lent, and the choir will be singing the Lenten melodies for the litanies. At the end of this unique Service we will ask forgiveness of each other, each person approaching the priests, then each other. Those who can, do a prostration before one another; those who cannot, simply ask forgiveness. We say: “forgive me;” and answer back, “forgive me. God forgives.” The important thing is to ask for forgiveness and then give it. In a Parish—and the longer you are in it the more this is true—there are things to forgive which we might not even know about, as well as things for which we must ask forgiveness (being equally blind to those things). I hope you understand that I am urging you, in the strongest, most emphatic and pastoral way I can, to attend this Vespers and participate in it, since Lent cannot really begin without it. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- PREPARING FOR FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, excerpt of a homily by Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom):

St Paul says, ‘Carry one another’s burdens, because it is the way in which you will have fulfilled the law of Christ.’ And carrying the burden upon our shoulders means primarily to accept my neighbour as he is, hoping that things will change, praying for him or for her that the grace of God should transform, transfigure this person — but also me, because what judge am I of another’s sins while I am a sinner, while I am a temptation, a wound in the life of so many others? So let us make this attempt. When we come to one another and say, ‘Forgive me’ it will not mean, if you answer ‘Yes I do’ that nothing that was wrong between us is annihilated, exists no more. But it means ‘I accept you as you are, sinful, a wound in my flesh, a wound in my heart, a problem in my life — but I accept you and I will carry this acceptance, and you, throughout life, and pray for God’s blessing to be on you and pray for God to heal both of us, that I should become such that I do not lead you into temptation, be the cause of your own fall. Let us therefore pray together during this service, bring to God true repentance of what we are and what we have been, but also bring one another to God. Moving towards Calvary, moving towards the resurrection has been compared by one of the ancient writers to travelers who board the same ship. They will never arrive safe if there are quarrels between them, if they are not at one. Let us be at one, with Christ who is at the rudder, with Christ who has given His life for each of us, however difficult we are for one another. And when we say, ‘Yes, I forgive,’ it means, ‘I accept you as you are with whatever consequences to me. I accept you, and give my life as an offering for yours.’ Amen.

- DRIVING MINISTRY:

I’m asking for help from our wonderful church family! The Parish needs drivers (and alternates as back-up) to drive parishioners to church who cannot drive themselves. We have about eight people who need rides and will not be able to attend services otherwise. I’m planning to drive two of them regularly, but need others to help out. I plan to organize the ministry by location to make the driving convenient for all. Volunteers are needed for Divine Liturgy, Saturday evening Vespers and occasional Feast days. I was without transportation for quite some time while living in Oakland and went to a church that had no driving ministry. Public transportation did not go to my church and I had to rent a car to attend, or miss it, so I’m honored to help put this driving service back together. I want to thank those of you who already do drive people to church...gifts of time and practical services mean so much to people. My contact info is: Karen Prisca Roselle, (707) 431-8021 or (510) 735-1306

- ON PRIDE & HUMILITY

...after grievous [spiritual] wounds I have come to know that the signs of pride are disparaging or disdain of one’s neighbors and carelessness over confession. But in and of itself, pride is not noticeable to a man, being the subtlest

passion, which deceived a light-bearing angel and caused the Fall in Heaven. Upon this passion the others are supported, like a building upon a foundation that is hidden beneath the earth. —by *St. Ignatius Brianchaninov*

When you see someone crying over the many insults he has received, you should know that, because he was overcome by vainglory [pride], he is now unknowingly reaping the crop of evils in his heart. He who loves pleasure is grieved by accusations and abuse. On the other hand, he who loves God is grieved by praises and other superfluous remarks. The degree of our humility is measured by slander. Don't think that you have humility when you cannot forbear even the slightest accusation. —*Abba Mark*

Remember the one who has ridiculed you, who has grieved you, who has wronged you, who has done evil to you, as your physician, your healer. Christ sent him to heal you; don't remember him with anger. (*Abba Zossima*)

Do not condemn, even if you see with your eyes, for they are often deceived. —*St. John Climacus*

Do not listen gleefully to gossip at your neighbors expense or chatter to a person who likes finding fault. —*St. Maximos the Confessor (First Century on Love no. 58)*

Even if a person's sin is not only obvious, but very grievous and comes from a hardened and unrepentant heart, do not condemn him, but raise your eyes to the wondrous and incomprehensible judgments of God; then you will see that many people, formerly full of iniquity, later repented and reached a high degree of sanctity, and that, on the other hand, others, who were on a high level of perfection, fell into a deep abyss. Take care, lest you also suffer this calamity through judging others. —*Bishop Theophan the Recluse, Unseen Warfare*

He who busies himself with the sins of others, or judges his brother on suspicion, has not yet even begun to repent or to examine himself so as to discover his own sins...—*St. Maximos the Confessor (Third Century on Love)*

- CHURCH FOOTBALL ~ THE OTHER SUNDAY SPORT
- Quarterback sneak: Church members quietly leaving during the homily.
- Draw play: What many children do with the bulletin during worship.
- Halftime: The period between the end of the Homily and the Creed, when many choose to leave.
- Benchwarmer: Those who do not sing, pray, work, or apparently do anything but sit.
- Backfield in motion: Making a trip to the parish Hall during the service.
- Staying in the pocket: What happens to a lot of money that should be given to the Lord's work.
- Two minute warning: The point at which you realize its almost Communion, and the rush to form a large "clump" at the front begins.
- Illegal formation: What happens after the Two Minute Warning. A "line" is the proper formation.
- Instant replay: The preacher loses his notes and falls back on last week's Gospel reading.
- Sudden death: What happens to the attention span of the congregation if the priest goes "overtime."
- Trap: You're called on to pray and are asleep.
- Flex defense: The ability to allow absolutely nothing said, read or sung during the Liturgy to affect your life.
- Blitz: The rush for lunch following the Dismissal.

- SCRIP PROGRAM:

This notice is to remind our fellow brethren to please bring in their old cell phones, i-pods used ink jet cartridges and toners. We get credit in the form of money. Just bring them to the Church and place them in the green-topped bins in the utility closet or give them to Shenina. Please don't just leave them in the church. Also, don't forget to sign up your Safeway cards and/or credit cards for escrip at escrip.com. We are under *Protection of the Holy Virgin Parish*. Or find us by using our address and/or zip code 90 Mountain View Ave 95407. Call Shenina at 575-3422 or email her at shenina@sbcglobal.net if you have questions or are having trouble.