

- RECEPTION OF CATECHUMENS:

Thanks be to God, we will receive the Merrill family into the ranks of the Catechumens on Sunday just prior to the Divine Liturgy. Please keep in your prayers: Anthony, Gioia, Phoebe and Collette as they begin their journey.

- ANNUAL MEETING:

A Parish Annual Membership Meeting is mandated to take place by our bylaws on the first Sunday of February. Accordingly, we will prayerfully gather in the Parish Hall at 12:30 PM, having just glorified the Holy Trinity and communed of the Most Pure Body and Blood of our Savior at the Divine Liturgy. Our assembly is a sacred one. The day is also, providentially, the *Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple* (see Luke 2:22), which lends a joy and solemnity to our gathering. Please read all the reports before coming to the meeting.

- TRUSTING GOD IN A PRACTICAL WAY:

Stewardship is not just about money. It is certainly NOT about dues, or fund-raising or covering the annual budget. It is not charity. Stewardship, from the beginning of Genesis, is about making choices, as individuals and in a community in the *light of God's gifts to us*. It's about being faithful disciples, trusting the Lord, caring for and managing time, talent and treasure (yes, that includes money, also a gift—or a curse). God gives; so we do too. We give back from the gifts from God and He gives the increase. How we manage our time, treasure and talent can help us escape the trap of anxiety (and often selfishness). Failing to manage those resources finds us anxious and distracted when it comes to our faith. "Booklets" of weekly offering envelopes are available at the Candle-desk, or speak with Martin Thong or Bobbi Griovski.

- MARK THE DATE:

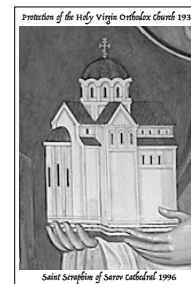
On Saturday, April 4th the parish will host a Women's Retreat with Presvytera Krista West, noted author, speaker and vestment maker. Flyers are being printed now.

- FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:

The marvelous, spiritually profound and moving Forgiveness Sunday Vespers will be celebrated on Sunday, March 1 at 1 PM (following the Agape Meal). This is very much a parish-event, and all are encouraged to attend and enter into the Great Fast through the "door" of this Vespers. —*Fr Lawrence*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



February 2

Meeting of the Lord in the Temple / Zacchaeus



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Eight:

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One; Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

- 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 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.

Protection of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church • 90 Mountain View Ave • Santa Rosa
707-584-9491 • LMargitich@sbcglobal.net • saintseraphim.com

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Feb. 1: 5 PM, Great Vespers with the Blessing of Candles / Confessions to follow
- Sunday, Feb. 2: 8:30 AM, Festal Matins
9:40 AM, Reception of Catechumens
 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
 11:45 AM, Church School
 12:30 PM, Parish Annual Meeting
- Monday, Feb. 3: 6 PM, Panikhida for Miropi Germanou
- Tuesday, Feb. 4: 10 AM, Funeral for Miropi
 5 PM, Jesus Prayer
- Wednesday, Feb. 5: 6 PM, Vespers, Potluck, Study of *Romans*
- Thursday, Feb. 6: 9:30 AM, *Ukiah House Blessings*
6 PM, Angels Unawares
- Friday, February 7: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Feb. 8: 4 PM, Catechism *On the Church*
 5 PM, Great Vespers—*Triodion Begins*
- Sunday, Feb. 9: 8:30 AM, Matins
 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
 11:45 AM, Church School
 Noon, Agape Meal
 1 PM, Church School Teacher Mtg.
House Blessings

• THE MEETING OF THE LORD ~ FEBRUARY 2

The *Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple* is so beautiful, so gentle, so truly human: Parents—holy and inspired by the Spirit—bring the Child Jesus to be presented in the Temple according to the Law of Moses; An old man—Symeon—receives the Child, uttering strange words inspired by the Holy Spirit—his life now joyfully fulfilled; The elderly and righteous Anna, living her life in worship and at the Temple, speaks prophetic words by the Spirit to the Holy Theotokos, foretelling the crucifixion, the pain of sorrow, for our salvation. Come to the *Vespers on Saturday at 5 PM*, and the *Matins on Sunday morning at 8:30 AM* to be immersed in the feast day. Come, learn the about the meaning of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Church, the coming in glory of the Lord to raise all the dead; the meaning of purity, watchfulness,

waiting on God, serving God, offering sacrifice to God. All this is humbly revealed in this feast.—*Fr. Lawrence*

• MEMORY ETERNAL:

It is with great sorrow, but with hope tempered by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, that we learned of the death of Miropi Germanou. Panikhidas have been served for her repose since we learned about her death. A panikhida will be served Monday, Feb. 3, at 6 PM (God willing, we will have a continuous reading of Psalms through the night. The Funeral Service will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 4 at 10 AM, followed by the burial at Oak Mound Cemetery in Healdsburg. A Mercy Meal will be offered in the Parish Hall after the burial. Donations for the funeral costs will be gratefully accepted, since the parish is covering the many expenses.

• THREE MONTHS:

The keeping of Great Lent and the celebration of Christ's Pascha in the Orthodox Christian Church has many similarities to the keeping of the Mosaic Jewish celebration of Passover (Pascha is the Greek word for Passover). But there are two essential differences, which Fr. John Takahashi succinctly points out in a recent essay. He wrote that for the catechumens—those who are preparing for baptism by fasting, prayer, alms, repentance, confession, worship, study and participation in Church life—Lent is the final period of “downloading” Christian life into themselves through the grace of God. For the faithful, who also fast, pray, give alms and all the other activities, it is a period of “recovering, upgrading, or renewal” of the Grace given at Holy Baptism. It is a renewal of the resolve to walk not according to sinful inclinations but according to the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:1). It is a joyful occasion to begin the Christian life again. This life, Fr. John reminds us, is known as Eternal Life in the Kingdom of God. Our day-to-day lives get complicated and we sometimes (often) lose the sense of God's presence, of repentance and Christian joy in Christ the Lord Who destroyed death by His death. So the Church sets aside a time for us to recover our initial repentance and joy in Christ, to recover our baptismal “vestment” so to say. Fr. John writes that “the celebration of Christ's Pascha with Great Lent and Great Feast is the time to download or recover our Christian life. It takes approximately three months including preparatory weeks.” With the Gospel reading about Zacchaeus in Jericho, we now enter into the preparatory weeks. Use the time in these days wisely by thinking about, meditating on and living the great teachings of the Gospel of these weeks.

—*Fr. Lawrence*