

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, March 6, 2016

- 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.

- KONTAKION OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT, Tone One:

When Thou comest, O God, upon the earth in glory, the whole world will tremble. The river of fire will bring men before Thy Judgement Seat, the Books will be opened and the secrets disclosed. Then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, and count me worthy to stand on Thy right hand, O Judge most righteous.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 5: 4 PM, Children's Choir Rehearsal, Protection Church
4:30 PM, Panikhida for Memorial Saturday
5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, March 6: 8:45 AM, Matins / 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon: ***Blini Luncheon***
- Monday, March 7: **Begin to fast from all meat products**
- Tuesday, March 8: 6 PM, Vespers for the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
- Wednesday, March 9: 8 AM, Matins for the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
5 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank
6 PM, Vespers (Lenten style)
- Thurs., March 10: Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship
6 PM, Vespers - *Lenten Style*
- Friday, March 11: 8 AM, Matins - *Lenten style*
- Saturday, March 12: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy commemorating all the Holy Monastics
11 AM, Blessing grave of Archpriest Victor Sokolov in Healdsburg (anniv. of repose)
1:30 PM, Baptism of Avalyn Glanville (child of Marina and Evan)
3:30 PM, Catechism, *on Confession*
4 PM, Children's Choir Rehearsal

- SERVING TODAY:

Ushers: Thom Stewart and Alexander Stameroff. *Altar Servers:* Team Seraphim

• TO DO LIST:

At a recent Parish Council meeting one of our members suggested that parish “to do” items should be listed in the announcement page, rather than just mentioned at the Council Meeting at which only a few people hear about the needs of our beloved grounds. So, in our continuing and ever-expanding effort to communicate better, here is a *partial* list of things that need doing around here. A few items that have been completed are included. See Serge Anderson or Fr. Lawrence for details on any of these items. (Items that are completed: Replace “No Parking” post by ditch; Deadhead roses; Fill parking lot potholes with gravel; Rearrange porch tables and chairs)

- acquire “Lost and Found” box (in progress)
- move big “BBQ boat” to designated spot
- pick up “Glendi fencing” by east ditch
- move two Glendi signs leaning against back of Sunday School building
- move Glendi stage leaning against Monks’ Hut
- clean ditch
- mow vineyard and mound
- the Ride Ministry needs volunteers (see Deanna Panages)

• SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT:

This Sunday is called the Sunday of the Last Judgment, so named because of the Gospel read at the Liturgy (Matthew 25:31–36) which describes that awesome Day of the Lord upon which all shall rise from the dead and be judged—those that have good “unto these, the least of my brethren” shall join the “Son of Man” as His sheep in Paradise. Notice two things: the righteous, called sheep, ministered to the “least of the brethren” out of compassion and humility, not because they thought, “well, here’s Jesus in this person, and so I’ll get a reward.” The motivation of the sheep was love, borne of deep faith in Jesus Christ. Secondly, the Judgment brings justice, and it is welcomed by those who are downcast, poor, abused, forgotten, hungry, naked, imprisoned, sick, and so forth. The Lord will set things right. All of scripture describes God’s providence, His plan, for leading us to that Day. The “goats” in other words, those that have not ministered to the poor, the hungry, the naked, the thirsty, the sick, and so forth, make the excuse “when did we see Thee, Lord...” revealing that they are arrogant and have no pity or faith. The judgment will be truly fearful. It also takes the form of being a revelation of the glory of God to each person. And “God is love.” Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of London said this: “On that day the time for faith will be over, because faith is certainty about things unseen, and on that day, in the blinding glory of God, we will see; we will see Him as He sees us, we will know Him as He knows us. And the time for hope will be over, because hope is expectation, and on that day all things will have been fulfilled; it will be the eighth day, the last day, the last day of time, the last day of becoming; it will be the first day of eternity. And on that threshold we shall stand; what are we going to bring? What will be the fruit of a whole life, of each of us singly, of all of us in our togetherness? Not as a crowd of individuals unrelated to each other, but as a living body of people who have all, all been baptized into Christ, into unity, into oneness, who are all called by the power of the Holy Spirit to be in the Only-begotten Son of God— what are we going to bring then? The only thing that can survive, faith and hope being of the past, will be love. And this is what today’s parable speaks about; not so much of the terror, the horror that may seize each of us, freeze the heart within us or, like a fire, burn us at that moment; it speaks of that confrontation when we shall see that the whole meaning of life is love, and ask ourselves: is there any within me? Have I borne any fruits of love?”

• THE PROFOUND MEANING OF MEAT-FARE:

More from the late Metropolitan Anthony: From today onwards [beginning Monday], Orthodox Christians abstain from meat; has it any meaning apart from the ascetic, the disciplinary? Yes, it has, I think. There is a frightening passage in the ninth chapter of Genesis. After the flood, when mankind has become even weaker than before, less rooted in God, more tragically alone, more tragically dependent upon the created because it has lost communion with the

uncreated, God says to Noah and his people, “From now on all living creatures are delivered unto you as food; they will be your meat, and you will be their terror...” That is the relationship which human sin, the loss of God in our lives, has established between us and all the created world, but particularly, in a particularly painful, monstrous way with the animal world. And our abstention from meat in the time of Lent is our act of recognition; it is also—oh, to such a small extent!—an act of reparation. We are the terror of the created world, we are those who destroy it, we are those who mar and pollute it, yet we are called originally to be its guide into eternity, into God’s glory, into the perfect beauty which God has intended for it. We were called to make of this world of ours God’s own world, God’s own Kingdom—in the sense that it is His family, the place where He lives among His creatures, and where the creatures of God can rejoice in Him and in one another. Let us therefore, to the extent to which we are faithful to the call of the Church, remember that apart from being an act by which we try to free ourselves from slavery to the material world, our fasting is an act of recognition of our sin against the world and, however small, a real attempt to make reparation for it, bring a testimony that we understand, that we are heartbroken, and that even if we cannot live otherwise, we live with a pain and a shame, and turn to God and to the world, which we treat so atrociously, with a broken and contrite heart. Amen.

- FORGIVENESS SUNDAY VESPERS—MARCH 13, 1:15 PM:

In an Orthodox Parish there is really nothing to compare to the unique Vespers of Forgiveness served on the very eve of Great Lent. Much has already been written about this Service elsewhere, and lots already has been said. All that remains is for us to come and to participate in the Vespers, ask forgiveness of each other, giving forgiveness to all—whether they ask or not—and supporting one another during the Lenten ascetic effort. The Forty days of Lent—a tith of our year—begins on Sunday, March 13 at 1:15 PM.

- CHILDREN’S CHOIR:

The Children’s Choir, (ages five and up), is led by Reader Nicolas, Jeanie Carl, Genevieve Richardson and Ellen Aylward. Rehearsals are on Saturdays from 4–4:40 PM, in the Protection Church. Parents, please speak with Nicolas Custer if you would like to enroll your child in this new endeavor. The immediate goal will be to prepare for the Lazarus Saturday Liturgy on April 23.

- APPEAL FOR MISSION FUNDS:

A few months back the Diocese of the West, with the blessing of Vladyka Benjamin, joined forces with the Orthodox Navigators. This missionary fellowship is working with the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade to bring the Gospel to uncatechized young Serbs. The mission teams will consist of young Orthodox adults who, after training, will live in Belgrade for two or three months. Our parish was visited by a representative from the Orthodox Navigators—as you may recall from the notice in a past Announcement sheet—who was hoping to recruit some of our young adults to join in the mission trip. By God’s grace, Seraphim Spencer was moved to sign up for the trip. I am hoping that we at St Seraphim can help him raise some funds (the goal is \$4000, a small portion of which has been raised already). Below is his appeal letter. —Fr. Lawrence

Greetings, peace and joy to you! I will be going to Serbia this summer to minister to young Orthodox Christians who have fallen away from their ancestral faith and to experience what it means to “bear witness” to my own beliefs. The Serbian Orthodox Church is the second oldest Slavic Orthodox Church; Serbia has been an Orthodox country since roughly the 600s. Within the last century, however, Orthodoxy has been subsumed by nationalism—largely fueled by WWI, after which Serbia was occupied by hostile Croatian military forces in WWII, and thereafter the Orthodox Church was persecuted by a distrustful communist dictator in the 1950s.

What does it mean to “bear witness” to one’s beliefs? This is something I have been giving much thought to recently, having less than a year ago been baptized an Orthodox Christian, and still growing into my faith in Christ. I heard someone clarify recently that the word “witness” is often misunderstood within the New Testament; that the Greek word for witness is *μάρτυς* (martyrs), from which the modern word “martyr” is derived. As St. Paul says, “Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles” (Heb. 12:1).

Coming out from the midst of secular America, many who previously knew me have not known how to react to my conversion; some frequently make light of my having “found God,” for example. The more I reflect on my faith, however, the more it becomes clear that it was God who sought after me, the lazy, slothful and thankless one; that as Christ says, “no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).

First and foremost the True faith is one which, with few exceptions, is experienced within a community. The two most common ways to do this, marriage and monasticism, are considered forms of martyrdom. To “bear witness” to the faith it is necessary to distinguish the Orthodox Christian faith from other practices and denominations: the word *orthodox* signifies “right tradition” and “right belief.” In the Nicene Creed it is written, “I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.” That is, it is necessary to maintain boundaries which define what one believes in—Christ—as well as to have a Tradition which communicates and preserves the essence of the belief in its unadulterated form. Concerning the nature of Truth—that not subject to human understanding—Orthodox believe that Truth is a Person. The True Christian faith is concerned with bearing witness to the Coherence, or Rationality of existence, and the Source from whence creation issues forth and is animated. Orthodox Christianity maintains that God—the living God, the only uncreated Being—“Who existed before the ages”—being the Author of our life—in Whom “we live and move and have our being,” (Acts 17:28) is not barred access to the works of His hands, and can do what He wills therewith and therein; that He desires to be known by them that worship him “in spirit and truth” (John 4:24); that the Lord has a Mind, a Will, and a Spirit, in which likeness it is said, “let Us make man in Our image” (Gen. 1:26). As the Apostle Paul says, let abundance of joy and extreme poverty (2 Cor. 8:2) give birth to generosity, not an excess of material wealth; “every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver,” (2 Cor. 9:7) the poor often give much more willingly, not having a heart hardened by material cares. These words come to mind because I am in need of financial assistance, certainly; they apply to myself equally well though: I ask for your prayers, to be strengthened spiritually; that I should not be as one presumptuous or pretentious when I go on my journey, but seeking always to give out of joy, and to learn through being exposed to a new culture. —*Spencer Seraphim Rhodes Longman*



Easter 2016

Sunday, March 27, 2016

Downtown Santa Rosa

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Victory is His! Easter is a time of celebration! Let's come together and celebrate Christ's victory over death and blood-bought gift of redemption. Let us invite those who need to hear the GREAT news and share in our gifts.

To Make an Impact this Easter:

- Host a Drive to collect the items below or commit to filling a specific number of bags. Especially good opportunity for community and life groups. **Goal - 450 bags.**
- Host a Drive to collect **23 Spiral Hams** – to be served at the Easter dinner
- Volunteer at the event or participate in pre-event planning activities.
Registration begins **March 4th** online at www.smission.org or Call Alice at 578-1830 with any questions.
- Special opportunities exist for –
 - People to cut hair (professional preferred but not required)
 - People to adopt a table or more to decorate and provide centerpieces
 - People to do manicures, pedicures, facials or make-up
 - People to do bicycle tune-ups or simple repairs
- Commit to manage or host one of the booths at the event (call Alice to discuss)

Items to fill an Easter Blessing Bag (In new, unopened, regular sizes):

- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Disposable Razors
- Deodorant
- Socks (men's only needed)
- Nail Clippers – heavy duty
- Individual First Aid kit
- Sun lotion
- Lip balm
- Bus passes
- Devotional or card with note
- Small Easter candy and breath mints

Place items in gallon zip lock bag.

- Additional item to bless the guests:
Knit boxer briefs sizes S – 2XL (men's only needed)

How will you choose to get involved?

Contact Alice at alowe@smission.org or at 578-1830

We thank God for you and commend you for giving your time and resources to serve those in need.

