

this world, but of God Himself; and we are ruled, not by worldly fear which grows and begets more fear, but by the peace of Christ which *surpasseth all understanding* (Philippians 4.7) and brings unfailing comfort, whether in times of peace or peril. In the present moment, therefore, I urge you to *be not afraid* (Isaiah 43.1) nor let the concerns of the moment shake you from the firm foundation that is unhindered faith in the living God, Who heals the sick and restores the broken-hearted. The present situation may be a cause of great upset in the world around us, but in the Church, and in our Christian lives, we continue unhindered and undeterred in all that God has delivered into our hands for the salvation of our souls.

...local governments will be issuing various instructions and protocols for managing and controlling the spread and effects of this momentary health challenge: we urge all our faithful to be acquainted with these practical instructions...*in all such things we should be examples to the world of pious trust in God that leads not to undisciplined alarm, but rather to a continuance of life in an untroubled spirit and undisturbed reliance on the Divine Will.* [italics mine]

In our churches, we shall continue with the celebration of all our rites, customs, Divine Services and above all the offering and receipt of the Holy Mysteries in precisely the same manner as we have always done. No genuinely believing Christian can for one moment accept that the Holy Mysteries might bring or be the source of sickness or ill-health: by no means! The Mysteries of Christ are the true medicine of our souls and bodies, and bring nothing but life—and life eternal. Any whose hearts are troubled by present matters should pray fervently for an increase of faith so that fear can be cast aside; and the Church will continue her ancient witness to the love that is beyond fear, bringing the Holy Mysteries to the world, and to each of us, in a time when it needs them profoundly. Do not be afraid! As we sing so frequently in these Lenten days, *God is with us!* And He is merciful and loving, quick to hear and heal and save. —*With love in Christ, IRENEI, Bishop of London and Western Europe (ROCOR).*

• A CALL FOR BELL RINGERS:

Those who are interested in learning how to ring the church bells are invited to a short introductory session on Sunday, March 15, at 12:45 PM. I will give a five minute talk on the importance and meaning of church bells, followed by a brief hands-on lesson. —*Fr. Lawrence*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 8, 2020

Sunday of Orthodoxy - First Sunday of Great Lent



• 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.

• TROPARION OF THE SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY, TONE TWO:

We venerate Thy most pure icon, O Loving Lord, asking Thee, O Christ our God, to pardon our transgressions. For of Thine own will wast Thou well-pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh, to deliver from the bondage of the enemy those whom Thou hast fashioned. Therefore, in thanksgiving, we cry aloud to Thee: Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior, when Thou camest to save the world.

• KONTAKION OF THE SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY, TONE EIGHT:

The uncircumscribed Word of the Father became circumscribed, taking flesh from thee, O Theotokos, and He has restored the sullied image to its

ancient glory, filling it with divine beauty. This our salvation we confess in deed and word, and we depict it in the holy icons.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 7: 3:30 PM, Catechism, *On Confession*
5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, March 8: 8:30 AM, Matins of the Resurrection
10 AM, Divine Liturgy / Procession with Icons
Noon, Agape luncheon
- Mon, March 9: 8 AM, Matins—Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste
- Tues., March 10: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
5 PM, Jesus Prayer (Protection Church)
- Wed., March 11: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
5 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, Meal
and Spiritual Reading
- Thurs., March 12: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
7 PM, Master Plan meeting / Library
- Friday, March 13: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
6 PM, Akathist to the Theotokos
- Saturday, March 14: 3:30 PM, Catechism, *On the Priesthood*
4 PM, Youth Choir
5 PM, Great Vespers

• PARISH MEN'S GROUP RETREAT TO MONASTERY:

Fr. Nicholas is organizing a retreat to the Monastery of St. John in Manton, March 13–15.

• IN TWO WEEKS:

The third Sunday of Lent is the half-way mark to Pascha, and is dedicated to the Veneration of the Precious Cross. On Saturday, March 21, we will

serve the Vigil (Vespers and Matins) at 5 PM, with the bringing out of the Precious Cross near the end of the Service.

• SISTERHOOD MEETING:

Please join us after the Agape lunch at 12:45 PM in the Parish Hall for our Sisterhood Meeting, Sunday, March 22. Any questions, please contact me by phone at 415.279.0353 or by email at email kirastaykow@gmail.com—*Kira Staykow*

• GRATITUDE FOR CLEAN WEEK—STANDING FAST:

We have just completed clean Week: the long Services, hymnography and structure of life (fasting, increased prayer, etc) given to us for our spiritual therapy, are such a miraculous gift. We marvel at the profound depth of understanding in the Canon of St. Andrew, how that saint gives 250 ways (the total number of verses we chant during the four times we do the Canon). We stand in awe during the solemn Presanctified Liturgy, so serious and grand, yet intimate and joyful, leading us to repentance. My overall response is gratitude to God for what He has given to us in the Church. I am also very mindful that a certain group of devoted people made it all “happen.” Particularly I refer to the Choir and it’s Director Nicolas, who sang and read so beautifully and reverently all week long during the Matins, the Canon and the Presanctified. Let us give thanks to God for them. I also would like to express gratitude for those who have cleaned and maintained the Church all week. And not least, we thank those who put “works of mercy” into action on Thursday evening, preparing a lovely meal for our guests from the Redwood Gospel Mission and providing a safe and comfortable place to sleep for the night. May the Lord bless you all. During these uncertain times let us remain focused on serving God and neighbor, worshipping, praying and receiving the Medicine of Immortality, the Holy Eucharist. I’d like to share with you a portion of a letter written by Bishop Irenei, Bishop of London (ROCOR)—many of you will remember that he served at St. Tikhon’s Church in SF. His Grace writes:

The Church of Christ has endured through many centuries — in the course of which she has been confronted with countless illnesses and diseases, small and great — in solid faith and with peaceful hearts, each member of the Church knowing that he or she is part of no worldly or man-made institution, but the Harbour of Life that is Christ’s Body. We are fed the food not of men but of angels; we are inspired by the truth, not of