

- SISTERHOOD RETREAT:

Another event cancelled! The retreat with Krista West, scheduled for April 4, has been cancelled.

- PRACTICALITY OF LENT:

It's in practical ways that we draw closer to our Savior. With the help of the Holy Spirit we fast, and thereby tame our appetites—we have so many appetites. We do works of mercy, and thereby discover some humility as well as practice compassion for the less fortunate—which is mostly everyone in this world—and thereby God cures our exaggerated self-love, self-care, self-pity, or even self-loathing. We pray more and enter into some silence, in order to silence the incessant and intrusive thoughts. St. Nikolai Velimirovic said that we are to “convert our cares into prayers, as ice is changed into flowing water.” In all this we hopefully find comfort in the life of Christ, and we discover trust in God. Let's be careful about our lives. We only have what God has given. —*Fr Lawrence*

- ANNUNCIATION:

One of the great joys of the Lenten season is the feast of Annunciation, which occurs on March 25. The feast commemorates the coming of the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, the incredible conversation (if one can say that about those words which changed the course of human history) and the All-Holy Maiden's conception of the Word of God by the Holy Spirit. “Let it be according to Thy word.” The fresco of the Annunciation is painted on the eastern-most columns of the Church, left and right—showing us how heaven and earth come together in the Virgin; the Royal Gates to the Altar have an icon on them—showing us that the Incarnation of the Son of God is our entry into the Kingdom. Our celebration of the Feast of Annunciation will begin with the Vigil for the Feast on Tuesday, March 24 at 6:15 PM. The next day, March 25, we keep a strict fast in preparation for the 5 PM Vespers Divine Liturgy (weekdays of Lent are always fasting days, so the Divine Liturgy for Annunciation is served late in the day, as part of Vespers, in order to preserve that fast).

*The palace of light is ready for thee, O Master, the womb of the pure child of God. Do Thou come down to her; come to visit Thy fallen creation, for many ages have passed since its beauty was destroyed, and which has been held in bitter bondage to the jealous enemy; therefore make haste to descend, O Lord, come now to deliver us from the tyranny of death. —Prefestal Hymn*

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**March 15, 2020**

Second Sunday of Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone 6:

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hades, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin granting life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: Glory to Thee.

- TROPARION OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS, Tone Eight:

O light of Orthodoxy, pillar and teacher of the Church, glory of monks and invincible protection of theologians, O Gregory, thou wonderworker, boast of Thessalonika, and preacher of grace, ever pray that our souls be saved.

- KONTAKION OF ST GREGORY, Tone Eight:

With one accord, we praise thee as the sacred and divine vessel of wisdom and clear trumpet of theology, O our righteous Father Gregory of divine speech. As a mind that standeth now before the Original Mind, do thou ever guide aright and lead our mind to Him, that we all may cry: Rejoice, O herald of grace divine.

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## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 14: 3:30 PM, Catechism, *On the Priesthood*  
4:45 PM, Trisagion for Embaye  
5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, March 15: 8:30 AM, Matins of the Resurrection  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy, followed by the Lesser  
Blessing of Water
- Tues., March 17: 8 AM, Lenten Matins  
5 PM, Jesus Prayer
- Wed., March 18: 8 AM, Lenten Matins  
5 PM, Confessions  
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
- Thurs., March 19: 8 AM, Lenten Matins  
11 AM, Funeral for Embaye Gebremeskel at  
*Lafferty and Smith Funeral Home*
- Friday, March 20: 10:30 AM, Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts  
6 PM, Akathist to the Theotokos
- Saturday, March 21: 3:30 PM, Catechism *On Marriage and Monasticism*  
5 PM, Vigil for the Veneration of the Cross

### • MEMORY ETERNAL:

Embaye Gebremeskel, a member of our parish since the late 1980s, reposed in the Lord on Thursday evening. May the Lord grant him the Kingdom of Heaven. His funeral will take place on Thursday at 11 AM, at the Lafferty and Smith Funeral Home, located on Hwy 12.

### • AGAPE MEALS / CHURCH SCHOOL:

After some discussion on Thursday evening with our Parish Council, and with the blessing of Bishop Daniel, we have decided that there will be no Sunday lunches or Church school for the next two weeks. We will also implement the following:

- I have blessed Nicolas, our Choir Master, to have only 4/5 singers in the choir at the Divine Liturgy (we won't worry about Vespers).

- Those parish members who need to stay home (sick, low immune, etc) should do so. During the time of the Liturgy, they should be praying psalms and hymns from the Liturgy book, reading the scriptures of the day, and interceding in prayer for their brothers and sisters and for the world. Plan ahead so you are prepared. **Sunday is the Lord's Day, not your day, or my day, or family day.** Make a serious spiritual investment of your time and attention.
- Please know that I am happy and honored to visit you at home with Holy Communion. No one should be without the Holy Mysteries in a time of need.
- The Post-Communion bread and wine (commonly called *Zapivka*) will not be available after Holy Communion, although the *Antidoron* will be given out to those who ask, at the conclusion of the Liturgy.
- Let us also not forget the poor, whom we are bound to care for also—according to the Lord's wish for His servants. I invite you to prepare “blessing bags” to hand out (see Denise Pellizzer about that). Perhaps you will call Catholic Charities or Redwood Gospel Mission to inquire what is needed.

This is Lent 2020. Make it work. Prayer, fasting and works of mercy are almost always possible to do, and essential to do even more ESPECIALLY when things are difficult. If things are hard for us, imagine how they are for the poor. I would also add, read the Holy Scriptures daily. Search for those passages which convict the heart and mind, and don't worry about those things which are hard to understand. Eventually they will become clear. To quote Mark Twain: “It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand.”

**This Sunday, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, we will serve the Lesser Blessing of Water. I encourage each person to bring a container to take the Holy Water home to drink each morning.** St. Luke the Surgeon (reposed June 11, 1961) said the following: “I am a Bishop and a Doctor. Now I am speaking to you like a Doctor: The best medication for both physical and spiritual viruses is to drink Holy Water!”—*Fr Lawrence*