

refrain "...before I perish utterly, save me, O Lord." It is as if the entire Lenten journey is being reviewed in hymn singing. On Thursday morning (some places it's Wednesday night) we will celebrate Matins, beginning at 9 AM. During this long (about 3 hours service) we will chant the *Canon of St. Andrew of Crete* in its entirety. see www.pravmir.com/the-whos-who-of-the-great-canon-of-st-andrew-of-crete/. This complex poem (a *Canon* has nine odes) was written in the early 8th century, and contains about 250 verses. The whole Canon is a kind of "Walk Through the Bible." Saint Andrew begins with Adam and Eve and goes all the way through, as he speaks to his soul, and to us, by applying the stories and characters of the Holy Bible. Father Alexander Schmemmann says about the Great Canon that "...The events of sacred history are revealed as events in my life, God's acts in the past as acts aimed at me and my salvation, the tragedy of sin and betrayal as my personal tragedy. My life is shown to me as part of the great and all embracing fight between God and the powers of darkness which rebel against Him... The Canon begins on a deeply personal note...one after another, my sins are revealed in their deep connection with the continuous drama of man's relation to God; the story of man's fall is my story." During this Matins service we will also listen to a reading of the Life of St. Mary of Egypt.

On Friday evening at 6:15 PM, we will celebrate the very festive, uniquely and mystically beautiful Matins of the Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos. We hear the bright and wonderful refrain "Rejoice, O Bride unwedded," at the end of each stanza. The place of the Theotokos in Lent is significant, since without her there is no incarnation. I've noticed that this Matins of the Fifth Friday is not well-attended; I ask you to set aside an hour and a half and join me in this magnificent Service.

The intensity of the Fifth Week of Lent offers the worshipper spiritual therapy. Those who have not yet attended Lenten Services, will find that the Fifth Week is a good time to begin. Be prepared to be tested and challenged, yet nourished and comforted by the spiritual therapy being offered to each person who comes. Don't let the week pass you by.

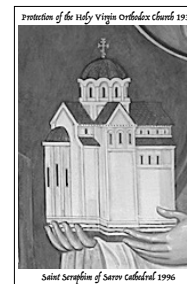
—Fr. Lawrence

• NEXT SATURDAY EVENING AND SUNDAY:

Annunciation of the Theotokos, one of the greatest of the Feasts of the Church.

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 18, 2018 ~ St. John of the Ladder



- 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 ST. JOHN, Tone One:
O John, our father, saint of God, thou wast revealed as a citizen of the desert, an angel in a body and worker of miracles. Through fasting, prayer and vigils thou hast received heavenly gifts of grace, and thou healest the sick and the souls of those that turn to thee with faith. Glory to Him who gave thee strength; glory to Him that crowned thee; glory to Him who through thee grants to all men healing.
- KONTAKION OF ST. JOHN, Tone Four:
Truly the Lord has set thee as a fixed star in the firmament of abstinence, giving light to the ends of the earth, O Father John, our teacher.

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ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 17: 3:30 PM, Catechism *On Holy Unction*
4 PM, Children's Choir Rehearsal
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
8 PM, Concert in St. Seraphim
- Sunday, March 18: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
Presentation on Diocesan Church Camp
3 PM, Concert in St. Seraphim
- Monday, March 19: 5 PM, Holy Unction at Sts. Peter and Paul Russian
Orthodox Church, Stony Point Rd.
- Tuesday, March 20: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
- Wednesday, March 21: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
5 PM, Confessions
6:15 PM, Presanctified Liturgy and Meal
- Thursday, March 22: 9 AM, Matins with the Great Canon of St.
Andrew of Crete and the Life of St. Mary
of Egypt (*about 3 hours*)
- Friday, March 23: 6:15 PM, Matins of the Akathist Hymn to the
Theotokos

• CONCERT HERE:

The Green Mountain Singers (part of Sonoma Bach) will give a concert of 15th century sacred choral music—entitled *Sacred Realms, the Eternal City*—at St. Seraphim Cathedral on Saturday, March 17, 8 PM and Sunday, March 18, 3 PM. For more info visit: www.sonomabach.org

• CHURCH CAMP:

There will be an informational meeting about the Diocesan Church Camp on Sunday, March 18, during (after?) the Agape Meal. We will welcome Kathy Pieracci and John Rhodes, assistants to the camp director, who will give us a full report on the new camp site. The Church Camp will be held from July 8th–14th.

• FROM THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT:

The sun shines on all alike, and vainglory beams on all activities. For instance, I am vainglorious when I fast; and when I relax the fast in order to be unnoticed, I am again vainglorious over my prudence. When well-dressed I am quite overcome by vainglory, and when I put on poor clothes I am vainglorious again. When I talk I am defeated, and when I am silent I am again defeated by it. However I throw this prickly-pear, a spike stands upright.

Fire and water are incompatible; and so is judging others in one who wants to repent. If you see someone falling into sin at the very moment of his death, even then do not judge him, because the Divine judgment is hidden from men. Some have fallen openly into great sins, but they have done greater good deeds in secret; so their critics were tricked, getting smoke instead of the sun.

• PASCHA CANDLES:

With Father Lawrence's blessing, Vicky Basch and I are planning to decorate Pascha candles on Holy Friday afternoon from 1–2:30 PM (“Burial Vespers” begins at 3 PM). We would like to invite all the children to come—and anyone else that would like to decorate a candle for Pascha is also welcome. The kids can take their candle home and then bring it back for Pascha. After Pascha, the candle can be used on your home prayer altar.

Younger children will need an adult with them to assist them. Please let Vicky or me know if you will be coming, so we will have enough decorations and candles. We will have plenty of supplies for everyone, but, if you have something special to put on your candle, please feel free to bring it.

—Shannon-Agni Winterton

• THIS WEEK:

The observant Orthodox worshipper will notice—during the Fifth Week of Great Lent—that there are additional Church Services and that those Services take longer. Of course, this is by design, and helps us intensify our Lenten efforts of prayer, fasting and alms. If a parishioner is accustomed to attending only the Sunday Liturgy during Great Lent, then the opportunity for a deeper Lenten experience will, alas, be missed. What should one expect this week? On Wednesday evening at the Presanctified the usual Psalms will be replaced by longer, more penitential Psalms. The usual hymns after *Lord, I Have Cried* increase from ten to twenty-four, all with the