

in faith we will receive it. And so, on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, the Church celebrates this message of salvation delivered to the Virgin Mary by the angel Gabriel. What is this message of salvation? The angel Gabriel tells her: ‘And behold you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His Kingdom there will be no end’ (Luke 1:31-33). Gabriel explains to Mary the amazing plan of salvation, that the child within her will be born of her and the Holy Spirit and this child Himself will be God. In the Feast of the Annunciation, the Church celebrates the initiation of God's salvation for man, the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity. But even as the Church celebrates the divine initiative of God, it also celebrates the response and acceptance of that initiative by Mary.” —*Fr. Steven Rogers*

• GREETING GUESTS:

Brothers and Sisters: Just as we welcome a new-comer to our homes, greeting them and offering them hospitality, so we do the same at the Church, especially at the Agape Meal after the Divine Liturgy. Who does the welcoming? I encourage you to look around on Sunday when you come to the Parish Hall. Most of us keep our habitual pattern of lunching with our friends, and that is important, but doing so means that we might walk by a stranger that no one has yet welcomed. As I enter the Parish Hall for the meal, I take a moment to see who is standing or sitting alone, and each week I see someone, and wonder, *why has no one in our congregation engaged this person?* Ask yourself: is there a face you don't recognize, a person standing alone? Greet them, welcome them, offer to sit with them. Now and then vary your Sunday lunch habits and extend yourself to someone new to you, and possibly to the Parish. —*Fr Lawrence*

• CANON OF ST. ANDREW:

On Thursday morning about twenty of us were witnesses to at least three miracles. It is a miracle that we sang a 1,200 year old, 250-verse hymn (It's a miracle that the hymn even exists!) and that we heard an account, some 1,300 years old (I am amazed it still exists) of a desert dwelling woman, the former prostitute St. Mary of Egypt, and that faithful gathered—on a Thursday morning—to be nourished and challenged by the amazing relevance of that hymn and the life story, sung and read so beautifully. I am grateful to the Lord for these miracles. —*Fr Lawrence*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 25, 2018

Annunciation of the Theotokos



• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone One:

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ; glory to Thy kingdom; glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

• TROPARION OF ANNUNCIATION, Tone Four:

Today is the fountainhead of our salvation and the manifestation of the mystery which was from eternity. The Son of God becometh the Virgin's Son, and Gabriel announceth the good tidings of grace; for this cause, let us cry to the Mother of God with him: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

• KONTAKION OF ANNUNCIATION, Tone Eight:

To thee, the Champion Leader, we thy flock dedicate a feast of victory and of thanksgiving as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos; but as thou

art one with might which is invincible, from all dangers that can be do thou deliver us, that we may cry to thee: Rejoice, thou Bride Unwedded.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 24: 9:30 AM, Garden Work-Party
3:30 PM, Catechism: *on Reading the Scriptures*
5 PM, Vigil for Annunciation
- Sunday, March 25: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape luncheon in Hall
- Tues., March 27: 8 AM, Matins
- Wed. March 28: 8 AM, Matins
5 PM, Confession, 6:15 PM, Presanctified
- Thurs., March 29 : 8 AM, Matins
- Friday, March 30: 8 AM, Matins (last Lenten Matins)
3 PM, Church Clean-up work party
6:30 PM, Matins for Lazarus Saturday
7:30 PM, Last Catechism
- Sat. March 31: 9 AM, Baptisms
10 AM, Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday
Agape Meal to follow the Liturgy
3 PM, Clean-up/decorating for Palm Sunday
5 PM, Vigil for Palm Sunday

• TODAY'S USHERS:

Alexandra Marino and Preston Booker.

• BAPTISMS NEXT WEEK:

Please keep those preparing for Holy Illumination in your prayers: Maiah Lucas, Jordan Morgan, Hannah Prudhomme, Sarah Stewart. The Service of Holy Baptism will begin at 9 AM, Lazarus Saturday, March 31. "Alumni" of Lazarus Saturday baptisms will be preparing the Agape Meal after the

Saturday Baptisms in honor of the newly-illuminated.

• CLEAN-UP AND DECORATION:

Next Friday and Saturday, 3 PM each day, there will be a Church Cleaning Work Party in preparation for the Palm Sunday Vigil, Holy Week and Pascha. Inside the Church we will be cleaning windows, light fixtures, scraping wax, and decorating the Church with flowers and palms for Palm Sunday. Please let me know what time you will be coming to help.

—Fr Lawrence

• DONATIONS FOR PASCHA FLOWERS:

A donation basket will be set out after the Liturgy on Sunday to collect funds for Holy Week and Pascha flower decorations.

• HOLY WEEK SIGN UP SHEETS NOW POSTED:

There are many ways to serve. Please see the list and sign up to help out.

• PARISH LIFE:

Members of healthy families are committed to share a common life. Cal Ripken Jr., the man who broke Lou Gehrig's consecutive game streak, was asked the secret of his success. "The key," he said, "is mostly just showing up." Joining a parish is committing to sharing a common life. That requires engaging with all sorts of different people. Some are outgoing, some are shy; some take part in lots of things and others mostly pray. All are essential; none is superfluous.

Healthy families have differences. The goal, in a healthy family, is not to make everybody to be the same. The variety of persons is revealed in a variety of gifts and, sometimes, on a variety of viewpoints. Diversity is no threat, when we are all agreed to journey together.

Healthy families are ordered. There are husband and wife, parents and children, older and younger siblings. These roles are distinct and not interchangeable. Each lives for the other. Love is given and respect is returned.

• CELEBRATING THE ANNUNCIATION:

In the midst of our Lenten journey, in this time of contrition and repentance, a proclamation of great hope and expectation is heard throughout the Church. Even as our struggles in Lent confront our sin and our powerlessness to overcome it, God sends a messenger to assure us that because of His love and mercy, salvation has been bestowed upon us if only