

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, August 16, 2015, Post-feast of Dormition

- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Two:

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life-Immortal, Thou didst slay hades with the splendor of Thy Godhead; and when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of Heaven cried out: O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to Thee.

- TROPARION OF DORMITION, Tone One

In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity, in thy dormition thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos; thou wast translated unto life, since thou art the Mother of Life; and by thine intercessions dost thou redeem our souls from death.

- KONTAKION OF DORMITION, Tone Two

The grave and death could not hold the Theotokos, who is unsleeping in her intercessions, and an unfading hope in her mediations. For as the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her ever-virgin womb.



## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Sat., August 15: 9 AM, at Monastery in Calistoga, Divine Liturgy for Dormition  
5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sun., August 16: 9:30 AM, Akathist *Nurturer of Children*  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
Blessing for Students at conclusion of Liturgy  
Noon, *Agape Meal*
- Mon., August 17: 3 PM, *Glendi Baking*
- Tuesday, August 18: 3 and 5 PM, *Glendi Baking*
- Wed., August 19: 7 AM, Divine Liturgy, Post-Feast of Dormition  
9:30 AM, at *Kazan Skete*, Divine Liturgy for *Transfiguration*, old calendar  
6 PM, Vespers
- Thurs., August 20: Noon, Senior/Retired Lunch Fellowship (meal to be prepared by Matushka Xenia and Debbie Buse)  
**7 PM, Parish Council Meeting**

### EARLY MORNING DIVINE LITURGIES:

Weekday Divine Liturgies, at 7 AM, have been scheduled for the next three weeks. It's hoped that the early start time will allow those going to work or school to attend. The Liturgy will last no more than an hour.

- WORK PARTY:

Matushka Ann is organizing a garden and kitchen work party for Saturday, August 22, from 9 AM until Noon or so. None of the work will involve heavy lifting.

- HOSPITALITY—A REMINDER:

The importance of hospitality in parish life—between parish members and towards visitors and guests, cannot be exaggerated. In our parish, typically, all of us are warmly met at the church door by our Greeters, Judy and Joseph Gumper. One of our two weekly Ushers will then assist visitors to a place, and ensure that visitors are escorted, if they so desire, to the Parish Hall for lunch. Here's where our hospitality seems to break down. Frequently I see a visitors, folks I have not yet met, standing or eating alone in the Parish Hall (for example, last week). I'd like to encourage each and everyone of you to take responsibility to greet and welcome those people that the Lord has sent to you and me. Bring the guest to me, or come get me, and I will have lunch with them. Let me put this another way, in terms of an *admonition*: I hope *never to see a visitor standing or eating alone in the Hall*. Such is as incomprehensible as having guests in one's home and ignoring them. Please, brothers and sisters, I beg you, love by welcoming our guests—extend yourself. To my way of thinking, once we get to the Hall on Sunday, those of us without small children should see to the comfort and the welcome of the guest before any other need we may have, before we sit, before we have our coffee or our lunch. Evangelism begins with hospitality. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- READING THE BIBLE:

For our reading of Scripture to be fruitful, to help save our souls, we must ourselves be leading a spiritual life in accordance with the Gospel. The Scriptures are addressed precisely to those who are trying to lead a spiritual life. Others will usually read them in vain, and will not even understand much. St. Paul teaches: “The natural [i.e., unspiritual] man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor. 2: 14). The more one is leading a spiritual life, the more one is capable of understanding the Scripture. A second point. Because we are weak and can only boast of our infirmities, we must pray to God to open the eyes of our understanding by His grace. Even Christ's disciples on the road to Emmaus did not understand the Scripture; they did not understand that it was Christ in front of them interpreting the Scripture, until Christ Himself opened their minds (cf Luke 24:45). So unless we have our minds opened—which comes from the grace of God—we will read Scripture and not understand it; hearing we will not understand, seeing we will not see. —*Fr. Seraphim (Rose)*

- PARISH LIBRARY:

Many thanks to George and Carol Ordynsky for their generous gift of a beautiful table to the parish library. We asked, and they delivered! The library—now in its new spot, formerly the parish office—is open for business. I encourage all to peruse the very large collection of Orthodox books on saints, prayer, history, liturgy and ethics. We each have the responsibility, and more, the need, to deepen our faith with spiritual reading. Our library is a great resource. The librarians Lahana Singer and Helen Kinnamon are more than happy to assist you.

- DORMITION

The Church has believed and ever taught that the All-Holy Lady died—fell asleep in the Lord (Dormition means sleep), being subject to death. However, the Church teaches us that she was assumed into heaven—body and soul brought back into unity that God intends for all of us. In the “immaculate Virgin the bounds of nature are overcome” says a hymn. Another hymn tells us that: “the Mother of God was bodily ‘translated’ to heaven, since the Lord did not allow the most pure temple of the Word to experience corruption: The Lord and God of all gave thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. For just as He kept thee virgin in thy childbirth so did He preserve thy body incorrupt in the tomb; and He glorified thee by a divine Translation, showing thee honor as a Son to His Mother.” (*Matins, First Canon, Canticle Six*) What is this saying? The hymn is celebrating the great mystery in Christ that she—as we will be too in God's time—was raised from the dead and she was taken up into heaven, in her body as well as in her soul (humans have both). She has passed beyond death and judgment, and lives wholly in the Age to Come—as we will too. The Resurrection of the Body, which all Christians await, has in her case been anticipated and is already an accomplished fact. In this fact, she is not a great exception in her death and life: what we are celebrating is that we all hope to share one day in that same glory of the Resurrection of the Body which she enjoys even now. The feast of Dormition shows us a glorious passing from a holy and unique life,

through death toward resurrection—now she is in the Age to Come—even beyond what we think of heaven, since she dwells in the coming age of the resurrection, at her Son’s side. The triumph of the Theotokos is our triumph; her assumption is our hope of glory; we struggle even now to overcome the bounds of nature, to be in Communion with the Lord, to overcome sin, and prepare ourselves daily for a blessed death. But it will take some planning and some attention for us. Hopefully we will learn from our most holy lady Theotokos how to do that.

—Fr. Lawrence



#### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- *Parking:* Glendi needs a person to manage parking and a person to prepare the parking lot and to take it down after Glendi. Truly, these two positions are as crucial to the success of the event as the food.
- *Gyro Booth:* As most everyone knows by now, Glendi needs a manager to work the busy *Gyro Booth*. The *Gyros* are one of the most popular of our food items at the Glendi. See Alex Stameroff.
- *Sanitation:* Thankfully, three people volunteered to work sanitation.
- *Piroshki Prep:* Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 21, 22 and 23.
- *Work Parties:* Saturday, September 5 and 12, 9 AM.
- *Glendi Friday:* Father Lawrence and Alex Stameroff are putting together a team for set up, especially for the day before Glendi, Friday, September 18, from 9 AM until dark.
- Please take Glendi flyers and postcards to distribute. Visit our Glendi Facebook page.

#### • PROSPHORA:

A *prosphoron* (plural *prosphora*) (Greek for offering) is a small loaf of leavened bread used in Orthodox Christian liturgies. The term originally meant any offering made to a temple, but in Orthodox Christianity it has come to mean specifically the bread offered at the Divine Liturgy (Eucharist). The only ingredients in prosphora are white flour, water, salt and yeast. This prosphora will become the Body of Christ in the Eucharistic celebration. When we partake in the simple bread of prosphora, we do so while remembering that our Lord came as a simple carpenter and endured our poverty out of love for us. Although some people think that whole wheat flour is somehow “more natural” and therefore more appropriate for prosphora, nothing could be further from the truth. Whole wheat flour should be avoided since this flour was never used in the early Church. White flour was always used, since it was more expensive than the brown variety and the loaf was quite literally a sacrifice for those who provided it. Whole wheat flour is the same grain as the white, but with the outer shell ground in with the kernel. Any member of the Church in good standing and whose conscience is clean may bake prosphora. Often in a parish church the women will take turns baking the prosphora, and in monasteries, the task is assigned by the abbot or abbess, to one or several monastics [our Parish has a Prosphora team, led by Matushka Xenia. See her if you’re interested in helping]. It is common but not necessary to go to confession before baking prosphora, and it is often done in the morning while fasting. Sometimes, special kitchen implements are used for making the prosphora which are used for no other purpose. The baker tries to maintain a spiritual state of mind throughout, often saying the Jesus Prayer. A prosphoron is made up of two separate round pieces of leavened dough which are placed one on top of another and baked together to form a single loaf. This double-loaf represents the two natures of Christ: human and divine. Before baking, each prosphoron is stamped with a special seal called *sphragis*, usually bearing the image of a cross with the Greek letters IC XC NIKA (“Jesus Christ conquers”)

around the arms of the cross. This impression is baked into the bread and serves as a guide for the priest who will be cutting it. In the Slavic practice (Russian Orthodox, Bulgarian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, etc.) five smaller prosphora are used (in commemoration of the five loaves Jesus used to feed the multitudes). In the Greek practice one larger prosphoron is used (in commemoration that all share in one “Bread” I Cor). In the part of the Divine Liturgy known as the Liturgy of Preparation (Proskomedia), a cube is cut from the center of the prosphoron, and is referred to as the Lamb. It is this Lamb which is consecrated to become the Body of Christ and from it both the clergy and the faithful will receive Holy Communion. The remainder of the prosphora is cut up for the antidoron, the blessed bread which is distributed at the end of the Liturgy to cleanse the palate, making sure no particle of the Body and Blood of Christ inadvertently be spit out when talking after receiving the Holy Mysteries. In addition to the Lamb, particles are removed from the prosphoron to commemorate the Holy Virgin, the nine ranks of angels and saints, the living (including the ruling bishop and the local authorities, and the departed. The laity may also present smaller prosphora together with a list of the faithful living and departed whom they wish to have commemorated during the Liturgy. From each of these smaller prosphora the priest will remove a triangular piece as well as several smaller particles while he prays for each of the persons listed. —*With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon, Vashon Island, WA.*

#### • CHILDREN AND THE CHURCH:

Metropolitan Tikhon recently said that we shouldn’t say that “children are the future of the Church” but that the “Church is the future of our children.” Let’s examine how that statement works out here. Statistics can be so disappointing. Of course, they do not ever tell the whole story. As I was looking for a funeral record from 1988, requested from another parish, I ran across a document made by Fr Andrew Morbey, probably from 1986 or 1987. In this document he lists the names of parish children, categorized according to age groups, up to age 13. There are 116 names of children, evenly distributed, more or less, over the age groups. Of the 116 names, 56 are names of Eritrean children. Sadly, only 1 (one) of those names is a person that attends church here (I personally know most of the persons named), and that is Akbaret Moges, a.k.a. Nini. Of the remaining 60 children, it seems to me that there are only 10 that are actively involved in the Orthodox church, here or elsewhere. I know most of the names, not all, so perhaps there are more than ten. Let’s hope so. Still, the rate of attrition is very high. I’m not about to cast blame for these low numbers. Kids do make choices, and sometimes, we just have to wait it out for them to return. However, in our secular society, only a very few will find the narrow path back to Christ. They will do that by your fervent prayers and love for them. More currently, baptismal records from 2004 through 2014 show that 98 children were baptized here during that time. 35 of them were Eritrean children, most of them do not attend church, a few attend the new Eritrean church in town. That leaves 63 non-Eritrean children which I baptized during that period. Many, if not most of them, are here each week. I thank God for that, and rejoice each Saturday Vespers, and Sunday or feast day Liturgy when I see them in church, hear them sing and cry, and watch them play on our playground (isn’t THAT a blessing that we have here!!).

It’s a cliché, but history does repeat itself. In terms of attrition, we must not be naïve otherwise our history will repeat itself. We must realize that these children are at a critical age for learning to know Jesus Christ, and how that works out in morality, spiritual life, parental interaction, priorities and everyday activities such as prayer, fasting and going to Church. So, let’s be watchful, helpful and joyful with our children and our Orthodox Christian faith. Watchful over ourselves—keeping our hearts for the Lord, praying, forgiving, fasting, not missing Vespers or Liturgy, serving God and loving our neighbor, living the faith in Jesus Christ, and not being hypocritical about that; avoid being critical of the parish and parishioners *in front of your children*; watchful for our children to protect their tender souls; helpful to our children to teach them prayer and the faith; supportive of the church, tithing, so that we and our children trust in God and not the dollar bill. Let’s be joyful that the Lord Jesus Christ has saved us by His Cross and Resurrection, has given us the Spirit as a pledge of the Kingdom, and let’s share that joy and knowledge with our children. Asking your prayers and forgiveness, —*Fr Lawrence*