

• YOU ARE INVITED TO A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION:

When: Next Saturday, September 7 at 5 PM. *Where:* The birthday celebration will be here at the Church. *Whose Birthday:* The gathering is in honor of the birthday—the Nativity—of the Mother of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ. Great Vespers will begin at 5 PM, followed by the Festal Matins. The Divine Liturgy will be served on Sunday, September 8, at 10 AM. You've received an invitation to come to a gathering for someone you dearly love and who loves you. As members of the Church we honor, extol, and sing to the Holy Mother of our Lord, the Ever-Virgin Mary and Theotokos on her birthday, notably the first great feast of the Church liturgical year. He Who is the Eternal Word and Son of the Father—Jesus Christ—became the Son of the Ever-Virgin Mary. “And the Word was made flesh...” She became the throne of God, the new Ark, prefigured by the old, the temple, showing us the way for us to become bearers of Christ. One writer says that “In her person the likeness of fertile trees is depicted, for spiritually she is like a fruitful olive tree or a blooming date-palm in the house of the Lord. Therefore, she is now called the life-giving garden, as the Church sings: ‘From a barren root the God of wonders has made a life-bearing garden to spring up for us: even His Mother.’” Come and enjoy the riches and delights of this birthday celebration. *Most Holy Theotokos, save us.*

• YOUR HELP, PLEASE:

After receiving Holy Communion the faithful partake of a little bread and wine, mixed with hot water, to break their fast and cleanse the mouth. Three comments about this: the bread marked “Antidoron” (which means, “instead of the Gifts”) is for those Orthodox Christians who did not receive Holy Communion that day (we've discussed the meaning of “Antidoron” many times). Secondly: please do not dip your bread into the cups—this is not a wine and bread pairing. Besides, the next person will have to consume your crumbs. Thirdly, parents are asked to monitor their children at the table(s). I've been told that some children are visiting the different tables to eat and drink at each.

• PARISH MEN'S GROUP GATHERING:

6 PM, Tuesday at *Hen House Brewing* on Belview Ave. (Past breakfasts have been at the “Happy Hen” on Santa Rosa Ave. Either guys like chicken-themed establishments, or else there's some psychological issue going on).

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



September 1, 2019

Church New Year



• 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 THE NEW YEAR, TONE TWO

O Creator of all creation, Who hast placed the times and seasons within Thine own authority, bless the crown of this year with Thy goodness, O Lord, and keep our rulers and Thy flock in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, and save us.

• KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Two:

Hades became afraid, O Almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb. The dead arose, creation with Adam beheld this and rejoiced with Thee; and the world, O my Savior, praises Thee forever.

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- KONTAKION OF THE NEW YEAR, TONE FOUR

O Creator and Master of time and all the ages, O God of all who art transcendent in essence: grant blessing for the course of this year, and in Thy boundless mercy save those who worship Thee and cry out in fear: O Redeemer, grant to all a fruitful year.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Aug. 31: 9 AM, Work Party (trim redwood trees)
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions
- Sunday, Sept. 1: 8:30 AM, Matins
9:40 AM, Reception of Catechumens
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Pot Luck Agape Meal
- Wednesday, Sept. 4: 6 PM, Vespers
- Saturday, Sept. 7: 5 PM, Vigil for the Nativity of the Theotokos

- NEW CATECHUMENS:

Travis Koeller and Tim Danford, both having attended Services here for some months, will be received as Catechumens immediately after Matins on Sunday, about 9:40 AM. Please keep them in your prayers.

- POTLUCK

This Sunday we will have a Potluck meal, so please bring a dish to share. If you know anyone who might not get this message please give them a call.

- CHURCH NEW YEAR:

We've completed our annual cycle of remembering, celebrating, and entering into God's plan for our salvation: the prophecies, His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension, the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the sacramental presence of His body, the Church. From a human perspective, we can be tempted with frustration at times when moving from the end of something back to its beginning—doing it over again. Yet in the case of the liturgical year, we give thanks to God that we can once again joyfully celebrate His benevolence towards us. For in our finite state we need

fresh starts, and this is one of them. From the culmination of Pascha, Ascension, Pentecost, and Transfiguration, we move back to the beginning events, the Nativity of the Mother of God and the Nativity of the Son of God Himself. We start this life-giving cycle over again, and the Holy Spirit, to the degree that we participate, further increases in us the sacramental realities that propel our salvation. God, who created and loves us, knows our human frailty and our need for renewal. Marriages have their anniversaries, children their birthdays, the departed their memorials, and the saints their feasts. These are milestones of progress and sources of motivation for us, seasons of opportunity as we spiral ever upward towards heaven. Notice that the last great feast of the closing year is the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, while the first great feast of the New Year is her Nativity. Christ is the beginning and end of all things Christian. Yet the Theotokos is the chosen passage, the gate through which the incarnate Son entered into the world and opened the way of salvation for all mankind. Therefore her birth and death, that is her entire life, encapsulate the earthly life of Christ, as her womb mysteriously circumscribed Him. The Church celebrates this day by thanking God for the spiritual and material harvests of the past year, beseeching Him for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundant harvest of grace and physical well-being in the year to come. This is a good time for each of us to do the same. Take a moment during personal prayers, driving in the car alone, when the kids are napping, or at any other convenient time, and thank God for what the last year offered in both blessings and challenges. Happy New Year! —*Fr. Thaddaeus Hardenbrook, St. Lawrence Orthodox Church, Felton, CA.*

- CAMP GLENDI — SEPTEMBER 20 AND 21:

See September bulletin for details.

- ALTAR SERVERS:

You are invited to a brief workshop on Altar Serving on Saturday, October 5, from 11 AM until about 1 PM. Lunch will be included.

- WEDNESDAY EVENING TALKS:

Father Nicholas Carr will give two talks about the book *The Soul's Longing: An Orthodox Christian Perspective on Biblical Interpretation* by Professor Mary Ford of St. Tikhon's Seminary: Wednesday, Sept. 18 and 25. Vespers at 6 PM, Potluck and talk at 6:45 PM.