

PENTECOST - THE FEAST OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Saint Symeon the New Theologian, like earlier fathers such as Saint Mark the Monk, places a great deal of emphasis upon the sacrament of baptism. In baptism, we receive into the innermost chamber of our heart Christ and the Holy Spirit. What greater gift could there be than that? To be Christ-bearers, Spirit Bearers? So Fathers like Saint Symeon the New Theologian would say we cannot possibly add to the grace of baptism. In baptism, the fullness of Divine life is given to us. But, what we have to do is to discover that grace. It is hidden within us when we are baptized in infancy, hidden within us in an unconscious way through the fulfillment of the commandments, through living the Christian life, through receiving the Eucharist with faith, we are gradually to discover the meaning of the grace of baptism and to experience this indwelling presence of Christ and the Spirit in a conscious and perceptible way. So the Christian life is a journey, if you like, from baptismal grace, present within us unconsciously, secretly, mystically—*mystikos* is the word that the Fathers use. A journey from unconscious grace to the experience of grace consciously, actively, with full perception and assurance. All of us are called to actively experience the presence of the Holy Spirit within us that was given to us in baptism. The Christian life can be summed up in the phrase, “Become what you are.”

— *Metropolitan Kallistos Ware*

Salvation is the divine gift through which men and women are delivered from sin and death, united to Christ, and brought into His eternal kingdom. Those who heard St. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost asked what they must do to be saved. He answered, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Salvation begins with these three steps: 1) repentance, 2) be baptized, and 3) receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. To repent means to change our mind about how we have been, to turn from our sin and to commit ourselves to Christ. To be baptized means to be born again by being joined into union with Christ. And to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit means to receive the Spirit Who empowers us to enter a new life in Christ, to be nurtured in the Church, and to be conformed to God's image. Salvation demands faith in Jesus

Christ. People cannot save themselves by their own good works. Salvation is “faith working through love.” It is an ongoing, life-long process. Salvation is past tense in that, through the death and Resurrection of Christ, we have been saved. It is present tense, for we are “being saved” by our active participation through faith in our union with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Salvation is also future, for we must yet be saved at His glorious Second Coming. Baptism is the way in which a person is actually united to Christ. The experience of salvation is initiated in the waters of baptism. The Apostle Paul teaches in Romans 6:1–6 that in baptism we experience Christ's death and resurrection. In it our sins are truly forgiven and we are energized by our union with Christ to live a holy life. The Orthodox Church practices baptism by full immersion. — *Bishop Alexander Mileant*

“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit,” (Acts 2:3-4). They partook of fire, not of burning but of saving fire; of fire which consumes the thorns of sins, but gives luster to the soul. This is now coming upon you also, and that to strip away and consume your sins which are like thorns, and to brighten yet more that precious possession of your souls, and to give you grace; for He gave it then to the Apostles. And He sat upon them in the form of fiery tongues, that they might crown themselves with new and spiritual diadems by fiery tongues upon their heads. A fiery sword barred of old the gates of Paradise; a fiery tongue which brought salvation restored the gift. — *St. Cyril of Jerusalem*

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who fills the whole universe, passes through all believing, meek, humble, good, and simple human souls, dwelling in them, vivifying and strengthening them. He becomes one spirit with them and everything to them - light, strength, peace, joy, success in their undertakings, especially in a pious life, and everything good - “going through all understanding, pure and most subtle spirits” (Wisdom of Solomon 7:23). “We have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (I Cor. 12:13). All pious people are filled with the Spirit of God similarly as a sponge is filled with water. — *St. John of Kronstadt*

INFORMATION

Protection of the Holy Virgin & St. Seraphim of Sarov Church
90 Mountain View Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95407
Parish office phone: 707-584-9491 / fax: 585-9445
website: www.saintseraphim.com

Our Parish Secretary—Bobbi Griovski—may be reached at the Church office Mon., Tues. and Wed., 9 AM to Noon, at 584-9491. Fr. Lawrence Margitich may be reached at the Parish office phone, or at Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net. He is available Tuesday–Saturday, from noon onwards each day.

Parish Contacts

Fr. Michael Margitich, Pastor Emeritus	473-0314
Fr. John Schettig, Assistant Pastor	318-1559
Serge Anderson, Parish Council Warden	291-7452
David Winterton, Treasurer	331-9085
Bonnie Alexander, Recording Secretary	338-4962
Kira Staykow, Sisterhood President	(415) 279-0353
Shenina, Scrip Manager	321-7417
Eleni Rose, Agape Meal Coordinator	480-6106
Debbie Buse, Hall Event Manager	696-4986

St. Seraphim Week

JUNE 16TH—20TH

If you have children, grandchild or Godchildren aged two to ten, you'll want to enroll them in our St. Seraphim Week for Kids program. The teachers for this year's activities will focus on "Saints Around the World." Monday, Saints of America; Tuesday, Saints of Russia; Wednesday, Saints of Africa; Thursday, Saints of China and Japan; Friday, Saints of Italy and Greece. Our schedule each day is as follows:

9:00 AM	Arrival and sign in
9:15 AM	Prayers in The Protection Church with Fr. Lawrence
9:45 AM	Crafts time, Gloria and Lara with six to ten year old Niki and Carmen with kids five and under
10:15 AM	Lesson (stories)
10:30 AM	Music with Carmen, all kids
10:45 AM	Snack time
11:15 AM	Play time
11:45 AM	Closing prayer led by Fr. Lawrence
12 Noon	Parents pick up children

If you have questions, please speak with Gloria Collins (849-6135), Lara Anderson (291-6856) or Niki Myles (779-9049).

THE APOSTLES' FAST

...AFTER THE DAYS of Holy Gladness [Pascha time], which we have devoted to the honor of the Lord rising from the dead and then ascending into heaven, and after receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, a Fast is ordained as a wholesome and needful practice, so that, if perchance through neglect or disorder even amid the joys of the festival any undue gluttony has broken out, it may be corrected by the remedy of strict abstinence, which must be the more scrupulously carried out in order that what was on this day Divinely bestowed on the Church may abide in us. For being made the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and watered with a greater supply than ever of the Divine Stream, we ought not to be conquered by any lusts nor held in possession by any vices in order that the habitation of Divine power may be stained with no pollution.

—*St. Leo the Great* (†461 AD), *Sermon 78*

DO YOU FAST? Then feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, visit the sick, do not forget the imprisoned, have pity on the tortured, comfort those who grieve and who weep, be merciful, humble, kind, calm, patient, sympathetic, forgiving, reverent, truthful and pious, so that God might accept your fasting and might plentifully grant you the fruits of repentance.

—*St. John Chrysostom* (†407)

THE APOSTLES' FAST is the oldest fast and the first one kept by the Christian Church. During the Apostles' Fast, the Holy Spirit spoke to them, "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted the Holy Spirit said: separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:2-3). The Apostles Fast begins the Monday after *All Saints Sunday* (which is itself a week after Pentecost) and continues until the *Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul* on June 29. The rule for this variable-length fast is more lenient than for Great Lent. *Monday, Wednesday, Friday*: abstain from meat, fish, wine and oil. *Tuesday, Thursday*: Oil and wine permitted. *Saturday, Sunday*: Fish, oil and wine permitted.

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- THE CHURCH SCHOOL teachers will host an end of the school year party for the parish children on Sunday, May 25, after the Divine Liturgy.
- THE KAZAN SKETE will have Divine Liturgies on Friday, June 6 and Thursday, June 26 at 9:30 AM.
- WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURES will resume in July. Topics are being decided now, so if you have a suggestion of something you'd like to hear about, please email Fr. Lawrence.
- SAINTS PETER AND PAUL Church on Stony Point will be hosting a Wine Tasting and Pig Roast, Sunday, June 1, from 3–8 PM. 850 St. Olga Court. For reservations, please contact Ann at 707-585-8330 or kasaak@pacbell.net
- WE WELCOME OUR NEW Catechumen Spencer Rhodes, and pray that the Lord grants him many years of fruitful labor in the Holy Church.
- JONATHAN AND SHILOH SOPHIA will receive the Holy Illumination of Baptism at 9 AM, the morning of Pentecost.
- KNEELING VESPERS: At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Pentecost, Sunday, June 8, we will immediately begin the Kneeling Vespers, so-called because of the three long prayers we make during which we kneel for the first time since Holy Week.
- SATURDAY CATECHISM sessions in the Protection Church will resume on June 14 at 3:15 PM. Not only Catechumens, but all are welcome to participate. There will be eight lectures: 1) The True God, 2) The Human Being, 3) Sin, 4) Jesus Christ the Son of God, 5) Jesus the Savior, 6) Repentance and Faith, 7) The Holy Spirit, 8) The Church and the Theotokos Mary.
- THE SENIOR LUNCH FELLOWSHIP will meet on June 12 (June 19 was a typo in the last bulletin). The meal will not be a potluck, but something special prepared by Esther Carr. Please call the office at 584-9491 to reserve a spot.
- PARISH COUNCIL: Items discussed: the replacement of the fence along Mtn View Ave (one like that at the Skete has been proposed), cutting down the poplars in the rectory yard after Glendi; the well pump died, so a new pump was installed; plan for heating the church school rooms; Hall rental agreement; new doors for St. Seraphim; finding a person to maintain the lawn drip systems with Matushka Ann; play-ground swing needs bolts tightened.

DECORATING THE CHURCH FOR THE FEAST

THE CHURCH will be decorated with greenery on Saturday, June 7, in preparation for the Vigil and Liturgy of Pentecost. Please see Patricia Krueger and Geoffrey John Lake if you can help. About why we decorate, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann wrote that “at Pentecost we decorate our churches with flowers and green branches—for the Church ‘never grows old, but is always young.’ It is an evergreen, ever-living Tree of grace and life, of joy and comfort. For the Holy Spirit— ‘the Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life—comes and abides in us, and cleanses us from all impurity,’ and fills our life with meaning, love, faith and hope.”

Here is a partial description of what you will see in the Church. In the center, an apple tree, signifying the “Tree of Life” of Paradise. Jesus Christ is Himself the Tree of Life according to one hymn. To the side will be a Photinia tree, as a sign of the “tongues of fire” of the Holy Spirit, Who enlightened the Disciples. There also is an oak, signifying the steadfast faith of Abraham: “The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day.” (Genesis 18:1) Salvation is the work of the Holy Trinity— prefigured by the three angels at the “hospitality of Abraham” and portrayed in Rublev’s famous icon—the mystery of the Trinity is fully revealed at Pentecost. On the side will stand an olive tree, witnessing to God’s peace, healing and abundance: “...and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in his beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew the waters had subsided from the earth.” (Genesis 8:11) Near the Icon of Golgotha will be a cypress, pine and cedar, the wood of the Precious Cross of Christ. “The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, with the cypress, pine, and cedar, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.” (Isaiah 60:13) These are the traditional woods used in the first temple (and used for the cross). “And all the trees of the field will clap with their branches; and instead of the briar shall come up the cypress; and the Lord shall be for a name and for an eternal sign, says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 55:12-13) Of course, there will be a palm tree, the sign of victory, and much more besides.

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

JUNE 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 - Holy Fathers • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy <i>Ushers: Thom S. & Alex S.</i> • Noon: Agape Meal	2	3	4 • 6 PM, Vespers	5	6	7 • 2 PM, Decoration of Church • 5 PM, VIGIL for Pentecost
8 - Pentecost • 9 AM, Baptisms • 10 AM, Liturgy with the Kneeling Vespers <i>Ushers: Joe A. & Ryan D.</i> • Noon: Agape Meal	9 - Holy Spirit Day • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy <i>No fast this week</i>	10 <i>[Fr. Lawrence in SF all day at Mission Board Meeting]</i> • 7 PM, Master Plan	11 <i>[Fr. Lawrence in SF all day at Diocesan Council Meeting]</i>	12 • Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship	13	14 • 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>The True God</i> • 4:30 PM, Panikhida for Sakovich family • 5 PM, Great Vespers
15 - All Saints • 10 AM, Liturgy <i>Ushers: George B. & Vlad B.</i> • 11:45, Church School • Noon: Agape Meal	16 <i>Beginning of the Sts. Peter and Paul Fast</i> St. Seraphim Week for Kids	17	18 • 6 PM, Vespers	19 • 6 PM, Akathist	20	21 • 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>The Human Being</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
22 - All Saints Russia/America • 10 AM, Liturgy <i>Ushers: Tito R. & Thom S.</i> • Noon: Agape Meal	23 • 6:15 PM, Great Vespers for Nativity of St. John the Baptist	24 - Nativity of St. John • 8:30 AM, Matins and Divine Liturgy	25 • 6 PM, Vespers	26 • 6 PM, Akathist to St. Seraphim • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting	27	28 • 5 PM, VIGIL for Sts. Peter and Paul
29 - Sts. Peter and Paul • 10 AM, Liturgy <i>Ushers: Esther S. & Joe A.</i> • Noon: Agape Meal	30 <i>Fr. Lawrence at Summer Camp until Thursday</i>	1	2	3	4 - Pilgrimage • 10 AM, Fort Ross, Divine Liturgy and Picnic	5 • 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>On Sin</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers

- The Feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, is the spiritual culmination of the fifty days after Pascha. The importance of the day can only be compared to Pascha itself. Accordingly, the Church will be decorated with abundant greenery (expressing the new life of the Spirit, and the harvest of spiritual gifts). Vigil will be celebrated on Saturday, June 7, at 5 PM. On Sunday, June 8 the Catechumens Jonathan and Shiloh will be baptized at 9 AM. The Festal Liturgy will begin at 10 AM, and be immediately followed by the **Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost**. The week following is fast free.
- The Apostles' Fast begins each year on the Monday after All Saints, and ends on the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul.