

FEAST OF THE PROTECTION ~ October 1

On October 1 the Church celebrates the feast of the *Protection of the Mother of God*. Our parish is named after this feast day, and so we enthusiastically participate, anticipate, and spiritually delight in the vision which was once seen by St. Andrew, the fool for Christ's sake in the Church of the Blakerni district in Constantinople, on Oct. 1, sometime in the mid-10th century. On that day, while the city of Constantinople was surrounded by enemy forces intent on destruction, the blessed St. Andrew the fool for Christ said to St. Epiphanius: "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" And the enemy was mysteriously scattered, and the city and the people saved. It may surprise us that we would celebrate a feast based on a vision seen by a man, known as a fool-for-Christ, so very long ago, in a land so far away, in a city no longer Christian. Of course, there have been many visions of the Mother of God praying for the world. Our own St. Seraphim saw the Theotokos on three separate occasions. However, on this feast of October 1 we do not celebrate the vision of St. Andrew-the-fool-for-Christ seeing the Virgin holding her veil over the City, we celebrate the fact that what he saw was something about the church, the Body of Christ, something that we too experience when we pray together: the unbreakable and unending bond of the Church both visible and invisible, all the faithful as members of the Lord's Holy Body, the Church. And it is also a confirmation that until the Coming of our Lord—and the resurrection and healing of all creation—all existence beyond the grave, of the righteous and the saints, is one untiring prayer, one ceaseless intercession and mediation, in love. When we sing at the Funeral and Panikhida that "their souls shall dwell with the blessed" this is what we mean. We have become used to imagining that the Holy Theotokos, and all the saints, all the deceased, the entire spiritual world in general—are somewhere over there, far away in the heavens. Certainly, they are all spiritually higher than we are, yet they are close to us. Is it so difficult for us to believe that the Mother of God and all the saints are so close to us that they can pray together with us in our Church? Do not let go of the chance, dear brethren, to make use of the Theotokos' nearness, and to pray to Her with childish simplicity, loyalty and sincere faith, calling out to Her: "Rejoice, O our Joy, protect us from all evil with Thy most precious veil." (*adapted*)

The Feast of the Protection will be celebrated with **Vigil on Tuesday evening, September 30, at 6 PM**, in the St. Seraphim Church. **The Divine Liturgy for the Feast will be celebrated on Wednesday, October 1, at 9:30 AM** in the Protection Church. Vladyka Benjamin is not able to come this year. All are invited to the Festal Luncheon in the Parish Hall which will follow the Liturgy.

Twelve Reasons...

LISTS LIKE THIS are usually so much "clickbait," I know...[*Clickbate*: an eye-catching link on a website which encourages people to read on. It is often paid for by the advertiser and generates income based on the number of clicks]...but I thought it was nevertheless worthwhile to compile a list of most of the reasons why I became and remain an Orthodox Christian. Some of these things were not really on my radar when I became Orthodox in 1998, but they are part of the reason why I genuinely do love belonging to the Orthodox Church (which is why "and/or Remain" is in the title).

The nature of lists like this is such that they can't constitute apologetics, really, nor is this one (at least) intended to be universally applicable — these are my reasons. They

may not be someone else's. It will also become apparent that my background as an Evangelical prior to becoming Orthodox is a major factor here. So, all that said, here's the list.

1) I believe the Orthodox Church really is the one, true Church of Christ. There's a lot that could be said here, but the reason why I believe this is that I examined both the Scriptures and the early history of Christianity, and I became convinced that the only church that matches them both is Orthodoxy. Particularly formative for me were the writings of St. Ignatius of Antioch, a disciple of the Apostle John. The church life he described was definitely not what I saw in Evangelicalism. Since he was someone who learned how to be a Christian from the

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, Second Priest	318-1559
Serge Anderson, Parish Council Warden	291-7452
David Winterton, Treasurer	331-9085
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Apostles themselves, I wanted to be in his church.

Orthodoxy takes history seriously and doesn't gloss over the hard stuff. It also doesn't pick and choose from early Christian witness to develop a streamlined "system" of theology that is easy to swallow. Rather, because Orthodoxy is truly the community descended from the Apostles, within its theological memory are centuries of dogma, doctrine and theological reflection. Not all of it is totally consistent or easy to sort out, but it is nevertheless one great river of truth with an overall unified direction. One doesn't see that in the same way in Roman Catholicism (there are several major turns in history), and it is impossible to find that in Protestantism. Most Protestants aren't even concerned with it. None of that means I regard non-Orthodox Christians as damned, nor do I even regard all Orthodox Christians as definitely destined for eternal bliss. And Orthodoxy's truth is no testament to me. Orthodoxy is true, but not because of me.

2) Orthodoxy gives me something to do. I don't mean that I was bored and needed something to entertain me. I mean that the Christian life as I had been taught it prior to becoming Orthodox was essentially non-critical. I had been "saved," and there was really nothing critical to do after that. I should try to be moral, of course, and get other people to get saved, too, but those things weren't really necessary to the big question, which was: "Do you know what would happen to you if you died tonight?" Well, I knew. I was "saved." I was going to Heaven. But what if spiritual life is actually all critical? What if you need to endure to the end to be saved? What if being a Christian means working out your salvation with fear and trembling? Orthodoxy provides a full-bodied, full-souled spiritual life that assumes that everything you do as a Christian makes you either more like God or less like Him, and because becoming like God is what salvation consists of, that means that everything you do is critical. You haven't "arrived" in this life. You should be moral and you should be evangelistic not because they get you bigger rewards in Heaven but because those things are part of what it means to cooperate with God so that you can be saved.

3) Orthodoxy gives me a way to see and touch God physically. The Son of God became the Son of Mary, and that means that He became visible and touchable. In Orthodoxy, the implications of the doctrine of the Incarnation are that the divine presence — holiness — actually becomes present in the material world. Now, one can argue that that presence is uniquely present only in one physical place — the human body of Jesus — or one can be consistent and see how holiness shows forth in lots of other physical places both in the Bible and in subsequent Christian history. Saints' bones, apostles' shadows and even handkerchiefs touched by apostles have all showed forth the power of God. Within that context, when Jesus said "This is My Body" and "This is My Blood," it makes more sense to take Him seriously and not just metaphorically. That's why St. Paul warned that people who received Holy Communion unworthily could get sick or even die. If it's "just" a symbol, why would it do that? The physicality of Orthodoxy — sacraments, incense, vestments, church architecture, icons, etc. — don't get between me and God. They put me in touch with God. A bridge between two cliffs does not get between the cliffs but rather connects them. Orthodoxy's many physical elements not manmade magic, but the working out of God's gift of the Incarnation, the reconnecting of God and man.

4) Change is really hard. People sometimes joke that Orthodoxy is not really an "organized religion," with emphasis on "organized." There is no pope handing down uniform instructions to the whole Church; our chiefest prelates often can't seem to get along; and it seems like we're never going to get around to holding that Great and Holy Council we've been talking about for nearly a century. But all those things don't bother me. For one thing, it means that sheer logistics make it nearly impossible for us to alter what we do.

And if all that Eternity and Truth stuff is really true, why should we even think about altering it? It can't get voted on democratically, and it can't get imposed monarchically. So change doesn't much happen. That's not a bug. It's a feature.

Orthodoxy is not going to change out from under you. That lack of organization also leads me to love Orthodoxy for another reason, too:

5) Orthodoxy really is one Church. Unlike the denominationalism of the Protestant world, the various churches of Orthodoxy really do have to talk to each other and work things out. A Presbyterian and a Lutheran may each recognize each other as Christian, but they have almost no stake in each other's internal church life. The same even holds true of someone belonging to the PCA and someone belonging to the PCUSA (both Presbyterian denominations). They don't have to work anything out between them. A PCA church plant does not in any way infringe on the territory of the PCUSA, because they're not the same church. Orthodoxy may often bicker and fight (though most parishioners never see this unless they happen to be in a dysfunctional parish), but the fact that we have such bickering and fighting with each other means that we recognize in each other that we are one Church, that we have a problem and that we need to fix it. Protestants always have the option of just splitting (and once splits occur, they don't have to bother with each other), while Roman Catholics can ultimately appeal to the Vatican, who can impose solutions that work for the Vatican but might not work for everyone else involved.

6) Orthodoxy is a faith for the whole life. Because Orthodoxy comes with a vast set of expressions of its tradition, you can never exhaust it all. There is always something new not just to learn but to become. While we don't really "arrive" until the next life (and I'd argue even that is not an arrival; that is, it's not the end of the road of salvation), there are many way-stations in this life that delight and grant joy. The difference between Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism in this regard is that I'm talking about not just growing in wisdom, which is common to all religious traditions, but that Orthodoxy tracks many stages of spiritual development throughout a whole lifetime. I remember one time hearing a monk explain the response he got from a holy elder on Mount Athos after asking him many questions. The elder replied that some things just wouldn't make sense to him until later, until he'd received some level of illumination (theoria). It's true. One cannot read a "Statement of Faith" from Orthodoxy (not even the Creed) and say, "Ah, yes. That is everything Orthodoxy teaches. I understand it now." Again, that's not a bug. It's a feature. Yes, we like things to be simple, to be readily accessible to everyone, but any faith that is not complex enough to address all the complexities of human

experience is not worthy of the dignity of mankind. Orthodoxy provides that in a way that I haven't found anywhere else.

7) Orthodoxy is a faith for the whole world. There are no "target demographics" for Orthodoxy. We don't do market research to figure out how to attract young people, old people, urban people, suburban people, or whatever particular demographic we might desire for our parish. A parish can often have a certain degree of commonality among members, but that isn't by inherent design. There was no committee that met saying, "How do we get the 30-something suburbanites?" Yes, Orthodoxy is sometimes plagued with ethnocentrism. But that's a distortion of Orthodoxy, not faithfulness to it. And it's not everywhere. I've belonged to both more ethnically focused and less ethnically focused, as well as ethnically non-focused Orthodox parishes, and none of them had an ethnic membership card check at the door. Orthodoxy is really a universal faith that has shaped numerous cultures and languages over many centuries. If people as diverse as Arabs, Greeks, Serbs, Georgians, Russians, Estonians and Finns can all sing the same faith, and if both their young and old can sing it together, then truly, anyone is welcome. (Some Orthodox need to remember that more than others, though.)

8) Orthodoxy is a faith for the whole person. Mankind is not just emotionally moved by beauty, but he aches to be near it, to create it as much as that is possible. More than any other iteration of Christian faith, the Orthodox Church knows how to envelop the worshiper with beauty in all five (or more!) senses, both otherworldly beauty that transports the worshiper and otherworldly beauty that transforms the earthly. One might describe this as aesthetic, but it is not "mere" aesthetics in the sense of something that appeals only to the senses, perhaps for entertainment value, but goes nowhere in particular. This is aesthetic in the sense that God Himself is beauty. That is why Orthodoxy, while sometimes homely or homey, is never cheesy. It is timely and timeless, but not "contemporary." The beauty of Orthodoxy addresses the whole human person in multiple ways. It is not a faith just for the "soul" or the "heart," but for the body, as well, including our ability to apprehend beauty.

9) God really does love you the way you are, and He loves you so much, He won't leave you that way. There seems to be a constant battle these days, especially within Protestantism, over whether God should be perceived as loving or as a judge. Even those who

preach that God is love still tend to preach a God Who is angry at you for your sins and has to be appeased. But Orthodoxy preaches the God Who is consistently loving, a God Who loves with such strength that His love will change you, if only you will cooperate with it. The change won't be lousy, either, turning you into some goody-goody prude. Rather, it will be a change into authentic personhood, where virtue is striven for because of communion, not because of adherence to arbitrary rules.

10) Orthodoxy is both mystical and rational.

Some Orthodox will oppose the mystical to the rational, but that's a mistake, I believe. For all the apophatic theology (theology which emphasizes our inability to know God with our minds), there is also a lot of cataphatic theology (theology that makes clear, positive truth claims) in the tradition of the Church. We don't have to choose one or the other, nor are the two really alternatives to each other. Apophatic theology is also not merely a "corrective" to cataphatic theology. Rather, both are simply ways of talking about theological emphases within Orthodoxy. It is not as though, when I am serving the Divine Liturgy, I switch on the "rational" part when preaching the Gospel and then toggle the switch to "mystical" when I drink from the Chalice. All these things are in play simultaneously. I love that, and I haven't really encountered that anywhere but in the Orthodox Church.

11) Orthodoxy is ascetical. No Christian body takes asceticism as seriously as Orthodoxy does. Roman Catholicism has it in its tradition, but it is mostly ignored. Yet Orthodoxy expects all Christians to fast, to stand vigil, to be as non-possessive as possible, etc., and it provides a programme for how to do that. You don't have to make it up for yourself, because the tradition is already established. And it's also customizable according to the pastoral discernment of your father-confessor.

Asceticism is a way to do real battle with the broken modes that the human will functions in. It allows a man to take control of himself in a powerful way so that he can redirect his God-given powers and energies back toward

God and away from his base appetites. Asceticism doesn't save anyone, but it certainly does help. Why? Because we are only saved to the degree that we want it. Asceticism helps us to want it.

And as anyone who has really fasted for all of Lent and then tasted that first taste of roast lamb at Pascha can tell you, asceticism actually makes the good things of this earth taste better. Far from being a denigration of God's good creation, asceticism returns the creation to us and opens up its beauty in ways that consuming it without restraint cannot ever do.

12) Orthodoxy aims higher than any other Christian faith. While theosis (deification/divinization) is not the only model of salvation in Orthodox Christian theology, it certainly makes some of the strongest claims. There are hints at doctrines of theosis in Roman Catholicism. (I am not aware of any Protestant groups that teach it.) Yet it is only in Orthodoxy that one is taught that salvation means to become by grace what Christ is by nature, that "God became man so that man might become divine" (Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*) that becoming "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4) is actually expounded upon. "I have said, 'ye are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High'" (Ps. 82:6) is taken very seriously. You won't find that anywhere else.

Even Pentecostals who teach that you can be chosen by God, spoken through by God, etc., aren't really teaching that you can enter into such union with God that you begin to take on the divine attributes. But that is exactly what Orthodoxy teaches, that the transfiguration, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ are all what it truly means to be a Christian, that mankind is now seated on the very Throne of God Himself, and being in Christ means being seated there, too.

Pretty daring. But why settle for less? So those are some of my reasons. What are yours?

—Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick, from
<http://roadsfromemmaus.org>

RANDOM QUOTES

The Sermon on the Mount is more carrot than pitchfork: "Blessed are the pure in heart." The allure of the beatific vision, not the threat of punishment, is what Jesus uses to motivate the ascetic regime. —*Wesley Hill*

When the soul knows the love of God by the Holy Spirit, then he clearly feels that the Lord is our own Father, the closest, dearest Father, the best. And there is not greater happiness than to love God with all the mind and heart, and our neighbor as ourself. And when this love is in the soul, then all things bring joy to the soul. —*St. Silouan the Athonite*

Don't be troubled if you don't feel the love of God in yourself, but think about the Lord, that He is merciful, and guard yourself from sins, and the grace of God will teach you. —*St. Silouan the Athonite*



Glendi 25 ~ What a Success!

An immense *thank you* all of all parishioners, their family members and friends who made this Glendi the most successful ever! I'm not just speaking about the dollar amount raised, I'm also thinking about the genuine loving, relaxing and fun atmosphere during both days of the event. I sat at Admissions for a while on both days and listened to many of our guests comment on what a wonderful time they had and how much they enjoyed the food, dancing and most of all interacting with the workers. Some came for the first time and as you know, others have attended for many years. Yet, almost all said they felt the most relaxed this weekend and as though they had just experienced a special event at **Glendi 25**. Several also commented that we have this event down and so well organized—that other festivals can't compare to Glendi, and that is why they enjoy attending to see the progress in the church and to see old friends.

Alex Stameroff deserves special thanks for agreeing to serve as Co-Chair. Alex jumped right in from the first Glendi meeting in July and took charge almost immediately. We are so grateful for his leadership, organization to detail and critical thinking. We wish him well as he continues as the Chair of **Glendi 26**. We also have to recognize the stellar efforts of Bobbi Griovski (seriously, she keeps the whole train moving), David Winterton for taking over as Finance Chair and doing an exceptional job (and agreeing to chair it next year as well), Geoff John Lake for guidance and Set-Up Chair, Catherine Ostling and Kristine Tellefsen, Barbara Owens and the bakers for baking the delicious Glendi desserts, Lydia Nicholson for coordinating the volunteers and workers starting in June and working at it almost every day thereafter; the Parking chairs: Thom Stewart and Rob Martin with the help of the Waldorf school students, it was almost flawless this year—so many people commented on how much they appreciate being able to park on the church grounds and loved seeing the youth out there.

Many thanks to all other workers: the many who came for set up on Friday—it was an endurance test; Kathy Ramos for stepping up to Chair Soda and Ice Cream, Rachael Bell for Worker Food, Lisa Moroz, Lydia Margitich and Francesca Duval for Outside Coffee, Vipassana and Sean Esbjorn-Hargens and family in the Baklava Sundae, Nick Nicholson in Beer, Esther Carr in Wine, Vladimir Baer, Lahana, Spencer, Elisabeth and Catherine Carpenter in the new Biergarten; Janet Baer in the Protection church; Tatiana and her crew in Crafts; Lana Koloboff and her cousins at Admissions; Xenia Keskitalo and George Barsi at Tokens—the new location is perfect; Ole Kern, Avery, Tracey and Mengistab in Sanitation; Denise and Bobbi in the Supply; Serge, Matushka Ann, Gabe, Steve and more in the Kitchen; Cathy Veenis in the Hall Coffee and Tea; Bonnie in the Bookstore; Helen, Kathie, Bonnie and David in the Glendi Finance Office; and this year, Debbie Buse as the lone Token-Collector—she was truly running at times; Gloria Collins and her volunteers in the Children's area—a very busy and critical area for Glendi; our gratitude to Len Carl for being the Official Go-Fer—He really ran; thanks to Matushka Karin and Patricia for making the lovely table decorations and flower arrangements; Catherine Carpenter in Hall Set-up. A special thank you to all the food booth chairs for preparing such delicious ethnic specialties—without the food and desserts—there truly would be no Glendi! They are: Lara and Carmen—Italian; Chris Clemons and Vladimir in Lamb; Maaza, Meheret, Yoursalem and crew in Eritrean; Petar and Donna and staff in Balkan; Shenina and Grace in Greek; Vicki, Ray, Elena and Alexander in Russian; Kristina Daya and Victor Dada in Middle Eastern; Eugenia Dada and Catherine Ostling in Outside Bakery; Daniel Bell in Gyros; Jeff Scarborough, Ryan Ferguson and Michael Dovey in Kabobs; thanks also goes to those who work behind the scenes such as Tom Pellizzer in electrical, George Kielczynski in Sound, Eleni Rose in Online ads, Geoff John Lake in Signs, Justin Margitich in Sign making, Ed O'Brien and Joseph Gumper in greeting, Photini Bohnker, Dana Ames, Father John Schettig, Father Patrick Doolan and Deacon Jeremiah in the St Seraphim Church. Our congratulations to Anthony Booker for his flawless performance as Master of Ceremonies. We thank the many friends and relatives of parishioners who come to work at Glendi. We are especially grateful to our neighbors Jim Severdia and Mary Ellwood, who so generously allowed us to park in their fields. Without them, there would be no Glendi. Jim Severdia was exceptionally helpful, and spent time mowing the fields for us, setting up and taking down Glendi parking signage, and assisting in every way he could. We thank Greg, from across the street, for his help. We are very grateful to Andy's Market for the fresh produce, the truck, and all the support they give. Finally—no Glendi could ever run smoothly without the guidance and direction of Father Lawrence Margitich. We are grateful for his hard work, physically and spiritually, to make Glendi a success every year! —*Esther Schau*

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **WE THANK GOD** that William Nestor, husband of Tracey Thekla, was uninjured during a very serious car accident pile-up on Hwy 880 in Oakland on Thursday. Will's truck rolled at least twice. He was able to climb out of the window and to safety after this very scary incident.
- **CHURCH SCHOOL BEGINS TODAY:** See the comments below about how important it is for consistent attendance at church school and the responsibility of the parents for bringing up their children in the faith in a conscientious and deliberate manner.
- **GLENDI:** There will be many announcements about Glendi forthcoming, for example, the scheduling of a Wrap-Up Meeting/BBQ, booth totals, and so forth. The good news to share immediately with all of you is that our Gross Income (that is, without expenses) was around \$88,000. That's about a 27% increase from last year! David Winterton estimated that we had 3800 guests. Congratulations to all. Our thanks to Esther Schau and Alexander Stameroff who were Co-Chairs of the Glendi for organizing the best Glendi ever. You will find a letter written by Esther in this bulletin, in which she thanks the legion of Glendi booth chairs and their associates. This is but one of the many expressions of thanks that will be given over the next few weeks, so if your name was not included in her list, you can be sure that it was not left out intentionally and you will be thanked for your efforts. May the Lord Who sees all reward you with His divine grace and consolation. The incredible coming together of talent, skill, energy, goodwill, love, donations and determination, that is GLENDI, is such a joy to behold, and I thank all of you for the opportunity to participate. —Fr. Lawrence
- **MEETINGS THIS MONTH:** A Master Plan meeting will take place on Thursday, October 2, at 7 PM. Please join us as we continue to plan for the future. The Parish Council will meet on Thursday, October 23 at 7 PM, following the Akathist to the Protection of the Theotokos. The Sisterhood will meet on Sunday, October 26, at 12:45.
- **THE REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK** distribution (to low income and needy families) is set for Wednesday, October 8, from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM. Volunteers, please just before 5 PM to set up. See Denise Pellizzer if you would like to volunteer to help the poor.
- **THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY** will take place in Phoenix, AZ. at the OCA parish there from October 7–9. Our parish delegate is David Winterton. On the agenda this year is restructuring of the parish assessment to the Diocese and Central Administration of the Orthodox Church in America (currently a very unChristian member "head tax"). God willing, we will implement the new plan starting January 1. This plan is based not on the number of official members a parish claims it has (we currently claim 125, even though we have 200 attending Sunday Liturgy), but on a calculation of income and expenses. Overall, our parish will tithe to the Diocese about 12% of its income—the Building and Icon funds are restricted from the calculation—and the Diocese will send financial support to the Central Admin of the OCA. This new plan, scriptural in its approach to stewardship and giving, has been long-awaited by many of us.
- **VESPERS WILL NOT BE SERVED HERE** on Saturday, October 11 due to the participation of Fr. Lawrence, Nicolas Custer, and many of our singers in the Liturgical Music workshop going on at Sts. Peter and Paul, on Stony Point Road. Vigil will be served at Sts. Peter and Paul at 6 PM. Father Alexander Krassovsky sends his invitation to all of us to attend the Service that evening. Father Lawrence will not be here on Sunday October 12, but will attend the Hierarchical Liturgy at Sts. Peter and Paul that day.
- **THE SENIOR LUNCH FELLOWSHIP RETURNS:** Seniors, you are invited to the luncheon on Thursday, October 16, at noon. Will it be a potluck or a prepared lunch? Stay tuned.
- **THE CATECHUMENS** Martin Thong and Scott Brown will be baptized on Sunday, October 19 at 9 AM. On Sunday, October 26 at 3 PM, Scott will be united in Holy Matrimony to Suha Alfahel here in our Church. Please keep them all in your prayers.
- **CATECHISM BEGINS NEW SEMESTER:** On Saturday, October 4, our parish catechism—not just for catechumens—will start its second semester with a lecture on the Holy Mystery of Baptism. Subsequent lectures as follows: October 18, on Holy Chrismation; October 25, on the Holy Eucharist; November 1, on Holy Confession; November 8, on the Holy Priesthood; November 15, on the Mystery of Marriage; November 22, on Holy Unction; December 13, on death and the funeral. Please note that there are no classes on October 11 and December 6.
- **FATHER LAWRENCE** and Matushka Ann will be taking a few days off, October 13–16.
- **CRYING CHILDREN:** When you see a parent struggling with a fussy child at church offer them a hand. Realize that this young family is not just the future of the church and faith but the present members of it. Christ said 'bring the children unto me.' Help parents do that so that everyone can reap the reward. If you don't hear babies crying, the church is dying.

The Importance of Church School

“Let the children come to me, so not to hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” (Mark 10: 14-15) The greatest gift, the most precious inheritance that we have to give to our children, is our Orthodox Faith and life. Jesus makes it clear that He considers it a grave offense for an adult to hinder this process or lead a child astray: “whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matt 18:6) The central aim of Christian education in our Church is to evoke and nurture faith in Jesus Christ according to the Orthodox phronema (vision) out of which issues a genuine Orthodox way of life—a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ that is renewed daily by prayer and repentance. The Church nurtures a living awareness of the risen Christ in our midst by worship, the feast days, personal prayer and family life. A Christ-centered, and therefore Church-centered family life is essential for the child’s spiritual health. It should be full of love and obedience to Jesus Christ (if parents are obedient to Jesus and His Church, then they might expect that their children will be obedient to them). Teaching becomes effective only to the degree that it communicates the love, beauty, humility and truth of Christ that is “not of this world.” Your home is indeed a little church in this regard. **Parents:** Bring your children to Church School. Your personal example and involvement in the religious education of your children are extremely important. The priest and teachers cannot do the job alone. Besides what has already been written above, how can you help develop the spiritual life and moral upbringing of your children? Consider the following: Register your child in our Church School Program. Bring your children to Church. Arrive before the Liturgy begins, not after. Be positive about Church—don’t gossip about church things and avoid criticism of others, especially in the presence of children. Discuss with them what they learned each Sunday. Teach them to bring their weekly stewardship offering. Give your personal example of Christian living (in other words, pray every day, make a monthly confession of sins, prepare for Holy Communion). Put Church before every other activity on Sunday. Let your love for our Lord Jesus Christ shine. —*borrowed*

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
58th Annual

BAZAAR



Saturday, October 4th
10:30am – 3:00pm

The Nikolai Ensemble – 11:00am
A nine-piece parish band!

 Choir Concert – 1:00pm
Theme: Light and Life

Traditional Slavic Foods + Live Music + Raffle
Working Artisans + Handmade Crafts + Collectibles

Church Tours and Bookstore will be available throughout the day
to learn more about Orthodox faith and worship.

All are welcome to attend the Vespers Service at 4:00pm.

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PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

OCTOBER 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			October 1 <i>Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish Feast</i> • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, Festal Meal	2 • 7 PM, Master Planning Meeting	3	4 • 2 PM, Baptism • 3:30, Catechism, <i>the Mystery of Holy Baptism</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
5 – Holy Hierarchs of Moscow • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, <i>Meley/Yonas Wedding</i> • 3 PM, <i>Delamonica Wedding</i> <i>(from the Sacramento parish)</i>	6	7	8	9	10	11 • No Catechism or Vespers here * At Sts. Peter and Paul: Vigil at 6 PM
	Fr. Lawrence and David Winterton at Diocesan Assembly in Phoenix					
			• 5 PM, <i>Redwood Empire Food Bank Distribution</i>			
12 – Holy Fathers • 9:30 AM, Akathist <i>Nurturer of Children</i> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	13 <i>Fr. Lawrence away until Friday</i>	14	15 • 6 PM, Reader Vespers	16 • Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship	17	18 • 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>the Mystery of Holy Chrismation</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
19 – Prophet Joel • 9 AM, <i>Baptisms of Martin Thong, Scott Brown</i> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, <i>Baptism of Schettig baby</i>	20	21	22 • 6 PM, Vespers	23 • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting	24	25 • 9 AM, Memorial Divine Liturgy • 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
26 – Great Martyr Demetrios • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 12:45 PM, Sisterhood Mtg. • 3 PM, <i>Wedding: Suha & Scott</i>	27	28	29 • 6 PM, Vespers	30	31	November 1 • 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>the Mystery of Confession</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers

* On Saturday, October 11, Fr. Lawrence and Nicolas will be participating in a music workshop at Sts. Peter and Paul on Stony Point Rd. Because of this, there will be no Vespers here, but Vigil will be celebrated there at 6 PM. Fr. Lawrence will be at Sts. Peter and Paul for the 9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy on October 12. Our own parish will celebrate as usual.