

THE ORTHODOX MESSENGER

OCTOBER 2018, Vol. 27, Issue 10



SERMON FOR THE FEAST OF THE PROTECTION

WHEN WE ASK THE SAINTS to pray for us, to stand with us, and when we glorify and honor them, kissing their icons and relics we don't replace Christ—there is only one mediator, as St Paul said, between God and man (mediates not just by what He does, as much as Who He is, God and Man). Our prayers to the Holy Ones of God show *how much we love* Christ, who is, as the psalm says, “wondrous in His saints.” Most wondrous of all is His Mother, the All-Holy Virgin Theotokos. Ever since the Archangel Gabriel first said, “Blessed art thou among women,” to the Virgin Mary, these words of praise have inspired the faithful of the Christian Church to join the Archangel in his prophecy: “from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed” (Lk. 1:45).

One of the most mysterious and deep inner feelings of the Orthodox Church is our celebration each October 1 of the feast of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God. In our parish we sing these words from the Feast day hymn almost every Sunday: *Today the Virgin stands forth in the Church and invisibly with the choirs of Saints prays to God for us...*

At the festal Vigil and especially the Divine Liturgy, we remember—but *more* than that—we participate, anticipate, and spiritually delight in—the vision of Our Lady *standing forth* which was once seen by Saint Andrew, a “fool for Christ's sake” in the Church of the Blakherni district in Constantinople, during a military assault on that City on October 1 sometime in the mid-10th century; the blessed Epiphanius his disciple standing beside him said, “Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all

the world?” He saw the All Holy Virgin with her Veil held over the City, protecting the people who were gathered in that Church praying fervently for help.

The Protecting Veil of the Mother of God is a vision of the unbreakable and unending bond of the heavenly and the earthly Church—one Body. 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 She, 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, “over the rainbow.” It is unusual and even 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 churches. Recall as frequently as you can how near the Theotokos is to us, 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.” Amen. —Fr. Lawrence, 2006

VIGIL for the Feast: 5 PM, Sunday, Sept. 30

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 AM, October 1

ANGELS UNAWARES ~ October 4:

The **Nomadic Shelter** program starts up again next week. These days we know it as “Angels Unawares” in reference to Hebrews 13: *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them who suffer adversity...*” Guests will arrive about 6 PM, departure about 6:30 AM. Michael and Rachel Dovey are the coordinators for the program this year. Volunteers are needed for the October 4 kick-off from 4–8 PM. Any questions call Michael or Rachel Dovey at (707) 799-4117.

ON PRAYER

Why is it, you ask, that one can pray for so many years with a prayer book, and still not have prayer in one's heart? I think the reason is that people only spend a little time lifting themselves up to God when they complete their prayer rule, and in other times, they do not remember God. For example, they finish their morning prayers, and think that their rela-

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tion to God is fulfilled by them; then the whole day passes in work, and such a person does not attend to God. Then in the evening, the thought returns that one must quickly stand at prayer and complete his evening rule. In this case, it happens that even if the Lord grants a person spiritual feelings at the time of the morning prayer, the bustle and business of the day drowns them out. As a result, it happens that one does not often feel like praying, and cannot get control of oneself even to soften his heart a little bit. In such an atmosphere, prayer develops and ripens poorly. This problem (is it not ubiquitous?) needs to be corrected, that is, one must ensure that the soul does not only make petition to God when standing in prayer, but during the whole day, as much as possible, one must unceasingly ascend to Him and remain with Him. In order to begin this task, one must first, during the course of the day, cry out to God more often, even if only with a few words, according to need and the work of the day. Beginning anything, for example, say 'Bless, O Lord!' When you finish something, say, 'Glory to Thee, O Lord' and not only with your lips, but with feeling in your heart. If passions arise, say, 'Save me, O Lord, I am perishing.' If the darkness of disturbing thoughts comes up, cry out: 'Bring my soul out of prison.' If dishonest deeds present themselves and sin leads you to

them, pray, 'Set me, O Lord, in the way', or 'do not give up my feet to stumbling.' If sin takes hold of you and leads you to despair, cry out with the voice of the publican, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner.' Do this in every circumstance, or simply say often, 'Lord, have mercy,' 'Most Holy Theotokos save us,' 'Holy Angel, my guardian, protect me,' or other such words. Say such prayers as often as possible, always making the effort for them come from your heart, as if squeezed out of it. When we do this, we will frequently ascend to God in our hearts, making frequent petitions and prayers. Such increased frequency will bring about the habit of mental [noetic] conversation with God. — *St. Theophan the Recluse*

HONORING THE SAINTS:

THE SAINT SERAPHIM CHURCH SCHOOL warmly invites you to our 4th Annual *Honoring the Saints* party on Sunday, October 28. We will sing the Akathist to All Saints of North America at 4:30 PM in Protection Church, then gather in the Parish Hall at 5 PM for dinner and crafts. All ages are welcome, and asked to come dressed as a saint. This event is a wonderful opportunity to develop greater understanding and knowledge of the lives of the saints while deepening our reverence for them. For those who wish to participate, we suggest the following:

- Select a saint (patron saint or another) soon! Read your saint's story until you can talk easily about his or her life.
- Collect items for a costume that represents the time period and place where the saint lived. Find an icon to help with this. Consider props that might also suit, e.g., a cross for a martyr, a pen for a Gospel writer, an obedient animal friend (such as St. Seraphim's bear or St. Gerasim's lion), a staff for a bishop, or sword for a warrior saint.
- Prepare and practice a short (1–3 min) presentation to give during the Guessing Game. Remember to keep the identity of your saint a secret.

After each participant presents the story, the audience makes guesses as to the saint you have chosen. This year, we are asking that only children over age 5 present their saints to the group. Younger children are encouraged to dress up and know their saints' stories, but they do not need to keep it a secret! If you would like to volunteer, please see Gloria Collins, Sarah Hamner, or Fr. Lawrence. We are looking for six soup-makers, four salad-makers, and six craft volunteers, plus set-up and clean-up crews. Thank you! —*Sarah Hamner*

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 29TH AGAPE MEAL:** This Sunday's Agape meal will be held outside because the hall will be decorated for the Protection of the Holy Virgin Feast Day meal Monday. Bagels with condiments, coffee, fruit, vegetables and juice will be served. We are asking a donation of \$2.00 per adult and \$1.00 per child. As you might know, the income from the Agape Meals is set aside to pay the janitorial service to maintain the hall. Please bring dollar change if possible.
- **LATER THIS WEEK** we will welcome our intern, Reader John and his wife Jeanine Kotalik. John (aka JJ) will make a quick trip to St. Catherine Orthodox Church in Kirkland, WA (where he became Orthodox) for ordination to the Holy Diaconate in Kirkland, WA on Sunday, October 14. He will return to us the next day or so. Divine Liturgies will be served, not only for our benefit but for the benefit of the newly-ordained Deacon John, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of that week, at 9 AM.
- **THE REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK** distribution will take place on Wednesday, October 10. Volunteers are asked to arrive no later than 5 PM. This Food Bank is an important way in which our parish does outreach to the community. Come and participate in this worthy endeavor.
- **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18** is the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, and a Divine Liturgy will be served at 9 AM, followed by the 40th Day Trisagion for Zoya Drake.
- **"POLISH BISHOP" DAY:** The Senior Lunch takes place at Noon on Thursday, October 18, as a memorial meal for Zoya's 40th Day. Archbishop Benjamin will join us for the lunch, and bring his guest, Archbishop Avil from Poland to meet us and see our Cathedral (Archbishop Avil is visiting for the 150th anniversary festivities at Holy Trinity in San Francisco). Please join us for prayers, a good meal and fellowship.
- **WE BID A SORROWFUL FAREWELL** to Deacon Jeremiah and Katherine (Karin) Crawford as they leave us for North Carolina. We hope that these two who have been pillars of our community for almost forty years will return to us in two years. God bless their way and keep them safe.
- **THE HOLIDAY BAZAAR RETURNS:** At the Sisterhood Meeting last Sunday Emma Anderson proposed that the parish restart and "retool" the Holiday Bazaar (an event we used to host). With my blessing and encouragement, Emma will serve as the head of the project. We are hoping for your support and help. —Fr. Lawrence
- **FROM EMMA:** This year we will be hosting a Christmas Bazaar as a fundraiser and public outreach event. We will have vendors selling hand-made items, church tours, live music and a bake sale. It will be held from 9 AM–4 PM on Saturday, November 24th. We have plenty of small jobs to fill. Let me know if you would like more information. —Emma Anderson
- **OUR PROFOUND THANKS** to Anderson Fine Woodworking for building two classrooms in the Storage Building (looking a lot less like a storage building, which has been the plan all along). The teachers and students are very grateful.
- **HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL** in San Francisco is the oldest Orthodox Parish in the lower 48 states. The community will celebrate its 150th Anniversary with Vespers at 6 PM on Friday, October 19. His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon will join Archbishop Benjamin and other hierarchs and clergy for the festive Hierarchical Liturgy on Saturday, October 20 at 9:30 AM. Fr. Kirill extends his invitation to our parish members to attend the celebration. Let's organize a carpool and show our support and respect for our "Mother Parish." —Fr. L
- **Fr. Lawrence and Matushka** will be away from October 9–16, visiting family. Fr. Nicholas will also be away. If there is a pastoral need, please call Fr. John.

CONTINUING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

ON WEDNESDAYS at 6 PM we have the brief and lovely service of "Daily Vespers." Following the service, those who are interested are invited to come to the Hall (bring a potluck dinner) to read from and speak about a particularly edifying and educational Orthodox book. We will study each book for at least three or four weeks. Since I will be reading and commenting on the book, you need not read the book ahead of time. Sessions end no later than 7:40 PM. Sunday school was a long time ago, and who knows what we learned or even remembered. I encourage all of us to invest some precious time on Wednesdays to continue our Orthodox education and understanding. —Fr. Lawrence

During October (there will be no session on Oct. 10) we will read Metropolitan Tikhon's essay *Of What Life Do We Speak, The Four Pillars* of the Christian life, available [online here](#).

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

OCTOBER 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 30 No Matins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 AM, Church School • <i>Agape Meal outside</i> • 5 PM, Vigil for the Feast 	1 - Protection Feast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy in the Protection Church • Festal Meal 	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting 	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Vespers, Potluck and Talk on <i>The Four Pillars</i> 	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Nomadic Shelter 	5	6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Feast of St. Innocent of Alaska • 5 PM, Great Vespers
7 - Sts. Sergius and Bacchus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:40 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	8	9	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank <p>No Vespers</p>	11	12	13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
14 - Holy Fathers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:40 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	15	16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 	17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 6 PM, Vespers, Potluck and Talk on <i>The Four Pillars</i> 	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, St. Luke 40th Day/Zoya Drake • Noon, Senior Lunch Fellowship, <i>Visit of Archbishops</i> 	19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>San Francisco, Holy Trinity Cathedral, 6 PM Great Vespers</i> 	20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity in SF, 150th Anniversary of Parish</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
21 - St. Hilarion the Great <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:40 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	22	23	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 6 PM, Vespers, Potluck and Talk on <i>The Four Pillars</i> 	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Great Vespers 	26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for Feast of St. Demetrios 	27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
28 - St Job of Pochaev <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:40 AM, Matins • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:45 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 1:30 PM, Panikhida • 5 PM, Honoring the Saints 	29	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting 	31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 6 PM, Vespers, Potluck and Talk on <i>The Four Pillars</i> 	November 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Nomadic Shelter 	2	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3:30 PM, Catechism, on <i>The True God</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers

• Fr. Lawrence and Matushka Ann will be in Maine visiting family from Tuesday, October 9–Wednesday, October 17. Fr. Nicholas will also be away that week. If you have a pastoral emergency call Fr. John at 318-1559 or leave a message on the parish phone at 584-9491.

SAINT SERAPHIM'S ORTHODOX CHURCH PRESENTS

Festal Christmas Bazaar

FIND BEAUTIFUL AND UNIQUE HANDMADE GIFTS AND STOCKING
STUFFERS, AND SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES...



TASTE DELICIOUS HOLIDAY TREATS AND WARM DRINKS,
INCLUDING OUR FAMOUS GREEK BAKLAVA...



LISTEN TO LIVE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS HYMNS AND LEARN ABOUT
ORTHODOXY'S RICH HISTORY IN OUR CHURCH TOURS...



AND SO MUCH MORE!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH FROM 9AM-4PM AT 90 MOUNTAINVIEW AVE.
SANTA ROSA, CA

*Sacred music
from the All-
Night Vigil
and Liturgy*

*A choral
concerto*

*Russian
songs and
romances*

Slavyanka Russian Chorus (Irina Shachneva, Artistic Director)
presents...

*Rachmaninov,
Known
& Unknown*

Sunday October 7th, 4:00pm
The Glaser Center
547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa

Tickets and more information available online
at www.slavyankachorus.org
\$20 general admission
Children under 12 admitted free