

- PROPHECIES OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES:

The prophets revealed many particulars regarding the coming of the Messiah, specifically: that He will be descended from Abraham (*Gen. 22:18*), from the tribe of Judah (*Gen. 49:9*), from the line of king David (*2 Samuel 7:13; 1 Chron. 17:12-13*), will be born of a Virgin (*Is. 7:14*) in the city of Bethlehem (*Mic. 5:2*), will spread spiritual light (*Is. 9:1-2*), will heal the infirm (*Is. 35:5-6*), will suffer, be pierced, die, be buried in a new grave, then will rise from the dead (*Gen. 49:9-11; Ps. 41:7-10; Is. 50:5-7 and the 53rd chapter; Zach. 12:10; Ps. 16:9-11*), will lead souls from hades (*Zach. 9:11*); they even predicted that not everyone will recognize Him as the Messiah (*Is. 6:9*), but that some would even feud with Him, though unsuccessfully (*Num. 24:17; Deut. 18:18; Ps. 2; Ps. 95:6-8; Ps. 110:1-4; Is. 50:8-9 and 65:1-3*).

In the sacred chants for this day in which we remember the holy ancestors of our Savior, the following are referred to by name: Aaron, Abacum (or Habakkuk), Obadiah, Abel, Abraham, Haggai, Adam, Azariah, Anna, Barak, Gideon, David, Daniel, Deborah, Eleazar, Elisha, Enos, Enoch, Esther (see Esther 1-10), Zechariah, Elijah, Isaac, Isaiah, Jael, Jacob, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Jesse, Jephthah, Joshua, Job, Jonah, Joseph, Josiah, Judah, Judith, Levi, Malachi, Melchizedek, Misael, Micaiah, Moses, Nahum, Nathan, Noah, Huldah, Hur, Rachel, Rebecca, Ruth, Samson, Samuel, Sarah, Seth, Solomon, Zephaniah.

- PRE-CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

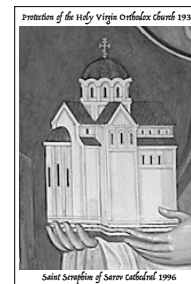
The demands of work, family, holiday preparations along with morning and evening routines the week before Christmas present many challenges, perhaps this year more than ever. Nevertheless, I invite you to set aside some time to join me at the Pre-Feast Services this week (see calendar) to enjoy and be enlightened by the profound hymnography. May God grant us the experience of calming and cleansing silence found in the approach to the spiritual Cave in Bethlehem during this **Winter Holy Week**. —Fr. Lawrence

- MEMORY ETERNAL:

We offer our prayers to God for a blessed repose for the newly-departed servant of God, Serge Schidlovsky. Serge was the choir master at Sts. Peter and Paul on Stony Point, and a man of deep personal prayer and a wonderful church singer. May the Lord grant great consolation to his wife, Lisa Joanna. Memory Eternal.

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



December 13, 2020

**Sunday of the Holy Ancestors of Christ
& St. Herman of Alaska**



- 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 ANCESTORS, TONE TWO:

By faith, Thou hast justified the ancient forefathers; through them Thou hast betrothed to Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the Saints, therefore, exult in glory, for from their seed is the noble fruit: she who without seed gave birth to Thee. Through their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us.

- TROPARION OF ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA, Tone Four:

Blessed dweller of the northern wilds, and gracious intercessor for the whole world, teacher of the Orthodox faith, good and most wondrous enlightener,

adornment of Alaska, and joy of all America: blessed Father Herman, pray to Christ the King of Glory, that He save our souls.

- 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, my Savior, praises Thee forever.

- KONTAKION OF SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA, TONE EIGHT:

Monk of Valaam, who through ascetic labors didst become an emulator of the desert dwelling saints of old, O beloved of the Mother of God and Virgin, having taken prayer as sword and shield, thou wast revealed as the scourge of pagan darkness and the demons' hosts. Hence we cry to thee: O Saint Herman, pray that we be saved.

- KONTAKION OF THE ANCESTORS, TONE TWO

A hand-wrought image ye would not worship, O thrice-blessed ones; but armed with the indescribable Essence, ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire. Standing in the midst of the irresistible flame, ye called upon God: Speed Thou, O Compassionate One, and hasten, as Thou art merciful, to come unto our aid. For Thou art able to do what Thou wilt.

- KONTAKION OF THE PRE-FEAST, Tone Three:

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to God the Word ineffably, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the angels and the shepherds now glorify Him, Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child, Who before the ages is God.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Dec. 12: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy / St. Spyridon
12:30 PM, High School Zoom Session with Steve Christoforou
5 PM, Vigil of the Resurrection, Ancestors of Christ and St. Herman of Alaska, St. Lucy
- Sunday, Dec. 13: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
- Wednesday, Dec. 16: 5 PM, Vespers
7 PM, Online Study of the Messiah prophecies
- Thursday, Dec. 17: *No Akathist*

- Friday, Dec. 18: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Dec. 19: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy / St. Sebastian
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
- Sunday, Dec. 20: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
1:30 PM, Vespers for the Prefeast of Christmas

- COUNTY DIRECTIVES:

Sonoma County, along with most of California, issued further “stay at home” directives this week. Since our parish has never actually opened up during the last six or seven months, we have nothing more to restrict, and so we will maintain our current safe practice of having a maximum of 15 people in the church for Services. Those outside who have prepared themselves for receiving Holy Communion will be invited in at the appropriate time.

- ST. LUCY OF SYRACUSE:

Saint Lucy was born in Syracuse, Sicily during the reign of [Diocletian](#) (Roman emperor from 284 to 305). She distributed her wealth to the poor, and made a vow of virginity. Since she refused to marry him, a rejected suitor denounced her to the Prefect Paschasius as a Christian, and she was arrested. She was sentenced to be defiled in a brothel, but with God's help she preserved her purity. Then the pagans attempted to burn her alive, but she was not harmed by the fire. Finally, she was killed by a sword thrust to the throat. The name Lucy (Lucia) is derived for the Latin word for light (lux), and so she is often invoked for afflictions of the eyes. There is a tradition that she was blinded by her torturers, and the church of [San Giovanni Maggiore](#) in Naples even claims to possess her eyes. We congratulate those who bear the name of this great martyr, and wish them many years, along with all those whose saints are commemorated today.

- TIME FOR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION:

Please prepare yourself for the Feast of the Birth of Christ. It is appropriate and proper for us—priests and people together—to make a Confession prior to receiving Holy Communion on all feast days, but especially before Christmas. Our bishops teach that if we receive Holy Communion frequently, **and we should each week**, we should be confessing no less than once a month. Let us all make our Confession prior to Christmas Day.