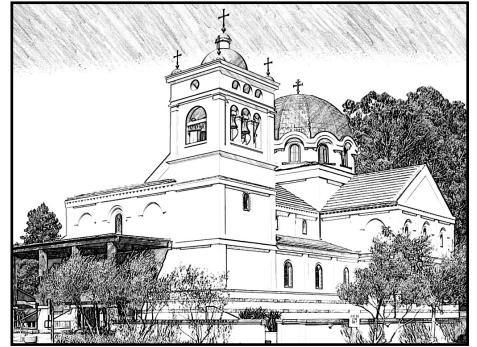


ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28

St. Stephen the New, Defender of the Holy Icons



- RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION, Tone Six:

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hades, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin granting life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: Glory to Thee.

- TROPARION OF ST. STEPHEN THE NEW, Tone Four:

Struggling in fasting upon the mountain, O all-blessed one, thou didst slay the noetic hordes of the enemy with the weapon of the Cross, courageously arming thyself again for martyrdom, slaying Copronymus with the sword of the Faith. And for both hast thou been crowned by God, O ever-memorable venerable [Martyr Stephen](#).

- RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION, Tone Six:

When Christ God the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed Resurrection on the human race. He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life and the God of all.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Nov. 27: 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
- Sunday, Nov. 28: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy (*No Church School today*)
11:45 AM, Agape Meal
- Tuesday, Nov. 30: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Litya for repose of Konstantin Sakovich Feast of the Holy Apostle Andrew,
- Wednesday, Dec. 1: 5 PM, Vespers for the Feast of St. Porphyrios
- Thursday, Dec. 2: 7 PM, Bible Study with Fr. James via Zoom
8 PM, *Cantiamo Christmas Concert in St. Seraphim*
- Friday, Dec. 3: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
8 PM, *Cantiamo Christmas Concert in St. Seraphim*
- Saturday, Dec. 4: *Welcoming Home* distribution in our parking lot (see note below)
3:30 PM, Catechism *On the Church*
5 PM, Vigil/Confessions

- THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY:

Father James will continue the Thursday Evening Bible Study this week via Zoom. This week, Dec. 2, he will focus on the Old Testament readings in the lectionary about the coming of the Messiah.

- THANKSGIVING TO GOD:

The thanks of men will not make God greater, more powerful, more glorious, richer or more alive, but they will make men all of these things. Man's gratitude will not add anything to God's peace and contentment, but it will add greatly

to man's. Thanksgiving to God will in no way change God's state and being, but it will change these in a grateful man. God has no need of our gratitude, nor are our prayers necessary to him. But it is this same Lord who said: "Your father knows what things you have need of, before you ask him" (Matthew 6:8) who at the same time recommended that men ought always to pray, and not to faint (Luke 18:1). God may not feel the need of our prayers, but He nevertheless tells us to pray. He may not feel the need of our gratitude, but nevertheless demands it of us—the thanksgiving that is nothing other than a form of prayer, a prayer of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving to God raises us mortals out of the corruption of mortality, releases us from that which we must all at some time be released, whether we will or no, and binds us to God the living and immortal; if we are not bound to him in this life, then we shall never be in his presence in eternity. Thanksgiving ennobles the thankful and nourishes good works. Thanksgiving inspires benevolence in the world, and gives freshness to every virtue." —*St. Nikolai of Zhicha*

- **THANKSGIVING DINNER BOXES:**

This is our ninth year of organizing *Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes*, which consist of 100 ready-to-go-all-the-fixings dinners, for distribution to those in need. All the food was purchased at *Smart and Final*, where the manager has a heart for helping the needy; on Tuesday morning our parish youth sorted all the items and another team came later in the afternoon pack everything in a very nice tub. Catholic Charities came on Wednesday morning to manage a very well-organized drive up and distribution. Many thanks to all who provided the funds for this worthy effort and to those who worked to make it happen.



- **PARTNERING TO HELP THE HOMELESS:**

On Saturday, December 4, our parish will once again partner with the non-profit charitable organization "Welcoming Home" (where I work) which furnishes apartments of formerly homeless families and provides assistance in that transition. Click here <https://tinyurl.com/december4thwelcoming> to see the full list of needed items and sign up for any you can donate. You will make one formerly homeless family who is working hard to build a new life very happy. Tax receipts given, of course. —*Lydia Margitich*

- **NATIVITY FAST:**

We find ourselves once again, and thank God for it, in the fast which prepares us for the feast day of the birth of Christ. I write "thank God for the Fast" because in our view of things, it is of the providence of God, and therefore has great potential for many blessings. Secondly, we have not had a fast since the two-week Dormition Fast in August, and at this point, we very much need what the fast brings: love for God and neighbor, obedience to the Church life, and self-control, for starters. As we struggle to enter into the spirit of the fast, we may discover things about ourselves and our relationship to our Savior and others—understanding brings many blessings. We will discover nothing at all if we consider that the Fast is optional. On the other hand, fasting is a tool, so we shouldn't get legalistic about it either. By fasting, we pray more attentively (after getting over ourselves and acclimated to abstinence); by fasting, we have something to share with those who are in need, thus treating our neighbor with love even when we don't feel like it; by fasting, we cling to God's will, rather than our own, which is always running errands for our ego; by fasting, we place obedience to the life in Christ above our own plans; by fasting, we strengthen the inner person to rely on God; by fasting, we humble our flesh (the *flesh*, according to St. Paul, is the sinful impulse in us, that which is opposed to God. The *body* is to be sanctified and blessed). We fast from meat (chicken, lamb, beef, pork), eggs, dairy products, as well as wine and olive oil (except for feast days when we do have fish, wine and olive oil). The fast begins around with the Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan, which we heard

a few weeks back. Let this story remind us to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbor (which is absolutely everyone else) even as we love ourselves. —*Fr Lawrence*

- ST. NICHOLAS DAY EVENTS:

The Feast of the beloved St. Nicholas is on December 6. The main celebration will take place at the Parish of St. Nicholas in San Anselmo (Vigil at 6 PM, Dec. 5 and Liturgy at 9:30 AM, Dec. 6), but we will also mark the holy day at our parish. After the Liturgy and Church School on Sunday, December 5, we will have a visit by “St. Nicholas” during our Agape Meal, with singing by our children, of the well-known folk song *O Who Loves Nicholas the Faithful*. See this [LINK](#) for more on St. Nicholas.

- PROPERTY WORK:

The work-party a few weeks back was not able to accomplish all the tasks that were planned. Any help with the following would be much appreciated: Change light-bulbs on porch of St. Seraphim. Sweep olives off the walkway around St. Seraphim. Clean solar panels and cut back weeds around them. Repaint outside Altar doo. —see *Fr. Lawrence for more info*

- DECEMBER 9–16:

I will be going to Miami, FL to escort Matushka Eleanor home and to visit my sister and her family. While there I will have the honor of baptizing my sister’s granddaughter as well. Fr. Nicholas will be available for whatever pastoral needs that come up while I am away.

- CONFESSION CONFERS THE GIFT OF LIVING (Reprint):

I don’t hear enough people tell how miraculously liberating the sacrament of Confession is; so I will share a little now. Because it should be made widely known, so that more people might avail themselves of this heavenly cure. I will do my best not to overstate its effects or fall into hyperbole but it is nothing short of a wonder; and the word ‘magic’ captures it’s quality, though that word isn’t really appropriate. It is impossible for my mind to grasp and understand how it actually works. How can the dark night in my soul so suddenly transform into a new dawn? In these very moments—as I bear my sins honestly and without contrivance, and as I utter them out loud for our only judge and redeemer Jesus Christ to forgive—it is as though I am given new life, and renewed hope. In the presence of my priest—who stands beside me and offers support and guidance as I share my inner depths with God—the fears that would have kept me far away from this moment, away from this place, these fears melt away in the love of God, and they are replaced by courage and boldness. The shameful meekness—which I carried for how long now?—or rather, the shame that had encased me in a numbing apathy, cracks, and then shatters, and then falls away, and I feel invigorated! Before Confession I was as though a dead person, moribund and overwhelmed by life; and after Confession I become as though raised from the dead, my mind and heart both active and excited again by the gift of life. Before Confession everything hurt: my nerves were on edge, my mind was befuddled, my heart didn’t care, my limbs were heavy and numb, and my soul felt imprisoned. After Confession my whole being became empowered: my soul felt set free, energy rose from my depths, my mind felt engaged, my heart grew warm, and my extremities could once again carry my own weight. The joy, the freedom and the power of Confession is not widely commented upon, and perhaps is not well-understood. This is too bad because it is not a secret, though it is a mystery. We may none of us fully grasp the reason for its efficacy, or the cause for its miraculous effects, but we can surmise it has a lot to do with the Holy Spirit. Finally, it doesn’t matter that we can’t understand, because what’s better is that we can believe. And believing, we can participate. Participating, we can enjoy renewed life and living! —*Francis Spillane*

- PARISH INTERNSHIP:

Our parish council has for many years been committed to hosting interns. With the blessing of Archbishop Benjamin, we will be receiving, God willing, a husband/wife intern in January: Josef and Euphrosini Candalario. [Here](#) is a short bio from OCMC. We are thankful that our Diocese will be offering some financial support each month.

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

DECEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 28	29	30 • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle	December 1 • 5 PM, Vespers	2 – St. Porphyrios • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James • 8 PM, <i>Cantiamo Concert</i>	3 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions • 8 PM, <i>Cantiamo Concert</i>	4 • <i>Welcoming Home</i> distribution here • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
5 – St. Sabbas the Sanctified • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal and visit of St. Nicholas • <i>San Anselmo, Vigil at 6 PM for St. Nicholas</i>	6 – St. Nicholas • <i>San Anselmo, Liturgy at 9:30 AM</i>	7	8 • 4 PM, Food Bank • 5 PM, Vespers	9 – Conception Theotokos • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James	10 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	11 • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
12 – Holy Forefathers of XC • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, Vespers for St. Herman of Alaska	13	14	15 • 5 PM, Vespers	16 • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James	17 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	18 • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
19 – Holy Ancestors of XC • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, Vespers for the Prefeast of Nativity	20 – Prefeast • 5 PM, Vespers	21 – Prefeast • 8 AM, Matins • 5 PM, Vespers	22 – Prefeast • 8 AM, Matins • 4 PM, Food Bank • 5 PM, Vespers	23 – Prefeast • 8 AM, Matins • 6 PM, Royal Hours of Nativity	24 – Christmas Eve • 11:30 AM, Vespersal Liturgy • 6 PM, Matins for Nativity	25 – Christmas • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy <i>No Vespers</i>
26 – Sts. David, James, Joseph • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal	27 – St. Stephen • <i>In San Anselmo, Liturgy at 9:30 AM</i>	28	29 • 5 PM, Vespers	30	31 • 5 PM, Great Vespers for the Feast of the Circumcision and St. Basil	1 – St. Basil/Circumcision • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy and prayers for the New Year • 5 PM, Great Vespers (Feast of St. Seraphim)

• OUR PARISH FEAST of St. Seraphim on Jan. 2 is on a Sunday. Great Vespers on Jan. 1 will be at 5 PM, and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday will begin with the greeting of the Archbishop Benjamin at 10 AM.