

# MISSION & SACRIFICE

1934—2009

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN

ST. SERAPHIM OF SAROV

ORTHODOX CHURCH

WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY

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## **FOUNDERS AND EARLY DAY PARISHIONERS**

The families and households of:

Eugene and Maria (née Kropotkin) Bilkevich

John and Anya Bunin

John Delavois

John Demakos

Constantine N. Gerogensen

Peter and Tamara Harding (Kurliavatikas)

Elizabeth Ikkonokoff

Paul and Jeanne Klimansky

Katie (née Yanoi) Klimansky

Alexander Krinoff

Alexei and Elizabeth (née Galakhov) Kropotkin

Vladimir and Alexandra (née Petrov) Moschensky

Nicon and Galina Pritoola-Gerogensen

Peter and Nadezhda Proskoriakoff

Andrew and Natalie (née Ikkonokoff) Rayburn

Roman Rayburn

Julia V. (née Ikkonokoff) Rayburn (Reabinin)

Vladimir and Natalia Razoumoff

Ivan Efimovich Rusanoff

Victor and Melitza (Lucia, née Rayburn) Schultze

Alex and Madeline (Magdalena, "Magda," née Rayburn) Sokol (Sokolovski)

*MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Others who aided in this endeavor include Bonnie Alexander, Elena Alexei, Joseph Anderson, Serge Anderson, Catachumen Janet (Nonna) Baer, Catachumen Lew (Vladimir) Baer, Maaza Belata, Paul Burch, the late Natalie Osander Canby, Robert Canby, Matushka Esther Carr, Deacon Nicholas Carr, Tyler-Rose Counts, Deacon Jeremiah Crawford, Matushka Katherine Crawford, Nicolas Custer, Reader David Doss, Magdalen Dugan, Tom Ells, Reader Daniel Everiss, Nina Formin, Eugenia "Bobbi" Griovski, Gabe Griovski, Petar Griovski, Natalie Hansen, Boris Ilyin, Marina D. Ilyin, Archimandrite Jonah (Paffhausen, now His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah), Etram Kaysay, Ole Kern, Alla Keyes, Lana Koloboff, Katherine Klimansky, Alicia Krueger, Hieromonk Alexander (Lisenko) of the Monastery of St. John, Matushka Ann Margitich, Joseph Marino, Laura Mayo, Gretchen McPherson, Barbara Owens, Deanna Panages, John Panages, Natalie Peters, Seraphim Ranney, Matushka Katherine Ramos, Archpriest Basil Rhodes, Eleni Rose, Konstantine Sakovich, Musya Sakovich, Peggy Canby Sanders, Priest John Schettig, His Grace Bishop Sergius of St. Gregory of Sinai Monastery, Shenina, Nick Sokol, Sonoma County Library, Sonoma County Recorder's Office Staff, Carol Elizabeth Thong, Lee Torliatt, Cathy Veenis, Abbess Victoria (Shurer) of St. Barbara Monastery, Sonja White, Ann Wilkes, and Patrick Wilkes.

*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God (Thessalonians 5:18)*

## A NOTE ON FOREIGN NAMES

Transliterating names from foreign alphabets or different writing systems into English is inexact at best, and rules are often set aside when different dialects and pronunciations come into play. In addition, some sounds—particularly diphthongs—do not even appear in English.

I have elected to spell names as they appear in published sources, Parish records or in archives unless corrected by family members. In only one case have I used my own judgment, and that was in favor of common usage. I have not changed any spellings on my own, even if they appear to be inconsistent, as with Vladimir and Vlademir, both of which are correctly pronounced Vla-DEE-mir.

The reader's understanding will be appreciated.

—PCT

## INTRODUCTION

*How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts! (Psalm 84:1)*

In the mid-1980s I was a student at Sonoma State University and I wanted to attend Divine Liturgy on Holy Thursday. So I looked up the address of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church, cut one class early and left school for the Church.

What I remember most clearly was a group of men coming to attend Liturgy wearing their blue denim work clothes and boots. Then I realized that these were working men, but they made time during their workday to go to church. Coming from a rather “dressier” parish, I was truly impressed.

Over the ensuing years, I used to bring my junior high age Sunday School students on a field trip to the Protection Church, and later to St. Seraphim Church. On those visits I never failed to be impressed by the hospitality offered to my students, their families, and to me.

In 2001 I became a godfather to a member of this Parish, and in my increasingly frequent visits with my godson I found myself with a growing respect for the piety, commitment and character of the parishioners as I came to know them better.

Toward the end of the year 2007 Archpriest Michael asked me if I would be willing to write a history of this Parish for the 75th Anniversary of its beginning. I could not refuse a request from a man I know and love not only as a priest but as a good and dear friend. Moreover, as an Orthodox Christian I could not refuse such an honor.

I have done my best to present a history which is people oriented rather than a dry rendition of names and dates which for many readers makes history boring. After all, it is the people of this Parish who, by God’s grace, made that history.

History is really nothing more than the study of how things came into being, and I pray that present and future parishioners may find in this work the inspiration to emulate those who, “with faith and love drew near” (Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom) and resolved to build a church so as to further the mission of Orthodoxy. They knew it would take sacrifice, but they were up to the task.

Mission and Sacrifice. I have come to believe that these two precepts, combined with a sincere faith in the Holy Trinity, the Resurrection of Christ, the Holy Theotokos and all the saints, and the teachings of the Holy Fathers of the Holy Orthodox Church have been the hallmarks of this wonderful Parish, and may it ever be so!

Therefore I offer this work to the Parish in gratitude to Almighty God, for among His many blessings to me have been the friendships I have made at 90 Mountain View Avenue, Santa Rosa, California.

*Paul C. Trimble, God’s unworthy servant, June, 2009*

## PART I

# MISSION TO KIEV

At what point in time does one begin an historical narrative which includes sufficient information to enable to reader to comprehend what brought the subject into being? After all, the present is the result of the past and for that reason the history of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Santa Rosa, California begins in the city of Kiev, now the capital of Ukraine. The year was 988 when Kiev's Prince Vladimir embraced the Orthodox Church for himself and his subjects.

To the reader who has known only the religious freedoms guaranteed by the American Constitution, the idea that a prince or king may decide someone else's religion for him may seem rather preposterous. However, in the course of history the concept of free practice of religion without government interference has taken root only in relatively recent times.

From antiquity, a king, prince or tribal leader was expected not only to lead his people in war and governance but also to be responsible for their spiritual welfare.

Thus we find the pagan Prince Vladimir in search of a fitting religion for himself and his people, and making substantial inquiries both at home and abroad, including sending ambassadors to Constantinople (present day Istanbul in Turkey), which at that time was the capital of the Byzantine Empire and the center of Orthodox Christianity.

Orthodoxy was not unknown in Kiev at that time, as Kiev was a major trade center and crossroads where different peoples and ideas met. There had been an Orthodox presence in the lands of the eastern Slavs for about a century with the faithful being served by canonically ordained clergy from the Byzantine Empire.

During his search, Vladimir had rejected Judaism, Islam and entreaties from learned Christians from the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup> Yet when his ambassadors returned to Kiev after visiting Constantinople and witnessing the Divine Liturgy in the great Cathedral of St. Sophia being celebrated by the Patriarch himself, they reported to the Prince that "When we stood in the temple we did not know where we were, for there is nothing else like it upon earth; there in truth God has His dwelling with men; and we can never forget the beauty we saw there. No one who has once tasted sweets will afterwards take that which is bitter, nor can we any longer abide in heathenism."

Vladimir's boyars, or nobles, then declared, "If the religion of the Byzantine Greeks had not been good, your grandmother Olga the Wise would not have embraced it." Vladimir was then baptized into Orthodoxy. In later years Olga, who had been a Byzantine princess before marrying into the ruling family of Kiev, was glorified as St. Olga, Equal to the Apostles.

## GROWTH OF ORTHODOXY IN RUSSIA

With full state support, what was to become the Russian Orthodox Church developed with a heritage of mission from its very beginning. Orthodoxy spread among the eastern Slavs, and with it the building of churches, monasteries and early cathedrals.

Fueled by the twin precepts of mission and sacrifice, this missionary effort would in time result in a church reaching over eleven time zones, from the Baltic to the Pacific, from the Black Sea to the Arctic. This was all the more remarkable when considering that the peoples of northern Russia and Siberia had their own languages, such as Komi, Tatar, Yakut and others, meaning the missionaries had to learn new languages and dialects as well as overcoming cultural barriers in order to effectively teach orthodox Christianity. Mission and sacrifice will be seen again and again in this history.

In time, native Russians were not only ordained to the ranks of the clergy but even elevated to episcopal seats formerly held by Byzantine Greeks. However, these new Slav hierarchs were required to travel to Constantinople for their consecrations and installations since they were as yet under the authority of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch.

In 1587 a synod of Russian hierarchs, with the concurrence of Tsar Theodore I and Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople, chose Metropolitan Job to be consecrated the first Patriarch of Moscow, signifying the independence of the Russian Orthodox Church from Constantinople. This act is not to be considered a separation, but rather a sign that the daughter church had reached maturity to handle her own affairs in concert and communion with the rest of the Orthodox world.

## OLD CHURCH SLAVONIC

All this had been preceded by two latter Ninth Century brothers from Thessalonica who preached to the Slavs in Moravia, then a central European principality but today is a part of the Czech Republic. To bring the Word of God to the Slavs, these two missionaries, named Cyril and Methodius, not only had to learn the Slav language but would come to translate the Gospels and Church teachings in Slavonic. Using Greek letters as a base, the brothers devised a Slavic alphabet, which is in use today and called Cyrillic.

During Western Europe's Dark Ages, there were fewer differences among the Slavic dialects, and communications were easier than they would be today. However, as each of these dialects developed into a distinct language of its own---much as French, Spanish and Italian and other Romance languages emerged from Latin---the dialect employed by Cyril and Methodius came less and less into common use, except for the Church,<sup>2</sup> and became known today as Old Slavonic, sometimes called Old Church Slavonic. While the liturgics continued in Old Slavonic, teaching and preaching were usually in local dialect. For the Orthodox, the important thing was to get out the message and have it understood by the faithful.

Beginning in 1223, Russia became by conquest a part of the Mongol Empire, an overlordship which didn't end until 1480 and the rise of Muscovy under Ivan III The Great (1462-1505), the first Russian ruler to claim the title Tsar. Under Ivan IV The Terrible (1533-1584) Muscovy solidified its position and gave rise to the imperial Russian state.



In large part for these reasons, Russia was not to engage in voyages of discovery and exploration until 1725 when Russian ships began exploring the Aleutian Island chain and what we know today as Alaska.

Imperial Russia would not claim this vast territory as a colony until 1741, prompted by the discovery of vast numbers of fur bearing animals, enticing many Russians to sail from Siberia to what was called Russian America in what has been termed the “Fur Rush,” hoping to reap fortunes from the lucrative fur and walrus ivory trade. In 1798 Tsar Paul granted a charter to the Russian American Company and with it a monopoly of the fur and ivory business in Alaska.

## PART II

# ORTHODOXY TAKES ROOT IN AMERICA

### THE FIRST MISSIONARIES

In 1793, ten Russian Orthodox monks set out for a year long journey from the Gulf of Finland to Alaska to bring the Orthodox Church to the colony and to minister to the hunters, their native wives and their Creole children, many of whom had been baptized but never had formal instruction in the Church or the benefits of the Church's sacraments.

The party consisted of six hieromonks, two hierodeacons and two monks. This undertaking was not for the faint hearted, as they would sacrifice any creature comforts they had known in their monasteries in Russia, such as regular meals, shelter and spiritual support from their fellows in the monastic life. They faced bitter cold, hunger, lack of adequate shelter, an uncertain future and the necessity of learning the twenty-one different languages of the indigenous peoples. Martyrdom itself was a probability, yet their labors would bear fruit in years to come.

Mission and sacrifice were manifested by one of the hieromonks, Father Juvenaly (Govoruchkin), who became the first Orthodox martyr in America when he was killed by natives, probably near Lake Iliamna in 1797. The actual date, location and circumstances remain somewhat unsure even today, but we do know that Fr. Juvenaly left Kodiak in 1796 for mainland Alaska. At Nuchek, on the coast, Fr. Juvenaly baptized over 700 Chugach Supiak Indians, then spent the winter evangelizing and baptizing the newly faithful among the Athabaskan Indians.

### GROWTH OF ORTHODOXY IN ALASKA

Within two years of the mission's landing on Kodiak Island, over 12,000 Alaskans had embraced Orthodoxy. Much of the mission's success was because the Church fought against abuses of the natives by the fur hunters. Moreover, the monks established schools in Alaska, and in time the Russian government would rely upon the Orthodox Church for the Alaskan education system.

Unfortunately the fur company was not fully self-supporting and in 1812 the company established a sub-colony on the Sonoma County coast, about eighty miles north of San Francisco, called Fort Ross. The purpose of Fort Ross was to provide foodstuffs to support the Alaskan colony through farming and hunting.

While this seemed rather simple and clear to the Russians, Fort Ross' legitimacy was questionable in light of the fact that California and the west coast were under the claim of Spain and the Spanish had already settled as far north as San Francisco. However, the Spanish military presence at San Francisco was little more than a squad of soldiers and the Spanish naval presence was negligible. There the matter rested, and while Madrid and St. Petersburg exchanged diplomatic charges and countercharges, Fort Ross stood.

## MARTYRDOM OF ST. PETER THE ALEUT

In 1815 a party of Aleut seal hunters from Alaska and their ship, under the leadership of a Russian named Tarasov, was captured by the Spanish. They were then taken to San Francisco to be put on trial for violating Spanish sovereignty.

Among the Aleuts was a young man named Cungagna (pronounced Choong-UGH-naq) who some years prior had been baptized at Kodiak Island and taken the name Peter. Some of these prisoners, including Peter, were tortured or cut with the soldiers' sabers, and Peter's head had been badly wounded, causing severe bleeding. The next day a Spanish priest-inquisitor tried to persuade the captives to accept Roman Catholicism, but they all refused, with Peter declaring simply, "I am a Christian and I will not betray my faith."

The following day, Peter was singled out as the inquisitor ordered his fingers to be hacked off, knuckle by knuckle. Then his hands, then his feet. Peter soon died and eventually word reached Fort Ross, and from there to Monk Herman on Spruce Island, off Kodiak Island.

Upon hearing of Peter's death, Father Herman went to an icon, crossed himself, and prayed, "Holy, newly martyred Peter, pray to God for us!"

In 1980 Peter the Aleut was glorified as an Orthodox saint and given the feastday of September 24, which he shares with St. Juvenaly, Protomartyr of America. Fr. Herman himself was glorified on August 7, 1970 as America's first Orthodox saint.

In 1822 a chapel was built at Fort Ross which can rightfully claim to be the cradle of Orthodoxy in California. Although never consecrated as a church, over the years it has welcomed a number of distinguished visitors such as Father John Veniaminov (later glorified as St. Innocent, Enlightener and Apostle to America), who blessed it in 1836; Fr. Innocent, a Russian priest and great, great grandson on St. Innocent in 1989; Patriarch Aleksey II of All-Russia in 1993; St. John (Maximovich), Wonder Worker of Shanghai and San Francisco during his term as ROCOR Archbishop in San Francisco; and since the end of communism in Russia many scholars, Church officials, politicians and---inevitably---thousands of tourists to what is now a state park. Sadly, fire destroyed the chapel on October 5, 1970 but it was quickly rebuilt, near replicating the original.

## AMERICA'S FIRST ORTHODOX HIERARCH

In November of 1840, as Fr. John Veniaminov was making an official report in St. Petersburg, word came that his beloved Matushka Elizabeth had reposed. At the urging

of Metropolitan PHILARET (Drozdev, later glorified as St. Philaret of Moscow), Fr. John accepted monastic tonsure, taking the name Innocent. Fr. Innocent was quickly elevated to archimandrite and then to Bishop of the newly created Diocese of Kamchatka, the Kurile and Aleutian Islands, with the seat at Sitka. The new Diocese included the Alaska mainland and all North America.

## SAN FRANCISCO'S FIRST ORTHODOX PARISH

The 1849 Gold Rush to California saw people coming from Europe, Asia and across America to get rich mining gold, a migration which included people from Orthodox lands. Contrary to some expectation, however, gold wasn't just picked up off the streets, and few miners became rich from the precious metal. Many then settled in San Francisco so that by 1860 the city's population had grown to 50,000. From an Hispanic colonial outpost, San Francisco had become a thriving American city. American, yet also cosmopolitan. In 1857 sixteen Orthodox Christians in the city established the Greek-Russian-Slavonian Orthodox Church and Benevolent Society, the seed of a future parish.

After the American Civil War broke out in 1861, President Abraham Lincoln was concerned about the significant pro-Confederacy sympathy in California. To interdict a potential California secession, Lincoln invited the Russian Imperial Navy to "visit" San Francisco, hoping the presence of a European power friendly to the Union would head off any ideas that Great Britain, which was sympathetic to the Confederacy, may have had for supporting a "copperhead" rebellion in the Golden State.

When the Russian warships under the command of Admiral A. A. Popov of the Colonial Fleet arrived in San Francisco in 1862, naval chaplains invited Orthodox residents aboard to attend Divine Liturgy in the ships' chapels and to receive the Holy Mysteries, a most welcome invitation as these people had been without such an opportunity due to a lack of clergy. Even Fort Ross never had a priest assigned there.

This was repeated the following year and Chaplain Hieromonk Kyril also baptized the infant Jovan Dabovich, the future Priest Sebastian<sup>3</sup>, aboard the ship *Bogatyr*.

In 1867 the first Orthodox parish in San Francisco began. Priest Nikolai Kovigin and Reader Vasili Shishkin were assigned from Sitka to the Prayer House of the Orthodox Oriental Church, at first in a home on Mission Street and later relocated to 504 Greenwich Street. This parish was the genesis of today's Holy Trinity Cathedral (OCA), Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church and St. Nicholas Orthodox Church (Antiochian Archdiocese) in San Francisco.

## THE USA ACQUIRES ALASKA

For some years the Alaskan fur trade had been in decline as hunters slaughtered sea otters and seals almost to the point of extinction, resulting in Russian America becoming a fiscal burden on St. Petersburg.<sup>4</sup>

Seeking a way out, Russia offered to sell Alaska to the United States and on October 18, 1867 the deal was completed. The United States purchased Alaska for what even today, if adjusted for inflation, would be an incredibly low price: \$7.2 million, or about

two cents per acre! At the time, in the U.S., the purchase became known as “Seward’s Folly.”

**Archbishop Innocent** (he was raised to archbishop in 1850 and was now residing in his new seat at Kakutsk in Siberia) wrote to the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, urging that the seat of the American diocese be transferred to San Francisco. Moreover, he urged that the Russian clergy be recalled and new clergy who could speak and preach in English be sent instead, that English translations be made of the services and that English be allowed to be used so that the Orthodox Church could attract Americans in what Alaskans today call the Lower 48.

Offering services in English was keeping with Orthodox tradition of using the language of the people, just as Ss. Cyril and Methodius had translated into Slavonic and as Fr. John Veniaminov had translated services and the Gospel of St. Matthew into Aleut.

Archbishop Innocent succeeded Metropolitan Philaret as the ruling hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1868, and began implementing his ideas and plans for the Church in America.

On June 10, 1870 the name of the American diocese was changed to Diocese of Alaska and Aleutian Islands, with Bishop John (Mitropolsky) as the new bishop. In 1872 the seat of the Diocese was moved from Sitka to San Francisco and the Orthodox “Prayer House” at 915 Jackson Street became St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and diocesan headquarters.

In 1874 the cathedral was moved to a larger building on Pierce Street and yet again to Powell Street and renamed in honor of St. Nicholas of Myra.

In 1876 Bishop John returned to Russia and his office was vacant until 1879, during which time the diocese was ruled directly from Russia.

## TOWARD AN AMERICAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

**Bishop Vladimir** (Sakolovsky) became ruling hierarch in 1888, and began conducting services as well as preaching in English, while insisting that his clergy also know English. For the first time, the President of the United States was commemorated in the services instead of Russia’s Imperial Family. Bishop Vladimir traveled a lot, visiting immigrant Orthodox communities in New York, Chicago, Detroit, New Orleans and Washington, D.C. where in 1889 he was received by President Grover Cleveland at the White House.

That same year St. Nicholas Cathedral was destroyed by fire, then rebuilt and consecrated in honor of St. Basil the Great. In turn, this structure was lost in San Francisco’s great Earthquake and Fire of 1906. In 1909 a new cathedral rose on the northwest corner of Green Street and Van Ness Avenue, was named to honor the Holy Trinity, and continues in use today.

In March of 1891 the Orthodox Church in America took a major leap forward as Bishop Vladimir, on the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, received Fr. Alexis Toth and hundreds of Ruthenian immigrants who, until then, had been Uniates, into the Orthodox Church. Fr. Alexis was glorified as St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre in May of 1990.

During the administration of Bishop NICHOLAS (Ziorov) from 1891 to 1898, the

Diocese grew even more through the reception of over twenty Uniate parishes, ordination of American born clergy, expansion of church education via schools and seminaries, and an enrollment growth stimulated by immigration to America of peoples from southern and eastern Europe, many of who brought their Orthodox faith with them.

The Holy Synod in Russia granted Bishop Nicholas additional authority to finalize divorces, enlarge the number of active priests and missionaries, and enjoy a greater independence of action than his predecessors had had.

## SAINT TIKHON'S LEGACY IN AMERICA

On December 12, 1898 **Bishop Tikhon** (Belavin) arrived in New York, succeeding Bishop Nicholas as Bishop of the Diocese of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska. Only thirty-three years old, he was in the next twenty-seven years to leave his mark both in North America and in his native Russia.

Born Vasili Ivanovich Belavin near Pskov into a priest's family, he prepared early for a clerical life. A brilliant scholar, he enrolled in St. Petersburg's Theological Academy at age 19, was graduated at 23, and immediately began teaching at his alma mater. At 26 he was tonsured a monk, taking the name Tikhon. Soon he was ordained to the priesthood and shortly after elevated to archimandrite. In October of 1897, while only 32, he was consecrated Bishop of Liublin (at that time part of the Russian Empire but now in Poland) and less than a year later was on his way to be North America's only Orthodox hierarch.

According to Church canons, all Orthodox Christians in America came under his omophor, and he was heading a diocese comprised of Native American, Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Arabs, Serbs, Macedonians, Albanians, Galicians, Carpatho-Russians, Romanians, and Americans whose ethnic backgrounds did not include lands traditionally associated with Orthodoxy.

Bishop Tikhon shared the vision of St. Innocent on an autocephalous (self-governing) American Orthodox Church, encompassing all the faithful, regardless of ethnicities. For nine years he served in America, traveling throughout his diocese. He established the first Orthodox seminary in the United States, the first American Orthodox monastery at South Canaan, Pennsylvania and requested the Holy Synod to send a hierarch to become an auxiliary bishop for Alaska. The request being granted, **Bishop Innocent** (Pustynsky) took up the post. In 1904 another milestone was reached with the consecration of Father Rafael Hawaweeny as Bishop of Brooklyn.

In 1905 the diocesan seat was again moved, this time to New York. In that same year Bishop Tikhon submitted to the Holy Synod a plan for local autonomy for the Church in America, to be followed by autocephalous status. Unfortunately, internal turmoil in Russia, a bureaucracy, World War I and the Russian Revolution prevented the plan's implementation.

In 1906 Bishop Tikhon was elevated to archbishop. He then called for the first General Council of the Church in America to be held at Mayfield, Pennsylvania following the New Year of 1907.

Interestingly, among the priests under Archbishop Tikhon's care in the United

States were Fathers John Kochurov and Alexander Hotovitsky of Chicago. Both men would be martyred by the Communists in Russia and on December 4, 1994 the Russian Orthodox Church glorified them as saints with Fr. John titled First Hieromartyr of the Bolshevik Yoke.

In February of 1907 Archbishop Tikhon was transferred to the Diocese of Yaroslavl in Russia, then just before World War I erupted in 1914 he was elected, at age 52, to be Metropolitan of Moscow.

The new Metropolitan presided as chairman of the Church's All-Russia Council of 1917-1918 (the first such council in Russia since 1696), where the most important order of business was the restoration of the patriarchate which Tsar Peter I had abolished in 1700. Metropolitan Tikhon was elected Patriarch November 5th and enthroned on November 21, 1917, only two weeks after the Bolsheviks seized control of Russia.

Archbishop Tikhon had been succeeded by **Archbishop Platon** (Razhdestvensky) who served from September 5, 1907 until May 20, 1914 when he returned to Russia as Archbishop of Odessa. Archbishop Platon was in turn succeeded by **Archbishop Evdokim** (Meschersky), who served from 1914 until 1917.

At the 1917-1918 Great Council, Archbishop Evdokim, Fr. Leonid Turkevich (later Metropolitan Leonty) and Fr. Alexander Kukulevsky were the American delegates. Following the Council, Frs. Leonid and Alexander returned to America by way of Siberia and Japan. Unfortunately, Archbishop Evdokim remained in Russia and joined the schismatic "Living Church" movement created by the atheist Soviet government. The American bishopric was again vacant.

In spite of everything, including a decline of missionary activity in Alaska following the sale of the colony to the United States, Orthodoxy continued to grow in the USA and Canada. By the time of the Great Council, the Church in America was able to show a membership of 600,000 faithful, 309 priests and deacons serving 461 churches and chapels, an archbishop and five bishops, a seminary, a women's college, a school for choir directors, a preparatory seminary and four monasteries.

## RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE CHURCH

1917 saw Russia experiencing her worst turmoil since Ivan the Terrible. Since entering World War I in 1914 the country had suffered devastating losses with 9,150,000 casualties out of the 12,000,000 men and youths in her armed forces, a casualty rate of 76.3%.<sup>5</sup> Food and fuel shortages due to inadequate transportation and communications combined with wartime inflation brought severe hardships to the people.

Tsar Nicholas II, while personally a decent man, proved to be inept in governing and was forced to abdicate in March, leaving the floundering empire without a head of state or commander in chief of its armed forces. What was left of government simply collapsed.

An ineffective provisional government under Alexander Kerensky fell to V. I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks in October. Starvation and epidemics which took an estimated 7,000,000 lives followed over the next two and a half years as well as the civil war following the Bolshevik takeover. In September of 1918, on Lenin's orders, a reign of

terror on a scale unknown since the French Revolution, was levied against the Imperial Family, the nobility, the wealthy aristocratic and business classes (who had been providing financial aid to the Church in America), the Orthodox Church and the intelligentsia.

Until his repose on the Feast of the Annunciation in 1925 (under the most suspicious of circumstances), Patriarch Tikhon struggled to keep churches open, to prevent altar vessels and religious artifacts from being confiscated or destroyed and to keep his bishops, priests, deacons and monastics out of prison on trumped-up charges.

In October of 1989 the late Patriarch was glorified as Saint Tikhon, Enlightener of North America and Confessor of Moscow.

In the wake of revolution and civil war, thousands of people fled Russia, seeking asylum in Western Europe, China or America. Financial aid which had been given to the American diocese abruptly ended and the Diocese was forced to fend for itself as best it could.

A new tradition for the Russian Orthodox communities of San Francisco and the North Bay began July 4, 1923 as Father Vladimir Sakovich, dean of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco, and other Orthodox faithful made a pilgrimage to the cradle of Orthodoxy in California: the Fort Ross Chapel. Fr. Vladimir celebrated Divine Liturgy there and since then this has become an annual event for those of Russian descent and Orthodox Christians in general to reconnect with their common heritages.

In 1924 the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, the lineal descendent of the 1794 Alaskan mission and precursor of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), effectively severed its relations with the Moscow Patriarchate. The Soviet government, now under control of Joseph Stalin, had ordered all the churches under the Patriarchate to pledge their loyalty to the Soviets. This, however, was not likely to be given by a church with membership comprised largely of American born and those who had settled in America on a permanent basis as well as second generation and later Americans who either did not speak Russian or who did not consider themselves Russians in the first place.



## PART III

# AN ORTHODOX PARISH FOR SONOMA COUNTY

### SEEKING FOREIGN REFUGE

Those fleeing Russia soon after 1917 were unable, with rare exceptions, to bring with them many assets of value. Landholdings, even if not expropriated by the Communists, could not be transported. Save for metallic or numismatic value, Russian money was worthless. Gems were often sold or bartered for expedient needs. Furs, artworks and other collectibles were often too bulky or inconvenient to carry when on the run.

What they did carry with them was their Orthodox Christian faith. Baptismal crosses, icons and knowledge of their religion came with them to safety. They also brought with them hope for a new beginning, and for some a hope to return someday to Russia, which of course was never realized.

One refugee, Julia Reabinin, wanted to get to England where two of her sons were in school, and after waiting in line for months while quarantined on an island in the Sea of Marmara trying to get visas to the United Kingdom, hope was wearing thin for her and her family. While standing in line, she prayed. As if hearing her thoughts, a little old lady in like circumstances tapped Julia on the shoulder and said, "Put yourself in the hands of the Holy Virgin and she will protect you." Julia did, no longer feeling alone. This incident remained with her for the rest of her life as a guide, a lesson and an inspiration. Eventually she and her family made it to Sonoma County.

Just as these refugees kept their Orthodox faith, they also kept the precepts of sacrifice and mission. They had fled their motherland at great personal sacrifice, some never making it to safety, and when they settled elsewhere they planted their Orthodox Church anew or helped to strengthen what they found. In cities in China and Europe where Russians resettled, Orthodox churches, monasteries and schools were established. In time, some of those churches attracted converts, and Orthodoxy grew as if it had been a missionary effort rather than a flight from Bolshevism.

### ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS SETTLE IN SONOMA COUNTY

The 1910 U. S. Census showed sixty-seven residents of Sonoma County who were Russian born, indicating a Russian presence there well before the 1917 Revolution. The 1920 census showed 276 people in the county of Russian birth while in the 1930 census the number had raised to 299. However, the census counts do not show whether or not these people were ethnically Russian. The Russian Empire contained many peoples, in-

cluding Poles, Finns, Germans, Latvians, Estonians, Lithuanians, Scandinavians, Georgians, Armenians, Turko-Tartars and others as well as Russians.

The numerical spike between 1910 and 1930 was undoubtedly stimulated by the Revolution, and it may be surmised that deaths or relocations during the 1920s may have kept the 1930 figure lower than what might otherwise have been the case. Moreover, had the 1910-1930 increase been due to immigration due to the Revolution, it is probable that most, if not all, of the growth during these two decades came from ethnic and Orthodox Russians.

Sonoma County directories of the period show a number of Slavic surnames not recorded as among the Founding Members of the Parish.

The question now is: if most were ethnic and Orthodox Russians, why weren't there more Founding Members? There is no ready answer and there may never be one. The more probable answers are that some were not too religious to begin with, some may have turned their backs on Russia and everything which went with it, some may have settled too far away to have anything to do with the Church on Mountain View Avenue (such as Glen Ellen or the Russian River area), and some may have started attending non-Orthodox churches which were nearer to where they lived.

Most of the Bay Area's Russian refugees first gravitated to San Francisco where, as we have seen, there was already a substantial Russian Orthodox community and an active social life with people who spoke their language centered on the Church. As the community grew, a number of first and second generation Russians in San Francisco began moving to surrounding areas, including Sonoma County. What the county lacked was an Orthodox parish in which they could nurture and practice their faith.

## HARD TIMES

Looking back seventy-five years later, 1934 doesn't appear to have been a good time to be building a church or anything else. Sonoma County, along with the rest of America, was in the worst economic depression in American history, as was much of the world. Nationally, unemployment had risen steadily from 4,000,000 in 1930 to 15,000,000 in 1934, an incredible one third of the nation's workforce. Some 2,000,000 hoboes were riding the rails in search of food and work.

In California freight car loadings were only one-half of those in 1928, building permits were only one-ninth of those of the peak year of 1925, and 1,250,000 Californians (one-fifth of the state population) were on relief. Amazing as it may seem today, in 1930 California's oil fields were producing 200,000 barrels of oil per day in excess of what the market could absorb, and drilling crews were reduced from forty-six to six.

## MOTIVATIONS TO BUILD A CHURCH

In view of the obstacles facing the new congregation, a non-Orthodox reader may well ask why these people were so determined to build a church.

It must be noted that neither the Bay Bridge nor the Golden Gate Bridge had been completed at the time, although both were under construction. This meant that to get to

San Francisco by automobile to attend services in an Orthodox house of worship, one had to drive from Santa Rosa to Sausalito on a two lane road in the days when the term “mile a minute” connoted a racetrack rather than slightly under today’s speed limit.

At Sausalito one had to board a ferryboat for the half hour trip to San Francisco’s Hyde Street Pier, which today is the site of a maritime museum. Of course, if the boat were full, one had to wait for the next one. Then off the ferry and on to Holy Trinity Cathedral, a mile away from the pier.

All told, a one-way trip could take as much as three hours, including changing a flat tire along the way. The only reasonable alternative was a train from Santa Rosa to Sausalito, then transfer to a ferryboat to San Francisco’s Ferry Building (adult fare, one-way: \$1.98). This would take two hours and twelve minutes, plus a 5¢ streetcar ride to the Cathedral.

There was another reason to build an Orthodox church in Santa Rosa that was in Orthodox eyes very important: Younger members of the community were marrying non-Russians and non-Orthodox, and in some cases attending religious services in their spouses’ churches.

These people had come from Imperial Russia with its intrinsic church-state relationship. One could not be a Russian citizen unless a member of the Orthodox Church. The Church’s major feastsdays were national holidays and social events revolved around the Church calendar. For example, during Great Lent and other fasting periods theaters were closed, and formal social activity was curtailed. Education curriculum in Russia was controlled by the Church.

America, with its constitutional separation of church and state, had none of that save for Sundays, which at that time were non-working days, and Christmas Day was a national holiday. People were constitutionally free to worship any way they chose.

Without the support of an Orthodox parish, without the benefit of Orthodox education during the turmoil of revolution, living in a non-Orthodox country and lack of adequate church education, younger members of the community may well have felt that any kind of Christianity was better than no Christianity at all. Hence, for the faithful, building an Orthodox church was not merely desirable but imperative.

Perhaps the most compelling reason to build was a simple desire to worship close to home in a church with traditional Orthodox Church architecture. The interiors of Orthodox churches are intrinsic to the services, and iconography is a must, for the Orthodox call icons “Windows into Heaven.” Simply renting space in a non-Orthodox church, no matter how well intended, simply wouldn’t do. Orthodox churches are not merely places to be on Sundays, but consecrated buildings which belong to God, and since there is a tabernacle on the altar containing the Body and Blood of Christ, they are the dwelling places of God.

Newspaper accounts at the time indicated that for a while the new congregation was holding services in a Santa Rosa Episcopalian church. However, this could never be considered permanent, nor because of interior furnishings could it ever be considered home.

Building the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox church was deemed a necessity with no alternatives, even during the Great Depression. It would require mis-

sion and sacrifice, but Orthodox Christians were, and are, used to that.

## BUILDING A CHURCH

Once the resolve had been made to build, Julia Reabinin contacted the bishop in San Francisco, asking for help. The hierarch's reply was that if the community could get the lumber, he would get people to build

Even at 1930's prices, buying lumber was a formidable challenge.

The first donation toward building was five dollars and fifty cents<sup>6</sup>, which was collected in 1934. Between March and May of 1935 another sixty dollars was raised, augmented later in the year by \$51.76 from a concert and yet another \$19.00 from a buffet dinner.

January of 1936 saw another \$110 in donations while a concert on February 29th at Hermann Sons Hall in Petaluma yielded a further \$99.00.

However, without collateral, the local lumberyards were understandably reluctant to extend credit, considering the times. At the suggestion of Vladimir Razoumoff, collateral came in the form of a donation of two parcels of land on Mountain View Avenue<sup>7</sup> by Mrs. Reabinin in memory of two of her sons, George and Serge, who had died in 1932 and 1935. Moreover, a life insurance payment for her older son brought \$200 to Julia, which she donated toward the new church. Now the little community had both land and cash, and a local lumberyard not only extended credit but discounted the price as well.

With cash, collateral and credit on hand, it was now time to get to work. First, however, there had to be a ground breaking according to Orthodox rites which required the blessings of ordained clergy. Therefore, Fr. Alexander Nichislavoff was sent to Santa Rosa in January of 1936 to bless the grounds and begin the project. By God's grace, the dream soon would become a reality.

Mountain View Avenue in the 1930s would never be mistaken for the high rent district. For the most part the residents were small farmers with a few acres each, raising chickens, ducks, a couple of cows or so, bee hives, vegetable gardens and fruit trees. When it was suggested to a former parishioner, who at the time was a little girl, that perhaps some of the housewives' butter and egg money could go toward the building and furnishing the interior of the church, she readily agreed. She also said "all of the women knew how to sew and embroider. They had learned that in Russia." Nadezhda Proskoriakoff took the lead in sewing altarcloths, vestments, and other coverings for the new temple.

Further assistance in furnishing the new church came from Julia Reabinin's cousin who was a monk in a monastery in Greece. Soon icons from the monastery were on their way for the new church.

Meanwhile the men sawed wood and hammered nails. Nicon Pritoola-Gerogensen assumed the role of master builder. He had been a stationmaster in Vladivostok, but somewhere in his life he had mastered carpentry. Not only did he act as master builder of the church itself, but he also built the analogions (icon stands), various smaller tables, choir stands and outdoor benches.

A tribute to the skills and talents of these people was revealed when, years later,

the Church was raised a few feet and the redwood structure was found to be in excellent condition.

From the outset the Founding Members had practiced the principles of stewardship: Time, Talent, and Treasure. If their fiscal treasure seemed small, they made up for it in time and talents. Years later, the magnitude of their talents was revealed when the Church was raised a few feet and the redwood structure was found to be in excellent condition.

Making allowance for the fact that building codes and regulations were not what they are today, erecting a house of worship during those hard times stands out today as a most remarkable achievement.

While some early day parishioners would either Anglicize or shorten their Russian surnames (i.e. Reabinin to Rayburn, Sokolovski to Sokol),<sup>8</sup> their legacy of adherence to church tradition endures. Indeed, it was Julia Rayburn who gave the name Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary (feastday October 1st) to the Church in remembrance of the time when she put herself in the Protection of the Theotokos (Greek for “she who bore God in the flesh as a mother”). The faith of this venerable lady who was to repose in the Lord as Mother Elena at the age of eighty at the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga had been rewarded.

## PRIEST MICHAEL PELZIG

Special mention must be given to Father Michael Pelzig, the Parish’s first rector. Among the churches he served in California were the Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco and a parish in Santa Barbara from which he was transferred to the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Santa Rosa in 1936.

A single man, Fr. Michael was probably in his seventies when he arrived in time to celebrate the Paschal Divine Liturgy. Multi-talented, he built the Altar for the new Temple as well as the other tables for the Church’s Sanctuary and the choir music stand. Fr. Michael also nailed the wall veneer and trimmed the windows, although he was not a professional carpenter. Prior to the Russian Revolution, Fr. Michael had been a military man, serving in the Tsar’s army and rising to the rank of colonel.

In the Orthodox view, a church is also a place of learning, so it isn’t surprising that Fr. Michael left his personal library to the Parish when he died, forming the nucleus of today’s Parish Library.

Sadly, this man of God was killed by a motor vehicle while walking down Santa Rosa Avenue in the days when it was two lanes and part of the highway to San Francisco. *May his memory be eternal!*

## EARLY YEARS

During the Parish’s early years there never seemed to be enough money. While during that era stipends for the clergy were generally quite low anyway, it can be surmised that, judging from the fact that most of the early priests were single men, there probably wasn’t enough money to support a married priest and his family.

This cannot be attributed entirely to parsimony, but rather a combination of fac-

tors, including the Great Depression and that the Parish was small and would remain so for many years to come. As late as 1964 when Father Prokopy was rector, perhaps only fifty or sixty people assembled for Sunday Liturgy and the Parish's chief financial support was from candle donations and trays on Sundays along with small miscellaneous donations.

Alexandra Moschensky lived next to the new Church at 98 Mountain View Avenue, and could be seen in those early years carrying water in buckets from the well on her family's property over to the Church to water the young trees. This was necessary because it would be some years before the Parish would install its own water well.

## THE WAR YEARS

By the 1940s the number of displaced Russians coming to America had slowed to a trickle and the only growth the Parish had came from births, offset by deaths, and some Orthodox Christians moving from elsewhere. As the Parish did not have any young people starting families, the years of World War II were not conducive to membership growth.

Despite wartime prosperity for civilians, wartime restrictions on building materials made it impossible to expand or improve the physical plant. That would have to wait until peacetime returned.

World War II affected the Parish in other ways as well. Alex Sokol served on the local Selective Service Board as well as a Civil Defense Warden in Santa Rosa.

Robert Canby, son of Vlademir and Alexandra Moschensky, was a Civil Defense Warden on Mountain View Avenue, then enlisted in the Navy and rose to the rank of commander. Fluent in both English and Russian, he was a translator for the American forces in the Aleutian Islands and in Germany. His son, Serge, also enlisted in the Navy and made a career of military service by serving in the Coast Guard and the Air Force as well.

Roman Rayburn, son of Founding Member Julia Rayburn, went into the Army. An expert skier, he saw service in Alaska with a special Army unit.

Constantine N. Gerogensen, son of Founding Member Nicon Pritoola-Gerogensen, served in the Army and was killed in action at Normandy on D-Day, June 7, 1944. *May his memory be eternal!*

## PART IV

# POSTWAR AND BEYOND

### SANTA ROSA GROWS

Santa Rosa's huge postwar population growth had little impact upon the Parish. For one thing, the main reason for the population jumping from 12,605 in 1940 to 31,000 in the mid-1950s was the city's annexation of Montgomery Village. For another, it was still very much the "little Russian Church" on Mountain View Avenue. Services were in Old Slavonic and it seemed as if everyone spoke Russian. There was as yet no Glendi or any other outreach to the community at large.

There were between seventy-five and one hundred parishioners in those days, and very few young people. At one point there were perhaps only fifteen kids of various ages.

This did not mean, however, that the Parish was stagnant. In fact, Parish reports from that time show ambitions to develop the grounds, bore a water well, add a cupola and a bell tower to the Church, build a roadway through the property and add wash-rooms, all of which would cost money.

### THE SISTERHOOD IS STARTED

To meet the challenge of further developing the property, the Parish ladies once again rose to the occasion, forming the Sisterhood which was charged with finding "profitable means of raising money." One way was to utilize their culinary skills, and thus came into being the Sunday Agape Lunches following Divine Liturgy and other social events for which the Parish has been noted.

To this day the Sisterhood remains the charitable arm of the Parish and the Sunday Agape meals have become an institution.

During the postwar years fund raising began anew and in 1950 the men of the Parish again took up their tools and built the first Parish Hall, just as they had built the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church.

Building continued, and in 1954 the Rectory was built to provide housing for the priests and their families. Originally a two bedroom, one bath cottage, it was expanded during the 1980s by adding two more bedrooms, another bath and a front living room at a cost of \$19,000.

The Rectory represents a substantial long-term investment for the Parish when one considers the rising housing costs in the Bay Area, particularly in Santa Rosa.

During the early 1950s, under the rectorship of Father Nicholas Szerocki, the first attempt was made to start a church school program in the Parish, due in large part to

the leadership of Metropolitan LEONTY (Turkevich), who was a strong advocate for religious education in the parishes.

#### ARCHIMANDRITE ANDRONIK ELPINDSKY

Fr. Nicholas' tenure as rector was followed by that of Archimandrite Andronik (Elpindsky), one of several monastic priests to serve the Parish.

Fr. Andronik was born November 3, 1894 in Petrozavodsk, in the far north of Russia by Lake Onega, and studied at the Theological Seminary there. During the First World War he served in the Russian Army, then in 1920 he emigrated to Germany and in 1923, to France, where on November 3, 1925 he accepted monastic tonsure. In that same year he was ordained to Holy Orders at St. Sergius Russian Orthodox Church in Paris.

Fr. Andronik then spent five years doing parish work in Belfort, France. He was a man of deep faith and self sacrifice, and was attracted to missionary work with a strong commitment to monasticism and prayer.

From 1931 until 1949 Fr. Andronik was a missionary in Trevancre, India where he built a house and a small church on top of a hill in the wilderness and lived as a hermit monk.

Although he had been graciously greeted by the Orthodox Church in India, relations became strained as the Indian Church felt that Fr. Andronik should help strengthen the Church as a whole, rather than being in retreat. The result was that he failed to make many converts to Orthodoxy while in India although he was technically a missionary. Fr. Andronik was obliged to leave India in 1949 under uncertain circumstances.

After leaving the subcontinent, Fr. Andronik came to the United States where he spent his last years, serving as rector of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish from 1955 to 1958.

#### METROPOLITAN LEONTY AND HIS LEGACY

Russian-born to a priestly family, Leonid Turkevich graduated from the Kiev Theological Academy in 1900. He then taught at two seminaries until 1905 when he was married and ordained to the priesthood.

In 1906 he was sent to the United States where he served both as rector of the North American Ecclesiastical Seminary until 1915 and as rector of St. Mary's Church in Minneapolis from 1907 to 1912. From 1914 until 1930 he was editor of the *Russian American Orthodox Messenger*.

He participated as a delegate to the 1917-1918 Great Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow and nominated Metropolitan Tikhon (Belavin) for election as Patriarch of All Russia.

Fr. Leonid became a widower in 1925, subsequently accepting monastic tonsure and taking the name Leonty. In 1933 he was made Bishop of Chicago, then, in 1950, he was elected Metropolitan of All America and Canada.

As Metropolitan, he encouraged and nourished the Church's missionary character and likewise encouraged the clergy and laity to get more involved in outreach and



educational activities. Under his leadership new English speaking parishes and missions were opened, not merely in major cities but in the suburbs as well.

As a professional educator, he was deeply interested in promoting Orthodox religious education. He developed a church school program and served as editor of the first series of English language religious education materials. During his tenure, women were admitted as students to the seminaries for the first time despite objections from traditionalists.

Metropolitan Leonty believed very strongly in having an American Orthodox Church according to the visions of Saints Innocent and Tikhon. He also initiated some of the early steps toward inter-Orthodox cooperation between jurisdictions which led to the formation of SCOBA.

He reposed on May 14, 1965 after a month-long illness. His funeral was held at the Protection of the Holy Virgin Cathedral in New York City, followed by internment at St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. May his memory be eternal!

## FORMATION OF SCOBA

In 1960 the hierarchs of various North American Orthodox jurisdictions formed the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, or SCOBA. The significance of this action was to reaffirm that the Orthodox are of one faith, are all part of the Body of Christ, and partake of One Cup, even as each retains its own customs and nuances.

Since then SCOBA has become responsible for the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in Florida, overseeing Orthodox missionary activities in foreign countries and Alaska. Additionally the International Orthodox Christian Charities is a SCOBA ministry, offering relief from disasters as well as development aid, both foreign and domestic.

This has allowed the jurisdictions to pool their resources, avoid wasteful duplication of efforts and to streamline the Orthodox mission of aiding others in need and spreading the Gospel.

Presently SCOBA members include: OCA, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada, Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America. In 2008 the Moscow Patriarchal parishes in the United States (thirty-three in number) under Bishop Mercurius of Zaraisk, joined SCOBA.

## ARCHIMANDRITE DIMITRY EGOROFF

Archimandrite Dimitry Egoroff (pronounced Yegóroff), the only priest to serve twice as rector of Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish, is worthy of special mention.

It is believed he was born in Shatsk, Ryazan Oblast (about 190 miles southeast of Moscow), in Russia about 1905. His exact birthdate and much of his life in Russia are unknown for several reasons. One was his sincere belief that a monastic must forget

his past and his worldly life<sup>9</sup>. For another, Fr. Dimitry was very reserved and not one for idle chatter, much preferring to teach by example rather than preaching. Also, it has been speculated that because he may have witnessed unspeakable horrors during his imprisonment in the USSR he was reluctant to discuss some matters, possibly for the protection of relatives still in the Soviet Union.

While in his twenties and a medical student at the university in Moscow, he was betrayed to the Soviet government and sent to Solovki, a group of small islands in the White Sea which were used as prison camps for religious believers who were usually sentenced to ten year terms for “counterrevolutionary activities.” It was there that he learned the faith and was baptized, albeit clandestinely. In later years he did admit to beatings by his jailers, perhaps making him a Confessor for Christ.

Following Solovki, he made his way to Old Valaam Monastery by Lake Lagoda on the USSR-Finland border where he was accepted as a novice monk and rejoined his friend from prison, Leonid Shavykin, and stayed there for about six months or longer.

On November 30, 1939 the USSR invaded Finland and Fr. Dimitry and the brotherhood fled the monastery when it was seized and closed by the advancing Red Army. On skis and on foot in winter Fr. Dimitry escaped into Finland and to safety. However, with inadequate footwear he suffered frostbite which cost him half of one of his feet; for the remainder of his life he walked with an awkward gait.

During World War II he somehow made his way to France and studied at St. Sergious Academy in Paris prior to ordination to Holy Orders, likely by Bishop EVLOGI-US of Paris, who spoke of Fr. Dimitry in glowing and admiring terms, calling him in Russian “svetlosky chelovik,” or holy man.

After ordination as a hieromonk, Fr. Dimitry served a Russian Orthodox church in a rural French village until 1950, then he came to San Francisco at the request of Archbishop JOHN (Shahavskoy) to be at the Holy Trinity Cathedral with his old friend from Russia, Leonid Shavykin, who by now was Father (later Bishop) Mark.

About this time the Lewry family of San Francisco donated seventeen acres of densely forested virgin growth Douglas firs near Point Reyes Station in Marin County, California to be used for a monastery in memory of their son, Eugene, who had been killed during World War II. The monastery was to be named for St. Eugene, an early church soldier-martyr and the monastery was to pray for the soul of Eugene Lewry.

Unhappy with parochial life (and, perhaps, church politics), Fr. Dimitry disappeared from the Cathedral. Two weeks later he was found camping out on the recently donated property, living as a hermit monk. Around 1951 he received a blessing from Archbishop John to start a monastery on the site.

With help of Orthodox friends in the Russian community (including Archimandrite Andronik Elpinsky, who would also serve as rector at the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish), Fr. Dimitry built two small buildings: a kellion (small religious house) with a small chapel and a trapeza (refectory)/guest building.

Trees on the property were felled to provide lumber to supplement scrap wood used for building, but cut selectively. In those early days of the monastery, conditions were so primitive that Fr. Dimitry’s first cell was a tent, probably army surplus. His next cell was little better, being a cabin measuring ten by eight feet, heated by a small

woodstove.

Despite the peaceful setting, Fr. Dimitry was never able to achieve the complete peace he so eagerly sought at St. Eugene's. One of the novices he took in used to chase him around with an axe or a knife, threatening to kill him! However, Fr. Dimitry had a way of calming Brother Nikolai, and after the brother's sojourns in a state mental hospital Fr. Dimitry always took him back, and with forgiveness.

Another man used to come up from San Francisco to do carpentry work at St. Eugene's, but he had the notion that he was the one who should make the decisions about building what and where, and not Fr. Dimitry, who, after all, was the igumen. Fr. Dimitry had to make peace a number of times, suggesting, "Perhaps... it is not needed?"

Fr. Dimitry was a victim of several slanders which he bore with love and patience. Visitors came to St. Eugene's for picnics and were made welcome. The problem was that in those days before recycling, they used to dump empty wine bottles in one place until there was quite a pile. Then the gossip spread that the good priest monk was having a drinking problem.

People gave Fr. Dimitry money for the monastery, but since it was owned by the Diocese, he was fearful of the money being "appropriated" for either cathedral or parish uses. He therefore deposited the donations in a bank in his own name, and withdrew funds from time to time for their intended purpose. Again the gossip mongers were at it, spreading a canard that this man of God was taking church money for his own use. Nothing could have been further from the truth, for here was a man so frugal that he not only mended his own clothing, but laundered it in his bathwater.

While Fr. Dimitry's heart was in monasticism and not parish work, he was obedient and accepted assignments to serve parishes when married priests refused, probably because of poor compensation. He served parishes in West Sacramento, Santa Barbara and Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary in Santa Rosa as well as substituting when parish clergy were unavailable, causing Archbishop John on one occasion to publicly pat Fr. Dimitry on his head and declare, "This is my ONLY obedient priest!"

A gentle and humble man, while yet living he was referred to as a Fool for Christ because of some of his actions. Such people are often misunderstood in their lifetimes, and such was the case with Fr. Dimitry.

One time a neighbor of St. Eugene's Monastery who, from time to time, was allowed to fell a tree for his own use was refused permission to cut down a large Douglas fir near the road. The neighbor waited until he thought Fr. Dimitry was in San Francisco, then came with his truck and a chain saw and proceeded to cut down the tree anyway. Halfway done, up came Fr. Dimitry shouting, "Don't cut that tree!" Caught in the act, the neighbor sheepishly put his equipment into his truck and drove away.

That would have been the end of the tale except that three weeks later. One of the novices learned that the tree had completely healed itself, something Douglas firs cannot do after being cut in the middle. Fr. Dimitry kept his silence. The neighbor didn't, however, telling the novice, "The tree healed itself; there was no indication of any saw cut whatsoever, and no mark at all! That was impossible. A miracle! I think that priest healed it." Until then, by the way, the neighbor could not have been mistaken for a believer.

In any case, the tree should have fallen simply because of its weight and the extent of the cut. Some things---including miracles---are beyond human explanation.

From 1963 to 1964 Fr. Dimitry served his first stint as Parish rector at the Parish of the Protection of the Holy Virgin, returning a decade later to serve from 1974 until October of 1975, with Fr. Prokopy Povarnitsin (Powers) serving from 1964 until 1974. Both of Fr. Dimitry's terms at the Parish were of short duration, indicating that they were intended to be only temporary.

Because of Fr. Dimitry's short terms as rector, it is tempting to think, erroneously, that he left little legacy behind when he moved on. In truth, losing part of a foot was a tribute to man's desire for freedom and liberty. Avoiding disputes and quarrels was not weakness but strength as Fr. Dimitry, being a hesychast who followed a mystical tradition of experiential prayer in the Orthodox Church, professed silence and the Jesus Prayer.

While he genuinely preferred a skete or a monastery to a parish, in his obedience and humility he bore his cross, teaching others by example. In establishing two monastic communities, he encouraged others to enter monasticism, sometimes called the "glory of Orthodoxy."

A Community of nuns gathered around Fr. Dimitry in the mid-1970s while he was recovering from an illness at Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga and he became their spiritual father. After acquiring a house in Santa Rosa in a roundabout way, he established the Skete of Our Lady of Kazan for his spiritual daughters and where he also lived.

In his last years his health grew worse, as he suffered from Type II Diabetes, heart problems and a skirmish with cancer. For about a year he lived on the Belkevich Ranch in Fallon, owned by Maria Belkevich Wieland, the daughter of Founding Members of the Protection Parish Eugene and Maria Belkevich. In the last years of his life, Fr. Dimitry suffered at least two strokes which confined him to a wheelchair.

On June 13, 1992 this man of God reposed in the Lord at the Kazan Skete in Santa Rosa where his funeral was held. He is buried in Oak Mound Cemetery in Healdsburg. May his memory be eternal!

As of this writing Archimandrite Dimitry Egoroff is being considered for glorification as a saint. If God so wills, it may be possible for Parish members to ask of their former rector, Holy Father Saint Dimitry of Santa Rosa, pray to God for us!

The population of Sonoma County continued to grow with Santa Rosa reaching 50,006, Petaluma 24,870, Rohnert Park 6,133, Healdsburg 5,438 and Sebastopol 3,008 by 1970. The next decade saw an even further climb as Santa Rosa recorded 83,205, Petaluma 33,834, Rohnert Park 22,965, Healdsburg 7,217, and Sebastopol 5,500, according to the 1980 U.S. Census.

English was finding its way into the Sunday Liturgies. Fr. Alexander Lisenko used both English and Old Slavonic in the Liturgy and preached his sermons in both Russian and English which was particularly beneficial to younger parishioners whose first language, increasingly, was English.

In 1968 the Parish built a new Church Hall, still in use today. This larger facility not only accommodated more people but was multipurpose in design. As with the Rec-

tory, it proved a wise investment for the future, particularly for the Glendi. The older hall was converted to Church School use and as a residence for the choir director.

Descendants of the Russian immigrant families were Americanized, not only marrying non-Slavs but marrying non-Orthodox who, in some cases, converted to Orthodoxy. This in itself was hardly revolutionary as from Apostolic times the Church's teachings have been to welcome converts. An early rector, Hieromonk Benedict (deSocio) was a convert and would not be the Parish's last convert priest, either.

## DIVISION IN THE CHURCH

Under Communist rule in Russia, Patriarch Tikhon was no longer able to effectively govern the Orthodox Churches that were under his authority but beyond Russian borders. A "temporary" expedient to resolve this problem evolved into yet another Orthodox jurisdiction which today is known as the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR).<sup>10</sup>

In 1924 the Soviets demanded that all Russian Orthodox faithful everywhere give allegiance to the Communist regime, which both the Church in America and ROCOR refused to do. Relations with the Moscow Patriarchate and ROCOR were severed and the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in America, while maintaining an official link with the mother church, out of necessity became self-governing. Meanwhile, relations between the Church in America and ROCOR became strained to the point of non-existence as attempts at both social and official reconciliation failed.

This division eventually impacted the Protection Parish. In 1980 ROCOR established a parish in Santa Rosa which some members left to join, and one Parish Council member donated land on which the newer church was to be built.

While there were different reasons for these defections, a major cause was the matter of liturgical language. While the older jurisdiction was becoming more Americanized and was using English more and more, ROCOR steadfastly clung to Old Church Slavonic and to giving sermons in Russian.

Other reasons included ROCOR's denunciation of the World Council of Churches with which the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of the Americas and other SCOBA jurisdictions were either affiliated or at least on speaking terms, the increasing use of the Gregorian Calendar while to this day ROCOR remains on the Julian Calendar, and the Orthodox Church in America's connection, however tenuous, with the Moscow Patriarchate, viewed with suspicion by ardent anti-Communists. This was during the Cold War era, and there were plenty of hard feelings to go around.

In 2007 ROCOR and the Patriarchate reestablished communion with each other, although some scars have yet to be healed.

## ORTHODOX NEIGHBORS

While the Protection of the Holy Virgin/St. Seraphim of Sarov Parish is the oldest Orthodox parish in the North Bay region, The Parish enjoys cordial relations with sister Orthodox parishes, such as Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church (OCA) in San Anselmo, Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church in Novato, Holy Dormition Church (Bulgar-

ian Archdiocese) in Santa Rosa, and All Saints Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church in Rohnert Park.

## THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

In 1970 the Moscow Patriarchate granted autocephalous (independent, self-governing) status to the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in America, making official what had been de facto since 1924. On April 10, 1970 the Metropolitanate officially changed its title to Orthodox Church in America (OCA). While these actions largely fulfilled the hopes of St. Tikhon when he was the hierarch for North America, there were still other Orthodox jurisdictions remaining in North America. What was significant, however, was that the OCA was the first Orthodox jurisdiction to shed its identity as an “ethnic” church.

## PRIEST ANDREW MORBEY

Sometimes organizations experience a personnel change which appears at first to be relatively routine, but which in retrospect becomes very significant. Such was the case with Father Andrew Morbey.

Fr. Andrew was not the first priest of the Parish who was a convert to the Orthodox Church that distinction apparently belongs to Hieromonk Benedict (de Socio). However, Fr. Andrew’s conversion to Orthodoxy probably had as much to do with the character of today’s Parish as anything else.

Father Andrew’s Matushka was what is often called a “cradle” Orthodox, or one who has been Orthodox since birth. (No one is actually born an Orthodox Christian, since becoming Orthodox is done through the Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation. Hence, all Orthodox Christians are, technically speaking, converts.) Therefore, Fr. Andrew was able to relate to both cradle and convert alike, and effectively.

During his two and a half years of rectorship in the Parish, people who had been non-Orthodox began finding a spiritual home in the “little Russian Church on Mountain View Avenue,” much of this having to do with Fr. Andrew’s outreach. As a convert, he understood those who were drawn to the beauty of Orthodoxy, sometime called a Church of “smells and bells,” with its historical continuity dating back to Pentecost and its unchanging doctrines.

According to an earlier rector, Priest Alexander Lisenko (now Hieromonk Alexander at the Monastery of St. John), Fr. Andrew “was the one who really tried to turn the Parish around, making it less of an immigrant church.” The Parish today is known for its many converts with parishioners of many ethnic backgrounds contributing to making it as much an American Orthodox Church as it was a Russian/Slavic Orthodox parish three quarters of a century ago, yet without yielding up its traditions in the name of “being modern.”

## ERITREANS COME TO SANTA ROSA

During the early 1980s Sonoma County started becoming home to Tigrinya-speak-

ing Coptic Christians from the southern highlands of Eritrea.

This east African country with its ancient history became an Italian colony from 1889 until World War II, after which it was briefly a British mandate. The country was given over to neighboring Ethiopia in 1952 and formally annexed to the Ethiopian Empire in 1962 and reduced to provincial status. Civil war between Eritreans and Ethiopians broke out in late 1962 and intensified after Emperor Haile Sellassie I was deposed in 1974.

After having been granted refugee immigration status in 1980, the first Eritreans began to arrive in Santa Rosa in 1981 under the sponsorship of Indo China-American Council (IAC), which was also active in bringing refugees from war-torn Cambodia to America.

Other refugees from Eritrea followed and were often placed in Santa Rosa because a friend or relative might already be there to help them. Additionally, Santa Rosa was considered a good place to raise children.

As with other ethnic groups who have migrated to America, the Eritreans struggle to retain their cultural values and traditions in a new land, and their children face the sometimes very difficult task of growing up bi-lingual, bi-cultural, and bi-continental.

Assimilation wasn't made easier because of the harsh memories from the civil war in Africa as well as the political divisions which not only afflicted the Horn of Africa but the refugee community itself.

Although proud inheritors of a Christian heritage reaching back to apostolic times, in Eritrea their Coptic faith had been undermined over the years by Italian-Catholic and British-Protestant rule, plus the Communist anti-religion doctrine during the civil war. Religious education had declined to non-existence as many people just followed the services by rote with little understanding of theology.

Given their preference in Santa Rosa, they would have had their own church with services in their own language, but it was not to be. However, there was an Orthodox Church in Santa Rosa. Orthodox! The word was as a beacon to these people who understood a church as ancient as theirs, and with a very understanding priest who made them welcome—Father Andrew Morbey.

Fr. Andrew was clearly the right man in the right place at the right time for the new Eritrean community reaching out to them and seeking to bridge the gap between Copt and Orthodox. One member of the community, Maaza Belata, said, "Father Andrew Morbey was one of us." True in more ways than one, being both an immigrant and a convert himself. Some feel that had Fr. Andrew served longer at the Parish the Eritrean membership would be even greater today.

The Eritreans not only served up native dishes for the Sisterhood lunches and for their food booth at the Glendi, but they also brought some of their customs even as they embraced the Church on Mountain View Avenue. Adult ladies tend to cover themselves with shawls as signs of modesty in God's house, the men worship in separate areas of the church so as not to be distracted by the ladies, and the ladies often remove their shoes and sandals so as not to track dirt into the presence of the Lord.

At Pascha Liturgy when the priests go around the Church with the Paschal candelabrum proclaiming "Christ is Risen!" in different languages and receive the joyful

response “Indeed, He is Risen!” the response from the ladies from Eritrea is distinct.

Their response is what is called an *elita*, a vibration of the tongue which sounds to western ears as a rapid-fire pronunciation of the letter D in high pitched warbles. To Eritreans, *elita* is a sign of excitement, of ultimate joy, of true happiness. It is part of their language and part of their lives. At St. Seraphim’s Church at Pascha, it has only enhanced the joy of the Feast of Feasts, and the *elita* brings joyous smiles to clergy and fellow parishioners alike.

## PARISH ADOPTS NEW CALENDAR

From Roman times the Universal Church used the Julian Calendar (Old Style, or OS) which was the Roman civil calendar for the dates of feast and fast days which are not dependent upon the movable date of Pascha. However, this calendar was inaccurate and in 1582 the Bishop of Rome (Gregory VIII) reformed the calendar which by then was ten days behind the actual date. Today, this is called the Gregorian Calendar (New Style, NS).

The New Style calendar gradually became accepted in western Europe, but was generally ignored in Orthodox lands for various historical reasons and Orthodox Churches emained on the Old Style calendar.

The Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church likewise continued using the Old Style until autocephaly when it became a parish option. In 1986 the Parish unanimously adopted the New Style, as have other, but not all, Orthodox jurisdictions. The calculations for Pascha, established at the first Ecumencial Council in 325 A.D., however, remain unchanged.

On October 14, 1986 the Parish celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church. A special lunch was provided by the Sisterhood, which included traditional Russian piroshki and sweet bread with cheese. For the occasion Sonoma County historian Gaye LeBaron wrote about the Parish’s history in her October 12th column in the Santa Rosa *Press-Democrat*.

Featured with the article were two photographs, one showing the groundbreaking in January 1936 with the officiating priest, Father Alexander Nichislavoff and Founding Members Nicon Pritoola, Julia Rayburn, Madeline Sokol, Elizabeth Sokol, Elizabeth Ikkonokoff and Nicholas and Mrs. Bashkoff, provided by the Parish. The second picture showed the Protection Church during the 1940s, taken from what is now the west parking lot, provided by Eugenia Vorobey.

During 1988, the Parish had but fifty-three members paying on the dues system and only twelve paying pledges in excess of dues. There were nine baptisms, three weddings, and seven funerals.

In February, the Parish was host to the Pacific Central Deanery, and Father Michael Oleksa was transferred from Alaska to become rector of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish.

In March of 1989, the Parish Council met and there was discussion concerning the rector’s compensation. Father George Sondergard, Cathedral Dean, appeared and asked the Parish to grant Fr. Michael a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA), noting that he was the lowest paid priest in the area.



In response, the Parish Council said that in addition to the base compensation, Fr. Michael also received rent-free housing, medical and life insurance, travel expenses and free utilities. Nevertheless, in spite of an operating deficit of \$2,429.20 over an income of \$43,000, the Parish Council voted to grant a COLA of \$451.20.

On March 5, 1989, the Parish held its Annual Meeting and Fr. Michael Oleska remarked how “this unique parish and that there are few Orthodox communities that contain so much ethnic and cultural diversity.”

On October 1st, Jeremiah Crawford was tonsured a sub deacon while Daniel Jones was ordained to the holy Diaconate.

## THE FIRST GLENDI

The idea for a *glendi*—Greek for party—originated in Spring of 1989 with Father Sergios Black, who suggested a fair be held on a modest scale on the Church grounds as a fund raiser for Parish operations and expenses. Festivals featuring traditional foods from Orthodox countries had for some time been held by other parishes and had been successful.

The idea was accepted and the first Glendi was held on September 16, 1989. Mina Roussos and Fr. Sergios volunteered as co-chairs of the event with Tom Doolan contacting vendors and suppliers.

The weather for the first Glendi was foul, with rain and hard winds forcing the entire festival to be moved into the Church Hall. Inside, it was crowded and cramped, and wet clothes didn't help. However, there was a general feeling of merriment and a “make do” spirit prevailed over Murphy's Law, and for those who remember the day it is looked upon with a degree of nostalgia. Today the Glendi is a two day affair, the culmination of weeks of planning, food preparation, putting out advertising, arranging for buses to and from the parking area, having enough cash on hand for making change, ordering supplies, setting up the tents, securing permits, contracting with bands for live music, and arranging for the vital equipment—portable restrooms and washing facilities. The manpower needs are extensive, and for the Parish it's 110% effort to make this Sonoma County Event a continuing success.

A Parish report dated October 29, 1989 shows Father Michael working with the Ministerial Association of Rohnert Park in trying to help the homeless situation in the area. It was announced that the Parish would funnel its aid through the St. Vincent de-Paul Society.

Tom Doolan was named chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee and he also began giving classes on iconography, prefiguring the time when, as Monk Simon and later Father Patrick, his talks would be a main feature of the Glendi.

By 1990 English had become the primary language of the Liturgy and other services. Moreover, the choir was now chanting responses in English, Slavonic and Greek, and there was of one day including Arabic and Tigrinyan as well. For style the choir was using a combination of Byzantine and znamenny chant.

The convert membership by then had grown to the point where they had become the mainstays of the “little Russian Church on Mountain View Avenue.” With this suc-

cess of mission and outreach and Parish growth, however, came a serious problem.

The problem was not that there were too many parishioners (there can never be too many!), but that the Temple was still the same size—now too small; serious discussions arose about how to resolve the problem. And it was a problem. On most Sundays the Temple was packed wall to wall with people, and on Pascha the situation was nearly impossible with worshippers unable to squeeze inside. One of the main points of discussion was money.

The parish had voted a budget of \$41,640 and yet took in only \$40,372.96. How was the Parish to afford extensive remodeling or building a new church, if operating at a deficit?

## PART V

# GROWTH, PROBLEMS, FAITH AND SOLUTIONS

### ARRIVAL OF PRIEST MICHAEL MARGITICH

The decade of the 1990s opened with the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish showing modest gains in numbers of pledged adults and in the annual budget. Pledges rose from thirty-one in 1990 to forty-eight in 1991, while the budget increased from \$49,381 to \$52,800.

Whether the Parish realized it or not at the time, its major impact would not be found in a few statistics, but in the assignment of Father Michael Margitich as the Parish's new rector in August of 1990.

Fr. Michael's many years in the priesthood had included not only parish work but a thirty year stint as a U.S. Air Force chaplain, rising to the rank of full colonel. This much decorated officer had retired, full of honors, to serve as chaplain to the nuns at St. Eugene's Monastery at Point Reyes Station in Marin County, and now he was back to pastoral duties at the Protection Parish.

In his first annual report to the Parish, he wrote: "I have not come to be a priest of a parish that is satisfied with minimum standards. Growth is the essence of life and the future of this parish rests in your hands. With faith, hope, love and determination, and with God's Mercy and Grace, we can make a difference." These words were to prove prophetic.

### PLANT IMPROVEMENTS AND MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

The next year's Annual Report showed increased attendance at all the Services, including Sunday Divine Liturgy, vigils, vespers and feastday liturgies on weekdays. Moreover, the records for 1991 show twenty-seven baptisms, thirteen chrismations, three weddings and six funerals.

The Church was repainted---interior and exterior---as well as the Church Hall, Rectorry and the Church School/choirmaster's dwelling.

There were also general repairs and upgrades to the physical plant, refinishing of the altar pieces, a new water filtration system and new lighting and spotlights for the Church exterior were installed.

Other continuing projects and renovations included the Rectorry (Fr. Michael and Matushka Eleanor donated the new dishwasher), new fencing on the property, and new rugs for the Church. All the icons were cleaned and/or repaired, planter boxes were built

in front of the Rectory, and a program was set up for regular maintenance, repair and upkeep. But Fr. Michael wasn't satisfied.

He was concerned that of the 185 households on the Parish mailing list, only forty-six of them had made formal pledges, although twenty-two of the families had exceeded their pledges for the year. He felt that the Parish had more potential than that, and that potential would soon be needed.

The Parish was facing a serious decision for the future. Due to the membership growth and increased attendance at Sunday Liturgies, the fifty-five year old Church was simply too small to accommodate everyone, much less the future worshippers whose ranks were to be swelled by the growing numbers of converts. In fact, then Choir Director Lawrence Margitich (later Archpriest Lawrence) reported, "Six years ago when I arrived the choir was 98% convert, with Konstantine Sakovich the only member of Russian lineage." The fruits of mission had produced a new challenge to sacrifice.

## TOWARD BUILDING A NEW CHURCH

The Parish Council accepted the challenge and asked the Building Committee to explore the pros and cons of whether to remodel the existing temple or to build a new and larger one.

Although the Committee's report was fairly straightforward, the tilt was clearly in favor of building a new temple. The argument in favor of remodeling was that it would cost \$80,000 less, countered by the point that it would destroy the character of the Protection Church while only increasing its capacity by 50%, and the Church would be unavailable for use during reconstruction.

It was pointed out that regardless of what decision was to be made, a new temple would be needed sooner or later anyway as the Parish continued its mission of bringing in new converts. Moreover, "A new temple, built in the traditional style, would be a witness to the faith, prove to be a powerful evangelical tool drawing both the non-Orthodox and marginally Orthodox." So much for the precept of mission. The precept of sacrifice meant an estimated cost of between three and four hundred thousand dollars and a minimum of two years before construction was completed.

For a sense of perspective as to what those estimated costs meant, the 1991 Glendi had brought in a net of \$9,000 for the first time, and the annual "dues" at the time remained pegged at \$150.

The dues figure did not actually represent \$150 for the Parish as fifty dollars of that went to the Metropolitanate (OCA) and forty-five dollars went to the Diocese, leaving fifty-five dollars for the Parish. Just to meet the annual Budget, 960 families would be needed if everyone only pledged dues. Meanwhile, the Parish was adding a new obligation.

## ASSISTANCE TO THE CHURCH IN RUSSIA

When the Communist regime in the Soviet Union fell in 1992, a new day had dawned with the Orthodox Church now having full freedom to operate but lacking the necessary financial resources. Aid to the Russian Church was forthcoming from Ortho-

dox Churches in the U.S.A. in both material and financial form.

The Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish also responded by contributing aid to an orphanage in Russia, with the funds being delivered by American Orthodox clergy when visiting that country.

## THE DECISION TO BUILD

The January 31, 1993 Parish Assembly was memorable in the Parish history, for on that day on a motion by John Burns and seconded by Barbara Owens, the membership voted to build a new temple. The vote wasn't even close, being recorded as twenty-six voting in the affirmative and two in opposition.

A motion was then made and passed to dedicate the entire \$106,000 in the Building Fund to new church construction. After all the discussion, after all the apprehensions (indeed, there were some), after all the questions had been raised and answered, the commitment had been made. Steve Dahl's Building Committee had done its part; now it was up to the parish membership.

The Parish appeared to be ready, for under Fr. Michael Margitich's rectorship attendance at the Holy Mysteries continued to increase, thirty-four baptisms and chrismations as well as three weddings had been performed the previous year and the 1993 budget of \$56,200 was adopted.

In January of 1994 Father Michael reported that the Parish was now serving about 170 people, and ".We can no longer live in the past or be content living with the status quo. Our Church Building is not only too small to accommodate our worshippers, but it is in need of some major repairs. It is not the financial recession which hinders us. It is not ability---but availability and willingness to sacrifice."

As if any further argument were needed, growth continued during 1993 with twenty-two baptisms, three adult chrismations and two weddings, offset by a dozen funerals and a slight drop in Sunday School enrollment as many of the Arab families had left to join the two new Antiochian Orthodox parishes in Sonoma County.

## A REFUSAL TO GIVE UP

Initially, it seemed as if the new temple might not be built as county health officials had indicated that a use permit for a new church would not be given, going so far as to tell the Parish's architect---informally---to "give up" on the idea, citing a lack of a public sewage hookup (the property is on unincorporated land between the cities of Santa Rosa and Rohnert Part) and inadequate soil conditions at 90 Mountain View Avenue. However, a use permit was granted eventually, based upon the architect's persuasion.

On June 18, 1993 at an open Building Committee meeting, there was a major discussion over the question of whether or not to put a dome on the new church, adding to the building's cost. The architect prepared two models: one with and one without a dome. That there would be a new temple was not in question, but the dome was. A decision had to be made, and the costs were rising. In the end, everyone voted for the dome, even with an estimated cost of \$750,000---some \$350,000 over the original estimate.

The Parish's faith and commitment were soon rewarded, for by God's grace the

1993 Glendi was another record breaker, netting \$11,381. 48.

## ADOPTING STEWARDSHIP

Responding to a need to change the way the Parish was financed, the congregation in 1994 abolished the out of date and inadequate system of “dues,” now relying entirely upon parishioner’s pledges, or what is sometimes called the “stewardship” system with a minimum annual pledge of \$150. Over the years stewardship has actually generated far more revenue than did the old system, an experience noted by many Orthodox parishes.

By the end of 1994 the pledged membership had grown to seventy and the 1994 budget of \$52,400 would be raised to \$53,000 in 1995. Moreover, several fund raisers which included savings jars, silver key raffles, a Valentine Party and a New Year’s Eve Party which had added \$60,000 to the Building Fund.

Progress in fund raising and commitment to the necessary sacrifice to build the new temple brought His Grace Bishop Tikhon, Bishop of the Diocese of San Francisco and the West, to the Parish on October 1st to bless the ground for the new structure in anticipation that construction would begin in Spring of the following year.

On February 11, 1996 the Parish convened its Annual Meeting and heard the various ministries’ reports. The mood was optimistic, with Fr. Michael saying that he had served as a priest for over forty years and this was the most unified parish he had ever seen.

Pledged memberships had increased to seventy-four, the Parish was paying \$458 per week on the bond accounts in the Building Fund, and in five years the Building Fund had grown from a mere \$40,000 to \$250,000.

## COMMITMENT TO TRADITION

Regardless of fiscal hurdles connected with building a new church while maintaining the older one, the Parish was clearly focused in the direction of traditional Orthodoxy, demonstrated by the choir and the new temple yet to be built.

Fr. Dcn. Lawrence Margitich, in reporting for the choir in 1995 (Fr. Lawrence was succeeded as choir director by Shirley Macrina Gawle, later Macrina Lewis) noted that some parishioners felt that there were too many changes being made in the music, making it difficult for the congregation to participate in the singing. However, Fr. Dcn. Lawrence had a ready explanation. Until then the choir had actually been singing abbreviated versions of some of the music, and now they were singing the antiphons as they were intended to be sung.

The architecture and iconography of the new Russian-Byzantine temple were also to reflect tradition. The church would face the east, have a true rounded apse, be in the shape of a cross, utilize a dome with clerestory windows around the base, have high windows letting in natural light but allowing worshippers not to be distracted by what might be happening outside, and yet would be of poured concrete and concrete block construction. Eventually the interior walls and dome were to be plastered over for fresco iconography. In sum, the new temple would reflect Eastern Orthodox traditions, eschew-

ing such western innovations as pews and an organ.

From the outset the Parish realized that completing the new temple, exterior and interior, would not be a quickie or a low budget job. For example, completion of the fresco iconography would take a number of years and would be more costly in the short term as opposed to mounting acrylic paintings on canvas like wallpaper with likelihood of eventual replacement with even more costs.

The Parish selected Monk Simon (Doolan) from St. Gregory of Sinai Monastery in Kelseyville, Lake County to execute the iconography for St. Seraphim of Sarov Church. Called Father Patrick today, this Orthodox monastic is a former student of the famed iconographer Leonid Ouspensky and has achieved acclaim in his own right, painting icons and church art for over thirty years. At St. Seraphim, and other fresco projects, Fr. Moses (---) has served as an able assistant to Fr. Patrick.

Because of the costs involved and the work of preparation (not the least of which is the erection of scaffolding) for such an extensive project, completion will take years.

At the same time, there had been from the very start a firm policy to retire the mortgage as a first priority and keep the building funding separate from the annual budget. The iconography and other furnishings for the temple were to be on a pay as you go basis.

## AN EVENT-FILLED YEAR

1996 was a busy year with construction for the new church getting under way. The Parish nominated three names for the new church and then submitted them to Bishop Tikhon for his selection. His Grace chose the name of that very beloved Russian saint, Seraphim the Wonder Worker of Sarov (feastdays January 2 and July 19).

As if history were repeating itself and the Parish reaching back to its roots, parishioners actively participated in creating furnishings for the new house of worship.

Serge Anderson put his masterful woodworking skills to use in building the iconostasis, the Altar Table, and the icon stands for the Church while Benjamin Smith built the benches along the walls.

The Parish distaff members, led by Zoya Drake, Shura Hrenoff and Matushka Eleanor Margitich were busy making icon stand covers and new vestments.

John VanDeventer provided the handsome chandeliers which today hang under the dome and adorn the side aisles. Again tradition reigned as the chandeliers were to be lit by candles and not electric lights. There was a joke circulating at the time which went:

Q. How many Orthodox Christians does it take to change a light bulb?

A. None. We use candles, not light bulbs!

The first Divine Liturgy in the new Temple was celebrated in October of 1996, even as scaffolding still occupied some of the floor space and there was only a temporary iconostasis with icons hanging on it. Officiating clergy at that first Liturgy in the new St. Seraphim Church were: Rt. Rev. Tikhon, Bishop of San Francisco and the West; Archimandrite Nicholas Soraich, Diocesan Chancellor; V. Rev. Michael Margitich, Rector; and Rev. Deacon Lawrence Margitich.

Whatever any inconvenience there may have been that day, it was a time of joy, for

the faith in God which had built the Protection Church was still at work at 90 Mountain View Avenue. The sixty year old original Church was retained and is still in use. One Parish, two churches.

Some parishioners liked the idea of having the older church so that newer generations could be baptized and married in the same church as had their forebears, providing a living tradition and continuity. An Orthodox Church is not something to be cavalierly demolished when its supposed usefulness is done.

1996 also saw the Parish celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the building and consecration of the *Pokrov*, the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church, the highlight being a dinner on Sunday, October 13th, attended by Bishop Tikhon and the V. Rev. Nicholas Soraich. An anniversary program was printed for the occasion which contained some of the history of the Parish, and which was found to be a valuable resource in researching for this volume.

The Annual Meeting on February 9, 1997 had two important pieces of business to be resolved. The first was to adopt new Parish By-Laws to bring the Parish into compliance with the already adopted Diocesan By-Laws.

The second item promoted a stimulating discussion of what the Parish's name should be now that St. Seraphim Church was in use. The official name since 1936 had been the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church, but the question was whether to incorporate the name of St. Seraphim of Sarov into the title, deleting the Protection name, using both or to stay with the original.

Apparently the more persuasive argument in favor of the original name was made by a parishioner who said, "St. Seraphim was humble. He would not want his name to supplant that of the Holy Virgin." The Parish voted for no name change.

That year the pledged memberships rose to eighty-one. The Sisterhood grossed more than \$21,000 while running up a deficit of \$400, largely due to helping with the new church---shades of the 1930s when the nebulous sisterhood found "butter and egg" money to aid in building the first church.

## ORDINATIONS AND COMPENSATIONS

In June of 1997 Fr. Dcn. Lawrence Margitich and Sub Deacon Joseph Ruocco-Brown were ordained to the holy priesthood and the holy diaconate, respectively, by Bishop Tikhon at the historic Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco, and on June 15th the new Priest Lawrence celebrated his first Divine Liturgy. Fr. Lawrence remained with the Parish as assistant to Fr. Michael.

1997 closed with the clergy having baptized and chrismated seven adults and twenty children. Four weddings and two funerals took place, a sign that the Parish would have young people to sustain it into the future.

Baptisms and chrismations continued during 1998 with twenty-nine more catechumens received into the Church. Interestingly, for the first time in recent memory funerals outnumbered weddings by two to one: two funerals and one wedding.

## ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL RETIRES



1998 ended with the retirement of Archpriest Michael Margitich, who was succeeded on January 1, 1999 by his son, Fr. Lawrence Margitich, as rector. As much as his health would permit, however, Fr. Michael continued to play an active role in the Parish and substituted for Fr. Lawrence when on vacation or away for other reasons.

The Annual Meeting on February 7, 1999 had on the agenda the matter of clergy salaries. It wasn't that the salaries were too high or that the clergy were living in luxury. In fact it was the opposite as parishioners felt that the compensations were too low, with one member making a remark about paying the clergy as if they were ditch diggers. It was not, however, disclosed what the going rate for ditch diggers was at the time!

It was revealed that Frs. Michael and Lawrence as well as Fr. Dcn. Joseph had voluntarily been declining offers to raise their stipends, further examples of mission and sacrifice. Nevertheless, despite facing a mortgage on St. Seraphim Church, extensive repairs to the leaky roof and dome and increased maintenance costs, the Parish voted overwhelmingly by 51 to 1 with 6 abstentions to calculate a total compensation package to bring the Parish into conformation with the diocesan recommendations.

Since then the rector has been provided compensation with a full benefit package which includes housing. It didn't come for free as the Annual Budget rose to \$80,100, a stratospheric figure when compared to the meager resources during the Parish's initial years.

Again it was the ever faithful Sisterhood helping out by taking over the responsibility for the choir director's salary, along with the costs of janitorial services for the Church Hall.

While there were twenty-three baptisms and chrismations (six of them adults), there were also eight funerals and three weddings as pledged memberships remained at eighty-one during the year.

Steve Dahl, Petar Griovski, Elizabeth Forsaith, Barbara Owens, Serge Anderson, Catherine Ostling, David Woodruff, Andy Skikos and John VanDeventer added to their stewardship by serving on the Parish Council while Christopher Lewis, Patrick Wilkes, Paul Burch and Jaime Cambra staffed the Church School.

It was recorded that the Parish was fulfilling the ancient Christian mission of charity by supporting the Monastery at Decani in Serbia, the Russian Red Cross, St. Tikhon's Seminary and---closer to home---food, clothing and toys to local groups.

The Parish Youth journeyed to Novato to join the Youth of the Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church for a volleyball day. This was not to be a parish vs. parish event for the teams were mixed with teenagers from both parishes with the clergy joining in for good measure and good fellowship. Your unworthy author was witness to the games which, toward the end of the afternoon, were featuring perhaps more on court acrobatics than pure volleyball, but no one was complaining. It was truly a great day for both parishes.

## RECORD BREAKING GLENDI

The 1999 Glendi reported 2,056 paid admissions, with gross receipts over the \$50,000 mark for the first time and a record profit of \$30,901.35, a far cry from the

\$2,000 realized from the initial Glendi. The Glendi was firmly established as a Sonoma County event of note, but even more importantly, it had become an established witness to Orthodoxy.

Amidst this euphoria there were dark clouds. The dark clouds turned into rain and the rains still leaked through the domed roof into St. Seraphim Church.

Extensive examination by the Building committee, headed by John VanDeventer, disclosed poor workmanship in construction and that wrong materials had been used. Only a rebuilding would suffice to protect the structure itself, not to mention the planned iconography. The picture was not a pretty one, and would have to be faced with a combination of pragmatic determination mixed with Orthodox Christian faith. Another tough challenge, but as noted before, Orthodoxy has had a lot of experience with challenges.

## PART VI

# THE NEW MILLENIUM

### A BUSY SISTERHOOD

The year 2000, foretold by some with trepidation as Y2K, was a busy one for the Sisterhood as thousands of dollars were raised through the piroshki sales, the Blini Meal, Rummage Sale, and the Christmas Bazaar, led by the traditional Sunday luncheons which alone brought in \$4,254.29. The Sisterhood continued to pay the expenses of the choir director, the Parish Hall janitorial services, the monthly advertising in the *Santa Rosa Press-Democrat*, vestments, silverware and making donations which included an impressive \$4,000 to the Building Fund.

Stewardship was proving to be successful as the Annual Budget's anticipated pledges of \$37,000 actually generated just over \$10,000 more which helped raise the Parish total income to \$91,435.69, some \$11,685 over the budget projections.

Although stewardship was doing well, one of the foundations of it is that it should be done prayerfully, with individual and personal commitment. Toward that end, Father Lawrence, at the February 4, 2001 Annual Meeting, asked everyone to prayerfully consider the words of St. Paul the Apostle: "Let each of you regularly on the first day of the week set aside a proportion as God has prospered you" (1Corinthians 16:2) For the Orthodox, stewardship means giving back to God what is His, since all things come from Him and worldly things, even if they appear to be essential, are not to distract us from our spiritual obligations.

It was not merely the rising costs but also the confidence instilled in the faithful which led to adopting an Annual Budget of \$103,050.

Nicholas Carr brought his professional teaching background to the Church School staff by being the coordinator, assisted by teachers Marsha Blank, Paul Burch, Jaime Cambra, Elizabeth Forsaith, Christopher Lewis and Patrick Wilkes.

The choir gave a concert at the Sonoma County Museum, offering yet another forum for Orthodox liturgical music and Orthodox outreach.

Sacramentally, there were twenty-eight people brought into the Church through the Holy Mysteries of baptism and chrismation, seven of whom were adults, eleven of the baptisms for members of the Eritrean community. The year ended with ten adult catachumens with weddings and funerals balanced at three each.

The year 2001 recorded thirty-five baptisms and chrismations, four weddings and seven funerals. Pledged memberships held at eighty-nine while between 150 and 175 faithful attended Sunday Liturgies.

## BAPTISMS AND CHRISMATIONS DON'T REPRESENT MORE PLEDGES

Since numerous baptisms and chrismations brought converts into the Parish, it may well be questioned why there was no commensurate increase in the number of pledged members. Here are some answers.

A substantial portion of those being baptized were children who would be enrolled as part of their parents' households, often well through their college years or until they became self-supporting.

Funerals often represented losses of pledged members while the families of those who had reposed were sometimes living out of the area or in another state.

This was an area once available for affordable or relatively inexpensive living, but was no longer the case and families had moved to less costly locations which were often out of the Santa Rosa area or even Sonoma County. Others had moved away because of job transfers or other reasons not entirely related to church life.

There certainly was no one size fits all answer. Archpriest Michael Margitich addressed the issue, albeit in the context of church attendance, in the October 2007 edition of the Parish newsletter, *Orthodox Messenger*.

Fr. Michael wrote: "The human factor is an ever present reality in the Church and there is no one specific way to reactivate the inactive members, the dropouts. The fact remains, if one returns to the Lord and His Church solely to 'get something' and never to give of oneself, spiritual growth will be stunted."

He also noted that the motivations for Church attendance are complex and varied. "I have known individuals who for many years actively supported the Church, but for one reason or another their devotion and commitment wore away. They then began to absent themselves from attending the Sunday Liturgy, not to mention the Saturday evening Vespers. Then infrequent participation becomes a permanent reality. They become a memory---placed on the 'inactive list.' Others, who become critical of Church programs, clergy, teaching and the implications of following the Church teachings, parish council decisions, etc. lose interest and become dropouts."

## ALMSGIVING IN THE BUDGETS

The minutes and reports at the Parish Assembly held on February 3, 2001 showed an increased commitment for charity and almsgiving as the Sisterhood reported that they were now using a line item of 10% of their income for charity and that the Glendi would now be setting aside a part of its profit for alms. Moreover, Fr. Lawrence disclosed that he was disbursing about \$100 per month for the poor and needy from the Parish's special fund for that purpose.

A serious item of discussion was the date for the Glendi, usually held in September. St. Seraphim Church was scheduled to be consecrated in July, and there were those who wondered if the Glendi were too close to the consecration date since both events would require extensive plans and preparation. In the end, it was decided to schedule the Glendi as it had been—the third weekend in September.

## THE PARISH GETS A SECRETARY

After sixty-five years of “making do,” the Parish finally employed a secretary to handle many of the daily chores associated with proper office management. It was ever faithful Alla Keyes who volunteered two days a week, and before long she was doing the banking and keeping the Parish records in good order. Seven years later the job has grown to five days a week, Tuesday through Saturday, 9:00 A.M. until Noon.

## CONSECRATION OF ST. SERAPHIM OF SAROV CHURCH

On July 28th, St. Seraphim of Sarov Church was consecrated by His Grace Bishop Tikhon, assisted by not only the Parish clergy but visiting Orthodox clergy as well, with one hieromonk coming all the way from Pennsylvania for the event. All in all, almost twenty priests and deacons participated in the service.

At the conclusion of the Consecration and the Divine Liturgy which followed, there was a joyful radiance. for in the hearts of the faithful were the words of the psalmist, “This was the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” (Psalm 118:23)

Choir director Macrina Lewis had divided the choir for singing antiphonically from both sides of the Church, something rarely witnessed in the Parish. Indeed, it was a memorable day.

Relics of Saints Elizabeth the New Martyr, Nun Barbara, and Anastasy the Hieromartyr and deacon of Kiev were sealed in the Altar and the Church was now formally consecrated and dedicated to Saint Seraphim, Wonder Worker of Sarov.

## THE PARISH REACTS TO 9/11

There was no time for the parishioners to rest, for now they had to get ready for the Glendi in mid-September. Then, on Tuesday September 11th, 2001, disaster struck on the east coast when terrorists hijacked four jetliners. Two were flown in suicide crashes into the World Trade Center in New York City, one was crashed into the Pentagon in Virginia, while the fourth crashed in rural Pennsylvania while allegedly en route to a suicide mission in Washington, D.C.

The regular Tuesday evening Vespers were somber, to say the least, and at the end Father Lawrence gathered everyone for prayer and memorial for those who had perished that day, praying for those who had died and for those who did not have time to pray. The day which has become known simply as “9/11” had enough news to shock the world, and the shock waves had reached Mountain View Avenue. The question was whether or not to go through with the Glendi as scheduled... or to postpone it.

Would having a festive affair with the nation still in shock and mourning be considered appropriate? How would the public feel? What about all the food which had been prepared, beverages which had already been purchased, the band contracts and the advertising which had already gone out? As Americans, should they stand up to the terrorists by hosting the Glendi as scheduled and let the terrorists know they could not destroy the American spirit? These were serious and well considered questions. In the end, however, the Glendi went on as planned with American flags in abundance. Apparently the public was in agreement with the Parish for the Glendi profit that year was

\$27,756.10.

Going into 2002 the Parish continued to grow and the Church School classes were meeting in what had become cramped quarters. At the Annual Meeting in 2003 Vicky Basch insisted that the ministry needed to be included in any future long range planning for the Parish. Moreover, the Church School had grown to the point where a full K-12 curriculum was needed.

Religious education did not end with Church School, for there were opportunities for adult education as well. On most Tuesdays following Vespers Vincent Rossi, Fred Krueger, Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford, Michael Hoffman, Nicholas Carr, Matushka Ann Margitich, Christopher Lewis, Macrina Lewis, Fr. Lawrence Margitich and others led the adults in religious discussion sessions, usually accompanied by a fine meal prepared by one or more of the "students." In addition, Fr. Lawrence led Wednesday morning classes. For some years there had been weekly Bible Study classes at the Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church in Novato, hosted by Fr. Constantine Efstathiou, and it was not unusual for parishioners from Protection of the Holy Virgin Parish to be participating in those classes as well.

There was a Winter Retreat in November, led by Father John Mack (OCA) with Mother Christopher, Abbess of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery for women in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania.

The choir made its first recordings on CD which sold out, bringing \$800 into the choir's budget. Plans were being made for further recordings with an even higher professional standard.

Fr. Lawrence and Choir Director Macrina Lewis attended a Choir and Readers Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin which brought together about sixty people from the northwestern United States.

The Glendi netted slightly less than in 2001, showing a profit of \$27,569.92. Of that, \$5,000 was allocated for charity with the House of Mercy Orphanage in Russia receiving \$2,500, Rafael House in San Francisco receiving \$1,250 and the same amount going into the Rector's Reserve. With solemnity, Fr. Lawrence noted that "in our own backyard it is never enough."

Sub Deacon Jeremiah Crawford was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius at Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco.

Meanwhile, Anthony Douglas was working closely with Fr. Lawrence to develop a website for the Parish, which can be visited at [www.stseraphim.com](http://www.stseraphim.com).

Baptisms continued during 2002 as eighteen infants, ten coming from the Eritrean community, received the Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation while twenty-five adults, twenty from the Eritrean community, were also received into the Church. While there were four weddings, they involved members of a sister parish in Sacramento.

Alla Keyes, long one of the mainstays of the Parish, was instrumental in having old and diseased trees removed and replaced by new ones. This project was made possible by a gift from an anonymous parishioner.

When Fr. Deacon Joseph Ruocco-Brown and his family relocated to the Sacramento area, he remained attached to the Parish by order of the Bishop. Subsequently, Fr. Dcn. Joseph was transferred to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America to serve at

St. Anna's Greek Orthodox Church in Roseville, California.

The Carr family left for Pennsylvania as Nicholas was to attend St. Tikhon's Seminary to further his Orthodox education.

The prominent Orthodox architectural firm, EKONA of San Francisco, was retained to take over the project of eliminating the leaks in the dome of St. Seraphim Church. This would amount to a complete rebuilding of the dome with some slight changes to the original design. It would not come cheaply, as an original estimate of \$150,000 would eventually climb to almost \$300,000, including plastering and scaffolding, and to that would have to be added the costs of the icons of the prophets and angels.

Parishioners coming into St. Seraphim Church were able to notice some changes in the Sanctuary, highlighted by a new bishop's throne which Fr. Lawrence called a "crown jewel." Other improvements included a new seven branched candelabra for the Altar, imported from Russia, new candlesticks, a new lamp hanging in the apse, and new robes for the altar boys. All in all, a good year.

As the Parish continued to grow in the new millennium, so did the need for sacrifice and mission. With stewardship firmly in place, the offerings of time and talent complemented the offerings of treasure.

Parish Council members for 2003 were Starosa John VanDeventer, Treasurer Petar Griovski, James Counts, Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford, Anthony Douglass, Mathew Michael, Lydia Nicholson, Xenia Duran, and Stephen Pellizer, along with alternates Chrysostomos Parks, Deanna Panages, and Secretary Esther Schau.

The Church School staff included Coordinator Victoria Basch, Margaret Hoffman, Elena Alexeyev, Paul Burch, Michael Hoffman, Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford, John VanDeventer, Deanna Panages, Carol Elizabeth Thong, Lydia Nicholson, Kyriaki VanDeventer, Mary Blank, Lara Anderson and Vincent Rossi.

Working with the Junior Youth Group were Ellen Aylward and Laurel Counts while the position for the high schoolers was vacant.

The Church Furnishings Artisan was Serge Anderson while Chrysostomos Parks and Nino Parks ran the Bookstore.

The Charity Committee consisted of Daniel Bell, Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford, Chrysostomos Parks and Paul Burch. The Food Bank Distributor was Efrain Monico, the Membership Secretary was Xenia Duran, and the 2003 Glendi Coordinators were Eugenia Griovski, Lydia Nicholson and Chris Frye. Catherine Ostling and Gregory Sanford were the Sunday lunch coordinators, the Auditors were Rachel Bell, Steven Nichols and Natalie Hansen (alternate), and Matushka Katherine Crawford and Natalie Hansen took care of the Temple Flower decorations. The Vestment Maker was Zoya Drake, the Librarian was Katherine Michael, Mathew Michael took charge of the Church Cleanup Committee and George Kielczinski was in charge of maintenance of the landscaping and grounds.

The numbers and scope of jobs and people to fill them might have awed the Parish's Founding Members, but it might not have surprised them, either. After all, it was their heritage of mission and sacrifice which was making those jobs necessary.

Another growth indicator was in Parish finance. Even though the budget for 2003 came to \$128,335.00, another \$23,751 was actually spent for a grand total of

\$152,086.00—a far cry from that initial donation of \$5.50, even if adjusted for inflation! And that wasn't all. Treasurer Petar Griovski estimated that the parish expenses would go up for the next five years and that the Parish might have to borrow as much as \$200,000 to keep going.

Even the Building Fund wasn't immune from six figure sums, budgeting \$292,225 for expenses although spending only \$106,870.

The Sisterhood was now dealing with sums unimaginable in the early years: an income of \$18,587.46 and expenses of \$16,952.10.

The 2003 Glendi was able to net \$21,000 from gross receipts of \$44,000. This was a decline from 2002, due largely to a drop off of 700 admissions. Still, the Glendi Tithe produced \$4,600 for almsgiving.

Work was done to correct the problems associated with the faulty construction of the dome on St. Seraphim Church. The plan was to fabricate the major part of the new steel framing off-site, followed by lifting the old dome of the roof and replacing it with the new steel framework, then covering it with copper and plastering the interior. A major job, but necessary if the Church were to stop leaking and the iconography to be completed.

The Church School had grown and matured, again a far cry from when Father Nicholas Szerocky was trying to get it started half a century before. There were five classes and only two classrooms, so one class met in the Protection Church, one met in the Rector's Office, and one met wherever space could be found. Attendance varied from forty-six to seventy-six students weekly.

The choir also showed its coming of age with close to a score of singers for Sunday Liturgies and its first professionally recorded CD, ATTEND, O HEAVEN, having sold the first 1,000 copies and a second order being produced. Again a far cry from the days when Julia Rayburn and Alexandra Moschensky were the entire choir and Peter Harding was their director!

The year 2003 closed with the Parish having 108 voting members. This number, of course, did not include members who did not, for various reasons, make their financial pledges to the Parish, and it did not include dependent offspring of pledged members.

This statistic was in conformity with the OCA statute which clearly spelled out the differences between members and voting members. According to the Statue, a member is one who is in good canonical standing and a voting member is one who is at least eighteen years of age, has participated in the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion at least once per year and has fulfilled such financial obligations as may be established by the All-American Councils, the Diocesan Assemblies and the Parish.

According to Parish records, the actual membership for 2003 were:

35 married couples	70
Children of members	42
Single men	7
Single women	10
Widow(er)s	13
Members with non-Orthodox spouses	<u>13</u>
Total	155



As of the 2004 Annual Meeting there were 110 members, seven under the figure at the same time the previous year. This drop was attributed to one death, two members who moved away, and four who had not renewed their pledges although Fr. Lawrence was hoping to convince them to renew.

As the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish entered its seventieth year, growth continued in the matters of budget and improvements to the buildings and grounds.

The 2004 budget of \$172,950.00 fell short by \$44,198.37 as the income was only \$128,751.63. Clearly more sacrifices would be needed.

Parish records show that in 2004 there were twenty baptisms or chrismations, four weddings, four funerals and seven receptions from monophysitism.

A study by Fr. Lawrence showed that from 1990 through 2004 there had been 408 baptisms or chrismations in the Parish. From 2002 until 2004 there had been thirty-nine receptions of Eritrean adults from the Coptic faith into the Orthodox Church. During the years 1990 through 2004, 166 children of Eritrean descent were baptized although many had moved away or did not return to Church following baptism. That same time frame also showed 100 children of other backgrounds being baptized although again, many were no longer visible in the Church.

## GREENING OF THE PARISH

Since the environment is God's creation, the Orthodox Church teaches that the faithful are to be good stewards of the earth. In 2004 the Parish did its part in going "green" as under the direction of Chris Frye solar panels were installed to meet the Parish's need for electric power. The monetary investment was \$34,321.73 plus labor donated by the parishioners, but over the long term this would not only be good for the environment but good for the Parish treasury as well.

Other physical improvements that year included a new water well, a new gazebo and landscaping in front of St. Seraphim Church, repairs to the dome in St. Seraphim Church with sketches in the dome for future icons, and a new Church Office. In addition, there was the new set of Russian-made church bells which included the huge 3,000 pound Blagovestnik bell. The cost of the bells was met by donations into a special fund for that purpose rather than from the Annual Budget.

St. Seraphim Church was further enhanced as the Sisterhood donated the fabrics for the new Church altar coverings, vestments, acolyte robes and curtains for the Royal Doors.

## NEW PORTABLE CLASSROOMS

The Church School was able to utilize two new portable classrooms located next to the Church Hall while the old Grades 1-3 classrooms were converted into the Parish Library, and the Pre-School—Kindergarten classroom was to be used for the high schoolers to "hang out" in for their evening get-togethers.

The choir hosted a workshop for small and mission parishes in the Pacific Northwest in the Springtime and CD sales were helping to acquire professional equipment to be used for future recordings.

Almsgiving took a slightly different direction as the Glendi Tithe was put into the Rector's Fund to discreetly help people associated with the Parish. It was hoped that this would be for only one year.

#### ADDITIONAL CLERGY FOR THE PARISH

The Parish saw more than a few personnel changes during 2005, not the least of which were additional clergy. Father Lawrence continued as the Rector, ably assisted by Archpriest Michael, Rector Emeritus. Priest John Schettig arrived to serve the Parish, on loan from the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church. On December 15th, Priest John Ramos became attached to the Parish. Fr. Deacon Jeremiah Crawford continued to serve, joined now by Fr. Deacon Brendan Doss, on loan from the Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada.

#### NEW CHOIR DIRECTOR

Choir Director Macrina Lewis and her family relocated to the Pacific Northwest, and Nicolas Craig Custer became the new Director. Mr. Custer brought with him a quarter of a century of conducting Orthodox choirs in the Slavic tradition. He studied music at the University of California–Berkeley, earned a master's degree from San Francisco State University and is pursuing his doctorate at UCLA.

The Grounds and Landscaping chores were being handled by Seraphim Ranney, Nilus Veenis and Alla Keyes who continued as Parish Secretary.

The Parish Council consisted of Starosta Serge Anderson, Treasurer Petar Griovski, Dimitrios Skikos, Gregory Sanford, Preston Anthony Booker, Lydia Nicholson, Nicholas Carr, Fr. Dcn. Brendan Doss, and Seraphim Ranney with Deanna Panages and Joseph Lovell serving as alternates.

Michael and Margaret Hoffman moved out of state, leaving a vacancy in the Office of Sisterhood President. Fr. Lawrence assumed that role temporarily until a special election could be called and then Barbara Owens was elected to the office.

During the year 2005, nineteen people were received into the Parish by baptism or chrismation and there was one wedding. The Parish lost seven members who reposed in the Lord, but as the year closed there were nine catechumens awaiting illumination.

There was a new fresco icon over the west door to St. Seraphim Church showing the Theotokos holding the Protection Church and St. Seraphim of Sarov holding the church named for him—permanent reminders to all who enter of the Parish's past and present.

#### AN UP-TO-DATE RECTORS OFFICE

The solar panel system was paid for and a new Church Office, with modern telephone equipment, FAX machine and computer installed in back of the Rectory. While steadfastly retaining past traditions, the Church Office was full up-to-date electronically and for the foreseeable future the Parish bulletins would not be written with a quill pen

on parchment by candlelight!

The Parish was now serving an Orthodox mission in Middletown in Lake County which had a budget of \$9,000 for the entire year. The precept of mission was still alive and well, thanks to God!

There were still some leaks in St. Seraphim Church, but this time they had nothing to do with the dome and it was estimated that they would be rectified when the exterior walls were finally finished.

Again the Parish's income fell short. The budget projection had been \$153,500.00. However, the total income was \$128,331.56. Fortunately, actual expenses came to \$128,489.72, leaving a deficit of only \$158.16.

The Sisterhood did better financially, taking in \$21,258.86 with expenses of \$11,217.04 and showing a net of \$10,041.82, of which \$9,555.72 were dispersed.

The 2005 Glendi netted \$30,543.72.

## CD AND STEWARDSHIP

The Choir began 2005 with \$4,847.25 in its treasury. Thanks to sales of its latest recording, this was increased by \$2,434.10. The Choir then demonstrated its own stewardship by donating \$6,000 to the Building Fund.

The Church School continued its mission with Coordinator Vicky Basch and her teaching staff of Lara Anderson, Susanna Booker and Lisa Thomas (Preschool—Kindergarten), Deanna Panages (Grades 1-3), Anthony Booker (Grades 4-5), Matushka Magdalene Doss, Priest John and Matushka Xenia Schettig (Grades 7-8), and Nicholas Carr teaching the high schoolers.

The 2006 Parish Assembly saw Vicky Basch again emphasizing the need for the Church School to be involved in the Parish long term planning as well as the need for more student involvement in the Sunday Liturgy.

## THE ROBBERIES

Overall, 2006 would be a successful year for the Parish, save for two unfortunate incidents. During the year, thieves struck, stealing two solar panels and one of the Russian church bells. At another time, a thief, or thieves, broke into two parishioners' cars during Sunday Divine Liturgy. Fr. Lawrence sadly had to advise everyone to keep their cars locked while they attended services.

The Parish's insurance eventually covered replacement of the solar panels and the bell.

## CHURCH IMPROVEMENTS

The exterior of St. Seraphim Church was finished, and at last it was felt that the problems with leaks were solved. The interior received added plasterwork as well as new leaded glass windows.

The Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary church also received upgrades as flooring was refinished, new curtains were hung, and the narthex was painted. At the same time,

new lamps, vestments, a diskos and candleholders were donated. New gravel was placed in the parking lot, the Pokrov was refurbished and a new septic system was installed for the rental units, the Church Hall was painted and beautified.

## FINANCES IMPROVED

The Parish did better financially in 2006 than in previous years. First, the bonds were paid off, relieving some of the debt on the new Church, although the debt balance in the Building Fund, at year's close stood at \$376,165.49. Yearly income exceeded the budget projection of \$137,000.00 by 11,310.13 even though the actual expenses were \$145,192.62. Some of the expenses included \$10,612.95 to the OCA and \$8,134.88 to charities, missions and evangelism while assistance to the seminaries came to \$5,147.10.

The Sisterhood continued to do very well, having the net of \$12,702.54 from an income of \$32,605.58.

Other highlights for 2006 included the printing of the new Parish Directory, hosting the 2006 Liturgical Singing Seminar, and—looking to the future—adopt a Five Year Master Plan.

The Glendi recorded a gross income of \$56,042.35 with a net of \$31,373.93 after expenses and that \$3,150 was set aside for Tithe for almsgiving. It was estimated that around 2,000 people attended the two day event.

Coordinator Vicky Basch took leave of absence from the Church School and was replaced by Lara Anderson, who also continued her teaching duties.

Baptisms and christmations continued as eighteen receptions into Orthodoxy took place, along with two weddings. There also were five funerals and five catechumens at year's end.

## ZNAMENNY CHANT AND THE CHOIR

Under Nicolas Custer's direction, the Choir was becoming more traditional, bringing back the Fifteenth Century Znamenny Chant which is based on short melodic motifs shaped in different ways so that each motif is individual yet flows from one to the other. Znamenny Chant is an expression of eastern Slavic music which was developed to fit the syllables and pronunciation of the Russian language to the services which were translated from Byzantine Greek.

It is noteworthy that a variation of the Znamenny Chant was used by the monks at Valaam Monastery at Lake Ladoga in Russia, and it was the chant used by St. Herman of Alaska and the early Church in what was to become the 49th State. A second wave of immigration from Galicia (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and western Ukraine brought yet another choral variation to America, and from that developed the chant used in Alaska.

The Choir later started using music composed by Father Lawrence and Choir Director Nicolas Custer.

In 2007 the Parish, through attorney Wayne Wolski, sued the building contractor for St. Seraphim of Sarov Church in an attempt to recover the costs involved with re-

building the church dome. Architect John Hunter, who had been donating his time and expertise not only with the lawsuit but helping the Parish in formulating the Master Plan as well, was the expert witness and it was felt that the Parish had a strong case. There was understandable disappointment when the judge ruled against the Parish, based upon the motion for the defense that the suit was not timely.

The stolen solar panels and the church bell were replaced, and then the solar array was fenced in to prevent further vandalism and theft. In addition, a security system and lighting were installed.

Priests John Schettig and John Ramos were formally attached to the Parish. The Diocese enthroned His Grace Bishop Benjamin (Patterson) as the new ruling hierarch of San Francisco and the Diocese of the West replacing His Grace Bishop Tikhon, who had retired.

*O Lord, keep our Master and Highpriest for Many Years!*

The Glendi set new records all around as the visitors produced an income of \$61,067.07. After expenses were deducted there was a profit of \$37,132.01, from which there was Tithe of \$3,713.00, a capital outlay of \$4,540.30, and even after an amazing \$20,000.00 to the Building Fund there was a balance of \$8,878.71 with a recommendation of an additional \$8,000 to be transferred to the Building Fund!

Whether all of this was a result of more sophisticated Glendi planning, the excellence of the bands, the radiant smile on Father Lawrence's face as he danced on the bass drum, the quality of the food (several booths sold out early), the fine weather, or the high level of energy expended by the parishioners to make the Glendi a success, it more than made up for some of the middling successes of Glendis past.

After being a paying visitor to the Glendi for about a decade, your unworthy author was honored by being asked to volunteer as a Glendi worker. Impressed by the high spirits and camaraderie of all the Glendi volunteers, he came away with a conviction that our gracious Lord has truly blessed this God fearing Parish. "Thy blessings be upon thy People!" (Psalm 3:8)

As with the Glendi, the Church School had a very successful year. In March the ministry donated household items for the Rafael House in San Francisco, in October a Bake Sale provided funds for the OCA Stocking Project, and in December there was a collection for the Rafael House, indicating that Orthodox education and Orthodox almsgiving go hand in hand.

It wasn't all classroom work with the Church School, for during St. Seraphim week the students made a pilgrimage to San Francisco to venerate the relic of St. John Maximovich, Wonder Worker of Shanghai and San Francisco; a "virtue walk" at the Bodega Headlands to appreciate God's gifts and the beauty of his creation; had an "angel party" for the Synaxis of the Holy Archangels. In February there was a "Blast Before the Fast" and in December the traditional St. Nicholas Party (Santa Claus wasn't there!) to add some fun to the joy of learning. Coordinator Lara Anderson also taught her Pre-school and Kindergarten class, Deanna Panages taught her grades 1-3 class, Fr. John Schettig and Matushka Xenia Schettig taught their grades 4-6 class, Ian Shipley taught the Grades 7-8 while Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford and Archpriest Lawrence taught the

high school class. Special mention must be made of the Church School Support Staff of Juliana Veenis, Susana Booker, Tyler-Rose Counts, Matushka Katherine Ramos and Fred Krueger.

## ST. SERAPHIM CHURCH STAYS DRY IN WINTER

The year 2008 brought severe winter rainstorms, but for the first time St. Seraphim Church did not leak and the Parish could look forward to completing the interior plasterwork and iconography.

Jennie Castillo, her daughter Micaela and son Alejandro were baptized into the Orthodox Church. To honor them, Jennie's parents, Lew and Janet Baer, commissioned icons of saints who have shown forth in America for the cliros in St. Seraphim Church. Later in 2008 the Baers themselves would become baptized Orthodox Christians.

The Church School enjoyed the annual "Blast Before the Fast" (Friday ice cream social prior to Lent), as well as—later in the year—St. Seraphim Week activities during the summer break before resuming classes in September.

## MARBLE AND PLASTER

The marble wainscoting in St. Seraphim Church was completed and the decision was made to complete the interior plastering of the Temple. Because of all the scaffolding and the necessity of removing the church furniture, a large tent was erected in the west parking lot (which was also improved in 2008) and used for Sunday Liturgies for four weeks.

April 20th, Palm Sunday, saw the choir using nine new music stands, all carefully crafted to blend with the woodwork of the iconostasis.

The plastering was completed in time for Pascha Liturgy and St. Seraphim Church was even brighter as the walls, now white, brilliantly reflected the light from hundreds of Paschal candles while the cry of "Christ is Risen!" seemed more joyous than ever. Parenthetically, the clergy continued what has become yet another tradition in the Parish, that of proclaiming "Christ is Risen!" in Slavonic, English, Greek, Arabic, and Tigrinyan to acknowledge the Parish's diversity and its unity.

## NEW SEMINARIANS

As summer began Ian and Priscilla Shipley and their children bade farewell as they departed for St. Tikhon's Seminary to begin their studies. That fall a special collection was taken to aid them financially.

## NEW MISSIONARY

During the summer Anastasia Micaela Castillo served the Lord by doing missionary work in the Dominican Republic.

## ST. SERAPHIM FEASTDAY

The parish celebrated the Feastday of St. Seraphim of Sarov in the Church named for him on July 19th. Celebrating the Liturgy were His Grace Bishop Benjamin, Fathers Lawrence, Michael, John Schettig and Hieromonk Sergious (Gherkin), Abbot of the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga.

Following the Divine Liturgy there was a coffee social in the patio as the Sisterhood prepared the luncheon in the Parish Hall. Lunch was a festive affair with remarks by Bishop Benjamin, Fr. Lawrence and Fr. Michael (who also encouraged ticket sales for a drawing to be held later that day). Other parishioners offered their thoughts on the day, but it was an announcement by long-time Parish Treasurer Petar Griovski which stole the show.

Within a short span of time, the Parish—in spite of setbacks due to the dome rebuilding—had managed to pay off the bank loans on St. Seraphim Church, and on that beloved Saint's feastday the bank mortgage would be burned.

The Treasurer held up a silver tray with the documents, was handed a lighter, and the papers were set to flame. Undoubtedly there were those in the Hall who were filled with emotion, for the first there had been those with sincere doubts as to how it could ever be done. But it was done, and "Thanks be to God, who gives us victory though our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

As July ended, the iconographer was applying new frescoes, giving the Parish icons of St. Paul, St. Barbara, and St. Mary Magdalene. Before the year was over another icon, took shape, that of St. Peter the Apostle.

## LONG TERM PLANNING TAKES SHAPE

On August 19th a master planning meeting was held to work on the Priority List of things to done over the next five years. In the absence of Master Plan Chairman Seraphim Ranney and consultant John Hunter, Fr. Lawrence assumed the chair.

It was noted that the Master Plan Committee was still without a secretary to take minutes and to keep records of proceedings, and that Fr. Lawrence was hoping for someone to step up and assume the job.

It had been emphasized in the announcements bulletin on August 10th that at no point during the master planning process have there been any secret meetings, decisions, or agendas. In fact, every meeting has been open to everyone and everyone has been encouraged to participate.

In that same bulletin Fr. Lawrence explained the format for having ideas submitted and considered: 1) come to the meeting; 2) write down suggestions regarding the topic at hand for the evening; 3) bring up the idea during the discussion on the area of interest; 4) review the minutes of the meeting to insure the idea has been recorded and considered.

The next step was to go over the Priority List, noting projects already completed, those which were ongoing and those which were a year away from completion, whether one, two, three, four, or five years. High on the importance was the need to make the Protection Church and its surrounding areas compliant with the American with Disabilities Act.

Other ideas were submitted which included tree planting, better security from tres-

passers, storage facilities, a drinking fountain for the children's playground, development of the vineyard for wine production, a compost pit for fertilizer which could be sustained by waste from the kitchen, and improvement in paving of the parking area (wheelchairs and walkers have difficulty in negotiating the loose gravel presently there).

The first parishioner to offer ideas at a meeting was seven year old Carmen Anderson, who not only had her ideas in writing but also carefully and clearly spelled out her reasons. Her first idea was for a basketball court behind the Church, a new playground and more trees. Any visitor would have been impressed with her presentation and with the attention she received from the seventeen adults in the audience.

In fact, it was democracy in action and the parish which clings to its heritage was clearly looking to its future.

## YOUTH VIEWS THE PARISH

That same month two teenage members of the Parish, Tyler-Rose Counts and Alicia Krueger, offered some thoughts and feelings about their Parish.

Tyler-Rose explained that Church "is where my family is—my Church family and my real family," while Alicia said, "I've been going to church all my life—it's a very important part of my life now. Church offers a source of stability. I know it is for me." Tyler-Rose added, "It's my stability, a refuge from the storm. It's peaceful here. I know I can come here for help if I need it."

Tyler-Rose went on to tell about her participation in the Choir, and how despite her youth she was treated as an equal with adult singers. "Ever since I was twelve, Fr. Lawrence has been trying to get me in the Choir. I really love to sing, and I have a chance to sing for the Glory of God."

Both girls told of their Church School experiences and noted that with the younger students getting older they looked forward to a more exciting high school program. All of this was reinforced by a strong sense of Parish community with Alicia remarking, "Everyone is like a big family here—there is a community feeling here," and Tyler-Rose added by saying, "I've been here all my life; it's like a home to me. I'd want to get married here."

## GLENDI REACHES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

On September 20th and 21st, the Parish hosted the 20th Annual Glendi, and it seemed as if the spirit and enthusiasm of the volunteers was limitless as they offered thoughts and impressions of their favorite Glendis and memories:

ELENA ALEXEI, Russian Food booth, 6th year: "Every Glendi is wonderful. I don't have any preferences. It's different every year.

SHENINA, Greek Food booth, 7th year: "They're all good. They're all different."

DEANNA PANAGES, Craft booth, 8th year: "My favorite Glendi was before we started coming to this church. About eighteen years ago [my husband] John and I came to the Glendi and I won the raffle—a big Russian doll!"

MAGDALEN DUGAN, Craft booth, 7th year: "This is my favorite because I had to move last year and it's wonderful seeing my old friends again, and how thankful I am for



this community.”

MATUSHKA ESTHER CARR, Wine booth, 9th year: “Every year it’s my favorite Glendi!”

READER PAUL BURCH, Beer and Ale booth, 16th year: “My favorite was my first. I came on a Sunday afternoon and people were starting to run out of food. It was my first time on these grounds and Fr. Simon [Doolan, now Fr. Patrick] did the Church Tour. About six months later I was christmated.”

READER DAVID DOSS, Balkan Food booth, 5th year: “The year 2006. I was very active in the Parish and just had a lot of fun.”

PETAR GRIOVSKI, Balkan Food booth, 20th “This one is the best because I do all the cooking!”

ELENI ROSE, Outdoor Pastries booth, 13th year: This year because my boyfriend was here—I made him work in the kabobs booth. This is the first year I got [all the way] through Fr. Patrick’s talk on iconography. It’s also my saddest because my best friend Julie lost her Dad the day before the Glendi and I worked her booth for her.”

CATECHUMEN JANET NONNA BAER, Protection Church Tour, 2nd year: “Oh this one is the best because now we’re so involved and it’s OURS!. We started coming eighteen years ago and Fr. Michael (Margitich) said that we would be back, and here we are, preparing for Baptism!”

CAROL ELIZABETH THONG, Indoor Pastries, 6th year: “My first was really fun because we didn’t work too hard and we danced a lot!”

TOM ELLS, Lamb booth, 9th year: “Well, it was the first year we broke \$20,000 and the year we broke \$50,000. Richard George Blank, I’ll never forget his contribution to the Lamb booth.”

MATUSHKA KATHERINE CRAWFORD, Office, 16th year: “My favorite memories are the music, the bands, the candlelight music on Saturday night, the choir music. But I also like the food, O.K.? It’s fun when family shows up.”

FR. DEACON JEREMIAH CRAWFORD, Bookstore, 16th year: “On the first one it utterly poured buckets of rain, thunder, and lightning, and the beer was still outside. We had to move everything into the Parish Hall. Five years ago I was working over in the parking lot and it was 115° and no shade—it was crazy but I survived it.”

GRETCHEN MCPHERSON, Bookstore, 2nd “I’ve been coming to Glendi for five years. my first Glendi I heard a Church Tour by Christopher Lewis, and heard and saw that standing in Church demonstrates church theology. my favorite was when they swung the chandelier and I realized that God is worthy of a swinging chandelier covered with candles. These things helped bring me to Orthodoxy.

LAURA MAYO, Indoor Pastries, 6th year: “I think the people are—there’s a diversity of nationality and beliefs—everyone is so polite to everyone else. Everyone is so kind to everyone else and seems so respectful of each other.”

CATHY VEENIS, Coffee Counter, 20th year, off and on: “My favorite was last year at night when it seemed like a huge Mediterranean party and a guy came up with big painted fingernails and said, ‘Veenis, I love you!’”

SERAPHIM RANNEY, Trash Collection, 5th year: “our first was the one in 2003, talking with Deacon Jeremiah (Crawford) up at the Bookstore in the Patio. That was 90%

of the reason we converted to Orthodoxy. My wife and I converted separately, but together in the same time frame. After that it's been nothing but work (laughter)!"

OLE KERN, Greek Coffee booth, 10th year: "I like the communal aspect, the sense of community with all the diversity, yet within the unity of the Church.

GABE GRIOVSKI, Kitchen, 20th year: "I was there for the first one, holding up tents with a broom handle!. There's no favorite, they all have their high and low points."

NATALIE HANSEN, Admissions booth, 20th year: I love counting the money I'm taking in (laughs). I love the contact with people and the adorable babies and welcoming them to our event. Glendi starts with us at Admissions."

LANA KOLOBOFF, Admissions, 12th year: The best is this year, because we met a lot of old friends."

FATHER MICHAEL MARGITICH, Raffle Tickets, 18th year: "My favorite? This one! The spirit, the jovial spirit and the enthusiasm of the crowds and the incredible ethnic diversity.

SERGE ANDERSON, Kitchen, 18th year:"The most memorable for me was right after 9/11 [2001]. All booths were decorated with American flags. It was a chance for everyone to heal."

CATECHUMEN LEW VLADIMIR BAER, Lamb booth, 19th year: My favorite? This one, always the current one! It's the best lamb ever!

## VIEWS OF A LIFER

Towards the end of preparing this history, it was felt that since so many members of the Parish had joined as adults that it would do well to have input from an adult lifetime member. On November 2, 2008, Gabriel "Gabe" Griovski sat for this short interview.

PAUL C. TRIMBLE: As I understand it, you were adopted as an infant and are one of a few adult members who has spent your entire life in this Parish.

GABE GRIOVSKI: Going back since when?

PCT: Diapers!

GG: Yeah, I think so. So many people have come and gone. I think the others are the Margitich kids [sons and daughter of Fr. Lawrence]

PCT: So what's the affinity with the Parish? What keeps you here?

GG: I grew up here. When I was at Cal Poly (San Luis Obispo) I attended another Orthodox Church, but it was different. Here it is a real family setting.

PCT: And you're one of the really active members here.

GG: A way of life is pretty much the way it is here.

PCT: What do you think is the future for this Parish?

GG: We have our future planning program in place.

PCT: I mean for people. Do you think there will be another OCA Parish in Sonoma or Mendocino County?

GG: I'm not really into that part, but I think we're good. We have a really diverse parish, and to the best of my knowledge a lot of faith.

PCT: I've noticed that. Faith, I believe, is what built the Protection Church in 1936, and with very little money. And then...

GG: ...St. Seraphim's Church!  
PCT: Right! I wondered at the time how this small parish could afford to build it. And then the trouble with the dome, which had to be taken down and totally rebuilt. Now look at it. The iconography, the finished work!  
GG: Yeah!  
PCT: How do you feel about keeping the Protection Church?  
GG: Why NOT keep it? It's a church!  
PCT: Now you're in charge of the vineyard?  
GG: Right.  
PCT: So how did you get started?  
GG: John Van Deventer planted it in hopes it would produce a couple of thousand dollars a year. This was back when the wine industry in Sonoma County was starting to boom. The present hope is for wine, perhaps a bonded label and sales. Maybe church use, too.  
PCT: I understand from the Planning Committee you're looking at perhaps 300 cases of wine a year.  
GG: More or less. It will vary. Some years more, some years less.  
PCT: When do you think you'll be ready for production?  
GG: Hopefully next year!

#### A NEW METROPOLITAN FOR THE OCA

At the end of August, Abbot Jonah (Paffhausen) of the Monastery of St. John in Manton, Tehama County and a good friend of the Parish, took leave of his monastic duties to become auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of the South. With Christian love and respect the Parish contributed to this new bishop's vestments as a farewell gift.

His Grace Bishop Jonah wasn't in that new office long, for at the November 2008 OCA All American Council he was elected, by God's grace, to become the new Archbishop of Washington and New York and Metropolitan of All America and Canada, replacing His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman who had retired earlier in the year.

*May God grant our new Metropolitan Jonah Many Years!*

#### REPOSE

The Parish was saddened as Sarah Rohrmann reposed in the Lord on November 9th. Ever faithful and ever loyal, she was an expert seamstress, helping to sew robes for the acolytes and other Church needs, including tablecloths for the Parish Hall for feasts. She not only baked Prospora, but taught others and organized teams for that job. Every month she could be seen cleaning St. Seraphim Church, ironing the analoi covers when the colors changed and was ever ready to help whenever and wherever needed or wanted.

*May her Memory be Eternal!*

Early in December of 2008 St. Seraphim Church was adorned with the new fresco icons of St. Andrew the Apostle and St. John of Damascus. In addition, the sketch was made for the icon of St. Romanos the Melodist which would be complete in time for the

Christmas Divine Liturgy.

On December 5th, His Holiness Alexei II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia reposed in the Lord. That evening Fr. Lawrence and some parishioners journeyed to St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in San Anselmo to attend Feastday Vespers.

The service opened with His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah offering a memorial for the late Patriarch, along with salient remarks on how His Holiness had guided the Mother Church of Russia out of the darkness of Communist rule into a reflowering of Orthodoxy in that troubled land.

*May His Memory Be Eternal!*

Metropolitan Jonah had made the commitment to be at St. Nicholas Church for their Feastday while he was still abbot of the Monastery of St. John, and in his homily that evening he said how good it was to be back and to see old friends again. That joy was reciprocated many fold.

As the year 2008 came to a close, the Parish Council consisted of Starosta Serge Anderson, Treasurer Petar Griovski, and Members Kent McMillian, Dmitrios Skikos, Lydia Nicholson, Barbara Owens, Alexander Alexei, Bonnie Alexander, Gabriel Griovski, Thom Stewart, and Samuel Coon.

The Church School was staffed by Lara Anderson, Coordinator, who also taught the Pre-school and Kindergarten Class, Deanna Panages teaching Grades 1-3, Fr. John Schettig and Matushka Xenia teaching Grades 4-5, Seraphim Ranney teaching the 7th and 8th Graders, and Vincent Rossi and Fred Krueger teaching the high schoolers. Support staff included Juliana Veenis, Vicky Basch, Kristine Tellefsen, Sophia Ramos, Serge Anderson, Sophia Onyemaechi, Susanna Booker, Rachel Bell, Brendan Schettig, Fr. Dcn. Nicholas Carr, Fred Krueger, Matushka Esther Carr and Laurel Counts.

In addition, the following parishioners practiced their stewardship in the following capacities: Choir Director, Nicolas C. Custer assisted by Justin Margitich; Tonsured Readers were Patrick Wilkes, Paul Burch, Vincent Rossi, Nilus Veenis and Justin Margitich; Sacristam, Nilus Veenis; Greeters, Joseph and Judith Gumper; Ushers, Nicholas Nicholson, Samuel Coon, Chris Frye, and Solomon Balata; Secretary, Alla Keyes; Youth Coordinators, Laurel Counts (high schoolers) and Alexandra Harrison (younger kids); Bookstore Manager, Kristine Tellefsen; Charity Committee Coordinator, Kent McMillian; Glendi Coordinators, Eugenia Griovski, Ann Wilkes, and Fr. Lawrence; SCRIP Director, Shenina; Funeral Arraignments, Brigid Sturgeon, Shenina, Christina DeMichael, and Bonnie Alexander; Sunday Lunch Coordinator, Eleni Rose; Auditors Natalie Hansen and Lana Koloboff; Temple Floral Decorations, Natalie Hansen and Matushka Katherine Crawford; Vestment Makers, Zoya Drake, Kristine Tellefsen, and Sarah Rohrmann; Librarian, Maria Dimitriev; Church Cleaning Coordinators, Nilus Veenis and Gloria Collins; Gardening, Nilus Veenis, Alla Keyes, Gretchen McPherson and Matushka Ann Margitich. In addition, Genevieve Richardson stepped up and assumed the duties of Master Planner Secretary.

The Year 2009—the seventy-fifth anniversary of the start of fund raising for the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church—opened with Divine Liturgy on January 1st, a Church Feastday.

The next day being the Feastday of St. Seraphim of Sarov, the Parish was again blessed with the presence of His Grace Bishop Benjamin, who together with both Parish and visiting clergy, celebrated the Divine Liturgy which was followed by a luncheon.

During the first week of February, Fr. Patrick started painting the icon of the Nativity of Christ in St. Seraphim Church. The Sunday of the Pharisee and the Publican saw the cliros cluttered with scaffolding and with another fresco emerging.

At the annual meeting on Sunday, February 8, the following were elected to serve on the Parish Council for 2009: Sub-Deacon Marc Richardson, Debbie Buse, Denise Pellizer, Lew Vladimir Baer and Joseph Marino. Also elected were Firstst Alternate Kent McMillian and Second Alternate Paul Burch. The following incumbents still had a year to serve on their terms: Petar Griovski, Serge Anderson, Bonnie Alexander, Samuel Coon, Gabriel Griovski and Alternate Alexander Alexei. Elected to serve as Auditors for 2009 were Ole Elisha Kern and Juliana Veenis.

Fr. Lawrence gave the Parish census report: 107 sacramentally active and contributing members. During 2008 there had been eighteen Baptisms/Christmations with an expectation of three more catachumens very shortly. There were also five funerals and three weddings.

Concerning the iconography progress, Fr. Lawrence noted that the Parish had fifteen frescoes ready to be painted in 2009, that Fr. Patrick, our iconographer, is internationally recognized and how blessed we were to have him working for us.

Church School Coordinator Lara Anderson reported an enrollment of sixty-three students with an average Sunday attendance of forty. Laurel Counts, in reporting for the St. Seraphim Club, noted that the Club, started late in 2008, had sixteen members.

The youthful parishioners were holding their own when it came to service, by cooking two Sunday Agape Lunches and taking on the duties of tending the candle stands during Sunday Divine Liturgies. It wasn't all work, however, as they managed to schedule swing dance lessons and a party along with a get together for dinner and a movie.

The financial report showed that actual pledge income exceeded the budget projections by \$8,800.50 for a total of \$103,800.50. Some very generous special donations to the Building Fund spiked that fund's income to \$620,377.52, well over the budgeted figure of \$377,820.00.

Gross income from the Glendi was \$58,364.17, a decrease of 4.44% from 2007, but still net \$29,963.54 of which \$3,000 was dedicated to charities and \$25,000 was assigned to the Building Fund.

It was reported that the Parish is reserving 20% of the money for charity in a special emergency fund in case of such things as earthquake or a fire.

The Parish voted unanimously to add Sarah Ingenito and Barbara Owens to the roll of Honorary Life Members.

The Parish for some time had been very concerned over the illness of Barbara Owens, President of the Sisterhood and a twenty-four year member. Upon request of John Panages, a Small Litany was offered for her recovery. (Later that month a pilgrimage was made to the relics of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco to ask that saint for his intercessions for Barbara's recovery.)

Father Lawrence announced that the Parish would be hosting the Diocesan Council Assembly during the first week in October, and that a committee would be formed to take care of the logistics of this important event.

Father Lawrence also took the time to praise Secretary Alla Keyes for all of her labors in the Lord's Vineyard, noting that she first came to the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church for a wedding back in 1936 or 1937 and has been here ever since, thus making her the last living link to the original Parish members.

A number of parishioners made comments from the floor, bearing witness to the state of the Parish as it prepares to celebrate its anniversary.

Fr. John Schettig: "We're well known. It's not to be taken lightly what we have here. I visited a small parish in South Carolina and the people told me, 'Your icons, your music! How did it happen?' It was done with unity and love."

Fr. Michael: "I know we have a great choir, but sing! Sing with joy! Sing with enthusiasm! It's part of the Orthodoxy and we need to do the 'Amens,' the 'Lord Have Mercy,' and so forth. And if I don't hear singing [nodding to Fr. Lawrence], I'll come out without his blessing to get you to sing!"

Basil Harrison: "On behalf of my family, I want to thank everyone for welcoming us [into the Parish] with love and enthusiasm."

Natalie Hansen: "I want to thank Father Michael for all we have here."

Laurel Counts: "We should all pray for our teenagers."

Steve Pellizzer: In praising Fr. Lawrence, Fr. Michael, Fr. John Schettig, and Fr. John Ramos, "It's so refreshing to walk into the Church and see proper Orthodox worship."

Lara Anderson: "We should all thank Father [Lawrence] for all his services. I encourage us all to attend the Akathists."

Tatiana Castillo: Referring to her past health problems, "I want to thank you all for your prayers; your prayers work. They did for me. The cathedral in Seattle used our bells for a model for their fund raiser to buy their bells. I want to thank my parents [Lew Vladimir and Janet Nona Baer] for bringing me here. Thank you too, Father Lawrence. God is working here!"

Fr. Lawrence: "I want to reaffirm that we are a community, which is a Gift from God. It takes work to maintain it. We don't remain co-workers in the Vineyard of Christ without being co-laborers co-laboring with Christ. Finally, I want to thank all of you. I've visited many parishes, but never have I seen so much love and unity. You make the pastor's job easier.

Serge Anderson: "I want to encourage the members to attend the Master Plan meetings. Most importantly, the Parish exists for the Church. People ask, 'Why didn't They do it?' It's not 'They,' it's we who do it. We're trying to get lots of small teams of three or four people rather have everyone involved in everything. It's been a long road to get here, a hard road, but now we know we're going."

Sarah Ingenito: "We need a larger kitchen, and a Hall three times as big."

Seraphim Ranney: "We want people focused and doing it well, We'll evaluate it next year to see if it works.

Lara Anderson: Concerning Church School, "I want to thank the Parish parents for their

support and help.”

Friday the 13th—the first week of the Triodion—a sell out crowd at the Parish Hall dined North Beach Italian style and remembered the Beat Generation of San Francisco of the 1950s with poetry readings, music and dance.

The black and white decorations created by Janet Nonna Baer artfully depicted San Francisco’s North Beach, centering around the intersections of Grant and Columbus Avenues, recalling such landmarks as Vesuvio’s, City Lights bookstore and the Co-Existence Bagel Shop at upper Grant Avenue and Green Street.

Readings included Beatnik Era style poetry, classics from Blake and Kipling and readers’ own works. Readers and performers included emcee Lew Baer, James Carr, Matushka Esther Carr, Xenia Pribyl, Conor Carr, Janet Baer, Paul Burch, Joseph, Moses and Carmen Anderson, Genevieve Richardson, Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford, Cathy Veenis, Lara Anderson, Maggie Duncan, Catherine Ostling, Gregory Sanford, Fr. Dcn. Nicholas Carr, Brendan Schettig, Meropi Germanou, Nicolas Custer, Bryce Williams and Paul Trimble.

## REFLECTIONS

As the year 2008 closed, the Parish stood ready to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the initial donations which were to bear fruit in the building of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church. The past three-quarters of a century have brought many changes, worldwide, nationwide, statewide, countywide and within Santa Rosa. The Parish has also changed. Yet despite changes in membership, changes in Parish finance, change of calendar, conversion from Church Slavonic to English and changes in clerical personnel, the Parish retains those Orthodox traditions handed down from the handful of Russian immigrants—and their Greek and Serb brethren in the Parish—so many years ago. It is no longer the “little Russian Church on Mountain View Avenue,” but rather a Parish which values its great ethnic diversity and sets a tone and pattern for other Orthodox parishes to emulate.

At the advent of this anniversary year, the Parish and its clergy stand ready to accept the challenges which will surely come their way, and it is hoped that this printed history will in some way contribute to the strength needed to meet those challenges. In truth, the history of this Parish has been that: meeting challenges.

At the time of that first Paschal Liturgy in 1936, the Parish had no clergy housing, no Parish Hall, no Church School, no benefits packages for its clergy, no Glendi, no playground for the youngsters, no deacon, no vineyard, no solar panels, no rental property, no landscaping, no office, no telephone, no FAX, no money... not even running water.

However, the Parish has always had faith, hope, love and a willingness to go forward. And so it has. May this ever be so!

Happy Anniversary, and may God grant the Parish, its reverend fathers, its ministries and its ever faithful members *Many Years!*

*MNOGAYA LETA!*

## REVEREND FATHERS WHO HAVE SERVED THE PARISH

### PRIESTS

Fr. Michael Pelzig	1936 -
Fr. Michael Erochine	
Fr. Constantine Popov	
Fr. John Frolov	
Fr. Constantine Zatoplaev	
Archimandrite Varnava Karataev	1946—1950
Fr. Nicholas Szerocki (Sherotsky)	1950—c. 1955
Archimandrite Andronik Elpinsky	c. 1955—1958
Fr. Alexander Kosygin	1958—1963
Archimandrite Dimitry Egoroff	1963—1964
Fr. Prokopy Povarnitsin (Powers)	1964—1974
Archimandrite Dimitry Egoroff	1974—10/75
Hieromonk Benedict (deSocio)	10/75—4 /76
Fr. Nicholas Sanin	4/76—12/15/ 79
Fr. Alexander Lisenko	12/15/79—6/20/80
Fr. Andre Levshin	6/20/80—10/80
Fr. Alexandru Moissy	1981—1984
Fr. Andrew Morbey	Palm Sunday, April 1984—10/1/87
Fr. Michael J. Oleska	1987—1989
Fr. Sergios Black	1989
Fr. Michael Margitich	1990 — 12/31/98 (Rector Emeritus 1/1/99)
Fr. Lawrence Margitich	1997—(Rector since 1/1/99)
Fr. John Schettig	(attached) 2005 —
Fr. John Ramos	(attached) 12/15/05 —

*“You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizadek” (PSALM 110:4)*

### DEACONS

Fr. Dcn. Daniel Jones	10/1/88
Fr. Dcn. Lawrence Margitich	1995—1997
Fr. Dcn. Joseph Ruocco-Brown	1997—2002
Fr. Dcn. Jeremiah Crawford	2002 —
Fr. Dcn. Brendan Doss	2005—2007
Fr. Dcn. Nicholas Carr	2007 —

*“But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons” (1 TIMOTHY 3:10)*



## PARISHONERS ORDAINED TO HOLY ORDERS

John Pierce, deacon; later to the priesthood while at St. Vladimir's  
Lawrence Margitich, deacon, priest  
Joseph Ruocco-Brown, deacon  
Daniel Jones, deacon  
Jeremiah Crawford, deacon  
Nicholas Carr, deacon

In addition, it is believed that during the rectorship of Archimandrite Dimitry (Egoroff) a parishioner was ordained as deacon, but it has not been verified.

*"Serve the Lord with Gladness! Come into His presence with singing!"* (PSALM 100:2)

## PARISHIONER ACCEPTING MONASTIC TONSURE

The only known member of the Parish to have accepted monastic tonsure was Founding Member Mrs. Julia Rayburn, who became an Orthodox nun at the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga. As Mother Elena she reposed in the Lord in 1964 at the age of 80.

*"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"* (MATTHEW 16:24)

## PARISHIONERS WHO ATTENDED ORTHODOX SEMINARY

John Pierce, St. Vladimir's, Crestwood, New York  
Fr. Dcn. Nicholas Carr, St. Tikhon's, South Canaan, Pennsylvania  
Seraphima Erica Carl, St. Vladimir's, Crestwood, New York  
Alejandro Oscar Sandoval, Holy Trinity, Jordanville, New York  
Ian Shipley, St. Tikhon's, South Canaan, Pennsylvania  
Priscilla Shipley, St. Tikhon's, South Canaan, Pennsylvania

*"That I may learn your statutes"* (PSALM 119:71)

## PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE SERVED AS MISSIONARIES

Seraphima Erica Carl, (Republic of South Africa)  
David Doss, (Albania)  
Zoe Doss, (Guatemala)  
Micaela Castillo, (Dominican Republic)

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations"* (Matthew 25:19)

## HONORARY PARISHIONERS

Section 3.07 of the Parish by-laws reads: “An honorary membership, no more than one per year, may be given to honor an especially industrious and hard working parishioner and present him or her with a title of Honorary Parishioner. This title, and the right to vote, is given for life and the holder of it pays no dues.” Those so honored have been:

ALEXANDER SOKOL († 1991)  
EUGENIA VOROBAY († 2000)  
MAGDALENE SOKOL († 2004)  
CATHERINE BALATSKI († 2003)  
LEONID SAKOVICH († 2001)  
ALEXANDRA HRENOFF († 2004)  
MUSYA SAKOVICH  
SOPHIE SILVERMAN  
ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL and  
MATUSHKA ELEANOR MARGITICH  
EUGENE GORDENEV († 2005)  
ZOYA DRAKE  
OLGA CANYUCH († 2005)  
PETAR and EUGENIA GRIOVSKI  
ANDREW SKIKOS  
NINA ANTIPOFF  
SARAH INGENITO  
BARBARA OWENS

† Reposed

“Well done, good and faithful servant(s)” (Mathew 25:21)

## PARISHIONERS WHO ENTERED THE ARMED FORCES

Roman Rayburn (Army)  
Constantine N. Gerogensen (Army)  
Serge Canby (Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force)  
“*We have done what was our duty to do*” (Luke 17:10)

For clarification, only those who were actually members of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Parish at the time of their entry into the armed forces are listed. No disrespect is intended to others who served their country. Unfortunately, we have no records of others from the Parish who served. If anyone knows of any who did, please inform the Parish Rector so that their names can be recorded.

## WHEN THE PARISH BEGAN...

There were no wash and wear fabrics, automatic shifts on cars, cellophane, Styrofoam, jet aircraft, color television, iPods™, hand-held radios, computers, aluminum baseball bats, calculators, automatic home dishwashers, home freezers, digital cameras, video games, transistors or computer chips, ZIP codes, telephone area codes, frozen TV dinners, little leagues for baseball or football, nuclear weapons, seat belts in all automobiles, latex gloves, non-stick cookware, Barbie Dolls™, nationally televised sports events, DVD or CD players, polio vaccines, high speed freeways, nuclear powered ships, solar panels to make energy, ball point pens, battery powered wristwatches, cordless microphones, microwave ovens, cordless telephones, telephone answering machines or voice mail, call forwarding, call waiting, caller ID, radial tires for cars, mountain bikes, movies in color, plastic bottles, synthetic fabrics, sport utility vehicles (SUV's), aluminum cans, electric can openers, ATM machines, turn signals on cars, or long distance and international direct dialing for telephones.

When the Parish began... America had forty-eight states. The census for 1930 reported 62,222 people in Sonoma County. Santa Rosa's 1935 population was estimated at 14,500; Healdsburg had 2,800, Sebastopol had 1,800, and Cloverdale had 1,228 residents. The Golden Gate and San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridges were under construction. The Richmond-San Rafael Bridge did not exist. Racial segregation was legal. Standing in the corner, wearing dunce caps and corporal punishment for misbehavior in school was legal. Franklin D. Roosevelt was in his first term as President of the United States. Frank Merriam was Governor of California. In 1930 Sonoma County registered 25,376 automobiles and 3,555 trucks. There were only sixteen Major League Baseball teams, none west of St. Louis. Primo Carnera was World Heavyweight Boxing Champion. Riverboats Gold and Petaluma were steaming up the Petaluma Creek from San Francisco. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad was running nineteen passenger trains a day in Sonoma County. The XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI Amendments to the Constitution had not been passed in Congress. On April 9, 1936 the *Press-Democrat* reported the National Debt was \$3,625,723,000.

## CLERGY NOTES

FR. MICHAEL PELZIG was transferred from Santa Barbara to Protection Parish, arriving in time to celebrate Pascha Liturgy in 1936. He was in his 70's, yet was still vigorous, helping to do the finish work in the Church and building furniture for the Sanctuary. He was killed by a motorist while walking down the old highway, now Santa Rosa Avenue.

ARCHIMANDRITE VARNAVA KARATAEV left Protection Parish to serve as chaplain to the nuns at the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga. He also served at Bryte. After getting out of the USSR, he became a monk on Mt. Athos, then came to America.

FATHER NICHOLAS SZEROCKI tried to start up the first Church School program in the early 1950's. His Matushka Helen (Elena) left her property next to the Church to the Parish when she reposed in 1986.

ARCHIMANDRITE ANDRONIK ELPINDSKY was a man of great physical strength. He helped Father Dimitry Egoroff build St. Eugene's Monastery at Point Reyes Station and amazed people by manhandling some of the trees which were cut down on the property.

FATHER ALEXANDER KOSYGIN was a deacon at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco. Upon ordination to the priesthood he was sent to Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish to serve there.

ARCHIMANDRITE DIMITRY EGOROFF founded St. Eugene's Monastery at Point Reyes Station and the Kazan Skete in Santa Rosa. He was the only priest to have served the Parish twice as rector. He was a true monastic and as of this writing is being considered for glorification as a saint.

FATHER PROKOPY POVARNITSIN (Powers), together with Fathers Alexander Schmemann and Leonid Kishovsky, officiated at the wedding of Father Alexander Lisenko. Fr. Prokopy was a tall, broad shouldered man who was born in Siberia and fled from the Bolsheviks. His first assignment in America was in Madison, Illinois.

HIEROMONK BENEDICT (deSocio) was a convert to the Orthodox Church.

FATHER NICHOLAS SANIN was in his 80's when he served. Prior to that he had been a naval officer for many years.

FATHER ALEXANDER LISENKO is now a hieromonk at the Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco in Manton, California. As with Fr. Alexander Kosygin, Protection Parish was his first rectorship.

FATHER ALEXANDRU MOISSY was also a lawyer.

FATHER ANDREW MORBEY was "on loan" from Canada. He was a convert while his Matushka was "cradle."

FATHER MICHAEL OLESKA was from Alaska and returned there after his stint with Protection Parish. He is also a noted Alaska author and historian.

FATHER MICHAEL MARGITICH has served many parishes, plus a thirty year career as an Air Force chaplain, retiring with the rank of colonel. He came out of retirement to become Rector at Protection Parish and retired again at the end of 1998. Since then he has remained active in the Parish. Retirement is a standing joke with Fr. Michael!

FATHER LAWRENCE MARGITICH first came to the Parish as the choir director and continues to take an active interest in the Choir, sometimes joining in the singing and even conducting. He has also led seminars on Orthodox liturgical music as well as having composed music.

FATHER JOHN SCHETTIG attended St. Tikhon's Seminary during 1992 and 1993 although ordained to Holy Orders in 1991. Leading an active life, he says he "always has two or three things going at once." He has served Orthodox mission churches in Maine, Ukiah, and had his own mission in Sonoma for thirteen years while at the same time doing construction work. He is also a chiropractor. Fr. John came to the Parish from the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church and has been married to Matushka Xenia for thirty-six years. At church we call him Father, not Doctor!

FATHER JOHN RAMOS, a graduate of St. Tikhon's Seminary, was ordained to the priesthood in 1999. his "day job" is a mortgage and loan broker. A sports enthusiast, he has been a professional soccer coach and is active in local semi-pro soccer leagues. Fr. John and Matushka Katherine have been married for eighteen years and have two teenage children.

FATHER ANDREW CUNEO came to St. Seraphim at the end of 2010, giving St. Seraphim a full altar with five priests and two deacons.

FATHER DEACON JOSEPH RUOCCO-BROWN was previously a sub-deacon in the Parish, and is currently deacon at St. Anna's Greek Orthodox Church in Roseville, California.

FATHER DEACON JEREMIAH CRAWFORD was also a sub-deacon in the Parish and has been a long active in many different aspects of parish life.

FATHER DEACON BRENDAN DOSS previously served in the Antiochian Archdiocese before coming to the OCA. He is currently deacon at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco.

FATHER DEACON NICHOLAS CARR is a professional educator and has taught in different schools, including the Parish Church School as well as leading adult education classes in the Parish.

## NOTES ON EARLY PARISHIONERS

The names of the Founding and Early Parishioners at the front of this history came from two sources: parish archives and names which have been confirmed by investigations. Unfortunately, some of the wives' names (if they had wives) have not come to light. If anyone knows who they were, please forward the names and any further information to the Parish Rector.

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Bashkoff may have been Founding Members but this has not been confirmed. ... Other early parishioners were the Batiaeff and Dolgireff families, although it cannot be ascertained as to when they joined the Parish. ... Walter and Eugenia Vorobey and their daughter Nina (Arrabit) joined the Parish in 1942.

Peter Speredon and Nadezhda Proskoriakoff lived in Cotati and had no children. ... Peter S. Proskoriakoff and Ivan Efemovich Rusanoff became American citizens on the same day and in the same courtroom, May 14, 1936. ... Ivan Rusanoff lived in Santa Rosa. ... Nadezhda Proskoriakoff was the start of the Sisterhood. She did the sewing of vestments, altarcloths, covers for the icon stands.

My brother Peter (Klimansky) was an altar boy with Nick Sokol. My father, Paul, was the Reader and I learned Church Slavonic standing next to my father when he read in Church. My mother was away for awhile and the entire Church and the Sisterhood were parents to us kids. Metropolitan Leonty (Turkevich) and Archbishop John (Shahovsky), of San Francisco visited our Parish many times. They used to come and concelebrate on the Parish's Feastday (October 1st).

Paul Klimansky's first wife (Jeanne) was a French professor. Her first husband was killed in World War I. They left Russia traveling across Siberia ... Founding Members Nikon and Galina Pritoola-Gerogensen had a daughter named Vera who lived in San Francisco. She had a beautiful contralto singing voice and when visiting her parents would sing with the Parish Choir.

—*Katherine Klimansky, April 7, 2008*

My father, Vladimir Razoumoff, was both a physician and a lawyer in Imperial Russia. He was also a judge in Russia and did forensic medicine. He spoke seven languages. The Razouimoff family escaped from Russia via Japan.

—*Sonja White*

My mother, Eugenia Vorobey, and my widowed grandmother fled Siberia after the Russian revolution and Civil War, sealed in a boxcar on the Trans-Siberian Railway. They were told not to get out until two days after the train stopped running so then they would know they were in Manchuria—and safe. My mother was only 13 at the time, but her formal education was ended.

My Dad, Vladimir Vorobey, crossed by foot across the Amur River and settled in Harbin, Manchuria. There were lots of Russian refugees in Harbin. My father had been an officer in the tsarist army and fought as a mercenary for the warlord Chang Tso-lin. I still have Chang Tso-lin's promissory note to pay my Dad 300 rubles in silver. [Author's note: Among the warlords contending for power in post-revolutionary China,

Chang Tso-lin was the most ardent anti-Communist and at one point in time wanted to use his Manchu/Mongol cavalry army to restore the Manchu Dynasty. Later he became pro-republic. Chang Tso-lin was murdered by the Japanese in Manchuria in 1928.]

Dad took passage for San Francisco in 1929, my mother followed a year later. I was born in San Francisco. The first part of my education was in a one room school in Healdsburg. After the war my dad worked as a carpenter in Sonoma County, building housing for veterans returning to school on the G.I. Bill. They were Quonset huts, where Emeritus Hall is now.

Dad had finished the university in St. Petersburg third in his class, studying history. He was a naturalist. He worked at the Marinship during World War II, then one day in 1942 they got in the car, drove as Healdsburg, and bought a place there.

Dad got to know the dean at the J.C., and he talked my dad into teaching Russian there. With a special credential he taught Russian for thirty years. My parents were very active in the Church right from the time they moved to Healdsburg. After my parents moved to Santa Rosa, I attended Santa Rosa High School, Santa Rosa J.C. and graduated from Sonoma State.

—*Nina Arrabit. May 15, 2008*

Eugenia Vorobey came from a wealthy Siberian family, but her escape into Chinese territory [Manchuria] after the Revolution meant loss of wealth in return for hard work, menial wages, and freedom from Communism. Her husband, Vladimir, worked in a quicksilver mine in Angel's Camp before returning to San Francisco for fear of losing his eyesight in the mine. Eugenia Vorobey worked at Burger Fur as a fur cutter and seamstress in Santa Rosa.

[Vladimir Vorobey died in 1974 at the age of 82, while Eugenia Vorobey died in 2000 at the age of 92. Before her repose she was honored as an Honorary Life Member by the Parish.]

—*Santa Rosa PRESS-DEMOCRAT, August 18, 2000*

Courtesy of Lee Torliatt of the Sonoma County Historical Society

Alexander Abraham Sokol (Sokolovski) was born in Rostov-on-Don in Russia where his father was a ship's engineer. During the civil war which followed the Russian Revolution, he and his family were able to escape from Russia and settled in Harbin, Manchuria. Shortly after, Alex left Harbin for America by way of China, Japan, and Hawaii, arriving in San Francisco in 1922 at the age of 19.

He then worked as a lumberjack in Westwood, near Mt. Shasta, returning to San Francisco in 1926 and rejoining the rest of his family when they arrived in America.

Alex was an excellent chess player as well as a linguist, having studied Latin and Greek and speaking Russian, Chinese and English which he learned after arriving in California. He mastered English well enough to attend what is now UCLA to study laboratory science.

In 1929 he married Madeline Rayburn (Reabinin) at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco and moved to Santa Rosa where, in 1932, he opened the first clinical laboratory in Sonoma County, located at 308 Mendocino Avenue in the Rosenberg

Building, retiring thirty-six years later.

Sokol was the first public health officer in Sonoma County, testing water and people for pathogens. He served as a Civil Defense warden during World War II as well as on the local Selective Service Board. He and Madeline had three children.

Alex Sokol was a very active member of the Parish, not only serving as starosta but doing the tree trimming on the grounds and painting the Church every year.

Julia V. Ikkonokoff was born in Russia in 1884 and later married Stephan Reabinin, who came from a well to do mercantile family in Rybinsk on the Volga River (now covered by the Rybinsk Reservoir). Julia and Stephan had eight children, one of whom died before the family left Russia.

World War I, revolution and civil war convinced the Reabinin family to emigrate to safety in England, which they did in 1918 by the way of Riga (capital of Latvia), riding in railroad boxcars.

In England, Julia became pregnant again and the family decided to travel to Georgia, which had belonged to Russia since 1801 and at the time was controlled by the White (anti-Bolshevik) Army. The purpose of the trip was so the child would be born Russian and there would be a uniformity of passports should they need to travel again. However, upon arrival the situation had changed dramatically and in trying to return to the U.K. they found themselves quarantined on an island in the Sea of Marmara due to an epidemic. Moreover, having returned to Russian territory they had lost their status as British immigrants and had to reapply for visas to the U.K. so they could rejoin the two older boys who were still in school in London. The wait would take another year.

Day after day Julia stood in line, hoping for the necessary visas and with a baby and small children in tow. Things seemed bleak, but an older woman in back of Julia seemed to read her thoughts and told her, "Put yourself in the hands of the Holy Virgin and she will protect you." Julia did, and soon the family—with the necessary papers—was on a ship for England.

England did not bring happiness, however, as one son was killed in a motorcycle accident and her ill husband reposed shortly after. The family then moved to America, living in Minneapolis. A year or so later they moved again, this time to San Francisco. Again they resettled first in Fairfax and then Petaluma. This may have been the time frame when the family Anglicized the surname from Reabinin to Rayburn, perhaps due to difficulty Americans had in correctly pronouncing the Russian name.

Apparently the family prospered in California for Julia was able to acquire real estate in Sonoma County, including two parcels on Mountain View Avenue although she never lived there. The parcels were probably viewed as an investment, and if so it turned out to be very rewarding.

In 1934 a group of Russian immigrants decided to build an Orthodox church in Sonoma County, and Julia Rayburn donated her two Mountain View Avenue parcels for the new church. Next, she went to San Francisco to request financial aid from the bishop, who told her to raise the money and he would supply the help in building. As this was the Great Depression, the hierarch likely had no money to offer.



Tragedy struck the Rayburns yet again as Julia's oldest son, George, was killed in a car accident in 1932 and another son, Serge, died in 1935. Yet from this came a life insurance payout which Julia, as beneficiary, donated toward the building of the new Church. Her gifts of land and money bore further fruit as a local lumberyard agreed that the fledgling Parish had both cash and land collateral. Thus generous terms were offered to the congregation in the form of credit and discounts. With further donations, the new Church was soon built.

Remembering her trying to wait for visas and her faith in the Virgin Mary's intercessions, Julia gave the new Temple its name: Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church.

Julia's generosity to her church didn't end there. She also donated \$3,000 toward the building of the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga, and it was there that she was tonsured into monasticism, taking the name Elena, although her grandchildren and great-grand children still called her Babinka. As Mother Elena she reposed in the Lord in 1964 at the age of 80. May her memory be eternal!

Andrew (Andy) Rayburn and Natalie Ivanoff were the first couple to be married at the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church .

—Tom Ells

CANBY FAMILY HISTORY by Peggy Sanders, neé Canby

[Peggy is the granddaughter of Vlademir Nikolaievich Moxchensky (Canby) and Alexandra Canby. Her dad chose the name Canby at Ellis Island because he said, "I can be whatever I want to be in America."]

Vlademir was born in the Ukraine, Russia in 1872 and served as a colonel in the Czar's army. In about 1899, he married Alexandra Petrov, born 1882 in Archangelik, Russia.

In 1910 my parents owned a home in Sumy, Russia and escaped from the Bolsheviks in 1919 with only their clothes and their samovar. They buried all their silver, etc. in the back yard. At the time they had ten year old son, Serge, with them.

Colonel Moxchensky served the Czar in Blagovestchensk, Siberia where my dad, Robert, was born in 1900 on the Chinese border. the family went west in 1902 to the Ural Mountains, then to Voznesensk, in the Ukraine, and other places of service. .

In 1910, my dad went to military school in Sumy. By 1914, the European war had broken out, and Vlademir served on the Austrian front—probably in Galicia—where he was wounded and partially paralyzed by shell shock. Later, he had a stroke and couldn't walk.

In 1918, my dad was on a training ship when the black Sea was blockaded, and he never returned home. He became a seaman on sailing vessels and worked his way to America by August of 1920 after many ports of call. Meanwhile, Robert's brother, George, had escaped the Bolsheviks in Melitopol and Sebastopol. He got word from the Marseille consulate that his brother, my dad, was in America. Dad sent a ticket to him in France, and George arrived in America in 1922.

Both boys worked and got money to pay for their parents and their younger

brother to flee Russia. The Jewish underground arranged their escape by night into Poland. The Polish Red Cross took care of them, and they made it to France and then by ship to New York.

Robert and George worked to buy an old Model T car; by 1924 the family was in California. The boys bought five acres on credit and built a house on it. This was at 112 Mt. View Ave. My dad was earning \$100 a month; \$50 of it went to his parents, and more, as he earned more.

Vladimir raised bees, planted eucalyptus trees and had a sweat house, cow, ducks, chickens.... He sold honey and raised vegetables. Also, a pear orchard was planted, and they dried the pears on trays.

Robert bought three-and-a-half acres next door at 98 Mt View Ave and built a home in 1930. He married Margaret Bailey of Santa Rosa in 1926 at the Presbyterian church and became a U.S. citizen the same year. Vladimir and Alexandra became citizens in 1939.

Sometime around 1936, my grandmother Alexandra and Mrs. Sokol helped found the Russian Orthodox church at 95 Mt. View Ave. Babushka carried water day after day in buckets from her home for the young trees on the church grounds until they became established. She also cared for Vladimir who was in a wheelchair and unable to walk. He reposed in the Lord at the age of 79. Alexandra reposed in 1953, and her funeral was at the little church on Mountain View Avenue. That church was her life. After such a lonely, turbulent and terrifying decade, it was the anchor and refuge she needed.

I remember her buying candles for herself and me and then standing for what seemed like hours while the priests wafted incense through the room. It smelled so good.... I didn't understand the words, but it was all strange and beautiful, especially the singing. I was so young, but even then I felt their hearts truly were worshipping God as they stood or kneeled. Some were crying. Sometimes I did, too, and I didn't even know why. I just felt it.

Babushka's home was a prime meeting place on Christmas, Easter and many, many other times. She made huge dinners for the church people and Russian friends. From her tiny—eight by eight foot—kitchen she produced perog, piroshkies, holodnyia, soups, czerniki, pascha and coolich and bottles of qvass from the tank house, homemade butter and cheese, smoked salmon and salads. The table burgeoned with abundant foods. Hidden in her linen closet were rum filled chocolates from friends in San Francisco. There was no refrigerator. A cooler in the kitchen brought cold air up from under the house for eggs and cheese. A box cooler on the screened porch held pies and watermelon or fresh fruit kept safe from flies, bees and kids. She raised baby turkeys with chopped hard boiled eggs. She made a baby rattle from a dried chicken esophagus with tiny rocks in it. She told me that lipstick was made from dead bugs, so I refused to use it until I was 16. She gave me a \$25.00 Audobon bird book when there was no money to be had. She absolutely "loved" people. She gave her heart to them and never for herself.

She and Vladimir saved everything—*everything*. Match sticks (to make frames in the bee hives), tin foil (real foil from gum wrappers). old boots, old silk stockings,

dried pears that the bees and wasps had eaten out while drying until they looked like lace, old broken knife blades, magazines from 1925, newspaper, balls of string carefully wound up. Nothing except fresh garbage was ever thrown away, and that was fed to the chickens. a ninety foot old chicken house held all the dusty treasures. It was like “Alice in Wonderland to me.

The church and its people were the center of my grandmother’s world. It was the glue that held the little spread out community together. their memories, language, foods, all the things they needed to remember from the old days and their expression to God of gratitude for their deliverance from tyranny.

They all had pretty much the same story. they loved God, and they were survivors. They also passionately loved America. When they escaped Russia there was no turning back, and America “welcomed” them.

A kind Methodist farmer up the road let them camp on his land until they could buy a place. My dad already loved this land of refuge that received him in 1920. He never spoke of Russia or the language ever again—not even to us kids. There was a fear of the Russian tentacles in many people for many years—especially in Calistoga.

My dad became 100% American, and that was it. He went on to become a full commander in the U. S. Navy during WW II and stayed in the reserves until retirement. He was in Berlin when the spoils of war were divided up among the nations in 1945. Because of my dad, the U. S. received the “Eagle” sailing vessel now berthed in San Francisco. Because he loved sailing ships so much, he made sure the U. S. acquired her.

We had a hand cranked air raid siren attached to the hay loft open door, and Dad, during early WW II, was the air raid warden for the community. He would run to the barn and crank it up hard while my mom covered all our windows with heavy quilts. When Dad enlisted in the Navy we were alone for three and a half years.

Mom took care of Babushka and Dedushka and was a strong, fragile little rock for all of us. She and I cut the hay and hauled it to the barn on a old tarp pulled by the truck. I milked two cows, and we just kept on until the war was over. My dad also started the Sea Scout troop in Santa rosa and built an old sixty-five foot hull into a two masted sailing ship—teaching the boys carpentry, knots, rigging and how to win at the regatta in Marin County. At his funeral at age 92, the troop honored him and gave me their buttons in his memory.

So many things to remember, but not all of it pertains to the little church—only to the tenacity of life, enduring faith in God and the refuge and welcome this land gave to our little world of hurting people. There are absolute multitudes of stories out there, each one similar, yet lived out in isolation and fear.

What America gave was that they weren’t—as a people—erased and forgotten. they were absorbed, wanted, given land to buy and freedom from all the fear and instability they had known. They were able to live again, to retain their precious heritage of things Russian and also to become loyal, appreciative American citizens. They knew also that their progeny would enjoy the same freedoms. From a land far away full of religious persecution, death and fear, they were borne across the ocean on ships and landed on rich adobe soil, canopied by heady pear blossoms in the springtime.

They are in Heaven now. I love them, and I'm so grateful.

—Peggy Sanders

There was a priest who lived between us and the Church on Mountain View Avenue. I remember seeing him with a scythe, cutting weeds. He always wore his black rasso and his big cross, even when working outside.

It was very important for my Dad [Robert Canby, Sr.] to be an American. He never spoke Russian unless he had to. We kids grew up speaking English. Dad suffered a stroke at the age of 75 and although he had a 90% recovery, he started speaking Russian again. There was a priest who lived between us and the Church on Mountain View Avenue. I remember seeing him with a scythe, cutting weeds. He always wore his black rasso and his big cross, even when working outside.

My Dad was like a lot of people in that community. They were hard working and very thrifty. My Dad told me, "If you have a creditor, pay him a little every month, but let him know you will pay." A lot of people lived on credit in those days .

There was a Greek family named Damakos who lived across the road from us, and they had a big chicken ranch. They attended the Russian Church with us.

—Robert Canby, Jr., May 10, 2008

My Dad, George Canby, lived with his Moschensky/Canby family on Mountain View Avenue doing poultry work in the 1930s. In 1935, he married Victoria, who was Salvadorean and Italian, and then they moved to Marin County where he did carpentry and building contract work. Bob Canby and George Canby were apparently the only ones who had a working knowledge of how to construct the Russian style cupola for the Protection Church, and they coached the contractors in how to build it, including the scaffolding. George stayed in Marin County, and worked at Marinship, the wartime shipyard in Sausalito, during World War II. George Canby later worked on the Fort Ross restoration.

I remember the Butayev family had a combination hardware store and salvage shop on Mountain View Avenue, and they also ran a small farm with livestock. During World War II when food was rationed we'd go to their place to buy butter. I remember the services in the little Russian Church. It seemed like we'd be standing forever in all the incense with our eyes watering because there was little ventilation. There was quite a Russian colony on Mountain View Avenue.

—Vadim "Vic" Canby, May 15, 2008

Alexei and Elizabeth Kropotkin lived in Petaluma with their two children, Alexei and Maria. Later the family moved to Fallon where they ran a grocery store and the post office where Alexei was the town's Postmaster.

Alexei Kropotkin had been a prince of noble rank in Russia, and was descended from the Rurik dynasty which ruled Russia for some 700 years until 1598. Kropotkin had become a good friend of Alex Sokol (Sokolovsky), and later Sokol paid for Kropotkin's transportation to America.

Elizabeth Kropotkin was related to the Razoumoff family, who were likewise

Founding Members of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish. A further founders connection was made when Maria Kropotkin married Eugene Bilkevich.

Alexei Kropotkin was the prototype for one of the characters in the book *DAWN OF THE EIGHTH DAY*, by Olga A. Ilyin. The book, based upon the author's life, is about an aristocratic family in Imperial Russia which is forced to flee from the revolution and the ensuing civil war. While the events were factual, names had to be changed to protect relatives living in the Soviet Union. At the time Stalin was still the ruler and the Cold War and Korean War were taking place. Thus the character for Prince Kropotkin became Prince Hropin in the book.

—*Author?*

## **LIFE OUTSIDE RUSSIA**

Author's note: While the following, written around 1983 by a Founding Member, may not seem at first to be a part of the history of the Parish. It is included because it gives a first person account in English of what refugees from the Bolsheviks faced in America and of how they were sustained by their heritage and their Orthodox faith. Archpriest Vladimir Sakovich in this article was the father of long-time parishioners Konstantine Sakovich and the late Leonid Sakovich and father-in-law of Musya Sakovich.

It was with feelings of anxiety and uncertainty that we approached San Francisco, where we were fated to begin a new life, but Russians who had come with us and had lived in America for a while were reassuring us with stories about the life of the Russian community. You'll see, they said, that you'll be met by the priest from Holy Trinity Cathedral, who helps Russians settle at their new place, get a job, and find an apartment and everything they need. The priest managed to extend this kind of help thanks to his ability to gain the respect and trust of Americans, who would fulfill the requests of Father Vladimir Sakovich.

Before new people started arriving from Russia Holy Trinity Cathedral [in San Francisco] had few parishioners, and there was also little in the parish treasury, while the mortgage was for eight thousand dollars, which required high interest payments and going to the trouble of making immediate payments to avoid the inevitable auction block. Life wasn't easy for the priest, since he was obliged to clean up and maintain the appearance and cleanliness of the church, ring the bells, and do minor repairs in the church. The personal life of the priest living at Holy Trinity Cathedral demanded restraint because so little money was coming in. But the new Russian parishioners were very motivated to support the parish, to contribute to the general task of the Church. Before that the parish treasury was experiencing slow growth, which prevented its debts from being cleared. Fr. Vladimir and Matushka would clean up the church, ring the bells, and the various starostas found it difficult to endure the church's poverty. However, with the increase in the number of parishioners, parish income started growing, and the situation was revitalized to the point that the church was no longer in debt. This improvement in the running of the church was enhanced by Father's heartfelt

attitude toward his parishioners, which was revealed in his priesthood, and his sincere service to parish members which brought about the realization among the faithful that Christ's Truth was being fulfilled in their church life. Perhaps this truth was not always fulfilled as the predominant state, but we distinctly felt the aspiration to come closer to its fulfillment, and so Russians would be helped and cared for more than once.

[T]he new life in America, given their paltry financial means, repeatedly obligated people to stop and think hard about their situation, but they would be reassured by the concern the San Francisco church showed for them, a concern both on part of the laity and the clergy.

At Holy Trinity Cathedral the faithful lived in the awareness of their mutual service to each other, seeing to each other, seeing the goodness of much service in the priest and in the esteem in which he was held by Americans.

Russians as a people understood such service, saying that the voice of one man is the voice of no one, and many understand this truism today as they undergo a difficult life in a foreign land. Everyone knows that it's well and good to have a hundred dollars, [and] it's also good to have a hundred friends. For the power of friendship brings about much that is good. The Russian cause was built up with the help of the Orthodox faith, which is based upon love and friendship, and this is not only the truth, but a power that is evident throughout the entire life of the Russian people in the light of history. This is the reason for the influence of Russian culture on Russia's entire life, since all that has been acquired by indigenous Russia from the earliest times has been carefully preserved in it. Our people have been so closely linked to Orthodoxy that someone who would lose the faith of the fathers was no longer considered Russian. No matter where fate would cast Russians, they would build churches, recognizing that in Liturgy the faithful take in Christ's salvific teaching.

### **MEMORIES...**

The Bilkevich family lived in Fallon. He ran a bar and a dance hall there. He also raised livestock and we used to go out and buy newly dropped [born] calves, either to raise or for veal. Back in the 1930s we could buy one for five dollars. Later on it was between five and twenty-five dollars.

—*Alla Keyes, May 11, 2008*

Founding Member Peter Harding (Kurliavatikas) served as the choir director.

—*Peggy Sanders, February 17, 2008*

We always had a wonderful time cooking: lunches, food for the Glendi, those things. It was wonderful to have friends around.

Gaye LeBaron [Sonoma County Historian and columnist for the *Santa Rosa Press-Democrat*] came to one of the Glendis and wrote about it in the newspaper. I remember her ending the story by writing: "What a wonderful world this would be if all the world could be like a Glendi."

—*Musaya Sakovich, April 11, 2008*

“Money for the church came from donations, the collection plate, and candle sales. The priests weren’t paid much; maybe that’s why we had so many unmarried priests.”

—*Konstantine Sakovich*

The Sisterhood was always there, right from the beginning of the Parish, but it wasn’t until the 1950s that it became formal, with a secretary and minutes and all that. The Sisterhood women helped build the [Protection] Church just as much as the men, by raising money and doing the sewing for the Church. Becoming formal didn’t change anything; it was the same people doing the same things.

—*Nina Arrabit, May 15, 2008*

The people needed a Russian Orthodox Church. San Francisco was too far and people couldn’t afford to travel that far. It was a unifying thing for the families who needed each other because they had difficulties with English. The Church was a focal point for social activities; it was the glue that held the little community together.

The Church was built by nickels and dimes, but they didn’t have nickels and dimes. They had faith in God.

Santa Rosa was crime free. Maybe a few farmers got killed by their pet Jersey bulls, but that’s about it. I never knew a moment of fear there .

There were hoboes. They weren’t bad men, just hungry men looking for work. Mrs. [Magda] Sokol used to feed them. She felt sorry for them. But she always used special plates and cutlery for them. She’d never let the family eat off them because she was afraid of TB [tuberculosis]. They didn’t have antibiotics then.

Alexei Kropotkin... his wife was a princess in Russia, but in America she was like everyone else. She worked hard too.

The telephones on Mountain View Avenue were on a party line. One had to crank the number of rings, both short and long, to connect with the person with whom you wanted to speak. Yes, all of the phones on the party line rang, and only the person whose bell signal it was was supposed to answer! It was, of course, possible for people to listen to others’ conversations, but there was an honor system in place.

—*Peggy Sanders*

Robert Canby’s telephone number in 1938 was 18-Y-5.

—*Polk’s Santa Rosa Directory*

The men playing chess on Sundays following Divine Liturgy....

—*Peggy Sanders*

When I was eleven we moved from San Francisco to Sonoma County. I attended Wilfred School by the railroad tracks on Wilfred Avenue. It was a one room schoolhouse, with the older kids helping the younger kids. Serge Canby sat in front of me. Two weeks later Serge brought his parents to meet my parents because we all spoke Russian. Our folks visited a lot. Serge and I played cards, but I didn’t know he cheated—that was so he could kiss me!

—*Natalie Osander Canby, March 24, 2008*

During the 1940s and 1950s we had at most, seventy-five to a hundred people in the Parish. Maybe thirty would show up for Sunday Liturgy. There were some Greek people who would join us at Pascha. In 1960 to 1964 the Eritreans started coming in. Julia Rayburn also gave \$3,000 to help build the monastery at Calistoga. In the 1940s and '50s there weren't too many kids—maybe fifteen; it was mostly older people. We all spoke Russian, even the kids; we all grew up bilingual.

—*Nick Sokol, March 22, 2008*

The men who built the Protection Church all learned a number of skills in Russia and then put them to work building homes, barns, and their Church. Although working as small farmers in America, many early parishioners had received good educations in Russia, and education for their children was considered simply the thing to do. There was a small Russian colony in Glen Ellen. They settled there because of their affection for Jack London's novels. Serge Canby was an able mechanic while yet a teenager. He bought an old, beat up jalopy and fixed it up so he could drive to Santa Rosa High School—and he had five riders with him every day. Serge was a big, husky boy, and the football coach at Santa Rosa High wanted him on the team, but his father refused permission because he thought he'd get hurt playing football.

—*Natalie Canby*

My wife Esther's dad was attending the Protection Church, and we started attending here. I told Esther, that was in August of 1998, "Esther, I think we ought to start becoming Orthodox. How do you feel about it?" She said, "I've been waiting for you to ask that!" We came to Glendi every year. We became close friends with the Wilkes family. We started coming here February 14, 1999 and were baptized as a family on April 3rd, 1999. I was a very brief catachumen!. Baptized, chrismated, nurtured and ordained here.

—*Fr. Dcn. Nicholas Carr*

I succeeded Father Nicholas Sanin, who was in his eighties. Father had been a naval officer for many years. I had been sent to Protection as a completely inexperienced priest and knew the Liturgy as a deacon but not really as a priest, and there is a lot of adjustment. Konstantine Sakovich was a big help. His father was a priest and he knew the Liturgy inside out. He didn't sing in the choir then, but served at the Altar and supervised the altar boys. He taught me a lot, and I'm always grateful to him.

My secretary was Linda Lowe. She lived next door in what used to be the parish house. She had three boys who were all altar boys. Anthony was the oldest son. Alve is still active in the Parish.

Father Andrew Morbey was the one who really tried to turn the Parish around, making it less of an immigrant church. He was a convert while his wife was cradle and she was the choir director. Father Andrew is a fine priest. He's now at St. Mary's in Minneapolis.



I used both Old Slavonic and English, mixing as much as I could. If the congregation were mostly younger, I'd use English. I preached in both languages. I'd preach the sermon in Russian, then repeat it in English. Made for a long sermon and a longer Liturgy!

Serge Spiridon was my Reader. Arkady Venekurov took care of the Altar. The Sisterhood President was Eugenia Vorobei. There was one Romanian whose name was Vasily Constantine. My first catachumen was Father John Pierce. Fr. John is now the dean at Holy Resurrection in Tacoma, Washington. Archimandrite Dimitry (Egoroff) was the founder of Saint Eugene's Hermitage at Point Reyes Station. Archimandrite Varnava (Karataev), was for many years at the monastery in Calisotga, serving the sisters there. He was their chaplain.

Alexandra Hrenoff made my first cassock, which I still wear! And I remember Olga Canyuch. And Eugenia Fittinghoff; her husband's name was Daniel. She was on the Parish Council. And, of course, Bobbi and Petar Griovski—very faithful people.”

—*Hieromonk Alexander (Lisenko), Rector 1979–1980, September 22, 2007*

About the Reabinin (Rayburn) family leaving Russia in 1918, Madeline Reabinin Sokol later recalled: “We left the house as it was, with everything, our servants, everything. We pretended we were going to visit my grandmother and we left. You remember Dr. Zhivago? That's the way we went, in boxcars. We went to Riga (Latvia) and then to England and finally to San Francisco.”

—*Madeline Sokol, Santa Rosa PRESS-DEMOCRAT, October 12, 1986*

Favorite memory? I have to think about that! I do think very fondly of the time when the children were small and we were in the little [Protection] Church. My children grew up sitting on the raised cliros. I always have my vision of them falling asleep at Pascha, but also being very excited.

—*Matushka Ann Margitich, November 23, 2008*

Without a doubt, my favorite memory is the older people, the Russians who were a generation or so ahead of me. Religiously, I am the inheritor of all their work for without them there would be no Orthodoxy in America. They did it under trying circumstances---they didn't have a lot of money or a lot of means. Probably their food, their traditions, their habits, and really their love of God enriched us. It is a treasure for our country—it is a Gift. I believe this is a marketplace, an agora if you will, of ideas. Orthodoxy will make significant gains as people encounter it and understand the historical truth.

—*John Panages, November 23, 2008*

My fondest memory is when my late husband [Dimitry] painted the gold in the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church. That was about 1940.

—*Nina Formin, November 23, 2008*

My favorite memory would be when I got to sing the Gospel in Church. My Sunday School teacher tells us about his past, and today we got to talk about how

people feel about Christianity and how some girl was insulted by another girl who is an atheist. Another is how regular school teachers unconsciously say Christianity is real, which is interesting. I am Eritrean, and I speak both Eritrean and English. Being bilingual helps me because I get to communicate with people. My teachers in school say how important it is to learn another language, and I'm lucky because I already know another language.

—*Etram Kahsay, age 15, November 23, 2008*

This is my third year serving in the Altar. It's easier to stand longer when you're in the Altar. It's very nice. It's a privilege because you can see what's going on, and I can understand the service better. At different parts of the Liturgy I really feel that I'm in a special place—special from the rest of the Church. Actually, I'd like to be a deacon someday, but that's up to God.

—*Acolyte Joseph Anderson, age 12, November 23, 2008*

My favorite memory was when my family was chrismated in December of 1991. I was first here when Fr. Andrew (Morbey) was here. We visited different churches and I saw Fr. Andrew, who had been a Presbyterian. He gave me some books to read; some he wanted returned and some he said I could keep.

—*Reader Patrick Wilkes, November 23, 2008*

My favorite memory of this Parish is when we consecrated Saint Seraphim Church.

—*Barbara Owens, November 23, 2008*

One of the things I most remember about your Parish is how after Liturgy men would sit together and play chess, and the women would visit and talk---well into the afternoon.

—*His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa (Canada), while visiting the Parish after a thirty year absence on October 1, 2007*

On building St. Seraphim's Church: "Father Michael [Margitich] was the moving force. Our Parish feels like a family; we have dedication, thanks to Father Michael and thanks to God."

—*Petar Griovski, Longtime Parish Treasurer, February 22, 2008*

Father Andrew Morbey was one of us [Eritreans], but with a different skin color. He was well loved. He was a living saint here in Santa Rosa.

—*Maaza Belata, October 19, 2008*

I've been a priest since 1953, and together with "filling in" at nearby parishes while I was in the Air Force, I guess I've served between twenty-five and thirty parishes. I was chaplain in the Air Force for thirty years. I graduated from St. Vladimir's Seminary and I have a Masters Degree from Troy University (Alabama) in counseling and alcoholic guidance.

Coming to Protection Parish... I had retired—I've retired four times now!—and was serving the nuns at Point Reyes (St. Eugene's Monastery). The bishop called me. He said this small parish needed help and it wouldn't be too hard. I came to the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Parish in August of 1990 and fell in love with the community. I used to come here when we visited our son. There weren't too many people perhaps thirty or forty, and mostly Russians. After three or four months the Parish began to grow.

One thing I knew was that I couldn't just come in and start telling people what to do. I felt that we would need a new church, but it had to come from the people. I had to have their support. And they gave it.

When we had the meeting to decide whether or not to build, there were only two questions about the new church's design. One person wanted to know if our vision would be blocked by the pillars while another wanted to know about the acoustics. That was it.

Before we built St. Seraphim Church we had nothing but weeds all over the place. It was terrible! I'd go out and mow for four or five hours, and without a power mower! What a job!

Building St. Seraphim Church was providential, not coincidental. Faith was the driving force. The Church was built with the widow's mite (Mark 12:42). When Bishop Tikhon came to see the place where we were to build, he looked, held out his arms and said, "I claim this land for Jesus Christ!" It was almost as if the Lord Himself had taken charge. There was a visiting priest, and he had a piece of cloth from St. John of Kronstadt. He gave it to me, saying, "He will help you." And he did. Today it's in the Church on the Table of Oblation.

We were going to name the new church. We had five names: St. Catherine, Holy Dormition, Ascension, one other and St. Seraphim of Sarov. I sent them to Bishop Tikhon, and he phoned me right away and said, "The name jumped out at me. The Blessed Virgin healed St. Seraphim."

There were things, other things, but it kind of all just fit together, like a mosaic. But this was providential, not coincidental, and it was faith. Faith was the driving force that built that church.

And love. Nothing can be done without love. Faith and love.

—Archpriest Michael Margitich, Rector 1990–1998, November 25, 2008

I was away from the Church for seven years for very personal reasons. One Sunday in June of 1995, however, something which I cannot explain to this day found me entering the Protection of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church on Mountain View Avenue. I had never been there before, and I didn't know anyone there, either.

The first thing that hit me was the choir, singing in English. Having been brought up Catholic with its Latin and having converted to Orthodoxy in a Greek Orthodox parish with its Greek, I was able to appreciate the beauty and poetry of the Liturgy for the first time. I knew then that there was a reason God had directed me here that Sunday.

After the Liturgy I met an old friend from my prior parish who introduced me to Fr. Michael [Margitich], and I've been here ever since. Everyone here is family. Everyone here is a brother, a sister, a mother and a father to everyone else. I never thought that way before. This is my home.

*—Eleni Rose, November 2, 2008*

This is the best choir in the OCA.

*—Father Bob Kondradich, OCA Chancellor, 2002*

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HISTORY TIMELINE: BEGIN ON THE FIRST PAGE OF PART III.

Year	Event
1934	Fund raising begins for what will be the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Santa Rosa Mao Tse-Tung leads the Long March in China. Gangsters John Dillinger and “Pretty Boy” Floyd killed by G-men.
1935	Congress passes the Social Security Act. Hitler renounces the Treaty of Versailles; Germany begins rearmament. Congress passes the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act. Will Rogers and Wiley Post die in airplane crash.
1936	Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Church built; first priest is Fr. Michael Pelzig. Sonoma County Fair organized. Civil War breaks out in Spain. Italy annexes Ethiopia
1937	Zeppelin Hindenburg crashes in Lakehurst, New Jersey; end of airship travel. Golden Gate Bridge opens. Japanese Army sacks Peking and Shanghai; start of World War II in Asia. U.S.S. Panay sunk by Japanese on Yangtze River in China.
1938	German Anschluss of Austria. America begins to prepare for war with \$1 billion defense bill.
1938	St. Tikhon’s and St. Vladimir’s Seminaries open for students.
1939	Golden Gate International Exposition opens on Treasure Island. Movies “Wizard of Oz” and “Gone with the Wind” come out.
1940	Repose of Archimandrite Sebastian Dabovich, Serb-American native of San Francisco and missionary of Orthodoxy in America. Santa Rosa’s population reaches 12,605, Petaluma 8,034, Healdsburg 2,507. France falls to Germany.
1941	Wilhelm II, ex-Kaiser of Germany, dies in exile at Doorn, Holland. Japanese Navy bombs Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii; U.S.A. Enters World War II. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issues Executive Order 9066 for all West Coast Japanese and Japanese-Americans to be interned for duration of the war.
1942	Santa Rosa Junior College starts nursing training program for the war effort.



- Japanese armed forces overrun Southeast Asia.
- 1943 Battle of Stalingrad in U.S.S.R.; tides turns against Germany.  
Pentagon Building in Virginia is completed.  
Microbiologist Selman A. Waksman discovers the antibiotic streptomycin.  
Italy surrenders to Allies.
- 1944 Allies successfully invade Normandy; beginning of Liberation of Europe.  
Congress passes the G.I. Bill of Rights.
- 1945 Surrender of Nazi Germany; war ends in Europe.  
U.S.A. drops atomic bomb and Japan surrenders; World War II ends with loss of  
50,000,000 lives.
- 1946 Novelist George Orwell publishes *Animal Farm*.  
Nuremburg War Crimes Tribunal for Nazis.  
Sonoma County Airport created from Army Air Field.
- 1947 Marshall Plan to aid war-torn Europe.  
Capt. Chuck Yeager breaks the sound barrier flying the Bell X-1.
- 1948 U.S.A. Wins 33 Gold Medals at London Olympic Games.  
Long-playing vinyl records (LP's, 33 rpm) begin to replace 78 rpm shellac re-  
cords.  
Baseball great Babe Ruth dies.
- 1949 Marx Brothers comedy team makes last film together, "Love Happy."  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) formed.  
National Trust for Historic Preservation created.  
State of Israel born.  
Kuomintang regime in China falls to Communists, escapes to exile on island of  
Taiwan.
- 1950 Last steam riverboat in the West, the *Petaluma*, makes final trip from San Fran-  
cisco to Petaluma.  
Charles M. Schultz introduces "Peanuts" comic strip.  
Bishop Leonty of Chicago elected Metropolitan of All America and Canada.  
Parish builds the first Church Hall.
- 1950 North Korean Army invades South Korea.  
Comedians Laurel and Hardy make last film together, "*Atol K.*"
- 1951 Franklin National Bank of New York introduces credit cards.  
Remington-Rand builds UNIVAC I, the world's first electronic computer.  
Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg of the University of California-Berkeley wins the Nobel  
Prize for Chemistry.

- St. Eugene's Monastery established at Point Reyes Station by Hieromonk Dimi-try (Eroroff), later rector of the Parish.
- 1952 India holds first national elections.  
U.S.A. tests the world's first hydrogen bomb.
- 1953 Dr. Jonas Salk develops polio vaccine.  
Coup d'etat in Egypt as King Farouk is overthrown.
- 1954 Parish builds the Rectory for clergy housing.  
U.S. Supreme Court rules school segregation in unconstitutional under the XIV Amendment.  
Plastic contact lenses introduced.  
Singer Elvis Presley cuts his first record.  
Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. becomes the first Afro-American general in the U.S. Air Force.  
U.S. Air Force Academy opens in temporary quarters at Lowry AFB.
- 1955 Rosa Parks defies "Jim Crow" laws on a Montgomery, Alabama bus and sparks the Civil Rights movement.  
Disneyland opens in Anaheim, California.
- 1955 Professor Albert Einstein dies.  
Ray A. Krok starts McDonald's hamburger chain in Des Plaines, Illinois.
- 1956 Richmond-San Rafael Bridge opens, ending the last major ferryboat service on San Francisco Bay.  
Sonoma State College opens.  
Nikita S. Khrushchev denounces Stalin at XX Party Congress.  
U.S.S.R. and U.S.A launch first satellites in Space.
- 1958 Comedienne Gracie Allen of stage, screen, radio, and TV retires.  
Alaska admitted into Statehood.  
King Faisal of Iraq is assassinated, Iraq becomes a republic.
- 1959 Hawaii admitted to Statehood.  
Fidel Castro assumes power in Cuba.
- 1960 Execution of Caryl Chessman at San Quentin stirs worldwide controversy.  
Seventeen former colonies in Africa gain independence from European colonial powers.  
Formation of SCOBA.
- 1961 Soviets erect Berlin Wall to prevent escapes from Communism.

- 1962 Marine Lt. Col. John Glenn the first American to orbit Earth.  
City of Rohnert Park incorporated.  
New York Yankees defeat San Francisco Giants in first World Series played in the Bay Area (seven games).
- 1962 Bobby Fischer wins U.S. Chess Championship.  
United Farm Workers founded by Cesar Chavez.
- 1963 Soviet Cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova becomes the first woman in Space.  
Assassination of President John F. Kennedy; succeeded by Lyndon B. Johnson.  
Quarterback Roger Staubach of Navy wins the Heisman Trophy.
- 1964 Congress passes the Civil Rights Act.  
Nikita S. Khrushchev falls from power in U.S.S.R., Alexei Kosygin takes over.
- 1965 Repose of Metropolitan Leonty; succeeded by Metropolitan Ireney.  
United Kingdom abolishes the death penalty for murder.
- 1966 Repose of St. John (Maximovich), Wonder Worker of Shanghai and San Francisco.  
Sonoma State College moves to new Rohnert Park campus.  
Peyton Rous wins Nobel Prize for discovering cancer virus.  
New TV shows “Star Trek” and “Mission: Impossible.”
- 1967 Thurgood Marshall becomes the Afro-American justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.  
Six Day War between Israel and Arab states.  
Rowan and Martin’s “Laugh-In” premieres as a TV special, leads to a six year run on NBC.
- 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam War.  
Parish builds new Church Hall; currently in use.  
Figure skater Peggy Fleming of U.S.A. wins Gold Medal in Winter Games.
- 1969 Neil A. Armstrong and Edwin A. “Buzz” Aldrin, Jr. are the first astronauts to walk on the moon.  
Earl Warren retires from the Supreme Court after sixteen years as Chief Justice of the United States.
- 1970 Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in America is granted autocephalous status by the Moscow Patriarchate; name changes to Orthodox Church in America (OCA).  
Boeing introduces the 747 Jumbo Jet.
- 1971 Anadel State Park is established.

XXVI Amendment to the Constitution gives eighteen year olds the right to vote.

People's Republic of China admitted to the United Nations.

- 1972 Proposition 20 establishes the California Coastal Commission.  
Watergate scandal surfaces.  
Israeli athletes murdered at Munich, Germany Olympics.
- 1973 Movie "American Grafitti" filmed in Sonoma County.  
Alexandr Solzhenitsyn publishes The Gulag Archipelago.  
Yom Kippur War between Arab states.
- 1974 President Richard M. Nixon resigns in wake of Watergate scandals.  
Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia is deposed.  
Heiress Patty Hearst is kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army.
- 1975 South Vietnam surrenders to North Vietnam to end war.  
1975 Billie Jean King wins women's singles at Wimbledon for sixth time.
- 1976 United States celebrates Bicentennial of Independence.
- 1977 Glorification of St. Juvenaly, Protomartyr of America and St. Innocent, Enlightener of America and Metropolitan of Moscow.  
Elvis Presley dies at age 42.  
Seattle Slew wins horseracing's Triple Crown.
- 1978 Sonoma State College, with 7,400 students, elevated to status of university.  
OCA membership reaches 1,000,000 mark.
- 1979 Repose of Matushka Olga Michael of Alaska, remembered for her many charities and aid to others.  
Old Santa Rosa Post Office moved to present location and becomes the Sonoma County Museum.  
Red Army invades Afghanistan.
- 1980 Mt. St. Helens volcano erupts in Washington State.  
1980's Immigration of people from Cambodia and Eritrea into Sonoma County.
- 1981 Justice Sandra Day O'Connor becomes the first woman justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.  
President Mohammed Anwar al Sadat of Egypt is assassinated after making

peace with Israel.

- 1982 First Human Race in Sonoma County to raise money for charities.
- 1982 Dr. Barney Clark becomes the first human to receive an artificial heart during 7 1/2 hour surgery.
- 1983 Warm Springs Dam built.  
Astronaut Sally Ride becomes the first American woman in Space.  
U.S. Marines and Army Rangers invade Grenada, evacuate hundreds of U.S. Citizens and depose Marxist regime.
- 1984 Petaluma & Santa Rosa Railroad abandoned.  
Astronauts Bruce McCandless and Robert Stewart are the first humans to fly free of a spacecraft in Space.
- 1985 Movie "Peggie Sue Got Married" is filmed at Santa Rosa High School and Sonoma County.  
General Electric Corp. buys RCA Corp. for \$6.28 billion, biggest corporate merger at the time.  
Mikhail Gorbachev becomes leader of U.S.S.R.
- 1986 Space Shuttle Challenger disaster, entire crew killed.  
Nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, Ukraine, U.S.S.R.
- 1987 Glorification of St. Nikolai (Velimirovich) of South Canaan and Zicha, Confessor of Dachau.
- 1988 Congress passes the Reparation Bill for 60,000 Japanese-American survivors of wartime internment.  
Rosenberg's Department Store in Santa Rosa closes.
- 1989 Parish hosts the first Glendi.
- 1990 Fr. Michael Margitich assigned to the Parish.
- 1991 U.S. Patent Office issues its 5,000,000 patent.
- 1992 Communism collapses in U.S.S.R.  
Johnny Carson retires after twenty-nine years on the "Tonight Show."
- 1993 Congress passes the Family Leave Act.  
Sears, Roebuck ends its annual catalog after ninety-seven years.
- 1994 Glorification of Archbishop John (Maximovich), Wonder Worker of Shanghai

and San Francisco; John (Kochurov), Hieromartyr of Chicago and Protomartyr of Bolshevik Revolution; Alexander ( Hotovitsky), Missionary of America and New Hieromartyr; Fr. Jacob Netsvetov, Enlightener of Peoples of Alaska; Fr. Alexis Toth of Wilkes-Barre.

- 1995 Santa Rosa Junior College opens Petaluma Campus.
- 1996 Construction of Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Church.
- 1997 Ordination of Deacon Lawrence Margitich to the Priesthood.  
Pathfinder lands on Mars.
- 1998 Terrorists bomb U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.
- 1999 Windsor High School graduates its first senior class.  
Fr. Michael retires; Fr. Lawrence becomes the Parish's 21st rector.
- 2000 Glorification of Bishop Rafael (Hawaweeny) of Brooklyn.
- 2001 Consecration of St. Seraphim Church by His Grace Bishop Tikhon.  
Terrorists destroy the World Trade Center in New York City.
- 2002 Sub Deacon Jeremiah Crawford is ordained to the Diaconate.  
United States invades Iraq.
- 2003 Consecration of Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church in Novato.
- 2004 Giant tsunami hits Southeast Asia; worst natural disaster in history.
- 2005 Fathers John Schettig and John Ramos assigned to the parish.
- 2006 Saddam Hussein, ex-dictator of Iraq, is captured, put on trial for crimes against humanity and executed.
- 2007 His Grace Bishop Benjamin (Patterson) of Berkeley becomes Bishop of San Francisco and the West.  
Sub Deacon Nicholas Carr is ordained to the Diaconate; first ordination in St. Seraphim Church.
- 2008 Rapprochement between ROCOR and Moscow Patriarchate.  
Parish burns the bank mortgage on St. Seraphim Church.  
Metropolitan Herman retires; succeeded by His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah (Paffhausen).

