

remembered Zion.” A soloist intones the verses of this ancient lament, and the people led by the choir respond by singing “Alleluia.” This was a psalm sung by the Jewish people who had been taken as captives to Babylon (597 BC the Temple in Jerusalem destroyed, with no hope of returning to the Land of Promise. It was a time of bitter repentance and sorrow. In the Scriptures the city of Babylon is seen as the antithesis of Jerusalem, as the broken and rebellious world opposed to God’s Kingdom, the condition of sin, of confusion, of idolatry, of [sexual immortality](#), of exile from God. The tower of Babel in Babylon was built on the presumption of those who felt they could control God, get Him to do their bidding. Finally, Babylon can be identified with the pig pen in the [Parable of the Prodigal Son](#), who went to live in a “far country” i.e., a land of sin and exile from God. The Prodigal son was weeping in the pigpen only when he remembered the house of the Father. As we meditate on this in the light of Jesus Christ, we can’t help but admit that we are often far away from Jesus in our deeds, yet we remember His glory, and the honor He confers on us, His grace and love. We come to the last, outrageous and violent verse of the psalm, and wonder, what could it mean? *Happy shall he be, that shall take and dash thine infants against the rock. Alleluia.* In our spiritual warfare, we are constantly confronted by intrusive thoughts—[logismi](#)—and passions that would lead us into sin. When they are just thoughts—infants, so to say, small and as yet harmless—we call upon the Name of Christ, who is the [Rock](#) (according to many scriptural verses), and the sins are crushed by Christ. —*Fr Lawrence*

Blini Brunch

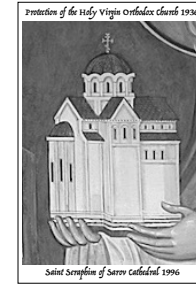
*Complete with sour cream, lox, herring,
and caviar...and of course, butter, syrup, fruit and bacon!!*

Church Hall
Sunday, February 20, Noon

*Please come enjoy Blini with us as we prepare to enter that
wonderful time of Lent.*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



February 20, 2022

Sunday of the Parable of the Prodigal Son



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Two:
When Thou didst descend to death, O Life-Immortal, Thou didst slay hades with the splendor of Thy Godhead; and when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of Heaven cried out: O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to Thee.
- KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Two:
Hades became afraid, O Almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb. The dead arose, creation with Adam beheld this and rejoiced with Thee; and the world, O my Savior, praises Thee forever.
- KONTAKION OF THE PRODIGAL SON, Tone Three:
Foolishly I sprang away from Thy great fatherly glory and dispersed in wicked deeds the riches that Thou didst give me. With the Prodigal I therefore cry unto Thee now: I have sinned against Thee, O compassionate Father. But receive me in repentance; and make me as one of Thy hired servants, O Lord.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Feb. 19: 3:30 PM, Catechism, *On Holy Baptism*
4:45 PM, *40 Day Trisagion* for Charles Mayo
5 PM, Vigil / Confessions
- Sunday, Feb. 20: 9:40 AM, Third and Sixth Hours
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Blini Brunch
- Wed., Feb. 23: 4 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank
5 PM, Vespers
- Thurs., Feb. 24: 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting
7 PM, Bible Study with Fr James via *Zoom*
- Fri., Feb. 25: 11:30 AM–1:30 PM, Confessions, in Protection Church
- Saturday, Feb. 26: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Soul Saturday (Protection)
3:30 PM, Catechism *On Holy Chrismation*
5 PM, Vigil / Confessions

• CATECHISM:

All are welcome to participate in the Catechumen Class in the Parish Hall at 3:30 PM on Saturdays. Topics for the next eight Saturdays will be: Holy Baptism, Chrismation, the Eucharist, Confession, Priesthood, Marriage, Holy Unction, and Death and the Funeral.

• PARISH ANNUAL MEETING:

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 27, at 12:30 PM. We will review the 2021 finances, approve a budget for 2022, elect new parish council members, approve new parish bylaws, look at areas to improve and thank one another for all the good work that took place during the year. Bring a sack-lunch, since there will be no lunch served here.

• 40TH DAY MEMORIALS:

A *Fortieth Day Lilya* for the repose will be served on Saturday, Feb. 19 at 4:30 for Charles Mayo (husband of Laura Mayo, who reposed in September. Kate Willens *Forty-Day* will be on Monday, Feb. 28, at 6 PM.

• REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK:

Come on Wednesday at 4 PM to help with food distribution to those in need. Questions? Speak with Lydia Nicholson. Online signup [HERE](#).

• THE SIX PSALMS AT VIGIL:

Night is the reality of the world without Christ; it gives man the feeling of chaos, fear, insecurity. Only the Word of God takes us out of the night. Light comes only from God. Light always is from God, for there is no darkness in God. The light of the day is a resurrection every morning. Matins celebrates this victory over night—the resurrection of light—and God’s goodness in not leaving us in perpetual darkness. Matins follows Vespers at the Vigil. We immediately begin reading [Psalms 3, 37, 62, 87, 102, and 142](#). Every Matins, daily, festal, Lenten or whatever, begins with these psalms. These Psalms are said to be summary of the Christian life, highlighting the sorrow that we so often meet along the way to our eternal joy. In some traditions, all the candles or lights in the church are extinguished while these Psalms are read. This is done to help aid us in hearing the words that are chanted without visual distraction. Midway through the Six Psalms, at the beginning of the 4th of the Psalms (Psalm 87), the one most filled with sorrow and extreme bitterness, the priest leaves the Altar and, standing before the Royal Doors, continues to quietly read the twelve appointed *Morning Prayers*. The priest images Jesus Christ, who, having heard the sorrow of fallen mankind, not only descended, but to the very end also shared in the suffering of which Psalm 87 speaks. These Psalms are not treated like those at Vespers (which we know more commonly from the Presacntified). We do not sit, but stand attentively struggling to bring the words deeply into our mind and heart. The rubrics direct that the Six Psalms be read slowly, without haste. Both reader and faithful are to read and hear the words as though they were praying them directly to God as a prayer. This is a time for stillness and concentration, and *so we stand rather than sit* during these Psalms. The rubrics even note that bows are not to be made after the first three psalms during the *Glory*. All is quiet, dark, and as motionless as possible to facilitate concentration as we strive to enter into the psalms and make the prayer of the Psalmist our own. See the *Commentary of the Vigil* [HERE](#). — *borrowed*

• BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON:

On the three Sundays prior to Great Lent we sing Psalm 136, which begins with the phrase: “By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we