

• LET US ATTEND:

Do we come to the liturgy, do we come to prayer simply to say to God, “Give, I want something, I need something. You can and therefore You must; it is Your duty to give.” So often people think of praying just as a beggar thinks of stretching out his hand in the hope that something will be put into it, and so often we come to the Liturgy, which is a miracle of the most intimate and deepest possible meeting with the Lord, in order to receive, to receive peace, encouragement, and to receive something which we should not dare to receive in such circumstances, to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. And I could give you an example of it which struck me more than forty years ago, on one unique occasion, thanks be to God. I had not yet begun the Liturgy, and suddenly I heard someone knocking at the door of the sanctuary. I came out, and there was a gentleman, not an ignoramus, but a man who had received religious education in his youth in Russia. He was knocking at the door, and when I asked him what he wanted he said, “Is this the place where I can receive Communion?” I said “No, you must stay for the Liturgy, make your confession, and we will see whether you are ready for it.” And his answer was, “I have no time for all this, I have been invited to lunch. Can’t I receive Communion at once and go?” This was an extreme situation, a monstrous one, but isn’t it the extreme of something which happens to most of us, that we come to God, whether in prayer or in Communion, simply to snatch something, expecting something and claiming it from Him? I think we should give more thought to the way in which we come to church, in which we enter it. So often, I notice that in the most holy moments of the liturgy, someone comes, turns his or her back on what is happening in the sanctuary, goes to buy candles, and goes around lighting candles at the moment when the prayers of Consecration are being said, or a blessing is given, or special prayers are being offered. The Liturgy, as every service in church, is not simply a private affair in which we come to beg and to receive, or even not to beg but to claim a right and to receive. It is a moment when we should enter like the publican into the church, knowing that we are unworthy to cross the threshold of the house of God, the place which is His unreservedly, while the world has been betrayed into the hands of evil.

—Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of London

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**September 18, 2022**

**Post-Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross**



• RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION, Tone Five:

Let us the faithful praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death and to raise the dead, by His glorious Resurrection.

• TROPARION OF THE CROSS, Tone One:

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

• KONTAKION OF THE CROSS, Tone Four:

As Thou wast voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy Name, O Christ God; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace!

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, Sept. 16: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Sept. 17: 5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
- Sunday, Sept. 18: 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy  
11:15 AM, Church School  
11:45, Agape Meal (Glendi BBQ postponed)
- Wednesday, Sept. 21: 6 PM, Vespers  
7 PM, Book Club
- Thursday Sept. 22: 6 PM, Small Supplicatory Canon  
7 PM, Bible Study, via Zoom
- Friday, Sept. 23: *No Confessions available today*

### • GLENDI POSTPONED:

Due to the weather forecast for Sunday, Sept. 18, the Glendi BBQ will be postponed (probably until October). Our thanks to all who volunteered to help organize the event.

### • CATECHISM:

Classes begin on Saturday, October 15, at 3:30 PM. All are welcome to attend. Catechesis consists of eight classes, from October 15–December and then another eight beginning in February, culminating in baptisms on Lazarus Saturday. In addition to these sixteen classes, each Sunday there are also twenty-minute sessions with our catechists on topics such as the Prayer Book, the Feast Days of the Church, the history of the Parish, Icons, preparing for Confession and Communion, etc. These classes happen on Sunday mornings, when you hear the Deacon exclaim: “Catechumens, depart....” They do indeed depart to the Hall or Library for study with a teacher.

### • CRITICAL GREETING TIME IS AFTER CHURCH

If you are a visitor to a church, receiving a greeting upon entering can be nice and helpful. Receiving a bulletin; smiling warmly; a friendly “Good Morning! Welcome!” is essential. However we've encountered a number of people who have related stories of how it took them a number of visits to a church before they had the nerve to stay for coffee hour. What will it be like? Will I have someone to talk to? In a survey, visitors were asked when they

made the determination of whether a church was friendly or not. The leading answer was *within ten minutes of the end of the service*. The most important time for greeting people is immediately as the Liturgy ends, a time when it is difficult, without planning ahead, for assigned greeters to be effective. Therefore whether you are part of a greeters ministry or not, YOU are the most important greeter in your parish. Practice these words: “Would you like to join me for a cup of coffee and lunch in the fellowship hall?” Don't be shy, reach out. You are not here just for yourself. —*borrowed*

### • REMINDER:

Matushka Ann and I will be going on a pilgrimage to the ancient sacred sites of Italy, **September 20–October 6**. Matushka Eleanor will also be traveling to visit my brother and his family in Plymouth, MA, departing here Sept. 19. For any pastoral needs please call Fr. Nicholas Carr at (707) 318-5391 or Fr. Alexander Krassovsky at (707) 292-5101.—*Fr Lawrence*

### • BOOK CLUB:

The St. Seraphim Book Club will wrap up the discussion of the novel *Laurus* on Wednesday, 7 PM, Parish Hall. All are welcome. The next book: The small 4th century book by St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*.

### • RESURRECTIONAL VESPERS—SATURDAY AT 5 PM

The “liturgical day,” which is to say, the day as God created it, begins in the evening with the setting of the sun, following the Biblical account of creation: “And there was evening and there was morning, one day” (Gen 1.5). Vespers is the first service of the Daily Cycle, and it takes place after sunset in the early evening. Vespers begin with the chanting of the evening psalm: “... the sun knows its time for setting, Thou makest darkness and it is night ...” (Ps 103.19–20). Glorifying God's creation of the world and thanking Him for it, this psalm is mankind's first act of worship, for we first of all meet God as our Creator. The service of Vespers takes us through creation, sin, and salvation in Christ. On Saturday evening it guides us in our meditation and celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. On other days it directs us to praise God for the particular saints whose memories we celebrate. It prepares us for the sleep of the night and the dawn of the new day to come. It begins our movement into the most perfect communion with God in the sacramental mysteries. Are you a lover of Vespers? —*borrowed*