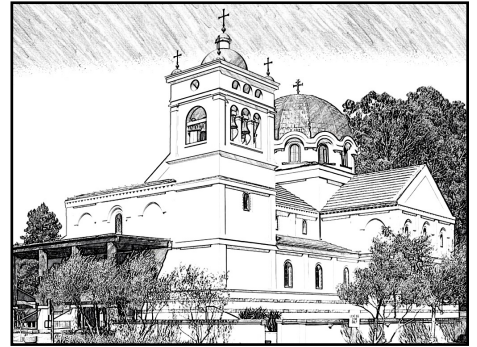


ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 29, 2023
Zacchaeus Sunday



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Eight:

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One; Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

- TROPARION OF ST. IGNATIUS THE GOD-BEARER, Tone Four:

As a sharer of the ways and a successor to the throne of the Apostles, O inspired of God, thou foundest discipline to be a means of ascent to divine vision. Wherefore, having rightly divided the word of truth, thou didst also contest for the faith even unto blood, O Hieromartyr Ignatius, intercede with Christ our God that our souls be saved.

- KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Eight:

By raising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam; Eve exults in Thy resurrection; and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O Greatly Merciful One.

- KONTAKION OF ST. IGNATIUS, Model Melody, "On this day..."

Dawning from the East this day, divine Ignatius, that God-bearer praised of all, hath made the whole creation bright with his wise teachings of piety and is adorned with the beauty of martyrdom.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Jan. 28: 11 AM, Baptism
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
- Sunday, Jan. 29: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
- Wednesday, Feb. 1: 1 PM, Burial for Ron Parmenas Davis at Forestville Cemetery.
6 PM, Vigil for the *Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple*
- Thursday, Feb. 2: 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy for the Feast, with the blessing of candles
7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James
- Friday, Feb. 3: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions

- PARISH ANNUAL MEETING:

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 5 at 12:30 PM. The report booklets will be distributed this Sunday, Jan. 29. Preparing for this meeting, let's call to mind the exclamation made at the Divine Liturgy

just before we sing the Creed: *Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess...* And we answer: *Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Trinity One in essence and undivided.* The word “mind” here means “one accord, one heart.” This call for love and oneness of mind and the deep spiritual heart is a precondition for our confession of God as Trinity. We are images of God in Trinity, and in order to truly confess the *Trinity undivided* we must also be undivided among ourselves—we must live a life of love. Fr Philip McCaffery writes: “God is a community of loving Persons, and human beings are made in God's "image and likeness." Christ is born into this world to restore human beings to their true selves, through repentance and communion with Him. This is the Gospel—Good News indeed!”

- PARISH PRE-LENTEN RETREAT:

What a blessing it is for our parish and the North Bay Orthodox community to receive Fr. Seraphim on Saturday, February 18. While we have someone who has stepped forward to prepare lunch, we will need a team to prepare the morning refreshments and a team to take care of clean up. Please see Fr. Lawrence if you would like to be part of our parish hospitality. Flyers for the retreat are in the narthex.

- THE ONE MEDIATOR ~ AND THE SACRAMENTS:

Perhaps the most salient aspect of the sacramental life is something that has almost been forgotten within contemporary Christianity: noetic experience. The fact that I will now be required to explain the very meaning of noetic experience for my readers makes my point. In the writings of the Church fathers, it is assumed that this is the true character of the saving knowledge of God. “Noetic” refers to that knowledge that is acquired by the “nous,” an aspect of the soul that is uniquely the place where we encounter God. It is not the place of the passions and emotions, nor is it the place of discursive reasoning. Rather, it is that place in which we “know” by a participatory knowledge that is sometimes described as “perception.” We lack a good vocabulary for speaking about noetic experience precisely because our culture has abandoned this once-essential mode of perception. The Scriptures tell us, “Be still and know that I am God.” But these words are read by a culture that knows almost nothing about true stillness (*hesychia*) and ceaselessly engages in activities to prevent its possibility. Stillness of this sort includes the silencing of the passions and emotions as well as discursive reasoning. It then becomes possible to be aware and to know wordlessly with a depth and stability that are the very bedrock of the spiritual life. When I was first ordained, perhaps the most difficult part of my spiritual life was the need to “think” as I celebrated the liturgy. Remembering what came next, or fiddling with the pages of a book were distractions of the first order. Every priest would agree that the best liturgical experience comes only when the actions and words are no longer the product of reasoning, but are simply known “by heart.” It is then that noetic experience is able to flower. The same is true among the laity. What is often experienced at first as “boredom” (the sameness of the liturgy or the interminable character of the Psalms or Canon in some services) is nothing more than a description of something that exists for the nurture of the nous rather than the emotions and reasoning. Imagine walking with someone through a Redwood forest, or along a quiet beach and being told, “I’m bored.” In truth, the forest and the beach are quite common examples of noetic experiences that have yet to be eradicated or destroyed by our culture. It is not surprising that many people report an awareness of God in such settings. It is not incorrect to describe our relationship with the passions as an addiction. The fathers described the passion-driven life as a constant swing between pain and pleasure. We experience boredom as a pain and seek to replace it with pleasure, which will only yield more pain later on. This movement, as it dominates our experience, draws us away from the opportunity to grow in noetic experience. As such, it tears us away from God other than as an entertaining idea or a concept to be considered. This brings me back to the question of mediation. The sacraments present God to us in a manner in which He can be noetically perceived. We enter into Him as communion. The so-called non-mediated paths are themselves hopelessly trapped in their own subjectivity,

mired in the passions and ideology. We may protest that we need no mediation, but this turns out to be a desire to dwell in the imagination. The sacraments (including the priesthood) do not present a barrier to Christ, but make our access to the One Mediator immediate and independent of our own subjectivity. God knew what He was doing when He gave us the sacraments! — [Fr. Stephen Freeman](#)

- WISDOM FROM ELDER AIMILIANOS:

Unforeseen things always happen in our lives. You come to the monastery to find a spiritual life and you meet evil people; it is something unforeseen. You ask for a cell in that part of the monastery where there is no dampness, you get it, but you realize that the sea gives you allergies, so therefore you cannot be happy, day or night. Immediately your thought will tell you, “Get up and leave!” It is something unforeseen. I come close to you thinking that you are a good person and then I see that you are exactly the opposite; an unforeseen thing. Unforeseen things turn up constantly in our way because we have our will and our desires. Those unforeseen things are contrary to our will and desires; this is why they appear unforeseen to us, although they really are not. Because the person who loves God expects whatever may come, saying always “your will be done!” Rain will come, a storm, hail, thunder? “Blessed be the name of the Lord!” These are unforeseen because they come in contact with our bodily way of being.

Therefore, in order not to be unsettled every time and to be upset, not to fret and succumb to anxiety, you have to expect all, and bear whatever may come. You must always say: “Welcome, illness, welcome, failure, welcome, suffering!” This will bring about gentleness, without which there cannot exist a spiritual life.

- ON THE TALENTS:

Almost everyone, in our parish anyway, is familiar with the Parable of the Talents, [Matthew 25:14-30](#). Consider what Fr. Barnabas Powell writes: “...First, The Master *entrusts His servants with his property*. And the Master knows these servants so well that he portions His property to them according to their truest selves. Next, the *servants reveal their truest selves*. In entrusting these servants with His property, the Master is blessing His servants with a

chance to know themselves. He gives them His gifts to help them discover who they are. Finally, the *Master returns and expects an accounting*. This isn’t cruel or unexpected. The servants knew the Master would return, they expected it. That’s why the very expectation of accounting reveals the heart of each servant. It isn’t amazing that the one with 5 talents made 5 more, and it isn’t surprising that the one with 2 talents made 2 more. No, the surprise is that the one with 1 talent did nothing at all with his talent except hide it. And what motivated him was fear, not service. He was a servant of the Master and he didn’t serve. He hid. Just like Adam and Eve, this servant hid when the Master gave him a great treasure, His trust.”

LOVE IS IN THE AIR

We of St. Seraphim have been blessed with an outpouring of love from above. It has permeated our hearts and all that we do. On Tuesday, February 14th, our expressions of love will be heard and felt by those close to us and by our fellow parishioners at a *Valentine’s Day Dinner and Floor Show* in the Parish Hall. This will be a revival of the “talent” shows and the music and poetry evenings of the now distant pre-C-19 past. The date is firm for 6:00 PM, so ink it in; the details have still to be finalized. Several truly talented church members have already said that they would appear, and a few more are yet to be confirmed. If you have a well practiced, people pleasing, performing proficiency, please respond to this announcement. The evening will include Italian Red (spaghetti and accompaniments) with potluck desserts. Although the donation jar will be out, there will be no charge. Entertainers will surprise and delight us so that we are not eager to call it a night by nine o’clock. — *Vladimir, ursusmjr@sonic.net*

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January 29 – Zacchaeus Sun • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	30	31	February 1 • 1 PM, Burial of Ron Davis in Forestville • 6 PM, Vigil for the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord	2 – Feast of the Meeting • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy and blessing of candles • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr James	3 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	4 • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
5 – Publican and Pharisee • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 12:30 PM, Parish Annual Meeting (bring a sack lunch)	6 Fast Free Week	7	8 • 6 PM, Vespers	9 • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James	10 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	11 • 3:30 PM, Catechism <i>On Holy Baptism</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
12 – Prodigal Son • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	13	14 • 6 PM, <i>Valentine's Day Dinner and Floor Show</i>	15 • 6 PM, Vespers • 7 PM, Book Group	16–St. Nicholas of Japan • 9:30 AM, Liturgy • 6:30 PM, Catechism <i>On Holy Chrismation</i> • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James	17 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	18 – Memorial Saturday • 10:15 AM, Parish Retreat with Fr. Seraphim • 4:30 PM, Panikhida • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
19 – Last Judgment Sunday • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Blini Luncheon <i>Meat-Fare Sunday</i>	20	21 • 6 PM, Pre-Lenten Vespers	22 <i>Fr L in SF all day at Diocesan Council</i> • 6 PM, Vespers	23 • 6 PM, Pre-Lenten Vespers • 7 PM, Parish Council Meeting • 7 PM, Bible Study	24 • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	25 - Departed Monastics • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 3:30 PM, <i>On the Eucharist</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
26 – Forgiveness Sunday • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, Forgiveness Sunday Vespers (Lent begins) <i>Cheese-Fare Sunday</i>	27 – Clean Week • 8 AM, Lenten Matins • 7 PM, Great Compline with Canon	28 • 8 AM, Lenten Matins • 7 PM, Great Compline with Canon	March 1 • 8 AM, Canon of St. Andrew • 6 PM, Presanctified and Meal	2 • 8 AM, Lenten Matins • 7 PM, Great Compline with Canon	3 • 10:30 AM, Presanctified with Canon to St. Theodore the Recruit • 6 PM, Akathist	4 • 3:30 PM, Catechism <i>On Confession</i> • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions

- Fr. Lawrence will be away from Feb. 7–9, attending the Mission Parish Retreat in Portland, OR.