

grow and thrive, becoming the true Light who enlightens all the world. In our hearts, may that same One dwell, making us more and more what He has in mind for us to be—those who can, like the Theotokos, also trust, also say yes, and also work together with the Living God as he brings wonders to pass.” The Festal Matins will be served on Friday, March 24 at 6 PM, and the Divine Liturgy on Saturday, March 25 at 9 AM.

- SENIOR LUNCH FOR EVERYONE 55 AND OVER

Come celebrate the start of spring and the restarting of senior lunch! Tuesday, March 21 in the Parish Hall. 11:30 AM—piano music by Henry DeMichele and 12:15—Lunch served. \$5 donation

- PLAN AHEAD:

During Great Lent, it is the norm for each Orthodox Christian to confess at least once, and certainly again some time prior to Pascha. When a person is at peace and the conscience is purified by the grace of God which comes upon one during Confession, then he is led to participate more deeply—according to one’s desire—in the life and communion of the Holy Trinity.

PLEASE NOTE: For those over the age of seven who will receive Holy Communion during Holy Week and Pascha, it is a holy obligation—please forgive the terminology, but it expresses the necessity—to make a confession at least once in the weeks before Holy Week. But don’t limit your spiritual life and confession to some legalistic time-table: confess when your conscience needs it. Confessions will not be heard after Holy Wednesday. —*Fr Lawrence*

- SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN.

See the following: <https://www.steugencamp.org> St. Eugene’s Orthodox Youth Camp will be held June 25–July 1, 2023 at the [Armenian camp in Dunlap, CA](#). We look forward to seeing you this summer! Scholarships are available—see Fr Lawrence.

- PRAYERS FOR CATECHUMENS:

O Lord our God, who dwellest in the heavens, and lookest down upon all thy works, look down upon thy servants, the catechumens—Alandrea, Stephanie, Andrew, Duke, Frances Ann, James, Roxanne and Liliana—who have bowed their necks before Thee, and grant them a light yoke. Make them honorable members of Thy holy Church, and vouchsafe unto them the washing of regeneration, the forgiveness of sins, and the robe of incorruption, unto the knowledge of Thee, our true God.

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 19, 2023

Veneration of the Precious Cross



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, TONE SEVEN:

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death; to the thief, Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy Disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

- 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 SEVEN:

The fiery sword no longer guards the gate of Eden, for in a strange and glorious way the wood of the Cross has quenched its flames. The sting of death and the victory of hades are now destroyed, for Thou art come, my Savior, crying unto those in hades: “Return again to Paradise.”

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, March 17: **No services here**
- Sat., March 18: 3:30 PM, Catechism—*On Marriage*
4:45 PM, Litya for the Reposed
5 PM, Vigil for the Veneration of the Precious Cross
- Sunday, March 19: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
12:45 PM, Parish Council Meeting (Library)
- Tues., March 21: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
Noon, Senior Lunch
- Wed., March 22: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
5 PM, Confessions
6:15 PM, Presanctified Liturgy / Meal and Spiritual Reading
- Thurs., March 23: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
7 PM, Scripture Study via Zoom
- Friday, March 24: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
6 PM, Festal Matins for **Annunciation**
- Sat., March 25: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for the **Feast of Annunciation**
3:30 PM, Catechism, *on Holy Unction*
4:45 PM, Litya for the Reposed
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confession
6 PM, Parish Council Dinner (Hall)

• SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS:

On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the *Precious and Life-Giving Cross* of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Services include a special veneration of the Cross, which prepares the faithful for the commemoration of the Crucifixion during Holy Week.

...[This feast] also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are “crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2:20). As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, or depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. ...As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers “planted” on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged. ...as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam’s gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree has condemnation been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal. ...At the Vigil of that day, after the Great Doxology, the Cross is brought in a solemn procession to the center of the church and remains there for the entire week—with a special rite of veneration following each service. —*borrowed*

• ANNUNCIATION:

On March 25—nine months before Christmas—we are invited to enthusiastically celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation. The young Virgin Maiden sings: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” Edith Humphrey writes: Her song speaks with joy and confidence of the overturning and fulfilling power of a God who has not abandoned his people, nor the human race, but finally has visited them and us fully, concretely and decisively. And so, with the announcement of Gabriel that we remember, we are ushered into the holy of holies, the deep recesses of the human heart where God visits us, and where he desires to dwell. It must never cease to amaze us that the omnipotent, self-sufficient Holy Trinity desires to dwell with us. The Father of all lights, and the Lord of heavenly hosts Who created us and weeps over our fall into corruption and death, desires to refashion us for immortality... In her very womb, the Word will