

- UPCOMING BAPTISMS:

Angelina and Rosemary, children of Paulina and Joe Zeni, will be baptized on Saturday, April 29 at 11 AM. All are invited to come.

- SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN.

See the following: <https://www.steugeneecamp.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 about that.

- PARISH COUNCIL:

The next meeting will be on Sunday, April 30, at about 12:30, in the Library.

- FINDING FAITH:

One of the modern myths is the idea that the religious worldview is based on an unqualified faith in authority, while the secular consciousness is based on a healthy skepticism and rationalism. However, so-called “critical thinkers” today absolutely do not understand even the basic principles of religion, having never thought seriously about faith; they reject religion on the basis of clichés... On the contrary, in our times, it is those who truly question atheistic prejudices and critically look at their lives who come to faith.

—Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenko), 1880-1961

- BIBLE STUDY WITH FR. JAMES:

The on-line Bible Study will start up again on Thursday, May 4, 7 PM, with a focus on the *Acts of the Holy Apostles*.

## M.O.M. OUTREACH

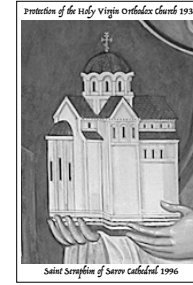


The parish diaper bank, now named after Matushka Olga Michael—*MOM Outreach*—and asking for her prayers—will take place on Wednesday, April 26 at 4

PM. Call Catie DeCarlo for information on how the distribution will take place (see [HERE](#) about the saintly Matushka Olga of Alaska).

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



### April 23, 2023

### Thomas Sunday & St. George the Great Martyr



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Five:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.

- TROPARION OF THOMAS SUNDAY, Tone Seven:

Whilst the tomb was sealed, Thou, O Life, didst shine forth from the grave, O Christ God; and whilst the doors were shut, Thou didst come unto Thy disciples, O Resurrection of all, renewing through them an upright Spirit in us according to Thy great mercy.

- TROPARION OF ST. GEORGE, Tone Four:

Liberator of captives, defender of the poor, physician of the sick, and champion of kings, O trophy-bearer Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

- KONTAKION OF THOMAS SUNDAY, Tone Eight:

With his searching right hand, Thomas did probe Thy life-bestowing side, O Christ God; for when Thou didst enter whilst the doors were shut, he cried out unto Thee with the rest of the Apostles: Thou art my Lord and my God.

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## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, April 21: 6 PM, Paschal Vespers
- Saturday, April 22: 9 AM, Paschal Divine Liturgy  
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions  
6 PM, Altar Server Dinner (Parish Hall)
- Sunday, April 23: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
11:30 AM, Church School  
Noon AM, Agape Meal
- Wednesday, April 26: 4 PM, MOM Diaper Bank Distribution  
6 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, April 27: 6 PM, St. Seraphim Men's Fellowship Dinner,  
Parish Hall
- Friday, April 28: 11:30 AM–1:30 PM, Confessions

### • DAY OF REJOICING:

During Holy Week and Bright Week, other than funerals, the Church forbids us to sing memorial hymns and *Panikhidas*. Why? Because Christ has destroyed the power of the devil and death by His death and resurrection, and the faithful are alive in Him. Memorial services are not necessary since Pascha is the perfect and all-encompassing memorial; what more could be desired. However, on the Tuesday after Bright Week we once again begin to sing hymns for those who have departed this life. I will be visiting the following cemeteries to bless graves:

10 AM at Pleasant Hill in Sebastopol

11 AM at the Forestville Cemetery

Noon at Healdsburg's Oak Mound Cemetery (Bring a picnic)

2 PM at the Windsor Cemetery

3 PM at Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery

### • GRATITUDE:

Christ is risen. We all give thanks for the tremendous blessings of Holy Week and Pascha, especially for those who organized all the various ingredients that make for a successful and bright feast. There are countless things to do to prepare for Holy Week and Pascha, to manage during Pascha and to arrange after Pascha. Please, extend a personal word of thanks to those that did so much to make our Paschal Feast so beautiful.

### • RENEWAL SUNDAY:

The Sunday after Pascha is called by three names: St. Thomas Sunday, Anti-Pascha and Renewal Sunday. Accordingly, we hear the Gospel from John 20:19. We hear Jesus say: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." Faith is not discovered by investigation (although it paves the way) or even by seeing. Keep in mind that the Apostles, the Pharisees and Judas all saw the incredible miracles. Not all believed (St. Matthew records that "they worshipped Him, but some doubted"). Faith is given, revealed, received, learned, lived and then understood only when one meets and accepts the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith is about a person, not acquiring doctrine. Theology is a result of knowing Christ. Remember the Lord's words to Peter: "flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in Heaven." We come to faith because the Father, Who loves us before we love Him, reveals Jesus to us. Seeing is believing we say. However, from the beginning the evil one, that liar, along with hypocrites, charlatans, thieves, philosophers, politicians, those guessing and those deceiving, and you name it, have used the approach that *seeing is believing* only to dupe the mind and heart; and this has led to all kinds of falsehoods, fictions and disasters, sorrows, disappointments, heresies and sins. Only God, the Risen Lord, to be exact, can cut through fiction, lies and deception; and He only can gently present Himself to the human heart (and then the mind), and bring a person, who is willing, to the illumination of faith. We believe—then we understand. And then we will call Jesus, Lord. Only God can get us there, and only if we offer Him a little way in to ourselves. Jesus, says Luke, "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures," particularly that "the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead." And so he does for us as well. So, this is one aspect of Renewal Sunday. Let us not forget that we are in a battle for our spiritual lives; we exercise and feed the soul. Be faithful, and the Lord will bring you to knowledge. —*Fr Lawrence*

### • ST. SERAPHIM MEN'S FELLOWSHIP:

A Men's Fellowship dinner will be held on Thursday, April 27 in the Parish Hall at 6 PM. All the men of the parish are invited. So that we can properly prepare RSVP Dan at (716) 861-4046 by this Sunday.

### • CHURCH CLEAN-UP:

On Sunday Denise Pellizzer will be organizing take-down and clean up of the Paschal floral decorations. Obviously, your help is appreciated.