

- M.O.M. OUTREACH—Diaper Bank

Just a reminder for anyone who would like to volunteer at our MOM Outreach diaper distribution, it will be in two weeks on Wednesday, May 31, from 4–6 PM at the parish. We need extra help this time, processing a very generous donation of beautiful used baby clothes. We just need to sort and store the clothes for easy access when parents want to look through and take some home.

- PENTECOST:

Having celebrated the Lord's Pascha and Ascension (May 25), we look forward to the Feast of Pentecost on Saturday, June 3 and Sunday, June 4. Most folks know that Pentecost is a Great Feast, but perhaps most of us don't realize that it is also the crown and fulfillment of Pascha—for it is by the “seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Chrismation that we sinful humans are given “power from on high” (Acts 1–2), in order to live the new life, the Risen Life received in baptism, to be transformed and become “little christs” —bearers of the Spirit of God. “Out of the heart,” says the Lord Jesus about the Spirit in us, will “flow rivers of Living Water” (John 38–39). So, **of course** we are going to celebrate our own Pentecost on the Feast of Pentecost, with as much gratitude, attention and enthusiasm as we celebrated on Pascha. An Orthodox Christian does not miss Pascha, nor would he or she fail to attend Pentecost. *Acts 20* tells us that St. Paul was “hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.” So we too must become eager and desirous to celebrate the Great Feast. Mark the calendars: June 3, Vigil at 5 PM; June 4, Divine Liturgy with the *Kneeling Vespers* to follow. —*Fr Lawrence*

- CANTIAMO CONCERT HERE:

*Cantiamo Sonoma* will present a free outdoor concert on the church lawn on Sunday, June 4 from 4–6 PM. The program will include a variety of a *cappella* choral music spanning from the Renaissance to the present.

- ST SERAPHIM WEEK:

The annual *St. Seraphim Week for Kids* “Church School” will take place this year July 17–21, so that it precedes and follows the Feast of St. Seraphim on July 19.

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**May 21, 2023**

Sunday of the Blind Man / Sts. Constantine and Helen



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, 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 ST. CONSTANTINE, Tone Eight:

Having seen the image of Thy Cross in Heaven, and like Paul, having received the call not from men, Thine Apostle among kings entrusted the commonwealth to Thy hand, O Lord. Keep us always in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O only Lover of man.

- KONTAKION OF ST. CONSTANTINE AND HELEN, Tone Three:

On this day Saint Constantine and blessed Helen, his mother, have revealed the Cross, the Wood, worthy of all veneration. For enemies it is dishonor, but faithful rulers, have it as a weapon vanquishing their opponents. For our sakes hath it been shown forth as a great ensign, dread and most awesome in war.

- KONTAKION OF THE BLIND MAN, Tone Four:

Being blinded in the eyes of my soul, O Savior, I come unto Thee, O Christ, as did the man who was born blind. And in repentance I cry to Thee: of those in darkness art Thou the most radiant Light.

- KONTAKION OF PASCHA, Tone Eight:

Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of Hades. And didst arise as victor, O Christ God, calling to the myrrh-bearing women: Rejoice; And giving peace unto Thine apostles, O Thou who dost grant resurrection to the fallen.

[Gospel: John 9:1–38](#)

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, May 20: 5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions  
6 PM, Wedding Rehearsal
- Sunday, May 21: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy  
11:30 AM, Church School (last class before break)  
Noon, Agape Meal  
3 PM, Marriage of Miranda and Stefan
- Tues., May 23: 6 PM, Matins for Leave-taking of Pascha (*note time change from Calendar*)  
7 PM, Dinner for Choir Members
- Wed., May 24: 6 PM, Vigil for the Ascension of our Lord
- Thurs., May 25: 9 AM, Ascension Day Divine Liturgy  
6 PM, St. Seraphim Men's Fellowship Dinner
- Friday, May 26: *No Confessions this day*

- LEAVE-TAKING OF PASCHA and ASCENSION:

On Wednesday, which is the eve of the *Ascension of the Lord* (an event which we confess when we recite the Creed) until the following Friday, we sing this hymn: *Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy Disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit. And they were assured by the blessing that Thou art the Son of God and Redeemer of the world. **Vigil will be served on***

- **Wednesday, May 24, and the Divine Liturgy on Thursday, May 25.**

The Feast is always on a Thursday—Forty Days after the Resurrection (described in *Acts 1*). The Ascension is the vindication of the crucified, buried and risen and glorified Lord Jesus, the initiation of His reign—inauguration day—over all creation, and His power made present in us. “Lo, I am with you, even to the end of the ages. Amen,” says the Lord as He ascends—that is, as He comes into His glory and sits upon the Throne at the Right Hand of the Father. He is with us—we are with Him too—because now, the One Who Is God AND man is in Heaven. As St. Leo the Great, the Pope of Rome (+461) taught: “With all due solemnity we are commemorating that day on which our poor human nature was carried up, in Christ, above all the hosts of Heaven, above all the ranks of angels, beyond the highest Heavenly powers to the very throne of God the Father.” This is simultaneously *our ascension and our glorification*, since we are united to Christ through holy Baptism as members of His Body. Therefore, St. Paul can further write: “For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:3) Out of our physical sight, we now “see” the glorified Christ through the eyes of faith. St. Leo further explains how important this spiritual insight is: “For such is the power of great minds, such the light of truly believing souls, that they put unhesitating faith in what is not seen with the bodily eyes; they fix their desires on what is beyond sight. Such fidelity could never be born in our hearts, nor could anyone be justified by faith, if our salvation lay only in what is visible.” The Feast of the Ascension is not a decline from the glory of Pascha. It is, rather, the increase of Pascha, and a movement upward toward the Kingdom of Heaven for those who are in Christ. It is the joyful revelation of our destiny in Christ. —*Fr Lawrence*

- ST. SERAPHIM MEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNER:

Thursday, Ascension Day, May 25 at 6 PM. Our guest for the evening, Michael Jones from the Orthodox Christian Mission Center, will give a brief talk about his missionary activities on the island of Tonga (east of Fiji) during the last year. BYOB. Still looking for a cook for the dinner...

- MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE AT THE CEMETERY:

A *Panikhida* will be served on Memorial Day, May 29, at 11:30 AM, at Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery. I invite all of you to join me in praying for those who laid down their lives for their country, and as a public witness of our Orthodox Faith in prayerful action. —*Fr Lawrence*