

- HOLY SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE:

A fundamental characteristic of Christian marriage is the equality of each spouse. In the marriage service the couple is called to realize and acknowledge the equality of honor and dignity of both the woman and the man. While the Orthodox rite of Matrimony acknowledges the Scriptural teaching that the man is called to be the head of the wife [Eph. 5:23], this headship is founded in the example and teachings of Christ. Indeed, ultimately, marriage is viewed as a living icon of the relationship between Christ and His Bride, the Church. Thus, what ever may be said about the nature of the relationship between Christ and the Church may also be said about the relationship of husband and wife. Therefore, like Christ Who came not to be served but to serve, he who is the head in the relationship holds a primacy of servitude. The husband is seen as the first servant, the first martyr, the first to give up his “self” and reach out in love to his wife. Likewise, a wife’s “honoring”/”obeying” of her husband is seen as a loving response to his love for her. Fr. Thomas Hopko writes, “The husband must love his wife to the point of death, as Christ loves the Church. And the wife must be totally given to her husband in everything as the Church is given to Christ. The union in love must be perfect, total, complete, enduring and lasting forever.” Always, the foundation of marriage must be selfless love, which by its nature is affirming, life-giving, and never exploitative or abusive. Orthodoxy would see the use of Scripture to support the husband oppressing his wife and family as a corruption of the Apostles’ Doctrine regarding marriage. Consequently, marriage is a path of self-denial, a path of asceticism, rather than of “self realization.” Marriage is a path for salvation for the husband and wife as they receive and bear the crowns of joy and martyrdom given to them in the marriage service. This is not intended to be a morbid prediction of suffering in marriage, but instead a call to lay down one’s life in order to participate with Christ in His victorious death and resurrection. —*borrowed*

- PENTECOST:

Fifty days after Pascha, June 4, we celebrate Pentecost. Mark your calendars now for this feast, which we must consider as important as the Paschal celebration itself. More on that topic to come. —*Fr L*

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



## May 7, 2023 ~ Sunday of the Paralytic



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Three:

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; for the Lord has shown strength with His arm; He has trampled down death by death; He has become the first-born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hades, and hath granted the world great mercy.

- TROPARION, Tone Four:

O righteous Father Alexis, our heavenly intercessor and teacher, divine adornment of the Church of Christ! Entreat the Master of All to strengthen the Orthodox Faith in America, to grant peace to the world and to our souls, great mercy!

- KONTAKION OF THE PARALYTIC, Melody *On This Day*:

As of old Thou didst raise up the paralytic, O Lord God, by Thy God-like care and might, raise up my soul which is palsied by diverse sins and transgressions and by unseemly deeds and acts, that, being saved, I may also cry out: O Compassionate Redeemer, O Christ God, glory to Thy dominion and might.

- 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.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, May 6: 5 PM, Great Vespers/Confession
- Sunday, May 7: 9 AM, Baptism of Maria Stameroff, child of Hannah and Alexander  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy (*also feast of St. Alexis Toth*)  
11:30 AM, Church School  
Noon, Agape Meal
- Tues., May 9: *Parish Feast of St. Nicholas in Saratoga*
- Wed., May 10: 6 PM, Vespers and *Blessing of Water* for the Feast of Mid-Pentecost
- Thur., May 11: 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James
- Fri., May 12: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions

- MANY YEARS:

Congratulations to Hannah and Alex Stameroff on the baptism of their daughter Maria on Sunday, May 7, at 9 AM. Please join with them in this celebration. On Sunday, May 21, Miranda and Stefan will be joined in marriage at 3 PM. All are invited to the wedding.

- BLESSING OF WATER:

Just as the *Veneration of the Cross* on the third Sunday of Lent marked the halfway point of Great Lent, so this Feast of Mid-Pentecost, a.k.a. Mid-Feast, marks the halfway mark to Pentecost (fifty days from Pascha to Pentecost). [Click here](#) for a short explanation of this feast. We will have a *Blessing of Water* on Wednesday, May 10, following Vespers, to celebrate the Feast. There is at least one lesson to be learned from the teaching of this feast of Mid-Pentecost: *thirst*. Even while feasting on the good things of this earth during this joyful season, we should yet thirst for what lies above the earth, for the Holy Spirit Whose coming we await even while we enjoy the

presence among us of the Risen Lord. *“Let him who thirsts come to Me and drink!” O Christ God, Thou Wellspring of life, glory to Thee!*

- MEMORIAL DAY PRAYERS, May 29:

It is our parish custom to go to Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery on Memorial Day at **11:30 AM** to offer prayers for the repose of the souls of those who served in the Armed Forces. I will set up an icon table at the east end of the cemetery, under a tree. Look for the priest in the white cassock.

- THOUGHTS ON THE HEALING ~ [John 5](#):

The paralyzed man, who had been at the *sometimes* miraculous pool for thirty-nine years, was asked a question by Jesus: “Do you want to be healed?” The hearer of the gospel must be one who wants to be changed. Unfortunately, I’m not sure that is always the case. More often than not people hear what they want to hear and make the gospel fit whatever their preconceived ideologies are, both on the right and the left. If you seek human things, that’s what you will find and you won’t find God, you won’t see Him. The more we open our hearts to God and lay aside “all earthly” agendas, the more we will receive Christ. Jesus asked that perceptive question about “wanting to be healed” — after which He did not say to the paralyzed man, “You are healed, and I know it’s been a long time and you must be exhausted by your ordeal, so just sit back and rest for a while before you begin to walk about.” Surprisingly He said, “rise, pick up your bed and walk.” Jesus called this man to begin acting on his faith, immediately. Take up your bed and walk—act, be a disciple in deed. This Gospel is read now, after Pascha and the baptisms of the catechumens, to remind all of us of the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in us, and the continuing, on-going grace of that experience, healing, the Lord’s power to raise us up from sin and our need to respond.

- ST. ALEXIS ~ Celebrated May 7:

Briefly, St. Alexis was born in a Carpatho-Rusyn family of priests, both his father and brother were priests and his uncle was a bishop. The Toths were Eastern Rite-Uniate Catholics. After completing his seminary education, he married Rosalie Mihalich, the daughter of a priest, in 1878, was ordained to the priesthood and eventually came to Minneapolis in 1889 to become the first pastor of the new Greek-Catholic church in Minneapolis. Read the very interesting and edifying account, [HERE](#), of how he was restored to the Orthodox Church (in SF) and led thousands of others to the faith.