

• LOVE IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

Once I had to wait for a taxi outside the Ukraine Hotel. A young man came up to me and said: "I'm guessing by your dress you are a priest, right?" I replied: *Yes*. He told me: "I don't believe in God..." I looked at him and said: *Too bad!* He asked "how can you show me that God exists?" I responded: *What kind of proof do you need?* "Here: show me your God in the palm of my hand, and I will believe in Him..." He stretched out his hand, and at that moment I saw his wedding ring. I asked him: *Are you married?* "Yes." *Have you got any children?* "Yes, I have." *Do you love your wife?* "I certainly do." *Do you love your children?* "Yes." *But I don't believe it!* "What do you mean, you don't believe it? I'm telling you..." *Still I don't believe it unless you put your love in the palm of my hand. I'll look at it and then I'll believe it...* He thought to himself for a moment and then said: "You are right, I've never looked at love from this perspective!" —*Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh*

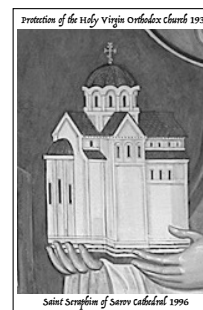
• TODAY'S EPISTLE, Romans 10:1-10:

...the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Faith is concerned, not with what we can do for God, but with what God has done, and promises to do, for us. In the incarnation and resurrection of Christ (and, of course, everything in-between), God has reconciled the heights and the depths. Man is required to believe and to confess what God has done in Christ. In this confession of faith, we observed the primacy of the resurrection, by which Christ put death to death. Putting our trust there, says Paul, we will be saved (Note the future tense for salvation here.) This salvation will be complete when our own bodies are raised from the dead at Christ's return. ...Faith...arises from the heart and issues through the mouth. It is not simply an impulse or a disposition. It is dogmatic; it is creedal... —*Fr Patrick Reardon, "Romans: An Orthodox Commentary"*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



July 9, 2023

Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Taormina in Sicily



• Resurrectional Troparion, Tone Four:

When the women disciples of the Lord / learned from the angel the joyous message of the Resurrection, / they cast away the ancestral curse, / and elatedly told the Apostles: / death is overthrown, / Christ God is risen, / granting the world great mercy.

• St. Seraphim, Troparion, Tone Four:

From thy youth thou didst love Christ, O blessed one, and ardently desiring to work for Him alone, thou didst struggle in the wilderness with constant prayer and labor, and having acquired love for Christ with compunction of heart, thou didst prove to be the beloved favorite of the Mother of God. Wherefore we chant to thee: Save us by thy prayers, O Seraphim, our righteous father.

• RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION, Tone Four:

My Savior and Redeemer / as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. / He has shattered the gates of hades, / and as Master, / He has risen on the third day!

- ST. SERAPHIM, KONTAKION, Tone Two:

Having left the beauty of the world and what is corrupt in it, O Saint, thou didst settle in Sarov Monastery, and having lived there an angelic life, thou wast for many the way to salvation. Therefore Christ hath glorified thee, Father Seraphim, and enriched thee with the gift of healing and miracles. And so we cry to thee: Rejoice, O Seraphim, our righteous Father.

- KONTAKION OF THE PROTECTION, Tone Three:

Today the Virgin stands forth in the Church / and invisibly with the choirs of Saints prays to God for us; / the Hierarchs bow down with the angels, / the Apostles and the Prophets rejoice, / for the Theotokos prays to the Eternal God for us.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, July 7: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions in *St. Seraphim*
- Saturday, July 8: 5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions
- Sunday, July 9: **10 AM**, Divine Liturgy (please be prompt)
Noon, POT LUCK Agape Meal
- Wednesday, July 12: *9:30 AM, Parish Feast at Sts. Peter and Paul*
5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga
6 PM, Daily Vespers
- Friday, July 14: 6 PM, Great Vespers for St. Vladimir
- Saturday, July 15: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for Feast of St. Vladimir
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions

- OUR PARISH FEAST ~ JULY 19:

Our Summer Feast of St. Seraphim, commemorating his glorification (canonization as a saint in 1903, [see here](#)) is celebrated on July 19. A parish feast is like a second Pascha, and beckons the entire congregation to prepare for the feast: by confession and reading about St. Seraphim; by celebrating at the Vigil the evening before; cleaning and beautifying the parish grounds; planning a festive meal in the Hall; cleaning and decorating the cathedral, choir rehearsing. Lots of work, for sure, needing lots of hands. I encourage each of you to prepare for the feast of our heavenly patron. All of this, including preparing for and receiving Holy Communion at the festal Liturgy,

is a work of the **Church/Parish community—the Body of Christ**—and not an individualistic and private spiritual matter, in which one considers perhaps to attend, or not to attend. In that sense the parish feast is a family event. Vigil for the feast is Tuesday, July 18 at 6 PM. Liturgy, July 19. We are expecting clergy and faithful from our deanery to join in our celebration, and of course, we are expecting His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin, who will arrive at the church doors at 9:30 AM for the vesting and the beginning of the Divine Liturgy. —*Fr. Lawrence*

- LET US ATTEND:

The Divine Liturgy begins with the joyous proclamation: “Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.” And the choir leads the congregation in singing, “Amen” which is the affirmation of that proclamation. Those words—and who would want to miss hearing them and giving an assent?—proclaim our thanksgiving for where we are going—to the Kingdom—and Who it is that saves, sanctifies and enlightens us. St Nicholas Cabasilas wrote that with these words “we lay aside ourselves and all our interests and glorify the Lord for His own sake for His power and His glory,” and only then move on to intercession, petitions and supplications for the salvation of the world. It’s very interesting, and fits our human psychology so very well, that before we hear “Blessed is the Kingdom,” the Church gives us a little bit of time to try to attain a proper frame of mind for what we are about to do (which is to become participants in accomplishment of the great and awesome sacrifice of the Eucharist, to receive the Eucharist and to “go forth in peace” out the front doors of the Church). Notice: about twenty minutes before the Liturgy begins, the Church offers us some psalmody and hymns, chanted very simply by one Reader—we call that the Third and the Sixth Hour Prayers, with some censuring of the church by the deacon—so that we have the time we need to prepare, to attend and to acquire that proper frame of mind. This psalmody is not just background prayers—like muzak that no one is really listening to as conversations take place. What a tremendous gift and blessing it is for all of us, the assembled Church—having arrived **eager, expectant and early**—to lift up our hearts unto the Lord and sing the “Amen” as we bless the Kingdom of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Be ready. —*Fr Lawrence*