

as He was, likewise the flesh became Word, without losing what it is, identifying moreover with the Word hypostatically. Thus, taking courage, I represent God, the invisible, not as invisible, but insofar as He has become visible for us by participation in flesh and blood. I do not represent the invisible deity but I represent the flesh of God which has been seen. —St. John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*

Very often one hears questions such as, “Does the Church meet the spiritual needs of our youth?” or “...what are we going to do for the youth in the parish?” or “How can we help our youth grow in the Church?” Obviously, these are very good questions in that they stem from a genuine sense of compassion, goodness and desire to extend a helping hand. But the difficulty with these questions is that they presuppose the existence of a “problem” and they place youth predominantly as the object of the Church’s favors. Youth is viewed as a “problem” for which the Church must find a “solution” — the needs of youth, the things they lack, their need for love, for understanding, for community, for meaning in their lives, and so on.

While well-intentioned, this approach is actually poorly focused. When a community concentrates primarily on how the Church can help youth rather than on *how the youth can help* the mission of the Church, it is actually saying: “You need us, but we don’t really need you—at least, not yet!” A more positive question to raise as a starting point should be: “How can we draw on the gifts of youth in our community for the sake of the mission of the Church?”

This approach, emphasizing as it does the charismatic qualities of young people, is more appropriate because it carries with it the fundamental assumption that our youth is a powerful resource rather than a group in need. By virtue of their Baptism—their reception of and faith in God— young people are full members of the Body of Christ and are children of God with a capacity, a responsibility, and a right to participate in the life of that Body. By focusing on how the gifts of youth can help the Church rather than on how the Church can help the youth, the message is clear: **The Orthodox Church needs you now. You have abilities and talents that are indispensable to her mission. Be examples “in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity”** (1 Timothy 4:12).

—Dimitri Conomos, from *“Essays on Orthodox Youth Ministry”*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



October 8, 2023

Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone One:
When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ; glory to Thy kingdom; glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.
- TROPARION OF THE HOLY FATHERS, Tone Eight:
Most glorified art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast established the Holy Fathers as luminous stars upon the earth, and through them didst guide us all to the true Faith. O Most Merciful One, glory be to Thee.
- KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone One:
As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself. Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. Adam exults, O Master, Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee: Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ.

- KONTAKION OF THE HOLY FATHERS, Tone Six:
The Son Who shone forth from the Father was ineffably born, twofold in nature, of a woman. Having beheld Him, we do not deny the image of His form, but depict it piously and revere it faithfully. Thus, keeping the True Faith, the Church venerates the icon of Christ Incarnate.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, Oct. 6: 11 AM, Akathist to St. Innocent of Alaska
11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Oct. 7: 9:30 AM–3 PM, Homeschool workshop
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions
- Sunday, Oct. 8: 9 AM, Baptism of Alvig Elizabeth
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
Noon, Agape Meal
12:30-ish, Spiritual Lesson
- Monday, Oct. 9: 7 PM, *Mentor training, via Zoom*
- Tuesday, Oct. 10: *Fr. Lawrence at Metro Council in DC until Friday*
- Wednesday, Oct. 11: 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga
6 PM, Vespers
- Thurs., Oct. 12: 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James
- Friday, Oct. 13: *No Confessions today*

Congratulations to Lina and Alexander on the baptism of their second child, Alvig Elizabeth, on Sunday at 9 AM, before the Divine Liturgy. All are most welcome to attend. We welcome Lina's parents from Sweden, Gunella and Ingmar, who have come to celebrate with us.

A Spiritual Lesson will be offered to the children and their families and mentors on Sunday in the parish hall. Andrew Mikrikov will offer the lesson this week. We won't begin this brief lesson until the Agape Meal is mostly concluded. Lessons will be only ten minutes long, plus Q&A.

Father Nicholas is filling in this week, and probably through the month, at St. Innocent Orthodox Church in Pleasanton. We thank him for his sacrificial work during this interim period when St. Innocent awaits a new pastor.

Catechism classes begin on Saturday, October 14 at 3:30 PM and will be held each Saturday (no class Thanksgiving weekend) concluding on December 16. Most sessions will take place in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to participate. The first topic is entitled *The True God*.

Keep our Catechumens in your prayers: Stephanie and Duke Geoffrion; James, Roxanne and Liliana Weaver; Skylar Skikos, William Rogers, Sadik Bradbury, David Dehnert; Joseph, Jackson, Dallas and Noah Zeni; Gigi Williams, Raymond West, Frances Ann Edmonston. ...*make them worthy in due season of the washing of regeneration, the forgiveness of sins, and the robe of incorruption. Unite them to thy holy, catholic, and Apostolic Church, and number them with thy elect flock, that with us they may glorify thine all honorable and majestic Name...*

The Annual Diocesan Assembly is being hosted by our parish, October 24–26. The [Assembly](#) is the yearly gathering—united in faith with our Archbishop Benjamin—of clergy and lay delegates from all the parishes and institutions in the Diocese. We can expect about 120 folks to be with us for those two and a half days. The task of our parish will be to provide church services, food and hospitality and meeting space for the delegates. It's also important that our parish members attend the Church Services during the Assembly. Having been to many Assemblies across the Diocese, it's sad and discouraging to see how few parish members in those places attend the Liturgical Services. Let's not only excel at hospitality for our guests, but let them see how much we love our church and services. *How to help and be of assistance:*

- ✓ *Wednesday lunch/dinner:* See Kristina Daya about helping in kitchen, serving tables and some clean up (we are hiring cleaners)
- ✓ *Thursday morning brunch:* See Matushka Esther, same tasks as above
- ✓ *Refreshments:* Help Debbie Buse keep everything stocked, coffee pots full, emptying garbage cans
- ✓ *Miscellaneous Tasks:* See Debbie Buse, who is the Hall Manager for the event, or Fr. Lawrence to help assist him with various tasks around the property on Wednesday and Thursday.

I do not venerate the creation over the Creator, but I venerate the Creator who became creation like me, and came down into creation without humiliation and without being debased, in order to glorify my nature and make me to be partaker of the divine nature... For the nature of flesh has not become deity, but, as the Word became flesh without change, remaining