

**Our practice** in the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) is to prepare ourselves for receiving Holy Communion each week by making a frequent confession—once a month being the norm. We are also instructed to do the *Prayers of Preparation*, found in any common Orthodox Prayer book, before coming to Liturgy. I would encourage all of you to remember that Saturday evening Great Vespers is also part of our preparation. If you haven't been attending Vespers on Saturday, at least start with coming once or twice a month, and see. You'll be glad you did.

**Christian Ed.** This year we will be offering Church School for K–6th Grade, and Mentorship for 7th–12th. Classes begin on Sunday, September 8th, as the Church New Year begins with the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos. **See the QR code to let us know that you like your child to be involved.** As we prepare, it's important to remember in excess of 60% of all Orthodox young people (indeed, almost all church-attending youth)—once they have left their homes, either upon graduating high school or college—leave the church and, maybe, attend Liturgy only on a most irregular basis... Church school, mentorship, youth activities are wonderful and probably essential—but they are only a support and an addendum to the *Home Church*—that is, the Christian way of life at home, mutual love and respect, fellowship with other Orthodox Christians, regular worship, prayer, fasting, confession, feast days, love, forgiveness and not least, the reading of Scripture together. We all need some help in accomplishing all that. Resources abound with books, Orthodox internet, Bible Study, catechism and fellowship. May the Lord bless our efforts.



**The St. Seraphim Men's Fellowship** dinner is scheduled for Thursday, August 22 at 6 PM at the home of Ted Dechant. Dinner will be provided—please bring a beverage to share. Set aside the time to be together with your brothers in Christ. St Paul, in *1 Thessalonians* asks us to “encourage one another and build one another up...” — and maybe, that happens best in person at a meal.

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**August 18, 2024**

**Sts. Florus and Laurus**



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Seven:  
By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death; to the thief, Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy Disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.
- TROPARION OF DORMITION, Tone One:  
In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity, in falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos; thou wast translated unto life, O Mother of Life; and by thy prayers thou dost deliver our souls from death.
- KONTAKION OF DORMITION, Tone Two  
The grave and death could not hold the Theotokos, who is unsleeping in her intercessions, and an unfading hope in her mediations. For as the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her ever-virgin womb.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, August 16: *No Confessions*
- Saturday, August 17: 4:30 PM, One Year Panikhida for D. Durrant  
5 PM, Vesper and Confessions
- Sunday, August 18: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy / Agape Meal
- Wednesday, August 21: 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga  
6 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, August 22: 6 PM, Men's Fellowship Dinner  
7 PM, Bible Study with Fr James
- Friday, August 23: *No Confessions*
- Saturday, August 24: 5 PM, Great Vespers and Confessions

**Apologies**—confessions are not available on Friday, August 16 and 23. On August 23 I will be driving to the Monastery of the Life-Giving Spring in Dunlap (about 5 hrs south) to participate in a baptism on Saturday morning, and will return, hopefully, in time for Vespers. —*Fr Lawrence*

**The Church has believed** and ever taught that the All-Holy Lady died—or as we say, *fell asleep in the Lord* (Dormition means *falling asleep*), being subject to death, which is the separation of the soul from the body. However, the Church teaches us that she was assumed into heaven—her body and soul were brought back into unity in the resurrection that God intends for all of us. A hymn tells us that: “the Mother of God was bodily ‘translated’ to heaven, since the Lord did not allow the most pure temple of the Word to experience corruption: The Lord and God of all gave thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. For just as He kept thee virgin in thy child-birth so did He preserve thy body incorrupt in the tomb; and He glorified thee by a divine Translation, showing thee honor as a Son to His Mother.”

What is this saying? That this feast is about the Gospel, the Good News of Christ destroying death by His death and giving us that victory. The feast brings us to the core of the Gospel message. The Theotokos died and passed through death, meaning that we believe she was raised from the dead and was taken up into heaven, in soul and body (we are not alive fully without the body). She has passed beyond death and judgment, and lives wholly in the Age to Come, the Eighth Day, the Kingdom of God—as we will too. The Resurrection of the Body, which all Christians await, has in

her case been anticipated and is already an accomplished fact. In this fact, her life and death are not a great exception: what we are celebrating is that we all hope to share one day in that same glory of the Resurrection of the Body which she enjoys even now. The feast of Dormition shows us a glorious passing from a holy and unique life, through death toward resurrection—even *beyond* what we think of heaven, since she dwells in the coming age of the resurrection, at her Son's side. The triumph of the Theotokos is our triumph. —*Fr Lawrence*

**There are always things** to do at the parish to help out, few very exciting, but all necessary.

- Yellow Jacket traps, which I have, need to be set out with bait.
- Weeds and grass clumps growing in the blacktop of the front parking lot need to be scraped away.
- Light fixtures in St Seraphim Cathedral, inside and out need cleaning.
- Trash bins on the Hall porch need to be emptied (it's good to notice these things).
- Utensils, plates, cups and bottles left out after the Sunday lunch each week need to be picked up.
- The garden needs tending (speak with Matushka Ann).
- Clean the Protection Church
- Assist with Sacristan work: trim and fill the oil lamps, change out candles on the chandeliers, scrape wax off the wooden floor in front of the iconostasis, etc. See one of the Sacristans to volunteer.

**St Paul tells us** in the *Epistle to the Colossians* that the Father created all things through the Son, Jesus Christ, Who is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” Jesus Christ has, in turn, given us the task—the priestly task—of caring for all that *we* have been given, whether it be talent, time or financial resources. Thank you, one and all, for giving to the Lord and caring so generously for the upbuilding of His Church. At each Liturgy we pray for the benefactors and founders of *this Holy House*. May the Lord grant that after we depart this life, our names will also be included in that prayer. —*Fr Lawrence*