

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 29, 2024

Commemoration of the Righteous Saints David the King and Psalmist,
James the Brother of the Lord, and
the Righteous Joseph the Betrothed

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

- TROPARION OF THE FEAST:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath shone to the world the light of wisdom; for by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to worship Thee the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee.

- TROPARION OF THE RIGHTEOUS ONES, Tone Two:

O Joseph, proclaim the wonders to David the father of our Divine Lord. Thou hast seen a Virgin conceive; thou hast given glory with the Shepherds; thou hast worshipped with the Magi; and thou hast been warned by an Angel. Implore Christ our God, to save our souls.

- KONTAKION OF THE RIGHTEOUS ONES, Tone Three:

Godly David on this day is filled with gladness of spirit; Joseph also joineth James in offering glory and praises. They rejoice, for as Christ's kinsmen, they have received crowns: and they praise the One ineffably born upon earth as they cry out with a great voice: O Lord of mercy, save them that honor Thy Name.

- KONTAKION OF THE FEAST:

On this day the Virgin beareth the Transcendent in essence; to the Unapproachable, the earth doth offer a small cave; Angels join in choir with shepherds in giving glory; with a star the Magi travel upon their journey; for our sakes is born a young Child, He that existed before the ages as God.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, Dec. 27: *No Confessions today*
- Saturday, Dec. 28: *10:45 AM, Funeral (Greek Orthodox using St. Seraphim)*
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions
- Sunday, Dec. 29: 9:40 AM, Catechumen Ceremony for Katrina Fritschen
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Potluck Agape
- Tuesday, Dec. 31: 5 PM, Great Vespers and Prayers for the New Year

- Wednesday, Jan. 1: 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy for Feast of the *Circumcision of Christ and St. Basil*
5 PM, Great Vespers and Akathist for the Feast of St. Seraphim
- Thursday, Jan. 2: **9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy for the Feast**, Festal luncheon to follow

The Child in that distant Bethlehem cave has no desire that we fear Him; He enters our hearts not by frightening us, by proving His power and authority, but by love alone. He is given to us as a child, and only as children can we in turn love Him and give ourselves to Him. The world is ruled by authority and power, by fear and domination. The Child God liberates us from that. All He desires from us is our love, freely given and joyful; all He desires is that we give Him our heart. And we give it to a defenseless, endlessly trusting child. —*Fr. Alexander Schmemmann*

We will enroll Katrina Fritschen as a catechumen on Sunday morning, at 9:40 AM. Please come to pray for and with her.

Once again we are preparing, as a parish, to celebrate one of the two St. Seraphim Feast Days in the Church year. The January 2 date commemorates the repose of St. Seraphim in 1833, the July 19 date is the day of his glorification by the Church in 1903. As we usually do, we will have Vespers and the Akathist for St. Seraphim at 5 PM on Tuesday, January 1. The Divine Liturgy for the Feast will be celebrated on Thursday, January 2 at 9:30. We are expecting His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin, to preside at the Divine Liturgy and ordain a parishioner from St. Innocent parish in Pleasanton to the Holy Diaconate. I look forward to celebrating the feast day of our patron together with you. —*Fr. Lawrence*

We can see how important Theophany (the Baptism of Christ) is in the life of the Church by the number of liturgical services that the Church appoints: *Royal Hours* on Friday, January 3, at 6 PM; *Vespers* with hymns for the Prefeast on Saturday evening at 5 PM; the Sunday morning *Divine Liturgy* followed by the *Great Blessing of Water*. The *Festal Matins for Theophany* will be celebrated on Sunday, January 5th, at 5 PM. The *Divine Liturgy of the Feast* will begin at 9 AM on Monday, January 6, with another *Great Blessing of Water*.

As we begin the year, we hang up our new 2025 calendars so we can keep track of days, events and appointments. Our 2025 church calendars (available in the narthex) indicate the feast days, the fast days, the beginning of Lent, Holy Week, and so on. However, if the church calendar—with its feasts, fasts and scripture references—is secondary for us in our everyday life, then the oft heard statement that “the calendar is about the sanctification of time” is only a pious notion, with no traction, and irrelevant to that everyday life. Fr Stephen Freeman recently wrote that for the Christian, the calendar “is thus something like an ‘appointment device.’ This feast, this day, this time in my life, if I will keep the appointment, I can meet God. The feasts on the calendar are not appointments with memorials, the recollection of events long past. They are invitations to present tense moments in the liturgical life of the world. In those moments there is an intersection of the present and the eternal. They are theophanies into which we may enter. The events in Christ’s ministry that are celebrated (to use one example) are of little importance if viewed in a merely historical manner. It is not enough to say and remember that Christ died. The Christian faith is that I must become a partaker of Christ’s death. Christ is Baptized,

but I must be a partaker of His Baptism. This is true of all the feasts and is the reason for our liturgical celebrations. The Church is not a memorial society—it is the living presence of Christ in the world and the primary means by which we may share in His presence. There is no time like the present for only in the present does time open its riches to us and bestow its gifts. Only at the present moment do the doors to eternity offer us union with what would otherwise seem lost. For He says: ‘In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.’” (2 Cor. 6:2) Perhaps in our society, shaped as we are by the secular influences that surround us, two of the most difficult things for many of our new Orthodox Christians to do are, first: Acquiring and practicing a consistent, regular, heartfelt and attentive prayer each and every day; and secondly: Giving priority to Church Services over family traditions, etc. Let’s all resolve to be more fervent about these two aspects of our Christian life.

A sign up list for Post-Theophany House Blessings will be posted on January 2. The late Archpriest John Udics reminds us that “on the Feast of the Parish or the Feast of Theophany we rededicate [and spiritually cleanse] our home for its original purpose, just as we must periodically rededicate our life to Christ. We do it especially on this Feast of Theophany because this is the day on which we remember in the Church Year the coming of Christ who began His ministry when He descended into Jordan to be baptized by Saint John the Forerunner. He enters again into our lives reminding us that we must ‘repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.’ An Orthodox Christian must dedicate not only himself and his house to the Lord, but his daily work and all his efforts as well. All things are to be done to the glory of God. That is why in the Christian Orthodox Church, not only religious objects, such as icons, crosses, churches and vestments, are blessed, but also homes, fields, animals, clothing and all objects which are used in our daily lives for the good of man. In this the Church expresses its faith that the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying action extends over the whole Creation.” Dates and times for blessing your homes is set up geographically. Please see me if you cannot be home at the day and time indicated for the blessing, or if your name does not appear on the list (which would be the case if you’ve had your home blessed by special appointment in past years).

Orthodox Christians are committed to the sanctity of life, not the sanctify of “choice.” Not all choices are good. Medical science reveals to us an authentic and full human life of a child in the womb—and we can witness, with gratitude to God, for the gift of that life, by participating in the San Francisco “Walk for Life” on Saturday, January 25, 12 PM, at the Civic Center. I am arranging for transport to this event. Please see me if you are interested. Check out the *Orthodox Christians for Life* website at <https://www.oclife.org/walk> —Fr. L

Because Women Deserve Better than Abortion.®

WALK **WEST COAST**
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21ST ANNUAL

Walk for Life West Coast
Abortion HURTS Women

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025 • CIVIC CENTER PLAZA • SAN FRANCISCO

Rally: 12:30PM
CIVIC CENTER PLAZA
Info Faire: 11:00AM
Saturday, January 25, 2025

Rally starts at Civic Center Plaza, walking down Market Street (2 miles). Walk ends at Embarcadero Plaza.
BART stations at both locations. Ample parking.

Register and info:
(415) 658-1793 | email: info@WalkforLifeWC.com

WalkforLifeWC.com

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PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

JANUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:45 AM, Receive Katrina as Catechumen • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • Noon, Potluck Agape 	30 <i>Office Closed</i>	31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Vespers for the Feasts of the Circumcision and St. Basil the Great 	January 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy for the Feast • 5 PM, Vespers and Akathist for the Feast of St. Seraphim 	2 - St. Seraphim Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy and Festal Meal to follow 	3 <i>No Confessions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Royal Hours for Theophany 	4 - Prefeast of Theophany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Vespers/ Confessions
5 - Eve of Theophany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy & Great Blessing of Water • Noon, Agape Meal • 5 PM, Matins for Theophany 	6 - Holy Theophany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy and the Great Blessing of Water 	7 - Synaxis of St. John	8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 PM, Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers 	9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James 	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM-1 PM, Confessions 	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
12 - St. Tatiana of Rome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	13 <i>Office Closed</i>	14	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 PM, Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers 	16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James 	17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM-1 PM, Confessions 	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
19 - St. Mark of Ephesus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	20 <i>Office Closed</i>	21	22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 PM, Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers 	23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James 	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM-1 PM, Confessions 	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Walk for Life in SF</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers/ Confessions
26 - New Martyrs of Russia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	27 <i>Office Closed</i>	28	29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 PM, Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers 	30 - Three Hierarchs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James 	31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM-1 PM, Confessions 	February 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 PM, Vigil for the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple