

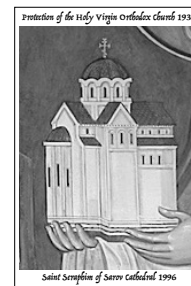
Unforeseen things always happen in our lives. You come to the monastery to find a spiritual life and you meet evil people; it is something unforeseen. You ask for a cell in that part of the monastery where there is no dampness, you get it, but you realize that the sea gives you allergies, so therefore you cannot be happy, day or night. Immediately your thought will tell you, “Get up and leave!” It is something unforeseen. I come close to you thinking that you are a good person and then I see that you are exactly the opposite; an unforeseen thing. Unforeseen things turn up constantly in our way because we have our will and our desires. Those unforeseen things are contrary to our will and desires; this is why they appear unforeseen to us, although they really are not. Because the person who loves God expects whatever may come, saying always “your will be done!” Rain will come, a storm, hail, thunder? “Blessed be the name of the Lord!” These are unforeseen because they come in contact with our bodily way of being. Therefore, in order not to be unsettled every time and to be upset, not to fret and succumb to anxiety, you have to expect all, and bear whatever may come. You must always say: “Welcome, illness, welcome, failure, welcome, suffering!” This will bring about gentleness, without which there cannot exist a spiritual life. —*Elder Aimilianos of Simonopetra Monastery, reposed 2019*

SAVE THE DATES:

- *The Parish Annual Meeting* is Sunday, February 2 at 12:30 PM
- *Catechism* begins again on Saturday, February 15 at 3:30 PM.
- *Forgiveness Sunday* this year is on March 2.
- *Great Lent* begins that evening/next morning.
- *Lazarus Saturday*—our primary day for baptisms, is April 12.
- *Holy Week* begins with Bridegroom Matins on Sunday evening, April 13 at 6 PM.
- *Great and Holy Saturday* is April 19
- *Pascha* is April 20
- *Holy Pentecost* is June 8
- *St. Eugene’s Church Camp* starts June 22.

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



January 19, 2025 / St. Mark of Ephesus



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Five:
Let us the faithful praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death and to raise the dead, by His glorious Resurrection.
- TROPARION OF ST. MARK OF EPHESUS, Tone Three:
O all-laudable and most divine Mark, in thee the Church found a great zealot by thy confession of the holy and sacred Faith; for thou didst champion the doctrines which the Fathers taught, and thou didst cast down darkness’s boastful pride. Wherefore, pray thou to Christ God for them that honor thee, that He may grant us the forgiveness of sins.
- KONTAKION OF ST. MARK OF EPHESUS, Tone Three:
Clad, O Godly-minded one, with an invincible armor, thou didst dash to pieces the pride of the Western rebellion; thou wast brought forth as the champion of Orthodoxy, as the Comforter’s own instrument and pure vessel. For this cause, to thee, we cry out: Rejoice, O Mark, thou boast of the Orthodox flock.

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ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, Jan. 17: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Jan. 18: 3 PM, Sisterhood
4:30 PM, Panikhida for James Ballard
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
- Sunday, Jan. 19: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM, Spiritual Lesson/Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
- Monday, Jan. 20: 12:30 PM, Funeral for James Ballard
- Wednesday, Jan. 22: 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga
6 PM, Vespers
6:30 PM, Parish Council Meeting
- Thursday, Jan. 23: 7 PM, On-line Bible Study with Fr. James
- Friday, Jan. 24: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions

This week our Livestream team will host the Parish Ministry table in the parish hall. Please stop in to say hello, ask about the work they do, and consider helping out.

Celebrated each year on January 19, Saint Mark Evgenikos, Archbishop of Ephesus, was a stalwart defender of Orthodoxy at the Council of Florence (1439 AD). He would not agree to a union with Rome which was based on theological compromise and political expediency: The Roman Pope was dictating terms for the Orthodox to accept, and in return, the Byzantine Emperor would receive military assistance from the West, to fight the Turkish Moslems who were encircling Constantinople. Saint Mark countered the arguments of his opponents, drawing from the well of pure theology, and the teachings of the Holy Fathers (specifics of those issues [may be found here](#)). When the members of his own delegation tried to pressure him into accepting the “Union” he replied, “There can be no compromise in matters of the Orthodox Faith.” The members of the Orthodox delegation signed the *Tomos of Union*—Saint Mark was the only one who refused to do so. When he returned from Italy, Saint Mark urged the inhabitants of Constantinople to repudiate the dishonorable document of union. He died in 1457 at the age of fifty-two.

The Annual Parish Membership Meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 2 at 12:30 PM. The report booklets will be distributed by Sunday, Jan. 26. A *Parish Member* is one who regularly worships, confesses, communes and makes an offering of financial support here of whatever amount (this is not a club, so there are no dues). It is hoped that all parish members will attend. Our quorum will be 71—since our membership list has 141 adults. —*Fr. Lawrence*

What if I have nothing to repent of in confession? If you come to confession and you have nothing to repent of, that is probably a good thing. The Apostle Paul says so: if your conscience does not condemn you, you are a happy person! Although the Psalmist David, for example, believed that it is impossible to live an hour without sinning. Of course, one should neither obsess about finding one’s sins, nor make them up. It often happens that a person approaches me, and I can feel that they are anxious: they need to say something, but do not know what! Then I stop them, “If you do not see your sins, might it be better just to repent that you do not see them? Just honestly admit it...” That would be right. —*Borrowed*

The Walk for Life in San Francisco, is on Saturday, January 25, 12:30 PM: Transportation to the *Walk* is being arranged. Speak with Fr. Lawrence if you would like to come. We will caravan to Holy Trinity Cathedral in SF for an 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy/breakfast, and from there we go to the Civic Center for the *Walk*.

With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Benjamin, a Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in the Protection Church at 8 AM on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. Thanks be to God for Fr. David Lowell and Reader/Choir Master Nicolas for their willingness to take responsibility for these services. We also give thanks for Alex and Deacon Justin, who will manage the choir duties in St. Seraphim on those weeks.

So that all things will “be done decently and in order,” as St Paul tells the Corinthians (1 Cor. 14) I would ask for two things from those that attend: Please, tidy up after the Liturgy by sweeping the floor and wiping down the table of crumbs and wine spills (altar servers will clean the altar area). Secondly, a Sacristan will be needed to fill the oil and *Kerry-fluid* lamps and trim the wicks (including the Altar). “O Lord, bless those who love the beauty of Thy House.” —*Fr. Lawrence*