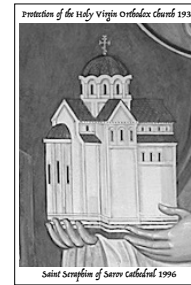


We arrive now at the fortieth day from our Lord's birth, when His mother and foster father Joseph bring Him to the Temple in Jerusalem to fulfill what was written in the Law of Moses concerning the first-born son of any family, that he should be dedicated to the Lord and a worthy sacrifice be offered as part of this special moment in the life of the family. The Lord Jesus is received there into the arms of the righteous Simeon, who had been waiting to see the promised Messiah for many long years and then prophesied about what was to come for this newly-born King of the Jews.... Jews dedicated the first-born sons because Moses told them to, but we Christians dedicate all our children because Christ Himself deigned to be dedicated in this way. And imitating Christ and becoming one with Christ is available not only to first-born sons but to every human person. This broadening of such customs fits in with the larger narrative of how the Church has appropriated and received its Jewish inheritance. Prior to the coming of Christ, the Jews were the chosen people and had access to a revelation not given to the rest of mankind. But with the coming of Christ, the age of the New Israel is inaugurated, and every human person is now welcome to enter into the New Israel, whatever his nationality, ethnicity or status from birth. There is no one who cannot become one with Christ. And so we bring all of our children to begin their life of becoming one with Christ by this custom of dedication on the fortieth day from their birth.... As we contemplate this great feast of the Church, we should see ourselves becoming part of this story. The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple is not just "the reason" that we bring forty day old babies to the Church, though we can indeed understand it that way. Rather, this is one of many ways in which we enter into the life of Christ. Because He is born into this world, we meet Him there. When He is dedicated in the Temple, we meet Him there. When He is baptized, we meet Him there. When He suffers and dies, we meet Him there. And when He is raised from the dead and ascends into Heaven, we meet Him there. Wherever Christ is, that is where we long to be. We join ourselves to every part of His life and experience, not just in terms of mental remembrance but in mystical solidarity and identity with the God Who became man. We go to be with Him because we want to know Him, to be one with Him, to receive the divine power by grace that is His by nature. ... —*Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



February 2, 2025

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple



• 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 THE MEETING OF THE LORD, Tone One:

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, O Virgin Theotokos, for from thee hath risen the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those in darkness. Rejoice, also thou righteous Elder, as thou receivest in thine arms the Redeemer of our souls, who also granteth unto us the Resurrection

• KONTAKION OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD, Tone One:

By Thy Nativity Thou didst sanctify the Virgin's womb and didst bless Simeon's hands, O Christ God. Now Thou hast come and saved us through love. Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of Man!

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, Jan. 31: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Feb. 1: 4:30 PM, Litya for the repose of Kurt Schau
5 PM, Vigil for the Feast
- Sunday, Feb. 2: 9:40 AM, Reception of Catechumen
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
12:15 PM, Annual Parish Meeting
- Wednesday, Feb. 5: 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga
6 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, Feb. 6: 5 PM, Angels Unawares Guests arrive
7 PM, Bible Study with Fr James
- Friday, Feb. 7: *No Confessions here, Fr Lawrence out of town*
- Saturday, Feb. 8: 5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
- Sunday, Feb. 9: 8 AM, Divine Liturgy in Protection Church
9:15 AM, Choir Rehearsal in the Hall
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal

Kurt Schau, the beloved husband of our dear Esther Schau, passed away suddenly on Sunday afternoon. May his memory be eternal. We will have a Litya for the Repose on Saturday at 4:30 PM. May the Lord send consolation and hope in the resurrection to Esther and her children and whole family. A private burial will take place next week.

On Sunday morning at 9:40 AM Kathleen Morgan will be made a Catechumen. Please give her a warm welcome as she embarks on this next step of the spiritual journey.

Our Annual Parish Meeting takes place Sunday directly after the Divine Liturgy. Please bring a bag lunch since no lunch will be served. All of those who are “Communicants-in-good-standing” (Worship, Confess and Commune here, who regularly support the Parish, are at least 18 years of age), will be called upon to assemble, to receive reports on Parish life, to adopt a budget for 2025 and confirm new members of the Parish Council. Let us all prepare ourselves with Confession and Holy Communion, being mindful of all that our Lord has done for us.

Angels Unawares is a program run by the *Redwood Gospel Mission* (RGM), in which Sonoma County church communities provide a meal and a place to sleep every night of the month for those who are unhoused. Our parish partners with the RGM, and welcomes those in need (usually on the first Thursday of each month). Come out to greet and serve our guests this month on Thursday, Feb. 6 at 5 PM. Please speak with Michael Dovey to let him know you will assist him with prep and serving.

Deacon Justin and I will be in Colorado Springs Feb. 6–9 to participate in a discussion and planning session with young diocesan choir directors, hosted by the *Thriving Parish Project* at Holy Theophany Church. On Sunday we will be at the Consecration and Divine Liturgy at the new St. John Orthodox Church on the east side of town. —*Fr Lawrence*

Regarding the Thriving Parish Project, something that came up numerous times in our parish focus groups was the desire to host an evening party here, a *mini-Glendi* if you will, with a limited menu, music and dancing. The discussions centered on wanting to work together for an event here. Consequently, a meeting is being called for Wednesday, Feb. 12 at 6:30 PM (following the 6 PM Vespers) to decide how such a *mini-Glendi* (let’s just say *Glendi*) will look, it’s size, food served, who would be doing what, etc. The tentative date for this *Glendi* is the fast-free Friday of June 13, from 6–10 PM. More to come.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple, Feb. 2, is one of the Twelve Great feasts of the Church. We also have the first of the pre-lenten Gospels, that of Christ meeting Zacchaeus in Jericho (Luke 19:1–10). Next Sunday, Feb. 9, will be the Sunday of the *Tax Collector (Publican) and Pharisee*, when we begin to sing hymns on Saturday evening from the book called the *Lenten Triodion* (3-ode hymns). We are approaching the Great Fast of Lent, the “springtime of repentance” as a hymn calls it. Plan ahead for the spiritual journey across the “sea of the fast” so you are not taken by surprise. Forgiveness Sunday is March 2. After the Divine Liturgy on that day we will have the Vespers of Forgiveness at 1 PM, and Lent begins. This is a service that we all should attend.

Elsie Avalon is recovering at Summerfield Rehab, and guests are welcome to visit her. George Kielczynski is a patient there as well. 1280 Summerfield Rd.