

During Great Lent, it is the norm for each Orthodox Christian to confess at least once, and certainly again some time prior to Pascha. Confession is a restoration and renewal of the soul, the forgiveness of sins, and a preparation for receiving Holy Communion. Moreover, during Lent, Confession prepares a person for Pascha. Confession is a Holy Mystery, and an encounter with the Living God; it is self-knowledge, an incentive to please God, and a reminder that we, too, must be forgiving and merciful towards the faults of others. **PLEASE NOTE:** For those over the age of seven who will receive Holy Communion during Holy Week and Pascha, it is a holy obligation—please forgive the terminology, but it expresses the necessity—to make a confession at least once in the three weeks before Holy Week. But don't limit your spiritual life and confession to some legalistic time-table: confess when your conscience needs it. —*Fr Lawrence*

Works of mercy. As individuals and as a Church community, we know from the teaching of the Savior that intentional [almsgiving](#) is an essential part of the Christian life. How should we approach this wisely and effectively? You are invited to attend a “round-table discussion” on the topic, led by Fr. David and Elaine Lowell and Mr. Jeff Gilman on Saturday, March 22, from Noon–2 PM. Fr. David and Matushka Elaine ran St. Raphael House in SF (a family shelter) for decades and Jeff is the director of the Redwood Gospel Mission in Santa Rosa, and member of Holy Dormition Orthodox Church. Let's learn from their vast experience. *RSVP by Monday, March 17, to Fr Lawrence.*



The Orthodox communities of Nativity of Christ, St. Nicholas, and St. Seraphim in the North Bay invite you to join them for a Mission Awareness fundraising dinner at Nativity of Christ parish in Novato on Sunday, March 30. Vespers at 5 PM, dinner and presentation to follow. This is a benefit for the Orthodox Christian Mission Center.



**\$35/Adult, \$15/Student,
Children Under 12 Free**

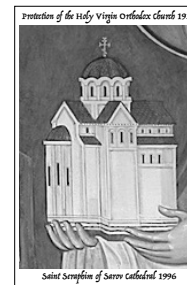
Sponsorship opportunities available!

www.ocmc.org/novato-dinner

ALL DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTIBLE

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 16, 2025

Second Sunday of Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas



- 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. GREGORY PALAMAS, Tone Eight:
O light of Orthodoxy, pillar and teacher of the Church, glory of monks and invincible protection of theologians, O Gregory, thou wonderworker, boast of Thessalonika, and preacher of grace, ever pray that our souls be saved.
- KONTAKION OF ST GREGORY, Tone Eight:
With one accord, we praise thee as the sacred and divine vessel of wisdom and clear trumpet of theology, O our righteous [Father Gregory](#) of divine speech. As a mind that standeth now before the Original Mind, do thou ever guide aright and lead our mind to Him, that we all may cry: Rejoice, O herald of grace divine.

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ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, March 14: 10:30 AM, Presanctified Liturgy
- Saturday, March 15: *(Lenten Retreat at Holy Trinity in SF)*
4:45 PM, Panikhida for Memorial Saturday
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions
* 8 PM, Concert in St. Seraphim *
- Sunday, March 16: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
* 3 PM, Concert in St. Seraphim *
- Tues., March 18: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
- Wed., March 19: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
5 PM, Confessions
6 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified/Meal
- Thurs., March 20: 8 AM, Lenten Matins
7 PM, Bible Study online with Fr James
- Friday, March 21: 10:30 AM, Presanctified Liturgy

• PRAYERS FOR CATECHUMENS:

O Lord our God, who dwellest in the heavens, and lookest down upon all thy works, look down upon thy servants, the catechumens—John, James, Nicholas, Nathan, James, Gabrielle and Cyprus-Nikolai; Alfredo, Francine and their children Charlie, Emily, June, Abner; Kiel; Jeffrey and his son Lachlan; Zachary, Julie and their children Iris and Paisley; Michael and Suzanne, Gregory and Natalie, Katrina, Dominic, Daniel, Kathleen, Jessie, Elaine—who have bowed their necks before Thee, and grant them a light yoke. Make them honorable members of Thy holy Church, and vouchsafe unto them the washing of regeneration, the forgiveness of sins, and the robe of incorruption, unto the knowledge of Thee, our true God.

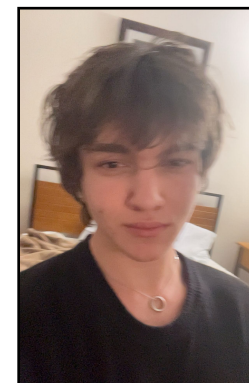
* **The Green Mountain Consort** (part of Bach Choir), will present a concert in the Cathedral on Saturday, March 15, at 8 PM and Sunday, March 16, at 3 PM. The ensemble will sing sacred choral music. For more info see the [LINK HERE](#).

On March 25—nine months before Christmas—we will enthusiastically celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation. The young Virgin Maiden sings: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Edith Humphrey writes: “Her song speaks with joy and confidence of the overturning and fulfilling power of a God who has not abandoned his people, nor the human race, but finally has visited them and us fully, concretely and decisively. And so, with the announcement of Gabriel that we remember, we are ushered into the holy of holies, the deep recesses of the human heart where God visits us, and where he desires to dwell. It must never cease to amaze us that the omnipotent, self-sufficient Holy Trinity desires to dwell with us. The Father of all lights, and the Lord of heavenly hosts Who created us and weeps over our fall into corruption and death, desires to refashion us for immortality... In her very womb, the Word will grow and thrive, becoming the true Light who enlightens all the world. In our hearts, may that same One dwell, making us more and more what He has in mind for us to be—those who can, like the Theotokos, also trust, also say yes, and also work together with the Living God as he brings wonders to pass.” The Festal Matins will be served on Monday, March 24 at 6 PM, and the Vespereal Liturgy on Tuesday, March 25 at 5 PM.

Meet Kiel Smits, who became a catechumen here some months back:

I grew up in Petaluma my whole life and never lived anywhere else. I had an interest in what the truth about life was for as long as I can remember, and I became engrossed with philosophy and religion in my freshmen year. Fast forward in my junior year: One night, I decided to pray to Jesus, because I felt lost and anxious about my life. I felt as if there was a presence in my room, like something or someone, responding to my prayer. I started digging into Orthodox Christianity and its core values. I agreed with a lot of what it had said. Then I told my friend John about it. He told Thomas Winowich (who is a member at St. Seraphim) and we three became very interested in Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Thomas started taking me to the church. I now attend I am grateful to Thomas for directing me here. My quality of life and my thoughts had been made better because of Jesus and the people that I am surrounded by in this community.



St. Eugene’s Summer Camp is now taking registrations—click online [HERE](#). This year camp runs from June 22–28. Early bird registration (during March) is available.