

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, September 28, 2025



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Seven:

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrhbearers 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 ST. CHARITON, Tone Eight:

With the streams of thy tears thou didst irrigate the barren desert and with sighs from the depths of thy soul thou didst render thy labors fruitful an hundredfold and becamest a beacon for the whole world, resplendent with miracles. O Chariton our Father, entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

- KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Seven:

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: "The Savior has come to those in faith; enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

- KONTAKION OF ST. CHARITON, Tone Two:

Thou didst delight in the monastic life, O divinely-wise one, and conquered the bodily passions; thou didst increase in faith, blossoming as the Tree of Life in the midst of Paradise, O most blessed and holy Chariton.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Friday, Sept. 26: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
- Saturday, Sept. 27: 5 PM, Resurrectional Vigil/Confessions
- Sunday, Sept. 28:
 - 8 AM, Divine Liturgy in the Protection Church
 - 9 AM, Choir Rehearsal
 - 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
 - Noon, Pot-Luck Agape Meal
- Tuesday, Sept. 30: 6 PM, Vigil for the Parish Feast Day of the Protection of the Holy Virgin
- Wednesday, Oct. 1:
 - 9:30 AM, Greeting of His Grace, Bishop Vasily, Divine Liturgy for the Feast
 - Festal Lunch to follow
 - One year anniversary Panikhida for the repose of Carl John Collard
- Thursday, Oct. 2: 7 PM, *Online* Bible Study with Fr James
- Friday, Oct. 3: 9 AM, Fort Ross Conference

We welcome our guests and visitors, and trust that you will have a good experience at the Divine Services—please speak with one of our priests if you have any questions. Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer (Pre-Communion Prayers), fasting and a recent Confession (at least within a month's time). With the fear of God, with faith and with love, draw near.

On October 1 we celebrate our Parish Feast Day, *The Protection of the Holy Virgin*. It is for this feast that our parish was named in 1936, and so, we celebrate the day with a special solemnity, joy and gratitude for the continual intercessions and protection of the Theotokos over us. We are mindful of the sacrifice and faith of those who came before us.

How to celebrate the feast day:

- ✦ Attend the Vigil (or at least a portion of it at least if you have small children)
- ✦ If you have not made a recent confession, then come and receive the Lord's mercy and peace by your repentance
- ✦ Stay for the Agape Meal, and help out as you can with the meal clean up to show hospitality to our guests
- ✦ Learn the *Troparion of the Parish* so you can sing it:

Today we Orthodox people joyfully keep festival,
being illumined by thy glorious coming among us, O Mother of God;
and gazing upon thy most pure image,
we say with compunction:
Shelter us with thy most precious Protection,
and deliver us from all evil,
and pray to thy Son, Christ our God, that he save our souls.

Ever since the Archangel Gabriel first said, “Blessed art thou among women,” to the Virgin Mary, these words of praise have inspired the faithful of the Christian Church to join the Virgin Mary in her prophecy: “from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed” (Lk. 1:45). One of the most mysterious and deep inner feelings of the Orthodox Church is our celebration each October 1 of the feast of the *Protecting Veil of the Mother of God*. In our parish we sing these words from the Feast day hymn almost every Sunday: *Today the Virgin stands forth in the Church and invisibly with the choirs of Saints prays to God for us...* At the festal Vigil and especially the Divine Liturgy, we remember—but more than that—we participate, anticipate, and spiritually delight in—the vision of Our Lady standing forth which was once seen by Saint Andrew, a “fool for Christ's sake” in the Church of the *Blakherni* district in Constantinople, during a military assault on that City on October 1 sometime in the mid-10th century; the blessed Epiphanius his disciple standing beside him said, “Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?” He saw the All Holy Virgin with her Veil held over the City, protecting the people who were gathered in that Church praying fervently for help.

The Protecting Veil of the Mother of God is a vision of the unbreakable and unending bond of the heavenly and the earthly Church—one Body. And it is also a confirmation that until the Coming of our Lord—and the resurrection and healing of all creation—all existence beyond the grave, of the righteous and the saints, is one untiring prayer, one ceaseless intercession and mediation in love. When we sing at the funeral and *panikhida* that “their souls shall dwell with the blessed” this is what we mean. We have become used to imagining that She, the Holy Theotokos, and all the saints, all the deceased, the entire spiritual world in general—are somewhere over there, far away in the heavens, “over the rainbow.” It is unusual and even difficult for us to believe that the Mother of God and all the saints are so close to us that they can pray together with us in our churches. Recall as

frequently as you can how near the Theotokos is to us, and to pray to Her with childish simplicity, loyalty and sincere faith, calling out to Her: “Rejoice, O our Joy, protect us from all evil with Thy most precious veil.”
Amen. —*Fr. Lawrence*

On Saturday, October 11 at 3:30 PM in the Parish Hall, Fr Damian will give a talk for inquirers and catechumens entitled *What is a Catechumen*. This is a general talk, about forty-five minutes in length, for anyone interested in learning more about joining the Orthodox Church.

The monthly gathering for dinner of the St. Seraphim Men’s Fellowship will be on Tuesday, October 14 at 6 PM.

The Sisterhood will gather on Saturday, October 25th, at 11 AM.

A get-ready-for-winter work party has been scheduled for Saturday, October 25th. More info to follow.

This week the gutters of the storage building were cleared out, and many of the trees on the property had dead and low hanging branches trimmed, as well as those hanging over a building.

Saturday evening Vigils: Beginning this Saturday, we will celebrate an abbreviated Vigil each Saturday at 5 PM (with the exception of Oct. 4 and 18, due to the Fort Ross evening a concert on 10/18). Practically speaking, this is a 1:45 hour-long service of Vespers and Matins together. Parents with young children: it’s fine to leave after venerating the Gospel. Those of you that cannot come at 5 PM, might want to arrive at 6 PM for the Matins. Why are we doing Vigil? Our parish is designated as a cathedral, so, we ought to have “cathedral services” meaning, we do that which is prescribed by the church tradition. In any case, how wonderful it is to pray the Six Psalms, the hymn “Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes,” the “Having Beheld the Resurrection of Christ” the Resurrectional verses on the Canon, the Magnificat and the Great Doxology. I am grateful to the Lord for the richness of our liturgical tradition and practice. —*Fr Lawrence*

An Orthodox Christian parish, however it was founded and for whatever purpose it was organized, must understand itself to be an apostolic community with a missionary purpose. Its members, especially its leaders, must be conscious of themselves as people sent by Christ from God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring God’s unity, holiness and fullness to all human beings in this divided, sinful and fragmented world. If a parish has no awareness and consciousness of being “sent” by God to speak His words, to do His work, and to accomplish His will in this world, then it is not an Orthodox Christian parish. At best it is a bunch of decent people carrying on a bundle of benign activities for their own benefit. —*Father Thomas Hopko*

Hi, I’m Nicholas Belli. I’m big on the outdoors. Hiking, climbing, lifting and running are my go-to ways to recharge and stay inspired. I also enjoy writing from time to time, usually as a way to get creative or share what I’ve learned. Always up for an adventure and a good conversation.



PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

OCTOBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Pot-luck Agape 	29	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Vigil for the Feast 	October 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:30 AM, Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Protection • Festive Lunch • Panikhida (Carl C.) 	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Online Bible Study 	3 9 AM, Fort Ross Conference in Parish Hall all day	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AM, Fort Ross • Divine Liturgy • 5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions
5 – Martyr Charitina <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	6 – St. Innocent <i>(Feast Day of St. Innocent Parish in Pleasanton)</i>	7 <i>Fr. Lawrence and Matushka Ann away until Oct. 17</i>	8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers • 6:45 PM, Bible Study on Genesis 	9 – St. Tikhon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 7 PM, Online Bible Study 	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions 	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3:30 PM, A talk on <i>What is a Catechumen</i>, Parish Hall • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
12 – 7th Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	13	14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, St. Seraphim Men's Fellowship Potluck Dinner 	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga • 6 PM, Vespers 	16 – St. Longinus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 7 PM, Online Bible Study 	17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions 	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3:30 PM, Catechism: <i>The True God</i> • 5 PM, Vespers ONLY/Confessions • 8 PM, Sonoma Bach Concert in church
19 – St. John of Rila <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 3 PM, Sonoma Bach Concert in church 	20	21	22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers • 6:45 PM, Bible Study on Genesis 	23 – St. James <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 7 PM, Online Bible Study 	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions 	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Work Party • 11 AM, Sisterhood • 3:30 PM, Catechism: <i>The Human Being</i> • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
26 – St. Demetrios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal 	27 – St. Olga of Alaska <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 	28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Parish Council Meeting 	29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga • 6 PM, Vespers 	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 PM, Online Bible Study 	31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions 	NOVEMBER 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3:30 PM, Catechism: <i>On Sin</i> • 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions