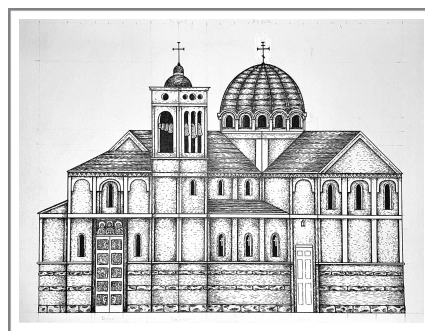


ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, April 26, 2026

Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women



- Fri., April 24: 8 AM, Daily Matins
11:30 AM–1:30 PM, Confessions
- Sat., April 25: 10 AM, Blessing of Graves (See times below)
4:30 PM, One year anniversary Panikhida for Matushka Eleanor
5 PM, Resurrectional Matins / Confessions
- Sunday, April 26: 8 AM, Divine Liturgy
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Lunch
2 PM, Wedding of Krissy and Forrest
- Tues., April 28: 6 PM, Parish Council Meeting
- Wed., April 29: 5:30 PM, Akathist / 6 PM, Vespers
- Thurs., April 30: 7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr. James
- Fri., May 1: 8 AM, Daily Matins
11:30 AM–1:30 PM, Confessions

On Sunday at 2 PM we have the great joy of serving the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony for Kristin and William, recently baptized and chrismated here. All are invited to share in this joy.

Whether we are at home or at church, our prayer during this season always begins with *Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life*—three times! The usual prayer *O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth...* is not said until Pentecost Day. Pentecost is the Feast of the Gift of the Holy Spirit, so we “save” the *O Heavenly King* until that day.

This Sunday we remember the Holy Myrrh-bearing Women and the Theotokos. We contemplate their courage and love for the Lord, as they faithfully stood by Him as He was crucified. We remember how they, with Joseph of Arimethea and Nicodemus, cared for and buried His beaten body. At the Cross on Golgotha on Great and Holy Friday, it was those Holy Women who constituted the Church—ministering to Christ—as an example to us, despite the profound danger and opposition they faced.

Fr. Alexander Elchaninov (reposed 1934 in France) wrote that “...as Orthodox, we have a great treasure of things and yet we vegetate in mediocrity.” We may be afraid to witness and express ourselves openly as Christ’s disciples. Perhaps a remedy for this state of weakness is to contemplate the Myrrhbearers: St. Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus cast out the demons (she was NOT a prostitute); Joanna the wife of Chouza (who was the steward-administrator of King Herod Antipas!! — imagine the social interactions); Mary the wife of Cleopas; Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee; Martha and

Mary, sisters of Lazarus; as well as the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, who was the stepmother of her husband Joseph's sons James and Joseph. Today we also also remember Saint Joseph of Arimathea, who was a secret disciple (John 19:38), and Saint Nicodemus, who was a disciple by night (John 3:3; 19:38). The holy right-believing Queen Tamara of Georgia is also honored on the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women. —*Fr Lawrence*

On this second week after Pascha, we also celebrate the institution of the Sacred Diaconate (as we hear in the reading from Acts 6:1–7). *Diakonia* means service. The themes of service, offering, devotion to the Lord and His Church are clearly given to us today in these readings. It is appropriate that we all consider which of the parish ministries we will get involved with, and also give thanks to God for all those who labor with faith, love and diligence for the upbuilding of the Church of God. Once again, the quote from Fr. Michael seems appropriate: “Do you wear a bib or an apron?” Are you being served or do you serve.

The May Calendar is attached, and as one can see, we will serve Daily Matins (just less than an hour in length) on most Fridays at 8 AM. Please check the calendar for day[s] when Matins might not be served.

Financial Giving is a Matter of the Heart: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (St. Matt. 6:19-21). The use of financial resources discloses the preoccupation of the heart. Simply put: “We use our money for what we love.” If we love God and His Kingdom this will be clearly reflected in our giving patterns. In this way the modern checkbook is something of a cardiac thermometer. It will demonstrate for us if we are storing up our treasure in heaven or not, and will show us where our heart lies. Your heart both dictates where your money will go and follows wherever you first put your money. Thus, if you want to increase your love for God and your desire for heavenly things, think about increasing your giving to the Church and to the poor, for your heart will follow your treasure. The reason that our finances are so intimately connected with our heart's disposition is because our financial offering is so closely tied up with the offering of our very selves. This is just the point. What God wants from us is us. He wants us to freely offer ourselves to him. —*Fr Josiah Trenham, St Andrew Church, Riverside, CA.*

Due to rain and mud our normal visit to the cemeteries to bless graves was postponed from the Tuesday after Bright Week to Saturday, April 25. The plan is to visit the following cemeteries: 10 AM at Pleasant Hills in Sebastopol / 11 AM in Forestville / Noon at Healdsburg's Oak Mound Cemetery / 1:30 approx at Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery.



Logan Estill: Logan grew up attending Roman Catholic services with his family and has always believed in God, but over time he began to experience a growing sense of dissatisfaction with Christianity as he knew it. He was first exposed to the Orthodox faith through several online content platforms. He spent about six months perusing this online content before attending his first Divine Liturgy at Saints Peter and Paul around the time of Theophany. After attending that service, he was eager to keep attending Orthodox services and looked up other English-speaking churches in the area, found Saint Seraphim, and has been coming here ever since.

Logan was born and raised in Santa Rosa, CA and has previously worked as a mechanic shop assistant. In his spare time, he enjoys playing guitar and piano, singing, and skateboarding.



Antonio and Esmeralda Gonzalez and family: I was born in 1992 in Concord, California, and grew up in Vallejo. During my teenage years I lived in Fort Worth, Texas, and later spent several years in Jalisco, Mexico. In my youth I had some difficult influences and challenges that ultimately led me to seek a new direction in life. I was able to build a new path and eventually start my own foundation repair company. My wife, Esmeralda, has been one of the greatest blessings in my life and a major reason I am where I am today.

We are raising our two children, Antonio and Valentina. I am grateful for God's mercy and guidance in my life and strive to live with gratitude, faith, and dedication to my family and church. So happy to have found the Orthodox Church!

I was born in Mexico on December 24, 1987. When I was about eight years old, I immigrated to the United States, where I grew up and built my life. At a young age, I became a mother to my daughter, Araceli, who is now twenty-one years old. Becoming a young mother shaped my strength, determination, and deep commitment to my family. For about 15 years, I worked as a makeup artist, where I developed a passion for creativity and for helping others feel confident and beautiful. In 2015, I met my husband, Antonio Gonzalez, and together we have built a loving family and share two children.

I was raised as a cradle Roman Catholic, but through my husband Antonio, I was drawn closer to Orthodox Christianity, which has become an important part of my spiritual journey. In my free time, I enjoy working out and traveling, and I appreciate opportunities to explore new places and experiences.



PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

MAY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 26 - Holy Myrrhbearers • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 2 PM, <i>Wedding</i>	27	28	29	30	MAY 1	2
3 - Paralytic • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, <i>Meet and Greet Agape</i> • 1 PM, Anniversary Molieben	4 <i>Fr Lawrence in SF at Deans' Meeting until Thursday</i>	5	6 - Mid-Pentecost • 5:30 PM, Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers	7	8 - Apostle John • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy <i>No Confessions Today</i>	9
10 - Samaritan Woman • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, no Agape today • 3 PM, <i>Wedding & Reception</i>	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 - Blind Man • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 9 AM, Baptisms • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	18	19	20 - Leavetaking of Pascha • 6 PM, Vigil for the Feast of the Ascension	21 - Ascension of Christ • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy • 6 PM, <i>Men's Fellowship Dinner</i> • 7 PM, Bible Study online with Fr James	22 • 8 AM, Matins <i>No Confessions Today</i>	23 • 5 PM, Vigil /Confessions
24 - Holy Fathers • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 11:30 AM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	25	26	27	28	29	30 - Memorial Saturday • 10 AM, Decoration of the Church • 5 PM, Vigil for Pentecost
31 - PENTECOST • 8 AM, Divine Liturgy • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • Noon, Agape Meal • 1 PM, Kneeling Vespers	JUNE 1 • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Day of the Holy Spirit / St. Justin Martyr	2	3	4	5	6
			• 5:30 PM, Akathist • 6 PM, Vespers	• 7 PM, Bible Study online with Fr James	• 8 AM, Matins • 11:30 AM-1 PM, Confessions	• 5 PM, Vigil /Confessions