

Please join our second discussion of the *Thriving Parish Project* (TPP) presentation on Bright Saturday, April 18 at 3:30 in the Parish Library. We will view two brief videos by priests drawing from their own experience and studies. First is Deacon Abraham Labrada, an immigrant from Mexico who has done missionary work throughout Mexico and translates liturgical texts into Spanish, who will be speaking on welcoming the Hispanic community into the Orthodox Church. The second presenter is Fr. Samuel Davis, son of Columbian and Panamanian immigrants, on welcoming all to the Church. Fr. Samuel considers the Nubian Church traditions for shaping church growth in America. He is the assistant priest at the Greek Orthodox Church at the National Shrine of the World Trade Center, NYC. Karla Van Meter, our TPP coordinator will lead the discussion with Fr. Daniel York.

During Holy Week and Bright Week, other than funerals, the Church forbids us to sing memorial hymns and *Panikhidas*. Why? Because Christ has destroyed the power of the devil and death by His death and resurrection, and the faithful are alive in Him. Memorial prayers are simply not needed—everyone, living and departed, have been offered to God. However, on the Tuesday after Bright Week, which we call the Day of Rejoicing (*Radonitsa*) we once again begin to sing hymns for those who have departed this life. I will be visiting the following cemeteries to bless graves on **Tuesday, April 21:**

10 AM at Pleasant Hill in Sebastopol / 11 AM in Forestville
Noon at Healdsburg's Oak Mound Cemetery (Bring a picnic)
1:30 approx at Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery

Let us give thanks to those who labored to so beautifully adorn the *Epi-taphios* (shroud of Christ), the Crucifixion icon, the Paschal icon and the entire church for the Three-Day-Pascha of Friday–Sunday. Let's give thanks for those who chanted and sang at the many services of Holy Week (is it fifteen?), and those who cleaned each day, those who managed the candle stand, those who helped set up for the Agape and the BBQ, and those who put things away. Reader Patrick told me the other day about a sermon given by Fr Michael Margitich (available on the website) prior to the Glendi. Fr Michael was lovingly encouraging each member of the congregation to get involved in activities. He asked this question: “Do you wear a bib, or do you wear an apron? Do you want to be served, or be like Christ, and serve?”

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



April 12, 2026

PASCHA ✠ The Resurrection of our Lord and
God and Savior Jesus Christ



- PROCESSION HYMN, Tone Six:
Thy Resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the Angels in Heaven sing; enable us on earth to glorify Thee in purity of heart.
- TROPARION OF PASCHA, Tone Five:
Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.

THIS WEEK

- Holy Fri., April 10: *Strict Fast Day*
9 AM, Royal Hours
3 PM, Great Vespers of Holy Friday with bringing out of Shroud (*Epitaphios*)
6 PM, Matins of Holy Saturday with the Lamentations and Procession
- Holy Sat., April 11: *Strict Fast Day*
12:30 PM, Vespers Divine Liturgy
Decoration of Church (floral team and helpers)
11:30 PM, Nocturn Service
Midnight: PASCHAL Matins and Liturgy
Blessing of Paschal Baskets after Liturgy
- PASCHA, April 12: 9:30 AM, Paschal Liturgy in the Protection Church
1 PM, Paschal Vespers (*picnic? probably postponed due to rain*)
- Bright Mon., April 13: 9:30 AM, Paschal Hours and Divine Liturgy
- Bright Tues., April 14: 6 PM, Paschal Vespers
- Bright Wed., April 15: 6 PM, Paschal Vespers
- Bright Thurs., April 16: 6 PM, Paschal Hours, Men's Fellowship Potluck Dinner

Let's all sing this together on Pascha night: Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, / let us worship the holy Lord Jesus, / the only Sinless One! / We venerate Thy Cross, O Christ, / and we praise and glorify Thy Holy Resurrection; / for Thou art our God, / and we know no other than Thee; / we call on Thy Name. / Come, all ye faithful, / let us worship Christ's Holy Resurrection! / For, behold! through the Cross joy has come into all the world. / Let us ever bless the Lord, / praising His Resurrection. / For by enduring the Cross for us, / He destroyed death by death!

“He lays down His life, but He has the power to take it again; and the veil is rent, for the mysterious doors of Heaven are opened; the rocks are cleft, the dead arise. He dies, but He gives life, and by His death destroys

death. He is buried, but He rises again. He goes down into Hades, but He brings up the souls” (St. Gregory of Nazianzus)...This descent into Hades (or hell) means first of all the entry or penetration into the realm of death, into the realm of mortality and corruption. And in this sense it is simply a synonym of death itself. It is hardly possible to identify Hades, or the “subterranean abodes” to which the Lord descended, with the “hell” of sufferings for the sinners and the wicked. ...And it was into *this* prison, into *this* Hades, that the Lord and Savior descended. Amid the darkness of pale death shines the unquenchable light of Life, and Life Divine...Hades is just the darkness and shadow of death...a dark “sheol,” a place of hopeless disembodiment and disincarnation... Since “Hades groans below” and “is afflicted,” by His descent Christ “shatters the bonds eternal,” and raises the whole human race. He destroys death itself, “the hold of death is broken and the power of Satan is destroyed.”...The Lord descended into hades as the Victor, *Christus Victor*, as the Master of Life. He descended in His glory, not in humiliation, although through humiliation...The Lord descended into hades to announce the good tidings and to preach to those souls who were held and imprisoned there (I Peter 3:19), by the power of His appearance and preaching, to set them free, to show them their deliverance. Thus Death itself is transmuted into Resurrection. *I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen. And I have the keys of death and of Hades* (Rev. 1:17-18). — *Fr. Georges Florovsky*

Parking is available in the lot to the east of the church, on the wood chips. There will be lighting mounted on the fence.

On Sunday, April 19, which we call St. Thomas Sunday, the Sunday after Pascha, we will have the joy of baptizing Jeff and Kira Boyd's baby and Natalie and Gregory Severs' baby at 9 AM.

Parents, please keep a watchful eye on your children at all times. Children should never—that should be stressed, **never**—be left unattended on the playground, in the Hall, the restrooms, or the church. Children should not be playing in the vineyard, behind the parish hall or in the parking lot. I do understand that some children need a break at some point during the Liturgy, but I would kindly ask that they not play on the play structure or on the lawn next to the church during the Divine Liturgy. —*Fr. Lawrence*