

# Sts. Peter & Paul Church Council News

## August–September 2021

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### Priest's Corner

***The Lord said to the Jews that came to Him: "Strive to enter the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." And they will say: "Lord, Lord, open unto us" and He shall answer and say unto them, "I know you not from whence you are." Then shall they begin to say: "Lord, we have eaten and drunk in your presence and Thou hast taught in our streets." But He shall say: "I tell you, I know not from whence ye are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity." (Lk 13: 24–27)***

We live in a world today that has lost its moral compass: a world in which Christianity is being persecuted both openly and covertly. We see before us the erosion of everything we hold dear as being moral, natural, and normal. It is tragically ironic that in a nation whose motto is "In God We Trust," it appears that God has very little to do with the manner in which laws are passed or policy is set.

Do we not incur the wrath of God when our Supreme Court begins its sessions with the words: "God bless this Court and the United States of America" and then proceeds to make rulings that are diametrically opposed to God's Will? Is not the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel (Dn 9:27) becoming evident in front of our eyes?

What then are we to do? Should we take to the streets in protest? Not necessarily. Should we write to our senators and congressmen? Possibly. Should we simply remain quiet and let this all happen? No. What each and every one of us must do is to *reaffirm in ourselves our own Christianity*. Indeed, the Lord did, and does, teach in our streets, our churches, and our homes. Indeed, we do eat, drink, and live in His presence, as He is with us always. The question is, does any of that really matter to us? Are we truly Christian in every sense of that most blessed calling, or are we Christian in name only? Search our hearts and souls. Do we maintain constant contact with our Lord through prayer? Are those prayers sincere, or merely poetry we recite? Is it a top priority in our personal lives to attend the church services to give thanks to God for His

***We live in a world today that has lost its moral compass.***

unlimited mercies He constantly bestows upon us, or is it "okay" to skip this week, then the next and the next? Do the words of the Gospels, Epistles, and homilies we hear in church truly reach us and inspire us to be better Christians, or are they just pretty words that we have to stand through so that we can finally leave? Do we fast, give alms to the poor and needy, try to be understanding, patient, and forgiving, and judge ourselves so as not to judge others? In a word, does the light of Christ shine in our hearts and souls? Is He the center of our lives? Is not His Will our own? If this is not the case, we are little better than those "doers of iniquity" whom the Lord will cast away from himself. If we are to change the world in which we live or have any impact on it and the people around us at all, we must reaffirm within ourselves our faith in God's Truth – and no one else's – and live in accordance with it. If so, God will truly be with us, and with that, all things will be possible for us.

God bless!  
—Fr. Alexander



### ***Congratulations to those who are celebrating their Name's days\*:***

- July 12 – Peter Gustav
- July 23 – Anthony Maximov
- Aug. 1 – Milica Chidlowsky, Seraphim Wawiliuk
- Aug. 2 – Ilya Ionin, Ilya Poluektov, and Ilya Shikaloff
- Aug. 4 – Marie Roquemore
- Aug. 7 – Anna Ferguson and Diana Handelih
- Aug. 16 – Anthony Newton and Anthony Tatsy
- Aug. 20 – Orr Chistiakoff
- Sept. 8 – Natalie Abrahams, Natalie Piperskih, Natalie Ramensky, Natalie Litvinenko, and Natalie Poluektov
- Sept. 12 – Fr. Alexander Krassovsky, Alexander Gray, Alexander Hubert, Alexander Lukianoff, and Alexander Markoff
- Sept. 18 – Elisabeth Maximov, Elisabeth Russie, Elizabeth Huhulova, Elizabeth Jones, Anna (Renée) Tchirkine, Zachary Able, Zachary Balitsky, and Zachary Jones

Sept. 19 – Alexander Gustav

Sept. 30 – Nadejda Balitsky, Nadejda Mogileva, Nadine Stewart, Vera Levshina–Williams, Vera Rajevisky–Spring, Dr. Sophia Schluter, Sophia Tatsy, Sophia Logvy, and Vera Zaro

**Editor’s Note: Congratulations to Father Alexander and Anya on their 40th wedding anniversary, which was celebrated by the parish on July 11!**



***God Grant them Many Years!***

*\*Fr. Alexander asks that you please notify him if we have missed anyone’s name’s day in our lists. Thank you!*



### **The Three Disciplines—Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving**

Our Lord Jesus Christ called for a thorough conversion of our heart and mind and a complete turning away from the old man (our fallen nature). The main act that begins this conversion is *metanoia*, which means “thorough change of mind.” This happens when we become aware that we have sinned and that we are in need of God’s forgiveness, and resolve, with His help, to submit to Him. Sometimes we see a synonymous use of two words: penance and confession. When going to Confession, a priest sometimes gives a penance, which is a spiritual discipline that can aid in our journey to God. We are given guidelines that can lead to spiritual growth and change of heart. These penances are often in the form of disciplines that are meant to help increase the time spent in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These three disciplines help us deepen our relationship with Christ and aid in the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. We may be asked to recite Akathist hymns, in which we seek the aid of saints or the Holy Virgin, as we struggle to go deeper in our spiritual quest. The priest will give certain prayers as penance because the person needs a jump-start to enter into a complete prayer life. When this happens, hinged together as it is with absolution, the medicine becomes a joyful communion with the Most High God. We might be given extra periods of

fasting, that in depriving ourselves of food, we are able to see deeper into our hearts, and with God’s help, be ridden of the dirt and grime that reside within us. Other times, we might be asked to perform acts of charity or increase our almsgiving as a way of moving beyond ourselves and focusing on the needs of others. Disciplines that focus on increased prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, along with immersing ourselves in the Holy Scriptures, help us in our continued quest to live a life in total submission to Christ. These three categories of discipline aid us in the acquisition of the Holy Spirit and help us to live our life for Christ. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are not ends in themselves but exercises that help in spiritual warfare against the demons who would bring us down. These disciplines are aids that help us in our attempt to repent and to have a thorough change of mind. And this repentance does not mean that we must feel sad but that we strive to put off all pride and selfishness, and replace the ego with love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, kindness, meekness, and self-control.

With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon  
*All-Merciful Saviour Monastery  
Vashon Island, Washington*



***Prayer, fasting, vigil, and all other Christian practices, however good they may be in themselves, do not constitute the aim of our Christian life, although they serve as the indispensable means of reaching this end. The true aim of our Christian life consists in the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God. —St. Seraphim of Sarov***



### **Starosta / Warden’s Corner**

Our Saints Peter and Paul feast day was once again a great success, and our Sisterhood did an outstanding job with the food for the dinner after the Vigil and the lunch the following day. It was really nice to see the high attendance, considering the restrictions we have been under for some time. Many thanks go to all the volunteers who helped to make this a special day.

Also, we have a group of ladies, Yelena, Arina, Lena, Yulia, and Sharon, who have enthusiastically taken on making flower arrangements, not only for the special holidays but for the weekly services as well. Their creations are absolutely beautiful and really brighten up the church.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Lana Logvy, who for so, so many years made sure we had beautiful flower arrangements for all the special occasions and most recently was assisted by Sharon Kardashiantz.



As mentioned in the previous newsletter, we have received the Conditional Use Permit for the cemetery project. We have retained WRA Environmental Consultants to provide environmental permitting support for the proposed project, which includes conversion of the undeveloped 21-acre parcel to a cemetery, with an aboveground columbarium and associated infrastructure. The project will need to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will need to obtain other federal, state, and local environmental permits to proceed.

—Paul Johnson  
707-696-5566; starosta@sonic.net



### Sisterhood News

It was another busy few months with the Ascension of Our Lord, Pentecost Sunday, the Saints Peter and Paul Church holiday, and Dormition of the Holy Theotokos. Everyone seems to have enjoyed themselves at all the celebrations, and the food was great. Thanks to those who helped with the bouquets of flowers and the decorations for Pentecost Sunday. Also, to those who made food for our Saints Peter and Paul parish feast day and Sunday lunches.

Upcoming holidays for September are the Nativity of the Holy Theotokos, Saturday, September 21, and the Exaltation of the Life-Giving Cross, Monday, September 27. If you would like to help out with future Sunday or holiday lunches, please contact me, our Lunch Scheduler, at 925-372-7838 or nadiastew55@yahoo.com.

Please do not forget our ailing members and shut-ins! They can always use our prayers and maybe even a cheerful visit or phone call. For more information, please contact our Outreach Liaison, Anna Judd at 707-823-2372 or annajudd@comcast.net.

Our next meeting is to be determined and will be held to discuss plans for our Christmas Bazaar, which will be held on November 13 and 14, a cooking schedule for the food for the Bazaar, and a festive Vecherinka (party) in mid-January. Our next pelmeniy-making date is also to be determined.

Thank you to everyone for their continuing support of and dedication to the Sisterhood. God bless!

—Nadine Stewart, Head Sister  
of the St. Olga Sisterhood  
925-372-7838 ♦ Nadiastew55@yahoo.com



### Feast of Dormition (*Uspeniye*) of the Most-Holy Theotokos

After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, the Most-holy Mother of God continued to live on earth for several years. One Christian historian says ten years, and another twenty-two years. The Apostle John the Theologian, according to the instructions of Jesus Christ, took her into his home and cared for her with great love as her own son until the end of her life. The Most-holy Mother of God became a mother to all twelve of the apostles in general. They prayed with her

with great joy and were comforted to listen to her instructive conversations about the Saviour. When the Christian faith had spread to other lands, many Christians came from distant countries to see and listen to her voice.

Living in Jerusalem, the Mother of God loved to visit those places where the Saviour had frequented and where he had suffered, died, rose from the dead, and ascended to Heaven. She prayed at these places weeping, remembering the suffering of the Saviour, and rejoicing at the places of His Resurrection and Ascension. She often prayed that Christ would soon take her to Himself in Heaven.

One day, when the Most-holy Mary was praying thus on the Mount of Olives, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her with a branch from a date palm in Paradise and told her the joyful news that in three days She would finish her earthly life, and the Lord would take her to Himself. The Most-holy Mother of God silently rejoiced over this news. She told her adopted son, John, and began to prepare for her end. At that time, the other apostles were not in Jerusalem, as they had dispersed to other countries to preach about the Saviour. The Mother of God wanted to bid farewell to them, and so the Lord in a miraculous manner gathered all the apostles to her (except Thomas), transporting them by His omnipotent power.

Grief befell them over losing the Mother of the Lord and their own spiritual Mother when they learned why God had gathered them. But the Mother of God comforted them, promising not to leave them and all Christians after her death and promising also to pray for them. Then, she blessed them all.

At the hour of her death, an extraordinary light shone in the room where the Mother of God lay. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, surrounded by angels, appeared and received her pure soul.

The apostles buried the pure body of the Mother of God according to her wishes in the Garden of Gethsemane, where the body of her parents and the righteous Joseph were buried. At the funeral, many miracles were performed. By touching the deathbed of the Mother of God, the blind regained their sight, demons were driven away, and all sorts of illnesses were cured. Crowds of people followed her most pure body. Jewish priests and leaders tried to break up this holy procession, but the Lord invisibly protected it. One of the Jewish priests, by the name of Athonius, ran up, seized, and tried to overturn the bier on which the body

of the Mother of God was laid. But an invisible angel chopped off both his hands. Athonius, struck by such a wondrous miracle, repented, and the Apostle Peter healed him.

Three days after the burial of the Mother of God, the absent Apostle Thomas arrived in Jerusalem. He was greatly saddened that he had not been able to say farewell to the Mother of God, and with all his heart, he desired to venerate her most pure remains. The apostles felt so sorry for him that they decided to go and roll away the stone from the tomb to give him the possibility to venerate for the last time the body of the Mother of God. But when they opened the tomb, her most holy body was not found, but only one piece of burial shroud was there. The amazed apostles returned to the house together and prayed to God to reveal to them what had become of the body of the Mother of God. In the



evening, at the end of dinner during prayer, they heard angelic singing. Looking up, the apostles saw in the air the Mother of God surrounded by angels and in the radiance of heavenly glory. The Mother of God said to the apostles, “Rejoice! I am with you always and will pray for you before God.”

The apostles exclaimed to her in joy, “Most-holy Mother of God, help us!”

Thus the Lord Jesus Christ glorified His Most-holy Mother. He resurrected her and took her most holy body to Himself and set her higher than all His angels.

The Dormition of our Most-holy Lady Mother of God is celebrated by the Holy Orthodox Church as one of its major feasts on the 15th of August (28th of August NS). Preceding this feast, there is a two-week fast beginning from the 1st of August. This feast is called the Dormition (“falling asleep”) because the Mother of God died quietly as if she was falling asleep and, more importantly, because of the short sojourn of her body in the grave. After three days, She was resurrected by the Lord and ascended into Heaven.

## ***Troparion of the Feast***

*In giving birth, Thou didst preserve Thy virginity. In Thy falling asleep Thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. As the Mother of Life, Thou wast translated unto life; and by Thine intercessions dost Thou deliver our souls from death!*



## Choir Notes: Follow the Leader

The duties of an Orthodox choir director involve more than preparing and conducting music. He or she is responsible for knowing and communicating the order of the service to the chanters and also understanding the parts of the service performed by the clergy. It must be remembered that the primary job of the chanter is to facilitate prayer and worship for the congregation, and good singing is important. Performance characteristics, while necessary for obvious reasons, should always be considered in the context of prayer.



That being said, there are a few logistical matters to consider that can help the performance aspect. Everyone knows to “watch the Director,” but actually it is more like “watch and listen to the Director as you sing the current hymn and prepare for the next one.” Most of the current choir members should have a pretty good knowledge of the Liturgy music binders. Even though everyone should know the order of the Liturgy, it can be confusing to find the music quickly after the Director has announced the particular setting. After the Cherubic Hymn, remember that there is a little bit of time to switch out the books to Liturgy volume 2 because there are several litany petitions and then the Creed before Milost’ Mira.

—Nina Russo



## Orthodox Community Events

- **Father James Jorgenson** will be teaching a series of **Thursday evening Bible studies on the Psalms, beginning September 9** at 7:00 p.m. in the parish hall and on Zoom. Please e-mail Father Lawrence to be sent the link for the online class: LMargitich@sbcglobal.net. Location: St. Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Church, 90 Mountain View Ave., Santa Rosa.

- **Holy Assumption Monastery Retreats on Zoom, Sat., September 11, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Rev. Dr. Anthony Roeber**, Professor of Church History at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, will speak on a topic TBD. **Sat., October 9, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Father Ian MacKinnon and Father Timothy Winegar.** Please call 707-942-6244 or email sisters@holyassumptionmonastery.com for more info. Previous talks are recorded and can be found at <https://holyassumptionmonastery.com>.
- **Holy Virgin Cathedral fundraising events** to benefit parking and senior residence project, and remodeling of the playground. Project costs are estimated at \$7 million. **September 12: Pieroshki to-go.** You can pick up the order form at the candle counter or send your order to [hvcsisterhood@gmail.com](mailto:hvcsisterhood@gmail.com) by Thurs., September 9. **October 17 and 18: Babushka Take ‘n’ Bake event.** More info to follow. Go to HVC Parking & Senior Housing Project website to order: [www.hvcparking.com](http://www.hvcparking.com). Holy Virgin Cathedral, 2610 Geary Blvd., San Francisco.
- **Gyro and Pastry Fest to Go, Sat. and Sun., September 18-19, 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.** Holy Nativity Greek Orthodox Church, Highland Ave., Novato.
- **Church School classes begin Sunday, September 12.** A table will be set up to register children. Location: St. Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Church, 90 Mountain View Ave., Santa Rosa.





morning of apple picking in the historic orchard, then moves to the historic Fort Ross compound, where you will enjoy the old-world charm of the 19th century Russian settlement. Enjoy a four-course luncheon served on a marine terrace overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Fort Ross State Historic Park, 11 miles north of Jenner on Highway 1.

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*The next Parish Council meeting will be  
 on Tuesday, September 28, at 6:00 p.m.,  
 in the Admin Building.*  
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### Our Council Members

- Rev. Alexander Krassovsky ..... 707-585-8330
- Fr. Deacon Athanasius Ferguson ..... 707-812-4125
- Paul Johnson, Warden ..... 707-696-5566
- Elisabeth Russie, Treasurer ..... 415-328-1095
- Nadia Stewart, Head Sister ..... 925-372-7838
- Anna Ferguson, Secretary ..... 707-812-4124
- Daniel Alva ..... 707-570-7787
- Demitrios Handelih ..... 707-292-2842
- Lana Logvy ..... 707-318-5836
- Michael A. Mogilev ..... 707-953-3636
- Lisa Joanna Smith ..... 617-285-5211
- Alla Zaharoff ..... 415-456-7926

- **Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, Annual Greek Festival, “A Taste of Greece,” September 17–19.** 245 Valencia St., San Francisco, 415-864-8000; festival@annunciation.org; www.sfgreekfestival.com.
- **Parish Family Day and Barbecue, Sunday, Sept. 19,** 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. Games and crafts for children, live music and food. BYO beverages. \$5 per person (kids under 12 free). RSVP: LMargitich@sbcglobal.net. Location: St. Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Church, 90 Mountain View Ave., Santa Rosa.

***Save the Dates!***  
***Saints Peter & Paul Annual Pre-Christmas Bazaar***  
***November 13 and 14***  
***New Year’s Gala Event (Vecherinka)***  
***Friday, January 14***

- **Adult Catechism Classes begin on Saturday, October 2,** at 3:30 p.m. and meet for eight weeks. Location: parish hall, St. Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Church, 90 Mountain View Ave., Santa Rosa.
- **Fort Ross Harvest Festival, Sat., October 16,** 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Harvest Festival starts out with a

