EPHESIANS: Paul the Apostle (1st Century CE) — 2:8-10

The theme for today’s service, as stated in St. John Chrysostom’s Homily in Accession at the Archontiko (Monastery) of Panagia Vlachernas, is "The One who Is with Us, Let Us Not Be Afraid," which Jesus said in his prayer to Father God during his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemani. The passage is found in scripture at Matthew 26:40-50. The apostle's words are a reminder to(stress the need to) trust and rely on God, who is always with us, to face whatever we may experience in life.

NIKIPHOROS PA, BISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE; CHRISTINA OF PERSIA

TODAY’S MEMORIAL: The feast commemorates St. Nemosynon, who died in the Lord 40 days ago.

PARISH ORATORICAL FESTIVAL AT THE CONCLUSION OF TODAY’S DIVINE LITURGY: We look forward to hearing from our Sunday School children following today’s Divine Liturgy, as they participate in the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.

KALI SARAKOSTI: Tomorrow begins the period of preparation for Holy Pascha. This period is known as the Great Lent. In Greek, the term teosaraskosi (or, simply, sarakosti) is used. The word literally means, the “40 day period.” During this time, we fast, we pray more intensely, we are more charitable, as we strive to become better citizens both of this world and of the world of the hereafter.

SERVICES THIS WEEK: Tomorrow, March 14, we will offer the Compline Service, beginning at 4 p.m. Then, on Friday, March 18, we will chant the First Stasies of the Salutations to the Virgin Mary. This is the first section of the service known as the Akathist. The Friday service will begin at 7 p.m. We look forward to seeing you.

OIKOS LECTURE SERIES CONTINUES: Following last Sunday’s successful lecture by Alexander Kozak on the topic, “What if the Fall Had Never Happened?”, we look forward to the continuation of the lecture series, aimed at informing, engaging, and edifying our parishioners in any number of areas involving individual and communal spiritual growth, family dynamics, and parish life. On Sunday, April 3, we will hear from Basil Crow, our accomplished chanter. His topic will be “On the Spirituality of Greek Orthodox Ecclesiastical Chant,” which boasts an uninterrupted history that stems from the local chant traditions of the ancient Eucharistic communities throughout the Christian world. For May (May 15), because of Pascha and Mother’s Day, we will hear from Professor Martha Kilonomos, Ph.D., head of the Modern Greek Studies Program at SF State. Future lectures will include Janine Economides, Dr. Katina Kostoulas, and Steven Harris, Ph.D. OIKOS (Orthodox in Koinonia Outreach Services), is under the direction of Dr. Katina Kostoulas, Ph.D., and of Dr. Anthony Elite, M.D. We are grateful to OIKOS for this initiative. The lectures take place as noted, typically the first Sunday of each month, during the coffee hour.

PSYCHOSAVVATA SERVICES AT THE CEMETERY CHAPEL NEXT SATURDAY: Psychosavvata (Saturday of Souls) services will not take place at the Cathedral. Instead, they will take place at the Chapel of the Greek Orthodox Memorial Park, Colma, next Saturday, March 19, beginning at 10 a.m.

TAX AID: This is a service provided gratis to low income citizens. CPAs donate their time to help prepare tax returns. The Cathedral is donating its space for this purpose. Tax Aid will take place Wednesday, March 16 and Wednesday, March 23, 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Almost all the windows are in. There are 135 of them. Most of them have been installed, and are now being tested against leaks, before we proceed with the stucco. We look forward to the installation of the copper domes (the large, central dome, as well as the iron half dome), the remaining, tile roofs, the stone along the base of the new Cathedral as well as the planted areas and, of course, the completion of the parking component. Meanwhile, we are planning for the placement of the cross over the entrance and the cross on the dome.

The large cross, which will go over the dome, measures 7 feet and weighs 500 pounds. The smaller cross, which will go over the entrance, above the Narthex, is 4’10” and weighs less. We will let you know. Some one out there may want the privilege of placing the cross above the dome, or above the narthex, thus essentially donating the dome or the narthex. Father Stephen is looking for a donation of $1 million and is confident one of you will step up for this honor. Meanwhile, we’ve projected a timetable for completion of the project. As announced, we are planning to hold a Gala event, to celebrate a great accomplishment, this 45th year of our existence as a community, and to kick off the work on the interior. The Gala will take place on Saturday, November 5, 2016. With God’s help, we hope to be able to complete the Cathedral by the end of 2017, and to consecrate the Cathedral to the glory of God to coincide with our 100th anniversary in 2021.

May God bless our undertaking, and may God continue to inspire you and generations to come through this landmark house of worship, which you are building to His glory.

“...The Church shall be a home for Orthodox Christians from every ethnic and national background. It shall be a house of prayer for all humankind, in which the Holy Name of our Triune God shall be extolled and all of creation sanctified.”

(Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Ground breaking, November 6, 1997)