



# FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF CHRIST

## Quarterly Bulletin of Saint John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church

Diocese of the West - Orthodox Church in America

1900 Essex Street, Berkeley, CA 94703

510-845-2944

[www.stjohnthebaptistberkeley.com](http://www.stjohnthebaptistberkeley.com)

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Rev. Edward Henderson

### **A New Year and A New Decade**

As a child, the year 2020 sounded like a time in the distant future and the setting of a science fiction story. Yet, here we are, beginning the third decade of the 21st century! A new decade can evoke great hope and excitement. We wonder at what new accomplishments we may achieve, what new technological advances we may see, how our society will develop in the next ten years. In our personal lives, beginning a new decade entails a journey. During this next decade, the small children in our parish will grow up into adolescents, those beginning high school now will soon be independent adults, those in the prime of their careers will see retirement, and we will say farewell to those now in the twilight of life. A century ago, with the end of the First World War, there was great hope that human civilization would enter into a period of lasting peace and prosperity. Yet, that would not happen. My grandparents, all born around a century ago, lived through the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War. What will this new decade bring us?

Pondering these things can fill us with both excitement and worry. In the Holy Gospel, Our Lord Jesus Christ taught that in the face such cares, we must “seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.” (Matt. 6:33) Likewise, the Holy Apostle Paul writes: “...do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” (Rom. 13:11-12)

As Orthodox Christians, we need not get carried away with emotion over the future. “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15) If we believe in the Gospel, if we are faithful sons and daughters of the Church, and if we live daily as Christians, we truly become “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.” (Rom. 8:17) One of the great ascetic fathers, Saint Isaac the Syrian, once wrote: “When the cares of life do not enter into the soul from without, and she abides in her nature, then she does not require prolonged toil to penetrate into and understand the wisdom of God. For her separation from the world and her stillness naturally move her toward the understanding of God’s creatures. And by this she is lifted up toward God; being astonished, she is struck with wonder, and she remains with God.” (*Ascetical Homilies*, 3)

In Christ, we live in the present. Salvation and God’s Kingdom exist here and now for us. Life in this world will bring us success and failure, triumph and tragedy, happiness and pain. Yet, in Christ, we are given the peace of God, which passes all understanding, preserving our hearts and minds. (Philippians 4:7)

To those reading, who regularly come to church, who pray and fast, and are striving to be devout Orthodox Christians- continue to persevere in your struggle, God is with you! To those of you, who rarely or never come to church, who are negligent in the things of God- today is the day of salvation. Look within yourselves- how much longer can you remain suffocated by your spiritual sloth? Let this be the year and the decade wherein you renew your relationship with God and with the Church. Fight the temptation to remain as you are and come to the church and immerse yourself in her life. We are waiting for you!

As we begin a new year and a new decade, let us resolve to live in such a way that Saint Paul’s words become our own: “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:38-39)

## Namesdays, Birthdays, and Anniversaries

January 6- Birthday of Arseny (Arnold) Kloian

January 25- Namesday of Tatyana Lukoyanova and Tatiana Starostina

January 27- Namesday of Nina Kloian

February 11- Birthday of Fr. Edward

February 16- Namesday of Werburga (Cynthia) Hilton

February 23- Namesday of Valentina Okulova and Valentina Klimko

March 3- Namesday of Eugene Dunsky and Birthday of Nina Kloian

March 25- Birthday of Tatiana Starostina

March 31- Namesday of Fr. Edward

*If you would like your namesday, birthday, and/or anniversary included in the future, please contact Fr. Edward at [revedwardhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:revedwardhenderson@gmail.com).*

## Upcoming Events

**February 16:** Annual Parish Assembly

**March 8:** Daylight Savings Time Begins

## Saint Eugene's Orthodox Summer Camp

July 5-11

Timber Mountain at Sugar Pines Camp (near Yosemite)

[www.steugenecamp.org](http://www.steugenecamp.org)

For several decades, Orthodox youth (ages 7-17) have come together for a week to play and pray at our diocesan summer camp. Offering all the activities of a summer camp, in addition, attendees have the opportunity to meet other Orthodox kids, be encouraged in their faith in a solid Christian environment, and grow spiritually. Moreover, our parish has offered to sponsor two youths, covering the entire camp tuition (please contact Fr. Edward for sponsorship).

For more information, contact the Camp Director, Fr. Andrew Smith at [director@steugenecamp.org](mailto:director@steugenecamp.org)



# Schedule of Services

**Sundays:** Divine Liturgy at 10:00am

**Saturdays:** Vigil *or* Great Vespers at 6:00pm

**Fridays** (March 6, 13, 20, 27): Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at 6:00pm

**Saturday Lenten Memorial Services (Panikhida):** 11:00am (February 22, March 14, 21, 28)

## January, February, March services

Monday, January 6	Christmas Eve	Vesperal Liturgy Vigil	10:00am 6:00pm
Tuesday, January 7	Nativity of Christ (Christmas)	Liturgy	10:00am
Monday, January 13		Great Vespers	6:00pm
Tuesday, January 14	Circumcision of the Lord Saint Basil the Great	Liturgy	8:00am
Sunday, January 19	Theophany	Liturgy Blessing of Waters	10:00am
Friday, February 14		Vigil	6:00pm
Saturday, February 15	Meeting of the Lord	Liturgy	10:00am
Monday, March 2- Thursday, March 5	Beginning of Great Lent Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	Great Compline	6:00pm
Saturday, March 7	Great-martyr Theodore	Liturgy	10:00am

More detailed service schedules are available on the parish website and at the candle desk.

**Confession** is available after Vigil/Vespers, before Liturgy, and as arranged with Fr. Edward.

**Choir rehearsal** is on Wednesdays at 6:30pm in the parish hall and 30 minutes prior to Vigil/Vespers and Liturgy. For further information about the parish choir, please contact Anastasia Klimko at [anastasia.d.klimko@gmail.com](mailto:anastasia.d.klimko@gmail.com).