

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR ...

The health and salvation of –

Abducted Bishops Paul & John	Pauline
Hieroschemamonk Ambrose	Ann
Archpriest Ian	Stefan
Archpriest Eugene	John
Archpriest Seraphim	Vivian
Reader Aleksei	Jung Sook
Monk Philaret	Thomas
Matushka Mary	Cheyenne
Mautshka Mary Sara	Nancy
Andrea	Randall
Virginia • Thomas	Rose
John • Jacqueline	Don
Euphrosynos	Norma
John • Samuel	
Catechumen Rebecca	

The repose and salvation of –

Please let Father know if there are any names you would like added to the list.

This Saturday, December 24 - Eve of the Nativity:

9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy followed by Great Vespers

5:00 PM – Vigil for the Nativity of the Lord

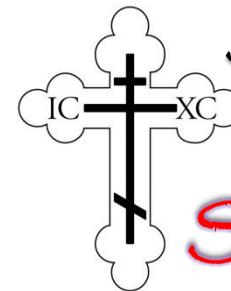
Next Sunday, December 25, 9:30 AM

Festal Divine Liturgy

Monday, December 26, 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

for the Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos

*A mission parish under the omophorion of His Eminence Benjamin,
Archbishop of San Francisco and the Diocese of the West,
Orthodox Church in America*



**ST TIKHON ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**



Sunday, December 18, 2016

Sunday of the Holy Fathers



The relics of St Sebastian at Catacombe San Sebastiano in Rome, Italy

**Sunday Hours & Divine Liturgy at 9:10 AM, followed by agape potluck
Other services as announced**

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Sunday of the Holy Fathers

The Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24) is known as the Sunday of the Holy Fathers. On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to Saint Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (December 17).

Martyr Sebastian at Rome, and those with him

This glorious saint was born in Italy and brought up in the city of Milan. While still young, he dedicated himself to military service. Being educated, handsome and courageous, he received the favor of Emperor Diocletian, who appointed him captain of his imperial guard. Secretly he confessed the Christian Faith and prayed to the Living God. As an honorable, just and merciful man, Sebastian was greatly beloved by his soldiers. Whenever he could, he saved Christians from torture and death, and, when he was unable to do so, he exhorted them to die for Christ the Living God without turning back. Two brothers, Marcus and Marcellinus, who had been imprisoned for Christ and were already on the verge of denouncing Him and worshiping idols, were confirmed in the Faith by Sebastian, who strengthened them for martyrdom. As he spoke with them, encouraging them not to fear death for Christ, his face was illumined. Everyone saw his shining face, like that of an angel of God. Sebastian also confirmed his words by miracles: he healed Zoe, the jailer Nicostratus's wife, who had been mute for six years; he brought her, Nicostratus and his entire household to baptism; he healed the two ailing sons of Claudius the commander and brought him and his household to baptism; he healed Tranquillinus, the father of Marcus and Marcellinus, of gout and pains in his legs which had troubled him for eleven years, and brought him to baptism together with his entire household; he healed the Roman eparch Chromatius of the same illness and brought him and his son Tiburtius to baptism.

The first of them to suffer was St. Zoe, whom they seized at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, where she was praying to God. After torturing her, they threw her into the Tiber River. They then seized Tiburtius, and the judge placed live coals before him, telling him to choose between life and death, that is, either to cast incense on the coals and to cense the idols or to stand barefoot on the hot coals. St. Tiburtius made the sign of the Cross, stood barefoot on the hot coals, and remained unharmed. After this, he was beheaded. Nicostratus was killed with a stake, Tranquillinus was drowned, and Marcus and Marcellinus were tortured and pierced with spears. Then Sebastian was brought before Emperor Diocletian. The emperor rebuked him for his betrayal, but Sebastian said: "I have always prayed to my Christ for your health and for the peace of the Roman Empire." The emperor ordered that he be stripped naked and shot through with arrows. The soldiers shot him through with arrows until the martyr was so completely covered with arrows that his body was not seen because of them. When all thought that he was dead, he appeared alive and completely healthy. Then the pagans killed him with staves. He suffered gloriously for Christ his Lord and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Christ in 287 at the time of Diocletian the Emperor and Gaius the Bishop of Rome.

Also this week: Martyr Boniface at Tarsus in Cilicia, and Righteous Aida of Rome (December 19); Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer, Bp of Antioch; Repose of St John of Kronstadt (December 20); Virgin Martyr Juliana and 630 with her (December 21); Greatmartyr Anastasia, her teacher Martyr Chrysogonus, and with them Martyrs Theodota, Evodias, Eutycheianus, and others (December 22); Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete (December 23); EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST, Nun Martyr Eugenia of Rome, and those with her (December 24).

*** NATIVITY FAST: wine and oil allowed on Thursday;
STRICT FAST ON SATURDAY ***

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 (Sunday Before Nativity)

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25 (Sunday Before Nativity)

Troparion – Tone 1 (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, /
While the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, /
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, /
Granting life to the world. /
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: /
“Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! /
Glory to Thy Kingdom! ///
Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!”

Troparion – Tone 2 (Fathers)

Great are the accomplishments of faith, /
For the three holy youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though at the waters of rest. /
And the prophet Daniel appeared /
A shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep: ///
So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Kontakion – Tone 2 (Fathers)

O thrice-blessèd ones, you did not worship the image made by man /
But armed with the invisible power of God /
You were glorified in a trial by fire; /
From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God /
Crying: Hasten, O Compassionate One! /
Speedily come to our defense ///
For Thou art merciful and able to accomplish all that Thou dost will.