

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR ...

The health and salvation of –

Abducted Bishops Paul & John	John
Hieroschemamonk Ambrose	Vivian
Archpriest Eugene	Jung Sook
Priest James	Thomas
Priest John	Randall
Reader Aleksei	Don
Monk Philaret	Norma
Matushka Priscilla	James
Elizabeth • Marie	Eileen
Marie • Virginia • Thomas	
John • Luke • Katherine	

Catechumens: Andrew, David,
Michael, Sergio, Rachel,
Jennifer, and Rebecca

The repose and salvation of –

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

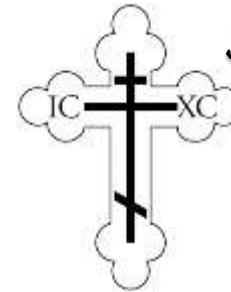
July 23-27, 2018 – 19th All American Council

Saturday, July 28, 4:00 PM– Choir Practice

**Saturday, July 28, 5:30 PM – Great
Vespers & Confession**

Sunday, July 29 – Parish Council

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

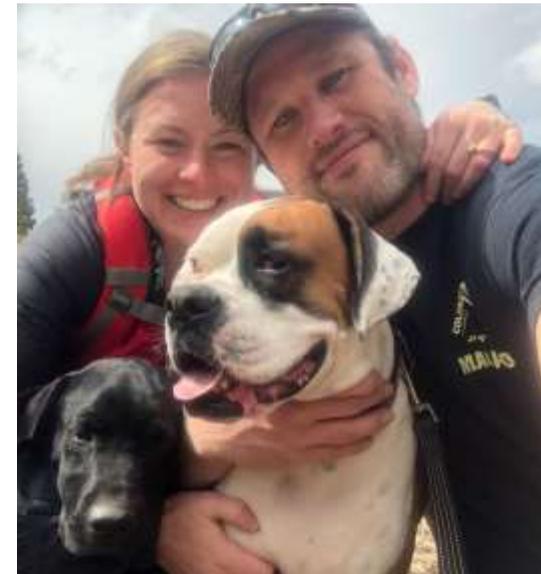


**ST TIKHON ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

Sunday, July 15, 2018



**Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils
Holy Great Prince Vladimir, Equal of the Apostles**



**Sunday Hours & Divine Liturgy at 9:10 AM, followed by agape potluck
Wednesdays at 6:30 PM – Evening Prayers & Saints of the Day
Other services as announced**

Priest Alexander Vallens, Rector

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Deacon John Manutes, Attached

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Wedding Vows

Few things differ more clearly between Eastern and Western Christianity than the service of Holy Matrimony. There are things found in Western Christian Marriage ceremonies that cannot be found in the East just as there are things in the East that cannot be found in the West. In many languages of the Eastern Churches, the service for a marriage is referred to as the “Crowning” – named for the central act within the ceremony – the crowning of the bride and groom. However nothing separates the marriage ceremonies of East and West like the place of marriage vows: there are no wedding vows in an Orthodox wedding.

Those unfamiliar with Orthodox weddings are often taken aback by this fact – how can there be a wedding without vows? How can a couple actually be married if they make no promises? I have heard it observed wryly that in Orthodoxy, we do not require the bride and groom to perjure themselves on their wedding day! But the absence of vows points to more than ceremonial differences – the theology of marriage differs greatly – and it is a difference worth pondering.

In the Orthodox wedding the couple is first “bethrothed” with the exchange of rings. Led into the center of the Church, the priest offers prayers. In the course of those prayers, in something of an “epiclesis” (the calling down of the Holy Spirit to accomplish a particular purpose – present in all the sacraments of the Church), the priest asks God to be present; to bless the marriage; to preserve their bed unassailed; to give them the dew of heaven; to fill their houses with every good thing; to send down heavenly grace to bless, preserve and remember the bride and groom; and just prior to the crowning:

Stretch out now also Thy hand from Thy holy dwelling place, and unite this Thy servant, N. and this Thy handmaiden, N.; for by Thee is the husband joined unto the wife. Unite them in one mind; wed them into one flesh, granting to them the fruit of the body and the procreation of fair children.

And then the priest crowns the couple (three times), saying each time: “Crown them with glory and honor!” (*see* Psalm 8:5)

In contrast, the marriage in the West finds its focus within the exchange of vows. “Do you...take this woman...to have and to hold, to love and to cherish...etc. as long as you both shall live?” I was taught, when I was an Anglican, that the “ministers” of the sacrament of marriage are the couple themselves. The priest witnesses, and prays for God’s blessing. This centerpiece of marriage in the West has been a subject of great creativity in the last number of decades. “Writing your own vows,” has been an essential undertaking for many couples (and probably the source of more than a little angst). I have seen examples of beauty and examples of triteness beyond description.

The role of vows in Western marriage is also bearing some very strange fruit. Our culture, following the logic of vows, views marriage as a contract between two people. Specific promises concerning performance (and non-performance) are offered. These details of the contract are “witnessed” (for that is the language of the license itself). A Church offers a blessing, but the essential nature of a civil ceremony and a religious ceremony are found only in music and the trappings, not in the ceremony itself. I have often wondered whether the state would declare Orthodox marriages to be null and void if it were to learn that there are no promises made or accepted. ...

However, there is no contract in an Orthodox marriage. A couple present themselves to God within the Church and it is there that the sacrament occurs. The power of God comes upon the lives of a man and a woman and unites them in one mind and weds them in one flesh. The sacrament is a union, not a contract. ... Crown them, O Lord, with glory and honor!

-- Priest Stephen Freeman

Also this week: Hieromartyr Athenogenes (July 16); Royal Passionbearers Tsar Nicholas, Tsaritsa Alexandra, Tsarevich Aleksey, Grand Duchesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia (July 17); Nun Martyrs Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Barbara (July 18); UNCOVERING OF THE RELICS OF VEN. SERAPHIM OF SAROV (July 19); HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET ELIJAH (July 20); *Prophet Ezekiel* (July 21).

*** Regular fasting this week; oil and wine allowed on Friday ***

Epistles: Romans 15:1-7 (Sunday) / Hebrews 13:7-16 (Fathers) / Galatians 1:11-19 (Saint)

Gospels: Matthew 9:27-35 (Sunday) / John 17:1-13 (Fathers) / John 10:1-9 (Saint)

Troparion – Tone 6 (Resurrection)

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; / The guards *became* as dead men. / Mary stood by Thy grave, / Seeking *Thy* most pure body. / Thou didst capture hell, / Not *being* tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. ///
O Lord, Who didst *rise* from the dead: glory to Thee!

Troparion – Tone 8 (Fathers)

Most glorious art *Thou*, O Christ our God! / Thou hast established the *Holy* Fathers as lights on the earth! / Through them Thou hast guided us to the True Faith! ///
O greatly-compassionate *One*, glory to Thee!

Troparion – Tone 4 (Saint)

O holy Prince Vladimir, / Thou wast like a merchant in search of fine pearls. / By sending servants to Constantinople for the Orthodox Faith, / Thou didst find Christ, the priceless pearl. / He appointed thee to be another Paul, / Washing away in baptism thy physical and spiritual blindness. / We celebrate thy memory, / Asking thee to pray for all Orthodox Christians of Russia ///
And for us, thy spiritual children.

Kontakion – Tone 6 (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, / Raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty Hand, / He bestowed resurrection on the human race. /// He is the *savior* of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Kontakion – Tone 8 (Fathers)

The apostles’ preaching and the father’s *doctrines* have established one Faith for the Church / Adorned with the robe of Truth, *woven* from heavenly theology, ///
It defines and glorifies the great *mystery* of Orthodoxy.

Kontakion – Tone 8 (Saint)

O most glorious Vladimir, *in* thine old age thou didst imitate the great apostle Paul: / He abandoned childish things, while thou didst forsake the idolatry of thy youth. / Together with him thou didst *reach* the fullness of divine wisdom / And through the grace of holy baptism thou wast adorned with purity. ///
Standing now before Christ our *Savior*, pray that all Orthodox Christians may be saved.