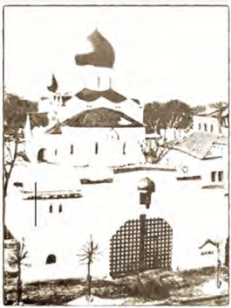


THE NEW WITNESS TO THE ANCIENT FAITH

A Newsletter of St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church

✠
JULY 2023



Glory to Jesus Christ!

This month, we celebrate St. Elizabeth's feast day with Archbishop Benjamin at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, July 16th. There will be a festal vigil on Saturday, July 15th. And we welcome our newest clergy member with the tonsuring of Jack Thompson as a reader before Liturgy on the 16th.

O God-wise Elizabeth, with humility thou didst hide thy nobility and honor Christ.

Especially by imitating the labors of Martha and Mary.

As a sacrifice to God, thou didst arm thyself with works of mercy, patience, and love.

Seeing thy life of good works and suffering, we sincerely beseech thee, our true teacher,

O Venerable Martyr, Grand Duchess Elizabeth, entreat Christ our God to enlighten and save our souls! ✠

Parish Life & Announcements

Preparations for Archbishop Benjamin's Visit

Archbishop Benjamin will be visiting our parish to celebrate St. Elizabeth's feast day with us. He will arrive and preside at Great Vespers on Saturday, July 15th and serve the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, July 16th. He is scheduled to tonsure Jack Thompson a reader just prior to the Liturgy.

You can read more about our bishop's visit in the attachment at the end of this newsletter, titled "When Our Bishop Visits." All members of Saint Elizabeth should plan to attend these services.

There are several tasks that will need to be completed to help us prepare for Archbishop Benjamin's visit, including flower arrangements, dressing the tables in our parish hall, dusting, and cleaning. A sign-up sheet is posted on the parish bulletin board. If you have any questions about these tasks, please contact Helenmae.

Later in the week, on Thursday, July 18th, we will serve the Divine Liturgy for our alter feast, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Western Wall Iconography & New Icons for Barrel Vault

We are in the process of solidifying plans with iconographer Brian Matthew Whirlledge for installation of our new western wall iconography of the Dormition of the Theotokos. Our plan is to have the new iconography installed prior to our celebration of the Dormition on August 15th.

We have also received a new bid from Brian Matthew Whirlledge for iconography in our barrel vault, which we will act on during the next year or so. An earlier possibility was to paint the Great Feasts in the barrel vault. The new plan is to line it with matching processions of saints (on the north and south

sides) culminating at the eastern end of the vault with a Deisis: Christ enthroned, flanked by the Theotokos and St. John the Baptist. The individual saint icons would be life-size—the same size as figures in our new eastern wall iconography of the Communion of the Apostles. An artist's sketch of this new iconography plan can be seen below.

Welcome to Our New Permanent Choir Director & New Director Stand Needed

We are happy to welcome Christine Adam as our new permanent choir director! We were blessed when she agreed to step in on a temporary basis after Kelsie left, and we are thrilled that she accepted a permanent position with our parish.

In addition, Christine is looking for someone who can build a larger—wider, longer and safer—director stand. If you think you can help, please speak to her after liturgy or email her at christine.pocock@gmail.com or christineadam.choirdirector@gmail.com.

Parish Camping Trip

Our parish camping trip to Dosewallips State Park is coming up, July 23rd through the 26th. If you would like to join us, there are still a few spots left. Most camp sites can hold up to eight people, so pitching a tent with someone who has already reserved a spot is a possibility as well.

Right now we have about 30 people signed up with spots reserved, including kids. If you are interested in joining us please contact Jamie Telegin at teleginj@gmail.com. If you would like to



Artist's sketch of new barrel vault iconography

join us for the day, that works too. Just stop by or let us know what day you plan to visit so we can plan ahead.

Men's Fellowship

The men's fellowship group is beginning a new book this month—*St. Saraphim of Sarov* by Valentine Zander. We meet this month at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 8th to discuss the first three chapters, and then again on July 22nd. From the SVS Press website:

Orthodox spirituality has produced many holy and famous men, but none in recent centuries to compare with St Seraphim, starets of the monastery of Sarov, in Russia. After an initial period as a monk working within the community, he became a hermit, living deep in the forests in a world of solitude which was destroyed only when he was attacked by brigands and returned to the community. In 1825, after fifteen years of living in silence, Seraphim began to receive visitors and to spend his energies for their spiritual direction. By means of his faith and asceticism he performed a number of miracles. His fame and humility brought to him for advice a steady stream of visitors, including religious and royalty. His humility and his concern for people made Sarov a center of pilgrimage until the events of the 1917 revolution.

If you are interested in attending and learning more about St. Saraphim with us, we'd love to have you! (We also usually enjoy a pretty good breakfast together.)

You can purchase *St. Saraphim of Sarov* by Valentine Zander from SVS Press ([here](#)) or from Amazon ([here](#)).

Women's Fellowship

The women's fellowship group is reading *Acquiring the Mind of Christ* by Archimandrite Sergius. Due to the July 4th holiday, we will be meeting this month on Tuesday, July 11th at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the chapter "Adam, the First Created Man." Please send Terri your questions or comments for this discussion. You can contact her at adkinsterri7@gmail.com.

Camp St. Sebastian

Several St. Elizabeth children just finished attending our deanery summer camp at All Saints Camp in Gig Harbor. Thank you to Dorian and Danielle for volunteering this year! Some photos of the fun can be seen below. Next year, we are told the camp would benefit from more men volunteering to be camp counselors (kayak experience a plus).



Photo Credit:
Danielle Craft

Suquamish Community Kitchen Dates

This month we will be serving another meal at the Suquamish Community Kitchen on July 12th. If you would like to join us, or make a dessert for the event, please let Jamie Telegin know. After July 12th, our next dates for serving at the Suquamish Community Kitchen will be September 13th and November 8th.

Plant Care Needed

Do you like to care for indoor plants? If so, would you be willing to nurse our peace lilies (in the nave) back to beauty? They are sorely in need of attention. It will take learning about how to care for them, time and commitment. Please contact Helenmae if you are willing to care for them.

Help Needed with Meal Teams

Our meal teams need your help. If you enjoy our Sunday meals together—and if you have not joined a meal team yet—please join one! Monthly meal contributions can be large or small, and every little bit helps. Email Joy at whitetigerofjoy@gmail.com or contact her at church to join a team.

Bookstore News

The bookstore ministry is an important and popular service for parish members and visitors. But currently, we are experiencing a twenty percent loss of inventory. Books are leaving our shelves with no payment or record of sale.

As a reminder, if you would like to purchase an item but need to pay later, you can place the item on the reserve shelf and pick it up when you are able to pay. But please do not remove the item from the bookstore without paying first.

In addition to paying, another very important step before removing items from the bookstore is to record your purchase on our inventory worksheet—with an accurate description of the items purchased, date, and amount paid (for icons, the descriptions are on the back). This enables us to remove these purchased items from our inventory.

Also, if there's something you'd like to have but can't afford, please speak to Fr. John, Sheryl or Nancy and a complimentary copy may be available. This will of course be kept anonymous.



"The Way to Christ" by Mikhail Vasilyevich Nesterov, c. 1910—refectory painting at St. Elizabeth's Martha and Mary Convent

Charity Sunday

July 2nd—After Liturgy we will be collecting for the St. Nicholas Uganda Children’s Fund. If you forget your checkbook on Charity Sunday, you can always make a donation later in the month. Just write “charity” in the memo line of your check.

Last month, parish donations to Kitsap Homes of Compassion totaled \$634.00. Thank you for your generous donations!

Recurring Dates

Wednesday Vespers & Orthodox Studies

Come pray with your fellow parishioners at vespers, Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.—and then stay after for a half-hour or so discussing interesting and important topics of our Orthodox faith. This is a particularly good time for introducing family members and acquaintances to the Church. Come with questions for Father John!

Choir Practice

The choir meets 30 minutes prior to each service to warm up and review the music of the day. The choir also meets a couple times a month for choir practice. This month, practices are scheduled for Sunday, July 9th (after Liturgy) and on Saturday, July 15th and 29th (at 4:00 p.m.).

If you have questions about choir or if you are interested in joining us, please email the choir director, Christine Adam, at christineadam.choirdirector@gmail.com.

Confessions

Father John is available for confessions every Saturday after vespers and by appointment. Email him at rector@stelizabethorthodox.org.

Classifieds

Free Bed, Coffee Maker, and Toaster

Mike and Sandy Wenberg are giving away a twin bed (newish mattress, box springs, metal frame), a Keurig coffee maker, and a Black & Decker toaster. The twin bed can be delivered, if needed. If you are interested, please contact Sandy or Mike Wenberg—sandywenberg@gmail.com.

Prayer List

Departed

ND Mark
ND Ruth

Living

Michael
Cheryl Magdalena
Allison Brigit
Jordyn CSB
Rd. Cornelius
Jeff Seraphim
Adrienne Elizabeth CSB
Carrie CSB
Cosette
Diane
Gabriel
Gary Olav
Samuel
Jim
Martin
Karen

ND: Newly Departed
CSB: Child She Bears

Miscellaneous

Newsletter Submissions

If you would like to submit any materials, announcements, classifieds, or requests for this monthly newsletter, please contact Bryan Telegin at bulletin@stelizabethorthodox.org.

Contact Us

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July 2023

Daily Readings

7/1	Rom 6:11-17	Mt 8:14-23
7/2	Rom 6:18-23	Mt 8:5-13
7/3	Rom 12:4-5, 15-21	Mt 12:9-13
7/4	Rom 14:9-18	Mt 12:14-16, 22-30
7/5	Rom 15:7-16	Mt 12:38-45
7/6	Rom 15:17-29	Mt 12:46-13:3
7/7	Rom 16:1-16	Mt 13:4-9
7/8	Rom 8:14-21	Mt 9:9-13
7/9	Rom 10:1-10	Mt 8:28-9:1
7/10	Rom 16:17-24	Mt 13:10-23
7/11	1 Cor 1:1-9	Mt 13:24-30
7/12	1 Cor 2:9-3:8	Mt 13:31-36
7/13	1 Cor 3:18-23	Mt 13:36-43
7/14	1 Cor 4:5-8	Mt 13:44-54
7/15	Rom 9:1-5	Mt 9:18-26
7/16	Rom 12:6-14	Mt 9:1-8
7/17	1 Cor 5:9-6:11	Mt 13:54-58
7/18	1 Cor 6:20-7:12	Mt 14:1-13
7/19	1 Cor 7:12-24	Mt 14:35-15:11
7/20	1 Cor 7:24-35	Mt 15:12-21
7/21	1 Cor 7:35-8:7	Mt 15:29-31
7/22	Rom 12:1-3	Mt 10:37-11:1
7/23	Rom 15:1-7	Mt 9:27-35
7/24	1 Cor 9:13-18	Mt 16:1-6
7/25	1 Cor 10:5-12	Mt 16:6-12
7/26	1 Cor 10:12-22	Mt 16:20-24
7/27	1 Cor 10:28-11:7	Mt 16:24-28
7/28	1 Cor 11:8-22	Mt 17:10-18
7/29	Rom 13:1-10	Mt 12:30-37
7/30	1 Cor 1:10-18	Mt 14:14-22
7/31	1 Cor 11:31-12:6	Mt 18:1-11

Sundays in red

<https://www.oca.org/readings/monthly/2023/07>

When Our Bishop Visits

Our bishop, the Most Reverend BENJAMIN, will be visiting our parish July 15 and 16. He will preside at the services of Great Vespers Saturday evening and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Sunday morning. All members of our parish should plan to attend both services. Punctual arrival before the Liturgy is especially important, as the bishop arrives at the door at 10:00, and everyone should be assembled inside the temple to greet him. After his ceremonial vesting in the nave, he will then tonsure our parishioner Jackson Fyodor Thompson a reader.

Below, you will find information that will help you prepare for and fully participate in these services.

The Bishop's Arrival

Archbishop Benjamin will arrive shortly before the beginning of Vespers at 6:00 Saturday evening. As the ruling hierarch of the Diocese of the West of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), he will be coming to his own church, and we should remember that we will therefore be greeting him not as a guest but as our archpastor. This will be apparent when he enters the temple. He will put on the garment known as the *mantiya*, which is characterized by horizontal ribbons symbolizing the rivers of apostolic teaching that he, as a successor to the Apostles, has been ordained by the Holy Spirit to preserve unchanged (cf. Acts 2:42).

Father John will ask for the bishop's blessing the same way a layperson would ask for the blessing of a priest. Laypeople also, at some point during his visit (the most convenient time to do so is after the services), should not hesitate to approach Vladyka Benjamin and to ask for his hierarchical blessing. To do so, one should lower the right hand to the floor (without making the sign of the cross) and then place it palm upward on top of the left, asking for a blessing. The customary formula for this is "bless, Master." Also, when speaking to an archbishop, the customary form of address instead of "you" is "Your Eminence." However, you will find that our bishop is a very warm man, and there is no cause to be preoccupied or embarrassed by the ancient customs of address that we as American Orthodox have received from centuries of cultural traditions outside our own.

It should be remembered that neither Fr. John nor any other priest should normally be asked for a blessing when a bishop is present, as the bishop, surrounded by the assembly of the clergy and the faithful, is himself the visible symbol of the fullness of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Saint Ignatius of Antioch (d. 110), for instance, in the earliest record of the use of the

expression “the catholic Church,” declared that “where the bishop is to be seen, there let all his people be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is present, we have the catholic Church” (*Smyrnaeans*, 8).

As the bishop proceeds toward the Altar, the Royal Gates will be opened (bishops generally enter and exit only through the Royal Gates, even when there is no service in progress). Upon entering the Altar, he will inspect the *antimension* (the cloth icon of the Lord’s burial on which the gifts are placed and which bears the signature of the hierarch authorizing the priest of our temple to celebrate the Divine Liturgy) and the parish metrical book (in which is recorded all baptisms, chrismations, marriages, and funerals).

Great Vespers

During Great Vespers, a bishop customarily sits in the Altar unvested while the priest and (if there is one) deacon serve. Take note, though, that at all points in which a blessing is given, it is the bishop who gives it and not the priest, who merely bows in the direction of the people. This reminds us that it is Jesus Christ who issues blessings in the Orthodox Church, as the bishop is the symbol of his presence among us. And it should be remembered that whether a bishop or a priest give a blessing, they do so by forming their fingers into the Greek letters abbreviating the name of Jesus Christ (ICXC, or *Iisous Khristos*).

Greeting the Bishop

Sunday morning by about 9:45 AM, we should be assembled in the temple to greet the bishop for the Divine Liturgy. There is a wonderful sense of anticipation as we do this, for he comes to us to lead us in the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, one of the most glorious and beautiful services we know. Altar servers will accompany him to the front of the church where he will be met by the parish rector Fr. John and any other clergy who happen to be in attendance. This year, we have three deacons and three subdeacons from other parishes scheduled to serve. As he approaches, the choir will begin to sing a special hymn. Upon entering the temple, Fr. John will present the blessing cross. He will venerate it, offer it to Fr. John for veneration, and then proceed to the iconostasis for the entrance prayers. As he does so, a deacon will proclaim “Wisdom!” and the choir will begin to sing a hymn to the Theotokos. At the completion of his entrance prayers, the bishop will turn toward the assembly of the faithful as the choir sings an acclamation known in Greek as *Ton Despotin*:

Ton Despotin, kai Arkhierea imon, Kyrie fillate, eis polla eti, Despota (O Master and Lord, preserve our Lord and High Priest for many years).

The Vesting

After giving his hierarchical blessing, the bishop will return to the center of the church, called the nave, where he will ascend a low platform called the *cathedra*, to begin vesting. Again, the deacon initiates the prayers and hymns that accompany this solemn prelude to the Liturgy. The second of the two hymns, the text of which (taken directly from Isaiah 61:10) is read by all bishops and priests while vesting, is particularly beautiful:

Thy soul shall rejoice in the Lord, for he clothed thee with the garment of salvation, and he hath vested thee with the vesture of gladness. As a bridegroom he hath set a crown on thee, and as a bride he hath adorned thee with ornament.

As this is sung, the deacons stand opposite the bishop on the *ambo* (the area in front of the Royal Gates that in a permanent temple is usually higher than the floor of the nave itself) and cense him solemnly. This is a very special moment in the liturgical experience of the Orthodox Church. As the faithful stand around their archpastor, he is vested by the clergy to perform his highest responsibility within the Church.

The vestments that the subdeacons place on him are symbolic of his office, and call to mind the priestly vestments of Aaron described in the Old Testament (cf. Sirach, 45:6-16). But as in Christ the Levitical priesthood has passed away, the vestments of the Christian priest now represent an image of our “Great High Priest” Jesus Christ himself (Heb. 4:14). Among these is the episcopal great *omophorion*, the long, broad garment wrapped around the bishop’s shoulders. This symbolizes the lost sheep that the Good Shepherd, our Lord, travels high and low to seek out and lead back to the safety of the sheepfold, the Church (John 10). A small, circular rug with an image of an eagle flying over a city is placed on the *cathedra* and other places the bishop stands, indicating that he has been placed over the city and diocese he rules as its vigilant protector. As the vesting concludes, the bishop is given two candle holders called the *trikiriy* and *dikiriy* (those used at our church were actually designed and made by our parishioners), with which to bless the faithful during the singing of *Ton Despotin* yet again. The *trikiriy* with its three candles symbolizes the Holy Trinity, and the *dikiriy* with its two candles symbolizes the two natures of Christ.

The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

The order of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy manifests the glory of the Church’s worship like no other service. Much of it was arranged in the context of worship within the great temple of Hagia Sophia in ancient Constantinople. Even though our modest temple is not Hagia Sophia, the service, when approached in a prayerful and prepared manner, is profoundly beautiful.

Among the many unique features of the hierarchical order is the fact that the first part of the Liturgy has the bishop standing in the middle of the nave. This makes the so-called little entrance, which follows the singing of the Beatitudes, a true “entrance” into the Altar. It is a really marvelous thing to watch all of the clergy and altar servers assemble around the bishop for this event, and then begin singing “O Come Let Us Worship.” The people allow the clergy to begin this hymn of entrance, and then take it up themselves as the procession into the Altar begins. At the great entrance, too, all of the clergy and servers come out and make a solemn entrance into the Altar. Many other features unique to the hierarchical order will be noted, especially as in the presence of the hierarch the Royal Gates are not closed and all of the liturgical actions of the clergy will therefore be visible. Be sure to stand in the middle of the nave if possible to behold it all.

At the very end of the Liturgy, we will sing many years for our Metropolitan Tikhon, our Archbishop Benjamin, and the entire Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America. After a word of greeting from Fr. John and any other words Vladyka Benjamin may want to add, we will approach to venerate the cross as usual. Then, as the bishop withdraws into the Altar to unvest, the choir will sing an elongated setting of *Eis Polla Eti Despota*. With this, the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy is completed.

Our Festal Meal and the Bishop’s Departure

Be sure to make time to stay after the Liturgy for a festal meal with the archbishop. He will be placed at the head of our clergy dining table. Be sure to stop by before you leave for his blessing and the opportunity to introduce or reintroduce yourself.

After leaving us later in the day, Vladyka Benjamin will be returning to his city of San Francisco. But, God willing, we will see him again next year, if not sooner. Be sure not to miss out on this special opportunity to experience the fullness of our Orthodox Church life!