

The Diocese of the West
The Orthodox Church in America

10825 Robinwood Lane*
Sonora, CA 95370 U.S.A.
209-536-0701

St. Susanna Orthodox Church

July 2009

www.stsusanna.com



Pastor:

Fr. Andrew Jacobs
(209) 984-4595

Deacon Elias Union
(209) 532-7899

Natalie Teshin
(209) 536-1495

From your youth you received Christ into your soul, O venerable one, / and above all desired to leave behind the turmoil of the world. / You courageously settled in the wilderness, where you raised children in obedience, the fruits of humility. / Thus, as an abode of the Trinity, you enlightened all who approached in faith and granted healing to all. // Our Father Sergius, pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.

—Tone 8 Troparion of St. Sergius of Radonezh (July 5)

Fort Ross Celebration on July 4 with our Metropolitan and Our Bishop

On July 4, at 10:00 a.m., a Divine Liturgy and procession will be led by His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah and His Grace Bishop Benjamin at historic Fort Ross. This is an honorable and wonderful yearly event in the Diocese of the West, commemorating not only our infancy as a nation, but also the long tradition of salvific Orthodox presence in “the lower 48.” Fort Ross is located on the Pacific Coast in Sonoma County, CA, on Highway 1, north of the town of Jenner at the mouth of the Russian River (about 2 hours north of San Francisco).

About Fort Ross

In 1812, the Russian-American Company established an outpost on the site of what became Fort Ross and established a colony of Russians and Aleuts to produce food that could not be grown in Alaska for the Russian Alaskan colony, and to hunt for sea otter pelts along the coast of California. The fort was built as a protective stockade enclosing the huts the colony would live in. Arrangements had been made with the Pomo Indians, native to the region, to allow for the Russian and Aleut presence there. On September 10, 1812, the main construction was complete, and a reader’s service was held to call down God’s grace upon the effort. Eventually, the

colony grew to include more than 260 Russians, Aleuts, Creoles (of Russian-Aleut ancestry) and natives of the area, who all worked more or less in harmony. This harmonious intercultural synergy is attributed to the Orthodox ethos that the visitors from Alaska brought with them. The colony forged farming implements (which came to be in demand by the Spanish and Mexicans to the south), built ships and boats, tanned hides, grew crops and bred cattle.

In the 1825, the colonists completed a chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, with help from the officers and crews of three Russian Navy ships who donated a considerable sum of money toward the construction. Mainly, Orthodox reader services were held there, although, through the years, a few priests visited and held services there, including Fr. John Veniaminov, who would become Bishop of Alaska, and Metropolitan of Moscow, and who is known to us today as St. Innocent, Enlightener of North America. In 1836, he spent three months at Fort Ross, making sojourns from there to visit the Spanish missions of San Raphael, San Jose, Santa Clara, and San Francisco. At the time of his visit, 15 percent of the local Indian population working in the colony were baptized into Orthodoxy.

Eventually, food for Alaska became available, from settlements in Oregon managed by the Hudson’s Bay Company in the 1830s. In 1841, the Russian-American Company sold

*Corner of Jamestown Rd.
& Robinwood Ln.
(2 blocks north of
Racetrack Rd.)

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the physical plant to Captain Johann Augustus Sutter, and the last colonists left for Alaska on January 1, 1842.

Various owners bought and sold the property until 1903, when the two-and one-half acres of the Fort and its building was sold to the California Historical Landmarks League. In 1906, the property passed into the hands of the State of California when the disastrous San Andreas fault earthquake severely damaged the buildings. Restoration of the Fort and the Chapel by the state took several years, and the property itself, as a historical landmark was increased to 3277 acres (as of 1992). Eventually, the California Parks and Recreation Department took over maintenance and jurisdiction of the fort.

The Orthodox Church in America (recognized as the successor to the Russian Orthodox mission in Alaska) is, in a sense, the spiritual keeper of Fort Ross. The chapel is now named the Holy Trinity Chapel, and Orthodox services are held there on July 4 and on Memorial Day, every year since 1925—and are traditionally led by the Diocesan Bishop.

St. Gabriel Mission Patronal Feast Day Celebration

On Sunday July 12, St. Gabriel Antiochian Mission in Angels Camp is having their Patronal Feast Day celebration. We are all invited. Divine Liturgy is at 10:00 a.m., and the festal picnic at White Pines Lake in Arnold is at 4:00 p.m. The directions are: left off Hwy. 4 onto Blagen Road to White Pines Lake. Get there early—there will be swimming, canoeing, fishing, volleyball and lots of fun. The flier will be on our dining hall bulletin board.

In August

On August 1, we begin the Dormition Fast, which lasts for 14 days, ending on August 14, and on the 15th, the great feast of the Dormition of the Most-holy Theotokos takes place. Within the Dormition Fast is the great Feast of Our Lord, the Transfiguration, on Thursday, August 6.

These feasts are interconnected because they both speak of our resurrection at the Second Coming. The

tradition is that after the Apostle Thomas came late for the funeral of Christ's Mother from his ministries in India, and upon appealing to the other Apostles that the tomb be opened so that he could honor this blessed woman who had supported the Apostles by her faith and service, and by giving birth to Christ Himself, the tomb was indeed opened—and her body was not there.

While some take this as meaning that the Church feels she was equal with Christ, and is a sort of "fourth member of the Trinity," that is not the Orthodox understanding. Orthodoxy teaches that the Theotokos was the first among saints, having given birth to God in human form. Many miracles were worked through her actions, and she and the other Myrrhbearers did handmaid service for Christ and the Apostles. However, she is not a goddess. rather, her bodily assumption is seen as yet one more testimony to God's promise to all the faithful who successfully run the rugged marathon of faith in this world: like Christ, and like the Theotokos, we will be resurrected bodily, and taken up to meet our eternal reward. (Indeed, all mankind will be resurrected—but some to a resurrection of damnation, and horrifyingly, by their own choice!)

So, too, the Transfiguration is a glimpse of the glory God has reserved for His faithful at the Second Coming: even our bodies—this skin, muscle, nerves and bones—will be transfigured into such astonishing brightness and eternal life that we will actually appear as we were meant to be. Even so, neither of these is at the center of the reward. The reward will be an eternal state of fulfilled relationship with God—the saints will fulfill, finally, all that God has willed for us to be—members of His household, filled with righteous love, the power of life, the understanding of true justice, and the revelation of having arrived at last in our rightful place. We will be "home" as never before.

All blessings in Christ,

Fr. Andrew

Liturgical Schedule for July, 2009

Note: The Bible Study featuring the Commentary of St. John Chrysostom will take place every Saturday at 4:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Note: On Saturday, July 4, the annual Divine Liturgy and Procession at Fort Ross will take place with Metropolitan Jonah and Bishop Benjamin. Services begin at 10:00 a.m.

Sat., July 4 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers

Sun., July 5 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—Romans 6:18–23 and Matthew 8:5–13
Note: The Parish Council Meeting will take place after Divine Liturgy.

Sat., July 11 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers

Sun., July 12 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—Romans 10:1–10 and Matthew 8:28–9:1
Note: A potluck luncheon will take place after Divine Liturgy.
St. Gabriel Mission Patronal Feast Day Celebration also takes place on the 12th @ 4:00 pm

Sat., July 18 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers **for the Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils**

Sun., July 19 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy **for the Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils**
Scripture Readings—Romans 12:6–14 and Matthew 9:1–8

Sat., July 25 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers

Sun., July 26 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—Romans 15:1–7 and Matthew 9:9:27–35
Note: A potluck luncheon will take place after Divine Liturgy.

August

Sat., August 1 **Dormition Fast Begins (Also, Lesser Feast of the Procession of the Holy Cross)**
6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers

Sun., August 2 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—1 Corinthians 1:10–18 and Matthew 14:14–22
Note: The Parish Council Meeting will take place after Divine Liturgy.

Tue., August 5 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers w/ Litya for **The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

Thu., August 6 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Transfiguration of Our Lord**
Scripture Readings—2 Peter 1:10–19 and Matthew 17:1–9

Sat., August 8 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers

Sun., August 9 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—1 Corinthians 3:9-17 and Matthew 14:22-34
Note: A potluck luncheon will take place after Divine Liturgy.

Fri., August 14 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers w/Litya for **The Dormition of the Most-holy Theotokos and End of the Dormition Fast**

Sat., August 15 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Dormition of the Most-holy Theotokos**
Scripture Readings—Romans 15:30-33 and Matthew 17:24-18:4
6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers

Sun., August 16 9:00 a.m.—**Divine Liturgy and Blessing for Children Beginning a new School Year**
Scripture Readings—1 Corinthians 4:9–16 and Matthew 17:14–23

Prayer List

PLEASE JOIN US IN GIVING THANKS TO GOD:

- For the skill and devotion of those beautifying our temple and gardens.
- For the beauty of the Mother Lode, and for the privilege we have been given to live here.
- That the Holy Mother of Jesus continues to care for the unborn.
- That many of our petitions are being answered.
- For Nadine's on-going successful therapy.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR GOD'S HELP:

- "St. John, please intercede for us before God for the membership growth of St. Susanna."
- That St. Susanna Mission may receive a Church Planting Grant.
- For repose of the souls of our service men and women who have given their lives for the people of foreign lands.
- To safeguard all the troops who remain in heathen lands.
- To help us forgive the heathen fanatics who continue to murder our soldiers and their own citizens and children.
- That many may come to Orthodoxy through our witness and example.
- To bless our monasteries and the men and women who dwell in them.
- For the well-being of Matushka Anna and her family.
- For health and welfare for Ann, Fr. John, and Elisa.
- For Natasha's success in securing a permanent art teaching position.
- For the healing and comfort for Donna and Ann.
- For health for Shay.

To ask us to pray for you, your family or friends, please call Alex Teshin at 209-536-9999.

MANY YEARS

Birthdays:

Christina Teshin	July 2
Larissa Worth	July 18
Marita Sevick	July 28

Namesdays:

Dn. Elias Union	July 20
Christina Teshin	July 24
Jeanne Harmer	July 25
Alisa Jacobs	July 25

Anniversaries:

Fr. Andrew & Mat. Elizabeth Jacobs	July 2
Nick & Larissa Worth	July 3

St. Susanna Cleaning Team Schedule

*Blessed are those who love the beauty
of God's house*

Team 2—July 18th; 9:00 a.m.