



# Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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## ***Today's Scripture Readings:***

*Epistle:* Acts 20:16-18; 28-36

*Gospel:* St. John 17:1-13

*Welcome to ALL our visitors and guests this morning, in person or  
on the Parish website live stream!*

## **Services, Events & Announcements**

**\*\*Services are being streamed live on our website  
homepage & Facebook page\*\***

**Great Vespers – Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup> @ 5pm**

**Feast of Pentecost / Divine Liturgy – Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup> @ 10am  
(Hours @ 9:40) Kneeling Vespers following.**

### **Our Giving – May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Tithes/Offerings - \$735.00**

**Candle Offerings – \$115.00**

**Memorial Gift - \$200.00**

*From Your Pastor . . .*

*As many of you know, the doors of the Church are open! We are having Services, open to whoever will come, but we have a limit of 25 per Service. Please visit our Parish website and read all about the Reopening Plan!! Glory Be to God!*

*Thank you everyone for your patience and support during the past few months. It has been hard and difficult for us all, but now, we can FINALLY gather and see each other!!*

*Memory Eternal to Joe Barnes who reposed on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 4 days after his 67<sup>th</sup> birthday. May his soul dwell with the blessed.*

*With Love and God's Blessing,*

**+ Fr. Seraphim**

### ***The Authority of the Bishop***

The bishop is always the head of his diocese, and no Orthodox priest should ever dare to presume to serve within the diocese without the blessing of his bishop. A priest must always seek the blessing of his bishop before serving in any capacity within the diocese. This includes celebrating the Divine Liturgy in a parish other than his own, unless first getting the blessing of the bishop. If a priest is asked to concelebrate in a parish or monastery within the canonical boundary of another diocese, or in a jurisdiction other than his own, he must first seek the blessing of not only his own bishop, but the blessing of the bishop who rules over the other diocese.

It is also imperative for good Church order that a priest hear the confession of a visitor only if the penitent has first received a blessing from their own priest to have him hear their confession. This preserves the integrity of the Mystery of Confession, protecting the penitent from hiding sins their own priest is aware of, and thus receiving the Holy Mysteries unworthily.

Even outside the Orthodox Church there is a hard and fast rule governing the service of Police and Fire Chaplains. A chaplain must never self-deploy, no matter the circumstances. There are many times I've wanted to offer my assistance and council, but unless I've been called by the lead officer or firefighter, I cannot assume the right to enter into a scene. Chaplains are not even permitted to openly say a prayer for someone without first receiving the person's permission.

None of this is always easy, for many of we priests serve the Church in ministry because we love people. I am reminded of the time I was asked to host a dinner put on by my dear friends, Nick and Nadine Buick. The Consul General of the Russian Federation and his wife had invited me to dinner in their home in San Francisco. Nadine thought it would be good for me, in turn, to host them in the Buick's home. Following the meal, we walked the Consul General and his wife to their car, parked out in front of the Buick's home. When I noticed that neither of them was putting on their seatbelts, I called their attention to a law that required them to do so. When Vladimir pointed out that they had diplomatic plates on their car, and therefore did not have to follow the law, I pulled out my sheriff's chaplain's badge, and stood in front of their vehicle, letting them know I would not move until I saw those seatbelts around them.

Not five minutes later, Nadine received a call from Tatiana, informing us they'd just been broadsided at a nearby intersection by two young men who'd run a red light. We immediately drove to the site, and getting out of Nadine's car, I held my badge in the air as I walked across the street. When I arrived at the accident scene, I asked to speak to the officer in charge, telling him that I was aware a chaplain must never self-deploy, but that I'd just had dinner with

the couple, and wanted to offer my assistance. I was informed by the lead medic that Tatiana would likely not have survived the impact, had she not been wearing the seatbelt. Early the next morning I received two text messages on my phone, one from the police lieutenant, and another from the ranking firefighter, both thanking me for stepping up as “a San Francisco Police and Fire Chaplain”.

There is always room for a priest to follow his heart, for bottom line, we must be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. Love and charity must always be front and center in priestly ministry. I must also confess that we priests are only human, and too often we make decisions that we live to regret. We, like all Christians, must be prepared to ask for forgiveness, both from the Lord, and those whom we've failed. I am grieved when recounting the number of times I've failed in my priestly ministry, and can only resolve to learn from past mistakes, and not repeat them.

Finally, we priests must never forget the power of prayer, knowing God does not need us to do formal liturgical prayers over someone, as though they'd be deprived of the help they need without them. When driving past an auto accident, or seeing someone in distress, we must never assume our prayers are not of value. The Lord hears our prayers, and our intercessory prayers for someone in need will be heard by the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is always quick to come to the aid of those in need. If I as a priest keep my focus on Christ, I may even become a true servant of the Lord, and perhaps even become a good priest.

*With Love in Christ,*

*Abbot Tryphon*

*All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA.*