

THE APOSTLE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2014

SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF IRVINE

Christ is Risen!! Truly He is Risen

Pastor's Column

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Rev Fr. Patrick Irish, Attached
Rev. Protodeacon George Moubayed
Sub-deacon: Athanasius Fakhouri
Choir Director: Barbara Scholl
Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Theresa Joubran, Karim Youssef, & Mark Ellis
Church Office Administrator: Lydia Wakileh

2014-2015 PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman {15} Penny Skaff (949)713-7411
Vice Chairman {14} Patrick Wilde (949) 330-9819
Secretary & Assistant Treasurer {16} Richard Jirjis (949) 552-7424
Issa Bahbah {15} Treasurer (714) 685-8841
Michael Khoury {14} (714)373-1225
Nelson Mamey {15} (949) 673-7400
Roger Tierney {14} Humanitarian (949) 699-2413
Fouad Tarazi {16} (949) 276-2923
Kyra Pelachik {16} (714) 906-9231
Afifa Artoul {16} (949) 215-2305

[Number in brackets is the member's last year of his or her current term]

Church School Director: Eileen Ellis (949) 458-1604
Men's Club President: Maurice Karkar (949) 586-2560
Ladies Guild Co-Presidents: Vera Bahbah (714) 277-5709 & Afifa Artoul (949) 215-2305
Teen SOYO President: Leilah Rodriguez (949) 470-9876

Christ is Risen!

Beginning on Pascha (April 20th, this year) for forty days we proclaim the Paschal greeting: Christ is Risen! The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is the cornerstone of our Christian Faith. If there is no resurrection, then there is no basis for the Faith. We say that Christ has "trampled down death by death," yet we are all too aware that there continues to be sin, tragedy, injustice, hypocrisy, betrayal and illness, war, murder and the like. How, then, is death overcome in the Resurrection? In this way: death is no longer the end of our hopes and aspirations, rather it is a passage (albeit a difficult one) to life in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus, being both God and man, broke down the dividing wall between humanity and God, making it possible for us to once again have communion with God, as did Adam and Eve before the Fall. This communion is made possible by our Lord's Pascha, that is to say by His Death on the Cross, and third day Resurrection.

The fact that the Crucifixion is inseparable from the Resurrection is most important. When Jesus comes again in glory, the end of earthly suffering and death will come, but in the meantime, Christ tells us that in order to be his disciples; we also must carry a cross. This means that we must expect to have to live with the consequences of sin (ours and others') and of the brokenness of this fallen world, just as Christ did, and to join our sufferings with His in order to share in his glory!

Along the way God does not leave us "on our own," but grants us strength and comfort to continue on the way. Indeed, in his merciful love, he grants us participation in the Kingdom to come even in this

life (Holy Communion is the best, but not the only example of this).

So my dear ones, let us not be overwhelmed by the news of evil which we see and hear all of the time. Imitating Christian believers throughout the centuries, let us remain people of hope. As such we must work for more justice, more peace, more good in the world, anticipating the day when Christ returns and "God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:3, 4)

In this hope, in this the light that shines from the Empty Tomb, let us rejoice!

Truly He is Risen!

Fr. Michael

SPECIAL SERVICES/EVENTS IN MAY 2014

Sunday May 11, Thomas Sunday and Mother's Day – Luncheon sponsored by Men's Club

Saturday May 17, Mother/Daughter Tea (see flyer for details)

May 25, Last Day of Church School instruction

Wednesday May 28, Evening Liturgy, Feast of Ascension, 6:30 p.m.

Advanced Calendar of Services & Events in June

June 1, Church School Awards, Presentation, Picnic

June 8, Feast of Pentecost

June 15, Father's Day Luncheon sponsored by Ladies Guild

June 29, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul

Archbishop Joseph's Schedule

May 3-4, 2014

St. John the Baptist Church, Post Falls, ID

Episcopal Visit

May 8-12, 2014

St. Philip Church, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Episcopal Visit

May 16-18, 2014

St. Anthony Church, San Diego, CA

Episcopal Visit

WEEKLY SERVICES

Wednesday Vespers 6:30 p.m.

Sunday Orthros 8:45 a.m. Confessions heard from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Construction has begun at St. Mark's

Due to hall rentals, no Saturday Vespers will be held at St. Mark. Unless otherwise announced, we will celebrate Saturday Vespers with Holy Nativity of the Theotokos Serbian Orthodox Church (2148 Michelson Drive, Suite 1, Irvine) at 5:00 p.m. Some special services may be at other churches.

Selected Saints of the Month

May 3

THE HOLY MARTYRS TIMOTHY AND MAURA

The fate of these two wonderful martyrs, husband and wife, is amazing! Because of their Christian Faith and only twenty days following their marriage, they were brought to court before Arrianus, the governor of the baid, during the reign of Diocletian. Timothy was a lector in his local church. The governor questioned him: "Who are you?" To that Timothy responded: "I am a Christian and a lector of God's Church." The governor further said to him: "Do you not see these instruments prepared for torture surrounding you?" Timothy replied: "And, do you not see all the angels of God who strengthen me?" Then the governor ordered an iron rod be pierced through his ears so that the pupils of his eyes protruded from pain. After that, they hung him upside down and placed a piece of wood in his mouth. At first, Maura was frightened because of Timothy's sufferings, but when her husband encouraged her, she also confessed her

steadfast faith before the governor. The governor then ordered all the hairs of her head pulled out and after that severed the fingers from her hands. After many other tortures, from which they would have succumbed had not the Grace of God strengthened them, they were both crucified facing each other. Thus, hanging on the cross, they lived for nine days counselling and encouraging each other in perseverance. On the tenth day, they gave up their souls to their Lord for Whom they endured death on a cross and so were made worthy of His kingdom. They suffered honorably for Christ in the year 286 A.D.

May 14

THE HOLY MARTYR ISIDORE

During the reign of Decius, Isidore was drafted by force from the island of Chios into military service. From childhood, Isidore adhered to the Faith of Christ and spent his entire life in fasting, prayer and good works. But when in the army Isidore declared himself a Christian, the commander seized him, required of him an answer and counselled him to deny Christ and offer sacrifices to the idols. The saint replied: "Even if you kill my body, you have no authority over my soul. I possess the True, Living God, Jesus Christ Who now lives in me and after my death, He will be with me and I am in Him and will remain in Him and I will never cease to confess His Holy Name as long as my soul is in my body." First, the commander ordered that Isidore be whipped with oxen tails and after that they cut out his tongue. Even without his tongue, Isidore, by the Spirit of God, spoke and confessed the Name of Christ. Meanwhile, the punishment of God came upon the commander and he, suddenly, became mute. Finally, the mute commander gave the sign to behead Isidore. Isidore was elated at this sentence and after praising God went to the scaffold where he was beheaded in the year 251 A.D. His companion, Ammon buried his body and following that also suffered and received the martyr's wreath.

May 23

ST. MICHAEL, BISHOP OF SYNNADA

Michael, this holy and learned hierarch, dedicated himself to the service of Christ from early childhood. Together with St. Theophylact of Nicomedia, he lived a life of asceticism. At one

time during a period of drought, these two saints, by their prayers, brought forth abundant rain on the earth. Because of his ascetical and chaste life from his early youth, he was chosen and consecrated bishop of Synnada by Patriarch Tarasius. He participated in the Seventh Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 783 A.D.]. At the request of the emperor, he went to Caliph Harun-al-Rashid to conduct negotiations for peace. During the reign of the nefarious Leo the Armenian, Michael was removed from his episcopal throne because of his veneration of icons and was banished into exile, where in misery and poverty and, remaining faithful to Orthodoxy, died in the year 818 A.D. and took up habitation in the kingdom of Christ the King.

May 31

THE HOLY APOSTLE HERMAS

Hermas was one of the Seventy Apostles. He is mentioned in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. "Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes and the brethren which are with them" (Romans 16:14). Hermas was a Greek by birth but lived in Rome for a long time. He was a bishop in Philippoupolis and ended his life as a martyr. He compiled a very instructive book called "The Shepherd" according to revelations from an angel of God. Hermas was a wealthy man but because of his sins and the sins of his sons, he fell into extreme poverty. Once while in prayer, a man appeared to him in white raiment with a staff in his hand and told him that he is an angel of repentance who was sent to be with him until the end of his life. The angel gave him twelve mandates:

1. Believe in God;
2. To live in simplicity and innocence; do not speak evil and give alms to all who beg;
3. Love truth and avoid falsehood;
4. Preserve chastity in your thoughts;
5. Learn patience and generosity;
6. To know that with every man, there is a good and an evil spirit;
7. To fear God and not to fear the devil;
8. To do every good and to refrain from every evil deed;
9. To pray to God from the depth of the soul with faith that our prayer will be fulfilled;
10. To guard against melancholy as the sister of doubt and anger;

11. To question true and false prophecies;
12. To guard against every evil desire.

Memory Eternal

Genevieve Saba mother of Rima Tarazi, passed away from this life on April 17th. Her Trisagion and Funeral were at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, and the burial at El Toro memorial park, Followed by the meal of mercy at The Hills hotel in Laguna Hills.

May her Memory be Eternal!

Parish & Organizations News

Ladies Guild

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

During April the Ladies of St. Mark Sponsored Pre-Spinach Pies Bake Sale to provide the parishioners with some Lenten food, and another Bake Sale that included Kaae'k and Baklava took Place on Palm Sunday!

The Pascha Night Breakfast was organized by the ladies! Many thanks and appreciation for all of the Parishioners who donated money OR food this breakfast.

In May we are planning for the Mother Daughter and Ladies Afternoon Tea Party, the date is set to the Saturday, May 17, 2014 in the church Hall, all of the ladies are encouraged to be part of this special time.

Your input is very important to us, please plan to attend the monthly meeting and share your ideas with the ladies.

Next meeting will be on Thursday May 29, 2014 and we will be getting ready to finalize the year activities.

Vera Bahbah,

Ladies Guild President

Men's Club

The Men's Club assisted with many of the services during Pascha in the form of ushering and security in the month of April. A special thanks should go to Mike Asalay and Randy Dabbah

The Men's Club will be hosting the Mother's Day lunch in May 11th.

Don Skaff

Men's club secretary

Teen SOYO

The Teens had a Volley ball game at St. Lukes in March and they helped in FOCUS Feeding.

They participated in St. Luke's Hunger Strike from April 5-6 and held the Friday Night Vigil on April 18th.

George Bahbah

Teen's Secretary

June Anter 5/20

Justine Bahbah 5/18

Ghassan Bahou 5/4

Ruth Conn 5/30

Maha Daher 5/25

Scott Daruty 5/19

May Dabbah 5/27

Natalie Debbas 5/9

Mirna Debbas 5/29

George Debbas 5/18

Omar Fakhouri 5/2

Sammi Faraj 5/15

Noah Fortuna 5/4

Josie Goson 5/28

Tania Habeeb 5/21

Paul Habeeb 5/22

Sahar Hanna 5/25

Cassidy Hilmar 5/31

Vera Jirjis 5/13

Michael Joellson 5/16

Bachir Kassir 5/30

Alexander Kashou 5/5

Michael Khoury 5/5

Maysoon Khoury 5/10

Kandy Kort 5/4

Elizabeth Kort 5/4

Emilie Laffoon 5/27

Nelson Mamey 5/29

Alexander Mokbel 5/31

George Richard 5/22

Sophia Richard 5/22

Muna Rizkallah 5/1

Ramez Sayegh 5/20

Natalia Soury 5/14

Fouad Tarazi 5/31

Richie Tierney 5/2

Anise Turk 5/4

Angelina Turk 5/29
Sophia Whitacre 5/20
Connor Wilde 5/8

Happy Anniversary

Phillip & Tarize Bahbah 5/9
Jacob & Vera Bahbah 5/13
Samir & Lucy Billeh 5/2
Mark & Eileen Ellis 5/22
Kevin & Sara Fortuna 5/23
Richard & Vera Jirjis 5/9
Michel & Theresa Joubran 5/17
Bachir & Helen Kassir 5/27
Elias & Najat Khury 5/1
Fr. Michael & Donna Laffoon 5/6
Nelson & Jeri Mamey 5/30
Tanya & Joseph Richards 5/29
Najeeb & Heba Saadeh 5/15
Robert & Sarah Smathers 5/10
Anees & Reham Turk 5/22
Anton & Keitie Turk 5/29
Patrick & Susan Wilde 5/25

The Apostle is a monthly newsletter of St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church. Parish Organizations are to submit articles by the 15th of the month to the Church office (949-851-8933)

St. Mark 2014 Stewardship Pledge Drive Progress Report

Thank you to all of you who have made their 2014 Pledge Commitment to St. Mark. We have a total of \$190,360 pledged which is 96% of our total goal of \$192,000. We have also successfully collected 142 pledge commitments!

We are so close to reaching our goal!! If you haven't made your pledge commitment yet then please take a few minutes today during Coffee Hour to fill out a pledge card.

In Christ,
St. Mark Stewardship Committee

BUY SCRIP! Our Ladies Guild buys scrip from many and various stores and restaurants (see list included in this bulletin) at a 3 to 10% discount. When you buy the scrip, which is accepted just like cash at the issuing store, the parish benefits. You pay no more for these goods and services and are making a donation to our parish. You can purchase this scrip from Saeda Turk at the coffee hour.

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