

THE APOSTLE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JULY & AUGUST 2014

SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH

OF IRVINE **Pastor's Column**

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Rev. Protodeacon George Moubayed
Sub-deacon: Athanasius Fakhouri
Choir Director: Barbara Scholl
Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Theresa Joubran, Karim Youssef, & Mark Ellis
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2014-2015 PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman {15} Penny Skaff (949)713-7411
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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

On the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos from "The Year of the Grace of our Lord" by a Monk of the Eastern Church

The third of the great feasts of the summer is the commemoration of the death of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary... This, from the liturgical point of view, is the most important of the feasts dedicated to the Virgin. A two weeks' fast, the "Lent of the Mother of God" precedes it... It is in the chants for vespers and matins that one finds the special significance which the Church attaches to the feast of August 15th.

This significance is twofold, and is given exact expression by a phrase which is sung at vespers: 'The source of life is laid in the grave and her tomb becomes a ladder to heaven; The first part of this – 'the source of life is laid in the grave' – indicates that we commemorate the death of the most Blessed Virgin... But the feast of August 15th is more than the commemoration of Mary's death. The second part of the phrase – and her tomb becomes a ladder to heaven'. The tomb of anyone who has died in Christ is, in a certain way, a ladder which leads to heaven. All the same, Mary's case is exceptional. The liturgical texts which are sung imply something more: 'Open wide the gates and receive above the world the Mother of the everlasting Light.... For today heaven is opened to receive her.... Let all the sons of earth tremble in spirit... and celebrate with joy the venerable Assumption of the Mother of God'. This makes it clear that more is involved than Mary's soul being received into heaven. According to this belief, Mary's body did not suffer the corruption which follows death: it did not stay in the

tomb. Mary, raised from the dead, was carried to heaven by angels (the Assumption differed from the Ascension in that Christ rose to heaven by himself).

The Assumption of Mary is outside – and above – history. Belief in the Assumption does not depend on any biblical account, or on any historical witness.... It is not the object of any dogmatic definition.... Enlightened by the Holy Spirit [the Church] has... become convinced that if ‘the wages of sin is death, Mary gained a special victory over death.

The Assumption is the feast, not only of Mary, but of all human nature. For, in Mary, human nature reached its goal... Thus... the cycle of Mary’s life manifests the destiny and development of a human nature which is entirely faithful to God.... The perfect flowering of grace that we marvel at in Mary on August 15th suggest what the line of development could be in a soul which applied itself to making the great gifts received during the liturgical year – the gift of Christmas, the gift of Easter and the gift of Pentecost – bear their fruit.

Fr. Michael

The **Dormiton Fast** begins on August 1 and ends on August 14. During the Fast we will sing the service of the **Paraklesis** (or Supplication) to the Theotokos on Monday and Friday evenings (see calendar for dates). These services will begin at 7:00 p.m. (except as noted) during this season the Church prescribes the following fast: we abstain from all meat, dairy products (including eggs), fish, wine and olive oil (in some traditions olive oil is allowed). Shellfish may be eaten throughout the fast. Wine and olive oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays only. On the Feast of the Transfiguration on August 6, fish, wine and oil are permitted. Make every effort to fast according to the best of your ability and to come to the Sacrament of Holy Confession during this holy season!

Feasts, Special Services and Events for July & August 2014

July 2 – 6, Western Diocese Parish Life Conference, San Francisco CA

July 14 – 18 Clergy Symposium, Ligonier PA
Thursday August 1, Procession of Holy Cross
August 1 to 14, Dormition Fast
Locations and times for August Feast (Transfiguration, Dormition and Beheading of the Baptist TBA IN THE WEEKLY BULLETINS

September 2014 Advanced Calendar
September 1, Church New Year

September 8, Feast of the Birth of the Theotokos

September 14, Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

September 21, Ladies Guild Friendship Tea

Archbishop Joseph’s Schedule

July 21-25, 2013
Archdiocese Clergy Symposium, Ligonier PA

WEEKLY SERVICES

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

July 7

THE HOLY GREAT FEMALE MARTYR DOMINICA [NEDELJA-KIRIAKI]

During the reign of the adversaries of Christ, Emperor Diocletian and his son-in-law Maximian, there lived in Anatolia two pious and elderly souls, Dorotheus and Eusebia. They were devout Christians, wealthy but childless. Unceasing in prayer they obtained a child from God, this holy Dominica. From her childhood, Dominica consecrated herself to God restraining from everything that unruly children do. When she matured, beautiful in body and soul, many suitors came to ask for her hand in marriage but she refused them all saying that she betrothed herself to Christ the Lord and that she desires nothing more than to die as a virgin. One of the rejected suitors denounced Dominica and her parents to Emperor Diocletian as being Christians. The emperor ordered that Dominica's parents be tortured and after torturing them banished them to the town of Melitene where they died enduring much suffering for Christ. Diocletian, however, sent Dominica to Maximian to stand trial. As Dominica confirmed her faith in Christ before Maximian, he ordered that she be placed on the ground and flogged with oxen whips. After that, the emperor handed her over to the commanders, at first Hilarion and then, after his death, to Apollonius. Both of them tortured Dominica in a beastly manner in all possible ways but all was in vain. When St. Dominica lay in the prison cell, completely covered with wounds, Christ the Lord appeared to her, healed her and said: "Dominica, do not be afraid of torture, My grace is with you." And truly, the Grace of Christ saved this martyr both from fire and from wild beasts from which the godless judges thought that she would certainly meet death. Seeing the miraculous salvation of Dominica from so many deaths, many pagans believed in Christ. However, they were all beheaded. Dominica said to Apollonius: "In no manner can you turn me away from my Faith. If you throw me into the fire, I have an example in the Three Youths [Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego]; if you throw me before wild beasts, I have an example in Daniel the Prophet; if you toss me

into the sea, I have an example in Jonah the Prophet; if you give me over to the sword, I will remember the honorable Forerunner [John the Baptist]; life for me is to die for Christ." Then Apollonius ordered that Dominica be beheaded. Dominica knelt on her knees, raised her hands to heaven and prayed to God that He would have mercy and save all those who would celebrate her memory and to give rest to her soul together with the souls of her parents. Upon completing her prayer, she rendered her soul to God before the sword was lowered on her head. Dominica suffered honorably and was received into eternal joy in the year 289 A.D. in Nicomedia.

July 27

SAINT CLEMENT, THE ARCHBISHOP OF OHRID

Clement was a disciple of Saints Methodius and Cyril. After the death of St. Methodius, Clement, under pressure by the Germans travelled from Moravia to the south. With Gorazd, Nahum, Sava, and Angelarius - together, they were called "The Numbers Five" - crossed the Danube River where they were guests of Emperor Boris Michael and following that came to the region of Ohrid. They first founded a monastery in Belica [Velitsa] where Clement's first Episcopal see was located. Afterward, he settled in Ohrid and from there he developed his great arch-pastoral and illuminating work for the nearby and distant regions. In Ohrid, St. Clement erected a church to Saint Pantaleon. He had many disciples who copied books in the Slavonic script for the Slavic peoples. Saint Naum especially assisted him in this work. He worked miracles during his life and his relics manifested a healing power until today. Following great labors and faithful service to God, he reposed peacefully in Ohrid in the year 916 A.D. His wonder-working relics repose in the former church dedicated to the Holy Birth-giver of God (The Theotokos) and later was renamed St. Clement.

August 13

SAINT TIKHON OF ZADONSK OR VORONEZH

Tikhon was born in a simple peasant family in the village of Korotsk in the providence of Novgorod in

the year 1724 A.D. He received the monastic tonsure at age thirty-four and because of his mortifications and great spiritual wisdom, soon received greater and greater service until finally he was consecrated as the Bishop of Voronezh. His episcopacy lasted for almost five years and, because of frail health, he withdrew and took up residence in the monastery of Zadonsk. He died peacefully in the year 1783 A.D. in Zadonsk where his miracle-working relics now repose. He was a great ascetic of the Russian Church, rare shepherd, intercessor and an author of the most beautiful spiritual works. By his wisdom, holiness and asceticism, Tikhon can be equated among the great fathers of the Orthodox Church of ancient times. Because of the many witnessed miracles over his relics, he was proclaimed a saint, at first, by the people and after that by the official church in the year 1861 A.D.

August 31

THE FEAST OF THE GIRDLE OF THE HOLY BIRTH-GIVER OF GOD

After her Dormition [Falling-asleep], the Holy Theotokos gave her girdle [sash] to the Apostle Thomas. That girdle was later brought to Constantinople and kept in a sealed reliquary in the church of the Mother of God at Blachernae, the royal foundation [Zaduzbina] of Empress Pulcheria. This reliquary was never opened until the time of Emperor Leo the Wise (886-912 A.D.). Leo's wife, the Empress Zoe, became mentally ill and, according to a mysterious vision, she desired that the girdle of the Holy Theotokos be placed on her. The emperor implored the patriarch and the reliquary was opened and the girdle was removed and placed on the ailing empress. The empress was immediately healed. This feast was instituted in commemoration of this miracle. One part of the girdle is to be found in Zugdid, Georgia. That is to say: the daughter of Emperor Romanus was healed with the aid of this girdle and later when her father married her to the Georgian Emperor Abuchaz, she took a part of that girdle with her. By order of the Russian Emperor Alexander I, a special church was built in Mingrelia in Zugdid where that part of the miracle-working garment of the Holy Theotokos is kept.

Parish & Organizations News

Born

On June 20th, Adela Tannous. Congratulations to the proud parents Juliana (Turk) and David Tannous and their families!

Married

On Saturday June 7th, Sreen Batarseh (daughter of Wally & Muna Batarseh of our church) & George Hreish, at Santa Sophia. The maid of honor was Dana Batarseh and the best man was Mark Hreish.

On Saturday June 14th, Nevine Elmasry and David Al-Rafidi at St. Luke's Church in Garden Grove, Maid of honor was Nancy Elmasry and the best man was Ihab Elmasry

Fallen asleep in the Lord

On May 25th, Georgette Hadded the aunt of Emile & Nabil Haddad. Her funeral was on June 1st at Pacific View Memorial Park.

On May 28th, Charles Amash. His funeral was sung on June 4th, at St. George Church in Downey. Burial was at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Cypress.

Ladies Guild

The ladies had a very special meeting on May, 29th where they shared their favorite Dish and played Bunco.

Luncheon on June 15, 2014 was served in honor of all of the fathers in Church.

Ladies Guild President

Vera Bahbah

Men's Club

Men's Club met on June 29th after Church!

Don Skaff

Men's club secretary

Teen SOYO

Our teen will share with the Bible Bowl at the Life Parish Conference which will be held in July 3-6 in San Francisco.

George Bahbah

Teen Secretary

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July

Seham Aldada 7/6
Daniel Attalla 7/21
Gabriel Attalla 7/24
Ghassan Awayjan 7/9
Mayssa Azzam 7/7
Phillip Bahbah 7/2
Samir Billeh 7/21
Rita Billeh 7/26
Leo Chade 7/14
George Chami 7/28
Annabelle Dabit 7/1
Tony Debbas 7/28
Huda Debbas 7/14
Mathew Ellis 7/15
Natalie Eadeh 7/28
Sandella Goson 7/27
Norman Haffty 7/28
Esperance Hadshiti 7/15
Wafa Hanna 7/29
Julia Jirjis 7/6
Elise Kalache 7/1
Reem Karkar 7/11
Wael Kashou 7/1
Steven Khamis 7/18
Elias Khamis 7/8
Donna Laffoon 7/6
Nicholas Mamey 7/18
Anne Mansour 7/1
Nabil Mitri 7/12
Robert Mokbel 7/18
Don Nassif 7/15
Irene Novac 7/2
Tony Rodriguez 7/12
Tymour Saba 7/3
Rocky Sayegh 7/31
Chloe Shaheen 7/2
Sophia Skaff 7/27
Penny Skaff 7/8
Seth Skaff 7/8
Simon Sliheet 7/19
Robert Smathers 7/9
Rami Tarazi 7/8
Devon Grace Tax 7/29
Dave Tax Jr. 7/27
Tiffany Tomeo 7/27
Stephanie Turk 7/11

Brittany Turk 7/8
Eleanor Wackeen 7/1
Christopher Wakileh 7/13

Morella Youssef

Nour Youssef

Samantha Zadah 7/18

AUGUST

Nassrin Artoul 8/14

Salwa Bahbah 8/28

Randy Bahbah 8/26

Ryan Boratynec 8/9

Serene Batarseh 8/17

Dana Chade 8/5

Rania Chami 8/29

Lauris Debbas 8/16

Marwan Dabit 8/13

Rula Dabit 8/1

Victoria Donovan 8/9

Mark Ellis 8/5

Eileen Ellis 8/25

Samira Fasheh 8/24

Majed Fasheh 8/18

Jimmy Goson Jr. 8/6

Joseph Haffty 8/12

Charlie Hanna 8/17

Madeline Hanna 8/19

Charlotte Hanna 8/10

Sandi Hanna 8/15

Salma Hanna 8/21

Kh. Nina Irish 8/1

Natalie Kassir 8/21

Tracy Khamis 8/28

Michael Khamis 8/31

James Kishek 8/21

Vijay Kumar 8/19

Joseph Laffoon 8/5

Johnny Liquete 8/30

Mary Rose Mamey 8/29

Jamal Qutami 8/8

Rachel Ranney 8/30

Yasmeen Rizkalla 8/22

Stella Saba 8/27

Christopher Scholl 8/1

Perla Shaheen 8/4

Nawal Sliheet 8/25

Roger Tierney 8/22

Christina Tomeo 8/31

George Toubbeh 8/23

William Turk 8/14

James Whitacre 8/28

Robert Whitehead 8/4
Hany Youssef 8/5
Maryan Youssef 8/22
Noriek Zadah 8/4
Leo Zadah 8/5
Ted Zogob 8/12

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

JULY

Paul & June Anter 7/30
Samir & Afifa Artoul 7/8
Gabriel & Samira Attalla 7/11
Issa & Julie Bahbah 7/23
Randy & May Dabbah 7/30
Marwan & Rula Dabit 7/12
Omar & Fatin Fakhouri 7/5
Majed & Bunia Fasheh 7/11
Michael & Sandee Gordon 7/13
Melad & Wafa Hanna 7/9
Isa & Barbara Khamis 7/9
Elias & Hilda Khamis 7/18
Dimitri & Kandy Kort 7/30
Nabil & Susie Mitri 7/16
Steve & Barbara Scholl 7/18
Milad & Madona Shaheen 7/22

AUGUST

Edward & Dana Chade 8/15
Sami & Wissam Farraj 8/31
Abe & Diana Khamis 8/28
Nabil & Anne Mansour 8/15
Elias & Jean Nasrawi 8/29
Sammy & Lana Nino 8/12
Kendall & Ronda Schorr 8/19
Shouki & Majida Soury 8/4

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)

*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.***

“No Debt Building Campaign”

Our sanctuary remodel and expansion is progressing and we hope to move into the new sanctuary by the end of August. In order to complete this work with little or no debt, we have embarked on a “No Debt” Campaign. So far we have pledges and donations totaling \$48,780. Thanks to those who have made these pledges. Please consider your “No Debt” contribution today!