

St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church

Self-ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, Diocese of the West

17840 Sky Park Circle, Irvine CA 92614 (949) 851-8933

Church Office Hours: M-F, 9:30 am – 4:30 pm

Website: www.st-mark-church.org

Archpriest Michael Laffoon, Priest Patrick Irish

Protodeacon George Moubayed, Sub Deacon Athanasius Fakhouri

Choir Director Barbara Scholl

Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Theresa Joubran, Mark Ellis,

Karim Youssef & Jake Bahbah

Church Office Administrator: Lydia Wakileh

Teen Advisors: Paula Rodriguez and Dana Chade

Sunday Schedule: Orthros (Matins) & Confessions 8:45 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.



FEBRUARY 28, 2016

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Venerable Basil the Confessor

HYMNS AFTER THE ENTRANCE

Troparion of the Resurrection in the Sixth Tone: When Mary stood at thy grave looking for thy sacred Body, angelic powers shone above thy revered tomb, and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby; Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world; O thou Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Troparion to St. Mark in the Fourth Tone: From thy childhood the light of truth enlightened thee, O Mark, and thou didst love the labor of Christ the Savior. Wherefore thou didst follow Peter with zeal and didst serve Paul as a fellow laborer and didst enlighten the world with thy holy Gospel.

Kontakion of the Prodigal Son in the Third Tone: When I disobeyed in ignorance Thy Fatherly glory, I wasted in iniquities the riches that Thou gavest me. Wherefore, I cry to Thee with the voice of the prodigal son, saying, "I have sinned before Thee, O compassionate Father; receive me repentant, and make me one of Thy hired servants.

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Prokeimenon (Psalm 32.22,1) Tone 1: Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.

The reading from Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (6:12-20)

Brethren, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" -- and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality! Every other sin, which a man commits, is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which belong to God.

Alleluia verses (Psalm 17.48, 50) Tone 1: It is God who avenges me. Great is the salvation he grants to his king and the mercy he shows to his anointed

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Luke (15:11-32)

The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

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Holy Oblations are offered today by the Turk family for Jamie on her birthday, by the Wakileh family for Aida & Robert Eadeh for their 13th wedding anniversary and for their daughter Amanda on her 12th birthday, by Don Nassif and family for the soul of his brother Tony, departed this life 40 days, and by Farah for the health and salvation of Sylvia and Tymour Saba.

Coffee Hour is given today by the Coffee Committee

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Please remember in your prayers: Michael Debbas, Odette Chade, Maha Kureh, Darlyne Dibs, Eleanor Wackeen, Georgette Salameh, Lourice Kishek, Paul and June Anter and the suffering people of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Palestine, Yemen, Ukraine, West Africa, Nepal and all people afflicted with disease and violence.

Ushers serving Today: Nelson Mamey & James Goson

March is Antiochian Women’s month, the Ladies will participate in Ushering, Reading the Epistle and serving during the 4 Sundays of March.

Ushers serving next week: Tariez Bahbah & Barbara Khamis

Epistle reading in English: Denise Nassif

Epistle reading in Arabic: Gisele Awyajan

Altar boys serving Today: James Bahbah, Peter William, Nicholas Bahou, Youssef Youssef

Altar boys serving next week: James Dabbah, Paul Youssef, Matthew Dabbah.

Quote from the Saints

"Let your prayers be simple, for both the Publican and the Prodigal Son were reconciled to God by a single phrase." -- *St. John Climacus*

Canned Food Drive

Low employment and homelessness continue to be significant problems, even in affluent Orange County. In light of this, the ongoing canned food collection of our parish is a small but important way to help. Please try to bring something to go in the collection barrel every week.

Good Samaritan Fund

Several years ago, St. Mark Church established a fund for assisting those in need, both within our parish and in the general community. From time to time we ask for contributions to the Good Samaritan Fund, and this is one of those times. If you are in need of assistance or you are aware of someone in our parish that needs financial assistance, please speak with Fr. Michael.

Church Etiquette

- Please be on time for services; those arriving late should not approach the Chalice for Communion.
- To receive Communion, one must be a baptized/chrisdated Orthodox Christian who has prepared by prayer, fasting, alms giving, and regular confession.

- Confessions are heard on Wednesday and Saturday evenings after Great Vespers and during the week by appointment.
- Men, women, and children: please dress modestly for services.
- Please remove lip balm or lipstick before receiving Communion or kissing the holy icons, Chalice, or Gospel.
- If you wish to stand for the entire service, please do so in the back or the aisle so as not to block the view of others who may need to sit. When seated, we should refrain from a posture of relaxation (e.g., crossing legs or arms).
- Pledges, Tithes, Donations: Giving 10% of one's income is God-pleasing, as are all gifts offered by a pious and cheerful giver with a humble heart. Membership forms, renewed annually, are located in the Hall.
- Children are welcome! Yet, if they interfere with the prayers of the faithful, we all may need a break. Food and drink (and toys) are not allowed in the Temple.

Today

Confession will be heard after Divine Liturgy, for 3rd & 4th grades

Church School Boutique in support of the Support a Missionary Priest program (SAMP), during Coffee Hour.

House blessings

We are now in House Blessing Season. To schedule a house blessing, please contact Fr Michael by calling the church office, (949) 851-8933 or via email at frmlaffoon@yahoo.com. When Fr Michael comes to your home, please turn off all televisions and other distractions and prepare a list of the living to be remembered in the prayers

The following items have been sponsored from the St. Mark Book of Needs

Processional Banners (2)

Censer Stand

Exterior Chandelier

Holy Water Basin

Chanters Stand Lamp

8 gal. Holy Water Font

We also have 1 donation towards new Altar Server robes. We are looking to provide two sets (one light and one dark), totaling 32 robes. Thus, we have 31 robes to go!

Parish Council Report: City of Irvine building final inspection is scheduled for Wednesday, March 2nd. This is required to obtain final certification of occupancy. We are operating with temporary COOP.

Books of Needs presented to Parish.

Kitchen Project - Committee recommendation to Replace Kitchen cabinets, purchase new appliances, install ice-maker, update/repair electrical and paint kitchen presented. Three bids were received.

Motion to appropriate amount not to exceed \$25,000 for Kitchen Project from Building Fund to passed.

Paid down the Building loan \$50,000, money taken from Building Fund Account.

This completes our conversion of LOC to a 10 year Mortgage with Umpqua Bank.

Pledge Drive Update as of February 18, 2016 - 115 Pledges for \$165,061. We are at 83% of Goal - \$200,000.

Financial snapshot (YTD as of January 2016): Total Income = \$43,414; Total Expenditures = \$33,492. Account Balances: General Checking \$60,953; Building Fund \$56,207; Good Samaritan/Hanna Chade \$17,377; Reserve Account \$48,343.

This Week

We fast as usual on Wednesday and Friday of this week.

Tuesday March 1, Mere Orthodoxy, 7:00 p.m. We will begin with dessert, followed by our video presentation and discussion. Our Topic “The Divine Mysteries”

Wednesday March 2, 6:30 p.m. Vespers

Thursday March 3rd, Men's Club meeting 7:00 pm at Café America in Tustin.

Come join us for some good food and fellowship.

Café America; 2680 Walnut Ave Tustin CA

We hope to see many of you there.

Next week

Sunday March 6, Judgment Sunday, the last day to eat meat.

Antiochian Women meeting after Church

Tuesday March 8, 6:30 P.M Parish Council Meeting

No Vespers on Wednesday March 9

Thursday March 10, Mere Orthodoxy, 7:00 p.m. We will begin with dessert, followed by our video presentation and discussion.

Friday March 11, SOYO activities: Vespers and Ice Skating.

Upcoming Services & Events

Sunday March 13, Forgiveness Sunday; Daylight Saving time begins;
Antiochian Women Lenten Luncheon to benefit Help Feed Hungry children

Monday March 14, First Day of Lent

St. Mark Church School Confession Schedule

Before Great Lent the children will have their confession heard after Divine Liturgy on the following Sundays:

March 6, - 1 & 2 grade

If your child has or will miss their classes turn they may have their confession heard on any of the above Sundays.

Please inform your students of the appropriate date and help them to come to confession prepared.

Orange County Orthodox Young Professionals

Young adults are welcome to join us for social and spiritual/discussion each month. Contact Kyra Pelachik at hi_imkyra@yahoo.com or Charlie Kassaseya at charlesgk@gmail.com or at 858-761-1720. You can find our events on www.facebook.com/OCOrthodoxchristianyoungprofessionals

March 13 - Focus Feeding

March 22 – Discussion with Christian Siskos: How Thoughts Determine our Spiritual Life

April TBD - Local Hiking Activity

April 19 - Discussion: TBA

May TBD - Wine & Paint Event

May 24 - Discussion: "Practical Applications to your Spiritual Life"

SAMP - Church School

Our SAMP Priest for 2015 - 2016 school year is Fr. Frumentius Elias Taubata.

In order to support our Priest your child should be:

- Remembering him in their daily prayers
- Contributing to our SAMP fund by bringing a dime, quarter or dollar to church school each Sunday and placing the funds in the basket on the table. Thank You! Eileen Waian-Ellis

Orthodox Christian Mission Center opportunities for mission work. Empower youth and teens in countries where youth ministry is emerging and opportunities for youth leadership exist. Orthodox Mission Teams to Alaska, Kenya, and Albania will offer programs for students and adult leaders, giving them the opportunity to develop vision for their youth groups, as well teach the Biblical basics of youth ministry and what it means to be a leader. These teams will model servant leadership by assisting in small groups, recreation, and worship. OCMC invites you to join these opportunities in youth ministry. For more information, please visit www.ocmc.org, e-mail teams@ocmc.org, or call 1-877 GO FORTH (ext 141).

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 Saudi Turk at the coffee hour.

St. John Cassian the Confessor (February 29)

Note: If it is not a leap year the hymns of Saint John are transferred to the 28th.

This Saint was born about the year 350, and was, according to some, from Rome, according to others, from Dacia Pontica (Dobrogea in present-day Romania). He was a learned man who had first served in the military. Later, he forsook this life and became a monk in Bethlehem with his friend and fellow-ascetic, Germanus of Dacia Pontica, whose memory is also celebrated today. Hearing the fame of the great Fathers of Scete, they went to Egypt about the year 390; their meetings with the famous monks of Scete are recorded in Saint John's Conferences. In the year 403 they went to Constantinople, where Cassian was ordained deacon by Saint John Chrysostom; after the exile of Saint Chrysostom, Saints Cassian and Germanus went to Rome with letters to Pope Innocent I in defence of the exiled Archbishop of Constantinople. There Saint Cassian was ordained priest, after which he went to Marseilles, where he established the famous monastery of Saint Victor. He reposed in peace about the year 433.

The last of his writings was On the Incarnation of the Lord, Against Nestorius, written in 430 at the request of Leo, the Archdeacon of Pope Celestine. In this work he was the first to show the spiritual kinship between Pelagianism, which taught that Christ was a mere man who without the help of God had avoided sin, and that it was possible for man to overcome sin by his own efforts; and Nestorianism, which taught that Christ was a mere man used as an instrument by

the Son of God, but was not God become man; and indeed, when Nestorius first became Patriarch of Constantinople in 428, he made much show of persecuting the heretics, with the exception only of the Pelagians, whom he received into communion and interceded for them to the Emperor and to Pope Celestine.

The error opposed to Pelagianism but equally ruinous was Augustine's teaching that after the fall, man was so corrupt that he could do nothing for his own salvation, and that God simply predestined some men to salvation and others to damnation. Saint John Cassian refuted this blasphemy in the thirteenth of his Conferences, with Abbot Chairemon, which eloquently sets forth, at length and with many citations from the Holy Scriptures, the Orthodox teaching of the balance between the grace of God on one hand, and man's efforts on the other, necessary for our salvation.

Saint Benedict of Nursia, in Chapter 73 of his Rule, ranks Saint Cassian's Institutes and Conferences first among the writings of the monastic fathers, and commands that they be read in his monasteries; indeed, the Rule of Saint Benedict is greatly indebted to the Institutes of Saint John Cassian. Saint John Climacus also praises him highly in section 105 of Step 4 of the Ladder of Divine Ascent, on Obedience.