

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

Church Office Administrator: Lydia Wakileh

Teen Advisors: Paula Rodriguez and Dana Chade

Church School After Holy Communion



FEBRUARY 26, 2017

SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS

PORPHYRIOS, BISHOP OF GAZA,

GREAT-MARTYR PHOTEINI THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

HYMNS AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Troparion of the Resurrection in the Third Tone: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

Troparion of Saint 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 Cheese Fare Sunday in the Sixth Tone: Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue, who teachest the thoughtless and protectest the poor: Strengthen and enlighten my heart, O Master. Give me word, O Word of the Father, for behold my lips will not be restrained from crying to thee: Have mercy on me, the transgressor, O merciful Lord.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 46.6, 1) Tone 3: O chant unto our God, chant ye. Clap your hands, all ye nations.

The reading from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans (13:11-14:4)

Brethren, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts.

But as for the one who is weak in faith, receive him, but not for disputes over opinions. For one believes he may eat anything; but the weak person eats herbs. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat pass judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to be the judge over the servant of stranger? To his own master that he either stands or falls; and he will be made to stand; for God is able to make him stand.

Alleluia Verses (Psalm 30.1,2) Tone 3: In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me not be put to shame forever. Be Thou unto me a God to defend me.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (6:14-21)

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".

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Holy Oblations are offered today by Our Antiochian Women of St. Mark to all our church parishioners wishing them a blessed beginning of Lent tomorrow!

Instead of Coffee hour today the Antiochian Women is offering a light breakfast for the Cheese Fare Sunday. Your free well donation is appreciated.

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Please remember in your prayers: Michael Debbas, Reham Turk, Maha Kureh, Darlyne Dibs, Eleanor Wackeen, Georgette Salameh, June Anter and the suffering people of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, Palestine, Venezuela, Ukraine, and all people afflicted with disease and violence.

Ushers this week: Nelson Mamey & Jimmy Goson.
Ushers next week: Antiochian Women ushering for the month of March
Altar boys serving this week: Sammy Khamis, Andrew Azzam, George Bahbah, Richard Tierney.
Altar boys serving next week: Noah Fortuna, Daniel Atallah, Connor Wilde, George Aldada.

Quote from the Saints

"Where shall I begin to weep for the actions of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, in this my lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me forgiveness of sins. Come, wretched soul, with thy flesh to the Creator of all. Make confession to Him, and abstain henceforth from thy past brutishness; and offer to God tears of repentance." -- St. Andrew of Crete

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.

TO THE PARENTS OF OUR YOUNG CHILDREN

- Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's home. All are welcome!
- Sit toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what's going on at the altar. They tire of seeing the back of others' heads.
- Quietly explain the actions of the Liturgy (what the priests, deacon, altar boys are doing)
- Sing the hymns and responses. Children learn how to worship in church by copying you.
- Incidental noise and movement are not reasons to take your child out of church. If a child's crying or movements become a distraction to others, then it is time to leave until they are calm.
- If you have to leave the church with your child, do so but please come back. Our Lord said, "Let the children come to me and forbid them not, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven."
- Remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to the Church, to God, and one another. Let them know that they are at home in our house of worship.

TO THE MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH

The presence of children is a gift to the Church and they are a reminder that our parish is growing!

Please welcome our children and give a little encouragement to their parents.

Today

Today is Forgiveness Sunday, the last day for eating dairy, eggs, fish etc., until Pascha.

Fr. Michael is absent today as he and his mother are returning from New Jersey for the funeral of Emilie's cousin, Elsie Nassor.

House Blessings

House blessings are traditionally done between Epiphany and the start of Great Lent. However, Fr Michael will continue to bless homes during Lent allowing for our more full liturgical schedule. If you would like Fr. Michael to bless your home or business, please call the church office, or email him directly at frmlaffoon@yahoo.com.

The home blessings will last about 40 minutes per home. When Fr. Michael arrives, all televisions, stereos, and radios should be turned off. If there is an icon corner in the home, the prayers will take place there, if not, an icon and a lit candle should be set up on a suitable table. A list of all those living in the home and others you would like to be included in the prayers should also be placed on the table.

June Hall Rentals: If you are thinking about using our church hall for a **June graduation party**, you should reserve a date now. Our Caterer is already asking to **reserve dates in June**. We will hold these dates for parishioners **until March 30**. After that, we will open them for the caterer.

2017 Stewardship Pledge Card!

Thank you to those who have made their 2017 pledge commitment. As of February 23, 2017, we have a total of \$170,730 pledged which is 83% of our total goal of \$205,000. We have also successfully collected 106 pledge commitments. If you have not done so, please turn your pledge commitment to the white box in the back of the church.

We hope to reach our goal by the end of February. Your financial pledge and commitment is important and supports the work of the church, the parish itself and those who work for St. Mark. Your support and commitment to St. Mark is appreciated!

In Christ,
St. Mark Stewardship Committee

Please remember to **take your Sunday Bulletin** with you home, it will help you to remember the services and the events going on in your church. Please put the Liturgy book service back in the pocket when you are done using it. Thank you!

This Week

...is the first week of Great Lent. There are services every evening as follows:

Monday February 27th, Great Compline, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday February 28th, Great Compline, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday March 1st Liturgy of Pre sanctified Gifts, 6:30 p.m. followed by pot luck dinner.

Thursday March 2nd, Great Compline, 7:00 p.m.

Friday March 3rd, Akathist (Madayeh 1), 7:00 p.m.

Next Week

Sunday March 5, Sunday of Orthodoxy at St. Luke Orthodox Church Garden Grove 6:00 p.m.

Monday March 6, Great Compline at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday March 8, Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts, 6:30 p.m., followed by Lenten pot-luck

Friday March 10, Akathist (Madayeh 2) 7:00 p.m.

Upcoming events and services

Lenten Service Schedule:

- **Mondays Great Compline, 7:00 p.m.**
- **Wednesdays Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts, 6:30 p.m.**
- **Fridays Akathist Service (Madayeh) 7:00 p.m.**

Saturday March 25, Feast of Annunciation, Orthros 9:00 a.m, and Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

March 31 – April. The 2017 Antiochian Women's Lenten Retreat of the Diocese of Los Angeles and the west at St. Nicholas Camp Frazier Park. The Speaker will be Rev. Fr. Calinic Berger. More information to follow.

Mark your calendar for two dates: First date of **July 5–9, 2017** for the **Diocese of Los Angeles and the West Parish Life Conference**. Hosted by **St. Michael Church, Van Nuys, CA**

Please see Registration form included in this bulletin.

Second date is for the **53rd Biennial Archdiocese Convention**. Hosted by: **St. George Cathedral, Coral Gables, Florida – July 23-30 2017**. Event registration form is included in this bulletin.

Please contribute to the **Camp St. Nicholas Legacy Campaign!** Members of the Diocese have come together to raise funds for immediate repairs which are needed at our camp facility. Any donation is welcome, and brings membership in the “Camp Legacy Committee” which will be hosting future fellowship events. The goal for the fundraising campaign is \$30,000. Contributions are tax deductible and can be made easily online by: <https://www.gofundme.com/Campsaintnicholas> or by sending a check to: Umpqua Bank, Attention: Concetta Smarius |700 N. Central Suite 150 |Glendale, CA 91203. Checks should be made to: “St. Nicholas Cathedral Camp Repairs.” For any questions, please contact Sonia Tower at 212-308-3696.

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).

Orange County Forum

A place for Orthodox Christian young adults in the Orange County area, married and single, to have fellowship and engage in social and service activities. This group serves to aid and foster the unity of faith, love and friendship that exists between the Orthodox young adults in the county through coordinated events, ministries and common prayer. Join our Face book group at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/OrangeCountyForum> for a list of scheduled events and more information. We meet at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church in Irvine and start at 6:30p.m. Our upcoming schedule of events includes:
Tuesday, Feb 28 - Discussion on Fasting

Tuesday, Mar 14 - 'Holy Icons' with Special Guest Speaker Dr. Eve Tibbs
Tuesday, Mar 28 - Discussion on St. Mary of Egypt

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.

Sunday of Forgiveness

The Holy Fathers have appointed the commemoration of Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight here, on the eve of the holy Forty-day Fast, demonstrating to us not by simple words, but by actual deeds, how beneficial fasting is for man, and how harmful and destructive are insatiety and the transgressing of the divine commandments. For the first commandment that God gave to man was that of fasting, which the first-fashioned received but did not keep; and not only did they not become gods, as they had imagined, but they lost even that blessed life which they had, and they fell into corruption and death, and transmitted these and innumerable other evils to all of mankind. The God-bearing Fathers set these things before us today, that by bringing to mind what we have fallen from, and what we have suffered because of the insatiety and disobedience of the first-fashioned, we might be diligent to return again to that ancient bliss and glory by means of fasting and obedience to all the divine commands. Taking occasion from today's Gospel (Matt. 6:14-21) to begin the Fast unencumbered by enmity, we also ask forgiveness this day, first from God, then from one another and all creation.