

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 12, 2017

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

MELETIOS, ARCHBISHOP OF ANTIOCH

HYMNS AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Troparion of the Resurrection in the First Tone: While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

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 the Prodigal Son in the Third Tone: I have foolishly run away from thy fatherly glory, and I have wasted in evil deeds the wealth which thou gavest me. Wherefore, I cry to thee with the voice of the prodigal: I have sinned before thee, O merciful Father. Receive me who repent and make me as one of thy hired servants.

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

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

Brethren, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are expedient. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be brought under the authority of anything. "Foods are for the belly and the belly for foods" -- but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body; And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up through his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? God forbid! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For, "The two" He says, "shall become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication! Every other sin, that a person commits, is outside the body; but whoever commits fornication sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Alleluia Verses (Psalm 17.48, 51) Tone 1: It is God who grants me vengeance; and has subdued peoples under me. God magnifies the salvation of his king and shows mercy to His anointed one!

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 Tina Storvis and family for the soul of her mother Rose Soffa, departed this life 40 days, by Michael & Charlotte Khoury and family, and Sonia & Nahla Daher for the soul of their sister Salwa on the 40th day after her repose, and for their father Salim passed away 22 years. May their memory be eternal, by Ghassan and Gisele Awayjan for Yorgo, Ivana, Madison, Ramzi, Laurice, Boulos, Jackie, Joseph, and Jack, and by the Nuha Qushair family, for the soul of John Qushair, Sr., beloved husband, father, and grandfather, departed this life 20 years ago. Memory eternal! And, for the good health and well-being of Nuha Qushair and Mae Qushair on the occasion of their birthdays.

Light luncheon will be given today by the Khoury and Daher families

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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: Austin Turk & Roger Tierney.

Ushers next week: Phillip Bahbah & Elias Nasrawi

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

Altar boys serving next week: Sammy Khamis, Andrew Azzam, George Bahbah, Richard Tierney.

Quote from the Saints

“We must always remember that we are not condemned for the multitude of our evils, but because we do not want to repent and learn. And those who have sinned must not despair. Let that never be.”

St. Mark the Ascetic

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

Parish Council Meeting after church.

Teen SOYO meeting after church

The Men Club of St Mark hosted their 3rd annual Super Bowl Viewing Party this past weekend. The event was well attended with over 70 parishioners and friends in attendance enjoying the exciting game and delicious food. Thank you to all those who attended and/or participated in the activity. Special thanks to our cooks and organizers: Ghassan Awayjan, Phillip Bahbah, Tony Rodriguez and Saeda Turk for all their efforts in making this a successful event. We are happy to announce St Mark's benefit totaled \$2,585. Thank you again for all your support and participation.

Many thanks to our President Denise Nassif and her committee and our Antiochian Women for a memorable Valentine Dinner/Dance last night. Thanks to all the ladies who donated the sweets and to all the people who attended this beautiful event.

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

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.

Parents, please note: Pre-Lent Church School Confession Schedule

February 12 - 3 & 4 confession

February 19 – Meat-fare / 1 & 2 confession

St. Mark 2017 Stewardship Pledge Card!

Our Parish Stewardship Drive continues and we're asking you to please consider making a pledge commitment to St. Mark for 2017. If you have not done so, please turn your pledge commitment to the white box in the back of the church now.

Thank you to those who have made their 2017 pledge commitment. As of February 8, 2017, we have a total of \$154,870 pledged which is 75% of our total goal of \$205,000. We have also successfully collected 92 pledge commitments.

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

The week after the Sunday of the Prodigal Son we fast on Wednesday and Friday as usual.

Wednesday February 15, 6:30 p.m. Vespers, followed by Mere Orthodoxy (about 7:15 p.m.)

Next Week

Sunday February 19, Judgment Sunday, the last day for eating meat until Pascha.

Sunday February 19, Antiochian Women meeting after church.

Tuesday February 21, Mere Orthodoxy 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday February 22, 6:30 p.m. Vespers,

Upcoming events and services

Sunday February 26, Forgiveness Sunday

Monday February 27, First Day of Lent; Great Compline at 7:00 p.m.

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:
Thursday, Feb 16 - 'Preparing for Lent' with Special Guest Speaker Fr. Michael Laffoon
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 the Prodigal Son

Through the parable of today's Gospel, our Saviour has set forth three things for us: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The divine Fathers have put this reading the week after the parable of the Publican and Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own wretched condition -- inasmuch as we are sunken in sin, far from God and His Mysteries -- we might at last come to our senses and make haste to return to Him by repentance during these holy days of the Fast. Furthermore, those who have wrought many great iniquities, and have persisted in them for a long time, oftentimes fall into despair, thinking that there can no longer be any forgiveness for them; and so being without hope, they fall every day into the same and even worse iniquities. Therefore, the divine Fathers, that they might root out the passion of despair from the hearts of such people, and rouse them to the deeds of virtue, have set the present parable at the forecourts of the Fast, to show them the surpassing goodness of God's compassion, and to teach them that there is no sin -- no matter how great it may be -- that can overcome at any time His love for man.