

# **THE APOSTLE**

## **MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

### **MAY 2017**

#### **SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF IRVINE**

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**Very Rev. Father Michael Laffoon, Pastor**  
Residence phone: (949) 559-6133  
**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**  
**Teen's Advisors: Paula Rodriguez & Dana Chade**

#### **2016-2017 PARISH COUNCIL**

**Chairman - Randy Dabbah {17}** (949) 293-7732  
**Vice Chairman – Barbara Scholl {18}** (949) 533-4634  
**Secretary – Dimitri Kort {18}** (909) 529-3671  
**Treasurer – Marwan Dabit {19}** (626)665-1096  
**Assistant Treasurer- Kyra Pelachik {18}** (714) 906-9231  
**Ghassan Awayjan {17}** (951) 454-5429  
**Joe Daruty {17}** (949) 612-7939  
**Mark Ellis {19}**(949) 458-1604  
**Lori Nour {19}** (949) 370-6224  
**Austin Turk {19}** (949) 922-2350  
[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 Acting President:** Ghassan Awayjan (951) 454-5429  
**Antiochian Women of St. Mark President:** Denise Nassif (949) 500-8318  
**Teen SOYO President:** Grace Bahbah (714) 401-2094

#### **Pastor's Column**

#### **Pascha 2017 Message of Bishop Basil of Wichita (excerpted)**

I embrace and greet you with a holy kiss in the Name of the Resurrected Theanthropos Jesus Christ, and, together with you and Orthodox Christians throughout the world, I joyfully proclaim that Christ is risen! Christos anesti! Al-Maseeh qaam! Christos Voskresse! Hristos a înviat!

As we prepare to celebrate the most glorious Feast of feasts in our beautifully adorned church temples... let us recall and be inspired by another glorious Pascha – this one celebrated in stark Block 26 at Dachau Concentration Camp in 1945:

“The room was bare, save for a wooden table and an icon of the Theotokos. A creative solution to the problem of the vestments was found. Linen towels were taken from the SS hospital. When sewn together lengthwise, two towels formed an epitachelion, and when sewn end-to-end they became an orarion. Red crosses, originally intended to be worn by the medical personnel of the SS guards, were put on these towel-vestments. On Pascha, May 6th, countless Serbs, Greeks and Russians gathered in and around the barracks. In the entire history of the Orthodox Church there has probably never been a Paschal service like that one. Greek and Serbian priests together with a Serbian deacon wore the make-shift vestments over their blue and gray-striped prisoner's uniforms. Then they began to chant, alternating from Greek to Slavonic, the Paschal Canon and the Paschal Stichera all from memory! The Gospel—“In the

beginning was the Word”—from memory! And finally, the Paschal Homily of Saint John Chrysostom—also from memory! A young Greek monk from the Holy Mountain stood up in front of us and recited it with such infectious enthusiasm that we shall never forget him as long as we live. Eighteen Orthodox priests and one deacon concelebrated this unforgettable service.”

May our Paschal joy approximate in some small measure that experienced by those courageous Orthodox Christians in Dachau seventy-two years ago.

In the Risen Christ,  
+Bishop Basil  
Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America

**Special Services/Events in May 2017**

Sunday May 7, Mother/Daughter Tea (see flyer for details)

Sunday May 14, Mother’s Day Luncheon

Sunday May 24, Evening Divine Liturgy, Feast of our Lord’s Ascension

Note: Per the decision of the Holy Synod of Antioch in 1997, the entire forty days between Pascha Sunday and Ascension are observed as fast-free.

**Advanced Calendar of Services & Events in June**

June 4 Holy Pentecost & Last Day of Church School

June 11 Church School Awards, Presentation

June 18 Father’s Day Luncheon sponsored by the Antiochian Women

June 24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist

June 29, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul

**Metropolitan Joseph’s Schedule**

May 5–7

St. Mary Church of Brooklyn, NY  
100th Anniversary Celebration

May 11–15

Antiochian Village in Bolivar, PA  
Spring Meetings of the Archdiocesan Bishops and Board of Trustees

**WEEKLY SERVICES**

Saturday Vespers 4:00 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.

Wednesday Vespers, 6:30 p.m.

**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 Thebaid, during the reign of Diocletian. Timothy was a reader in his local church. The governor questioned him: "Who are you?" To this Timothy responded: "I am a Christian and a reader in God's Church." The governor further said to him: "Do you not see these instruments of 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 crosses, they lived for nine days, counseling and encouraging each other in perseverance. On the tenth day, they gave up their souls to their Lord for Whom they had endured death on a cross, and so were made worthy of His kingdom. They suffered honorably for Christ in the year 286 A.D.

(\*)The name "Maura" means black. Therefore, in Macedonia, the feast day of these two saints is referred to as Black Day. On the island of Zakynthos, there exists a church dedicated to Saints Timothy and Maura in which many miracles of healing have taken place.

**May 11**  
**SAINT NICODEMUS, THE**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF PEĆ**

This great hierarch was a Serb by birth. He lived a life of asceticism on the Holy Mt. Athos and was abbot of Hilendar Monastery. Following the death of Sava III, he was elected as the Archbishop of "all the Serbian and coastal lands" in the year 1317 A.D. Nicodemus crowned King Milutin in the year 1321 A.D. He translated the Jerusalem Typikon into Serbian. [The Typikon is a book containing the rubrics (directions) for the celebration of the Divine Mysteries and other offices of the Orthodox Church.] In the introduction of this book, Nicodemus writes: "Almighty God, Who knows our weaknesses, will give us spiritual strength, but only if we first display effort." He sincerely loved the ascetical life and labored to strengthen it throughout the Serbian land. He labored relentlessly to uproot the Bogomil heresy and to strengthen the Orthodox Faith. He died in the Lord in the year 1325 A.D. His miracle-working relics repose in the monastery in Peć.

**May 20**  
**THE HOLY MARTYR ASCLAS**

Asclas suffered in the town of Antinoe in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian. He was flogged, scraped, burned with candles, but he remained unwavering in the Faith to the end. When the tormentor Arrian was crossing the Nile by boat, Asclas, through prayer, stopped the boat in the middle of the river and would not allow it to move until Arrian wrote that he believed in Christ as the One and Almighty God. But ascribing this miracle to a magical skill of Asclas, the tormentor forgot what he wrote and continued to torment the man of God. Finally they tied a stone around his neck and cast him into the Nile River. On the third day Christians found the body of Asclas along the shore with the stone around his neck (as the martyr

foretold to them before his death) and honorably buried him in the year 287 A.D. Leonides, the holy martyr, also suffered with him. Arrian, their tormentor, later repented, believed in Christ with his whole heart and openly began to express his faith before the pagans. The pagans also killed him, and so Arrian--a former tormentor of Christians--was made worthy of the martyr's wreath for Christ.

**May 29**  
**COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST**  
**ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

The commemoration and praise of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council is held on the Sunday before Pentecost, the Seventh Sunday after Pascha. This Council was held in Nicaea in the year 325 A.D. during the reign of the saintly Emperor Constantine the Great. The Council was convened to eliminate the confusion which Arius, a priest of Alexandria, had created by his false teaching. He taught that Christ was created in time by God and that He is not the pre-eternal Son of God, equal in being [essence] with God the Father. Three hundred and eighteen Holy Fathers participated in this Council. The Council condemned the teaching of Arius, and Arius was anathematized since he refused to repent. The Council finally confirmed the Symbol of Faith [The Creed], which was later augmented at the Second Ecumenical Council [381 A.D.]. Many distinguished saints were present at the First Ecumenical Council, among whom the most notable were: St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia, St. Spyridon, St. Athanasius, St. Acillus, St. Paphnutius, St. James of Nisibis, Macarius of Jerusalem, Alexander of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius of Caesarea, Metrophanes of Constantinople, John of Persia, Aristarchus of Armenia and many others from the East. From the West, the following were present: Hosius of Cordova, Theophilus the Goth, Cecilianus of Carthage and others. The most important work of this Council was the confirmation of the Symbol of Faith [The Creed]. The Council also established the time of the celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ [Pascha] and issued twenty various canons.

### **St. Mark 2017 Stewardship Pledge Drive!**

We are less than \$4,000 away from our goal! As of April 21, 2017, we have a total of \$201,654 pledged which is 98% of our total goal of \$205,000. Thank you to those who have made their 2017 pledge commitment! We have also successfully collected 133 pledge commitments.

Please help us wrap up this campaign by turning in your pledge cards. They can be turned in to the white box at the back of the church. 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

### **Antiochian Women of St. Mark**

During the month of March, which was Ladies Month in our Archdiocese, we decided to try something new. I suggested we sell spinach pies all through Lent when people really needed them and not wait until one week from Pascha. We purchased them from a very good Arabic bakery in Anaheim. We sold them in packs of 6 for \$10. and sold them almost every Sunday of Lent. Each time we sold out and people were so glad to get them. We made about \$250. - \$300. each time and could have sold even more. Our ladies also had their March Lenten Cheese Fare Sunday Luncheon and did quite well on this and donated the proceeds to charity. During Ladies Month we also volunteered to read the Epistle and usher each Sunday.

During the Month of April We planned our Annual Palm Sunday Bake Sale, which is one of our big money makers of the year. Our ladies did so much volunteer baking that we had left-overs to sell and made around 3000.00 when we were finally through with selling. For this bake sale we also purchased our Spinach Pies from the same bakery again, instead of relying the women to make them which is so very exhausting for them, this time purchasing 600 pies, and sold out in the first 20 minutes! We are learning.... We also planned and organized the Pascha Breakfast after Easter service.

In the month of May We are going to hold our annual Mother Daughter Tea themed "Tea at Tiffany's" which is back by popular demand from last year!!! The date is May 7th. I am currently working hard to create

this beautiful afternoon, and we hopefully will have around 100 ladies in attendance.

**Denise Nassif**

**President**

### **Men's Club**

Our Men will be hosting a luncheon for Mother's Day on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Teen SOYO**

Our Teens are busy studying for the Parish Life Conference Bible Bowl. They are also planning a fun afternoon at Boomers on Sunday May 28<sup>th</sup>.

*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.***

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

June Anter 5/20

Justine Bahbah 5/18

Ghassan Bahou 5/4

Steven Berouty 5/13

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

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 Richards 5/22  
Sophia Richards 5/22  
Ramez Sayegh 5/20  
Natalia Souri 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 & Jerri 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 15<sup>th</sup> of the month to the Church office (949-851-8933)*

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**SAINT MARK ANTIOCHIAN  
ORTHODOX CHURCH  
17840 SKY PARK CIRCLE  
IRVINE, CA 92614  
MAY 2017 NEWSLETTER**

**المسيح قام! حقاً قام!**

*Christ is Risen, Truly he is Risen!*