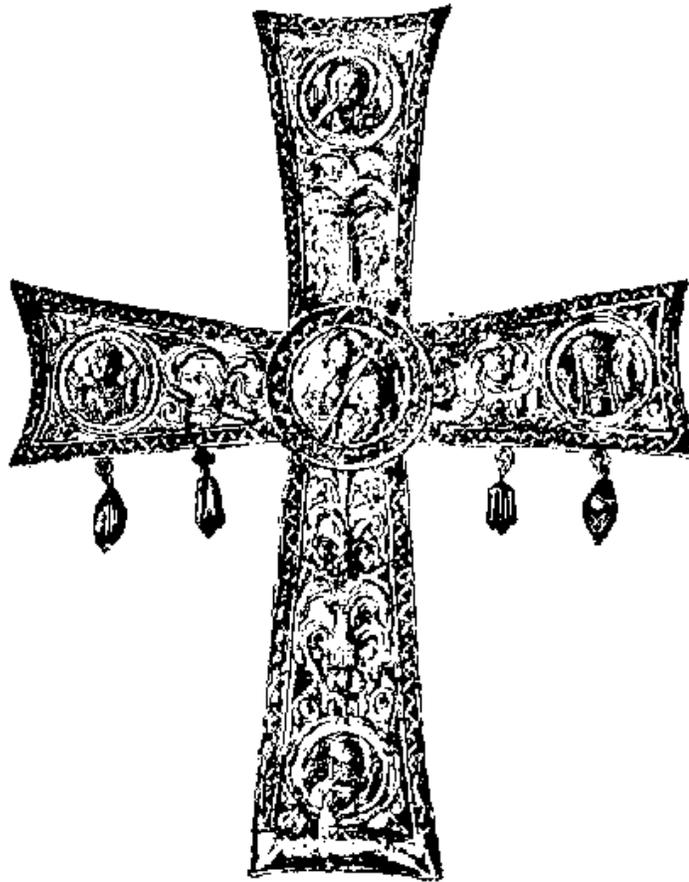


**St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, Diocese of the West**  
17840 Sky Park Circle, Irvine CA 92614 (949) 851-8933  
Church Office Hours: M-F, 9:30 am – 4:30 pm  
Website: [www.st-mark-church.org](http://www.st-mark-church.org)  
Archpriest Michael Laffoon, 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  
*Sunday Schedule: Orthros (Matins) & Confessions 8:45 a.m.*  
*Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.*  
*Church School after Holy Communion*



**December 10, 2017**  
**Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes and EUGRAPHOS of Alexandria**

## HYMNS AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

**Troparion of the Resurrection in the Second Tone:** When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

**Troparion of the Holy Martyrs in the Eighth Tone:** Since they had slain through their abstinence and struggles the fiery ragings and fierce motions of the passions, the staunch Martyrs of Christ God laid hold on the graces to drive off the pains and illnesses of the sick and work wonders both while living and after death. Strange indeed is the miracle: that these bare bones should pour forth such overflowing streams of cures. Glory be to our only God.

All: **Troparion of 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 Feast of the Nativity in Tone 3:** The Virgin brings forth today the Omnipotent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels give glory with shepherds, and the magi journey with the star when for our sakes was born as a new babe, He who is from eternity God.

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**The Prokeimenon (Psalm 117:14, 18)** The Lord is my strength and my song. The Lord has chastened me sorely.

### **The Reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (6:10-17)**

Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the Gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

**Alleluia Verses: (Psalm 19:1, 9)** May the Lord hear you in the day of trouble. O Lord, save the king, and hear us when we call upon you.

**The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (13:10-17)**

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrite! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" As Jesus said this, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by Him.

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**Holy Oblations are offered today by** May, Sarah & Amber Asaly for the soul of husband and father Michael Asaly departed this life one year, and for the soul of May's Aunt and sister of Virgin Bolous, Rose Francis who passed away last Saturday in Australia, by June Anter for the health and salvation of her friend Caren Deeb Kouri and for the soul of the newly departed Lilian Meena, by Tony Debbas and family for the health and salvation of their brother Michael Debbas, by Wafa Hanna & Family for the soul of her mother Jamileh Shahod departed this life 3 years and for the health and salvation of her family and the Shahod family, and by Austin, Saeda, Anthony, Stephanie & Alex Turk for the soul of mother and grandmother Gladys Khoury departed this life 40 days. Memory Eternal!

**Coffee Hour is given today by** May Asaly and family for one year memorial of Michael Aslay.

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***Please remember in your prayers: Michael Debbas, Reham Turk, Darlyne Dibs, Nuha Qushair, Eleanor Wackeen, Georgette Salameh, June Anter, Kh. Katherine Tsihchlis, Shamesi Joanne Townsend, Tarek Fakhouri, Caren Deeb, and the suffering people of Mexico, Puerto Rico, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Palestine, Venezuela, Ukraine, and all people afflicted with disease and violence.***

<p><b>Ushers serving this week:</b> Nelson Mamey &amp; Jimmy Goson <b>Ushers serving next week:</b> Paul Habeeb &amp; Don Nassif</p>
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## **Quote from the Saints**

“This Mystery is called a ‘receiving’ (metalipsis) because through it we receive the Divinity of Jesus. And it is called ‘Communion’ because through it we enter into communion with Christ and are made partakers both of His flesh and of His Divinity.” *St. John of Damascus*

## **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

**A Big Thank You to all who** ♡ Shared what they CAN for those in Need♡  
Our Church School CANNed Food Drive has been a success. We donated 12 grocery bags full to Second Harvest Food Bank.

Thank you for your generous donations,  
St. Mark Church School Teachers

We have received some pictures from **Life touch** here at the church. Please check the envelope on the table by the book store to find your picture. Please initial if you got yours. Thank you.

***Advent (the Christmas Fast)*** began on **November 15**. This fast, which lasts exactly 40 days, prepares us to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity (Birth) of Jesus Christ, commonly known as Christmas. During this season we are reminded that the Christian life style must include alms giving (acts of charity), prayer and fasting. Therefore, we are asked to intensify these efforts. During Advent we should be praying more, giving more time and resources to those in need, eat less and more simply, and above all, seek to fast from sin. As usual, Wednesdays and Fridays are strict fasting days (abstention from all meat, poultry, dairy & egg products, alcohol and olive oil). Until December 20, the other days of the week we are to fast from all meat and meat products, with wine and olive oil allowed. As part of our Advent effort Orthodox Christians should also participate in the Sacrament of Confession. The only way to combat the commercialization and vaguely sentimental observance of the Birth of the Savior is to prepare for a Holy Feast Day by participating in some meaningful way in the Fast.

**Flowers...** add color and beauty to the church. When our iconostasis was designed we included flower boxes in front of the icons. Thank you to Leo Chade, Gisele Awayjan, Michael & Theresa Joubran, and others for bringing plants and cut flowers to place there. Perhaps you would consider donating flowers as well. Two

rules of thumb: We do not want flowers or plants on the floor of the solea (the raised area in front of the iconostasis) and please keep the size of the flowers/plants reasonable so as not to obscure the holy icons.

### **St. Mark 2018 Stewardship Pledge Has Begun!**

Let's Get it Done!! St. Mark 2018 Stewardship Pledge Drive!

Last week we had a great response with 33 families turning in their 2018 Pledge cards and we're so appreciative. So far we've raised \$69,752 which is 34% of our goal of pledging \$205,000. We also want all the pledge cards turned in by the end of the month, so please take the time to fill them out today. Remember that you don't need to make your first payment until January 2018. Your financial pledge and commitment is important and supports the work of the church, the parish itself and those who work for St. Mark. We appreciate your prayers and support. Additional pledge cards are available in the back of the church and can be dropped off in the white box between the church and the hall. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to ask a parish council member.

In Christ,

St. Mark Stewardship Committee

**Please remember to take your Sunday Bulletin** 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**

**Tuesday December 12**, Journey to Fullness 6:30 p.m.

**Wednesday December 13**, Vespers, 6:30 p.m.

**Friday December 15**, Advent Paraklesis at 6:30 p.m.

#### **Next week**

**Sunday December 17**, Antiochian Women of St Mark Annual Christmas Bake Sale. Please see order form included in this bulletin.

**Tuesday December 19**, Journey to Fullness 6:30 p.m.

**Wednesday December 20**, Pre-Feast Vespers 6:30 p.m.

**Friday December 22**, Royal Hours 9:30 a.m.

**Saturday December 23**, Great Vespers 4:00 p.m.

#### **Upcoming Services & Events**

**Sunday December 24**, Paramon of the Feast;

**Church School Christmas Program**

**Festal Vespers 6:30 p.m.**

**Monday December 25, Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Liturgy 10:00 a.m. (Orthros 8:45 a.m.) Church Office will be closed!**

**Monday January 1, Feast of our Lord's Circumcision and St. Basil Day, Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m. (Orthros 8:45 a.m.) Church Office will be closed!**

**St. Mark Church Blood Drive, January 21, 2018.** Please save the date, invite family and friends. Thanks for saving lives. Please see flyers included for more information.

**2018 Sweetheart Ball: Prospective Debutantes and Parents**

The Ladies' Society of St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Cathedral is now preparing to host the 56th Sweetheart Ball to be held on Saturday, April 14, 2018, at the Universal Hilton Hotel.

Your experience as a debutante will be most memorable, filled with a variety of activities! Nothing would give us greater pleasure than to share this amazing experience with you this coming year. Debutantes must be at least 15 years old by October 1, 2017.

If you are interested in becoming a debutante in the Sweetheart Ball please email or call me as soon as possible. The deadline to sign up is October 15th, 2017.

Much Love,

Caren Deeb Kouri [auntylulu@aol.com](mailto:auntylulu@aol.com) (818-399-8899)

**Orange County Forum**

A place for Orthodox Christian young adults in the OC area, married and single, to have fellowship, fun and engage in social and service activities. This group serves to foster the unity of faith, love and friendship between the Orthodox young adults in the community with discussion, speakers and fun social events. Join our Face book group at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/OrangeCountyForum> for a list of scheduled events and more information. Our next meeting is Tuesday December 19 at St. Mark Church.

**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.

**The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes and Euegraphos**

## (December 10)

Saint Menas, according to the Synaxaristes, had Athens as his homeland. He was a military officer, an educated man and skilled in speech, wherefore he was surnamed Kallikelados ("most eloquent"); EUGRAPHUS was his scribe. Both had Christian parents. The Emperor Maximinus (he was the successor of Alexander Severus, and reigned from 235 to 238) sent Saint Menas to Alexandria to employ his eloquence to end certain strife among the citizens. Saint Menas, having accomplished this, also employed his eloquence to strengthen the Christians in their faith, which when Maximinus heard, he sent Hermogenes, who was an eparch born to unbelievers to turn Menas away from Christ. But Hermogenes rather came to the Faith of Christ because of the miracles wrought by Saint Menas. Saints Menas, EUGRAPHUS, and Hermogenes received the crown of martyrdom in the year 235.

### Section from Advent Paraklesis

#### Ektenia of Supplication

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. (*after each petition*)

Again we pray for Metropolitan Joseph, the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons and monastics and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Again we pray thee, O Lord, that thou wouldst make us worthy to praise and glorify thee together with the angels and shepherds.

We give thanks unto the, O Lord, that thou hast chosen us from the barren Church of the Gentiles and hast grafted us, a young olive shoot, upon the root and stock of righteous Abraham; and we pray thee to open our ears that we might hear the Prophet's warning and 'prepare the way of the Lord.'

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health and salvation and visitation and pardon and forgiveness of sins for the servants of God, all Orthodox Christians of true worship, now gathered to prepare for the feast of thy holy nativity.

For thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto thee we send up glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

### Troparion for the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ (Special Tone 4)

Make ready, O Bethlehem, for Eden hath been opened for all. Prepare, O Ephratha, for the tree of life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin. For her womb did appear as a supersensual paradise, in which is planted that holy Vine. If we should eat thereof we shall live and not die as Adam of old. Christ shall be born, raising the image that fell of old.