

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

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 3, 2017

The Holy Prophet Zephaniah

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.

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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Prokeimenon (Psalm 33:22,1) Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.

The reading from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (5:8-19)

Brethren, walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

Alleluia Verses (Psalm 17:47, 50) It is God who avenges me. God magnifies the salvation of his king, and deals mercifully with his anointed.

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (18:35-43)

At that time, when Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of

David, have mercy on me!” And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, let me receive my sight.” And Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

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Holy Oblations are offered today by Salma Fanous and family, Yacoub Qushair and family for the soul of Hani Fanous departed this life one year, by Samira Attallah & family for the 40 days memorial of her brother Michael Nakad. May their memory be Eternal! By Theresa Joubran for her husband Michel on the occasion of his birthday 12/5, by the Turk family for their Godfather Farid Elnemry departed this life 2 years, by the Bahbah brothers and sisters for the soul of their father Andrew Bahbah on the occasion of his name day and birthday, by Esperance Hadshiti for her daughter Heba Khoury on her birthday and for the health and salvation of Samer, Antonio & Joelle. Holy oblations by Caren Deeb Kouri to St. Mark church “thank you for your love and prayers” with gratitude, Caren Deeb Kouri.

Coffee Hour is given today by Salma Fanous and Yacoub Qushair and their families.

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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 Tschlis, 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.

Ushers serving this week: Phillip Bahbah & Elias Nasrawi

Ushers serving next week: Nelson Mamey & Jimmy Goson

Quote from the Saints

Strive as well as you can to enter deeply with the heart into the church reading and singing and to imprint these on the tablets of the heart.

Abbot Nazarius

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

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!

With 2017 rapidly coming to an end and 2018 quickly approaching, it's time for our parish Stewardship Drive to begin. Please consider making your 2018 pledge commitment to St. Mark now in our "Promise Now, Pay Later" Stewardship Drive. 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 as we strive to reach our \$205,000 goal again. 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 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

Tuesday December 5, Journey to Fullness 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday December 6/ Thursday December 7 Funeral Services for Khouria Lynn Wilson of St. Barnabas Orthodox Church

- Wednesday 7:00 p.m. Viewing at St. Luke Church, Garden Grove
- Thursday 10:00 a.m. Funeral Service at St. Luke Church
 - Graveside service at Westminster Memorial Park
- Meal of Mercy at St. Barnabas Church

Friday December 8, Advent Paraklesis at 6:30 p.m.

Next 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.

Upcoming Services & Events

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

Tuesday December 19, Evening Liturgy, St. Ignatius of Antioch, 6:30 p.m.

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

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

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.**

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 (818-399-8899)

Arabic Lessons at our Church

Lilian Zeidan is offering Arabic Lessons. The lessons are after Church School on Sunday at 12:00 noon for kids up to 7 years old, and from 1- 3 pm for adults. If you are interested please call Lilian Zeidan at 714-721-4148 or email her at lilianzeidan@yahoo.com

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 Prophet Zephaniah (December 2)

The Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonias) was a contemporary of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Prophetess Oldama. He was from the tribe of Simeon, and was the ninth of the Twelve Minor Prophets of the Old Testament. The prophet lived at the royal

court, where he preached repentance and helped King Josiah eliminate idol-worship.

He prophesied about the calamities that were to come for the people of Judea and the surrounding regions: Gaza, Ascalon, Crete, and against the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Ninevites.

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 the together with the angels and shepherds.

We give thanks unto the, O Lord, that thou has 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.