

# St. Mark Orthodox Church

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese,

**His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all  
North America**

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 31, 2017**

**SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST, AND LEAVE-TAKING OF THE  
NATIVITY OF CHRIST**

SPECIAL REFRAIN OF THE SECOND ANTIPHON

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, who wast born of a Virgin, who sing to Thee, Alleluia.

During the Entrance: All: **Troparion of the Feast Tone in the Forth Tone:** Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom. For by it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to thee.

ENTRANCE HYMN (instead of "Come let worship....")

Priest: Out of the womb, before the morning star have I begotten Thee: the Lord hath sworn and will not repent: thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedech.

People: Save us, O Son of God, **who art risen from the dead**, who sing to Thee, Alleluia.

**HYMNS AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE**

**Troparion of the Resurrection in the Fifth Tone:** Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection

**Troparion of the Feast Tone in the Fourth Tone:** Thy Nativity, O Christ our God...

**Troparion for Sunday after the Nativity** Tone 2: Proclaim, O Joseph to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonder; for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; for with the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

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 for Christmas in the Third Tone:** Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent in essence; the earth offereth the cave to the unapproachable One. Angels with shepherds glorify, Magi journey with a star, for a new Child hath been born for our sakes, the pre-eternal God.

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**Prokeimenon** (Psalm 65:4, 1): Let all the earth worship you and sing to you. Shout with joy to God, all the earth.

**The reading from Saint Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy (4:4-8)**

My son Timothy, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

**Alleluia Verses** (Psalm 66:1) May God be merciful to us and bless us. May he cause his face to shine upon us and have mercy on us.

**The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark (1:1-8)**

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight -- "

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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**Holy Oblations are offered today** by Julie Bahbah and family for Issa and Andrew on the occasion of their birthdays.

**Coffee hour is given today** by the Coffee hour committee.

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**Instead of "It is truly meet..." we sing:**

Magnify, O my soul, her who hath delivered us from the curse. Verily it is easier for us to endure silence since there is no dread danger therefrom for us. But because of our strong desire, O Virgin, and Mother of sameness, to indite well-balanced songs of praise, this becometh indeed onerous to us. Wherefore, grant us power to equal our natural inclination.

***Please remember in your prayers: Michael Debbas, Reham Turk, Darlyne Dibs, Nuha Qushair, Eleanor Wackeen, Georgette Salameh, June Anter, Kh. Katherine Tsichlis, Khouria 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: Ghassan Awayjan & Sami Nino**

**Ushers serving next week: Sam Munayyer & Wael Kahsou**

### **Quote from the Saints**

The Lord, before His Incarnation, let mankind experience all the bitterness of sin, all their powerlessness to eradicate it; and when all longed for a Deliverer, then He appeared, the most wise, all-powerful Physician and Helper. When men hungered and thirsted after righteousness, as it grew weaker, then the everlasting righteousness came.

*St. John of Kronstadt*

### **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

### **Annual St. Mark New Year's Eve Dinner Dance**

**Please make sure to pick up your 2018 calendar from the table by the bookstore. Please one calendar per family.**

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

This month we've had a great response with 46 families turning in their 2018 Pledge cards! So far we've raised \$82,332 which is 36% of our goal of pledging \$205,000. But we still have some pledge cards out there and would like 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*

**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!**

**Tuesday January 3, Vespers 7:00 p.m.**

**Saturday January 6, Feast of Theophany Liturgy 10:00 a.m.**

## *Next week*

**Sunday January 7, Zalabieh Coffee hour sponsored by the Antiochian Women.**

**Sunday January 7, Teen SOYO Christmas outing**

**Tuesday January 9, Journey to Fullness at 6:30 p.m.**

## *Upcoming Services & Events*

**Sunday January 14, Antiochian Women of St Mark Christmas outing at Hanna Restaurant after Church.**

**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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **Feast of the Circumcision of Christ (January 1)**

Since the Mosaic Law commands that if a woman give birth to a male child, he should be circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh on the eighth day (Lev. 12:2-3), on this, the eighth day from His Nativity, our Saviour accepted the circumcision commanded by the Law. According to the command of the Angel, He received the Name which is above every name: JESUS, which means "Saviour" (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31 and 2:21).