

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

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



January 7, 2018

SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY PROPHET, FORERUNNER

AND BAPTIST JOHN

SPECIAL REFRAIN OF THE SECOND ANTIPHON

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, who was baptized by John in the Jordan, 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

Come let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, **who art risen from the dead**. Who sing to thee: Alleluia

HYMNS AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Troparion for the Resurrection, in the Sixth Tone: When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Troparion of Epiphany in the First Tone: When Thou O Lord wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest! For the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, and called Thee his beloved Son. And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of his word. O Christ, our God, who hast revealed Thyself and hast enlightened the world, Glory to Thee.

Troparion of St. John the Baptist in the Second Tone: The memory of the just is celebrated with songs of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for thee, O Forerunner; for thou wast shown indeed to be the most honorable of the Prophets, for in the waters thou didst baptize him who had been proclaimed. After suffering with joy in behalf of the truth, thou didst proclaim to those in hades the God who appeared in the flesh, who taketh away the sin of the world and granteth us great mercy.

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 Theophany in the Fourth Tone: Today thou hast appeared to the universe, O Lord; and thy light hath been signed upon us, who praise thee with knowledge, saying: Thou hast come and appeared, O unapproachable Light.

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Instead of "Holy God." We sing "As many as have been baptized...."

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The Prokeimenon in tone 7 (Psalm 63.10,1) The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord. O God, hear my prayer.

The Reading is from the Acts of the Apostles. (19:1-8)

In those days, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the One Who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve of them in all. And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, arguing and pleading about the Kingdom of God.

Alleluia Verses in tone 4 (Psalm 91.12-13.) The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree and shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the name of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. John. (1:29-34)

At that time, John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of Whom I said, 'After me comes a man Who ranks before me, for He was before me.' I myself did not know Him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that He might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on Him. I myself did not know Him; but He Who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on Whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is He Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

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Hymn to the Theotokos (instead of "It is truly meet...") in Tone 2

Magnify, O my soul, the Maiden who delivered us from the curse. O the wonder of thy super-intelligent birth-giving, thou all-pure bride, the blessed Mother through whom we have received perfect salvation, we indite a fitting song, offering as a gift the song of gratitude.

Communion Hymn of the Synaxis in Tone 8: In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings. Alleluia.

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Holy Oblations are offered today by Lydia, Charlie, Michael & Chris Wakileh for Ibrahim on the occasion on his birthday 1/6, and by Fr. Michael and family for our Protodeacon George Moubayed on the occasion of his birthday (January 7)

In lieu of the coffee hour today the Antiochian Women of St. Mark are selling Zalabieh Dessert for the Feast of Theophany.

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Please remember in your prayers: Michael Debbas, Reham Turk, 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.

<p>Ushers serving this week: Sam Munayyer & Wael Kashou Ushers serving next week: Marwan Dabit & Gabriel Attallah</p>

Quote from the Saints

"St. John the Forerunner set out to men the whole path of true repentance: 'Repent ye!' And he immediately continued: 'Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance' (Matt. 3:2,8)." -- *St. Nicholai of Zica*

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

Zalabieh Coffee hour sponsored by the Antiochian Women

Teen SOYO Christmas outing after church.

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

Our Metropolitan has issued instructions regarding our Sunday Bulletins and Announcements. In order to preserve the dignity of the holy services, the following instructions are in effect as of January 2018.

“The church bulletin must only contain the following:

- a. The Epistle and Gospel for the day (in English first, followed by Arabic or any other language as necessary).
- b. The variable hymns for the day as listed in the liturgical resource section of Antiochian.org.
- c. Weekly offerings, prayers for the sick and Trisagion services by parishioners, etc.
- d. Excerpts from the Synaxarion of the day and sayings from the saints or short writings about the season or the feast being celebrated.
- e. Calendar of upcoming services and important meetings (organizations, Bible studies, retreats, lectures, etc.)

4. Any fliers or advertising of social functions (including church functions), outside advertising, etc. should be separate from the bulletin and placed on a table in the vestibule for distribution or on tables in the church hall. In other words, in the church bulletin itself, there should only be liturgical and religious items, except for the calendar of events where you may list by date upcoming services, meetings, retreats, Bible studies, lectures, Trisagion Services, etc.

5. Regarding announcements/speaking in the church. Only clergy may speak or make announcements from the solea. If any organization or person needs an announcement to be made, he or she must give it to the pastor before the liturgy (we don't want people walking in and out of the altar during the liturgy) and the pastor will make it on behalf of the person or organization.”

Flyers for upcoming events will be handed out in the Narthex as people leave the Divine Liturgy or left out on tables in the hall, and as needed (with the pastor's approval), verbal announcements may be made by lay people over the public address system in the fellowship Hall. If you have questions regarding the new policy, please direct them to Fr Michael.

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

This month we've had a great response with 49 families turning in their 2018 Pledge cards! So far we've raised \$93,882 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

Tuesday January 9, 6:30 p.m. Adult Education series: A Journey to Fullness continues.

Wednesday January 10, Vespers 7:00 p.m.

Next week

Sunday January 14, Antiochian Women Holiday Luncheon

Tuesday January 16, 6:30 p.m. Adult Education series: A Journey to Fullness continues.

Wednesday January 17, Vespers 7:00 p.m.

Upcoming Services & Events

Sunday January 21, Antiochian Women of St. Mark meeting 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.

Synaxis of the Holy Forerunner and Baptist John (January 7)

Because John's main role in his life was played out on the day of Theophany (Epiphany), the Church from earliest times dedicated the "day after" to his memory.

Among the Gospel personalities who surround the Savior, John the Baptist occupies a totally unique place by his roles in baptizing the Messiah and in baptizing people for repentance. John prepared himself in the wilderness of the desert for 30 years for his great service by a strict life, by fasting, prayer and sympathy for the fate of God's people. John was of such moral purity that, in truth, he could be called an angel (messenger) as Holy Scripture calls him rather than a mortal man. He appeared on the banks of the Jordan, to prepare the people by his preaching to accept the Savior of the world. In church hymnology, the Baptist is called a "bright morning star," whose gleaming outshone the brilliance of all the other stars, announcing the coming dawn of the day of grace, illumined with the light of the spiritual Sun, our Lord Jesus Christ. John differs from all other prophets especially in that he had that privilege of being able, with his hand, to show the world Him about Whom he prophesied. As the holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord—whom the Lord called the greatest of the prophets—John concludes the history of the Old Testament and opens the era of the New Testament. He bore witness to the Only-Begotten Son of God, incarnate in the flesh. John was accounted worthy to baptize Him in the waters of the Jordan, and he was a witness of the Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity at the Savior's Baptism.