

المسيح قام! حقاً قام!

THE APOSTLE

Christ is Risen; Truly he
Is Risen!

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2018

SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF IRVINE

CHRIST IS RISEN; TRULY HE IS RISEN

Pastor's Column

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America
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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

2017-2018 PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman - Barbara Scholl {18} (949) 533-4634
Vice Chairman – Kyra Pelachik {18} (714) 906-9231
Secretary – Jerri Lynn Mamey {18} (949) 831-5776
Treasurer – Marwan Dabit {20} (626)665-1096
Assistant Treasurers- Melad Hanna {20} (949) 433-
1698 & **Richard Jirjis {20}** (714) 404-9002
Dimitri Kort {18} (909) 529-3671
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: Kristen
Chala (909) 217-2317

Teen SOYO Co-Presidents: Christina Habeeb,
Marianne Hanouneh

WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING

By Fr John Breck

Miraculously, Orthodox Christianity has preserved the essence of “the faith once delivered to the saints.” By the sheer grace of God, it has maintained the Apostolic Faith in the face of extraordinary pressures, from persecution and martyrdom to Western secularism and pluralism. Without that grace, Orthodoxy would have disappeared before the end of the first millennium. And with it would have disappeared “true belief” and “true worship.”

Because of its God-given survival and God-inspired expansion throughout what is called “the Diaspora,” Orthodoxy continues to preserve, proclaim and celebrate the truth about God and about ourselves. More than any other expression of Christian faith, it enables us to know God, to celebrate His saving work, and to participate in His very life. To borrow the expression of St. Innocent Veniaminov, Orthodoxy does nothing less than indicates the Way that leads to the Kingdom of Heaven.

That Way, nevertheless, includes an aspect that is particularly difficult to preserve and to cultivate in modern American society: an aspect expressed most eloquently in the Entrance Hymn of the Divine Liturgy of Holy Saturday.

On that day, we sing with solemn anticipation words that express awe -- fear and trembling -- before the ineffable mystery of the death and coming resurrection of God's eternal Son.

“Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and in fear and trembling stand,

Pondering nothing earthly-minded.
For the King of kings, and the Lord
of lords, comes to be slain, to give
Himself as food to the faithful!"

In the usual celebrations of the Divine Liturgy, we exhort ourselves to "lay aside all earthly care," in order to receive "the King of all." On this particular day, as we commemorate Christ's repose in the tomb and His descent into the realm of the dead, we recall the price paid for our own liberation from death and corruption. We declare that He, the pre-existent divine Son of the Father, came into our world and into our life for one purpose: to die, that through His death we might have life, lived in eternal communion with the Holy Trinity.

There is nothing in human experience, nor even in the human imagination, that could offer greater promise and greater joy than this central message of the Christian gospel. Yet for many of us, the most familiar and painful aspect of our lenten journey is likely to be our inability to relate to that message -- to that extraordinary promise -- in a way that actually changes our life. Distraction, dispersion and chaos, whether from outside or from deep within our own psyche, work their demonic influence in every phase of our daily life, while we are at work, with our friends or family, or in a liturgical service. And so we live our lives on the surface, feeling little and caring little for what is in fact the one thing in this world that really matters, the one thing that is truly needful.

As this Lenten season flows into Holy Week, and we journey with our Lord toward His Passion and Death, may we anticipate in our thought and prayer the call issued by that magnificent hymn we will sing together on Holy Saturday morning. May we find within ourselves the courage, patience and conviction to lay aside all earthly cares; to wage relentless warfare against the demons of distraction, confusion and pointless routine; and to assume the last days of the fast in order to feast upon the food which He, through His sacrificial love, offers to the faithful.

Beginning today, beginning now, may we simply yet passionately beg God to grant silence to our mortal flesh, that we might welcome Him from the

very depths of our being, with fear, with trembling, and with boundless joy.

Amen!

Fr. Michael

Special Services/Events in April 2018

Palm Sunday and Holy Week

Sunday April 1, Entrance of our Lord and Savior into Jerusalem {Palm Sunday} 8:45 a.m. Orthros, 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Sunday evening, 7:00 p.m. Bridegroom Orthros

Monday April 2, 7:00 p.m. Bridegroom Orthros

Tuesday April 3, 7:00 p.m. Bridegroom Orthros

Wednesday April 4, 7:00 p.m. Holy Unction Service

Thursday Morning April 5: Orthros 9:00 a.m., Holy Thursday Vespers Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday Evening April 5: Service of the Twelve Passion Gospels, 7:00 p.m.

Friday Morning April 6: Royal Hours, 9:30 a.m.

Friday Afternoon April 6: Vespers of the Taking Down of our Lord's Body from the Cross, 3:30 p.m.

Friday Evening April 6: Service of Lamentations 7:00 p.m.

Saturday morning April 7 Holy Saturday Vespers Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Saturday night April 7/ April 8: PASCHA Rush, Procession, Orthros and Divine Liturgy 11:00 p.m. Pascha Breakfast following.

April 8, Great and Holy PASCHA, Agape Vespers, 1:00 p.m.

May 2018 Advanced Calendar

May 13, Mother's Day & Thomas Sunday

May 20, St. Mark Antiochian Women
Mother/Daughter Tea

May 27, Pentecost Sunday

THE LENTEN FAST (Lent began on February 19)

During Great Lent, the rules of the dietary fast are thus: All of Lent and Holy Week we are to abstain from all meat and animal products (including eggs, milk, animal fats, etc.) The only exceptions are shellfish. In addition, Mondays through Fridays, we are to abstain from wine and other alcoholic drinks and olive oil. This is the "letter of the law." It is important for you and your family to participate in the "spirit of the law", working out this Lenten effort within your household in ways pleasing to God and beneficial for the soul. We all must be reminded that the purpose of the dietary fast is to help us to fast from sin and ungodliness! If you have questions regarding Lenten discipline, please see Fr. Michael.

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

April 7th

SAINT GEORGE THE CONFESSOR

Because of his great virtues, which he attained through long ascetic labors, George was chosen and installed as Metropolitan of Mitylene. This saint governed his spiritual flock prudently and zealously to a ripe old age. When a persecution began under Leo V, the Armenian, who destroyed the holy icons, this saintly elder was summoned to Constantinople, to an assembly of bishops convened by him and, whose intention it was to discontinue the veneration of icons, George not only refused to carry out the wish of the wicked emperor, but with other courageous bishops stood up in defense of holy icons. Not only was he ridiculed for this, but he was also banished into exile by the emperor to the region of Cherson. There he endured all sorts of physical afflictions and deprivations for the remaining years of his life. He died and was translated to eternal life about the year 816 A.D. Because of his great sanctity and love for the Lord Jesus, George was a great miracle-worker, both during his life and after his death.

April 12th

SAINT BASIL THE CONFESSOR

At the time of the Iconoclastic controversy, this devout man was bishop in the town of Parius in Asia Minor. He refused to sign an imperial document against the veneration of icons. For that, Basil was greatly persecuted and severely tortured. He remained as firm as a diamond in His Orthodoxy. He died at the beginning of the eighth century and was translated to the Lord.

April 20th

THE HOLY APOSTLE ZACCHAEUS

At first, Zacchaeus was a tax collector and a sinner. When our Lord saw him in Jericho in a tree and entered his home, Zacchaeus was brought to repentance. "He (Jesus) came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed the sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, Who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him: 'Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house.' And he came down quickly and received Him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, 'He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner.' But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over.'" And Jesus said to him, 'today salvation has come to this house because this man is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost' (St. Luke 19: 1-10). Later on, Zacchaeus followed the Apostle Peter who appointed him bishop of Caesarea in Palestine where he faithfully served the Gospel and died peacefully.

April 27th

THE HOLY APOSTLE SIMEON

Simeon was one of the Seventy Apostles. He was the son of Cleopas who was the brother of Joseph, the betrothed of the All-Holy Mother of God. Seeing the miracles of our Lord and Savior, Jesus

Christ, Simeon believed and was numbered among the Seventy Apostles. He preached the Gospel of Christ with great zeal and courage throughout Judea. When the nefarious Jews killed James, the brother of our Lord and first bishop of the Church of Jerusalem, by hurling him from the heights of the Temple and beat him over the head with a hoe, then this Simeon, a cousin of James, was appointed Bishop of Jerusalem. And Simeon, as the second bishop of the Holy City, governed the Church of God with wisdom and strength until a ripe old age. He was over one hundred years old when he suffered. His suffering was in this manner: during the reign of Emperor Trajan, a two-fold persecution began: one in Palestine against the descendants of David and the other persecution against the Christians. The wicked people accused Simeon of being both one and the other (a Jew and a Christian). St. Simeon endured enormous pains and finally was crucified on a cross, as was his Lord, Whom he faithfully served on earth.

Parish & Organizations News

Antiochian Women of St. Mark

The Antiochian Women of St. Mark had their Meeting Sunday, March 18, 2018 Opening Prayer: Prayer was lead Fr. Michael. There were 16 ladies in attendance including Father Michael.

Treasurer Report by Gisele Awayjan, Gave an overview of our current expenditures.

Scrip Report by Saeda Turk we received a donation of \$2500 which was sent to P.C. Monthly profit \$ 2200. We are in process to add Super King store to our script. Everyone was encouraged to use Amazon Smile on line.

Humanitarian Report by Afifa Artoul, The Humanitarian Committee visited different ladies in need of support during the month.

Old Business:

President Kristin gave thanks to all of the ladies who signed to read the Sunday Epistle and who ushered during March.

President also thanked all of the ladies who donated and served on March 11 during the Falafel Luncheon and many thanks went to Janette Ganter for donating the Falafel. Proceeds of \$426 were allocated to the Antiochian women Project "Vocations".

President also gave thanks to Denise and Don Nassif for following up with the Spinach Pies sales. Many thanks to Kh. Donna who bought new Tablecloths from Amazon using the Scrip. Hannah's Gift was March 1st, Afifa, Kristin prepared food and took it for serving.

New Business:

Palm Sunday Annual Bake Sale will take place on April 1, 2018.

Planning to take a trip to St. Barbara Monastery. Father will contact Mother Victoria in order the group can visit after Pascha.

A sign-up sheet is placed in the Hall for Pascha Breakfast April 7, everyone is encouraged to sign for item

We approved giving donation to Our Church Good Samaritan Fund: \$1000 motion made by Vera Bahbah, seconded by Tammy Qutami.

Santa Barbara Monastery \$1200 one payment and not divided, motion made by Tammy Qutami and seconded by Barbara Khamis.

St Macarius Monastery (requested by Kristin) \$1000 motion made by Afifa Artoul, seconded by Tammy Qutami

Closing Prayer: Father Michael Laffoon

Next Meeting: Sunday April 22, 2018 after church

***Prepared by Vera Bahbah, Secretary
Antiochian Women of St. Mark***

Teen SOYO

Old Business:

Friday, March 2nd, we had a great turnout of 32 teens attend a very productive "Ask Abouna" session with St. Luke's Teens at St. Mark's church. We first attended the Akathist Vesper service followed by a Lenten dinner and then had the Teens ask anonymous questions of challenging issues they are facing in their day to day lives as well as questions they had about their faith. Both Priests did a wonderful job of answering some very difficult and pressing questions in a non threatening environment!

Sunday, March 11th was another very productive day for SOYO! Since the month of March has been designated as SOYO Service Youth month, we put together 125 plus hygiene kits for the homeless

through FOCUS as a community outreach program at St. Luke's Hall! We had 39 kids participate and set up a very organized assembly line to prepare the kits with all kinds of snacks and toiletries that were paid for through our SOYO Account. The kids really enjoyed giving back to the community! Once again we enjoyed a delicious Lenten lunch before hand while holding a brief SOYO meeting and played dodge ball and some other fun games once we were finished with the kits.

New Business:

Please note April 6th is Good Friday. Unfortunately both Dana Chade and myself will be out of town for the "All Night Vigil" We are hoping we will be able to recruit 3-4 adults to substitute for us. This is a tradition we have had for years and is usually everyone's favorite event of the year! We attend Good Friday services, have some snacks, and read psalms from the Bible as we watch over the Tomb of Jesus overnight. The Teens bring sleeping bags & sleep in the Sanctuary. More details to follow.

*Yours in Christ,
Paula Rodriguez
Teen SOYO Advisor*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Sarah Ammari 4/24
- Jessica Azzam 4/28
- Andrew Azzam 4/17
- George Bahbah 4/8
- Grace Bahbah 4/8
- Julie Bahbah 4/11
- Peter Batarseh 4/25
- Rita Bayouk 4/20
- Nicholas Benjamin 4/29
- Christopher Chala 4/28
- Matthew Daruty 4/25
- Liana Debbas 4/16
- Mary Dibs 4/27
- Samar Elsayegh 4/30
- Elaina Fakhouri 4/11
- Fatin Fakhouri 4/11
- Ian Fortuna 4/27
- Marianne Hanouneh 4/9
- Tyler Hilmar 4/25
- Theresa Joubran 4/1

- Juliette Khamis 4/4
- Mary Ann Khamis 4/1
- Aida Khamis 4/21
- Malvina Kumar 4/2
- Sophia Liqueze 4/25
- Nathaniel Liqueze 4/25
- Jean Nasrawi 4/26
- Jason Nino 4/15
- Sammy Nino 4/7
- Emily Nour 4/26
- Jeries Qoborsi 4/12
- Daniel Qoborsi 2/24
- Paul Rodriguez 4/13
- Alexander Saadeh 4/17
- Aaron Scholl 4/11
- Jay Skaff 4/8
- Sarah Smathers 4/17
- Charlie Tarazi 4/7
- Carol Tierney 4/24
- Stephanie Toubbeh 4/30
- Gina Turk 4/26

Happy Anniversary

- Khaled & Ruba Ammari 4/16
- Michael & Rania Debbas 4/9
- Maurice & Nadia Karkar 4/17
- Robert & Linda Mokbel 4/23
- Sam & Adel Munayyer 4/29
- Mufid & Salam Samara 4/27

*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 Apostle is a monthly newsletter of St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church. **Parish Organizations are to submit articles by the 15th of the month to the Church office (949-851-8933)***

**ST MARK ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH
17840 SKY PARK CIRCLE
IRVINE, CA 92614
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