

THE APOSTLE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2018

SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH

OF IRVINE

Pastor's Column

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America
Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of all 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 Hanounch

The Paschal Letter of His Eminence **Metropolitan Joseph**

Beloved in Christ,
CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED, HE IS RISEN!

*Having traversed the time of the Great Fast with
fasting and repentance, and having witnessed the
Passion and Burial of our Great God and Savior,
Jesus Christ, with fear and awe, we now enter in
the radiant joy of the Resurrection!*

*At a time when humanity appears to be throwing
itself into ever more darkness, we rejoice in the
fact that Christ destroyed death by the very means
of death. In other words, Our Lord has shown
Himself to be the faithful Bridegroom who can
take our very means of rebellion and transform
them into Life-giving means of communion.*

*Let us with grateful hearts embrace the mystery of
the Life and Light pouring forth from the Empty
Tomb and, together, take up the evangelical labor
of proclaiming to the world that the Lord is indeed
risen and will indeed transform our sorrows into
joy!*

Yours in the Risen Lord,

+JOSEPH

*Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all
North America*

SPECIAL SERVICES/EVENTS IN MAY 2017

Sunday May 6, Church School Boutique

Sunday May 13, Mother’s Day Luncheon

Tuesday May 15, 22, 29 Journey to Fullness, adult education 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday May 16, Evening Divine Liturgy, Feast of our Lord’s Ascension

Sunday May 27, Feast of Pentecost

Note: Per the decision of the Holy Synod of Antioch in 1997, the entire forty days between Pascha Sunday and Ascension are observed as fast-free.

Advanced Calendar of Services & Events in June

June 3 through June 28, Apostles Fast

June 3, Last Day of Church School

June 10 Church School Awards Presentation

June 17 Father’s Day Luncheon sponsored by the Antiochian Women

June 24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist

June 29, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul

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

May 3

THE HOLY MARTYRS TIMOTHY AND MAURA

The fate of these two wonderful martyrs, husband and wife, is amazing! Because of their Christian Faith, and only twenty days following their marriage, they were brought to court before Arrianus, the governor of Thebaid, during the reign of Diocletian. Timothy was a reader in his local

church. The governor questioned him: "Who are you?" To this Timothy responded: "I am a Christian and a reader in God's Church." The governor further said to him: "Do you not see these instruments of torture surrounding you?" Timothy replied: "And do you not see all the angels of God who strengthen me?" Then the governor ordered an iron rod be pierced through his ears, so that the pupils of his eyes protruded from pain. After that, they hung him upside down and placed a piece of wood in his mouth. At first Maura was frightened because of Timothy's sufferings, but when her husband encouraged her, she also confessed her steadfast faith before the governor. The governor then ordered all the hairs of her head pulled out and after that severed the fingers from her hands. After many other tortures, from which they would have succumbed had not the Grace of God strengthened them, they were both crucified facing each other. Thus hanging on the crosses, they lived for nine days, counseling and encouraging each other in perseverance. On the tenth day, they gave up their souls to their Lord for Whom they had endured death on a cross, and so were made worthy of His kingdom. They suffered honorably for Christ in the year 286 A.D.

(*)The name "Maura" means black. Therefore, in Macedonia, the feast day of these two saints is referred to as Black Day. On the island of Zakynthos, there exists a church dedicated to Saints Timothy and Maura in which many miracles of healing have taken place.

May 11

SAINT NICODEMUS, THE ARCHBISHOP OF PEĆ

This great hierarch was a Serb by birth. He lived a life of asceticism on the Holy Mt. Athos and was abbot of Hilendar Monastery. Following the death of Sava III, he was elected as the Archbishop of "all the Serbian and coastal lands" in the year 1317 A.D. Nicodemus crowned King Milutin in the year 1321 A.D. He translated the Jerusalem Typikon into Serbian. [The Typikon is a book containing the rubrics (directions) for the celebration of the Divine Mysteries and other offices of the Orthodox Church.] In the introduction of this book, Nicodemus writes: "Almighty God, Who knows our weaknesses, will give us spiritual strength, but only

if we first display effort." He sincerely loved the ascetical life and labored to strengthen it throughout the Serbian land. He labored relentlessly to uproot the Bogomil heresy and to strengthen the Orthodox Faith. He died in the Lord in the year 1325 A.D. His miracle-working relics repose in the monastery in Peć.

May 20

THE HOLY MARTYR ASCLAS

Asclas suffered in the town of Antinoe in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian. He was flogged, scraped, burned with candles, but he remained unwavering in the Faith to the end. When the tormentor Arrian was crossing the Nile by boat, Asclas, through prayer, stopped the boat in the middle of the river and would not allow it to move until Arrian wrote that he believed in Christ as the One and Almighty God. But ascribing this miracle to a magical skill of Asclas, the tormentor forgot what he wrote and continued to torment the man of God. Finally they tied a stone around his neck and cast him into the Nile River. On the third day Christians found the body of Asclas along the shore with the stone around his neck (as the martyr foretold to them before his death) and honorably buried him in the year 287 A.D. Leonides, the holy martyr, also suffered with him. Arrian, their tormentor, later repented, believed in Christ with his whole heart and openly began to express his faith before the pagans. The pagans also killed him, and so Arrian--a former tormentor of Christians--was made worthy of the martyr's wreath for Christ.

May 29

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The commemoration and praise of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council is held on the Sunday before Pentecost, the Seventh Sunday after Pascha. This Council was held in Nicaea in the year 325 A.D. during the reign of the saintly Emperor Constantine the Great. The Council was convened to eliminate the confusion which Arius, a priest of Alexandria, had created by his false teaching. He taught that Christ was created in time by God and that He is not the pre-eternal Son of God, equal in being [essence] with God the Father. Three hundred and eighteen Holy Fathers participated in this

Council. The Council condemned the teaching of Arius, and Arius was anathematized since he refused to repent. The Council finally confirmed the Symbol of Faith [The Creed], which was later augmented at the Second Ecumenical Council [381 A.D.]. Many distinguished saints were present at the First Ecumenical Council, among whom the most notable were: St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia, St. Spyridon, St. Athanasius, St. Acillus, St. Paphnutius, St. James of Nisibis, Macarius of Jerusalem, Alexander of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius of Caesarea, Metrophanes of Constantinople, John of Persia, Aristarchus of Armenia and many others from the East. From the West, the following were present: Hosius of Cordova, Theophilus the Goth, Cecilianus of Carthage and others. The most important work of this Council was the confirmation of the Symbol of Faith [The Creed]. The Council also established the time of the celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ [Pascha] and issued twenty various canons.

Parish & Organizations News

Baptized into Christ

On April 21, Luciano Patricio Mansour son of Patrick Nabil Mansour and Florella Guerra. His godfather is Nicholas Mansour and his Godmother Jaclyn Mansour

Received into the Orthodox Faith by Chrismation.

On March 31, 2018 Jannae "Katherine Nichols At St. Mark Church. Her sponsor was Carol Tierney.

Departed this Life

On April 4, 2018 Reham Turk the wife of Anees Turk, her funeral was at St. Mark Church on April 10. Grave side was at El Toro Memorial Park in Lake Forest, followed by the meal of Mercy at St. Mark Church Hall.
May her Memory Be Eternal!!

Antiochian Women of St. Mark

The Antiochian Women of St. Mark had their Meeting on Sunday, April 22, 2018. Opening Prayer: Prayer was lead by Fr. Michael. There were 11 ladies in attendance including Father Michael.

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

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

Old Business:

Many thanks to the Antiochian Women of St. Mark for all of their contributions for the month of March and April. Our Palm Sunday Bake Sale took place on April 1, 2018 with a \$2,683.82 income. Thank you to Denise Nassif and Barbara Khamis for co-chairing our annual Palm Sunday Bake Sale.

Our Pascha Breakfast was on April 7, thank you to everyone for donating the main food items along with donations of \$400.00 were given. Thank you to Denise Nassif, Don Nassif and the Pascha Breakfast Committee for a delicious breakfast along with fellowship.

New Business:

Update on the Mother/Daughter Tea party has been canceled for this year.

Grief Support Group will start on Saturday, April 28, 2018 at St. Mark Church from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. which is coordinated by Tammy Qutami.

Closing Prayer: Father Michael Laffoon

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, May 17, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. The Antiochian Women will be treating the ladies to a pizza dinner. Please plan on attending and making a difference in our organization.

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

Teen SOYO

Christ Is Risen!

The month of April was a very celebratory month!

Holy Thursday, April 5th, St. Mark's Teen SOYO attended an annual event at St. Luke's where the Teens watched the movie, "The Passion" followed by a discussion of the recount of Jesus' last days through his crucifixion & resurrection. Once they were done with the discussion the kids enjoyed a

delicious crawfish, corn on the cob, potatoes, and salad dinner where they were able to enjoy each other's fellowship! After dinner most of the teens stayed at St. Luke's to attend the Holy Thursday evening Service. It is unfortunate that St. Mark's Teens' attendance at this very special event was minimal; however there was a nice turnout of St. Luke's teens who were able to benefit from this season appropriate function.

On April 6th, Good Friday St. Mark's held its Annual "All Night Vigil". Fortunately we had a great turnout and had over 25 teens from both St. Mark's & St. Luke's combined sleep over and guard Jesus' tomb while reading excerpts from the Bible. Kindly, since both Dana and myself were out of town Charlotte Khoury, Fatin Fakhouri & Rhanda Salameh generously filled in for us! They also fed the Teens some delicious food to sustain them through the night. It was a very spiritually enriching experience for everyone who attended!

April 14th, several of our Teens attended The St. Nicholas Debutante Ball! Congratulations to the following Debutante from St. Mark's;

Kayla Daruty
Jillian Grace Goson
Amanda Faith Khoury
Anabelle Rose Mahshi
Rachel Anastasia Mahshi
Samira Virginia Skaff

We are so proud of the amazing young woman you are all becoming!

The following boys were fortunate enough to be selected as escorts to some of these beautiful Debutantes;

Andrew Bahbah
George Bahbah
Paul Habeeb
Paul Rodriguez-Anter
Jay Skaff

It was a memorable evening for all!

Our next upcoming SOYO meeting will be this Sunday, April 29th directly after Sunday school in the Teen room.

*Yours in Christ,
Paula Rodriguez*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

June Anter 5/20
Justine Bahbah 5/18
Ghassan Bahou 5/4
Steven Berooty 5/13
Ruth Conn 5/30
Maha Daher 5/25
Scott Daruty 5/19
May Dabbah 5/27
Natalie Debbas 5/9
Mirna Debbas 5/29
George Debbas 5/18
Omar Fakhouri 5/2
Sammi Faraj 5/15
Noah Fortuna 5/4
Josie Goson 5/28
Tania Habeeb 5/21
Paul Habeeb 5/22
Sahar Hanna 5/25
Vera Jirjis 5/13
Michael Joellson 5/16
Bachir Kassir 5/30
Alexander Kashou 5/5
Michael Khoury 5/5
Maysoon Khoury 5/10
Kandy Kort 5/4
Elizabeth Kort 5/4
Emilie Laffoon 5/27
Ziad Mahshi 5/29
Anabella Mahshi 5/10
Richael Mahshi 5/11
Nelson Mamey 5/29
Alexander Mokbel 5/31
George Richards 5/2
Sophia Richards 5/2
Ramez Sayegh 5/20
Natalia Soury 5/14
Fouad Tarazi 5/31
Richie Tierney 5/2
Anees Turk 5/4
Angelina Turk 5/29
Sophia Whitacre 5/20
Connor Wilde 5/8

Happy Anniversary

Phillip & Tarize Bahbah 5/9

Jacob & Vera Bahbah 5/13
Samir & Lucy Billeh 5/2
Mark & Eileen Ellis 5/22
Kevin & Sara Fortuna 5/23
Richard & Vera Jirjis 5/9
Michel & Theresa Joubran 5/17
Bachir & Helen Kassir 5/27
Elias & Najat Khury 5/1
Fr. Michael & Donna Laffoon 5/6
Nelson & Jerri Mamey 5/30
Tanya & Joseph Richards 5/29
Najeeb & Heba Saadeh 5/15
Robert & Sarah Smathers 5/10

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)

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IRVINE, CA 92614
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