

THE APOSTLE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JULY & AUGUST 2018

SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH

OF IRVINE

Pastor's Column

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America
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Metropolitan of all North America
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Rev Fr. Patrick Irish, Attached
Rev. Protodeacon George Moubayed
Rev. Deacon Nicholas Mamey
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 Rodriquez & 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 Co-Directors: Tammy Qutami (714) 449-9680 and Kristin Chala (909) 662-9131
Men's Club Acting President: Ghassan Awayjan (951) 454-5429
Antiochian Women of St. Mark President: Kristin Chala (909) 217-2317
Teen SOYO Co-Presidents: Christina Habeeb, Marianne Hanounch

We live such hectic lives in the midst of our chaotic and ever changing world that we need to make an extra effort to keep the Holy Trinity in the center of our lives. I came across booklet published online by St. George Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Greenville, South Carolina entitled The Ten Point Program for Living an Orthodox Life. Here are the Introduction and the Ten Points.

Introduction

The final goal of man is communion with God. The path to this communion has been precisely defined: faith, and walking in the Commandments with the help of God's grace.

Saint Theophan the Recluse

While it is true that the Orthodox way of life is not the normal way of life for most people in our society, it is a most practical life for married people with families faced with the challenges of careers. In fact, it is the way of living that will make your life less stressful and more meaningful.

The Orthodox Way of Life is NOT a monastic way of life. Even though monasticism was part of the early church, we are not required to live this most honored lifestyle. Only a few are called to this style of life. We do, however, have the same goals. Like the monks we seek holiness and union with God, but we are called to live in the world with our families. The principles of our spiritual growth are the same no matter which path we chose.

Most of us never take the time to reflect on the purpose of our lives. Often we don't do this until someone we love departs from this life unexpectedly. During this moment of grief, our soul has our attention and we begin to think about what life is all about. In one way, life is about death. We all know this is where we are headed, but we too

often refuse to think about this seriously because of the unknown and the fear it presents.

The purpose of life taught by the Apostles and the Church Fathers is one of finding union with God. Jesus came to save us and to open the gates of heaven for us. He showed us how to live through His teaching and example. He showed us that we have nothing to fear in death.

To begin, you must have faith in God and accept His love for you. With a little faith, you can begin to live the Orthodox way of life outlined in this booklet. This way of life is given to us by Christ Himself through His Church. It is a proven way of life that WILL bring you closer to God. As you come closer to God, you increase your capability to deal with any difficulty you may face. You increase your ability to live according to the virtues.

These ten points presented here are only an outline on how to find union with God. However, if you follow them you will be led to everything you need to know.

Study each one of them and examine your current life. Then seek ways to make the necessary changes in your life to incorporate them. Always pray for God's help in this.

The Ten Points

1. Praying Daily: Have a regular prayer rule that includes morning and evening prayer.
2. Worshiping and Participating in the Sacraments: Attend and participate in the Divine Liturgy receiving Holy Communion regularly as well as regular participation in Confession.
3. Honoring the Liturgical Cycle: Follow the seasons of the church and participate in the fasts and feasts of the Church.
4. Using the Jesus Prayer: Repeat the Holy name whenever possible throughout the day or night.
5. Slowing Down and Ordering Your Life: Set priorities and reduce the stress and friction caused by a hurried life.

6. Being Watchful: Give full attention to what you are doing at the moment.

7. Taming the Passions: Overcome your habits, attachment to your likes and dislikes, and learn to practice the virtues.

8. Putting Others First: Free yourself from your selfishness and find joy in helping others.

9. Spiritual Fellowship: Spend time regularly with other Orthodox Christians for support and inspiration.

10. Reading Scripture and Holy Fathers

For the full publication, please go to:

<http://stgeorgegreenville.org/our-faith/tenpointprogram/>

The **Dormiton Fast** begins on August 1 and ends on August 14. During the Fast we will sing the service of the **Paraklesis** (or Supplication) to the Theotokos on Wednesdays (see calendar for dates). These services will begin at 7:00 p.m.

During this season the Church prescribes the following fast: we abstain from all meat, dairy products (including eggs), fish, wine and olive oil (in some traditions olive oil is allowed). Shellfish may be eaten throughout the fast. Wine and olive oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays only. On the Feast of the Transfiguration on August 6, fish, wine and oil are permitted. Make every effort to fast according to the best of your ability and to come to the Sacrament of Holy Confession during this holy season!

July/August Calendar

July 4 – July 8, Western Diocese Parish Life Conference, Los Angeles CA

July 16 – 20 Archdiocese Clergy Symposium

Tuesday August 1, Procession of Holy Cross

August 1 to 14, Dormition Fast

Monday August 6, 10:00 a.m. Liturgy, Feast of Transfiguration (Orthros 9:00 a.m.)

Tuesday, August 14, 6:30 p.m. Liturgy: Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos (Orthros 5:30 p.m.)

Tuesday August 28, 6:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m. Liturgy: Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist (Orthros 5:30 p.m.)

September 2018 Advanced Calendar

September 1, Church New Year

September 22, Annual Fund Raising Dinner

September 8, Feast of the Birth of the Theotokos

September 14, Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

September 23, Ladies Guild Friendship Tea (tentative date)

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, 7:00 p.m.

Selected Saints of the Month

July 4th

SAINT MARTHA

Martha was the mother of St. Simeon of the Wonderful Mountain (May 24). Dedicated with all her soul to the Faith, she did not think of marriage. When her parents betrothed her to a young man, Martha thought of leaving the home of her parents and withdrawing from the world. Then St. John the Baptist appeared to Martha and counseled her to fulfill the will of her parents by entering into marriage, which she did. From this marital union, the wondrous St. Simeon, ascetic of the Wonderful Mountain, was born. St. Martha had the regular habit of rising at midnight for prayer. With great compassion she helped the poor, visited the orphaned, and served the sick. A year before her death she saw a multitude of angels with candles in their hands, and learned from them the time of her death. Upon learning this, Martha dedicated herself

to prayer and good works with even great zeal. She died peacefully in the year 551 A.D., and was buried near the pillar of her son, Simeon the Stylite. After her death, she appeared many times to instruct people and to heal the sick. Her most significant appearance on record was to the abbot of Simeon's monastery. Following the burial of St. Martha, the abbot placed a votive candle on her grave, with the understanding that it should never be extinguished. But after a certain time, people became lazy, and the lamp went out. Then the abbot became ill, and the saint appeared to him and said: "Why do you not burn a votive candle on my grave? Know that I am not in need of the light from your candles, since I have been found worthy before God, the Eternal Heavenly Light--but you need it. When you burn a light on my grave, you entreat me to pray to the Lord for you." It is obvious from this that the goal of our veneration of the saints is to entreat them, as those worthier than we are, to pray to God for us and for our salvation.

July 25th

SAINT OLYMPIAS [OLYMPIADA], THE DEACONESS
Olympias was born in Constantinople of very distinguished parents. Her father, Anysius Secundus, was a senator, and her mother was the daughter of the famous nobleman Eulavius, who is mentioned in the life of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. When Olympias reached maturity, she was betrothed to a nobleman who died before the marriage took place. The emperor and her other relatives pressured Olympias to marry another, but in vain. She in no way desired this, and devoted herself to a God-pleasing life, giving great offerings to the churches and alms to the needy from her inherited estate. She served as a deaconess in the Church during the time of Patriarch Nectarius and, after his death, during the time of St. John Chrysostom. When Chrysostom was exiled, he counseled Olympias to remain in the church and to serve as before, regardless of who the patriarch after him would be. Immediately after the banishment of this great saint, someone started a fire in the Great Church [The Church of the Divine Wisdom, Hagia Sophia], and the fire consumed many prominent buildings in the capital. The enemies of St. John Chrysostom accused this holy woman of maliciously starting the fire. Olympias was banished from Constantinople to Nicomedia, where

she died in the year 410 A.D. She had requested in her last testament that her body be placed in a box and cast into the sea, and that she was to be buried wherever the waves brought it ashore. The coffin was cast ashore in the city of Vrochthoi, where there was a church dedicated to the Apostle Thomas. Throughout the centuries, her relics have had the power of great healing miracles. The exiled Chrysostom wrote beautiful letters to the exiled Olympias, which even today serve as a great comfort to all those who suffer for the sake of God's justice. Among other things, Chrysostom wrote to Olympias: "Now I am very happy, not only because you have been delivered from infirmity, but even more because you are nobly enduring all difficulties, referring to them as trivialities, which is characteristic of a soul full of strength and abounding in the rich fruits of courage. For not only are you courageously enduring misfortune, but you do not even notice it when it comes and, without exertion, without labor and disturbance, do not even inform others, but rejoice and triumph over it. This serves as proof of the greatest wisdom" (Letter VI).

August 6th

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

In the third year of His preaching, the Lord Jesus often spoke to His disciples of His approaching passion, and also of His glory following His suffering on the Cross. So that His impending passion would not totally weaken His disciples, and so that no one would fall away from Him, He, the All-wise, wanted to show them a portion of His divine glory before His passion. For that reason, He took Peter, James and John with Him and went by night to Mt. Tabor, and was there transfigured before them: *And His face shone as the sun and His garments became white as snow*(Matthew 17:2). Moses and Elias [Elijah], the great Old Testament prophets, also appeared beside Him. Seeing this, His disciples were stunned. Peter said: *Lord, it is good for us to be here: if You will, let us make here three tabernacles; one for You, one for Moses and one for Elias* (Matthew 17:4). While Peter still spoke, Moses and Elias departed, and a bright cloud overshadowed the Lord and His disciples, and there came a voice from the cloud saying: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear*

Him (Matthew 17:5). Hearing the voice, the disciples fell face down on the ground as though dead, and remained that way, prostrate in fear, until the Lord came to them and said: *Arise, and be not afraid* (Matthew 17:7). Why did the Lord take only three disciples onto Tabor, and not all? Because Judas was not worthy to behold the divine glory of the Teacher, Whom he will betray; and the Lord did not want to leave him alone at the foot of the mountain, so that the betrayer would not, because of this, justify his betrayal. Why was our Lord transfigured on a mountain and not in a valley? So as to teach us two virtues: love of labor and godly-thoughts--for climbing to the heights requires labor, and the heights themselves represent the elevation of our thoughts to the things of God. Why was our Lord transfigured at night? Because the night is more suitable than the day for prayer and godly-thoughts; and the night, by its darkness, conceals all the beauty of the earth, and reveals the beauty of the starry heavens. Why did Moses and Elias appear? In order to destroy the Jewish fallacy that Christ was one of the prophets--Elias or Jeremiah or some other. That is why He appeared as a King, above the prophets, and that is why Moses and Elias appeared as His servants. Until then, our Lord had manifested His divine power many times to the disciples; but on Mt. Tabor He manifested His Divine Nature. This vision of His Divinity, and the hearing of the heavenly witness to His being the Son of God, must have served the disciples in the days of the Lord's passion--in the strengthening of a steadfast faith in Him and in His final victory.

August 18th

THE HOLY MARTYRS FLORUS AND LAURUS

Florus and Laurus were brothers in the flesh, and in spirit and in vocation. Both were zealous Christians, and were stonecutters by occupation. They lived in Illyria. A pagan prince hired them for the building of a temple to the idols. It happened that, during their work, a piece of stone flew and struck the eye of the pagan priest Merentius's son, who was observing the work of the builders with curiosity. Seeing his son blind and bloody, the pagan priest began to shout at Florus and Laurus and wanted to beat them. Then the holy brothers said to him that if he would believe in the God in whom they believed,

his son would be healed. The pagan priest promised. Florus and Laurus prayed with tears to the one, living Lord God, and traced the sign of the Cross over the child's injured eye. The child was immediately healed, and his eye became whole, just as it had been. Then Merentius and his son were baptized. Shortly after that, both suffered for Christ, being tortured by fire. When they completed the temple, Florus and Laurus placed a cross on it, summoned all Christians and consecrated it in the name of the Lord Jesus, with an all-night vigil of hymn-singing. Hearing of this, the Illyrian deputy burned many of those Christians, and had Florus and Laurus themselves thrown into a well. He then filled it with dirt to suffocate them. Their relics were later revealed and translated to Constantinople. These two wonderful brothers suffered, and were martyred for Christ and glorified by Him, in the second century.

Parish & Organizations News

Welcome Deacon Nicholas Mamey

For many months, your Parish Council has been discussing many ways to serve the youth of our parish since this has been a goal throughout the year. At St. Mark's, we are blessed to have a large number of youth. Over the years, we have been grateful for a quality Sunday School program and a growing Teen SOYO program. We continually struggle with finding ways to keep our older children in the church, give support to our Sunday School program and continue to support our youth into their adult years.

Good news! A few months ago, your Parish Council voted to fund the position of Youth and Pastoral Assistant. After this vote, we requested the blessing of Metropolitan Joseph and have been awaiting his reply. A few days ago, we received a letter from Metropolitan Joseph with his approval and blessing for Deacon Nicholas Mamey to be placed at St. Mark Church in a part time position. Knowing that Deacon Nicholas is beloved within our community, growing up from his childhood at St. Mark is an immeasurable blessing. Deacon Nicholas' first Sunday at St. Mark will be July 1, 2018 and we welcome him with open arms. As part of his duties, Deacon Nicholas will have office hours at St. Mark and will support our church

community in a variety of ways. While Deacon Nicholas is finishing his graduate degree locally, he will be serving the church on a part time basis.

Thank you, Eileen Ellis!

After 20 years, our Church School Coordinator is stepping down. Eileen Ellis has been serving in this capacity since 1998. She will continue to teach the Pre-School class. Kristin Chala and Tammy Qutami have agreed to serve together to administer our Church School. Many Years!

Antiochian Women of St. Mark

On June 17th, the Antiochian Women served a fish luncheon to all the fathers, grandfathers and Godfathers for Father's day. Thanks to all the Ladies who donated the food, cash, or helped in the setting up and cleaning for this event.

Our final meeting for this year will be held on Saturday, June 30th at The Chili Pepper Restaurant in Orange, CA.

No meetings during the summer time (July & August) but would like to wish everyone a great summer with your families.

The Antiochian Women of St. Mark Church will resume our meetings at the Ladies Friendship Tea in September. If you're interested in hosting the event, please let us know.

Thank you Ladies for your all hard work and support during the whole year. I really appreciate all your help.

Have a blessed and happy Summer. God bless you always!

***Prepared by Kristin Chala, President
Antiochian Women of St. Mark***

Teen SOYO

June is an exciting and busy month for many of our SOYO members as they look forward to finishing school and in some cases graduating from Middle School and High School. Congratulations to our graduates!

At our last meeting, our SOYO members were encouraged to participate in St. Nicholas' summer camp. A few kids shared their camp experiences to hopefully encourage other SOYO members to attend. Some of our members had been attending camp since they were seven, so there were a lot of fun stories to share. There was also discussion about summer events that the kids would be interested in. Beach days were on the top of the list. Depending upon vacation schedules, future dates will be determined.

One area of concern has been SOYO's struggle to create a Bible Bowl Team for the Conference in Oregon this July. Many of our families were not able to attend the conference so creating a team became a difficult task. Hopefully we can make up for this next year.

Have a wonderful summer!!

St. Mark SOYO Advisors

Paula Rodriguez and Dana Chade

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July

Seham Aldada 7/6
 Daniel Atallah 7/21
 Gabriel Atallah 7/24
 Ghassan Awayjan 7/9
 Mayssa Azzam 7/7
 Phillip Bahbah 7/2
 Samir Billeh 7/21
 Rita Billeh 7/26
 Leo Chade 7/14
 George Chami 7/28
 Annabelle Dabit 7/1
 Tony Debbas 7/28
 Mathew Ellis 7/15
 Sandella Goson 7/27
 Christina Habeeb 7/18
 Norman Haffty 7/28
 Esperance Hadshiti 7/15
 Wafa Hanna 7/29
 Julia Jirjis 7/6
 Reem Karkar 7/11
 Wael Kashou 7/1
 Steven Khamis 7/18
 Elias Khamis 7/8
 Donna Laffoon 7/6
 Nicholas Mamey 7/18

Anne Mansour 7/1
 Robert Mokbel 7/18
 Don Nassif 7/15
 Irene Novac 7/2
 Tony Rodriguez 7/12
 Tymour Saba 7/3
 Rocky Sayegh 7/31
 Sophia Skaff 7/27
 Penny Skaff 7/8
 Seth Skaff 7/8
 Rami Tarazi 7/8
 Devon Grace Tax 7/29
 Dave Tax Jr. 7/27
 Tiffany Tomeo 7/27
 Stephanie Turk 7/11
 Brittany Turk 7/8
 Christopher Wakileh 7/13
 Patricia Yaghnam 7/20
 Merolla Youssef 7/12
 Nour Youssef 7/21

AUGUST

Nassrin Artoul 8/14
 Salwa Bahbah 8/28
 Randy Bahbah 8/13
 Serene Batarseh 8/17
 Jelly Betar 8/24
 Lucy Billeh Jr. 8/22
 Alex Beyrooty 8/2
 Nicholas Beyrooty 8/2
 Chris Beyrooty 8/11
 Dana Chade 8/5
 Marwan Dabit 8/13
 Rula Dabit 8/1
 Victoria Donovan 8/9
 Mark Ellis 8/5
 Eileen Ellis 8/25
 Samira Fasheh 8/24
 Majed Fasheh 8/18
 Richard Gallade 8/11
 Charles George 8/5
 Jimmy Goson Jr. 8/6
 Joseph Haffty 8/12
 Sandi Hanna 8/15
 Salma Hanna 8/21
 Kh. Nina Irish 8/1
 Natalie Kassir 8/21
 Tracy Khamis 8/28
 Michael Khamis 8/31
 James Kishek 8/21
 Sarina Kumar 8/14

Vijay Kumar 8/19
Joseph Laffoon 8/5
Johnny Liqueste 8/30
Mary Rose Mamey 8/29
Rachel Ranney 8/30
Yasmeen Rizkalla 8/22
Christopher Scholl 8/1
David Tannous 7/16
Roger Tierney 8/22
Christina Tomeo 8/31
George Toubbeh 8/23
William Turk 8/14
James Whitacre 8/28
Luke Whitacre 8/2
Robert Whitehead 8/4
Tatiana Yahgnam 8/3
Hany Youssef 8/5
Maryan Youssef 8/22

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

JULY

Samir & Afifa Artoul 7/8
Gabriel & Samira Attalla 7/11
Issa & Julie Bahbah 7/23
Randy & May Dabbah 7/30
Marwan & Rula Dabit 7/12
Omar & Fatin Fakhouri 7/5
Majed & Bunia Fasheh 7/11
Melad & Wafa Hanna 7/9
Isa & Barbara Khamis 7/9
Elias & Hilda Khamis 7/18
Dimitri & Kandy Kort 7/30
Steve & Barbara Scholl 7/18

AUGUST

Edward & Dana Chade 8/15
Sami & Wisam Farraj 8/31
Abe & Diana Khamis 8/28
Nabil & Anne Mansour 8/15
Elias & Jean Nasrawi 8/29
Sammy & Lana Nino 8/12
Kendall & Ronda Schorr 8/19
Shouki & Majida Soury 8/4

*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
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IRVINE, CA 92614
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