

المسيح ولد ، فمجده !

THE APOSTLE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Christ is Born, Glorify Him!

NOVEMBER 2018

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF IRVINE**

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America
Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of all North America
17840 Sky Park Circle
Irvine, CA 92614-6407
Tel: (949) 851-8933
Fax: (949) 851-0010
Email: frmlaffoon@yahoo.com
Website: www.st-mark-church.org

Very Rev. Father Michael Laffoon, Pastor
Residence phone: (949) 559-6133
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 Secretary: Lydia Wakileh
Teen's Advisors: Fatin Fakhouri

2018-2019 PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman Austin Turk {19} (949) 922-2350
Vice Chairman – Lew Malouf {21} (818) 842-0458
Secretary – Jerri Lynn Mamey {21} (949) 831-5776
Treasurer – Marwan Dabit {20} (626)665-1096
Assistant Treasurers- Melad Hanna {20} (949) 433-
1698 & **Richard Jirjis {20}** (714) 404-9002- **Michael
Khoury {21}** (714) 717 - 2349
Mark Ellis {19}(949) 458-1604
Lori Nour {19} (949) 370-6224
Dana Chade {21} (949) 939-8243
[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: Denise
Nassiff (949)
Teen SOYO Co-Presidents: Jillian Goson

Pastor's Column

Excerpt from "Meditation for Christmas" from **The Year of the Grace of Our Lord** by A Monk of the Eastern Church.

"The feast of Christmas is the feast of the mystical Body, for it is through the Incarnation that men have become members of Christ. Whatever theological interpretation we give to this great spiritual and patristic affirmation of our incorporation into Christ, we must believe that with the Incarnation, an ineffable union – that passes all understanding-- began, in human flesh, between Jesus Christ and men. Beyond the particular historical event that took place at Bethlehem and through which the Son of God took on a visible human body, another event took place that concerns the whole human race: God, in becoming incarnate, in some way weds and assumes the human nature which we all share and creates between himself and us a relationship which, without its ever ceasing to be that between the Creator and his creature, is also that between the body and its members. There is union without confusion. Christmas allows us to become most deeply conscious of what is our true nature, human nature, regenerated by Jesus Christ. 'And the Word was made flesh.' These words summarize and express the feast of Christmas perfectly. If we give them their full meaning, we will understand that they do not only concern the mystery by which the Son and Word of the father became man: this formula also carries an implication of a moral and practical order. Our flesh is often a source of temptation and sin to us. May the Word God become flesh in us, may it enter into our body. May the power of this Word (for there can be no question of its being an Incarnation is substance) pass from the exterior to the interior, and so, into our bodies; the law of the flesh.

Christmas will have a true meaning for us only if our own flesh becomes transformed, changed and ruled by the Word made flesh.”

In anticipation of the Feast: **Christ is born!**

Fr. Michael

The Advent (the Christmas Fast) continues through December 24. This fast, which lasts exactly 40 days, prepares us to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity (Birth) of Jesus Christ, commonly known as Christmas. During this season we are reminded that the Christian life style must include alms giving (acts of charity), prayer and fasting. Therefore, we are asked to intensify these efforts. During Advent we should be praying more, giving more time and resources to those in need, eat less and more simply, and above all, seek to fast from sin.

The fasting rules are as follows: on all days we abstain from meat, poultry, dairy (milk, cheese etc. Fish, oil and wine may be eaten on Saturdays and Sundays (some also allow this on Tuesdays and Thursdays). The last four days of the Fast are strict fasting days (as in Great Lent). Fasting should always be combined with increased giving to the needy.

Last, but not least we should strive to fast from sin and come to Holy Confession before Christmas.

Tuesday December 25, Orthros (9:00 a.m.) and Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ (10:00 a.m.)

January 2018 Advanced Calendar
January 1 New Year’s Day, St. Basil’s Day
January 6 Feast of Epiphany
January 17 St. Anthony the Great
January 25 St. Gregory the Theologian
January 30 Feast of the Three Holy Hierarchs

On Thursday November 15th, Advent (the Christmas Fast) begins. This fast, which lasts exactly 40 days, prepares us to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity (Birth) of Jesus Christ, commonly known as Christmas. During this season we are reminded that the Christian life style must include alms giving (acts of charity), prayer and fasting. Therefore, we are asked to intensify these efforts. During Advent we should be praying more, giving more time and resources to those in need, eat less and more simply, and above all, seek to fast from sin. As usual, Wednesdays and Fridays are strict fasting days (abstention from all meat, poultry, dairy & egg products, alcohol and olive oil). Until December 20, the other days of the week we are to fast from all meat and meat products, with wine and olive oil allowed. As part of our Advent effort Orthodox Christians should also participate in the Sacrament of Confession.

Feasts, Special Services and Events for December 2018

Sunday December 2, St. Nicholas Sunday
Tuesday December 4, Feast of St. Barbara and St. John of Damascus
Wednesday December 5, 6:30 p.m. Evening Liturgy, Feast of St. Nicholas
Friday December 7 & 14, Wednesday December 12, 7:00 p.m. Advent Paraklesis
Sunday December 16, Annual Women’s Bake sale
Pre-Feast Vespers, December 19, and 23; 7:00 p.m.
Sunday December 23, Church School Christmas Program
Monday December 24, 9:30 a.m. Royal Hours of the Nativity
Christmas Paramon (Eve) Liturgy, 5:00 p.m. Thursday December 24

New monthly event: **An Evening with St. Raphael of Brooklyn.** On Friday December 14 at 7:00 p.m. we will meet at St. Mark Church. We will hear and discuss the life and writings of St. Raphael of Brooklyn.

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

December 2

THE HOLY PROPHET HABAKKUK

Habakkuk was the son of Asaphat from the tribe of Simeon. He prophesied six hundred years before Christ, during the time of King Manasseh, and foretold the destruction of Jerusalem. When Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, attacked Jerusalem, Habakkuk sought refuge in the land of the Ishmaelites. From there he returned to Judea, where he lived as a farmer. One day he was carrying lunch to the workers in the fields, when suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said: *Go carry the dinner that thou hast into Babylon unto Daniel, who is in the lion's den* (Daniel 14:34*). But Habakkuk responded: *Lord, I never saw Babylon; neither do I know where the den is* (Daniel 14:34-35). Then the angel took him by the hair and instantly brought him to Babylon, over an immense distance, to the lion's den, where Daniel had been cast by King Cyrus as a punishment for not worshipping the idols. *O Daniel, Daniel, cried Habakkuk, take the dinner which God hath sent thee* (Daniel 14:37), and Daniel took it and ate. Then the angel of God again took Habakkuk and carried him back to his field in Judea. Habakkuk also prophesied the liberation of Jerusalem and the time of the coming of Christ. He entered into rest in ripe old age and was buried at Kela. His relics were discovered during the reign of Theodosius the Great.

December 14

THE HOLY MARTYRS PHILEMON, APOLLONIUS, ARIANUS AND OTHERS

During the reign of Diocletian, a certain judge Arianus cruelly persecuted the Christians of Egypt. He seized Apollonius and threatened him with tortures. Apollonius, afraid of the tortures, bribed a certain well-known pagan musician, Philemon, to offer sacrifices to the idols in his place, disguised in his clothes. When Philemon appeared before the idols, the light of the Christian Faith suddenly shone in his heart, and he made the sign of the Cross. After he came out of the temple, he began to shout: "I am a Christian! A servant of Christ the Living God!" Hearing this, the judge laughed, thinking that Philemon was mocking the Christians. Later, Philemon endured horrible tortures. Rain fell from heaven and baptized him. Finally, Philemon and

Apollonius were beheaded by Arianus the judge. Then, because his blind eye was healed in a miraculous manner at Philemon's grave, Arianus himself became a Christian. Arianus was condemned to death by Emperor Diocletian and was slain with four soldiers who likewise declared themselves Christians.

December 20

THE HIEROMARTYR IGNATIUS THE GOD-BEARER

This holy man is called "the God-bearer" because he constantly bore the name of the Living God in his heart and on his lips. According to tradition, he was thus named because he was held in the arms of God Incarnate, Jesus Christ. On a day when the Lord was teaching His disciples humility, He took a child and placed him among them, saying: *Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven* (Matthew 18:4). This child was Ignatius. Later, Ignatius was a disciple of St. John the Theologian, together with Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. As Bishop of Antioch, Ignatius governed the Church of God as a good shepherd and was the first to introduce antiphonal chanting in the Church, in which two choirs alternate the chanting. This manner of chanting was revealed to St. Ignatius by the angels in heaven. When Emperor Trajan was passing through Antioch on his way to do battle with the Persians, he heard of Ignatius, summoned him and counseled him to offer sacrifice to the idols. If Ignatius would do so, Trajan would bestow upon him the rank of senator. As the counsels and threats of the emperor were in vain, St. Ignatius was shackled in irons and sent to Rome in the company of ten merciless soldiers, to be thrown to the wild beasts. Ignatius rejoiced in suffering for his Lord, only praying to God that the wild beasts would become the tomb for his body and that no one would prevent him from this death. After a long and difficult journey from Asia through Thrace, Macedonia and Epirus, Ignatius arrived in Rome, where he was thrown to the lions in the circus. The lions tore him to pieces and devoured him, leaving only several of the larger bones and his heart. This glorious lover of the Lord Christ suffered in the year 106 A.D. in Rome at the time of the Christ-hating Emperor Trajan. Ignatius has appeared many times

from the other world and worked miracles, even to this day helping all who call upon him for help.

December 28

THE HOLY MARTYR DOMNA

Domna was a virgin and priestess of the foul idols at the court of Emperor Maximian. Reading the Acts of the Apostles, which she had obtained from somewhere, she came to believe in Christ and was baptized by Bishop Cyril in Nicomedia, together with the eunuch Indes. St. Cyril directed her to a convent, where Blessed Agatha was the abbess. When the emperor began to search for her, Agatha dressed her in men's clothing and sent her to a men's monastery. This was at the time when twenty thousand Christians were burned in the church by Emperor Maximian. Immediately after this, by the emperor's command, Saints Indes, Gorgonius and Peter were thrown into the sea with millstones around their necks; Commander Zeno, who had openly denounced the emperor for his idolatry, was beheaded; St. Theophilus, the deacon of Bishop Anthimus, was slain by stoning and by arrows; Abbess Agatha, the nun Theophila and the nobles Dorotheus, Mardonius, Migdonius and Euthymius were also slain for the sake of Christ. One night, Domna was walking along the seashore and saw fishermen casting their nets into the sea. At that time she was especially grieving for St. Indes. Called by the fishermen to help them, she assisted them and by God's providence drew out three human bodies in the net. Domna recognized in them Saints Indes, Gorgonius and Peter, and she took their bodies and reverently buried them. When the emperor learned that a young man was caring for and censing the graves of the Christian martyrs, he ordered that the young man be beheaded. Thus, St. Domna was seized and beheaded, and she was crowned with the wreath of glory in the Heavenly Kingdom with the other martyrs.

Charlotte El-Hinn 12/31
Salim Elsayegh 12/21
Jerise Elqura 12/30
Mary Fasheh 12/18
Efstathios Geronikolaou 12/15
Adele Habeeb 12/21
Haitham Hanna 12/6
John Jirjis 12/19
Michel Joubran 12/5
John Karam 12/29
Patricia Khamis 12/8
Hilda Khamis 12/6
Antoun Houry 12/27
George Houry 12/15
Fayez Houry 12/18
Melody Houry 12/16
Antoine Maalouli 12/17
Susan Mitri 12/27
Claude Mokbel 12/28
Marina Najjar 12/12
Lana Nino 12/10
Jacob Qushair 12/29
Nour Salameh 12/21
Manuel Salameh 12/25
Elias Sliheet 12/31
Shouki Soury 12/27
Majida Soury 12/11
Christiana Tarazi 12/26
Charlie Wakileh 12/17
Ed Wong 12/31
Michael Yaghnam 12/26

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Ghassan & Gisele Awayjan 12/16
Joseph & Salwa Bahbah 12/27

Parish & Organizations News

Antiochian Women of St. Mark

The month of November the Women had a Thanksgiving Luncheon which was a success. The money was donated to the Church Samaritan Fund. Thank you to all who donated, cooked, served and helped out. The Ladies are planning their Holiday Luncheon, more details to follow.

Tania Maalouly
Secretary Antiochian Women

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Christina Aldada 12/1
Ramzi Ammari 12/10
Khalid Ammari 12/6
Naheda Artoul 12/16
Christopher Azzam 12/22
Vera Bahbah 12/19
Daniel Chami 12/29
Jerald Donovan 12/5

Teen SOYO

No report submitted!

*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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