

# St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, Diocese of the West

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](http://www.st-mark-church.org)

Archpriest Michael Laffoon, Priest Patrick Irish

Protodeacon George Moubayed, Deacon Nicholas Mamey

Sub Deacon Athanasius Fakhouri

Parish Council Chairman: Austin Turk

Choir Director Barbara Scholl

Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Mark Ellis,

Karim Youssef

Church Secretary: Lydia Wakileh

Teen Advisor: Fatin Fakhouri

*Church School after Holy Communion*



**DECEMBER 23, 2018**

**SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD  
KNOWN AS THE SUNDAY OF THE GENEALOGY**

## HYMNS AFTER THE ENTRANCE

**Troparion of the Resurrection in the Fifth Tone:** Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

**Troparion of the Fore feast of the Nativity in the Fourth Tone:** Make ready, O Bethlehem; for Eden hath been opened for all. Prepare, O Ephratha; for the Tree of life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin; for her womb did appear as a true spiritual paradise in which is planted the divine Plant, whereof eating we shall live and not die as Adam. Verily, Christ shall be born, raising the likeness that fell of old.

**Troparion of the Sunday before the Nativity in the Second Tone: Troparion** Great are the accomplishments of faith; for the three holy youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though at waters of rest. And the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. Wherefore, by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

**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 the Pre-Feast of the Nativity in Tone 3:** The Virgin cometh today to the cave to give birth, ineffably to bring forth the Word eternal. Therefore, rejoice, O earth at the message with the angels and shepherds give glory to him who shall appear by his own will as a young child, he who is from eternity God.

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**Prokeimenon** Tone 4 (Daniel 3.26, 27) Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our Fathers. For you are just in all you have done.

### **The reading from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews: 11:9-10, 32-40)**

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received

their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

**Alleluia Verses** Tone 4 (Psalms 43.1;33.17) O God, we have heard with our ears. The righteous cried and the Lord heard them.

### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (1:1-25)**

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child

of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

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**Holy Oblations are offered today** by Fr. Michael & Kh, Donna for the soul of Fr. Paul Doyle, departed this life 2 years, and by Kareem & Hani Youssef and their families for the soul of their mother Mary departed this life 2 years. Memory Eternal!

**Today's Coffee Hour is given by the coffee committee.**

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*Please remember in your prayers: Michael Debbas, Edward Deeb, Eleanor Wackeen, Michael Joubran, Tarek Fakhouri, George Aldada (the elder), Adele Bahbah, and the suffering people of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Palestine, Venezuela, Ukraine, and all people afflicted with disease and violence.*

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<p><b>Ushers this week:</b> Ghassan Awyjan &amp; Sami Nino</p> <p><b>Ushers next week:</b> Sam Munayyer &amp; Waek Kashou</p> <p><b>Altar boys serving this week:</b> George Bahbah, Andrew Azzam, Richard Tierney, Youseff Youseff, Andrew Bahbah, Andrew Hanouneh.</p> <p><b>Altar boys serving next week:</b> Paul Rodriguez, Paul Habeeb, Jeries Hanna, Anthony Saadeh, Dave Tax Jr.</p>
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**Quote from the Saints**

The Lord, before His Incarnation, let mankind experience all the bitterness of sin, all their powerlessness to eradicate it; and when all longed for a Deliverer, then He appeared, the most wise, all-powerful Physician and Helper. When men hungered and thirsted after righteousness, as it grew weaker, then the everlasting righteousness came. *St. John of Kronstadt*

## **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.

## **A NOTE TO OUR VISTORS**

Welcome to St. Mark's! We are pleased to have you here with us today. Please be informed that only those Orthodox Christians who are prepared through prayer, fasting, and the sacrament of confession should approach the Chalice for the Eucharist. The Orthodox Church does not practice "open communion" or intercommunion with other churches (non-Orthodox). If you have any questions concerning this, please talk to Father Michael before taking communion. Visitors are welcome to venerate the cross at the end of the service and to receive some of the blessed bread, if they so desire.

For Orthodox Christians to receive Holy Communion:

- You must be spiritually prepared and uphold the beliefs and moral teachings of the Church.
- You must keep the fast (Wednesday & Friday, and other fasting seasons)
- If married, your marriage must have been consecrated in the Orthodox Church.
- If (unfortunately) divorced, you must be formally restored to communion by the Church by confession and Episcopal decision.

**If an Orthodox Christian has left the church, or has been absent from services for a long period, and is returning, he or she must see the priest prior to receiving the sacraments of the Church.**

## **Today**

**The St. Mark Church School Christmas Music Program;** High School students will read the bible passages. Silent Night soloists: Sophia Skaff and John

Hanouneh. Angels we have Heard On High. Away in the Manger soloists: Adella Tannous, Zena Hanna, Katelyn Scholl and James Whitacre. O Come, All Ye Faithful: Sophia Liquete, Seth Skaff. The First Noel: Maha and Nathaniel Liquete. Joy to the World: Adam and Allison Erdkamp, Isabella Turk, Jeries Hanna. We Wish You a Merry Christmas!

## **FOCUS Ministry, Valencia Inn**

**Sunday Church Ushers** are needed at St. Mark. Both men and women are invited to serve as ushers on Sunday, please contact Isa Khamis [ijk53@yahoo.com](mailto:ijk53@yahoo.com) or (714) 904-2270.

**We are in the last few days of the Advent (the Christmas Fast) which began on November 15<sup>th</sup>.** The Nativity Fast is one of the four Canonical Fasting Seasons in the Church year. This is a joyous fast in anticipation of the Nativity of Christ. That is the reason it is less strict than other fasting periods. The fast is divided into two periods. The 1st period is November 15th through December 19th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, dairy, fish, wine, and oil) is observed. There is dispensation given for wine and oil on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Similarly, fish, wine, and oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays (some allow fish on Tuesdays and Thursday in this period). The 2nd period is December 20th through 24th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, dairy, fish, wine, and oil) is observed. There is dispensation given for wine and oil only on Saturday and Sunday during this period.

### **This Week**

#### ***Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas) Schedule of Services***

**Monday December 24, Royal hours 9:30 a.m.; Vespers Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.**

**Tuesday December 25<sup>th</sup>, NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST; Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.**

**Church Office closed for Christmas Day December 25**

**No Vespers on Wednesday**

**Friday December 28, 7:00 p.m. Men's Club Christmas Dinner at The Maalouli's home. Please see flyer included for more information.**

**Teen's Christmas Party is postponed. New date TBA.**

*Next week*

**Monday December 31 Our Church New Year's Eve Dinner/Dance.**

**January 4, Young Adult Event**

*Upcoming Services & Events*

**Sunday January 6, Feast of Theophany with Great Blessing of Waters.  
Antiochian Women Zalabieh Coffee Hour**

*Our monthly Newsletter (and other important information) can be found at the parish website [www.st-mark-church.org](http://www.st-mark-church.org)*

**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. **And.... Do you use Amazon.com? You can have a percentage of your purchase go to St. Mark Church. All you need to do is go to smile.amazon.com and sign in with your existing account. On the home screen, click on "Supporting" and when asked to choose a charity type "St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church" and select that as your designated charity. When you shop on Amazon, be sure you are on the smile.amazon.com web page to start. One half of one percent of what you spend will be given to our parish.**

**Sunday before the Nativity of Jesus Christ**

On the Sunday that occurs on or immediately after the eighteenth of this month, we celebrate all those who from ages past have been well-pleasing to God, beginning from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, according to genealogy, as the Evangelist Luke hath recorded historically (Luke 3:23-38); we also commemorate the Prophets and Prophetesses, and especially the Prophet Daniel and the Holy Three Children.