

THE APOSTLE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2019

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
Khouri {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

Implications of Holy Communion
By Fr. Vladimir Berzonsky

"The precious and most holy Body of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ is given unto me, the unworthy priest (N) for the remission of my sins, and unto life everlasting." (Prayer during Divine Liturgy)

Note the passive voice [is given to N] deacon, laity, and to himself, because all comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, as seen icons of some of the back walls of churches where it is Christ Himself communing the apostles. This format is expressed in all sacraments. For example, in the prayers of forgiveness and absolution of holy Confession, it is not the priest but Christ through the hands and voice of the priest who forgives sins.

"Of Your Mystical Supper..." Mystical, meaning the mystery of how transcending time and space we are transported not so much to the original Last Supper (many western Christians feel it to be only in memory of the Meal) but forward and into the Kingdom of heaven. Christ spent so much of His effort on earth announcing the Kingdom, expressing what it is and the requirements for entry, the conditions and obligations incumbent upon all who are called, so that they might be elected. From the Cherubic hymn where we "lay aside all earthly care" to the command to "Lift up your hearts," to the fellowship of love for one another the way the Three Persons of Trinity love – all that is understood by Holy Communion. Yes, indeed with Christ in His Body and Blood – but in Him

and through Him all who share His Being, those in heaven and those on earth. Far from a one-on-one relationship. *Sobornost* [unity in faith and mind] is the common expression that explains and defines what the meaning of Eucharist is.

For I will not speak of Your mystery to Your enemies, neither will I give You a kiss like Judas.

It means first of all that there are enemies of Christ, and we dare not be naïve, like so many who seem to feel that we only have to love the world and the world will respond with love. **Read John:** *“If the world hates you, know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also.... [John 15:18-28]*

But like the thief will I confess You.

Compare the chosen apostle Judas Iscariot with the Good Thief. One was selected among the seventy disciples of 5,000 who heard Jesus on the Mount, so there had to be something positive about his nature. The other is the thief who had spent his entire life stealing, robbing, cheating and perhaps much worse. On the cross he did not plead for sympathy, beg to be excused because of a bad home life, missing or uncaring parents, a society that did not provide for his welfare; but called out to the third man on a cross, “We are getting what we deserve, but not this man.”

We understand how precious is fellowship with Christ in the Church and how easy it is to sin, each sin being against the Lord Jesus, just as wicked as the kiss of Judas because it takes liberties with the compassion of Christ and

ignores the high cost of membership in the Church.

Feasts, Special Services and Events for February 2019

Saturday, February 2 – 10:00 a.m., Divine Liturgy
Feast of the Presentation of our Lord in the Temple
(Orthros 9:00 a.m.)

Sunday February 4, Super Bowl Viewing Party at
St. Mark Church

Tuesdays, Feb 5, 19, 26 Adult Education 6:45 p.m.

Saturday February 9, 8:00 p.m. Valentine’s Dinner
Dance in the Church Hall

Friday February 22, 6:45 p.m. An Evening with St.
Raphael

Advance Calendar for March 2017

Monday March 11, Clean Monday- Start of Great
Lent

Sunday March 17, First Sunday of Lent, Sunday of
Orthodoxy

Monday March 25, Feast of the Annunciation
(Monday)

Metropolitan Joseph's Schedule

February 11–14
Annual Clergy Seminar, Diocese of Los Angeles
and the West, Alhambra CA

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

February 2

THE MEETING [PRESENTATION] OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

The fortieth day after His birth, the All-Holy Virgin brought her Divine Son into the Temple of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Law, to dedicate Him to God and to purify herself. *Consecrate to me every first-born that opens the womb among the Israelites both of man and beast, for it belongs to me* (Exodus 13:2). *Tell the Israelites: when a woman has conceived and gives birth to a boy, she shall be unclean for seven days, with the same uncleanness as at her menstrual period. On the eighth day, the flesh of the boy's foreskin shall be circumcised, and then she shall spend thirty-three days more in becoming purified of her blood; she shall not touch anything sacred nor enter the sanctuary till the days of her purification are fulfilled. If she gives birth to a girl, for fourteen days she shall be as unclean as at her menstruation, after which she shall spend sixty-six days in becoming purified of her blood. When the days of her purification for a son or for a daughter are fulfilled, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the meeting tent a yearling lamb for a holocaust and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering. The priest shall offer them up before the Lord to make atonement for her, and thus she will be clean again after her flow of blood. Such is the law for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl child* (Leviticus 12:2-7). Even though neither the one nor the other was necessary, nevertheless the Lawgiver did not, in anyway, want to transgress His own Law whom He had given through Moses, His servant and prophet. At that time, the high-priest Zaccharias, the father of John the Forerunner [Precursor], was on duty in the Temple [*serving as a priest before God in the order of his division* (St. Luke 1:8)]. Zaccharias placed the Virgin, not in the temple area reserved for women, but rather, in the area reserved for virgins. On this occasion, two unusual persons appeared in the Temple: the Elder Simeon and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The righteous Simeon took the Messiah in his arms and said: *Now, Master, You may let Your servant go in peace, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation* (St. Luke 2: 29-30). Simeon also spoke

the following words about the Christ-child: *Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel* (St. Luke 2:34). Then Anna, who from her youth served God in the Temple by fasting and prayers, recognized the Messiah and glorified God and proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem about the coming of the long-awaited One. The Pharisees present in the Temple, who having seen and heard all, became angry with Zacharias because he placed the Virgin Mary in the area reserved for virgins and reported this to King Herod. Convinced that this is the new king about whom the Magi from the east spoke, Herod immediately sent his soldiers to kill Jesus. In the meantime the Holy Family had already left the city and set out for Egypt under the guidance of an angel of God. The Feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple was celebrated from earliest times but the solemn celebration of this day was established in the year 544 A.D. during the reign of Emperor Justinian.

February 11

SAINT THEODORA

Theodora, a Greek empress, was the wife of the nefarious Emperor Theophilus the Iconoclast. After the death of Theophilus, Theodora became the ruling empress and reigned together with her son Michael III. At the Council in Constantinople (842 A.D.), she immediately restored the veneration of icons. On this occasion, the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy was instituted which is still celebrated today on the First Sunday of the Honorable Fast [First Sunday in Lent]. This holy and meritorious woman of the Church gave up her soul to God on February 11, 867 A.D. It was at that time, by the divine and wonderful Providence of God, at the solemn triumph of Orthodoxy over all heresies, that St. Cyril and St. Methodius were sent as Christian missionaries to the Slavs.

February 21

SAINT ZACHARIAS PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

During the reign of the Greek Emperor Heraclius, the Persian Emperor Chozroes attacked Jerusalem in the year 614 A.D. Chozroes pillaged the city, removed the Honorable Cross [of Christ] to Persia and took an enormous number of Christians into bondage, among them was Patriarch Zacharias. The Jews assisted Chozroes in committing evil against

the Christians. Among the other Jewish acts of wickedness, this one is mentioned: the Jews purchased from Chozroes 90,000 Christians as their slaves and slew them all. The aged Patriarch Zacharias remained in bondage for fourteen years. Many miracles occurred in Persia as a result of the Honorable Cross, so even the Persians said: "The Christian God has come to Persia." Later on, Heraclius forced the Persian emperor to return the Honorable Cross to Jerusalem, along with the patriarch and the remaining captives. Emperor Heraclius himself bore the Cross on his shoulders into the Holy City. St. Zacharias spent his remaining days in peace and took up habitation with the Lord in the year 631 A.D. He was succeeded on the throne by Patriarch Modestus and followed by St. Sophronius (March 11).

February 28

SAINT BASIL THE CONFESSOR

Basil was a companion and co-suffer with St. Procopius of Decapolis. Basil faithfully followed his teacher Procopius, both in peaceful times and in times of persecution. He suffered many hardships from the iconoclasts. When the iconoclasts were defeated, Basil, according to God's Providence, returned together with Procopius to his monastery, where in fasting and prayer he lived a long life of asceticism. He died peacefully in the year 747 A.D.

Parish & Organizations News

Antiochian Women of St. Mark

On January 12th the Antiochian Women had their Annual Christmas Luncheon at Darya Restaurant. The luncheon was a beautiful gathering where everyone enjoyed socializing and a fun gift exchange. The Ladies will have their monthly meeting at church on January 20th after Liturgy in which we will be discussing upcoming events such as the Valentine's Party on February 9th. More details to follow. Thank you

Tania Maalouli
Antiochian Women Secretary

Teen SOYO

The Teens held their Christmas Party on December 27. Many attended and enjoyed a fun evening. They are busy planning more activities in the new year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Jessica Alchammas 2/26

Samir Artoul 2/2

May Asaly 2/15

Ivana Awayjan 2/27

Joseph Azzam 2/15

Maryse Benjamin 2/17

Matt Beyrooty 2/22

Mikhail Billeh 2/4

Sarah Chade 2/17

George Chala 2/6

Vladimir Chendler 2/3

Randy Dabbah 2/18

Samira Eissa 2/1

Kevin Fortuna 2/22

Jamie Hanna 2/13

Gellan Kashou 2/20

Sammy Khamis 2/17

Diana Khamis 2/19

Charlotte Houry 2/15

Amanda Khury 2/12

Simon Kishek 2/2

Adel Munayyer 2/13

Danice Najjar 2/22

Lori Nour 2/10

Tanya Richards 2/2

Rebekah Rodriguez 2/16

Paul Qaqundah 2/26

Mae Sakhel-Qushair 2/12

Nuha Qushair 2/10

Tammy Qutami 2/25

Robert Ranney 2/14

Kimla Ranney 2/24

Paula Rodriguez 2/6

Najib Saadeh 2/18

George Saba 2/2

Siham Saba 2/10

Yacoub Saba 2/17

Nabeel Salameh 2/16

Daniel Scholl 2/10

Sebastian Skaff 2/6

Michael Souri 2/25

Andre Terzian 2/25
Brenda Tax 2/13
Melanie Tierney 2/22
Tina Tomeo 2/19

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Tony & Maryse Benjamin 2/23
Fr. Patrick & Nina Irish 2/6
Antoune & Maysoun Khoury 2/10
Ramzi & Randa Salameh 2/14
Don Jr. & Penny Skaff 2/14

*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)***

**SAINT MARK ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH
17840 SKY PARK CIRCLE
IRVINE, CA 92614
FEBRUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER**

**SUPPORT ST MARK CHURCH
RALPHS CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM 5% EARNINGS**

USE OUR NEW NPO #YX817

PLEASE CALL **800-443-4438** TO SIGN UP TODAY
01/20/2019

RESTAURANTS

CARL'S JR	(10'S)	\$70
CHEESECAKE FACTORY		\$100
CHIPOTLE MEXICAN GRILL	110'S)	\$40
DEL TACO		\$0
EL POLLO LOCO (\$10)		\$30
EL TORITO ACAPULCO		\$50
MAGGIANO'S/CHILI'S / MACARONI GRILL (25'S)		\$175
MIMI'S CAFE		\$100
OUTBACK STEAK HOUSE		\$0
PANERA BREAD (\$25'S)		\$80
PF CHANGS/PEI WEI		\$0
OLIVE GARDEN		\$50
SMASHBURGER (\$10'S)		\$30
SUBWAY (10'S)		\$30
TACO BELL (510'S)		\$30

GAS STATIONS

ARCO		\$250
EXXON/MOBIL		\$600
SHELL		\$400
76 UNOCAL (5100'S)		\$400

CLOTHING DEPARTMENT STORES

BLOOMINGDALE'S	100'S	\$180
EXPRESS CLOTHING STORES		\$180
Gap/Banana Republic/Old Navy \$25	NEW	\$50
MACY'S (\$25/\$100'S)		\$100
MARSHALL/TJ MAX		\$100
NORDSTROM	\$100'S	\$200
ROSS (\$25'S)		\$100
SAKS 5TH AVENUE	(\$50'S)	\$100
STEIN MART (\$25)		\$50
SEPHORA COSMETICS (\$25'S) ***NEW***		\$50
AMAZON.COM GIFT CARDS (\$25'S /100'S)		\$250 <u>SHOP SMILE AMAZON</u>
Visa® Five Back (\$50/\$100)		\$700

FOOD MARKETS

ALBERTSON'S		\$300
SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET (\$50)	** NEW**	\$100
STATER BROTHERS		\$400
SMART N FINAL (\$50 \$ ONLY)		\$0
SUPER KING MARKET	***NEW	\$200

SPECIALTY RETAIL STORES

BATH & BODY		\$30
RFD BATH & BEYOND		\$50
DISNEY STORES		\$250
HOME DEPOT		\$75
HONEYBAKED HAM		\$50
I-TUNES (\$15 & 25'S)		\$25
SEE'S CANDIES \$20.00/LB		1 POUND
STARBUCKS (\$10 and \$25)		\$345
TARGET \$25		\$375
WALMART \$25 AND 100'S		\$100

**SHOP @ SMILE AMAZON.COM... CHOOSE ST.MARK Antiochian Orthodox Church
FOR YOUR CHARITY ORGANIZATION**

St. Mark Orthodox Church

February 2019

Sunday Orthros 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						2
						Feast of the Presentation of Christ into the Temple\ Liturgy at 10:00 a.m. Vespers 4:00 p.m.
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Super Bowl Viewing Party at 3:00 p.m.		Adult Education 6:45 p.m.	Vespers 7:00 p.m. Fasting Day		Fasting Day	Vespers 4:00 p.m. Valentine Dinner Dance
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Sunday of the Cananite Woman	Diocese Clergy. Seminar	Diocese Clergy. Seminar	No Vespers Fasting Day Diocese Clergy. Seminar	Valentine Day Diocese Clergy. Seminar	SOYO Winter Camp Fasting Day	SOYO Winter Camp Vespers 4:00 p.m.
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Sunday of the Publican And the Pharises	Parish Council Meeting 6:30 p.m.	Adult Education 6:45 p.m.	Vespers 7:00 p.m. No Fasting all Week		An Evening with St. Raphael 6:45 p.m.	Vespers 4:00 p.m
24	25	26	27	28		
Sunday of the Prodigal Son Antiochian Women's Meeting		Adult Education 6:45 p.	Vespers 7:00 p.m. Fasting Day			

St. Mark Men's Club
5th Annual Super Bowl Viewing Party

Sunday, February 3, 2019

3:00 p.m.

At

St. Mark Church Hall

Menu

Hot Chicken Wings, Chili, Pizza, Chips, Salsa & Dips, Cheese & Crackers,
Veggies, Dessert, Coffee, Water & Sodas
(Bring your Own Beer)

MEN, LADIES AND CHILDREN ARE ALL WELCOME!

***MUST RSVP with Austin Turk at (949)922-2350 or Austinturk@aol.com
by February 1, Donation \$10 per Adult, \$5 Children 12 years old or under***

FOR ADDED FUN

There will be A Super bowl pool \$25 per square

Prizes:

\$100 for 1st quarter

\$100 for 2nd quarter

\$100 for 3rd quarter

\$200 for Final

**no need to be Present to win
purchase pool squares starting Sunday 1/13/2019
See Gus Awayjan to Purchase and/or Reserve Squares**

Antiochian Women of St Mark Invite You to our Annual

Valentines Dinner Dance

Saturday February 9th, 2019

St. Marks Church Ballroom

17840 Sky Park Circle, Irvine

February 9th, 2019 7:00PM - 1:00AM

*Join Us for a Romantic Evening and
Dance to the Beautiful Rhythms of DJ Frankie Flow*

9 Middle Eastern Appetizers Hot and Cold

Full Arabic Dinner

Complimentary Bottle of El Massaya ARAK

On Each Table

Dessert Buffet

Silent Auction and Great Prizes!!!

Please feel free to bring any beverage of choice

TICKETS: \$70.00 per person

RESERVATIONS: Denise Nassif 949.500-8318

Afifa Artoul 949.600-3876