**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, 10:00 am – 3:30 pm

Website: www.st-mark-church.org

Archpriest Michael Laffoon, Priest Patrick Irish

Protodeacon George Moubayed, Dn. Nicholas Mamey, Sub Deacon Athanasius Fakhouri

Choir Director Barbara Scholl

Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Mark Ellis, Theresa Joubran,

Karim Youssef

Church Office Secretary: Lydia Wakileh

Teen Advisor: Fatin Fakhouri

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**July 5, 2020**

**Fourth Sunday After Pentecost**

**Venerable Athanasius of Athos; Venerable Lampados of Irenoupolis; Hieromartyr Cyprian of Mount Athos; synaxis of the 23 martyrs of Lesvos;**

**uncovering of relics of Sergios the wonderworker of Radonezh**

**HYMNS AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE**

**All: Troparion of the Resurrection the Third Tone:** Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath

delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

**Troparion of St. Athanasius the Athonite in the Third Tone:** The Angels’ ranks were awed by thy life in the flesh, how, though corporeal, and clad with earthly clay, thou didst set forth with courage to invisible wars and wrestlings and didst boldly smite the hordes of the demons with mortal wounds. Wherefore, Christ rewarded thee with abundant gifts in return. Entreat Him that our souls find salvation, O most renowned Father Athanasius.

All: **Troparion to 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 Theotokos in the Second Tone**: O undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix unrejected by the Creator, turn not away from the voice of our petitions, though we be sinners. Come to us in time, who cries to thee in faith, with assistance; for thou art good. Hasten to us with intercessions, O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

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**Prokeimenon** The saints shall boast in glory, and they shall rejoice upon their beds. Sing unto the Lord a new song; His praise is in the church of the saints.

**The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. (5:22-6:2)**

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provocation of one another, no envy of one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**Alleluia Verses** (Psalms 30.1,2) Tone 2: In you Lord I have hoped; let me never be ashamed. Be my God and protector.

**The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (8:5-13)**

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching Him and saying, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress.” And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” But the centurion answered Him, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard him, He marveled, and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.” And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; be it done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed at that very moment.

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**Holy oblations are given today by** Fr. Michael and family for Kh. Donna Laffoon on the occasion of her birthday (July 6), by Tarize, Grace & George Bahbah for Phillip on his birthday (July 2) and by the Bahbah & Wakileh family for the soul of their father Andrew Bahbah departed this life 19 years on 7/2.

**Until further notice, there is no Coffee Hour.**

***Please remember in your prayers: Eleanor Wackeen, Jamal El-Sayegh, Francois & Maureen Maatouk, Tarek Fakhouri, Adele Bahbah, Paul Qaqundah, Theresa Joubran, and the suffering people of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Palestine, Venezuela, Ukraine, and all people afflicted by violence and disease, especially those affected by the Coronavirus.***

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**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.

***Today***

**Please remember that even in the midst of this difficult period, the expenses of the parish continue. It is important that we send in our donations and pledges via U.S. mail, or if you prefer to pay by credit card call the Church Office to set this up.** We are working to keep our expenditures as low as possible until things return to a more normal state.

***This Week***

**Wednesday July 8, 6:00 p.m. Vespers**

**Quote from the Saints**

“As painters, when they are painting from other pictures, constantly look at the model, and do their best to transfer its lineaments to their own work, so too must he who is desirous of rendering himself perfect in all branches of excellence, keep his eyes turned to the lives of the saints…and make their virtue his own by imitation.” St. Basil the Great, Letter 2

# Athanasius of Mount Athos (July 5)

Saint Athanasius had Trebizond for his homeland. He first entered the monastic life on the mountain called Kymaeos or Kyminas, which is in Mysia of Bithynia, then he went to Mount Athos and founded a large monastery, which is known as the Great Lavra. He became so renowned for his virtue that from Rome, Calabria, Georgia, and elsewhere, rulers, men of wealth and nobility, abbots, and even bishops came to him and were subject to him. When the time for his departure was at hand, God revealed to him how it would take place, so that he was able to instruct his spiritual children not to be troubled when it should come to pass. A new church was being built for the sake of the many who came to him, and only the dome had not been finished. Together with six of the brethren, the Saint went to the top of the church to help the workmen. The dome collapsed, and they fell. Five were killed at once, and the Saint died three hours later. His holy body remained incorrupt and he worked many miracles after his death. He reposed about the end of the tenth century.

**Regarding Church Attendance**

On May 25, Gov. Newsome announced relaxed guidelines for religious gatherings in the State of California. The guidelines specify that churches, synagogues, mosques, etc. may now gather for services with a limit of 25% of capacity, or 100 attendees whichever is less.

Based on the maximum number of people allowed in our sanctuary (324), we are now allowed up to 81 attendees.

This will be a partial re-opening of our services. This requires some kind of system to allow a larger number of people to start coming to holy services without going over our limit and allowing everyone a chance to attend, even though it can’t all be on the same day.

We now are enabling parish members to sign up for purposes of attending Sunday Divine Liturgy. There is a limited total number of attendees (60). To sign up, please go to https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904044CABAB29A4FF2-sunday

Every Sunday our Choir Director Barbara Scholl will ask a rotating number of singers to also be present.

Holy Services will continue being live-streamed at https://livestream.com/accounts/13863088/events/9076624?t=1586211820473

We are implementing this partial re-opening using the guidelines from the State of California and from our Metropolitan. These are summarized below. Please read these guidelines carefully and follow them.

We will continue to live stream all services until we all can be together again. For those attending services, please work diligently to be at church on time. It is a gift to be able to come together again so let’s start with “Blessed is the Kingdom” at 10 AM. You are also welcome to join us for Matins at 8:45 AM.

There is a great deal of joy in bringing our community back together again even though we are still doing this slowly.

All attendees must practice self-distancing, excepting those who live in the same household (no less than 6 ft. separation). Every other row of seats will be “blocked off” to facilitate distancing. Ushers may ask you to move if necessary to maintain prudent distancing.

The wearing of protective masks is highly recommended (young children excepted). Choir members will not be wearing masks, but will practice rigorous distancing).

If you have symptoms of illness, please stay home. These symptoms include:

Fever or chills

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Fatigue

Muscle or body aches

Headache

New loss of taste or smell

Sore throat

Congestion or runny nose

Nausea or vomiting

Diarrhea

People with serious underlying conditions and the elderly should stay home. These people can schedule Confession and/or reception of Holy Communion by appointment. If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should not participate in holy services for 14 days.

The “stay at home” order went into effect in mid-Lent. Holy Confession therefore, is overdue for many. These can be scheduled with Fr. Michael on Wednesday or Saturday after Vespers. For the time being Confessions will not be heard on Sunday mornings. The weekly Vespers services are open to all (up to our 81 person limit).

Points of contact in the Narthex and Church will be cleaned/disinfected after each service. Hand sanitizer will be available in the Narthex (please help us by bringing your own, if possible).

Please use sanitizer or soap and water to wash your hands upon entering the church building.

Clergy will cleanse their hands periodically during holy services.

Regarding the distribution of Holy Communion, I quote from the directive of our Metropolitan, “we will continue to offer Communion according to our Tradition, but all should allow the priest to pour the Body and Blood by opening their mouths wide and not closing their lips on the spoon. If the spoon does touch the mouth of the communicant, it should be wiped on the kalima [communion cloth].”

When lining up for Holy Communion, please maintain 6 ft. distancing

Antidoron [holy bread] will be handed out by the priest, or an altar server wearing a plastic glove.

Collection trays will not be passed as usual. Instead one tray in the Narthex will be designated for collections.

The latest medical evidence tells us that COVID-19 is mainly spread via “respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).” (CDC website).

Gathering to celebrate the Lord’s Day is essential to Christian life. At the same time the last thing we want to see happen is for our gatherings to enable any serious illness. This is why the practices listed above are necessary.

Please continue to pray that our decisions and actions in the process of re-opening our church (and indeed our society) are guided by God’s wisdom. No plan is perfect so I apologize for any inconveniences ours may cause. If you have questions, please contact me via email (frmlaffoon@gmail.com) or call the Church Office (949-851-8933)