

# **St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church**

**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, Diocese of the West**

17840 Sky Park Circle, Irvine CA 92614 (949) 851-8933

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

Archpriest Michael Laffoon, Priest Patrick Irish

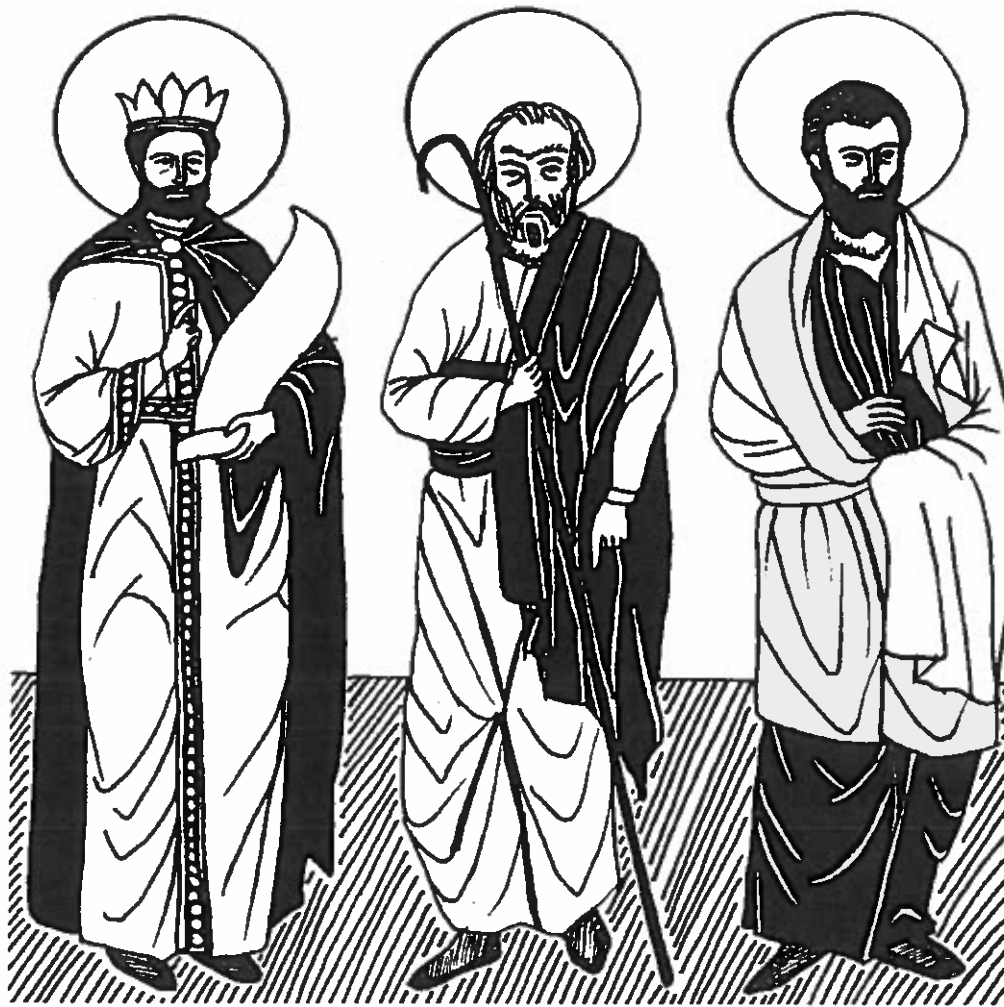
Protodeacon George Moubayed, Dn. Nicholas Mamey, Sub Deacon Athanasius Fakhouri

Choir Director Barbara Scholl

Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Mark Ellis, Theresa Joubran,

Karim Youssef

Teen Advisor: Fatin Fakhouri



**DECEMBER 13, 2020**

**SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS OF CHRIST**

**VENERABLE FATHER HERMAN OF ALASKA**

## Entrance Hymns

**Troparion for the Resurrection in the Second Tone:** When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

**Troparion of the Forefathers in the Second Tone:** Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and she it was who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

**Troparion of St. Herman of Alaska in the Fourth Tone:** Blessed ascetic of the northern wilds and gracious intercessor for the whole world, teacher of the Orthodox Faith, good instructor of piety, adornment of Alaska and joy of all America, holy Father Herman, pray to Christ God that He save our souls.

**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 Preparation for the Nativity of Christ in the Third Tone:** Today the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth in an ineffable manner to the pre-eternal Word. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest, and glorify with the angels and shepherds him who shall appear by his own will as a new Child, the pre-eternal God.

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**Prokeimenon (Daniel 3:26,27) Tone 8:** 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 Colossians (3:4-11)**

Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off

the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

**Alleluia Verses** (Psalm 98.6, 33:17) Tone 4: Moses and Aaron are among his priests. The righteous cried and the Lord heard them.

**The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (14:16-24)**

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

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**Holy oblations are given today by Lupe Allen for the souls of her husband Cecil, her cousin Elias Hanout and her friend Tanya Stansbury; by Samir Billeh for his brother-in-law Tony Karim Matta, newly-departed; by the Bahbah, Turk, Wakilieh and Hadshiti families for the soul of the newly-departed Adele Bahbah, and by the Baba families for the soul of the newly-departed Vadney Baroody (mother of Michele Baba). May all their memorie be eternal!**

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

*Please remember in your prayers: Eleanor Wackeen, Yuri Sidorenko, Jamal El-Sayegh, Tarek Fakhouri, Adele Bahbah, Adib and Nabila Zabaneh, 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

*Is the Fifth Sunday of the Christmas Fast (Advent).* 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. The only way to combat the commercialization and vaguely sentimental observance of the Birth of the Savior is to prepare for a Holy Feast Day by participating in some meaningful way in the Fast.

**2021 Wall Calendars are here.** Please pick on up from the information table in the Hall.

*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 go to our new parish web page [www.st-mark-church.org](http://www.st-mark-church.org) and click on "Donate"* We are working to keep our expenditures as low as possible until things return to a more normal state.

### This Week

**Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Advent Parakelsis (Supplication Service)**

**Friday 6:00 p.m. Advent Parakelsis (Supplication Service)**

**Saturday Great Vespers 4:00 p.m.**

### Next Week

**Christmas week Services**

**Sunday December 20, 6:00 p.m. Pre- Feast Vespers**  
**Monday December 21, 6:00 p.m. Pre- Feast Vespers**  
**Tuesday December 22, 6:00 p.m. Pre- Feast Vespers**  
**Wednesday December 23, 6:00 p.m. Pre- Feast Vespers**  
**Thursday December 24, 1- Royal hours 9:30 a.m.**  
**Thursday December 24<sup>th</sup>, Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ; Orthros 8:00 p.m. and Divine Liturgy 9:00 p.m.**

Would you not say, Is not that which is best, above all, and surpassing all, and that which by preference is most worthy of love, the Very Lord, our Jesus Christ, who created us, adorned us with such ideals, gave life to all, sustains everything, nurtures and loves all, who is Himself Love and most beautiful of all men? Should we not then love God above every thing, desire Him more than anything, and search Him out?'

*St. Herman of Alaska*

### **St Herman of Alaska (December 13)**

Saint Herman (his name is a variant of Germanus) was born near Moscow in 1756. In his youth he became a monk, first at the Saint Sergius Hermitage near Saint Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland; while he dwelt there, the most holy Mother of God appeared to him, healing him of a grave malady. Afterwards he entered Valaam Monastery on Valiant Island in Lake Ladoga; he often withdrew into the wilderness to pray for days at a time. In 1794, answering a call for missionaries to preach the Gospel to the Aleuts, he came to the New World with the first Orthodox mission to Alaska. He settled on Spruce Island, which he called New Valaam, and here he persevered, even in the face of many grievous afflictions mostly at the hands of his own countrymen in the loving service of God and of his neighbour. Besides his many toils for the sake of the Aleuts, he subdued his flesh with great asceticism, wearing chains, sleeping little, fasting and praying much. He brought many people to Christ by the example of his life, his teaching, and his kindness and sanctity, and was granted the grace of working miracles and of prophetic insight. Since he was not a priest, Angels descended at Theophany to bless the waters in the bay; Saint Herman used this holy water to heal the sick. Because of his unwearying missionary labours, which were crowned by God with the salvation of countless souls, he is called the Enlightener of the Aleuts, and has likewise been renowned as a wonderworker s since his repose in 1837.

## Regarding Church Attendance

We have been 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>. 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. 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 (except young children). Choir members will not be wearing masks, but will practice 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.

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PLACE ORDERS FOR CHRISTMAS**  
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Orthodox Church FOR THE CHARITY ORGANIZATION

12/13/2020

**RESTAURANTS**

CHEESECAKE FACTORY	\$100
MIMIS CAFÉ	\$100
MAGGIANO'S/MACARONI GRILL/ CHILI'S / (25'S)	\$175
OLIVE GARDEN	\$50
SMASHBURGER (\$10'S)	\$30
TACO BELL (\$10'S)	\$30

**GAS STATIONS**

ARCO	\$700
CHEVRON	\$650
EXXON/MOBIL	\$500
SHELL	\$800
76 UNOCAL (\$100's)	\$200

**CLOTHING DEPARTMENT STORES**

BLOOMINGDALE'S 100's	\$100
MACY'S (\$100's)	\$400
MARSHALL/ TJ MAX	\$100
SAKS 5TH AVENUE (\$50'S)	\$100
ULTA BEAUTY \$25'S	\$50
AMAZON.COM GIFT CARDS (\$25'S /100's)	\$200 <i>SHOP SMILE.AMAZON</i>
Visa® Five Back (\$50'& \$100 )	\$200 <b>***GREAT FOR GIFTING****</b>

**FOOD MARKETS**

SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET (\$50)	\$200
STATER BROTHERS	\$275
SMART N FINAL (\$50'S ONLY)	\$100

**SPECIALTY RETAIL STORES**

BED BATH & BEYOND	\$50
DISNEY STORES	\$150
HOME DEPOT	\$75
HONEYBAKED HAM	\$50 <b>**HOLIDAY MEAL **</b>
STARBUCKS (\$10 and \$25)	\$100
TARGET	\$250
WALMART \$25' AND 100'S	\$400

**800-443-4438 RALPHS SIGN UP**

# ST. MARK CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE



Please support the ladies at the shelter of  
Grandma's House of Hope.

We are looking for gift cards from Target, Walmart, could be  
purchased from Saeda Turk at church

Contact Afifa Artoul at 949-600-3876

Return gift cards to Afifa Artoul, Kristin Chala or Saeda Turk.

Please return by December 13, 2020

*Sponsored by The Antiochian women of St. Mark*