

THE APOSTLE
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2021
SAINT MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF IRVINE

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America
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and Metropolitan of all North America
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Very Rev. Father Michael Laffoon, Pastor
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Rev Fr. Patrick Irish, Attached
Rev. Protodeacon George Moubayed
Rev. Deacon Nicholas Mamey
Sub-deacon: Athanasius Fakhouri
Choir Director: Barbara Scholl
Chanters: Jacob Bahbah, Mark Ellis, Theresa
Joubran, Karim Youssef, Perry Ioannides
Teen Advisor: Fatin Fakhouri

2019 – 2020 PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman Kristin Chala {22}
Vice Chairman – Penny Skaff {22}
Secretary – Jerri Lynn Mamey {21}
Treasurer – Osama Kishek {23}
Assistant Treasurers- Michael Khoury {21} &
Imad Alchammas {23}
Gisele Awayjan {23}
Lew Malouf {21}
Barbara Scholl {22}
Tammy Qutami {21}
[Number in brackets is the member's last year of his
or her current term]
Church School Co-Directors: Tammy Qutami and
Kristin Chala
Men's Club President: Ghassan Awayjan
Antiochian Women of St. Mark President: Vera
Bahbah
Teen SOYO President: Nadim Youssef

Pastor's Corner
Pastor's Message

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 if 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.

Monday February 1, Evening Liturgy, Feast of Meeting of the Lord in the Temple 6:30 p.m. (Orthros 5:30 p.m.)

Tuesday February 23, Evening Liturgy, 1st & 2nd Discovery of the Head of St. John the Baptist 6:30 p.m. (Orthros 5:30 p.m.)

February 22- 27, Fast-free Week

March 2021 Advanced Calendar

March 7 Judgement Sunday (last day to eat meet)

March 8-14, Cheese Week

March 15, Clean Monday – Start of Great Lent

March 25, Feast of the Annunciation

Selected Saint of the Month

February 10

THE HIEROMARTYR HARALAMPOS

The great saint, Haralampos [sometimes rendered Charalampos] was a bishop in Magnesia [Greece] who suffered for Christ in his 113th year. When a terrible persecution began during the reign of Emperor Septimus Serverus, the elder Haralampos did not hide from the persecutors. Instead, he freely and openly preached the Christian Faith. He endured all tortures as though he were in someone else’s body. When they skinned him alive, the forgiving elder said to the emperors soldiers: Thank you my brethren, for in scraping my old body you renew my spirit for a new eternal life.” He worked many miracles and converted many to the Faith. Even the emperor’s daughter, Galina, abandoned the idolatry of her father and became a Christian. Codenamed to death and brought to the place of execution, St. Haralampos raised his hands to heaven and prayed to God for all people, that God would grant them bodily health and spiritual salvation and that He would multiply their fruit of the earth: “O Lord, Thou knowest that men are flesh and blood,; forgive them their sins and pour out Thy grace on all!” After praying, this the holy elder gave up his soul to God before the executioner lowered the sword

**Feasts, Special Services and Events for
February 2021**

Parish & Organization News

All of our Organization activities are suspended until the State restrictions on gatherings is lifted.

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
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 Khoury 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 Soury 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

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)

February 2021

January '21

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

March '21

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 Evening Liturgy 6:30 p.m.	2 Groundhog Day Feast of the Meeting of the Lord	3 Vespers 6:00 p.m.	4	5	6 Vespers 4:00 p.m.
7	8 Parish Council Mtg 7:00 p.m.	9	10 Fast Day	11	12 Lincoln's B-Day Chinese New Year Fast Day	13 Vespers 4:00 p.m.
14 Valentine's Day	15 President's Day	16 Mardi Gras	17 Ash Wednesday Vespers 6:00 p.m.	18	19 Fast Day	20 Vespers 4:00 p.m.
21	22	23	24 Fast free Week Vespers 6:00 p.m.	25	26 Fast free Week	27 Vespers 4:00 p.m.
28 Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Sunday of the Prodigal Son	8	Notes Great Lent begins on March 15				