

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

Archpriest Michael Laffoon, Priest Patrick Irish

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

Choir Director Barbara Scholl

Chanters: Mark Ellis, Jacob Bahbah, Theresa Joubran,

Karim Youssef, Pericles Ioannides

Teen Advisor: Fatin Fakhouri



MARCH 14, 2021

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY (SUNDAY OF CHEESE FARE)

VENERABLE BENEDICT OF NURSIA; EUSCHEMENOS, BISHOP OF LAMPSAKOS

HYMNS AFTER THE ENTRANCE

Troparion of the Resurrection in the Seventh Tone: Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

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.

Clergy: **Kontakion of Cheese Fare Sunday in the Sixth Tone:** Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue, who teachest the thoughtless and protectest the poor: Strengthen and enlighten my heart, O Master. Give me word, O Word of the Father, for behold my lips will not be restrained from crying to thee: Have mercy on me, the transgressor, O merciful Lord.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 46.6, 1) Tone 3: O chant unto our God, chant ye. Clap your hands, all ye nations.

The reading from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans (13:11-14:4)

Brethren, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts.

But as for the one who is weak in faith, receive him, but not for disputes over opinions. For one believes he may eat anything; but the weak person eats herbs. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to be the judge over the servant of a stranger? To his own master that he either stands or falls; and he will be made to stand; for God is able to make him stand.

Alleluia Verses (Psalm 30.1,2) Tone 3: In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me not be put to shame forever. Be Thou unto me a God to defend me.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (6:14-21)

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".

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Holy Oblations are offered today by Michael and Charlotte Khoury for their daughter Melissa and her husband Zach on the occasion of their wedding anniversary. We also pray for Diana Josan and her daughter Aria who are being churched this morning and for Father Patrick Irish on the occasion of his birthday.

Until further notice, there is no Coffee Hour.

Please remember in your prayers: Yuri Sidorenko, Jamal El-Sayegh, Tarek Fakhouri, 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

March is Ladies Month in our Archdiocese. During March our Ladies will be ushering and reading the Sunday epistles.

2021 Wall Calendars are here. Please pick one 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 and click on "Donate" We are working to keep our expenditures as low as possible until things return to a more normal state.

Today is Forgiveness Sunday, the last day for eating dairy, eggs, fish etc., until Pascha. We will sing an abbreviated Forgiveness Vespers after Liturgy.

Our Antiochian Women are offering Spinach Pies for sale each Sunday through Great Lent. Go to the paved area behind the church to purchase.

This Week

Lent begins tomorrow: During Great Lent, the rules of the dietary fast are thus: All of Lent and Holy Week we are to abstain from all meat and animal products (including eggs, milk, animal fats, etc.) The only exceptions are shellfish. In addition, Mondays through Fridays, we are to abstain from wine and other alcoholic drinks and olive oil (in some Orthodox traditions olive oil is allowed). This is the "letter of the law." It is important for you and your family to participate in the "spirit of the law", working out this Lenten effort within your household in ways pleasing to God and beneficial for the soul. We all must be reminded that the purpose of the dietary fast is to help us to fast from sin and ungodliness! If you have questions regarding Lenten discipline, please see Fr. Michael.

Monday March 15, First Day of Great Lent

Schedule for First Week of Lent

Monday March 15, Great Compline 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday March 16, Great Compline 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday March 17, Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts 6:30 p.m.

Thursday March 18, Great Compline 7:00 p.m.

Friday March 19, Little Compline with Akathist Hymn

Next Week

Monday March 22, 7:00 -p.m. Great Compline

Wednesday March 24, Great Vespers 6:00 p.m.

Thursday March 25, 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy for Feast of the Annunciation (Orthros 8:45 a.m.)

Friday March 26, Little Compline with Akathist Hymn (Madayeh 2) 7:00 p.m.

Upcoming Services and Events

The 2021 Western Diocese Parish Life Conference will held be online (i.e. not in person) this summer. All the PLCs in the Archdiocese will be held this way, per the directive of Metropolitan Joseph. Details of the online PLC will be forthcoming.

Quote from the Saints

"Fasting is an admirable thing, but it is more admirable to forgive insults. Through fasting a man is preparing for charity, but by forgiving insults, a man shows charity. Fasting precedes forgiveness, but fasting alone does not save without forgiveness."

-- *St. Nicholai of Zica*

Sunday of Forgiveness

The Holy Fathers have appointed the commemoration of Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight here, on the eve of the holy Forty-day Fast, demonstrating to us not by simple words, but by actual deeds, how beneficial fasting is for man, and how harmful and destructive are insatiety and the transgressing of the divine commandments. For the first commandment that God gave to man was that of fasting, which the first-fashioned received but did not keep; and not only did they not become gods, as they had imagined, but they lost even that blessed life which they had, and they fell into corruption and death, and transmitted these and innumerable other evils to all of mankind. The God-bearing Fathers set these things before us today, that by bringing to mind what we have fallen from, and what we have suffered because of the insatiety and disobedience of the first-fashioned, we might be diligent to return again to that ancient bliss and glory by means of fasting and obedience to all the divine commands. Taking occasion from today's Gospel (Matt. 6:14-21) to begin the Fast unencumbered by enmity, we also ask forgiveness this day, first from God, then from one another and all creation.

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 (80, including clergy and singers). 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>

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). Several rows 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.