

ST. MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
A PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA
PARISH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR APRIL 21, 2019

Our Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Andrew Mamary Sr who has recently departed this life. May God comfort his family and friends in their sorrow and grant his memory to be eternal !"

Our Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Father Herb who has recently departed this life. May God comfort his family and friends in their sorrow and grant his memory to be eternal !"

- We will have our procession with Palms today. Please participate in the Lord's Glorious Entry into Jerusalem. It is a great start to Holy Week!
- A reminder from Father George We should all make plans to receive the Sacrament of Confession at least once during Great Lent as an important part of our preparation to celebrate Christ's Resurrection from the Dead.
- There is no Spaghetti Dinner this week but the crew is back for the Spaghetti Dinner starting next week, May 2!
- Many thanks to our Sunday School students, teachers and parents as well as Parishioners who helped us make the palms for today's service. Please keep in mind also that there will be a procession with palms today. Please remain in the Church until the entire service is completed.
- We will take a second collection today for the Patriarchate. Every year on Palm Sunday, a special Patriarchal tray offering is conducted in Antiochian parishes. The Palm Sunday special tray collection is for the benefit of the Patriarchate of Antioch, and is used at the discretion of the Patriarch to benefit people, churches, and programs of the Patriarchate of Antioch in the Middle East. Now, more than ever, this material support is crucial, as our brothers and sisters in Syria are suffering such great hardship because of the violence that has gripped the country. Please give generously.
- The Ladies are planning a "Rummage and Book Sale" on Friday and Saturday May 3 & 4 ...
- We are at the end of the Lenten season. It is not too late to refocus your attention away from the material world and culture in which we live and look to

your spiritual health and growth. Take advantage of the great opportunities afforded by the Church to bring yourself back to Christ or (if you have been here all along) to strengthen your life in Christ.

- We continue our journey to Pascha today with celebration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The journey to the empty tomb follows the course set out by the Church and the services that will be performed throughout the week. Please make every effort to attend as many services as possible.
- It is never too late to bring family, friends and neighbors to experience the beautiful services we will celebrate this week. Please make every effort to attend as many services as possible. Think of it this way -- Many of us lose ourselves in our jobs, our children's sporting events, TV programs and any one of a number of secular events during course of any given week and don't think twice about giving our time for these types of events. Well now think into the issue further -- How hard is it to take a step back and take the long view of your salvation. How hard is it to set aside time this week to come to our Holy Week services and loose yourself in the beauty that is Orthodox worship!
- Please remember to bring your Food for Hungry People Boxes with you to Church when you come for the Holy Week Services.
- We congratulate Dr. Christopher Veniamin on his recent appointment as Dean of the Antiochian House of Studies. He is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the School, academic and administrative. We are pleased to have Dr. Veniamen as a member of our Parish and Parish Council and we ask God to grant him and the staff of the Antiochian House of Studies many years!
- We thank Father George for a wonderful Lenten Retreat that was held yesterday at our Church. The Topic was Attaining Grace and we all left the Retreat richer for the time we spent together.
- Bishop THOMAS expects to make his annual visit to our Parish of St. Mary over the Mother's Day Weekend, May 10-12. Also, as a reminder, Bishop THOMAS will be with us for the services of Holy Tuesday this year.
- Please remember your families and commit yourselves to be that person who brings everyone in your family together to Church. We all have members of families who belong but do not participate. This is a great time to invite them back. Make a few calls and invite those who have not been present in the Church to join us. Invite them with love
- SAVE THE DATE! We are planning a golf outing for Friday August 16, 2019 at the Sand Springs golf course. Please make plans to get together with a foursome of your fellow parishioners, friends, neighbors, coworkers and family to join us in some Fellowship and fresh air. More details to come.
- Today is the last day to reserve your personalized egg for the Parish "Pascha Tree", which is set up in the front of the Church on the baptismal font. The donation for a colorful Pascha Egg is only \$5.00. Don't wait to get your Ornament for the good health or in loving memory of a loved one because

today is the very last day. Names of all those for whom eggs have been donated will be placed on a special prayer list for Pascha!

- Our Parish Life Conference will be held again this year at the Antiochian Village. Father George encourages all of our parishioners to consider attending with your families (though if there are a lot of events and activities for children it's also for adults). There is something for the entire family at the conference.



AND FINALLY ... SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT & QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

Ask yourself if you find yourself acting or thinking differently about the Church than other aspects of and in your life. Ask yourself if (and why) you seem to hold back when it comes to the Church and think about the strange contradictions listed below when considering the place the Church holds in *your* life ...

- ✘ Isn't it strange how \$20 seems like such a large amount when you donate it to a Church but such a small amount when you go shopping?
- ✘ Isn't it strange how two hours seems so long when you're sitting at Church and how short two hours seems when you're watching a good movie?
- ✘ Isn't it strange that you cannot find words to say when you're praying but you have no trouble having something to say when talking or even texting with a friend?
- ✘ Isn't it strange how difficult it is to read one chapter of the Bible but how easy it is to read a popular novel, an e-book of Facebook?
- ✘ Isn't it strange how everyone wants a front row seat at a concert but wants to sit in the last row at Church?
- ✘ Isn't it strange how we need to know about an event for Church weeks before the event so we could include it in our schedules but we can adjust our schedules at a moment's notice to go out with friends?
- ✘ Isn't it strange how difficult it is to learn and then share with others a fact about God but it's so easy to learn and then share gossip?
- ✘ Isn't it strange how we believe everything in magazines, newspapers and the Internet but we question the words in the Bible?

.... SO WHEN YOU HAVE A MINUTE TO REFLECT, THINK ABOUT WHERE YOU HAVE PLACED GOD AND HIS CHURCH IN YOUR LIFE ITS NEVER TOO LATE TO REARRANGE THE PRIORITIES IN YOUR LIFE ... AND GOD WILL ALWAYS WELCOME YOU HOME

“ If any have tarried even until the eleventh hour, let him, also, be not alarmed at his tardiness; for the Lord ... will accept the last even as the first; he gives rest unto him who comes at the eleventh hour, even as unto him who has wrought from the first hour.”

... excerpted from the Paschal Homily of St. John Chrysostom