



ST. MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

A PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

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CLERGY

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH,

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

His Grace Bishop THOMAS, *Auxiliary Bishop of Charleston, Oakland & the Mid-Atlantic*

Very Rev. Fr. George Alberts, *Pastor*

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. David Hester, *Pastor Emeritus*

Deacon Ephraim Vest

Subdeacon William Obeid + Subdeacon N.D. Namey + Subdeacon John Moses Jr.

WELCOME to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. We are the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Christian Church whose roots trace directly back to the first century Antioch, the city in which the disciples of Jesus Christ were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).

The Orthodox Church is the oldest and second-largest Christian group in the world. We are called by God, our Creator, to worship and follow Him and to proclaim to the world His message of love, peace and salvation.

God loves all mankind and desires that all human beings should believe in Him, know Him, abide in Him, and receive eternal life from Him. To accomplish this God Himself came into the world as a man in Jesus Christ --- becoming man that we might become like God.

The Parishioners of St. Mary Parish welcome you and are pleased that you have decided to worship Almighty God with our Parish family today. We encourage you to learn about our Orthodox faith and our Parish if you are not yet Orthodox.

Although the non-Orthodox may not receive Holy Communion, which may only be given to the Orthodox faithful, we invite you to come forward at the close of the Liturgy to receive a blessing from the Priest and blessed bread. Please also come downstairs to the Parish Hall join us for our fellowship hour.

Our Patronal Feast is the DORMITION (FALLING-ASLEEP) OF THE THEOTOKOS, which is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church and is celebrated each year on August 15. The Theotokos, the Virgin Mary, was "blessed amongst women," and she was chosen "to bear the Savior of our souls." Orthodox Christians consider her to be the Queen of all the saints and angels. Knowing she is eternally present at the throne of God interceding for mankind, we pray for her love, guidance, and protection.



PLEASE NOTE

All our services can be watched as they occur on our Parish Face Book page at <https://www.facebook.com/StMaryAO/>

COMMEMORATIONS

- Today Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are offered/sponsored in Loving Memory of Leo "Brady" Moses and Martha Moses by Suanne Moses *and also* Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are sponsored by Jane Saba in Loving Memory of Janine Saba on the 6th Anniversary of her repose and George Saba Sr on the 7th Anniversary of his repose *and also* Trisagion Prayers are offered for Janine Saba and George Saba Sr. *and also* Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are offered/sponsored in Loving Memory of Marion Norman *and also* Trisagion Prayers are offered for Marion Norman
- Nov. 28 Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are sponsored in Loving Memory of Helen Moses by the Moses Family *and also* Trisagion Prayers are offered for Helen Moses *and also* Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are sponsored in Loving Memory of Joseph and Ruth Solomon by the Solomon Family *and also* Trisagion Prayers are offered for Joseph and Ruth Solomon
- Dec. 12 Trisagion Prayers are offered for the 40 day Memorial for Joseph Morrash. The Coffee Hour is sponsored, in honor of Joe and Connie Morrash by their children, grandchildren, and their families.
- Dec. 19 Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are sponsored in Loving Memory of the Reposed of St. Mary Parish as well as for the Good Health of the Parishioners and the Parish by Sky Elizabeth Blue
- Jan. 16 Bread, Bulletin and Coffee Hour are offered/sponsored in Loving Memory of Hal Morrash for her 5 year memorial for George A Morrash for his 3 year memorial by their family *and also* Trisagion Prayers are offered for Hal and George Morrash

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

It is not necessary to roam heaven and earth after God or to send our mind to seek Him in different places. Purify your soul, O son of man, remove from yourself the thought of memories outside of nature; hang the veil of chastity and humility before your impulses. By means of these you will be able to find Him who is within you. -- *St. Isaac the Syrian*

SCHEDULE OF PARISH LIFE AT ST. MARY

Advent Continues

Today After Liturgy	Teen/College Class with Father George
Tuesday, November 23	Father George at the Church from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Wed. November 24	Akathist of Thanksgiving at 6:00 pm
Thursday, November 25	Happy Thanksgiving!
Friday, November 26	Father George at the Church from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Saturday, November 27	Confessions from 4:30 – 5:00 followed by Vespers at 5:00 pm
Sunday, November 28	Matins at 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am followed by Teen/College Class with Father George

Preparing for the Nativity of Our Lord

Advent is the 40-day period of preparation preceding the Nativity and is observed by the Advent Fast. The Scriptural readings for the Nativity Season orient us to one of the reasons God gave His only begotten Son, which is to establish a New Covenant between Himself and all those who would believe in His Son, from every tribe and nation. *We will all know Him in our hearts if we allow Him to enter!*

The Nativity Fast is one of the four Canonical Fasting Seasons in the Church year. This is a joyous fast in anticipation of the Nativity of Christ and is less strict than other fasting periods. The fast is divided into two periods: (1) November 15th through December 19th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, dairy, fish, wine, and oil) is observed. There is dispensation given for wine and oil on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Similarly, fish, wine, and oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays; and (2) December 20th through 24th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, dairy, fish, wine, and oil) is observed. There is dispensation given for wine and oil only on Saturday and Sunday during this period. Please see Father George if you have questions.

The Feast of the Nativity is celebrated for twelve days after December 25 culminating in the Feast of Epiphany, or Theophany. We will be holding the Advent Paraclesis Service on Wednesdays during Advent unless otherwise listed on the calendar or in the bulletin. Please take some time to slow down and orient yourself to the Season ... *Please join us as often as possible throughout Advent for these Paraclesis Services.*

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2021 FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FIVE

Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

Today the Virgin is the foreshadowing of the pleasure of God, and the beginning of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. Thou hast appeared in the Temple of God openly and hast gone before, preaching Christ to all. Let us shout with one thrilling voice, saying: Rejoice, O thou who art the fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation.

KONTAKION OF ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

The sacred treasury of God's holy glory, * the greatly precious bridal chamber and Virgin, * the Savior's most pure temple, free of stain and undefiled, * into the House of the Lord * on this day is brought forward * and bringeth with herself the grace * of the Most Divine Spirit; * her do God's Angels hymn with songs of praise, * for she is truly the heavenly tabernacle.

THE EPISTLE

*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.
He hath regarded the lowliness of His servant.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (9:1-7)

Brethren, the first tabernacle had ordinances of the divine services and an earthly sanctuary. For the first tabernacle was prepared, in which were the candlestick, and the table, and the bread of the offering, which is called the Sanctuary. And behind the second veil stood the tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies; having a golden altar of incense, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, which contained a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the two tablets of the covenant; and above it the two Cherubim of glory overshadowing the Ark's lid; of these things, we cannot now speak in particular. Now these things having been thus prepared, the priests go in continually into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the divine services; but into the second the high priest enters alone, once in the year, not without blood, which he offers for himself, and for the ignorances of the people.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (10:38-42; 11:27-28)

At that time, Jesus entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to Him and said, "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." As He said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the breasts that Thou didst suck!" But He said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

THE SYNAXARION

On November 21 in the Holy Orthodox Church we celebrate the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple.

Within the temple, Gabriel feedeth thee, O Maid, And shortly he shall come and shall say to thee: Rejoice. On the twenty-first Mary entereth the sacred fane.

Leading the procession into the Temple were virgins with lighted tapers in their hands, then the three-year-old Most-holy Virgin, led by her father and mother. The Virgin was clad in vesture of royal magnificence and adornments as was befitting the "King's daughter, the Bride of God" (Psalm 44:13-15). Following them were many kinsmen and friends, all with lighted tapers. Fifteen steps led up to the Temple. Joachim and Anna lifted the Virgin onto the first step, then she ran quickly to the top herself, where she was met by the High Priest Zachariah, who was to be the father of St. John the Forerunner. Taking her by the hand, he led her not only into the Temple, but into the "Holy of Holies," the holiest of holy places, into which no one but the high priest ever entered, and only once each year, at that. Zachariah "was outside himself and possessed by God" when he led the Virgin into the holiest place in the Temple, beyond the second curtain—otherwise, his action could not be explained. The Most-holy Virgin remained in the Temple and dwelt there for nine full years. While her parents were alive, they visited her often. When God called her parents from this world, the Most-holy Virgin was left an orphan and did not wish to leave the Temple until death or to enter into marriage. The Most-holy Virgin Mary was the first of such life-vowed virgins, of the thousands and thousands of virgin men and women who would follow her in the Church of Christ.

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

PARISH NEWS

- ✘ Today we celebrate the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple. This feast celebrates the day when the Theotokos, still a child, went to the Temple. The background story to this event is outlined below.
- ✘ We attach three messages from Bishop THOMAS regarding (1) Christ Fast Guidelines; (2) A message for this Sunday's Feast of the Presentation of the Theotokos into the Temple; and (3) A message for the Advent Fast and the Nativity.
- ✘ Father George is meeting with our Teens and College Students during Coffee Hour today continuing our series of classes discussing Moral Issues. We invite all our Teens and College Students to attend. We plan to meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. Our Schedule had to change this month due to a change in meeting schedules and the Thanksgiving Holiday.
- ✘ Advent, the Christmas Fast, continues. During the Advent period we hold the Advent Paraclesis Service at 6 p.m. each Wednesday. HOWEVER this Wednesday, the day before Thanksgiving, we will celebrate the Akathist of Thanksgiving rather than the Advent Paraclesis at 6 p.m. Come and join us to give Thanks to God before celebrating the Civil Holiday of Thanksgiving.
- ✘ Our final Take-Out Spaghetti Dinner is Thursday, December 2nd from 4-6 p.m. Please spread the word. Please plan on taking out dinners for family, friends and neighbors ...
- ✘ Father George will be in the Church on Tuesday and Friday this week between 10:00 and 2:00.

- ✘ We still have frozen uncooked stuffed grape leaves and frozen baked kibbee for sale. We will also be able to cook the grape leaves for you if you desire. The cost is \$6 per kibbee and 5 grape leaves for \$7.
- ✘ *Please let Father George or Sbdcn Norman if anyone can be removed from the Prayer List.*
- ✘ We all enjoy the coffee hour and fellowship that follows the Divine Liturgy each Sunday, which is really a special time that gives us the opportunity to share fellowship with our fellow parishioners, catch up on what happened the previous week, maybe talk about next week and welcome visitors and new Parishioners to St. Mary's. However, we need the support of all our families in the Parish to continue with this lovely custom so please consider sponsoring a coffee hour. It doesn't have to be anything elaborate --- *Commit to hosting a Coffee Hour and make a plan Go ahead and do the shopping and come to the Parish Hall on Sunday morning to set up ... put your own "stamp" on the Coffee Hour you host and use the experience to bring together your family!*

On The Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos

This is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church. The background story to the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple is pretty amazing. We celebrate this Feast to commemorate the day when the Theotokos, still a child, went to the Temple.

Joachim and Anna (the parents of the Theotokos) were devout Jews who loved God very much. They lived on only a third of their income, tithing and giving away the rest. Yet they had no child. They promised God that they would give their child back to Him, if He would grant them one, and He blessed them with the gift of their daughter Mary.

When Mary was three years old, and finally weaned, Joachim and Anna did not forget their promise to God. They gathered young ladies with candles to walk with them, and all together walked to the Temple so that they could present Mary to God and give her back to Him. Many family and friends came along, as well, all carrying lit candles.

When they arrived at the Temple, Joachim and Anna lifted Mary up onto the first of the 15 steps that led up into the temple. As soon as she was on that step, she ran all the way up the rest of them. The High Priest at the time was Zachariah (who later became the father of St. John the Forerunner). Zachariah greeted Mary at the top of the steps, took her by the hand, and led her into the Temple. The Holy Spirit directed him as he led her not just into the Temple, but into the "Holy of Holies," the most sacred part of the Temple (which was so holy that only the High Priest could go in there; and he could only go in once a year after much preparation and prayer!!)

The Most-holy Virgin lived in the Temple for many years. The angels fed her in the Holy of Holies. As long as they lived, Joachim and Anna came regularly to the Temple to visit their daughter. When they departed this life, she stayed on in the Temple until she was betrothed to Joseph.

The holiness that Mary acquired while in the Temple, along with her own piety and desire to follow God, prepared the Most-Holy Virgin to become the new Temple, in which God Himself dwelt. Her willingness to come to the Temple with such joy is a notable part of the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple.

Most Holy Theotokos, intercede for our salvation!