

March 19, 2023



THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

3RD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT —TONE 7
SUNDAY OF THE CROSS

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Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow
Jesus Christ and manifest the Kingdom of
God in the Liturgy of His Church.

If this is your first time with us, give us a
chance to get to know you.

Please join us for our fellowship meal
following the service

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From the Holy Fathers

Let all the trees of the forest dance and
sing, as they behold their fellow-tree, the
Cross, today receiving veneration: for
Christ, as holy David prophesied, has
exalted it on high.

*9th Ode of the Canon for the
Sunday of the Cross*

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or
Receive our Weekly
Parish E-mails**

E-mail info@stjohnofdamascus.org
with your request.



Parish Life

Fellowship Meal Sign-up Posted Now through June

The sign-up calendar for fellowship meals after Sunday Divine Liturgies for the first half of 2023 has been posted in the church hall on the bulletin board. Please take a look and sign up for a few. There is room on the form for multiple families to sign-up for a given Sunday so no one is tasked with feed the masses alone. Please be a part of this important ministry of fellowship and hospitality.



Purchase Gift Cards Through Our Scrip Coordinator & Help our Parish

Scrip gift cards raise money for St. John's Auxiliary. When you buy Scrip cards, the store makes a donation with NO extra expense. Use the cards for your regular monthly purchases or gifts for loved ones and support our parish's ministry. Cards are available for gas, groceries, Amazon, restaurants and many other stores.

Look for the Scrip sign on the rectangle table next to the church hall doors.

Father's Café Now on Wednesday In-Person as well as via Zoom 10:30-11:30 (ish)

Our weekly gathering for prayer, reflection & simple fellowship has moved to Wednesdays. It is at 10:30am is available for people to attend IN PERSON as well as via Zoom (see online calendar for the link).

This is an opportunity to sit and have a cup of coffee or tea (reg and decaf provided) and ask questions about the Faith or talk about whatever comes to mind (gardening, movies, history, etc.). We say a prayer, read a reflection and let the conversation (and coffee) flow.

Help Needed with Pre-School & Early Elementary Church School Classes

We need a couple people to help with our pre-school and early elementary church school classes.

Classes are held twice a month (1st & 3rd Sundays) from September to June at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

If you are willing to help please see Bill Moision, Fr Michael or Sally Menig



Blood Drive Sign-up

We are working on scheduling another blood drive here at St John's to help with the current blood shortages being reported in San Diego County. This time we will be working with the San Diego Blood Bank.

We need 35 people to sign-up before we contact them about setting a day and time. At present we have 14.

Please consider adding your name to the sign-up sheet on the bulleting board to the right of the doors in the church hall.



Donations for Paschal Flowers

Part of our parish celebration of Pascha is adorning the church temple with special flowers and decorations.

Please give as you are able so that we can add the beauty of God's creation to the beauty of our temple to glorify our Lord.

Today's Worship—Hymns

Viewing of TV Show "The Chosen" Sunday Mar 12 12:30pm Discussion to Follow

A number of parishioners have been watching a TV show about the ministry of the Lord.

We will be showing the 1st 2 episodes of season 1 in the Church Hall on Sunday Mar 12 beginning at 12:30pm after our fellowship meal. We will also have a short discussion about the episodes and how it compare to the Church's understanding of the events and people (some are saints) presentd.



Auxiliary Baking Schedule for March

Our Auxiliary's baking schedule for the month of March is below. Veterans as well as new people are needed. Please help as you are able!

Thurs Mar 23 Pierogies
Thurs Mar 30 Stuffed Cabbage

If you have questions see Tanya F, Phyllis B, or another member of the Auxiliary.



BRING IN YOUR PALMS

It is time to dispose of your blessed palms from last year. Please bring them to church and give them to Fr. Michael. He will then burn them and scatter the ashes around the church.

Pysanki Workshop—Sat 4/1 Sign-up in Church Hall

We are blessed that Diane Worth is offering a pysanki making workshop on Sat April 1st from 3-5:30pm.

Whether you have a lot of experience or would like to try this beautiful folk craft for

the first time please sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the church hall. Please sign-up ahead of time so Diane can be sure to have enough supplies for everyone.



Sunday Lenten Vespers Sun Mar 19—St Gregory of Nyssa Greek Orthodox Church

The canonical Orthodox Churches in San Diego County will be gathering for Sunday Lenten Vespers on Sun Mar 19 at 6pm.

Come and pray with and meet other Orthodox Christians and enjoy a Lenten reception after the service.

Church Address: 1454 Jamacha Rd
El Cajon, CA 92019

Follow-up Collection for Project Mexico & St Innocent Orphanage

We had a wonderful response to last week's presentation re: St Innocent Orphanage & Project Mexico. We are having a follow-up collection this week.

A basket will be placed on the table after the veneration of the Cross. We raised nearly \$1000.00 last week. Your donations will make a real difference in the life in children and families ministered to by these wonderful institutions of our Church here in North America.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection — Tone 7

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death! To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise! For the Myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy! And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy!

Cross—Tone 1

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

KONTAKIA

Veneration of the Cross — Tone 7

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;
it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;
for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell://
“Enter again into Paradise!”

PROKEIMENON

Tone 6 — O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance! (Ps 27/28:9))

v: To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me! (Ps 27/28:1)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Hebrews 4:14-5:6

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

¹ For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. ³ Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. ⁴ And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; ⁶ as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

Gospel — Mark 8: 34-9:1

³⁴ And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his life? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

¹ And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power."

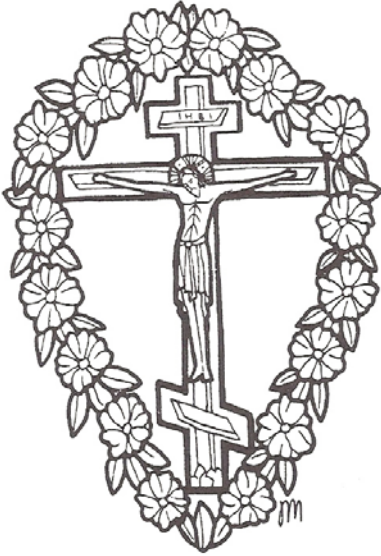
ALLELUIA

Tone 6 — V. He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God. (Ps. 90:1)

V. He will say to the Lord: "My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust." (Ps. 90:2)

Tone 2 — V. The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak of judgment. (Ps. 36:31)

Parish Life



"And he said unto them: Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his own soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:34-38. From the reading for the Sunday of the Cross.)

On Sunday, March 14th, we observe *Mid-Lent*. This, the Third Sunday of the Fast is dedicated every year to the Adoration of the Holy Cross. As the Cross is at the center of our Faith, it seemed natural to the Church over the course of history, to place this "weapon of victory" in the midst of the assembly mid-way through the most spiritually intense season of the year. Gazing and meditating upon it, the faithful,

who have chosen the way of the Cross as the way that leads to life, are renewed and strengthened for what remains of their Lenten pilgrimage to Pascha.

It has been said that Lent is a time for returning to "the basics" of the Faith, for re-evaluating priorities, for renewing one's commitment to Jesus Christ. The Cross, in a profound sense *is basic* to our Faith. Its acceptance, therefore, as the way of life for Christ's followers lies at the very heart of any understanding of Lent. The Cross is our badge and emblem as Christians. Remove the Cross from our lives and we have nothing. Without the Cross, both in Christ's life and in ours, there is no genuine Christianity and consequently, no reason to observe Lent or any other sacred season.

This fact may seem self-evident. Yet ours is a time in which words like sin, repentance, sacrifice, the Cross and crucifixion, are misunderstood, being viewed even by some Christians with suspicion, as "negative" terms, at least when applied to our own lives. Acceptable, very popular "religious buzz words," are resurrection, triumph, victory, peace and the like. "These are the things," one is told, "that will motivate people, what they want to hear about and acquire for themselves." The problem is that these so-called "positive" elements of the Christian life are unattainable apart from the so-called "negative" elements. Acknowledging sin's existence and its consequences, and being co-crucified with Christ on a daily basis, are all part of 'working out our own salvation with fear and trembling.' (Philippians 2:12)

In speaking of the Cross we must take note of its constant use by Christians. We adorn our church buildings and homes with it. We carry it reverently in procession and venerate it. The Cross is worn around our necks as a daily reminder of who we are: people who have died and risen with Christ. In addition we sign ourselves with the Cross. In so doing we mark or brand ourselves, on the one hand, with the emblem of shame. For our Lord, pure, undefiled and guiltless, was put to death in a manner reserved for the worst of criminals. It is written, "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Galatians 3:13; Deuteronomy 21:23) Indeed He was "condemned between two thieves," one of whom confessed, "... we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this

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man hath done nothing amiss ... Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." (Luke 23:41-42) By suffering crucifixion our Lord endured the penalty that each of us deserves for our many sins, for our wickedness.

In and through Christ, however, the Cross, once synonymous exclusively with humiliation, becomes His glory and ours as well. It becomes His victory over sin and death and ours also. Through the Cross and its completion in the Third Day Resurrection we have everlasting life. Thus the Cross is the main emblem for Christians of joy and strength. Along with St. Paul we "glory ... in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ ..." (Galatians 6:14)

The Christian must take very seriously the words of our Lord in the Gospel lesson quoted above: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." How do we deny ourselves and lose our lives, in order to come after the Lord to save our lives? The answer is very simple, but its very simplicity makes it the hardest thing on earth to accomplish. Nevertheless it must be done, by putting God and our relationship with Him, first, above every other consideration: before business, pleasure, country, family, friends or reputation. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" What a price to pay in order to enjoy a few fleeting years of earthly goods, or brief moments of fame, that we value so highly. Yet, there is no denying it, our Lord stated repeatedly, in no uncertain terms, "What shall a man give ...?"

Taking up the Cross and following the footsteps of Christ is not merely a formal compliance with a set of external religious or charitable acts. To be sure, such acts are necessary. We must demonstrate openly how we feel towards Him. These acts, however, cannot be some sort of mechanical or self-affirming performance. Rather they must proceed from the depths of the heart, a heart turned completely toward Christ. Our Lord wants His followers hot, not lukewarm (Revelation 3:15-16), as hot as the flames that burn before icons of His saints. During Great Lent Orthodox Christians are quite accustomed to celebrating the weekday penitential services with great solemnity, almost entirely by candlelight. The burning wicks, illuminating the temple in which God is being praised, are vivid reminders of the heat and intensity of the saints' devotion to Christ. What we say, in effect, when we light candles in Church or before our personal icon corners, is that we now light the flame of devotion in our own hearts. The act of lighting a candle is a pledge of our promise, with God's help and the intercessions of the saints, that we will kindle the fire of faith within ourselves.

Once again, the Cross is at the heart of our "religion." Thus we find its veneration in the middle of the Fast, the great season of repentance and spiritual renewal. The Church reminds us that our minds and our hearts must be on the Cross. Upon it God's only begotten Son gave His life for us. In turn, we must 'lose our lives for His sake and the gospel's,' and thus find salvation.

From **The Dawn**, Publication of the Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America, February 1999



LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services & parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

Sat-Tues Mar 18-21

Fr Michael travels to Phoenix on Diocesan Business
Fr Peter Carmichael to Celebrate Services

Tues Mar 21

11am — Diamond Circle: Presentation from Federoffs & Millers
about trip to Panama Canal

Wed Mar 22

10:30-11:30am — Father's Café (In person and via Zoom)
6:00pm—Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten Potluck

Thurs Mar 23

9:00am-12:00pm—Auxiliary Cooking Day

Fri Mar 24

6:00pm—Vigil for Annunciation

Sat Mar 25—Annunciation

8:30am — 3rd Hour & Festal Divine Liturgy

Sun Mar 26

12:30pm — Viewing of Episode of The Chosen w/ Discussion

Mon Mar 27

6:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Wed Mar 29

10:30-11:30am — Father's Café (In person and via Zoom)
6:00pm—Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten Potluck

For more dates & links please visit our website: www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar

Confessions are held on Saturdays after Great Vespers or by appointment with Fr Michael.

Many Years!

Name Days

Klavdia Ivanushkina	3/18
Evangelos Keeling	3/25

Birthdays

Mary Caetta, Dathan (Daniel) Hubler	3/18
Klavdia Ivanushkina, Reena Kale	3/22
Michael Wesdell, Viorica-Victoria Rădulescu	3/23
Margarita (Rita) Sladack, Caleb Fenlason	3/25

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

Church: 16903 Espola Rd Poway — **Mailing Address:** PO Box 28291 San Diego, CA 92198

Web: www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Email: info@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

Email: powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired & Pdcn. George Shumaik

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA