

October 29, 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

21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 4

MARTYR ANASTASIA THE ROMAN

VENERABLE ABRAMIUS THE RECLUSE & HIS
NEICE MARY

+

Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow
Jesus Christ & 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 and fill out a visitor card.

+

A Word from the Holy Fathers

When the foolish thought of counting up
any of your good works enters into your
head, immediately correct your fault and
rather count up your sins, your continual
and innumerable offenses against the
All-merciful and Righteous Master, and
you will find that their number is as the
sand of the sea, whilst your virtues in
comparison with them are as nothing.

—*St. John of Kronstadt*

+

**Include Something in the Bulletin or
Be Included in our Weekly E-mails**

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



St Anastasia of Rome

Parish Life

Ministry Directory

Below are the people who coordinate various ministries in our parish. Feel free to contact them to find out how to offer your God-given time and talents to the life of our community.

Adult Ed — Fr Michael

Altar Servers—Subdeacon Ken Telles

Auxiliary President — Tanya Franchak

Candle Stand — Gene Francello

Choir—Carole Shumaik

Church School — Bill Moision & Sally Menig

Counters — Fr Michael

Diamond Circle Seniors — Jim & Patty Pelachik

Electric Church Sign Messages—John Thayer

Fellowship/Coffee Hour — Linda Kedroff

Flowers/Decorating—Diane Worth

Greeters — Valerie Lane

Handmaidens — Sally Menig & Desiree Geralt

Koliva — Fr Michael

Parish Council Vice-President—Patty Pelachik

Prospora — Fr Michael

Readers at Divine Liturgy—Bill Moision

Security Committee — Parish Council

Scrip Sales—Gene Francello, Valerie Lane

Social Media —Evan Keeling & Iryna Thayer

Sunday Commemoration Loaves— Fr Michael

Consider taking part and helping this group make St John's the wonderful lively parish it is. For information on how to contact any of the above please speak with Fr Michael.

Altar Server Meeting/Training Sun Oct 29—Mark Your Calendars

It is important for altar servers to be “in sync” when serving. We will be hosting a meeting/training Today Sunday Oct 29 after Divine Liturgy (and folks have had a chance to eat a bit).

We will be going over “norms” for things like entrances, proper use of fans, candles, etc.



Sunday Youth & Children Classes

1st and 3rd Sundays—Church School

2nd and 4th Sundays — Youth Choir

***PLEASE ENTER HALL QUIETLY AFTER
LITURGY TO AVOID INTERRUPTING CLASS***



Monthly Collections

As we continue to restore many of the beloved practices of our parish we are reinstating our monthly Sunday collections:

- 2nd Sunday of the Month—Seminarian at St Herman's Seminary in Alaska
- 3rd Sunday of the Month—Charities (local needs, IOCC, Project Mexico, etc.)

The basket will be placed out for the veneration of the cross at the end of Liturgy. Please give as you can.

Parish Life

Brick Pavers Fundraiser— Due Nov 1

Looking at the needs of the parish, the Parish Council is moving to complete the brick pavers along the walkway from the lower parking lot to the steps leading up to the church. The funds collected will be for projects like youth activities, enhancement of the area by the playground and the icon frescoes in the church.

The donation is \$200 for a brick with a name or message of your choice on it.

There are 73 remaining spaces. You can view the existing bricks for ideas.

The deadline to donate towards a brick is November 1st. Forms will be in the back of the church in the narthex and in the church hall.

Online Giving System

We have an online giving system that enables people to be able to manage their giving to our church.

You can set up automatic ongoing donations each month to cover your pledges. You can also use the system to make occasional donations for things like charities, flowers, candles, memorial donations, etc. You can even pay for your bookstore purchases.

There is an option to cover the bank processing fees if you would like to do that.

Not only is this a convenience for you it helps reduce the work required of our Counters on Sundays

Visit www.stjohnofdamascus.org and click on **DONATE** or scan the QR below with your phone.



Auxiliary Ethnic Food & Bake Sale Save the Date—Nov 18

Our Auxiliary is working hard cooking and baking for our pre-Thanksgiving Bake Sale on November 19.

Save the date. Mark your calendar. Tell a friend!



Auxiliary Cooking Days Thursdays

The Auxiliary cooking schedule is taking place from 9am-12pm.

Thurs Nov 2 — Nut Rolls

Tues Nov 7— Stuffed Cabbage

Thurs Nov 9—Nut Rolls

Everyone is welcome to come and help. If you have questions contact Tanya F or another member of the Auxiliary.



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.

See Carmen Brown after Liturgy for more information or to purchase your cards.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection—Tone 4

When the women Disciples of the Lord
learned from the Angel the joyous message of
the Resurrection,
they cast away the ancestral curse
and elatedly told the Apostles:
“Death is overthrown!
Christ God is risen,
granting the world great mercy!”

St John of Damascus —Tone 8

Teacher of Orthodoxy, piety, & purity!
Enlightener of the universe!
& divine inspiration to monastics
by your teachings we are all enlightened,
& by your spiritual music, O all-wise John of
Damascus,
pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our
souls!

Virgin-martyr Anastasia—Tone 4

Your lamb Anastasia calls out to You, O Jesus,
in a loud voice:
“I love You, my Bridegroom, and in seeking You
I endure suffering.
In baptism I was crucified so that I might reign in
You,
and I died so that I might live with You.
Accept me as a pure sacrifice,
for I have offered myself in love!”
Through her prayers save our souls, since You
are merciful!

Venerable Abramius —Tone 8

The image of God was truly preserved in you,
O Father,
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.
By so doing you taught us to disregard the flesh
for it passes away
but to care instead for the soul, since it is
immortal.
Therefore your spirit, venerable Abramius,
rejoices with the Angels.

KONTAKIA

Resurrection—Tone 4

My Savior and Redeemer
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the
earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell,
and as Master,
He has risen on the third day!

St John of Damascus — Tone 4

Let us the faithful sing praises to John,
worthy of great honor the composer of hymns.
The star & teacher of the Orthodox Faith,
the defender of its doctrine.
Through the might of the Lord's Cross he
overcame heretical error!
Now he is fervent in prayer to Christ God,
to grant forgiveness of our sins.

Virgin-martyr Anastasia—Tone 3

Purified by the waters of virginity,
righteous Anastasia, you were crowned by the
blood of martyrdom.
You grant healing and salvation to those in
need,
and who call on you from their hearts,
for Christ gives you strength, pouring out on you
ever-flowing grace.

Venerable Abramius —Tone 3

You lived in the flesh on earth as an angel,
and through your ascetic life you became like a
tree nourished by the waters of abstinence and
flourished.
You have washed away stains with the streams
of your tears
and so you have been revealed, Abramius,
to be a God-like vessel of the Spirit.

Steadfast Protectress—Tone 6

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,
Constant advocate before the Creator:
Do not despise the cry of us sinners,
But in your goodness, come speedily to help us
who call on you in faith.
Hasten to hear our petitions and to intercede for
us, O Theotokos,
For you always protect those who honor you!

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

PROKEIMENON

Tone 4 — (*Resurrection*) O Lord, how manifold are Your works; in wisdom have You made them all. (*Ps 103/104:24*)

v: Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, You are very great! (Ps 103/104:1)



Epistle — Galatians 2:16-20

¹⁶ yet knowing that no one is justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. ¹⁷ But if, even though we desired to be justified in Christ, we were found to be sinners, does that mean that Christ is a servant of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸ Indeed, if I build up again those things which I [once] destroyed, I show that I am breaking the law. ¹⁹ For I, through the law, died to the law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. I now live this life in the flesh, but I live [it] by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and who gave himself up for me.



Gospel — Luke 8:26-39

²⁶ Then they reached the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.

²⁷ When Jesus stepped ashore, a man from the town who had had demons for a long time came to meet him. This man wore no clothes, and he did not live in a house, but in the tombs. ²⁸ When

he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him. With a loud voice, he said, "What do you want from me, Jesus, you Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me!" ²⁹ (For Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man). The unclean spirit had often seized the man and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and fetters. [But he had been] breaking the chains and was driven by the demon into deserted places.

³⁰ Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

He replied, "Legion," for many demons had entered into him. ³¹ And he begged Jesus not to command them to go into the abyss. ³² Now there was a large herd of swine feeding on the mountain, and the demons begged him that he would allow them to enter into those [pigs]; and Jesus allowed them. ³³ The demons came out from the man and entered into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and [the swine] were drowned. ³⁴ When the people who fed the pigs saw what had happened, they fled and told the story in the city and in the countryside.

³⁵ Then people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been delivered. ³⁷ All the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked Jesus to depart from them, because they were extremely afraid. So he got into the boat and went back. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with Jesus, but Jesus sent him away, saying: ³⁹ "Return to your house and proclaim what great things God has done for you." So the man went on his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

YOU ARE NOT A TV SHOW

The modern world, with the advent of technologies such as the internet and other forms of digital creation, has created what is easily described as a virtual world. In digital comprehension, a virtual world is not a real world, but increasingly feels like one and, to some extent, can be experienced like one. Doubtless, human experience has known a variety of experiential worlds, but this latest, the virtual world, stands perhaps as a primary exemplar of those things that are not real or true. Any photo, any video, cannot only be taken for what it is, a photo or a video. Technology is such that the trustworthiness of such phenomenon has plummeted to near zero. Are we seeing what the camera has shown, or are we seeing a digitally altered version of reality?

On another level, any digital presentation of reality is not the same thing as reality – but is, at best, a digital presentation. To see a film of an animal in the jungle is not the same thing as to see an animal in a jungle. But the lines between reality and the presentation of reality have become increasingly blurred.

This is not just a phenomenon of our computerized world: it is a pattern, long established, in human behavior. Archimandrite Meletios Webber has written very aptly about the difference between the true human self, and the falsely constructed human ego:

“The mind is the great defense system we need to process all the information we receive. However, in so doing, the mind is self-centered, judgmental, and fearful of attack. It expects and assumes the worst from the world, from other people, and ultimately from God. Every detail in the universe is measured by the mind against its usefulness to the mind’s story of the self, the ego. The mind attempts to replace the real center of being, the heart, with a center of its own creation.”

Thus, in Fr. Meletios’ description (which is consonant with that of the Fathers), the ego has long been living in a virtual reality, creating a story and a version of the self which is not our true self – but a project of imagination and creative distortion.

This project of imagination and creative distortion has been raised from the level of personal, self-deception, to public presentation within our digitalized world. It entices people towards a reality that is no reality at all, and towards a false presentation of the self – upheld and preserved through the digitalized version of the self.

Some of this temptation is manifest in the drive to fame through various forms of modern media. We have witnessed numerous attempts by individuals and families to acquire a “reality show” based on some bizarre action or performance. Of course, reality show is among the ultimate contradictions. Such shows do not depict reality: they depict false projections and reports of a constructed ego.

You are not a TV show.

Of course, the more time we spend defining our world through various virtual experiences, the more we come to mistake such virtual realities for reality itself. Even without the aid of technology, we all experience a form of virtual reality through the construct of stories, true and false, which we tell

Our Life in Christ

ourselves and relate to others in our efforts to construct, define, and defend the false reality of the human ego.

The ego, as defined by itself, is not our true self and can never be: we are not self-constructed. The reality of who we are – the meaning and purpose of our existence – is constructed by God – who alone gives us existence and purpose. Our efforts to avoid our dependence on God is simple a symptom of sin – not a true existential problem.

St. Paul offers this observation:

“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory” (Col. 3:2-4).

Perhaps the most fundamental exercise of the Christian life is found within St. Paul’s simple admonition. It is a directive that points us towards authenticity. The self which St. Paul describes is not the same as the ego which we construct. I am not defined by the stories of my abuse or my public perception. I am not defined by my choices or my genetic inheritance.

The life which is “hidden with Christ in God,” is the life which St. Paul describes in Galatians 2:20:

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

The false constructs of the ego – the virtual reality defined by sin and imagination – are dead. They have been crucified with Christ. The life which we now live, which alone is authentic, is the life lived by faith in the Son of God. Who I am is a matter which is hidden and which is a matter of constant discovery in my life in Christ.

It is a daily struggle to know God. In the same manner it is a daily struggle to know our true selves – for they are only found within Christ our God. The true self is not my own construct – but a new man – fashioned in the image of Christ. I cannot know my own self unless I know myself in Christ.

I am not a TV show – nor am I any of the false versions of the ego which I may tell myself or believe when told by the lips of others. I am only to be known in Christ. And thus I can only know others in the truth of their being as I know them in Christ.

It is a great kindness within God.

Source: Fr Stephen Freeman, oca.org/reflections

ALLELUIA

Tone 4 — V. Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of meekness, righteousness and truth!
(Ps. 44:3b)

V. For You love righteousness, and hate iniquity. (Ps. 44:6)



LOOKING AHEAD

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

Sun Oct 29

After Divine Liturgy — Altar Server Workshop

Mon Oct 30

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tues Oct 31

7:00am — Monthly Weekday Divine Liturgy

Wed Nov 1

10:30am — Father's Café

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Lives of the Apostles

Thurs Nov 2

9:00am — Auxiliary Cooking Day

Sat Nov 4

4:30pm — Choir Rehearsal

Mon Nov 6

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tues Nov 7

9:00am — Auxiliary Cooking Day

Wed Nov 8

7:00am — Divine Liturgy

10:20am — Father's Café

7:00pm — Adult Ed — Lives of the Apostles

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

Stacie (Anastasia) Seitz 10/29

Birthdays

Patricia Swinehart, Therese Moision 10/31

Magnolia (Johanna) Keeling 11/1

Cheyenne Michaud 11/3

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 & Dn. George Shumaik

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