

December 3, 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

26TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 1

PROPHET ZEPHANIAH

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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.

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A Word from the Holy Fathers

Now we are on our way to venerate the Nativity of our Christ. What shall we tell Him? What will show our worth to Him? Now is truly the hour to gather a little care, a little painful work, a little self-denial, a little humility, a little self-reproach, so that we might say with fervor before the Infant: 'O All-Good One, have you come for me? Receive me the poor one! I don't have anything!' This He desires. He desires nothing else."

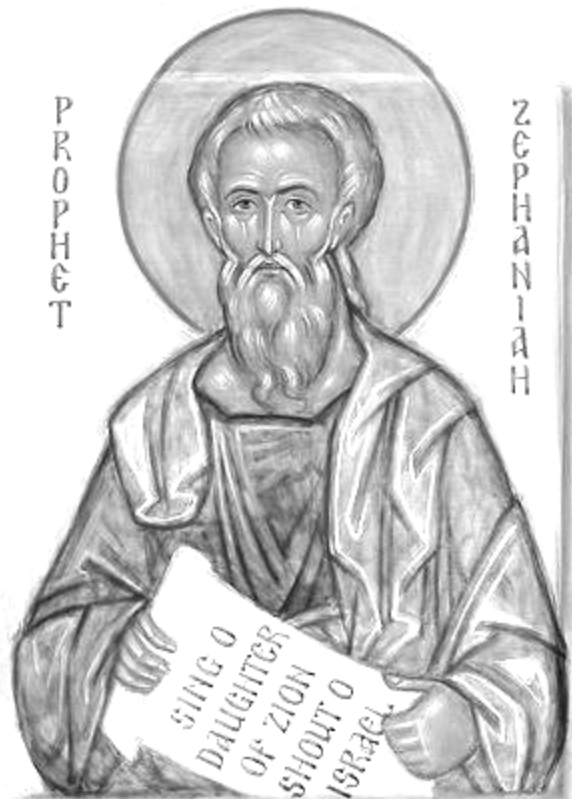
Receive me the poor one! I don't have anything! This He desires. He desires nothing else."

—Elder Joseph of Vatopedi

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

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



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

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

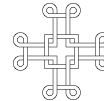
Sunday Commemoration Loaves— Fr Michael

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.

St Nicholas Day Children, Leave Your Shoes Today

In connection with the feast of St Nicholas coming up on Dec 6 all our children and youth are welcome to bring an extra pair of shoes next Sunday to leave in the hall. St Nicholas has a tradition of filling the shoes of children with treats and little gifts.

Children can come on Wed Dec 6 to the Akathist to St Nicholas to pick up their shoes and any gifts St Nicholas has left.



STEWARDSHIP (PLEDGE/TITHE) FORMS FOR 2024 PLEASE SUBMIT TODAY

It is once again time to fill out and submit our tithe/pledge forms so that we can prepare for the coming year. Dmitriy Panasenکو will have forms for everyone. There are 3 parts:

- General Information—names, addresses, birthdays, name days, wedding anniversaries, etc.
- Time & Talents—indicate by number who in your family would like to be involved in which areas of ministry in the parish for the coming year. This section also includes consent or non-consent to use photos of you, and a place to indicate your desire to officially be a member of the parish.
- Financial Offering—indicate what your financial offering for the year will be. There is a chart to remind us to consider offering the “first fruits” of the blessings we receive.

Please submit your forms by **TODAY** to Ed Lump, Dennis Stavrou or Fr. Michael. Thank

Parish Life

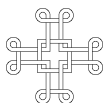
Christmas Bake Sale—Dec 16 Get Your Orders In & Help Where You Can

Each year our Auxiliary has three “Bake Sales.” Our Christmas bake sale is right around the corner. The Auxiliary has been working hard preparing the menu/flyer and the cooking begins this week.

Upcoming Cooking Days

- Wednesday Nov 29 9am-12pm (Pierogies)
- Thursday Nov 30 9am-12pm {Pierogies}
- Tuesday Dec 5 9am-12pm (Stuffed Cabbage)

Please help where you can!

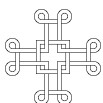


Viewing of Episode of The Chosen w/ Discussion Today

Today around 12:20pm after Fellowship Hour we will have a viewing of “Season 2 Episode 4 “The Perfect Opportunity”

We will have a short discussion afterwards.

All are welcome!



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.

Patronal/Altar Feast Mon Dec 4

Our patronal feast day is coming up next week.

This is an opportunity to give thanks to God for our heavenly patron St John of Damascus and all of his intercessions for us as a parish as well as each of us in the parish that receive the blessings of worshipping the Triune God and living out our faith here.

We will have clergy and faithful from area parishes with us and will be having a modest breakfast after Liturgy on Monday.

Sunday Dec 3—6pm Great Vespers w/Litya

Monday Dec 4—8:30am Hours & 9am Divine Liturgy

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.



Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection—Tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,
while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure
body,
You rose on the third day, O Savior, granting life
to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to You,
O Giver of Life:
"Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!
Glory to Your Kingdom!
Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!"

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

Prophet Zephaniah—Tone 2

We celebrate the memory
of Your prophet Zephaniah, O Lord;
through him we beseech You:
"Save our souls!"

KONTAKIA

Resurrection—Tone 1

As God, You rose from the tomb in glory,
raising the world with Yourself.
Human nature praises You as God, for death has
vanished.
Adam exults, O Master!
Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and
cries to You:
"You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O
Christ!"

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.

Prophet Zephaniah—Tone 4

You have been revealed by the Spirit of God to
be brilliant, Prophet
Zephaniah,
for you proclaimed the coming of God:
"Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!
Proclaim Him, O Jerusalem!
Behold, your King is coming to save mankind!"

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!

PROKEIMENON

Tone 1 — *(Resurrection)* Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on You! *(Ps 32/33:22)*
v: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps 32/33:1)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Ephesians 5:9-19

⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

¹² For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

¹⁴ Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

ALLELUIA

Tone 1 — *(Resurrection) V. God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me. (Ps. 17:48)*

V. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever. (Ps. 17:51)

Gospel — Luke 18:18-27

¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁹ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

²⁰ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"

²¹ And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."

²² So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

²³ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. ²⁴ And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶ And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" ²⁷ But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Dates for 2023

FASTS

Nativity Fast/Advent Nov 15-Dec 24

FAST-FREE WEEKS

After Christmas Dec 25-Jan 4



The Pre-Nativity Season

"O angelic hosts of the Lord, do ye hasten to the village of Bethlehem in Judea to prepare a noble place for Him who cannot be contained, the Author of creation..."

How can we prepare for Christ's arrival?

***By increasing our prayer.** Says Fr. Anthony Coniaris, "The two great movements of the soul have always been withdrawal and return...withdrawal into God's presence through prayer for strength...without prayer, the quality of our service deteriorates. Without prayer we forget the world; with prayer we remember." Advent is a time to remember that in God, we move and breathe and have our being, and we must be *with* Him and consciously *in* Him before we can have authentic love and relationship with others.

***By giving alms.** There is something almost poetic about giving money and perhaps even more important in these busy times, our time, to others who are in need at Christmas time. We can battle our self indulgence with self sacrifice, by giving freely, with joy and gratitude to God for His good gifts to us. St. John Chrysostom writes, "It is not enough to help the poor. We must help them with generosity and without grumbling. And it is not enough to help them without grumbling. We must help them gladly and happily. When the poor are helped there ought to be these two conditions: generosity and joy."

***By going to Church more often.** The Advent season provides extra opportunities to be in the atmosphere of worship. Isn't it true that when we walk into the doors of our parishes, and those doors swing shut behind us, the flickering candles and the sights and smells of icons and incense before us, aid us in our seasonal preparations? Sometimes it is so hard to get there and so many things crowd our calendars but the rewards are always great. As Fr. Alexander Schmemmann writes, "There is no need to preach constantly on 'sin,' to judge and condemn. It is when a man is challenged with the real contents of the Gospel, with its Divine depth and wisdom, beauty and all embracing meaning, that he becomes 'capable of repentance,' for true repentance is precisely the discovery by the man of the abyss that separates him from God and from His real offer to man. It is when the man sees the bridal chamber adorned that he realizes that he has no garment for entering it."

***By remembering some of the unique and remarkable saints of the Advent season,** reading about their lives and celebrating their days of remembrance. Of course, we remember St. Nicholas (December 6) as he is commonly honored at this time of year, but what about some of the others? St. Herman of Alaska (December 13) exemplified the spirit of this time of year to perfection, and he belongs to us here in America, so let's not let the day go by without reading about him and recalling his sacrificial life with the people of Alaska. St. Stephen the protomartyr is remembered on December 26, immediately following the Nativity service, and he too can be venerated for his godly example. On New Year's Day, we can speak of the brilliant St. Basil, who spoke with erudition and intelligence to the issues of his day in a manner which transformed the Church.

Our Life in Christ

***By going to confession.** If there is any act out of step with the vain and glib holiday atmosphere presented to us by the spirit of this age, it is act of the repentant Christian confessing his or her sins. Said Dorothy Day, “Going to confession is hard, hard when you have sins to confess, hard when you haven’t, and you wrack your brain for even the beginnings of sins against charity, chastity, sins of distraction, sloth or gluttony. You do not want to make too much of your constant imperfections and venial sins, but you want to drag them out to the light of day as the first step in getting rid of them....I have sinned. These are my sins. That is all you are supposed to tell; not the sins of others, or your own virtues, but only your ugly, gray, drab, monotonous sins.” Blessed are those who mourn, for it is precisely in this mourning that we receive comfort. These are the tidings of comfort and joy that the Christmas carol songwriter celebrates—redemption from guilt and the weight of sin!

***By incorporating the Church’s traditions** in ways that make sense for us here and now. Though we are not perfect fasters by any means, our family eats more simply in the season of Advent. We decorate our tree just before Christmas and then leave it up through Theophany. We celebrate St. Nicholas’ Feast Day by putting out shoes on the night of December 5th so that “St. Nicholas” can fill them with gold coins while the children sleep. We read about his life, marveling at his overflowing love and goodness. We listening to Orthodox Christmas music via the Internet (try Ancient Faith Radio) or CD’s, and we keep an Advent wreath and calendar for six Sundays instead of four. We have invented our own traditional Christmas Eve dinner that is a variation of old country traditions. In other words, we have adapted, albeit imperfectly, our own cultural traditions to incorporate the spirit of Orthodox worship and emphasis at this time of year.

Author Matthew Gallatin has said that we in America have traditionally celebrated the Christmas season in backwards fashion. “Just as the guest of honor walks through the door, it’s all over,” he notes. This year, may we embrace the Orthodox vision of holy preparation, so that when December 25th dawns, we will be ready to receive Christ in the feast, the “Winter Pascha” of Nativity!

By Virginia Nieuwsma

Originally published in [OrthodoxCircle—Return Ezine](#);



LOOKING AHEAD

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

Sun Dec 3

6:00pm — Great Vespers w/ Litya for St John of Damascus

Mon Dec 4—Parish Feast Day

8:30am — 3rd & 6th Hours

9:00am—Festal Divine Liturgy w/ light breakfast following

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tues Dec 5

9:00am-12:00pm— Auxiliary Cooking Day

Wed Dec 6—St Nicholas

10:30am— Father's Café

6:00pm — Akathist to St Nicholas

7:00pm — Adult Ed—The 12 Apostles: A Primer

Mon Dec 11

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tues Dec 12

7:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

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

Barbara Karleen, Barbara Anderson, John Keeling, Kelvin (John) Brown 12/04

Nicholas Franchak, Nicholas Geralt 12/06

Rebekah Hones 12/08

Kim Anh (Anna) Nguyễn Herbert 12/9

Birthdays

Lena Strateff, Tom Ferrari, Victor Anderson 12/03

George Minakov 12/05

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