

June 30, 2024



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

1ST SUNDAY AFER PENTECOST
SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS

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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

The Lord loves all people, but He loves those who seek Him even more. To His chosen ones the Lord gives such great grace that for love they forsake the whole earth, the whole world, and their souls burn with desire that all people might be saved and see the glory of the Lord.

—*St. Silouan the Athonite*

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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.



Come, O faithful,
let us celebrate in song today,
glorifying the memory of all the Saints!
Rejoice, glorious Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs and
Hierarchs!

Rejoice, O company of all the Just!
Rejoice, you ranks of holy Women!
Pray that Christ will grant our souls great mercy!

Parish Life

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

<https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/StJohnofDamascusOrthodoxChurch/donations>

Or visit our website at:

www.stjohnofdamascus.org and click on DONATE and then "Donate Now."



Dates for 2024

FASTS

Dormition Fast August 1-14
Nativity Fast/Advent Nov 15-Dec 24

FAST-FREE WEEKS

After Christmas Dec 25-Jan 4

Keep Informed Receive Weekly E-mails About Parish Life

We are an active community with a lot going on. These days it is especially helpful to keep up to date on things taking place in our parish.

We have an email group
"News@stjohnofdamascus.org"

It is all those who are interested in the activities of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church.

**To be included E-mail Fr Michael at
info@stjohnofdamascus.org**



Please Sign-up for Fellowship Hour

We have posted the sign-up sheet for Fellowship Hour meals for the second half of the year. We encourage groups of 4 to alleviate the cost of trying to feed our growing parish.

Simple meals are welcome!

If you have any questions speak with Linda Kedroff.



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—Seminarians at St Herman's Seminary in Alaska & Peter Anderson
- 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

New Adult Ed Class Life in the Early Church: The Apostolic Fathers

Next Class Monday July 1 —7pm

Did you ever wonder what life in the early Church was like? What happened in those earliest days after the Apostles?

The class will discuss an overview of the Apostolic Fathers, who were the disciples of the Apostles.

We will introduce some of their writings and the issues they were addressing making connections with our current times and the issues the Church faces today.

Classes (Mondays at 7pm) will be offered in person and via Zoom.

New Monthly Adult “Class” Inquiring Minds w/ Fr Michael Wednesday July 24 — 7pm

We have completed this year’s Orthodox Christianity 101 class. Our next session will begin in the fall.

Until that time, we are having a monthly gathering for ANYONE (inquirers, catechumen, longtime Orthodox Christians) to gather to ask questions about the Faith and discuss life in the Church. Class.

Class will be in person in the church hall and via Zoom (see parish calendar online for the Zoom link.)

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.

Visit the Scip Table in the hall after Liturgy for more information or to purchase your cards.

SUMMER IS HERE! HOLD ON TO YOUR FAITH

With summer comes much needed vacations and opportunities to do fun things with friends & loved ones. As you are planning your summer be sure to keep your faith in mind. Remember to attend to your prayer life, scripture reading, and reception of the holy Sacraments.

Some dates to remember...

	SUMMER FEASTS
August 6	Transfiguration
August 15	Dormition of the Theotokos

	SUMMER FASTS
August 1-14	Dormition Fast

Also, please do what you can to **maintain your much-needed offerings of time and talent as well as your pledges and contributions over the summer.** Unfortunately, our parish’s expenses and needs do not decrease during the summer months. The water bill still needs to be paid. We still want to have fellowship meals after Liturgy on Sundays.

Regarding financial giving, people handle this differently. Some people make up for weeks away when they return. Other members keep their financial contributions regular by using their online banking system to write and send their donations to the mission each month automatically. The parish also has an online giving system on our website. Simply click the “DONATE” button.

Whatever works best for you, please keep your spiritual home in mind.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection — Tone 8

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us
from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to
You!

All Saints — Tone 4

As with fine porphyry and royal purple,
Your Church has been adorned with Your
martyrs' blood shed throughout all the world.
She cries to You, O Christ God:
"Send down Your bounties on Your people,//
grant peace to Your habitation and great
mercy to our souls!"

KONTAKIA

All Saints — Tone 8

The universe offers You the God-bearing
Martyrs
as the first fruits of creation, O Lord and
Creator.
By their prayers keep Your Church, Your
habitation, in abiding peace//
through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

PROKEIMENON

Tone 8 (All Saints) — Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God!
(Ps 75/76:11)

v: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel. (Ps 75/76:1)

Tone 4 (Saints) God is wonderful in His saints, the God of Israel. (Ps
67/68:35)

ALLELUIA

Tone 4 — V. The righteous cried and the Lord heard them, and delivered them
out of all their troubles. (Ps. 33:17)

V. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; the Lord will deliver them out of them
all. (Ps. 33:19)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Heb 11:33-12:2

³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

³⁹ And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Gospel — Matt 10: 32-33, 37-38; 19: 27-30

³² Whoever confesses me before men I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven.

³³ But whoever denies me in front of others I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.

³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

³⁸ Whoever does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.

²⁷ Then Peter said, "Behold, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?"

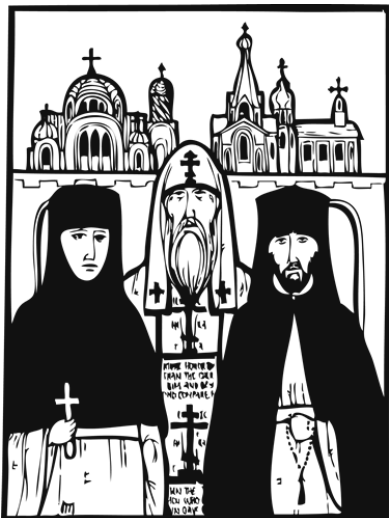
²⁸ Jesus said to them, "Amen, I tell you that you who have followed me, at the regeneration, when the Son of Man will sit on the throne of his glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, or lands for my Name's sake will receive a hundred times [more] and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first!"

Our Life in Christ

THE SAINTS: EXAMPLES OF HOLINESS

We recently celebrated the Great Feast of Pentecost. All of the subsequent Sundays of the liturgical year, until the pre-lenten Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee sometime next year, will be so numbered, challenging us to keep our spiritual sight on the overwhelming significance of Pentecost in the divine economy. The New Testament era of the Church began its existence on the Day of Pentecost with the Spirit's descent as a mighty rushing wind that took on the form of fiery tongues alighting upon the heads of the future apostles [Acts 2:1-13]. The Church has always existed, but the Church as a remnant of Israel that would flourish and grow with the addition of the Gentiles began its final phase of existence with the death, resurrection and ascension of God's Messiah, Jesus Christ Who, seated at the right hand of the Father, would send the Holy Spirit into the world and upon "all flesh" on the day of Pentecost. As Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus wrote in the fourth century, "The Catholic Church, which exists from the ages, is revealed most clearly in the incarnate advent of Christ." The simple calendar rubric of numbering the Sundays after Pentecost is one way of reminding us of this essential truth of the Christian Faith. The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and in and through the sacramental life of the Church we experience something like a permanent pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The first two Sundays after Pentecost are dedicated to the saints—the first, to All Saints, and the second, to local Saints, in our case, the Saints that have shown forth in North America. We commemorate all of the saints of the Church – men, women and children—from her beginning to the present day, including the "patriarchs, matriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics and every righteous spirit made perfect in faith." That is, the entire "cloud of witnesses" that surround us and pray for us while serving as models for our own faith. God has revealed to the Church His innumerable saints, and we rejoice in their continuous presence, made possible by the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit. The divine and co-eternal Spirit, holy by nature, makes human beings holy by grace. That is why these particular Sundays fall so naturally after the Sunday of Pentecost.



The word we use for "saint" is the Greek word for "holy" – *agios*. In a real sense, we are celebrating the presence of holiness in the world, incarnate in actual flesh and blood human beings. The descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for human beings to become and remain holy. Without the Holy Spirit, human beings can be nice, pleasant and even good – but not holy. And it is the holiness of the saints that is their one common characteristic, expressed in an endless diversity of vocations. Every baptized and chrismated member of the Church is already a saint – a person sanctified and set apart as a member of the People of God – and every such member has the vocation to become a saint. The phrase often used to capture this paradox of the Christian life is "become what you already are." This phrase

Our Life in Christ

expresses an entire lifetime of striving and struggle to attain, by God's grace, the highest of vocations – the holiness of a genuine child of God, “born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” [John 1:13]. Of this we are reminded in the Gospel reading for the Sunday of All Saints: “So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father Who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father Who is in heaven.... He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” [Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38].

We probably have a difficult time relating to such a passage, since we expend an enormous amount of energy – time, talent and treasure—in order to guarantee for ourselves a comfortable life and the closest of possible family relationships. God and Church may be a part of that choice, but perhaps only as one compartment of life among many. At times, the greatest of our goals may be to create a certain form of “domestic bliss,” to the extent that this is humanly attainable. Nothing else can seem greater or more desirable. Jesus, however, makes other claims on us. And the first of those radical claims is that we must love Him above all else – including father and mother, son and daughter. This is a “hard teaching.” Perhaps it is here that we discover the greatest “achievement” of the saints, and the reason behind the sanctity that they often so clearly manifest. They simply loved Christ before all else. And there is nothing that can deflect them from that love. But in no way does this diminish our love for our loved ones. I believe that if we love Christ before all else, then we would have a greater love for those around us, including our very family members. To love Christ above all else is to expand our very notion and experience of love. If we live “in Christ,” we can then love “in Christ.” Elsewhere, Jesus would claim that this would include our enemies! This is a love that will not disappoint. With any other deeper love, there is always the lurking temptation of succumbing to one form of idolatry or another. Jesus even says that if we love anyone else more than Him, we are not “worthy” of Him! Clearly, there is nothing easy about bearing the name of Christ and calling oneself a Christian. Is all of this impossible? Jesus teaches that “with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” [Matthew 19:26].

We share the most difficult of vocations – to live up to our high calling in Christ Jesus. This is not something that we achieve on our own, but a process that includes the grace of God and our own self-determination, what we call our freedom of choice or “free will.” There are obstacles that begin with the genetic and the environmental. There are distractions and temptations too numerous to keep track of. There is the unbelief of the world around us. Yet, if we approach this “day by day,” we soon realize that we are simply trying to become genuine human beings, for the glory of God is a human being fully alive, to paraphrase Saint Irenaeus of Lyons. As disciples of Christ, we have the “inside track” to allow us to “run with perseverance the race that is before us” [Hebrews 12:1]. So, we thank God for the multitude of the saints who not only set an example for us, but who also pray for us unceasingly in the Kingdom of God.

— Fr Stephen Kostoff, oca.org/reflections





LOOKING AHEAD

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

Monday July 1

7:00-8:30pm — Adult Ed: Life in the Early Church— The Apostolic Fathers (Church Hall and via Zoom)

Wed July 3

10:30am — Father's Café (Church Hall and via Zoom)

Sat July 6

4:30pm — Baptisms of Marianne & Sarah Hubler

July 8-19

Fr Michael Travels to MA to Help His Mother

July 21

After Divine Liturgy—Annual Blessing of Vehicles

Monday July 22

7:00-8:30pm — Adult Ed: Life in the Early Church— The Apostolic Fathers (Church Hall and via Zoom)

July 23

7:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

Wed July 24

7:00am — Weekday Divine Liturgy

10:30am — Father's Café (Church Hall and via Zoom)

7:00pm — Inquiring Minds w/ Fr Michael (Church Hall & via Zoom)

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

Many Years!

Birthdays

Bob (Vladimir) Stone	7/1
Cynthia Zmina, Ruben Castañeda, Alan Michaud, Sava Sierra (Sava)	7/2
Dale (Michael) Franchak, Elena Vladimirovna	7/4

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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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