

September 8, 2024



# THE IMAGE...

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

[www.stjohnofdamascus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org)

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

**11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY  
THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY  
SUNDAY BEFORE THE ELEVATION OF THE  
CROSS**

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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**

She is the treasure of virginity, the rod of Aaron springing from the root of Jesse, the preaching of the prophets, offshoot of the righteous Joachim and Anna. She is born, and with her is the world become new again. She is born, and the Church clothes herself in majesty. She is the holy temple, the receiver of the Godhead: the instrument of virginity, the bridal chamber of the King, wherein was accomplished the marvelous mystery of the ineffable union of the natures which come together in Christ. —*St. Sergios of Constantinople*

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or  
Be Included in our Weekly E-mails**  
E-mail [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org)



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

## Parish Life

### **Bishop Boris Scholarships Applications Due Oct 1st**

In memory of our dear Bishop Boris our parish provides scholarships for students continuing their education through academic and vocational programs past high school.

If someone received a scholarship last year and is continuing their education this year, they may complete a "returning" application.

Those who have just completed high school and beginning a program can complete their full application.

Applications are in the back of the church and in the church hall.

If you have questions please contact Ken Telles or Nino Kiria.

### **Orthodox Christianity 101 Class Mondays 7pm Beginning September 16**

This 14 session class introduces people to the basic teachings and life of the Orthodox Christian Faith. It is excellent for new inquirers, those preparing for baptism and/or chrismation, as well as people who may have grown up in the Church but may desire a refresher in the basics of our Faith.

**Tell your friends. All are welcome.**

To register email [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org) or call 858-717-2172

### **Prospora Baking "Workshop" Saturday September 28—1:20pm**

Some folks are asking if they could learn how to bake prospora. The truth is we could use some more bakers.

We will be planning a workshop (maybe 2) for anyone who would like to learn how it is done. Our first workshop will focus on the Slavic style smaller loaves.

If you are interested please speak to or email Fr Michael at [FrMichael@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:FrMichael@stjohnofdamascus.org)

### **Sunday Counters—2 People Needed**

Some of our Counters have had to step down for personal reasons. We are in need of 2 or so more people to fill "the ranks" to allow for people to only have to count 1 weekend a month.

We have a written "how-to" document to help new recruits as well as our 8 other experienced counters.

Please consider being part of this important ministry.

### **Church School Helpers Needed**

We have an excellent team of Church School Teachers but we need 4 or so people to help in the classrooms.

Our Orthodox Church in America has an official policy that there need to be 2 adults in each classroom so each classroom will need an adult helper as well as a teacher.

Church School takes place on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month after Divine Liturgy.

Please consider stepping up to help!

See Bill Moision, Sally Menig or Fr Michael for questions or details.

### **Auxiliary Baking & Cooking Dates Helpers Needed!**

The Auxiliary will be baking/cooking on Thursday September 12th & 26th and then every Thursday in October.

Sessions usually begin at 9am and go until noon.

Please consider helping and bring a friend!

Questions? Speak with Tanya Franchak, Phyllis Brown and Linda Kedroff.

### **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***

## Today's Worship — Hymns

### TROPARIA

#### Resurrection—Tone 2

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,  
You slew hell with the splendor of Your  
Godhead.

And when from the depths You raised the dead,  
all the powers of heaven cried out://

“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

#### Feast —Tone 4

Your nativity, O Virgin,  
has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!  
The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God,  
has shone from you, O Theotokos.

By annulling the curse,  
He bestowed a blessing.//

By destroying death, He has granted us eternal  
life.

### KONTAKIA

#### Resurrection—Tone 2

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior,  
seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the  
tomb!

The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld  
this and rejoiced with You.//  
and the world, my Savior, praises You forever.

#### Feast—Tone 4

By your nativity, O most pure Virgin,  
Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness,  
Adam and Eve — from the corruption of death.  
And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin,  
celebrate and sing to you://  
“The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos,  
the nourisher of our Life.”

### PROKEIMENA

**Tone 3** ((Sunday Before) O Lord, save Your  
people, / and bless Your inheritance! (Ps. 27:9a)

V. To You, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not  
silent to me! (Ps. 27:1a)

**Tone 3** (Song of the Theotokos) - My soul  
magnifies the Lord, / and my spirit rejoices in  
God my Savior. (Lk. 1:46-47)

### ALLELUIA

**Tone 1** — V. I have exalted one chosen out of  
My people. (Ps. 88:18b)

V. For My hand shall defend him and My arm  
shall strengthen him. (Ps. 88:20)

**Tone 8** -V. Hearken, O daughter, and see, and  
incline your ear! (Ps. 44:9a)

### Fall Adult Ed Class Begins Wed Sept 18 Praying the Services—Vespers

Ever attend services but wonder if there  
is a reason why they are structured the  
way they are?

The services of the Church are  
designed to help transform us, leading  
us through an experience as we  
worship the Lord.

Our 1st topic will be about Vespers.

Classes will be offered in person in the  
hall and via Zoom.

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Epistle — Galatians 6:11-18

<sup>11</sup> See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!

<sup>12</sup> As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

<sup>13</sup> For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

<sup>14</sup> But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. <sup>15</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

<sup>16</sup> And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

<sup>17</sup> From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. <sup>18</sup> Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

### Epistle — 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

<sup>6</sup> After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater

part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

### Epistle — Philippians 2:5-11

<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### Church School Dates

Sun Sept 15 — Start of Church School

Sun Sept 22 — Start of Youth Choir

Sun Sept 29 — Church School Picnic.

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Gospel — John 3:13-17

<sup>13</sup> No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

<sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

<sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

### Gospel — Matthew 19:16-26

<sup>16</sup> Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

<sup>17</sup> So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

<sup>18</sup> He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'

<sup>19</sup> 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "

<sup>20</sup> The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

<sup>22</sup> But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>24</sup> And again I say to you, 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.

<sup>25</sup> When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" <sup>26</sup> But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

### Gospel — Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

<sup>38</sup> Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

<sup>39</sup> And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

<sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

<sup>41</sup> And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. <sup>42</sup> But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

<sup>27</sup> And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!"

<sup>28</sup> But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

## Our Life in Christ

### **MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS, SAVE US!**

Orthodox Christians begin and end the liturgical year with celebrations dedicated to the Virgin Mary, whom we venerate as the Theotokos or “bearer of God.” On September 8, the end of the first week of the new year, we commemorate her Nativity or birth; on August 15, we close the year with the feast of her Dormition, her “falling asleep” and translation to heaven.

As the hymns of these and other Marian feasts make clear, our veneration of Mary, the Mother of God, is basically a confession of our faith in the Person of her Son. All Marian piety, in other words, is an expression of christological dogma. It points beyond the Virgin herself and focuses on the significance—for her as for us—of the One whom she bore, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the troparion or festal hymn of her Nativity, we affirm the truth that “the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shown forth” from her. By virtue of the fact that she gave birth to this One who is both Messiah (Christ) and Lord (God), the “curse” of our sin and resultant condemnation has been annulled. These words are reminiscent of the apostle Paul’s declaration to the Colossians: Christ has canceled the legal bond (judgment) that stood against us; He has set it aside, “nailing it to the cross” (2:14). The troparion concludes with the Paschal assurance that this Son of Mary has bestowed upon us the blessing of eternal life by destroying the power of death. As the Author of Life, He has descended into the realm of death; and by His resurrection, He has opened the way for each of us to rise up with Him and to share in His eternal glory.

The troparion of Mary’s Dormition continues this theme by referring to her as the prototype of all of those who will be “translated” from death to life at the General Resurrection. The hymn begins by affirming a twofold miracle: although she gave birth in the flesh to the eternal Son of God, she did not lose her virginal quality. Virginity in this sense is a sign of purity and holiness, of self-sacrificing love. These virtues Mary preserved fully, even though she experienced pregnancy and the “opening of her womb.” This wonder is coupled with a second: the fact that her death in no wise separated her from “the world,” from the human objects of God’s boundless love. Accordingly, she is able to intercede for us before her Son and our God, and thereby to “deliver our souls from death.”

Mary in no way replaces her Son in the work of salvation, nor does she serve in the technical sense as “mediatrix” or mediator between God and us. Although the liturgy at times attributes to her the title *Mediatrix*, the expression can be understood only in the light of her Son’s saving activity. She “mediates” for us only insofar as she prays and intercedes on our behalf. This is the calling—and the blessed possibility—offered to all of us, insofar as we, like the Mother of God, willingly offer ourselves, together with the world around us, to the mercy and grace of our Lord.

There is only “one Mediator between God and men,” the apostle declares, “the man Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as a ransom for all...” (1 Tim 2:5f). Orthodox Christians know this intuitively. Yet they also know that Jesus’ mother never ceases to intercede for us and, indeed, to “mediate” our prayer before God.

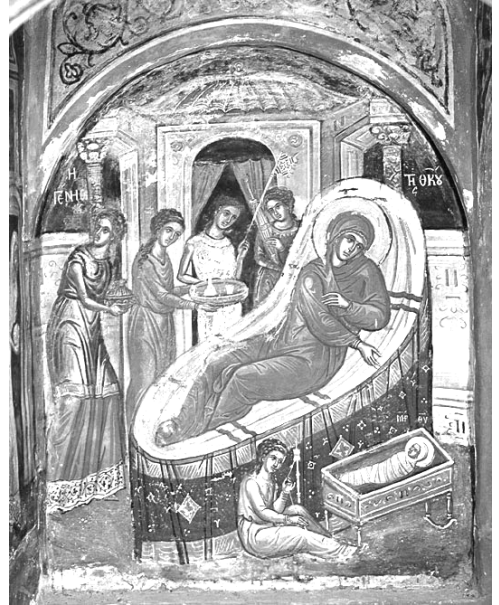
## Our Life in Christ

For this reason, we conclude most of our liturgical services with a word of supplication that to many people, including many other Christians, sounds scandalous or blasphemous: “Most holy Theotokos, save us!”

“How can you people pray that?” a Baptist friend asked me one day.

If Jesus is truly the eternal Son of God, the God-man who “became flesh” in the womb of Mary; if in and through her person He, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, actually assumed our human nature, to transfigure that nature and restore it to its “original” intended purity and holiness; if His saving, redeeming work was realized because of Mary’s “fiat,” her willing acceptance of virginal birth-giving through the power of the Holy Spirit—if all of this is true, then we can do nothing other than acknowledge her role in God’s economy of salvation, and celebrate that role, with joy and conviction, in the services of the Church.

If Jesus is truly who we believe and confess Him to be, then we can do nothing other, and nothing less, than exalt His humble mother as truly Theotokos: a human person like ourselves, but whose womb “became more spacious than the heavens” by bearing the incarnate Son of God. And if, from her Nativity through her Dormition and beyond, she is truly who we believe and confess her to be—the Mother of God—then we can do nothing other, and nothing less, than ask her to intercede ceaselessly for us, for the sake of our salvation.



— Source: oca.org, *Reflections in Christ*, by Fr John Breck



## LOOKING AHEAD

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

### Wed Sept 11

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

### Thurs Sept 12

9am-12pm — Auxiliary Baking/Cooking

### Fri Sept 13

6pm — Vigil for Exaltation of the Cross

### Sat Sept 14 — Exaltation of the Cross

Strict Fast

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

6:00pm — Great Vespers for the Resurrection

### Sun Sept 15

After Divine Liturgy — Service for Beginning of Instruction  
1st Day of Church School

### Mon Sept 16

6:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

### Tues Sept 17

7:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

### Wed Sept 18

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

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Praying the Services—Vespers

**For more dates & links please visit our website: [www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar)**

## Many Years!

### *Name Days*

Ana Griebing, Anna Chkhikvishvili, Anna Hubler, Anna Kaminskaya, Anna Rahal, Anne Cooper, Annie Keeling, Kim (Anna) Klavzar, Patricia (Anna) Pelachik 9/9

### *Birthdays*

Edward Lump, Presbyteria Mary Velonis	9/9
David Martot	9/11
Challen Henry, Caitlin (Juliana) Gannon	9/12
Veronica Rahal	9/14

### *Wedding Anniversaries*

Sarah & Alan Michaud	9/13
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### PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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

**Web:** [www.stjohnofdamascus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org)

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

**Priest:** V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

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

**Attached Clergy:** V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired, Rev. John Robinson, Retired & Pdn. George Shumaik

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