

December 15, 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

26TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 1

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS

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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

As the Lord put on the body, leaving behind all principality and power, so Christians put on the Holy Spirit, and are at rest.

— *St. Macarius the Great*

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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.



The Holy Forefathers of Christ

Parish Life

SAVE THE DATE St John's 50th Anniversary May 25, 2025

The weekend of Sunday May 24 and 25, 2025 we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our beloved parish.

His Eminence Archbishop Benjamin along with other special guests will be with us.

There will also be a celebratory banquet at Vintana Wine + Dine in Escondido

More details to follow



Sunday Counters—I Person Needed

Some of our Counters have had to step down for personal reasons. We are in need of 1 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.



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.

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](https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/StJohnofDamascusOrthodoxChurch/donations)

Or visit our website at:

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



Parish Life

Youth Christmas Program Sunday Dec 22 Mark Your Calendars

This year our Christmas Youth Program will take place on Sunday Dec 22 after the Divine Liturgy.

They will be present "The Gift of the Magi"

Be sure to mark your calendars and plan on attending!



Collection for Christmas Flowers

Today and next week we will be having a collection for the flowers/decorations in the church temple for Christmas.

A basket will be put out at the end of Liturgy.

You may also make a donation through our online giving system. Just choose "flowers" under purpose.



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.

Auxiliary Christmas Ethnic Foods & Bake Sale Saturday Dec 21 Get Your Orders In!

On Saturday Dec 21 from 11:00am—2:00pm our Auxiliary will be having its Christmas Ethnic Foods & Bake Sale.

Pre-orders are taken by phone, with drive-through pick-up and payment on the day of the event.

All our traditional ethnic foods and freshly made baked goods will be available. A menu flyer with ordering instructions has been emailed

To be added to the Auxiliary's e-mail list and receive this year's menu immediately, send an email to Auxiliary@stjohnofdamascus.org or speak to Mike Wesdell.



Poway Adopt-a-Family Gifts Delivered

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Adopt-a-Family program for families in Poway. The gifts were sorted and delivered this past week. Let us continue to offer prayers for the

Dates for 2024

FASTS

Nativity Fast/Advent Nov 15-Dec 24

FAST-FREE WEEKS

After Christmas Dec 25-Jan 4

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!

Forefathers—Tone 2

Through faith You justified the Forefathers,
betrothing through them the Church of the
gentiles.
These saints exult in glory,
for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:
she who bore You without seed.
So, by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy
on us!

KONTAKION

Forefathers—Tone 6

You did not worship the graven image,
O thrice-blessed ones,
but armed with the immaterial Essence of God,
you were glorified in a trial by fire.
From the midst of unbearable flames you called
on God, crying:
“Hasten, O compassionate One!
Speedily come to our aid,
for You are merciful and able to do as You will!”



PROKEIMENON

Tone 4 (Song of the *Fathers*) — Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers, and praised
and glorified is Your Name forever! (Song of the three Holy Children, v. 3)

vs: For You are just in all that You have done for us! (v. 4)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Colossians 3:4-11

⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷ in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel — Luke 14:16-24

¹⁶ Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, ¹⁷ and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'

¹⁸ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.'

¹⁹ And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.'

²⁰ Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

²¹ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.'

²² And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.'



ALLELUIA

Tone 4 — V. Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name. (Ps. 98:6)

V. They called to the Lord and He answered them. (Ps. 98:6)

Our Life in Christ

HOMILY ON THE SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS

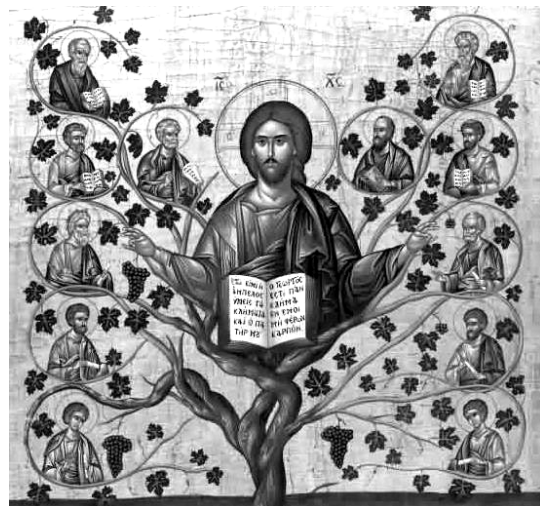
— St Gregory Palamas

David indicates that our Lord Jesus Christ has no genealogy with regard to His divinity (Ps 110.4), Isaiah says the same (Isa 53.8), and later so does the Apostle (Heb 7.3). How can the descent be traced of Him “who is in the beginning, and is with God, and is God, and is the Word and Son of God” (Jn 1.1-2, 18)? He does not have a Father who was before Him, and shares with His Father “a name which is above every other name” and all speech (Phil 2.9). For the most part, genealogies are traced back through different surnames but there is no surname for God, and whatever may be said of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, They are one and do not differ in any respect.

Impossible to recount is Christ’s descent according to His divinity, but His ancestry according to His human nature can be traced, since He who deigned to become Son of man in order to save mankind was the offspring of men. And it is this genealogy of His that two of the evangelists, Matthew and Luke, recorded. But although Matthew, in the passage from his Gospel read today, begins with those born first, he makes no mention of anyone before Abraham. He traces the line down from Abraham until he reaches Joseph to whom, by divine dispensation, the Virgin Mother of God was betrothed, being of the same tribe and homeland as him, that her own stock might be shown from this to be in no way inferior.

Luke, by contrast, begins not with the earliest forebears but the most recent, and working his way back from Joseph the Betrothed, does not stop at Abraham, nor, having included Abraham’s predecessors, does he end with Adam, but lists God among Christ’s human forebears (Luke 3.23-38); wishing to show, in my opinion, that from the beginning man was not just a creation of God, but also a son in the Spirit, which was given to him at the same time as his soul, through God’s quickening breath (Gen 2.7). It was granted to him as a pledge that, if, waiting patiently for it, he kept the commandment, he would be able to share through the same Spirit in a more perfect union with God, by which he would live for ever with Him and obtain immortality.

By heeding the evil counsel of the pernicious angel, man transgressed the divine commandments, was shown to be unworthy, forfeited the pledge and interrupted God’s plan. God’s grace, however, is unalterable and His purpose cannot prove false, so some of man’s offspring were chosen, that, from



Our Life in Christ

among many, a suitable receptacle for this divine adoption and grace might be found, who would serve God's will perfectly, and would be revealed as a vessel worthy to unite divine and human nature in one person, not just exalting our nature, but restoring the human race. The holy Maid and Virgin Mother of God was this vessel, so she was proclaimed by the archangel Gabriel as full of grace, being the chosen one among the chosen, blameless, undefiled and worthy to contain the person of the God-man and to collaborate with Him. Therefore God pre-ordained her before all ages, chose her from among all who had ever lived, and deemed her worthy of more grace than anyone else, making her the holiest of saints, even before her mysterious childbearing.

For that reason, He graciously willed that she should make her home in the Holy of Holies, and accepted her as His companion to share His dwelling from her childhood. He did not simply choose her from the masses, but from the elect of all time, who were admired and renowned for their piety and wisdom, and for their character, words and deeds, which pleased God and brought benefit to all.

Observe also that the Holy Spirit makes it clear to such as have understanding that the whole of divinely inspired Scripture was written because of the Virgin Mother of God. It relates in detail the entire line of her ancestry, which begins with Adam, then passes through Seth, Noah and Abraham, as well as David and Zerubbabel, those in between them and their successors, and goes up to the time of the Virgin Mother of God. By contrast, Scripture does not touch upon some races at all, and in the case of others, it makes a start at tracing their descent, then soon abandons them, leaving them in the depths of oblivion. Above all, it commemorates those of the Mother of God's forebears who, in their own lives and the deeds wrought by them, prefigured Christ, who was to be born of the Virgin.

Now these things are examples and types of greater mysteries, since it was necessary that the royal line be united in many ways with the priestly race, which would bring forth the family of Christ according to the flesh; because in many ways Christ is truly the eternal King and High Priest. And the fact that adopted sons are counted as sons, that the law approves of adoptive fathers no less and sometimes more than natural fathers, and that the same, appropriately, applies to other kinds of kinship, was a clear example and type of our adoption by Christ, our kinship with Him and our calling according to the Spirit and the law of grace. For the Lord Himself says in the Gospels, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt 12.50).

May we all attain to this, to the glory of Christ and of His Father without beginning and of the life-giving Spirit, now and for ever, and unto unceasing ages. Amen.



LOOKING AHEAD

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

Mon Dec 16

6:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101
(via Zoom AND in person in Church Hall)
8:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

Sat Dec 21

11am-2pm — Auxiliary Christmas Ethnic Food & Bake Sale

Sun Dec 22

After Divine Liturgy — Youth Christmas Program

Mon Dec 23

11am — Sacrament of Confession
4:30pm — Sacrament of Confession
6:30pm — Sacrament of Confession

Tues Dec 24—Christmas Eve

10:00am — Vespers Divine Liturgy for Eve of Nativity
6:00pm — Vigil for the Nativity of Christ

Wed Dec 25

Nativity of Our Lord in the Flesh (Christmas)

8:30am — 3rd & 6th Hours
9:00am — Festal Divine Liturgy

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

Many Years!

Name Days

Barbara Karleen (old style) 12/17

Birthdays

Philip Kedroff 12/18 Irene Stone 12/19
Vera Klavzar, Abigail Lorelli 12/20

Wedding Anniversaries

Mark & Katrina Griebing 12/21

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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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, Rev. John Robinson, Retired & Pdn. George Shumaik

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