

February 16, 2025



# 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

34TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 1

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

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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

Watch your heart during all your life—examine it, listen to it, and see what prevents its union with the most blessed Lord. Let this be for you the science of all sciences, and with God's help, you will easily observe what estranges you from God, and what draws you towards Him and unites you to Him. It is the evil spirit more than anything that stands between our hearts and God; he estranges God from us by various passions, or by the desire of the flesh, by the desires of the eyes, and by worldly pride.

— St. John of Kronstadt

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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) with your request.



<sup>32</sup> 'It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'

## Parish Life

### **Parish Annual Meeting 2/16 Nominations for Parish Council, Lay Representative & Auditors**

Our annual meeting is today on February 16. We will be electing

- 4 people for positions on the Parish Council
- a Lay Representative for our Diocesan Assembly and All-American Council (Phoenix, AZ July 14-18)
- 2 Auditors for 2025

If you would like to be nominated to run for any of these positions please see Fr Michael or any member of the current Parish Council.



### **2025 Wall Calendars Available (with Feasts, Fasts, Scriptures Readings)**

The wall calendars for 2025 have arrived and are available in the narthex in the back of the church.

\$10 is the suggested donation.



### **Support our Parish Through the Auxiliary's Scrip Program**

Purchase gift cards for your regular expenses through St John's Auxiliary Scrip Program (gas stations, grocery stores, retail stores, etc) & at no extra cost to you the parish will receive a percentage of your purchase.

See Carmen Brown after Liturgy to purchase gift cards.

### **All-American Council AND Diocesan Assembly July 14-18, 2025 Phoenix, AZ**

The 21st All-American Council will take place in Phoenix, AZ at the Grand Arizona Resort from July 14-18, 2025.

We will be sending our usual clergy and lay delegate to the Council but other parishioners are welcome and encouraged to come as well.

There will be a special celebration in connection with the glorification of Matushka Olga of AK, Mark your calendars and be on the lookout for hotel, scheduling and other information.



### **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](mailto: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](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org)**



### **House Blessings**

Following the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent (Jan. 7 - Mar. 1) Fr. Michael will be blessing homes.

Please contact Fr. Michael to arrange a date and time.

## Parish Life

### Monthly Memorial Saturday February 22

This month's memorial for our beloved departed will be in connection with the Soul Saturday Divine Liturgy on February 22.

Please submit the names of your loved ones BEFORE the beginning of the service.



### List of Current Voting Members Posted

In preparation for our upcoming annual parish meeting February 16, the list of voting members (those parishioners who have submitted pledge forms for 2025) has been posted in both the church narthex and in the church hall.

If your name is not on there, please submit your pledge form ASAP.



### 2025 Wall Calendars Available (with Feasts, Fasts, Scriptures Readings)

The wall calendars for 2025 have arrived and are available in the narthex in the back of the church.

\$10 is the suggested donation.

### 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

Bookstore — Evan Keeling

Candle Stand — Gene Francello

Choir — Carole Shumaik

Church School — Bill Moision & Sally Menig

Commemorative Loaves — Fr Michael

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

Library — TBD

Parish Council Vice-President — Linda Kedroff

Prospora — Fr Michael

Readers at Divine Liturgy — Bill Moision

Security Committee — Parish Council

Scrip Sales — Erik Worth

Social Media — Evan Keeling & Iryna Thayer

Sunday Commemoration Loaves — Fr Michael

Youth Choir — Carole Shumaik

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.

## 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!

### KONTAKIA

#### 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.

#### Prodigal Son —Tone 3

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O Father;  
and among sinners I have scattered the riches  
which You had given me.

Therefore I cry to You like the Prodigal:

"I have sinned before You, O compassionate  
Father; //

receive me a penitent, and make me as one of  
Your hired servants!"

### PROKEIMENA

**Tone 1** (Resurrection) - Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us /as we have set our hope on You! (Ps. 32:22)

V. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)

### ALLELUIA

**Tone 1** — 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)

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Epistle — 1 Cor 6: 12-20

<sup>12</sup> [You say:] "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be brought under the power of anything. <sup>13</sup> "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food," but God will bring to nothing both of these. However, the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord is [made] for the body. <sup>14</sup> Now God raised up the Lord, and he will also raise us up by his power. <sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! <sup>16</sup> Or do you not know that whoever is joined to a prostitute is one body? For God says, "The two will become one flesh." <sup>17</sup> But whoever who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. <sup>18</sup> Flee sexual immorality! "Every sin that a person can do is outside the body," but whoever commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit which dwells in you, and which you have from God? You are not your own! <sup>20</sup> You were bought with a price! Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which belong to God.

### Gospel — Luke 15: 11-32

<sup>11</sup> Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that will come to me.' So the father divided his livelihood between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later, the younger son gathered all that he had and traveled to a far country. There, he squandered his property, living immorally. <sup>14</sup> When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place in that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> He went and hired himself to one of the citizens of that country who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> He wanted to feed himself with the husks that the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup> But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough to spare, and I am dying with hunger! <sup>18</sup> I will get up, go to my father,

and tell him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son! Make me as one of your hired servants."'

<sup>20</sup> So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still at a distance, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. He ran, and embraced his son, and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> Then the son said, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you! I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

<sup>22</sup> But the father said to his slaves, 'Bring out the first robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet! <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup> for this, my son, was dead, and he is alive again! He was lost and [now he] is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> Now his elder son was in the field. As he came near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

<sup>26</sup> Calling one of the servants, he asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> The servant replied, 'Your brother has returned! Your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and healthy.' <sup>28</sup> However, the elder son became angry and he would not go in. Therefore, his father came out and begged him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, 'Look, for so many years I have served you, and I have never disobeyed a commandment of yours. Yet, you never gave me a goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.

<sup>30</sup> But when this, your son, arrived, he who has devoured your living with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'

<sup>31</sup> The father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours! <sup>32</sup> But it was fitting to celebrate and to rejoice, for this, your brother, was dead, and is alive again. He was lost and is found!'

## RETURN FROM EXILE

— Fr. Alexander Schmemmann; excerpt from *Great Lent* (Ch. 2)

On the third Sunday of preparation for Lent, we hear the parable of the Prodigal Son (LK 15:11-32). Together with the hymns on this day, the parable reveals to us the time of repentance as man's return from exile. The prodigal son, we are told, went to a far country and there spent all that he had. A far country! It is this unique definition of our human condition that we must assume and make ours as we begin our approach to God. A man who has never had that experience, be it only very briefly, who has never felt that he is exiled from God and from real life, will never understand what Christianity is about. And the one who is perfectly "at home" in this world and its life, who has never been wounded by the nostalgic desire for another Reality, will not understand what is repentance.

Repentance is often simply identified as a cool and "objective" enumeration of sins and transgressions, as the act of "pleading guilty" to a legal indictment. Confession and absolution are seen as being of a juridical nature. But something very essential is overlooked—without which neither confession nor absolution have any real meaning or power. This "something" is precisely the feeling of alienation from God, from the joy of communion with Him, from the real life as created and given by God. It is easy indeed to confess that I have not fasted on prescribed days, or missed my prayers, or become angry. It is quite a different thing, however, to realize suddenly that I have defiled and lost my spiritual beauty, that I am far away from my real home, my real life, and that something precious and pure and beautiful has been hopelessly broken in the very texture of my existence. Yet this, and only this, is repentance, and therefore it is also a deep desire to return, to go back, to recover that lost home....

One liturgical peculiarity of this "Sunday of the Prodigal Son" must be especially mentioned here. At Sunday Matins, following the solemn and joyful Psalms of the Polyeleion, we sing the sad and nostalgic Psalm 137:

*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, and we wept when we remembered Zion... How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget*



## Our Life in Christ

*her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy...*

It is the Psalm of exile. It was sung by the Jews in their Babylonian captivity as they thought of their holy city of Jerusalem. It has become forever the song of man as he realizes his exile from God, and realizing it, becomes man again: the one who can never be fully satisfied by anything in this fallen world, for by nature and vocation he is a pilgrim of the Absolute. This Psalm will be sung twice more: on the last two Sundays before Lent. It reveals Lent itself as pilgrimage and repentance—as return.



### Psalm 136/7

*By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept,  
when we remembered Zion.  
On the willows there we hung up our lyres.  
For there our captors required of us songs,  
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”  
How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?  
If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither!  
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,  
if I do not remember you,  
if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy!  
Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem,  
how they said, “Raze it, raze it! Down to its foundations!”  
O daughter of Babylon, you devastator!  
Blessed is he who requites you  
with what you have done to us!  
Blessed is he who takes your little ones  
and dashes them against the rock!*



## LOOKING AHEAD

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

### Monday January 6-March 1

Annual House Blessings—Contact Fr Michael to Schedule

### Monday February 17

6:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

### Wednesday February 19

10:30am — Father's Café (in person in hall or via Zoom)

### Saturday February 22—Memorial Saturday

8:30am—3rd Hour & Divine Liturgy for the Departed

### Monday February 24

*Meat Fast Begins*

6:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

### Wednesday February 26

10:30am — Father's Café (in person in hall or via Zoom)

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

## Many Years!

### *Name Days*

Leo Keeling 2/18

### *Birthdays*

Alex Darjania 2/16

Iryna Sheeler 2/17

Sally Elizabeth Menig, William George Hubler 2/19

Julie Callahan 2/21

### *Wedding Anniversaries*

Valerie and Chris Lane 2/20

Joe & Cora Temnick 2/22

## PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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

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

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