

June 15, 2025



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 AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 8
ALL SAINTS**



Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow
Jesus Christ and 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.

Please join us for our fellowship meal
following the service



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*



**Include Something in the Bulletin or
Receive our Weekly Parish 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

Iconography “Helpers” Invited

In the past some folks with artistic ability have offered to help Yakov Ferens, our iconographer, as he works. If you would like to help with that please contact Yakov at 619-952-4738.

Parish Family Photo “Directory”

Photos to Begin to be Taken in June

Our bulletin board “Parish Family Directory” is ready to take its next step.

Beginning in June, Elena Stafford will be approaching people to have their pictures taken to be posted on the blue bulletin board in the church hall. The photos will also have the names of the people in them so that folks have a resource to put names to the faces” as our community continues to grow.

If you have a photo you would rather have used, please speak to Elena about sending it to her so we can have it printed in the format we will be using.



The above picture of a photo directory is taken from St Nicholas Orthodox in Portland, OR. A number of parishes in our Diocese as well as around the country are doing similar things to address the quick growth in their communities.

Services for the Repose of Paul Swanson

Marina Swanson’s husband, Paul Arthur Swanson, fell asleep in the Lord peacefully at home on Wednesday, May 28, 2025. A memorial worship service for his repose (pannikhida) will be held at St. John’s on **Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm with viewing beginning at 5:00 pm.**

The funeral service will be at St. John’s on Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 10:30 am.

A procession to the cemetery will follow, arriving at 12:45 pm to line up and proceed for a 30 minute Military Committal Service at Miramar National Cemetery.

Appetizers will be offered at the Swanson’s house immediately following the services. Please confirm your attendance to Pat Swinehart, cell #760-331-3938, by Friday, June 6, 2025. She will forward detailed information to you.

On behalf of Marina & the family, “Thank you to all the endearing friends at St. John of Damascus.”

Volunteers Needed w/ Ministries

Our Electronic Sign Ministry and Counting Ministries are in need of 1 or 2 more volunteers each as well.

If you are interested in helping see Fr Michael

Church School End of Year BBQ Sunday June 29

This year’s Church School program is coming to an end. We have planned on a BBQ on June 29 after Divine Liturgy.

More details to follow. See Bill Moision if you have questions.

Parish Life

SUMMER IS HERE!

STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR FAITH

With summer comes much-needed vacation time and opportunities to travel and visit 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. See Fr Michael if you have any questions.

Here are some dates to keep in mind:

SUMMER FEASTS

June 28/29	Ss. Peter & Paul
July 14-18	Diocesan Assembly & All-American Council w/ Special Services for Glorification of Olga of Alaska
August 5/6	Transfiguration w/ blessing of fruit
August 14/15	Dormition of the Theotokos w/ blessing of flowers
August 28/29	Beheading of St John the Baptist

SUMMER FASTS

June 16-28	Apostles' Fast
August 1-14	Dormition Fast

Also, please do what you can to **maintain your much-needed offerings of time & talent as well as your financial offerings and contributions over the summer**. Our parish's needs and expenses do not go down during the summer months. The water bill still needs to be paid. The fellowship meals after Liturgy on Sundays still need people to host them and clean up.

For financial contributions, several parish members find it easy to keep up by using an automatic system like our Online Giving or their bank's bill pay system.

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

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

Counters — Fr Michael

Diamond Circle Seniors — Jim & Patty Pelachik

Electric Church Sign Messages—John Thayer

Fellowship/Coffee Hour — Lilliane Coyle

Flowers/Decorating—Diane Worth

Greeters — Valerie Lane

Handmaidens — Sally Menig & Desiree Geralt

Koliva — Fr Michael

Parish Council Vice-President—Vince Palumbo

Prospora — Fr Michael

Readers at Divine Liturgy—Bill Moision

Security Committee — Parish Council

Scrip Sales—Erik Worth

Social Media —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.

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
martyr's 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!"

KONTAKION

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!



PROKEIMENA

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

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

Tone 4 (*All 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 — Hebrews 11:33-12:2

³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

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

³² Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I also will deny before My Father who is in heaven.

³⁷ 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. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

²⁷ Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" ²⁸ So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

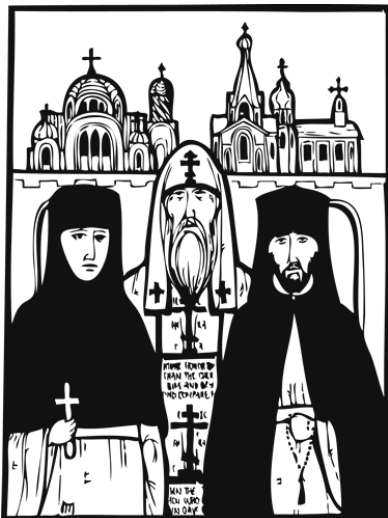
³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

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

Our Life in Christ

already are.” This phrase 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).*

June 9-27

Fr Michael on Vacation

Sunday — June 15

After Divine Liturgy — Fathers' Day Brunch

June 16-28

Apostles Fast

Tuesday — June 17

11:00am — Diamond Circle

6:00pm — Pannikhida & Viewing for Paul Swanson

Wednesday — June 18

10:30am — Funeral for Paul Swanson

Saturday — June 21

4:30pm — Choir Rehearsal

Many Years!

Birthday

Anna Rahal	6/16
Anastasia Michaud	6/17
Melissa Palumbo	6/20

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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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

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