

February 8, 2026



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

**SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON—TONE 2
AFTERFEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE
LORD**

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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

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A Word...

When Paul speaks of "all things" he
mentions even the things that seem painful.
For if tribulation, or poverty, or
imprisonment, or famines, or deaths or
anything else should come upon us, God
can change them into the opposite. For this
is one instance of his ineffable power, that
he can make painful things appear light to
us and turn them into things which can be
helpful.

St. John Chrysostom

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**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

Coming Soon! Mark Your Calendars Upcoming Events in the Next Few Months

February 8 — **Annual Parish Meeting**

February 14-15 — **Archpastoral Visit of His
Grace Bishop Vasily & Young Adult Summit Par-**
ticipants

February 23 — **Beginning of Great Lent**



Super Bowl Chili Sale

Tanya Franchak & Mike Wesdell are offering their annual “chili special.”

\$25 for a take home order of award winning chili, cornbread and the fixings to go with them.

All proceeds will be donated to St Tikhon's Monastery

Be sure to pick up your order today!



Church School for Children & Youth 1st & 3rd Sunday of Month Youth Choir 2nd & 4th Sunday of Month

Our Church School for children and youth are held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

Our children's and youth choir (for those able to read) are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.



Additional Parking Available

People have been sharing that our church is growing so much that folks are having trouble finding parking spots at times.

We do have an agreement with the Lutheran Church next door to be able to use the BACK parking lot if need be.

If you have questions about where it is please see one of the Parish Council members.

Dates for 2026

MOVABLE FEASTS

Pascha	April 12
Ascension	May 21
Pentecost	May 31

FASTS

Meatfare	Feb 16-21
Great Lent	Feb 23—April 12
Holy Week	April 5—10
Apostles Fast	June 8—28
Dormition Fast	August 1-14
Nativity Fast/Advent	Nov 15-Dec 24

FAST-FREE WEEKS

Publican & Pharisee	Feb 1-7
Bright Week	April 12-18
After Pentecost	June 1-6
After Christmas	Dec 25-Jan 4

Parish Life

Diamond Circle Moved to Thursday 2/12 at 11am

This month's Diamond Circle gathering has been moved to Thursday 2/12. The group will be meeting at Phil's BBQ for lunch.

Please email Patty & Jim Pelachik if you are planning to attend as they need to make reservations. Ppelachik@cypresscollege.edu



Barbara Karleen Moved to Rehab Facility

Barbara is making good progress with her recovery after her surgery. She has left the hospital and is in a rehab facility in Encinitas. She is grateful for all the calls and visits and is very open for more.

If you would like to visit her, the address can be found in the narthex.



St John's Hosting 2 Groups Next Week

Young Adult Summit

We are blessed to be hosting nearly 50 young adults next week who will be gathering for our diocese's first Young Adult Summit. They will have guest speakers including His Grace Bishop Vasily and Fr Josiah Trenham. Their schedule begins on Friday morning.

Priestly Formation Cohort

A group of men preparing for possible ordination to the priesthood will also be with us. Their schedules begins Thursday afternoon.

Saturday at 8:00am there will be a Divine Liturgy in connection with the Priestly Formation Cohort. All are welcome to attend the liturgy if they would like to.

Annual Meeting TODAY

After our fellowship meal today we will hold our annual meeting.

The agenda includes:

- Elections
- Passing of the Annual Parish Budget
- Reports on the Various Ministries of the Parish

Voting members are:

Orthodox Christians who have participated in the sacraments of confession and communion this year and have submitted a pledge form outlining their intended support for the ministries and finances of the parish.

Non-voting attendees are welcome to attend as well.



Monthly Collections

St John's is committed to supporting our OCA seminaries who train our future priests & leaders as well as the needs of so many who lack basic things like food, shelter, etc. :

- 2nd Sunday of each Month—Seminarians
- 3rd Sunday of each 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 plan on contributing as you can.



Food Collection

Our parish collects food for the San Diego Food Bank as well as for St Innocent's Orphanage in Tijuana Mexico.

Please remember the many people who struggle with food security in our area. If we all picked up one extra item at the grocery store each time we went we would be able to fill our bins every month.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection — Tone 2

When You descended to death, O Life
Immortal,
You destroyed 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!"

Meeting of the Lord — Tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness,
^Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,
you accepted in your arms the ^Redeemer of
our souls,
Who grants us the Resurrection!

KONTAKIA

Prodigal Son — Tone 3

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O
Father;
and among sinners I have scattered the riches
which You gave me.
And now I cry to You as the Prodigal:
"I have sinned before You, O merciful Father;
receive me a penitent,
and make me as one of Your hired servants!"

Meeting of the Lord — Tone 1

By Your Nativity You sanctified the Virgin's
womb
and blessed Simeon's hands, ^O Christ God.
Now You have come and saved us through
love.
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians,
O only Lover of Man!

PROKEIMENON

Tone 2 (*Resurrection*) — The Lord is my strength and my song; He has
become my salvation. (*Ps 117/118:4*)

v: The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over to
death. (*Ps 117/118:18*)

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. 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*)

SCHEDULE YOUR HOUSEBLESSING (JAN 6– FEB 21)

Fr. Michael will be blessing homes beginning on the day of Theophany (Jan 6)
through Saturday Feb 21st (Great Lent begins on Feb 23rd).

Contact Fr. Michael to schedule your house blessing at
PowayPadre@stjohnofdamascus.org or 858-717-2172.

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — 1 Cor 6:12-20

¹² All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

¹³ Food's for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. ¹⁵ 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 harlot? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

¹⁸ Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Gospel — Luke 15:11-32

¹¹ Then He said: "A certain man had two sons.

¹² And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood.

¹³ And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. ¹⁴ But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵ Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one

gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." ²⁰ And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. ²⁵ Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' ²⁸ But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' ³¹ And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² 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.'"

Our Life in Christ—The Kingdom of God

God's gift of eternal life in Christ and the Holy Spirit is the Kingdom of God. Jesus has brought the **Kingdom of God** to the world through the Spirit in the Church. Spiritual life is life—already now—in the Kingdom of God.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also (Lk 12:32-34).

To live already now in the Kingdom of God is to live in freedom from sin and death in the gracious life of Christ and the Church. A person who has died to sin with Christ in baptism and has been sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit in chrismation and who participates in Christ's Body and Blood in the eucharist is already a member of the Kingdom of God.

... for through Christ we have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph 2:18-22).

The Church is called the Kingdom of God on earth; and the presence and power of the Kingdom is identified with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who abides in the faithful bringing to them the presence and power of God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

Thus the Apostle Paul has said, "The Kingdom of God is... righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; he who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men" (*Rom 14:17-18*). And Saint Gregory of Nyssa (4th c.) citing the earlier tradition of Christians said simply: "The Kingdom of God is the Holy Spirit. ...The Kingdom of the Father and the Uncction of the Son." It has always been understood in the spiritual tradition of the Orthodox Church that to the measure with which one is filled with the Spirit of God, to that same measure he is united with Christ and is in communion with the Father, becoming His child and a member of His Kingdom. Thus it is the teaching that the "acquisition of the Holy Spirit" in "seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (*Mt 6:33*) is the sole purpose and content of man's spiritual life. It is for this, and this alone, that man has been created by God.

...Walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other.

...Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. ...those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (Gal 5:16-21).



Our Life in Christ—Blessing of Homes

The blessing of homes of faithful Christians following the feast of Holy Theophany is an ancient custom. It is the central sign of God's sanctification of all things through Christ's epiphany to the world and His baptism in the Jordan River.

From the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent, the Orthodox priest visits all the members of the Church in order to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the sanctified water.

According to the Orthodox Christian Faith, the family is considered to be a "small church" and the family table is the "home altar" where the people gather each day to receive their "daily bread" from God with thanksgiving in the Name of Christ. Thus, during the Theophany season, the priest, who is the father of the great "family of God," the Church community, comes to each of the "small churches" bringing the blessings of God the Father and all of the brothers and sisters in Christ.

The sanctification of the home takes place not only by the words of prayer, but by the sprinkling with the blessed water which stands for the new creation of the Kingdom of God in which God Himself "fills all things with Himself" including even the smallest particles of material existence.

The priest asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. All pray together for the good of the living and the departed of the family, and of all who live and have lived in the house. All sing together the great hymn of salvation that Christ, the Son of the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit, "has revealed Himself and has enlightened the world." This the house itself, together with the living persons of the family, is "filled with all the fullness of God."

Preparing for your house blessing

When the priest comes to bless the family and its house it is not something to worry about. The priest comes to bless a house that is lived in, not one that has to be in Better Homes and Gardens. There are some basics that are normally observed:

- A lighted candle, an icon and a wide bowl for the blessed water should be placed on the main table in the house.
- All radios, televisions, video games, mp3 players etc. should be turned off. Phones should be on silent.
- All who are present in the house should come together and stand by the table until the end of service.
- Those who are able should join in the singing of the hymns and responses of the services.
- The first names of those for whom special prayers are to be offered, including, of course, all members of the family and those living in the house, should be clearly printed on a sheet of paper, with the clear distinction between the living and the departed.

Taken and revised from the Introduction to the Great Blessing of Water by Fr. Thomas Hopko.

Following the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent

(Jan. 6-Feb 21) Fr. Michael will be blessing homes.

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



LOOKING AHEAD

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

Monday February 9

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tuesday February 10

7:00pm — Catechism

Wednesday February 11

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Women in the OT—Diverse Roles in God's Plan

Thursday February 12

11:00am — Diamond Circle Lunch at Phil's BBQ

Friday February 13

9:00pm — Compline

Saturday February 14—Visit of Bishop

8:00am — Divine Liturgy (PFC)

6:00pm — Great Vespers with Bishop

Sunday February 15—Visit of Bishop

8:30am — 3rd & 6th Hours

9:00am — Entry of the Bishop & Divine Liturgy

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

Many Years!

Birthday

Mikheil Tutberidze, Timothy Anderson

2/9

Mark Sladack

2/10

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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

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

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