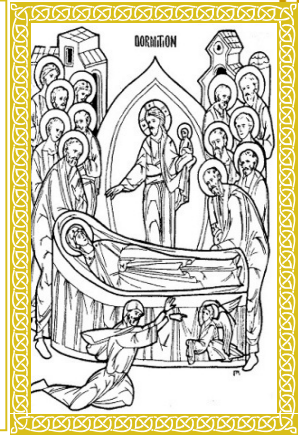




Church of the Virgin Mary

كنيسة العذراء مريم الأنطاكية الأرثوذكسية

*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America*



"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." (Acts 11:26)

March 25, 2012

Feast of the Annunciation

عيد البشارة

12147 S. Cicero Avenue, Alsip, IL 60803

Phone : (708) 239-0004 Fax : (708) 221-6449

www.virginmaryoc.org

Fr. Mousa Haddad - cell phone: (708) 979-3222, email: fr.mousa@gmail.com

Fr. Malek Rihani - cell phone: (708) 516-6417, email: myrihani@hotmail.com

Dn. Saed Rihani - cell phone: (773) 454-2191, email: srihani6@cs.com

Weekly Schedule of Services

Saturday: 5:30 p.m. Great Vespers

Sunday: 9:15 a.m. Matins -- 10:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. Matins -- 10:30 a.m. Bible Study

(Confessions by Appointment)

Welcome to the Church of the Virgin Mary! We extend our warmest and heartfelt greetings to you and your family. If this is your first time with us, we pray that you feel at home. After all, we are gathered together in our Father's house. Please see one of the ushers at the end of the service for a "Welcome Packet" for more information. May God bless you and give you many healthy years in His service.

أهلاً بكم في كنيسة العذراء مريم! يُسعدنا أن نُقدّم لكم ولعائلاتكم تحياتنا القلبية الحارة. إذا كانت هذه زيارتكم الأولى لكنيستنا، نرجو أن تشعروا بأنكم في بيتكم الذي هو بيت أئبنا جميعاً. أأرجاء أن تسألوا أحد المساعدين في الكنيسة في نهاية الخدمة الالهية عن "رزمة معلومات الترحيب" التي تحتوي على المعلومات المطلوبة. أأله يبارككم وينعم عليكم بالصحة لسنين عديدة في خدمة الرب.

Clergy, Parish Council, Committees, and Ministries

Parish Clergy:

Rev. Fr. Mousa Haddad, Pastor
Rev. Fr. Malek Rihani
Rev. Dn. Saed Rihani
Subdeacon Matthew Sweis

Parish Council:

Presiding Officer

Rev. Fr. Mousa Haddad

Chairman

Fadi Abu Manneh

Vice Chairman

Rashid Sweis

Treasurer

Abdullah Tadros

Financial Secretary

Samer Tadros

Secretary

Abeer Khouri

Council Members:

George Barakat

Maher Ibrahim

CJ Kari

Bassam Salman

Faris Samawi

Ramzi Sweis

Committees:

Altar / Liturgics

Mazen Ammari & Steve Rihani

PLC 2012

Abdullah Tadros & CJ Kari

Expansion & Maintenance

Luai Sweiss

Fundraising & Stewardship

Rashid Sweis & Bassam Salman

Financial

Abdullah Tadros

Communication

Abeer Khouri

Constitution

Ramzi Sweis

Humanitarian

Shireen Salman

Ushering

Fadi Abu Manneh

Web Master

Sana Sweis

Office Secretary

Katia Haddad

Organizations and Ministries:

Sunday School Director

Omar Sweiss

Sunday School Spiritual Director

Fr. Mousa Haddad

Ladies Guild President

Kholoud Swais

Ladies Guild Spiritual Director

Fr. Mousa Haddad

Fellowship President

Khalil Haddad

Fellowship Spiritual Director

Fr. Mousa Haddad

SOYO President

Hadeel Sweis

SOYO Advisor

Orieb Sweis & Steve Rihani

SOYO Spiritual Director

Fr. Malek Rihani

Handmaids of the Lord

Mansoura Khouri & Lina Haddad

Handmaids Spiritual Director

Fr. Malek Rihani

Choir Director

Michael Rascia

Chanter

Khaled Salman & Faris Samawi

Church Hall Rental - Call: 708-691-0827 or email: katiahaddad@virginmaryoc.org

Changes in the Liturgy

تغييرات في القداس

First Antiphon

Give the King Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the King's Son. May the mountains bring peace to Thy people, and the little hills righteousness.

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Savior, save us!

Tell forth from day to day the glad tidings of the salvation of our God. The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, and He will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Savior, save us!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

الانديفونا الأولى

اللهم اعطِ حكمك للملك وعدلك لإبن الملك. لتأخذ الجبال سلاماً للشعب والتلال عدلاً.

بشفاعاتِ والدةِ الإلهِ يا مخلصُ خلصنا!

بشروا من يومٍ إلى يومٍ بخلصِ إلهنا. حلفَ الربُّ لداود حقاً ولا يغدر به.

بشفاعاتِ والدةِ الإلهِ يا مخلصُ خلصنا!

المجدُ للآبِ والإبْنِ والروحِ القدس، الآنَ وكلَّ أوانٍ وإلى دهرِ الداهرينَ، آمين.

بشفاعاتِ والدةِ الإلهِ يا مخلصُ خلصنا!

Second Antiphon

He shall come down as rain upon a fleece, and as the dew which falls upon the earth. The Most High hath sanctified His tabernacle.

Save us, O Son of God, Who wast incarnate for our sake, who sing to Thee, Alleluia!

Our God shall plainly come, and shall not keep silence.

Save us, O Son of God, Who wast incarnate for our sake, who sing to Thee, Alleluia!

In His days righteousness shall shine forth; and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth.

Save us, O Son of God, Who wast incarnate for our sake, who sing to Thee, Alleluia!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O only-begotten son and word of God...

الانديفونا الثانية

ينزلُ مثل الندى على الجزة. ومثلتُ القطرُ القاطرُ على الأرض. لقد قدّسَ العلي مسكنه.

خلصنا يا ابنَ الله، يا من تجسّدَ من البتول، لنرتل لك، هلولويا! الله إلهنا يأتي علانيةً، ولا يسكت.

خلصنا يا ابنَ الله، يا من تجسّدَ من البتول، لنرتل لك، هلولويا! يشرقُ في أيامه العدل وكثرةُ السلام.

خلصنا يا ابنَ الله، يا من تجسّدَ من البتول، لنرتل لك، هلولويا!

المجدُ للآبِ والإبْنِ والروحِ القدس، الآنَ وكلَّ أوانٍ وإلى دهرِ الداهرينَ، آمين.

يا كلمةَ الله الابنِ الوحيد...

Third Antiphon

His Name shall be blessed forever; His Name shall continue longer than the sun. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious Name unto the ages, and unto the ages of ages.

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

الانديفونا الثالثة

يكونُ إسمه مباركا مدى الدهور، واسمه يدوم أطول من الشمس. مباركُ الربُّ إلهُ إسرائيل الصانعُ العجائب وحده. مباركُ اسمُهُ إلى الدهر وإلى دهرِ الداهرين.

اليومُ رأسُ خلاصنا وظهورُ السِّرِّ الذي منذ الدهور. فإنَّ ابنَ الله يصيرُ ابنَ البتول. وجبرائيلُ يبشِّرُ بالنعمة. فلنهنّفنَّ نحن أيضاً معه نحو والدةِ الإلهِ قائلين: إفرحي يا ممثلةً نعمةَ الربِّ معك.

Changes in the Liturgy

تغييرات في القداس

Entrance Hymn

Tell forth from day to day the glad tidings of the salvation of our God.
Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

بشروا من يومٍ إلى يومٍ بخلاصِ إلهنا، خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من قام من بين الأموات، لنرتل لك، هلوليا!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone Eight)

From the heights Thou didst descend, O Compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion. Thou art our life and our resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee.

انحدرت من العلى أيها المُنحَن. وقبِلت الدفنَ ذا الثلاثةِ الأيام، لكي تعنقنا من الآلام. فيا حياتنا وقيامتنا ياربُّ المجد لك.

Troparion for the Feast of the Annunciation (Tone Four)

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace.

Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

اليوم رأسُ خلاصنا وظهورُ السرِّ الذي منذ الدهور. فإنَّ ابنَ الله يصيرُ ابنَ البتول. وجبرائيلُ يبشُرُ بالنعمة. فلنهنقن نحن أيضاً معه نحو والدة الإله قائلين: إفرحي يا ممتلئة نعمة الربِّ معك.

Kontakion of the Theotokos for the Sundays of Lent (Tone Eight)

To thee the champion leader, I thy city ascribe thank-offerings of victory. For thou hast delivered me from terrors O Theotokos. But as thou hast that power which is invincible, from all dangers set me free that I may cry out unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom!

إني أنا عبدك يا والدة الإله، اكتبْ لكِ رياتِ الغلبة يا جنديَّةً مُحامية. وأقدمُ لكِ الشكرَ كمنقذة من الشدائد. لكن بما أنَّ لكِ

العزة التي لا تُحارب، اعتقينا من صنوفِ الشدائد. حتَّى أصرخَ إليك: إفرحي يا عروساً لا عروس لها!

Megalynarion for the Feast of the Annunciation (Tone Four)

Receive, O earth, the glad tidings of great joy, and ye heavens, praise the glory of God.

The Theotokos, being the living tabernacle of God, shall never be touched by an unclean hand. But the lips of believers shall sing unto her ceaselessly with the voice of angels, crying joyfully: Rejoice, O full of grace. The Lord is with thee.

استبشري أيتها الأرض بالفرح العظيم، وسبحي يا سماوات مجد الله.

إن والدة الإله تابوتُ الله حيٌّ ناطقٌ. فلا تلمسها أبداً يدٌ دنسة. أما شفاهُ المؤمنين فلترنن لها بصوتِ الملاكِ بدون

صمتٍ. هاتفةً عن سرور: إفرحي يا ممتلئة نعمة الربِّ معك.

Koinonikon for the Feast of the Annunciation (Tone Eight)

The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath chosen it for His dwelling. Alleluia!

إن الربَّ اختار صهيون وارتضاها مسكناً له. هلوليا!

Epistle for the Feast of the Annunciation

الرسالة لعيد البشارة

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

For he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden!

The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews (2:11-18).

Brethren, He Who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim Thy Name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise Thee." And again, "I will put my trust in Him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." Since, therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that He is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.

تُعْظِمُ نَفْسِي لِلرَّبِّ وَتَبْتَهِجُ رُوحِي بِاللَّهِ مُخَلِّصِي!

لِأَنَّهُ نَظَرَ إِلَيَّ تَوَاضَعِ أُمَّتِهِ!

فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى العبرانيين (2:11-18)

يا إخوة إن المقدّس والمقدّسين كلّهم من واحد. فلهذا السبب لا يستحيي أن يدعوهم إخوة قائلاً * سأخبر باسمك إختي وأسبحك في الكنيسة * وأيضاً سأكون متوكلاً عليه. وأيضاً هاءنذا والأولاد الذين أعطانيهم الله * إذن إذ قد اشترك الأولاد في اللحم والدم اشترك هو كذلك فيهما لكي يُبطل بموته من كان له سلطان الموت أي إبليس * ويعتق كلّ الذين كانوا مدّة حياتهم كلّها خاضعين للعبودية مخافة من الموت * فأنه لم يتخذ الملائكة قط بل إنّما اتخذ نسل إبراهيم * فمن ثمّ كان ينبغي أن يكون شبيهاً باخوته في كلّ شيء ليكون رئيس كهنة رحيماً أميناً فيما لله حتى يكفر خطايا الشعب * لأنه إذ كان قد تألم مجرباً فهو قادر على أن يُغيث المُصابين بالتجارب.

Gospel for the Feast of the Annunciation

الأنجيل لعيد البشارة

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (1:24-38).

At that time, Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah, conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying, "Thus the Lord has done to me in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." In the sixth month the archangel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the archangel came to her and said, "Rejoice, O full of grace, the Lord is with thee! Blessed art thou among women!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the archangel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou wilt conceive in thy womb and bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the archangel, "How shall this be, since I have known no man?" And the archangel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon thee, and the power of the Most High will overshadow thee; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the archangel departed from her.

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس مرقس الإنجيلي البشير, التلميذ الطاهر (8:34-38; 9:1)

في ذلك الزمان حَبَلَتْ أليصابات امرأة زَحْرِيَا فاختبأت حَمَسَةَ أَشْهُرٍ قَائِلَةً هَكَذَا صَنَعَ بي الرَّبُّ في الأيَّام التي نَظَرَ إِلَيَّ فيها لِيَصْرِفَ عَنِّي العَارَ بينَ الناسِ * وفي الشَّهرِ السَّادِسِ أُرْسِلَ الملاكُ جبرائيلُ مِنْ قِبَلِ اللهِ إلى مَدِينَةٍ في الجليلِ اسمُها الناصِرةُ، إلى عذراءٍ مخطوبةٍ لرجُلٍ اسمُهُ يوسُفُ مِنْ بيتِ داودَ واسمُ العذراءِ مريمُ * فلَمَّا دَخَلَ إليها الملاكُ قالَ: "السَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا المُمْتَلِئَةُ نعمةً، الرَّبُّ مَعَكَ، مباركةٌ أَنْتِ في النِّساءِ" * فلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ اضْطَرَبَتْ مِنْ كَلامِهِ وفَكَّرَتْ ما عسى أن يكونَ هذا السَّلامُ * فقالَ لها الملاكُ: لا تخافي يا مَريمُ فَإِنَّكَ قد نلتِ نعمةً لدى اللهِ * وها أَنْتِ تَحْبَلِينَ وتَلْدِينَ ابناً وتُسَمِّيهُ يَسوعَ * هذا سيكونُ عظيمًا وابنَ العَلِيِّ يُدْعَى وسَيُعْطِيهِ الرَّبُّ الإلهُ عرشَ داودَ أبيهِ ويملُكُ على بيتِ يعقوبَ إلى الأبدِ، ولا يكونُ لملكِهِ انقضاءً * فقالت مَريمُ للملاكِ: كيفَ يكونُ هذا وأنا لا أعرفُ رجلاً * فأجابَ الملاكُ وقالَ لها: إِنَّ الرُّوحَ القُدُسَ يَحِلُّ عَلَيْكَ وقوَّةُ العَلِيِّ تُظَلِّلُكَ ولذلكَ فالقُدُّوسُ المولودُ مِنْكَ يُدْعَى ابنَ اللهِ * وها إِنَّ نَسِيبَتِكَ قد حَبَلَتْ هي أيضاً بابنٍ في شيخوختها وهذا الشَّهرُ هو السَّادِسُ لتلكَ المدعوَّةِ عاقراً * لأنَّهُ ليسَ أمرٌ غيرَ ممكِنٍ لدى اللهِ * فقالت مَريمُ ها أنا أمةٌ للرَّبِّ. فليكنَ لي بحَسَبِ قَوْلِكَ". وانصَرَفَ الملاكُ مِنْ عِنْدِهَا.



Lenten Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power and idle talk.
(prostration)

أَيُّهَا الرَّبُّ وَسَيِّدُ حَيَاتِي، أَعْتِقْنِي مِنْ رُوحِ الْبَطَالَةِ وَالْفُضُولِ
وَحُبِّ الرَّئِيسَةِ وَالْكَلامِ الْبَطَالِ. (مطانية)

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. (prostration)

وَأَنْعِمْ عَلَيَّ أَنَا عَبْدُكَ، بِرُوحِ الْعِفَّةِ وَاتِّضَاعِ الْفِكْرِ وَالصَّبْرِ
وَالْمَحَبَّةِ. (مطانية)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother, for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages.
Amen. (prostration)

نَعَمْ يَا مَلِكِي وَالْهَيَّ هَبْ لِي أَنْ أَعْرِفَ ذُنُوبِي وَعُيُوبِي، وَأَنْ لَا
أَدِينَ إِخْوَتِي، فَإِنَّكَ مُبَارَكٌ إِلَى دَهْرِ الدَّاهِرِينَ. آمين. (مطانية)



Honoring your loved ones: Please consider signing up for one or more Sundays to provide Holy Bread and Coffee hour. It's this gift of Holy Bread that we use to prepare communion and to share with our parishioners at the end of the service.

What better way to honor your loved ones on their birthday, anniversary, graduation or memorial. It takes minimal effort, and it encourages fellowship among our community.

Hospitality Teams

“Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the Trinity one in essence and undivided.” - From the Divine Liturgy

<i>Holy Bread and Coffee Hour</i>	القداس والقهوة
03/25: Refqa Sweis & Family	3/25: رفقة صويص والعائلة
04/01: Rayya Saloum Makamreh & Family	4/01: رية سلوم مخامرة والعائلة
04/08: Issa Eid Sweis & Family	04/08: عيسى عيد صويص والعائلة

Epistle Readers:

Today: English - Rana Nino, Arabic - Norma Tadros

Next Week: English - Futien Johnson, Arabic - Fares Samawi

Altar Server Ministry:

03/25: Team C (Captain Murad Salman): Omar Nemri, Mathew Nemri, Samer Sweis, Elia Sweis, Simon Tadros, George Corey, Woody Corey, Mark Sweis

04/01 Team A (Captain Jordan Rihani): Odei Sweis, Yousif Saigh, Jimmy Salman, Jai Riske, Sean Rihani, Daniel Al-Nemri, Joseph Sweis, Matthew Ibrahim, Gabe Corey, Sam Corey, David Sweis

04/08: Team B (Captain Ramiz Riadi): Rami Sweis, Yazen Swais, Anthony Rihani, Saleem Swais, Sharbel Samawi, Kyse Dahdal, Joseph Fallouh, Louis Corey, Alexander Corey

“Bible Verse of the Week”

Like newborn babies hungry for milk, you should want the pure teaching that feeds your spirit. With it you can grow and be saved. You have already tasted the goodness of the Lord.” [1 Peter 2:2-3](#)

وَتُوفُوا كَالْأَطْفَالِ الْمَوْلُودِينَ حَدِيثًا إِلَى الْحَلِيبِ الرُّوحِيِّ النَّقِيِّ، لِكَيْ تَنْمُوا وَتَخْلُصُوا، فَقَدْ دُقْتُمْ أَنْ الرَّبَّ طَيِّبٌ. [بطرس](#)

[الاول 2:2-3](#)



The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese OF NORTH AMERICA

358 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 5238, Englewood, NJ 07631-5238
Telephone (201) 871-1355 * Fax (201) 871-7954
Website: www.antiochian.org * Email: archdiocese@antiochian.org

March, 2012

TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT AND PRINTED IN THE BULLETIN

Beloved Hierarchs, esteemed members of the Board of Trustees, members of our Archdiocesan Organizations and all faithful of our God Protected Archdiocese,

Greetings and blessings to you in the spirit of this Holy and Great Lent. I am certain that you have been following the tragic events in Syria from where many of us have originated. Besides our cultural and historical roots which are planted in Syria, Syria has a great spiritual significance to all of us and all Christians. Damascus is considered the most ancient city in the world. Syria and the entire Fertile Crescent gave the world its first known civilization.

Damascus is a holy city for us. It has been the center of our Patriarchate since the Patriarchate moved from Antioch. Our venerable Patriarch lives on the Straight Street where St. Paul walked to be baptized after his conversion to Christianity. (Acts 9:11)

Dear brothers and sisters,

For more than one year, Syria, the land of saints and martyrs, has been victimized by external and internal evil forces. Syria refused to be a tool in the hands of great powers. The purpose of this letter is not to analyze the political situation in Syria; others have done that. We intend from this letter to direct your attention to the extent of the tragedy in Syria: thousands of people have lost their lives, many children have become orphans, thousands of women have been widowed, and thousands of homes have been destroyed. All of us have our spiritual roots in Syria, and many do come from Syria, and they are our brothers and sisters.

Your Archdiocese has always extended a helping hand to victims of natural and social catastrophes. I would like to mention but a few of them: The natural disasters in our own country, i.e., hurricanes and tornadoes, the earthquake in Mexico, the Chilean earthquake, starvation in Africa, the victims of the uncivil war in Lebanon, the ongoing Palestinian tragedy, and many others throughout the world. We have helped many people throughout the years, **especially through our food for hungry people program.**

My dear brothers and sisters,

For more than one year, Syria has been plagued by a wave of extremists just like the extremists who caused the destruction and death of Americans on September 11, 2001. We cannot wash our hands from the Syrian blood. I appeal to you in the spirit of this Great Lent and in the spirit of the suffering Christ and His glorious Resurrection to respond generously to this appeal, and send your contribution to our Archdiocese as soon as possible earmarked Syrian Appeal. May the rest of your journey to the empty tomb be spiritually rewarding.

Your father in Christ,



Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate
Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

P.S. We have learned that one of our Orthodox Priests was murdered in the city of Hamat and another Orthodox Deacon was shot in Homs, both by terrorists. Please pray for the repose of their souls.

*** There will be a second collection today for the suffering victims of the crisis in Syria ***

PLEASE BE GENEROUS

Thank you !

Parish News

Great Lent!

We are currently in the Lenten Fast and it will continue until Pascha (Easter), April 15th. Please do not forget that in order for our fasting to be effective and beneficial to our souls, it must be accompanied by prayer, repentance, forgiveness, alms-giving (giving to the poor), and good works. The fast is not a “diet” so that one could lose weight. What good is the fast if it does not change us and strengthen our relationship with Jesus Christ and with one another? Fast from anger, judging, pride, gossip, and lust. If you are not able to keep the discipline of fasting as prescribed by the church for health reasons, please speak to Fr. Mousa and he will give you a discipline you can handle. Remember the words of St. John Chrysostom:

“Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip...”

“Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism...”

“For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?”

The Church of the Virgin Mary will have the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy every Wednesday at 7pm and the service of the Akathist (Al-Madayeh) followed by a potluck dinner every Friday at 7pm. May you have a spiritually rewarding Lent. God bless you!

نحن الان في فترة الصوم الذي يستمر حتى عيد الفصح 15-4-2012. نرجو أن نتذكروا انه حتى يكون صيامكم مقبولاً ومفيداً لأرواحكم, يجب أن يقترن بالصلاة والندامة والمسامحة ومساعدة الفقراء والمحتاجين وكافة الاعمال الصالحة. الصيام ليس وسيلة لتخفيف الوزن. ما الفائدة منه إذا لم نتغير ونقوي علاقتنا مع السيد يسوع المسيح ومع بعضنا البعض. الصيام هو الابتعاد عن الغضب والعصبية والحكم على الآخرين والغرور والقبل والقال والشهوة. إذا كان لأي منكم اسباب تمنعه من الصيام كما اوصت الكنيسة, يُرجى التكلم مع الاب موسى حداد الذي سيساعدكم على معالجة الامر. تذكروا ما قاله القديس يوحنا الذهبي الفم:

" لتصم أذانكم عن سماع أقوال الشر وكلام الثرثرة... "

" لتصم أفواهكم عن الكلام البطل وأنقاد الآخرين... "

" لانه أية مئة لكم إذا أمتعتكم عن أكل اللحوم والاسماك, بنما تنهشون أخوانكم؟ "

ستقيم الكنيسة قُداس "السابق تقديسه" كل يوم أربعاء الساعة 7 مساءً. أيضاً خدمة المدائح كل يوم الجمعة الساعة 7 مساءً يتبعها وجبة طعام في قاعة الكنيسة. نسأل الله أن يُكافئكم روحياً بهذا الصيام. الله يبارككم!

St. Mary's Spring Basketball League

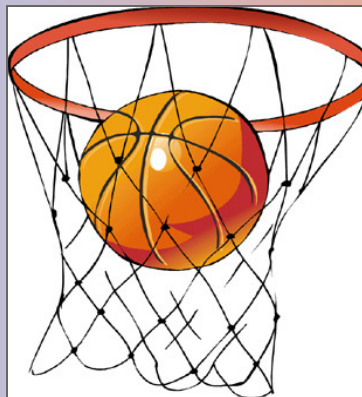


Join St. Mary's Spring Basketball League! You must be at least 16 years of age or older. We have a



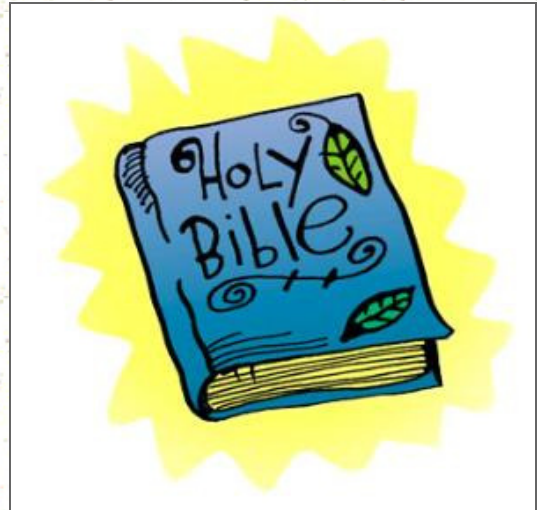
fine program planned and we welcome you to join us. We are currently accepting registration and we anticipate the league will start mid-April, after Pascha. The games will be played at St. Mary Orthodox Church, 6330 W. 127th St., Palos Heights, IL 60463. The start times will vary, and are to be determined, pending final registration counts. At the present time, games are slated to be played week-day evenings, or weekend afternoons. Please spread the word quickly and encourage others to sign-up as well. We look forward to your participation in the 2012 Spring Basketball League.

If you have any questions please call Samer Tadros at 708.289.6982 or samertadros78@gmail.com.



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HOUSE BLESSINGS

Traditionally, at the feast of our Lord's Theophany on January 6th, we bless water which is used to sanctify the homes of all the faithful. In bringing the blessed water to our homes, and sprinkling it in each room, we rid our house of any evil influence, and rededicate it to God in a special way. As we were once renewed by the waters of our own baptism into Christ, so too our home, and our entire lives, are re-dedicated and renewed unto Christ our God each year at this time. Please contact Fr. Mousa at 708-979-3222 or Fr. Malek at 708-516-6417 if you would like your home blessed this year



CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN MARY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Attention all boys and girls 2nd through 5th grade
Practices have begun...hope to see you this Saturday

*Parents are asked to stay downstairs during practice but are encouraged to join us at 5:30pm for Great Vespers

Practices

When: Every Saturday

Time: 5:00 to 6:15pm

Place: Church of the Virgin Mary

?s contact Angela Sweis at angelasweis@msn.com or 708.715.9057 or Grace Riske at grace@graceriske.com or 630.532.8640

Scholarship

Through a generous gift of the Francis Maria Foundation for Justice and Peace, the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America will once again grant several scholarships in the amount of \$2,500 to students attending an accredited College. Scholarships will be granted each July. Completed [2012 Francis Maria Scholarship Application](#) and all supporting documentation must be post-marked by May 15, 2012 and received by May 22.

<http://www.teensoyo.org/Pages/Scholarships.aspx>

Fellowship

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March 25, 2012

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Diocese of Toledo & the Midwest

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

June 27th - July 1st, 2012

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See www.2012MidwestPLC.org for event information!

Hosted by Church of the Virgin Mary Antiochian Church
Palos Heights, IL (formerly of Alsip, IL)
www.VirginMaryOC.org VirginMary@VirginMaryOC.org (708)239-0004



Midwest Parish Life Conference 2012

Commemorative Journal

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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55 Maxims for Christian Living

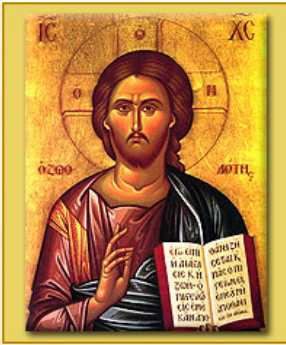
By Fr. Thomas Hopko

1. Be always with Christ.
2. Pray as you can, not as you want.
3. Have a keepable rule of prayer that you do by discipline.
4. Say the Lord's Prayer several times a day.
5. Have a short prayer that you constantly repeat when your mind is not occupied with other things.
6. Make some prostrations when you pray.
7. Eat good foods in moderation.
8. Keep the Church's fasting rules.
9. Spend some time in silence every day.
10. Do acts of mercy in secret.
11. Go to liturgical services regularly
12. Go to confession and communion regularly.
13. Do not engage intrusive thoughts and feelings. Cut them off at the start.
14. Reveal all your thoughts and feelings regularly to a trusted person.
15. Read the scriptures regularly.
16. Read good books a little at a time.
17. Cultivate communion with the saints.
18. Be an ordinary person.
19. Be polite with everyone.
20. Maintain cleanliness and order in your home.
21. Have a healthy, wholesome hobby.
22. Exercise regularly.
23. Live a day, and a part of a day, at a time.
24. Be totally honest, first of all, with yourself.
25. Be faithful in little things.
26. Do your work, and then forget it.
27. Do the most difficult and painful things first.
28. Face reality.
29. Be grateful in all things.
30. Be cheerful.
31. Be simple, hidden, quiet and small.
32. Never bring attention to yourself.
33. Listen when people talk to you.
34. Be awake and be attentive.
35. Think and talk about things no more than necessary.
36. When we speak, speak simply, clearly, firmly and directly.
37. Flee imagination, analysis, figuring things out.
38. Flee carnal, sexual things at their first appearance.
39. Don't complain, mumble, murmur or whine.
40. Don't compare yourself with anyone.
41. Don't seek or expect praise or pity from anyone.
42. We don't judge anyone for anything.
43. Don't try to convince anyone of anything.
44. Don't defend or justify yourself.
45. Be defined and bound by God alone.
46. Accept criticism gratefully but test it critically.
47. Give advice to others only when asked or obligated to do so.
48. Do nothing for anyone that they can and should do for themselves.
49. Have a daily schedule of activities, avoiding whim and caprice.
50. Be merciful with yourself and with others.
51. Have no expectations except to be fiercely tempted to your last breath.
52. Focus exclusively on God and light, not on sin and darkness.
53. Endure the trial of yourself and your own faults and sins peacefully, serenely, because you know that God's mercy is greater than your wretchedness.
54. When we fall, get up immediately and start over.
55. Get help when you need it, without fear and without shame.

قاعدة للحياة المسيحية 55

(بقلم الاب توماس هبكو)

- 1 - كن دائماً مع المسيح.
- 2- صلي كما تستطيع لا كما تريد.
- 3- إحفظ قواعد الصلاة بانتظام.
- 4- صلي الصلاة الربانية عدة مرات في اليوم.
- 5- إختتر صلاة قصيرة ترددها عندما يكون تفكيرك مشغولاً في أشياء أخرى.
- 6- أسجد عندما تُصلي.
- 7- تناول الطعام الصحي بأعتدال.
- 8- حافظ على قواعد الصيام.
- 9- إقضي بعض الوقت في هدوء كل يوم.
- 10- قدّم الحسنات سرّاً.
- 11- إذهب إلى الخدمة الدينية بانتظام.
- 12- قم بالاعتراف وتناول القربان المقدس بانتظام.
- 13- لا تتخرط بالأفكار والمشاعر الفضولية. إنزعها من البداية.
- 14- إفض بما في نفسك لإنسان تثق به.
- 15- إقرأ الكتاب المقدس باستمرار.
- 16- إقرأ الكتب الجيدة من حين إلى حين.
- 17- تناول القربان المقدس بقداسة وأيمان.
- 18- كن إنساناً بسيطاً.
- 19- تحلى بالادب مع كل إنسان.
- 20- حافظ على النظافة والنظام في بيتك.
- 21- مارس الهوايات الصحية.
- 22- مارس التمارين الرياضية بانتظام.
- 23- عش يومك ولكن على مراحل منتظمة.
- 24- كن صادقاً مع نفسك بالدرجة الأولى.
- 25- كن بالأشياء البسيطة.
- 26- إعمل ما عليك عمله ثم إنساه.
- 27- قم بإتمام الأشياء الصعبة والمؤلمة أولاً.
- 28- واجه الحقيقة.
- 29- كن شاكرًا لكل شيء.
- 30- كن بشوشاً.
- 31- كن بسيطاً، كتوماً، هادئاً ومتواضعاً.
- 32- لا تحاول أن تُلفت الانتباه لنفسك.
- 33- إضع عندما يتكلم معك الآخرون.
- 34- كن مُتقيضاً وشديد الانتباه.
- 35- فكر وتكلم ضمن حدود المعقول.
- 36- تكلم ببساطة ووضوح ومباشرة.
- 37- إنسى الخيال والتحلل والتصورات.
- 38- حاول أن تنسى الأشياء الجنسية الحيوانية عندما تخطر ببالك.
- 39- لا تشكو، أو تهذي أو تتذمر أو تُؤنن.
- 40- لا تُقارن نفسك بالآخرين.
- 41- لا تطلب أو تتوقع المديح والعطف من أحد.
- 42- لا تحكم على الآخرين.
- 43- لا تحاول إقناع الآخرين بأي شيء.
- 44- لا تُدافع عن نفسك رأيك.
- 45- تمثّل بالله وحده وألتزم به.
- 46- إقبل الانتقاد ببشاشة وحلله بأمعان.
- 47- قدّم النصيحة عندما يُطلب منك أو عندما تكون مُلزماً.
- 48- لا تعمل للآخرين ما هم قادرين ويجب عليهم عمله.
- 49- ضع لك برنامجاً لنشاطاتك اليومية وتحاشى الخيال والنزوات.
- 50- كن رحوماً لنفسك وللآخرين.
- 51- لا تتوقع سوى أن تُجرب بقساوة حتى النفس الأخير.
- 52- ركز فقط على الله والنور لا على الخطيئة والظلمه.
- 53- تحمّل محاسبة نفسك وأخطاءك الخاصة بسلام وهدوء، لأن رحمة الله أعظم من إثمك.
- 54- عندما تقع، قم حالاً وأبداء من جديد.
- 55- أطلب المساعدة وقت الحاجة بدون خجل.



Weekly Synaxarion



On March 25 in the Holy Orthodox Church we celebrate the Annunciation to our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary. When the All-Holy Virgin completed the fourteenth year after her birth and was entering her fifteenth year, after having spent eleven years of living and serving in the Temple of Jerusalem, the priests informed her that, according to the Law, she could not remain in the Temple but was required to be betrothed and enter into marriage. Mary surprised the priests when she told them that she had dedicated her life to God and that she desired to remain a virgin until death. Then, Zacharias, the high priest and father of the Forerunner, under the inspiration of God, and in agreement with the other priests, betrothed the Virgin Mary to Joseph of Nazareth to preserve her virginity and to care for her. When the fullness of time had come, as prophesied by Daniel the Prophet, and when God was pleased to fulfill His promise to the banished Adam and to the Prophets, the great Archangel Gabriel appeared in the chamber of the All-Holy Virgin and, as some priestly writers wrote, precisely at that same moment when she held open the book of the Prophet Isaiah and was contemplating his great prophecy: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son! (7:13)” Gabriel appeared in all of his angelic brightness and saluted her: “Rejoice, highly favored one! The Lord is with thee,” and the rest in order as it is written in the Gospel of Luke. With this angelic annunciation and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Virgin, leading to the incarnation of our Lord, the salvation of mankind and restoration of all creation began. Through the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and of all Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.