

# St. Mary Orthodox Church

Palos Heights, Illinois

Fr. Mousa Haddad and Fr. Malek Rihani and their families  
wish you a Blessed Christmas Celebration and a  
New Year filled with God's Blessings!



المسيح ولد ! فمجدوه !

**Christ is Born ! Glorify Him !**



# SAINT MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

*“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” (Acts 11:26)*

6330 W. 127th St., Palos Heights, IL 60463  
Phone : (708) 239-0004, Fax : (708) 221-6449  
www.stmaryoc.org (office@stmaryoc.org)  
Church Office Hours : Monday - Friday 10:00am-3:00pm

### St. Mary Parish Clergy

Rev. Fr. Mousa Haddad, Pastor  
Very Rev. Fr. Malek Rihani  
Subdeacon Matthew Sweis  
Subdeacon Ameer Tadros

### Parish Council

Fr. Mousa - Presiding Officer  
Fadi Abu Manneh - Chairman  
Feras Sweis - Vice Chairman  
Abdullah Tadros - Treasurer  
Constantin Kari - Financial Sec.  
Abeer Khouri - Secretary  
Nidal Al-Farah  
George Barakat  
Bassam Salman  
Feras Salman  
Faris Samawi  
Samer Tadros

### Parish Ministries

Sunday School - Omar Sweis  
SOYO - Marram Salman  
Fellowship - Khalil Haddad  
Antiochian Women - Susan Sweis  
Handmaids - Mansoura Khouri and Lina Haddad  
Humanitarian - Shireen Salman  
OCLife - Nancy Cannon  
Fishers of Men - John Eannace  
Athletics - Melad Qodsi  
Choir - Michael Rascia  
Chanters - Khaled Salman and Faris Samawi  
Webmaster - Sana Sweis

### Office Administrator

Katia Haddad  
administrator@stmaryoc.org

### Parish Administrator

Rachel Kari  
rkari@stmaryoc.org

### Church Hall Rental

Call the church office or email our Office Administrator

## December 25, 2013 The Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ



### Weekly Schedule of Services

Saturday: 5:30 p.m. -- Great Vespers

Sunday: 8:45 a.m. Matins -- 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. Matins -- 10:30 a.m. Bible Study  
(Confessions by Appointment)

Welcome to St. Mary Orthodox Church! 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. For more information, please see one of the ushers at the end of the service for a "Welcome Packet." May God bless you and give you many healthy years in His service.



# Clergy Christmas Message

To our Beloved Community of St. Mary,

## Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

On Christmas Eve, as we gather to celebrate the glorious Birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, we cannot help but reflect on the miraculous birth of our own St. Mary Church.

It was ten years ago around this time that we searched tirelessly for a home where we can give birth to our new church. Much like Mary and Joseph rejoiced when they were allowed to use a stable, so did we when St. Luke opened their home to us.

For the Holy Family, it was a matter of a few short years before their little child Jesus became the Savior of the World. As the Holy Church Fathers teach us, *God became man, so that man might become like god*. God saves us, so that in our own humble way, we can save the world.

We are privileged that the birth of our church shares much in common with the birth of our Savior. As joyous as we are to have celebrated ten years as a parish community, we – like Mary whose name we carry– must know in our hearts that our goals will be achieved only if we carry our cross. In order to achieve His goal and save the world, Jesus had to endure the kind of pain that we must be prepared to endure. As an infant, He watched agonizingly as fellow infants were murdered mercilessly by King Herod. As an adult He saw His best friends deny Him and betray Him to the enemy. But in the end, Christ's humble beginnings in a cold manger, led to the warmth of a glorious resurrection and eternal happiness. We've come so far, but we still have so much to look forward to.

As you exchange gifts and enjoy the warm embraces of your family, please think of those in need, and whenever possible, share with them the joy and love of family. This is a very difficult time of the year for those who have no one, or have recently lost a loved one. Give the gift of compassion.

On behalf of our families, thank you for your precious gift of love and prayers.

With love,

Fr. Mousa Haddad - Fr. Malek Rihani

MOST. REV. METROPOLITAN PHILIP



ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK AND  
METROPOLITAN OF ALL NORTH AMERICA

RT. REV. BISHOP ANTHONY

DIOCESE OF TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST

The Self-Ruled

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

The Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest

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December 25, 2013

Dear Beloved clergy, brothers and sisters in Christ:

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

As we thank God for giving us His Son at Christmas, I thought to remember what Jesus taught His disciples about little children. He said that the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven is a little child. That is true because He is a child; a child, here, at Christmas, and an eternal Child of His Father forever. He said children have angels who are close to the throne of the Father in heaven. Who is closer to God than His Child and Son?

Jesus' love for His Father showed itself with such pure openness and humility in the Gospels. He said He did nothing without the Father and could do nothing without Him. He did all that He did to please His Father and, then, said on the Cross, after having loved us and saved us with the same love the Father has for us: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46) He spread His arms out on the Cross like little ones open their arms to be picked up and held by their parents. He was going home.

For Jesus dependency didn't mean deficiency. He is forever the Image of His Father. Let us be forever dependent on God. For us to be ourselves we need God Himself. As we look at our Lord at Christmas He is a baby, a lamb who will take away the sins of the world. Because He is the Lamb He becomes the Shepherd. Let us know what He knows: we come from Someone to be in some place to go somewhere.

We must follow the Star of Bethlehem on our own journey in life. Let's not use this earthly time of preparation as our real destination or we will miss the celebration!

May the blessings of the Nativity be with His Eminence Metropolitan Philip, the bishops Holy Synod, and each of us,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bishop Anthony". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

+Bishop ANTHONY

Bishop of Toledo and the Midwest  
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

# Changes in the Liturgy

## First Antiphon

I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will speak of all Thy marvelous works. In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation, the works of the Lord are great.

*Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us.*

I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will speak of all Thy marvelous works. In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation, the works of the Lord are great.

*Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us.*

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

*Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us.*

## Second Antiphon

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; that delighteth greatly in His commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

*Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin, who sing to Thee, Alleluia!*

Glory and riches shall be in His house, and His righteousness endureth forever.

*Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin, who sing to Thee, Alleluia!*

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: He is gracious, full of compassion and righteous.

*Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin, 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.

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

## Third Antiphon

The Lord said unto my Lord: sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send Thee a rod of strength out of Zion. With Thee is dominion in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints.

*Thy Nativity O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn there from to worship thee, O Sun of justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest thou didst come, O Lord, glory to thee!*

# Changes in the Liturgy

## **Entrance Hymn**

Out of the womb, before the morning star, have I begotten Thee.  
The Lord hath sworn and will not change His mind: Thou art a  
priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.  
Save us, O Son of God, who wast born of a Virgin, who sing to  
Thee: Alleluia!

## **Troparion of the Nativity (Tone Four)**

Thy Nativity O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of  
knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn  
there from to worship thee, O Sun of justice, and to know that from  
the east of the Highest thou didst come, O Lord, glory to thee!

## **Kontakion of the Nativity (Tone Three)**

Today, the Virgin giveth birth to the transcendent in essence; the  
earth offereth the cave to the unapproachable One; the angels with  
the shepherds glorify Him; and the Magi with the star travel on their  
way; for a new child hath been born for our sakes; God before the  
ages.

## **Instead of the Trisagion Hymn, the following is sung (Tone One):**

“As many as have been Baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.  
Alleluia!”

## **Megalynarion for the Nativity (Tone One)**

*Magnify, O my soul, her who is more honorable and more exalted in  
glory than the heavenly hosts.*

I behold a strange and wonderful mystery: the cave a heaven, the  
Virgin a cherubic throne, and the manger a noble place in which  
hath lain Christ the uncontained God. Let us, therefore, praise and  
magnify Him.

## **Koinonikon for the Nativity (Tone Eight)**

The Lord hath sent redemption to his people. Alleluia!

## **Epistle for the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

*Let all the earth worship Thee, and sing to Thee!*

*Shout with joy to God, all the earth!*

### **The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians (4:4-7).**

Brethren, when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then also an heir of God through Christ.

## **Gospel of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

### **The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (2:1-12).**

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

# PARISH NEWS



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.*

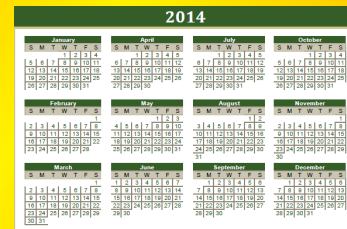
## *Holy Bread and Coffee Hour*

12/29: Aida Ziadat & Family

01/05: Nahil and Mervitt Tadros & Family

01/12: Ghaleb and Rita Sweis & Family

The 2014 Holy Bread & Coffee Hour sign-up sheet is available in the Church hall. Please take time to sign up for a Sunday. God bless!



Please make sure you pick up your 2014 St. Mary Calendar after Liturgy. One per family. God bless!



**Bulletin Blurb for Sunday  
December 22, 2013**

*The best Christmas gift  
is a wholesome, healthy child.*

*Help ensure that your holiday celebrations are safe and enjoyable. While the holiday season is a time for young people to meet up with old friends and to connect with family...Make Time To Talk. We ask parents to talk to your teen about the risks of underage drinking and drug use while encouraging him or her to spend quality time with both family and friends. Don't relax your rules just because it's the holiday season.*



## Epistle Reading

12/24: Nour Swais & Delia Haddad  
12/29: Mansoura Khouri & Rana Nino

## “Bible Verse of the Week”

“Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be Emmanuel, which means, God with us.”  
Matthew 1:23



St. Mary Orthodox Church

&

Fuheis American Association



Invite you to celebrate a community

# New Year's Party

Orland Chateau

14500 S La Grange Rd.

Orland Park, IL 60462

at 7:00pm

Music by: Faisal Al-Wazani & Nabil Nemeh

Tickets:

Adults - \$75

12yrs & younger - \$30



# St. Mary Orthodox Church

## 9th Annual Christmas High School Retreat

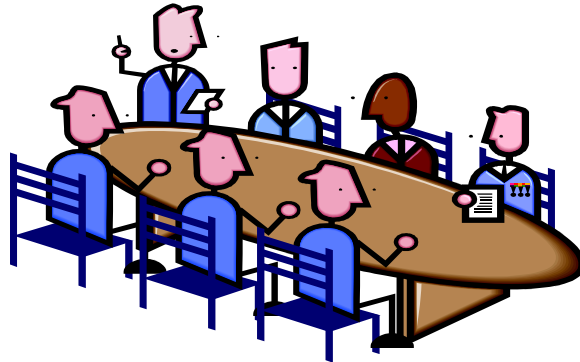
December 27 - December 29

**This annual retreat is an opportunity for you to build upon your Orthodox Christian faith and learn how to apply the teachings of Jesus Christ to your own life.**

**\$175 per teen; payment plans available.  
Please see Orieb Sweis to register or make  
your deposit. God bless!**



# **Annual General Assembly Meeting and Parish Council Nominations**

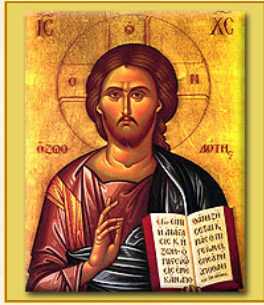


If you are interested in nominating yourself or another person for St. Mary's Parish Council, please let Fr. Mousa or Fadi Abu Manneh know by Friday, December 27th. Nominations will not be considered after that date.

Our Annual General Assembly Meeting will take place Sunday, January 12th immediately following the Divine Liturgy. Mark your calendars and make every effort to attend.

Please make sure your 2013 pledge is paid in full by Sunday, December 29th, so that you can participate in the General Assembly.

**Thanks and God bless!**



## Weekly Synaxarion



### **December 25th**

Today in the Holy Orthodox Church we celebrate the Nativity according to the flesh of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.

God Himself is born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea, the city of David. The creation had never seen a greater wonder. A cave became the dwelling of the King of the universe. On this same day, we commemorate the adoration of the Magi. Prostrating before the newborn Jesus, these princes of the nations prefigure the adoration of the Gentiles. Also on this day, we commemorate the shepherds who saw the Lord. Leaving their flocks behind, the shepherds come with haste to contemplate Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Thus entered the world He Whose coming was foretold by the prophets, and Who was born in the same manner in which it had been prophesied: of a Most-holy Virgin, in the town of Bethlehem, of the lineage of David according to the flesh, at the time when there was no king in Jerusalem of the lineage of Judah, but rather when a foreigner named Herod, who sought to kill the infant Messiah, was reigning. After many types and prefigurings, messengers and heralds, prophets and righteous men, wise men and kings, finally He appeared, the Lord of the world and King of kings, to perform the work of the salvation of mankind. To Him be glory, honor, and worship, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.