

# The Spirit of St. George

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church Phoenix, Arizona

Volume 9 Number 4

April 2002

## A Message from Father Chris . . .

**“John the baptizer** *appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.*” (Mark 1:4-5)

Sin is traditionally defined in the Orthodox Church as “missing the mark.” The example of shooting a bow and arrow at a bull’s-eye is sometimes referred to and sin is compared to shooting the arrow to the right or left of the target. While I think this example has some value, it is more proper to define sin as disobedience to the commandments of God. Think of sin in a very legalistic manner and you’ll be getting closer. Imagine a traffic signal: the law says that you may not drive through the red light but that you have to stop behind the white line. If you abide by this law then you are innocent of a traffic crime. However, if you disregard this law – for whatever reason – then you will be guilty of committing a traffic crime. If you are caught running a red light, then you can be punished with a ticket or a fine or even worse...traffic school!

The same holds true with God as the ultimate Law-Giver. In the beginning, *“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.’”* (Gen. 2:17) As long as Adam obeyed God’s one commandment, he was free to live in Paradise. But, as we all know, once Adam disobeyed God’s commandment he was forced out of the garden into the world where Death would now have dominion over him. Adam sinned against God by disobeying His commandment. And true to his Word, God punished Adam by expulsion from the garden and ultimately. (Gen. 2:17) It is clear from the very first instance that sin is equated with disobedience of God’s commandments.

So how then do we find our way back into that original state of Paradise? How can we redeem ourselves from this disobedience to the commandments? Well, our first realization must be that WE cannot do anything to redeem ourselves. Only God can conquer Death. And He did so in and through His Son our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Cross of Christ that we are now approaching is the means by which Jesus puts Death to death, hence the Paschal Troparion, *“Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down Death by death...”* Jesus takes on humanity –he becomes a human being without ceasing to be God – putting all the sinful ways to death on the Cross, that beautiful Friday some 2000 years ago. On the third day, we rejoice because He lifted up that dead body and made it new again. He cleansed humanity as only God could: He restored it to the way it was created, the way it was intended to be.

Now, for those of us who believe and *“have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”* (Gal. 3:27) We who *“have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father we too might walk in the newness of life.”* (Rom. 6:3-4) And furthermore, *“We know that our old self was crucified with him [in baptism] so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.”* (Rom 6:6)

The symbolism is clear in our baptismal ceremony when the child is clothed in a white robe signifying the newness of his or her soul, that newness which only God can bring! Our charge is to keep that baptismal robe white for the remainder of our lives. And if we can keep the robe of our soul clean, then on the Lord’s terrible Day, we shall find life in the Kingdom of God!

The problem is, and now we return to the Baptist’s message from above, which of us keeps our robe clean by not sinning? Which of us abides continually by the commandments of God thus showing ourselves to be truly free from sin? The answer is obvious: none of us. Hear the strong but astonishingly real words from the First Epistle of John: *“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”* (1John 1:8-9) How powerful are these words! How fearful if we are found to be deceiving ourselves.

But if we look closely, we can clearly see that the words of the Baptist also resound through 1 John. Hear verse 9 again: *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* If we **confess** our sins God will take them away. He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness (Which by the way is the definition of the state of sin. If one sins, he is unrighteous. The converse is also true if one abides by the commandments of God he is righteous. Cf. Deuteronomy 28) In the Sacrament of Confession, the penitent comes forward, before the icon of Christ and

confesses all his sins *to God*. This verbal action of putting forth all of our sins, allows us to totally give to God that which only He can take away. We bring our baptismal robe, which has become filthy through our sins and God completely heals and cleanses it. It's as if the Sacrament of Confession is Clorox bleach for the soul! In the most real sense, the way for us to be restored to that state of grace in the Garden, the way for us to keep our baptismal robe white, is to be cleansed and healed by God through the Sacrament of Confession.

Some may wonder why we cannot confess our sins in private during our daily prayers. I believe that this is wonderful and should definitely be done on a daily basis. However, we do not have the power to administer the sacrament to ourselves. Only the priest, through the grace of ordination, is permitted to deliver the healing power of God to those who repent. In other words, the true cleansing comes through the sacrament –which is a mystery –given only by God. The priest is charged to deliver that mystery through the pronouncement of the prayers of absolution.

Confessing our sins is an integral part of being prepared to receive the Lord when He comes again in glory. When we repent and confess our sins, God is true to His Word. He forgives us all of our transgressions and makes us new again. Great Lent is the perfect opportunity for us to make our confession so that when the Lord comes in glory on His Cross, we might be able to stand before Him, cleansed of our sins and with our baptismal robe white.

## Bishop JOSEPH'S Visitations



**April 1-8 St. Nicholas Church Spokane, WA & St. John the Baptist Church, Post Falls, ID**

**April 12-15 Church of the Annunciation, Calgary, Alberta, Canada**

**April 21 St. Andrew the First-Called, Riverside, CA**

**April 28 St. Nicholas Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA**

**April 30 St. Barnabas Church, Costa Mesa, CA**

### ~ The Ladies Corner ~

Blessings to all as we start our Lenten Journey

We are pleased to inform you that the Mediterranean Food Bazaar was a great success. This wonderful annual event attracted many people from around the valley the first weekend in March.

We'd like to thank everyone who took time preparing for the festival. This includes everyone who donated their extra time and were involved in the pastry and food preparation before as well as during the festival. The food was delicious and many people complimented your talents. Another big thank you goes out to all of our family and friends who donated generous prizes for the raffle.

Companies and people who donated prizes were David Ghiz at Paddock Pools, Abuelo's Mexican Embassy, Nora Sweis at KoFee Zone, Ganem Jewelers, Sarah Foster at the Phoenician and Wigwam Resorts, Gregory Kruger at Western Security Bank, The Karadsheh family at the Middle Eastern Bakery, Dr. Gerard Schneider at Phoenician Dentistry, Laila Khoury at Royal Jordanian Airlines, Wild Oats Market, The Pita House, The Law Offices of Michael Ziton, Dr. Jim Farha, Dr. Garth Gemar

& Natalia Wilson, Jimmy DeRienzo, The Saliba Family, and Wayne Abraham. Thank you to all, this could have not been done without you!

The next ladies meeting will be held on Thursday, April 4th in the fellowship hall. Hope to see all of our ladies there!

Ruby Rideout, Ladies Auxiliary Vice President

### **Bakeless Bake Sale** **To Benefit A.O.C.W.N.A. Project Mexico**

Simply donate what you would spend if you baked goodies at home for a bake sale. No turning on the oven and working -just donate-it's that simple, and we will be helping the orphans! This is a terrific and painless way to help, especially after all the hard baking for the Festival! Just fill out the form below and hand in with your donation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: \$20\_\_ \$15\_\_ \$10\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_\_

### Church Records

#### **Baptisms:**

**Bahige Abdallah February 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Parents: Gary & Zeina Abdallah**

**Anthony Ayache February 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Parents: Nicolas & Rona Ayache**

#### **Marriages:**

**Joseph & Nazaret Tekeste February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Joseph & Romy Marra March 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Darrin & Layla Saikley March 10<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Funerals:**

**Minnie Nasser February 20, 2002**

## Stewardship Pledged Members To-date

Rev. Fr. & Mrs. Christopher Salamy V. Rev. Fr. & Mrs. Christo Christoff V. Rev. Fr. and Mrs. Anthony Sola Deacon and Mrs. Anthony Blackwell Sub-Deacon and Mrs. Ron Abrahams Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Abdelnour Mr. and Mrs. Philip Abdoulah Ms. Jodi Abodeely Ms. Nadine Aboud Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Abraham Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Abraham Mr. and Mrs. Dean Abraham Mr. and Mrs. Michael Abukhader Ms. Chinnaz Ammari Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Assad Mr. William Assaly Ms. Jean Baxter Ms. Marian Beck Ms. Katrina Bitar Mr. and Mrs. James Bagues Ms. Rosalie Bousard Ms. Anna Bronnenkant Ms. Lynn Church Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Clair Mr. and Mrs. Jason Clark Ms. Annie Coury Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Dahlan Mr. and Mrs. James DeRienzo Mr. and Mrs. Anna Derrickson Mr. and Mrs. John Doumani Mr. and Mrs. Tomothy Doyle Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dungan Ms. Christine Elliott Mrs. Bernice Esahak Mr. and Mrs. David Ghiz Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Ghiz Dr. and Mrs. Jim Farha	Mr. and Mrs. Hani Farah Mr. and Mrs. Cornel Fitu Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Florence Mr. and Mrs. Robert Foster Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Freije Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Garrison Mr. and Mrs. Assad Gebran Ms. Hiyam Gharieb Ms. Sally Ghiz Mr. and Mrs. Dan Gray Ms. Helena Habib Ms. Fannie Habib Mr. Kenneth Haddad Mr. and Mrs. Aziz Haddad Mr. and Mrs. Taysir Haddad Mr. and Mrs. Albert Haddy Mr. and Mrs. Larry Haddy Mrs. Lillian Haddy Mr. Richard Haddy Mr. and Mrs. Fouad Hakimeh Mrs. Rhonda Hallal Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Hanna Ms. Nahla Harb Mr. and Mrs. Louis Hasbany Mr. and Mrs. Shafiq Hasou Ms. Aurelia Henry Mr. and Mrs. Shawn Hill Mr. and Mrs. George Homsey Mrs. Mae Homsey Mr. and Mrs. Adnan Horan Mr. and Mrs. Alan Horan Mr. and Mrs. W. Gary Hull Mr. and Mrs. Sammer Hweimel Mr. and Mrs. Adel Hweimel Mr. and Mrs. Buzz Iacovelli Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Kanaan Mrs. Mary Karadsheh	Mr. and Mrs. John Karadsheh Mr. Shadi Karraz Mr. and Mrs. Tony Karraz Mr. and Mrs. Jack Khoury Mr. Victor Khoury Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Khoury Mr. and Mrs. Banyout Khoury Ms. Evelyn Kosobud Mr. and Mrs. Cornel Lengyel-Leahu Mr. and Mrs. Sami Lorenzo Mr. and Mrs. Warren Love Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Mabbett Ms. Joan Manning Ms. Heather Mcleod & Mr. Adam Labbe Mr. and Mrs. Elias Mousa Dr. and Mrs. Jacob Musallem Mr. and Mrs. Michael Musallam Mr. and Mrs. Yousef Mushahwar Mr. and Mrs. Edward Naddour Mrs. Linda Nahat Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Nassar Ms. Fadiya Nassar Mrs. Doris Nasser Mr. and Mrs. Orlando Nassif Mr. and Mrs. Richard Nichols Mr. and Mrs. Victor Postoy Ms. Athena Potter Ms Maram Quomsieh Mr. and Mrs. William Quomsieh Ms. Margaret Raymond Mr. and Mrs. Micheal Rideout Ms. Barbara Risk Mr. and Mrs. Richard Saba Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Saigh Mr. and Mrs. Kassab Saigh	Mr. and Mrs. Andy Salem Mr. and Mrs. Kenny Salem Mr. and Mrs. Mechael Salem Mr. and Mrs. Robert Salem Mr. and Mrs. James Saliba Mr. and Mrs. John Saliba Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Majed Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Gus Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Yacub Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. John Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Jamal Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Hani Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Saliba Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Sam Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Samman Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Sultan Sayegh Mr. and Mrs. Fred Shaheen Mrs. Beverly Showah Ms. Shirley Snage Mrs. Teresa Sweilem Mr. and Mrs. Issa Sweilem Mrs. Nourhan Sweis Mr. and Mrs. Mike Taamneh Mr. and Mrs. Carl Tamuty Mr. Daniel Thomas Mrs. Neoma Tibshraeny Mrs. Yvonne Tibshraeny Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Toronto Mr. James Truscott Mrs. Kathleen Wagner Mrs. Larman & Natalia Wilson Mr. and Mrs. Shaker Yacoub Mr. Micheal Ziton Mr. and Mrs. John Zurikat
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**A special Thank You to all the St. George Church pledged members to date, for making possible our vision for the 2002 Stewardship Program.**

<b>STEWARDSHIP UPDATE</b>				
As of February 28 <sup>th</sup>	Monthly Actual	Monthly Budgeted	YTD Actual	YTD Budgeted
<b>Envelope/Pledges</b>	<b>\$ 21,138</b>	<b>\$ 15,000</b>	<b>\$ 43,127</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>
<b>Archdiocese Dues Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,385</b>	<b>\$ 3,906</b>	<b>\$ 2,771</b>

## April 2002 Weekly Servers

	April 7	April 14	April 21	April 28
<b>Epistle Reader</b>	Heb. 4:14-5:6 Suzanne Sayegh	Heb. 6:13-20 James Bagues	Heb. 9:11-14 Larry Haddy	Phil. 4:4-9 Scott Ferris
<b>Greeters</b>	O.J. & Jeanette Nassif	Philip & Connie Abdoulah	Ralph & Jeanette Clair	Ken & Lynda Haddad
<b>Ushers</b>	Irene Saigh Margaret Ann Raymond Suzanne Sayegh Farhat David Dale Belt Sam Nassif	Carrie Sayegh Lillian Macoule Salwa Nassar Ralph Clair Richard Nichols Mike Ziton	Michael Haddad Evelyn Kosobud Anna Bronnenkant Hani Sayegh Ray Toronto Richard Saba	Shadi Karraz Sally Ghiz Marion Saba George Freije Wayne Abraham Joe Macoule
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Simon Abrahams Drew Bronnenkant Chris Doumani Rick Khoury Rami Khoury	Philip Bolanos Jordan Gray Basil Dahlan Musa Sayegh Bryan Johnson	Andy Leahu Ronnie Sayegh Danny Sayegh Joseph Hasou Odeh Sayegh	Mathew Saliba Alex Saliba David Yates Joseph Sayegh Michael About-Rihani
<b>Hall Lock-up</b>	Mike Ziton	John Karadsheh	Sandy Hasbany	John Doumani
<b>Coffee Hour</b>	Haddad Family	Samira & Albert Kassisieh	Bassam & Abeer Khoury	Available

# Holy Week

(Please note ~ no confessions will be heard after Tuesday evening of Holy Week)

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>April 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Lazarus Saturday</b>
<i>The fourth day rising from the dead of St. Lazarus as the pledge of the universal resurrection of all men.</i>		
10:00 a.m.		Divine Liturgy
11:30-5 p.m.		Altar Boy Retreat
5:00 p.m.		Great Vespers
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>April 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
<i>The entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem before His voluntary death.</i>		
8:50 a.m.		Orthros
10:00 a.m.		Divine Liturgy
<i>No Sunday School ~ There will be a Procession immediately following Divine Liturgy</i>		
6:30 p.m.		Bride Groom Matins
<b>Monday</b>	<b>April 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Bridegroom Matins</b>
6:30 p.m.		Bride Groom Matins
<i>The commemoration of the noble Joseph of the Old Testament and the fig tree, which was cursed by the Lord. The procession of the icon of Christ as the bridegroom takes place.</i>		
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>April 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Bridegroom Matins</b>
6:30 p.m.		Bride Groom Matins
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>May 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Holy Unction</b>
<i>The Sacrament of Holy Oil will be administered ONLY TO THOSE Orthodox Christians who have had their confessions heard BEFOREHAND, which is also a preparation for Holy Thursday.</i>		
6:30 p.m.		Holy Unction Service
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>May 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Holy Thursday</b>
<i>It is customary for all PREPARED Orthodox Christians to receive the Eucharist on this day in commemoration of the Last Supper. We especially encourage parents to bring their children before going to school, if at all possible (excuses for school will be provided).</i>		
9:00 a.m.		Vespers Liturgy with washing of feet
6:30 p.m.		Twelve Passion Gospels
<i>Commemoration of the Passion of our Lord and the confession of the thief. The priest carry's the Holy Cross in remembrance of our Lord's voluntary suffering and journey to Golgatha.</i>		
<b>Friday</b>	<b>May 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Great and Holy Friday</b>
9:00 a.m.		Royal Hours
3:00 p.m.		Vespers with the taking down from the Cross
6:30 p.m.		Lamentations
<i>Commemoration of the entombment of the divine Body of our Lord and His descent into Hades. Procession of the Bier.</i>		
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>May 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Rush Procession/Divine Liturgy</b>
10:00 a.m.		Vespers Liturgy
<i>The commemoration of the Blessed Sabbath, the day which Christ rested from all His works and reposed in the tomb.</i>		
11:00 p.m.		Rush Procession (Hajme) with Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
<i>Commemoration of the Life-giving Resurrection of our Lord.</i>		
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>May 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Agape Vespers</b>
Noon		Agape Vespers
Easter Egg Hunt will follow Vesper Service		

# Flowers for Holy Friday and Pascha

If you would like to make a donation for flowers, please fill out below and return to the Church office before April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

For the health of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

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Office Hours 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Monday thru Friday

**The Rev. Fr. Christopher Salamy**

(602) 765-6069

## Church Services

Great Vespers Saturdays 5:00 p.m.

(check calendar for dates)

Sunday Orthros (Matins) 8:50 a.m.

Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Confession: Sundays 9:00-9:25 a.m.

or by appointment.

All articles for submission must be in to the office on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. If you do not have your article ready to hand in, it will not be included in that month's newsletter. Please call or send name and address changes to the church office.

On Saturday April 27<sup>th</sup>  
Junior Choir Debut during Divine Liturgy 10am.  
Holy Bread making for all Sunday School  
Girls following Divine Liturgy.