

The Spirit of St. George

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
4530 E. Gold Dust Ave., Phoenix, Arizona 85028-4221

Volume X Number 10 Monthly except July & August

December 2003

~ A Message from Fr. Chris...

For Orthodox Christians, Communion is the central focal point of life. Also known as the Eucharist, Communion makes Orthodox Christians what we are. Without it we can scarcely even call ourselves Orthodox. But what does this word “communion” mean? Is it just the “stuff” that the priest gives us from the chalice, or is it something much more than that?

The word “communion” is translated from the Greek word, *koinonia* (pronounced kee-no-nee-a). *Koinonia* is defined as, “fellowship, a close mutual relationship; participation, sharing in; partnership.” At some points in the New Testament the word is actually translated as “participation.” (cf 1 Cor. 11) So how does it take on such an impactful meaning for us? How do we make the jump from “communion” as participation into “Communion” as the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ uses the example of bread in the Gospel of John to make the link. As we all know, man must eat bread to survive. Bread is the lowest form of consumable food that will sustain the human body. In chapter 6, the scribes and Pharisees are taunting the Lord saying that if he really is the Son of God to do some magical sign. They reminded him that the Israelites were fed with bread from heaven during the forty years in the wilderness in the Book of Exodus. Jesus responds by stating that HE is the bread of life which comes down from heaven! Anyone who comes to Him to eat shall never hunger, and he who believes in Him shall never thirst. (Jn. 6:35) In other words, with Christ we are filled!

The Lord uses the example of bread to produce in our minds the image of “table.” The table is significant in the mind of every human being because around the table we gather together to find sustenance and fellowship. We eat food to maintain our bodies, and we interact and communicate with our family and friends to nurture our souls. Every culture in every generation knows the value of “table.” A home is incomplete without a table and no meal is a meal without one.

Thus, when we gather around the Lord’s table, He feeds us with this heavenly bread, which is ultimately His Body and Blood. We commune with the

Lord himself. We are –to reflect on our previous definition—“sharing in/participating in” his holy life. Hear his words from the Gospel, “He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.” (6:56) When we come to receive communion, we actually sit at the Lord’s table and partake of his life-giving Body and Blood. We actually are in communion with the Lord! It is as he says, “we are abiding in him and he in us.” But the metaphor extends further: *all* of us who sit at the same table of the Lord are in communion with one another. The fellowship that we share during our gathering around God’s holy table follows the same structure as the fellowship that we have at our family dinners in our homes. When we sit at our table at home as one family with the father of the house at the head of the table, we participate in the same meal. In fact, we may often even receive food from one dish. The gathering around this table together makes us *one family* in one mutually close and dependant relationship. The same holds true for those who gather around our mutual Father’s table. Because we all eat from the one same bread, whether in Phoenix, New York, Moscow, Beirut or Athens, we are all *one family* in Christ. It is because we share in the same “Communion” that we are actually in communion! This is how the Holy Eucharist can serve the two-fold purpose of first being the bread from heaven which sanctifies and sustains our lives, and secondly, the *koinonia* that makes us all into one Body in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Orthodox Liturgy testifies to all of this in the final priestly prayer before the Lord’s prayer is recited:

“Unto thee we commend our whole life and our hope, O Master who loves mankind; and we beseech thee, and pray thee, and supplicate thee: make us worthy to partake of the heavenly and terrible Mysteries of this sacred and spiritual table, with a pure conscience: unto remission of sins, unto forgiveness of transgressions, unto communion of the Holy Spirit, unto inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, unto boldness towards thee, and not unto judgment nor unto condemnation!”

REAC

Bishop JOSEPH's Visitations

December, 2003

7	St. Nicholas Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA	Patronal Feast Day
13 - 14	Holy Resurrection Church, Tucson, AZ	Episcopal Visit
20 - 21	St. Andrew Church, Riverside, CA	Episcopal Visit
22 - 29	All 3 Churches in Alaska	المسيح ولد ، فمجدوه ! Christmas – <i>Christ is Born!</i>



Church Records

Baptisms

Rachel, Fiona & Riley Sheriff ~
11/02/2003

Matthew Hall ~ 11/16/2003

Anthony Marwan Dahdal ~ 11/09/2003

Marriages

Brian & Janee Nichols ~ 10/25/2003

Mark & Caroline Aeed Southam ~ 11/08/2003

Ladies Auxiliary Notes

* Cookie Exchange and Secret-Sister-in-Christ revealed Wednesday December 10th in the Fellowship Hall at 7pm. All of our ladies at St. George Church are invited to attend! Everyone is asked to bring six-dozen home baked cookies or bars to share. If you don't wish to take home six-dozen, then you may bring just one-dozen to be served along with the coffee that evening. We will reveal our Secret-Sisters from the past year as well as draw new names for next year. Any of the women that would be interested in participating in this gift exchange are asked to attend. This is a great time to get to know your fellow Sisters-in-Christ!

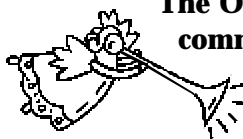
* Holiday Luncheon & Meeting will be on Saturday December 13th at noon at the Olive Garden Restaurant. Located on Cactus Road just east of Tatum Blvd. Please R.S.V.P. to Alisa Jones at (602) 788-4725. Bring a \$5 grab bag gift to exchange.

* Holiday Shopping – for those of you looking for holiday gift ideas, St. George Bookstore has a number of items available for consideration. See Evelyn at the bookstore in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday to see what lovely items she has for sale.

Parish Council Meeting

Monday, Dec 1st at 7 pm Office Conference Room

Collection for the IOCC in November was
\$2,209.00. Thank you – everyone!
Have you given your gift of love yet?
IOCC P.O. Box 630225 Baltimore, MD 21263-0225



The Order of St. Andrew the First Called committee will embark on a new outreach program. The committee's major focus is to bring joy and happiness into the

homes of our senior parish members. We would love to help decorate homes for the holidays, help with holiday shopping, and with any needs that a parish member may have around their home. If you, know of a parish member who would enjoy a visit, please contact the church office at 602 953-1921, Rima Iacovelli at 480 421-6486 or Rachel Sheriff at 602 301-9083.

Angels Needed!

If you would like to be an Angel, see Connie Abdoulah or Tammy Belt after church. All family members of St. George Church community may apply. All ages accepted. The only requirement: a generous heart and spirit! Perseverance helps, especially when searching for that special toy! Please look for the Angel Tree next week in the Narthex and help us to bring Christmas to the children of the Guadalupe area.



Stewardship Financial Update For Year End

Due to a computer failure, all year end figures will be posted in the Sunday bulletins and also will be updated for the Annual Parish Meeting booklets. Thank you for your understanding.

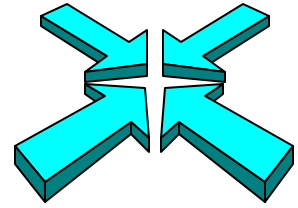
A reminder that all organization reports must be turned in by December 31st to be included into the Annual Meeting Booklet!

Parish Council Nominees Are Needed!

Are you interested in running for the Parish Council or would like to submit the name of a parish member in good standing with the Orthodox Church? There will be four openings to fill at the end of this year.

Contact one of the nominating committee members: John Karadsheh, Marion Saba, Issa Sweilem, Aziz Haddad or Fr. Christopher.

YOUTH CONNECTION



LIVE FROM THE CLASSROOM!

This year, in the first and second grade class, we are learning about Love. We are teaching the children about the importance of Love in our families, daily lives and the Church. We have not only had an opportunity to teach the children about love, but also learn about this topic by watching their interactions with one another, and hearing the many examples of how to treat one another with Love. The amazing thing about first and second grade class is their ability to learn complicated information, and not only repeat it weeks later, but also relate it to their personal lives. This year the class has decided to not only give a homeless child a present for Christmas, but also write them personal Christmas cards. This activity will be sure to show the children one of the many different levels of Love, which we as Orthodox Christians can show.

Your Sisters in Christ,

Allyson Salamy & Irene Saigh

WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

- **CHRISTMAS PROGRAM- Sunday, December 7th**
- **SOYO Winter Retreat @ Camp St. Nick's- December 12th -14th**
 - **The Hospitalers meet every other Sunday**
- **CHRISTMAS CAROLING! - Sunday, December 21st**

Pathways- every Tuesday night @ 6:30pm

Teen Bible Study- Every Wednesday night
6:30pm

ADVENT: A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND CORRECTION

**"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid."
-Proverbs 12:1**

I don't know many people who like to be corrected. It's not fun to be told that you are on the wrong path, let alone walking on a path that is not leading you towards God. But something that we should all keep in mind is that when someone is correcting you out of love, it is because their wish for you is to see things correctly... and do things correctly. Being obedient to the commandments of the Lord is, in a very real sense, allowing yourself to be corrected! The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us away from sin and death and gives us life everlasting! We should welcome this correction, especially if God uses someone who loves us to guide us back to Him.

PURIFICATION

Once there was a disciple of a renowned Greek philosopher who was handed an odd assignment. He was commanded by his Master to give money to everyone who insulted him, for a period of three years. Wanting very much to awaken, this student did exactly what he was told.

When this rather lengthy trial was over, the Master summoned the young man to his quarters and said to him: "Now you can go to Athens, for you are ready to learn wisdom."

Elated, the disciple set off for Athens. Just before he entered the great city, he saw a certain wise man sitting at the gate insulting everybody who came and went. Naturally, the moment this fellow saw the disciple he insulted him, too.

"Hey!" he cried out to the student, "How did you get to be so ugly and stupid? I have never before seen anyone as ridiculous looking as you."

But instead of taking offense, the disciple just burst out laughing.

"Why do you laugh when I insult you?" asked the wise man.

"Because," said the disciple, "for three whole years I have been paying for this kind of thing and now you give it to me for NOTHING!"

"Enter the city," said the wise man. "It is all yours."

--Desert Fathers

December 2003

Sunday

December 7

Epistle Reader	Eph. 4:1-7	Michael Haddad
Greeters		Tony & Bonnie Karraz
Ushers	Mariam Hasou, Jennifer Saigh, Nicole Doumani, Jim Bogues, Bruce Florence, Louis Hasbany	
Altar Servers	Mathew Saliba, Jared Blackwell, Freddy Dahdal, Gus Sahawneh, Joseph Sayegh	
Hall Lock-up		Briggette DeRienzo
Coffee Hour		Phil & Connie Abdoulah, Marybeth & John Saliba
Stewardship Table		

Sunday

December 14

Epistle Reader	Col. 5:4-11	Tess Bronnenkant
Greeters		Maram & Eva Quomsieh
Ushers	Rachel Abrahams, Evelyn Kosobud, Anna Bronnenkant, James Saliba, Jr. George Maloley, Joe Abraham	
Altar Servers	Chris Doumani, Brian Johnson, Anthony Sahawneh, Butros Sayegh, James Sayegh, Alexander Thomas	
Hall Lock-up		Issa Sweilem
Coffee Hour		Issa & Jennie Sweilem
Stewardship Table		

Sunday

December 21

Epistle Reader	Hebrews 11:9-10; 17:23, 32-40	Zubeida Horan
Greeters		Suzanne & Layla Sayegh
Ushers	Krystal Saigh, Sally Ghiz, Marion Saba, David Ghiz, Sami Lorenzo, Tony Karraz	
Altar Servers	Nick Kalinichenko, Rick Khoury, Alex Saliba, Abanoob Sayegh, Odeh Sayegh	
Hall Lock-up		Aziz Haddad
Coffee Hour		John & Jennifer Zuraikat
Stewardship Table		

Sunday

December 24th Evening Divine Liturgy of the Nativity

Epistle Reader	Galatians 4:4-7	Scott Ferris, Najla Saigh
Greeters		Hani & Amal Farah
Ushers	Amanda Haddad, Salwa Nassar, Irene Saigh, Dale Belt, Sam Nassif, Ralph Clair	
Altar Servers	Nick Kalinichenko, Michael Aboud-Rihani, Joseph Hasou, Chris Doumani, Simon Abrahams, Odeh Sayegh	

Sunday

December 28

Epistle Reader	Galatians 1:11-19	Larry Haddy
Greeters		Aziz & Samar Haddad
Ushers	Eva Quomsieh, Margaret Ann Raymond, Suzanne Sayegh, Richard Nichols, Mike Ziton	
Altar Servers	Joseph Hasou, Michael Aboud-Rihani, Ramy Khoury	
Hall Lock-up		Ralph Clair
Coffee Hour		Sayegh Memorial
Stewardship Table		

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

St. John the Divine Fellowship

~ Christmas Party Saturday, December 6th ~

**The Fellowship would love to share the Holiday Joy with you
at the Annual Christmas Dinner**



It will be held at the Scottsdale Athletic Club. Hors D'oeuvres will be served at 6:30 pm with dinner to follow. You will have a choice of Eggplant Parmigiana or Tilapia Fish Fillet complete with dessert and beverage. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday after Liturgy ~ \$30.00 per person. Have a Blessed Christmas!

December

	1 Parish Council Meeting 7pm	2 PATHWAYS Bible Study 6:30pm	3 TEEN Bible Study 6:30pm	4 9am Divine Liturgy Saint John of Damascus & St. Barbara	5 St. George Rummage Sale ? 7am to 1pm	6 Rummage Sale 7am to 1pm Great Vespers 5pm Fellowship Dinner 6pm
7 8:50 Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy No Sunday School Nativity Prog.	8	9 PATHWAYS Bible Study 6:30pm	10 Ladies Cookie Exchg Secret Sisters 7pm TEEN Bible Study 6:30pm	11	12 SOYO WINTER RETREAT?	13 No Great Vespers SOYO WINTER RETREAT?
14 8:50 Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Sunday School 11am RETREAT	15	16 PATHWAYS Bible Study 6:30pm	17 TEEN Bible Study 6:30pm	18	19	20 No Vespers Young Adult Trip to Saint Anthony Monastery
21 8:50 Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Sunday School 11am Christmas Caroling	22	23 Bible Study 6:30pm	24 Christmas Eve Matins 7pm Christmas Liturgy 8pm <i>Christ is Born Glorify Him!</i>	25 <i>Merry Christmas</i>	26	27 No Great Vespers
28 8:50 Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Sunday School 11am	29	30	31 <i>Happy New Year!</i> 			

Official Notice of Annual Parish Meeting January 25, 2004

Pursuant to the St. George Church Constitution, Article 8 Section 3, the Annual Parish Meeting will be held January 25, 2004 following Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. We encourage everyone to attend this very important meeting so we can all be informed on what is happening with our church.

According to The St. George Church By-laws, in order to participate and vote at this meeting, the following requirements must be met:

- ✦ *Signed Declaration of membership (Pledge Card) indicating that you desire to be a voting member of St. George Church*
- ✦ *Commit to support the Church financially by signing a pledge card*
- ✦ *Be current with your financial pledge on file and your Archdiocese Dues PRIOR TO THE START of the Annual Meeting.*

It is important that each Parishioner know his or her voting status before the meeting. Please be reminded of the following:

On Sunday, January 4th & 11th the parish Council Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer along with a Stewardship Committee member will have a table set up in the Fellowship Hall where you can check on your pledge status as it is noted on the record books. There is much opportunity for growth and involvement here at St. George Antiochian Orthodox church and with everyone's participation we have a chance to be the best we can be.

Christmas Flowers



If you would like to make a donation for memorial Poinsettias to decorate the church on Christmas Eve, Please complete the following and give to Evelyn Kosobud at the bookstore or mail into the church office:

St. George Church Christmas Flowers

4530 E. Gold Dust Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85028

Please make all donation checks separate & earmarked for flowers. Thank you

Deadline will be Friday, December 19th

Your Name _____

For the health of _____

For the memory of _____

Donation: \$20 _____ \$10 _____ \$5 _____



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
4530 E. Gold Dust Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85028-4221

Office: (602) 953-1921 Fax: (602) 953-2460
E-mail: Abounachris@aol.com

Office Hours 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Monday – Friday

The Rev. Fr. Christopher Salamy
(602) 765-6069

Church Services

Sat. Great Vespers	5:00 p.m.
Sun. Matins	8:50 a.m.
Sun. Divine Liturgy	10:00 a.m.
Sunday School	11:00 a.m.
Evening Feast Days	6:30 p.m.

Confessions are heard the following times, or
by making an appointment with Fr. Christopher:
Sunday 9:00-9:25 a.m.

Parishioners are encouraged to submit articles for consideration.

Matins 7pm ~ Divine Liturgy 8 pm



Wed – December 24th
The Nativity ~ Christ is Born!

Please note the deadline for submitting an article is now the 10th of each month for the next month's issue.