

# THE SPIRIT OF ST. GEORGE

## A newsletter of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

*A Parish of the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West*

4530 E. Gold Dust Avenue

Phoenix, Arizona 85028-4221

The Spirit of St. George

Volume XII, Number 10

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December 2005 Issue

### *Why Come to Church?*

Every Orthodox Christian is duty-bound to join at specified times in the public worship of God, especially on the Lord's Day (Sunday). We attend the celebration of the Divine Liturgy to give to Almighty God the adoration, praise, and thanksgiving which is His due. Some people who do not "feel the need" of the spiritual help that can come to them through the Church services, conclude that it is right for them to stay away, excusing their absence from public worship on the grounds that they "get nothing out of it." But worship is a *giving* of ourselves to God, rather than a *getting* something from Him; it is a sacred duty, not merely something that we do to fulfill our own need. It is, of course, true that we do secure real help from God when first we have drawn near to Him; but the honoring of God is the primary thing, our own satisfaction is secondary. For Orthodox Christian, worship is only complete when we join ourselves with the sacramental offering of Our Lord in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Our motto ought to be, "The Lord's own service, on the Lord's Day."

The truth that the Liturgy contains is simply astounding. The act which expresses that truth is astoundingly simple. It is astounding because it announces that God came to earth

and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and dwelt among us, and suffered and died for our sins, and rose again from the dead to restore to us everlasting life, and ascended into Heaven to prepare a place for us. But the supremely astounding climax in the Liturgy are the moments when God who did all this appears in person through His Word and through His Word become flesh, the Holy Eucharist, and offers Himself as sustenance for our souls.

The Liturgy is astoundingly simple. So simple that it shows forth in one act things which if they should be written every one, even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. So simple that old men and children, young men and young women, the educated and uneducated alike may hear each in the language of their own hearts, the wonderful works of God, and see with their own eyes the mighty things which have come to pass.

Besides going to Church to honor God, we go in order to help ourselves. It is difficult to make one coal burn alone, but together with other coals it burns readily. Who can resist the spirit of Christmas? It gets into the

*(Continued on page 2)*

atmosphere. Even Scrooge capitulated. And so it is with the spirit of corporate worship. It has been said that ordinary people at all levels help each other to be a little more supernatural than each could have been alone. This is another way of saying what Christ said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them."

When the entire world is mixed and muddled and distracted, and willful and wanton and soiled, and mad and sad and wistful, the Liturgy is the massive miracle of truth and light and joy and hope and comfort and peace and sanity and stability, one thing on earth that shall not pass away.



### *New Faces - Welcome!*

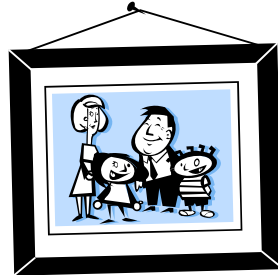
Sami Jallad moved to Phoenix in March of 2005 from Boulder, Colorado where he was born, raised and educated. Although Sami is new to St. George, he is definitely not new to the Antiochian Orthodox Church, as he was (for many years), an Altar Boy, a Parish Council member, and the bartender at all the parties at St. Elias Antiochian Church, in Westminster, Colorado. He received his BS in Finance and Accounting from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and his MBA from University of Colorado at Denver. His first job was with Ralston Purina as an Accounting Manager. After five years with Pepsi, in Denver, Colorado, he was promoted to Senior Finance Manager in Phoenix. Sami is living in central Phoenix, and enjoying the weather, St. George, and the Tarneeb.

### *Festival 2006 News*

Although the Festival is months away, your committee chairpersons are hard at work in preparation. Please do not miss this opportunity to join your St. George family as we cook and bake and build and rake to make ready for the Festival. The fellowship created by working together is a priceless gift. It is not too early to think about the marketing of our largest parish event. The publicity committee for our 2006 Festival is looking for some help from the parish. February 1st we will have available window posters which will be approximately 11"x17" in size. We are now gathering a list of parishioners who will display our poster. If you have or work at a business that will allow the display of such a poster, please let us know who you are. If you have a friend or neighbor who might be willing to display our poster, please convey that to us also. John Doumani, Elias Mousa and Stephanie Haddy are waiting for your calls!



# THE TEN MOST WANTED PEOPLE IN CHURCH



1. The person who puts God's business above any other business.
2. The person who brings their children to Church rather than sending them.
3. The person who is willing to be the right example to every child they meet.
4. The person who thinks more of their Sunday worship than their Sunday sleep.
5. The person who measures their giving by what they have left, rather than by the amount they give.
6. The person who goes to Church for Christ's sake rather than for themselves or for someone else.
7. The person who has a willing mind rather than a brilliant mind.
8. The person who has a passion to help rather than a passion to be helped.
9. The person who can see their own faults before they see the faults of others.
10. The person who is more concerned about winning honor in Heaven than they are about winning worldly honor.

## Live from the Classroom

### GRADES 5 & 6

This year, the students are studying the *Parables of Our Lord*. First the Parable is read from the Bible, then we turn to the textbook where Jesus' teachings are applied to life today. This is followed by an open discussion as to what the children can do to live their lives according to these lessons. The format is an excellent guide for their behavior and Christian conduct.

We have also been encouraging the students to gear their minds towards anything having to do with Orthodoxy which is how we end the class. They have been asking some extremely thought provoking questions. Often times, they even stump their teachers and we have to research the answers for them. It is a great joy to witness their inquisitive minds and their genuine interest in the Holy Orthodox Faith.

In His Service,  
Caraline Saigh - Yvonne Vranes

## The Surprising Christmas Pageant

St. George Sunday School proudly  
presents

### *The Surprising Christmas Pageant*

Please join us on Sunday Evening  
December 4th at 6:00 PM for the  
Nativity Program.

Refreshments will be served.

## MOM's Group Missions of Orthodox Mom's

We are a newly developing group looking for Mom's to join us on a monthly basis. We are about

- Prayer & fellowship
- Spiritual teaching
- Our children spending time together
- Crafts
- Fund-raising
- Book group

We meet once a month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday from 10 to 12 pm. Our next meeting is on Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. We provide babysitting and snack for the children.

Please join us!

If you have any questions or would like to RSVP, please contact the Church Office.



## Church Remodel Update

To date, the woodcarving and iconography are on schedule and should arrive at almost the same time. The actual construction within the sanctuary, originally scheduled for February 1, 2006, may be moved up to early to mid-January. This will be done because there is a small, but real, possibility that the church will be ready by Pascha! What a beautiful time to celebrate our first service after the renovations. As mentioned at the August meeting, Liturgy will be held in the Fellowship Hall and will not affect any Hall Rentals.

Drawings for the choir loft extension have been completed by the architect and structural/electrical engineer and city permits are being obtained. The loft will be extended farther forward into the nave and new staircases will be installed for easier access. Acoustical engineers are being sought to examine the possibility of sound panels to better reflect sound into the nave of the church.

Marble or granite tiling will replace the carpeting on the solea and within the sanctuary. Acoustical engineer will determine if the effect of marble on the solea will disturb the acoustics in the church. If the impact on the sound is negative or too "live," carpeting will be laid instead. The tiling will match the marble on the Narthex entry and the ushers' tables.

And the most exciting news is the addition of a permanent, stationary baptismal font! A new baptismal font will be permanently stationed on the front right side of the church, just below the chanters' stand. Plumbing will be run from the current location under the solea to the font to fill and drain directly into the ground. The font will be octagonal and carved in the same manner as the iconostasion and altar table. A marble top will be affixed to protect the wood from water and the bowl will be made from stainless steel. One pew on the front right side of the church will be removed to enable access from the outer isle. The new font will be large enough to baptize a full-grown adult.

Lastly, St. George will need to acquire a U.S. Customs broker to handle the transition of the container into the country. A broker has been selected with minimal cost. Kavroulakis Co. is handling shipping directly to the Church.

Below are some photos of the iconostasion being carved, as well as the new Baptismal Font.



## Notice of Annual Meeting December, 2005

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Pursuant to the St. George Church Constitution Article 8, Section 3, the Annual Parish General Assembly Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 29, 2006 in the Fellowship Hall immediately following Divine Liturgy. It is important that we proceed directly to the Hall following Liturgy so that we can start on time.

In accordance with the By-Laws of St. George, you must be a member in good standing to participate and vote at this meeting. The following requirements must be met:

- You must have signed a pledge card for 2005 showing your financial commitment.
- Your financial pledge and your Archdiocese dues must be paid in full prior to January 29, 2006. Please note that no monies will be accepted for your 2005 obligation on January 29, 2006.

If, for any reason, you have any question(s) regarding your financial obligation, feel free to contact Joe Macoule, Treasurer of the Parish Council, to verify where you stand, according to our records, for the year ending 2005.

Packets containing minutes from last year's General Assembly and committee reports for 2005 will be made available for pick up in the Hall on Sunday, January 22, 2006. Please be sure to pick up your packet and bring it with you to the meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

It is imperative that as a pledged voting member you attend this Annual Meeting. In addition, included at the meeting will be an update of the Church renovations.

Yours in Christ,

Marion Saba  
Parish Council President

## THE LADIES AUXILIARY

With our Fashion Show and our Holiday for the Homeless projects behind us, the Ladies Auxiliary is ready for the Christmas holiday. Before I go any further, I want to take this opportunity to thank not only those individuals who provided assistance to make our Fashion Show Luncheon a success but more specifically, to the models who went beyond the scope by taking the time to go to Draper's & Damon's to select outfits and get fitted and then later demonstrate their talents on the stage. I am referring specifically to Niki Abraham, Rachel Abrahams, Rosie Bousard, Jeannette Clair, Nesrin Karraz, Heather McLeod, Michele Mellenbrook, Sherry Nichols, Eva Quomsieh, Marion Saba, Hanna Saigh, Jennifer Saigh, and Rachel Sheriff. Many thanks to each of you for a great job done.

Each December the Ladies Auxiliary hosts the Cookie Exchange and Secret Sister get-together. This year, we are going to host this event on Wednesday, December 7 at 6:30 PM at the home of Richard and Marion Saba. It is a time to identify yourself to your Secret Sister. But you need not be a Secret Sister to join us for a fun evening. To participate in the cookie exchange, bring along 5 dozen cookies and one dozen to share. If you don't want to take cookies home, simply bring one dozen cookies to share. The Saba family resides at 8010 Via De Lago in Scottsdale. To get to their home go to Scottsdale and McCormick Parkway. Go east and look for the Chart House Restaurant on the right-hand side of McCormick Parkway. On the opposite side of the street is Northern. Turn left on Northern and go to Via de Lago. Their house is located on the corner of Northern and Via de Lago.

Please R.S.V.P. by calling me at (480) 380-0896 if you will be joining us. We look forward to seeing you then.

In the meantime, on behalf of the Ladies Auxiliary we wish each and every one of you a healthy and happy Christmas season and a wonderful New Year. At this time I want to share a poem by Christina Rossetti which illustrates what the holiday season is about.

*Love came down at Christmas, Love all Lovely, Love  
Divine; Love was born at Christmas; Star and angels  
gave the sign.*

Lillian Macoule  
President

## **Children in Church**

### *Principles for Forming Your Child in Orthodox Worship By Fr. Paul O'Callaghan*

#### **Children Belong in Church**

This is the first and most basic principle from which every other principle flows. Many churches isolate children from the "adult" worship service, and many Americans have come to accept this as normal. It is not. Orthodox congregations function as families; from the very old to the very young, we gather as one body when we worship our God.

#### **Children Not Formed in Worship Will Most Often Not Be Faithful Orthodox**

Many parents believe that their babies and small children should not attend church because they squirm, wiggle, make noise, and get bored. They feel that their children can begin attending services when they are older, say 7 or 8 years old. This is a huge mistake with grave spiritual consequences. If children are not formed in worship from the earliest age, they are never likely to get used to it. Are 8 year olds less bored in worship than 1 year olds? of course not! But the 8 year old who has been attending liturgy faithfully from babyhood is going to be far less bored than the 8 year old who has never gotten used to it.

#### **Children School Without Liturgy is a Waste of Time**

I should have capitalized, bolded, underscored, and emphasized the words "waste of time." It is a typical error of the modern American/Western way of thinking to consider Christianity more as the education of the mind than a way of life. Even Orthodox Christians have been corrupted by this false mentality. it reduces the faith to

information to be processed. Of course, there is much that one must learn to have an intelligent grasp of the faith. Yet children especially learn not just by concepts, but by assimilating the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of Orthodox worship. They are formed in the faith as much by eating memorial wheat as by learning about the Ecumenical Councils. Children need to be acclimated to worship from their earliest days if they are ever going to be devoted to it. Do NOT bring your children to Church School and then take them home before Liturgy!

#### **You Must Discipline Your children in church**

Parents today often bring a wide array of snacks, candy, gum, toys, and other things to keep their children entertained in church. It is often believed that children are incapable of paying attention to the service for any length of time, so they must be kept distracted with things they enjoy. Some parents believe that disciplining their children in church will make the liturgy a negative experience for them and then they will learn to hate it.

But consider your own parents and grandparents. If you are an adult over 35 years old, ask yourself, "Did my parents bring snacks and toys to keep me entertained in church?" I will venture to guess that the answer is "no." What did our parents do? If we squiggled too much, we were met by a stern gaze and possibly even pinched. if we started getting noisy, we were usually marched out of the sanctuary and given a firm reprimand. Did we end up hating the Church? Of course not. We were treated like the children we were - our parents recognized we needed to be trained to be attentive in worship and they were not afraid to do it. Needless to say, they were not possessed by the notion that children must always be pleased and entertained.

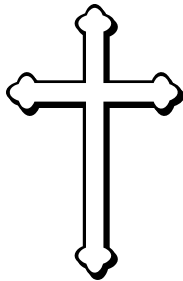
#### **Be Considerate and Use Common Sense**

(Continued from page 8)

Having said all that, small children are not little adults and shouldn't be expected to believe as such. They are going to move about a certain amount. Babies and very small children are going to make some noise. Parents need to be sensitive to when their children are becoming a distraction to others. If they are crying loudly, they need to be taken into the cry room for a break. If they are getting too rambunctious and won't settle down, they need to be taken out and calmed. Running up and down the pews, jumping round, shouting and screaming are unacceptable behaviors. But some wiggling, chattering, and other happy noises are to be expected from small children and ought to be tolerated by others in the pew.

### **Conclusion**

There are two errors that negatively impact the situation of children in Orthodox worship. The first is a desire to have an antiseptically perfect environment for adults to pray and spiritually contemplate, and thus to exclude children. This is simply not Orthodox. As mentioned above, an Orthodox congregation is a family and everybody is included in worship. The second error is to believe that children should be allowed to run rampant during services because it is somehow wrong to discipline them. This turns worship into a nightmarish circus experience. Let us avoid either pitfall by seeking to carefully implement the principles outlined above.



## **Bishop JOSEPH'S Visitations**

December 4, 2005

St. Nicholas Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA  
*Patronal Feast Day*

December 10-11, 2005

Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Ben Lomond, CA  
*Episcopal Visits*

December 22-28, 2005

St. John the Evangelist Cathedral,  
Eagle River, AK; St. Herman Mission,  
Wasilla, AK;  
All Saints of America Mission, Homer, AK  
*Holy Nativity of our Lord*

*Christ is born! Glorify Him!*

**Baptisms:**

المسيح ولد ، فمجده !

## **Church's Records**

Juliana Rose Ziton ~ November 5, 2005

Parents: Michael & Feirouz Ziton

Marlo Jane Catherine Southam ~ November 5, 2005

Parents: Mark & Caroline Southam

Jacob John Zuraikat ~ November 6, 2005

Parents: Husam & Jennifer Zuraikat

**Marriages:**

David Solheim & Alisha Switzer ~  
November 4, 2005

**Funerals:**

Aurelia M. Henry ~ October 7, 2005

Cornelia Hanna ~ November 15, 2005

## December 2005 Servers

### Sunday December 4

Epistle Reader	Irene Saigh
Greeters	Ralph & Jeanette Clair
Ushers	Tess Bronnenkant, Suzanne Sayegh, Salwa Nassar, Mike Ziton, Ray Toronto, Richard Saba
Altar Servers	Chris Doumani, Brian Johnson, Anthony Sahawneh, Butros Sayegh, James Sayegh Alexander Thomas
Hall Lock-up	Khalil Saigh
Coffee Hour	Open

### Sunday December 11

Epistle Reader	Becky Abrahams
Greeters	Jim Bagues, Elia Naijm
Ushers	Zubeida Horan, Irene Saigh, Sarah Foster, Hani Farah, Aziz Haddad, Majed Sayegh
Altar Servers	Rick Khoury, Alex Saliba Abanoob Sayegh, Odeh Sayegh, Gergey Mousa, Stephen Skuba
Hall Lock-up	John Doumani
Coffee Hour	Connie Abdoulah & Marybeth Saliba

### Sunday December 18

### The Order of St. Ignatius Acknowledged This Sunday

Epistle Reader	Richard Nichols, Salwa Nassar
Greeters	Eugene & Donna Kanaan
Ushers from the Order of St. Ignatius	Jim Cohlmiya, John Doumani, Sarah Foster, George Freije, Sally Ghiz, Daivd Ghiz, Tony & Bonnie Karraz, John Karadsheh, Mary Karadsheh, Bonnie Khoury
Altar Servers	Joseph Hasou, Joseph Salem, Ramy Khoury, Issa Sayegh, Ronnie Sayegh, Anthony Bitar
Hall Lock-up	Elias Mousa
Coffee Hour	Jim & Jumana Hadeed

### Saturday December 24<sup>th</sup>

### Evening of the Nativity of Jesus Christ

Epistle Reader	Anna Bronnenkant
Greeters	Elias & Lama Mousa
Ushers	Megan Doumani, Natascha Karadsheh, Mary Karadsheh, Bob Foster, Jamal Sayegh, Jim Bagues
Altar Servers	Mathew Saliba, Jared Blackwell, Chris Doumani, Gus Sahawneh, Gergey Mousa
Hall Lock-up	Louis Hasbany

## December 2005 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Ladies Auxiliary Mtg 11:30am Parish Council Mtg 6:30pm	2	3  Great Vespers 5pm
4 Orthros 8:50am Divine Liturgy 10am Sun School 11am <b>SS Christmas Pageant</b>	5	6 PATHWAYS Adult Bible Study 6:30pm	7 Teen Bible Study 6:30pm  <b>Introduction to Orthodoxy 6:30pm</b>	8	9  <b>SOYO Retreat @ Camp St. Nicholas</b>	10  <b>SOYO Retreat @ Camp St. Nicholas through Sunday</b>
11 Orthros 8:50am Div Lit 10am Sun Schl 11am <b>Fellowship Christmas Party @ Caleo</b>	12	13 PATHWAYS Adult Bible Study 6:30pm  <b>MOM's Mtg @ Sandy Khoury's Home 11am</b>	14  Teen Bible Study 6:30pm	15	16 <b>SOYO Christmas Party???</b>	17  Great Vespers 5pm
18 Orthros 8:50am Divine Lit. 10am Sun School 11am <b>Hospitalers SOYO Christmas Caroling</b>	19	20 PATHWAYS Adult Bible Study 6:30pm	21 Teen Bible Study 6:30pm	22	23 <b>Royal Hours 10am</b>	24 <b>Nativity of Christ Vespers 3pm</b>  Orthros 10:30pm  Divine Liturgy 11:30pm
25 <i>Christ is Born - Glorify Him!</i>	26	27  College Conference>	28  Conference	29  Conference	30  Conference	31 <b>Fellowship New Year's Eve Celebration</b>

Visit our website:  
[www.stgeorgeaz.org](http://www.stgeorgeaz.org)

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Office Hours 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday – Friday

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

Church Services	
Saturdays Great Vespers	5:00 pm
Sun. Matins	8:50 am
Sun. Divine Liturgy	10:00 am
Sunday School	After Communion
Evening Feast Days	6:30 pm

Confessions are heard the following times, or by making an appointment with Fr. Christopher:  
Saturdays 4:30-5 pm Sundays 9:00-9:25 am

Parishioners are encouraged to submit articles for consideration.

Please note the deadline for submitting articles for approval is the 10th of each month before issue date.

