
THE SPIRIT OF ST. GEORGE

A newsletter of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America & of the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

4530 E. Gold Dust Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85028-4221

The Spirit of St. George
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Lenten Discipline

by Mary Pier (Mar. '01)
www.antiochian.org

“Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector...” Every time this passage of Luke’s Gospel is read, a sudden wave of awareness comes over me. Zacchaeus Sunday is the first of the five Lenten preparatory Sundays. At this time, there is only one thought going through my mind: there are only five weeks left till the official start of Lent. Then my survival instincts kick in. I stock up on “Icy Hot” and Neosporin, for all of the aches, pains, and rug burns that come from prostrations. For the next five weeks, I am a regular customer at all the fast food restaurants in the York County area, eating as many burgers and chicken nuggets as I can before the start of Lent. I’m sure that all of you have had similar experiences. Just as we all have our

preparations before Lent, there also preparations during the season of Lent that will ready us for the Resurrection of the Lord.

Lent is a preparation for the Resurrection of Christ resting on a tripod of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. In Lent, we are called to take a step back from the everyday bustle of our lives and concentrate on Christ again. It’s a renewal period, a time to start over, and focus on being members of the body of Christ - instead of the world. The three elements of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are instituted –not to make our lives miserable – but to help us achieve our goal of growing closer to God in the Lenten Season.

Fasting is the most active of the three that affects us during Lent. We are asked to give up all or a combination of the

following items: meat, dairy products, wine, and oil. These strict guidelines are not for everyone. Most of the time we only focus on abstaining from meat. However, we should not focus too much on what we give up. The reasoning behind fasting is not just about abstaining from some foods. Fasting teaches us to discipline and control our body’s wants and desires. We are then supposed to use this control to focus on abstaining from sin, which brings us closer to God. “Therefore, also now, saith the Lord, turn ye to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord.” (Joel 2: 12-13) This passage emphasizes the importance for fasting to be accompanied with the desire to turn from

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sin. Fasting is also used to bring God into our lives more often. Every time we make the decision to order a puny Garden Salad over a Bacon Double Cheeseburger (extra cheese), God enters our lives. When deciding between the two meals, we remember that the reason we choose the salad is because we love God, and want to grow closer to Him.

The element of prayer is a silent element of Lenten preparation. A rough definition of prayer is "a conversation with God." If the purpose of Lent is to draw closer to God, then talking to Him more often is an excellent way to establish a greater relationship with Him. Oftentimes, we find ourselves just drifting through life with no direction. Monday through Saturday we are overwhelmed with work, school, and friends. Our busy schedules rarely allow us any time to think, let alone pray. God may only appear once out of the entire week, on Sunday morning when we are half-asleep and exhausted from Saturday night's excursions. Lent offers more opportunities for us to break from this monotonous routine, by attending Lenten services during the week and increasing our own personal prayer. By taking five or ten more minutes out of our day to pray, we are refocusing our lives five or ten minutes more on things concerning God, instead of the world.

The last element of Lent is almsgiving. Like fasting, almsgiving is another way that we discipline ourselves. We are called to move away from temptations and distractions that lead us to sin. Money is one of the greatest distractions we know. "For if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell." (*Matthew 5:30*) Also when we are charitable and are selfless in our giving to help our brothers and sisters who are in need, we come a little bit closer to understanding the

sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross for our sins.

These guidelines are instituted for our benefit to draw closer to God. We are not, however, supposed to parade our good deeds before men. God is the only one who needs to know that we are fasting, praying, and giving alms. Instructions on how to fast, pray, and give alms are found in chapter six of Matthew's Gospel. When fasting, "Do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to me to be fasting." Instead, "anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting." When praying, do not "pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that [you] may be seen by men." Instead, "Go into your room, and when you have shut the door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly." When giving alms, "Do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them... do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men." Instead, "When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, that your charitable deed may be seen in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

If we follow those guidelines, Lent will have a different and more powerful meaning. That's not saying, however, that the task before us is easy. On the contrary, it is quite difficult - but possible. Take your time and be patient with yourself. When you stumble, do not despair, but try again. Another thing to remember is that Lent is only a starting block. Prayer, charity, and self-discipline should not be abandoned after Pascha. We should continue to practice them and use them to keep focused on our goal of attaining God's kingdom and drawing nearer to Him.



Bishop JOSEPH'S Visitations

March 2, 2008

St. James Church, Anaheim, CA
Episcopal Visit

March 16, 2008

St. Sophia Greek Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA
Sunday of Orthodoxy

March 10-12, 2008

St. Vladimir Seminary, Crestwood, NY
Lenten Retreat

March 20-24, 2008

St. John the Baptist Church, Post Falls, ID,
Christ the Savior Church, Spokane Valley,
WA, and St. Nicholas Church, Spokane, WA
Episcopal Visit

Church Records



Baptism:

Charbel Michael Alkhori ~ February 16, 2008
Parents: Waleed & Kholoud Khouri

Chrismations:

Kristine M. Sayegh ~ February 9, 2008



House Blessing 2008

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Please complete below and Fr. Chris will call you to make an appointment
The most convenient **Day** and **Time:**

Please Check one or more

Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri.

Morning (9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon) Afternoon (1:00 p.m.-5:00 pm)

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OF ST. GEORGE

Many exciting things have been happening with the Antiochian Women of St. George. We are planning a beautiful luncheon fashion show for May 17th at the Orange Tree Resort. Since this is the Saturday after Mother's Day, we have a theme of "Mothers and Daughters". Alisa Jones and her committee are handling arrangements with the Resort and Briggette DeRienzo and her committee are working to get a boutique with beautiful clothes and hopefully a children's boutique for the fashion show. Our ladies will model and we will have many items for a raffle. Anyone who has items to raffle, please contact Alisa at 602-618-2203, or at alisanassarjones@hotmail.com. Everyone mark your calendars for May 17th at 11am. And don't forget, we Would love to have the men join us! Everyone will have a great time.

An ongoing project is the preparation of Memorial Wheat for families who wish to commemorate the passing of loved ones. The cost to the family for this time consuming work is \$85.00. We have already provided the Memorial Wheat for several families. Also, we are collecting non-perishable food for a local food bank. We can show our thanks to God for our tables which are laden with delicious food by feeding those in need. The collection bin is in the narthex of the Church.

We are having a "Bakeless Bake Sale" this month to raise money for the Retired Clergy Fund. This drive is sponsored by the Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West and the goal is to raise \$500,000 to provide financial assistance to our retired clergy and their widows. It is our responsibility to "Care for those who have cared for us". Donations are being collected in the Hall after Church for this very worthy cause.

The ladies all worked very hard baking pastries, cooking food and working at last month's Festival. They see the results of their efforts in the great success of this annual event that brings the entire parish together.

Special thanks to David Ghiz for his generous donation to the Ladies in appreciation for the luncheon that was prepared and served after his mother's 40 day Trisagion. It was our privilege to honor Sally's memory for her many, many years of devoted service to our group and our Church.

All the women of St. George are welcome to attend our monthly meetings. The day potluck meeting is held on the first Thursday of each month at 11:30am. The evening meeting is held on the third Thursday of each month at 7pm. Mark your calendars and join your sisters for our enjoyable and productive meetings.

Your sister in Christ
Mary Karadsheh, President

What I learned about Icons - By Heather McLeod

The colors used in icons are made from the minerals of the Earth ground into a fine powder and then mixed with egg yolk & vinegar or white wine & honey. The edges of the icon are made from pigmented clay powder mixed with honey & gold. The gold is crushed and blown by the iconographer onto the sides of the icon to symbolize God's breath of Creation into Adam.

The colors in an icon have meaning beyond the aesthetic. For example:

- Purple or burgundy = royalty or highest of high
 - o Rendering purple dye is a very expensive process so it is used to show a high status
- Gold = God
 - o Gold is actually gold! It's not a color as much as it is tiny, tiny pieces of gold pressed into remarkably small sheets called gold leaf and then suspended in a liquid & written onto the icon.
- White = God's Light
- Blue = infinity
- Green = nature or hope or New Testament
- Brown = temporary life
- Black = death or mystery
- Red = martyr or blood or Old Testament

Grey is never used because you'd have to mix the colors. In modern icons the colors are layered to create depth. For example, to create fogginess or great detail one pure color is layered on top of another completely dried and sovereign color. And you will only ever see two dimensions in an icon. This represents the two worlds: heaven & earth.

You never see shadows because in Gods world there is only light! Icons show a Reverse Dimension, or point-of-view, from heaven. Thus icons with children aren't seen as children, just small adults. In addition you do not see profiles of the subject in an icon. They are facing the viewer as if looking out a window from the heavenly world

into our world. This is why we pray for their intercessions; it would be weird if you were talking the side of their face!

Icons show things that aren't in reality. A great example is the Icon of St. John the Baptist. In this icon you see his head on the platter, his wings and Jesus in heaven. And nothing depicted in an icon is ever random; the iconographer doesn't just toss in things that he or she would think are interesting!

Icons start on wood layered with marble dust & glue. Only pure & natural materials are ever used in the writing of an icon. In addition to the minerals that make the colors of the icon these materials are also used: Wood, fabric, gypsum, glue, clay. Linden & birch wood are the most typical woods used in icons and the grain of the wood is always vertical, pointing towards heaven. Sometimes in very humid environments, strips of oak wood are used on the back of an icon for support. This keeps the icon from buckling or warping. When the icon is finished, hot linseed oil is gently poured and pressed into the icon to seal it.

The iconographer is not an artist; he or she is fulfilling a call from Heaven and writing what there is to write. That is why we don't say they are painted, but written. Think of a book that you're listening to on CD: the story isn't being made up on the fly! A person is actually reading the book to you so you can listen to it via the CD. Writing an icon is exactly the opposite! The iconographer is "writing" what they hear and what they are writing is clarified through much prayer and preparation. In addition, the iconographer is praying to the Saint they are writing and on behalf of the recipient of the icon.

Iconography isn't about art. It is about providing a window, or space, into which we can speak to the Saints in heaven so that they may intercede on our behalf and the behalves of the people we love.

"I've pitched my tent in the Land of Hope!" Acts 2:26

2008 LENTEN VESPERS SERVICES

Sponsored by the Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches

All Vespers Services Begin at 6:00 PM



The Sunday of Orthodoxy

March 16, 2008

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, 8202 E. Cactus Rd.
Scottsdale

The Second Sunday of Lent

March 23, 2008

SS. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, 1614 E Monte Vista Rd.
Phoenix



The Third Sunday of Lent

March 30, 2008

St. Sava Church, 4436 E. McKinley, Phoenix

The Fourth Sunday of Lent

April 6, 2008

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral,
1973 E. Maryland Ave. Phoenix



The Fifth Sunday of Lent

April 13, 2008

St. John Romanian Orthodox Church, 3749 W. Behrend Drive, Glendale

*Please join our Brothers & Sisters at the host parishes for these
Sunday Evening Lenten Vespers Services*

March 2008 Servers

Sunday March 2

Epistle Reader	I Cor. 8:8-9:2	Krystal Saigh, Najla F. Saigh
Greeters		Donna Kanaan, Mary Karadsheh
Ushers	Enaam Hweimel, Alisa Jones, Catherine Aeed, Rima Iacovelli, Rana Hakim, Molly Abrahams	
Altar Servers	Chris Doumani, Andrew Stokich, Anthony Sahawneh, Butros Sayegh, James Sayegh, Chase McBride	
Hall Lock-up		John Karadsheh
Coffee Hour		Sam & Doreen Dahdal

Sunday March 9

Epistle Reader	Hebrews 12:1-10	Bonnie Karraz, Nawal Salman
Greeters		Samar Haddad, Valerie Haddad
Ushers	Eva Quomsieh, Hiyam Gharib, Jane Romley, Nasreen Karraz, Amanda Haddad, Julie Doku	
Altar Servers	Rick Khoury, Jacob Sayegh, Abanoob Sayegh, Odeh Sayegh, Gergey Mousa, Stephen Skuba	
Hall Lock-up		Michael Haddad
Coffee Hour		Open

Sunday March 16

Epistle Reader	Hebrews 11:24-26;32-40	Yvonne Vranes, Theresa Sweilem
Greeters		Briggette DeRienzo, May Sayegh
Ushers	Noha Simon, Natascha Karadsheh, Slice Bassett, Nawal Salman, Marion Saba, Carol Ordynsky	
Altar Servers	Joseph Salem, Ramy Khoury, Issa Sayegh, Ronnie Sayegh	
Hall Lock-up		Alisa Jones
Coffee Hour		Jeff & Lillian Sayegh

Sunday March 23

Epistle Reader	Hebrews 1:10-2:3	Becky Abrahams, Rima Iacovelli
Greeters		Bonnie Sarsam, Salwa Nassar
Ushers	Rima Iacovelli, Lorraine Florence, Rose marie Toronto, Nikki Doumani, Megan Doumani, Donna Beauchamp	
Altar Servers	Jared Blackwell, Freddy Dahdal, Gus Sahawneh, Joseph Sayegh, Christopher Stokich	
Hall Lock-up		John Doumani
Coffee Hour		Odette Odeh

Sunday March 30

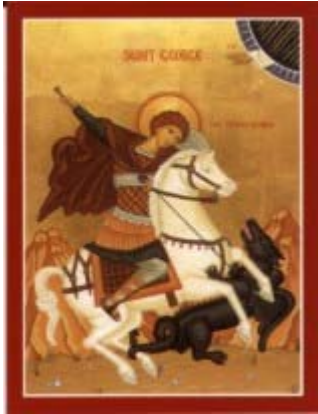
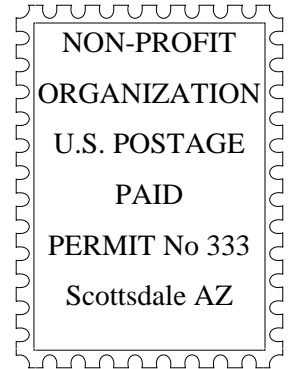
Epistle Reader	Hebrews 4:14-5:6	Marion Saba
Greeters		Connie Abdoulah, Halh Rihani
Ushers	Alisa Jones, Sherry Nichols, Mary Karadsheh, Heather McLeod, Jennifer Baker, Sanna Saigh	
Altar Servers	Chris Doumani, Andrew Stokich, Anthony Sahawneh, Butros Sayegh, James Sayegh, Chase McBride	
Hall Lock-up		Dan Thomas
Coffee Hour		Open

March 2008 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Retreat with Fr. Marc Boulos Great Vespers 5pm
2 Orthros 8:50am Divine Liturgy 10am Hospitalers	3	4 PATHWAYS & Ask Abouna 6:30pm	5 TEEN Bible Study 6:30pm	6 Ladies Mtg 11:30am Parish Council Mtg 6:30pm	7	8 Great Vespers 5pm
9 Orthros 8:50am Div Lit 10am Sun School 11am <i>Forgiveness Vespers 6pm</i>	10 GREAT LENT BEGINS	11 PATHWAYS & Adult Bible Study 6:30pm	12 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 4pm followed by TEEN Bible Study	13	14 "Akathist" Madayeh 6:30pm	15 Great Vespers 5pm
16 Orthros 8:50am Div. Lit. 10am Sun School 11am Hospitalers	17	18 PATHWAYS & Adult Bible Study 6:30pm	19 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 4pm followed by TEEN Bible Study	20 MOM's Group 10am to noon Ladies Evening Mtg 7pm	21 "Akathist" Madayeh 6:30pm	22 Pre-Marital Seminar 2-4pm Great Vespers 5pm
23 Orthros 8:50am Div Lit 10am Sun School 11am	24	25 PATHWAYS & Adult Bible Study 6:30pm	26 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 4pm followed by TEEN Bible Study	27	28 SOYO Desert Deanery Retreat>>>>>	29 SOYO Retreat Great Vespers 5pm
30 Orthros 8:50am Div Lit 10am Sun School 11am Hospitalers						

Visit our website:
www.stgeorgeaz.org

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
4530 E. Gold Dust Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85028



THE SPIRIT OF ST. GEORGE

Office: (602) 953-1921 Fax: (602) 953-2460

E-mail: abouna@stgeorgeaz.org

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

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

Church Services	
Saturday 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

Just a reminder ... Confessions are heard on Saturday evenings before Great Vespers, or anytime, by making an appointment with Fr. Christopher.

Parishioners are encouraged to submit articles for consideration.

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