

THE GUARDIAN

St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church of the San Fernando Valley
See of the Rt. Rev. JOSEPH, Bishop of Los Angeles and the West



Pastoral Message

“Let the little children come unto me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.” (Mark 10:14)

In the Gospel, our Lord pointed to the innocence of children and taught His disciples the meaning of humility by saying: *“I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”* And he took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them. (Mark 10:15-16). We also find in St. Matthew’s Gospel these words: *“And whoever welcomes a little child...welcomes me”* (Matthew 18:5).

We have been blessed with a growing number of newborns, young infants and toddlers in our parish. Many parents in our community continue to faithfully bring their children to church on a regular basis and have made the church a priority in their family life. They are to be commended, supported and encouraged. Children who are not used to being in church and regularly receiving the Sacraments will naturally struggle with what they are not familiar with. It is more important for the very young to experience being brought to church on Sunday morning and to participate in receiving Holy Communion with their parents than for them to be attentive throughout the entire Liturgy.

They are children and not adults. Consequently, we cannot expect them to be anything more than what they are, but to take the time and to have patience with them. We must love them, enjoy and have fun with them, care for and protect them from evil, especially

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when they are dependent upon us, realizing that there will be a time when they will make choices for themselves. Most importantly, we must place them in God’s hands and under His protective care from the start. They are really His gift to us.

Raising children today presents many new challenges unlike those many of us faced when we were their age. Nonetheless, the scriptures tell us: *“Raise up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it”* (Proverbs 22:6). While life provides us with no guarantees we can only be faithful to what we know to be good and right and to trust God to watch over them.

The first years of a young person’s life is like the first words inscribed upon a new tablet. They are called the “formative years.” It is a time of nurturing. We baptize infants in our church because we do not believe that a child must reach the age of reason to be received and accepted by God. Consequently, our tradition places a great deal of importance upon the early years of a child’s life in order that doing and practicing what we believe to be true will become a very normal part of their life.

While in Church...a continuing series

Submitted by: Ramez Hage

Often members of our congregation and visitors inquire about certain etiquettes and traditions in the Orthodox church. Although certain standards differ from church to church, many of those behaviors are universal in Orthodoxy.

*In an article published by Father David Barr in *The Word*, on January 1997, pages 4-7, titled "Some Things You Should Know While in Church," he answers many of our questions regarding appropriate behavior in church.*

*Our newsletter, *The Guardian*, will start publishing excerpts from his article starting with this issue. It has been edited by Father Timothy and will include some of his own comments. We hope this will help us all attend our liturgical services with full reverence.*

Your questions are welcome and may be sent directly to Father Timothy at: pastor@stmichaelvannuys.org.

ENTERING THE CHURCH (LATE)

The time to arrive at church is before the service starts, but for some unknown reason, it has become the custom - or rather the bad habit - for some to come to church late.

If you arrive after the Divine Liturgy begins, try to enter the church quietly - and observe what is happening. If the Epistle or Gospel is being read or the Little or Great Entrance is taking place, wait until it is finished to quickly find a seat. If Father is giving the sermon, stay in the back until he has concluded.

If in doubt, check with one of the ushers to see if it is a good time to seat yourself. Try not to interrupt the Liturgy with your entrance.

By the way, the best way to avoid this problem is to arrive on time - then you don't have to wonder if it's okay to come in or not.

People who come late to the Liturgy, especially after the reading of the Epistle and Gospel lesson, should not partake of the Eucharist.

Our preparation to receive Holy Communion begins before we arrive at church. The evening meal of the previous day should be light, and unless one requires medical prescriptions, complete abstinence is observed until the time of Holy Communion.

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Psalms 122:1



Pastoral Message continued from page 1:

We've heard it said that children learn what they live. We are their examples. They may be helped in knowing and loving God by observing and imitating us. The opposite is also true. Seeing and hearing their parents, grandparents, Godparents, and loved ones express their love for God and the church in their speech and actions, and in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect, are critical to their understanding and the development of a good conscience.

This fall, our cradle roll, Pre-school and Kindergarten class will be the largest in our Church School. This is not uncommon in many of our parishes today. We must continue to provide our children with every opportunity to be an integral part of our community beginning with the Church Sacraments. But we must also realize the lessons that we as adults are shown by their pure and innocent lives.

Time for Church School !

First Sunday of Church School:
September 18, 2005

2005 Church School and Festival
Awards Presentation:

Sunday, September 25, 2005
(not a luncheon)



Saint of the Month – Holy Martyr Anthusa

Holy Martyr Anthusa and others with her

Commemorated on August 22nd

Anthusa was the daughter of wealthy but pagan parents from Seleucia in Syria. Learning of Christ, Anthusa believed in Him with all her heart and secretly went to Bishop Athanasius, who baptized her. Angels of God appeared to her at her baptism.

Soon afterward, Anthusa set out for the wilderness to live a life of asceticism, for she was afraid to return to her parents. She labored ascetically in the wilderness for twenty-three years.

She gave up her soul while in prayer, kneeling on a stone under which, according to her last testament, she wished to be buried beneath. Bishop Athanasius and two of Anthusa's servants, Charismus and Neophytus, were slain some time later because of their faith in Christ.

These events occurred in the time of Emperor Valerian, in about the year 257. They all reposed honorably and were crowned with heavenly wreaths of victory.

Bible Trivia...How many will you know?



1. How many books are in the New Testament?

- a) 23
- b) 25
- c) 27
- d) 29

*** Answers found on page 6 ***

2. How many books are in the Old Testament?

- a) 33
- b) 35
- c) 37
- d) 39

3. The book of Hebrews tells us to entertain strangers because they might be _____

4. Name the fruit of the Spirit...hint there are a total of nine!

5. How many people were on Noah's Ark and who were they?

6. Matthew, Mark, and John called it Golgotha or the place of the skull.
What did Luke call it?

7. What was the name of a physician in the Bible who was also an author?

8. What was the name of the man who lifted up the infant Jesus at the temple and praised God?

New Face on the 2005 Parish Council

The 2005 Parish Council welcomed Daniel Barney as an appointed member serving this year for the first time. Daniel has been a member of St. Michael's for over 5 years. He converted to Orthodoxy at St. Nicholas Cathedral, which he then attended for several years. Daniel has been married for 12 years to Sylvana. The Barney's have two children, Kevin and Tamara. You've all seen Kevin faithfully serving as an altar boy. Although raised in Ferndale, CA - Daniel was born in Missoula, Montana. His hobbies include fishing and bowling and if he could travel anywhere he'd like to visit Alaska. Daniel also enjoys watching his favorite football team, the San Francisco forty-niners. Since this is his first time serving on the Council, he feels it is important to watch and learn as much as possible to gain a more complete understanding of the business of the church.

Thanks for serving Daniel!

St. Michael to Host 2009 Archdiocese Convention

On Friday, July 29, 2005, the Archdiocese General Assembly approved, by a vote of acclamation, St. Michael's bid to host the 49th bi-annual Archdiocese Convention.

The convention will be held at the JW Desert Springs Marriott Resort and Spa in Palm Desert. This hotel is really everything we look for in a convention hotel, and more: perfect for conduction the business of the Archdiocese and ideal for the fellowship and worship that is at the core of our coming together as one community. The resort environment will also appeal to those who want to make it a family vacation.

More good news! We have a guaranteed room rate of \$133.00 per night with complementary self parking and 10% discount at all hotel restaurants and recreational facilities which include, golf, tennis, and their award winning Spa and Fitness Center. We also have a 10% discount on most airline travel, ground transportation, car rentals and restaurants in the area as well.

Our Planning Committee has been working for over a year under the Co-Chairmanship of Don Meena and Michael Srour with Adeeb Sadd serving as Honorary Chair. Our planning committee consist of: Charmaine Darmour (Secretary), Phil Nassief (Treasurer), Elaine Srour (Events), Sondra M. Love (Fund-raising), Katie Nassief (Hotel/Liaison), Robert Abraham, Jr. (Marketing), Lillian Meena (Registration), Emile Skaff (Security), John G. Khouri II, Carolyn Sadd and Hani Abughazaleh.

**"Happy are the people
whose God IS the Lord!"**

Psalm 144:15



DESERT SPRINGS RESORT & SPA PALM DESERT

God has blessed us all with different talents and in order for this Convention to be a great success our entire St. Michael family must get involved! That means you!

For more information visit our website at www.archdioceseconvention2009.org. If you have any questions please contact either of the co-chairs in person or by email at info@archdioceseconvention2009.org. Stay tuned for more information in future issues.

Liturgical Notes

Pre-Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos
Great Vespers
Friday, August 12th, 5 pm

Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos -
Monday, August 14th
Celebrated on Sunday, August 13th
Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Liturgy 10 a.m.

Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos
Vespereal Divine Liturgy
Wednesday, September 7th, 7 pm

Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross
Vespereal Divine Liturgy
Tuesday, September 13th, 7pm

Antiochian Gospel Program

In attendance at our Diocese Conference (hosted by St. Nicholas, San Francisco) was Carol Buleza. Carol is the Director of the Department of Christian Education for our Antiochian Archdiocese.

Carol described with great excitement the Antiochian Gospel Program that is available for families on our Archdiocese web site: www.antiochian.org. Just click on the Department of Christian Education link and then "Antiochian Gospel Program."

So, just what is the Antiochian Gospel Program? It is the Gospel reading paraphrased for children from pre-school age through high school. They carry the message that is true to the words they will hear at Divine Liturgy on Sunday.

**2005 Fall Ladies Retreat
Hosted by Northern California
Deanery of Antiochian Women**

When ?? November 11 – 13, 2005

Where ?? San Damiano - Danville, CA

Retreat Topic:

**Cure of the Soul, Cure of the Body
The Causes of Illness & the Path to Healing**

**Retreat Speaker: Mother Gabriella of
Holy Dormition Monastery**

Discussions to include: Why do we become ill? Is Illness always bad? What do physical & spiritual illnesses have to do with each other? How are body & soul cured?

Registration \$180

Registration forms available at:

www.protomartyr.org/2005_womens_retreat.pdf



Also included with the Gospel message is an icon page that can be downloaded for younger children to color. Additionally, there are questions relevant to the scripture which families can review together.

This is a wonderful way for families to study the word of our Lord together and prepare for Divine Liturgy.



Answers to Bible Trivia

(questions found on page 4)

1. 27 books in the New Testament
2. 39 books in the Old Testament
3. Angels (Hebrews 13:2)
4. Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control (Galatians 5:22-23)
5. Eight - Noah & his wife - their 3 sons and their sons wives (Genesis 6:18)
6. Calvary (Luke 23:33)
7. Luke (Colossians 4:14)
8. Simeon (Luke 2:25-31)



Cultural Group Happenings & Suggestions

Submitted by Carrie Deeb Skaff

The St. Michael Cultural Group will be traveling by bus to the Laguna Pageant of the Masters on Saturday, August 13th -- check with Carrie for any last minute availability at: **(818) 501-3477**

There are many other cultural activities currently throughout the Southland including:

King Tut Exhibit at Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Fabulous pieces, most of which are different from the King Tut exhibit 25 years ago – Less Crowded during the day!

Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits at the Getty through August 28th – 16 portraits on display with an easy to use audio – ALL FREE – only a parking fee

Mummies Etc at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana – Egyptian things from the German Museums

Reagan Library – Air Force One is nearly ready for display – Stay tuned for further info

Peterson Museum at Fairfax & Wilshire (across from LACMA) – Vintage car display

San Sylmar Museum – Huge car display

Coming up at the Nixon Library – after Thanksgiving they decorate 36 Christmas trees – one that was a favorite of Pat's and 35 representing the countries Nixon visited while in office

Let Carrie know if you are interested, if there are enough of us, we can go as a group!

St. Michael 16th Annual Golf Classic...a GREAT Success!!

The St. Michael 16th Annual Golf Classic was co-hosted with St. Nicholas Cathedral and was dedicated to the memory of the Very Reverend Fr. Paul Romley who loved the game of golf. The Co-Chairpersons were Don Meena and Katie Nassief from St. Michael and Danny Andrews from St. Nicholas. The hard work and efforts put in by the entire Golf Classic Committee resulted in an outstanding event that was praised by all who attended. We had 92 golfers, 218 dinner attendees, and 57 hole sponsors. Once again the dinner was the highlight of the evening. We feasted on barbequed tri-tip roast and chicken, accompanied by condiments. For desert we had an ice cream bar with a variety of delicious toppings.

The master of ceremonies for the evening's activities was Jay Coury who, as usual, did a great job. This year we initiated a money raffle. The winners were Jimmy Goson (\$1,000), Diane Nixon (\$500) and Orit Srour (\$250). There were also 3 door prizes on each table. Not to mention the excitement of the Chinese, Silent, and live auctions.

Of course the most important part of the evening was the presentation of the golf awards that were as follows:

Low Gross (57) John Khouri Moe Harb Paul Kinan

1st Flight Low Net 1st (50.4) Danny Simon – Greg Ajalat – William Hanna – Art Luciani

2nd (52.9) John L. Sadd – Jimmy Goson – Michael Lawyer – Mikey Lawyer

2nd Flight Low Net 1st (50.7) Bruce Fishman– Steve Friedman– Fred Nicola– Rick Shields – Ricky Nicola

2nd (52.9) John Koupsi – George Schwary – Dorian Khouri- Salim Iswari

Ladies Flight Low Net (60) Geri Thabit – Barbara Ausburn – Caroline Van Dam – Kris Thabit

Closest to the Pin Hole 12 Men – Steve Konow – 8'3" Ladies – Geri Thabit - 6'10"

Closest to the Line Men – Louie Sadd Ladies – Bobbi Kouri

All in all, this years Golf Classic was very successful and one of the best ever!!



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Bishop JOSEPH's Schedule

September 13 - 15 Holy Cross Church
Yakima, WA

September 16 -18 St. Innocent Church
Everson, WA

October 14 - 16 Fall Delegates Meeting
Hosted by Sts. Peter & Paul - San Dimas, CA

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stmichaelvannuys.org

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