
❖ THE TORCHBEARER ❖

Vol. 8 ... No. 2

October, 1999

From the Pastor...

Beloved in the Lord:

October is Youth Month throughout our archdiocese. Here at St. John's we will observe Youth Month in the usual way. The teens will read the epistle, serve as ushers, host the coffee hour, and take up a collection for the Special Olympics. While these things are most important, they are not enough.

As one who was brought up in the church, serving as an altar boy, being part of the church school, helping wait tables at parish dinners, participating in the different festivals, and the like, I used to think that this was what church was all about. Not only did I do these things but many, many of my friends did them too. Yet, I ask how many of them still go to church, still have a commitment to Christ and His Church? Sadly, the answer is not many. Look back to when you were in the YPA, the Crusaders, or the many other groups that we have. How many of our friends still come to church? Again, the answer, sadly, is not many.

Do you see a common thread here? When we have a commitment that is exclusively on the "business" side of the church, burnout is sure to follow. Our commitment to the church must first and foremost be a commitment to Christ and His holy church. This should be *the* priority. What a joy is it to attend the Divine Liturgy, to hear the words of God in the Epistle and Gospel, and how humbling it is to

receive the very body and blood of Christ, when we enter into communion with God.

Don't get me wrong. I enjoy dances, dinners, bazaars, fashion shows and the like as much as anyone else; however, when they become the reason for the church's existence and not *vice versa* then something is wrong. The Church's *raison d'être*, its reason for being, is to form an earthly community to reflect the glory of God and community of saints gathered around the heavenly church. To receive the sacraments, to pray, to fast, to grow in the Spirit towards full Communion with God. This is what we are supposed to do. Field trips and recess are nice, but is that why we send our children to school?



Hence, our *example* as faithful Orthodox Christians is how we can teach our youth something that is real and will withstand the test of time. When they see us pray and take our faith seriously they in turn will see how important our Orthodox faith must be. If we think that taking kids to conventions, to dinners, or having them participate in the oratorical festivals, or even going to the Village is going to cement their relationship with God in and of itself we are, in my opinion, sadly mistaken.

Let's not let history repeat itself. Let's show our children and ourselves that the Church is something worthy of our love, respect, and attention. It will be hard to do but you'll be glad you did!

With much love in Christ,

Rev. Fr. John K. Teebagy
Pastor

From the Chairman...

I hope and pray that this edition of *The Torchbearer* finds you and your family in good health. Welcome back to what will be a very busy church year. Plans and preparations are under way for our Annual Bazaar (November 5 - 7) and our Feast Day (December 5).

Work has begun on replacing the roof and waterproofing the church complex. The church was approved for an Equity Loan of \$100,000. The "loan" has given the church the ability to proceed with this project, while a fund raising committee organizes and presents a complete program to address the needs of the parish to the Executive Board and the parish. Once a program has been completed a Special Parish Meeting will be called to present the Capitol Improvement Funding Program to the Parish as promised at the August Special Parish Meeting.

While the Executive Board is composed of 21 members, it takes all 1000 parishioners to make the Church of St. John of Damascus a strong and united spiritual family. It is up to each parishioner to get involved. It is up to each and every parishioner to help make our church (and family) stronger. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please do not hesitate to bring them to the attention of the Executive Board. We want you to feel free to approach any Board Member, including Fr. John, with your comments.

May God Bless You,
Bob Zahka

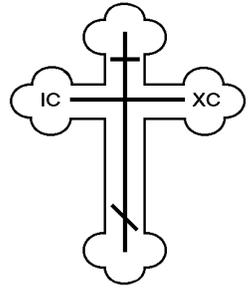
Robert P. Zahka, Chairman
Executive Board

IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE... While every attempt is made to accommodate requests for **memorial services, removal of crowns, and churching of babies**, there may be times, due to other events and/or liturgical seasons, when this may not be possible. **To avoid any confusion, these events must be scheduled in advance with the understanding that conflicts may arise.**
Thank you.

Church Records...

“As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”

Andrew Kenneth Bergeron, son of Kenneth and Andrea (Sakakini) Bergeron of Arlington, MA was baptized on August 23, 1998.



Many Years!!

“O Lord our God, crown them with glory and honor!”

Lisa Zahka and David Cassarino were married on August 21, 1999. They reside in West Roxbury, MA.

Many Years!!

“Blessed are they whom thou has chosen and taken O Lord!”

Janette Hamwey (78) of Arlington, MA fell asleep in the Lord on August 17, 1999. She is survived by her three children and their families. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park, MA.

Memory Eternal!!

Funny How...

...a \$10.00 bill looks so big when you take it to church, but so small when you take it to the market.

...long are a couple of hours spent at church, but how short they are when watching a movie...

... people want to get a front seat at a football game or basketball game, but scramble to get a back seat at church services...

...we believe what newspapers say, but question what the Bible says...

FUNNY, isn't it ?

Or is it?

Have you seen St. John's Web Site ... recently?

<http://www.stjohnd.org>

Many new changes have been added over the summer. If you haven't seen the web site recently, be sure to check it out. Information is updated weekly, so you will always see new information. Here are some of the changes that have been added this summer:

Scrolling Bulletin Board – Now, all the latest information is presented on a scrolling bulletin board on the home page. To stop the scrolling and read the item of interest, just move your mouse pointer over the box. To continue scrolling, move your mouse pointer off the box. Any text in blue can be clicked on for more information.

Parish E-Mail Mailing List – We have started a parish e-mail mailing list. This list will be used as an easy way for the church office to communicate information immediately to many people. You can receive up to date info on changes to the church web site or important announcements from the church office. We are in the process now of building this list. To join the list, simply go to the box on the home page that says "Join our Parish e-mail mailing list", put in your e-mail address, then click on the join list button and follow the instructions. It's a great way to stay informed.

Real-time Church Calendar – All of you receive a church calendar with the newsletter each month. Problem is that many times, the information may be out of date by the time you receive it, as many new events and meetings are being scheduled each week. We have implemented an on-line, real time calendar on the web site. Now, through the church office, as meetings are scheduled or events are booked, you will see them immediately on the web site. You can look at the calendar daily, weekly or monthly and see the details of the events. Check this out by going to the church home page and selecting Calendar either from the News and Information link or by using the "quick links".

We would really like to get your feedback on these new items and would like your suggestions for other ideas you may like to see. Please drop an e-mail message to the church webmaster at [**webmaster@stjohnd.org**](mailto:webmaster@stjohnd.org) with your feedback.

It's that time of year again ...

Annual Bazaar - November 5th, 6th & 7th

We need your help and support!

Donations for the Auction - Live auction to be held on Saturday, November 6th at 3:00 p.m. We are looking for any items you have of value that you would like to donate. Please make sure any furniture or valued items are in very good to excellent condition. Sports tickets, restaurant gift certificates or any gift certificates for services are always welcome.. Let's make this year's auction a huge success! See John Haddad or Ray Hamwey if you have items to donate.

Donations to White Elephant Table and Almost New Boutique - Clean out your closets ... clean out your attics and basements. Please bring clean clothes (no shoes) and costume jewelry for the Almost New Boutique. Please bring other miscellaneous items in good condition for the White Elephant Table. Please bring these items to the church hall beginning Sunday, October 10th.

General Store Items - Canned goods and miscellaneous food items. We will be gladly take any gift certificates you may have for various grocery and specialty food stores and use them to help defray the costs of the General Store. Also, we need gallon jars with tight fitting lids and pickling jars for our pickles.

Cash Donations - Cash donations are always welcome to help defray the expenses of the bazaar and to help us buy items we need for cooking. If you wish to donate please make your checks payable to "St. John of Damascus Church" and earmark the donation "Bazaar".

Volunteers – We can use help in many areas this year. You may see many people working the bazaar, but believe it or not, we are always short of help ... before, during and after the bazaar. We need help at the tables, raffles, office work, picking up and cleaning tables, setting up the hall, breaking down the hall, etc. Please, if you haven't been involved in the past, get involved now. It's fun and rewarding. Contact John Haddad or Ray Hamwey if you can help.

Thanks in advance for your help and your generosity

1999 Bazaar Co-Chairmen

John Haddad (508)533-6218

From the Church School...

By the time this Newsletter is published, we will have already been back in Church School here at St. John's. Thanks to the Maintenance Committee, as well as our devoted staff, our Church School sports a fresh coat of paint; shiny, waxed floors; and a clean, crisp appearance.



The plans for our second annual Overnight Retreat are in the works, for the weekend of November 19th. Last year's retreat was such a success that we've asked Nick Louh, Assistant Camp Director at Antiochian Village, to run the program again this year. Our students will participate in lively discussions about our faith, attend evening worship "Village" style...and of course, enjoy homemade pancakes on Saturday morning!

We hope to introduce some new events this year, such as the "Come as your Favorite Saint" party, Church Icon Tour, and a Youth Choir. The successful Scouting Program also returns. We'll keep you posted...

Here is our staff list – we are thrilled to add some new names to the list this year, and thankful to all the teachers for their commitment and enthusiasm!

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Preschool 1</i> | <i>Parent Volunteers</i> |
| <i>Preschool 2</i> | <i>Laurie Bradley, and Kristen Matta, Aide</i> |
| <i>Kindergarten</i> | <i>Roberta Maloof and Bertina Kurker and Karen Vachon, Aides</i> |
| <i>Grade 1</i> | <i>Diane Mercado, and Georgette Cullen, Aide</i> |
| <i>Grade 2/3</i> | <i>Sharon Cormier, and Carol Hazerjian, Aide</i> |
| <i>Grade 4</i> | <i>Kathleen Tawa, and Theresa Matthews, Aide</i> |
| <i>Grade 5</i> | <i>Erin Tawa</i> |
| <i>Grade 6/7</i> | <i>Abe Sabbag</i> |
| <i>Grade 8/9</i> | <i>Don Khouri</i> |
| <i>Office Assistant</i> | <i>Debbie Vogel</i> |
| <i>Teacher Resource</i> | <i>Joan Teebagy</i> |

As always, we welcome your ideas, input and interest in our Church School. And we thank the many, many people who continue to support and assist us!

Faithfully,

Announcements...

- **CORRECTION:** Emily Vogel was inadvertently not listed as a member of the Bible Bowl Team in the last issue of *The Torchbearer*. We regret this oversight.
- **PLEASE MAKE NOTE OF UPDATED OFFICE HOURS:** Monday - Thursday, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. *Bulletin Deadline:* Thursday at 10 a.m.
- **ARE YOU IN YOUR FRESHMAN YEAR OF COLLEGE? If yes,** then you are invited to apply for either the Robert P. Zahka Scholarship or the Wedad Spear Scholarship. Please contact the church office for further information. The deadline for applying for these scholarships, which will be awarded on December 5th, is **November 14th. This deadline will be strictly adhered to.**
- **WEEKEND WITH BISHOP DEMETRI – October 1 - 3, 1999, St. Mary Church, Cambridge.** Events include: Great Vespers followed by Arabic Dinner and Hafli with Fouad Hajjar & Ensemble; Hierarchical Divine Liturgy followed by a reception.
- **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, West Roxbury, 23rd ANNUAL BAZAAR & FOOD FAIR – October 15, 16 & 17, 1999, 55 Emmonsdale Rd., West Roxbury.**
- **FIFTIES DANCE to benefit Antiochian Village campers - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23rd 7 p.m. – 12:30 a.m. DONATIONS ARE NEEDED!!** – Please call Paula Hamwey at (978) 840-0559.
- **STUDENTS & YOUNG ADULTS – An informal lunch and discussion with His Grace, Bishop DEMETRI will be held on Saturday, October 2nd at Harvard Catholic Student Ctr., St. Paul's Church, 20 Arrow St., Cambridge.** See bulletin board for details and directions.
- **PAN-ORTHODOX YOUTH WORKERS CONFERENCE, November 19-21, 1999.** You should attend this conference if you work with teens; are concerned about the welfare of our youth, believe that right moral and ethical

behavior matters. For more details see the bulletin board.

From the Antiochian Village Campers...

Well, another summer is over and our campers all had a great time at camp. Altogether we had twenty-six campers attending camp this year, as well as Gina DeStito working as a camp counselor for the whole summer. Kristen Sabbag attended the camp as a CIT. The number of campers attending camp next year will be over thirty.

Just to let people know, through the fund-raising efforts last year and the support of all of our parishioners, each camper received \$161 towards their camp expenses. In addition to that, \$900 was given out through the St. Ignatius fund to children based on a financial need. We heard some misinformation going around over the summer –that all campers received a full scholarship as well as the \$161. That was not the case. We just wanted to clear that up.

We have lots of activities planned this year. We hope that you will support our efforts again this year. Please look in the weekly bulletin for information regarding the camp and any activities that we have coming up. We are planning on doing service projects this year as well as fund-raising.

October 23rd is the Fifties Dance. This was a great event last year. Please try to attend. Tickets will be sold by all campers as well as during Coffee Hour.

If anyone has any questions or suggestions, please contact Paula Hamway or Debbie Leotsakos.

We appreciate all of your support!

International Orthodox Christian Charities

P.O. Box 630225

Baltimore, MD 21263-0225

Tel: (877) 803-4622 ● Fax: (410) 243-9824

Internet: www.iocc.org

Sometimes You Can Put A Village Back Together With A Needle and Thread...

In the city of Tbilisi in the Republic of Georgia, citizens who have been displaced by unrest are creating new lives for themselves with the help of International Orthodox Christian Charities. IOCC coordinates sewing workshops that enable participants to sew comforter-style wool blankets. The “Blanket Project” has provided not only a source of income for the community but winter protection for orphans, needy families and the homeless.

Sometimes The Best Medicine Someone Can Have Is A Healthy Pig...

In the midst of war and unrest, a family, or an entire community, can lose everything, including its will to survive. When refugees from Bosnia found themselves struggling to build a new life in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, International Orthodox Christian Charities gave them a loan so they could purchase pigs and farming equipment. This simple gesture gave their lives meaning and provided them with the ability to earn an income, feed their families, and realize that their lives were not useless but, in fact, quite meaningful.

These are a couple of the many ways IOCC is responding to people in need. And with your continued support we can help other communities patch their lives back together.

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THE TORCHBEARER
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A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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Services: Sunday-Matins 9:00 a.m.,

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours...

Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The deadline for the Sunday bulletin is Thursday at 10 a.m.

Please plan accordingly.

DEADLINE for the **NOVEMBER TORCHBEARER**

will be **October 10th.**

Please consult the Weekly Sunday Bulletin for any changes, corrections, etc.