
THE TORCHBEARER

The Newsletter of the Church of St. John of Damascus, Dedham, MA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2003

From the Pastor...

As usual the summer has brought a different rhythm to the life of the parish. The 2002-3 church school year concluded on Sunday, June 8th with graduation/promotion exercises after the liturgy, followed by a well-attended parish "cookout" in the hall, as the weather did not cooperate with our plans for Claxon Field in nearby Needham. What a wonderful day! My sincere thanks to all those involved in this, especially our church school director Nancy Close, who consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty year in and year out.

The next event of the summer was the New England Parish Life Conference on June 26th-29th at Sunday River Ski Resort in Maine, which was hosted by St. George, Norwood who did an outstanding job. Our parish was very well represented and you would have been very proud of the youth of our parish. Emily Vogel, who will attend the University of Michigan in the fall, won one of the scholarships given by the region; the Teens received the "Most Improved Chapter" award. Congratulations go to them and their president David Haddad, who will attend Bryant College in Rhode Island. In the Bible Bowl, Leila Rawan, David Hazerjian, and Alexander Teebagy did a fine job. Considering that they were the youngest team, they have set high expectations for future bible bowls teams from St. John's. We also thank their coaches Iyad Ozone and Carol Hazerjian. We also want to thank Debbie Vogel and Khouria Joan Teebagy for doing a great job in the adult bible bowl. Nancy Close coordinated the Oratorical Festival.

I attended the Archdiocese Convention in Miami from July 21st -27th. At the general assembly the many departments of the archdiocese presented their reports and we heard of the work that they are doing. The archdiocese is certainly growing and thriving as we seek to bring Christ to our communities all across the United States and Canada. The general assembly voted on a number of things. The 2007 archdiocese convention will be held in Montreal (2005 is in Detroit), ten people were (re)-elected to the archdiocese's board of trustees, and the assessment was raised to \$30 per baptized soul from \$25. This is the first increase in eight years and if you look at the pie charts in this newsletter you will see where the archdiocese gets and spends its money.

Currently, I am meeting with different people regarding our altar servers, church school, etc. I am also excited about the direction of our choir. Under the direction of Andrea Jabbour the choir grew and thrived; however, because of personal issues Andrea could not give the choir the time and attention that it needed and her last Sunday with us was on June 8th. During the summer months, Fred

Maloof, our chanter, and Fr. Nifon beautifully chanted the responses at the liturgy. A big thank you goes to them!! The new choir director is an old face from our parish – Mark Haddad.

Mark Haddad comes to us as our new Choir Director with extensive experience in performing, directing, and teaching music. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Music History from Boston College and a Master of Education degree in Creative Arts in Learning from Lesley College. He currently studies voice privately with Dr. William Cutter and sings with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, the official chorus of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops Orchestra. Mark's directing experience in choral and musical theater productions is marked by his eight-year tenure as the primary music director for the award-winning Speakeasy Stage Company in Boston. In addition to conducting area choruses, Mark was a music teacher for twelve years. Most recently, he was choral director and head of the Music Department at Newton Country Day School, where he also served as Director of Operations. Currently, Mark is a partner in Haddad/Hakansson, LLC, a full service interior design firm. No matter how much expertise Mark brings, it means nothing without people willing to serve the church as choir members. Please consider joining the choir and help make the divine services that much more beautiful.

No matter how much we do in the church it is in vain if people stand on the sidelines and watch. Get involved! Become a full part of this parish family! Rediscover your faith and your fellow sojourners on the road to salvation. You'll be glad that you did. After all it is your church and if you don't help, who will?!

In Christ,
Fr. John K. Teebagy, Pastor

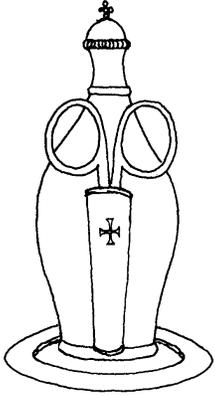
Liturgical notes:

❖ We will return to our regular liturgical schedule on Sunday, September 7TH, which is the observance of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, with Matins at 9:00 a.m., the Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m. Confession is offered from 8:45-9:40 a.m. or by appointment. As a reminder, confession is NOT available after Liturgy.

❖ To celebrate the Elevation of the Holy Cross on September 14th, we will have the procession of the Holy Cross.

❖ It is the teaching of the Holy Orthodox Church that only those Orthodox Christians who have **prepared** themselves through prayer, recent confession, and fasting (and being on time for church) should approach the chalice. It is likewise the teaching of the Church that our non-Orthodox guests and friends **should not** approach the chalice or that Orthodox Christians **cannot and should not** take communion in non Orthodox Churches.

Church Records...



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

Dominic David, son of David and Lisa (Zahka) Cassarino of Tolland, CT, was baptized on May 25th, 2003.

Tessa Jade Teresa, daughter of Norman and Kimberly (Bocon) Beshere of Randolph, was baptized on May 25th, 2003

Nicholas George, son of Ramzi and Misaki (Sato) Mitri (members of St. George, Houston, TX), was baptized on May 31st, 2003

Lindsay Susan, daughter of Jeffrey and Laura (Cahaly) Ristaino of Acton, was baptized on June 15th, 2003

Matthew Elias, son of Christopher and Leslie (Ganim) Hamilton of Sudbury, was baptized on July 20th 2003

Nicole Michele, daughter of Joseph and Linda (Mabardy) Spruce of Waltham, was baptized on July 27th, 2003

Many Years!



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

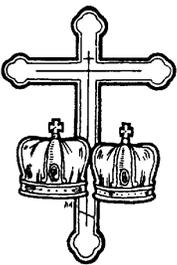


Helen M. Wyshak (87) of Bedford fell asleep in the Lord on May 27th, 2003. Her son and daughter along with their families survive her. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

Memory Eternal!



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



Andronikos Stamboulides and RoseMarie Nawfel were united in marriage on May 10th, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Ashland.

David J. Shagoury and Nancy (Kaaz) Shagoury were united in marriage on May 18th, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Boston.

Eduardo Delgado and Rebecca Bargoot were united in marriage on May 31st, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Waltham.

Stephen J. Saber and Stephanie C. Ward were united in marriage on May 31st, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Dover.

Phillip Lynch and Stephanie Murphy were united in marriage on June 1st, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Stoughton.

Christopher Tocchio and Nicole Derany were united in marriage on June 7th, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Brookline.

Philip L. Demers and Zakie Nahat were united in marriage on July 19, 2003. We congratulate them as they begin their new life together in Burlington.

Many Years!!



From the Executive Board Chairman...

I would like to thank the members of the Executive Board – old and new - for the privilege of electing me as chair of the Executive Board. I look forward to working with all of you. As the new chair, it is nice to see how strong and united so many parishioners are in supporting the work of the board, its chair, and the church, and for that I am grateful.

We have the annual bazaar coming up very quickly, which gives us all a chance to work together again and to raise a great deal of money for the church. Anyone with time to share in this project is most welcomed to join. This year the bazaar will be held on November 7th – 9th, shortly after that, is our annual feast day celebration in December.

Honestly, I have been trying to write this letter for a week and still don't know what exactly I should be saying here but again I am grateful and honored to be able to work with all of the church organizations and parishioners. I look forward to a great year ahead!

I am open to any comments or suggestions that you may have and, once again, am thankful for the chance to serve you.

Sincerely,
Alan Cardoos, Chair

From the Teen SOYO...

The Teen SOYO is ready for another exciting and fun-filled year. Last June, we had elections for the upcoming year and the new officers are... Congratulations to next year's Teen SOYO officers: Rachael Sabbag- President, Nicole Leotsakos- Vice President, Christina Haddad- Secretary, Michael O'Hara- Treasurer, Tim O'Hara- Sergeant-At-Arms, and Alexander Teebagy- Chaplain and advisors, Don Khouri and Anthony Hamwey. These officers as well as the members are looking forward to the upcoming year and hope for it to be quite successful. Anyone in the 7th grade to age 19 interested in joining the Teen SOYO, please see Rachel Sabbag to join.

Rachel Sabbag, President of the Teen SOYO

From the Church School...

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It's "Back to School Time" here at St. John of Damascus Church School! Classes begin on September 7th for grades Preschool 2 through Grade 10. We also offer a Preschool 1 class for children who will be three years old by September 1, 2003. This class is organized as a "Parent Cooperative" -- all parents of Preschool 1 students help out on a rotating basis. There will be a brief parent meeting on Sunday, September 28th (during Church School time) to explain how this class operates. The first Preschool 1 class will be held on Sunday, October 5th. In order for children to benefit from our Church School program, regular attendance at the Divine Liturgy and in class is essential. The continuity provided by weekly attendance makes it possible for students to understand, appreciate, and embrace our Orthodox faith. It's also a lot more fun for the students when they are involved in our weekly activities, and feel "at home" in Church School. If it's been a while since you've brought your children to Church School, now's the time to come back! We have a busy, productive year planned. We will offer some new activities at all age levels, as well as repeat some tried and true favorites ... make sure your kids are part of the action! Also, would you like to try your hand at teaching or assisting in a classroom or the office? Whatever your talent, you can definitely put it to good use in the Church School! We welcome your ideas, input and genuine interest in our Church School! Help celebrate the start of our new Church School year by attending an old-fashioned BACK-TO-SCHOOL BARBECUE on September 7th, sponsored by the Church School Parent Guild. (See the flyer in the Torchbearer.)

In Christ,
Nancy Close Church School Director

From the Fellowship of St. John the Divine...

Make plans to attend the Fellowship's Lobster Dinner on Wednesday, October 8, 2003. The deadline for reservations is Sunday, October 5th; to make reservations, please call Linda Hakar 781.551.9444. Details to follow.

From the Choir...

"Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing" (Psalm 100:2)

As the new choir director, I am thrilled to continue the growth and development of the choir that Andrea Gabriel Jabbour so flawlessly led for the past 2½ years – but I need your help! In order to become one of the finest choirs in the New England Region, it is essential that we increase enrollment in all voice parts. We need dedicated parishioners who are willing to make the commitment to attend Sunday rehearsals and to sing three Sundays per month. No experience is necessary. The first choir Liturgy is on Sunday, September 7th at 10:00 a.m. Please arrive by 9:30 a.m. Feel free to contact me with any questions or thoughts at (617) 489-9456. Stop singing quietly in the pews - raise your voice in song and join us in the choir loft!

Mark Haddad, Director

P.S. The first required choir rehearsal for new and existing members will take place at the church on Thursday, September 4th, at 7p.m. sharp. New members are encouraged to attend. For questions, please call Mark Haddad at 617-489-9456.

From the Virgin Mary Society...

After a relaxing and enjoyable summer, the ladies of the Virgin Mary Society are back in the kitchen cooking and baking for our upcoming bazaar.

We are in dire need of help. If you are able to volunteer a few hours a week on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday from 9 am to 1 pm, it would be greatly appreciated. I also want to sincerely thank all of the parishioners who picked or donated grape leaves. This is a big help!

Our bazaar is our biggest moneymaker for the year. Please contact Lillian Khouri at (781) 237-4819.

Yours in Christ,
Lillian Khouri, President



ANNOUNCING
BAZAAR AND AUCTION 2003
November 7th, 8th, 9th

The Annual Bazaar and Auction will be held on November 7th, 8th, and 9th 2003. If you are interested in either chairing a committee or being a part of a committee, please call the church office. We would love to see many parishioners help us with this major fund raising event.

We look forward to some of the classics – Middle Eastern cuisine, snack bar, country store, video arcade, live auction, craft table, religious table and more. We also look forward to any new ideas. We will need auction items and other donations too. Mark your calendars! Keep these dates open! Hope to see you all soon.

Paula Hamwey and Sheila Hamwey, Bazaar Co-chairs



Announcements . . .

❖ **DID YOU KNOW?** The church office is covered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by an answering service and voice mail. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number and a brief message. Your call will be returned. *If it is an emergency*, you should inform the answering service and request that they page Fr. John immediately.

❖ **MANY YEARS** to the new officers and members of the Executive Board: Alan Cardoos -Chair, Paula Hamwey- Vice Chair, Kathy Tawa- Treasurer, Bob Kurker-Recording Secretary, Cheryl Mattar-Corresponding Secretary, Christopher Bradley, Dan Capobianco, Arthur Khouri, Elizabeth MacNeil, Roberta Maloof, Elaine Sabbag, and Tom Sabbag.

❖ **MANY THANKS** to all who donated to the Food For Hungry Program. Because of your generosity, the church was able to send \$6,923 to the Archdiocese to help those in need.

❖ **ST. MARY'S, PAWTUCKET** will host Metropolitan PHILIP on the weekend of September 5th, 2003. For more information, please call 401.726.1202

❖ **ST. MARY'S, CAMBRIDGE** will celebrate their 75th anniversary over the weekend of September 19th, 2003 at the Burlington Marriott. For further information, please call 617.547.1234.

❖ **ST. GEORGE, WEST ROXBURY** announces their 27th annual bazaar and food fair on October 17-19th at their church hall. For more information, please call 617.323.9861

❖ **FEAST DAY 2004** We are pleased to announce that His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP will preside at our feast day weekend over the weekend of December 4, 2004. The feast day weekend this year will be December 5th -7th. More information will follow

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL
BARBECUE!**



**Celebrate the start of a new
Church School year with an
Old Fashioned Barbecue at St. John's.**

September 7th

After Divine Liturgy in the Church Hall

**Adults - \$6
Church School Students - \$3**

**For reservations, please call
Carol Hazerjian 508-660-0072
or Patty in the Office 781-326-3046**

Church of St. John of Damascus
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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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Sunday Services: Matins 9:00 a.m.; Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours...Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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

Please plan accordingly.

DEADLINE for the November/December 2003 *Torchbearer* will be October 7th.

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