

THE TORCHBEARER

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

September/October 2010

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 had/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 kids 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, Fr. John K. Teebagy, Pastor*

Church Records...

"As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"

Justin Andre, son of Justin and Jacqueline (Turner) Hadaya of Medford, was baptized on June 13th.

Owen Jackson, son of Albert and Lindsey (Alexander) Kassatly of York, ME, was baptized on June 13th.

Amanda Grace, daughter of Timothy and Nadine (Beshere) Adams of Hanover, was baptized on August 1st.

Many Years!



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

+Cecelia Maloof Connolly (81) of Arlington fell asleep in the Lord on April 24th. She is survived by a son and daughter, along with their families. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

+Dolores Tabet (74) of Somerville fell asleep in the Lord on May 3rd. She is survived by two sisters and a brother, along with their families. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

+Joseph Haddad (88) of Yarmouth fell asleep in the Lord on June 4th. He is survived by his daughter, along with her family. Burial was at Blue Hill Cemetery in Braintree.

+ Robert Khouri (80) of West Roxbury fell asleep in the Lord on August 11th. He is survived by his wife, son and daughter, along with their families. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

Memory Eternal!



“The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit “

Philip Demers of Burlington was welcomed into the Orthodox Church by chrismation on June 13th.

Many Years!



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

Michael A. Anderson and Kathryn Rose Sabbag were married on June 6th. We wish them well as they begin their new life together in Dorchester.

Paul H. Wilcock and Shirley Ash McGovern were married on July 31st. We wish them well as they begin their new life together in London, England

Many Years!



From the Executive Board Chair... Greetings Fellow Parishioners, I hope and pray that you are enjoying the summer and that this letter finds you and your family doing well.

I am thankful that the Executive Board has elected me to a second term, and hope to continue serving the parish well. I would like to announce the new and returning officers of the Executive Board: Chairman: Don Khouri II; Vice Chairman: Rick Ahto; Clerk: Heather Feldman; Treasurer: Kathleen Tawa

I would also like to welcome Heather Feldman and Emily Vogel who are joining the Executive Board for the first time. All members will be sworn in after Liturgy on Sunday, September 8th.

We have a great deal going on in the life of the parish during 2010 and 2011. **The Silver Anniversary Celebration** which is being chaired by Mitch Hallal will take Place on October 2nd and 3rd at the Church. There is a dinner cabaret scheduled for Saturday night, and special extended coffee hour Sunday after church. For more information and to make reservations, please visit the website at <http://stjohnd.org/pdf/jubilee.pdf>

The Annual Bazaar is being chaired again by Nancy Close, Carol Hazerjian, and Sheila Tawa. It will take place Friday, November 5 through Sunday, November 7. This is a great opportunity for fun, fellowship, and fundraising. This is a great way to get involved and help out the church. Please contact Nancy, Carol, or Sheila for more information.

The 73rd New England Parish Life Conference will take place June 17-19, 2011 at the Resort and Conference Center in Hyannis on Cape Cod. It is a great way to spend a summer family vacation and participate in the life of the diocese. The resort offers quite a bit including a full-service spa, 18 hole golf course, and indoor and outdoor pools. The theme of the Conference is, "Be mindful, O Lord, of the priesthood, the diaconate, and every priestly rank." For more information, please visit the website: <http://www.stjohnd.org/conference2011/>. Thank you to Cynthia Capobianco and Debbie Leotsakos for taking on this major project. To get involved please reach out.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions. ***With the Love of Christ, Don Khouri II, Executive Board Chairman*** (executiveboard@stjohnd.org).

From the Virgin Mary Society... The members of the Virgin Mary Society are busy preparing for the bazaar. It would be most appreciated if you, male or female, could offer a few hours a week to help. Cooking for the Bazaar has already begun; we work on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

From the Parent Guild... As summer is coming to an end, Parent Guild is getting ready for its annual "Welcome Back Barbecue" which will be held on the first day of church school, September 12th, after liturgy. The cost is \$10 per adult, \$5 per child from 5 to 16 years of age. Please make a reservation by contacting Carol Hazerjian at (508) 660-0072 or chazerjian@verizon.net, Bertina Kurker at (781) 721-1647, or by e-mailing the church office at churchoffice@stjohnd.org. The first Parent Guild meeting of the school year will be Sunday, September 26th following Diving Liturgy, at which time we will schedule our activities for the year. There are many opportunities during the year for you to get involved and help with our activities, which are all to benefit the church school, as well as to promote fellowship within the parish. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to help out with any of the activities, please contact either of us. Looking forward to seeing you in church and at the barbecue on September 12th! ***Yours in Christ, Carol Hazerjian and Bertina Kurker***

From the Church School... It's "**Back to School Time**" once again at St. John of Damascus Church School! Classes begin on September 12th 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, 2010. This class is a "Parent Cooperative" – all parents of Preschool 1 students help out on a rotating basis. There will be a brief parent meeting on Sept. 26th (during Church School) to explain how this class operates, set up the volunteer schedule, and distribute the curriculum. The first class will be held on Oct. 10th.

Classes begin immediately after Holy Communion. Children will be dismissed from their pews into the Communion line, and then will proceed directly to their classrooms. Adults will be ushered into the Communion line after all children and Church School staff have gone, so that we may start our program as quickly and smoothly as possible. School will be in session until noon each Sunday, at which time children will be sent into the hall area where you can meet them.

In order for children to benefit from our 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. Students who have attained at least 50% attendance during the school year will be awarded a certificate of completion and will be eligible for other awards at graduation on May 22, 2011.

We offer an excellent program through which it is possible for your children to come to know the faith, and to know God Himself. This program cannot be carried out without your support, however. We rely on you to reinforce and enhance what your children learn in class. If you need any help with expressing your faith to your children, please contact Fr. John or me, and we would be more than happy to assist you. *In Christ, Nancy Close, Church School Director, 978-692-0857 / school@stjohnd.org*

HELP WANTED!! Teachers and Teachers' Aides to join our Church School staff. All are welcome!

**Congratulations to the members of the 2010 Bible Bowl team: Caitlin Bradley, Andrew Hazerjian, Brian Hazerjian. They missed 1st place by 1 point!!
May God grant them many years!!**

From the Stewardship Committee... Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, As we begin to enter the fifth year of our Stewardship Program, I am pleased to announce that it is going very well. Although we may have always thought of ourselves as Stewards of St. John's, we now are able to fully enjoy the benefits of feel good giving. When we search our hearts and give God the first fruits of our labor we in fact reap the benefits. "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; For God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7) David Haddad has stepped forward to give us his talent and chair the time and talent portion of our Stewardship program. I am very pleased to have him lead this effort. Please look for opportunities to help support David, by giving of your time and talents with all of the many wonderful events we have coming up this year. *Thank you, Debbie Greenstein & the stewardship committee.*

From the Fellowship... Mark your calendars now for the Fellowship's Lobster Dinner which will be held on October 13th from 5-7:30 pm. For reservations, please call Agnes Medwar at 781.762.5734. Please make your reservations by October 10th. More details to follow.

From the Choir... From July 28th through August 1st, the Antiochian Sacred Music Department hosted the 25th Annual Sacred Music Institute held at Antiochian Village. I, along with Tom and Sheri Sabbag of our parish and nine other participants from New England, joined the other 124 choir members, conductors, chanters, and sacred music lovers from across the country and Canada for an amazing week filled with music, learning, and fellowship. The highlights of the institute included classes in Byzantine chant, conducting, vocal technique, new music and some of the most glorious singing ever heard at Vespers and Diving Liturgy.

I had the privilege of singing in the Sacred Music Chamber Choir. The twenty-four members, selected for this auditioned ensemble from throughout the Archdiocese, performed eight sacred pieces as part of the second annual Saturday evening concert. The other performances included works from The Boston Byzantine Choir and the Byzantine Choir of Pittsburgh.

I am proud to report that St. John's is one of the first parishes in New England to successfully incorporate the "standard" music set forth by the Archdiocese in our Divine Liturgy. The talents and dedication of our choir members allow us to bring these beautiful hymns to life here at St. John's.

Since the Institute coincided with the 3rd session of camp, it was an extra treat to see many of our own campers and counselors from St. John's before they departed for home.

The most significant update from the Institute is that Mr. Paul Jabara of Montreal, Canada, has been appointed as the new Sacred Music Coordinator of the Diocese of New England. Paul has been the director of the choir at St. George in Montreal for 26 years. He has been a part of The Sacred Music Institute pretty much from its beginning, and has been coordinating it for the past two years. He is also the creator and conductor of The Sacred Music Institute Chamber Choir. I had the pleasure of working with Paul and welcome his talents and leadership to our Diocese and to our Parish.

On behalf of the choir, we would like to thank David Franciosi very much for all of his time and efforts throughout the many years he fulfilled the role of Sacred Music Coordinator for New England and ask God to bless him always.

Once again, we welcome new members to the choir. For more information, please see me after Liturgy or contact me at 617-489-9456. *Yours in Christ, Mark Haddad*

Announcements....

- **MANY THANKS** to all who donated to the 2010 *Food for Hungry Program* campaign. Because of your generosity, the church was able to send \$3,699 to the archdiocese to help those in need.
- **AABA** presents its "36th Annual Hufli" with *The Mitchell Kaltsunas Ensemble* on Saturday, September 25th from 7 p.m. – midnight at the Annunciation Church Hall; tickets are \$60 per person, which includes a full dinner, dessert, and coffee. No tickets will be sold at the door. Please call June David @ 617.327.3385 or Olivia Waishek @ 617.694.9783 for ticket reservations.
- **FAIR** St. Michael the Archangel Church holds its 1st Annual International Taverna and Food Fair on October 9th -10th on the church grounds, 62 Main St., Cotuit, MA. Free admission. For further information, please contact Jasmine Andrews, (508) 540-1657.
- **ST. GEORGE, WEST ROXBURY** announces their 34th annual bazaar and food fair on October 15th – 17th at their church hall. For more information, please call St. George at 617.323.0323.
- **SNOWBIRDS** Before leaving for Florida, *please* give the office your temporary address. This ensures that you get the church's mail in a timely manner and reduces postage costs for the church.
- **LITURGY** We will return to our regular liturgical schedule on Sunday, September 12th, with Matins at 9 a.m., the Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m. Confession is offered from 8:45-9:40 a.m. or by appointment. As a reminder, confession is *NOT* available after Liturgy. Church School will also begin on September 12th.
- **2011 PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE** Please join us on Sunday, September 12th for a planning meeting for the conference, which St. John's will host. Please see Cynthia Capobianco or Debbie Leotsakos for more information.
- **CHURCH OFFICE** During Bazaar season the church office will be closed on Wednesdays; after the bazaar the office will be closed on Mondays. The new office hours are 8 am -2:15 pm. The bulletin deadline remains Thursday at 10 am.

- **COOKBOOK** Back by Popular Demand! The St. John of Damascus Centennial Cookbook is being reprinted and will be here in time for the holidays. Place your order now to be sure to get the number you need. The first publication was a total sellout: Don't be left out! Order forms can be found at www.stjohnd.org/pdf/cookbook.pdf or from the church office.

- **UPCOMING FEASTS** In September, we celebrate 2 major feast days in the life of the Church; the Nativity of Mary and the Elevation of the Cross. On September 7th and September 13th, please join us at St. George, Norwood at 6 p.m. as we celebrate these two great feasts.

- **ADULT EDUCATION** Please join us for 6 Tuesday nights, starting September 14th, from 7-8 pm for our fall education series. We will discuss the book *The Faith* by Clark Carlton. You can order this book by contacting Regina Press at 1.800.636.2470 or <http://www.reginaorthodoxpress.com/faith.html>. If you plan on attending, please read chapter 1 in advance. Please see Fr. John for questions.

- **ST. JOHN'S GOT TALENT!** Calling parishioners of all ages with special talents who would like to perform at our Silver Celebration Cabaret on Saturday, October 2nd. If you are interested, please contact Mitch Hallal at 508. 790.1219 for more information.

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS

ANNUAL BAZAAR

NOVEMBER 5, 6 & 7, 2010

Join us for a fun-filled weekend of culinary delights,

great bazaar shopping, games and more!

AUTHENTIC MIDDLE EASTERN CUISINE!

All your favorites, including rolled grape leaves, kibbee, shish kebab & sfeeha

♣*Takeout Available*♣

LIVE & SILENT AUCTIONS

Sports tickets, gift certificates, electronics...and more!

FEATURING...

- Middle Eastern Pastries • American Pastries • Gift Baskets • American Food • Snack Bar • Almost New Boutique • Country Store • Christmas Crafts • White Elephant Table • Religious Articles • Money Raffles • Kids Games • Sports Tickets Raffle • Middle East Gifts • and more!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

The success of this year's bazaar depends on all of us working together! If you are able to participate in any way, we need your help! If you have never worked on the bazaar before, you're missing out on a fun-filled event that is key to our parish's continued growth and vitality. *Contact us and we will put you to work!*

Thank you!

2010 Bazaar Chairpeople

Nancy Close at 978.692.0857 /nzclose@verizon.net; **Carol Hazerjian** at 508.660.0072 /
chazerjian@verizon.net; **Sheila Hamwey** at 781.453.8980 /shamwey@comcast.net

Let's celebrate the start of a new

Church School Year with a

BACK-TO-

CHURCH-SCHOOL

BARBECUE

Sponsored by the Church School Parent Guild



Sunday, September 12, 2010

Directly after Divine Liturgy and Church School

Donation:

\$10 Adult/\$5 Children ages 5 – 16 years old

For reservations, please contact:

Carol Hazerjian at 508-660-0072 or chazerjian@verizon.net

Bertina Kurker at 781-721-1647 or email the Church Office

Volunteers needed! Please contact Carol Hazerjian if you can help.

All are welcome!

Church of St. John of Damascus

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is the Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the Church of St. John of Damascus

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.

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

Please plan accordingly.

DEADLINE for the November/December 2010 Torchbearer will be October 6th.

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

St. John of Damascus Silver Jubilee

*Celebrating 25 Years at West Street
October 2-3, 2010*

For the past 25 years, the Church of St. John of Damascus has been calling West Street in Dedham home. As a parish we have journeyed from our humble beginnings on Hudson Street, to our expanded facility on Museum Road and finally arriving at our beautiful parish complex on West Street in 1985. Come celebrate this milestone with your friends, family and fellow parishioners on October 2nd & 3rd, 2010.

Saturday, October 2, 2010 Dinner Cabaret

Cocktails & dinner will be followed by a special evening of family entertainment and the chance to win great raffle prizes.

6 -7 pm - Cocktails & Piano Music

7-8:30 pm – Middle Eastern Buffet Dinner

8:30-10 pm - Parish Family Entertainment

10-11 pm - Door Prize, Raffle Drawings & Coffee Hour

For prepaid reservations, call Donald Khouri, Sr. at 781-769-9693 or email Dek1@Cox.net. Tables of 8, 9 or 10 are available. Mail checks to: Donald E. Khouri, 24 Rose Court, Norwood, MA 02062.

Sunday, October 3, 2010 Divine Liturgy & Extended Coffee Hour

Please join our parish family immediately following Divine Liturgy for an extended coffee hour with a feature presentation by our Church School students and a mini auction.

