SAINT MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." (Acts 11:26)

6330 W. 127th St., Palos Heights, IL 60463
Phone : (708) 239-0004, Fax : (708) 221-6449
www.stmaryoc.org (office@stmaryoc.org)
Church Office Hours : Monday - Friday 10:00am-3:00pm

St. Mary Parish Clergy
Rev. Fr. Mousa Haddad, Pastor
Very Rev. Fr. Malek Rihani
Subdeacon Matthew Sweis
Subdeacon Ameer Tadros

Parish Council
Fr. Mousa - Presiding Officer
Fadi Abu Manneh - Chairman
Feras Sweis - Vice Chairman
Abdullah Tadros - Treasurer
Constantin Kari - Financial Sec.
Abeer Khouri - Secretary
Nidal Al-Farah
George Barakat
Bassam Salman
Feras Salman
Faris Samawi
Samer Tadros

Parish Ministries
Sunday School - Omar Sweiss
SOYO - Marram Salman
Fellowship - Khalil Haddad
Antiochian Women - Susan Sweis
Handmaids - Mansoura Khouri and Lina Haddad
Humanitarian - Shireen Salman
OCLife - Nancy Cannon
Fishers of Men - John Eannace
Athletics - Melad Qodsi
Choir - Michael Rascia
Chanters - Khaled Salman and Faris Samawi
Webmaster - Sana Sweis

Office Administrator
Katia Haddad
administrator@stmaryoc.org

Parish Administrator
Rachel Kari
rkari@stmaryoc.org

Church Hall Rental
Call the church office or email our Office Administrator

December 22, 2013

The Sunday before the Nativity of Christ (Genealogy Sunday)

Weekly Schedule of Services

Saturday: 5:30 p.m. -- Great Vespers
Sunday: 8:45 a.m. Matins -- 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. Matins -- 10:30 a.m. Bible Study
(Confessions by Appointment)

Welcome to St. Mary Orthodox Church! We extend our warmest and heartfelt greetings to you and your family. If this is your first time with us, we pray that you feel at home. After all, we are gathered together in our Father's house. For more information, please see one of the ushers at the end of the service for a "Welcome Packet." May God bless you and give you many healthy years in His service.

Hymns of the Day

Entrance Hymn (Tone Two)

O Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead,
who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone One)

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life to the world; for which cause the Heavenly Powers cried aloud unto Thee, O Giver of Life, Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy Providence! O Thou who alone art the Lover of Mankind.

Troparion of the Fore-feast (Tone Four)

Be thou ready, O Bethlehem; for Eden hath been opened for all. Prepare, O Ephratha; for the Tree of life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin; for her belly did appear as a noetic paradise in which is planted the divine Plant, whereof eating we shall live and not die as Adam. Verily, Christ shall be born, raising the likeness that fell of old.

Troparion of the Sunday before the Nativity (Tone Two)

Great are the accomplishments of faith; for the three holy youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though at waters of rest. And the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

Troparion of the Dormition (Tone One)

In thy birth giving O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

Kontakion of the Fore-feast of the Nativity (Tone Three)

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave where she will give birth in an ineffable manner to the Word Who is before all the ages. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest it heralded: Glorify Him, with the angels and the shepherds, Who chose to be seen as a new-born babe, the God Who is before all the ages.

Epistle for the Sunday before the Nativity

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our Fathers!
For you are just in all you have done!

The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews (11:9-10, 32-40).

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Gospel for the Sunday before the Nativity

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (1:1-25).

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Issac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Jerubbabel, and Jerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary you wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

Parish News

Honoring your loved ones: Please consider signing up for one or more Sundays to provide Holy Bread and Coffee hour. It's this gift of Holy Bread that we use to prepare communion and to share with our parishioners at the end of the service. *What better way to honor your loved ones on their birthday, anniversary, graduation or memorial*. It takes minimal effort, and it encourages fellowship among our community.

Holy Bread and Coffee Hour

12/22: Jamal and Kholoud Swais & Family

12/29: Aida Ziadat & Family

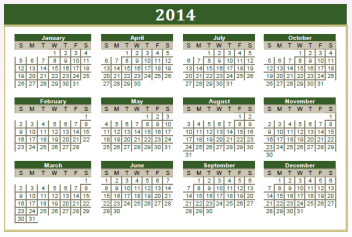
01/05: Nahil and Mervitt Tadros & Family

Bulletin Blurb for Sunday
December 22, 2013

The best Christmas gift is a wholesome, healthy child.

Help ensure that your holiday celebrations are safe and enjoyable. While the holiday season is a time for young people to meet up with old friends and to connect with family…Make Time To Talk. We ask parents to talk to your teen about the risks of underage drinking and drug use while encouraging him or her to spend quality time with both family and friends. Don't relax your rules just because it's the holiday season.

The 2014 Holy Bread & Coffee Hour sign-up sheet is available in the Church hall. Please take time to sign up for a Sunday.
God bless!



Please make sure you pick up your 2014 St. Mary Calendar after Liturgy. One per family. God bless!

Epistle Reading

12/22: Lily Sweiss & Elaine Riadi
12/24: Norma Tadros & Delia Haddad
12/29: Nour Swaiss & Abeer Khouri

"Bible Verse of the Week"

"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; Luke 1:76-78

Advent Fast & Christmas Reminder!

The Nativity Fast (Advent) began Friday, November 15th and will end December 24th (after Christmas Eve Liturgy). We are to fast from meat and dairy. In order for fasting to be effective, it must be accompanied with prayer and acts of mercy and love. St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "What good is it to fast from meat and dairy, if we devour and eat one another." Please remember to love and forgive in this special time in which we prepare for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Important: Mark your Calendars for Christmas Liturgy

Important! Please mark your calendars for the Christmas Liturgy. It will begin at 6pm, Tuesday December 24th. How can we truly celebrate Christmas if we skip out on Christmas Liturgy? The Christmas season is a very busy time, & we have plans to be with friends & family. But, we must learn to set our priorities straight, so schedule your gatherings around the Christmas Liturgy. Can you imagine having a birthday party without the birthday boy?! That's exactly what we do when we don't attend Christmas Liturgy. Let us begin to change the secularization of Christmas & bring Christ back into the picture by remembering the reason for the season. I am looking forward to seeing you all at Christmas Liturgy. God bless!

Upcoming Events

Fri Dec 20, 2013	7:00pm	Fellowship Christmas Gathering
Sat Dec 21, 2013	11:00am	Arabic School Christmas Pageant
	1:30pm	Youth Sports League
	5:00pm	Great Vespers
Sun Dec 22, 2013	8:45am	Matins
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy / Sunday School
Mon Dec 23, 2013	6:00pm	PADS Shelter Volunteering
Tue Dec 24, 2013	6:00pm	Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity
Wed Dec 25, 2013		Nativity of Christ
Thu Dec 26, 2013		Fast Free until January 4th
Fri Dec 27, 2013		SOYO Christmas Retreat
Sat Dec 28, 2013		SOYO Christmas Retreat
	5:30pm	Great Vespers
	6:30pm	After Christmas Ladies Party
Sun Dec 29, 2013		SOYO Christmas Retreat
	8:45am	Matins
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
Tue Dec 31, 2013	7:00pm–	New Year's Party

The Fellowship of St. John the Divine

Christmas Gathering

Friday, December 20th 2013
7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Please bring your favorite Lenten dish for the potluck!

The person with the ugliest Christmas sweater will be awarded.

If you would like to participate in the Secret Santa please submit your name to Nada Tadros or Fabiola Sweis by Sunday December 8th 2013.
(The spending limit is $25)

"And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not: behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people, unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ the Lord.'" Luke 2:11

St. Mary Orthodox Church
6330 W. 127th St. Palos Heights, IL 60463

Arabic School Christmas Pageant

Saturday, December 21, 2013

11am - 1pm

There will be refreshments and gifts after the pageant in the fellowship hall.

Sunday School Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 22, 2013

What to wear for the Christmas Pageant:

* **Boys:** Please wear black dress pants a white shirt and a red tie.
* **Girls:** Please wear a red dress or black skirt/pants with red top.
* **Pre-K/Kind class:** please wear neutral colored pants and tops like white, brown, grey or beige.

The winners of the bicycles based on Sunday School attendance will be announced. We will also announce the winner class from the Food Drive .

Those who donated costume money thank you, it will be used to purchase some costumes for the pageant.

St. Mary Orthodox Church

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Fuheis American Association

Invite you to celebrate a community

New Year's Party

Orland Chateau

14500 S La Grange Rd.

Orland Park, IL 60462

at 7:00pm

Music by: Faisal Al-Wazani & Nabil Nemeh

Tickets:

Adults - $75

12yrs & younger - $30

St. Mary Orthodox Church

9th Annual Christmas High School Retreat

December 27 - December 29

This annual retreat is an opportunity for you to build upon your Orthodox Christian faith and learn how to apply the teachings of Jesus Christ to your own life.

$175 per teen; payment plans available. Please see Orieb Sweis to register or make your deposit. God bless!

Sale Going on NOW!!!

Teen SOYO

Cold Stone Ice-Cream PIE Sale

Please see any of the Teen SOYO members to put in you order for your Holiday PIE!!!

$15 each

S'more Some More Pie
There's Chocolate on my Peanut Butter Pie
Cookie Dough Pie
Caramel Turtle Treat
Mintastic Chip Pie
Caramel Apple Pie

$10 PIZZA Coupon

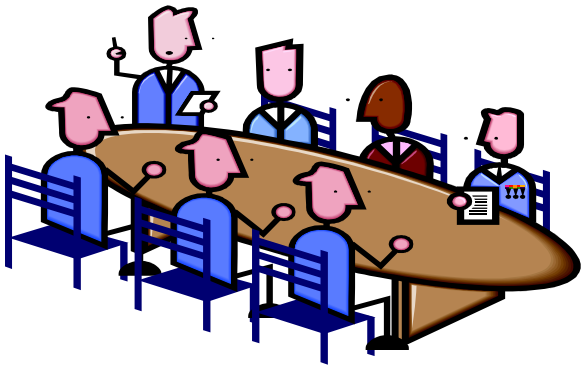
Includes 16 buy one get one free coupons.
In total you will get 16 free pizzas.
You can use it at any of the Domino's locations.
Please see any of the **Teen SOYO** members
to purchase your coupon!

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE

Domino's

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE

Annual General Assembly Meeting and Parish Council Nominations



If you are interested in nominating yourself or another person for St. Mary's Parish Council, please let Fr. Mousa or Fadi Abu Manneh know by Friday, December 27th. Nominations will not be considered after that date.

Our Annual General Assembly Meeting will take place Sunday, January 12th immediately following the Divine Liturgy. Mark your calendars and make every effort to attend.

Please make sure your 2013 pledge is paid in full by Sunday, December 29th, so that you can participate in the General Assembly.

Thanks and God bless!

Weekly Synaxarion

On December 22 in the Holy Orthodox Church we commemorate the Great-martyr Anastasia the deliverer from potions, and her teacher the Martyr Chrysogonos. On this day, the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, we have been enjoined by our holy and God-bearing Fathers to make commemoration of all them that from the beginning of time have been well-pleasing unto God, from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, according to genealogy, as Luke the Evangelist hath recounted historically; and likewise for the Prophets and Prophetesses, especially of Daniel the Prophet and the three holy youths. It is also known as the Sunday of the Holy Genealogy. We remember the aforementioned names, those in the Old Testament who were related to Christ by blood, and those who spoke of His Birth as a man. In the Divine Liturgy, we shall read of Jesus Christ's lineage from the Gospel of Saint Matthew. In this way, the Church shows us that Christ truly became a man, taking on human nature. He was not a ghost, an apparition, a myth, a distant imagined god, or the abstract god of philosophers; such a god does not have a family tree. Our God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He has flesh and blood, human ancestors—many of whom sinned greatly, but like David, also repented greatly. Yet, all of these righteous ones in every age had been well-pleasing to God because they loved Him. By taking on human nature, the Son of God became like us in all ways, in flesh and blood, in mind and soul, and in heart and will. He differed from us in only one way: He could not sin. Since we know that Christ's human nature remained sinless, He is also fully divine, and He shows us the way in which we can avoid sin, and so improve and transform our human nature. By their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.