

Antiochian Women ~ North American Board March - Women's Month & Great Lent to Pascha E-Bulletin "A Sisterhood serving Christ through serving Others"

Latest News - Announcements - Events - Religious Devotions



AW-NAB WEBPAGE + AW-NAB FACEBOOK + AW-NAB INSTAGRAM

LOS ANGELES & the WEST: Webpage Newsletter Facebook MIAMI & the SOUTHEAST: Webpage Facebook N.Y. & D.C.; OAKLAND & CHARLESTON; MID-ATLANTIC: Newsletter Webpage Facebook OTTAWA, EASTERN CANADA & UPSTATE NY: Facebook TOLEDO & the MIDWEST: Newsletter Facebook WICHITA & MID-AMERICA: Facebook WORCESTER & NEW ENGLAND: Newsletter

- + A Message from Metropolitan JOSEPH & Antiochian Village Project, page 2-3
- + March is AW Month!, page 4-5
- + Great Lent to Pascha resources, page 6-8
- + Together Again, page 9
- + "Women in the Church", page 10
- + Acts of Mercy, page 11-12
- + "A Quiet and Peaceful Life" St. Piama, page 13-15



- + Sister to Sister: Interview with Isabel Elac, page 16
- + Feast of the Annunciation, page 17
- + Fun reproducibles for you!, page 18
- + Retreat announcements, page 19
- + AW-NAB Directory, page 20
- + AW Holy Week to Pascha Greeting, page 21



Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

March 2022

Beloved Antiochian Women throughout our God-Protected Archdiocese:

Many blessings to you and your families as we approach the start of Great Lent, that beautiful season of repentance and renewal.

For many years now, March has been dedicated to recognizing your important contributions to the life of our parishes and our archdiocese. What an appropriate time for us to emphasize the role of women in our Church! Later this month we will celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation, when the Virgin Mary learned that she would bear the Savior of the World and said "Yes" to God's plan for her. She accepted this role with faith and courage and remained faithful to her Son through all the difficulties that followed, enduring the sword that Righteous Symeon foretold would pierce her own soul also (Luke 2:35).

In imitation of the Most-Holy Theotokos, you now accept the ministries entrusted to you and persevere in them with faith and love, and it is right for us to acknowledge this not just for one month but throughout the year. On behalf of our archdiocese, I thank you for all your good works: from fundraising for archdiocesan projects to assisting those in unfortunate circumstances; from cooking for parish events to providing spiritual nourishment by sponsoring retreats.

This year we have as our annual-project theme "Reflecting on the Past—Building for the Future." It focuses on the next phases of development at the Antiochian Village, which you have been working to support for a few years now: a new cathedral (with a crypt for our deceased hierarchs and a shrine to house the holy relics of St. Raphael of Brooklyn), a residence for our hierarchs when they retire, an independent/assisted living facility, and a monastery on a secluded part of the property. This project will bless many future generations and will stand as a monument to your loving generosity, along with that of many others throughout our archdiocese.

As we begin our Lenten journey, I pray that each of you will be spiritually strengthened to accomplish the course of the Fast with humility and love for one another. May it strengthen your resolve to continue working together in harmony for the glory of God and the good of the Church, doing your best and never giving up.

Your Father in Christ,

Metropolitan Loseph

+**JOSEPH** Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

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

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THE ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE PROJECT Reflecting on the Past—Building for the Future





the Monastery & cemetery

www.antiochian.org/AVPJT



THE EPISCOPAL RETIREMENT RESIDENCE



An Independent/ Assisted Living Facility

AVPJT@antiochian.org







March is Antiochian Women's Month!

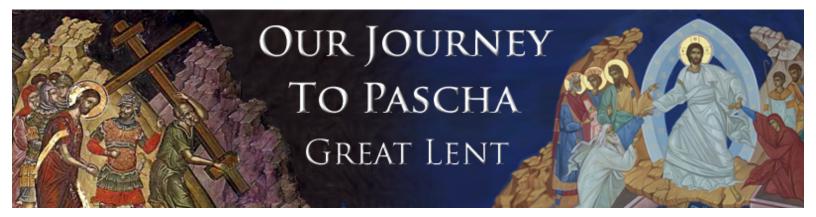












The Church, in its wisdom, provides for us many opportunities for spiritual growth during the Lenten season. We are blessed to have many services to attend, as well as prayers and fasting. If you are looking for personal study, extra reading this lent, or Pascha basket gift ideas, Emily Bradly, AW NAB Spiritual Coordinator, has put together some resources for you, your family, and friends!

OrthodoxMom proverbs 14:1



Orthodox Lenten Companion for Adults This is a printable PDF with daily study and journaling. https://www.orthodoxmom.com/orthodox-studies/p/orthodox-

lenten-companion-for-adults

<u>My Path to Pascha</u> This is also a printable PDF to be used with your children. <u>https://www.orthodoxmom.com/</u> <u>orthodox-studies/p/my-path-to-</u> <u>pascha-lenten-study-for-kids</u>

my path to pascha





Closer to Lent, there are also <u>Psalter Groups</u> available at orthodoxmom.com People are put in a group of 20.

Each person reads one Kathisma a day, so that each group is reading the entire psalter each day of Lent.



Figs From Thistles Lenten

<u>Planner-</u> This planner includes weekly study, meal planning and space to organize life for Great Lent





Letters for Pilgrimage- This book is a daily study for teenage girls during Lent.



<u>Browse Draw Near Designs Shop!</u> There are also many books, toys and artwork dedicated to Lent and Pascha. So many options to choose from!



Recommended reading during Great Lent...

Pilgrimage to Pascha by Michele Constable and Steven J. Belonick

Fasting as a Family by Melissa Naasko

Great Lent: Journey to Pascha by Father Alexander Schmemann

Tending the Garden of our Hearts by Elissa Bjeletich and Kristina Wenger

The Lenten Spring by Father Thomas Hopko

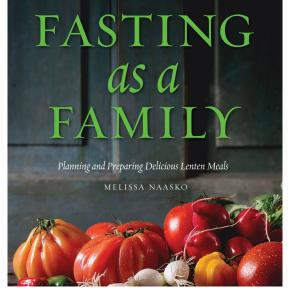
First Fruits of Prayer by Frederica Mathewes-Green



pilgrimage 3 PASCHA

A Daily Devotional for GREAT LENT

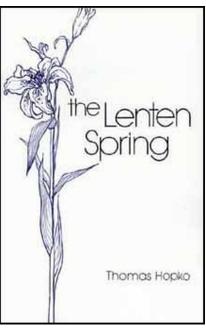
Archpriest Steven John Belonick with Michele Constable and Michael Soroka SECOND EDITION EDITED BY Deborah Malacky Belonick

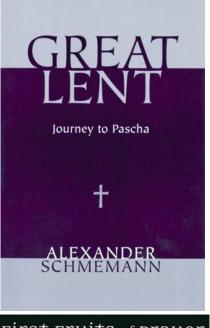


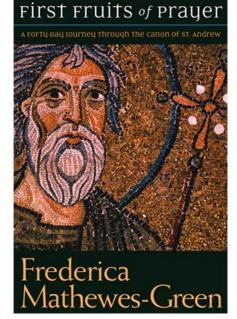


Daily Lenten Meditations for Families













But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life

The women of St Luke parish in Erie, Colorado, came together in January 2022 for a oneday retreat on the topic of St Photini and the Water of Life presented by the chapter officers.



presented by the Antiochian Women chapter officers.

The focus of the retreat was on new beginnings with an emphasis on the role of water in renewing our spiritual lives. Some of the new beginnings

noted were: the new year; our community being able to re-gather as the pandemic wanes; the various new beginnings Christ gave to people in the gospels as He healed them; how baptism and Theophany represent new beginnings in our spiritual lives.

The day began with an opportunity for women to arrive early and spend some time in quiet prayer in the temple before the retreat began in our newlyexpanded (another new beginning!) parish hall. Session topics included: Thirst; Women at Wells; St Photini; the Water of Life; you're Wells and Going Forth. There were opportunities for fellowship and re-connection, a delicious lunch together, and sharing among our community. The day ended in time for participants to attend Vespers before heading home.

In all, 35 women participated in the retreat, which turned out to be a beautiful day together and the perfect way to kick-off a new year and a new postpandemic focus on fellowship and re-connection in our community. There were requests to hold more retreats like this in the future!











"Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord." Luke 1:39–45

"The joy of the connection between these two mothers and their two sons is reflected in the Orthodox Church's iconographic depiction of this story. As seen in the twelfth century example here, Elizabeth and Mary are greeting each other in a cheek-to-cheek embrace. They are shown rushing into each other's arms, with their robes aflutter behind them; this is a depiction of the "haste" that Luke describes. It



is no accident that there are only a few other instances in which icons depict two people embracing. In this case, two cousins and dear friends are eager for each other's company, sharing, as they are, this exceptional time in their lives."

Read the full article by Dr. Carrie Frederick Frost (courtesy of PRAXIS Volume 17, Issue 2: Women in the Church <u>"A Relationship to be Smulated:</u> <u>The Maternal Kinship between the</u> <u>Mother of God and her cousin</u> <u>Elizabeth"</u>

Listen to two encouraging and wise video interviews about "Women in the Church" (click the pictures to access the YouTube link) COURTESY OF PROTECTING VEIL COLLECTIVE WISDOM PROJECT



Mother Christophora





PROVERBS 31:26

Rh Frederica Mathewes-Green





Throughout February, the AW at St Luke in Garden Grove, CA held a Blanket Collection Drive. They collected new or gently used, freshly washed blankets that are being donated to <u>FOCUS</u>* Southern California to be distributed to the people they are serving in their regular weekly outreaches.

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."" Matthew 25:40



If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the Church door, you will not find Him in the chalice. + St John Chrysotom





*Look for ways to get involved with your local parish chapter. FOCUS North American can help today in your community – just ask them!





The Antiochian Women from St Michael in Van Nuys, CA recently compiled College Care Packages for the college students of their parish family.

Prior to packing & shipping the packages, their priest, Fr Timothy led the parish in prayers for the students & blessed the icons that were included. Additionally, the care packages also contained a church calendar, assorted treats, supplies, gift cards & other fun items. Each package also included notes to the student from both Fr. Timothy & the Antiochian Women.

"I do not cease to

give thanks for you.

pravers

Ephesians 1:16 (ESV)

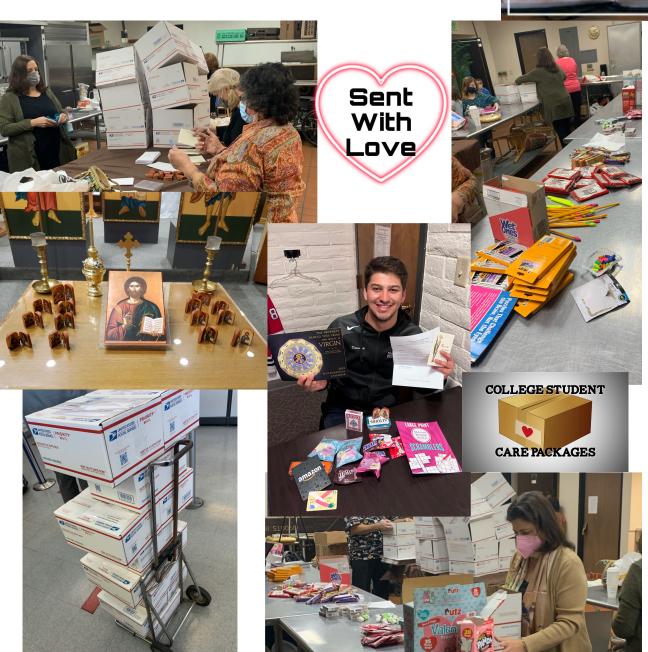
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remembering

mv

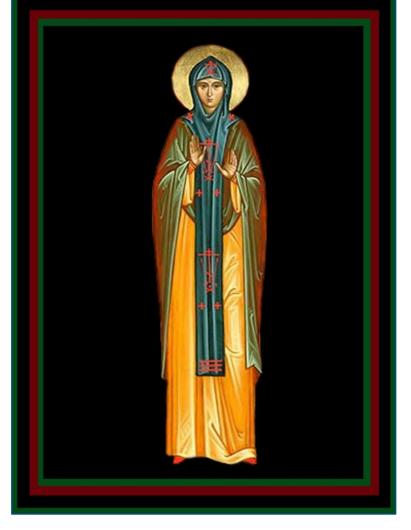
It's very important to let these young adults know that although they're away at school - their home parish will always be home & they are loved. One thank you note said, *"It meant so much to me to know you were all thinking of me and praying for me."* Another said, *"I am very grateful for your consideration & remembrance of me while I'm away."* Dominick sent a photo with some of the items he received & as can be seen by the look on his face, the care packages were well received.

God bless these young people & keep them near to God's holy house & our Orthodox Christian faith!



A Quiet and Peaceful Life... by Father Steven Ritter

Ancient Faith Radio podcast: <u>Hidden Saints</u>



Who among us does not desire a quiet and peaceful life? We certainly pray for that many times during the divine services, and although our lives may be quite harried and quite crazy sometimes with the pace of everything that goes on around us, all of us, I think, would wish basically for a peaceful life, for one full of quietness and calm. This is certainly what the venerable virgin maiden Piamoun^{*}, whom we <u>commemorate on March 3</u>, desired greatly in her own life.

She lived during the fourth century in Egypt, and she was a young maid who, from the earliest years, was very quiet and devout: said her prayers continuously, always loving God, and rarely thinking of anything else. She actually lived alone with her mother, and because they were poor, Piamoun also had to help to support the family. She did this by working at different types of weaving and with fabrics and this sort of thing along with her mother.

Piamoun was always desirous of this life; she really wanted nothing else. But, as things happen, particularly at this particular time in Egypt, Piamoun's village came under assault by a stronger village. The reason was because these two villages were arguing over water rights to the Nile. Certainly this sort of thing has happened many times before in history, hasn't it? Because water is so important for life. But the stronger village, which was not Piamoun's village, had been sending men in ambush for a long, long time, and there were a lot of murders taking place, even among Christians in these two villages.

Piamoun was really upset about this. Piamoun is someone who did not like violence at all. Yet word came to her that the stronger of the villages was going to assault her village, and they had murderous intent. The messenger about this was no less a figure than an angel. Seeing the prayers of Piamoun and seeing how devout she was, he sought to warn her and said, "You must prepare, because they are coming after you." Piamoun was quite distressed about this, so she called a number of priests to her home and said to them, "Look, we can't fight them off. They're coming with very grave intent upon our people here in the village, so if you would, would you please go out and meet them and try to persuade them not to invade the village? Because I think they will listen to you."

Well, the priests were—how can I say it?—chicken. They knew the murderous intent of these villagers, and they felt like there was nothing that they could do, so they refused. They would not go and even try to do their priestly duties, to be peacemakers, and assuage the fears of all those in their village and calm the passions of the invading village. They would have nothing to do with it. Well, they suggested something else: that Piamoun herself would go and persuade this neighboring village to stay away.

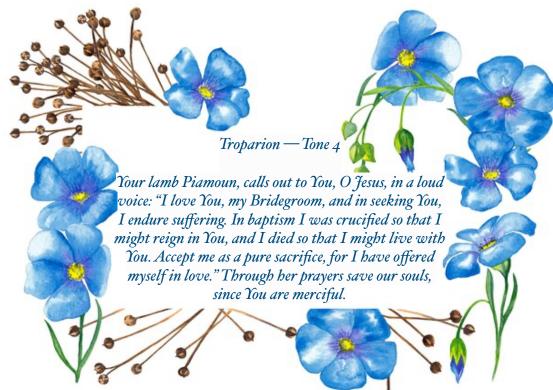
Piamoun understood, though, that because she was but a maiden and because she was someone who was very quiet that she would probably have no effect on this at all. So what she did instead was to send a message, send a message rounding up as many people as she could to go out and try and stop these invading villagers. Well, that didn't seem to work, either. So what she did is pray. She stayed up in vigil all night long, never even sitting down, never lying down, but standing in constant prayer, asking the Lord that he would protect them from the onslaught that was coming upon them.

And a marvelous thing happened. These villagers from the stronger village, at about the first hour of the night, assembled together and were ready to storm the smaller village; they were right at the outskirts—and they were frozen in their steps. They could not move, and they waited and waited, and still they could not move from where they were, until finally it came to them through a message that it was by the prayers of the holy virgin Piamoun that they were fixed to their spot.

Upon seeing this, they eventually repented of what they had done. They were quite fearful that this young girl would have such power over all of them, and so they repented and stepped back and decided not to invade, and in fact sent a message to the smaller village saying that all of you should thank God, because it is through the prayers of the holy virgin Piamoun that we did not invade. Eventually the two sides negotiated, made peace, and the problem was solved.

One doesn't often think that such a quiet life could have that sort of great effect on all of the horrible occurrences going around us, but the holy virgin Piamoun shows us that by prayer and fasting and faith in God and a firm intent to follow his will, that miracles can indeed happen.







*Saint Piamoun is also known as Piama. The holy virgin Piamoun ($\Pi_{1CL}\mu_O(v)$) was from Egypt, and she lived during the IV century. Her Life is recorded by Palladius in his Lausiac History.

When the Saint was very young her father died, but her Christian mother raised her with discipline and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). When she grew up, she and her mother engaged in works of mercy and compassion. They were not wealthy, but out of their meagre income, they were able to help their poor and weak brethren.

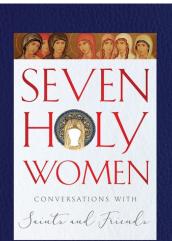
Saint Piamoun would eat a little food in the evening, and at night she kept constant vigil. She also labored at weaving linen, and she was found worthy of the gift of foresight.

When her mother reposed, the venerable one continued the work of ministering to her suffering brothers and sisters by herself. She visited their homes, comforted them, and strengthened their faith.

When Saint Piamoun reposed in 337, there was widespread mourning in her village.

There is a beautiful chapter about St Piama in this gem of a book...







"Thank you, Isabel Elac, for sharing your pearls of wisdom with the AW. We truly appreciate the seasons of your life, and all you have offered, and continue to offer for the church —according to God's Holy will.

AW: Do you have an early memory of being in church, tell us about that?

Isabel: I came to the USA from Chile – at age 11 – to Lowell, MA – the priest was my mother's Uncle Cosmos – this is where life close to the Orthodox church began.

Is there a particular time in the church year that truly resonates with you?

Nothing supersedes the celebration of Pascha in the Orthodox Church!

What roles have you served in the church, especially within the Antiochian Women? Tell us one of your fondest times serving the AW?

We moved to Southern CA when I was a teenager & I was a charter member of Teen SOYO at St Nicholas under the late V. Rev Fr James C Meena.

Eventually, I moved into being active in what was then called Senior SOYO. I held varied offices in both Teen & Sr SOYO In time, I became active with the St Nicholas Ladies Society. In the early 1970's I became active with the newly formed Antiochian Women of the Archdiocese – representing the women of the then Western Region. I also held multiple Officer/Board positions on a Diocese level – including starting off the AW Lenten Retreat in 1979! We planned them for several years & the retreat continues to this day with the 43rd annual Lenten Retreat being held in April. The first speaker was Dr. John Dalack (May his memory be eternal).

In 1985 – AW elected me to become the very first AW NAB President. Previously, the AW President of the Archdiocese, wore two hats - also serving as a regional president.

This was a very memorable term & during that time I served as the AW NAB President, the Evangelical Orthodox Church was received into our Antiochian Archdiocese by Met. PHILIP, of blessed memory.

Would you say that your closest and cherished friends are in the church, were on the AW Board with you, or all over the map? Anyone you'd like to mention?

Most of my closest friends are from my local parish, where I've been for over 60 years – but throughout the years, I've been blessed with countless friends through the Sisterhood of the Antiochian Women all over our Antiochian Archdiocese.

Kh Peggy King – was the first of the newly received Evangelical Orthodox & to serve as a Diocese President, and she also served on my NAB Board.

Are there some "pearls of wisdom" you can share with us on being a woman of faith? One of my favorite scriptures is –

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23

"If only we could all strive to live by this."

Thank you so much, Isabel, for chatting with the AW Sisterhood; thank you for your many years of dedicated service serving others while serving Christ!



Troparion (Tone 4) -

Today is the beginning of our salvation, The revelation of the eternal mystery! The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin As Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, The Lord is with You!



The Feast of the Annunciation is a very important feast of the Faith. Did you ever stop and think about why that is true? Why is the Annunciation one of the twelve great feasts of the Church? Let us take a moment to think about what happened at the Annunciation, so that we can be better prepared to lead our family in celebrating this great feast.

When we stop and think about it, we can see that each part of this event is notable of its own accord, and together, all are essential for our salvation. It began when the Angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary that she had been chosen by God to bear His Son. The fact that this angel appeared shows that the event was significant, for he is sent whenever God has an important message to convey. God's selection of Mary to become the Theotokos is a critical part of the event, since she was a holy young lady who had consecrated her life to God's service. Her agreement, "Let it be to me as you say," is a vitally important piece as well, because it simultaneously demonstrates Mary's humility before God and her willingness to obey. Also noteworthy is the fact that this event marks the moment in history when a person became the first Christian, for after the Annunciation, the Theotokos truly had Christ living within her. But the most significant aspect of the Annunciation is in what it announces; what came about as a result of both the announcement and the ensuing humble submission to God's will. And that is this; at the Annunciation, God Himself became human. This mystery is both mind-boggling and crucial. Christ's taking on flesh and dwelling among us was necessary so that He could die, break well. What humility! What love!

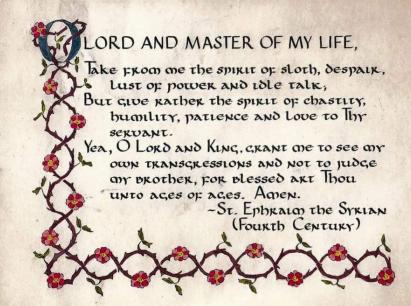
After giving it a little thought, we can see that the Feast of the Annunciation is truly a big deal for so many reasons! Even the other feasts of the church year would not exist without it! In addition, March 25 falls exactly nine months before Christmas, and is therefore is the date of the Annunciation. How wonderfully not-so-coincidental it is that the date of this Feast falls right in the midst of Great Lent each year, for it reminds us of Christ's humility and the Theotokos' obedience. Both humility and obedience are things that we are working on in our own lives, especially during Great Lent! The Annunciation reminds us of what God can do when both are exercised perfectly. Let us accordingly prepare our family to celebrate this great feast!

Kontakion (Tone 8) -

O Victorious Leader of Triumphant Hosts! We, your servants, delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might, set us free from every calamity So that we may sing: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!

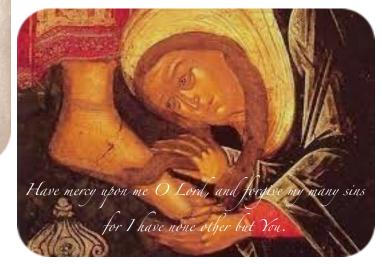
> Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.





FUN IDEA!

Print this page onto stock paper, cut out, and enjoy as book markers inside your Lenten books or Bible. Place them on a vanity mirror, at your desk, in the car, or at the kitchen sink; hand them out after Divine Liturgy during Antiochian Women's month!



Antiochian Women Prayer



In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

0 Christ our God, we are all pledged to serve Thee with our whole being. Help us to continue to work for Thee through our Church without seeking praise, without seeking personal gain, without judging others, without a feeling that we have worked hard enough and now must allow ourselves rest. Give us strength to do what is right and help us to go on striving and to remember that activities are not the main thing in life. The most important thing is to have our hearts directed and attuned to Thee. Amen.



The purpose of the Lenten discipline is to wean us from the habit of making temporary things have eternal importance. -Bishop Anthony (Michaels)

Photo courtesy of PhotographybyKelleylynn.com







WITH THE BLESSING OF HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN JOSEPH

THE ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OF LOS ANGELES AND THE WEST PRESENTS.

AN **ANTIOCHIAN** WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL **RETREAT! April 8-10** (Fri-Sun), R 2022

In Person at Camp St. Nicholas 11770 Frontier Rd. Frazier Park, CA 93225

COST

- \$145 Includes 5 meals, snacks, room, and board.
- . \$65 Saturday only, Includes 3 meals, and snacks.

Theme May it Be Blessed: Conforming

God's

atured Keynote Speaker: Rev. Fr. John Valadez



Lompoc, CA

St. Timothy Antiochian Church

V. Rev. Fr. David Hovik **DLAW Antiochian Women Spiritual Leader** St. Andrew Antiochian Church Arlington, WA

For any questions, please contact Khourieh Jean Baba, DLAW Retreat Coordinator @ (916) 955-4736

Mother Gabriella, Abbess of Holy **Dormition Monastery** is our guest speaking on the "Life of the Theotokos."

Please share with the Antiochian Women in your parishes.

Click <u>here</u> or image to register online. Deadline to register is April 18th, 2022!

Don't miss out, register early. We look forward to seeing you all.

REGISTRATION FOR RETREAT

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FOR RETREAT

Please make the check payable to: "AW-DLAW" Mail to: Kh. Jean Baba 3880 Otay Street West Sacramento, CA 95691

SPRING RETREAT 2022 AWE

Life of the Theotokos

with Mother Gabriella Abbess of Holy Dormition Monastery





April 29th - May 01st, 2022 new Dates Antiochian Village, Bolivar PA **Highlights Include:**

Paraklesis Service

- Procession and Supplication Service at Shrine of St. Thekla
- Ask Abouna and Mother

Register Online:

http://registration.antiochianvillage.org/Lenten2022

any auestions email aweorthodox1973@email.com

Antiochian Women Prayer

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

0 Christ our God, we are all pledged to serve Thee with our whole being. Help us to continue to work for Thee through our Church without seeking praise, without seeking personal gain, without judging others, without a feeling that we have worked hard enough and now must allow ourselves rest. Give us strength to do what is right and help us to go on striving and to remember that activities are not the main thing in life. The most important thing is to have our hearts directed and attuned to Thee. Amen.

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We wish to hear from you! Share "all the beautiful things!" We're looking for poetry, short stories, or a reflection on one of our beloved Women Saints. Share something your daughter, goddaughter, granddaughter, niece, or friend may have written. Do you take photographs? Share a moment that particularly made you aware of God's presence. Are you an Artist, and wouldn't mind sharing your talents with the rest us? Do you make homemade items? Let AW know about them, so we can share your small business.

There will not be an April issue Deadline for the AW-NAB E-Bulletin is the 20th of each month!



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https://www.facebook.com/antiochianwomen facebook. AntiochianXSisterhood Instagram Awaken our sleeping souls; and grant unto us endurance on the path of repentance. May we have faith like the children waving their palms of victory; shouting with perfect praise, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!" And, while we lament with "bitter tears" to "worship Thy Passion, O Christ, show us also Thy Glorious Resurrection."



Our prayer for the Sisterhood (and all mankind) is that this Great Lent fosters joy, peace, and repentance in the hearts, minds, and souls who partake in the richness of the fast. May we fervently pray for one another, forgiving first ourselves, and "those who trespass against us." And, at the dawn of the new day, may we with haste, "Come receive the light from the Light that is never overtaken by night, and glorify Christ who is risen from the dead."

A Joyous Great Lent & Glorious Pascha to the AW Sisterhood!

Please share your Pascha joys with the Sisterhood! May issue deadline is April 25th

Χριστός Ανέστη!

Αληθώς Ανέστη!

Ιλοηθώς Ανέστη!

Ιλοηθως Ανέστη!

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