
❖ THE TORCHBEARER ❖

Vol. 7 ... No. 1

September, 1998

From the Pastor...

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

This has been one of the best summers that I have had in a long time! As I write this, I am preparing to leave for Los Angeles for four days to attend the wedding of Sub-deacon Chris Salamy, who so faithfully served St. John's for two years. During the first part of July, I had the chance to visit my in-laws in Niagara Falls, Canada. Khouria Joan and I were able to visit Toronto for two days, thanks to my in-laws, without kids!! Later I flew to Pittsburgh for the Clergy Symposium at the Antiochian Village. The Village is such a special place! Thanks be to God, our church sent a record 15 kids to the camp, and thanks to the efforts of our Parent Guild and the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch, any family who requested financial assistance received it! No one, to my knowledge, was prevented from attending the camp due to finances.

Before the Clergy Symposium officially began on Monday, I visited with perhaps my closest friend from the seminary and his wife, whom I have not seen in almost ten years! While recalling our "younger" days at the seminary, we laughed and laughed. We recalled our dorm's nightly ritual, the trip to the local "Seven 11" store. Almost every night about 9:30 p.m. or so, our friend Paul would come by everyone's room collect \$2 and go to the local "Seven 11" for nachos and "Big Gulps." By the time he got back with ten or so orders, we were all ready for a break from our studies and spent the remainder of the night talking and joking!

What does this have to do with St. John of Damascus Church? Plenty! After serving you for six

years as your pastor, I hope that many of you have come to know me. You know that I love each and every one of you – I hope that my ministry thus far has shown this. If I did not care about your life in Christ and take my priesthood seriously, I would stand silent and say nothing. But sometimes we see, I feel, the church as the local "Seven 11." We go there only when we need something.



It amazes me that people will come to church at 8:30 a.m. on a Sunday morning to help set up the coffee hour one week but won't come back the following week at 10 a.m. for Liturgy. It amazes me that people will come to church to baptize their baby then we won't see them, in most cases, until a new baby is born or until the child starts church school. It amazes me that people come to communion after "slipping in" the back door one minute beforehand or even skip the Liturgy all together only to arrive in time for church school and the coffee hour. It amazes me how the church will be packed to the gills (mainly with parishioners) when we have a memorial service but the following week plenty of seating can be found. It amazes me when couples planning on getting married ask more questions about the externals of the day than how they can ask Christ to come into their new life. Sadly, the list goes on and on. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)

Where is your heart? I know that our parishioners live, in many cases, a distance from the church; I know that their lives and careers are demanding; I know, from having three children of my own, that parenting can be difficult. But your personal relationship with God and His Body, the Church, should be just as important, if not more important, to you as other matters. Shouldn't it? Isn't it time to reevaluate our view of the Church? If you are

unwilling to do this for yourself then who will do it?
If you don't do it now, when are you going to do it?

This parish didn't just fall from the heavens. If you look at her history, you will see the sacrifices made by our forefathers and mothers. How they gave their dimes and nickels for the church. How they worked and worked to establish the church we now know. When we look to the history of the Church, we see how blood was shed and controversies arose to protect the "orthodoxy" of the Church, to prevent the Church from falling into heresy. We are the spiritual and blood ancestors to these brave and faithful people; hence, our awesome obligation and responsibility as their heirs. Am I suggesting that our church simply become a place to worship the dead? God forbid!! What I am suggesting is a place to worship the Living – Jesus Christ!!

For your sake, for your soul's salvation, and even for my salvation as your priest, reevaluate your faith in God and in the Holy Orthodox Church. As one church father, St. Cyprian of Carthage (if my memory serves me correct), has said, "how can you have God as your Father, if you don't have the Church as your mother?" The Church's doors are open to you. ALL are welcomed into God's house. Can God count on you? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20) May we all have the courage, humility, and desire to see the need to open our hearts and let God come into them. I can guarantee that you won't regret it!

Asking remembrance in your God pleasing prayers,
I remain

In Christ,

Rev. Fr. John K. Teebagy
Pastor

**We will return to our
REGULAR CHURCH SCHEDULE as of
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH:**

Services: Sunday-Matins 9:00 a.m.,
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Confession: 8:45-9:40 a.m. or by appointment.

Please note: It has recently come to my attention that during the Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings there are many people congregating in the corridor and large hall. During the Divine Liturgy, only those preparing the coffee hour should be in the large hall and/or the kitchen. In addition, if there is a "special" coffee hour, i.e. a 40-day memorial, etc., no one is to take any food or drink until either the family hosting the coffee hour arrives *and/or* until Fr. John blesses the food. Please help us keep Sunday mornings, the Lord's day, holy, prayerful and dignified. A big thank you for your anticipated cooperation in this matter!! – Fr. John

From the Chairman...

I hope and pray that this edition of the Torchbearer finds you and your family in good health and that your summer was enjoyable.

On behalf of the Executive Board, I would like to thank you for the confidence you have shown in us and the responsibility you have placed upon us. Your Executive Board has been busy over the summer months getting the ball rolling for the upcoming year.

Your Bazaar Committee is busy planning an enjoyable and profitable weekend on November 6-8. Details for our 91st Feast Day are being formulated. Your Building Maintenance, Religious Coordination, and other Committees are all hard at work.

While the Executive Board is comprised of 21 members, it takes all 1,000 parishioners to make the Church of St. John of Damascus a strong and united spiritual family. It is up to each and every 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,

Church Records...

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

Jason Robert Clark, son of Gregory and Dianne (Serris) Clark of Brewster, MA was baptized on May 3, 1998.

Kristina Penelope Kurker, daughter of Robert and Bertina (Flessas) Kurker of Winchester, MA was baptized on May 3, 1998.

Richard Martin Scott, son of Michael and Colleen (Murphy) Scott of Quincy, MA was baptized on May 31, 1998.

Anthony Demitry Borghi, son of Anthony and Loretta (Taksery) Borghi of Walpole, MA was baptized on June 14, 1998.

Sarah Elizabeth Cahaly, daughter of John, Jr. and Eloise (DeSantis) Cahaly of Hopkinton, MA was baptized on July 26, 1998.

Many Years!!

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

Richard A. Lind, Jr. and Shannon Theresa Notine were married on May 9, 1998. They reside in Marlboro, MA.

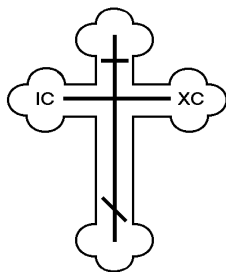
Richard Kevin McCarty and Michele Elaine Mabardy were married on May 16, 1998. They reside in Belmont, MA.

Anthony Peter Hamwey and JoLaine Agnes Benson were married on May 23, 1998. They reside in Tewksbury, MA.

Steven M. Murray and Afamia Battikha were married on June 20, 1998. They reside in Boston, MA.

Vincent Paul LaRosa and Andrea Marie George were married on July 19, 1998. They reside in Roslindale, MA.

Dennis Anthony Kirshy, Jr. and Maureen Jean Sharpe Kirshy were crowned on August 26, 1998. They reside in Needham, MA.



Many Years!!

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

Rose S. Thomas (81) of Dedham, MA fell asleep in the Lord on May 19, 1998. She is survived by her husband, 2 daughters and son. Burial was at Brookdale Cemetery in Dedham, MA.

Mary Egidio (79) of Hyde Park, MA fell asleep in the Lord on May 23, 1998. She is survived by her 2 daughters and son. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park, MA.

Demetri Samuel Gatteny (49) of Reading, MA fell asleep in the Lord on July 13, 1998. He is survived by his wife, daughter, mother and 2 sisters. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park, MA.

Memory Eternal!!

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

“A Gift from the Heart”

A gift of \$4,500 was lovingly and generously donated to the 1998 Food for Hungry People Program by the loving parishioners of the Church of St. John of Damascus. This gift was gratefully acknowledged by Robin Lynn Nicholas, Food for Hungry People Chairman, Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese.

Let us welcome and congratulate the newly elected members of our Executive Board for the 1998-99 year...Herbert Aswad (Alternate), Paul Aswad, Carolyn Ganim, Fred Matook, Gloria Matook (Alternate), Kathleen Tawa, Demitry Taksery, Olivia Waishek, Robert Zahka, Jr.

ELECTED OFFICERS

Robert Zahka, Jr., *Chairman*
David Shagoury, *Vice Chairman*
Dan Capobianco, *Treasurer*

Carolyn Ganim, *Recording Secretary*
Mary Battikha, *Corresponding Secretary*

From the Virgin Mary Society...

September and October are our two busiest months in preparing for our annual bazaar in November. WE can always use more help so we welcome anyone interested in giving some spare time for a good cause, supporting our church, to join us whenever possible. Come down and have some fun along with rewarding work! Due to the hard work of many volunteers, the Virgin Mary Society has always been proud of their contributions to the bazaar in previous years and we hope this year will be the same. For details on our working schedule, please contact Linda in the church office at (781) 326-3046 or Maryann Hamwey at (781) 326-3417.

From the Church School...

It's "Back to School Time" once again at St. John's Church School! Classes begin on September 13th, and are followed by the Annual Family Barbecue sponsored by the Parent Guild. Hope to see you all there.

If your kids do not attend Church School regularly – or at all, they are really missing out! Let this be your invitation to join us...

Our emphasis here at St. John's is on a comprehensive religious education for all students. We meld Orthodox Christian doctrine with a focus on moral responsibility, as well as introduce the students to stewardship and service. We strive to develop a program through which students come to know the true faith, and to know God Himself.

If this sounds like a mouthful, let me add that all this occurs in an atmosphere that is fun and lively. We plan our programs to instill enthusiasm and pride in our students, and to make Church School a place our kids look forward to attending!

We have a devoted, dedicated staff of 20 teachers and aides who have a full, productive year planned – make sure your kids are part of it!

In Christ,
Nancy Close

From the Parent Guild...

September 11th marks the kick off of the church school year with a Family Dance. The dance is for all ages. If you went to the family dance last year, you know how much fun it will be. Then on Sunday, September 13th, the Parent Guild will once again have the Family Bar-B-Que right after Liturgy. For reservations please call the church office or Kathleen Tawa at (781) 878-2992.

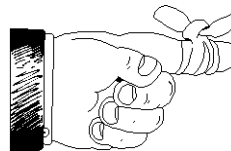
The Parent Guild and Church School have been busy planning the upcoming year. You'll see a lot of the same events, and also a couple of new ones. We look forward to working together to provide the children of our parish an opportunity to learn about our faith, and to give them the opportunity to get together with their friends at church socially. Any suggestions, ideas or comments are always welcomed from everyone at St. John of Damascus.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Tawa, *Guild President*
Debbie Leotsakos, *Vice President*

We're looking for decorations and paraphernalia for the Fifties Dance! All items will be returned. Please contact Linda in the church office or call Paula Hamwey at (978) 840-0559.

***Tickets for the dance
will be sold during coffee hour.***



DID YOU KNOW? The Church Office is covered 24 hours a day by an answering service. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number and a brief message. We will get back to you within 24 hours. ***If it is an emergency***, you should inform the answering service and request that they page Fr. John immediately.

From the Y.P.A....

Hi! My name is Erin Tawa, and I have been a member of the St. John Y.P.A. for 3 years now. As some of you may know, I am running for president this year. Therefore it is my job to try and make the Y.P.A. the best it can be.

If you are wondering what the Y.P.A. is let me explain. The Y.P.A. is a group of kids ages 12-19 that gets together to do service projects, celebrate our religion, and of course have fun. Many of you may have attended our dances, while all of you have attended our dinners we put on for the church. Another thing the Y.P.A. does is run the Great Friday Vigil every year before Easter. As dull as it may sound it really is fun, and it makes you feel like you did something to help celebrate Easter. We also get together with other teens from around the New England Region to hold socials and regional meetings. Anyone who went to camp, this is a great way to see all your friends from camp!!! I could go on but I hope you can now see how much fun the Y.P.A. is!!!

I am very excited about this year and hope everyone can help make it better. We have two new advisors, Abe Sabbag and Sheila Tawa.

We also have new people running for the positions of secretary and treasurer, with Mike Bezreh running for secretary and Ashley Close running for treasurer. Elections are being held on August 16th, at a Y.P.A. cookout.

I am hoping this year will be a great year in St. John's Y.P.A. Fr. John and I have many plans, and we are always looking for new ideas. I hope the summer is treating everyone well, and I hope to see everyone in church on September 13th for Liturgy and the Church School bar-b-que.

Sincerely,
Erin Tawa

BONE MARROW DONOR PROGRAM

The Archdiocese, as well as parents of children suffering from leukemia and other forms of cancer, have made appeals for our church communities to sponsor drives to add donors to the National Marrow Donor Program



Registry. Area churches participated in a Blood Drive/Marrow Donor Typing Drive at New England Medical Center on August 25th. This fall, we would like to sponsor a Marrow Donor Typing Drive by Red Cross at St. John's some time in the Fall. Testing is \$50.00 per person. We are looking for sponsors to defray this cost. If you cannot participate please consider being a sponsor or making a donation. Please read enclosed material and think about helping. Donors must be in good health and between the ages of 18 and 60. For further information or to offer help, please contact Khouryie Joan Teebagy (781) 551-0974. More details to follow. Thank you.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW for Upcoming Events at the Church of St. John of Damascus

FIFTIES DANCE sponsored by the Parent Guild to benefit the Antiochian Village Scholarship Fund will be held on Saturday, October 24th at St.



John's.

Watch for further details.

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS ANNUAL BAZAAR will be held on November 6, 7, and 8, 1998 – **Mark your calendars!** Volunteers are needed as we prepare for our largest fund-raiser of the year! Please call co-chairmen, Ray Hamwey at (978) 263-1266 or John Haddad at (508) 533-6218 if you are interested in helping out.

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS FEAST DAY WEEKEND, December 4, 5, and 6 1998 – Mark your calendar and watch for upcoming details.

Announcements...

N.G. BERAM LADIES AUXILIARY presents **A GRAND OLE HUFLA** featuring Richard Bayrouy and his ensemble on **September 19th from 8 p.m.-12 midnight** at St. John of Damascus Church Hall. Donation: \$15 per person. Advance reservations only/Accompanied with a check. Tickets will not be sold at door. **Deadline: September 11th**. For Reservations call Olga Takserly at (781) 762-5967.

NEW ENGLAND REGION – ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN: Meeting to be held on Saturday, September 26th – Liturgy at 9 a.m. followed by a Coffee Hour; General Assembly Meetings of Antiochian Women, Fellowship of St. John and Teen SOYO at 10:30 a.m.; Luncheon at 12:00 noon. Old Town Trolley Tour of Boston from 1 p.m.–3 p.m. - \$14 per person - **Reservation Deadline: Monday, September 14th** (All reservations will be handled on a space-available basis). Call Marilyn Robbat, St. Mary Church, Cambridge at (617) 547-1234.

ST. MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, Cambridge - 70th ANNIVERSARY AND MORTGAGE BURNING FOR CHURCH AND PARISH HOME – October 2, 3, and 4 with presiding hierarch, the Rt. Rev. Bishop DEMETRI. **Friday, October 2nd: 7-10 p.m.** Wine & Cheese Reception – View 70 years of History; **Saturday, October 3rd: 5:30 p.m.** Vespers, **6:30 p.m.** Cocktail Hour, **7:30 p.m.** Dinner (Tickets \$35 – Reservations Required); **Sunday, October 4th: 8:45 a.m.** Orthros, **10 a.m.** Hierarchical Divine Liturgy followed by reception. For reservations and more information call St. Mary's church office at (617) 547-1234.

22nd ANNUAL BAZAAR & FOOD FAIR, St. George Orthodox Church, West Roxbury – October 16, 17, & 18. See bulletin board for more details or call(617) 323-9861.

DEPARTMENT OF CAMPUS MINISTRY invites all 1998 graduates, college students and young adults to **ANNUAL WINTER COLLEGE CONFERENCE** at the Antiochian Village Heritage and Learning Center, PA from **December 26th – 30th**. This years theme is “Through Eyes of Faith.” Complete room and registration fee is only \$125 – scholarship assistance is available. For reservations call the Village at (724) 238-9565.

THE ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF BETHANY
THE BETHANY COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST
RUSSIAN ECCLESIASTICAL MISSION OF JERUSALEM
Tel: 749797 – P.O.B. 20607, Jerusalem 91191

14 June 1998

Rev. Fr. John K. Teebagy
Church of St. John of Damascus
300 West Street
Dedham, Massachusetts 02026-5594

Dear Father John,

Please, forgive the delay in sending you a receipt for your generous donation. The receipt was promptly issued but I just did not get around to writing to you. This school year has been very hectic and busy. Many events took place, each needing special attention. Also, we have had to deal with some less pleasant events, such as – unfortunately- break-ins. The area in which we live continues to be quite volatile.

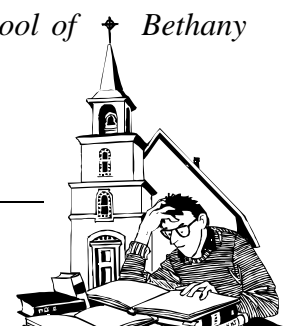
Thank God, the school year has ended successfully and our children have begun their holidays whilst the sisters and I are gradually making preparations for the next term.

We remain most grateful to you and your parishioners and pray that God may bless them all abundantly. We feel encouraged by such responses and hope to welcome some of your parishioners as pilgrims to the Holy Land.

Keep us in your holy prayers.

Yours in Christ,

The nuns of the Orthodox School of Bethany



Adult Education: Fr. John is in the process of organizing a study group. *Please watch the weekly bulletin for dates and times.* Please call Fr. John, at the church office, for more details!

THE TORCHBEARER
is the Monthly Newsletter of the
Church of St. John of Damascus

*A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America*

Rev. Fr. John K. Teebagy, Pastor

300 West Street ♦ Dedham, Massachusetts 02026-5594

♦ Telephone: (781) 326-3046 ♦ Fax: (781) 326-4473

♦ Web Page: <http://members.aol.com/stjohnd>

Services: Sunday-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 noon.

Please plan accordingly.

Dear Parishioners,

As part of our community outreach program, Saint John's parish has committed to going to **Saint Paul's Shelter** (a satellite shelter of the Pine Street Inn) in Dorchester one Sunday a month in order to provide food for 60-70 homeless men. Last year's program was very successful, and we thank the dozens of volunteers who helped.

Our responsibility is to cook the food in advance, go to the shelter, heat the food, serve it, and then clean up. John Najjar and Sheila Demerjian have volunteered to be responsible for organizing the cooking of the food and the trips to the shelter with a group of people on each of the Sundays involved. We would like 5 people to go each time to help, and we encourage you and your family to sign up. We also need volunteers to cook the food and package it before it goes.

If you decide to be a server, the commitment for the afternoon is merely two and a half hours. You will meet at the church at 4:00 p.m., arrive at the shelter at 4:30 p.m., and then leave the shelter to go back to the church by 6:00 p.m.

Please sign up to either cook or serve, and we will be in touch with you when the time approaches. If you can't do either, perhaps you would like to make a small donation to help with the cost of the food that we have to provide. You may also call John Najjar at (617) 361-2376 or the church office.

Please check the month(s) you would like to help.

Name _____

Phone #: _____

I would like to volunteer to serve:

1997:

October 14 _____ November 16 _____ December 14 _____

1998

January 11 _____ February 15 _____ March 15 _____

April 5 _____

May 17 _____ June 14 _____



The number of people to volunteer is: _____
I cannot serve but would like to help cook in _____
(month)

I would like to donate towards the cost of the food. Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____.

Church of St. John of Damascus
300 West Street
Dedham, MA 02026-5594

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DEADLINE for the
OCTOBER TORCHBEARER
will be **September 10th.**

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