



Schedule of Church Services during the Blessed Month of “Kiahk”

Sunday	7:00 - 7:30AM	Matin Prayers
	7:30-10:00AM	Divine Liturgy (Arabic)
	8:00-10:30AM	Divine Liturgy (English)
	11:00AM-12:00Noon	Sermon in Arabic
	11:15AM-12:00Noon	Sunday School
	12:15-1:00PM	Servants Meeting
	6:00 - 7:00PM	Bible Study N.T. (Arabic)
Wednesday	7:30-10:00AM	Divine Liturgy (Arabic)
Thursday	5:30-7:30AM	Divine Liturgy (for workers)
Friday	7:30-9:00PM	Youth Meeting (H.S. & College)
Saturday	8:00-10:00AM	Divine Liturgy (English)
	5:00-6:30PM	Advanced Hymn Class
	6:30-7:00PM	Beginners Hymn Class
	5:30-6:30PM	Bible Study O.T. (Arabic)
	6:30 till, almost, Midnight	Vespers Prayers followed by Midnight & Kiahk Praises.

The Priests receive confession by appointment and during Midnight Praises

Visit our Church Website at: www.Stgeorge-lacopts.org

Please share the magazine articles with your children and encourage them to submit articles for publication.



MET IN THE STAIRWELL

You say you will never forget where you were when you heard the news, Sept. 11, 2001. Neither will I.

I was on the 110th floor in a smoke-filled room with a man who called his wife to say, "Good-bye." I held his fingers steady as he dialed. I gave him the peace to say, "Honey, I am not going to make it, but it is OK...I am ready to go." I was with his wife when he called, as she fed breakfast to their children. I held her up as she tried to understand his words and realized he wasn't coming home that night.

I was in the stairwell of the 23rd floor when a woman cried out to me for help. "I have been knocking on the door of your heart for 50 years," I said. "Of course I will show you the way home - only believe on Me now." I was at the base of the building with the priest, ministering to the injured and devastated souls. I took him home with me. He heard my voice and answered.

I was on all four of those planes, in every seat, with every prayer. I was with the crew as they were overtaken. I was in the very hearts of the believers there, comforting and assuring them that their faith has saved them.

I was in Texas, Kansas and London. I was standing next to you when you heard the terrible news. Did you sense me? I want you to know that I saw every face. I knew every name - though they did NOT all know Me. Some met Me for the first time on the 100th floor. Some sought Me out in their last breath. Some couldn't hear Me calling to them through the smoke and flames, "Come to Me...this way...take my hand!" Some chose for the final time, to ignore Me. But, I was there.

I did not place you in the tower that day - you may not know why, but I do. If you HAD been there in that explosive moment in time, would you have reached for Me? Sept. 11, 2001, was not the end of the journey for you. Someday your journey will end, and I will be there for you as well.

Seek Me now while I may be found. Then, at any moment, you know you are "ready to go." I will be in the stairwell of your final moments.

(Author Unknown)

Signed: **GOD**

God's Wings

An article in National Geographic several years ago provided a penetrating picture of God's wings.

After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers began their trek up a mountain to assess the inferno's damage.

One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched statuesquely on the ground at the base of a tree.

Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, he knocked over the bird with a stick.

When he gently struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mother's wings.

The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies.

Then the blaze had arrived and the heat had scorched her small body, the mother had remained steadfast. Because she had been willing to die, those under the cover of her wings would live.

"He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge." (Psalm 91:4)

**Being loved this much should make a difference in your life.
Remember the One who loves you, and then be different because of
it.**

(Author Unknown)

Holy Living

+ Relieve and comfort all the persecuted and afflicted; speak peace to troubled consciences; strengthen the weak; confirm the strong; instruct the ignorant; deliver the oppressed from him that spoileth him; and relieve the needy that hath no helper; and bring us all, by the waters of comfort, and in the ways of righteousness, to the kingdom of rest and glory, through Jesus. {Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667)}

+ None can become fit for the future life, who hath not practiced himself for it now. {Augustine (354-430)}

The Scriptures in the Orthodox Concept

Adapted from: The Characteristics of Orthodox Teaching. By: **H.G. Bishop Moussa**

Christian Orthodoxy is based on a true understanding of both Testaments of the Holy Bible. Our holy fathers adhered to the spirit and letter of the Bible and followed it in their daily lives. They explained the books of both Testaments and set the rules for Church readings with all the excellent Christian theological thought that they include.

The Holy Gospel is always on the altar, and is always raised above our heads. When His Holiness the Pope reads the Gospel, he removes his crown to indicate that the Lord Jesus is speaking in person.

The Icon-bearer (Iconostasis) is lit up during the reading of the Gospel, and two lighted candles are held on both sides of the Gospel to show that it is the Divine Light that enlightens the mind of men, and leads them to salvation. Everybody accepts the Gospel with love, for it is the Good News that enables us to enter into life with Christ, and to walk in the way of the eternal Kingdom.

All the doctrines of the Church are taken from the Holy Bible. All the Church rites include many chapters from the Bible. All the Church prayers quote the words of God from the two Testaments.

The Church has designated a special rank among the rank of deacons for the reader of the Holy Bible. It is the rank of “Agnostos” or “reader”.

Both Testament of the Holy Bible are studied as one unit *“For the Old Testament is revealed in the New, and the New Testament is hidden in the Old”*. (St. Augustine)

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III warned us against the danger of **“the text taken out of context”**. We should not take one text only and extract a doctrine or principle from it, but we should study the spirit of the Bible as a whole and the sum total of the texts in order to arrive at a sound understanding of the Word.

Orthodox teaching is Scriptural and takes the Bible as a whole. The Church passed it on to us, as it was lived by the Saints and explained by the fathers.

The Bible is the Word of God and His Holy Breath.

The Bible is infallible.

We get our interpretation of the Bible From:

1. Jesus Christ Himself: His Life, work, our fellowship with Him and the light of His Spirit within us. *“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He (Jesus) expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself”* (Luke 24. 27). Thus, the Lord was the first to interpret the Scriptures and He asked us to do the same. If we want to understand the word of God well, we have to resort to its Author and Inspirer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Church Interprets the Books to Us: We have to receive the sound interpretation from the holy Church in which the Holy Spirit resides, in which the fathers lived in the godly truth that is recorded in the Gospel, and where there is a sound understanding of the Word of God as a result of being enlightened by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Bible is part of the tradition delivered to us by the Church and it is the arbiter of every doctrine, ritual or tradition. That is why our Coptic Church honors the Bible, reading it, studying it and living it.

3. The Apostles’ Awareness of the Correct Interpretation: The Apostles were careful to preserve the Christian truth and refuted the heresies of Judaizers and Agnostics in their writings and epistles: as Romans, Galatians, Colossians and John. The Apostles were alert to the importance of preserving the Christian teaching from all Jewish or pagan influences.

4. The Fathers of the Church: They lived the Gospel in their daily lives; they interpreted it spiritually and kept the holy teaching. Their interpretation of the Bible was aiming at their salvation and the growth and guidance of their spirits. It is said that the epistles of St. Pakhomios seem to be *“A summary of the Holy Bible”*. St. Antony said, *“If I want to read, I read God’s Book”*.

5. The Council Laws: These defined the Christian teaching legally, so that it is preserved from any corrupting influences.

Let us be filled with the Bible, contemplating its words and nurtured by its teaching, within the confines of the vast heritage that the Church has delivered to us.



Take Time

- + Take time to think, this is the source of power.
- + Take time to play, this is the secret of youth.
- + Take time to read, this is the foundation of wisdom.
- + Take time to pray, this the mightiest power on earth.
- + Take time to be friendly, this is the road to Happiness.
- + Take time to laugh, this is the music of the soul.
- + Take time to give, a day is too brief to be selfish.
- + Take time to work, this is the price of success.
- + Take time to do good, this is the key to Heaven.
- + Take time for God, this is the only lasting investment in life.
- + Take time to love and be loved, this is a privilege given by God.

How to Pray to the Lord Jesus?

In any gift exchange, there has to be giver and receiver. God has already given us the gift, His Son, now we must receive Him. ***“But as many as received Him, to them, He gave the right to become children of God”***. (John 1: 12)

We receive Him by faith. ***“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast”***. (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

We receive Him by personal invitation. ***“Behold, I stand as the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him”*** (Revelation 3:20). Do we hear His voice?

A suggested prayer:

“Lord, Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God and that you died on the Cross for my sins, to save me from eternal death. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. I give You my life. Help me to be what You want me to be, and to say as you taught your holy disciples: ‘Our Father Who art in heaven...’ ”

The Wisdom of Obeying the Word of God

Today, the whole world continually talks about sex. Media such as newspapers, magazines, T.V., the internet, the movies, schools and colleges abound in sexual things.

1. **“In latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons”.** (1 Timothy 4: 1)
2. **“In the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money... disobedient to parents... unholy ... without self-control, brutal, despisers of good... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God”.** (2 Timothy 3: 1-4)
3. **“Scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts”.** (2 Peter 3: 3)
4. **“As Sodom and Gomorrah... having given themselves over to sexual immorality”.** (Jude 1: 7)
5. **“There would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts”** (Jude 1: 18)

A model in the Bible, to follow in his footsteps: Joseph (Genesis chapters 39-42) to learn a moral lesson of vital importance to all of us. You do not have to give in to the pressure of your emotions or to the pressure of your peers. Do just as Joseph has done:

- + He refused to **“do such a wicked thing and sin against God”.** (Genesis 39: 9)
- + Thus, because Joseph **“walked with the Lord, he was a successful man”.** (Genesis 39: 2)
- + And because of his righteous behavior, he became **“the governor over all the land of Egypt”.** (Genesis 42: 6)
- + **When the people of Egypt cried to Pharaoh for bread, he told them: “Go to Joseph, whatever he says to you, do”.** (Genesis 41: 55)



Recent Martyrs

On October 28th, 2001, 16 Christians in Pakistan were martyred while praying in their church. They were attacked by trained terrorists. They were martyred right after the Holy Liturgy. Men, on motorcycles, came and attacked the people in the church after the Holy Liturgy had ended. Though we should mourn the death of these innocent people, we often should look back at these events and consider many things.

+ **First**, we remember the lives of the martyrs and how they received great crowns in heaven for witnessing to Christ unto death.

+ **Secondly**, we should thank God for giving us a place in which we can worship His Holy Name without being persecuted or killed, fearing our lives the moment we mention His Name or enter His Church.

+ **Third and most importantly**, God's Grace bestowed on these martyrs. The attacks occurred after the Holy Liturgy, which means these people died in the most pure state. They had just finishing praising our Creator and had just had the Holy Communion before their lives on earth ended and their lives in heaven began. Now these people are in heaven praising God and praying for peace.

May the Lord teach us from the lives of these martyrs and we pray for the peace of the world.

+ **"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."** (Mt 5: 12)

+ **"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."** (Mt 24: 9)

+ **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."** (Jn. 16: 33)

Epistle on Confession and the Power to Remit Sins

(Saint Symeon the New Theologian)

"The power to remit sins is given by God neither to those who have the monastic schema nor to those who are ordained to the ranks of priesthood, nor to those honored by the office of episcopacy...merely because of ordination and its office. Heaven forbid!...But the power of remitting sins is given only to those from among the priests and bishops and monks who belong to the rank of the disciples of Christ because of purity...

Therefore If you find a flatterer or a slave to the belly do not strive to make him your counselor and ally lest he come around to your will and teach you not those things that are pleasing to God but those that you will accept, and thus you remain again the enemy of God and unreconciled to Him...

Accept neither an inexperienced physician who will plunge you into despair with his great abruptness and improper incisions and cauteries, nor one who, in his excessive sympathy, will leave you ill while you think you are cured and worst of all, what you do not expect, will surrender you to eternal hades.

Let us seek such a spiritual father. Indeed, let us search with toils for such men who are true disciples of Christ. And let us beseech God with pangs of the heart and much tears for many days to uncover the eyes of our heart that they may know if and where such a man is to be found in our evil generation. And having found him, pray that we may receive remission of sins through him, obeying his commandments and injunctions with our whole soul, just as he obeys the commandments of Christ, and became a participant in His grace and gifts, and received from Him the power to bind and to loose sins and was made fire by the Holy Spirit..."

"Do not rail against anyone, but rather say 'God knows each one.' Do not agree with him who slanders, do not rejoice at his slander and do not hate him who slanders his neighbor. This is what it means not to judge."

(St. Moses the Ethiopian)

"Perseverance And Love"

(Written by Mildred Hondorf)

At the prodding of my friends, I am writing this story. My name is Mildred Hondorf. I am a former elementary school music teacher from De Moines, Iowa. I've always supplemented my income by teaching piano lessons-something I've done for over 30 years. Over the years, I found that children have many levels of musical ability. I've never had the pleasure of having a protégé though I have taught some talented students. However I've also had my share of what I call "musically challenged" pupils. One such student was Robby.

Robby was 11 years old when his mother (a single mom) dropped him off for his first piano lesson. I prefer that students (especially boys!) begin at an earlier age, which I explained to Robby. But Robby said that it had always been his mother's dream to hear him play the piano. So I took him as a student. Well, Robby began with his piano lessons and from the beginning I thought it was a hopeless endeavor.

As much as Robby tried, he lacked the sense of tone and basic rhythm needed to excel. But he dutifully reviewed his scales and some elementary pieces that I require all my students to learn. Over the months he tried and tried while I listened and cringed and tried to encourage him. At the end of each weekly lesson he'd always say, "My day." But it seemed hopeless. He just did not have any inborn ability. I only knew his mother from a distance as she dropped Robby off or waited in her aged car to pick him up. She always waved and smiled but never stopped in. Then one day Robby stopped coming to our lessons. I thought about calling him but assumed, because of his lack of ability, that he had decided to pursue something else. I also was glad that he stopped coming. He was a bad advertisement for my teaching!

Several weeks later I mailed to the student's homes a flyer on the upcoming recital. To my surprise Robby (who received a flyer) asked me if he could be in the recital. I told him that the recital was for current pupils and because he had dropped out he really did not qualify. He said that his mom had been sick and unable to take him to piano lessons but he was still practicing. "Miss Hondorf . . . I've just got to play!" he insisted. I don't know what led me to allow him to play in the recital.

Maybe it was his persistence or maybe it was something inside of me saying that it would be all right.

The night for the recital came. The high school gymnasium was packed with parents, friends and relatives. I put Robby up last in the program before I was to come up and thank all the students and play a finishing piece. I thought that any damage he would do would come at the end of the program and I could always salvage his poor performance through my curtain closer." Well the recital went off without a hitch. The students had been practicing and it showed. Then Robby came up on stage. His clothes were wrinkled and his hair looked like he'd run an eggbeater through it. "Why didn't he dress up like the other students?" I thought. "Why didn't his mother at least make him comb his hair for this special night?"

Robby pulled out the piano bench and he began. I was surprised when he announced that he had chosen Mozart's Concerto #21 in C Major. I was not prepared for what I heard next. His fingers were light on the keys; they even danced nimbly on the ivories. He went from pianissimo to fortissimo . . . from allegro to virtuoso . . . His suspended chords that Mozart demands were magnificent!

Never had I heard Mozart played so well by people his age. After six and a half minutes he ended in a grand crescendo and everyone was on his or her feet in wild applause.

Overcome and in tears I ran up on stage and put my arms around Robby in joy. "I've never heard you play like that Robby! How'd you do it?"

Through the microphone Robby explained: "Well Miss Hondorf . . . remember I told you my mom was sick? Well actually she had cancer and passed away this morning. And well . . . she was born deaf so tonight was the first time she ever heard me play. I wanted to make it special."

There wasn't a dry eye in the house that evening. As the people from Social Services led Robby from the stage to be placed into foster care, I noticed that even their eyes were red and puffy and I thought to myself how much richer my life had been for taking Robby as my pupil.

No, I've never had a protégé but that night I became a protégé . . of Robby's. He was the teacher and I was the pupil. For it is he that taught me the meaning of perseverance and love and believing in yourself and maybe even taking a chance in someone and you don't know why.

This is especially meaningful to me since after serving in Desert Storm Robby was killed in the senseless bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in April of 1995, where he was reportedly . . . playing the piano.



O abyss, O eternal Godhead, O sea profound,
What more could you give me than yourself?
You are the fire that burns without being consumed;
You consume in your heat all the soul's self-love;
You are the fire which takes away cold;
With your light you illuminate me so that I may know all your truth.

Clothe me, clothe me with yourself, Eternal Truth,
So that I may run this mortal life with true obedience,
And with the light of your most holy faith.

Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)