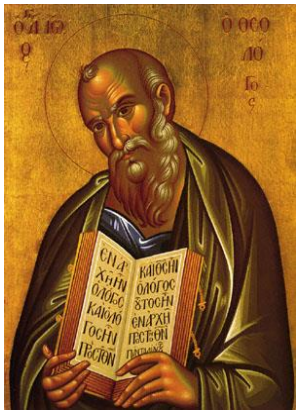


St. John Evangelist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America

Metropolitan Saba of New York and all North America

V. Rev. Fr. Nicholas Borzghol, Pastor

Dn. Nicholas Adranly

Address: **501 Moraga Way, Orinda, California** Phone: **925-258-4255**

Web: www.stjohnorinda.org Email: st.john.evangelist.orinda@gmail.com

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Orthros on Sunday, November 15, 2026; Tone 7 / Eothinon 2

Martyrs Guria, Shamuna and Habib the Deacon of Edessa

Thomas the New, patriarch of Constantinople; Venerable Paisios Velichkovsky

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On November 15 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy Martyrs and Confessors of Edessa in Syria: Guria, Shamuna and Habib the Deacon. Guria and Shamuna contested during the reign of Diocletian, in 288; Habib contested in the days of Licinius, in 316; he was buried with Guria and Shamuna. The three have one common feast and they are always portrayed together in icons. They are invoked for help in marital difficulties. A certain Goth had come with the Roman army to Edessa and was quartered in the house of a pious widow named Sophia. The Goth asked Sophia for the hand of her daughter, Euphemia; reluctantly, Sophia at last agreed. She made the Goth vow by the power of the holy Martyrs Shamuna, Guria, and Habib to keep Euphemia as the apple of his eye. As he was nearing his home, however, the treacherous man revealed to Euphemia that he already had a wife. Euphemia became the Goth couple's slave which dealt with her mercilessly. After extreme sufferings, which included being sealed alive in a tomb and left there to die, Euphemia begged the Saints to save her, and they miraculously conveyed her to Edessa, to the very shrine of the holy Martyrs. Euphemia was reunited with her mother through their holy prayers.

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THE EPISTLE

The Lord will give strength to His people.

Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, ascribe to the Lord honor and glory.

The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (2:14-22)

Brethren, Christ is our peace, Who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And He came and preached peace to you, who were far off, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in Whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

الرَّبُّ يُعْطي قُوَّةً لِشَعْبِهِ.
قَدِّمُوا لِلرَّبِّ يا أَبْناءَ اللهِ.

فَصْلٌ مِنْ رِسالَةِ القِدّيسِ بولُسَ الرَّسولِ إلى أفَسُس. (2:14-22)

يا إخْوَةُ، إنَّ المَسيحَ هُوَ سَلامُنَا، هُوَ جَعَلَ الإثْنَيْنِ واحِداً، وَنَقَضَ في جَسَدِهِ حائِطَ السِياجِ الحاجِزَ، أي العَداوَة. وأَبْطَلَ ناموسَ الوَصايا في فرائِضِهِ، لِيَخْلُقَ الإثْنَيْنِ في نَفْسِهِ إنساناً واحِداً جَديداً بإِجْرائِهِ السَّلام. ويُصالِحَ كِلَيْهِما في جَسَدٍ واحِدٍ مَعَ اللهِ في الصليبِ، بِقَتْلِهِ العَداوَةَ في نَفْسِهِ. فَجاءَ وبَشَّرَكُمْ بِالسَلامِ، البَعيدينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالقَريبين. لأنَّ بِهِ لَنَا كِلَيْنَا التَوَصُّلَ إلى الآبِ في روحٍ واحِدٍ. فَلَسْتُمْ غُرَباءَ بَعْدُ ونُزَلاءَ، بَلْ مُواطِنو القِدّيسينَ وأَهْلُ بَيْتِ الله. وَقَدْ بُنِيتُمْ على أَساسِ الرُسُلِ، والأَنْبياءِ، وحَجَرُ الزاوِيَةِ هُوَ يسوعُ المَسيحُ نَفْسُهُ الذي بِهِ يُنْسَّقُ البُنْيانُ كُلُّهُ، فَيَنْمُو هَيْكَلاً مُقَدَّساً في الرَّبِّ، وفيهِ أَنْتُمْ أَيْضاً تُبْنَوْنَ مَعاً مَسْكَناً للهِ في الروح.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (10:25-37)

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" And the lawyer answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And Jesus said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But the lawyer, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" The lawyer said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

فصلٌ شَريفٌ مِنْ بِشارَةِ القِدّيسِ لوقا الإنْجيلِيّ البَشيرِ والتلْميذِ الطاهِر. (10:25-37)

في ذلكَ الزمانِ، دَنا إلى يَسوعَ ناموسِيٌّ وقالَ، مُجرِّباً لهُ: يا مُعَلِّمُ، ماذا أَعْمَلُ لأرِثَ الحَياةَ الأبَدِيَّةَ. فقالَ لهُ: ماذا كُتِبَ في النَّامُوسِ؟ كَيفَ تَقرأُ؟ فأجابَ وقالَ: أَحْبِبِ الرَّبَّ إلهَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ قَلْبِكَ، ومِنْ كُلِّ نَفْسِكَ، ومِنْ كُلِّ قُدرَتِكَ، ومنْ كُلِّ ذِهْنِكَ، وقَريبَكَ كَنَفْسِكَ. فقالَ لهُ: بالصَوابِ أَجَبْتَ. إعْمَلْ ذَلِكَ فَتَحْيا. فأرادَ أَنْ يُزَكِّيَ نَفسَهُ فقالَ لِيَسوعَ: ومَنْ قَريبي؟ فَعادَ يَسوعُ وقالَ: كانَ إنسانٌ مُنْحَدِراً مِنْ أورَشَليمَ إلى أريحا، فوَقَعَ بَيْنَ لُصوصٍ.

فَعَرَّوهُ وجَرَّحوهُ وتَرَكوهُ بيْنَ حَيٍّ ومَيِّتٍ. فَاتَّفَقَ أنَّ كاهِناً كانَ مُنحَدِراً في ذلكَ الطريقِ، فَأَبْصَرَهُ وجَازَ مِنْ أمامِهِ. وكذلكَ لاويٌّ، وأتى إلى المكانِ، فأبْصَرَهُ وجَازَ مِنْ أمامِهِ. ثُمَّ إنَّ سامِرِيّاً مُسافِراً مَرَّ بِهِ، فلَمَّا رآهُ تَحَنَّنَ. فَدنا إلَيْهِ وضَمَّدَ جِراحاتِهِ، وصَبَّ عَلَيْها زَيْتاً وخَمراً، وحَمَلَهُ على دابَّتِهِ، وأتى بِهِ إلى فُنْدُقٍ، واعْتَنى بِأَمْرِهِ. وفي الغَدِ، فيما هُوَ خارِجٌ، أخرَجَ دينارَيْنِ وأعْطاهُما لِصاحِبِ الفُنْدُقِ وقالَ لهُ: اعْتَنِ بِأَمرِهِ، ومَهْما تُنْفِقْ فَوْقَ هَذا فَأَنا أدْفَعُهُ لكَ عندَ عَوْدَتي. فَأيُّ هؤلاءِ الثلاثَةِ تَحْسَبُ صارَ قَريباً لِلَّذي وقَعَ بَيْنَ اللصُوصِ؟ قالَ: الذي صنَعَ إلَيْهِ الرَحْمَة. فقالَ لهُ يسوعُ: امْضِ فَاصْنَعْ أنْتَ أيْضاً كذلِك.

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Holy Oblations

This week, Holy Oblations are offered by:

- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola, Sandy Dudum, George Messih, George Adranly, Fred Addes, Henriette Hilal, Souhad Halaka, George Cawog, Rocky Dudum** and **Norma Khalil**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Violet Jaber.** Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family in memory of **Leila Farradj.** May her memory be eternal!
- † May their Memory be eternal!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Inam Ansara**. Many Years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health **Brayden "Bartholomew" Clarkson** on the occasion of his baptism. Welcome into the Holy Orthodox Church!

Candles for the altar table and in front of the icons of Christ and the Theotokos offered by:

† Ibrahim Fasheh in memory of Hanada Fasheh for one full year. May her memory be eternal!



†Altar Servers: Nathan Sweis, Clayton Morgan, Elias Freij, Angelo Freij, Andrew Freij, Mazyn Haddadin, James Dudum, John Dudum, David Evans, Evan Kawar, Mason Kawar, Jonathan Juha, Luke and Timothy Ernst, Maron Juha and Zaiden Karanikola, Nimer and Nathan Moganam, Luke Samara

Coffee Hour

Nov 15th	Luncheon leftovers Shikh El Mahshi (eggplant) from IOCC dinner. Server volunteers needed
Nov 22nd	Nelly Nassif for the good health of the Nassif Family
Nov 29th	Farradj & Silva family in memory of the Handmaiden of God Leila Farradj. May her memory be eternal!
Dec 6th	The Ladies of St. John are honoring and expressing their gratitude to those who have contributed endless hours of service by preparing, baking, cooking, teaching recipes and who now are enjoying their retirements: Helen Ghantous, Frieda Cawog, Nada Dudum, Norma Khalil, Ruth Jeha, Laila Adranly and our late Leila Farradj-- may her memory be eternal!
Dec 13th	Bake Sale!

Upcoming Events

Nov 22nd	Prison Ministry Christmas card writing workshop at coffee hour. See Jill Norgaard to participate
Nov 29th	40th day prayer for the Handmaiden of God Leila Farradj
Dec 4th	 Borbara pudding- Fairouz Freij, good health of Issam and family, Rania Shuhaiber and family
Dec 12th	Mark your calendars! Our Annual Christmas Party is scheduled for Saturday, December 12th
Dec 14th	Ladies Club: Rose's Christmas Bake Sale! Namoura, Baklava, Date Cookies, Maamoul, Ghraybeh

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St. John Orthodox Church
501 Moraga Way
Orinda, CA 94563

You could use this QR code for your donation

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Announcements

Love your Neighbor: November – International Orthodox Christian Charities – IOCC

IOCC, in the spirit of Christ's love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond. We envision that, by God's grace, IOCC will enable those suffering and in need to continue to improve their own lives and communities and to have means to live with dignity, respect, and hope.

Thanksgiving Basket Nov 22nd

Rima Kashou would appreciate if you would begin sending gourmet items for the Thanksgiving basket. Please bring abundantly so will be able to make more than one basket. The deadline to receive your goodies is November 15.

Sunday School Message

Upcoming Events & Reminders:

November 15th: **Kids & Teens Thanksgiving Retreat**: We are so excited for our children and teens to experience making Holy Bread, participate in a Bible Study, and build community! Thank you to all the volunteers and especially Rania Kashou for making this event possible. If your child/ren are attending please have them wear comfortable (non-bulky) clothing and closed toed tennis shoes, so that they are safe and prepared for the kitchen.

December 6th: **Jolly Cars with St. Nicholas** -- Please consider decorating your trunk for this festive event -- use this link to sign up! See flyer for more details.

December 13th: **Christmas Pageant** -- please let Irene know if your child will be there and would like to be involved.

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The Sacrament of Confession, Part One
His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

The work of the priest has expanded in our time, and his duties have multiplied, no longer limited to performing rituals, but extending to the fields of education, guidance, and social services. Amidst these diverse services, the risk of the priest losing sight of his purpose is very real. According to our Orthodox faith, everything must contribute to the primary goal we call "life in Christ," that is, helping people achieve spiritual healing and open themselves to the work of the Holy Spirit in their person and life. Therefore, his role as confessor is paramount. His essential service lies in being a spiritual father who raises children in Christ and for Christ.

The sacrament of confession in the Church is not merely a retrieval of memories, nor simply psychological analysis or social guidance; rather, it is the creation of a new person and the bestowal of life in Christ.

God created humankind out of love, creating them in His image and likeness. But after Adam's fall, sin entered human nature, causing confusion within humanity, dividing it against itself, and making it susceptible to corruption, having become enslaved to its desires. From this stems the Christian perspective on understanding humanity's many psychological and spiritual problems and struggles. As Jesus said:

"For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a man" (Mark 7:21–23).

How do we define the word "passion," and its plural "passions"? It is a tendency or movement of the soul that manifests in the act of sin and is repeated until humans become enslaved to it, possessing, controlling, and subjugating them. To the extent that it holds sway over them, they drift away from God and are swept away on a path contrary to His life. The Church performs its healing work in the sacrament of confession, by treating the passions of the individuals and restoring them to their original state before the fall of man.

The Holy Fathers of the Church, like Saint Dorotheus of Gaza, distinguish three powers within the soul: the appetitive, the irascible, and the rational. The rational powers manifest themselves in the dominance of pride and its associated vices; the appetitive in the desires of the flesh and the like; while the irascible in hatred, anger, resentment, and the like. All passions are summarized in these three powers. According to the Orthodox Church's doctrine, healing is based on restoring passions to their natural role in human nature, not on their suppression.

In this regard, St. John Climacus says:

"Vice or passion is not originally planted in nature, for God is not the Creator of passions. But there are in us many natural virtues from Him… We have taken natural qualities from ourselves and transformed them into passions…" (*The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, step 26).

St. Maximus the Confessor explains this in more detail, saying:

"It is not food that is evil, but gluttony; it is not the birth of children that is evil, but adultery; it is not money that is evil, but the love of money; it is not glory that is evil, but vainglory. This being so, nothing in existence is evil in itself; rather, evil lies in its misuse." (*Four Hundred Chapters on Love*, third century, 4)

Man was created for glory, but through God. This glory is achieved through the fulfillment of God's image within him, in its supposed journey toward the divine ideal. However, what happened after the fall is that man began to seek his lost glory in ways contrary to his creation, and therein lies sin. Sin, in the Orthodox understanding, is the disease that manifests itself in the misuse of the soul's powers.

In other words, we can summarize the condition of man after the fall in the words of the contemporary Greek theologian Christos Yannaras:

"The road, then, remains open after the fall for the person of man to become once more an hypostasis of life, no longer of a biological life, corruptible and temporary, but of an incorruptible and immortal life. This new existential possibility God inaugurates himself with his incarnation, becoming the beginning of salvation and renewal of the human race" (*Elements of Faith*, chapter 7).

The Sacrament of Confession:
A Healing Process Through Christ the Savior and Healer

We find the roots of healing in the New Testament in many words with "medical" terminology, indicating that Christ came to heal humanity and restore it to its original state. For example:

- "When Jesus heard their words, he replied, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick'" (Matthew 9:12).
- "When the people of the town recognized Jesus, they spread word throughout the whole region. They brought their sick to him and begged that they might touch even the hem of his garment, and everyone who touched it was made well" (Matthew 14:35).
- "Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:12).
- "Then the angel showed me the river of life, clear as crystal... either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Revelation 22:1-2).

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Lord reveals several truths:

"A Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Luke 10:33-34).

Christ heals the wounded man and takes him to the inn. Christ, the Samaritan in this parable, is clearly portrayed as a physician who heals the sick and takes them to His Church (the inn) or hospital.

(To be continued)

(المقال باللغة العربية)

St. John Financial Snapshot

Year to Date Actual Finances as of 10/31/2026

INCOME	2026 Year To Date	% of Total Income	2025 Year To Date	
Membership Pledges	$ 150,292	24%	$ 135,875	**+$14K** difference vs. 2025 YTD. **+$9K** difference vs. Budget.
Tray Collections	$ 14,562	2%	$ 12,279	
Preschool Contribution	$ 318,163	51%	$ 309,362	
Crab Feed and Festival	$ 79,373	13%	$ 59,605	
Ladies Contribution	$ -	0%	$ 5,000	Ladies account to now hold end-of-year balance of $5K.
Other**	$ 62,358	10%	$ 17,568	
Total Income	$ 624,748	100%	$ 539,689	
Total Expenses	$ 488,350		$ 438,455	
YTD Net Income	$ 136,398	22%	$ 101,233	

**Other includes bookstore, candles, flowers, palms, coffee hour, memorials, weddings, baptisms. weddings, prior year pledges

Hall Rental Revenue Net of Expenses	Current Month	YTD
$ Amount	$ (1,982)	$ (7,592)

Building Fund Balance (Hold)	$ 390,000.00
Building Fund (To Use)	$ 2,073
Playground Funds	$ 33,985

Those who wish to see the full financial summary should contact Parish Council Treasurer Andrew Thayer


St. John's Church
MEN'S FELLOWSHIP
Monday Night Football
Monday, December 7th
VS
SEATTLE
DALLAS
5:00 P.M.
Come Have Dinner, Drinks, Cigars
Enjoy the Game • Have a Meeting
Good Fun and Camaraderie
$25 Per Person Donation
Bring a Friend!
AT OUR HALL

ORTHODOX
Thanksgiving
KIDS AND TEENS RETREAT

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His mercy endures forever.
– Psalm 107:1

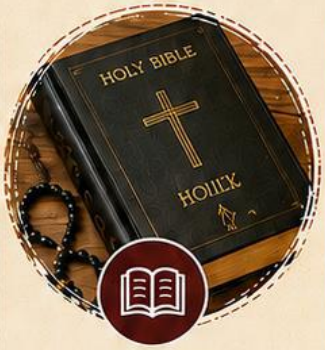


SUNDAY, NOV 15
1:30 PM – 5:00 PM

A fun and faith-filled afternoon for kids and teens and their families to grow closer to Christ and give thanks together!



WE WILL BE MAKING *Holy Bread*



BIBLE STUDY



TEAM BUILDING



DINNER *will be* PROVIDED

SUGGEST **$40** DONATION *per family*

RSVP BY NOV. 1
— TO —
Rania Kashou
or
Irene Guajardo

DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOMED!

FAITH. FELLOWSHIP. THANKSGIVING.
Come grow in Christ and gratitude together!

Jolly Cars with St. Nicholas

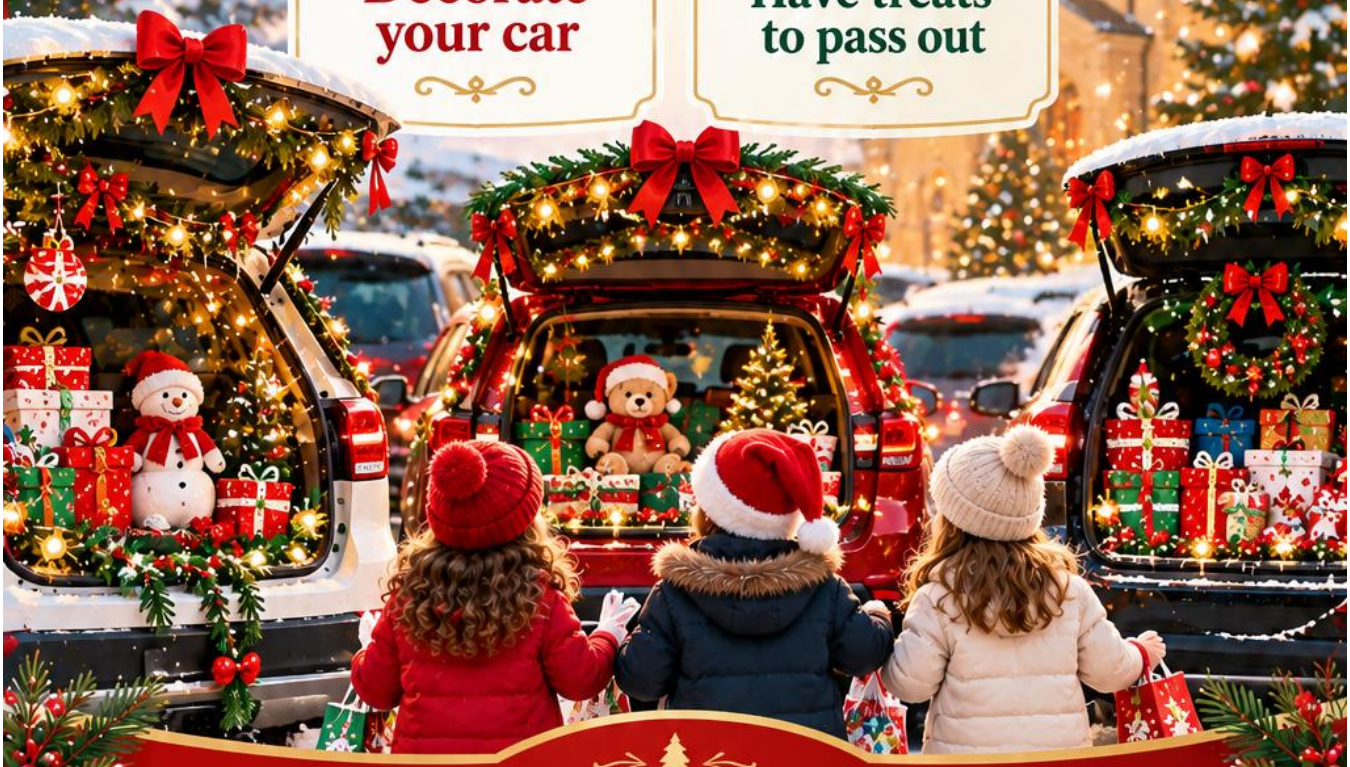
at St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

DECEMBER 6TH

AFTER LITURGY

Decorate your car

Have treats to pass out



RSVP to Irene: (925) 413-3242


ST. JOHN'S
CHRISTMAS
Party
Join us for a wonderful evening for the whole family
as we gather to celebrate the holiday season together!
SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 12, 2026
5:30 PM
COCKTAIL HOUR
6:30 PM
DINNER
NO-HOST,
CASHLESS BAR
LIVE DJ
MUSIC & DANCING
KIDS' CORNER
WITH HOLIDAY FUN
SPECIAL KIDS MENU
ADULTS
$110
CHILDREN
(AGES 6–12)
$35
AGES 5 & UNDER
FREE
COCKTAIL ATTIRE
RSVP by December 1st
to Rania Kashou | (415) 722-0774
501 Moraga Way, Orinda, CA
TICKETS ARE ON SALE UNTIL SOLD OUT.
LIMITED SEATING – RESERVE YOUR SPOT EARLY!
Salmon is available in observance of the Nativity Advent fast.

Rose's Christmas Bake Sale

Sunday, December 14th
after Church

Homemade Goodies Including:

- Namoura
- Baklava
- Date Cookies
- Maamoul
- Ghraybeh



Support the Ladies Club

For further information, please contact
Denise Dudum at 925-360-3350.