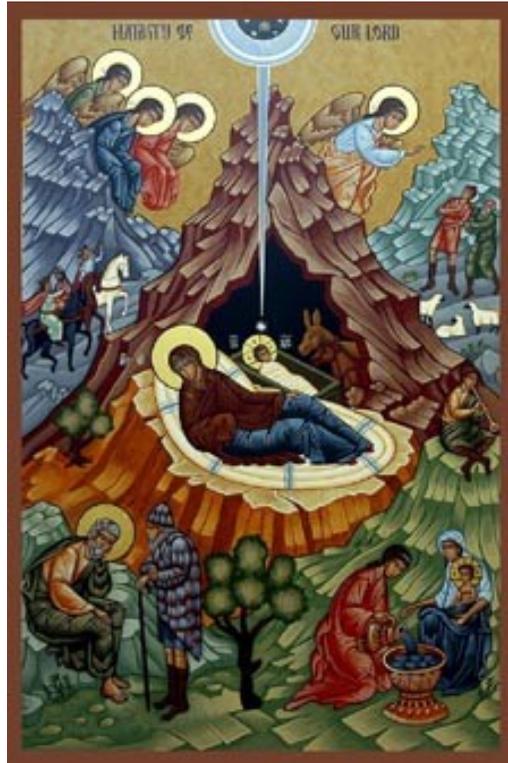


St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
Lowell, Massachusetts



*First day of the Forefeast of & Sunday before the
Nativity of Christ (The Genealogy)*

December 20, 2020

ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Most Reverend Metropolitan JOSEPH

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America

The Rt. Rev. Bishop JOHN, Diocese of Worcester and New England

Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Leonard Faris

Pastor of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

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WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) Service 9:00 a.m. Sunday School: Every other Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m. **Church Office Hours:** Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Divine Liturgy begins at 10:00 a.m. and we should not arrive late. When we do arrive late and the Epistle or Gospel is being read or the priest is preaching the sermon or the Great Entrance is taking place, please **REMAIN** in the Vestibule until it is finished before entering the Church. At the end of the Divine Liturgy please keep your conversation until the "Coffee Hour". **We should leave the Church in silence.**

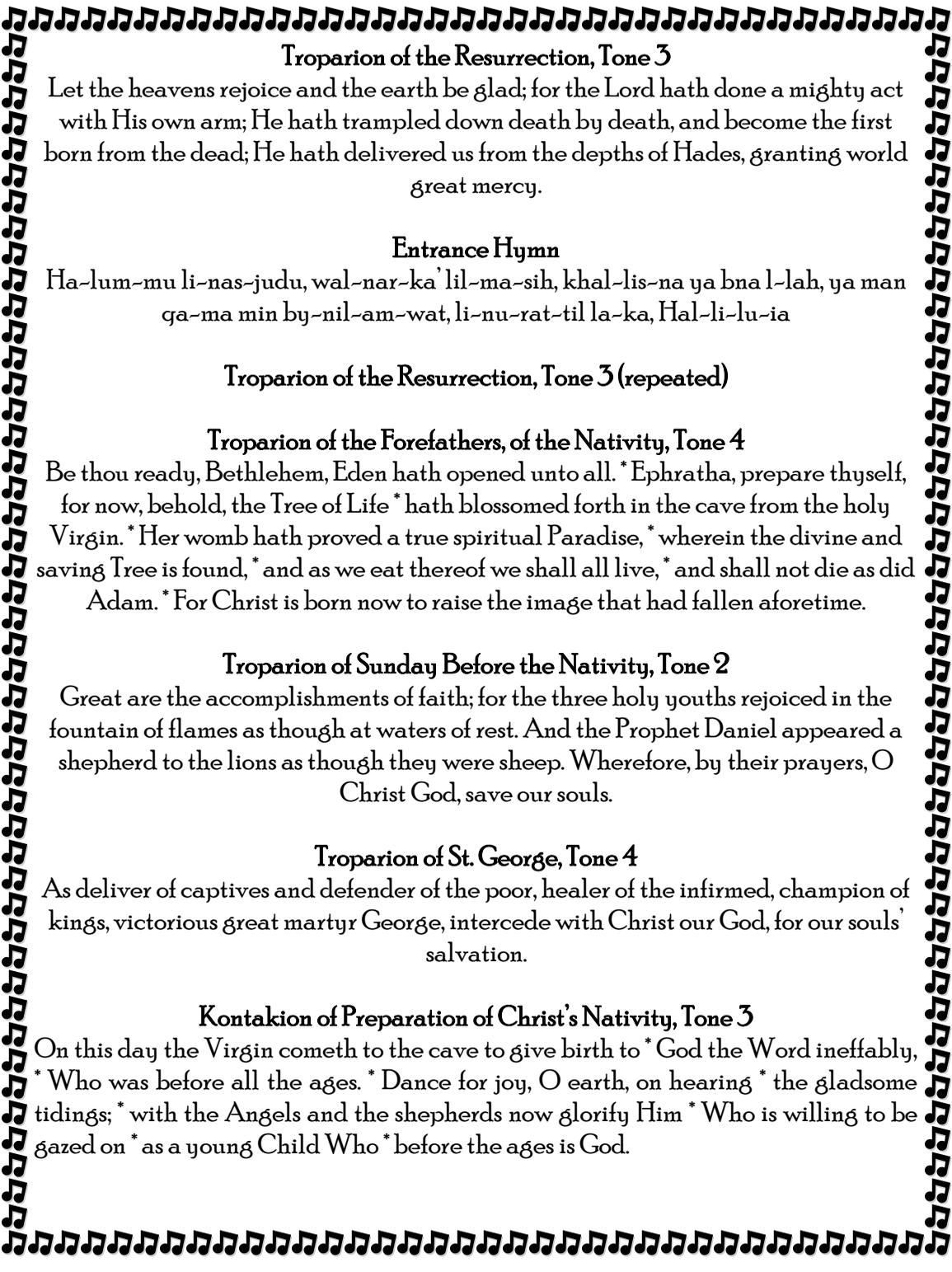
Important Notice: The reception of Holy Communion is limited to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting and recent Confession. Confessions are heard on Sunday mornings during the Matins Service or by special appointment. The Eucharistic Fast begins at midnight on Saturday and ends up with the receiving of Holy Communion. If you are on medication or a young child, you can have a light breakfast before coming to church. If you have any questions, please call Fr. Leonard.

*Thank you,
Father Leonard*

Prayer Requests and Bulletin News: All prayer requests and articles for the weekly bulletin must be submitted each week by **Noon, Tuesday:** emailed to Fr. Leonard at fatherfaris@comcast.net or call 978-452-4816, otherwise, the requests and articles will be published the following week.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

If anyone is in the hospital it is the duty of the family to inform the priest so that he can visit the patient. Also, if anyone is homebound and would like to receive Holy Communion, he/she or a family member should contact Fr. Leonard to make arrangements to bring the Sacrament to the shut-in. Fr. Leonard is always happy to bring the Sacraments to those in Hospitals, Nursing Homes or at home. Thank you and God bless!



Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad; for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm; He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first born from the dead; He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting world great mercy.

Entrance Hymn

Ha-lum-mu li-nas-ju-du, wal-nar-ka' lil-ma-sih, khal-lis-na ya bna l-lah, ya man qa-ma min by-nil-am-wat, li-nu-rat-til la-ka, Hal-li-lu-ia

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 3 (repeated)

Troparion of the Forefathers, of the Nativity, Tone 4

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. * Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life * hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. * Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, * wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, * and as we eat thereof we shall all live, * and shall not die as did Adam. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

Troparion of Sunday Before the Nativity, Tone 2

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

Troparion of St. George, Tone 4

As deliver of captives and defender of the poor, healer of the infirmed, champion of kings, victorious great martyr George, intercede with Christ our God, for our souls' salvation.

Kontakion of Preparation of Christ's Nativity, Tone 3

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.

THE EPISTLE

Blessed are Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers. For Thou art justified in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (11:9-10, 32-40)

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

THE GOSPEL

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

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of

Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, Who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ were fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord December 20, 2020 Liturgy Variables 3 Sunday before Nativity appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

*Prayers are being offered for the
Health and Safety of:*

Nora Abdelahad
Connie Abodeely
Virginia Andersson
Lorice Ansara
William Ansara
Phyllis & Nel Arsenault
Siham Bahou
Charles Behrakis
Ed Betor
Paul & Kerrie Betor
David and Cindy Boragine
Ida Boragine
George Ead
George Ellis
Michael Faris
Michael Forsley
Athanasia Grivas
Duayne Habib
Sam Halperin & Family
Elias Hanna & Family
Joe Kadir
Fr. Stephen and Family
Rose Lowe
Joseph Mansour
Lynn, Thomas Marcotte & Family
Clemence Maria
Karine Nabbout & Family
Gwen Noonan
Helen Poulos
Lilanne Saad
Amad Tayebi
Jack Trottier
Dr. Vartan & Lisa Yeghiazarians &
Family
Genia Yeghiazarians
Fr. Andrew and Khouryee Jane Zbeeb

Prayers are being offered in Memory of:

Charles Abdelahad
George Abodeely
Miriam Abodeely
Andrew Ansara
Elias Ansara
John Ansara
Maurice Ansara
Michael Ansara
Gladys Assaly
Linda Assaly
Yaacoub Awad
Juliette Bahou
Laurice Bahou
Widad Batten
James "Jimmy" Beaudry
Calvin Beede
June Behrakis
Lillian Betor
Dorothy Boragine
Sal Boragine
Cleopatra Bouras
Ella Jean Elias
Rosalind Elias
Frances Ellis
Frank Ellis
George & Elsie Faris
Mary T. Faris
Mary V. Faris
Phillip George
Elizabeth & Joseph Ghareeb
Elias Grivas
George P. Habib
Emile & Teffaha Haddad
Philip & Rosalind Hajjar
Charles & Annie Hamwey
Dorothea Husson
Eleanor Husson
Joanne Husson
N. Mary Husson
Terry Husson Kadir
Siham Khadij
George Lowe
Amanda Louh
Efthymios & Paraskevi Manolis
Robert Maria
George Matook
Denise McCradry
Nafie Moses
Elias Nabbout
Fred Noonan
Frederick & Matilda Noonan
Paul Panagopoulos, Sr.
Anisse Saad
Hanna Saad
Mary Saati
George W. & Mary Saba
Badawi Sabbouh
Eleanor Shalhoup
Fred Simon
Chakeep Skaff
Judy Skaff
Mildred & Arthur Skaff
Minnie Skaff
Nellie Husson Skaff
Ricky Skaff
Stephen Skaff
T. Michael Skaff
J. B. Taleb
Elaine Vieira
Leon Yeghiazarians
Mary Ann & Charles Zaharias
Hilda Zananiri
Nahil Zananiri

ALTAR BREAD

Today's Altar Bread is given in memory of the Servant of God, Sharkey Skaff, requested by his wife Laurence and his Family. May Sharkey's memory be eternal.

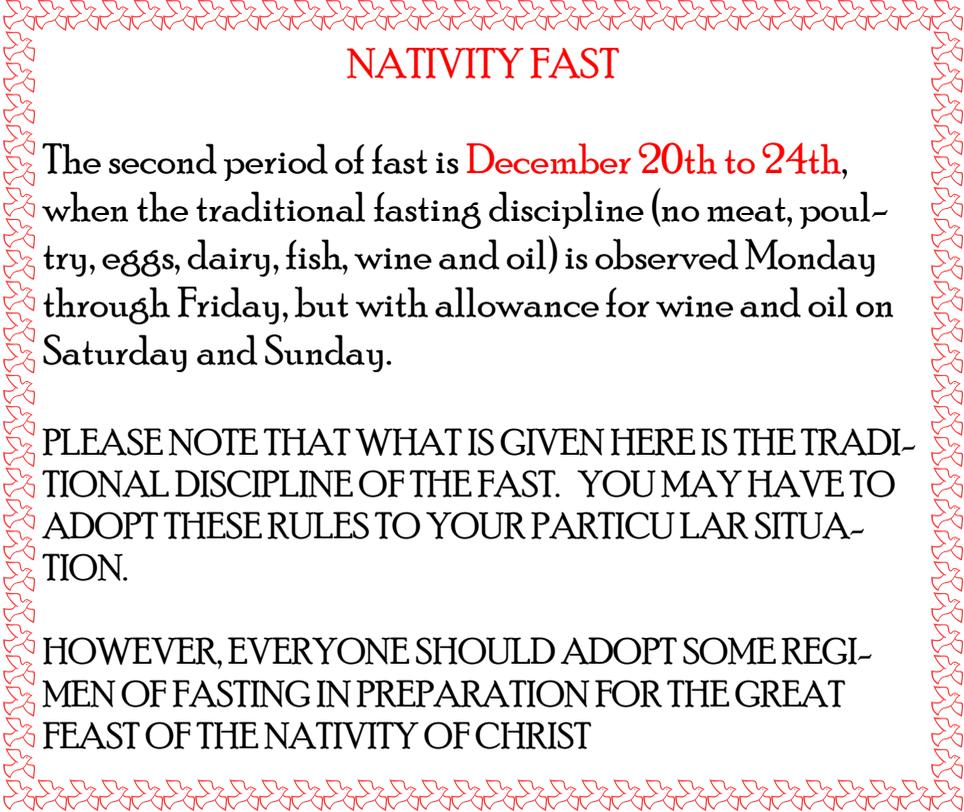
MEMORIAL ~ Today, December 20th

A Two Year Memorial Service is being offered for the repose of the soul of the Servant of God, Sharkey Skaff, requested by his wife Laurence and his Family. May Sharkey's memory be eternal.



REMINDER

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR A MASK WHEN
ENTERING THE CHURCH AND WEARING IT
THROUGHOUT THE LITURGY.**



NATIVITY FAST

The second period of fast is **December 20th to 24th**, when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine and oil) is observed Monday through Friday, but with allowance for wine and oil on Saturday and Sunday.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WHAT IS GIVEN HERE IS THE TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINE OF THE FAST. YOU MAY HAVE TO ADOPT THESE RULES TO YOUR PARTICULAR SITUATION.

HOWEVER, EVERYONE SHOULD ADOPT SOME REGIMEN OF FASTING IN PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST



COME AND CELEBRATE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

Beloved in Christ,

On Thursday, December 24, 2020, we will celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. "The Word was made Flesh and Dwelt among us!"

You are all invited to come and attend Christmas Eve Services and receive Holy Communion on this Great Feast!

| | |
|--|---------|
| Festal Orthros (Matins) | 5:00 pm |
| Procession to the Creche and Blessing | 5:45 pm |
| Solemn Candlelight Divine Liturgy of St. Basil | 6:00 pm |

Begin your Christmas celebration by coming to church first and wishing Our Lord "Happy Birthday"! May the Prince of Peace, Whose Birth we are celebrating, fill your hearts with joy and gladness during this Holy Season and may the New Year bring us all peace, good health and spiritual happiness!

With Love,
+Fr. Leonard



CHRISTMAS

Christmas is marked on the **25 December** (7 January for Orthodox Christians).

The Holy Family, Mary and Joseph with the baby Jesus

Christmas is a Christian holy day that marks the birth of Jesus, the son of God.



The story of Christmas

Jesus' birth, known as the *nativity*, is described in the New Testament of the Bible. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke give different accounts. It is from them that the nativity story is pieced together. Both accounts tell us that Jesus was born to a woman called Mary who was engaged to Joseph, a carpenter. The Gospels state that Mary was a virgin when she became pregnant.

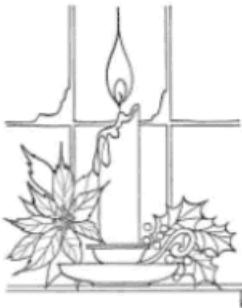
In Luke's account Mary was visited by an angel who brought the message that she would give birth to God's son. According to Matthew's account, Joseph was visited by an angel who persuaded him to marry Mary rather than send her away or expose her pregnancy. Matthew tells us about some wise men who followed a star that led them to Jesus' birthplace and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Luke tells how shepherds were led to Bethlehem by an angel.

According to tradition, Joseph and Mary travelled to Bethlehem shortly before Jesus' birth. Joseph had been ordered to take part in a census in his home town of Bethlehem. All Jewish people had to be counted so the Roman Emperor could determine how much money to collect from them in tax. Those who had moved away from their family homes, like Joseph, had to return to have their names entered in the Roman records.

Joseph and Mary set off on the long, arduous 90-mile journey from Nazareth along the valley of the River Jordan, past Jerusalem to Bethlehem. Mary travelled on a donkey to conserve her energy for the birth.

But when they arrived in Bethlehem the local inn was already full with people returning for the census. The innkeeper let them stay in the rock cave below his house which was used as a stable for his animals.

It was here, next to the noise and filth of the animals, that Mary gave birth to her son and laid him in a manger.



Twas the Night Before Christmas



Twas the night before Christmas
and all thru the house,
not a creature was stirring,
not even a mouse.
All the stockings were hung
by the chimney with care
In the hope that St. Nicholas
soon would be there.

Then what to my
wondering eyes should appear,
A miniature sleigh
and eight tiny reindeer.
A little old driver
so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment
it must be St. Nick.

And more rapid than eagles
his reindeer all came
As he shouted, "On Dasher"
and each reindeer's name.
And so up to the housetop
the reindeer soon flew,
with the sleigh full of toys
and St. Nicholas too.

Down the chimney he came
with a leap and a bound
He was dressed all in fur
and his belly was round
He spoke not a word
but went straight to his work
And filled all the stockings
then turned with a jerk.

And laying his finger
aside of his nose,
then giving a nod
up the chimney he rose
But I heard him exclaim
as he drove out of sight
"Merry Christmas to all
and to all a Good Night".



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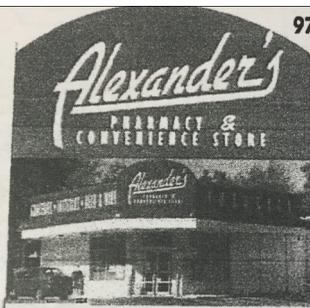
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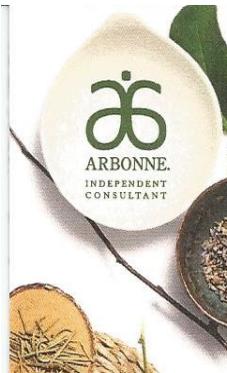
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George L. Duncan
Founder and Chairman of the Board

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