

كنيسة مار نقولا الانطاكية الارثوذكسية

St. Nicholas Weekly Bulletin

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America

Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

5200 Diamond Hts. Boulevard, San Francisco, CA 94131

Tel: (415) 648-5200

Email: info@stnicholas-sf.com--website: stnicholas-sf.com

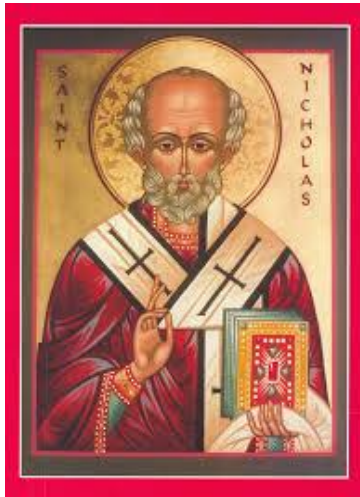
Pastor, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki

(586) 214-4428- revbaalbaki@yahoo.com

Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Parish Council Chairman: Suheil Azar



Sunday, September 18th , 2016

Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross/ الأحد الذي بعد عيد الصليب

This Sunday: (6-Month) Memorial Service for the handmaiden of God Nawal Modawar.

Offered by her family. May her memory be eternal!



THE EPISTLE: Paul to the Galatians. (2:16-20)

Brethren, you know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. Even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the Law died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ Who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.

الرسالة: يا إخوة إذ نعلم أنَّ الإنسان لا يُبرَّرُ بأعمالِ الناموسِ بل إنَّما بالإيمانِ بيسوع المسيح آمناً نحنُ أيضاً بيسوع المسيح لكي نُبرَّرَ بالإيمانِ بالمسيح لا بأعمالِ الناموسِ إذ لا يُبرَّرُ بأعمالِ الناموسِ أحدٌ من ذوي الجسدِ فإن كُنَّا ونحنُ طالبونَ التبريرِ بالمسيح ووجدنا نحنُ أيضاً خطاةً أفيكونَ المسيحُ إذن خادماً للخطيئة. حاشي فإنِّي إن عدتُ أبنِي ما قد هَدَمْتُ أَجْعَلُ نفسي مُتَعَدِّياً لَأَتِي بالناموسِ مُتً للناموسِ لكي أحيأَ الله مع المسيح صُلبتُ فأحيأَ لا أنا بل المسيحُ يحيا فيَّ. ومالي من الحياة في الجسدِ أنا أحيأُ في إيمانِ ابنِ الله الذي احبَّنِي وبذلَ نفسه عَنِّي.

THE GOSPEL: St. Mark. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

الإنجيل:

قالَ الربُّ مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَّبِعَنِي فَلْيَكْفُرْ بِنَفْسِهِ وَيَحْمِلْ صَلِيبَهُ وَيَتَّبِعَنِي. لِأَنَّ مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَ نَفْسَهُ يُهْلِكُهَا وَمَنْ أَهْلَكَ نَفْسَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي وَمِنْ أَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ يُخَلِّصُهَا فَإِنَّهُ مَاذَا يَنْتَفِعُ الْإِنْسَانُ لو ربحَ العالمَ كُلَّهُ وخَسِرَ نَفْسَهُ أَمْ مَاذَا يُعْطَى الْإِنْسَانُ فداءً عَن نَفْسِهِ لِأَنَّ مَنْ يَسْتَحْيِي بِي وَبِكَلَامِي فِي هَذَا الْجِيلِ الْفَاسِقِ الْخَاطِئِ يَسْتَحْيِي بِهِ ابْنُ الْبَشَرِ مَتَى أَتَى فِي مَجْدٍ أَمَّا فِي هَذَا الْجِيلِ الْقَدِيسِينَ وَقَالَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنَّ قَوْمًا مِنْ الْقَائِمِينَ ههنا لا يذوقونَ الموتَ حتَّى يَرَوْا مَلَكُوتَ اللَّهِ قَدْ أَتَى بِقُوَّةٍ.

Holy Bread of Oblation offered by:

- ❖ St. Nicholas church for the good health of those who have celebrated their birthdays this week: Alaa Elhaj, Wardeh Jada, Jenevieve Rantisi, Bassam Halteh, Issa Husary, Budr Husary. Happy Birthday. Many Years!

Alter candle offered by:

Sponsors for Sunday's are needed. Please make checks payable St. Nicholas Church in the amount of \$25.00 or more. Thank you!

Upcoming Events:



This Sunday we will have the **Procession of the Holy Cross**. It is customary in our Archdiocese for the procession to take place at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

دورة الصليب: طقوسياً في آخر الصلاة يرفع الكاهن الصليب أمام الشعب ويبارك به الشعب و يضعه بين الرياحين والزهور، فيأتي المؤمنون إليه ساجدين ومقبلينه، فيدفع الكاهن إلى كل واحد زهرة ليوحى إليه انه "بالصليب قد أتى الفرح لكل العالم".

Sunday School Students & Parents

Sunday school starts on Sunday, September 11th, 2016. Regular attendance is very important.



Sunday Luncheon

This Sunday's lunch will be sponsored by Jeries & Janet Azar for the good health of their family. May God grant them many years! Many Thanks for your continuous support.

Upcoming Festivals:

- Holy Virgin Mary Church, Sacramento Food Festival - **September 17th & 18th**
- Palestine Cultural Day 2016 - **September 18th** (Hall of Flowers, 9th and Lincoln, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco)
- St. John the Evangelist (Orinda) Food Festival - **September 24th & 25th**.
- St. Thomas More Catholic Church Food Festival - **September 24th & 25th**



St. Nicholas Church Annual Festival

St. Nicholas Church Annual Food Festival will be held on Saturday & Sunday, October 1st & 2nd. More info to follow...

A lot of items needed for our festival. We would appreciate your generosity to donate and help us to purchase it. Thank you for your continuous support.

Car Raffle: This year we will have a raffle for **2016 Honda Accord LX**. Hurry up and buy your ticket for \$50 to win this car.



Fashion Show:

St. Nicholas Annual Fashion Show will be held on Sunday, November 6th at St. Nicholas Banquet Hall.

Ladies Auxiliary is looking for "Kids" to Model in our annual fashion show

Ages: 5 till 15 years

If you are interested in registering your kid, Please call this number

Juliana @ [415-760-9177](tel:415-760-9177) or Samantha @ [415-710-6805](tel:415-710-6805)

The registration is open till September 23rd



Mark your calendar:

St. Nicholas Church Christmas Party will be held on Saturday December 17th, 2016.

More info to follow...



Exaltation of the Cross: September 14

The Exaltation of the Cross is one of the twelve great feasts in the yearly Church cycle. It commemorates two historical events: first, the finding of the Life-giving Cross in the year 326, and second, its recovery from Persia in 628.

History of the Feast

In the first centuries of Christianity, during the years of persecution, the pagans wished to destroy all evidence of the life of Jesus Christ, and the Cross on which He was crucified disappeared. With the conversion of Emperor Constantine the Great, Christians were at liberty to worship openly and build churches. The emperor's mother, St. Helen, longed to find the True Cross of Christ. She traveled to Jerusalem and was told by a very old Jew that the Cross was buried beneath the temple of the pagan goddess Venus, built in 119 AD by the Roman Emperor Hadrian.

The temple was torn down, and digging in the earth below uncovered three wooden crosses. The small board which had hung over Christ with the inscription 'Jesus King of the Jews,' had long since fallen off, and -there was no way of telling which was the True Cross and which were the crosses of the two thieves crucified on either side of Christ. A sick woman was brought and likewise a dead man who was being carried to burial. The three crosses were laid in turn one by one upon the sick woman and upon the dead man. Two of the crosses had no effect, but through contact with the third cross, the sick woman was healed of her infirmity and the dead man came to life. These miracles clearly indicated which of the three was Christ's Cross.

Hearing of this discovery, all the faithful desired to see the Cross of the Lord and to venerate it. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, Makarios, took the Cross onto a raised platform and lifted it on high, 'exalting' it, for all to see. The people fell to their knees, bowing down before the Cross and crying out repeatedly: "Lord, have mercy!"

To house the relic of the True Cross, St. Helen had a church built over the Holy Sepulchre. The church was consecrated on Sept. 13, 335, an event also commemorated in the service hymns of the Feast. The finding and exaltation of the Cross was appointed to be celebrated annually on the following day.

The Life-giving Cross was kept in Jerusalem until the year 614 when the Holy City fell to the Persians who looted the Church of the Resurrection and took the True Cross back with them to Persia. Fourteen years later Emperor Heraclius concluded a peace with the Persians, and the Holy Cross was brought to the imperial capital of Constantinople.

The Emperor, taking off his shoes and his imperial robes, carried the Cross into the Church of Holy Wisdom (Agia Sophia) where it was once again triumphantly exalted. It was then resolved that the Feast be celebrated by the Church in all parts of the world, for which reason it is called the Universal Exaltation.

This feast of Nativity of the Mother of God is the time when we remember the birth of the One who for the sake of us all, for the whole human race, was able to show such faith, to surrender so absolutely to God, that He could become Man through Her, and bring us these manifold, unfathomable gifts. Glory to Her humility, glory to Her faith, glory to Her love, glory to God Who was incarnate and to the Virgin Mother of God, the worthy vessel of the incarnation of the Son of God, Christ our God!

اكفر بنفسك واتبعني

يتحدث الرب في إنجيل اليوم عن نكران الذات بقوله: "من أراد أن يتبعني فليكفر بنفسه ويحمل صليبه ويتبعني". ثم يقول: "ماذا ينفع الإنسان لو ربح العالم كله وخسر نفسه، أو ماذا يعطي الإنسان فداء عن نفسه؟". السؤال المطروح هنا هو هذا: كيف يريد الرب من جهة أن يكفر الإنسان بنفسه، ثم يريد منه أن يربح نفسه؟ وكأن هذين القولين متناقضان.

إن قوله في المقطع الأول "فليكفر بنفسه" يعني أن يتجرد المرء من شهواته، من كل أهوائه ومن دنياه. فإنه كان يحسب أن نفسه، أي ذاتيته، هي في الدنيا التي يعب منها ويأكل منها ويستولي عليها ويتمجد فيها. كان يحسب هذا الإنسان أنه موجود إن اقتنى أملاكاً أو صار كبيراً في قومه. إن هذا الإنسان يجد نفسه في أعين الآخرين، يرونه كبيراً فيكبر، ويرونه فطنا فيعظم. ولكنه إذا وقف وحده في خلوة أمام الرب يرى نفسه فارغاً. الإنسان الأجوف يملأ ذاته من كل ما في دنياه ليتعرف على نفسه على أنه قائم. كل منا مصاب بهذه المصيبة على درجات، ولهذا يقول السيد: اكفروا بأنفسكم، اكفروا بأموالكم، اكفروا بأمجادكم. قد تأتاكم الأمجاد، ولكن احسبوها كلاً شيئاً. قد تأتاكم الأموال فاحسبوها كلاً شيئاً. قد تأتاكم الملمات على أصنافها، ازهدوا بها واعتبروها زائلة. هكذا تسيطرون على الدنيا ولو كنتم في الدنيا.

لا تظنوا أنفسكم ذوي شأن، فأى داء قد يذهب بكم في لحظة. لذلك من عرف أنه يموت، يعرف أنه كان في حياته كلاً شيئاً. وإذا توصلتم إلى أن تكفروا ليس فقط بخطاياكم وشهواتكم، ولكن أن تكفروا بذواتكم، عند ذاك ترحبون أنفسكم لأنكم قلتم للرب: يا سيد، نحن فهمنا أننا لسنا بشيء وانت كل شيء، فتعال أيها الرب يسوع واملأ نفوسنا من حضرتك. إذا أخذتم تذوقون هذه الحضرة، يبدأ تكونكم. تتكونون من الله، تصبحون أناساً جدد. كل ما فيكم وعندكم هو منه، وأنتم له في كل حين شاكرون.

يضطربنا هذا أن نتبع المعلم حتى النهاية، أن يحمل كل منا صليبه ويتبع السيد. هذا هو الصليب أن نميت كل ما يعرقل سيرنا إلى المسيح، والدرب لا تنتهي عند الجلجلة. ولكن كيف نموت مع المسيح؟ أن نميت هذا الجسد وأهواءه. من له القدرة أن يعتبر الحياة كلها كلاً شيئاً، أن يسحقها في عينيه، في قلبه، يقترب من نكران الذات. وإن كنا لا نعمل هذا، نبقي متحيرين بين الله والشيطان. من أين لنا أن نحب الصليب، ومن يحب أداة عذابه؟ فالصليب آلام، والسيد يطلب إلينا أن نتقبل الآلام برضاء أو أن نُسَرَّ بها بسبب ما ينتظرنا من بعدها، بسبب الفرح الذي يحلّ فينا إن نحن عانقنا المصلوب، إن زهدنا بهذا العالم.

"اكفر بنفسك واتبعني". الإنسان لا يحب الإنسان حتى النهاية. غالباً لا يموت الإنسان من أجل الإنسان. كل منا يموت وحده. ولكن هناك شخصاً واحداً أحببنا حتى المنتهى. كان ممكناً للمسيح أن ينزل على الأرض ليس فقط في سبيلنا كلنا، ولكن في سبيل كل منا بمفرده. نحن محبوبون كل منا بمفرده، ولذلك نستطيع أن نحمل صليب الذي أحببنا وأسلم نفسه عنا.

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