

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

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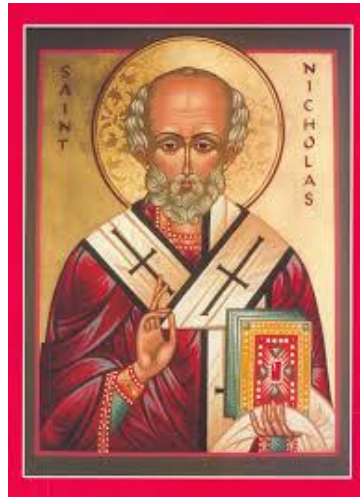
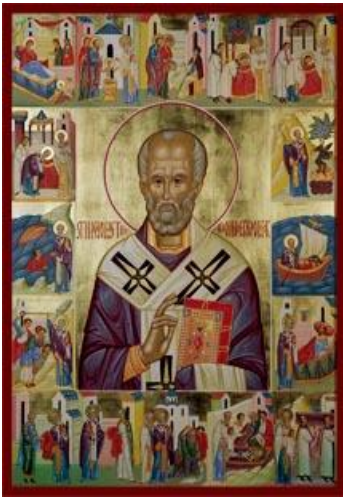
Pastor, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki

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

Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Parish Council Chairman: Suheil Azar



Sunday, November 27th, 2016

✠ **Condolences:** We would like to offer our sincere condolences and sympathy to Fawzi Khoury and family on the passing into eternal life of **Edmon Naseer Khoury** (Fawzi's brother) in Jordan.

A 3rd, 9th & 40-Days Memorial service will take place this Sunday November 27th.

May his memory be eternal!

✠ Also we would like to offer our sincere condolences and sympathy to Odett and Mitri Najjar on the passing of Odett's nephew **Ilyan Michael Abu Hatab** in Damascus last week.

9th & 40-Days Memorial service will take place this Sunday November 27th.

May his memory be eternal!

Also, we would like to offer our sincere condolences and sympathy to Diana Batshon on the passing of her niece **Tina Totah Tawasha**. May her memory be eternal!

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### **NATIVITY FAST: November 15<sup>th</sup> - December 25<sup>th</sup>**

Nativity Fast (Advent) is the period proceeding the Christmas season in which we abstain from meat and dairy products. Eating fish is allowed except Wednesdays and Fridays, and we can eat all the regular meals like breakfasts, lunches, and dinners. The purpose of this fast is seeking the spirituality and the preparation for the feast of the advent of our Lord on December 25<sup>th</sup>.



بدء صوم الميلاد: يبدأ صوم الميلاد 11/15 وهو صوم يسمح فيه أكل السمك (عدا الأربعاء والجمع) لغاية نهار 12/20 هذا الصوم تهيئة للاحتفال بعيد ميلاد ربنا يسوع المسيح. نتمنى للجميع صوماً مباركاً وكل عام وأنتم بخير.

### **THE EPISTLE: St. Paul to the Ephesians. (2:4-10)**

Brethren, God, Who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast. For, we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them

**الرسالة:** يا إخوة إنَّ الله لكونه غنيّاً بالرحمة ومن أجل كثرة محبته التي أحبنا بها حين كُنَّا أمواتاً بالزلاّت أحيانا مع المسيح. (فإنَّكم بالنعمة مُخلَّصون) وأقامنا معه وأجلَّسنا معه في السماويات في المسيح يسوع ليظهر في الدهور المستقبلة فرط غنى نِعَمَتِهِ بِاللُّطْفِ بِنَا فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ فَإِنَّكُمْ بِالنِّعْمَةِ مُخَلَّصُونَ بِوَاسِطَةِ الْإِيمَانِ. وَذَلِكَ لَيْسَ مِنْكُمْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ عَطِيَّةُ اللَّهِ وَلَيْسَ مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ لِئَلَّا يَفْتَخِرَ أَحَدٌ لِأَنَّا نَحْنُ صُنْعُهُ مَخْلُوقِينَ فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ لِلأَعْمَالِ الصَّالِحَةِ الَّتِي سَبَقَ اللَّهُ فَأَعَدَّهَا لِئَسْلُكَ فِيهَا.

**THE GOSPEL: St. Luke. (18:18-27)** At that time, a man came testing Jesus and asking, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother.’” And the man said, “All these I have observed from my youth.” And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when the man heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus, seeing him sad, said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus said, “What is impossible with men is possible with God.”

**الإنجيل:** في ذلك الزمان دنا إلى يسوع إنسان مجرباً له وقائلاً أيها المعلم الصالح ماذا أعمل لأرث الحياة الأبدية فقال له يسوع لماذا تدعوني صالحاً وما صالح إلا واحد وهو الله إنك تعرف الوصايا لاتزن. لا تقتل. لا تسرق. لا تشهد بالزور. أكرم أباك وأمك فقال كل هذا قد حفظته منذ صباهي فلما سمع يسوع ذلك قال له واحدة تعوزك بعد. بع كل شيء لك ووزعه على المساكين فيكون لك كنز في السماء وتعال اتبعني فلما سمع ذلك حزن لأنه كان غنياً جداً فلما رآه يسوع قد حزن قال ما أعسر على ذوي الأموال أن يدخلوا ملكوت الله إنه لأسهل أن يدخل الجمل في ثقب الإبرة من أن يدخل غني ملكوت الله فقال السامعون فمن يستطيع إذن أن يخلص فقال ما لا يستطيع عند الناس مستطاع عند الله.

### *Holy Bread of Oblation offered by:*

- ❖ St. Nicholas church for the good health of those who have celebrated their birthdays this week: Jeries Azar, Fadwa Azar, Charlie Rantisi, Diana Kehring, Kamal Gamoney. Happy Birthday. Many Years!
- ❖ St. Nicholas Parish family for the good health of all who are named Katherine, Katie after **Katherine the Great Martyr (November 25)** on the occasion of their Names's Day! Many years!
- ❖ Mitri and Odette Najjar in loving memory of **Ilyan Michael Abu Hatab** (Odette's nephew). May his memory be eternal!

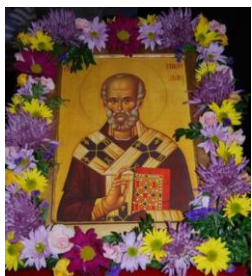
## **Congratulations**

The Parish Family extends congratulations to:

- **Ilyan Baalbaki** who was tonsured by the hands of His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH to the rank of Sub -Deacon. He will serve and assist at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church. May God bless him!
- **Archpriest Father Alexandros El-Far** who was honored by His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH for his 55 years of service as a priest. God grant him many years!
- To the newly inducted members of St. Ignatius of Antioch: **Sana Jada, Lamis Massad and Suheil Shatara** Many years!

### **Upcoming Events:**

Next Sunday Dec 4<sup>th</sup>: Delicious “Burbara” Pudding will be served after Liturgy donated by Diana Batshon In memory of her Husband **Michel Batshon**. May his memory be eternal! Many thanks to Diana. May God bless you and your family.



### ***St. Nicholas Great Feast***

Tuesday Dec 6<sup>th</sup> Celebrating the great Feast of St. Nicholas the Patron Saint of our Church / رئيس أساقفة ميرا

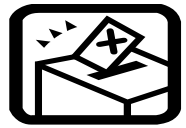
Matins Service will be held on Tuesday Dec 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am.

Divine Liturgy at 11:00 am. Followed by a delicious Lenten lunch.

Please join us in welcoming some of the Parishioners from the annunciation Greek Orthodox Church and some of our Northern California Deanery Clergy.

❖ ***Parish Council Election December 11<sup>th</sup> after the Divine Liturgy***

On Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, there will be a parish council election meeting for the sole purpose of electing some members of the Parish Council for the coming term. Three are to be elected and one to be appointed by the Pastor.



**Anyone interested in serving or nominating someone to serve on the Parish Council must be fully pledged and spiritually qualified.**

***Please submit your candidate's name to the pastor by Dec 4<sup>th</sup>.***

In order to vote in the elections, members must be spiritually qualified and in a good standing with the church.

❖ ***Christmas Party:*** St. Nicholas Church Christmas Party will be held on Saturday December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

**St. Nicholas Orthodox Church**  
Christmas Party  
Saturday December 17, 2016 @8:00pm

Famous singers from Palestine: Bishara Sakhanini  
And from Jordan: Fouad Rakan  
& Maestro Radwan Shakhshir & Band

Donation \$85 per person  
(Includes open top shelf bar, Meza and dinner)

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:

|                                 |                               |                                 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Church Office: (415) 648 - 5200 | Jeries Azar: (415) 710 - 0456 | Maurice Kari: (650) 455 - 1600  |
| Salim Qaru: (650) 642 - 0168    | Sana Jada: (650) 255 - 1380   | Elias Batshon: (650) 580 - 7185 |

*Happy  
Thanksgiving*

The Lord warns us today of how difficult it is for a man who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God. Does it mean that the Kingdom of God is open only to destitute, to those who are materially poor, who lack everything on earth? No. The Kingdom of God is open to all who are not enslaved by possessions. When we read the first Beatitude, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven', we are given a key to this saying: the poor in spirit are those who have understood that they possess nothing which is their own. We have been created as an act of God, loved into existence; we are offered by God communion with Him to which we have no rights. All we are, all we possess is not our own in the sense that we have not made ourselves, we did not create what is seemingly ours - every thing which we are and which we have is love, the love of God and the love of people, and we cannot possess anything because everything is a gift that escapes us the moment we want to have possession of it and say, "It is mine".



On the other hand, the Kingdom of God is really the kingdom of those who are aware that they are infinitely rich because we can expect everything from love divine and from human love. We are rich because we possess nothing, we are rich because we are given all things; and so, it is difficult for one who imagines that he is rich in his own right to belong to that kingdom in which everything is a sign of love, and nothing can be possessed, as it were - taken away from others; because the moment we say that we possess something which is not given us either by God or by human care, we subtract it from the mystery of love.

On the other hand, the moment we cling to anything we become slaves of it. I remember when I was young, a man telling me: Don't you understand that the moment you have taken a copper coin in your hand and are not prepared to open your hand to let it go, you have lost the use of a hand, the use of an arm, the use of your body, because all your attention will be concentrated on not losing this copper coin, - the rest will be forgotten.

Whether we keep in our hand a copper coin, or whether we feel rich in so many other ways - intellectually, emotionally, materially is irrelevant, - we are prisoners, we have lost the use of a limb, the use of our mind, the use of our heart; we can no longer be free, and the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of freedom.

On the other hand also, how difficult it is to one who has never lacked anything, who has always possessed more than he needs, to be aware of the poverty or the need of another: poverty - material, emotional or intellectual, or any other lack. It requires a great deal of understanding and sympathy, it requires from us that we should learn to be attentive to the movements of other people's hearts and to their material needs in order to respond to them. One says in Russian 'A satisfied person no longer understands a hungry one'; which of us can say that we are hungry in any respect? And this is why we do not understand the needs of people - of one another here, or of people beyond the confines of our congregation.

So, let us reflect on that; poverty does not mean destitution; it means freedom from enslavement to an illusion that we are self-sufficient, self-contained, the creator of what we are and what we possess. And also free from enslavement to what is given us to make husbandmen of God.

Let us reflect on this; because if we learn this, if we learn what Saint Paul said that whether he is rich, whether he is destitute, he is equally rich because his richness is in God and in the human love. Then we will be able, whether we possess material things or not, to be free of them, and to belong to God's Kingdom which is a Kingdom of mutual love, or mutual solidarity, of compassion for one another, of giving to one another what we were given freely.



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