

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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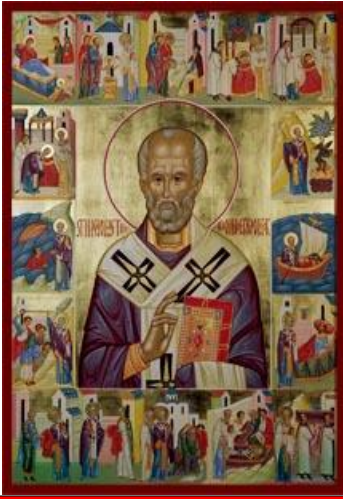
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Parish Council Chairman: Suheil Azar



Sunday, December 4th, 2016

Great-martyr Barbara of Syria & Venerable John of Damascus

Memorial Services This Sunday December 4th :

Third- Day Memorial Service for the Servant of God **Fuad Hanhan** offered by his family.

Forty-Day Memorial Service for the Servant of God **Habib Carouba** offered by his family.

Six-Month Memorial Service for the Servant of God **Fuad Baba** offered by his family.

May their memory be eternal!



NATIVITY FAST: November 15th - December 25th

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 25th.



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 Galatians. (3:23-4:5) Brethren, before faith came, we were confined under the Law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the Law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

الرسالة: غلاطية يا إخوة، قبل أن يأتي الإيمان كنّا محفوظين تحت الناموس مغلّقاً علينا الى الإيمان الذي كان مزمعاً إعلانه. فالناموس إدّا كان مؤدّباً لنا يرشدنا الى المسيح لكي نبرّر بالإيمان. فبعد أن جاء الإيمان لسنّا بعد تحت مؤدّب لأن جميعكم أبناء الله بالإيمان بالمسيح يسوع لأنكم كلّكم الذين اعتمدتم في المسيح قد لبستم المسيح. ليس يهودي ولا يوناني، ليس عبد ولا حرّ، ليس ذكر ولا أنثى لأنكم جميعكم واحد في المسيح يسوع. فإذا كنتم للمسيح فأنتم أدّا نسل إبراهيم وورثته بحسب الموعد. وأقول ان الوارث ما دام طفلاً فلا فرق بينه وبين العبد مع كونه مالك الجميع، لكنّه تحت أيدي الأوصياء والوكلاء الى الوقت الذي أجّله الآب. هكذا نحن أيضاً حين كنّا أطفالاً كنّا متعبّدين تحت أركان العالم. فلما حان ملء الزمان أرسل الله ابنه مولوداً من امرأة، مولوداً تحت الناموس ليفتدي الذين تحت الناموس لننال التبني.

THE GOSPEL: St. Luke. (13:10-17) At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrite! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" As Jesus said this, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by Him.

الإنجيل: لوقا 13: 10 - 17 في ذلك الزمان كان يسوع يعلم في أحد المجامع يوم السبت، وإذا بامرأة بها روح مرض منذ ثماني عشرة سنة وكانت منحنية لا تستطيع أن تنتصب البتة. فلما رآها يسوع دعاها وقال لها: انك مطلقّة من مرضك، ووضع يديه عليها، وفي الحال استقامت ومجّدت الله. فأجاب رئيس المجمع وهو مغتاظ لإبراء يسوع في السبت وقال للمجمع: هي ستة أيام ينبغي العمل فيها، ففيها تأتون وتستشفون لا في يوم السبت. فأجاب الرب وقال: يا مرائي أليس كل واحد منكم يحلّ ثوره أو حماره في السبت من المذود وينطلق به فيسقيه؟ وهذه هي ابنة إبراهيم التي ربطها الشيطان منذ ثماني عشرة سنة، أما كان ينبغي أن تُطلق من هذا الرباط يوم السبت؟ ولما قال هذا خزي كل من كان يقاومه، وفرح الجمع بجميع الأمور المجيدة التي كانت تصدر منه.

Holy Bread of Oblation offered by:

- ❖ St. Nicholas Parish family for the good health of all who are named; Andrew, Andrea, Andi after **Apostle Andrew the First called (November 30)** on the occasion of their Names's Day! Many years!
- ❖ Laila Louh in loving memory of **Elias Louh**. May his memory be eternal!
- ❖ St. Nicholas church for the good health of those who have celebrated their birthdays this week: Janet Azar, Paul Habeeb, Saideh Herrera, Mona Khoury, Sema Shami, Amanda Batshon, Naim Shnoudi. Happy Birthday. Many Years!
- ❖ Maha Dabit and family in loving memory of **Rimon Dabit, Nakleh and Ellen Aho**. May their memory be eternal!

Upcoming Events:

Burbara: This Sunday Dec 4th: 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 6th Celebrating the great Feast of St. Nicholas the Patron Saint of our Church / رئيس أساقفة ميرا
Matins Service will be held on Tuesday Dec 6th 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 11th after the Divine Liturgy*

On Sunday, December 11th, 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 4th.

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 17th,



St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

Christmas Party
Saturday December 17, 2016 @7:30pm

Famous singers from Palestine: Bishara Sakhamini
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
Salim Qaru: (650) 642 - 0168	Sana Jada: (650) 255 - 1380
Maurice Kari: (650) 455 - 1600	Elias Batshon: (650) 580 - 7185

MIRACLES OF CHRIST ON THE SABBATH DAY (Metropolitan Anthony)

Time and again we read in the Gospel of the anger which the Lord Jesus Christ provoked by performing an act of mercy, a miracle of healing on a Sabbath day. And we cannot help asking ourselves a question: Why did He do it so constantly, so persistently, with such insistence? Could it be to challenge those who surrounded Him? Could it be to provoke them? Could it be simply a pedagogical action?

I believe that there is a great deal more in His action. The Lord created the world in six days; on the seventh day He rested of His toils and labours. But what happened to the world then? The seventh day was the day when the world came into the hands of man to be brought to its fulfilment and to its completeness; the seventh day, the Sabbath of the Lord is the day of man. The whole of human history falls in that day. But God did not leave man to work alone as the Lord Jesus Christ says in the Gospel, as reported by Saint John, **ⲃⲏⲛ**My Father still works, He shows His work to His Son for Him to fulfil them**ⲃⲏⲛ**TM. And in another passage He teaches us, He tells us that His judgment is true because it is not His judgment; He hears the words of the Father and that is the judgment He pronounces.

And so, history is the day of man, but man is called to be guided by the wisdom, by the love of God. It is because we are so often seeking for our own ways, it is because we do not ask ourselves what is God's way in one situation or the other that the world has become so ugly, and so frightening, and so tragic. There is a Hebrew poem that describes the misery of this world into which man does not bring the love of God; it says, **ⲃⲏⲛ**Man has ceased to believe in God and love has departed this world. Men have hanged themselves in forests, have drowned themselves in lakes, in rivers. Heaven is no longer mirrored in the lakes, in the woods; the bird does no longer sing songs of paradise, and the Prophet himself on his pedestal has become a mere statue.**ⲃⲏⲛ**TM

Is this not what we have become? Not statues but so much alike the wife of Lot who turned back and who became a statue of salt. We have remained salt and yet we are petrified, immobile, we do not fulfil on earth this function of ours. And Christ shows us, by working His miracles, His acts of love and of compassion on Sabbath day, time and again, He Who is the only true man, the only man who is in total, ultimate oneness with God, what our part should be: take on the history of mankind, take every situation in which we or others find themselves, and carry them on our shoulders in an act of mercy and of love.

A Western writer has said that a Christian is the one to whom God has committed the care of His world and of other people. Are we discharging this basic central commission of ours, do we care? We may care with tenderness, we may care sternly, but we must care.

And then, this seventh day when God in His mercy and love has committed this world to our care, still can become the day of the Lord. And the City of man which is been built without God, which so often is like the Tower of P'P'bel, may still unfold and attain the greatness and the holiness of the City of God in which the Lord Jesus Christ, true God but also true Man, is called to be a citizen, the heart of it, but also one of us. Is not this call great enough? Is not God's faith in us sufficiently inspiring? Are we going to defeat His hope, to reject His love for ourselves or for others? Or are we going to learn from the ways in which Christ fulfils His human vocation in the day of the Lord, shall we not learn from Him and together with Him build the world which God has dreamed, has willed and is still loving in his distress and so often in our betrayal of Him! Let us learn to love one another actively, bear one another's burdens, listen to the Living God when He speaks, listen with all our energy, look into His ways and be those who fulfill His will and bring the world to the perfect beauty He has willed for it!

السبت

إنجيل اليوم يحدثنا عن شفاء قام به السيد يوم السبت. وقد لعبت قضية حفظ السبت دوراً هاماً جداً في حياة السيد، فمؤامرة اليهود لقتله ابتدأت عندما شفى يسوع الرجل ذا اليد اليابسة يوم السبت (متى ١٢: ٩-١٣). منذ ذلك الحين، يقول لنا الإنجيل، تشاوروا ليقتلوه لأنهم اعتبروا انه ليس فقط يخالف الشريعة كما شرحوها هم، ولكنه ينسف الكيان السياسي اليهودي. إذا أردنا أن نفحص عن السبب الحقيقي لمقتل يسوع في أذهان اليهود ورؤسائهم لوجدنا أن السبب هو أن يسوع أراد أن يمدّ حدود شعب الله الى خارج إسرائيل، أن يدخل الأمم في العهد القائم بين الله والناس، أن يمتنع البشر جميعاً بحلاوة الله وبركات الله، وبالنتيجة أن يكسر القوقعة التي كان اليهود مرتمين فيها، وأن يضرب الشعور بالتفوق الذي كان لهم. السبت كان رمزاً للانغلاق اليهودي، للعصبية اليهودية، ولهذا وقف اليهود ضد السيد هذا الموقف الصلب بسبب ما ظنّوه تجاوزاً للشريعة. جاء السيد وأراد أن يتخطى الشعب هذا العناد الذي كانوا فيه. أراد أن يبين لهم أن السبت جعل للإنسان وان كل قانون وُضع لخدمة الانسان. لم يُخلق الإنسان للقانون. الشريعة مسخرة في سبيل الانسان، في سبيل نموه ومعرفته للرب. ولهذا أتى يسوع بشيء جديد في تاريخ البشرية وهو أنه علّمنا أن الانسان وقلبه وروحه أفضل من كل قانون، وأنا نتجاوز القانون في سبيل هذا الانسان.

الأيام التي لا يجوز فيها إقامة إكليل، الأيام التي يجب فيها الصوم، الصوم قبل المناولة، الى ما هنالك... هذه قواعد بشرية صالحة وُضعت في المجامع، ولكنها قواعد عامة. وإذا كان هناك خير للإنسان في تجاوز القانون، فلا نتعلّق بالقواعد العامة: فلان يُحلّ من الصوم مثلاً، وفلان يُعطى المناولة ولو كان غير صائم لأن في المناولة خيراً وقد يكون هذا الانسان بحاجة اليها. لذلك لا نتمسك بقانون الصوم بالنسبة لهذا الانسان في هذا الطرف المعين. يبقى هذا على عاتق المسؤول الذي يميّز الأوضاع. المهم أن تكون علاقتنا مع الله علاقة الروح مع الروح، علاقة القلب الانساني مع القلب الإلهي، لا علاقة عبيد خاضعين لقانون خارجي. المهم أن نحول الوصية من شريعة مفروضة الى شريعة محبوبة. لا تسرق، لا تزن، أكرم أباك وأمك... هذه تبتدئ كوصايا خارجية يتعلّمها الإنسان تعلّماً ويشعر أحياناً انها كابوس عليه لأنه يحسب الله بعيداً وخارجاً عنه وضارباً إياه. أمّا المؤمن فإذا عرف الله أباً له وأدرك نفسه ابناً لله، صار يُدرك أن هذه الوصية ليست كابوساً يُفرض وليس كسبب اليهود، ولكنها أمر محبوب وإشارة للخلاص.

في المسيح يسوع انتقلنا من الخوف الى الحياة، الى الرجاء، الى الثقة. ولهذا فيما نحن سالكون فترة الميلاد، جدير بنا أن لا نعتبر المسيحية شيئاً خارجاً عنّا، مجرد طقوس وعادات اجتماعية مثل سبت اليهود. لا نرتبك لإقامة مغارة الميلاد تحت شجرة العيد، بل لنسح ليتحول قلبنا الى مغارة تستقبل المسيح. هكذا نجعل إيماننا في القلب رؤية للمسيح، التصاقاً به وحباً لكي يولد المسيح فينا ينبوع خير وعطاء ويصبح ربنا كل شيء في حياتنا. هكذا نزداد في محبة يسوع حتى يقول المسيح في نفسه: كل بيت في هذه الأبرشية بيت لي وكأني أولد فيه وفي قلوب أبنائه كل يوم.

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