

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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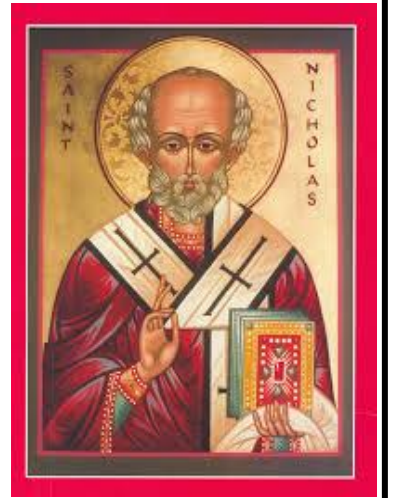
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Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Parish Council Chairman: Suheil Azar



Sunday, January 1st 2017

CHRIST IS BORN...GLORFY HIM!

المسيح ولد ... فمجدوه

Merry Christmas



House Blessing Starts on Monday, January 9th

As the tradition of our Orthodox Church, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki will start his visitation for house blessings on Monday, January 9th. You will receive a phone call from the Church Office for scheduling. If you would like to reschedule to another date, please call the church office.



Blessing of Water خدمة تقديس المياه

January 6th celebration the great Feast of Epiphany (الغطاس) عيد الظهور الالهي

Divine Liturgy will take place on Thursday January 5th at 6:00 pm

THE EPISTLE: St. Paul Epistle to the Colossians. (2:8-12)

Brethren, see to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in Him the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in Him, Who is the head of all rule and authority. In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, Who raised Him from the dead.

الرسالة: كولوسي ٢: ٨-١٢

يا إخوة، انظروا أن لا يسلبكم أحد بالفلسفة والغرور الباطل حسب تقليد الناس على مقتضى أركان العالم لا على مقتضى المسيح. فإنه فيه يحل كل ملء اللاهوت جسدياً. وأنتم مملؤون فيه وهو رأس كل رئاسة وسلطان. وفيه خُتنتم ختناً ليس من عمل الأيدي بل بخلع جسم خطايا البشرية عنكم بختان المسيح. مدفونين معه في المعمودية التي فيها أيضاً أقمتم معه بإيمانكم بعمل الله الذي أقامه من بين الأموات.

THE GOSPEL: St. Luke. (2:20-21, 40-52)

And it came to pass that the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him. Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing Him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. And when they saw Him they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why hast Thou treated us so? Behold, Thy father and I have been looking for Thee anxiously." And Jesus said to them, "How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying which He spoke to them. And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

الإنجيل: لوقا ٢: ٢٠-٢١، ٤٠-٥٢

في ذلك الزمان رجع الرعاة وهم يمجدون الله ويسبحونه على كل ما سمعوا وعانوا كما قيل لهم. ولما تمت ثمانية أيام ليُختَن الصبي سُمِّي يسوع كما سمَّاه الملاك قبل أن يُحبل به في البطن. وكان الصبي ينمو ويتقوى بالروح ممثلًا حكمًا وكانت نعمة الله عليه. وكان أبواه يذهبان إلى أورشليم كل سنة في عيد الفصح. فلما بلغ اثنتي عشرة سنة صعدا إلى أورشليم كعادة العيد. ولما أتما الأيام بقي عند رجوعهما الصبي يسوع في أورشليم ويوسف وأمه لا يعلمان. وإذ كانا يظنان انه مع الرفقة سافرا مسيرة يوم وكانا يطلبانه بين الأقارب والمعارف. وإذ لم يجدا رجعا إلى أورشليم يطلبانه. وبعد ثلاثة أيام وجدا في الهيكل جالسا فيما بين المعلمين يسمعون ويسألهم. وكان جميع الذين يسمعون مندهشين من فهمه وأجوبته. فلما نظراه بُهتا. فقالت له أمه: يا ابني لم صنعت بنا هكذا؟ ها اننا أنا وأباك كنا نطلبك متوجعين. فقال لهما لماذا تطلبانني؟ ألم تعلما انه ينبغي لي أن أكون فيما هو لأبي؟ فلم يفهما هما الكلام الذي قاله لهما. ثم نزل معهما.

Holy Bread of oblation offered by:

- ❖ St. Nicholas church for the good health of those who have celebrated their birthdays this week: Tamara Aljada, Zoher Eyad, Nicholas Tannous, David Hanhan, David Dabit, Rozana Maayeh, Christina Batshon Daheb, Chris Rantisi. Happy Birthdays. Many Years!
- ❖ St. Nicholas Parish family for the good health of all who are named after **Saint Basil the Great (January 1)**, on the occasion of their Names Day! Many years!

Upcoming events:

- ❖ Next Sunday January 8th we will have Awamat (Zalabieh زلابية) offered by Rodi and Janet Baqleh. God bless you and your family. كل عام وأنتم بخير



Young Adults SoCal WINTER RETREAT

Meet and hangout with Orthodox Christian Young Adults from all over North America in Big Bear Lake, CA at the 2017 Young Adult Winter Retreat - Hosted by the Young Adult Ministry within the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West. We've planned a weekend full of activities; including snow tubing, snowboarding, skiing and spiritual discussions lead by The Rev. Father Justin Havens and The V. Rev. Father David Sommer.

"Wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow" January 13-15, 2017

Guest Speakers:

The Rev. Father Justin Havens

The V. Rev. Father David Sommer

- ❖ *St. Nicholas Parish General Assembly meeting* will take place on *Sunday, January 22nd*. In order to have the right for voting, you have to be spiritually qualified, also a member in good standing and paid your dues for 2016.

NEW YEAR

Before we pray, I should like to introduce our prayers so that when we pray, we do it more effectively, with one mind and with one heart. Year after year I have spoken of the New Year that was coming, in terms of a plain covered with snow, unspoiled, pure, and called our attention to the fact that we must tread responsibly on this expanse of whiteness still unspoiled, because according to the way in which we tread it, there will be a road cutting through the plain following the will of God, or wandering steps that will only soil the whiteness of the snow. But a thing which we cannot, must not forget this year perhaps more than on many previous occasions, is that, surrounding, covering this whiteness and this unknown as with a dome, there is darkness, a darkness with few or many stars, but a darkness, dense, opaque, dangerous and frightening. We come out of a year when darkness has been perceived by all of us, when violence and cruelty is still rife.

How shall we meet it? It would be naive, and it would be very unchristian, to ask God to shield us against it, to make of the Church a haven of peace while around us there is no peace. There is strife, there is tension, there is discouragement, there are fears, there is violence, there is murder. We cannot ask for peace for ourselves if this peace does not extend beyond the Church, does not come as rays of light to dispel the darkness. One Western spiritual writer has said that the Christian is one to whom God has committed responsibility for all other men, and this responsibility we must be prepared to discharge. In a few moments we will entreat for both the unknown and the darkness, the greatest blessing which is pronounced in our liturgical services, «Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost» - blessed is the kingship of God.

These words are spoken rarely: at the beginning of services, at the outset of the Liturgy, as a blessing upon the New Year, and at moments when eternity and time unite, when with the eyes of faith we can see eternity intertwined with time, and conquering. The Christian is one who must be capable of seeing history as God sees it, as a mystery of salvation but also as a tragedy of human fallenness and sin. And with regard to both we must take our stand. Christ says in the Gospel, «When you will hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled»; lift up your heads. There is no space in the heart and in the life of the Christian for cowardice, faintheartedness and fear, which are all born of selfishness, concern for self, even if it extends to those whom we love. God is the Lord of history, but we must be co-workers with God, and we are sent by Him into this world of His, in order to make the discordant city of men into the harmony which will be called the city of God.

And we must remember the words of the Apostle who says, whoever will wish to work for the Lord will be led into trial, and the words of another Apostle who tells us not to be afraid of trial by fire. In the present world we must be prepared, ready for trials and ready to stand, perhaps with fear in our heart for lack of faith, but unshaken in the service of God and the service of men.

And when we look back at the past year the words of the litany hit us and accuse us. We ask God to forgive us all that we have done or left undone in the past year. We claim to be Orthodox; to be Orthodox does not mean only to confess the Gospel in its integrity and proclaim it in its purity, but it consists, even more than this, in living according to the Gospel. And we know that Christ comes to no compromise with anything but the greatness of man and the message of love and worship. We can indeed repent because who, looking at us, would say as people said about the early Christians, «See how they love one another!» Who would say, looking at us, that we are in possession of an understanding of life, of a love which makes us beyond compare, which causes everyone to wonder where it comes from? Who gave it to them? How can they stand the test of trial? And if we want this year to be worthy of God, of our Christian

calling, of the holy name of Orthodoxy, we must singly and as a body become to all, to each person who may need us, a vision of what man can be and what a community of men can be under God.

Let us pray for forgiveness, we who are so far below our calling, let us pray for fortitude, for courage, for determination to discount ourselves, to take up our cross, to follow in the footsteps of Christ whithersoever He will call us.

At the beginning of the war King George VI spoke words which we can repeat from year to year. In his message to the Nation he read a quotation: «I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown, and he replied: go out into the darkness and put your hand in the hand of God that shall be better to you than light and safer than a known way.»

This is what we are called to do, and perhaps we should make today a resolution, determined to be faithful to our calling and begin the New Year with courage.

خُتْنَتُمْ خَتَانَا غَيْرَ مَصْنُوعٍ بِيَدِ

العيد الذي نحن فيه اليوم هو عيد ختانة الرب يسوع. ما الختانة؟ الختانة هي العلامة التي كانت ترسم على صبيان اليهود تحقيقاً للعهد الذي أقامه الله مع إبراهيم لَمَّا جعله أباً لأُمَمٍ كثيرة وطلب إليه أن يختن كل صببية الأمة (تكوين ١٧: ١٣). الختانة كانت علامة العهد بالدم بين الله والشعب حتى جاء المخلص وأقام عهداً آخر بالدم، عهد الحب بإهراق الدم على الصليب. ولذلك حُررنا من الختان. كان على السيد طفلاً إطاعة الشريعة لكي يعبر بطاعات كثيرة قبل أن يُتمَّ الطاعة الكبرى على الصليب.

من أجل ذلك، وبسبب هذه الحرية، قال الرسول بولس اليوم في ما كتبه إلى أهل كولوسي: «خُتْنَتُمْ خَتَانًا لَيْسَ مِنْ عَمَلِ الْأَيْدِي بَلْ بِخُلْعِ جِسْمِ الْخَطَايَا الْبَشَرِيَّةِ عَنْكُمْ بِخَتَانِ الْمَسِيحِ». وهذا عهدُ العُمَرِ أن نكون دائماً منقطعين عن الخطيئة حسبما صَوَّرَ لَنَا مَعْلَمٌ كَبِيرٌ فِي الْأَسْكَندَرِيَّةِ قَدِيمًا لَمَّا قَالَ: «الختانة المسيحية هي ختانة الأعين بحيث لا تتفرَّس بالأشياء الرديئة. هي عهدُ الإنسان مع عينيه. والختانة ختانة الأذنين، فإن الأذنين عن الفحشاء صمَّاء. وهي ختانة اليدين حتى لا تنغمس بالدم. وهي ختانة الرجلين حتى لا تسلكا إلا سبيل البر». أي أن الإنسان المؤمن محفوظ كَلِّه في المسيح بحيث يحوي المسيح فقط ولا يجعل أحاسيسه وأفكاره إلا منافذ للمسيح. وإن تحدثنا عن سنة جديدة كما المجتمع المدني يريد، فلن تكون جديدة بحيث تأتي بأحداث جديدة أو توفيق أو ثناء. قد يكون هذا وقد لا يكون. لكن الجديد الحق هو الإنسان الجديد، هو القلب الجديد، هو الذي لا يأتي من خارج ولا يعطيه نظام. الجديد ليس في الدنيا. انه فيك. أنت خالق الدنيا إن كنتَ في المسيح يسوع.

فإذا قررتَ أن يكون المسيح أنيسك، وإذا استطبتَ أن تكون عشير الأبرار، فأنت مؤنس وحشتك، ودنياك فيك ومنك تُطلَّ على الآخرين. وإذا كثر المتجددون بالمسيح في ما بيننا، تشعُّ الجدة وينتشر الجمال من حولنا فنرى أنفسنا أناساً جددًا. ليست القضية بتقلُّب السنين والأزمنة، ولكن القضية كلها بهداية القلوب إلى القادر وحده أن يُغيِّرَها. في آخر المطاف، القداسة وحدها هي الجدة. إذا دخلنا في هذا العام اليوم، فلندرك أننا نسير على منوال هذا الذي أهرق شيئاً من دمه اليوم في الختانة وأهرق كلَّ دمه على الجُلجلة ليبقى النَّاسُ على عهد الحبِّ إلى الأبد.

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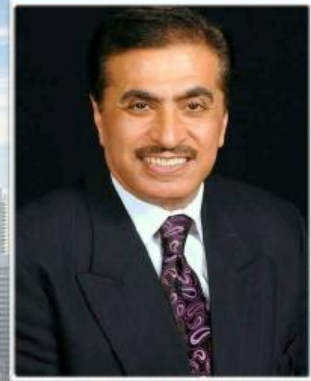


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