

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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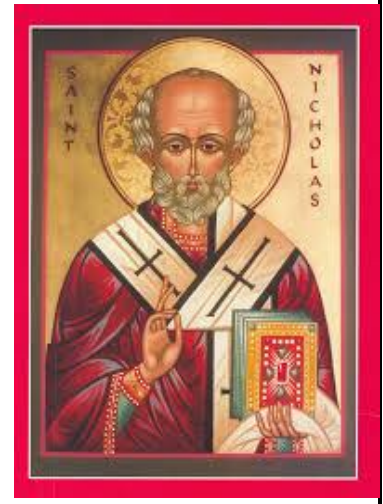
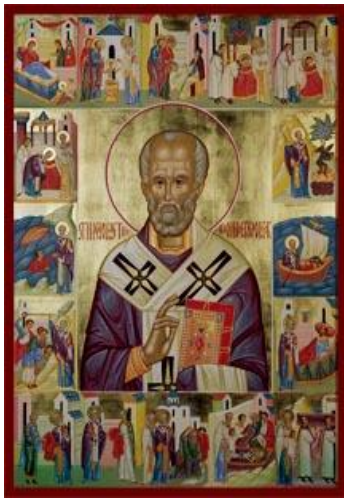
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Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Sub-Dn. Ilyan Baalbaki

Parish Council Chairman: Maher Shami



Sunday, May 21st 2017 Sunday of the Blind Man; Equals-to-the-Apostles Constantine and Helen

أحد الأعمى / عيد القديسين قسطنطين وهيلانة المعادلي الرسل

This Sunday (6-Month) Memorial Service for the servant of God **Fayek Rantisi** offered by his family!

Next Sunday May 28th (6-Month) Memorial Service for the servant of God **Fuad Hanhan**.

May their memory be eternal!

THE EPISTLE: The Acts of the Saintly and Pure Apostles. (26:1, 12-20)

In those days, King Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense: "I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining round me and those who journeyed with me. And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.' And I said, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus Whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those at Damascus, then at Jerusalem and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and perform deeds worthy of their repentance."

الرسالة: أعمال الرسل القديسين في تلك الأيام قال الملك أغريبّا لبولس: «مأذون لك أن تتكلم عن نفسك». فحينئذ بسط بولس يده وطفق يحث. «لما انطلقت وأنا على ذلك إلى دمشق، بسطان وتوكيل من رؤساء الكهنة، رأيت في نصف النهار على الطريق أيها الملك، نوراً من السماء يفوق لمعان الشمس، قد أبرق حولي وحول السائرين معي. فسقطنا جميعاً على الأرض، وسمعت صوتاً يكلمني ويقول باللغة العبرانية: شاول، شاول! لماذا تضطهدني؟ إنه لصعب عليك أن ترفض المناخس. فقلت: من أنت يارب؟ فقال: أنا يسوع الذي أنت تضطهده. ولكن قم وقف على قدميك، فأني لهذا ظهرت لك، لأنتخبك خادماً وشاهداً بما رأيت وبما سأترعى لك فيه، وأنا أنجيك من الشعب ومن الأمم الذين أنا الآن مرسلك إليهم،¹⁸ لئفتح عيونهم فيرجعوا من الظلمة إلى النور، ومن سلطان الشيطان إلى الله، حتى ينالوا مغفرة الخطايا وحظاً بين المقدسين بالإيمان الذي بي. «فمن ثم أيها الملك أغريبّا ما عصيت الرؤيا السماوية، بل بشرت الذين في دمشق أولاً، وأورشليم وأرض اليهودية كلها، ثم الأمم أيضاً، بأن يتوبوا ويرجعوا إلى الله عاملين أعمالاً تليق بالتوبة.

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس يوحنا الإنجيلي البشير والتلميذ الطاهر: في ذلك الزمان، فيما يسوع مجتاز رأى إنساناً أعمى منذ مولده. فسأله تلاميذه قائلين، يارب، من أخطأ أم أبواه حتى ولد أعمى؟ أجاب يسوع، لا هذا أخطأ ولا أبواه، لكن لتظهر أعمال الله فيه، ينبغي لي أن أعمل أعمال الذي أرسلني ما دام نهار، يأتي ليلاً حيث لا يستطيع أحد أن يعمل. ما دمت في العالم، فأنا نور العالم. قال هذا، وتفل على الأرض، وصنع من تفلته طيناً، وطلّى بالطين عيني الأعمى، وقال له اذهب واغتسل في بركة سلوام (الذي تفسيره المرسل). فمضى واغتسل وعاد بصيراً. فالجيران والذين كانوا يرونه من قبل أنه كان أعمى قالوا: أليس هذا هو الذي كان يجلس ويستعطي؟ فقال بعضهم هذا هو، وآخرون قالوا إنه يشبهه. وأمّا هو فكان يقول إني أنا هو. فقالوا له كيف انفتحت عينك؟ أجاب ذلك وقال: إنسان يُقال له يسوع صنع طيناً وطلّى عيني وقال لي، اذهب إلى بركة سلوام واغتسل. فمضيت واغتسلت فأبصرت.

فَقَالُوا لَهُ أَيْنَ ذَلِكَ؟ فَقَالَ، لَا أَعْلَمُ. فَأَتُوا بِهِ، أَيْ بِالَّذِي كَانَ قَبْلًا أَعْمَى إِلَى الْفَرِيسِيِّينَ. وَكَانَ حِينَ صَنَعَ يَسُوعُ الطِّينَ وَفَتَحَ عَيْنَيْهِ يَوْمَ سَبْتٍ. فَسَأَلَهُ الْفَرِيسِيُّونَ أَيْضًا كَيْفَ أَبْصَرَ، فَقَالَ لَهُمْ، جَعَلَ عَلَى عَيْنَيَّ طِينًا ثُمَّ اغْتَسَلْتُ فَأَنَا الْآنَ أَبْصِرُ. فَقَالَ قَوْمٌ مِنَ الْفَرِيسِيِّينَ، هَذَا الْإِنْسَانُ لَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ، لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَحْفَظُ السَّبْتَ، آخَرُونَ قَالُوا، كَيْفَ يَقْدِرُ إِنْسَانٌ خَاطِئٌ أَنْ يَعْمَلَ مِثْلَ هَذِهِ الْآيَاتِ؟ فَوَقَعَ بَيْنَهُمْ شِقَاقٌ. فَقَالُوا أَيْضًا لِلأَعْمَى: مَاذَا تَقُولُ أَنْتَ عَنْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ إِنَّهُ فَتَحَ عَيْنَيْكَ؟ فَقَالَ إِنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ. وَلَمْ يُصَدِّقِ الْيَهُودُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ أَعْمَى فَأَبْصَرَ حَتَّى دَعَا أَبُوِي الَّذِي أَبْصَرَ، وَسَأَلُوهُمَا قَائِلِينَ: أَهَذَا هُوَ ابْنُكُمَا الَّذِي تَقُولَانِ إِنَّهُ وُلِدَ أَعْمَى، فَكَيْفَ أَبْصَرَ الْآنَ؟ أَجَابَهُمْ أَبَوَاهُ وَقَالَا: نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا وَلَدُنَا، وَأَنَّهُ وُلِدَ أَعْمَى، وَأَمَا كَيْفَ أَبْصَرَ الْآنَ فَلَا نَعْلَمُ، أَوْ مَنْ فَتَحَ عَيْنَيْهِ، فَتَحْنُ لَا نَعْلَمُ، هُوَ كَامِلُ السِّنِّ فَاسْأَلُوهُ، فَهُوَ يَتَكَلَّمُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ. قَالَ أَبَوَاهُ هَذَا، لِأَنَّهُمَا كَانَا يَخَافَانِ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ، لِأَنَّ الْيَهُودَ كَانُوا قَدْ تَعَاهَدُوا أَنَّهُ إِنْ اعْتَرَفَ أَحَدٌ بِأَنَّهُ الْمَسِيحُ، يُخْرِجُ مِنَ الْمَجْمَعِ. فَلِذَلِكَ قَالَ أَبَوَاهُ، هُوَ كَامِلُ السِّنِّ فَاسْأَلُوهُ. فَدَعَا ثَانِيَةَ الْإِنْسَانِ الَّذِي كَانَ أَعْمَى وَقَالُوا لَهُ: أَعْطِ مَجْدًا لِلَّهِ، فَإِنَّا نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْإِنْسَانَ خَاطِئٌ. فَأَجَابَ ذَلِكَ وَقَالَ: أَخَاطِئُ هُوَ لَا أَعْلَمُ، إِنَّمَا أَعْلَمُ شَيْئًا وَاحِدًا، أَنِّي كُنْتُ أَعْمَى، وَالْآنَ أَنَا أَبْصِرُ. فَقَالُوا لَهُ أَيْضًا: مَاذَا صَنَعَ بِكَ؟ كَيْفَ فَتَحَ عَيْنَيْكَ؟ أَجَابَهُمْ: قَدْ أَخْبَرْتُمْ فَلَمْ تَسْمَعُوا، فَمَاذَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْمَعُوا أَيْضًا؟ أَلَعَلَّكُمْ أَنْتُمْ أَيْضًا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تُصِيرُوا لَهُ تَلَامِيذٌ؟ فَسْتَمَوْهُ وَقَالُوا لَهُ: أَنْتَ تَلْمِيزُ ذَلِكَ، فَمَاذَا نَحْنُ فَإِنَّا تَلَامِيذُ مُوسَى، وَنَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ كَلَّمَ مُوسَى، فَمَاذَا هَذَا، فَلَا نَعْلَمُ مِنْ أَيْنَ هُوَ. أَجَابَ الرَّجُلُ وَقَالَ لَهُمْ: إِنْ فِي هَذَا عَجَبًا أَنْتُمْ مَا تَعْلَمُونَ مِنْ أَيْنَ هُوَ وَقَدْ فَتَحَ عَيْنَيَّ، وَنَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْمَعُ لِلْخَطَاةِ، وَلَكِنْ إِذَا أَحَدٌ اتَّقَى اللَّهَ وَعَمِلَ مَشِيئَتَهُ، فَلَهُ يَسْتَجِيبُ. مِنْذُ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يُسْمَعْ أَنَّ أَحَدًا فَتَحَ عَيْنَيَّ مَوْلُودٍ أَعْمَى. فَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ هَذَا مِنَ اللَّهِ، لَمْ يَقْدِرْ أَنْ يَفْعَلَ شَيْئًا. أَجَابُوهُ وَقَالُوا لَهُ: إِنَّكَ فِي الْخَطَايَا قَدْ وُلِدْتَ بِجَمَلَتِكَ، أَفَأَنْتَ تَعْلَمُنَا؟ فَأَخْرَجُوهُ خَارِجًا. وَسَمِعَ يَسُوعُ أَنَّهُمْ أَخْرَجُوهُ خَارِجًا، فَوَجَدَهُ وَقَالَ لَهُ: أَتُؤْمِنُ أَنْتَ بِابْنِ اللَّهِ؟ فَأَجَابَ ذَلِكَ وَقَالَ: فَمَنْ هُوَ يَا سَيِّدُ لِأَوْ مِنْ بِهِ؟ فَقَالَ لَهُ يَسُوعُ: قَدْ رَأَيْتَهُ وَالَّذِي يَتَكَلَّمُ مَعَكَ هُوَ هُوَ. فَقَالَ لَهُ: قَدْ آمَنْتُ يَا رَبُّ، وَسَجَدْتُ لَهُ.

THE GOSPEL: St. John. (9:1-38) At that time, when Jesus was passing, He saw a man blind from his birth. And His Disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him Who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” As He said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man’s eyes with the clay, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” [which means Sent]. So he went and washed and came back seeing. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, “Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is he”; others said, “No, but he is like him.” He said, “I am the man.” They said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash’; so I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.” They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” There was a division among them. So they again said to the blind man, “What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age, ask him.” So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?” He them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you answered too want to become His disciples?” And they reviled him, saying, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from.” The man answered, “Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He answered, “And Who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen Him, and it is He who speaks to you.” He said, “Lord, I believe”; and he worshiped Him.

Holy Bread of oblation offered by:

- ❖ St. Nicholas church for the good health of those who have celebrated their birthdays this week: Nabil Baalbaki, Juliet Haddad and Helen Bekhit. Happy Birthday. Many Years!

Alter candles offered by:

- ❖ Daoud and Farida Srouji for the good health and healing of **Farida Srouji** and their family. Many Years!

Mark your calendar for our upcoming events:

- ❖ **Three Holy Youths Camp: June 19th – June 23rd 2017**
Medical Forms must be completed at your parish in person. **Registration \$100.**
For more info, please contact Ilyan Baalbaki : (586) 604-5331.
- ❖ **2017 PLC:** 2017 Parish Life Conference will be held on **July 5-9, 2017** hosted by St. Michael Church in Van Nuys, CA. for more info, visit: <http://www.antiochianevents.com/la.html>
- ❖ **2017 Antiochian Archdiocese Convention** will be held on **July 23-30, 2017** hosted by St. George Cathedral. Florida. For more info, visit: <http://ac2017miami.org/>
- ❖ **Save the date: October 22nd, 2017 Ball Dance Contest:** We are having our first Ball Dance Contest in October 22nd and we need young men and young women to participate.
For further information please call **Gladys Maalouf @ [4158320316](tel:4158320316)**.

Man Blind from Birth

We heard today the story of the man born blind. We do not know from experience what physical blindness is, but we can imagine how this man was walled in himself, how all the world around him existed only as a distant sound, something he could not picture, imagine. He was a prisoner within his own body. He could live by imaginations, he could invent a world around himself, he could by touch and by hearing approximate what really was around him; but the total, full reality could only escape him.

We are not physically blind, but how many of us are locked in themselves! Who of us can say that he is so open that he can perceive all the world in its width, but also in its depth? We meet people, and we see them with our eyes; but seldom it happens that beyond the outer shape, features, clothes, - how often does it happen that we see something of the depth of the person? How seldom it is that we look into a person's eyes and go deep in understanding! We are surrounded by people and every person is unique to God, but are people unique to us? Are not people that surround us just 'people', who have names, surnames, nicknames, whom we can recognise by their outer looks but whom we do not know at any depth?

This is our condition: we are blind, we are deaf, we are insensitive to the outer world, and yet, we are called to read meanings. When we meet a person, we should approach this person as a mystery, that is as something which we can discover only by a deep communion, by entering into a relationship, perhaps silent, perhaps in words, but so deep that we can know one another not quite as God knows us, but in the light of God that enlightens all and each of us.

And more than this: we can do, each within his own power, within his own gifts, what Christ did: He opened the eyes of this man. What did this man see? The first thing he saw was the face of the Incarnate Son of God, in other words, he saw love incarnate. When his eyes met the eyes of Christ, he met God's compassion, God's tenderness, God's earnest concern and understanding. In the same way could so many people begin to see, if by meeting us they meet people in whose eyes, on whose face they could see the shining of earnest, sober love, of a love that is not sentimental but is seeing, a love that can see and understand. And then, how much could we be to people around us a revelation of all the meanings that this world holds and contains through art, through beauty, through science, through all the means by which beauty is perceived and proclaimed among human beings.

But are we doing this? Is our concern to convey the width, and the depth, the beauty and the meaning of things to every person whom we meet? Are we not rather concerned with receiving than with giving? And yet, Saint Paul who knew what it meant to receive and to give, said, 'It is a more blessed thing to give than to

receive'. And yet how much had he received! He had received the knowledge of God in his own experience; he had received teaching, and knowledge, and experience within the Old Testament, and then Christ revealed Himself to him: what did he not receive! And yet, he exulted more in giving than in receiving, because he did not want to be the owner of all the richness that had come his way; he wanted to share it, to give it, to set aglow and afire other lives than his own.

Let us reflect on how rich, how richly endowed we are, how much it was given us to see, and to hear. And let us realise at the same time how tragically walled we are within ourselves unless we break this wall in order to give, as generously, as richly, as abundantly as we were given. And then indeed, our joy will be fulfilled according to Christ's promise. And no one, nothing will ever be able to take it away from us.

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

أن يستمرّ النور علينا

«هذا الإنسان ليس من الله لأنه لا يحفظ السبت». هذه هي التهمة التي اتخذها الفرّيسيّون ذريعة ليبعدوا الناس عن يسوع. منذ البدء أصرّ اليهود على ألاّ يُعترف بيسوع الناصريّ مسيحاً في شعبه، وصمّموا على إخراج أيّ يهوديّ من المجمع، من الأُمَّة، إذا اعترف بيسوع المسيح. أدركوا منذ البدء أنهم لو اعترفوا بالمسيح فإنّما عليهم أن يغيّروا شيئاً بأنفسهم، بتفاسيرهم، بمواقفهم وأنّ هذا يعرّض أمّتهم على ألاّ تبقى متماسكة. فإنّهم لو اعترفوا بيسوع مسيحاً لكانت الرسالة خرجت من إسرائيل إلى العالم، ولكانت الأمم دخلت في الميراث وانهارت زعامة الفرّيسيّين. إذ ذاك يصير المسيح سيّداً على الشعب وتنتسح حدود الأُمَّة وتصبح كنيسة واحدة تضمّ الجميع وكان هذا خطراً عليهم.

كان السبت في نظرهم يوماً مخصّصاً للربّ لا يُعمل فيه أيّ عمل، واعتبروا الشفاء عملاً. فضّلوا التمسك الحرفيّ بالشرّيعه على عمل الخير. وجدوا ذريعة ليس في شرّيعه موسى بل في تفاسيرهم لشرّيعه موسى. وجدوا ذريعة لكي يفضّوا على يسوع ويميتوه، ولذلك أخذوا يجادلون في أمر الذي شفّى: أنت أعمى؟ من قال إنك أعمى؟ أين الشهود على أنّك كنت أعمى؟ طبعاً كانوا يعرفون أنّه أعمى، كانوا يرونه في كلّ مكان، لكنّهم أرادوا أن ينفوا الشفاء وألاّ يعترفوا بيسوع صانع معجزات.

أمّا الأعمى فقد اعترف طبعاً بالمعجزة، صارت معه. وأبواه اللذان كان مغضوباً عليهما من اليهود، اعترفاً بها أي أنّ الإنجيل يبيّن لنا أن من كان مظنوناً على أنّه مستنير، أعني اليهود، كان الأعمى. والأعمى منذ مولده صار بصيراً، أي انقلبت الآية، من ظنّوا أنفسهم في النور كانوا حقاً في الظلام لأنّهم جعلوا أنفسهم ضدّ المسيح، والذي كان في الظلام صار في النور لأنّه آمن بالمسيح. كلّ من اتّبع المسيح يصبح في النور. تقرأ الكنيسة هذا الإنجيل اليوم لأنّها كانت في هذه الفترة الفصحية تعلّم الذين اعتمدوا في سبت النور على الإنجيل. ولهذا نقرأ إنجيل يوحنا في هذه الفترة لأنّه يحتوي على تعليم كبير يتعلّق بالمعمودية والأسرار. وإنجيل شفاء الأعمى الذي يُقرأ اليوم يرمز إلى الخلاص الذي ناله المبصرون الجدد أي المعمدون، كانوا عمياناً قبل المعمودية فأبصروا.

قد يكون الإنسان مسيحياً ومع ذلك يبقى أعمى، ليس لأنّ إيمانه أعمى لكن لكونه لم يبقَ على إيمانه، ويظلم من جديد من بعد نور. السلوك السيئ ظلام يدخل إلينا من جديد من بعد النور ويجعلنا عمياناً. فإذا لا نفتخر بأننا مسيحيون، هذا لا يكفي، بل نفتخر بأننا نطيع وصايا الله. القضية هي أن يستمرّ النور علينا، لا أن نأخذ النور بالمعمودية في طفولتنا ونبقى عند هذا الحدّ. الأمر كلّهُ أن نبقي معمدين أي أن نسلك سلوك المعمدين، كأنّ النور يُعطى لنا كلّ يوم بالعمل الصالح. المعمودية تجدد، لا بالماء، ولكن بالعهد الذي نقطعه على أنفسنا في حضرة

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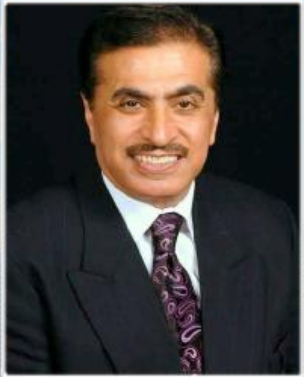
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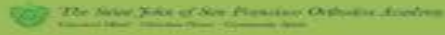
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