

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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Sunday, December 28th, 2014

CHRIST IS BORN...

GLORFY HIM!

المسيح ولد ... فمجّدوه

المجّد لله في الأعالى وعلى الأرض
والسلام وبالناس المسرة!



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2015



THE EPISTLE St. Paul to the Galatians. (1:11-19) Brethren, I would have you know that the Gospel, which was preached by me, is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the Church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people; so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me, in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

الرسالة: غلاطية 1: 11-19

يا إخوة أعلمكم ان الإنجيل الذي بشرتُ به ليس بحسب الإنسان، لأنني لم أتسلّمه وأتعلّمه من إنسان بل بإعلان يسوع المسيح. فإنكم قد سمعتم بسيرتي قديمًا في ملة اليهود أني كنتُ أضطهد كنيسة الله بإفراط وأدمرها، وأزيد تقدّمًا في ملة اليهود على كثيرين من أتريبي في جنسي بكوني أوفر منهم غيرة على تقاليدات آبائي. فلما ارتضى الله الذي أفرزني من جوف أمي ودعاني بنعمته ان يعلن ابنه فيّ لأبشر بين الأمم، لساعتي لم أصغ إلى لحم ودم ولا صعدتُ إلى أورشليم إلى الرسل الذين قبلي، بل انطلقتُ إلى ديار العرب وبعد ذلك رجعتُ إلى دمشق. ثم إنني بعد ثلاث سنين صعدتُ إلى أورشليم لأزور بطرس فأقمتُ عنده خمسة عشر يومًا. ولم أرَ غيره من الرسل سوى يعقوب أخي الرب.

THE GOSPEL St. Matthew. (2:13-23) When the wise men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him.” And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called My Son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region, who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.” But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” And he rose and took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

الإنجيل: متى 2: 13-23

لما انصرف المجوس اذا بملاك الرب ظهر ليوسف في الحلم قائلاً: قم فخذ الصبي وأمه واهرب إلى مصر وكن هناك حتى أقول لك فإن هيرودس مزمع ان يطلب الصبي ليهلكه. فقام وأخذ الصبي وأمه ليلاً وانصرف إلى مصر. وكان هناك إلى وفاة هيرودس ليتم المقول من الرب بالنبي القائل: من مصر دعوت ابني. حينئذ لما رأى هيرودس ان المجوس سخرُوا به غضب جدا وأرسل فقتل كل صبيان بيت لحم وجميع تخومها من ابن سنتين فما دون على حسب الزمان الذي تحقّقه من المجوس. حينئذ تم ما قاله إرمياء النبي القائل: صوتٌ سُمع في الرامة، نوح وبكاء وعويل كثير، راحيل تبكي على أولادها وقد أبت ان تتعزى لأنهم ليسوا بموجودين. فلما مات هيرودس اذا بملاك الرب ظهر ليوسف في الحلم في مصر قائلاً: قم فخذ الصبي وأمه واذهب إلى أرض اسرائيل فقد مات طالبو نفس الصبي. فقام وأخذ الصبي وأمه وجاء إلى أرض إسرائيل. ولما سمع ان أرشيلوس قد ملك على اليهودية مكان هيرودس أبيه، خاف ان يذهب إلى هناك وأوحى إليه في الحلم فانصرف إلى نواحي الجليل وأتى وسكن في مدينة تدعى ناصرة ليتم المقول بالأنبياء انه يُدعى ناصرياً.

Holy Bread of oblation offered by:

- ❖ Rimon and Sana Jada for the good health of **Antoinette Khoury**. Many years!
- ❖ Maha Dabit and family in loving memory of husband and father **Rimon Dabit** May his memory be eternal!
- ❖ Rossete Saba and family in loving memory of **George Nicola Saba (Son) and Nicola George Saba (Husband)**. May their memory be eternal!

Announcements:

→ **Young Adult Winter Retreat** The Fellowship of St. John the Divine will be hosting their second annual Young Adult Winter Retreat in Big Bear, CA from January 16-18, 2015. The retreat is very inexpensive so that young adults from all over the diocese can attend. Join young adults from across the diocese for a weekend of prayer, fellowship, and fun! The speakers will be Mother Victoria from St. Barbara Monastery & Fr. David Sommer. \$50/\$75 w/ Lift Ticket. More information and registration can be found on the website www.dlawyoungadults.com. Or contact **Tariq Rantisi : (650) 290-3492**.

📌 Note:

Our dear beloved ones in Christ: You can help in spreading the word of God by providing us the email addresses of the members of your family and your friends who do not receive our bulletin via email. Please send their emails to: info@stnicholas-sf.com

➔**SAVE THE DATE! SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2015.** *By the grace of God, we invite you to prayerfully participate in the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West Enthronement Gala Celebration of*

HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN JOSEPH
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Saturday, January 31, 2015
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3:30 PM Clergy and Clergy Wives Reception
5:00 PM Great Vespers Service
6:00 PM Cocktail Reception
7:30 PM Dinner and Program

Please note there will be a Youth and Young Adult Brunch with Metropolitan JOSEPH on Saturday 11:00 AM and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy beginning with Orthros on Sunday 9:15 AM Both of these events will take place at St. Nicholas Cathedral : 2300 West 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90057

Adult Tickets are \$185.00 per person, Young Adult Ticket 18-30: \$100 (includes the Youth and Young Adult Brunch Saturday Morning), Child's Ticket (up to 17 years): \$75 (includes the Youth and Young Adult Brunch Saturday Morning) To order tickets online or place an ad in the program book visit: <http://antiochianladiocese.org/enthronementgala.html>. To purchase by check, kindly remit check or money order payable to St. Nicholas Cathedral to: Anna Nasser | St. Luke Orthodox Church | 13261 Dunklee Avenue | Garden Grove, CA 92840. Phone: [714-971-2244](tel:714-971-2244) Deadline for Reservations is January 15, 2015

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### **The Virgin Mary**

The Virgin Mary is known in Orthodoxy as the *Theotokos*, the God-bearer or Mother of God. Although Mary is the most dominant figure in the icon, she is not the most important. Sometimes she is shown kneeling, still concerned.

Mary is right at the centre of the Christmas story, which is why she is at the centre of this icon. It was her “yes” spoken to the angel who told her she would give birth to Christ which set the whole story in motion. It was her belief that God could do what he promised that made it all possible. And it was she who gave birth and laid her son in a feeding trough for cattle, due to overcrowding in Bethlehem.

In this icon, we see Mary lying on a sort of long, red cushion – it almost looks like a bean bag – with the Christ Child in his makeshift cot by her side. She is pulling her cloak around her for warmth, and perhaps she is trying to catch some sleep after the exhaustion of giving birth. The icon-writer presents Mary like this to remind us that the birth of Christ – like any birth – was hard work and that it was a human event. Jesus Christ was fully human. The way Mary wraps herself in her cloak and turns to get some sleep tells us that.

But Jesus Christ was more than just a human being, as we are told in the words of the nativity narratives in the Gospels, and through the images in this icon.





**The Christ Child:** The little helpless figure in swaddling clothes represents the complete submission of Christ to the physical conditions governing the human race. The earth provides him with a cave. The animals watch over him in silent wonder and we humans offer him one of us, the Virgin Mother. His manger is like a coffin and his swaddling clothes are very much like the grave clothes, for this child is born to die. Far from the Christmas-card image of being born in a sweet, cosy stable, surrounded by cuddly animals and adoring fans, Christ is born in a dark cave. The craggy rocks above the cave form the shadow of the cross on which he dies. One very old version of the Christmas story has it that Christ was born in a cave outside Bethlehem, which is why the icon shows him that way, in the midst of jagged rocks and pitch dark. Christ has come into the world to save it, but that means he has come into a place of darkness and danger. He is in the depths. His birth anticipates his death, just as the gift of myrrh (a spice used in burials) points us to Christ's death and burial. So, while the nativity is a joyful event, it carries a serious message. Jesus Christ is God with us, God come to live the life of a human being on earth. But he has also come to die, to set us free from our slavery to evil, poverty and injustice. As one writer puts it: "God became a human child so that we might become children of God."

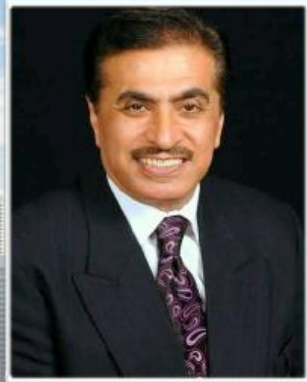
## الإله الطفل

ماذا نقدّم للإله الطفل المولود من أجلنا بعد أن اعترف به المجوس في تقاليدهم إليها وملكا ومُعَدًّا للذبح؟ ماذا نقول أكثر من ذلك وقد علمتنا النصوص التي تُتلى علينا في صلاة السّحر أن ما يريده المسيح منّا أقوال لاهوتية مستقيمة الرأي، أي أن نعترف به فاديًا، إليها أزليًا، نورًا من نور، إليها حقًا من إله حق، مولودًا غير مخلوق. أقول هذه الأشياء التي تعرفونها لأن بعض الناس هنا وهناك يدعون أنهم نشأوا على المسيحية ولا يعترفون بهذا الإيمان ولا يعيدون لميلاد الإله المتجسّد ولا لظهوره بل لذكرى إنسان عظيم. الكثيرون في أوساطنا نفسها، إذا سألتهم، عندهم أن المسيح نبيّ أو انه رجل كبير أو مُصلح اجتماعي وما إلى ذلك من تعابير. ولكننا نحن الذين نجتمع في معابده إنما نأتي معًا لنعترف به أولاً إليها ونقبله سيّدًا، ونقرّ بأن الله وحده يفدي الإنسان وبأن الإنسان يتخبط في جهالته وفي موته وأننا، إذا أردنا أن نخرج من هذه الدوامة، ومن اليأس ومن الموت الروحي، فليس علينا سوى أن نعترف بأن المائدة المُعدّة لنا في كل عيد نقيمه وفي كل قداس إلهي تأتي من الله ذاته بالنعمة لتشفينا. المسيح بشر بها، وكانها، وسكبها على الصليب، وفجرها بالقيامة. ما الميلاد الذي نقيمه اليوم سوى بداية للمسيرة الطيبة التي سوف يسيرها من مغارة إلى مغارة، من مغارة المولد إلى مغارة الموت: المسيح بأقمطة طفل، المسيح بعد ذلك في كفن، المسيح تضحية من البدء إلى النهاية ليظهر للناس نورًا يضيء عليهم نارًا. النور بالعربية هو من النار، ومن تأججت فيه محبة المسيح فهو في المسيح نور العالم. إن علمنا نحن ذلك نستخلص منه قول الرسول الذي يُقرأ علينا في رسالة الميلاد حيث قال: "لما حان ملء الزمان أرسل الله ابنه مولودًا من امرأة، مولودًا تحت الناموس لننال التنبّي" (غلاطية ٤: ٤). ومعنى ذلك أن المسيح هو كمال الأزمنة وأننا لا ننتظر زمانًا غيره، لا ننتظر مكانًا نعيش فيه غير مكان المسيح، لا ننتظر فكرًا آخر، لا ننتظر شعورًا آخر. كل الأشياء قد تحققت وما علينا الآن سوى أن نأخذ، سوى أن نصغي إليه، أن نتأمل في وجهه، أن نحيا من هذا الوجه وأن نوحى للأخريين به. لماذا نستطيع أن نعيش بوجه يسوع وأن نمده في الناس حولينا؟ ذلك لأننا به صرنا أبناء الله. لقد نفخ فينا الروح القدس وهو الذي يجعلنا نقول له "أبا"، وبلغه مُعاصري يسوع يعني "يا بابا". هذه كلمة الغنج، كلمة الدالة من الابن على أبيه أو أمه. نحن دخلنا أدا في عائلة الله. بعد أن كنّا مولودين في عائلة من لحم ودم، انتقلنا من كل ما هو أرضي وجسديّ ومن كل علاقة في اللحم والدم إلى علاقة العبادة. والعبادة بالعربية من العبودية، أي اننا جعلنا أنفسنا عبيدًا لله. ليس أننا عبيد ولكننا استعبدنا أنفسنا لمن نحب بحيث اننا ننظر إلى الله عينه فقط ونُطيعه، وهكذا نولد من جديد، نولد من رؤية الحب الذي يرانا الله به. لو كان يرانا كما نحن بخطايانا لمُتنا. ولكنه يرانا بالرحمة ويتلقانا في قلبه الأبوي لنسّر هكذا على بركات الميلاد مولودين من جديد في عالم لا يعرف الله ولا يعرف جمال الإنجيل فنكون نورًا يسير في دنيا مظلمة، ويرى الناس أعمالنا ويمجدوا أبانا الذي في السموات. جاورجيوس مطران جبيل والبترون وما يليهما (جبيل لبنان)





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