

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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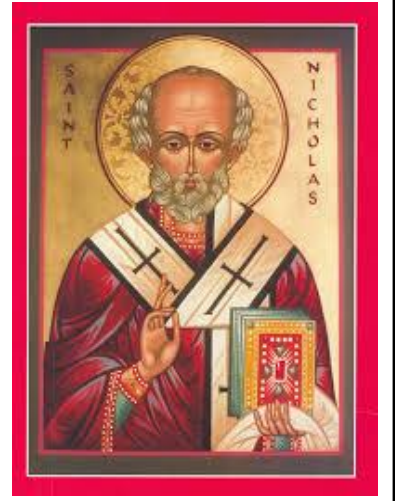
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Rev. Deacon Niphon Sweiss

Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Parish Council Chairman: Salim Qaru



Sunday, January 4th, 2015



Blessing of Water خدمة تقديس المياه

On Monday, January 5th celebration the great Feast of Epiphany (The manifestation of the divine nature)
عيد الظهور الالهي (الغطاس) Divine Liturgy will take place at 6:00 pm

House Blessing Starts on Tuesday, January 6th

As the tradition of our Orthodox Church, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki will start his visitation for house blessings on Tuesday, January 6th. You will receive a phone call from the Church Office for scheduling. If you would like to reschedule to another date, please call the office.

THE EPISTLE St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy. (4:5-8) Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

الرسالة: 2 تيموثاوس 4:5-8 يا ولدي تيموثاوس تيقظ في كل شيء واحتمل المشقات واعمل عمل المبشر وأوف خدمتك. اما انا فقد أريق السكيب علي وقت انحلالي قد اقترب. وقد جاهدت الجهاد الحسن وأتممت شوطي وحفظت الإيمان. وانما يبقى محفوظاً لي إكليل العدل الذي يُجزيني به في ذلك اليوم الرب الديان العادل، لا إياي فقط بل جميع الذين يحبون ظهوره ايضاً.

THE GOSPEL St. Mark. (1:1-8)The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes He Who is mightier than I, the strap of Whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

الإنجيل: مرقس 1:1-8 بدء إنجيل يسوع المسيح ابن الله كما هو مكتوب في الأنبياء: ها أنذا مرسل ملاكي امام وجهك يهيء طريقك قدامك. صوتٌ صارخ في البرية أعدوا طريق الرب، اجعلوا سبله قويمه. كان يوحنا يعمد في البرية ويكرز بمعمودية التوبة لغفران الخطايا. وكان يخرج اليه جميع اهل بلد اليهودية وأورشليم فيعتمدون جميعهم منه في نهر الأردن معترفين بخطاياهم. وكان يوحنا يلبس وبر الإبل ، وعلى حَقْوِيه منطقة من جلد، ويأكل جرادا وعسلا برياً. وكان يكرز قائلاً: انه يأتي بعدي من هو أقوى مني، وانا لا أستحق ان أنحني وأحلّ سَيْرِ حذاءه. انا عمّدتكم بالماء، واما هو فيعمدكم بالروح القدس.

Holy Bread of oblation offered by:

- ❖ Lamis Malouf Bachir and Wafa Vassilakis and family in loving memory of mother **Souraya Baker** and brother **Josef Milano Malouf**. May their memory be eternal!
- ❖ St. Nicholas church and Fr. George for the good health for those whose names: John, Hanna, Happy Names Day. Many Years!

Coffee Hour offered by:

- ❖ John and Trix Salih and family in loving memory of sister Souraya Baker and nephew Josef Milano Malouf. May their memory be eternal!

Announcements:

→ Youth meeting will be held on **January 13th at 7:00 pm.**



Suheila Sweis would like to thank all the ladies and their families for their continued support and help in the past year, and wish you all a Happy New Year. Ladies Auxiliary first meeting for 2015 will take place on Wednesday **January 14th at 6:30 pm** in the church hall.

→ **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.dlawayoungadults.com. Or contact **Tariq Rantisi : (650) 290-3492**.

→ ***St. Nicholas Parish General Assembly meeting*** will take place on **Sunday, January 25th**. 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 2014.

→ Men's Fellowship monthly meeting will take place on **Tuesday the 27th**.at 7:30 pm

→ ***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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METROPOLITAN OF ALL NORTH AMERICA
Saturday, January 31, 2015
Sheraton Universal Hotel – Universal City, California
Benefitting St. Nicholas Camp and Youth Education Programs
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

Note: Anyone who is interested to go to LA, please contact the church office at (415)648-5200 by January 14th



Valentine Party: We will have a party on Saturday February 14th. More info to follow...

Metropolitan Anthony Sourozh :A WEEK AFTER CHRISTMAS

In imagination we think ourselves 2000 years back. What wonder should fill us: a week, and the world has become different. The world that had been for thousands of years like the lost sheep was now the sheep found, taken upon His shoulders by the Son of God become the Son of man. The unbridgeable gap that sin had created between God and man was now at least incipiently bridged; God had entered into history, God Himself had become man. God had taken flesh, and all things visible, what we perceive in our blindness as dead, inert matter, could in His body recognise itself in glory. Something absolutely new had occurred, the world was no longer the same. Moreover, there is another aspect to the Incarnation. God had become man, but God in Christ had spoken words of truth that was decisive, that gradually like yeast dropped into dough was to change the world. God had revealed to us the greatness of man. Christ becoming man was evidence, is and will remain forever evidence that man is so vast, so deep, so mysteriously deep, that he can not only contain the divine presence as a temple, but can unite himself with God, "become partaker of the divine nature", as St. Peter puts it in his Epistle. And again that man is great, and that however far we fall away from our vocation, however unworthy we may become of it, God will never re-establish with us a relationship which is less than that of His fatherhood and our condition of sons and daughters of the Most High. The prodigal son was asking his father to receive him as a hireling now that he was unworthy of being called a son; but the father did not accept it. When the son made his confession, the father stopped him before he could even pronounce those words, because God does not accept our debasement, we are no slaves and no hirelings. Has not Christ said to His disciples, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know the will of his master, and lo, I have told you everything." Again, the proclamation in Christ and by Him is that what matters supremely is every person, that He lives and dies for every one of us, that it is not collective units that matter, but each of us. Each of us, tells us the Book of Revelation, possesses from God a name, a name which will be revealed to us at the end of time, but a name which no

one can know but God and he who receives it, because this name is our relationship to God, unique, unrepeatable; each of us is unique for Him. What a wonder! The ancient world knew of nations and races, it knew of slaves and owners, it knew of categories of people, exactly in the same way in which the modern world that is gradually becoming not only secular but pagan, distinguishes categories and types and groups. God knows only living men and women. And then a new justice was introduced, or rather proclaimed by Him, not the distributive and retributive justice of the law, another justice. When Christ says to us, "let your justice be beyond that of the scribes and pharisees," He speaks of the way in which God treats each of us. He accepts each of us as we are. He accepts good and evil, He rejoices in the good, and He dies because of and for the sake of what is evil. And that is what God calls us to remember, and how He calls us to be and to behave - not only within our Christian circle but in the whole world, to look at every person with that kind of justice; not judging and condemning, but seeing in each person the beauty which God has impressed upon it and which we call "the image of God in man". Venerate this beauty, work for this beauty to shine in all glory, dispelling what is evil and dark and making it possible, by the recognition of beauty in each other, for this beauty to become reality and to conquer. He has taught us also about a love which the ancient world did not know, and the modern world, like the old one, is so afraid of: A love that accepted to be vulnerable, helpless, giving, sacrificial; a love that gives without counting, a love that gives not only what it possesses, but itself. That is what the Gospel., that is what the Incarnation brought into the world, and this has remained in the world. Christ said that "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot comprehend it," but it cannot put it out either. And this light shines and shall shine, but it will conquer only if we undertake to be its heralds and the doers of these commandments of justice and of love, if we accept God's vision of the world and bring to it our faith, that is, our certainty and our hope, which is the only power that can help others to start anew; but to start anew they must see newness in us. The world has become incipiently new by the union of God with man, when the Word became flesh; it is for us to be a revelation of this newness, the resplendence and shining of God in the darkness or the dusk of this world. May God grant us courage and love and greatness of heart to be His messengers and His witnesses, and may the blessing of the Lord be upon you by His grace and love towards mankind always, now and forever and world without end. Amen.

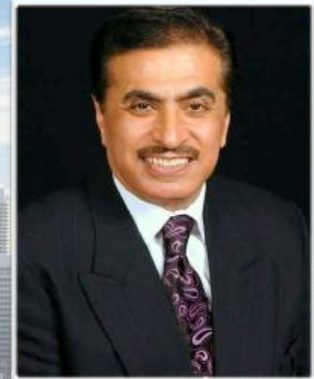
ظهور المسيح

في كلام بولس الى تلميذه تيموثاوس كلام تشجيع على الجهاد الروحي. الدعوة الاولى الى اليقظة الروحية الدائمة وفي قوة اليقظة يدعوه الى احتمال المشقات في سبيل الانجيل اذ البشارة به تتطلب تعبًا كثيرًا. ثم يحثه على عمل المبشر في المنطقة التي انتدبه على رعايتها حتى يقول "أوف خدمتك" والخدمة هي الرعاية وإقامة الأسرار. بعد هذا يقول الرسول عن نفسه "لقد أريق السكيب عليّ فإني انا ايضًا أتممت خدمتي ووقت انحلال (اي موتي) قد اقترب، وقد جاهدت الجهاد الحسن وأتممت شوطي" في البشارة من مدينة الى مدينة في كل أنحاء البحر الأبيض المتوسط من أنطاكية الى رومية والى كريت وربما الى اسبانيا وفي كل هذا "حفظت الإيمان" سالما كما سلمني اياه الرب يسوع والمسيحيون الأوائل. حفظته مستقيماً غير مصاب، والإيمان يُنتج عمل البرّ بالمحبة بعد هذا يقول: "انما يبقى محفوظاً لي إكليل العدل الذي يجزيني به في ذلك اليوم (اي يوم القيامة) الديان العادل". بولس يرى نفسه تحت الدينونة ولكنه يرجو الرحمة. عند الموت ليس أمامنا سوى رحمة الرب ولا يخلص أحد بدونها اذ لا يستطيع أحد ان يدعي أن في يده صكّ الدخول الى الملكوت. بولس على قداسة سيرته يرى نفسه تحت الرحمة الإلهية التي يمنّ الله بها على أحبائه. وبعد ان يقول الرسول انه يرجو الإكليل لنفسه يقول ايضًا انه يرجو لجميع الذين يحبون ظهور المسيح في اليوم الأخير، وقد اختارت الكنيسة هذا الفصل من رسالة بولس الثانية لأنها مختومة بكلمة ظهور الذي يدلّ على العيد (الغطاس) الذي ننتظره. مقطع قصير فيه كل محبة بولس لتلميذه وفيه دعوة الى كل الفضائل التي يحتاج اليها التلميذ النشط. ومن وراء تيموثاوس تُخاطبنا الكلمة الإلهية لتكون مثل تيموثاوس أناساً قائمين باليقظة لا ننام ولا ندع شيئاً يجعلنا في الكسل ولا سيّما ان الحصاد كثير والفلة قليلون. لا نستطيع ان نتلهّى عن خدمة الإنجيل ولا نغرق بأمور الدنيا مهما كانت جذابة ومسلية. ومهما أحسنا باقتراب الأجل، ومهما تعبنا، نبقى على الجهاد حتى آخر رمق، على الجهاد الحسن الذي يتطلّب منا الاستمرار يوماً في خدمة الإنجيل وفي إقامة الذبيحة الإلهية وبقية الأسرار والاهتمام بما يهمّ الناس اجتماعياً وخيرياً وثقافياً حتى نكون قد نفدنا الإنجيل وأطعناه، فإننا إن أهملنا الإخوة وخدمتهم نكون قد وقعنا في الخيانة. واذ ما نحن بذلنا أنفسنا في الخدمة منتظرين ظهور المسيح لنا ولهم ليس فقط يوم القيامة ولكن في كل يوم نكون فيه قد أقمنا خدمة. واذما جاء العيد وهو مع الميلاد فصح صغير نكون قد انتقلنا من موت الخطيئة وقمنا لإتمام البر حتى نكون مع المسيح دائماً. واذما زاركم الكاهن لنضح منازلكم بالماء المقدس تفهمون أن هذا هو قبل كل شيء نضح حياتكم بالمقدس. عيد الظهور الإلهي عيد يوميّ تغتسلون بمياهه اي بالنعمة التي وعدكم الله بها فتكونون أنقياء في كل حين وترفضون الخطيئة. رفض الخطيئة ظهور إلهيّ عليكم وإشعاع منكم على الآخرين. بوركتكم في العيد القادم وبوركت الدنيا كلها بكم حتى تصبح الدنيا مكاناً لنور المسيح.

(جاورجيوس مطران جبل لبنان)



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