

كنيسة مار نقولا الأنطاكية الأرثوذكسية

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America

Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

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His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop  
of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

Pastor, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki

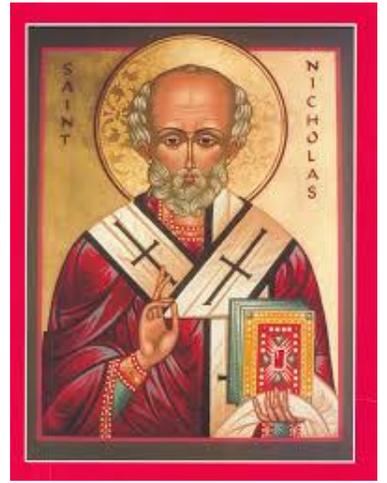
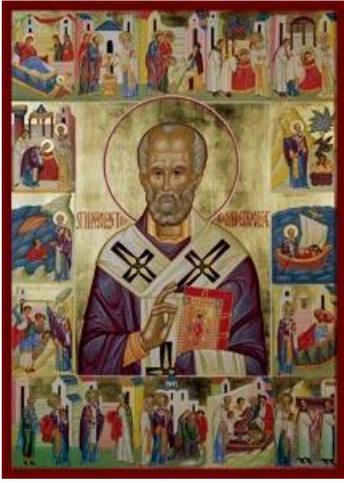
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Sub-Dn. Michel Khoury

Sub-Dn. Ilyan Baalbaki

Parish Council Chairman: Maher Shami



**Sunday, March 18, 2018**

**John Climacus, Author of "The Ladder" القديس يوحنا السلميّ**

**House Blessings are underway:** If you have not received a phone call from the church office yet, please reach out and contact us to set up a time for a home blessing from Father George. You can also reach him at 586 214 4428

**THE EPISTLE: St. Paul to the Hebrews. (6:13-20)**

Brethren, when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by one greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He interposed with an oath. So that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

**الرسالة: عبرانيين ٦: ١٣-٢٠**

يا إخوة، إنّ الله لما وعد إبراهيم، إذ لم يمكن أن يُقسم بما هو أعظم منه، أقسم بنفسه قائلاً: لأباركنك بركة وأكثرتك تكثرًا. وذاك إذ تأنى نال الموعد. وإنّما الناس يُقسمون بما هو أعظم منهم، وتنقضي كلّ مشاجرة بينهم بالقسم للتثبيت. فذلك لما شاء الله أن يزيد ورثة الموعد بيانًا، لعدم تحوّل عزمه، توسط القسم، حتّى نحصل بأمرين لا يتحوّلان ولا يمكن أن يخلف الله فيهما، على تعزية قويّة نحن الذين التجأنا إلى التمسك بالرجاء الموضوع أمامنا، الذي هو لنا كمرساة للنفس أمانة راسخة تدخل إلى داخل الحجاب حيث دخل يسوع كسابق لنا، وقد صار على رتبة ملكيصادق رئيس كهنة إلى الأبد.

**الإنجيل: مرقس ٩: ١٧-٣١**

في ذلك الزمان دنا إلى يسوع إنسان وسجد له قائلاً: يا معلّم، قد أتيتك بابني به روح أبكم، وحيثما أخذه يصصره فيزيد ويصرف بأسنانه وبيبيس. وقد سألت تلاميذك أن يخرجوه فلم يقدرُوا. فأجاب قائلاً: أيّها الجيل غير المؤمن، إلى متى أكون عندكم؟ حتى متى أحتملكم؟ هلّم به إليّ. فأتوه به. فلما رآه للوقت صرعه الروح فسقط على الأرض يتمرّع ويذب. فسأل أباه: منذ كم من الزمان أصابه هذا؟ فقال: منذ صباه، وكثيرًا ما ألقاه في النار وفي المياه ليهلكه. ولكن إن استطعت شيئًا فتحنن علينا وأغثنا. فقال له يسوع: إن استطعت أن تؤمن فكلّ شيء مستطاع للمؤمن. فصاح أبو الصبيّ من ساعته بدموع وقال: إني أوّمن يا سيّد، فأغث عدم إيماني. فلما رأى يسوع أنّ الجمع يتبادرون إليه، انتهر الروح النجس قائلاً له: أيّها الروح الأبكم الأصمّ أنا أمرك بأن أخرج منه ولا تعدّ تدخل فيه. فصرخ وخبطه كثيرًا وخرج منه، فصار كالميت حتّى قال كثيرون إنّه قد مات. فأخذ يسوع بيده وأنهضه فقام. ولما دخل بيتًا سأله تلاميذه على انفراد: لماذا لم نستطع نحن أن نُخرجه؟ فقال لهم: إنّ هذا الجنس لا يمكن أن يخرج إلاّ بالصلاة والصوم. ولما خرجوا من هناك اجتازوا في الجليل ولم يُردّ أن يدري أحد، فإنّه كان يُعلم تلاميذه ويقول لهم: إنّ ابن البشر يُسلم إلى أيدي الناس فيقتلونه، وبعد أن يُقتل يقوم في اليوم الثالث.

## THE GOSPEL: St. Mark. (9:16-30)

At that time, a man came to Jesus, kneeling down and saying unto him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked Thy Disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And Jesus answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to Me." And they brought the boy to Him; and when the spirit saw Jesus, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if Thou canst do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when Jesus had entered the house, His Disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And Jesus said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And Jesus would not have anyone know it; for He was teaching His Disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and after He is killed, He will rise on the third day."

## MARCH IS LADIES' MONTH

In keeping with the tradition in our Archdiocese, ladies will show their involvement in the life of the church in the most visible way during the month of March.

They will usher, collect trays, read the Epistle and deliver sermonette...

*Our ladies Auxiliary usually prepare a Lenten Luncheon on Sundays. This year they are asking of your help by Donating or preparing food for that purpose.*

**Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>: Sermonette: Khouriey Eman Baalbaki**

- ❖ Epistle Reader Arabic: Basma Howell
- ❖ Epistle Reader English: Afaf Dudum

## Lenten Luncheon

Join us this Sunday. Lenten Luncheon offered by:

**Shibly Azar and family.**

### ***Food for Hungry:***

- ❖ Please pick up a donation box and donate what you can for the poor and needy people during this holy season. The boxes will be collected after Easter.

### ***Altar Candle Offering:***

- ❖ By **Adele Khoury** in loving memory of her husband **Jabra Khoury**.
- ❖ By **Ghada Malouf** in loving memory of her uncle **Metropolitan Philip**, her father **Nassif** and mother **Adma Saliba**, sister **Daad Shalhoub**, and brother in law **Fayez Shalhoub**.  
May their memory be eternal!
- ❖ By St. Nicholas church for the good health, well-being, and speedy recovery of **John Batshon**.

**Bake Sale Workshop:** Our Easter Bake sale is almost here and we need your help! The Ladies Auxiliary is hosting the workshop at the church hall on the following days:

**Monday the 26th at 10:30 AM - this is for special orders.**

**Thursday the 29th at 10:30 AM**

As always, your help is greatly appreciated.

**SPECIAL BIRTHDAY:**

We would like to wish a Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday on Sunday March 18<sup>th</sup> to **Odette Khalaf**, the mother of **Afaf Dudum**. God bless!

**SAVE THE DATE:**

❖ **ANNUAL PICNIC:** Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. More info to come.

❖ **CAMP THREE HOLY YOUTHS:** June 18-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 at St. Sava Mission in Jackson, California. Tuition: \$100 per camper. Register online at

[www.norcaldeanerycamp.org](http://www.norcaldeanerycamp.org).

The Services program during the period of Great Lent 2018			برنامج الصلوات خلال فترة الصوم الأربعيني المقدس لعام ٢٠١٨		
Wednesdays	Great Compline Service	7 pm	٧ مساءً	صلاة النوم الكبرى "يا رب القوات"	الإربعاء
Fridays	Akathist Service	7 pm	٧ مساءً	خدمة مديح والدة الإله	الجمعة
Sundays	The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great	10 am	١٠ صباحاً	القداس الإلهي للقدّيس باسيليوس الكبير	الأحد

**❖ 2018 Great Lent**

❖ *Lent Period: February 19<sup>th</sup> – April 8<sup>th</sup>*

*Strict Fast: NO Dairy, Meat, Cheese, Eggs, and Fish*

Day	Date	Celebration
Sunday	March 25 <sup>th</sup>	Annunciation of the Theotokos (Fish Allowed)
Sunday	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Palm Sunday (Fish Allowed)
Friday	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	Great and Holy Friday
Sunday	April 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA</b>

**Good Friday Flowers \$50 (Minimum Donation) per Bouquet**

**الزهور لتزيين نعش المسيح يوم الجمعة العظيمة**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ الاسم

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ رقم الهاتف

Donation(\$): \_\_\_\_\_ المبلغ

Message: \_\_\_\_\_

**Good Friday flowers: Dear Parishioners: We apologize to announce** الزهور لنعش المسيح **that we will not be able to put any names and order any bouquet of flowers for the Bier of Christ this year for Good Friday unless we receive the form and payment. To avoid misspelling of the names, please do not call the church office. Mail or email the names along with the donation or put it in the tray on Sunday in an envelope with your name & write a memo that this donation is for the "Bier of Christ". Thank you for your cooperation.**

## PASCHA (EASTER) BREAKFAST ITEMS NEEDED

As our custom, the Family of St. Nicholas Parish enjoys breaking the Fast together on the dawn of the Resurrection day. All the parishioners of St. Nicholas will have their breakfast together in celebration of the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord. Call church office if you would like to donate these items or money toward purchasing these items:

Feta Cheese	Cheese	Labneh	Olives	Ham
Orange Juice	Turkey	Pickles	Fruits	Napkins
Pita Bread	Tahini	Milk	Foam Cups	Olive Oil
Forks	Sausage	Bacon	Potato	Coffee
Pancakes	Knives			

Thanks for your donations!

## الإيمان المسيحي

هناك بعض الحقائق الأساسية في الإيمان المسيحي إذا نسيناها نكون متهورين. سأحاول أن أبين هنا بعض الأركان أو الأسس. الأساس الأول هو الإيمان الذي قال عنه ربنا يسوع «إن كنت تستطيع أن تؤمن فكل شيء مستطاع للمؤمن». الإيمان كلمة عربية تعني أمرين: تعني الأمانة أي كما يسلم أحدهم شيئاً ثميناً لشخص ما. والمؤمن هو الأمين الذي تسلم عقيدة وتسلم سلوكاً عليه أن يحافظ عليهما. إذاً عندما نتكلم على المؤمن نعي أنه إنسان يحافظ على وديعة تسلمها بدون تفريط ويؤدى عنها الحساب، والحساب يؤدى طبعاً إلى الرب.

والإيمان يعني أيضاً المبنى أو الحصن، مكان لا يمكن أن يدخله العدو. في أوقات الكوارث يحتمي الناس إلى ملاجئ حتى يقوا أنفسهم من هجمات العدو. فالمؤمن تالياً هو من يعتبر أن له حصناً هو الرب. المؤمن إنسان ثابت لا تزعه تقلبات الدهر لأنه مبني على أساس. المؤمن إنسان قلق يتعذب مثل كل الناس لأنه من لحم ودم وهو ناقص، ويعرف أنه إذا تسلم هذه الوديعة إنما له مأمّن، ويعرف أين مركز الله ويريد أن يبقى معه إلى اليوم الأخير. ولذلك يبقى حيث هو مؤسساً على المسيح ومؤسساً تالياً على الكنيسة. المسيح اليوم هو منظور بالكنيسة ننذوقه عندما نجتمع حول القرايين المقدسة. المسيح يظهر لنا اليوم بشكل خفي هو جسده ودمه.

الشيء الثاني الذي نستنتجه هو أن الإيمان يغذي الإنسان عندما يكون مع الله ويتوجه إلى الله بالصلاة. لذلك لن أصدق أبداً أن هناك إنساناً مؤمناً لا يصلي. الإنسان استلم إيمانه بالنعمة من الكنيسة ولكنه يغذيه بالصلاة وبالكلمة الإلهية التي يقرأها في الإنجيل. من يريد أن يعيش في جو الله يشبه الصديق الذي يغذي الصداقة بالاتصالات والزيارات، كذلك المؤمن هو من يغذي إيمانه حتى يستمر.

من السهل جداً أن يغيب الله عن نظرنا وعن قلبنا لأننا ندخل إلى قلوبنا أشياء غريبة عنه أو ندخل عدوه. قضيتنا مع الله هي قضية محبة، قضية شوق. من هنا دعاؤنا إلى الرب أن يجرحنا بشوقه. وقد قيل إن من جرحه يسوع جرحه لا يُشفى، يبقى يحبّ وعنده شوق دائم. يبقى الجرح مفتوحاً ويبقى الشوق من طريق الصلاة وقراءة الإنجيل.

نبتلع الصلاة، الله يُبتلع. ولهذا قال: «كلوا، هذا هو جسدي». أظهر الله لنا نفسه بشكل خبز، لا لأنه هو خبز، لكن لأننا من طريق أكل هذا الخبز نفهم أننا نأكل الله ذاته أي ندخله في كياننا. كذلك كشف الرب يسوع نفسه من طريق الكأس المشتركة إذ قال اشربوا منها كلكم.

هناك أمر أساس في الصلاة أن من يصلي يعود إلى الطمأنينة، يعود إلى السماء. تنتفض نفسه من الخطيئة وتصير مبررة ويرجع الهدوء إليه. الهدوء الحقيقي لا يأتي إلا من طريق الصلاة فيتمكّن من محاربة الأهواء. المؤمن هو الإنسان الذي يقف أمام التجربة ويقاومها. يصير الإنسان المسيحي سيّداً على عينيه وعلى أذنيه ويديه ورجليه. ويبقى الله سيّداً على النفس بالإيمان أولاً وبالصلاة ثانياً وبترك شهوات النفس وميولها. هكذا نحاول أن نحيا حياة مسيحية. المطران جاورجيوس

## Metropolitan Anthony: SAINT JOHN OF THE LADDER

Lent is a time of repentance, a time when our heart of stone must be made by the power of God into a heart of flesh, from insensitive to become perceptive, from cold and hard to become warm and open to others, and indeed, to God Himself.

Lent is a time of renewal when like spring, everything become new again; when our life that had gone into a twilight becomes alive with all the intensity which God can communicate to us, humans,

by making us partakers of His Holy Spirit, by making us partakers, through the Holy Sacraments and the direct gift of God, of the Divine nature.

It is a time of reconciliation, and reconciliation is a joy: it is God's joy, and it is our joy; it's a new beginning.

Today is the day of Saint John of the Ladder, and I want to read to you a few phrases of his which are relevant to the particular time of the year in which we live:

“Repentance, that is our return to God is renewal of our baptism; it is our effort to renew our covenant with God, our promise to change our life. It is a time when we can acquire humility, that is peace; peace with God, peace with ourselves, peace with all the created world. Repentance is born of hope and rejection of despair. And one who repents, is one who deserves condemnation - and yet, goes away from the tribunal without shame, because repentance is our peace with God. And this is achieved through a worthy life, alien to the sins we committed in the past. Repentance is cleansing of our conscience. Repentance implies carrying off all sadness and pain.”

And if we ask ourselves how we can achieve it, how we can come to this, how we can respond to God Who receives us as the father received the prodigal son, a God Who has waited for us, longingly, Who, rejected, never turned away from us - how can we respond to Him? Here is a short word about prayer :

“Don't use in prayer falsely wise words; because it is often the simple and uncomplicated whispering of children that rejoices our heavenly Father. Don't try to say much when you speak to God, because otherwise your mind in search of words will be lost in them. One word spoken by the publican brought Divine mercy upon him; one word filled with faith saved the thief on the cross. The use of the multiplicity of words when we pray disperses our mind and fill it with imaginations. One word spoken to God collects the mind in His presence. And if a word, in thy prayer, reaches you deeply, if you perceive it profoundly - dwell in it, dwell in it, because at such moments our Angel guardian prays with us because we are true to ourselves and to God”.

Let us remember what Saint John of the Ladder says, even if you forget the short comments (which I introduced) to make his text more readily understandable. Let us remember his words because he was a man who knew what it means to turn to God, to *stay* with God, to be God's joy and to rejoice in Him. He is offered us in this time, when we are ascending towards the days of the Passion, he is offered us as an example of what grace Divine can do to transform an ordinary, simple human being into a light to the world.

Let us learn from him, let us follow his example, let us *rejoice* in what God can do by His power in a human being, and let us confidently, with faith, with an exulting and yet serene joy follow the advice, listen to God *begging* us to find a way of life and telling us that with Him, in Him we *will* be alive, because He *is* the Truth but also the Way and also Life eternal.

# SAINT NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH BANQUET HALL

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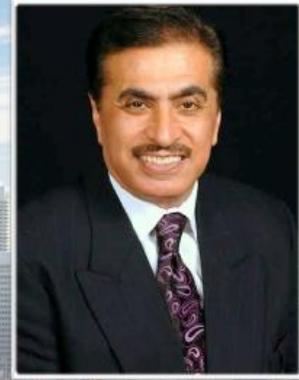
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