

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**

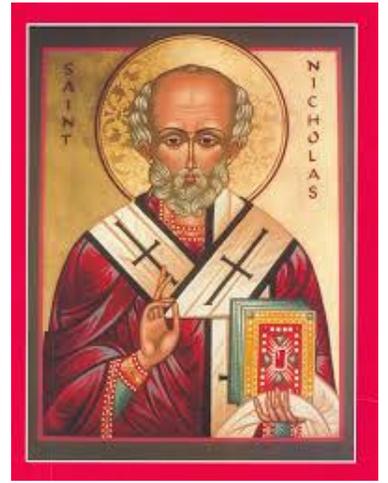
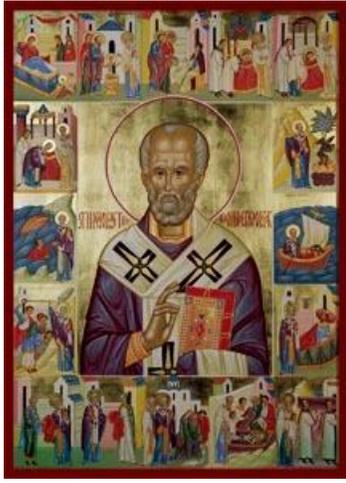
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. **Gregory Ofiesh**

Sub-Dn. **Michel Khoury**

Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Maher Shami**



Sunday, May 13, 2018 Sunday of the Blind Man أحد الأعمى



Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Al Maseeh Qam! Haqan Qam!

Kristos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

المسيح قام! حقا قام كل عام وأنتم بخير



Memorial Service: Sunday May 20th

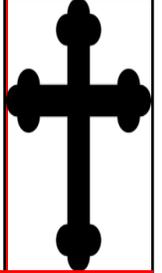
❖ Six Month Memorial Service for the Servants of God

Georgette and Hanna Yanni offered by their family.

❖ Six Month Memorial Service for the Handmaiden of God

Olga Azar offered by her family.

May their memory be eternal!



THE EPISTLE: The Acts of the Apostles. (16:16-34) In those days, as we Apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the Name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened and every one's fetters were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God.

الرسالة: أعمال الرسل ١٦ : ١٦-٣٤ في تلك الأيام، فيما نحن الرسل منطلقون إلى الصلاة، استقبلتنا جارية بها روح عرافة، وكانت تُكسب موالها كسباً جزيلاً بعراقتها. فطقت تمشي في إثر بولس وإثرنا وتصيح قائلة: هؤلاء الرجال هم عبيد الله العليّ وهم يُبشرونكم بطريق الخلاص. وصنعت ذلك أياماً كثيرة، فتضجّر بولس والتفت إلى الروح وقال: إني أمرُك باسم يسوع المسيح أن تخرج منها، فخرج في تلك الساعة. فلما رأى موالها أنه قد خرج رجاء مكسبهم قبضوا على بولس وسيلا وجرّوهما إلى السوق عند الحكّام، وقدموهما إلى الولاة قائلين: إنّ هذين الرجلين يُبلمان مدينتنا وهما يهوديان، ويُناديان بعبادات لا يجوز لنا قبولها ولا العمل بها إذ نحن رومانيون. فقام عليهما الجمع معاً ومزّق الولاة ثيابهما وأمرّوا بأن يُضربا بالعصي. ولما أثنوهما بالجراح ألقوهما في السجن وأوصوا السجان بأن يحرسهما بضبط. وهو إذ أوصي بمثل تلك الوصيّة ألقاهما في السجن الداخلي وضبط رجليهما في المقطرة. وعند نصف الليل كان بولس وسيلا يُصليان ويسبحان الله والمحبوسون يسمعونهما، فحدثت بغنة زلزلة عظيمة حتى تزعزت أسس السجن، فانفتحت في الحال الأبواب كلّها وانفكت قيود الجميع. فلما استيقظ السجان ورأى أبواب السجن أنها مفتوحة استلّ السيف وهمّ أن يقتل نفسه لظنه أنّ المحبوسين قد هربوا. فناداه بولس بصوت عال قائلاً: لا تعمل بنفسك سوءاً فإننا جميعنا هنا. فطلب مصباحاً ووثب إلى داخل وخرّ لبولس وسيلا وهو مرتعد. ثم خرج بهما وقال: يا سيدي، ماذا ينبغي لي أن أصنع لكي أخلص؟ فقالا: آمن بالرب يسوع المسيح فتخلص أنت وأهل بيتك. وكلماه هو وجميع من في بيته بكلمة الرب. فأخذهما في تلك الساعة من الليل وغسل جراحهما واعتمد من وقته هو وذووه أجمعون. ثم أصدعهما إلى بيته وقدم لهما مائدة وابتهج مع جميع أهل بيته إذ كان قد آمن بالله.

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 answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you 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.

الإنجيل: يوحنا ٩: ١-٣٨ في ذلك الزمان فيما يسوع مجتاز رأى إنساناً أعمى منذ مولده. فسأله تلاميذه قائلين: يا رب، من أخطأ هذا أم أبواه حتى وُلد أعمى؟ أجاب يسوع: لا هذا أخطأ ولا أبواه، لكن لتظهر أعمال الله فيه. ينبغي لي أن أعمل أعمال الذي أرسلني ما دام نهاراً، يأتي ليل حين 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. وأما هو فكان يقول: إنني 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، فمضيتُ واغتسلتُ فأبصرتُ. فقالوا له: أين ذلك؟ فقال لهم: لا أعلم. فأتوا به، أي بالذي كان قبلاً أعمى، إلى الفريسيين. وكان حين صنع يسوع الطين وفتح عينيه يوم سبت. فسأله الفريسيون أيضاً كيف أبصر، فقال لهم: جعل على عيني طيناً ثم اغتسلتُ فأنا الآن أبصر. فقال قوم من الفريسيين: هذا الإنسان ليس من الله لأنه لا يحفظ السبت. آخرون قالوا: كيف يقدر إنسان خاطئ أن يعمل مثل هذه الآيات؟ فوقع بينهم شقاق. فقالوا أيضاً للأعمى: ماذا تقول أنت عنه من حيث إنه فتح عينيك؟ فقال: إنه نبي. ولم يصدق اليهود عنه أنه كان أعمى فأبصر حتى دعوا أبوي الذي أبصر وسألوهما قائلين: أهذا هو ابنكما الذي تقولان إنه وُلد أعمى، فكيف أبصر الآن؟ أجابهم أبواه وقالوا: نحن نعلم أن هذا ولدنا وأنه وُلد أعمى، وأما كيف أبصر الآن فلا نعلم، أو من فتح عينيه فنحن لا نعلم، هو كامل السن فاسألوه فهو يتكلم على نفسه. قال أبواه هذا لأنهما كانا يخافان من اليهود لأن اليهود كانوا قد تعاهدوا أنه إن اعترف أحد بأنه المسيح يُخرج من المجمع. فذلك قال أبواه هو كامل السن فاسألوه. فدعوا ثانية الإنسان الذي كان أعمى وقالوا له: أعط مجداً لله، فإننا نعلم أن هذا الإنسان خاطئ. فأجاب ذلك وقال: أخطئي هو لا أعلم، إنما أعلم شيئاً واحداً أنني كنتُ أعمى والآن أنا أبصر. فقالوا له أيضاً: ماذا صنع بك؟ كيف فتح عينيك؟ أجابهم قد أخبرتكم فلم تسمعوا، فماذا تريدون أن تسمعوا أيضاً؟ ألعلمكم أنتم أيضاً تريدون أن تصيروا له تلاميذ؟ فشموه وقالوا له: أنت تلميذ ذلك. وأما نحن فإننا تلاميذ موسى ونحن نعلم أن الله قد كلم موسى. فأما هذا فلا نعلم من أين هو. أجاب الرجل وقال لهم: إن في هذا عجباً أنكم ما تعلمون من أين هو وقد فتح عيني، ونحن نعلم أن الله لا يسمع للخطاة، ولكن إذا أحد اتقى الله وعمل مشيئته فله يستجيب. منذ الدهر لم يُسمع أن أحداً فتح عيني مولود أعمى. فلو لم يكن هذا من الله لم يقدر على أن يفعل شيئاً. أجابوه وقالوا له: إنك في الخطايا قد وُلدت بجملتك. أفأنت تعلمنا؟ فأخرجوه خارجاً. وسمع يسوع أنهم أخرجوه خارجاً، فوجده وقال له: أتؤمن أنت بابن الله؟ فأجاب ذلك وقال: فمن هو يا سيد لأؤمن به؟ فقال له يسوع: قد رأيته، والذي يتكلم معك هو هو. فقال له: قد آمنت يا رب، وسجد له.

SAVE THE DATE:

- ❖ **MOTHER'S DAY FAMILY NIGHT FUNDRAISER FOR CAMP:** Saturday May 12th @ 7:00 PM WITH SPECIAL SINGER RAMI KEILA. Donations go towards our summer camp. Adults: \$35 Children \$15
- ❖ **CAMP THREE HOLY YOUTHS:** June 18-22nd, 2018 at St. Sava Mission in Jackson, California. Tuition: \$100 per camper. Register online at www.norcaldeanerycamp.org.
- ❖ ****ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL PICNIC:**** Is now on Sunday July 8th at Dr. Elias Hanna Winery. We will have a bus leaving from the church to transport those who are unable to drive. There will be limited capacity so please call us in advance to reserve a seat.
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL FOOD FESTIVAL:** September 29th & 30th. More info to come

Altar Candle Offering:

- ❖ **Alter Candles:** Offered by **Sue Wais** in loving memory of her beloved mother **Janette Tannous** for Mother's day and in loving memory of her beloved father **Khalil Fared Tannous**, May their Memory be Eternal.

Holy Bread of Oblation:

- ❖ **Holy Bread:** Offered by **Sue Wais** for the good health of husband **Donald**, daughter **Jeanette** on the occasion of her birthday, son in-law **Jason** and grandsons **Anthony, Khalil and Dylan** – Many Happy Years!

Holy Ascension Feast: Thursday May 17th
Holy Pentecost Church Service: Sunday May 27th

Metropolitan Anthony: SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

At the end of today's reading, words stand that we pass by very often. The blind man says to Christ, "And who is the Son of God?" and Christ answers, "You have seen Him and He is speaking to you". For us, the first words are so natural; the first event of our life, the first event of a meeting is that we see a person, but what was this wonder of this man who had never seen anything in the world and who, touched by the life-giving hand of Christ, of a sudden saw! And the first person he saw was his Lord and his God, Christ, the Son of Man.

I remember a Romanian writer telling us in his biography what definitive, what profound impression the face of the first man he remembers made. He remembers himself as a child, and over him - the inexpressibly beautiful face of his father who was a priest, looking at him, with all human love, with all the tenderness, and all the depth of a human gaze. And he says that this was a first vision for him in the icon which a human face can be when it is lit from inside by love and by understanding, by depth and by eternity, a vision of God. Here this man saw God in the features of Him who was God and who had become the Son of Man.

I would like to attract your attention also to something different. On another occasion we read the story of a paralytic healed by Christ; and the Church, singing the praises of God on that occasion says, "As this man found no one to show mercy on him, the Son of Mary, God Himself, stooped down and met his need". Because this man had not found another man to show mercy, to show compassion, to show concern, God has come down to him. Now we live in another time, we live in the time with God truly having become man in our midst, and more than this: He has made us to be living members of His body, an incarnate, concrete presence of His Incarnation, the temples of the Spirit, the place of the Presence. Now any man who is in need should at the same time find in each of us a man stirred to compassion, taught mercy and understanding by God become Man, and at the same time, simultaneously, meeting with us, he should be able to see the love of God in our eyes and to perceive the active, imaginative, creative action of divine charity in our words and in our deeds. Since Christ has come into the world, the time of man has come; but not of man as severed from God, separated from Him, alien to Him, but a wonderful time when in man, in those who have discovered Christ, who have believed in Him, who have become one with Him - those men to whom God has entrusted the care of His world - people can both receive divine and human mercy and see human compassion, human love, human joy.

Is not this a great call, is not that something which should make us capable of great things? The time of God and the time of man is one, not only in the incarnate Son of God, but in this mysterious incarnate presence which each of us represents, the presence of God in the flesh, in human compassion, in human love, and this is an earnest claim and a challenge which the Gospel presents us with. Are we to one another and to those further afield that kind of humanity? New humanity, new creatures, new men with the newness of a renewed life, the life of God. This is what we are called to be.

Let us then reflect on it, make a decision, make a move and become an icon, a vision of God, not only in the shining of love in our eyes, not only in the words we speak, but also in every action and deed, so that the time of man should have become the day of the Son of Man, the day of the Lord.

نور المسيح

منذ الفصح نقرأ إنجيل يوحنا ونهتدي به إلى نور المخلص وهو إنجيل مملوء بالحديث عن النور. هذا هو الأحد الأخير من الفترة الفصحية، وقد شاءت الكنيسة المقدسة أن نختتم هذه المدة الطيبة بتلاوة عن أعمى يُشرق بنور يتدفق عليه، وكأنها تريد أن نلتفت إلى المسيح النور الذي هو ضياء نفوسنا لأننا في الخطايا عميان، ويجب أن نكف عن الخطيئة لنبصر نور المخلص. نحن منذ قيامة المخلص صرنا منتصرين به، فرحين بخلاصه.

قرأنا عن المولود أعمى حيث يتبين الصراع القائم بين السيد والفرسيين. إنسان سُفي من مرضه يوم سبت حيث كان العمل ممنوعاً واعتُبرت الأعجوبة عملاً ممنوعاً، واعتُبرت أيضاً مستحيلة لأنه ما سُمع قط أن إنساناً أعمى منذ مولده يُشفى. الواقع الملموس أنه سُفي. لكن رؤساء اليهود لم يقتنعوا بالملموس لأن هذه الأعجوبة تلغي موافقهم التي كانت مسبقاً لاغية ليسوع الناصري.

ما أراد اليهود أن يقرّوا بأنّ الشاب كان أعمى- كانوا هم عمياناً- أرادوا ألا يعترفوا بالواقع، مصيبتهم أنّهم استمروا ينكرون حتى النهاية. المأساة في القلب البشري أنّ الإنسان حرّ، حرّ في أن يرتكب الخطأ وحرّ في أن يتوب، وقد يبقى الإنسان مصراً على الخطأ ولو رأى الخطيئة.

كان اليهود يخشون أن يصبح يسوع ملكاً على الإنسانيّة الجديدة التي تؤلفها الكنيسة خارج إسرائيل فيزول نفوذهم. لذلك كان ينبغي أن يموت هذا النبيّ الجديد وأن تُلغى أعماله وألا يُعترف بها. كان هذا موقفاً اتخذوه مسبقاً لعماهم هم. أبصر الأعمى وهم غير مبصرين، لكنهم يحسبون أنفسهم مبصرين لذلك يجب أن يبقى المريض أعمى. هذا كان الموقف. أرادوا أن يلغوا جميع أعمال يسوع التي كانت سابقة لموته وقيامته. الاعتراف بشفاء الأعمى كان اعترافاً بأنّ يسوع الناصري قد أرسله الله لخلاص العالم.

شرط الخلاص أن يغتسل الإنسان بالكلام الذي أرسله الله، أن يغتسل بالنعمة التي يفنئها الله في قلبه. قال يسوع للأعمى:

«اذهب واغتسل»، أي لا تبقى قذراً، اذهب أيها الإنسان، كل إنسان، واغتسل، لا تبقى ملتصقاً بأوساخك، مكبلاً بها، ولكن اتركها وارحض ذاتك بماء النعمة. وإذا ذهبت واغتسلت بكلام الله عندذاك تُبصر.

قد يكون الإنسان مسيحياً ومع ذلك يبقى أعمى، ليس لأنّ ديانتته مظلمة ولكن لكونه هو لم يبق على ديانتته. المؤمن بالرب يسوع مبصر. فإذا أخطأ وأصرّ يجعل نفسه وكأنّه مولود أعمى. يُظلم من جديد من بعد نور لأنّ السلوك السيئ بظلام يدخل إلينا من جديد من بعد النور ويجعلنا عمياناً. إذا لا نفتخر بأننا مسيحيون، هذا لا يكفي، بل نفتخر بأننا نطيع وصايا الله. القضية أن يستمرّ النور علينا، لا أن نأخذ النور منذ طفولتنا في المعمودية وننسى، الأمر كلّه أن نبقي معتمدين أي أن نسلك سلوك المعتمدين، يُعطى لنا النور بالعمل الصالح. المعمودية تُجدد بالعهد الذي نقطعه على أنفسنا في حضرة المسيح كلّ يوم. المطران جاورجيوس

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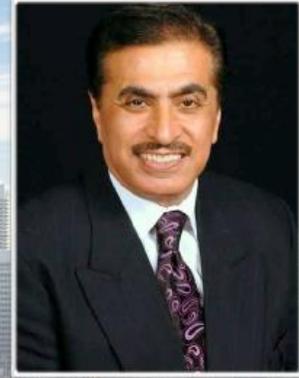
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