

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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of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

Pastor, V. Rev. Fr. **George Baalbaki**

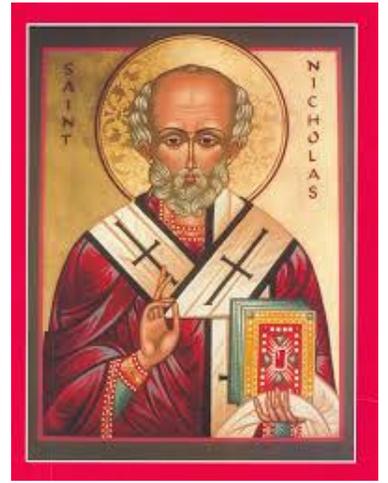
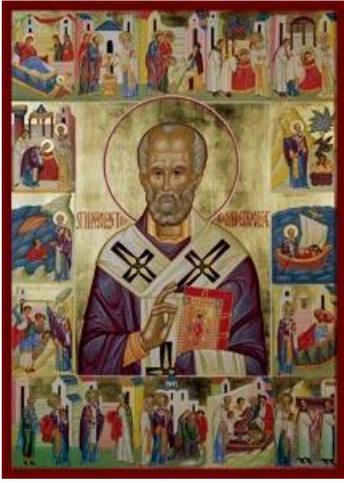
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## Sunday, July 01, 2018 Unmercenarys Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs in Rome تذكّار الشهيدين قزما ودميانوس الماقتي الفضة

### **IMPORTANT REMINDER:**

- ❖ Next week Sunday July 8<sup>th</sup> our Divine Liturgy service will take place in Santa Rosa at Hanna Winery. The service begins at 11:00 AM. The winery is located at 5353 Occidental Rd, Santa Rosa, CA 95401. We would love to see you there so please try your best to make it!

**The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (12:27-13:8)** Brethren, you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the Church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

الرسالة: ١ كورنثوس ١٢: ٢٧-٣١، ١٣: ١-٨

يا إخوة أنتم جسد المسيح وأعضاؤه أفراداً، وقد وضع الله في الكنيسة أناساً، أولاً رسلاً، ثانياً أنبياء، ثالثاً معلّمين، ثم قوّات، ثم مواهب شفاء، فأغاثات، فتدابير، فأنواع السنة. ألعّلّ الجميع أنبياء؟ ألعّلّ الجميع معلّمون؟ ألعّلّ الجميع صانعو قوّات؟ ألعّلّ للجميع مواهب الشفاء؟ ألعّلّ الجميع ينطقون بالسنة؟ ألعّلّ الجميع يترجمون؟ ولكن تنافسوا في المواهب الفضلى وأنا أريكم طريقاً أفضل جداً. إن كنت أنطق بالسنة الناس والملائكة ولم تكن فيّ المحبة فإمّا أنا نحاس يطنّ أو صنج يرنّ، وإن كانت لي النبوة وكنت أعلم جميع الأسرار والعلم كلّ، وإن كان لي الإيمان كلّ حتى أنقل الجبال ولم تكن فيّ المحبة فليست بشيء، وإن أطعمت جميع أموالني وأسلمت جسدي لأحرق ولم تكن فيّ المحبة فلا أنفع شيئاً. المحبة تتأني وترفق، المحبة لا تحسد، المحبة لا تنباهي ولا تنتفخ، ولا تأتي قباحة ولا تلتمس ما هو لها ولا تحتدّ ولا تظنّ سوء، ولا تفرح بالظلم بل تفرح بالحقّ، وتحتمل كلّ شيء وتصدّق كلّ شيء وترجو كلّ شيء وتصبّر على كلّ شيء. المحبة لا تسقط أبداً.

### **THE GOSPEL: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (8:28-9:1)**

At that time, when Jesus came to the country of the Gergesenes, two demoniacs met Him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have we to do to Thee, O Son of God? Art Thou come here to torment us before the time?"

Now a herd of many swine was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged Him, "If Thou castest us out, send us away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and perished in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, and what had happened to the demoniacs. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, they begged Him to leave their neighborhood. And getting into a boat He crossed over and came to His own city.

الإنجيل: متى ٨: ٢٨-٣٤، ٩: ١

في ذلك الزمان لما أتى يسوع إلى كورة الجرجسيين استقبله مجنونان خارجان من القبور، شرسان جدًا، حتى إنه لم يكن أحد يقدر على أن يجتاز من تلك الطريق. فصاحا قائلين: ما لنا ولك يا يسوع ابن الله؟ أجننت إلى ههنا قبل الزمان لتعدبنا؟ وكان بعيدًا عنهم قطيع خنازير كثيرة ترعى. فأخذ الشياطين يطلبون إليه قائلين: إن كنت تُخرجنا فأذن لنا بأن نذهب إلى قطيع الخنازير. فقال لهم: اذهبوا. فخرجوا وذهبوا إلى قطيع الخنازير. فإذا بالقطيع كله قد وثب عن الجرف إلى البحر ومات في المياه. أما الرعاة فهربوا ومضوا إلى المدينة، وأخبروا بكل شيء وبأمر المجنونين. فخرجت المدينة كلها للقاء يسوع. ولما رأوه طلبوا إليه أن يتحول عن تخومهم. فدخل السفينة واجتاز وأتى إلى مدينته.

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL PICNIC:** Sunday July 8<sup>th</sup> at Hanna Winery at 5353 Occidental Rd, Santa Rosa, CA 95401. **DIVINE LITURGY CHURCH SERVICE WILL BE HELD AT THE 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.
- ❖ **CAMP THREE HOLY YOUTHS REUNION (LOCK-IN):** Friday July 13<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 PM to 8:00 AM Saturday morning at St. Nicholas. There will be a dinner, movies, and other activities. Parents are invited for the dinner and movie. Activities will take place after. Please bring your children to keep them involved in our growing community. God bless!
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL FOOD FESTIVAL:** Saturday and Sunday September 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. More info to come.
- ❖ **FOLK AND CULTURE DANCE:** Saturday October 20<sup>th</sup> we will have a Folk and Culture

### **Altar Candle Offering:**

- ❖ Offered by Nadim, Basma, Janan, Jim, Ivette, Jennifer, Brandon, and Matthew Howell, Oscar Moran for the good health of Jane Moran on the occasion of her birthday July 12<sup>th</sup>.  
Happy birthday and God bless!
- ❖ Offered by Nabil Hanhan for the good health of Nabil, Nicholas and Alexander on the occasion of their birthdays. God bless and many years!
- ❖ Offered by St. Nicholas for the good health of Amjad Qaqish on the occasion of his birthday. Happy birthday and many years!

### **Congratulations:**

- ❖ And best wishes to Jamel Ezzat Asfour and Raneim Emad Fahel on their engagement. God bless and many years!

### **Pledge Reminder:**

- ❖ We would like to remind you to honor your pledge. The annual pledge for the members of our church is \$600 per family or \$300 per individual. Your support is truly needed and appreciated and it helps fulfill our commitment. God bless!

## *Altar Candle Offering*

- ❖ Altar Candle offered by St. Nicholas Church for the good health of all those named Paul, Peter, Bulos, Butros, and Pierre on the occasion of their names day. God bless!

### Metropolitan Anthony: **The Healing of the Men of Gergesene**

How familiar is this story to us. Yet every time we read it we rediscover something in it which touches our heart, or gives a new light to our mind. And to-day I would like to attract your attention to three features of this passage.

The first is the attitude of the devils, of the powers of evil, to their victims. The powers of evil have no other intention or desire than to take possession of a living creature and to make it both a sufferer and one that will fulfil their will. The Fathers of the Church teach us that the devils can have no direct action in this world; all they can do is enslave human beings and through them work the evil within them. So this is what these powers of evil had intended: to enslave these men and to make them instruments of destruction, but at the same time to make them suffer for it.

When Christ commanded them to leave their victims they cried, shall I say, for a place of refuge, a place where they could dwell and work destruction. And Christ allowed them to indwell the pigs. Pigs, in the eyes of Jews, were a symbol of impurity; the request to be lodged in their bodies was a sign for all who could understand - and every Jew could - that they were as impure as the impurest of the animals. But what happened next was a demonstration to people of what happens when we allow ourselves to be possessed of evil, when we allow passions to have power over us - hatred, lust, jealousy, and all the passions of body and soul. Being possessed by them we are doomed to destruction, as this herd ended in death.

We should remember this because we do not always realise how much we are in the grip, in the power of those things which rule our life: likes and dislikes, hatreds, resentments and so on. We are not only possessed, but we are also working evil through our subjection to the power of evil. And the warning is clear: if we only allow evil to take possession of us completely, it will mean death; not physical death, but a total, tragic alienation from all that is life: from God, from love, from beauty, from meaning. We cannot fall out of existence but we can be possessed of an existence which is a ghostly one, an existence without life, without content - a shell that is empty, and yet a torment.

And in contrast to this we see the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God become Man. He is the Creator, He is the Lord, He is the Saviour of the whole world; and He forgets everything, as it were, the whole of creation to pay attention to nothing but these two men who are in need of salvation, indeed He is prepared to leave ninety-nine righteous, whole people who do not need Him at that moment alone in order to give all His attention, all His life, indeed all His power to save these two men. In the face of all the need of the world He can see every individual need and respond to it with all His love, all His compassion, all His understanding and all His divine power to save and to heal.

There is a third group of people whom we see in action in this Gospel story; it is the inhabitants of the country. They had known of the desperate condition of these two men; they were told of what Christ did for them; they were told who their master was, who was their tormentor; should they not have come to give glory to God and thank Him for delivering the

two men from the power of evil? NO! All they saw in the act of Christ was that they were deprived of their herd of swine. What mattered to them the wholeness and the life and the salvation of these two men? They were deprived of what was important to them, what mattered to them more than a human life, and they asked Christ to leave their borders, to go because they did not want to risk another miracle that would be costly to them. What a tragic - not monstrous, but just tragic contrast between the attitude of God and the attitude of these people.

Let us give thought and ask ourselves, where do we stand? Of course, the first movement we shall have is to say, 'On God's side' - it is not true. When there is a tragic need, and the cost of helping would be perhaps not a disaster but a pain or loss to us, what would we choose? Let us reflect on this: are we really on the side of Christ Who can forget the whole world because His Heart is pierced, transfixed with compassion, or - do we allow our heart to be moved one moment, and then recalculate the cost and turn away from the need?

Let us reflect - because every one of these stories, every parable, every image, every act of God is challenging us: Where do you stand? Who are you? The person possessed, to whatever extent? A disciple of Christ ready to forget everything for the sake of a desperate need? Or rather one of those who say to Christ: Go, go away - you are disturbing our peace, the harmony of our life and our security? Let us reflect deeply; but not only reflect, take a decision and act.

## نحن واحد

يلفتك في الكنيسة أنها المكان الوحيد الذي يجتمع فيه غير المؤمنين في رغبة محبة، رجالاً كانوا أو نساء، فقراء أو أغنياء، أصحاء أو معوقين، بسطاء في الفهم أو عظماء فيه. ذلك بأن السيد المذبح من أجل الجميع يرفعهم إلى مرتبة واحدة هي مرتبة حبه، وكأنه يقول للمرأة المقهورة (وأحياناً الرجل مقهور) إذا كان زوجك لا يرى فيك إلا متعة أو خادمة لأولاده وما كان لك عنده قدر، فأنت رفيفتي لأن من صفك جاءت مريم أمي وأم العالمين وجاءت حاملات الطيب، وبلغت رفيفاتك من القداسة شأنًا عظيمًا. ويقول المخلص للفقير: أنا لا أساويك مع الغني فإني ساويتك بنفسي، وأنت إن أحببت فصبرت وغدوت رفيق فقير الناصرة فلا يفوقك أحد في المجد، لأنك علوت عرش التواضع ولا عرش سواه.

ويقول السيد المبارك للمعوق: أنت سليم في ما هو عميق وقادر على عظمة والقلب في شجاعة وإقدام، فإن شئت يداك أو رجلاك فلا خلل في فكري، لأن الكراهية هي وحدها الإعاقة وقد يستكبر الأصحاء. إذ ذاك هم المقعدون. وينادي الرب إليه البسطاء بقوله: «كل شيء قلب»، وأنت في المسيحية مجالك الطهارة والعطاء والفهم الذي أودعه الله القلب، وكثيراً ما يأتي الفكر المتفذلك ضد القلب النقي. فالعطاء الذي تعرفه المسيحية فيض حب فإن امتنع هذا الفيض عن إنسان ليس هو على شيء. ويتوجه هؤلاء معاً إلى الكأس المقدسة متواضعين فتعرف الجميلة في حضرة يسوع أن جمالها تراب حتى تتناول قرباناً فاعلاً، ويذوق الغني أنه فقير إلى رحمة ربه وأنه عدل المحتاجين أو أدنى منهم لنأل يدينه جسد المسيح. ويرى السليم أنه يتزكى بشكره لنأل تجلب عليه الصحة الوافرة كارثة الاستعلاء، ويقتنع المثقف بأنه إن لم يضع معرفته عند قدمي المصلوب فالمعرفة صالبة. ولكن الخطر يدهمنا بعد القداس الإلهي فتخرج الجميلة متبخثرة والأغنياء زاهين أو يتصدقون في ترفع وإحساس بالمنة، ويوزع المثقفون الكلام الذكي هنا وثمة في تغرغر وتبجح فيبطل، إذ ذاك، أثر المناولة فينا يكون كالكلب الذي عاد إلى قيئه كما يقول الكتاب (٢ بطرس ٢: ٢٢).

العالم الذي فيه المسيحيون تنبسط فيه التفاهات ومنتشر فيه العمى، إذ لا يعرف السليم أنه ليس أبهى من المعوق، ولا الرجل أنه ليس بشيء من حيث إنه ذكر وأنه يصبح شيئاً فقط برئاسة المسيح عليه، ولا يذوق المتعلم أن ذرة من المحبة أثمن من قنطار من العلم. وإذا سقطنا إلى هذه الدرجات يكون القداس الإلهي قد تحول أحياناً بيزنطية بلا مضمون، وكأن المسيح لم يمت ليجمعنا إليه ويوحّدنا بعضنا ببعض. وتعود الدنيا مسرحاً للشياطين في مجتمع مسيحي، ولا نكون قد أخذنا الكنيسة إلى العالم لنجعلها هو الكنيسة ولنهيئ في هذا العالم ملكوت الله. المعبد ليس محبة أخيرة، إنه انطلاقة إلى العالم.

لماذا لا نكون فيه جماعة إلهية ونرتضي أنفسنا فيه طائفة لا روح قدساً فيها. المحبة بين الفئات المختلفة هي روح النخبة المطران جاورجيوس المضيفة التي نسميها المسيحيين.

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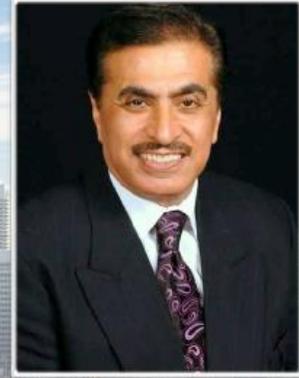
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