

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**

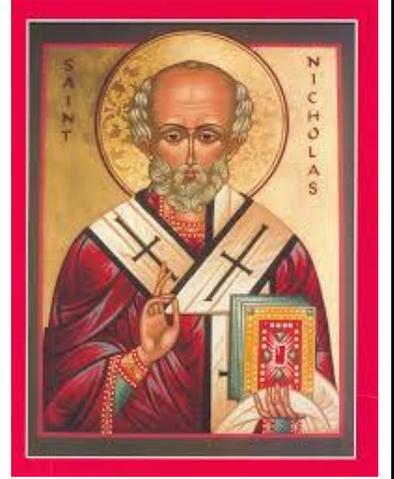
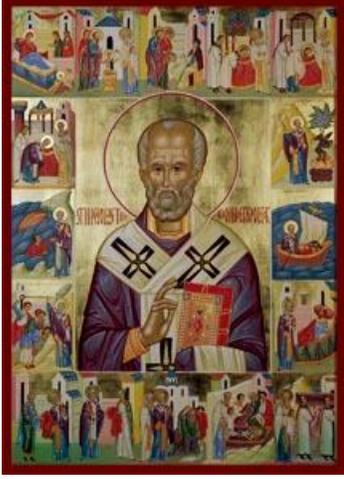
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. **Gregory Ofiesh**

Sub-Dn. **Michel Khoury**

Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Maher Shami**



Sunday, October 14, 2018 Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council

آباء المجمع المسكوني السابع

THE EPISTLE: St. Paul to St. Titus. (3:8-15)

Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissension, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

الرسالة: تيطس ٣: ٨-١٥

يا ولدي تيطس، صادقة هي الكلمة وإياها أريد أن تقرّر حتى يهتمّ الذين آمنوا بالله في القيام بالأعمال الحسنة، فهذه هي الأعمال الحسنة والنافعة. أمّا المباحثات الهذيانّة والأنساب والخصومات والمماحكات الناموسيّة فاجتنبها، فإنّها غير نافعة وباطلة. ورَجُل البدعة، بعد الإنذار مرّة وأخرى، أعرض عنه، عالمًا أنّ من هو كذلك قد اعتسف وهو في الخطيئة يقضي بنفسه على نفسه. ومتى أرسلتُ إليك أرتيماس أو تيكوكوس فيبادر إلى أن تأتيني إلى نيكوبوليس لأنّي قد عزمْتُ أن أشتي هناك. أمّا زيناس معلّم الناموس وأبلوس فاجتهد في تشييعهما متأهبيّن لئلا يُعوزهما شيء. ولتعلّم ذوونا أن يقوموا بالأعمال الصالحة للحاجات الضروريّة حتى لا يكونوا غير مثمرين. يسلم عليك جميع الذين معي. سلّم على الذين يحبّوننا في الإيمان. النعمة معكم أجمعين، آمين.

الإنجيل: لوقا ٨: ٥-١٥

قال الربّ هذا المثل: خرج الزارع ليزرع زرعه، وفيما هو يزرع سقط بعض على الطريق فوطئ وأكلته طيور السماء. والبعض سقط على الصخر فلمّا نبت يبس لأنّه لم تكن له رطوبة. وبعض سقط بين الشوك فنبت الشوك معه فخنقه. وبعض سقط في الأرض الصالحة فلمّا نبت أثمر مئة ضعف. فسأله تلاميذه: ما عسى أن يكون هذا المثل؟ فقال: لكم قد أعطي أن تعرفوا أسرار ملكوت الله. وأمّا الباقون فبأمثال كيلا ينظروا وهم ناظرون ولا يفهموا وهم سامعون. وهذا هو المثل: الزرع هو كلمة الله، والذين على الطريق هم الذين يسمعون ثمّ يأتي إبليس وينزع الكلمة من قلوبهم لئلا يؤمنوا فيخلصوا. والذين على الصخر هم الذين يسمعون الكلمة ويقبلونها بفرح ولكن ليس لهم أصل، وإنّما يؤمنون إلى حين وفي وقت التجربة يرتدون. والذين سقطوا في الشوك هم الذين يسمعون ثمّ يذهبون فيختنقون بهموم هذه الحياة وغناها وملذّاتها، فلا يأتون بثمر. وأمّا الذي سقط في الأرض الجيدة فهم الذين يسمعون الكلمة فيحفظونها في قلب جيّد صالح ويثمرون بالصبر. ولمّا قال هذا، نادى من له أذنان للسمع فليسمع.

THE GOSPEL: St. Luke. (8:5-15)

The Lord spoke this parable: “A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold.” And when His Disciples asked Him what this parable meant, Jesus said, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience.” As Jesus said this, He called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

SAVE THE DATE:

- ❖ **TEEN SOYO OCEAN BEACH BONFIRE:** Saturday October 13th at 4:30 PM. Food, Music, Games. Bring blankets and warm clothing! Contact Ilyan Baalbaki for more info at 586 604 5331.
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS TARAB NIGHT:** Saturday October 20th featuring NABIL EL SAFE with the maestro RADWAN SHAKHSHIR. Donation: \$60. For further information please contact Gladys Maalouf @ 415-832-0316.
- ❖ **FESTIVAL APPRECIATION DINNER:** Tuesday October 30th we will have a dinner at the church hall to commemorate all those who volunteered and helped make the festival successful. Please do your best to join us.
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL FAMILY NIGHT:** Friday November 16th sponsored by the Rantisi Families. More info to come.
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS DAY/80TH ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON:** Sunday December 9th after Divine Liturgy please join us in celebrating the Feast of Saint Nicholas Day as well as our 80th anniversary.
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY:** Saturday December 22nd. More info to come.

OCTOBER IS YOUTH MONTH!

In October, we celebrate youth month within our archdiocese, where our youth are designated to take higher roles in the church. Likewise the entire archdiocese participates in more network based SOYO activities as well as one of our largest fundraisers of the year. The money goes towards Special Olympics hosted by our very own Antiochian Village and is one of the largest Special Olympics in the world. **Please contact the Teen Soyo, or Ilyan Baalbaki** if you'd like your teen to participate in any of the roles listed: Epistle reader, chanter, usher, and sermons.

Coffee Hour:

- ❖ Coffee and candles offered in loving memory of **Mary and Ibrahim Katout** by their children. May their memory be eternal!

Metropolitan Anthony: The Parable of the Sower

How familiar, and how simple seems to us, appears to us today's parable of the seed and of the sower; and yet, how relevant it is to us, and how much more thought we should give to it. We forget the setting itself of the parable, the imagery of the sower and the seed, and we don't see in it an image of Christ, walking along the roads and the paths of Galilee and Judea; and everywhere He went, people came to the roadside because they have heard, as the Blind Man have heard of whom Saint Marc reports, that He was a Teacher, that His words were true, that they had in them a power of life.

And people came, and lined the roads, and lined the streets, and listened. Some were prepared for the message; some have been in an agony of mind, have been asking themselves questions which hitherto no one has been able to answer. But others came, as so many people come now to a preacher, to an evangelist, to a leader of any side, came to see a man of whom one spoke, and to listen to what he had to say. He was not answering any of their questions, He was not meeting any of their needs, except perhaps the desire to see someone that was outstanding, someone unique in his time. They heard the word, but it fell at their ears, they find it beautiful, lovely, true - but it did not go beyond this. They were listening to words, they were not listening to the cry of their own soul that was hungry for words of truth.

And so, when He had passed, they all returned to what was their ordinary, their normal life. They might have gone home and repeated these words, saying, Wasn't it lovely? Didn't He speak well? - and then they went back to what was life, ordinary life, day-to-day life...

Others, who had come to the roadside, received the message with emotion, it stirred something in their hearts, something in their minds, it answered something in them. And they received it and hugged it to themselves, and returned home; but the moment they were no longer by the road, at home, the concerns of home overwhelmed them: there was so much to do, so much to think about, there was so much in life, there was no time to reflect again and again on the words heard, there was no time to sit quietly and to look in imagination at the face they had seen, to rehearse the voice they have heard.

We have another parable about those who have been called to the Bridal Feast of the King: they heard a call, they knew they were called personally - but could they go? The one had bought a field, he was rooted in it, tied to it, a prisoner of it; others have bought five pairs of oxen - they had to try them, they had something to do in life, a vocation, a job, something great - or something simply that matters supremely in a personal way, as the last one: he had taken a bride - how could he spend time for anyone else?

Those are the people who receive the word, who receive it truly, in their heart, but there are so many things that matter - tomorrow will do, or, if we only could reduce the message to something liveable, simple, not to the absoluteness of it!

And then, those who receive the message, like the rich soil that could receive the message, receive a seed and bear fruit. Those people were not simply better people, they probably were not better people; they were people who had a question in their mind and heart, people who had a longing, people for whom their daily life was too narrow, too small, people who were aware that their soul was deep, and vast and could not be filled with the trivialities - or even the noble, the good things of life: they received the message, they took it to heart, deep into them, and they bore fruit because it was answering a need.

Now, we can apply it to ourselves: how many of us listen to the words of the Gospel, listen to the words of preaching, read books that are full of interest and depth, and they store it in their memory, they enjoy it - but that is the end; they can quote it, they can pass it on to others, - but that is all.

And there are so many of us who have received the message with enthusiasm, with passion, knowing that this message is an answer to all there is in us of longing, of hunger, of greatness, indeed; but then, life is so complex, there is so much to do! And in all this doing, in all this complexity the word is left aside - for another time, for another day, when I will be old enough not to have any concerns: then I can turn back to this glorious moment when life unfolded itself in all its splendour - I keep it in my memory!

What about us, receiving the message and bearing fruit? But how does this message reach us? I remember a Russian priest saying to me, I read the Gospel daily, and I respond to it very seldom. But I read it daily because I never know whether today, or tomorrow, or on another day I will be the barren roadside, or the weeds by the way, or, of a sudden, whether this word will not fall on a small patch in me which is capable of receiving it and bearing fruit.

Isn't that simple, isn't that encouraging? We all are the three things described in the parable of the Gospel; but if we give a chance to God Who speaks, to God, Who passes through our life, to God Who knocks at our heart - from time to time we will receive the message with joy and let go of it; but from time to time it will reach a depth in our heart, a core of our life and be the answer that will change it.

Let us therefore listen, listen to the words of the Gospel day in and day out; listen to the voice of our conscience, listen to what the deepest self says to us about life, about truth, about reality; and from time to time we will have been the good ground that can bear fruit. This parable, so simple, so clear, if we only apply it, can be a beginning of a new life.

العقيدة السليمة سلوك ظاهر

في هذا الأحد نقيم ذكرى لأبائنا القديسين الذين عقدوا المجمع المسكوني السابع. المجمع المسكونية عُقدت لتوضيح الإيمان بين القرن الرابع والقرن الثامن. لماذا تؤكد الكنيسة على تعييننا لهؤلاء الذين التمعوا في تحديد الإيمان؟ لأننا نجيء منهم، لأن كل ما لنا من صحة العقيدة، من سلامة الإيمان يجيء من هؤلاء الذين قضوا حياتهم يدرسون الإنجيل ويوضحونه لنا.

ما نؤكد اليوم هو أن هناك أناسا ولدونا في المسيح يسوع. نحن نجيء من خط كبير، من سلكٍ ذهبيٍّ عظيمٍ سيرنا عليه. والأهم من ذلك أننا نسميهم آباء «قديسين». السرّ في الكنيسة هو أن من عاش بموجب الإنجيل، بحق الإنجيل، قادر على عقيدة سليمة، قادر أن يحفظ أرثوذكسية الإيمان. وأما من عاش سيرة ملطخة مدنسة فليس قادرا أن يحافظ على استقامة العقيدة لأن الأوساخ التي تدخل إلينا تلطخ الإيمان وتُسود العقل. الانسان اذا انحرف لا بد له أن يبرر انحرافاته. لا يقدر الانسان أن يعيش طويلا وبين إيمانه وسلوكه تناقض. لا بد له أن يظهر سلوكه أو أن يرمي إيمانه جانبا. الا إيمان الصحيح متلازم والسلوك الصحيح كما أن السلوك الدنيس متلازم والعقيدة المخنطة. إليكم مثلا على ذلك: اذا آمن الانسان بالثالوث القدوس ايمانا جيدا سليما، فهو يؤمن بأن الأب والابن والروح القدس واحد وفي جوهر واحد. كيف يعبر عن إيمانه هذا على صعيد التعامل بين الناس؟ اذا كان الأب والابن والروح القدس واحدا، فالبشرية ايضا واحدة، وهذا وذاك من الناس واحد. فمن يستبدّ بالناس ويسيطر عليهم ويُعذبهم ويسلب ممتلكاتهم لا يؤمن بأن البشر واحد، وبالتالي لا يؤمن بأن الله واحد. العقيدة الصالحة تنعكس في سلوك صحيح. فالإنسان المستبدّ في عائلته أو في عمله أو في المجتمع لا يؤمن حقا بالثالوث القدوس. إليكم مثلا آخر: قال لي أحدهم مرة: «أنا لم أزن في حياتي لأني لو فعلت لأسأت الى الكنيسة». سألته: كيف ذلك؟ قال: «ما دامت الكنيسة عروسا للمسيح، فعلاقتنا بالمسيح طاهرة، وعلاقتي أنا بكل امرأة طاهرة». هذا الرجل أدرك بعمق إيمانه أنه اذا انحرف في سلوكه فقد انكسر شيء في الكنيسة. علينا اذاً أن نحافظ على طهارة سلوكنا إن أردنا أن يكون إيماننا مستقيما وان يبقى مستقيما. ومن جهة اخرى علينا أن نحافظ على سلامة عقيدتنا إن أردنا ان تنعكس العقيدة في طهارة السلوك. أنا واثق كليا أن من كان منحرف العقيدة لا يمكن ان يكون سلوكه طاهرا بالكلية، فهو يسيء بشكل أو بآخر، ظاهرا أو خفيا، ويكون سلوكه ملطخا بالكذب، بالاستبداد... من وصل إلى قداسة الحياة لا بد له أن يصل إلى سلامة الإيمان. الأمران متلازمان. المطران جاورجيوس

Parish Council Election will take place on Sunday December 2nd.

There will be a parish council election meeting for the sole purpose of electing some members of the Parish Council for the upcoming term. Three are to be elected and one to be appointed by the Pastor.

Anyone interested in serving or nominating someone to serve on the Parish Council must be fully pledged and spiritually qualified. *Please submit your candidate's name to Father George and/or Maher Shami as soon as possible.*

In order to vote in the elections, members must be in spiritual and financial good standing with the church.

SAINT NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH BANQUET HALL

The Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church Banquet Hall, is the perfect venue for your next wedding reception, baptism, graduation, birthday, or conference. We offer a range of professional banquet and catering services for making any event a very personal experience for our community. Our vast and eclectic menu showcases a variety of banquet menu options and premium beverages. Our friendly and professionally trained staff will work with you to identify your needs, budget and develop the perfect event for you.

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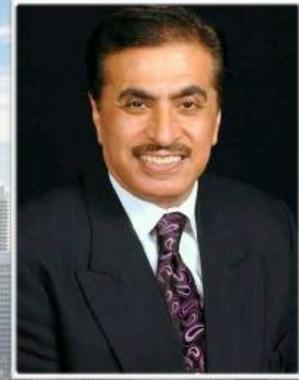
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