

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**

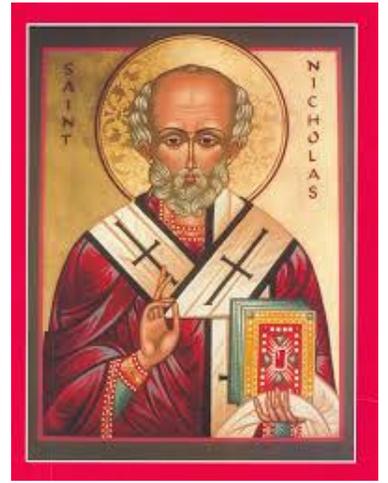
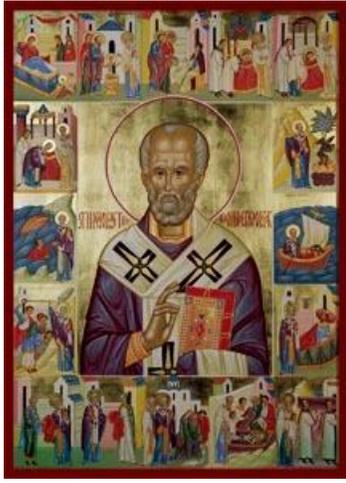
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. **Gregory Ofiesh**

Sub-Dn. **Michel Khoury**

Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Maher Munib Zabaneh**



Sunday, January 20, 2019

Memorial Service: Sunday January 20th: Six Month Memorial Service for the Handmaiden of God **Jaleela Salem (Qarfout) Dabit** offered by her family.

Sunday January 27th:

- ❖ Three Seven and Nine Day Memorial Service for the Servant of God **Abdallah Hanna Shami** offered by his family.
- ❖ One Year Memorial Service for the Servant of God **John Salih** offered by his wife **Beatrix**, and children **George, Gregory, and Atina**, and their families.
May their memory be eternal!

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 Corinthians. (4:6-15)

Brethren, it is the God Who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. While we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

الرسالة: ٢ كورنثوس ٤: ٦-١٥ يا إخوة، إنّ الله الذي أمر بأن يُشرق من ظلمة نور هو الذي أشرق في قلوبنا لإنارة معرفة مجد الله في وجه يسوع المسيح. ولنا هذا الكنز في أنية خزفية ليكون فضل القوة لله لا منّا متضايقين في كلّ شيء لكن غير منحصرين، ومتحيرين ولكن غير يائسين، ومضطهدين ولكن غير مخذولين، ومطروحين ولكن غير هالكين، حاملين في الجسد كلّ حين إماتة الربّ يسوع لتظهر حياة يسوع أيضًا في أجسادنا لأنّا نحن الأحياء نسلم دائمًا إلى الموت من أجل يسوع لتظهر حياة المسيح أيضًا في أجسادنا المائتة فالموت إذا يجري فينا والحياة فيكم. فإذ فينا روح الإيمان بعينه على حسب ما كتبت إني أمنت ولذلك تكلمت، فنحن أيضًا نؤمن ولذلك نتكلم عالمين أنّ الذي أقام الربّ يسوع سيقمنا نحن أيضًا بيسوع، فننتصب معكم لأنّ كلّ شيء هو من أجلكم لكي تتكاثر النعمة بشكر الأكثرين فتزداد لمجد الله.

THE GOSPEL: St. Luke. (17:12-19)

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus said, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

الإنجيل: لوقا ١٧: ١٢-١٩

في ذلك الزمان فيما يسوع داخلٌ إلى قرية استقبله عشرة رجال بُرص ووقفوا من بعيد ورفعوا أصواتهم قائلين: يا يسوع المعلم ارحمنا. فلما رآهم قال لهم: امضوا وأروا الكهنة أنفسكم. وفيما هم منطلقون طهروا. وإنَّ واحدًا منهم لما رأى أنه قد برئ، رجع يمجّد الله بصوت عظيم، وخرّ على وجهه عند قدميه شاكرًا له، وكان سامريًّا. فأجاب يسوع وقال: أليس العشرة قد طهروا فأين التسعة؟ ألم يوجد من يرجع ليمجّد الله إلا هذا الأجنبي؟ وقال له: قم وامض، إيمانك قد خلّصك.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS:

- ❖ **BIG BEAR RETREAT: January 19th – 21st**. Registration deadline January 14th. Meet and hangout with Orthodox Christian Young Adults from all over North America in Big Bear Lake, CA at the 2019 Young Adult Winter Retreat – Hosted by the Young Adult Ministry within the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West.
- ❖ **ANNUAL GENERAL PARISH MEETING: Sunday January 20th**. **The main item on the agenda is to discuss and approve a budget for 2019.** In order to have the right to vote, you have to be spiritually qualified, a member in good standing, and dues for 2018 should be paid.
- ❖ **LADIES AUXILIARY MEETING: Wednesday January 23rd** at 6:30 PM at St. Nicholas Church. It will be a small potluck dinner so please bring a dish with you if you can. See you there!
- ❖ **ANNUAL VALENTINE PARTY: Saturday February 9th**. Donation: \$100. Includes: Premium Dinner, Open Bar and Mezza. Featuring famous Palestinian singer: **Elias Glyanos**. Doors @ 7:30 PM. Please call to reserve your seats.
- ❖ **CAMP THREE HOLY YOUTHS: June 16-21st**. campthy.com

Altar Candle Offering:

- ❖ Offered by **Nadim, Janan, Jim, Ivette, Jennifer, Brandon and Matthew Howell, Jane and Oscar Moran** for the good health of **Basma Howell** on the occasion of her birthday January 18th. God bless and many years!
- ❖ Offered by **Hayat Shuhaiber** for the good health and speedy recovery of **Fayeq Mechail Khouri**. God bless and many years!

Congratulations:

- ❖ And best wishes to **Hanna and Claudia Azar**, the **Rantisi and Azar families** for baby boy and bundle of joy **George Azar**. God bless and many years!

Coffee Hour:

- ❖ Offered by **Salameh, Nina and Mitri Azar** and family for their good health and in loving memory of mom **Olga** and brother **Salim**. God bless and may their memory be eternal!

حالتنا مع الرب أننا معذبون وان الرب دائما يشفي. ليس لنا أن نتساءل لماذا نحن في الآلام، لماذا وُجدنا في الآلام. الوحي الإلهي لا يجيب عن هذا السؤال، لا يقول لأي سبب نحن مطروحون في الأوجاع، في أوجاع الجسد، في أوجاع الروح، في أوجاع الضمير. يكتفي الكتاب الإلهي في أن يلاحظ ذلك، وينطلق منه ليكشف لنا كيف نستطيع أن نخرج من هذه الآلام أو كيف نقدر أن نحتملها ونحوّلها إلى طاقة إبداع وتقرب من الله فنجعلها سلما نرتقي بها إلى السماء.

عندنا في الكتاب وعود بالشفاء وبالخلاص من الخطيئة. وعندنا وعد بالفرح وكشف للحياة الأبدية التي تأتي عندما نقبل سر الله ونطيعه في كل ما ندوقه من مصائب الدنيا، في الروح كان أم في الجسد. عندما نكون في حال من هذه الأحوال، في عذاب كهذا الذي وقع فيه الرجال العشرة البرص الذين يذكرهم لنا إنجيل اليوم، لسان حالنا مع السيد ان نقول: "يا رب ارحمني".

نلاحظ هنا ان الرجال استرحموا يسوع، وهذا أشمل من قضية الشفاء. عندما نطلب الشفاء، أكثرنا يطلب شفاء الجسد، وهذا صالح. الألم الجسدي يُلقينا في ما هو مبهم، وكأننا تجاهه في خلوة قمة عالية حيث صفاء الهواء يجعل التنفس صعبا ومضنيا. في الضعف الجسدي العَضَلِي تسقط كل تساؤلاتنا. كل ما ادخرناه من معرفة وفهم يزول ويفنى، يصبح لا شيء. نعلق هكذا في فراغ وعجز وفقر. ندهم فجأة بتفاهة كل ما نتعرقل به من سعي ومأرب. السقم والمرض يمحوان كل ما هو سطحيّ فينا. نُنقى داخلنا اذ نُعمد بدموع الألم. والسيد دائما يفتقدنا هناك فيما تجفّ أحشاؤنا في داخلنا فنعطش حقا إلى ماء حيّ ونلتئمسه في ما نعرف من عمق وجدية. يأتي السيد ويُلزمننا في وحدتنا. يقف من بعيد. يمرّ بنا كما يذكر لنا النص الإنجيلي. لا يفرض نفسه بل ينتظرننا. يخاطبنا بلغتنا نحن. فإن قبلنا الحوار، إن تعلّمنا كيف نتنفّض ونقول: "ارحمني"، حتى ولو بدا لنا غريبا، حتى إن لم نكن نعرف اسمه، يدخل هو في حوار معنا ويزيل بحضرته حشرة أهواننا، يطفئ لهيب سهامها ويحوّل ضجيج أفكارنا إلى ينبوع يفيض فينا فننتعش، يرفع عنا كل ضيق ونبقى للمسيح.

ما هو موقفنا في المصاب بعد أن نتع في الشر، بعد أن تجتاح الظلمات نفوسنا؟ أية صلاة نصلي؟ هل نحن واثقون بأن الله نفسه ينحدر إلينا اذا صلينا؟ هل نعرف أن الله يريد أن نخدمه، ان ندخل معه في حوار؟

الله قادر بالطبع أن يستجيب في كل حين، وهو مُستجيب بالفعل اذا سألنا واذا لم نسأل لأنه يعلم حاجتنا. ومع ذلك فالرب يفضّل ان نُكلّمه لكي نتدرب على صداقته. انه يطلب منا هذه الدالة، دالة البنين على أبيهم. وهذا ما نطلبه في القداس الإلهي قبل أن نتلو الصلاة الربية اذ نقول: "وأهلنا ايها السيد أن نجسر بدالة لندعوك أبا".

الله يريد ان يختلط بنا، ان يعاشرنا لكي نعرف أننا ارتفعنا إلى مصف الألوهة ولكي ندرك أن الله تنازل إلى مصاف البشر. واذا جاء الله إلى نفوسنا كما هي، كما نعهدها، في ضعفها، في هوانها، في قذارتها، اذا جاء الله إلى هذه النفوس فهو شافيها. تجربة الألم القصوى هي أن نتعلّق بألمنا، ان نُغلق النوافذ بالكأية على أنفسنا فنختنق داخلنا. قلوبنا تذبذب، عقولنا تسكت، ضمائرنا تتسكع فتموت روحيا. الانسان لا يختنق فقط من رثيته، يختنق إن رفض ان يفتح النوافذ متى أحسّ بالاختناق، لأنه إن فتح نوافذ القلب إلى السماء فالرب يأتي إليه ويحاوره والحوار تنفس وانتعاش.

الصلاة تنفّس. اذا ما كنا متأكدين من هذا الأمر، نستطيع ان نتغلب على جميع تجارب الدنيا لأن أرواحنا تكون مليئة من النعمة. المطران جاورجيوس

Metropolitan Anthony: On Miracles

Time and again we read of miracles in the Gospel and in the Old Testament and indeed, we observe them in the life of the Church through the centuries; miracles of healing, miracles of the renewal of a human life by the power of God. And at times people - we all - ask ourselves, What is a miracle? Is it a moment when God overpowers His own creation, breaks its own laws, destroys something which He has willed Himself? That would be an act of magic, an act of overpowering whatever is unwilling to obey, of overpowering what is weak in comparison to Him Who is strong. A miracle is something completely different, a miracle is a moment when harmony destroyed by human sin is restored. It may be a moment, it may be the beginning of a whole life: a harmony between God and man, a harmony between the created world and its Creator. It is a restoration of what should always be; not a miracle in the sense of something unheard of, unnatural, perhaps contrary to the nature of things, but rather a moment when God enters into His creation and is received. And because He is received, He can act freely.

We have an example of such a miracle in the story of the marriage at Cana of Galilee, when the Mother of God turned to Christ and said to Him at this poor, peasant feast, "They have no wine". Their hearts were still hungry for human happiness, for human joy; and yet, the material support of

such joy had gone. And Christ says to Her, "What have I to do with Thee, why are you asking Me this question?" And She does not answer Him directly; She turns to the servants and says, "Whatever He may say to you - do it". She offers Him a perfect act of faith; unreservedly She trusts His wisdom, His love and His Divinity. And at that moment, because a door has been opened by the faith of one person who has drawn into this faith all those who will do what they are told, the Kingdom of God is established, a new dimension of eternity, of infinite depth enters into the world and what is otherwise impossible becomes reality.

And here we are confronted with several things which are necessary for this harmony to be re-established. On the one hand, - a need; a need which is real; it may not be great, but it must be true; and joy and sorrow, illness and un-happiness are equally in need of being absorbed into something greater than the earth, something as vast and deep as the Divine Love and the Divine Harmony. And then there is the Divine compassion that we have heard of so many times, and the word is repeated here again in today's Gospel - the feeding of the five thousand: Christ had compassion, compassion which means that He looked at these people who were in need, who could do nothing to alleviate it, and He felt a pain in His Divine Heart, that these people, whose life should be fulfilment, abundance, a glorious joy - that these people should be in obvious need. This time it was hunger, another time it is illness, another time it is sin, another time it is death - it may be anything. But God's love may be either joy, exulting, glorious joy or crucified, sacrificial pain. And when all this meets then a mysterious harmony is established between the Divine sorrow and the human need, between human helplessness and the power of God, the love of God that expresses itself in all ways, great and small.

Let us therefore learn to be pure enough in heart, pure enough in mind to be able to turn to God with our need without hiding our face; or if we feel unworthy of coming up to Him, let us kneel at His feet and say, Lord - I am unworthy! Unworthy to be in Thy presence, unworthy of being loved, unworthy of Thy compassion, and yet I believe in Thy love more than I am sure of my unworthiness, and I come, because Thou art love and victory; because I have evidence in the life and in the death of Thine Only Begotten Son of what I mean to Thee: the life, the passion, the death, the descent into hell, the horror of it, to save me.

Let us learn this creative helplessness that consists in surrendering all hope of human victory for the sake of the certainty that God can do what we cannot. Let us be helpless in the sense of being transparent, and supple, and listening with all our being, and presenting our need to God - our need of eternal life, but also our needs that are human and frail: the need of support, the need of consolation, the need for mercy. And the response of God will always be the same: If you can believe, however little - everything is possible.

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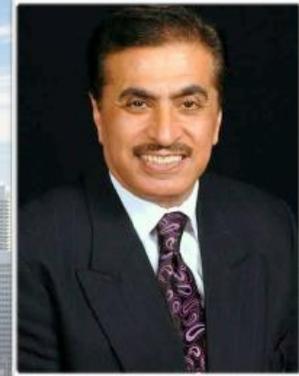
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