

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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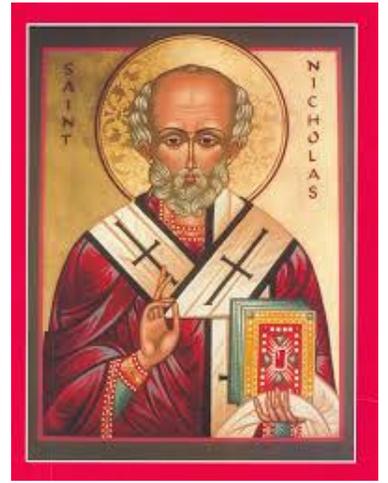
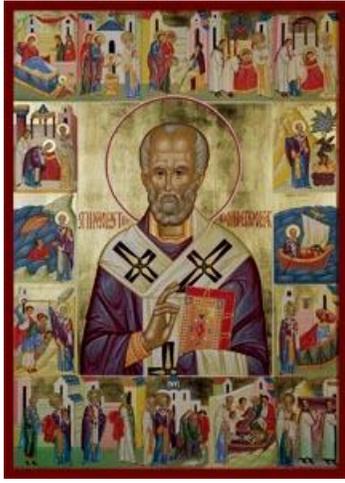
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Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Maher Munib Zabaneh (650) 219-3779**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Ramzi Srouji**



Sunday, December 15, 2019

Sunday of the Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ

أحد الأجداد القديسين



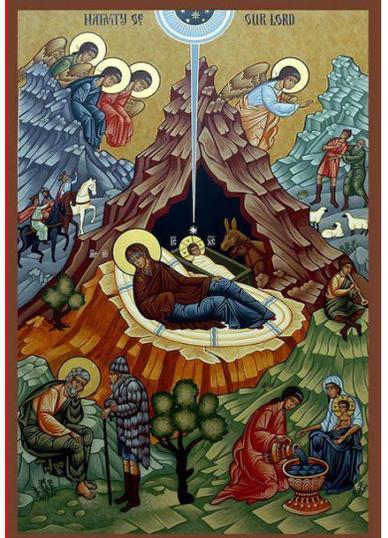
Memorial Service: Three, Nine, & Forty-Day Memorial Service for the Servant of God, **Shawqi Hanna Khalaf** offered by his family. May his memory be eternal!

NATIVITY FAST: November 15th - December 24th We would like to wish you a happy Advent season!

Nativity Fast (Advent) is the period preceding the Christmas season in which we abstain from meat and dairy products. Eating fish is allowed except Wednesdays and Fridays, and we can eat all the regular meals like breakfasts, lunches, and dinners. The purpose of this fast is seeking the spirituality and the preparation for the feast of our Lord on December 25th.

بدء صوم الميلاد: أبناء الرعية الأحباء: كل عام وأنتم بألف خير.

في كنيستنا الأرثوذكسية المقدسة، يبدأ صوم الميلاد هذا العام الجمعة الواقع فيه ١٥ تشرين الثاني، وسيستمر حتى ٢٤ كانون الأول. وهذا الصوم لا يوجد فيه "صوم انقطاعي". أي لا يوجد صوم للساعة ١٢:٠٠، فهو صوم خفيف. أي نستطيع أن نتناول وجبة افطار صباحا، من مواد صيامية. وفي ٢٥ كانون الأول سنحتفل بعيد "الميلاد" الذي فيه أتى ابن الله إلى العالم ليدلنا على طريق الخلاص، الطريق إلى الله الأب. صوم مبارك



THE EPISTLE: 2 St. Paul to St. Timothy. (1:8-18)

Timothy, my son, do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, and therefore I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know Whom I have believed, and I am sure that He is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit Who dwells within us. You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, and among them Phygelos and Hermogenes. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphoros, for he often refreshed me; he was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me eagerly and found me. May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

الرسالة: 2 تيموثاوس 1: 8-18

يا ولدي تيموثاوس، لا تَحْجَلْ بِشَهَادَةِ رَبَّنَا، وَلَا بِي أَنَا أُسِيرُهُ، بَلْ اشْتَرِكْ فِي احْتِمَالِ الْمَشَقَّاتِ لِأَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِحَسَبِ قُوَّةِ اللَّهِ، الَّذِي خَلَصَنَا وَدَعَانَا دَعْوَةً مُقَدَّسَةً، لَا بِمُقْتَضَى أَعْمَالِنَا، بَلْ بِمُقْتَضَى الْقَصْدِ وَالنَّعْمَةِ الَّتِي أُعْطِيتَ لَنَا فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ قَبْلَ الْأَزْمِنَةِ الْأَرْزَلِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَظْهَرْتَ الْآنَ بِظُهُورِ مُخْلِصِنَا يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ، الَّذِي أَبْطَلَ الْمَوْتَ وَأَنَارَ الْحَيَاةَ وَالْخُلُودَ بِوَاسِطَةِ الْإِنْجِيلِ. الَّذِي جَعَلْتَ أَنَا لَهُ كَارِزًا وَرَسُولًا وَمُعَلِّمًا لِلْأَمَمِ. لِهَذَا السَّبَبِ أَحْتَمِلُ هَذِهِ الْأُمُورَ أَيْضًا. لَكِنِّي لَسْتُ أَحْجَلُ، لِأَنَّي عَالِمٌ بِمَنْ آمَنْتَ، وَمُوقِنٌ أَنَّهُ قَادِرٌ أَنْ يَحْفَظَ وَدِيْعَتِي إِلَى ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ. تَمَسِّكْ بِصُورَةِ الْكَلَامِ الصَّحِيحِ الَّذِي سَمِعْتَهُ مِنِّي، فِي الْإِيمَانِ وَالْمَحَبَّةِ الَّتِي فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. إِحْفَظِ الْوَدِيعَةَ الصَّالِحَةَ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ السَّاكِنِ فِيْنَا. أَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ هَذَا أَنَّ جَمِيعَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَسْيَا ارْتَدُّوا عَنِّي، الَّذِينَ مِنْهُمْ فِيَجَلْسُ وَهَرْمُوجَانِسُ. لِيُعْطِ الرَّبُّ رَحْمَةً لِنَيْتِ أَنْيْسِيفُورُسَ، لِأَنَّهُ مَرَارًا كَثِيرَةً أَرَاخُنِي وَلَمْ يَحْجَلْ بِسِلْسِلَتِي، بَلْ لَمَّا كَانَ فِي رُومِيَّةَ، طَلَبَنِي بِأَوْفَرِ اجْتِهَادٍ فَوَجَدَنِي. لِيُعْطِهِ الرَّبُّ أَنْ يَجِدَ رَحْمَةً مِنَ الرَّبِّ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ. وَكُلُّ مَا كَانَ يَخْدِمُ فِي أفسُسَ أَنْتَ تَعْرِفُهُ جَيِّدًا.

THE GOSPEL: St. Luke. (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: “A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for all is now ready.’ But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

الإنجيل: لوقا 14: 16-24

قال الرب هذا المثل: إنسان صنع عشاء عظيمًا ودعا كثيرين، فأرسل عبده في ساعة العشاء يقول للمدعوين: تعالوا فإن كل شيء قد أُعدَّ. فطفق كلهم، واحد فواحد، يستعفون. فقال له الأول: قد اشتريت حقلاً ولا بد لي من أن أخرج وأنظره، فأسألك أن تُعفيني. وقال الآخر: قد اشتريت خمسة فدادين بقر وأنا ماض لأجرها، فأسألك أن تُعفيني. وقال الآخر: قد تزوجت بامرأة، فلذلك لا أستطيع أن أجيء. فأتى العبد وأخبر سيده بذلك. فحينئذ غضب رب البيت وقال لعبده: اخرج سريعاً إلى شوارع المدينة وأزقتها، وأدخل المساكين والجذع والعميان والعرج إلى ههنا. فقال العبد: يا سيدي قد قضي ما أمرت به، ويبقى أيضاً محل. فقال السيد للعبد: اخرج إلى الطرق والأسيجة واضطررهم إلى الدخول حتى يمتلئ بيتي. فإني أقول لكم إنه لا يدوق عشاءي أحد من أولئك الرجال المدعوين، لأن المدعوين كثيرين والمختارين قليلين.

HOLIDAY SEASON:

As we gather with our families this Advent/Holiday Season to thank God for the many blessings He has bestowed on us, we also need to be mindful of the needs of others. If you know of anyone in need, please contact Father George Baalbaki at revbaalbaki@yahoo.com or 586 214 4428.

STEWARDSHIP 2020:

As we reflect on the past year, we pause to give thanks for the many blessings that have been bestowed on us and our church community. If you have not paid your pledge in full for this year, we pray that you will do so today before the end of the year. We are pleased to tell you that you can now pay your pledge online. Go to our website <https://www.stnicholas-sf.com/>, **Click here to Donate Online.** Many of us today pay most of our bills online, so now you can pay your church pledge as well. Going forward into next year, you can decide how you want to make your payment(s). Check it out. Now you can pay using your envelope, by mail and online. Thank you for your support.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS:

- ❖ **TOYS FOR TOTS: Saturday December 14th**, Teen SOYO officers and members will be purchasing toys to donate to the Toys for Tots drive. Come and join us at Target in Foster City at 2 PM!
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY: Friday December 20th** featuring the musically talented: **BISHARA SAKHNINI**. Open bar, Elegant Mezza Dinner. Donation: \$95 Please call in advance to reserve seats.
- ❖ **YOUNG ADULT POTLUCK/WHITE ELEPHANT CHRISTMAS PARTY: Saturday December 21st**. Barebottle Brewery: 1525 Cortland Ave, SF 94110. Time: 6PM-9PM. White Elephant: \$25 Max.
- ❖ **SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PLAY: Sunday December 22nd**. Our Sunday School students will be performing our annual Christmas play called "Can you believe it?" immediately after Divine Liturgy! We would love to see everyone come and have ALL students participate in this wonderful Holiday event. Delicious lunch offered after the play. For questions/concerns please contact estherbatarse@gmail.com

RECENT EVENT PHOTOS:

Please like, interact, and share our photos on facebook of our recent events. Thank you!

1. **St. Nicholas TEEN SOYO/YAM 2nd Annual Food Drive:**

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2. **St. Nicholas 6th Annual Family Night:**

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3. **THE Feast of SAINT NICHOLAS 2019:**

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CONGRATULATIONS:

- ❖ And best wishes to the newly elected/appointed members of the Parish Council: **Salim Qaru, Mourice Kari, George Jada, Suhair Hanhan, and Azar Azar.**
- ❖ We would also like to thank those who fulfilled their duties and responsibilities to their church by serving on our council. We wish you and your families the best and pray that you will continue to help in the future.

NATIVITY SERVICE (Christmas Eve):

- ❖ We will have Matins service starting at 6:15 PM and Divine Liturgy at 7:00PM on Tuesday December 24th (Christmas Eve). Please join us for this wonderful service.

Metropolitan Anthony: BRIDAL FEAST

How often have we heard today's a parable about those people who were called to the Bridal Feast of the King, and who refused to come. The one who had acquired a plot of land; he thought he was in possession of it; in reality, he was so attached to it that he could not detach himself from it: he was a prisoner of what he thought he possessed. And so it is with whatever we imagine we possess; it is enough for us to have the smallest thing in our hand - and this hand is alienated to us; we cannot use it anymore, we cannot use our arm, our whole body is conditioned by what we possess, or imagine we possess: we are held a prisoner by it. Others refused to come because they had bought five pairs of oxen: they had to try them, they had a task to fulfill, they had work to do, they had perhaps what they believed to be a mission in life, and therefore they had no time for anything except that that was their personal concern.

And the last refused to come because his heart was full of his own joy; having married, how could he be concerned with anyone else's marriage? He was full of his own joy - how could he participate in anyone else's joy? And so, they all turned away from the call.

Doesn't it apply very directly to us? Each of us possesses something that he deems so important that he is prepared to turn away from God - yes, from God: there is no time for prayer, there is no time for worship. At the same time we turn away from other people who need us because we are busy with our own business? And how often happens that we are full of joy or of sorrow - but they are our own, we hug them to our heart, we have no time for anyone else's sorrow or anyone else's joy.

But then, what should we do? You hear every Sunday in the Liturgy words that say, 'Let us lay aside all the cares of this life'; does it mean that we must turn away from the earth on which we live, from the tasks which are ours, from the joys and true sorrows that come our way? No!

But there is an answer to it perhaps in the lines that precede the reading from the Epistle which we heard today, where we are told: Are you risen with Christ? Are you where He is? Is your life hid in God with Christ? What does it really mean to us? It means that if we are dead with the death of Christ to everything which is destructive of love, destructive of compassion, which is self-centeredness, which is self-love, which leaves no space for anyone but ourselves - if we are dead to all this, and if we have accepted life on Christ's terms, ready to live for others, live for God, live for the joy and life of those who surround us - then we are risen with Christ, and our life is indeed hid with Christ in God, it is at the very depth of God, at the very depth of divine love! And then we can turn to the earth; then, instead of possessing we can serve, instead of overpowering we can try to bring this earth of ours, in an act of love, in an act of reverence to be free, to be God's earth, to be able to bring fruit, not as it does being raped, being violently possessed by us, but giving us its fruit in an act of responsive love. And the same applies to our tasks; we are called to serve, we are called to make of all our life an act of concern, of love, of service - then, all that we do becomes an act of God, then it becomes meaningful and it does not separate us from God.

And if joy has come into our heart, it is a gift of God; if sorrow has come into our heart, we can carry it to God, for it to be integrated in the mystery of salvation!

Let us reflect on this! Let us truly lay aside all the cares of this life in the sense that let us not be prisoners, but free: Christ has come to set us free. And then the earth, and our labour, and our joys, and our sorrows and everyone on earth will become part of the Kingdom of God. Then indeed, our life will be hid with Christ in God, but a God Who have chosen so to love the world as to be incarnate, to become man among men, to take upon Himself all the human destiny, createdness, life in a fallen world, the consequences of human sin, and even the loss of God which is what kills. And, having accepted it all in an act of saving and redeeming love, He has risen, and anyone can enter into eternal life, the life of the resurrection by uniting himself or herself to Christ.

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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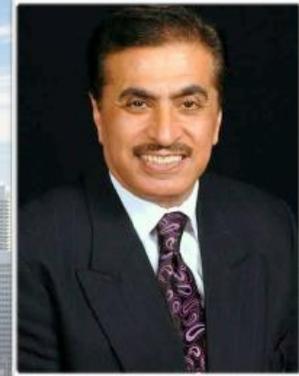
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