

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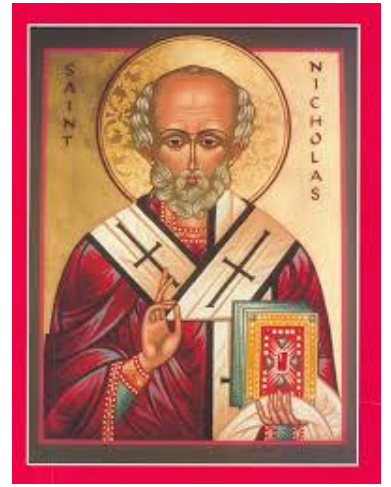
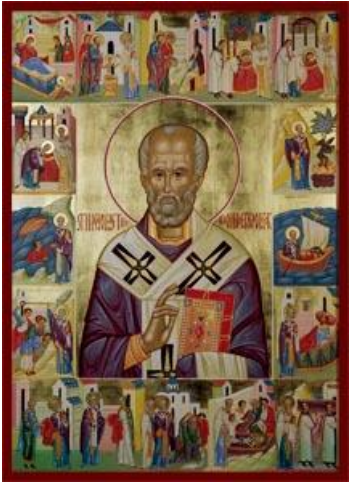
Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. **Gregory Ofiesh**

Sub-Dn. **Michel Khoury**

Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Ramzi Srouji**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Salim Qaru**



Sunday, February 23, 2020

Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meat Fare)

أحد مرفع اللحم (الدينونة)

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. (8:8-9:2)

Brethren, food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care, lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you—a man of knowledge—at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall. Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

الرسالة: ١ كورنثوس ٨ : ٨-١٣ ، ٩ : ١-٢

يا إخوة إن الطعام لا يُقربنا إلى الله، لأننا إن أكلنا لا نزيد وإن لم نأكل لا ننقص. ولكن انظروا ألا يكون سلطانكم هذا معثرة للضعفاء، لأنه إن رآك أحد، يا من له العلم، متكئا في بيت الأوثان، أفلا يتقوى ضميره وهو ضعيف على أكل ذبائح الأوثان، فيهلك بسبب علمك الأخ الضعيف الذي مات المسيح لأجله. وهكذا إذ تُخطئون إلى الإخوة وتجرحون ضمائرهم وهي ضعيفة إنما تُخطئون إلى المسيح. فلذلك إن كان الطعام يُشكك أخي فلا أكل لحمًا إلى الأبد لنلأ أشكك أخي. ألسنتُ أنا رسولًا؟ ألسنتُ أنا حرًا؟ أما رأيت يسوع المسيح ربنا؟ ألسنتم أنتم عملي في الرب؟ وإن لم أكن رسولًا إلى آخرين فإنِّي رسول إليكم، لأن خاتم رسالتي هو أنتم في الرب.

THE GOSPEL: St. Matthew. (25:31-46)

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and He will place the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at His right hand,

‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see Thee hungry and feed Thee, or thirsty and give Thee drink? And when did we see Thee a stranger and welcome Thee, or naked and clothe Thee? And when did we see Thee sick or in prison and visit Thee?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Then He will say to those at his left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave Me no food, I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome Me, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see Thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?’ Then He will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to Me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

الإنجيل: متى ٢٥: ٣١-٤٦

قال الرب: متى جاء ابن البشر في مجده وجميع الملائكة القديسين معه، فحينئذ يجلس على عرش مجده، وتُجمع إليه كل الأمم، فيميز بعضهم من بعض كما يميز الراعي الخراف من الجداء، ويُقيم الخراف عن يمينه والجداء عن يساره. حينئذ يقول الملك للذين عن يمينه: تعالوا يا مباركي أبي رثوا الملك المُعد لكم منذ إنشاء العالم لأنني جُعتُ فأطعمتموني وعطشتم فسقيتموني وكنتم غريباً فأوَيْتموني وعرياناً فكسوتموني ومريضاً فعدتُموني ومحبوساً فأتيتم إليّ. حينئذ يجيبه الصديقون قائلين: يا رب متى رأيناك جائعاً فأطعمناك أو عطشاناً فسقيناك، ومتى رأيناك غريباً فأويناك أو عرياناً فكسوناك، ومتى رأيناك مريضاً أو محبوساً فأتينا إليك؟ فيجيب الملك ويقول لهم: الحق أقول لكم بما أنكم فعلتم ذلك بأحد إخوتي هؤلاء الصغار فبي فعلتموه. حينئذ يقول أيضاً للذين عن يساره: اذهبوا عني يا ملاعين إلى النار الأبدية المُعدة لإبليس وملائكته، لأنني جُعتُ فلم تُطعموني وعطشتم فلم تسقوني وكنتم غريباً فلم تأوونوني وعرياناً فلم تكسوني ومريضاً ومحبوساً فلم تزوروني. حينئذ يجيبونه هم أيضاً قائلين: يا رب متى رأيناك جائعاً أو عطشاناً أو غريباً أو عرياناً أو مريضاً أو محبوساً ولم نخدمك؟ حينئذ يجيبهم قائلًا: الحق أقول لكم بما أنكم لم تفعلوا ذلك بأحد هؤلاء الصغار فبي لم تفعلوه. فيذهب هؤلاء إلى العذاب الأبدي، والصديقون إلى الحياة الأبدية.

Saturday of the Dead: February 22 is Saturday of the Dead. On Sunday February 23, a General memorial Service “For All Those Who Have Fallen Asleep Since The Ages” will take place. We will remember in particular all our departed ones who have fallen asleep recently.

سبت الأموات هو يوم السبت 22 شباط : سنقيم يوم الأحد 23 شباط تذكارا عاما لجميع الراقدين منذ الدهر من ابائنا واخوتنا على رجاء القيامة والحياة الابدية. نذكر بشكل خاص أحبائنا الذين سبقونا الى الحياة الأبدية جميع الذين سبق انتقالهم مؤخرا

ALTAR CANDLE OFFERING:

❖ Offered by **Nadia Wehab and family** in loving memory of **Bishara Wehab, Dawud Wehab, Milad Wehab, Khalil & Malakeh Habash, and David Habash.**

May their memory be eternal!

❖ Offered by **Sergio & Hilda Herrera** for the good health of the **Herrera & Dudum** families.
God bless and many years!

MARCH IS LADIES' MONTH

In keeping with the tradition in our Archdiocese, ladies will show their involvement in the life of the church in the most visible way during the month of March.

They will usher, collect trays, read the Epistle and deliver sermonette...

Our Ladies Auxiliary usually prepares a Lenten Luncheon on Sundays. This year they are asking for your help by donating or preparing food.

2020 BIBLE BOWL: The upcoming *68th Parish Life Conference* will take place on 1st - 5th July 2020 hosted by our Parish. We are seeking members to join the Bible Bowl Team Divisions; Juniors (ages: 13-15), Seniors (ages:16-19) and Adults (20 and older). For those who would like to participate in the upcoming Bible Bowl and be part of the St. Nicholas Bible Bowl teams, please see Father George or Tariq Rantisi. 2020 Bible Bowl Topic: The Gospel of St. John. For more information please visit, 68TH ANNUAL PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE, WEBSITE <https://antiochianevents.com/la>

SAVE THE DATE:

- ❖ **MEN'S FELLOWSHIP MEETING:** Tuesday February 25th. Special Guest Speaker: Lawyer Issa Michael. He will cover insurance: managing risk and exposure for personal and business coverage. Dinner: Ribeye steak, baked potato, salad and spirits. Doors: 7pm, Dinner 7:30pm and the speaker after with a Q&A period. All men of the church are welcome to join the meeting! Call Jeres Azar if you're interested in attending: 415 710 0456.
- ❖ **TEEN SOYO CAR WASH:** Saturday February 29th. Come support our Teen Soyo. We will be handwashing cars!
- ❖ **TEEN SOYO SANTA CRUZ RETREAT:** Saturday March 21st. Teen Soyo Deanery retreat Ages 13-19 in Santa Cruz.
- ❖ **ST. NICHOLAS CRAB FEED FAMILY NIGHT:** Wednesday March 25th at 7:30 PM. All you can eat crab! Chicken and pasta for non-crab eaters. Please RSVP by February 25th by calling the church office at (415) 648-5200. Donation: Adults : \$50 Children (under 12 years old): \$25
- ❖ **PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE 2020:** We are pleased to announce that we will be hosting the PLC this year. July 1-5th at Hyatt Burlingame. We need your help with many different things. More info at: www.laplc.org

Meat Fare Sunday Luncheon

Join us this Sunday. Meat Fare Luncheon offered by:
Janet Baqleh, Sue Rantisi, and Basma Tannous. Thank you for all the hard work!

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Welcome to the new 2020 Sunday School Year! We are excited to welcome everyone back and have new students join! In addition we have developed an online registration form for parents to sign up their children. It is extremely necessary that each individual student has a form submitted. If you have any questions feel free to contact the director at

estherbatarse@gmail.com

Thank you! Link to registration. <https://form.jotform.com/200137043640037>

ONLINE GIVING:

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. Thank you for your support.

2020 Great Lent

Lent Period: March 2nd – April 19th

Strict Fast: NO Dairy, Meat, Cheese, Eggs, and Fish

Day	Date	Celebration
Sunday	February 23	Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday)
Sunday	March 1	Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare Sunday)
Monday	March 2	FIRST DAY OF GREAT LENT
Sunday	March 8	Sunday of Orthodoxy
Sunday	March 22	Sunday of the Holy Cross
Wednesday	March 25	Annunciation of the Theotokos (Fish Allowed)
Sunday	April 12	Palm Sunday (Fish Allowed)
Friday	April 17	Great and Holy Friday
Sunday	April 19	GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA

The Services program during the period of Great Lent 2020			برنامج الصلوات خلال فترة الصوم الأربعيني المقدس لعام ٢٠٢٠		
Wednesdays	Great Compline Service	7 pm	مساءً	خدمة النوم الكبرى " يا رب القوات "	الإربعاء
Fridays (Followed by Potluck)	Akathist Service	7 pm	٧ مساءً	خدمة مديح والدة الاله	الجمعة
Sundays	The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great	11 am	١١ صباحاً	القداس الإلهي للقديس باسيليوس الكبير	الأحد

Metropolitan Anthony: SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT

Today, on our preparation journey towards Lent, we have come to an ultimate stage: we are confronted with judgment. If we pay attention to it, next week our spiritual destiny will be in our own hands, because next week is the day of Forgiveness.

The link between these two days is too obvious. If we only could become aware that all and each of us stand before the judgment of God and the judgment of men, if we could remember and realize with depth, wholeheartedly, in earnest that we are, all of us, indebted to each other, all responsible to each other for some of the pain and the heaviness of life, then we would find it easy, when we are asked to forgive, not only to forgive, but, in response to this request, to ask for forgiveness ourselves.

It is not only by what we do, not only in a way by what we leave undone, it is by this extraordinary lack of awareness, of our responsibility, of all we could be to others, and to do to others, that we do not fulfill our human vocation. We could, and we should, on all levels and for all men, and beyond men for the whole world which is ours, be a blessing and a revelation of things great, of things so great, so deep that people, we first of all, could realise that we are on the scale of God Himself, that our vocation is not only to be morally good, but to be as great as God. A mystic of Germany said in one of his poems 'I am as great as God, God is as small as I.'

If we only could remember this, and this is why the judgment is not only a moment when we are confronted with a danger of condemnation; there is in the very notion of judgment something great and inspiring. We are not going to be judged according to human standards of behavior or decency. We are going to be judged according to standards which are beyond human ordinary life. We are going to be judged on the scale of God, and the scale of God is love: not love felt, not an emotional love, but love lived and accomplished. The fact that we are going to be judged, that indeed we are being judged all the time, above our means, beyond all our smallness must, should reveal to us our potential greatness. And the parable which we have read today can be seen in those very terms: men are judged by Christ, in His parable, on humanity. Have these men been human or not? Have they known how to love in their hearts first, but also in action, in their very deeds because, as Saint John puts it, one who says that he loves God and does not love his neighbor actively, creatively is a liar. There is no love of God if it is not expressed in every detail of our relationship with men, with people and with each person.

And so, let us this week prepare ourselves for the final stage of our journey by asking ourselves in the face of this divine judgment, 'Am I human? Am I human within myself, in my behavior - not my general attitude, but my ways: are they human? Is my life an expression of a fine, a thoughtful, a perceptive, a creative, and at times a generous and a sacrificial love?' As the object of love is the test of this love, it must be my neighbor; to love God who asks for nothing is too easy.

And if in the course of this week we find where we belong, we find both our shortcomings and the greatness of our vocation; if we make our peace with those to whom we are indebted, then, when the time comes to forgive, when someone else will have made the same discovery, we will be able with joy to give peace and forgiveness out of a sense of responsibility and of the creative joy of repentance.

اعطوا المحبة

نقف في رهبة كبيرة أمام إنجيل اليوم وقد شاءت الكنيسة أن تُعدنا به للدخول في صيام مبارك نمارسه في محبة وطاعة، والناس سيقفون أمام المسيح، وسوف تسطع محبته كاملة لامعة ولكنها صداعة. سوف تكون محبة المسيح جذابة للذين أحبوا الفقر وأحبوا الإنسان، وسوف تكون كاسرة هدامة للذين لم يحبوا أخاهم الإنسان.

محبّة المسيح إذا انكشفت للخطاة، المتوغلين في خطاياهم، المحبّين لمعاصيهم، سوف تحرقهم وتُفنيهم لأنهم هم أرادوا أن يحرقوا أنفسهم بالمآثم التي أَلفوها والتي أرادوها معشّشة في نفوسهم، مسيطرة عليهم.

سوف نمثّل أمام وجهه الكريم، وسوف نمثّل مسحورين بجمال هذا الوجه إن سلطنا أنواره علينا منذ الآن، أي إن دنا أنفسنا الآن، وإن جعلناه هو الصديق المحبّ الحبيب، وإن كنا معه في إلفة ووُدّ، إذ ذاك يرفع عنا الدينونة ليضمنا إلى صدره الأبوي. ولكن إن أردنا هنا أن نتعبّد لأنفسنا وأن نحب ذواتنا على الفقراء، عندئذ نكون قد دنا أنفسنا. الله لا يدين ولكن الحقيقة تدين، الحقيقة سوف تظهر كاملة وسوف تُعرى ونشاهد أنفسنا إما عُشراء الله أو أعداء الله، ولذلك لنا منذ الآن أن ندخل في هذه المعاشرة الحلوة الطيبة حتى لا نكون معادين.

على ماذا ندان؟ ماذا سيكتشف منا عند ذلك؟ كلمة واحدة قالها يسوع: إن أحببتم المحتاجين تكونوا قد أحببتموني، وإن نسيتموهم أو لم تبصروهم تكونوا قد نسيتموني. ماذا نعمل الآن في الدنيا؟ شيئاً واحداً فتأكاً نفعله: المريض لا نراه، والسجين لا نراه، والفقير لا نراه...

لذلك سوف يحاكمنا المسيح لأننا لم نبصر، لأننا لم نرَ الفقراء حيث هم، لم نرَ المريض مرميا على سرير المرض، ولم نرَ الجاهل يفتك فيه الجهل، ولم نبصر الخاطئ، وبقينا مرتاحين. «ويل للمستريحين في صهيون وللمطمئنين» (عاموس ٦: ١). هكذا قال الأنبياء: كلّ فقير سوف يُطلب منّا، كل مريض وكل محتاج. فالناس في وحدة وهم بحاجة إلى الحب. كلهم محرومون محبة وحناناً. الإنسان الذي لا يرى الحنان من حوله يحيا في عزلة رهيبية. كل إنسان يعيش في عزلة، كل إنسان وحده.

المؤمن ليس فقط من يلتفت إلى الله، فإله ليس بحاجة إلينا. نصليّ ليس لأنه بحاجة، لكن لنربح نحن، لنستفيد من حوار نُقيمه معه. نريد الصلاة لكي يروّضنا الله على الحب. الله ليس بحاجة إلى الدعاء، نحن بحاجة إلى الدعاء.

ولكن، إن التفتنا إلى وجه الله، يردنا وجهه إلى وجوه الناس. فإله يريدنا أن نكون مع الناس، ويريدنا في الدرجة الأولى أن نجعل الإنسان الوحيد المعزول ألا يحسّ بعزلته. هذه خبرة لنا جميعاً. ليس من إنسان يُحبّ بقدر كاف، ولهذا أعطوا وتدققوا. أعطوا كل يوم ساعات من الحب للناس الذين من حولكم حتى لا يعيشوا محرومين. وعندئذ لن يدينكم الله بل يرفعكم أمام وجهه فوق كل شيء، ويضمكم إلى صدره.

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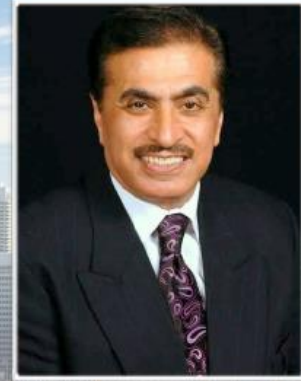
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