

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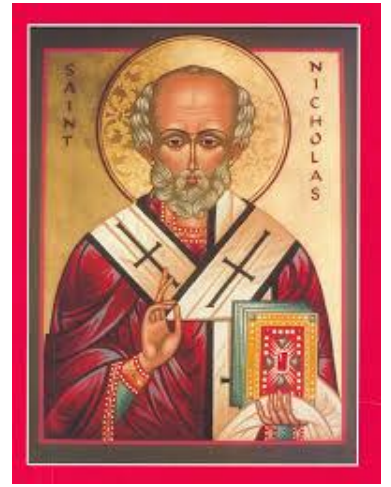
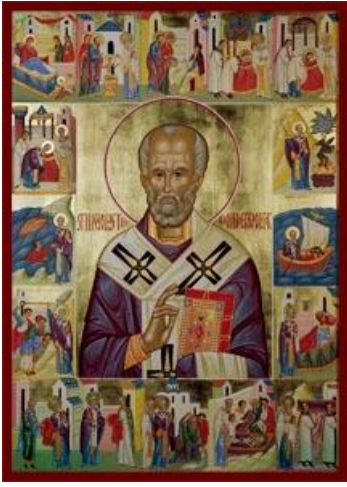
Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. **Gregory Ofiesh**

Sub-Dn. **Michel Khoury**

Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Ramzi Srouji**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Salim Qaru**



Sunday, March 29, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Great Lent

Commemoration of John Climacus, Author of "The Ladder"

أحد القديس يوحنا السلميّ

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Based on the ongoing situation regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus), all Church social events and gatherings are postponed until further notice. For now, only Friday and Sunday services are open. All liturgical services will be served with only clergy, servers, and chanters. No liturgical service can total more than ten persons. You can watch the livestream of the service on our social media.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stnicksf/>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vI2-qh23sfl>

We pray for the good health, well-being, and safety of everyone in these hard times. God bless!

THE EPISTLE: St. Paul to the Hebrews. (6:13-20)

Brethren, when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by one greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He interposed with an oath. So that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

الرسالة: عبرانيين ٦: ١٣-٢٠

يا إخوة، إنّ الله لما وعد إبراهيم، اذ لم يمكن أن يُقسم بما هو أعظم منه، أقسم بنفسه قائلاً: لأباركك بركة وأكثرتك تكثيراً. وذلك إذ تأتى نال الموعد. وإنّما الناس يُقسمون بما هو أعظم منهم، وتتقضي كلّ مشاجرة بينهم بالقسم للتثبيت. فلذلك لما شاء الله أن يزيد ورثة الموعد بياناً، لعدم تحوّل عزمه، توسّط بالقسم، حتّى نحصل بأمرين لا يتحوّلان ولا يمكن أن يُخلف الله فيهما، على تعزية قويّة نحن الذين التجأنا إلى التمسك بالرجاء الموضوع أمامنا، الذي هو لنا كمرساة للنفس أمينة راسخة تدخل إلى داخل الحجاب حيث دخل يسوع كسابق لنا، وقد صار على رتبة ملكيصادق رئيس كهنة إلى الأبد.

THE GOSPEL: St. Mark. (9:17-31)

At that time, a man came to Jesus, kneeling down and saying unto him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked Thy Disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And Jesus answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to Me." And they brought the boy to Him; and when the spirit saw Jesus, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if Thou canst do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when Jesus had entered the house, His Disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And Jesus said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And Jesus would not have anyone know it; for He was teaching His Disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and after He is killed, He will rise on the third day."

الإنجيل: مرقس ٩: ١٧-٣١

في ذلك الزمان دنا إلى يسوع إنسان وسجد له قائلاً: يا معلّم، قد أتيتك بابني به روح أبكم، وحيثما أخذه يصرعه فيزبد ويصرف بأسنانه ويبيس. وقد سألت تلاميذك أن يخرجوه فلم يقدرُوا. فأجابه قائلاً: أيها الجيل غير المؤمن، إلى متى أكون عندكم؟ حتى متى أحتملكم؟ هلّم به إليّ. فأتوه به. فلما رآه للوقت صرعه الروح فسقط على الأرض يتمرّغ ويزبد. فسأل أباه: منذ كم من الزمان أصابه هذا؟ فقال: منذ صباه، وكثيراً ما ألقاه في النار وفي المياه ليهلكه. ولكن إن استطعت شيئاً فتحنّ علينا وأغننا. فقال له يسوع: إن استطعت أن تؤمن فكلّ شيء مستطاع للمؤمن. فصاح أبو الصبيّ من ساعته بدموع وقال: إني أوّمن يا سيّد، فأغث عدم إيماني. فلما رأى يسوع أنّ الجمع يتبادرون إليه، انتهر الروح النجس قائلاً له: أيها الروح الأبكم الأصمّ أنا أمرك بأن اخرج منه ولا تغدّ تدخل فيه. فصرخ وخطبه كثيراً وخرج منه، فصار كالصبيّ حتى قال كثيرون إنّه قد مات. فأخذ يسوع بيده وأنهضه فقام. ولما دخل بيتاً سأله تلاميذه على انفراد: لماذا لم نستطع نحن أن نخرجه؟ فقال لهم: إنّ هذا الجنس لا يمكن أن يخرج إلاّ بالصلاة والصوم. ولما خرجوا من هناك اجتازوا في الجليل ولم يردّ أن يدري أحد، فإنّه كان يُعلّم تلاميذه ويقول لهم: إنّ ابن البشر يُسلّم إلى أيدي الناس فيقتلونه، وبعد أن يُقتل يقوم في اليوم الثالث.

PLEDGE UPDATE:

As most of you know, we are all going through times of hardship. We have had to close our church services, cancel many events and gatherings, cancel our PLC, and close our daycare for now. We humbly ask you to please keep this in mind when making your next donation or pledge payment. God bless you and your families.

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.

Good Friday Flowers \$50 (Minimum Donation) per Bouquet

الزهور لتزيين نعش المسيح يوم الجمعة العظيمة

Name: _____ الأسم
Phone Number _____ رقم التلفون
Donation(\$): _____ المبلغ
Message: _____

Good Friday flowers: Dear Parishioners: To avoid misspelling the names, please do not call the church office. Mail or email the names along with the donation or put it in the tray on Sunday in an envelope with your name & write a memo that this donation is for the "Bier of Christ". Thank you for your cooperation.

2020 Great Lent

Lent Period: March 2nd – April 19th

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

Day	Date	Celebration
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

Days	Service	Time	Arabic Time	Service	Day
Fridays	Akathist Service	7 pm	٧ مساءً	خدمة مديح والدة الاله	الجمعة
Sundays	The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great	11 am	١١ صباحاً	القديس باسيليوس الكبير للقداس الإلهي	الأحد

SYMPATHY & CONDOLENCES:

Deepest sympathy and condolences to **Ajia Habash** for the passing of her sister **Laila Rasheed Fannous Azar** in the old country. Altar Candle will be offered this Sunday for the rest of her soul. May her memory be eternal!

ALTAR CANDLE OFFERING:

Offered by St. Nicholas Church in loving memory of **Bishara Wehab** on the occasion of the Annunciation Feast (March 25th). May his memory be eternal!

Metropolitan Anthony: SAINT JOHN OF THE LADDER

Lent is a time of repentance, a time when our heart of stone must be made by the power of God into a heart of flesh, from insensitive to become perceptive, from cold and hard to become warm and open to others, and indeed, to God Himself.

Lent is a time of renewal when like spring, everything become new again; when our life that had gone into a twilight becomes alive with all the intensity which God can communicate to us, humans, by making us partakers of His Holy Spirit, by making us partakers, through the Holy Sacraments and the direct gift of God, of the Divine nature.

It is a time of reconciliation, and reconciliation is a joy: it is God's joy, and it is our joy; it's a new beginning. Today is the day of Saint John of the Ladder, and I want to read to you a few phrases of his which are relevant to the particular time of the year in which we live:

“Repentance, that is our return to God is renewal of our baptism; it is our effort to renew our covenant with God, our promise to change our life. It is a time when we can acquire humility, that is peace; peace with God, peace with ourselves, peace with all the created world. Repentance is born of hope and rejection of despair. And one who repents, is one who deserves condemnation - and yet, goes away from the tribunal without shame, because repentance is our peace with God. And this is achieved through a worthy life, alien to the sins we committed in the past. Repentance is cleansing of our conscience. Repentance implies carrying off all sadness and pain.”

And if we ask ourselves how we can achieve it, how we can come to this, how we can respond to God Who receives us as the father received the prodigal son, a God Who has waited for us, longingly, Who, rejected, never turned away from us - how can we respond to Him? Here is a short word about prayer :

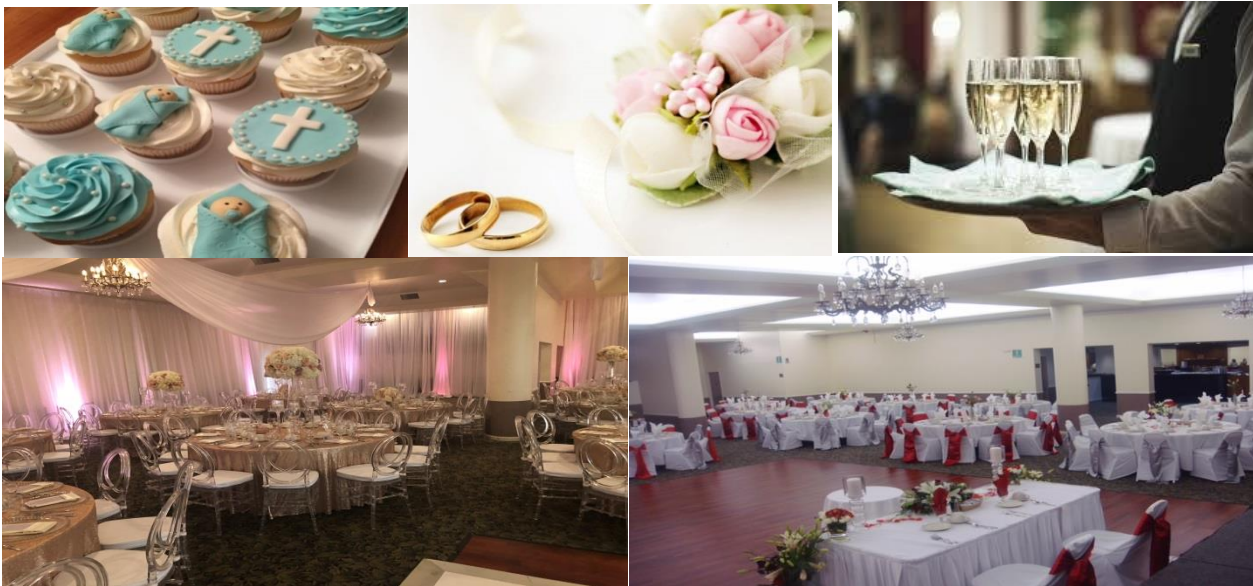
“Don't use in prayer falsely wise words; because it is often the simple and uncomplicated whispering of children that rejoices our heavenly Father. Don't try to say much when you speak to God, because otherwise your mind in search of words will be lost in them. One word spoken by the publican brought Divine mercy upon him; one word filled with faith saved the thief on the cross. The use of the multiplicity of words when we pray disperses our mind and fill it with imaginations. One word spoken to God collects the mind in His presence. And if a word, in thy prayer, reaches you deeply, if you perceive it profoundly - dwell in it, dwell in it, because at such moments our Angel guardian prays with us because we are true to ourselves and to God”.

Let us remember what Saint John of the Ladder says, even if you forget the short comments (which I introduced) to make his text more readily understandable. Let us remember his words because he was a man who knew what it means to turn to God, to stay with God, to be God's joy and to rejoice in Him. He is offered us in this time, when we are ascending towards the days of the Passion, he is offered us as an example of what grace Divine can do to transform an ordinary, simple human being into a light to the world.

Let us learn from him, let us follow his example, let us rejoice in what God can do by His power in a human being, and let us confidently, with faith, with an exulting and yet serene joy follow the advice, listen to God begging us to find a way of life and telling us that with Him, in Him we will be alive, because He is the Truth but also the Way and also Life eternal.

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. For more information contact our Church office at (415) 648-5200 or info@stnicholas-sf.com



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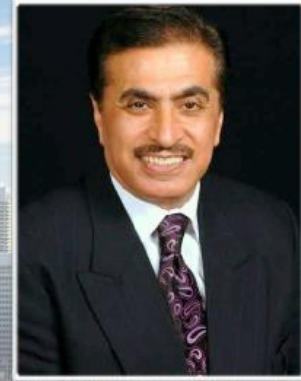
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