

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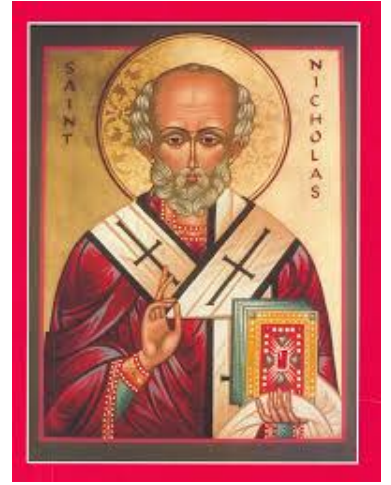
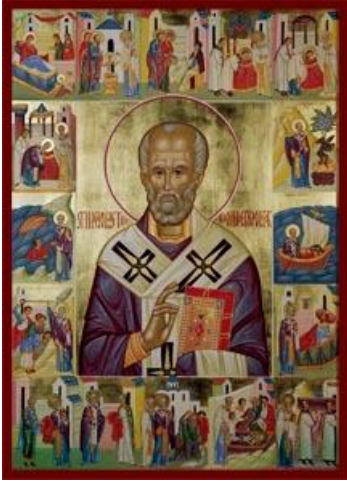
Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. **Gregory Ofiesh**

Sub-Dn. **Michel Khoury**

Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Parish Council Chairman: **Ramzi Srouji**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Salim Qaru**



Sunday, July 26, 2020

The Holy Righteous Martyr Paraskeva of Rome

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Based on the ongoing situation regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus), all Church social events and gatherings are postponed until further notice. **Church is not open to the public. Please do not attend.** All liturgical services will be served with ONLY CLERGY. Please watch the livestream of the service on our social media.

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrDWWPWreLZpVhzVGZkjDIA>

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

THE EPISTLE: Galatians. (3:23-4:5)

Brethren, before faith came, we were confined under the Law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the Law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

غَلَاطِيَّة 3: 23 - 4: 5

يا إِخْوَةَ، قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ الْإِيمَانُ كُنَّا مَحْفُوظِينَ تَحْتَ النَّامُوسِ مُغْلَقًا عَلَيْنَا مِنْ أَجْلِ الْإِيمَانِ الَّذِي كَانَ مُزْمَعًا إِعْلَانُهُ. فَالْتَّامُوسُ إِذَا كَانَ مُؤَدِّبًا لَنَا، يَرْشِدُنَا إِلَى الْمَسِيحِ، لِكَيْ نُبْرَرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ. فَبَعْدَ أَنْ جَاءَ الْإِيمَانُ، لَسْنَا بَعْدَ تَحْتَ مُؤَدِّبٍ. فَانْتُمْ كُلُّكُمْ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ بِالْإِيمَانِ بِالْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. لِأَنَّكُمْ أَنْتُمْ الَّذِينَ بِالْمَسِيحِ اعْتَمَدْتُمْ، الْمَسِيحَ قَدْ لَبَسْتُمْ. لَيْسَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا يُونَانِيًّا، لَيْسَ عَبْدٌ وَلَا حُرٌّ، لَيْسَ ذَكَرٌ وَلَا أُنْثَى، فَانْتُمْ كُلُّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. فَإِذَا كُنْتُمْ لِلْمَسِيحِ، فَانْتُمْ إِذَا نَسَلُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَوَرَثْتَهُ بِحَسَبِ الْمَوْعِدِ. وَأَقُولُ: إِنَّ الْوَارِثَ مَا دَامَ طِفْلًا فَلَا فَرْقَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْعَبْدِ مَعَ كَوْنِهِ مَالِكِ الْجَمِيعِ، لَكِنَّهُ تَحْتَ أَيْدِي الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَالْوَكَلَاءِ إِلَى الْوَقْتِ الَّذِي حَدَدَهُ الْأَبُ. هَكَذَا نَحْنُ أَيْضًا جِبْنٌ كُنَّا أَطْفَالًا كُنَّا مُتَعَبِّدِينَ تَحْتَ أَرْكَانِ الْعَالَمِ. فَلَمَّا حَانَ مِنْهُ الزَّمَانُ، أَرْسَلَ اللَّهُ ابْنَهُ مَوْلُودًا مِنْ امْرَأَةٍ، مَوْلُودًا تَحْتَ النَّامُوسِ، لِنَقَلِ النَّبِيِّ.

THE GOSPEL: Matthew. (9:27-35)

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud: "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When He entered the house, the blind men came to Him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread His fame through all that district. As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to Him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons." And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity.

الانجيل: متى ٩: ٢٧-٣٥ في ذلك الزمان، فيما يسوع مجتاز، تبعه اعميان يصيحان ويقولان: ارحمنا يا ابن داود. فلما دخل البيت دنا اليه الأعميان، فقال لهما يسوع: هل تؤمنان أنني أقدر أن أفعل ذلك؟ فقالا له: نعم يا رب. حينئذ لمس أعينهما. فانتهرهما يسوع قائلاً: انظرا، لا يعلم أحد. فلما خرجا شهرا في تلك الأرض كلها. وبعد خروجهما قدما اليه أخرس به شيطان. فلما أخرج الشيطان تكلم الأخرس. فتعجب الجموع قائلين: لم يظهر قط مثل هذا في اسرائيل. اما الفريسيون فقالوا: انه برئيس الشياطين يُخرج الشياطين. وكان يسوع يطوف المدن كلها والقرى، يعلم في مجامعهم ويكرز ببشارة الملكوت ويشفي كل مرض وكل ضعف في الشعب.

To the Faithful of St. Nicholas Church:

These past few months have been unprecedented in the history of our parish. While we have not been physically present in church, we have, thanks to Clemence Batarse and her team, still been able to participate in the Divine Liturgy on Sunday through Live Streaming. As of this time, we do not know when we can return to "normal." We want to thank those who have continued to be current on their pledge. We still have our financial responsibilities and your support enables us to meet our obligations. The most convenient way to send your donation is through Online Giving. Go to our website: stnicholas-sf.com and you will see "Click here to donate online" or mail a check to the church office: 5200 Diamond Heights. Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94131. May our Lord continue to watch over you and your loved ones, protect us and keep us safe from every adversary.

ALTAR CANDLE OFFERING:

- ❖ Offered by **Sub-Deacon Micheal, Zachary, & Gregory Khoury** for the good health of **Judy Khoury** on the special occasion of her birthday. God bless and many years!
- ❖ Offered by **Nadim, Basma, Janan, Jim, Jennifer, Brandon, and Matthew Howell, Jane & Oscar Moran** for the good health of **Ivette Howell** on the special occasion of her birthday. God bless and many years!
- ❖ **THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR MARINA (MARGARET), FRIDAY JULY 17:** Offered by St. Nicholas Church for the good health of all those named Marina (Margaret), especially **Marina Khalaf, Margaret Qaqish, and Margaret Amjad Qaqish**. God bless and many years! Also in loving memory of **Margo Hanhan and Margaret Qaqish**. May their memory be eternal!
- ❖ **THE GLORIOUS PROPHET ELIAS (ELIJAH), MONDAY JULY 20:** Offered by St. Nicholas Church for the good health of all those named Elias (Elijah), especially **Dr. Elias Hanna, Elias Batshon, Eli Hanna, Eli Saoud, Elias Tannous, Elias Katout, Elias Jadelrab, Elias Khoury, Elias Hanhan, Loui Toufiq Hanhan, Loui Wajdi Nasser, Elias Akram Nasser, Elias Shatara, Elias Shamia, Elias Qura, Elias Bazouzi, & Elias Shaheen**. God bless and many years! Also in loving memory of **Elia Saoud, Elias Shatara, & Fr. Elias Bitar**. May their memory be eternal!

DORMITION FAST (The Fast of St. Mary)

On August 1st the fast of the Dormition feast of St. Mary starts, and it will end on August 15th, the feast of the Dormition of St. Mary. During this fast we abstain from eating: Fish, Meat, Milk and Dairy. On Transfiguration we may eat fish, olive oil and wine.

- ❖ The Paraklesis Service to the Virgin Mary (Every Friday @ 7:00 P.M.)
- ❖ Transfiguration Service عيد التجلي (Friday August 7th)

FOOD FOR PICK UP: We will be offering special food orders for pick up from the church kitchen. Orders will be placed over the phone or via email by contacting the church office. Food options are as follows: Half Chicken & Hashwei, Beef or Chicken Kebabs, and Kibbeh. Deadline to place orders is Thursday July 30th for pickup on Sunday August 2nd.

Metropolitan Anthony: Christ's miracles: We constantly read about Christ's miracles in the Holy Gospels, and we ask ourselves, "why is it that such things were possible in those days, and yet we see so few miracles in our own day?" I think there are three possible answers. The first is that we do not see the miracles that surround us, we take everything for granted, as completely natural. We receive all the good things from the hand of God as though they were normal, and we no longer see that life is a wonderful, joyful miracle, that God wanted to create us, that He called us from non-being into being, laid open before us the whole miracle of existence. Nor did He confine Himself to this. He called us to be His friends forever, everlastingly to live the eternal, divine life. He revealed Himself to us; we know that He is, we know Him in Christ as the God whose love did not falter even in the face of His own death which was to save those He loves. And what about those miracles that are even less obvious to us, like health, like peace, like friendship, like love? They are all pure miracles — you cannot buy them, you cannot force anyone to give you his heart; and yet all around us there are so many hearts open to each other, so much friendship, so much love. And our physical existence which we consider so natural — is not that a miracle? That is the first point that I wanted to make: that the whole of life is a miracle. I know, of course, that there is much, very much pain and horror in it, but at the same time such a quiet yet unwavering light shines in the darkness: if only we could believe in the light, and so become children of light, as Christ says, the bearers of light? There are two more remarks I should like to make. Today we read that the people were in need, that the apostles noticed this need and spoke to the Lord about it. And the Lord said: "It is up to you to relieve this need, to feed these hungry people". "How?" they said, "we have only two fishes and five loaves, can that possibly be enough for such a crowd?" And Christ blessed those fish and those loaves and it was enough for the crowd. So what is expected of us in order that God can freely, by His sovereign power, perform heavenly miracles on earth? First, that we should notice someone else's need. So often we pass by it and do not open the door to God to allow Him to enter and do that which it is impossible for us to do. Let us open our eyes in order to see the needs of the people around us — material, psychological, spiritual; the loneliness and longing and countless other needs. And another thing that the Lord urges upon His disciples is, "give everything that you have, and we shall be able to feed them all." The disciples did not leave aside some fish and some bread for themselves, they gave it all to the Lord. And because they gave everything, the Kingdom of God, the kingdom of love, the kingdom where God can act freely and untrammelled, was established and all were satisfied. This call is addressed to us also: when we see want, let us give all, and all will be well. Now a final remark: when the paralytic about whom we read a few weeks ago was brought to Christ He saw the people's faith and cured the sick man. We can supply the faith that is lacking in those around us, we can carry them on our faith as on a stretcher. But faith is not enough; in the case of the paralytic there was not only the faith that the Lord could heal him, but there was caring love for the sick man. If only there were such love amongst us the beginning of the Kingdom of God would already be established in our midst, and God could act freely. Let us consider this, for every one of God's miracles was introduced, and so to speak conditioned, by the participation of man. It depends on us that the Kingdom which we pray and long for should be established on earth, that Kingdom which we are called on to build together with God and in His name.

النبي

ما النبي إذا تنبأ؟ في حال التنبؤ كيف يكون؟ يكون انسانا في سلطة الله فقط، لا يسمع الى أحد آخر، ولا الهوى ينطق فيه، فكأنه إذا تكلم الله يتكلم لأنه أداة الله وإطلالة الله على العالمين.

"كلام الله كان على لسان ايليا" كما قال الكتاب، فحبس المطر وأمرت السماء بألا تُمطر. وكان كلام الله على فمه فأمر السماء بأن تُمطر ففعلت. وكان كلام الله على فمه في صرْفند لما كان يزور الأرملة فنفخ كلمة الله في الميت فقام الميت.

توحد ايليا مع الكلمة فاصطدم مع أكابر القوم ومع أصاغرهم. اصطدم مع كل أعداء الله، فما كان منه الا ان ذبح كل كهنة البعل وكهنة عشتروت، ليس لأن الله يريد الذبح -وقد وبّخه على ذلك كما سوف نرى- ولكن معنى الكلام أن لا مكان للالهة الكاذبة اذا ظهر الإله الصحيح. لا مكان لعبادة القوة ولعبادة الجسد اذا أطل الإله الصحيح. ولكن يجب ان تكون هناك غيرة نارية حتى تباد الالهة الكاذبة والأفكار الكاذبة.

الملك ككل حاكم يقلق منه لأن الحكام قلما يكونون عادلين. هم رجال شهوة ورجال هوى ولهم أتباع. اما الأنبياء فليس فيه شهوة ولا هوى ولا لهم أتباع. ولذلك عندما جاء آخاب الملك وقال لإيليا: "انت مُقلق إسرائيل"، أجابه إيليا: "بل أنت وأبوك، انت وبيت أبيك مقلقان إسرائيل" لأن الذي ضلّ في الخطيئة يقلق الشعب. الخطيئة وحدها مزعجة للناس.

ولما أرادت إيزابيل الملكة الوثنية المغناج المترفة الآتية من فينيقية الزانية، لما أرادت ان تقمع النبي، وكانت تطارده، ظلمت الشعب كله: جرّدت رجلا فقيرا يُدعى نابوت من كرمه وبعثت بزوجه الملك ليسجّل الكرم باسمها. أعطت كل مظاهر الشرعية للجريمة فتصدّى لها النبي، وهل من ناصر للفقراء غير الأنبياء او أشباه الأنبياء؟

وطاردت الملكة نبيّنا الى الصحراء، دفعتة عن البلد ليموت خنقا في رمال سيناء. أما هو فأكل مما أعطاه ملاك الرب "وسار بقوة تلك الأكلة أربعين يوما وأربعين ليلة" ووصل الى حوريب الى حيث ظهر الله لموسى اولا واختبأ في مغارة، ثم خرج ووقف على الجبل امام الرب. وكان زلزال ولم يكن الله في الزلزال، وكانت ريح عاصفة وما كان الله في الريح العاصفة. اي ان الله لا يظهر في القوة ولا في العنف، وكنت على خطأ يا إيليا لما ذبحت الكهنة. ما كنت على خطأ في غيرتك ولكن في تجسيدك الغيرة على هذا المنوال. نحن الإلهيين لا نذبح، نحن نذبح. وكانت ريح لطيفة فجثا إيليا على ركبته لأن الله كان في النسمة اللطيفة.

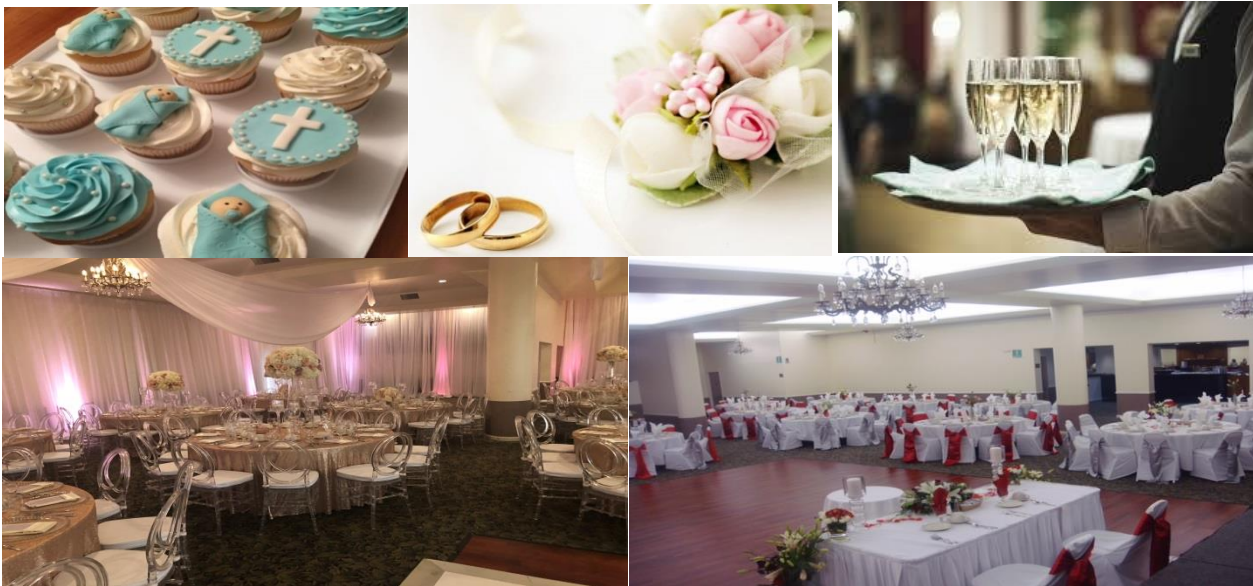
وبعد هذا لم يبق في الأرض موضع لإيليا فاخطفه الله اليه في عاصفة وجعل له مركبة نارية وخيلا ناريا ليس لأن الانسان قادر ان يجلس على نار او ان تقوده نار ولكن الله نفسه هو نار. أليس الله نورًا ونارًا في أن معا؟ أليس الله لهب القلوب وضوء القلوب؟ حمل الله إيليا على كتفيه وقاده الى السماء. حيّ إيليا بحبه، بغيرته، "غيرة غرتُ لرب الجنود". لماذا غار لرب السماء والأرض؟ لأنه هو القائل: "حيّ هو الرب الذي انا واقف أمامه". حيّ الرب والناس أموات، والملوك أموات والظالمون أموات. الله وحده حي، ومن عرف ذلك ووقف أمام الله الحي لا يستطيع ان يعيش مع الأموات.

ويبقى الله والذين يحبونه، وهؤلاء خُطفت قلوبهم بالحب الى ذلك الجالس فوق، فوق أهل الشهوة والطغيان والعنف لأنه إله السماء، إله السلام، إله القلوب المُحبّة للسلام. من أجل ذلك نكرم إيليا الذي كان مع الرب في جبل التجلي، فتجلّى في الغيرة وبقي للناس والتاريخ هو بدوره لهبا ونورا.

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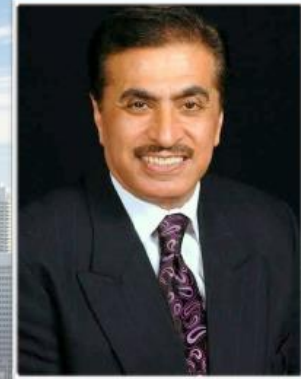


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