

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

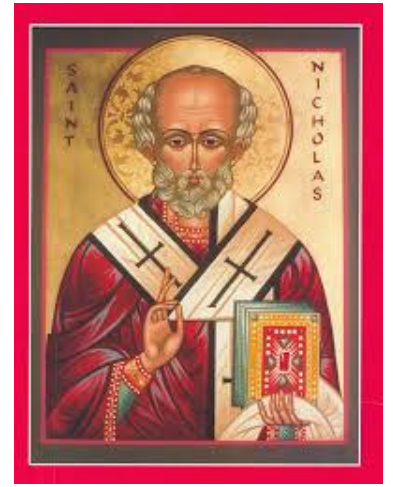
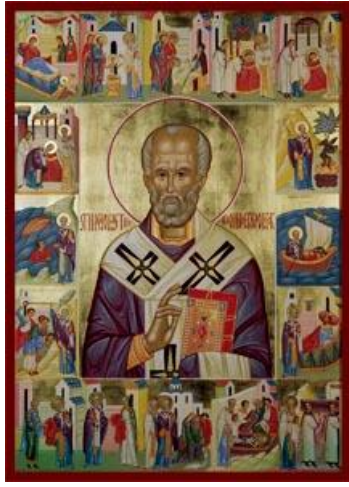
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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Sub-Dn. Ilyan Baalbaki

Parish Council Chairman: Ramzi Srouji

Parish Council Vice Chairman: Salim Qaru



Sunday, January 17, 2021

Venerable and God-bearing Father Anthony the Great

القديس أنطونيوس الكبير معلم البرية

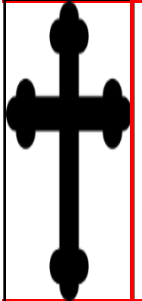


House Blessings: Because of the pandemic we will not have the traditional home blessings as usual. If you want the priest to pay a visit to your house, please call Fr. George at 586 214 4428 and schedule with him. Please follow all safety precautions. God bless!

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 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!



MEMORIAL SERVICE:

Forty Day Memorial Service for the Servant of God **Sub-Deacon Michel Khoury** offered by his family.

Two Year Memorial Service for the Servant of God **Abdallah H Shami** offered by his family.

NEXT SUNDAY JANUARY 24TH:

Three Year Memorial Service for the Servant of God **John Salih** offered by his family.
May their memory be eternal!

THE EPISTLE: St. Paul to the Hebrews. (13:17-21):

Brethren, obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you. Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner. Now may the God of peace Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

الرسالة: عبرانيين ١٣: ١٧-٢١ يا إخوة أطيعوا مدبريكم واخضعوا لهم فإنهم يسهرون على نفوسكم سهر من سيُعطي حساباً حتى يفعلوا ذلك بسرور لا آتين، لأن هذا غير نافع لكم. صلوا من أجلنا فإننا نثق بسرور بأن لنا ضميراً صالحاً فترغب في أن نُحسن التصرف في كل شيء، وأطلب ذلك بأشد إلهام حتى أرد اليكم في أسرع وقت. وإله السلام، الذي أعاد من بين الأموات راعي الخراف العظيم بدم العهد الأبدي ربنا يسوع، يكملكم في كل عمل صالح حتى تعملوا بمشيئته عاملاً فيكم ما هو مرضي لديه بيسوع المسيح الذي له المجد إلى الأبد، آمين.

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 بُرّص ووقفوا من بعيد ورفعوا أصواتهم قائلين: يا يسوع المعلم ارحمنا. فلما رآهم قال لهم: امضوا وأروا الكهنة أنفسكم. وفيما هم منطلقون طهروا. وإنّ واحداً منهم، لما رأى أنّه قد برئ، رجع يمجّد الله بصوت عظيم، وخرّ على وجهه عند قدميه شاكرًا له، وكان سامريًا. 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.

ANNUAL GENERAL PARISH MEETING: Sunday January 24th, 2021 at 2 PM on ZOOM.

The main item on the agenda is to discuss and approve a budget for 2021. All church members can attend the meeting but in order to have the right to vote, you have to be spiritually qualified, a member in good standing, and dues for 2020 should be paid. Thank you!

ALTAR CANDLE OFFERING:

- ❖ Offered by **Afaf Dudum** in loving memory of **Tom Dudum**. May his memory be eternal!
- ❖ Offered by **Nadim, Janan, Jim, Ivette, Jennifer, Brandon & Matthew Howell, Jane & Oscar Moran** for the continued good health of **Basma Howell** on the special occasion of her birthday on January 18th. God bless and many years!
- ❖ Offered by the **Atwan** family for the continued good health of **Basima Atwan** on the special occasion of her birthday on January 13th. God bless and many years!
- ❖ Offered by **St. Nicholas Church** for the good health of all those named Anthony, Antoun, Antoinette, after Saint Anthony, especially: **Tony Batshon, Tony Karam, Anthony Batarse, Anthony Batarse Jr., Antoinette Mufarreh, Andoni Tannous, Antoinett Tamey Dudum, and Antoun Halteh**. God bless and many years! Also in loving memory of **Anthony Abdallah Shami**. May his memory be eternal!

CONGRATULATIONS:

- ❖ And best wishes to the newly elected officers of the Parish Council: **Azar Azar (Chairman)** **Salim Qaru (Vice Chairman)**, **Amjad Qaqish (Treasurer)** and **Claudine Batarse (Secretary)**. God bless and many years!
- ❖ We would also like to thank **Ramzi Srouji** for fulfilling his duty and responsibility to his church by serving as our previous Chairman. We wish you and your family the best and pray that you will continue to help in the future.

Metropolitan Anthony: HEALING OF THE TEN LEPERS

The Gospel - all the Gospel is a gift of God to us, and although we are not continuously reminded of the need to be grateful, how can we not respond with gratitude to what the Gospel brings to us? God has so loved the world that He has given His only begotten Son that the world may be saved; and the Son has given Himself freely, in the sovereign freedom of His Divinity to us; no-one has taken His life from Him - these are His own words; He gave His life willingly, freely, that we may live. And today we have in the Gospel a short example of the way in which we, most of the time, receive the gifts of God. Ten men came, covered with leprosy, condemned to a cruel death by

illness, but also rejected ritually by their own people for the impurity of this infectious disease. They came to Him, stood at a distance, because they knew that according to the Jewish Law they had no right even to come near Him to touch Him. And they asked for mercy. And God send them to the priests to bring forth the sign of their gratitude for the healing which they had not received; and they believed, and they went, and they were healed before they reached their goal... We might have expected that they rushed back to fall to the feet of Christ, to touch Him in gratitude - no. Nine of them went their way; it was enough for them to have been healed: it's all they needed of God. One of them, however, turned round, and came to thank the Lord.

Isn't it an image of the way in which so often we also behave? We pray; we ask the Lord for something that matters to us: it may not be life and death, it may just be that we need so much one thing or another; or that we don't even need it so much, but that we long so much for it. And then it is given us; and we receive the gift, and we rush into life with this gift in our hearts, this gift in our hands, we rush to life because it is enough for us that our prayer was fulfilled. How seldom it is that we come back, leaving our gift to be used later, but first of all turning to God and saying: What wonder! What is Your love! How great, how compassionate, how humble that You have responded to my prayer...

One out of ten came back to the Lord Jesus Christ: how many of us have ever come immediately, before they took advantage of the gift to turn to God with a smile, like a child turns and say 'Thank you!', even with a smile, without words before taking advantage of what is given. And we loose so much at not being grateful; because if we learned to be grateful for the obvious gifts of God, we would gradually discover that we can be grateful for a great deal more, for everything that Providence puts in our way: not only things we rejoice in, not only the wanders of life, but even the challenges of life, the things that claims from us courage, greatness, nobility, the things which we are afraid of. And how often we could overcome vanity by gratitude! Because vanity consists in looking at ourselves, and thinking how wonderful we are, forgetting that all that we are, all that we have is a gift of God. If we only, every time we have said the right thing, done the right thing, been worthy of our human quality, human greatness and nobility, and also of the name of the disciples of Christ - if every time we turned to God and said, 'Yes! How wonderful are the words I have spoken, how good is the action I have performed - and everything was of You: the occasion was given by You, o Lord! I was able to perceive the need because You whispered in my heart: Look! I could understand because I had my mind enlightened by the Gospel! My heart responded because You touched it, and from the heart of stone which I carry in my bosom most of the time it became a heart of flesh full of compassion and of understanding! And You gave me the means of meeting the need, and the joy of meeting this need!.. If we could respond to everything this way, we would discover that life is made into an act of worship and of gratitude.

Let us reflect on this because we are coming within a few weeks, a few days now to a day when our heart should be aflame with gratitude: God has loved us so much as to become one of us; while we were strangers, alien to Him, often inimical to Him, He came, and He gave His life for us that we may live!.. We must prepare for it: joy, gratitude, faith, openness to God does not happen of a sudden; we must prepare for it. Let us reflect on what is going to happen; the thing that happened nearly two thousand years ago we shall remember as an actual event now, in a few weeks; and be ready, with a heart tilled, deeply furrowed by faith, by reflection, having though out all our life, ready to receive the Lord like a shepherd, in the simplicity and purity of our hearts, or like the Wise Men in the deep understanding of wisdom.

عائلة من نور في وسط جيل معوج ملتو (من نشرة "رعيتي")

«تضيئون بينهم كأنوار في العالم» (فيلبي ٢: ١٥): هذه هي دعوة القديس بولس الرسول إلى أبنائه في فيليبي وإلى كل فرد منا اليوم. ومن أدري منه بالنور، وهو الذي وُلد من النور إنساناً جديداً على طريق دمشق، إذ «أبرق حوله نورٌ من السماء» (أعمال ٩: ٣)، بعد أن كان يحيا في الظلمة.

وجّه قديسنا الأسير في روما هذه الرسالة، التي تتردد فيها تهليلات الفرح ستّ عشرة مرّة وأصداء المحبة إحدى عشرة مرّة، إلى الكنيسة التي أسسها في فيليبي، وهو يوجّهها اليوم إلى كل كنيسة في العالم، وتالياً إلى كل أسرة مسيحية في العالم، إذ «الأسرة المسيحية هي كنيسة صغيرة» على ما وصفها القديس يوحنا الذهبي الفم. فهو إذا يخاطب أسرنا داعياً إليها:

لتعيش «كما يحقّ لإنجيل المسيح» (١: ٢٧)، ساعيةً نحو القداسة بكل أفرادها. فدعوة الأب والأمّ للأولاد «ليكونوا متمثلين بهم» (٣: ١٧) مسؤولية كبيرة تقع على عاتقهما. فهما في نظر أطفالهما صورة منظورة عن الله غير المنظور. فهؤلاء يرون الله المحبّ عبر محبة أهلهم، والإله المتواضع عبر تواضعهم، فيعملون لاحقاً، حتّى من دون إدراك منهم، على التمثّل بهم.

لتعيش البساطة والفتاة، وتتكل على الله في كل حاجاتها، فيردّد كل فرد من أفرادها مع القديس بولس: «أعرف أن أتضع وأعرف أيضاً أن أستفضل. في كل شيء وفي جميع الأشياء تدرّبت على أن أشبع وأن أجوع، وأن أستفضل وأن أنقص. أستطيع كل شيء بالمسيح الذي يقوّيني» (٤: ١٢-١٣).

لتعرف كيف تحدّد أولوياتها في الحياة. ففي توجيه أبنائها لتحقيق النجاح في العالم لا تنسى أن تعلّمهم أنّ الكنز الأساس هو ذلك المحفوظ في السماء، فيستطيع كل منهم أن يقول «إنّي أحسب كل شيء أيضاً خسارة من أجل فضل معرفة المسيح يسوع ربّي الذي من أجله خسرت كل الأشياء، وأنا أحسبها نفاية لكي أربح المسيح» (٣: ٨).

لتشغلها الأعمال الصالحة والأفكار النقيّة عن كل ما عداها، فلا وقت للحسد والخصام والنميمة، ولا وقت للتفكير بالمماحكات والسلبات والتوترات «كلّ ما هو حقّ، كلّ ما هو جليل، كلّ ما هو عادل، كلّ ما هو طاهر، كلّ ما هو مسير، كلّ ما صيته حسن، إن كانت فضيلة وإن كان مدح، ففي هذه افكروا» (٤: ٨).

لتعجن أولادها بالحبّ والحنان فيختبروا في حناياها الوحدة والتضحية والتواضع، ساعين «ليفتكروا فكراً واحداً، ولهم محبة واحدة بنفس واحدة، مُفكرين شيئاً واحداً، لا شيئاً يتحرّب أو عُجب، بل بتواضع، حاسبين بعضهم البعض أفضل من أنفسهم» (٢: ٢-٣). **ألا تُساكن هذا الدهر في ضياعه وغربته وضلاله،** فتربّي أبناءً واعين وأتقين، «يفعلون كل شيء بلا دمدمة ولا مجادلة، لكي يكونوا بلا لوم وبسطاء، أولاداً لله بلا عيب في وسط جيل معوج ملتو...» (٢: ١٤-١٥).

لتُدرك أنّ الصّحة والمرض والموت ما هي إلا محطات يتوقّف عندها قطار الحياة السائر لا محالة إلى المحطة الأخيرة. فلسان حالهم يقول «... يتعظّم المسيح في جسدي، سواء أكان ب حياة أم بموت. لأنّ الحياة لي هي المسيح والموت هو ربّ» (١: ٢٠). **لتجابه التجارب القاسية والظروف الصعبة** التي تواجهها بالصلاة الدائمة والشكر «لا تهتمّوا بشيء، بل في كل شيء بالصلاة والدعاء مع الشكر، لتعلّم طلباتكم لدى الله» (٤: ٦).

لتكون قادرة رغم كل المصاعب التي تعترضها، على أن تفتح قلبها وتفرح بالربّ على حسب الدعوة «افرحوا في الربّ كل حين، وأقول أيضاً افرحوا» (٤: ٤).

لتشهد كل يوم، في وسط أبناء هذا الجيل، صارخةً «أنا وأهل بيتي فنعبد الربّ» (يشوع ٢٤: ١٥)، ويعيش أبنائوها «مُضيئون بينهم كأنوار في العالم» (فيلبي ٢: ١٥)، على رجاء أن يسمع كل منهم، في اليوم الأخير صوتاً من السماء قائلاً: «أنت ابني الحبيب، بك سررت». (لوقا ٣: ٢٢).

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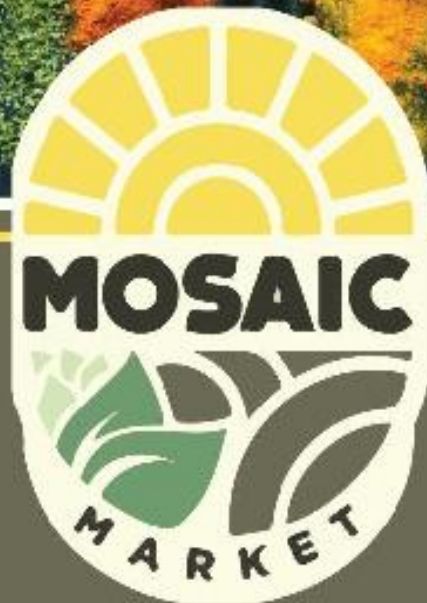
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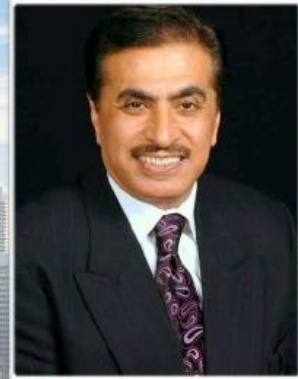
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