

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

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Pastor Emeritus, V. Rev. Fr. Gregory Ofiesh

Sub-Dn. Ilyan Baalbaki

Parish Council Chairman: Azar Azar

Parish Council Vice Chairman: Salim Qaru

Sunday, February 28, 2021

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

**IMPORTANT NOTICE: CHURCH IS OPEN!**

If you plan to attend, please make sure you wear a mask and use hand sanitizer when you walk inside. Please don't attend if you're feeling sick or have any symptoms of sickness.

You can still watch the livestream of the services 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!

**SYMPATHY & CONDOLENCES:**

Deepest Sympathy and Condolences to the **Malouf family** for the passing of one of the Pillars of our Church, **Albert Malouf** into eternal life. May his memory be eternal!

**THE EPISTLE: Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.**

BRETHREN, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"--and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit which belong to God.

الرسالة (1كو6: 12-20)

يا إخوة كل شيء مباح لي ولكن ليس كل شيء يوافق كل شيء مباح لي ولكن لا يتسلط علي شيء إن الأطعمة للجوف والجوف للأطعمة وسيبيد الله هذا وتلك. أما الجسد فليس للزنى بل للرب والرب للجسد والله قد أقام الرب وسيقيمنا نحن أيضاً بقوته أما تعلمون أن أجسادكم هي أعضاء المسيح. فأخذ أعضاء المسيح وأجعلها أعضاء زانية. حاشي أما تعلمون أن من اقترن بزانية يصير معها جسداً واحداً لأنه قد قيل يصيران كلاهما جسداً واحداً أما الذي يقترن بالرب فيكون معه روحاً واحداً اهربوا من الزنى. فإن كل خطيئة يفعلها الإنسان هي في خارج الجسد أما الزاني فإنه يخطئ إلى جسده أم لستم تعلمون أن أجسادكم هي هيكل الروح القدس الذي فيكم الذي نلتموه من الله وأنكم لستم لأنفسكم لأنكم قد اشتريتم بثمن فمجدوا الله في أجسادكم وفي أرواحكم التي هي لله.

## **THE GOSPEL: Luke 15:11-32**

The Lord told this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will rise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to the servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him and put a ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

### **الإنجيل: لوقا 15:11-32**

قال الرب هذا المثل: إنسان كان له ابنان. فقال أصغرهما لأبيه: يا أبت أعطني النصيب الذي يَخَصُّني من المال. فقسم بينهما معيشته. وبعد أيام غير كثيرة جمع الابن الأصغر كل شيء له وسافر إلى بلد بعيد وبذر ماله هناك عائشا في الخلاعة. فلما أنفق كل شيء حدثت في ذلك البلد مجاعة شديدة، فأخذ في العوز. فذهب وانضوى إلى واحد من أهل ذلك البلد، فأرسله إلى حقوله يرعى خنازير. وكان يشتهي أن يملأ بطنه من الخرنوب الذي كانت الخنازير تأكله فلم يعطه أحد. فرجع إلى نفسه وقال: كم لأبي من أجراء يَفْضُلُ عنهم الخبز وأنا أهلك جوعاً. أقوم وأمضي إلى أبي وأقول له: يا أبت قد أخطأت إلى السماء وأمامك، ولست مستحقاً بعد أن ادعى لك ابنا فاجعلني كأحد أجرائك. فقام وجاء إلى أبيه، وفيما هو بعد غير بعيد رآه أبوه فتحنن عليه وأسرع وألقى بنفسه على عنقه وقبله. فقال له الابن: يا أبت قد أخطأت إلى السماء وأمامك ولست مستحقاً بعد أن ادعى لك ابنا. فقال الأب لعبيده: هاتوا الحلة الأولى وألبسوه، واجعلوا خاتماً في يده وحذاء في رجله، وأتوا بالعجل المُسَمَّن واذبحوه فأكُل ونفِرح، لأن ابني هذا كان ميتاً فعاش وكان ضالاً فوجد. فطفقوا يفرحون.

وكان ابنه الأكبر في الحقل. فلما أتى وقرب من البيت سمع أصوات الغناء والرقص. فدعا أحد الغلمان وسأله: ما هذا؟ فقال له: قد قدِم أخوك فذبح أبوك العجل المُسَمَّن لأنه لقيه سالماً. فغضب ولم يُرد أن يدخل. فخرج أبوه وطفق يتوسل إليه. فأجاب وقال لأبيه: كم لي من السنين أخدمك ولم أتعد لك وصية، وانت لم تعطني قط جدياً لأفرح مع أصدقائي. ولما جاء ابنك هذا الذي أكل معيشتك مع الزواني ذبحت له العجل المُسَمَّن! فقال له: يا ابني انت معي في كل حين وكل ما هو لي فهو لك. ولكن كان ينبغي أن نفرح ونُسِر لأن أخاك هذا كان ميتاً فعاش وكان ضالاً فوجد.

### **ALTAR CANDLE OFFERING:**

- ❖ Offered by St. Nicholas Church for the good health and well-being of **Louise LeFevre**.  
God bless and many years!
- ❖ Offered by St. Nicholas Church for the good health and well-being of **Patty Munayer**.  
God bless and many years!

### **MARCH IS ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN'S MONTH:**

Our Ladies Auxiliary will be working on updating our Altar Robes and the Holy Altar Table Cover. If you'd like to donate, please mail a check to the church earmarked "Altar Robes". Thank you for all the hard work!

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS:**

- ❖ **National Orthodox Youth Lenten Retreat: March 13th 1-3:30pm EST.** This event is for High School Students (Grades 9-12). Register at:  
[https://enrollment.hchc.edu/ambassadors\\_lenten\\_retreat](https://enrollment.hchc.edu/ambassadors_lenten_retreat)

### **TREE OF LIFE:**

We have updated our Tree of Life in the back of our Church. If you would like to purchase a Leaf with your name or a loved one's name engraved to hang on the tree, please contact the Church office.

### **CHURCH HALL REMODEL:**

We would like to let you know that we've started the remodel of the bar and the bathrooms in our church hall. We are very excited about this project and can't wait to share the updates with you when it's completed.

**March 6 is Saturday of Souls.** On Sunday March 7<sup>th</sup>, a General Memorial Service "For All Those Who Have Fallen Asleep Since The Ages" will take place. Special Commemoration will take place for all those who passed away recently! Memory Eternal.

سبت الأموات هو يوم السبت ٦ آذار. سوف نقيم يوم الأحد ٧ آذار تذكارا عاما لجميع الراقدين منذ الدهر من ابائنا واخوتنا على رجاء القيامة والحياة الابدية. سنذكر بشكل خاص جميع الذين رقدوا بالرب مؤخرًا!

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF GREAT LENT?**

It is very natural to wonder what is the reason and purpose for all the things associated with Great Lent — the fasting, the extra Services, going to Confession and receiving Communion, asking forgiveness, giving alms, doing more praying and reading the Bible and other spiritual reading, and helping others more, and the whole experience of Great Lent. Many might wonder, why do we subject ourselves to all these things anyway?

There are a number of reasons, but the most significant one is simply that **we need it!** The everyday stresses and pressures of a very corrupt and godless world around us has such a great influence on us that we frequently don't even notice how far away we have wandered from being the kind of person and living the kind of life that the Lord expects of us. Usually this doesn't happen overnight or suddenly — it is gradual. That is why the image of us wandering away like sheep is very valid. A sheep has his head to the ground, nibbling away on the grass and he just keeps going, following his nose as he eats the grass. Then he might look up after a while and suddenly he discovers he has wandered away from his flock, and has gotten lost. This is really our condition as human beings — we nibble away a little at a time in our daily routine of working, eating, sleeping, playing, etc. and don't realize that we are getting lost. Sometimes we have gotten so lost, we don't even realize how lost we are, especially if we encounter other lost sheep, who think that being lost is the normal, natural way of living.

So we need this annual Great Lenten opportunity to try to return to our flock—the beloved people of God, the Body of Christ. Great Lent provides this opportunity, when we are also preparing ourselves to be crucified with Christ so that we may be resurrected with Him. One theme of Great Lent is that we are in exile in this life, and that our true home is with God in His Kingdom, and that we must return as the prodigal son or daughter to our heavenly Father. But it takes a conscious effort and decision to return and get our priorities straight. After all, what really is important in life—what are our priorities? What the world around us tells us is important is the polar opposite of what God tells us is important. If during this special holy season of Great Lent, it is life as usual, we are missing the opportunity of getting our lives straightened out. When our priorities are messed up and we become lost sheep, then nothing works out right: we get depressed, discouraged, sick; we get used to sin and think that sin is normal, and that virtue is abnormal, and things just go wrong. So now we have the opportunity to get ourselves straightened out and to build up our relationship with God, without which life is a living garbage dump.

So we can make a free choice: life as usual, or get back on the right path and stop making excuses of why we should not to go to church and Confession and Communion, why not to pray nor make God's priorities our priorities. We are free to choose the path of joy in God, or misery on the garbage heap of the world. (ST. INNOCENT/ FIREBIRD)

#### الابن الشاطر

مثله، سرّداً طويلاً، قد يكون من أبلغ ما تقوّه به السيد عن التوبة. فتى يحب العيش الرغد، الواسع بما يتضمّن ذلك من تحرر، يطلب نصيبه في الإرث من أبيه. ليس لأنّه عزم على أن يضل وحسب، ولكن لأنّ الذهاب عن البيت رمز عنده لتقلّته من سلطة أبيه التي تبدو للكثيرين منا سلطة مستبدّة، متعسّفة.

"سافر إلى بلد بعيد" ليدل على أنه لا يطيق القربى من أبيه أو لا يحتمل أن يدفعه الشوق إلى الرجوع. ترجمتنا تقول إنّّه عاش في الخلاعة. ترجمة آخرين تقول إنّّه عاش في الإسراف. الخلاعة تتطلّب الإسراف. أخوه الأكبر يتّهمه أنّه عاش مع الزواني. ما أراد الإنجيل أن يبيّنه أنّه بدّد كل نصيبه من الثروة وأنه لم يبقّ عنده ما يقدر به على أن يعيش. جاع الفتى. طلب عملاً عند واحد فاستخدمه راعياً للخنازير. والخنزير حيوان نجس عند اليهود ولعل في ذكره إشارة إلى أن هذا الشاب كان يلامس الخطيئة أو يحيا فيها. "رجع إلى نفسه". هذا ما يسميه أبونا امتحان القلب وما يسميه بعضُ فحَصَ الضمير. إنه ساعة وعي، وعي الشاب إلى أن أباه عنده ما يكفي لإعاشة كل أهل بيته. وتصور أن أباه سيقبله. ولكنه أدرك قبل ذلك أنّه أخطأ إلى السماء. الخطيئة هي جرحنا لله قبل أن تكون جرحاً للناس. ولكن الوعي مع الندم لا يكفي فقال هذا ما مفاده أنني إذا عدتُ إلى البيت الأبوي سأقول صراحة لأبي: "لست مستحقاً أن أدعى لك ابناً، فاجعلني كأحد أجرانك". الندم لا يكفي أن تعترف أمام الكاهن. مطلوب منك أن تعتذر من الذي أخطأت إليه وذلك بوضوح.

"فقام ورجع إلى أبيه"! لم يقل لوقا فقط إلى أبيه ولكنّه قال قبل ذلك قام. قام من أعماله القذرة. تخلص منها بالتوبة أي بنكران هذه الأعمال أولاً، ثم تحرك نحو والده. إذن، التوبة أولاً ثم ما تُلزمنا به من أعمال.

"وفيما هو غير بعيد رآه أبوه". كيف رآه إن لم لم يقف على مطل من البيت، على شرفة أو وراء نافذة. أي أنّه سمّر نفسه في مكان لأمله بأن ابنه عائد لا محال. بعد ذلك يقول: "فتحنّن عليه وأسرع وألقى بنفسه على عنقه وقبله". ما قال لوقا: انتظره لكي يدخل. الشوق دفعه، وربما كان شيخاً، إلى أن يخرج هو لأنّه لم يحتمل أن يؤخّر وقت القبلة. وقبل ذلك قال: "ألقى بنفسه على عنقه". كان ينتظر هذا الضم. كان يعيش بأمل هذا الالتصاق. وأخذ الوالد مع الخدم يفرح برجوع الخاطئ. لم يعاتبه. لم يوبّخه على أنّه أنفق المال. لم يذكر له أنّه عاش مع الزواني. الولد هنا. يكفي أنّه حيّ يرزق وأنّه سيتمتع بكل غنى الوالد وبحنانه. وهذا الحنان هو الذي سيحس به الفتى ويحس أنّه دواء لقلبه المجروح ولم تكن الملدّات دواء.

"لأنّ ابني كان ميتاً فعاش وضرّاً فوجد". هذا القارئ لكلمة الله كان قد تعلّم منها أن الخطيئة موت وأنّ الوجود عودة عن الضلال. ثم كانت الفرحة مع الغناء والرقص وذبح العجل المسمّن. وهذا فرح في السماء وعند الملائكة.

لن أتكلّم عن الابن البار الذي حسد أخاه. هذا تذكير من السيد أننا مدعوون إلى محبة الخطاة وأن يعودوا وقد يصيرون أفضل من الأبرار. هذا المثل الذي سُمّي مثل الابن الشاطر عند شارحيه مع أن هناك ابنين هو في الحقيقة مثل الأب الشفوق الذي يغفر دائماً للعائدين إليه لأنّه يحبّهم مجاناً.

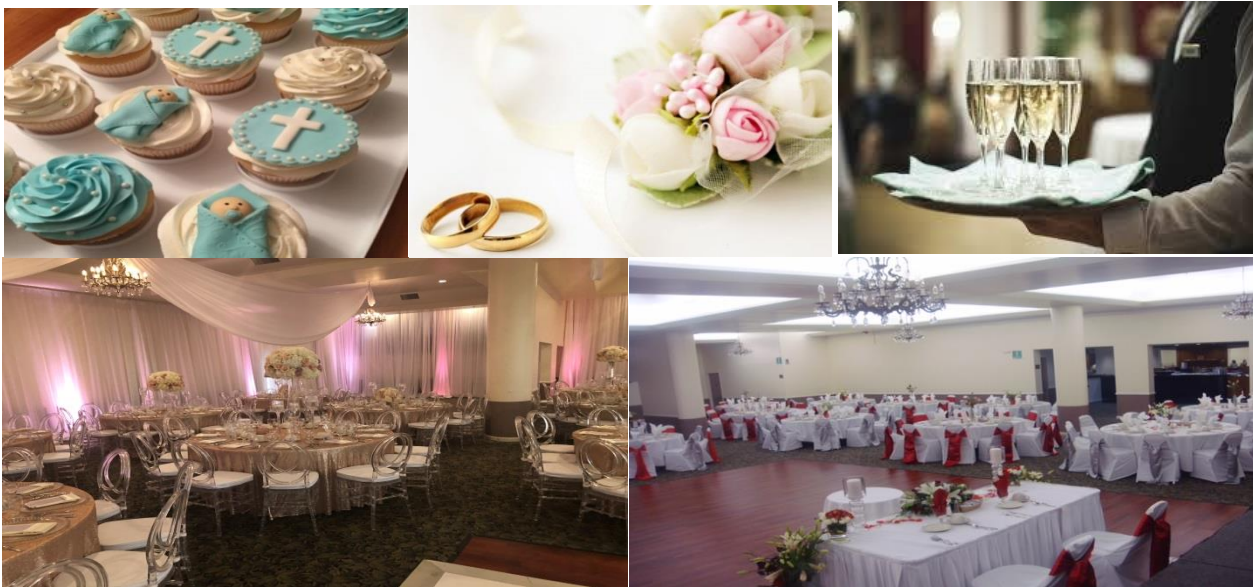
هذه القراءة وهي الثانية من موسم التريودي الذي يهيئنا للصيام المبارك تدفعنا إلى أن نعي حسنات الصيام وجمال التوبة فيه.

المطران جاورجيوس



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