



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 Beatitude **Patriarch JOHN X**, Patriarch

of Antioch and All of East

Pastor, V. Rev. **Fr. George Baalbaki**

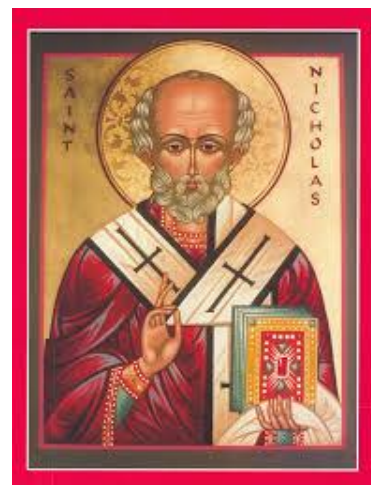
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Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Sub-Dn. **Tariq Rantisi**

Parish Council Chairman: **Salim Qaru**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Azar Azar**



Sunday, September 17, 2023

Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross

الأحد بعد عيد رفع الصليب

SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES

We would like to offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to the **Entire Lama, Batarse and Shami Family**, especially **Nizar & Georgette Lama, Naifeh Abdallah Batarse, John & Jamilah Shami, Lizzy Lama Halteh & Families** on the falling asleep of our dear brother in Christ + **Bishir Antone Lama** in Santiago Chile.

May His Memory be Eternal!



MEMORIAL SERVICES



Memorial service for the servant of God, +**Bishir Antone Lama** will be held this Sunday, offered by the **Lama, Batarse and Shami Families**.

May His Memory be Eternal!

PROCESSION OF THE HOLY CROSS:

The Procession of the Holy Cross will take place at the end of the Divine Liturgy this Sunday. The flowers are offered in loving memory of +**Bishir Antone Lama**, donated by **Naifeh Abdallah Batarse**. *May his Memory be Eternal!*

THE EPISTLE: Galatians. (2:16-20)

Brethren, knowing that a person is not justified by the works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? God forbid! For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me.

الرسالة: غلاطية

يا إخوة، إذ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَا يُبَرِّرُ بِأَعْمَالِ الْنَامُوسِ، بَلْ إِنَّمَا بِالْإِيمَانِ بِيَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ. أَمَّا نَحْنُ أَيْضاً بِيَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ لَكِي نُبَرِّرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ بِالْمَسِيحِ لَا بِأَعْمَالِ الْنَامُوسِ، إِذْ لَا يُبَرِّرُ بِأَعْمَالِ الْنَامُوسِ أَحَدٌ مِنْ دَوَى الْجَسَدِ. فَإِنْ كُنَّا وَنَحْنُ طَالِبُونَ التَّبَرِيرَ بِالْمَسِيحِ وَجَدْنَا نَحْنُ أَيْضاً خُطَاةَ، أَفَيَكُونُ الْمَسِيحُ إِذَنْ خَادِماً لِلْخَطِيئَةِ؟ حَاشَى. فَإِنِّي إِنِ عُدْتُ أَبْنِي مَا قَدْ هَدَمْتُ، أَجْعَلُ نَفْسِي مُتَعَدِّياً. لَأَتِي بِالنَامُوسِ مُتً لِلنَامُوسِ لَكِي أَحْيَا لَلَّهِ. مَعَ الْمَسِيحِ صُلِبْتُ، فَأَحْيَا، لَا أَنَا، بَلِ الْمَسِيحُ يَحْيَا فِيَّ. وَمَا لِي مِنَ الْحَيَاةِ فِي الْجَسَدِ، أَنَا أَحْيَا فِي إِيْمَانِ ابْنِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَحَبَّنِي، وَبَدَّلَ نَفْسَهُ عَنِّي.

THE GOSPEL: Mark. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

١ الإنجيل: مرقس

قَالَ الرَّبُّ: "مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَّبِعَنِي، فَلْيَكْفُرْ بِنَفْسِهِ وَيَحْمِلْ صَلِيبَهُ وَيَتَّبِعْنِي. لِأَنَّ مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَ نَفْسَهُ يُهْلِكُهَا، وَمَنْ أَهْلَكَ نَفْسَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي وَمِنْ أَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ يُخَلِّصُهَا. فَإِنَّهُ مَاذَا يَنْتَفِعُ الْإِنْسَانُ لَوْ رَجَعَ الْعَالَمُ كُلُّهُ وَخَسِرَ نَفْسَهُ؟ أَمْ مَاذَا يُعْطِي الْإِنْسَانُ فِدَاءً عَنْ نَفْسِهِ؟ لِأَنَّ مَنْ يَسْتَحْيِي بِي وَبِكَلَامِي فِي هَذَا الْجِيلِ الْفَاسِقِ الْخَاطِي، يَسْتَحْيِي بِهِ ابْنُ الْبَشَرِ مَتَى آتَى فِي مَجْدٍ أَبِيهِ مَعَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ الْقَدِيسِينَ." وَقَالَ لَهُمْ: "الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنَّ قَوْماً مِنْ الْقَائِمِينَ هَهُنَا لَا يَذُوقُونَ الْمَوْتَ، حَتَّى يَرَوْا مَلَكُوتَ اللَّهِ قَدْ آتَى بِقُوَّةٍ."

ALTAR CANDLE OFFERING:

✠ Offered by **Michael Habeeb** in everlasting remembrance of dearest and most beloved
+**Salma (Sally) Habeeb**, the "Elbee" in the lives of her family and friends.

May her beautiful Memory be Eternal!

Holy Bread of Oblation

✠ Offered by **David Hanhan and his family**, in loving memory of his mother
Afdokia Hanhan and his son **Joseph David Hanhan**.

May Their Memory Be Eternal!

CHURCH ANNUAL FESTIVALS:

- Holy Virgin Mary (West Sacramento, Fr. Paul Baba): **September 16th**
- Archangel Michael & St Mercurius Orthodox Church (Redwood City, Fr. Bishoy William):
September 16th & 17th
- St. James Orthodox Church (Milpitas, Fr. Jeries Hanna): **September 15th - 17th**
- St. John the Evangelist (Orinda, Fr. Nicholas Borzghol): **September 23-24th**
- **St. Nicholas Church (San Francisco, Fr. George Baalbaki): October 7th-8th**

LADIES:

Thank you to the ladies that came and helped with our meat pie workshop.

God Bless you all!

Please be on the lookout for our next workshop!

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS:

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH CHOIR: We are looking for men and women who would be interested in singing with the choir on Sundays. There would be a 30 minute rehearsal downstairs before Divine Liturgy. If interested, please contact Fr. George or Theresa Cardinale, the choir director at theresacardinale@hotmail.com

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH ANNUAL FESTIVAL CAR RAFFLE TICKETS: Our annual car raffle tickets with a grand prize of a brand new Tesla is back! \$50 Per ticket. Please contact Elias Batshon (650) 580-7185 to purchase.

ST NICHOLAS ANNUAL FOOD FESTIVAL: Save the date! October 7th-8th!

TREE OF LIFE: 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 (415) 648-5200.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF 2023:

November 18th	St. Nicholas Annual Thanksgiving Family Night
December 10th	Parish Council Elections
December 23rd	St. Nicholas Christmas Party

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh Sermon on The Cross

We have been keeping these days the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. There is a passage in the Gospel in which the Lord says to us, "No one has greater love than he who gives his life for his neighbour". And these words resolve the antinomy between the horror of the Cross and the glory of it, between death and the Resurrection. There is nothing more glorious, more awe-inspiring and wonderful than to love and to be loved. And to be loved of God with all the life, with all the death of the Only-Begotten Son, and to love one another at the cost of all our life and, if necessary, of our death is both tragedy but mainly victory. In the Canon of the Liturgy we say, "Holy, most holy art Thou and Thine Only-Begotten Son and Thy Holy Spirit! Holy and most holy art Thou because Thou hast so loved Thy world that Thou hast given Thine Only-Begotten Son that those who will believe in Him do not perish but have life eternal, Who hath come and hath fulfilled all that was appointed for our sakes, and in the night when He was betrayed" no!" when He gave Himself up, He took bread, and brake it and gave it to His disciples ..."

This is the divine love. At times one can give one's own life more easily than offer unto death the person whom one loves beyond all; and this is what God, our Father has done. But it does not make less the sacrifice of Him who is sent unto death for the salvation of one person or of the whole world.

And so when we think of the Cross we must think of this strangely inter-twined mystery of tragedy and of victory. The Cross, an instrument of infamous death, of punitive death to which criminals were doomed, because Christ's death was that of an innocent, and because this death was a gift of self in an act of love" becomes victory.

This is why Saint Paul could say, "It is no longer I, it is Christ Who lives in me." Divine love filled him to the brim and therefore there was no room for any other thought or feeling, any other approach to anyone apart from love, a love that gave itself unreservedly, love sacrificial, love crucified, but love exulting in the joy of life.

And when we are told in to-day's Gospel, Turn away from yourself, take up your Cross, Follow Me' (St Mark VIII: 34)" we are not called to something dark and frightening; we are told by God: Open yourself to love! Do not remain a prisoner of your own self-centredness. Do not be, in the words of Theophane the Recluse, like a shaving of wood which is rolled around its own emptiness. Open yourself up! Look" there is so much to love, there are so many to love! There is such an infinity of ways in which love can be experienced, and fulfilled and accomplished. Open yourself and love" because this is the way of the Cross! Not the way which the two criminals trod together with Christ to be punished for their crimes; but the wonderful way in which giving oneself unreservedly, turning away from self, existing only for the other, loving with all one's being so that one exists only for the sake of the other" this is the Cross and the glory of the Cross.

So, when we venerate the Cross, when we think of Christ's crucifixion, when we hear the call of Christ to deny ourselves" and these words simply mean: turn away from yourself! Take up your cross!" we are called to open ourselves to the flood of Love Divine, that is both death to ourselves and openness to God and to each and to all.

In the beginning of the Gospel of Saint John we are told, "And the Word was with God"; in the Greek it says "Godwards". The Word, the Son had no other love, no other thought, no other movement but towards the Beloved One, giving Himself to Him Who gave Himself perfectly to Him.

Let us learn the glory of crucified Love, of this Love sacrificial which is in the words of the Old Testament, stronger than death, stronger than hell, stronger than all things because it is Divine Life conquering us and poured through us onto all those who need to be loved in order to come to Life, to believe in Love and themselves to become children of Love, children of Light, inherit the Life eternal.

تلميذ المسيح وحمل الصليب في ورشة الحياة

في الأحد الذي يلي احتفالنا بعيد رفع الصليب، تعلّمنا الكنيسة عبر القراءة الإنجيليّة أن نطرح على أنفسنا خمسة أسئلة تساعدنا الإجابة عنها على حمل صليب المسيح والافتداء به. فما هي معالم طريق المتّلمذ على الإنجيل في حمل صليبه؟ السؤال الأوّل، كيف نتعاطى مع أنفسنا ومع العالم؟ يقودنا الجواب إلى أن نفحص أنفسنا كيف نفتدي الوقت وفي أيّ مشروع نستثمره. فهل مشروعنا هو ملكوت أرضيّ أم الملكوت الذي وعدنا به الله؟ في أيّ مشروع منهما نستثمر وقتنا ومواهبنا وطاقاتنا؟ في أيّ منهما نضع أحلامنا وتطلّعاتنا ومخطّطاتنا؟ فإن ابتغيّا ملكوت الله، كان علينا أن نسير في معالمه والذي يتزيّن بالتوبة إلى الله، بالمصالحة مع الإخوة، بالتعاضد مع القريب، وبالبذل بصمت. أمّا المشروع الآخر، فمبنيّ على نقيض الأوّل، أي على الأنانيّة والمصلحة والتسلّط وتمجيد الذات والتملّك.

السؤال الثاني، ما هو ميزان الربح والخسارة بحسب الإنجيل؟ الإنسان الحكيم هو من يطلب في الحياة معطيها وما يتزيّن به من حقّ وحياة وخلود وبرّ وصلاح، ويتخلّى في هذا السبيل عمّا هو وهم وموت وقتيّ وفانٍ. يساعدنا ميزان الإنجيل على اكتساب الحكمة الضروريّة والحرّيّة الحقّ في الاختيار بين طريق الله وطريق الشيطان، بين الحياة الأبديّة والحياة العالميّة. هكذا نميّز بين المعطي (الله) وعطيّته (العالم) ونؤثّر أن نلتصق بالأوّل، ولا يأسرنا الثاني. فالشركة مع الله نتيجتها الربح الأسمى! السؤال الثالث، ما علاقتنا بالعالم: أهو مجال ازدرأ أم مجال بشارة؟ الله لم يزدّر العالم، فهو وضعه ليشتغل مجالاً لشركتنا فيه، لتسبيحه على أعماله ومحبّته وتدبيره، وتمجيده بالأعمال الصالحة. العالم هو المجال المعطى للإنسان لينمو في الله. فإن أغرقه العالم وشنته عن الله بات العالم خطراً عليه، ولكن عندما يحوّل العالم إلى مذبح يقدّم عليه نفسه وهيكل يستدعي فيه نعمة الروح القدس، ساعته يصير العالم مجالاً للبشارة وليحتضنه الله بتدبيره.

السؤال الرابع، ما معنى أن نستحي بالربّ وبكلامه؟ هذا سؤال يجرّنا بالعمق. هل من الممكن أن نصل إلى حالة نعيش فيها على أساس أن يسوع لا يشكّل بالنسبة إلينا من نفتخر به، أو من يعلي شأننا، أو من هو أهل للثقة والاتكال عليه، أو من هو إلهاً ومخلصنا؟ يبدو أن الخطر كامن في أن نؤثّر طريقة حياة وحكمة غير تلك التي يقدّمها انكشفت بعيش الإنجيل في عمقه وعرفت الكنيسة حقيقته بالخبرة المتراكمة، جيلاً بعد جيل.

السؤال الخامس، ما هي المفارقة بين الجيل الفاسق الخاطي والجيل الذي لا يذوق الموت وسيرى ملكوت الله آتياً بقوة؟ قابل يسوع، في حديثه مع تلاميذه، بين جيلين، وعاین واقعهما، من جهة، وثمارهما، من جهة أخرى، وذلك من منظار علاقتهما بالله ووجود الإيمان في حياة هؤلاء وأولئك وفاعليّته وحقيقته. هذا يفتح مداركنا على فهم القصد الكامن في دعوة المسيح لتلاميذه عبر العصور: «من أراد أن يأتي ورائي فليترك نفسه ويحمل صليبه ويتبعني» (مرقس ٨: ٣٤). بات بإمكان التلميذ أن يعاین فاعليّة حكمة الإنجيل في شقّ الطريق نحو الله (نكران الذات-البذل)، والسير فيه (حمل الصليب-الصبر)، والبلوغ إلى نهايته (اتباع المسيح-الشركة مع الله).

هلاً تأملنا الحكمة الكامنة في هذه الدعوة وواجهنا أنفسنا في مرآتها وتلقّفنا الربح الكامن فيها؟ هلاً شجعنا بعضنا بعضاً في هذا الدرب الذي يتطلّب بذلاً وصبراً والتصاقاً بالربّ دائماً؟ هلاً شكرنا كلّ أب أو أم أو مربّ أو معلّم أو قريب أنار دربنا حتّى لا نخسر أنفسنا، بل نربحها للمسيح؟ ألا بارك الربّ جميع الذين هم مثال صالح لسواهم، والذين يسبّرون في إثرهم ويتعلّمون من كيسهم ومن خبرة سواهم في حمل صليب المسيح.

+سلوان متروبوليت جبيل والبترون وما يليهما



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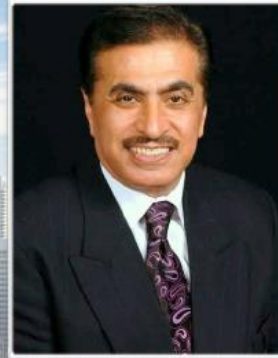


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