

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**

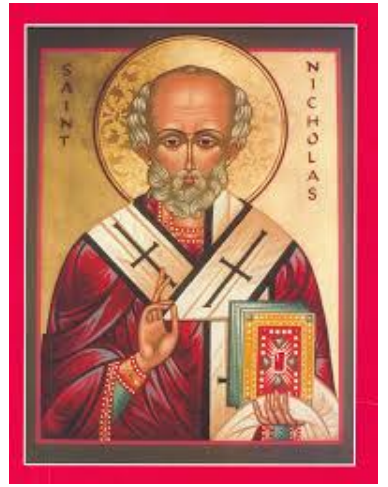
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Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Sub-Dn. **Tariq Rantisi**

Parish Council Chairman: **Salim Qaru**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Azar Azar**



**Sunday, September 3, 2023**

### **SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES**

We would like to offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to the **Entire Dabit and Shatara Families** on the falling asleep of our dear sister in Christ, + **Nabiha Shatara Dabit**.

*May Her Memory be Eternal!*



### **MEMORIAL SERVICES**



3 and 9 Day Memorial Service for the Handmaiden of God, +**Nabiha Shatara Dabit**  
will be held this Sunday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, offered by her family.

*May Her Memory be Eternal!*

### **THE EPISTLE: 1 Corinthians (16:13-24)**

Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, and be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

### **الرسالة: 1: كورنثوس**

يا إخوة، اسهروا، اثنبوا على الإيمان، كونوا رجالاً، تشددوا. ولتكن أموركم كلها بالمحبة. وأطلب إليكم أيها الإخوة: تعرفون أن استيفاناس وفرثاناس وأكانكس هم باكورة أخائية وقد خصصوا أنفسهم لخدمة القديسين. فعليكم، أن تخضعوا أنتم أيضاً لمثل هؤلاء ولكل من يعاون ويتعب. إني فرح بحضور استيفاناس وفرثانوس وأخايكوس فقد قاموا مقامكم في غيابكم، فأراحوا روحي وأرواحكم. فقدرتوا أمثالهم. تسلم عليكم كنائس آسية. تسلم عليكم في الرب كثيراً أكيبلا وبرسيلة والكنيسة التي في بيتيها. تسلم عليكم جميع الإخوة. سلموا بعضكم على بعض بقبلة مقدسة. السلام بيدي أنا بولس. إن كان أحد لا يحب ربنا يسوع المسيح فليكن مفروراً. أما. نعمة ربنا يسوع المسيح معكم. محبتي لكم جميعاً في المسيح يسوع. آمين.

## THE GOSPEL: Matthew. (21:33-42)

The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

### الإنجيل: متى

قال الرب هذا المثل: إنسان رب بيت غرس كرماً وحوطه بسياج، وحفر فيه معصرة، وبنى بزرجاً، وسلمه إلى عملة وسافر. فلما قرب أوان الثمر، أرسل عبده إلى العملة ليأخذوا ثمره فأخذ العملة عبده، وجلدوا بعضاً، وقتلوا بعضاً، ورجموا بعضاً. فأرسل عبداً آخرين أكثر من الأولين، فصنعوا بهم كذلك. وفي الآخر، أرسل إليهم ابنه قائلاً "سيهابون ابني". فلما رأى العملة الابن قالوا فيما بينهم "هذا هو الوارث. هلم نقتله ونستولي على ميراثه." فأخذوه وأخرجوه خارج الكرّم وقتلوه. فمضى رب الكرّم ماذا يفعل بأولئك العملة؟ فقالوا له: إنه يهلك أولئك الأعداء أزداء هلاك، ويسلم الكرّم إلى عملة آخرين يؤذون له الثمر في أوانه. فقال لهم يسوع: أما قرأتم قط في الكتب إن الحبر الذي رذله البناءون هو صار رأساً للزاوية. من قبل الرب كان ذلك وهو عجيب في أعيننا؟

### 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!*

### LADIES:

It is that time of the year again and we are getting ready for our 2023 festival! On **Saturday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>**, the ladies will be making the "kibbeh". The cooking will be at the church and will **start at 10AM**. All ladies are encouraged to come and help.

*Your help is greatly appreciated.*

**\*\*\* Thank you to the ladies that came to our spinach pie workshop \*\*\***

*May God bless you and your families.*

### CHURCH ANNUAL FESTIVALS:

- Church of the Redeemer (Los Altos Hills, Fr. Samer Yousif ): **September 9th & 10th**
- Holy Virgin Mary (West Sacramento, Fr. Paul Baba): **September 16<sup>th</sup>**
- 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 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>**

## **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](mailto: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 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>!

**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:**

<b>November 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>St. Nicholas Annual Thanksgiving Family Night</b>
<b>December 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Parish Council Elections</b>
<b>December 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>St. Nicholas Christmas Party</b>

## **Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh**

### **BRIDAL FEAST**

Time and again we hear this parable of Christ. If we only received it deep in our hearts, if we only saw ourselves as we are depicted in it, both to our shame and to our glory, to our hope! How many of us are those who are described there, are the people who could say when they are called by God - not to do anything in particular, but simply to be with Him, to share His joy, to be partakers of the grace - how many of us would say to Him (and we do, but are we aware of it?): Lord, I belong to the earth; didn't You take me out of the earth, have I not been fashioned out of the dust? The earth is my mother, the earth is the closest thing to me, I belong to it! Forgetting that indeed, we belong to it; we are taken out of it, fashioned out of it, but we shall return to it as dust, unless there is the other dimension that has grown in us, unless we realize, not only with our mind - with all our being, that we were indeed made out of earth, but by the powerful, the creative word of God, and that we belong to Him Who spoke this word, we are akin to Him more than we are to this earth, if that is possible. We feel as though we have set roots deep, deep into the earth, as though we derived from it all that we are: our life - yes, called out of it; but also all that it produces, beauty and joy, and everything; and it is so easy to forget that we are called to be more than just the dust of this earth!

And then, how often do we think, there is no time for me to spend in the intimacy of God, to be with Him, just to be, just to be happy, to be together with Him: haven't I got a task? It may be something that I feel is important! It may even be something that we imagine is important to God - is there time for me to be with Him? We may be with Him later, one day, when all things are fulfilled, or when death has severed our fetters, our link with the earth and with what we imagine is our task. And our tasks are endless; one or another of the divines of the past had said that the image of the five yokes of oxen indeed speaks of the work we feel we must fulfill; but also perhaps, do they not represent our five senses? Do they not represent the five senses which we use continuously, in all directions, anarchically, un-purposefully being by them blinded to the

invisible? Isn't it true that the demon of the noonday is this moment when everything created, all the visible becomes so intensely, powerfully perceptible to us and blinds us to the invisible? And then, the last man said, I can't share your joy, oh Lord, I have my own. I have taken a bride, my heart is full of rejoicing! Can I turn away from my joy, forget it for one moment, let go of it and share yours? Let this joy of mine become every day's life; loose its newness perhaps, and then I will share yours.

Isn't that the various images which depict us? And what can God do about it? He offers Himself; He wants to share with us all there is: yes, even this earth, but on His terms; to use an image of Saint Ephraim of Syria, to make for us this very earth a sacrament of initiation: a sacrament, a divine act by which He Himself is disclosed, and the means by which He discloses Himself become holy, sacred, shining with glory divine... Yes, He wants us to fulfill a task on earth, but that this task should be what He is doing, make us co-workers with Him, not people sent away from His presence, but people who had become so perfectly one with Him that what we do is what He does and what we are is what He is, ultimately, and that His joy should be ours, the joy that cannot be contained in our hearts, so great it is - it fills the heart of God.

But isn't there a way? Yes! Become like the people to whom the King send His servants: they were lame, they were beggars, they were in rags, they were the scum of the earth; but because they were deprived of everything, their longing was for all; and "all" was not simply the little things of the earth that seem so great to us, but something greater: the Kingdom of God, where all should be love, beauty, truth, justice they have longed all their lives; and it is to them the Angels of God, the servants of the King were sent!

What about us? Couldn't we become, each of us, one of these people? Aren't we as blind as the blind, as lame as the lame, as poor as the poorest? Why not turn to God and receive the earth, and our task, and all that can fill our life and our hearts on God's own terms, with Him? And this is what He is offering us on this day of the Nativity which we will keep next week; the day when He became one of us to show us that while being human totally, perfectly, unreservedly human, and yet, totally pervaded with divinity, we can become one with Him, partakers of the divine nature, partakers of His cross and of His glory. Let us reflect on this; let us become the lame, and the poor, and the blind, and the hungry; and then as the Beatitude tells us we shall be fed.

## المسيح حجر الزاوية

«الحجر الذي رذله البناؤون هو صار رأساً للزاوية». بعد أن حكى المخلص مثل رب الكرم الذي أرسل عبيده ليأخذوا ثمر الكرم فقتلهم العملة ثم أرسل لهم ابنه فقتلوه أيضاً، ذكر هذه الآية (مزمور ١١٧ : ٢٢). والنبي داود لما قال هذا قديماً كان يعني بحجر الزاوية الله نفسه، فأخذ يسوع هذا القول المتعلق بالله وطبقه على نفسه وجعل نفسه حجر الزاوية، ذاك الحجر الذي رفضه اليهود وألقوه جانباً.

نعلم ان بناء العقد التقليدي كان يُشيد بحجارة تُثبت صفّاً صفّاً أي يوضع الحجر بجانب الحجر وليس بينهما لحمة، بل تُسند الحجارة بالخشب حتى تصل إلى أعلى السقف، إلى فجوة لا بدّ أن يملأها حجر يُسمّى حجر الزاوية. وكان في القرى قديماً معلّم بناء يعرف وحده أن يختار الحجر المناسب فينحته بشكل صليب ويضعه في الفجوة، فإذا التصق التصاقاً حقيقياً بالحجارة التي بقربه شكّل «قفلًا» للبناء بكامله. هكذا تتماسك حجارة البناء كلها مترابطة بحجر واحد في أعلى السقف. أخذ يسوع هذه الصورة وقال عن نفسه انه حجر الزاوية. ونحن، كما يقول بطرس الرسول: «كونوا أنتم أيضاً مبنيين كحجارة حيّة بيّنا روحياً...» (١ بطرس ٢ : ٥). نحن المؤمنون بالمسيح دُعينا هيكل الله ومعنى ذلك اننا ننزل من المسيح ونتماسك به، وكل منّا يتمسك بأخيه إذا تمسك بالمسيح. أي إذا كان كلّ منّا متحدًا بالمسيح يكون بالوقت نفسه متعلقًا بأخيه وخادماً له. نحن أعضاء الكنيسة ليس بيننا مناصرة عصبية، لا يجمعنا تحزّب ولا عائلة من لحم ودم. ننتمي إلى أجناس وألوان مختلفة وإلى مدن مختلفة، ولكل منا تربيته وصادقاته ومزاجه، ولكل منا منافعه في الأرض، ولكننا نتجاوزها جميعاً حتى نصبح عائلة الله الواحدة حسبما قال الرسول بولس: «رب واحد، إيمان واحد، معمودية واحدة، آب واحد لكل وعلى الكل وفي الكل» (أفسس ٤ : ٥).

ولهذا لا ننظر في كنيستنا إلى ما يُفرّق بين الفرد والفرد، لكننا ننظر إلى ما يجمع بين الإنسان والإنسان. لقد اشترينا جميعاً بثمن وهو الدم الإلهي الذي يجري في عروقنا، ودم المسيح الذي نتناوله من الكأس المقدسة يجمعنا في عائلة واحدة. قال الرسول بولس في رسالة اليوم: «إن كان أحدٌ لا يحبّ ربّنا يسوع المسيح فليكن مفروّزاً»، أي فليكن مقطوعاً من عضوية الكنيسة. لم يقل الرسول بولس ان من انتسب بالهوية إلى المسيحية كان مسيحياً، ولم يقل ان من اكتفى بمعموديته يكون مسيحياً. المسيحي هو من أحبّ يسوع المسيح بإخلاص فائق وطبّق تعاليمه وسار وفقاً لوصاياه. ثم يضيف بولس عبارة آرامية «ماران آتا»، وهذه عبارة آرامية تعني «الرب ياتي». الرب يأتي بيننا في الذبيحة الإلهية بالجسد والدم، بالمحبة المبذولة. وطالما ان الرب قد جاء إلينا ويجيء بحب يقين، لا نستطيع الا أن نحب ربنا يسوع المسيح وان نستند اليه لكونه حجر الزاوية. به نصير إخوة في عائلة واحدة. وإذا كان الرب يسوع هو الحياة فلا نستطيع ان نفكر في شيء آخر. الأكل والشرب والمعيشة كلها أشياء جميلة لا بد منها ولكنها جانبية إذا قيسَت بيسوع المسيح. هو حياتنا.

**المطران جاورجيوس**



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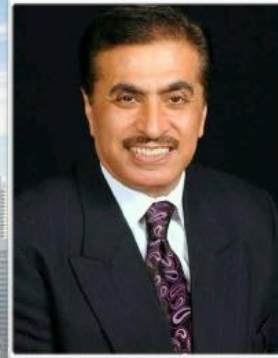


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