

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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Sub-Dn. Ilyan Baalbaki

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Parish Council Chairman: Salim Qaru

Parish Council Vice Chairman: Azar Azar

Sunday, January 14, 2024

House Blessing

As the tradition of our Orthodox Church, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki started his visitation for house blessings. If you would like the priest to bless your home, please call the church office 415-648-5200 or Fr. George's cellphone: 586-214-4428 to schedule a visit.

THE EPISTLE: Ephesians. (4:7-13)

Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it is said, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

الرسالة أفسس

يا إخوة، لِكُلِّ واحدٍ مِنَّا أُعْطِيَتْ النِّعْمَةُ عَلَى مِقْدَارِ مَوْهَبَةِ الْمَسِيحِ. فَلِذَلِكَ يَقُولُ "لَمَّا صَعِدَ إِلَى الْعُلَى سَبَى سَبْيًا وَأَعْطَى النَّاسَ عَطَايَا." فَكُونُوا صَاعِدِينَ، هَلْ هُوَ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ نَزَلَ أَوَّلًا إِلَى أَسْفَلِ الْأَرْضِ؟ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي نَزَلَ، هُوَ الَّذِي صَعِدَ أَيْضًا فَوْقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ كُلِّهَا لِيَمْلَأَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ. وَهُوَ قَدْ أَعْطَى أَنْ يَكُونَ الْبَعْضُ رُسُلًا، وَالْبَعْضُ أَنْبِيَاءَ، وَالْبَعْضُ مُبَشِّرِينَ، وَالْبَعْضُ رُعَاةً، وَمُعَلِّمِينَ، لِأَجْلِ تَكْمِيلِ الْقَدِيسِينَ، وَلِعَمَلِ الْخِدْمَةِ، وَبُنْيَانِ جَسَدِ الْمَسِيحِ إِلَى أَنْ نَنْتَهِيَ جَمِيعُنَا إِلَى وَحْدَةِ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَعْرِفَةِ ابْنِ اللَّهِ، إِلَى إِنْسَانٍ كَامِلٍ، إِلَى مِقْدَارِ قَامَةِ مِلَّةِ الْمَسِيحِ.

THE GOSPEL: Matthew. (4:12-17)

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

في ذلك الزمان، لَمَّا سَمِعَ يَسُوعُ أَنَّ يُوْحَنَّا قَدْ أُسْلِمَ، انْصَرَفَ إِلَى الْجَلِيلِ وَتَرَكَ النَّاصِرَةَ، وَجَاءَ فَسَكَنَ فِي كَفَرْنَاهُومَ الَّتِي عَلَى شَاطِئِ الْبَحْرِ فِي نَحْوِ زَبُولُونَ وَنَفْتَالِيمَ. لِيَتِمَّ مَا قِيلَ بِأَشْعِيَاءَ النَّبِيِّ الْقَائِلِ: أَرْضُ زَبُولُونَ وَأَرْضُ نَفْتَالِيمَ، طَرِيقُ الْبَحْرِ، عَبْرَ الْأُرْدُنِّ، جَلِيلُ الْأُمَمِ. الشَّعْبُ الْجَالِسُ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ أَبْصَرَ نَوْرًا عَظِيمًا، وَالْجَالِسُونَ فِي بُقْعَةِ الْمَوْتِ وَظِلَالِهِ أَشْرَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ نُورٌ. وَمُنْذُنْذِ ابْتَدَأَ يَسُوعُ يَكْرِزُ وَيَقُولُ: تَوْبُوا، فَقَدْ اقْتَرَبَ مَلَكُوتُ السَّمَاوَاتِ.

ALTAR CANDLES قناديل الهيكل

- ✠ Offered by **Mary Hanhan** for the good health of **Mimi Hanhan, Chuck, Randy Hanhan and families Nadene Msalam and family, Aho's families. God Bless and Many Years!** Also in loving memory of **Basem Hanhan, Shukri & Wadia Hanhan, Nakleh & Ellen Aho and Rimon Dabit. May their memory be eternal!**
- ✠ Offered by **Maha Dabit** for the good health of Alex, Christopher Dabit and Alexis, Emile and Baby Ramsey Nijmeh. *God Bless and Many Years!* Also in loving memory of **Rimon Dabit, Nakleh & Ellen Aho, Basem Hanhan, Iskandar & Nahil Dabit. May their memory be eternal!**
- ✠ Offered by **Afaf Dudum** in loving memory of **Tom Dudum** on the occasion of his heavenly birthday on January 14th. *May his memory be eternal!*
- ✠ Offered by the **Atwan** family in loving memory of **Basima Atwan** on the occasion of her heavenly birthday on January 13th. *May her 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!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS:

GENERAL PARISH MEETING & INSTALLATION OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS:

January 28, 2024, The main item on the agenda is to discuss and approve a budget for 2024.

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 2023 should be paid. Thank you!

2024 PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE: PLC will be held at the Westin in Tucson, AZ from July 3-7th, hosted by Holy Resurrection Church. To register, please visit

<https://www.antiochianevents.org/events/diocese-of-los-angeles-and-the-west-3/>

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.

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

Remission of sins

Very often people come to confession and repeat sins which they have confessed time and again. The priest does not know what to do with it, neither does the one who comes to confession; it seems that he simply is in the power of these sins.

I would like to remind you — not to remind you, because for most of you it is not a reminder, it is as warning — that when old age comes upon us, a moment comes when we cannot repulse, reject the thoughts that arise in us, and then we are confronted with memories that are for us a terror and a horror.

I remember an old woman who came to me and said: "I don't know what to do. I can't sleep any more, when the night comes, memories of the past surge up in me, it is always memories of evil, memories of sin, memories of ugliness, and I don't know what to do. I asked for help from the doctor; he gave me sleeping pills, but instead of curing me, they transformed the memories into delirium against which I can do nothing". I said to her: "Thank God for this". God grants us to re-live our lives time and again, not in the sense that we come back to life after death in re-incarnation, but time and again memories of the past surge up in us and claim our attention. As though God was saying to us: "This has happened in your life; this sin you have committed; these words, cruel, harsh, you have spoken to someone; you have wounded the soul of so and so. What is your attitude now? When you sinned twenty, thirty, forty years ago, you probably did not understand about life most of what you understand now. But now, enriched by years of experience, what would you do if you were transported again to that moment which comes like a delirious dream to you? What would you do? Would you say the same words? Would you do the same thing? Would you sin again in the same manner? Instead of trying to escape the memory, go back to that moment and ask yourself: "Now, enriched by the experience of many years, would I do the same? Would I speak the same words? Would I wound a person the way I did?" And if you can say with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, all your determination "No, this would be impossible now" then the sin which has come to your memory, will drop into non-existence. But until you can confess it to God and to yourself, until you can recognise it as evil and reject it with all your being, it is not a sin of the past, it has remained a sin of your present, your present day sinfulness, nothing else.

Another example comes to my mind, that of an old woman who was dying. She made a confession and I felt there was something lacking in it and I said to her: "Before I give you absolution, tell me, are you at peace with everyone?" And she said: "With every one but one person, and that person I shall never forgive" "In that case," I said, "I cannot give you absolution and I refuse to give you Communion". "But I cannot die into eternal death". "You shall, until you put right your life now, before death has come to you. I give you an hour; in an hour I will come back and you have to answer my question".

I came back an hour later; she received me with shining eyes and said: "Thank you for not being merciful to me. I rang this person whom I hated for years and we have made our peace; he is coming presently, and now I can say I have forgiven him from the bottom of my heart, with all my being". Then I gave her absolution and Communion, and having met this person, she died in peace.

I give you these thoughts and these examples because I think we ought not to wait for the hour of death, we ought not to wait until old age makes us victims of these atrocious memories, of this delirium of sin which we thought belonged to the past and which has remained to the present.

Let us reflect on this, and when we think that we will come to confession and say: "Father, I have done this and that", let us stop before we come to the confession and ask ourselves: "How is it that I have not repented? How is it that this sin is still my present condition?", ask ourselves: "Why, how has it become so powerful over me?" And then act; act passionately; act daringly to free ourselves from things small or big.

If we do not do that every time, sin emerges from the depths of our memory, of our soul, and a day will come when we are confronted with it in old age in the way in which this woman was. She got rid of it all, because she understood, but how many do not.

Let us, therefore, with all our energy, all our courage, face our past, everything in it, and cleanse it, because as long as this past is not cleansed it is our present.

May God's mercy be on us; may His light shine upon us, may His grace lead us into true repentance and into newness of life.

يوحنا السابق

في اليوم الذي يلي عيد الظهور الإلهي، نقيم ذكرى جامعة للقديس يوحنا المعمدان. تبرز شخصية يوحنا أمامنا ساحرة صداعة بأن معًا. رجل في منتهى التواضع لكي يُظهر المسيح لإسرائيل. كان يختفي ويريد أن يختفي واعتبر أن رسالته قد انتهت بمجيء ذلك العظيم المرتجى. لذلك انتهى دوره بعد أن عمّد يسوع بالماء إلى أن سُجن من أجل الحقيقة التي قالها لهيرودس.

قد نسأل لماذا استطاع أن يكون متواضعًا، وكيف تمكن من أن يحيا هذه الحياة الجديدة، كيف قدر على أن يصمد أمام الملك الظالم وأن يذهب به صموده حتى الشهادة. سرّ ذلك في أنّه كان زاهدًا بكلّ ما يملك الناس وبما يشتهي الناس. كان يوحنا يعيش وحده في الصحراء ليشير إلى أنّ وحدة الإنسان هي مع الله ولقائه مع الحقيقة. هذا يتمّ بالعيش بالفقر بلا طعام، بلا مأوى. كان يوحنا يقتات من الجراد والعسل البرّي.

أن نأكل كثيرًا يعني أننا نخشى الموت، وألا نأكل يعني أننا لا نخاف الموت. نظنّ أنّ الطعام يقينا خطر الموت. أمّا يوحنا فكان يطلب الوحدة حتى النهاية حتى حدود الجوع. زهد بكلّ ما يساورنا من أمجاد. زهد بالكهنوت وأبوه كان كاهنًا وكان الكهنوت حقًا له. وكان الكهنوت يعني آنذاك بعضًا من مجد. زهد بمجد كان يستطيع أن يناله إذ كان مقربًا من هيرودس الملك الذي كان يصغي إليه بفرح. ولأنّه كان زاهدًا بمجد البلاط الملكي كان يوبّخ الملك. ما كان يحجب ضميره بسبب الصداقة التي تربطه بالملك.

كان يوحنا يؤمن بأنّ لله حقوقًا على الناس وبأنّ عليه أن يذكّر الناس جميعًا بحقّ الله عليهم وبأنّهم جميعًا تراب. لكن من يتعاطى أمورًا كهذه يعرض نفسه ويوحنا عرض نفسه لما قال لصديقه الملك: لا يجوز لك أن تأخذ امرأة أخيك. ما كان هذا الكلام يروق للملك الزاني مع أنّه كان يُسرّ بالأقوال الأخرى التي كان يسمعها من يوحنا.

ثمّ كانت هذه الحفلة الساهرة الماجنة، وكان الملك قد دعا أكابر القوم وأكلهم وشاربهم حتى سكر، وأقسم أن يعطي الصبيّة الراقصة ما شاءت ولو كان نصف مملكته. فذهبت إلى أمّها التي طلبت رأس يوحنا على طبق. ومن بعد ذلك صار رأسه نورًا للعالمين.

هذه الميثة الكبرى، التي نعيّد لها في الكنيسة المقدّسة في ٢٩ آب، كانت تهيئة لموت المخلّص. يوحنا رجل عاش قبل يسوع وكأنّه مخلص، لذلك جعلت الكنيسة عيدًا له في ثاني يوم من ظهور الربّ يسوع كأنّه هو أيضًا ظهر بضياء. المطران جاورجيوس



Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church

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868 Shotwell St, San Francisco



2844 21st St, San Francisco
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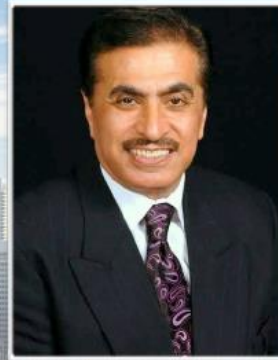


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