The After-Feast and Sunday after the Nativity of Christ Commemoration of Joseph the Betrothed, David the Prophet and King, and James the Brother of the Lord

Sunday, December 30, 2018

Tone 6; Eothinon 9

Apolytikion of the Resurrection (Tone 4)

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Apolytikion of the Nativity (Tone 4)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn there from to worship Thee, O Sun of justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.

Apolytikion of the Sunday after the Nativity (Tone 2)

Proclaim, O Joseph, to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonders; for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; for with the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

Apolytikion of our Patron, Michael the Archangel (Tone 2)

O ye foremost of the heavenly hosts, we beseech thee, though we are unworthy, pray that we may be encompassed with a shadow of thine unearthly glory; preserving us who kneel and cry endlessly: Deliver us from oppression since ye are the prince of the highest powers.

Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent in essence; the earth offereth the cave to the unapproachable One; the angels with the shepherds glorify Him; and the Magi with the star travel on their way; for a new child hath been born for our sakes, God before the ages.

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (Sunday after the Nativity of Christ)

God is wondrous in His saints. Bless God in the congregations.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (1:11-19)

Brethren, I would have you know that the Gospel, which was preached by me, is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the Church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people; so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me, in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

THE GOSPEL (Sunday after the Nativity of Christ)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew (2:13-23)

When the wise men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him." And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region, who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she

refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child's life are dead." And he rose and took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

The Synaxarion

On December 30 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate Virgin-martyr Anysia of Thessalonica; Martyr Philetairos of Nicomedia; Venerable Leon the Archimandrite; Venerable-martyr Gideon of Karakallou monastery on Athos; and Makarios, Metropolitan of Moscow.

On the Sunday after the Nativity of Christ, we commemorate the holy and just Ancestors of God: Joseph the Betrothed of the Holy Virgin, our Lady the Theotokos; James the Brother of the Lord and the First Bishop of Jerusalem; and David the Prophet and King.

Verses

I honor Joseph, the Betrothed of the Virgin, who to be her protector was alone chosen.

Thou art a carpenter's son, but also the brother of the Lord that built all with a word, O blest James.

What shall I say, seeing that the Lord testifieth, as a man after Mine own heart, I have found David.

David committed adultery and murder, yet God forgave him and glorified him above all the kings of Israel. He gave him the great grace to compose the most beautiful penitential prayers (the Psalms) and to prophesy the coming of Christ. Thus, God was not ashamed to take upon Himself flesh from David's seed. God designated Joseph to protect the Most-holy Virgin, and imparted to him great honor in the plan of the salvation of mankind. Although Joseph was of the royal lineage of David, he was a humble carpenter in Nazareth. At the age of 80, Joseph took the Most-holy Virgin from the Temple in Jerusalem and into his home. He entered into rest at the age of 110. The Apostle James is called the "Brother of

the Lord" because he was the son of the righteous Joseph the Betrothed. James greatly loved Jesus and, according to tradition, he traveled to Egypt with the Most-holy Virgin and Joseph, when Herod sought to slay the newborn King.

By their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

A Note Regarding Holy Communion

Since we understand Communion to mean that we have all things in common, sharing an identical Faith, *only* those who are members of the Orthodox Church and who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and recent Confession may participate in Holy Communion. (We invite all, however, to partake of the blessed bread which is distributed at the dismissal.) Please see the Pastor for inquiries on how to become a member.

OFFERINGS

The Holy Bread is being offered and the Coffee Hour hosted this morning by Ramez & Rima Hage on the occasion of their sons's birthdays: Teddy (December 26) and Steven (January 4); praying for their continued good health, success and happiness; also in memory of Rima's mother, Blanche Barghash (+29 December, 2014). Memory eternal.

The Holy Bread for the Feast of the Holy Nativity was offered by John & Emily Apostolou with prayers for the continued health of their family and in memory of their departed loved ones.

Special offerings and requests for prayer are being made . . .

by Michael C. Srour for Tony & Madonna (Zouein) Karam, on the occasion of their marriage (December 29) in Byblos, Lebanon.

May God grant them many years.

for the recovery of Homer Valle by Michael Malouf

in memory of Dr. Edward Deeb (+23 years) by Jeanice Rose Deeb, Gina Deeb, Edward & Louise, Edward George & Amy, and Elias Deeb.

Memory eternal.

for the continued recovery of Edward Deeb, Jr., by Jeanice Rose Deeb, Gina Deeb, Edward & Louise, Edward George & Amy, and Elias Deeb.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December is "St. Ignatius Month" in the Antiochian Archdiocese We thank the members of the Order for their participation in our services this month. Reading the epistle this morning is Richard Ajalat. For more information on The Order visit their website: www.orderofstignatius.org.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

The Circumcision of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ and the Feast of St. Basil the Great (New Year's Day)

Monday, December 31st (New Year's Eve) – <u>Great Vespers</u>, 5 p.m. with prayers for the New Year

Tuesday, January 1st (New Year's Day) – <u>Orthros</u>, 8:45 a.m.,

Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. with prayers for the New Year

THE GREAT FEAST OF HOLY THEOPHANY (EPIPHANY)

Friday, January 4th – The Ninth Royal hour, 4:30 p.m. followed by <u>Daily Vespers</u> of the *Paramon* (Eve) of Theophany 5 p.m.

Saturday, January 5th - The Eve of Theophany (*Paramon*) [observed as a day of strict fasting] <u>Daily Orthros</u>, 9 a.m., <u>Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom</u>* 10 a.m. <u>Great Vesper of Holy Theophany</u>, 5 p.m.

Sunday, January 6th – The Feast of Holy Theophany
<u>Festal Orthros</u>, 8:30 a.m. followed by <u>The Great Sanctification of Water</u> immediately followed by <u>The Festal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great</u>*

* Services with Holy Communion

2019 Offering Boxes Now Available

If you use our offering envelopes each week for your pledge, your box is now available in the narthex with your name label.

A New Sign-up Board for Coffee Hour Hosts is Now Available Please see or contact Cindy Tamoush to host an open date for the upcoming Coffee Hours.

Note to Coffee Hour hosts: coffee and paper goods will be provided each week.

Holy Bread Offering List Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Jan 01 - open

Jan 06 - open (Holy Theophany) Jan 06 - open

Jan 13 - the Azzam and Hallak families Jan 13 - the Azzam and Hallak families

Jan 20 - open Jan 20 - open

Jan 27 - Katrina & John Tambouras Jan 27 - The Antiochian Women

Please contact Fr. Timothy (818/219-3761; pastor@stmichaelvannuys.org) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread and Cindy Tamoush at: (818-345-4363; famtam5@socal.rr.com) to sign-up for the Coffee Hour.

Antiochian House of Studies Begins Class Enrollment [1020 Base Line Rd., La Verne, CA, 91750]

The following classes are scheduled for all interested: 1) Sacred Church Music with V. Rev. Anna Hakimeh (Arabic and English); to be held every other Saturday for 2.5 hours, beginning on March 2, 2019 at 10 a.m., \$600 [for further information contact Fr. Anania at: fatherananias@gmail.com] Sacred Art of Iconography with Khouirye Randa Al Khoury Azar; seven classes planned for Saturdays (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.), and Sundays (1-6 p.m.); March 30-31, April 06-07, 13-15, and on May 18 (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), \$600, plus \$150 for course materials [for further information contact Khouriye Randa at: randa.Azar@gmail.com]. For registration contact: Anna Naser at 714-971-2244 or annasai@yahoo.com for an application form.

Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Report Booklet

Due to our 50th Anniversary Celebration weekend, the Annual Meeting of the Voting Membership will be held on <u>Sunday, February 24, 2019</u>. In the best interest of time, a Report Booklet will be prepared for distribution prior to the Annual Meeting. <u>All Council officers, Standing Committees and Subsidiary Organizations should turn in their single page reports to the Church Office no later than Sunday, January 6, 2019 in order to be printed on time for distribution to the Voting Membership.</u>

Thank you!

We sincerely thank our contributors to this year's Thanksgiving and Christmas food collection: Mary Ann Coury, Patricia & Michael Malouf, Tanya & Fred Milkie, Sharon Katerelos, John Apostolou, Randa & Saad Tarbouche, Emile F. Skaff, Laila Abughazaleh, Charmaine Darmour, Ramona Darmour, Haitham & Asma Sweis, Frieda Kabbash, Andrea & Alan Waldman, Maria & Greg Safady, Rima & Ramez Hage, Adeeb & Nuha Abughazaleh, Don Meena, Kathy & Ron Zraick.

Upcoming Events (see the foyer bulletin board for more information)

St. Nicholas Cathedral New Year's Eve Celebration Sunday, December 31, 2018, 9 p.m., \$150/person for tickets phone: 818-903-0953

Saturday, January 26, 2019 - 50th Anniversary Reception and Banquet at the Odyssey Restaurant following Great Vespers (4 p.m.); Reception, 5:30 p.m.; Dinner, 6:30 p.m.

Calendar for:	2019	2020	2021
First Day of Great Lent Holy Pascha Western Easter	March 11 April 28 April 21	March 02 April 19 April 12	March 15 May 02 April 04
Feast of Theophany Meat Fare Sunday Feast of the Annunciation Feast of the Ascension Pentecost Feast of the Nativity	Sunday Sunday Monday Thursday Sunday Wednesday	January 6, 2019 March 3, 2019 March 25, 2019 June 6, 2019 June 16, 2019 December 25, 2019	

Our 2019 Pledge Forms Provided with this Bulletin

As a committed member of St. Michael Church, please complete a new 2019 form. Everyone's financial situation is subject to changes from year to year. In the same way, our parish depends upon the financial pledge commitments of its members in order to meet its monthly expenses. Each year a budget is prepared for membership approval at our Annual Meeting. May God bless us all in practicing good Christian stewardship.

Pastoral Sermon The Sunday after the Nativity By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig December 30, 2018

Today is the "Fourth Day of Christmas." It is also called The Sunday after Christmas. I always enjoy the time between Christmas and Theophany not only because there is no fasting, but there seems to be less traffic on the road and things seems to slow down from the regular pace of life. Sadly, I am very disappointed to find that Christmas decorations are removed from the stores soon after Christmas and Valentines Day cards are already out! Commercialism has made the Twelve Days of Christmas something that is counted before the Feast instead of the days following the Feast that lead to the Great Feast of Holy Theophany – the Twelfth Day of Christmas!

The Gospel reading today is the continuation of the events of the Holy Nativity according to the St. Matthew. It covers the period of time that begins with Mary & Joseph escaping from Herod with Jesus to Egypt, the killing of 14,000 innocent children by Herod (commemorated on December 29), and Jesus' journey with Mary and Joseph to the northern city of Nazareth in Galilee following the death of Herod.

That is because we are often presented with the nativity scene with everyone in place: Mary, Joseph, the Baby Jesus, the shepherds and the Wise Men – all there at once! If we were to mark the chronological events of Christ's birth, we would obviously begin Mary being told by the Angel of the Lord of the news to conceive a child (The Feast of the Annunciation; March 25th). Then there is Joseph "the Betrothed" who is described in the Gospel as a righteous and just man.

We learn from the Apocryphal books such as *The Proto Evangelium of St. James* that Joseph was a master builder, a craftsman who was very gifted with his hands. He was married to Salome and together had four sons: James, Joseph, Jude, and Simeon; also three daughters: Esther, Martha, and Salome. Joseph and Simeon, the elder sons of Joseph were married and had families of their own. Their daughters were also married and lives in their own homes. So there remained in Joseph's house Jude and James – who has the honorable title "James, the 'brother' of the Lord;" who was also the first bishop of Jerusalem – commemorated today with David the Prophet and King, and Joseph "the

Betrothed." Joseph's wife, Salome died after a long and blessed marriage of about 40 years.

Joseph, therefore, was a widower and was chosen by the Temple priests to be betrothed to the Virgin Mary. Following the events of the Annunciation, when Mary was in her sixth month of pregnancy, Joseph was overwhelmingly troubled in learning that Mary was with child. This image is shown to us on the icon of the Holy Nativity. But as a man who was a "servant of the Lord," he heeded the Angel of the Lord who spoke to him in a dream: "...do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1:19-21). Joseph, who was a man knowledgeable of the Law and the prophets remembered the prophesy of Isaiah: "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called 'Immanuel'" (Is. 7:14). Being a just man, he resolved to care for Mary by keeping her safely in his home; accepting her as his wife (Matt. 1:24) and in this way protected her from being stoned for adultery.

They journeyed for three days from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to present themselves for the census of the Roman government, when the Gospel says; Christ was born, in a cave amidst an ox and donkey, where there appeared "a great light."

In obedience to the Law of Moses, Joseph took the Child and His mother and had him circumcised on the eighth day, and named Him "Jesus." (Luke 2:22). This commemoration is on Wednesday, the eighth day of following the birth of Christ. It happens to also be our Civil New Year and the Feast of St. Basil the Great (when we will serve the Divine Liturgy).

It cannot be overstated that while Joseph was an accomplished builder and carpenter from a family well known in Galilee as well as Judea and to the Jewish leaders, his spirit was refined and elevated with the knowledge of the scriptures. Joseph was the head of his household, however, it was a home governed by love and devotion to the Law and the Prophets. Most importantly, Joseph was a man of God.

Very little of the life of Mary, the Holy Virgin is known from the scriptures. Similarly, not much can be said of Joseph "the betrothed." However a great deal can be understood about a man who not only faced great challenges, but made some very difficult choices.

Joseph was able to make wise decisions because he learned to respond to God's call, readily and willingly over and over again. In a very few passages of the Gospel, Joseph appears as a strong, courageous man, a working man, yet in his heart we see a tenderness, which is not the trait of the weak, but rather a sign of strength of spirit and a capacity for concern, for love and compassion, and for genuine openness to others.

As a man of faith, who is described as a righteous and just man, He is a man of great kindness and compassion. This righteousness is not "self righteousness." Nor is it based upon self-interests. It grounded in compassion and mercy. It is a righteousness that is rooted in love and obedience. Most importantly, Joseph's righteousness is based upon his relationship to God that defines who he was. His righteousness was not even based upon what he was called to do or even the fact that he did it. Joseph, the son of David was simply a "servant of the Lord."

He is a man who remains constantly attentive to God; open to the signs of His presence, receptive to God's plans and not to his own. The man, Joseph is the protector. Discretely, humbly, silently, but with patience, diligent attentiveness and fidelity, Joseph took care of Mary and gladly dedicated himself to Jesus Christ's upbringing, even when it may have been hard to understand—from the time of his betrothal to the finding of the 12 year old Jesus in the Temple in Jerusalem. Joseph is present with loving care as the spouse of Mary. He is at her side in good times and bad, on the first journey to Bethlehem, and then to Egypt, and for the frantic search for the child in the Temple; later in northern Palestine, in a day to day life in their home at Nazareth; in the workshop, where (tradition tells us) he taught his trade to Jesus.

Joseph is able to hear God's voice because He makes it his purpose to be guided by God's will and for this reason is all the more attentive to Jesus and Mary who are entrusted to his care and safety.

God has given us hope in the Feast of His Birth in the revelation of Himself born as a little child, and in the Feast to come: The Feast of His Baptism (Holy Theophany) – hope of renewal and sanctification. For you and me, His life in us *is* our hope *for all that really matters*. May we have the courage of Joseph, the purity of Mary, the diligence of the shepherds and the wisdom of the Magi to be servants of God our King, for Christ is born! Let us glorify Him!

THE AFTER-FEAST AND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

THE COMMEMORATION OF JOSEPH THE BETROTHED,
DAVID THE PROPHET AND KING, AND JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن السادس

إنّ القواتِ الملائكية ظهرت عند قبرك الموقر, فالحراسُ صاروا كالأموات, ومريم وقفت عند القبرِ طالبةً جسدَك الطاهر, فسبيتَ الجحيمَ ولم تُجرّب منها, وصادفتَ البتولَ مانحاً الحياة, فيا من قام من بين الأموات, يا ربّ المجدُ لك

طروبارية الميلاد باللحن الرابع

ميلادُك أيها المسيخ إلهُنا, قد أطلع نور المعرفة في العالم, لآنَ الساجدين للكواكب, به تعلموا من الكوكب السجود لك يا شمس العدل, وان يعرفوا أنك المشرق الذي من العلاء, يا ربُّ المجد لك

طروبارية الأحد بعد الميلاد على اللحن الثاني

يا يوسف بشّر داود جدّ الإله بالعجائب الباهرة. لأنك قد رأيتَ البتولَ حاملا, فمع الرعاةِ مجّدت, ومع المجوسِ سجدت, وبالملاك أوحي إليك. فابتهل إلى المسيح الإله أن يخلص نفو سنا

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع

أيها المتقدّمونَ على الأجنّادُ السماويين، نتوسل إليكم نحن غير المستحقّين، حتى أنّكم بطلباتِكم تكتنوفوننا بظل أجنحة مجدِكم غير الهيولي، حافظين إيّانا نحن الجاثين والصارخين بغير فتور، أنقذونا من الشدائد، بما أنّكم رؤساء مراتب القواتِ العلوية.

قنداق الميلاد على اللحن الثالث

اليومَ العذراءُ تلد الفائقَ الجوهر، والأرضُ تقربُ المغارةَ لمن لا يُدنى منه. الملائكةُ مع الرعاةِ يمجّدون، والمجوسُ مع الكوكبِ في الطريق يسيرون، لأنّه قد وُلِد من أجلنا صبيً . جديدٌ، وهو الإلهُ قبلَ الدهور

الرسالة

عجيب هو الله في مقادسه, في المجامع باركوا الله فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى أهل غلاطية

يا اخوة أراعمكم أن البشارة التي بشرتكم بها ليست على سنة البشر. فأنا لم أتسلمها أو تعلمتها من بشرر بل بإعلان يسوع المسيح. فإنكم سمعتم بسيرتي الماضية في ملة اليهود, وكيف كنت أضطهد كنيسة الله غاية الاضطهاد وأحاول تدمير ها وأفوق أترابي من بني قومي في ملة اليهود حمية على تقاليد آبائي. ولكن لما ارتضى الله الذي دعاني بنعمته وأنا في بطن أمي إلى خدمته, أن يعلن ابنه في لأبشر به بين الأمم, لم استشر لحما ودما ولا صعدت إلى أورشليم لأرى الذين كانوا رسلا قبلي, بل ذهبت على الفور إلى بلاد العرب, وبعد ذلك رجعت إلى أورشليم. ثم أني بعد ثلاث سنوات صعدت إلى أورشليم لأرى بطرس, فأقمت عنده خمسة عشر يوما, ولم أر غيره من الرسل سوى يعقوب أخي الرب

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارةِ القديسِ متى

ولما انصرف المجوس, ظهر ملاك الرب ليوسف في الحلم قائلا: "قم, خذ الصبي وأمه واهرب إلى مصر وأقم فيها, حتى أعلمك, لان هيرودس سيبحث عن الصبي ليهلكه. فقام وأخذ الصبي وأمه ليلا وانصرف إلى مصر. فأقام فيها إلى أن مات هيرودس, ليتم ما قال الرب على لسان النبي: "من مصر دعوت ابني." فلما رأى هيرودس أن المجوس استهزأوا به, غضب جدا وأمر بقتل كل صبيان بيت لحم وجميع تخومها, من ابن سنتين فما دون ذلك, حسب الزمان الذي تحققه من المجوس. فتم ما قال أرميه النبي: صراخ سمع في الرامة, نوح وبكاء ونحيب كثير, راحيل تبكي على أو لادها وقد أبت أن تتعزى, لأنهم ليسوا على قيد الحياة." ولما مات هيرودوس ظهر ملاك الرب ليوسف في الحلم في مصر قائلا: "قم, خذ الصبي وأمه وارجع إلى أرض اسرائيل, فقد مات من كان يريد قتل الصبي." فقام وأخذ الصبي وإمه وجاء إلى أرض إسرائيل. ولما سمع أن أر خيلاوس يملك على اليهودية خلفا لابيه هيرودس, خاف أن يذهب إليها. فأوحي إليه في الحلم, فانصرف إلى نواحي الجليل. وجاء مدينة اسمها الناصرة فسكن فيها, ليتم ما قيل على لسان الأنبياء: "إنه يدعى الباصريا

ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان يعنى عمومية المشاركة فيه لذوى العقيدة الواحدة، الا إن المشاركة في سر القربان المقدس هنا مقتصر فقط على أعضاء الكنائس الارثوذكسية والذين يحضرون أنفسهم بالصلاة والصوم والاعتراف منذ فترة قريبة (وعلى كل حال، فإننا ندعو الجميع للمشاركة في الخبز المقدس الذي يوزع عند إنتهاء مراسيم القداس.) رجاء مراجعة الكاهن إذا رغبت أن تصبح عضوا في الكنيسة الارثوذكسية