

St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church of the San Fernando Valley
a Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
16643 Vanowen Street; Van Nuys, California; 91406 **stmichaelvannuys.org**

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The Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross The Feast of the Nativity of the Holy Theotokos

Sunday, September 8, 2019

Tone 3; Eothinon 1

Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 2)

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

Apolytikion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

Thy nativity, O Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to the whole universe; for from thee did shine forth the Sun of justice, Christ our God, annulling the curse, and bestowing the blessing, abolishing death and granting us life everlasting.

Kontakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

By thy holy nativity, O pure one, Joachim and Anna were delivered from the reproach of barrenness; and Adam and Eve were delivered from the corruption of death; thy people do celebrate it, having been saved from the stain of iniquity, crying unto thee, The barren doth give birth to the Theotokos, who nourisheth our life.

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (for the Sunday before the Elevation of the Cross)

*O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.
To Thee, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (6:11-18)

Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the Law, but they desire to have you

circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all, who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

THE GOSPEL (for the Sunday before the Elevation of the Cross)

**The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. John
(3:13-17)**

The Lord said, “No one has ascended into heaven but He who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

The Synaxarion

On September 8 in the Holy Orthodox Church we celebrate the Nativity of our Most-holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary.

Verses

*Truly, O Anna, thou surpassest all mothers,
Until that day thy daughter shall become a mother.
On the eighth Anna brought God's Mother into the light.*

The Holy Virgin Mary was born of aged parents, Joachim and Anna. Her father was of the lineage of David, and her mother of the lineage of Aaron. Thus, she was of royal birth by her father and of priestly birth by her mother. In this, she foreshadowed Him Who would be born of her as King and High Priest. Her parents were quite old and had no children. Because of this they were ashamed before men and humble before God. In their humility they prayed to God with tears, to bring them joy in their old age by giving them a child, as He had once given joy to the aged Abraham and his wife Sarah by giving them Isaac. The Almighty and All-

seeing God rewarded them with a joy that surpassed all their expectations and all their most beautiful dreams; for He gave them not just a daughter, but the Mother of God. She was Mary, Full of grace, Blessed among women, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the Altar of the Living God, the Table of the Heavenly Bread, the Ark of God's Holiness, the Tree of the Sweetest Fruit, the Glory of the race of man, the Praise of womanhood, and the Fount of virginity and purity.

*Through intercessions of Thy Mother, O Christ God, have mercy upon 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

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

for the continued health of Alice Prewett

for the continued health of Sharon Katerelos

for the continued health of Helen Gota

for John Khouri and Chrisa Sadd on the occasion of their birthdays.

May God grant them many, many years! (from their families)

by Emile Skaff for the healing and successful surgery of his nephew,
Alan Namay

By Daphne Thabet for Alan & Andrea Waldman's birthdays and
for the safe travel of Libby Vincenzino

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today we will be honoring the recipients of Creative Festival Awards.

Today we are also registering our young people for Church School.

Next Sunday is the first day of Church School classes.

[Note: classes begin immediately following Holy Communion]

You are invited to join us for a
Church School Awards Presentation Lunch

Today, September 8, 2019 after Liturgy
[a free-will offering will be received for our curriculum]

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

[Note: Wednesdays and Fridays are observed as days of fasting in the Orthodox Church.]

The Feast of The Elevation of the Holy Cross

Saturday, September 14th - Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 6:30 p.m.

The Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross

Saturday, September 14th - Vespers, 5 p.m.

Sunday, September 15th - Orthros, 8:45 a.m.,
Divine Liturgy and Procession, 10 a.m.

Attention Parents, Grandparents and Godparents:

The first day of Church School is next Sunday, September 15th. Get ready for a great year! Register (if you have not already done so) your child(ren) today. Contact Lila Coudsy with any questions you might have at: lcoudsy@aol.com

Care Packages for the Homeless and Needy

We have concluded our collection of items for "care packages" for the homeless. Additional bags are available in the narthex for you to have in your car for distribution to those on street corners who can benefit from bottled water and various hygiene items. We thank Levia Arbuckle for her help in planning this project.

Parish Council Meeting – Monday, September 16, 7 p.m.

New E-mail Address

NOTE: Father Timothy has a new church e-mail address: frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org Please do not use his former address and update his contact information on your computer. His phone number has not changed: 818-219-3761. He prefers that you do not text him by telephone for bulletin postings or announcements. Sunday Bulletin announcements are properly received by e-mail, however, prayer requests may be made by text, e-mail or voice call.

New Parish Directory

We have begun to plan for a new Parish Directory. Please be sure that your mailing address and phone number(s) are current for our records by either e-mailing or providing Samia Habib with a clearly handwritten note. If there has been no change to your information in our 2018-2019 Parish Directory you will not need to inform us of an update. However, if you choose to not publish your mailing address and or phone number(s) please let us know. Samia's e-mail address is: <sambur@juno.com>.

Do You Receive The Word Magazine?

The Word magazine is the official monthly periodical of the Antiochian Archdiocese. A free subscription is available to all pledging members of St. Michael Church. If you are not receiving your copy and would like to, please contact Samia Habib at: <sambur@juno.com>.

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

Holy Bread Offering List

Sep 15 - open
Sep 22 - open
Sep 29 - open
Oct 06 - open
Oct 13 - open

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Sep 15 - open
Sep 22 - open
Sep 29 - open
Oct 06 - Leslie Henry
Oct 13 - Vera Ababseh

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.

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

First Day of Church School Classes - Sunday, September 15

September Parish Council Meeting - Monday, September 16, 7 p.m.

So. California Antiochian Clergy Deanery Meeting at St. Michael Church
Tuesday, September 17, 2019, 10:30 a.m.

Teen SOYO Fall “Kick-off” - Saturday, September 21, 2019,
St. Nicholas Cathedral Heritage Hall; 1-5 p.m.

St. Mark “Disco and Dabke Dinner-Dance”
Saturday, September 21, 2019

St. Michael Antiochian Women’s Meeting - Sunday, October 6

October is “Youth Month”

Diocesan Fall Gathering - October 25-27, 2019; St. Peter and Paul
Church (Ben Lomond, California); \$139/night (available by September
25, 2019); for more information please contact the planning
committee at: <FallGathering2019@gmail.com>

23rd Annual L.A. Mediterranean Festival at St. Nicholas Cathedral
2300 W. Third Street; Los Angeles; Saturday-Sunday, October 5-6, 2019

End of Daylight Savings Time - Sunday, November 3

Patronal Feast Day of the Holy Archangel Michael - Friday, November 8
Vesperal Divine Liturgy, Thursday, November 7; 6:30 p.m.

St. Michael 50th Anniversary Feast Day Luncheon
Sunday, November 10

Father Timothy on Vacation:
Monday, November 11 to Thursday, November 21

Church School Christmas Program Rehearsal - Saturday, December 7
Christmas Program - Sunday, December 8

The Feast of the Holy Nativity (Christmas) - Wednesday, December 25
Christmas Eve Liturgy (Paramon), 3:30 p.m.; Christmas Day, 10 a.m.

Have You Received your "Real" (National) ID"?

What is a Real ID?

In January 2018 the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** implemented phase 4 of the "REAL ID Act" (Law) that sets a new standard for state issued driver's licenses and identity documents. The State of California and other states were granted an extension to comply with the Federal Law by October 10, 2020. A "Real ID" is issued at local offices of the Department of Motor Vehicles and will require providing hard copy documents that verify one's identification. Those documents include: a) a birth certificate of a U.S. state or territory; an unexpired passport, certificate of naturalization or citizenship, an unexpired permanent resident card, a certified legal document supporting name change, if applicable; b) an original or certified Social Security number, W-2 form, SSA-1099 form; c) two (2) forms of proof of California residence that may include home utility bills, medical documents, insurance documents, IRS or California tax return. NOTE: All names used on legal documents must be consistent on all records. Your California Driver's License may be used as your "Real ID" when it shows a gold (California bear) logo on the top right of your driver's license. Otherwise a "Real ID" is issued as a separate form of identification from your California Driver's License. See Fr. Timothy to receive an official document of the above.

Why will I need a Real ID?

A "Real ID" is a form of identification that meets increased security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards. Travelers will be required to provide either a real ID or another TSA-approved form of identification (i.e., Passport) for air travel or to visit a secure federal facility such as a military base after October 1, 2020.

How may I acquire a Real ID?

Anyone may register on-line at: dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv in order to receive a code for a non-appointment when visiting a local DMV office. Appointments may also be made on-line, however, on-line appointments may require waiting for a month or more.

Pastor's Sermon
The Sunday before the Elevation of the Cross
By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig
September 8, 2019

Today there are two events that converge on our liturgical commemoration. First, it is the Feast of the birth (Nativity) of the Holy Theotokos, and second, this is the Sunday before the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross (Saturday, September 14); and the theme of today's Gospel lesson since the Feast of our Lord takes precedence in the lesson.

The Feasts of the Holy Virgin are among the 12 Feasts of the Church (They are not "lesser" in their commemoration, except when they coincide with a Feast of our Lord on a Sunday). The Feasts of the Holy Virgin are important to us because they present us with the full picture, the complete image of family and holiness. Our families are broken, none are perfect, however the image presented to us is one of humility, faithfulness, and love – all of which were not without pain or suffering. Joachim & Anna and their daughter, the Holy Virgin, were not exempt from pain and suffering. Their lives testify to faith and love and the joy of the Cross.

Joachim and Anna, we are told, were barren, meaning that their mature marriage was without any conception for many years. In fact, we are told that their barrenness was considered a curse in their day. They were ridiculed and their union regarded as having no blessing, according to Judaic belief. There are many times that I have had to remind families that as Christians we do not function by Judaic beliefs. Our Christian teaching and practice has surpassed Judaic beliefs. In fact, Judaic belief in their day also ridiculed Joachim and Anna for not having a son, for having a boy meant eternal life to many. It meant that the lineage would continue through a male child.

The Feast and message of the Holy Cross which is heard at this particular time together with the theme of the Nativity of the Theotokos and the Feast, along

with the Feast of her parents, Joachim and Anna (commemorated on September 9), speak to us as parents, grandparents, godparents and teachers. They point to the many choices we face as children, young people, young adults, husbands, wives, parents, godparents; choices that always begin with parenting and the challenge to love with the sacrificial love of God. It is the same lesson heard in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism when Godparents are reminded of their commitment to Christ and their responsibility to teach their Godchildren. It is the same lesson heard in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony when a couple is challenged to love as Christ loved the church, “submitting to one another out of reverence of Christ.” It is the same lesson heard in the Sacrament of Healing, the symbol of which is also the cross.

With each Sacrament, the lesson remains the same: Love is never mastered. It is always tested. It is grounded in commitment and devotion. It is selfless and not proud, not rude or boastful, does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres. It grows with patience and is never practiced in a vacuum. It is greater than faith and hope [see I Corinthians 13]. Love is eternal.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross will be commemorated this coming Saturday, September 14th. It is observed as a day of strict fasting when we are reminded of our Lord’s passion. Our Liturgy will take place on Saturday at 10 a.m. The Gospel reading for the Feast is of our Lord’s judgment and crucifixion, reminiscent of his saving work. It is the most important Feast of the fall season, celebrating the redeeming love of God and the power of spiritual renewal for our lives. We are reminded that the Holy Cross is called the “life-giving” Cross. A sign of hope, as Christ is seen not as a victim but victor: He who trampled down death by Death. It is a symbol of God’s unconditional love as we hear in today’s Gospel. The Feast of the Holy Cross is among several days in the Church calendar devoted to the theme of God’s unconditional love, His supreme sacrifice and what it means to be committed to Christ. Finally, the Holy Cross is our “weapon of peace” and the symbol of deliverance and healing.

These very facts are heard in the content of today's short and very concise Gospel lesson: *“No one has ascended into heaven but He who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”*

God's prophetic word is complete and there is no need for any new prophet. Most importantly, as Christians we must now be vigilant in knowing how to respond and not react to all that we see and hear around us. In every circumstance our response is in love. That love, however, is grounded in the truth. And our actions cannot be anything other than what is based upon that Christ has fulfilled and accomplished for us.

A Prayer for September 11th

O Thou who didst pray for them that crucified Thee and who didst commend Thy servants to pray for their enemies, forgive, O Lord, those who hate and maltreat us, and turn our lives, and the lives of all those who suffered at the hands of our enemies, from all harm and evil to brotherly love and good works. For this we humbly bring our prayer, that with one accord and one heart we may glorify Thee who alone art the Lover of mankind. And as Thy first martyr Stephen prayed to Thee for those who slew him, so we fall down before Thee and pray: Forgive, O Lord, all those who hate us and maltreat us, and let not one of them perish because of us, but be saved by Thy grace. Set our hearts on fire with love for Thee, O Christ our God, that in its flame we may love Thee with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, so that, keeping Thy commandments, we may glorify Thee together with Thine unoriginate Father and Thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. A-men.

Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross & Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

طروبارية القيامة على الحن الثاني

عندما انحدرت إلى الموت، أيها الحياة الذي لا يموت، حينئذ أمتّ الجحيم ببرق لاهوتك،
وعندما أقيمت الأموات من تحت الترى، صرخ نحوك جميع القوات السماويين أيها المسيح
الإله المعطي الحياة، المجد لك.

طروبارية ميلاد والدة الإله، على الحن الرابع

ميلادك يا والدة الإله، بشر بالفرح كل المسكونة. لأنه منك أشرق شمس العدل المسيح إلهنا،
فحلّ اللعنة ووهب البركة، وأبطل الموت ومنحنا الحياة الأبدية.

قنداق ميلاد العذراء على الحن الرابع

بميلادك الطاهر أطلق يواكيم وحنة من عار العقر وأدم وحواء من فساد الموت. فله يُعيد شعبك
إذ تخلص من وصمة الزلات هاتفاً نحوك: العاقر تلد والدة الإله المغذية حياتنا.

الرسالة

خلص يا رب شعبك، وبارك ميراثك، إليك يا رب أصرخ الهي.

فصل من رسالة بولس الرسول إلى أهل غلاطية

يا إخوة، انظروا ما أعظم الحروف التي أخطها لكم بيدي. هؤلاء الذين يريدون
التفاخر بظاهر الجسد هم الذين يلزمونكم الختان، وما ذلك إلا ليهربوا من
الاضطهاد في سبيل صليب المسيح، لأن الذين يختنون لا يحفظون الشريعة،
ولكنهم يريدون أن تختنوا ليفاخروا بجسدكم. أما أنا فلن أفاخر إلا بصليب ربنا

يسوع المسيح. به صار العالم مصلوباً بالنسبة إليّ، وصرت أنا مصلوباً بالنسبة إلى العالم. فما الختانُ بشيءٍ ولا القلفُ بشيءٍ، وإنما الشيءُ أن يكونَ الإنسانُ خليفةً جديدةً. والسلامُ والرحمةُ على الذين يسلكون هذا السبيلَ وعلى شعبِ الله. فلا يُزعجني أحدٌ بعد الآن، لأنني أحملُ في جسدي سماتِ يسوع. ولتكن مع روجكم، أيها الاخوة، نعمة ربنا يسوع المسيح. آمين

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارَةِ القديسِ يوحنا

قال الربّ: ما صعد أحد إلى السماء إلا الذي نزل من السماء، وهو ابن الإنسان. وكما رفع موسى الحية في البرية، فكذلك يجب أن يُرفع ابن الإنسان، لينال كل من يؤمن به الحياة الأبدية. وهكذا أحب الله العالم حتى جاد بابنه الأوحد، فلا يهلك كل من يؤمن به، بل تكون له الحياة الأبدية. فإنّ الله أرسل ابنه إلى العالم لا ليدين العالم، بل ليخلص به العالم.

ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان يعني عمومية المشاركة فيه لذوى العقيدة الواحدة، إلا إن المشاركة في سر القربان المقدس هنا تقتصر 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 عضواً في الكنيسة الارثوذكسية