

**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](http://stmichaelvannuys.org)

His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York  
and Metropolitan of all North America [www.antiochian.org](http://www.antiochian.org)  
Archpriest Timothy Baclig, Pastor [frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org)  
Rev. Fr. Minas Sarchizian, Assisting Priest [fatherminas@gmail.com](mailto:fatherminas@gmail.com)  
Rev. Deacon Andrew Monsue [armcopper@gmail.com](mailto:armcopper@gmail.com)  
Subdeacon Richard Tamoush [Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com](mailto:Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com)  
Subdeacon Magued Wassef [wassefm@msn.com](mailto:wassefm@msn.com)  
Subdeacon Richard Ajalat, Pastoral Assistant [rajalat@stmichaelvannuys.com](mailto:rajalat@stmichaelvannuys.com)  
Parish Council Chair - Kris Thabit [kthabit66@hotmail.com](mailto:kthabit66@hotmail.com)  
Council Vice-Chair - Connie Abdun-Nur Barilla [cmatthews46@yahoo.com](mailto:cmatthews46@yahoo.com)  
Council Secretary - John Khouri [johngkhouri@gmail.com](mailto:johngkhouri@gmail.com)  
Council Treasurer - Julie Bitar [jbitar027@gmail.com](mailto:jbitar027@gmail.com)

**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of No. America (AOCWNA)**

Chapter President - Charmaine Darmour [cdarmour@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cdarmour@sbcglobal.net)  
Choir Director - Art Danks [artdanks1@yahoo.com](mailto:artdanks1@yahoo.com)  
Church School Director - Lila Coudsy [lcoudsy@aol.com](mailto:lcoudsy@aol.com)  
Youth Director - Cooper Rowe [crowe31@gmail.com](mailto:crowe31@gmail.com)  
Young Adult Director - Richard Ajalat [rajalat@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:rajalat@stmichaelvannuys.org)  
Young Parents' Ministry - Brittney Ajalat [brittneylee704@gmail.com](mailto:brittneylee704@gmail.com)  
Faithtree Resources Exec. Director - Michelle Moujaes [michelle@faithtree.org](mailto:michelle@faithtree.org)  
Project Manager - Michael J. Malouf [michael@jacksonia.com](mailto:michael@jacksonia.com)  
Stewardship Chair - Richard Tamoush [Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com](mailto:Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com)  
Capital Funds Campaign Chair - Ron Zraick [ronaldzraick@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldzraick@gmail.com)  
Property Management Chair - Eric Nelson [ericnelson2520@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ericnelson2520@sbcglobal.net)  
Bookstore Manager - Bobbi Monsue [bobbi\\_monsue@att.net](mailto:bobbi_monsue@att.net)  
Golf Classic Chair - Fred Milkie [milkief@aol.com](mailto:milkief@aol.com)  
Webmaster - Dan Raju [dan.raju16@hotmail.com](mailto:dan.raju16@hotmail.com)  
Coffee Hour Coordinator - Cindy Tamoush [famtam5@socal.rr.com](mailto:famtam5@socal.rr.com)  
Head Usher - Ramez Hage [jeddo.ramez@gmail.com](mailto:jeddo.ramez@gmail.com)

## **Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 4th Ecumenical Council**

The Martyr Emilianos of Silistria in Bulgaria; John, Metropolitan of Chalcedon; and Stephen, Patriarch of Constantinople

**Sunday, July 18, 2021**

**Tone 3; Eothinon 4**

### **Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 3)**

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 Holy Fathers (Tone 8)**

Thou, O Christ, art our God of exceeding praise Who didst establish our Holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them didst guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to Thee.

### **Apolytikion for 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 for the Theotokos (Tone 2)**

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

## **Daily Readings**

THE EPISTLE (for the Holy Fathers)

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.  
For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.*

**The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Titus (3:8-15)**

Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

THE GOSPEL (for the Holy Fathers)

**The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew (5:14-19)**

The Lord said to His Disciples: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them, but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

**The Synaxarion**

On July 18 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the Martyr Emilianos of Silistria in Bulgaria; John, metropolitan of Chalcedon; and Stephen, patriarch of Constantinople.

On this Sunday, we commemorate the 630 holy and God-bearing Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which convened in Chalcedon in 451 against the Monophysites.

### ***Verses***

Shunning opposite errors like the sea monsters Scylla and Charybdis,  
The Fathers steer the Church on a straight course to safety.

The Holy Fathers were, once again, concerned with the nature of Jesus Christ. The false teaching arose that Christ's human nature (considered by heretics as less perfect) dissolved itself in His divine nature (considered by heretics as more perfect): like a cube of sugar in a parcel of water. Thus, in that scenario, Christ had only one nature, the Divine. These false preachers were called Monophysites ("mono", meaning "one" and "physis", meaning "nature"), and they were led by Eutyches and Dioscorus. Monophysitism overemphasized the divine nature of Christ, at the expense of the human. The Fourth Ecumenical Council condemned Monophysitism and proclaimed that Christ has two complete natures: the divine and the human, as defined by previous Councils. These two natures function as equally perfect, without confusion, and are neither divided nor separate. The Fathers declared that at no time did they undergo any change.

By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us.  
Amen.

---

## **OFFERINGS**

The Holy Bread is being offered this morning by Don Meena and family in loving memory of Albert Meena (+18 July, 2016), beloved brother and uncle. Memory eternal.

Holy Bread is also being offered by Beverly Ansara for her dearly beloved and deeply missed husband, Michael Ansara (+31 July), and precious and deeply missed son, Matthew Ansara (+25 June); in loving memory of her mother-in-law, Syria Ansara (+16 August); in loving memory of her cousin, Dr. Sakae Kawara (+26 August); and in loving memory of her dear friend, Laura Olsen (+15 August). Memory eternal.

Father Timothy, thanks everyone for their kind messages on the occasion of his sixty-seventh birthday on July 11th.

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

in memory of the newly-departed servant of God, Haifa Moujaes Habib (+8 July, 2021), beloved aunt of Waleed Moujaes. Memory eternal.

for the healing and speedy recovery of Emile Skaff.

for the continued success of Adam Lamar

for Adrienne Levy and Regan Hines, celebrating their one-year wedding anniversary. May God grant them a long and healthy life!

for Presbytera Stela-Nicole Sarchizian celebrating her birthday (July 20). May God grant her many years!

for the recovery and good health of Daher Ababseh

## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

*NOTE: Wednesday and Friday are observed as days of fasting*

**The Feast of the Holy Prophet Elias** – Tuesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>

**The Dormition of the Righteous Anna, Mother of the Theotokos  
and the Fifth Sunday of Matthew**

Great Vespers – Saturday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 5 p.m.

Orthros – Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Fast of the Holy Dormition - August 1-14; and Feast - August 15

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Live-streaming Sunday Orthros and Liturgy

If you are unable to be with us at church on Sunday, are on vacation or out-of-town, plan to view all of our scheduled church services on-line by logging on to: either **Facebook** or **YouTube** via our parish website: <[www.stmichaelvannuys.org](http://www.stmichaelvannuys.org)> Your church offering may be made on-line

via our website "Donation" tab or by mailing your check to the church at: 16643 Vanowen Street; Van Nuys, California; 91406. Mailing your check to the church will save our church a 3% service charge.

### **Join in our Parish Bible Study Zoom Meetings**

Our next Bible Study will be held on Tuesday evening, July 20th, at 7 p.m. We will be beginning our study of St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians (chapters 1 and 2). A link to the Zoom meeting will be sent out on Tuesday. Sessions are recorded for those unable to attend who may also request the link to the study. Plan to join us.

### **Church Attendance**

We are currently requesting that everyone attending our church services to again wear face coverings due to the City policy regarding the rapid rise in the Delta COVID Variant, effective: Sunday, July 18, 2021. Questions will also be answered by Father Timothy by e-mail at: [frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org) The Sacrament(s) are also available on weekdays by appointment.

**Parish Council Virtual Meeting - Monday, July 19, 5 p.m.**

### **Bookstore Orders Available on Parish Website**

You may place an order through our parish website or e-mail Bobbi Monsue (Manager) for special orders at: [bobbi\\_monsue@att.net](mailto:bobbi_monsue@att.net). A new book release by Fr. Stephen de Young, now available is: [The Religion of the Apostles; Orthodox Christianity in the First Century](#). Father Stephen is the co-host of "Lords of the Spirits" on Ancient Faith Radio. Your credit card will also be accepted for payment.

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

#### **Holy Bread Offering List**

Aug 01 - open

Aug 08 - open

Aug 15 - open (Feast of the Holy Dormition)

#### **Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar**

Please contact Fr. Timothy (818/219-3761; [frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org)) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread.



# Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (all times are EST)

# 2021 Virtual Archdiocese Convention

### FRIDAY, JULY 23, 2021

- **3:00PM – 5:00PM** Order of St. Ignatius Meeting
- **5:00PM – 7:30PM** Antiochian Women Meeting
- **9:00PM – 10:30PM** - Teen SOYO Virtual
- **9:00PM – 10:30PM** - Young Adults Virtual Event

### SATURDAY, JULY 24, 2021

- **10AM – 11:00AM** - Breakout Rooms where members can choose to join particular topics related to current parish matters such as:
  - o **Finance:** Mr. Salim Abboud, Fr. Michael Tassos, Dr. Elias Hebeka
  - o **Youth:** Fr. Nicholas Belcher
  - o **Stewardship:** Mr. William Morrison
  - o **Pandemic:** Dr. Badie Alnemr, Dr. James Rossetti
- **11:00AM – 11:45AM** - Fr. Joseph Huneycutt, guest speaker
- **11:45AM – 12:30PM** - BREAK - Lunch
- **12:30PM – 3:00PM** - General Assembly Meeting and closing
  - o **12:30PM – 1:30PM** Sayedna's speech
  - o Mr. Salim Abboud - Department of Finance
  - o Fr. Nicholas Belcher - Young Adult Ministry, Department of Christian Education, Department of Youth and Department of Camping
  - o Archdn. Emile P. Sayegh, Chancellor



**His Eminence  
Metropolitan  
Joseph**  
*presiding*

## **Upcoming Events**

**2021 Virtual Archdiocese Convention** with His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH; Friday-Saturday, July 23-24 (see flier below)

30th Annual St. Michael Annual Golf Classic at the  
Woodland Hills Country Club  
**(Monday, September 27, 2021)**

**Diocesan Fall Gathering** - October 8-10, 2021  
Host: St. John Church; Orinda, California

The 57th "Sweetheart Ball" - at the Universal Hilton Hotel  
**(Saturday, November 27, 2021)**

## **New Church Building Fund**

As we approach the completion of our new church building project it has been determined that we are \$400,000.00 dollars short in order to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy from the City of Los Angeles. We still have many items to comply with, that include codes set by the City and State in order to be able to worship in our new church as a "public use building."

We are very thankful for the many who have generously supported our Project, however, several households of our parish who have not donated to our project.

We have now developed a parishioner loan program that will enable you to help us reach our goal of occupancy (\$50,000.00 dollar minimum), whereby you will be paid interest on the loan plus a five-year payback. This will be backed by a Promissory Note. There are other details that will be discussed should you express a willingness to lend the money to the church.

We are also exploring a Line of Credit with a lending institution. In the case of a Line of Credit you only pay interest on the money you draw, and not the established amount of credit.

Ideally, we would like to avoid any type of loans and remain debt free. Should you have any questions please contact Ron Zraick by e-mail [ronaldzraick@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldzraick@gmail.com) or by phone at 310-897-1571.

**St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**16643 Vanowen Street, Van Nuys, CA 91406 Phone: 818-994-2313**  
**Website: www.stmichaelvannuys.org**

**2021 CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT FORM**

**1. All enrolled members must first fulfill a fair share contribution that is paid 100% by St. Michael Church to the Archdiocese annually (this does not include your family pledge obligation BELOW).**

Total number of baptized Orthodox persons (age 18 & above) in your household \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 each \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of baptized Orthodox persons (age 17 & under) in your household \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 each \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please print all names with information in the section below)**

**2. In gratitude of God's blessings, I / we pledge to contribute St. Michael Church expenses.**

A total annual amount of: \_\_\_\_ (see Treasure self-assessment chart)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ weekly    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ semi-annually    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annually

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**3. How do you wish to pay? We accept personal checks or credit card payments. (See below)**

- a. You may write a check to "St. Michael Church" and mail it to the Church Office. (see address above)
- b. You may process an "automatic bill pay" with your bank that will mail a recurring monthly hard-copy earmarked check to St. Michael Church.
- c. You may pay by credit card using our website donation page (a 3% processing fee will apply) at: <https://www.stmichaelvannuys.org/donate/> and we will be immediately notified.
- d. You may arrange for a recurring monthly automatic withdrawal from your bank account using our church bank routing number and bank account.

**Note: Each donation to St. Michael Church should be earmarked, i.e., "Building Fund," "Pledge," etc.**

**Print names of baptized Orthodox persons in your household.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Age**

## **Our 2021 Pledge Form Provided with this Bulletin**

As a committed member of St. Michael Church, please complete a new 2021 form. An annual "Fair Share Contribution" is paid by St. Michael Church to the Archdiocese (\$50/adult; \$35/17 years of age or under). 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. Hardcopies will be mailed to you by request. We thank you for your faithful financial support of our parish and all who have made additional contributions to our Building Fund.

---

### **The Prayer of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow\***

O Lord, grant that I may meet the coming day in peace. Help me in all things to rely upon your holy will. In each hour of the day reveal your will to me. Bless my dealings with all who surround me. Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul, and with the firm conviction that Your will governs all.

In all my deeds and words guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all are sent by You. Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and embarrassing others. Give me the strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all that it shall bring. Direct my will. Teach me to pray. Pray within me.

Most Holy God, I pray and beseech you, give me a pure heart, a way of speaking that befits the faith I profess. Grant me uprightness of purpose, powers of reasoning unhindered by passions, conduct that becomes those who fear you, and perfect knowledge of your commandments. May I enjoy health in body and in spirit.

Grant me a life of peace, genuine faith and living hope, sincere charity and bountiful generosity, patience that knows no bounds and the light of Your truth to proclaim Your goodness to me, that for ever and in all things placing my trust only in You, I may abound in every good work, and that in Christ Your gifts may increase in every soul.

For to You belong all glory, honor and majesty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

*\*Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow (1782-1867) was canonized a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1995. His Feast Day is on November 19. He was known to preach and write about how to live the Christian life, and based his words on the wisdom of the Holy Fathers. He published a catechism that was an influential book in Russia and other countries for nearly 200 years.*

**Pastor's Sermon**  
**Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council**

by V. Rev. Timothy Baclig

July 18, 2021

Today, along with three other times in the year we remember the Holy Fathers of our Church who participated in the great Councils: 1) On the Sunday following the Feast of the Ascension, we commemorate the **Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council** in Nicaea (324 AD) which proclaimed Christ as being of one essence (*homoousios*) with the Father; 2) On the first Sunday during the period of October 11-17 we celebrate **The Feast of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council** at Constantinople (787 AD) which defended the use of icons as expressions of Christian piety; 3) The Seventh Council is also remembered each year on the first Sunday of Great Lent – known as “The Sunday of [the triumph] Orthodoxy;” 4) Today, the first Sunday in the period between July 13-19 we commemorate **The Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon** (451 AD) that proclaimed that Christ has two natures, divine and human, united in one Person, and born of the Holy Theotokos. It is this Church Council that resulted in the first schism – dividing the church from those who, on the one hand, believed that Christ had one nature (the “monophysites,” also called “the non-Chalcedonians”) and those who upheld the decision of the Council: proclaiming that Jesus Christ had two natures: a divine and a human nature, united in one person.

We remember the Church Fathers as examples of faith, inspiration, sound teaching, holiness of life, and as courageous witnesses; in some cases even sacrificing their lives as martyrs of the Faith. Countless Church fathers and Church mothers lived what they taught, and taught what they lived. Heard in today's Gospel lesson is the concluding verse: *Whoever **does** [the commandments of God] and teaches them shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:19).* Notice that the word “does” precedes the word “teaches.”

I am personally very thankful for having had many good teachers in my life. The lessons that I learned from them were effective because they were knowledgeable people whose lives were great in spiritual content. They were persons of strong moral character; not hypocrites; fully human; repentant sinners. Men and women, who I greatly respected, but people who, I noticed, loved and enjoyed their work; people who were fully alive in doing what they did well.

Good teachers know what they are talking about. They are persons with experience and a good reputation. However, I have noticed that the best teachers among the very intelligent were the simple, uncomplicated, humble and loving. I Corinthians 13 reminds us: *If I speak (with) the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophesy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge... but have not love, and am nothing...*

St. Paul said in writing to the Corinthians: ***A man who thinks that he knows something, does not yet know as he ought to know.*** (I Corinthians 8:2) This wonderful verse is sandwiched between two verses that are its commentary. Verse 1 of chapter 8 begins, **“...knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.”** Then in verse 3 of chapter 8 in I Corinthians: **“The man who loves God is known by God.”**

A saint once said that a person who teaches by example is like someone who gives to others his own wealth, because he gives part of himself. There is nothing more inspirational or influential than the true example of people who practice the truths they teach. There is nothing more disappointing or disillusioning than to observe people who do not practice what they may profess. As Christians we not only expect others to be examples for us, we also share the responsibility in being examples ourselves, to others through deeds, not mere words. A Christian always begins with building a personal relationship with God before attempting to teaching others.

Our Orthodox theology is not theoretical—having no relevance or application to how we live our lives. This is precisely what can be found by looking closely at what today’s Gospel reveals in what the Church Fathers have taught us.

The reading of today’s Gospel lesson (Matthew 5:14-19) is taken from the context of our Lord’s “Sermon on the Mount”. A close reading of the section will help us to recognize that our Lord was establishing a relationship between “doing what is good” and “keeping God’s Law”. However, as pointed out in many of my previous sermons: the

Christian Law, or what Christ has established under the “New Covenant” is, in reality, a more difficult law because it pertains to what God has prescribed for our hearts.

Christian ethics is based on the truth that every one of us has “...sinned and fallen short of the glory of God”; we have all “missed the mark”, and there is no righteousness outside of what God has Himself accomplished in sending His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born of a holy Virgin, under the Law, causing, as what is described in scripture: He who knew no sin to become sin for us; to be the most perfect sacrifice for our salvation in fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. For as we find in the words of St. Paul in writing to the Romans (chapter 8, verse 3-4), *For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so He condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to (our) sinful flesh but according to the Spirit.*

In other words, Christ’s saving work, His accomplished deed and supreme sacrifice on the Cross for you and I, fulfilled what no man’s human righteousness could achieve. His sacrifice went even beyond any animal offering of atonement for sin. For there is no righteousness, no holiness, no perfection, outside of the One who is Righteous, the One who is Holy, and the One who is Perfect. For “One is Holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father” as we proclaim in our Liturgy.

Doing what is good therefore is: not only desiring, but **doing** our utmost to be in step with God’s will and Spirit. At the preface of today’s Gospel lesson the Christian is a person who is described as the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world”. Verse 13 of chapter 5 begins: “You are the salt of the earth... (continuing at verse 14) “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.” And then, at verse 16 we hear: “In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

Upon first hearing such a description one could easily misinterpret what it means. St. John Chrysostom’s commentary on this passage helps us to keep the right perspective. **St. John’s commentary also helps us to also understand the significance of this passage being chosen on the commemoration of the Holy Fathers, our preeminent teachers of Orthodox doctrine.** St. John says: that “our Lord’s words intend to train us to strictness of life... to be earnest and devout in our endeavors; openly transparent

before the eyes of all as “in the midst of the amphitheater of the world...” He goes on to say that it was not fame (of their teaching) that made the followers of Christ conspicuous, but the actual demonstration of their works; their deeds. In his own words St. John says, “...as through they had wings, more vehemently than the sunbeam, they overran the whole earth, sowing the light of godliness... **It was impossible that what they preached (would) sink into silence and obscurity.**” [Homilies XV, 11, and XVI, 5 on Matthew V]

In one of our church prayers, God’s Commandments are called: “a light.” Doing what is good in keeping God’s Commandments, can seem impossible for many. Today, many consider it too difficult and give up. That is because it is only possible through Christ and His Spirit that indwells us. It is the greater work, the more profound and brilliant work of God, like the miracle achieved in the sacred union of a man and a woman. Notice I said “sacred”, meaning that it is blessed of God and unique. It is the beginning of not just any good deed, but a sacred good deed. Just as the work of an ordained person, or any baptized person for that matter is with the blessing and power of God Himself who also continues His creative work in the world through us – with all of our weaknesses and imperfections. This is what is meant by the word “sanctity”. One has sanctity when he or she is does the work that is sanctioned; the work that is authorized, supported, confirmed, and blessed of God. On the contrary, one is “sanctimonious” when there is fraud, when one is pretentious, or is falsely pious.

The whole matter, while simple, becomes complicated to us because we are caught up and distracted by the many things of this world that cause us to think and believe differently from what God has designed. Life is not life if it is reduced to getting things, finding acquiring things, making things, and using things. Life is acquiring the Holy Spirit. Without the study of Scripture, prayer, and fasting we cannot remain properly focused. These disciplines are taught by the Church as the means by which we preserve and maintain our vision of the Kingdom.

The lessons of our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount as found in the Gospel of Saint Matthew therefore provide us with that focus, but only if they do not become for us a lesson that we interpret for ourselves, to suit our desires and interests; our self-serving goals and selfish desires. Doing what is good, therefore, is simply loving God and keeping His commandments. It is the whole premise and basis to the Sermon on the Mount. It is not just love for love sake. It is not even love for your or my sake. It is God’s love for us, our love of God and love of our neighbor.

## Prayer

Our soul awakes early from the night, O God, for Thy commandments are a light. Teach us Thy righteousness, thy commandments and Thy statures, O God. Enlighten the eyes of our understanding, lest at any time we sleep unto death in sins. Dispel all darkness from our hearts. Graciously give unto us the Sun of Righteousness, and preserve our life unassailed, by the seal of Thy Holy Spirit. Guide our steps into the way of peace. Grant us to lead a godly life, both thinking and doing such things that are well pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art our Sanctification, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. A-men.

**EOTHINON 4**

الايوثينا4

**TONE 3**

اللحن 3

### **SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE FOURTH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

MARTYR EMILIANOS OF SILISTRIA IN BULGARIA; JOHN, METROPOLITAN OF CHALCEDON;  
STEPHEN, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

#### **طروبارية القيامة على اللحن الثالث**

لتفرح السماويات وتبتهج الارضيات, لان الرب صنع عزاً بساعده, ووطئ الموت  
بالموت, وصار بكر الاموات, وأنقذنا من جوف الجحيم, ومنح العالم الرحمة العظمى

#### **طروبارية الاباء على اللحن الثامن**

أنت أيها المسيح إلهنا فائق التسبيح, لأنك أقمت آباءنا كواكب على الأرض, وبهم هديتنا جميعا إلى  
الإيمان الحقيقي. فيا جزيل التحنن المجد لك

#### **طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع**

أيها المتقدمون على الأجناد السماويين, نتوسل إليكم نحن غير المستحقين, حتى أنكم  
بطلبكم تكتنوفوننا بظل أجنحة مجدكم غير الهيولي, حافظين إيانا نحن الجاثين  
والصارخين بغير فتور, أنقذونا من الشدائد, بما أنكم رؤساء مراتب القوات العلوية.

## فنداق السيدة على اللحن الثاني

يا شفيعة المسيحيين غير المخذولة، المتوسطة لدى الخالق غير المردودة، لا تعرضي عن أصوات طلباتنا نحن الخطاة، بل تداركينا بالمعونة بما أنك صالحة نحن الصارخين إليك. بإيمان: بادري إلى الشفاعة وأسرعني في الطلبة، يا والدة الإله المتشفعة دائماً في مكرميك.

## الرسالة

افرحوا بالرب وابتهجوا أيها الأبرار، طوبى لمن غفرت معصيتهم  
فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى تيطس

يا ولدي تيطس، هذا قولٌ صادقٌ، وأريدُ أن تكونَ حازماً في هذا الأمر حتى ينصرفَ المؤمنون بالله إلى العملِ الصالحِ، فهذا حسنٌ ومفيدٌ للناس. أما المجادلةُ السخيفةُ وذكرُ الأنسابِ والخلافِ والمناقشةُ في الشريعةِ، فاجتنبها لأنها لا تفيدُ ولا تنفع. وأما صاحبُ البدعِ فأعرضْ عنه بعد أن تُنذِرَه مرةً ومرتين. وأنتِ تعرفُ أن من كان مثله ضلَّ وكان خاطئاً وحكَّمَ على نفسه. ومتى أرسلتُ إليك أرتيماس أو تيخيكس بادرُ في المجيءِ إليَّ إلى نكوبولس، لأنني أنوي أن أقضي الشتاءَ هناك. واجتهدْ في إعدادِ سفرِ زيناس معلِّمِ الشريعةِ وأبلس لئلا يحتاجا إلى شيء. وليتعلمَ ذوونا حسنَ القيامِ بالعملِ الصالحِ ليسدوا الحاجاتِ الضروريةَ، فلا يكونوا عقماء. يسلم عليك جميع الذين معي. سلِّم على أحبائنا في الإيمان. ولتكنْ النعمةُ معكم أجمعين.

## الإنجيل

### فصل شريف من بشارة القديس متى

قال الرب لتلاميذه: أنتم نورُ العالم، لا تخفي مدينةً على جبل، ولا يوقدُ سراجٌ ويوضعُ تحت المكيال، لكن على المنارة حتى يضيء لجميع الذين هم في البيت. فليضيء نوركم هكذا قدام الناس، ليروا أعمالكم الصالحة ويمجدوا أباكم الذي في السماوات. لا تظنوا أنني جئت لأبطل الشريعة والأنبياء: ما جئت لأبطل بل لأكمل. الحق أقول لكم: إلى أن تزول السماء والأرض لن يزول حرف أو نقطة من الشريعة حتى يتم كل شيء. فمن خالف وصية من أصغر هذه الوصايا وعلم الناس أن يعملوا مثله، عدَّ صغيراً في ملكوت السماوات. وأما من عمل بها وعلمها فهو يُعدَّ عظيماً في ملكوت السماوات.

## ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان يعني عمومية المشاركة فيه لذوى العقيدة الواحدة، إلا 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 الذى يوزع عند إنتهاء مراسيم القداس). رجاء مراجعة الكاهن إذا رغبت أن تصبح عضواً فى الكنيسة الارثوذكسية.