

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

His Eminence, Metropolitan SABA, of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
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The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost and the Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew

Hieromartyr Anthimos of Nicomedia & Venerable
Theoktistos, fellow ascetic with Euthymios the Great

Sunday, September 3, 2023

Tone 4; Eothinon 2

Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 4)

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying, Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

Apolytikion for St. Anthimos (Tone 1)

O godly-minded Anthimos, as a staunch defender of thy flock, thou eagerly sheddest thy blood for its protection. Unbending and wholly unafraid of all thine adversaries' fearful threats, thou rejoicest now in Heaven, standing before the throne of the Three-Sun Godhead. Glory to Christ Who hath given thee strength. Glory to thy manly bravery. Glory to thy patient endurance in martyrdom.

Apolytikion for St. Theoktistos (Tone 8)

The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles a hundredfold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father Theoktistos, intercede with Christ God to save our souls..

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 Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 2)

[in anticipation of the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos on September 8]

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 [Arabic translation below]

THE EPISTLE (for the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

*O Lord, how marvelous are Thy works. In wisdom hast Thou made them all.
Bless the Lord, O my soul!*

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the 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.

THE GOSPEL (for the Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. 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?’”

The Synaxarion

On September 3 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy Hieromartyr Anthimos of Nicomedia.

Verses

Though the sword cut off thy head, O Anthimos Martyr,
Even when dead, thou sproutest hair unto God’s glory.
On the third, the sharp sword killed Anthimos.

Anthimos governed as Bishop during the cruel and violent persecution of Christians under the villainous Emperors Diocletian and Maximian. He retreated to the village of Semana to continue encouraging his flock in the feat of martyrdom, so that no one would fall away out of fear. Maximian eventually dispatched twenty soldiers to find Anthimos and bring him to court. When they found him, Anthimos welcomed them into his home. The soldiers encouraged him to run for his life, saying they would lie to the emperor to cover him. However, Anthimos would not transgress God’s commandment against falsehood to save his life, and he went with the soldiers, whom he baptized on the journey back to the emperor. Anthimos was beheaded and returned to the Lord in the fourth century.

On this day, we also commemorate our righteous father Theoktistos, fellow ascetic with Euthymios the Great. The pursuit of the same ideal and communal labors united their hearts in a very strong friendship in the Pharan Lavra just outside of Jerusalem. Their souls were blended in such a great spiritual affection that each was, so to speak, in the soul of the other. Considerable crowds would come to Euthymios for spiritual nourishment. The great anchorite shared the care of all who came to him with the blessed Theoktistos, who never having known disobedience, gave himself at once to the assistance of his master and disposed of everything material. Both holy monks served the flocks of Christ in the fifth century.

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

OFFERINGS

Holy Bread is being offered and the coffee hour hosted this morning for the one-year memorial of the servant of God, Salima Ballout (+3 September, 2022), beloved mother and grandmother. Memory eternal. Prayers are also offered for the Almarji and Sayegh families and their departed loved ones.

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

for the well being of Daher Ababseh and his family.

by Charlotte Murr and family for the speedy recovery of her nephew,
Brandon Terry.

A message will be delivered by Andrew, Hannah and Olivia Mitchell, reflecting on their participation in this years Special Olympics Sports Camp at the Antiochian Village this summer.

Included in our prayers throughout the month of September are those celebrating their birthday: Tony Mansur (9/1), Shannon Sullivan (9/1), Maisun Ababseh (9/3), Toni Abughazaleh (9/3), Johny Aftimos (9/3), Chrisa Sadd (9/4), Pierre Azzam (9/5), Catherine Bishop (9/5), Gabriel Habib (9/5), John Khouri (9/5), Grace Nasser (9/4), Margaret Soffa (9/5), Jonah Moujaes (9/8), Sandra Sweis (9/8), Andrea Thabet (9/8), Dorian Farr (9/9), Fred Milkie, Jr. (9/9), Jonathan Salim Srour (9/13), Saylor Swain (9/13), Tyler Tamoush (9/14), Nadim Kneizeh (9/15), Joy Farr (9/16), Louis J. Khoury (9/17), Anita Chala (9/18), Lauren Baba (9/19), Travis Ruff, (9/21), Michael Ajalat (9/22), Elias Mankouche (9/22), Nicholas Murr (9/22), Andrew Keoni Baclig (9/23), Marissa Kiley Coury (9/23), Araceli Yazbek (9/23), Katie AbuGhazaleh (9/24), Jocelyn Rogers (9/24), Caroline Abughazaleh (9/25), Cindy Tamoush (9/25), Abdulla Mallouk (9/25), Constantine Nasr (9/25), Ella Ruth Stolz (9/25), Christiane Abdennour (9/26), Leila Grace Hage (9/26), Kyla Marie Terry (9/26), MacLean Khoury (9/27), Michael Simon (9/27), Jameel Sadd (9/27), Daniel Saidy (9/27), Adam Lamar (9/28), Rafeef Khleif (9/30), Andrew Mitchell (9/30); and celebrating their wedding anniversary: Albert & Vanessa Coury (9/6), John & Katrina Tambouras (9/7), Steven & Erin Hage (9/10), Lenny & Joni Slatko (9/12), Mandy & Constantine Nasr (9/13), Samir & Amira Boutari (9/12), Philip & Muriel Khoury (9/24), April & Teddy Hage (9/25), Marcelle & Edward Chaffin (9/26), Don & Noha

Simon (9/26), George & Camilia Daftari (9/27), George & Michele Yazbek (9/27). God grant them all many years!

Included in our prayers for the departed during the month of September:

<i>Metre Chala Salid, +4 Sept. 1964</i>	<i>Doris Cates Hewlett, +22 Sept. 2005</i>
<i>George Nicholas, +5 Sept. 1968</i>	<i>Adele Robinett, +18 Sept. 2006</i>
<i>Daas Issa, +30 Sept. 1973</i>	<i>Evelyn Barghash, +22 Sept. 2006</i>
<i>Louise Martin, +6 Sept. 1975</i>	<i>Sharon Rowihab, +9 Sept. 2007</i>
<i>Katherine Wassef, +7 Sept. 1976</i>	<i>Jamileh Ghawi, +1 Sept. 2008</i>
<i>Victoria Aboud Noonan, +Sept. '78</i>	<i>Jeannette Aboud, +13 Sept. 2008</i>
<i>Claudette Johnson, +18 Sept. 1979</i>	<i>Talina Sayegh, +9 Sept. 2009</i>
<i>Elias Abughazaleh, +20 Sept. 1979</i>	<i>Nicholae Juganu, +17 Sept. 2010</i>
<i>Lilly Gentry, +14 Sept. 1984</i>	<i>Alice Ayoob, +30 Sept. 2010</i>
<i>Hanna Bibby, +9 Sept. 1987</i>	<i>Faith Siano, +27 Sept. 2011</i>
<i>Odeh Sweis, +3 Sept. 1987</i>	<i>Jameel Sadd, +20 Sept. 2012</i>
<i>Toufic El-Hage, +29 Sept. 1992</i>	<i>Mary Gillespie, +28 Sept. 2012</i>
<i>Gloe Sarah Harris, +2 Sept. 1995</i>	<i>Charles Slemmon, +28 Sept. 2014</i>
<i>Evelyn Jenkins, +2 Sept. 1995</i>	<i>Nouhad Tarbouche, +9 Sept. 2015</i>
<i>William Kavan, +28 Sept. 1995</i>	<i>Robert Michaelis, +16 Sept. 2015</i>
<i>Patricia Slatko, +23 Sept. 1997</i>	<i>Shibley Horaney, +19 Sept. 2015</i>
<i>Samuel Simon, +4 Sept. 1997</i>	<i>Marsha Harvey, +17 Sept. 2016</i>
<i>Rose Thomas, +12 Sept. 1998</i>	<i>Sondra Murr Love, +25 Sept., 2016</i>
<i>Michel Mallouk, +3 Sept. 1999</i>	<i>Cle Bassett, +19 Sept., 2017</i>
<i>Ralph Miller, +23 Sept. 2000</i>	<i>Michael Mitchell, Jr., +28 Sept. 2017</i>
<i>James Piper, +23 Sept. 2000</i>	<i>Sadaa Sadd Eldeeb, +4 Sept., 2020</i>
<i>Adele Adams, +5 Sept. 2001</i>	<i>Maria Juganu, +15 September 2021</i>
<i>Alice Wakeem, +26 Sept. 2001</i>	<i>Dr. Samir Abu-Rustum, +5 Sept., 2021</i>
<i>Najla Mussallem, +2 Sept. 2002</i>	<i>Linda Simon +14 September, 2021</i>
<i>Nicola Massu, +9 Sept. 2002</i>	<i>Roger Tierney +2 September, 2022</i>
<i>Lorraine M. Bitar, +29 Sept. 2002</i>	<i>Salima Balout +3 September, 2022</i>
<i>Michael A. Edwards, +23 Sept.</i>	<i>Helen Maloof Mansur +7 Sept., 2022</i>
<i>Katherine Nassir, +18 Sept. 2004</i>	<i>Dr. Fred Milkie +10 Sept., 2022</i>
<i>Janice Nassany, +21 Sept. 2004</i>	<i>Alan Namay +21 September, 2022</i>
<i>Dr. Mitry Ajalat, +21 Sept. 2005</i>	

Memory Eternal!

Please bear in mind that some have chosen not to be included in our announcement.
Please inform Fr. Timothy of any errors.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

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

[Labor Day – Monday, September 4th (U.S.A.)]

Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

Friday, September 8, 10 a.m.

The Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Saturday, September 9th, Great Vespers, 5 p.m.

Sunday, September 10th, Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Liturgy for the Feast of The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

[observed as a day of strict fasting]

Thursday, September 14, 11 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Zoom Meeting Bible Study

Bible Study with Father Timothy — Tuesday, September 5th at 7 p.m. **Use the link provided in the parish e-mail on Tuesday.**

Our Bible Study on Exodus is open to anyone and recorded sessions are available by request. This week our study will continue our reading beginning with chapter 33. Our study has asked the question: "If our bodies are the dwelling place of God and 'temples' of the Holy Spirit, what is the purpose and necessity for temples to be built as holy places of worship?"

Use of Assembly Hall and In-House Caterers

St. Michael Church will provide it's ballroom and kitchen for special events, i.e., parties and receptions, with an established donation fee for parishioner requests made on an individual basis. Also, we welcome licensed caterers who may be interested in use of our kitchen. Please contact either: Connie Barilla: <cmatthews46@yahoo.com>, Michael Mitchell <mgmitchell3@gmail.com>, or Father Timothy for more information.



Lake Balboa Town Hall (Date Change) - Saturday, October 14, 10 a.m.

Our Neighborhood Council has planned a Town Hall to discuss the State Mandate for the City of Los Angeles housing requirement; identifying areas where 4-5 story buildings may be constructed next to single family residences, including the neighborhoods west of the Van Nuys Airport. For more information visit the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council website at: www.lakebalboanc.org

St. Barbara Lebanon Relief Fund Update

View photos and updates of how our donations have assisted with the work of St. Barbara Lebanon Relief Fund this summer. Go to: <https://stbarbaralebanonrelief.org/>

Sale of Storage Items

Furniture in a that needs to be sold in a Mission Hills Self Storage unit is available for anyone interested by contacting Father Timothy for more information at: 818-219-3761 or at: frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org

Upcoming Events

[Note: You may now access our Google Parish Calendar to your personal calendar.

Simply go to: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/1?cid=YWRtaW5Ac3RtaWN0YWVsdmFubnV5cy5vcmcj>

Ladies Fellowship Brunch - Saturday, September 23, 2023 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon; RSVP to Charmaine Darmour at: 714-287-1266

First Sunday of Church School - September 24th

Lake Balboa Neighborhood Town Hall - Saturday, October 14, 2023
at 10 a.m. Discussion on State Housing Mandate

St. Nicholas Cathedral Festival - Saturday, Sunday, October 7-8, 2023
Saturday, 3-11 p.m., Sunday, 12 noon to 10 p.m.

Diocesan Fall Gathering - Friday-Sunday, October 13-15, 2023
Hosted by St. James Church (Modesto, California); Register at:
saintjamesmodesto.org

St. Michael Feast Day Celebration - Saturday-Sunday, November 4-5
Church School Christmas Program - Sunday, December 10

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

Holy Bread Offering List

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Sep 08 (Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos) - open

Sep 10 - open

Sep 14 (Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross) - open

Sep 17 - open

Please contact Fr. Timothy (818/219-3761; frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org) to sign-up
to offer Holy Bread or host the coffee hour.

Our 2023 Pledge Form Provided with this Bulletin

Our parish depends upon the financial pledge commitments of its members in order to meet its monthly expenses. Our 2023 budget has included the increase of costs and was expanded to include additional maintenance expenses for our new church sanctuary. A hardcopy of the Pledge Form is provided with this bulletin, is also available in the church narthex, or will be mailed to you by request.

As a committed member of St. Michael Church, please complete a new 2023 form. An annual "Fair Share Contribution" is paid by St. Michael Church to the Archdiocese (\$50/adult; \$35/17 years of age or under). If you have completed a Pledge Form and would like to receive an six-month update of your contributions, please send your request to our Treasurer, Britton McLinn at: britton@stmichaelvannuys.org Our Six-month Financial Summary will be soon mailed to our members. Thank you.

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

2023 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

Name Age

Name Age

Name Age

Name Age

Church School Fall Registration

Now is the time to be sure that your child(ren) are registered for Church School this fall. A QR code and link is provided below:

CHURCH SCHOOL REGISTRATION

SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER



OR REGISTER AT THIS LINK

[Church School Registraion Form | '23-'24](#)

For questions, please email Cooper Rowe at
superintendent@stmichaelvannuys.org



ST MICHAEL LADIES FELLOWSHIP BRUNCH



**Let's come together as Sisters in Christ
for a Fellowship Brunch. An opportunity
to get to know one another better.**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD
10AM - 12:30PM
OUR CHURCH HALL**



**RSVP to Charmaine at 714-287-1266
Please advise if you can
bring a dish to share**

**We will also be collecting baby
supplies for the OPEN ARMS
Pregnancy Center in Northridge.
Baby clothes, diapers, blankets,
wipes, pacifiers, teething rings, etc.
Things to help moms
who have chosen LIFE.**



ST. MICHAEL ANTIOCHIAN CHURCH

Young Adults

CHEESE & WINE

NIGHT

Sept 29

07.00 PM



Join us for a night of wine and
cheese and fellowship,
Hosted by William M. Nehme

5849 Ranchito Ave Sherman Oaks, California 91401

St. Nicholas

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL



Festival



WIN
2023
TOYOTA
CAMRY

SATURDAY & SUNDAY
OCTOBER 7 & 8, 2023

2300 W. 3RD STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90057

\$5
ENTRANCE
FEE

SATURDAY: 3:00PM - 11:00PM

SUNDAY: 12:00PM - 10:00PM

CHURCH
TOURS

KIDS UNDER 10 - FREE

LIVE MUSIC & DJ



FIOEL FAYAD



MICHEL ASHKAR



MICHEL ASLAN



CHARBEL BASSIL



FADI HANANI

VENDORS AND RENTAL INQUIRIES, AD BOOK, DONATIONS: PLEASE CONTACT ZIAD SALEH AT 818-288-8716



BEER
+
WINE

MANAKEESH
KABAB . GYRO . TACOS .
FALAFEL . KIBBEH MASHWEYEH
SWEETS & MUCH MORE



KIDS ACTIVITIES
CARNIVAL GAMES .
BOUNCY HOUSE & MORE



2023 TOYOTA CAMRY
SILENT AUCTION
SPORT COLLECTIBLES

SMOKING IN DESIGNATED AREAS ONLY

Stock Donation Option

A charitable donation of long-term appreciated securities, i.e., stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds that have realized significant appreciation over time is one of the best and most tax-efficient of all ways to support St. Michael Church. There are two main advantages: 1) Any long-term appreciated securities with unrealized gains (meaning they were purchased over a year ago, and have a current value greater than their original cost) may be donated to the church with the benefit of receiving a tax deduction for the full fair value of the securities—up to 60% of the donor's adjusted gross income; 2) since the securities/stock is being donated rather than sold, capital gains taxes from selling the securities no longer apply. And the more appreciation the securities have, the greater the tax savings will be. Please speak with or contact Ron Zraick, Chair of the Capital Funds Campaign Committee for more information at: [<ronaldzraick@yahoo.com>](mailto:ronaldzraick@yahoo.com).

Camp St. Nicholas Resident Manager Sought

The Resident Manager at Camp St Nicholas in Frazier Park CA has submitted her resignation after twelve years of service. We are now actively seeking candidates to interview for this position. The position is an exempt, full time, salaried position. It is required that the candidate reside at the house provided on the camp site for this purpose (the cathedral covers all utilities and repairs required at the house). The position includes the same healthcare benefits offered to all full time employees of St Nicholas Cathedral, and currently also includes a small life insurance policy. For more information, please contact Father Andrew Andrews at: frandrewa@stnicholasla.com

PASTORAL SERMON **The Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew** **By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig** **September 3, 2023**

The full context of today's Gospel lesson is in a section of St. Matthew's gospel (of chapter 21), and is the third in a sequence of parables taught by our Lord prior to this final entrance into Jerusalem, when He confronted the religious leaders

concerning their hypocrisy and their false guidance in misleading the people. He compares them to a fruitless fig tree. He then illustrates their unfruitfulness in the Parable of the Two Sons. They, like the son in the parable, who promised to work in his father's vineyard, failed to do their Father's will. Finally, Jesus tells them the Parable of the Tenants, bringing His indictment of them to a climax, in order that they might realize their great distortion of God's plan. And in the words of St. John Chrysostom: "that [the Lord] might show their judgment to be greater and highly unpardonable" (Matthew; Homily 68). Any Jew in Jesus' day would've clearly understood what He meant.

The parable begins: *There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country.* God had chosen the Hebrew people and made a covenant with them. He cared for them, provided for them, and gave them victory over their enemies. In the parable the nation was *God's vineyard*, and in it everything necessary was given them; they had land; its boundaries were set; laws and institutions were divinely provided. According to St. Ambrose: these details are to be understood as symbols: *the hedge* is the shield of divine power; the *winepress* is the scene of spiritual effort to bring about the fruit of good works; the *tower* is the beacon or shelter of the Law, designed to guide them to righteousness (Treatise on the Gospel of Luke; Book 9, 24).

Kings and priests were the stewards (managers) of God's vineyards and their responsibility was to lead the people to spiritual fruitfulness and fidelity to their covenant and fidelity to their covenant with God. They owed Him loyalty and obedience. The householder's (landlord's) departure for another country signifies: first, God's trust in them, and second, His patience with their failures. He gave them adequate time to develop what He had entrusted to them, even when they had failed over and over again. But they still had time to return to obeying Him and to show fruits of godliness.

(verse 34) *So...when the season of fruit (time of harvest) 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.*

The Book of Kings (divided into two books in the Protestant Bible) is divided into four books of the "Four Kingdoms" of the Old Covenant period. It contains

many accounts of the persecution and the murder of the prophets (I Kings 18:4; 19:10; 22:24-27). God had sent his prophets to proclaim His will to the Hebrews, to call them back from their sinfulness and their idolatry, and to exhort them to keep their covenant with Him, an agreement that they had frequently broken.

In the parable: the landowner repeatedly sends servants to his vineyard and they are killed. It is a reminder of the shameful events in the history of God's people as recorded in the Old Testament. Any Jew hearing our Lord's parable in the first century would have known what the Lord was making reference to.

Finally, in the parable we hear the landowner sends his own son and says, "They will respect my son." And here the lesson goes much further. It was obvious to everyone who heard the parable that Jesus was not only referring to Israel's rejecting and slaying the prophets but also to Himself as the Son who had come to demand an accounting of the tenants, who were the chief priests and elders. He was predicting His own slaying at the demand of the religious leaders of His day.

We hear in verse 39 *...And they took Him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him.* (The tenant's casting the son out of the vineyard further reminds us that Christ was taken outside the city of Jerusalem to be crucified.)

The image of a vineyard is frequently used in the Old Testament, and represents the people of God. So great was the Lord's care for His vineyard, the house of Israel, that He sent His own son to reclaim what was His. His patience was still not exhausted, even though they had rejected His messengers – the prophets. Perhaps the tenants thought that the Master would never come again to call them to account for mishandling his vineyard. Maybe the kings and chief priests did not understand the message of the prophets. In any case, they paid no attention to the message. They had taken possession of God's vineyard and behaved as if there was no Master to whom they must be accountable.

But even before this parable was used by our Lord, the Holy Prophet Isaiah (8 c. BC) had foretold this very parable, in his reprimand of Israel for its perverse conduct in chapter five, verses four to seven:

What more could have been done to my vineyard than have I done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my

vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briars and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it. For the vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel . . . And He looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

But was the lesson of the parable intended only for the Jews? Certainly not! The parable is a clear reminder to Christians that we have a covenant to keep: we are given a “sacred trust;” we are God’s stewards, His “tenants,” and that our disobedience and disloyalty will fall under the same condemnation. Prophets no longer come to proclaim God’s will and to pass judgment on the people entrusted with the vineyard. The last and greatest Prophet has come and revealed God and His will for mankind. He is the Son of God, the true Heir, and *we are the children of God: and if children, then heir, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ* (Romans 8:16-17).

Paying attention to God’s warnings in our life is something that you and I can easily overlook. It is not difficult for us to call upon God when we find ourselves in predicaments, or to earnestly pray for what we need or desire. However, when God wants to get through to us – how readily are we willing to listen? How frequently are we available? How willing are we to make sacrifices or to change our course or direction? Is having God there to serve our purposes really what matters to us? Is there any thought to what God might expect of us?

In reflecting upon today’s parable I am reminded how that many of a persons frustrations can be the result of his or her own stubbornness and self-centered pride. Being selfish can easily turn to a callousness that make ourselves accountable to no one, not even God. It is easy to acknowledge that God knows what is best for us and to be thankful for His goodness. However, it is not very difficult to isolate God from having much to say about what we would want for ourselves, our personal choices, forgetting that our Lord is the Landowner and we are His tenants; His stewards.

And for those of us who like to consider ourselves religious: be careful! Spiritual pride is also a sin and can get the best of us. How often have you or I thought that we can handle bigger or heavier crosses? Then there is the reality of how big or how heavy that cross is. Sometimes it crushes us, but the wonderful thing is: God is there to help us to learn and grow from our own ignorance.

Very shortly we will be commemorating the Feast of The Elevation of the Holy Cross. It will be another reminder to us that God's great love and abundant mercy is what sustains us. Also, that our life, if it is to be a life of love, is never without commitments and self-sacrifices, personal choices and crosses.

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, who is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, and has called us to tend your vineyard, which you have established with your right hand, we Thy sinful servants ask for your guidance and help as we endeavor to be your good stewards as we labor to do your will. Extend your hand from heaven and bless us all as we earnestly prepare for the Feast of your coming. As we are ever mindful of your supreme sacrifice and are called to your service, grant us courage in obedience that we may truly be the inheritors and heirs of your Kingdom. Keep us ever in your watchful care and protect us from the Evil One, for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. A-men.

EOTHINON 2

الايوثينا 2

TONE 4

اللحن 4

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

HIEROMARTYR ANTHIMOS OF NICOMEDIA & VENERABLE
THEOKTISTOS, FELLOW ASCETIC WITH EUTHYMIOS THE GREAT

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن الرابع

إن تلميذات الرب تعلمن من الملاك الكرز بالقيامة البهجة، وطرحن القضاء الجدي،
وخاطبن الرسل مفتخرات وقائلات: سبي الموت وقام المسيح الإله، مانحاً العالم
الرحمة العظمى

أبوليتيكيون للقديس أنثيموس باللحن الأول

لما صرّت مناضلاً ثابتاً عن رعيّتك أيّها المتألّه العزم أنثيموس، أهرقت دمك بإقدام
من أجلها. وإذ أنك لم تجزع من تهديدات الأعداء، تبتهج الآن في السماوات، مثلاً

لدى عَرْشِ اللاهوتِ الْمُتَثَلِّبِ الضَّيَاءِ. فَالْمَجْدُ لِلْمَسِيحِ الَّذِي شَدَّدَكَ، الْمَجْدُ لِكَرَامَةِ
نَفْسِكَ، الْمَجْدُ لِجَلَادَتِكَ فِي الشَّهَادَةِ.

أبوليتيكيون للقديس ثاوكتيستس باللحن الثامن

لِلْبَرِيَّةِ غَيْرِ الْمُثْمِرَةِ بِمَجَارِي دُمُوعِكَ أَمْرَعَتَ، وَبِالْتَهْدَاتِ الَّتِي مِنَ الْأَعْمَاقِ أَثْمَرْتَ
بِاتِّعَابِكَ إِلَى مِئَةِ ضِعْفٍ. فَصِرْتَ كَوَكْبًا لِلْمَسْكُونَةِ مُتَالِفًا بِالْعَجَائِبِ يَا أَبَانَا الْبَارَّ
ثَاوكتيستس. فَتَشْفَعْ إِلَى الْمَسِيحِ الْإِلَهِ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَ نَفُوسَنَا.

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع

أَيُّهَا الْمُتَقَدِّمُونَ عَلَى الْأَجْنَادِ السَّمَاوِيِّينَ، نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكُمْ نَحْنُ غَيْرِ الْمُسْتَحَقِّينَ، حَتَّى أَنْكُمْ
بَطْلِبَاتِكُمْ تَكْتَنُفُونَنَا بِظُلِّ أَجْنَحَةِ مَجْدِكُمْ غَيْرِ الْهَيُولِيِّ، حَافِظِينَ إِيَّانَا نَحْنُ الْجَائِثِينَ
وَالصَّارِحِينَ بِغَيْرِ فِتُورٍ، أَنْقِدُونَا مِنَ الشَّدَائِدِ، بِمَا أَنْكُمْ رُؤَسَاءُ مَرَاتِبِ الْقَوَاتِ الْعُلُويَّةِ.

قنفاق ميلاد العذراء على اللحن الرابع

إِنَّ يُوَاكِيمَ وَحَنَّةً مِنْ عَارِ الْعُقْرِ أُطْلِقًا، وَإِيْمَ وَحَوَاءً مِنْ فَسَادِ الْمَوْتِ، بِمَوْلِدِكَ الْمُقَدَّسِ
يَا طَاهِرَةً أَعْتَقًا. فَلَهُ يُعِيدُ شَعْبَكَ، وَقَدْ تَخَلَّصَ مِنْ وَصْمَةِ الزَّلَّاتِ، صَارِيحًا نَحْوَكِ:
الْعَاقِرُ تَلِدُ وَالِدَةَ الْإِلَهِ الْمَغْذِيَّةِ حَيَاتِنَا.

الرسالة

مَا أَعْظَمَ أَعْمَالِكَ يَا رَبُّ كُلَّهَا بِحُكْمَةٍ صَنَعْتَ

بَارِكِي يَا نَفْسِي الرَّبَّ.

فصلٌ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولْسِ الرِّسُولِ الْأُولَى إِلَى أَهْلِ كُورِنْثُوسِ.

مَا أَعْظَمَ أَعْمَالِكَ يَا رَبُّ لَقَدْ صَنَعْتَ جَمِيعَهَا بِالْحُكْمَةِ، بَارِكِي يَا نَفْسِي الرَّبِّ

فصلٌ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ بُولْسِ الرِّسُولِ الْأُولَى إِلَى أَهْلِ كُورِنْثُوسِ

يَا إِخْوَةَ، تَبْقِظُوا، وَاثْبَتُوا فِي الْإِيمَانِ، كُونُوا رَجَالًا، كُونُوا أَقْوِيَاءَ. اَعْمَلُوا كُلَّ
شَيْءٍ بِمُحَبَّةٍ. أَنْتُمْ تَعْرِفُونَ، أَيُّهَا الْإِخْوَةُ، أَنَّ عَائِلَةَ اسْتَفَانَسِ هِيَ بَاكُورَةٌ مِنْ آمَنٍ
بِالْمَسِيحِ فِي آخَائِيَّةٍ. وَأَنْهُمْ كَرَسُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ لخدمَةِ الْإِخْوَةِ الْقَدِيسِينَ. فَأُنَاشِدُكُمْ، أَنْ

تسمعوا لهم ولكل من يعمل ويخدم معهم. سرّني مجيء أستفاناس وفرتوناتوس وأخائيكوس، لأنهم قاموا مقامكم في غيابكم. وأنعشوا قلبي مثلما أنعشوا قلوبكم. فاعرفوا كيف تكرمون أمثالهم. تسلّم عليكم كنائس أسية، ويسلم عليكم كثيرا أكيليا وبريسكلا والكنيسة التي في دارهما. ويسلم عليكم الاخوة كلهم. سلموا بعضكم على بعض بقبلة مقدسة. هذا السلام بخط يدي أنا بولس. من لا يحب الرب يسوع المسيح هو تحت اللعنة! "ماران أثا" الرب أتى. عليكم جميعا نعمة الرب يسوع. محبتي لكم جميعا في المسيح يسوع.

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارة القديس متى

قال الربّ هذا المثل: غرس ربّ بيت كرما، فسيجه وحفر فيه معصرة وبنى برجاً وسلّمه إلى بعض الكرامين وسافر. فلما حان وقت القطف، أرسل عبيده إلى الكرامين ليأخذوا ثمره. فأمسك الكرامون عبيده وضربوا واحدا منهم، وقتلوا غيره، ورجموا الآخر. فأرسل عبيدا غيرهم أكثر عددا من الأولين، ففعلوا بهم ما فعلوه بالأولين: وفي آخر الأمر أرسل إليهم ابنه وقال: سيهابون ابني. فلما رأى الكرامون الابن، قال بعضهم لبعض: "ها هو الوارث! هلّمّ نقتله ونأخذ ميراثه!" فأمسكوه ورموه في خارج الكرم وقتلوه. فماذا يفعل رب الكرم بهؤلاء الكرامين عند رجوعه؟ قالوا له: "يقتل هؤلاء الأشرار قتلا ويسلم الكرم إلى كرامين آخرين يؤدون إليه الثمر في حينه." فقال له يسوع: "أما قرأتم في الكتب المقدسة: الحجر الذي رذله البنائون صار رأس الزاوية؟ هذا ما صنعه الرب، وهو عجب لأبصارنا"

ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان عنى 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 الذي يوزع عند إنتهاء مراسم القداس). رجاء مراجعة الكاهن إذا رغبت أن تصبح عضواً في الكنيسة الارثوذكسية