

+St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America

Metropolitan Saba of New York and all North America

V. Rev. Fr. Nicholas Borzghol, Pastor

Dn. Nicholas Adranly

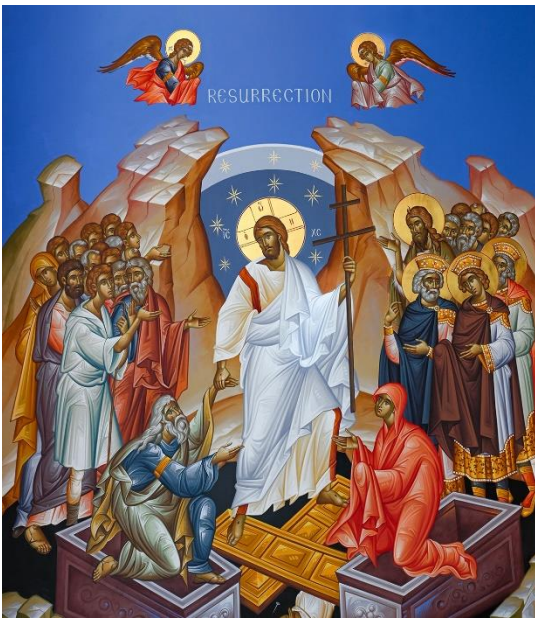
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SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH, 2026

SUNDAY OF GREAT AND ALL-HOLY PASCHA

CHRIST IS RISEN / Χριστός Ανέστη / المسيح قام



Mary Magdalene, and the other women who were present at the burial of our Saviour on Friday evening, returned from Golgotha to the city and prepared fragrant spices and myrrh, so that they might anoint the body of Jesus. On the morrow, because of the law which forbids work on the day of the Sabbath, they rested for the whole day. But at early dawn on the Sunday that followed, almost thirty-six hours since the death of the Life-giving Redeemer, they came to the sepulchre with the spices to anoint His body. While they were considering the difficulty of rolling away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, there was a fearful earthquake; and an Angel, whose countenance shone like lightning and whose garment was white as snow, rolled away the stone and sat upon it. The guards that were there became as dead from fear and took to flight. The women, however, went into the sepulchre, but did not find the Lord's body. Instead, they saw

two other Angels in the form of youths clothed in white, who told them that the Saviour was risen, and they sent forth the women, who ran to proclaim to the disciples these gladsome tidings. Then Peter and John arrived, having learned from Mary Magdalene what had come to pass, and when they entered the tomb, they found only the winding sheets. Therefore, they returned again to the city with joy, as heralds now of the supernatural Resurrection of Christ, Who in truth was seen alive by the disciples on this day on five occasions.

Our Lord, then, was crucified, died, and was buried on Friday, before the setting of the sun, which was the first of His "three days" in the grave; observing the mystical Sabbath, that "seventh day" in which it is said that the Lord "rested from all His works" (Gen. 2:2-3), He passed all of Saturday in the grave; and He arose "while it was yet dark, very early in the morning" on Sunday, the third day, which, according to the Hebrew reckoning, began after sunset on Saturday.

As we celebrate today this joyous Resurrection, we greet and embrace one another in Christ, thereby demonstrating our Saviour's victory over death and corruption, and the destruction of our ancient enmity with God, and His reconciliation toward us, and our inheritance of life everlasting. The feast itself is called Pascha, which is derived from the Hebrew word which means "passover"; because Christ, Who suffered and arose, has made us to pass over from the curse of Adam and slavery to the devil and death unto our primal freedom and blessedness. In addition, this day of this particular week, which is the first of all the rest, is dedicated to the honour of the Lord; in honour and remembrance of the Resurrection, the Apostles transferred to this day the rest from labour that was formerly assigned to the Sabbath of the ancient Law.

THE EPISTLE

*This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.
Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.*

The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1:1-8).

In the first book, O Theophilos, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

هَذَا هُوَ الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي صَنَعَهُ الرَّبُّ، فَلْنَفْرَحْ وَنَتَهَلَّلْ بِهِ. اعْتَرِفُوا لِلرَّبِّ، فَإِنَّهُ صَالِحٌ وَإِلَى الْأَبَدِ رَحْمَتُهُ.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ أَعْمَالِ الرُّسُلِ الْقَدِيسِينَ الْأَطْهَارِ. (8-1:1)

إِنِّي قَدْ أَنْشَأْتُ الْكَلَامَ الْأَوَّلَ يَا ثاوفيلسُ فِي جَمِيعِ الْأُمُورِ الَّتِي ابْتَدَأَ يَسُوعُ يَعْمَلُهَا وَيُعَلِّمُ بِهَا، إِلَى الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي صَعِدَ فِيهِ، مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ أَوْصَى بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ الرُّسُلَ الَّذِينَ اضْطَفَاهُمْ، الَّذِينَ أَرَاهُمْ أَيْضاً نَفْسَهُ حَيًّا بَعْدَ تَأْلَمِهِ بِبِرَاهِينَ كَثِيرَةٍ، وَهُوَ يَتَرَاءَى لَهُمْ مُدَّةَ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْماً، وَيُكَلِّمُهُمْ بِمَا يَخْتَصُّ بِمَلَكَوتِ اللَّهِ. وَفِيمَا هُوَ مُجْتَمِعٌ مَعَهُمْ، أَوْصَاهُمْ أَنْ "لَا تَبْرَحُوا مِنْ أُورُشَلِيمَ، بَلِ انْتَظِرُوا مَوْعِدَ الْآبِ الَّذِي سَمِعْتُمُوهُ مِنِّي. فَإِنَّ يُوْحَنَّا عَمَدَ بِالْمَاءِ، وَأَمَّا أَنْتُمْ فَسَتَعْمَدُونَ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ، لَا بَعْدَ هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامِ بَكْثِيرٍ." فَسَأَلَهُ الْمُجْتَمِعُونَ قَائِلِينَ: "يَا رَبُّ، أَفِي هَذَا الزَّمَانِ تَرُدُّ الْمُلْكَ إِلَى إِسْرَائِيلَ؟" فَقَالَ لَهُمْ: "لَيْسَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَعْرِفُوا الْأَزْمِنَةَ أَوْ الْأَوْقَاتِ الَّتِي جَعَلَهَا الْآبُ فِي سُلْطَانِهِ. لَكِنَّكُمْ سَتَتَالُونَ قُوَّةَ بِحُلُولِ الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَتَكُونُونَ لِي شُهَدَاءَ فِي أُورُشَلِيمَ، وَفِي جَمِيعِ الْيَهُودِيَّةِ وَالسَّامِرَةِ، وَإِلَى أَقْصَى الْأَرْضِ."

THE GOSPEL

The Reading of the Holy Gospel according to St. John (1:1-17).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. John bore witness to him, and cried, "This is he of whom I said, 'he who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'" And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

فَصْلٌ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ يُوْحَنَّا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ. (17-1:1)

فِي الْبَدْءِ كَانَ الْكَلِمَةُ، وَالْكَالِمَةُ كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَإِلَهَا كَانَ الْكَلِمَةُ. هَذَا كَانَ فِي الْبَدْءِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ. كُلُّ بِهِ كَانَ، وَبِغَيْرِهِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْءٌ مِمَّا كُونُ. بِهِ كَانَتْ الْحَيَاةُ، وَالْحَيَاةُ كَانَتْ نَوْرَ النَّاسِ. وَالنَّوْرُ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ يُضِيءُ، وَالظُّلْمَةُ لَمْ تُدْرِكْهُ. كَانَ إِنْسَانٌ مُرْسَلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ اسْمُهُ يُوْحَنَّا. هَذَا جَاءَ لِلشَّهَادَةِ لِيَشْهَدَ لِلنَّوْرِ، لِكَيْ يُؤْمِنَ الْكُلُّ بِوِاسِطَتِهِ. لَمْ يَكُنْ هُوَ النَّوْرَ بَلْ كَانَ لِيَشْهَدَ لِلنَّوْرِ. كَانَ النَّوْرُ الْحَقِيقِيُّ الَّذِي يُنِيرُ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ آتِيًا إِلَى الْعَالَمِ. فِي الْعَالَمِ كَانَ، وَالْعَالَمُ بِهِ كُونُ، وَالْعَالَمُ لَمْ يَعْرِفْهُ. إِلَى خَاصَّتِهِ أَتَى، وَخَاصَّتُهُ لَمْ تَقْبَلْهُ. أَمَّا كُلُّ الَّذِينَ قَبِلُوهُ، فَأَعْطَاهُمْ سُلْطَانًا أَنْ يَكُونُوا أَوْلَادًا لِلَّهِ، الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاسْمِهِ، الَّذِينَ لَا مِنْ دِمٍ، وَلَا مِنْ مَشِيئَةِ لَحْمٍ، وَلَا مِنْ مَشِيئَةِ رَجُلٍ، لَكِنْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَوُلِدُوا. وَالْكَالِمَةُ صَارَ جَسَدًا وَحَلَّ فِيْنَا، وَقَدْ أَبْصَرْنَا مَجْدَهُ، مَجْدَ وَحِيدٍ مِنَ الْآبِ مَمْلُوءًا نِعْمَةً وَحَقًّا. وَيُوْحَنَّا شَهِدَ لَهُ، وَصَرَخَ قَائِلًا: "هَذَا هُوَ الَّذِي قُلْتُ عَنْهُ إِنَّ الَّذِي يَأْتِي بَعْدِي صَارَ قَبْلِي لِأَنَّهُ مُتَقَدِّمِي." وَمِنْ مَلِيئِهِ نَحْنُ كُلُّنَا أَحَدُنَا، وَنِعْمَةٌ فَوْقَ نِعْمَةٍ. لِأَنَّ النَّامُوسَ بِمُوسَى أُعْطِيَ، وَأَمَّا النَّعْمَةُ وَالْحَقُّ فَبِيسُوعِ الْمَسِيحِ حَصَلَا.

Upcoming Events

April 19 th	Memorial service for the servant of God Albert Toubassy (Laila Farradj's brother) on Sunday 4/19/26. May his memory be eternal!
April 26 th	One year memorial service for Donna Potter
May 2 nd	40 days memorial service for the servant of God Christopher Jaber on Sunday May 2nd. May his memory be eternal!
1 st and 3 rd Sundays	St. Anastasia's Fellowship for those struggling with substance abuse. 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. 6pm meeting; 7pm Readers Paraklesis at St. John's. Please contact Joseph: (310) 227-9848

Coffee Hour

April 12 th	Pascha!
April 19 th	In memory of Albert Toubassy
April 26 th	Siham Mitry for the one-year memorial for her daughter Donna Potter.

Holy Week Schedule

April 9 th Holy Thursday	Vesperal Liturgy and Washing of the Feet at 10:00am Passion Gospels at 6:30 pm
April 10 th Holy Friday	Royal Hours, Vespers and Taking the Body from the Cross 2:30 pm Lamentations تقاريط الجنائز at 6:30 pm Vigil at Christ's Tomb at 9:00pm
April 11 th Holy Saturday	Vesperal Liturgy at 10:00am Rush Service 10:30 pm followed by the Divine Liturgy
April 12 th Great and Holy Pascha	Agape Vespers at 1:00pm

Holy Oblations

This week, Holy Oblations are offered by:

- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola, Sandy Dudum, George Messih, George Adranly, Fred Addas, Henriette Hilal, Souhad Halaka, George Cawog, Sam Nassab, Rocky Dudum** and **Norma Khalil**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family in memory of **Elia Ansara** May his memory be eternal!
- † Nelly Nasif for the good health of her brother **Nabil Haddad**, recovering from surgery. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **John Freij**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Eddie Salem** Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Ron and Ruth Jeha** Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Bradley Yowakim**. Many years!
- † Siham Mitry in memory of **Osama Mitry** and his family: **Habib, Nabiha, Evelyn, Margaret, Leila, Mitri**, and **Eugenia**. Also, for the good health of her great granddaughter **Camille Potter** on her one-year birthday and her baptism.
- † John and Dina Freij and family in memory of **Rose Freij** . May her memory be eternal!
- † St. John Parish Family in memory of **Albert Toubassy**, the brother of Laila Farradj and Samir Toubassy. May his memory be eternal!
- † Jim and Aileen Jaber and family in memory of **Christopher Jaber**. May his memory be eternal!
- † St. John Parish Family in memory of **Sam Nassab**. May his memory be eternal!

Candles for the altar table and in front of the icons of Christ and the Theotokos offered by:

- † Ibrahim Fasheh in memory of



Hanada Fasheh for one full year. May her memory be eternal!

- † Altar Servers: Nathan Sweis, Clayton Morgan, Elias Freij, Angelo Freij, Andrew Freij, Mazyn Haddadin, James Dudum, John Dudum, David Evans, Evan Kawar, Mason Kawar, Jonathan Juha, Maron Juha and Zaiden Karanikola

Announcements

Talent Show

To all participants: Please attend our mandatory rehearsal on Saturday, April 18 at 6:00, here in the church hall. April 25, Saturday night at 7:00 we will present our Talent Show. Everyone is welcome to attend!! Come enjoy a night of fun and entertainment!! Here in our new church hall.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday April 11th is our annual Easter Egg hunt event. After morning service. Anyone who would like to co-chair this fantastic event, please contact Rania Kashou asap 415.722.0774 or raniamariekashou@gmail.com

Bake Sale Thank You

Christ is Risen... Indeed He is Risen!

A special thank you and appreciation to the leader of Rose bake sale, Denise Dudum, and all the ladies who from their hearts have donated and baked the delicious sweets sold at Palm Sunday and thanks to our parishioners and guests who purchased and took it home. All the proceed of \$4,884. will be added into the Ladies account. Thank you to the ladies who have read the epistles in Arabic and English and those who delivered beautiful sermonettes during the month of March.

In Christ, Fadwa



BBQ Easter Sunday Morning

There will be a Barbecue early in the morning after the Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection on Pascha.



Flowers for The Bier نعش المسيح of Christ

- Donated in memory of John and Misadeh Dudum, Elias and Nahiel Nazzal. May their memory be eternal! Also, for the good health of Jack and Sylvia Dudum and their family. Many years!
- Sam and Yessie Khoury For the continued good health of Sam, Yessie, Sam Jr. and Sofia Khoury. Many years!
- In memory of Ayesh Nasrah and Shawi Khalas. Memory eternal! And for the continued good health of Gianna, Banks, William, Jason, Gabriellas, and all of our families. Many Years!
- For the good health of Daniel and Mona Thayer. Many years!
- From Victor and Angela Husary in memory of beloved parents, Andony, Nazar & parents-in-law, Khamis & Georgette. May their memory be eternal! Also, for our good health & the good health of our children, Chris, Tony and Mike. Many years!
- From Afaf Wahbeh and family in memory of George Wahbeh, Nabil Wahbeh, Hassib Kaileh and Halim Kaileh. May their memory be eternal!

St. Nicholas Summer Camp: Three Holy Youths

St. Nicholas is putting on a summer camp; Camp Three Holy Youths will take place Thursday, July 23 through Monday, July 27 at Daybreak Camp in Felton, California. \$300 per camper for ages 8 years and older. Adults can volunteer. The Antiochian Archdiocese has created step-by-step instructions for setting up an account and registering campers. Please see flyer and link. Would be nice to get a group from St. John to join. Here is the link: www.campthy.com

Dave N Buster's Promotion

Dave N Buster's promotion is almost over. Quick way to give back. How it works:

1. Order: Place an order using the link below
2. Support: **50%** of each Dave & Buster's Power Card purchased is donated back to St. John's.
3. Enjoy: Visit any Dave & Buster's location to pick up your Power Card and start playing!

Please pass link to friends and family. Use this link:

https://www.groupraise.com/oc/59958?utm_campaign=ocmp_copy_url&utm_medium=social&utm_source=offers_promo&fbclid=IwDGRjcARDIzIjbGNrBEOXNwV4dG4DYWvtAjExAHNydGMGYXBwX2IkDDM1MDY4NTUzMTcyOAABHhm1OoePvkG_0fm8xawxQJ43Le3RvnyPqfiFnV5Zkdm5K4TwtTflnyRofAfG_aem_Yb1xQra0Y8JUGO4-9Ra67w

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St. John Orthodox Church
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About St. John's

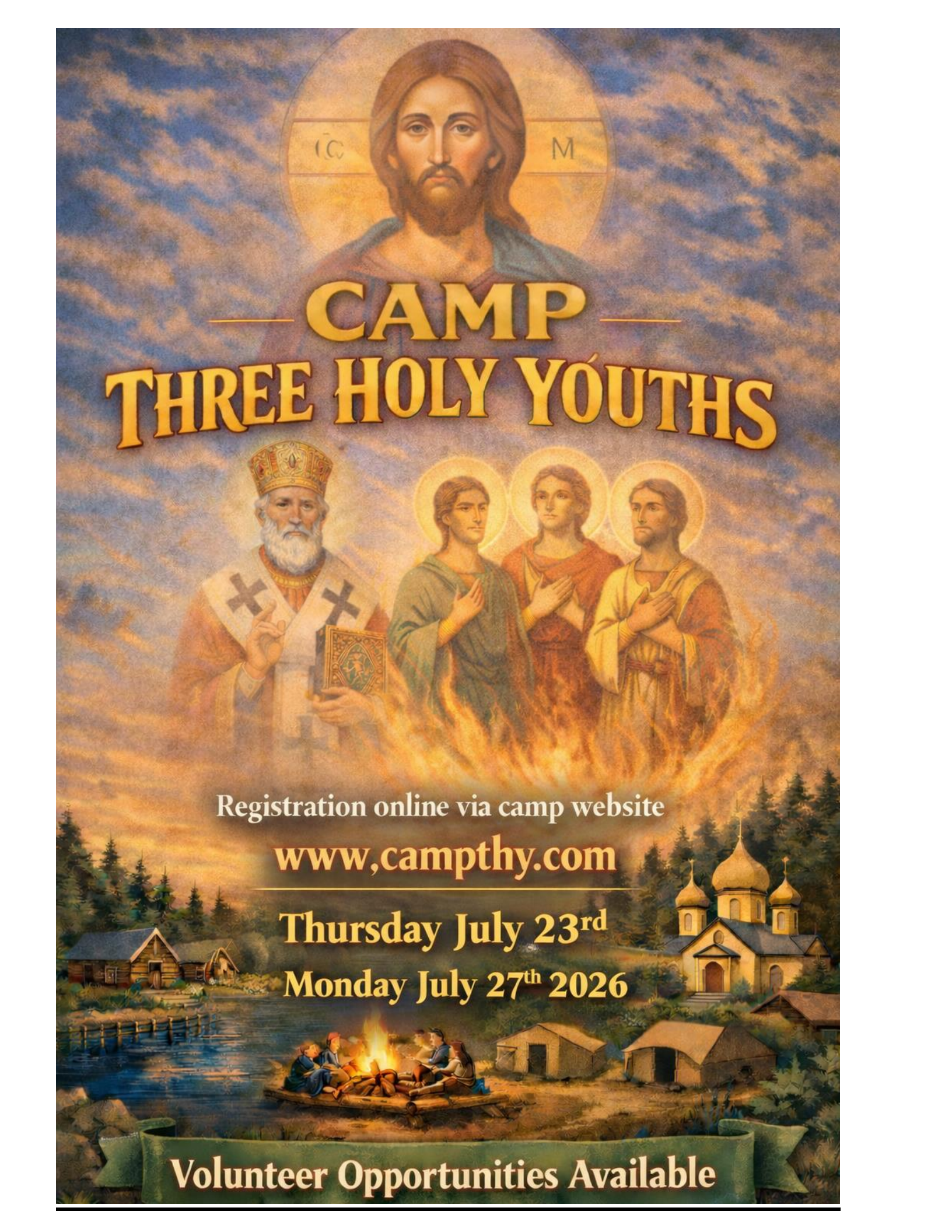
Today's article marks the last in the series of messages highlighting how the long-held dream of building the Fellowship Hall became a reality. Now every Sunday, as parishioners gather for Divine Liturgy and coffee hour, we are reminded of God's guidance of and love for our parish. We again acknowledge and thank the 181 people and families whose contributions enabled our dream to become a reality.

We once again thank, honor, and recognize those St. John parishioners mentioned in this series of articles who served on the various committees formed prior to and during construction. Their skills, knowledge, and devotion to our parish continue a long-standing tradition at St. John of parishioners sharing their talents in thanksgiving for all of God's love and blessings. We are thankful too of the leadership, involvement, and spiritual guidance provided by Fr. Nicholas and Deacon Nicholas during this project and always.

We all look forward to now utilizing our Fellowship Hall to continuing those traditional events that have long been the hallmark of St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church. In addition, we are already seeing and hearing about new initiatives for programs and gatherings that having this new facility makes possible.

"About St. John's," has been the title of the articles about the Fellowship Hall's construction. Under this same title, a new series of articles will appear in the bulletin periodically that will be designed to accomplish two goals. First, stories about the rich history of our parish are being prepared that we hope will inspire us to continue and build upon our rich tradition. Second, we plan to utilize the Weekly Bulletin to provide parishioners with more in-depth stories about ongoing programs and practices that keep our parish moving forward.

In this passage from John 13:34, we find this passage. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." This kind of spiritual unity has, thank God, always been, and we pray will always be, a practice and characteristic of our beloved St. John community.



CAMP THREE HOLY YOUTHS

Registration online via camp website

www.campthy.com

Thursday July 23rd

Monday July 27th 2026

Volunteer Opportunities Available

St. Simeon 10 Year Gala



HONORING

V. Rev. Fr. George Ajalat

— & —

WELCOMING

Rev. Fr. Andrew Andrews

MAY

SATURDAY | **16** | AT 5:30 PM
2026

THE PASADENA HILTON
168 SOUTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE

PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE:

WWW.SCVORTHODOX.COM/GALA-2026

OR SCAN QR CODE BELOW



His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA



Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

Prot. no.: 175/2026

Great and Holy Pascha, 2026

My beloved brother bishops,

My spiritual sons, the beloved priests and deacons,

My beloved in Christ, sons and daughters of the God protected Archdiocese,

I greet you on this great feast, crying out with you: Christ is risen! Truly, He is risen!

Each year, Pascha returns as a season of light, renewing within us the strength of true life and the possibility of our transfiguration and that of the world. This is what I pray for you every day. May you remain always immersed in the joy of the Resurrection.

“The Resurrection and Me”

My meditation this year on Your Resurrection, O my Christ, carried me to its very end, so I asked myself why Pascha remains an annual commemoration and does not become a daily reality in my life. I found the answer in my forgetfulness of eternal life. I realized that when I live on the level of earthly things, I see the Resurrection as no more than a joyful event. But when eternal life becomes my destination and my desire, I live it already, here and now, by the power of the life Your Resurrection has brought me, O my Lord and God.

You told us once: “And this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). Knowing You is either on the personal level — at the level of one’s very being, not merely of the mind — or it is not a knowledge that leads to eternal life. This knowledge calls for a longing for Your heavenly Kingdom, which, the more it is kindled within me, the more I taste it here on earth.

Abide with me, O Lord, that I may be strengthened by the power of Your Resurrection and fear death no longer, for life with You is life indeed, and Your absence is true death. Everything around me and within me seeks life, yet its joy quickly fades. And although I believe that the true life whose joy never fades is by You and in You, I still fear paying its price.

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

358 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 5238, Englewood, NJ 07631-5238
(201) 871-1355 T Archdiocese@antiochian.org (201) 871-7954 F

I want the joy of Your Resurrection without passing through the Cross; therefore, I still stumble and limp between the two. Teach me how to direct my gaze toward Your Resurrection so that, in its light, I may see the Cross as the passage to the defeat of death and all that is bound to it.

Strengthen me to overcome whatever prevents me from setting out toward You and whatever binds me to the glitter and sweetness of this world, so that I may taste Your grace when You touch me and my spiritual senses may no longer remain dull.

Today I am like the two disciples of Emmaus — troubled, anxious, and afraid of what is happening in this world. I long to be with You, for that is far better, but I cannot do it alone. I need You, and like the two disciples I call upon You: “Abide with us, Lord” (Luke 24:29), for the evening of this world has grown dark and its day is fading.

Abide with me, O Lord, that my old self may be renewed and I may become a new person, trampling underfoot all that prevents You from remaining with me.

Abide with me, O Lord, that I may know the power of Your Resurrection, carry Your Cross with joy, and bear witness to the world that it is the passageway to the Resurrection.

Abide with me, O Jesus, that I may see the world in the light of Your eyes and be a witness of joy, peace, and consolation within it.

Abide with me, that by Your Resurrection I may overcome my sins, trample my deadness, and crush my shortcomings and vices.

Abide with me, break Your bread, and give it to me, that my eyes may be opened and my heart may burn with love for You, and that I may proclaim what Your presence works within me.

So, when I cry out that You are risen, risen forever, those who hear me will believe me and know that I am not merely repeating a song I love.

Restore me and Your people, O my Christ, to an everlasting feast, so that our daily greeting may become: O my joy, Christ is risen!

Your father in the risen Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "T. Saba". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+SABA

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

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ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

رقم: ٢٠٢٦/١٧٥

عيد الفصح العظيم والمقدس، ٢٠٢٦

إخوتي الأساقفة الأحباء،

أبنائي الروحانيين، الكهنة والشمامسة المحبوبين،

أولادي في المسيح، أبناء وبنات الأبرشية المحروسة بالله،

أعابيدكم في هذا العيد الكبير، هاتفاً معكم: المسيح قام... حقاً قام.

يعود الفصح في كل عام موسماً نورانياً، يجدد فينا طاقة الحياة الفضلى، وإمكانية تجلينا وتجلي العالم، وهو ما أرجوه لكم في صلاتي يومياً. دتم في غمرة فرح القيامة في كل حين.

"أنا والقيامة"

أخذني التأمل في قيامتك يا مسيحي هذا العام، إلى غايتها، وتساءلت لماذا يبقى الفصح ذكرى سنوية، ولا يصير واقعاً يومياً في حياتي. وجدت الجواب في نسياني الحياة الأبدية. وفطنت إلى أنني عندما أحيأ على مستوى الأرضيات لا أرى القيامة أكثر من حدث مبهج، أما عندما تكون الحياة الأبدية قبلي ومشتهاي، أحيأها منذ الآن بقوة الحياة التي حملتها لي قيامتك يا سيدي وربّي.

قلت لنا مرّة أن: "الحياة الأبدية هي أن يعرفوك أنت الإله الحقّ وحدك ويعرفوا يسوع المسيح الذي أرسلته" (يو ٣: ١٧). إمّا أن تكون معرفتك شخصيّة، على مستوى الكيان لا على العقل فقط، أو ليست بمعرفة تقود إلى الحياة الأبدية. تتطلّب هذه المعرفة شوقاً إلى ملكوتك السماوي، الذي كلّمنا اضطرم فيّ ازداد تذوّقي إيّاه ههنا على الأرض.

امكث معي يا سيّد لأتقوى بطاقة قيامتك، ولا أخاف الموت من بعد، فالحياة معك أو ليست بحياة، وغيابك هو الموت الحقيقي. كلّ ما حولي وما في داخلي يطلب حياة، ولكن فرحها يخبو سريعاً، وإن كنت أوّمن أنّ الحياة الحقّة التي لا يخبو فرحها هي بك وفيك، إلّا أنني لا أزال أخشى دفع ثمنها.

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

أريد فرح قيامتك دون المرور في الصليب، ولذلك تراني لا أزال أتعتّر وأعرج على الجنبيين.
علمني كيف أوجّه نظري إلى قيامتك لأرى الصليب على ضوءها معبراً إلى انهزام الموت وما
يمت إليه.

قوّني لأغلب ما يمنعني عن الانطلاق إليك وما يشدّني إلى بهرجات هذه الدنيا وحلاواتها،
فأذوق نعمتك عندما تلمسني ولا يبقى حسّي الروحي بليداً.

أنا اليوم مثل تلميذٍ عمّواس، مضطرب، قلق، وخائف ممّا يجري في هذه الدنيا، وأرغب
بأن أكون معك، فذاك أفضل جدّاً، لكنني لا أستطيعه وحدي. أحتاجك وأدعوك على غرار
التلميذين أن: "امكث معي يا سيّد" (لوقا ٢٤: ٢٩)، فمساء هذه الدنيا صار ظلاماً ونهارها قد
مال.

امكث معي يا سيّد، ليتجدّد إنساني القديم فأصير إنساناً جديداً وأطأ كلّ ما يمنعك من البقاء
معي.

امكث معي يا ربّ، لأعرف قوّة قيامتك، وأحمل صليبك بفرح، وأشهد للعالم بأنّه المعبّر إلى
القيامة.

امكث معي يا يسوعي، لأرى العالم بنور عينيك، وأكون شاهد فرح وسلام وعزاء فيه.

امكث معي، لأغلب بقيامتك خطاياي، وأدوس مواتيتي، وأسحق نقائصي وردائلي.

امكث معي واكسر خبزك وناولني لتنتفح عيناي ويحترق قلبي بحبّك، وأخبر بما يفعله
حضورك فيّ.

وإذا ما هتفت آنذاك بأنك قمت، وأنك قائم أبداً، يصدّقني الذين يسمعونني، ويعرفون أنني
لا أردّد أغنية أحبّها.

رُدّني وشعبك يا مسيحي إلى عيدٍ دائم، فتصبح تحيّننا اليومية: يا فرحي، المسيح قام.

الداعي لكم،



+سأبا

رئيس أساقفة نيويورك وميتروبوليت أميركا الشمالية

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

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