

# +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

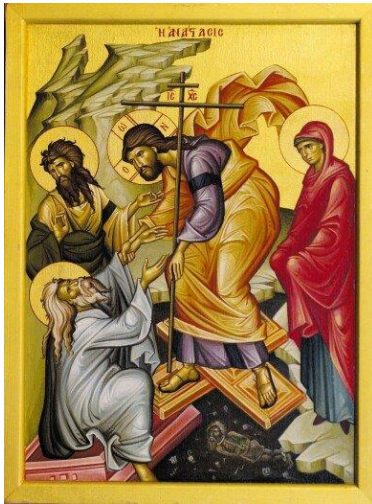
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**SUNDAY, APRIL 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2025**

Sunday of Great and All-Holy Pascha

*Christ is Risen / Χριστός Ανέστη / المسيح قام*

## Great and Holy Pascha



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."

### **الرسالة.**

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

### **فَصَلِّ مِنْ أَعْمَالِ الرُّسُلِ الْقَدِيسِينَ الْأَطْهَارِ.**

إِنِّي قَدْ أَنْشَأْتُ الْكَلَامَ الْأَوَّلَ يَا ثاوفيلُسُ 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 حَيّاً بَعْدَ تَأْلَمِهِ بِبَرَاهِينٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، وَهُوَ يَتَرَاءَى لَهُمْ مُدَّةَ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْماً، وَيُكَلِّمُهُمْ بِمَا يَخْتَصُّ بِمَلَكُوتِ اللَّهِ. وَفِيمَا هُوَ مُجْتَمِعٌ مَعَهُمْ، أَوْصَاهُمْ أَنْ "لَا تَبْرَحُوا مِنْ أُورُشَلِيمَ، بَلْ انْتَظِرُوا مَوْعِدَ الْآبِ الَّذِي سَمِعْتُمُوهُ مِنِّي. فَإِنَّ يَوْحَنَّا عَمَّدَ بِالْمَاءِ، وَأَمَّا أَنْتُمْ فَسَتَعَمَّدُونَ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ، لَا بَعْدَ هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامِ بكَثِيرٍ." فَسَأَلَهُ الْمُجْتَمِعُونَ قَائِلِينَ: "يَا رَبُّ، أَفِي هَذَا الزَّمَانِ تَرُدُّ الْمُلْكَ إِلَى إِسْرَائِيلَ؟" فَقَالَ لَهُمْ: "لَيْسَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَعْرِفُوا الْأَزْمَنَةَ أَوْ الْأَوْقَاتِ الَّتِي جَعَلَهَا الْآبُ فِي سُلْطَانِهِ. لَكِنِّكُمْ يَسْتَنَالُونَ قُوَّةَ بَحُلُولِ 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.

## الإنجيل

### فَضْلٌ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِّيسِ يُوْحَنَّا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ.

فِي الْبَدْءِ كَانَ الْكَلِمَةُ، وَالْكَلِمَةُ كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَالْهِيَ كَانَ الْكَلِمَةُ. هَذَا كَانَ فِي الْبَدْءِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ. كُلُّ بِهِ كَانَ، وَبَعْيَرُهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْءٌ مِمَّا كُونُ. بِهِ كَانَتْ الْحَيَاةُ، وَالْحَيَاةُ كَانَتْ نَوْرَ النَّاسِ. وَالنَّوْرُ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ يُضِيءُ، وَالظُّلْمَةُ لَمْ تَدْرِكْهُ. كَانَ إِنْسَانٌ مُرْسَلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ اسْمُهُ يُوْحَنَّا. هَذَا جَاءَ لِلشَّهَادَةِ لِلنَّوْرِ، لِكَيْ يُؤْمِنَ الْكُلُّ بِوِاسْطَتِهِ. لَمْ يَكُنْ هُوَ النَّوْرَ بَلْ كَانَ لِيُشْهَدَ لِلنَّوْرِ. كَانَ النَّوْرُ الْحَقِيقِيُّ الَّذِي يُنِيرُ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ أَتَى إِلَى الْعَالَمِ. فِي الْعَالَمِ كَانَ، وَالْعَالَمُ بِهِ كُونُ، وَالْعَالَمُ لَمْ يَعْرِفْهُ. إِلَى خَاصَّتِهِ أَتَى، وَخَاصَّتُهُ لَمْ تَقْبَلْهُ. أَمَّا كُلُّ الَّذِينَ قَبَلُوهُ، فَأَعْطَاهُمْ سُلْطَانًا أَنْ يَكُونُوا أَوْلَادًا لِلَّهِ، الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاسْمِهِ، الَّذِينَ لَا مِنْ دِمٍ، وَلَا مِنْ مَشِيئَةِ لَحْمٍ، وَلَا مِنْ مَشِيئَةِ رَجُلٍ، لَكِنْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلِدُوا. وَالْكَلِمَةُ صَارَ جَسَدًا وَجَلَّ فِيْنَا، وَقَدْ أَبْصَرْنَا مَجْدَهُ، مَجْدَ وَحِيدٍ مِنَ الْآبِ مَمْلُوءٍ نِعْمَةً وَحَقًّا. وَيُوْحَنَّا شَهِدَ لَهُ، وَصَرَخَ قَائِلًا: "هَذَا هُوَ الَّذِي قُلْتُ عَنْهُ إِنَّ الَّذِي يَأْتِي بَعْدِي صَارَ قَبْلِي لِأَنَّهُ مُقَدِّمِي." وَمَنْ مِلَّيْهِ نَحْنُ كُلْنَا أَخَذْنَا، وَنِعْمَةً فَوْقَ نِعْمَةٍ. لِأَنَّ النَّامُوسَ بِمُوسَى أُعْطِيَ، وَأَمَّا النِّعْمَةُ وَالْحَقُّ فَبِيسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ حَصَلَا.

### Love Your Neighbor

#### **April – Archdiocese Collection for Palm Sunday (April 13, 2025)**

Each year, the Archdiocese asks each parish to take a collection to help support the Patriarchate in Antioch on Palm Sunday. This will be our "neighbor" for the month of April.

### Flowers for The Bier نَعشُ الْمَسِيحِ of Christ.

Offered by



- Jack and Sylvia Dudum and family for the good health of the Dudum and Nazzal families and in memory of John, Misadeh, Audie and Mary Dudum and Elias, Nahiel and Naim Nazzal. May their memories be eternal!
- Sonia and Raif Rihani in memory of Mousa, Mary, Maryate Mar'ashly, Victor, Jameeleh and Raidah Rihani, Raidah Shawneh, Jeries, Widad and Yousef Nesheiwat and Sami Khouri. May their memories be eternal! Also for the good health of Raif, Hani, Sami and Fadi Rihani, Sonia Nesheiwat and the Rihani and Nesheiwat Families. Many years!
- Afaf Wahbeh and family in memory of George Wahbeh, Nabil Wahbeh and Haseeb Keileh. May their memories be eternal!
- Sam and Yessie Khoury for the continued good health of Sam, Yessie, Sam Jr. and Sofia Khoury. Many years!

### Help with the Easter Egg Hunt

Our 3rd Annual Easter Egg Hunt is fast approaching, coming up on April 19th! We are looking for some volunteers and donations to help make this event a memorable one for all of our youth at St. John's! Please review the SignUp Genius link (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E45A8A929AA8-55762312-stjohns#/>) and sign-up to donate some items or volunteer to help set-up/tear down and during the event!

We have created an Amazon Wishlist for the event, please take a look if you are able to help purchase any items: [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/348DHSRJJZJR8?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/348DHSRJJZJR8?ref=wl_share)

Please reach out to Rania or Kimberly if you have any questions:

[raniamariakashou@gmail.com](mailto:raniamariakashou@gmail.com)

[kimberlynicola@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlynicola@gmail.com)

Thank you!

Kimberly Bailey

### PROJECT MEXICO & ST. INNOCENT ORPHANAGE

At St. John's, many of our teens have had the opportunity to volunteer to build homes for communities in need in Northern Mexico, just across the US border (about 30 minutes from San Diego). We have some interest in taking a group down this summer, June 12-18th. This is a wonderful, transformative volunteer experience as part of "a mission to build hope, one home at a time" and has been a blessing to participate in. <https://www.projectmexico.org/homebuilding#gl>

The homebuilding program is open to all teens 14 years & above or adults of any age!!! Younger teens under 14 can join along with a parent chaperone. If you're interested or have questions, please contact Rula Adranly [rulaadranly@comcast.net](mailto:rulaadranly@comcast.net) or Nadine Potts [nbhpotts@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nbhpotts@sbcglobal.net).

### Best Ever Rose Bake Sale

Best ever Rose Bake Sale \$6,688 headed by Denise Dudum who always dedicated her love and time towards the sale. Thank you Denise and all the ladies who donated, helped, prepared and baked the dessert, arranged the lunch boxes, and handled the sale, your dedication and hard work is very much appreciated. The proceed will be added to the ladies accounts towards the our future kitchen equipments. Thanks again

### **Mother's Day luncheon on Sunday May 4th at 1:30pm**

Melo's restaurant 644 San Ramon Blvd, Danville

Let's get together to honor our mothers, wives, grandmothers, godmothers and aunties To show them our love and appreciation for a Mother's Day luncheon, no cooking or cleaning. \$50 per person, Pizza for children 12 and under is \$12 per child.

Menu: salad

Choice of entrée

1) Chicken Marsala

2) Or

2) Lasagna

Soft drink

Alcohol on your own

For reservation and payment please call Mona Thayer by May 1st at 925 918-2170.

Thank you

### **Holy Week Schedule**

<b><u>April 16<sup>th</sup></u> : Holy Wednesday</b>	Holy Unction صلاة الزيت المقدس at 6:30 pm
<b><u>April 17<sup>th</sup></u> : Holy Thursday</b>	Vesperal Liturgy and Washing of the Feet at 10:00am Passion Gospels at 6:30 pm
<b><u>April 18<sup>th</sup></u> : Holy Friday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Royal Hours, Vespers and Taking the Body from the Cross – 2:00 pm</li><li>Lamentations تقاريط الجنائز at 6:30 pm</li><li>Vigil at Christ's Tomb at 9:00pm</li></ul>
<b><u>April 19<sup>th</sup></u> : Holy Saturday</b>	Vesperal Liturgy at 10:00am Rush Service 10:30 pm followed by the Divine Liturgy
<b><u>April 20<sup>th</sup></u> : Great and Holy Pascha</b>	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, George Messih, Sam Nassab, Sandy Dudum Bennett, Fairouz Freij, Henriette Hilal and Aida Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family in memory of **Rose Freij**. May her memory be eternal!
- † Victor and Angela Husary for the good health of **Chris Husary**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish family for the good health of **Samir and Pat Jeha**. Many years!
- † Romley, Farradj and Lawyer families in memory of **Kh. Patricia Romley**. May her memory be eternal!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **George Adranly**. Many years!

### **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
- † Thank you to Ziad and Charlene Nassoura for donating the communion wine.  
God bless you and your children!
- † Palms for Palm Sunday are offered by **Jim and Denise Dudum and Family** in loving memory of John, Misadeh, Audie and Mary Dudum, Jim and Rose Romley and Naim Nazzal. May their memory be eternal!



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.: 155/2025

**Great and Holy Pascha - 2025**

Beloved in Christ:  
The Most Reverend Hierarchs,  
The Reverend Priests and Deacons,  
And the devout People of God in this blessed Archdiocese,

**Christ is risen!** I greet you with the most beautiful proclamation on this radiant and divine Pascha. I offer my heartfelt prayers for each of you daily, asking for God's abundant mercy and the joy of victory over death—every kind of death—for all of you.

I will not address the glorious event of the Resurrection from a doctrinal perspective today, but instead, I wish to offer a brief reflection.

In our Church, each feast is a moment where we relive the event itself. At Pascha, as you know, we walk with our Lord Jesus through every step of His salvific journey, culminating in His resurrection from the dead. The Cross precedes the Resurrection; death precedes life. This is why we begin our Paschal celebration on Great and Holy Friday evening. In the middle of the service, immediately after the chanting of the lamentations for the death of the Lord, we begin chanting the Resurrectional verses: *"Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me thy statutes."*

There is a beautiful tradition in some churches where this funeral service begins with clergy wearing dark purple vestments, the color of the Lenten season. Then, following the lamentations, they change into white vestments. It is worth noting that white, the color of the Resurrection, becomes predominant in the church coverings and clergy vestments following the service.

All of this is an outward expression affirming that the Cross (death) and the Resurrection are one inseparable event. If we walk with Christ in His Passion, it is to prepare for the joy of His Resurrection.

Thus, it is only the repentant—those who recognize their sins and feel the need to be freed from them—who know how to crucify their sins with Christ, bury them in His tomb, and rise with Him in His Resurrection, striving toward the face of the Risen Lord. Then their eyes become fixed on Christ the Risen One, and through His Resurrection and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,

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

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they come to understand that they are called to live not on earth, but in heaven—and thus realize that their Christian calling is to make earth itself a piece of heaven.

After our Christ defeated death, we now understand—by the grace of the Risen Lord—that we are responsible for transforming the world and restoring it to the Kingdom of God, beginning by purifying it from sin. But we have also begun to understand that this great work does not begin with others – it begins with us and within us.

What remains is for us to live a new life: a life free of sin, a life the world does not know, for it is according to God's will, not our own. I invite you to reflect with me on words written by Metropolitan Georges Khodr on Pascha 2014, when he had reached the age of ninety-one:

“I am a crossing, O Lord, until I meet You. Do not allow me to distract myself: ‘Shine Your face upon Your servant,’ that I may become of Your light. Take me to You, that I may know You. Do not leave me in the wilderness of this world. Do not leave me prey to the beasts. Come, for in Your coming I am formed. If You come to me, I will complete my journey toward Your face, O Lord. If I see You, Your face becomes my world. Nothing benefits me but Your face. That is Pascha. Let no other face distract me from You. Fix my eyes upon it. Each day, I desire Your face, O Master. Let it suffice for me as my life. Train me to see You as my all in this age and the one to come, so that I may understand You are existence itself. Discipline me to forsake all things to see You. If I attain You, You will take care of me. I will become Paschal in You. And if I reach You, my journey ends.” (From **"Who Am I at Pascha," Pascha 2014**)

May the joy of our Risen Lord flood your hearts at all times.

Yours in the Risen Christ,



+**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: ٢٠٢٥/١٥٥

عيد الفصح العظيم والمقدس، ٢٠٢٥

أحبائي في المسيح:  
السادة الأساقفة الكلي برّهم،  
قدس الكهنة والشمامسة الموقرين،  
شعب الله الورع، في هذه الأبرشية المباركة،

المسيح قام! أجمل هتاف أعيدكم به في هذا الفصح الإلهي المنير، وأرفع صلواتي ذاكرا إياكم  
يوميًا، وطالبا رحمة الله الغامرة وفرح الانتصار على الموت، كل موت، لكم جميعًا.

لن أنظر إلى حدث القيامة المجيدة عقانديا، بل سأأمل قليلا فيه.

العيد، في كنيستنا، محطة نستعيد فيها حدث العيد. في الفصح، كما تعلمون، نرافق أحداث  
الرب يسوع الخلاصية خطوة خطوة، وصولاً إلى قيامته من بين الأموات. فالصليب يسبق  
القيامة، الموت يسبق الحياة. لذلك تلاحظون أن الفصح عندنا يبتدئ مساء الجمعة العظيمة؛  
ففي منتصف خدمة جناز الرب، نبدأ بترتيل قياميات الملائكة: "مبارك أنت يا رب علمني  
حقوقك".

ثمة تقليد جميل في بعض الكنائس حيث تبدأ خدمة الجناز والكهنة يرتدون بذلاتهم الكهنوتية  
باللون الصيامي البنفسجي الغامق، وبعد انتهاء التقاريط يستبدلون باللون الأبيض. جدير  
بالذكر أن اللون الأبيض، لون القيامة هو الذي يسود في كل أغنية الكنيسة وبذلات الكهنة بعد  
خدمة الجناز.

هذا كله تعبير خارجي يؤكد فيه ارتباط الصليب (الموت) بالقيامة وأن كليهما حدث واحد. فإذا  
رافقنا المسيح في خطوات آلامه فإنما كي نستعد لفرح قيامته.

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

من هنا وحدهم التائبون الذين وعوا خطاياهم وأدركوا حاجتهم إلى التحرر منها، يعرفون كيف يصلبونها مع المسيح، ويدفنونها مع قبره، ويقومون منها بقيامته، ناهدين إلى وجه المسيح القائم. إذ ذاك تتسمر عيونهم على المسيح القائم ويعون، من بعد قيامة المسيح وحضور الروح القدس فيهم، باتوا مدعوين إلى العيش في السماوات، لا على الأرض، وتاليا يدركون أن دعوتهم كمسيحيين باتت في جعل الأرض قطعة من السماء.

بعد أن هزم مسيحنا الموت، صرنا نعي، بنعمة المسيح القائم، أننا مسؤولون عن تحويل العالم ليستعاد إلى ملكوت الله، وذلك بتنقيته من الخطيئة. لكننا بدأنا نعي أن هذا العمل العظيم لا يبدأ من غيرنا بل يبدأ بنا وفينا.

بقي علينا أن نحيا حياة جديدة، حياة خالية من الخطيئة، حياة يجهلها العالم، لأنها بحسب مشيئة الله، لا مشيئتنا نحن. وأدعوكم للتأمل معي فيما كتبه المطران جورج خضر في فصيح 2014، وكان قد بلغ الواحدة والتسعين آنذاك:

"أنا عبورٌ يا سيدٌ حتّى ألقاك. لا تدعني أتلهى بنفسي: "أضئْ بوجهك على عبدك" لأكونَ من ضيائك. خذني إليك لأعرفك. لا تدعني في وحشة هذا العالم. لا تتركني فريسةً للوحوش. تعالْ ففي مجيئك أتكونُ. وإذا جنّت إليّ أكملْ سيرتي إلى وجهك يا ربُّ. إذا رأيتُك يصبح وجهك هو العالمُ. لا ينفعني إلّا وجهك. إنّه هو الفصحُ. لا يُلهني عنك وجهٌ. سَمِرْ عينيّ عليه. كلَّ يومٍ أريدُ وجهك يا سيدٌ. اكفني به حياةً لي. دَرَبني على أن أترك كلَّ شيءٍ لأراك. إذا أدركتُك أنتَ تتدبرني. أصبحُ فصيحاً فيك. فإذا وصلتُ إليك تنتهي مسيرتي."

(من أكون في الفصح، فصيح 2014)

ليغمركم إلهنا القائم بفرح حضوره في كل حين.

الداعي لكم،

+سأبا



رئيس أساقفة نيويورك وميتروبوليت أميركا الشمالية

*"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

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan SABA

The Right Reverend  
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York and  
Metropolitan of  
All North America

Diocese of Los Angeles  
And the West

April 2, 2025

**TEACHING BY BISHOP ANTHONY**  
TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE FAITHFUL

## Meditation for Great and Holy Wednesday

When events and circumstances align themselves in ways that please us, we say: “Things couldn’t have worked out better. What a blessing!” Sometimes, maybe most of the time, that’s true, but not all the time.

When the elders and priests gathered together to plan our Lord’s arrest and crucifixion and colluded with the Roman authorities to make it happen, Judas broke into this meeting and gave them just what they were looking for, the answer to this problem. And there, from that moment, the Scripture says, “and it was night.” It was the darkest night ever.

These conspirators might have said, “Things couldn’t have worked out better.” They couldn’t have worked out better for the absolute worst!

For us, we should be careful. Maybe when our plans fall apart, and our life takes a stressful turn, and what we expected would be a great success was actually a surprising failure, it was our Lord protecting us, not indulging us. Sometimes, by hindering us, God helps us. Sometimes, not getting a blessing is the blessing!

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

454 South Lorraine Boulevard • Los Angeles, California, 90020

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
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The Right Reverend  
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York and  
Metropolitan of  
All North America

Diocese of Los Angeles  
And the West

March 27, 2025

Dear reverend clergy, parish council officers and faithful parishioners:

As you know, every year, in the West and throughout the Archdiocese, in every geographic and administrative area, there have been organized, promoted and established Parish Life Conferences.

In the West, there have been and continue to be dedicated persons who, over the years, have worked to refine and expand these conferences, so all of us can enjoy the experience of sharing, caring and growing in our life in Christ, in His Body, the Church.

The historical beginnings and social pedigree of these Conferences can be generally discovered in the post-World-War-II American experience, where all ethnic and national groups formed the so-called “melting pot” of U.S. political identity. It was at this time when America was not so much multi-cultural as it was an acculturation of all social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic and national peoples. It was the time of the GI Bill, when higher education was available to returning veterans and where that—at the time—uniquely American home expansion called “urban sprawl” and numerous neighborhood subdivisions crowded the city landscapes of urban centers and spread across every state and farm.

Though I am simplifying this development of Conferences, they were planned for us around the senior SOYO organization of our Archdiocese. These early years saw very large conventions and gatherings that celebrated their Orthodoxy along with their appreciation for being here, in what they called a “God-protected land,” as it was known among many immigrant groups.

We have, since then, been blessed with a dynamic addition of—in the words of Scripture—“*the redeemed for God* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5.9b; cf. 7.9). We are more than a big tent; we have a domed stadium!

With that review, our Metropolitan and our Archdiocese still schedule PLCs and expect our clergy and parishes to support, attend, participate in and promote our host parish’s PLCs.

We have many opportunities and obligations that are admirably publicized by the PLC organizing volunteers, as has been mentioned previously.

In this regard, I have taken an informed survey of our priests concerning the overall challenges of time, resources and benefit that come from PLCs today. I have heard of the challenges of costs, which are only increasing, both in general and for attending our Conferences.

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

454 South Lorraine Boulevard • Los Angeles, California, 90020

This year, as I compose this memorandum, the PLC is three short months away, and we cannot assemble all the desired venues of parish needs, such as: stewardship, teen group development, young adult groups, etc. Be assured, however, that we will work on giving our clergy more tools and resources for their parish needs in future PLCs, as we work to include them.

We need to start to build expectations and participation this year. As we work together to grow and evolve our Conferences in the years to come, this year's PLC will be primarily a social and liturgical gathering, but it will definitely include some workshops and inspiring take-away messages. So, we would *not* want anyone to evaluate its value on preconceived or biased bases. Come and see!

Since I was in seminary, PLCs were obligatory for pastors, and our Metropolitan expected us at the Conference (exclusive of obvious reasons for being absent and pre-excused permission not to attend).

To mitigate costs, we are working with the Order of St. Ignatius and certain individuals who may be willing to help with travel, room and other expenses, so we can come together. *And I believe it is really important for us to be together.* Beyond specific offerings of workshops and such, it is often those conversations on the sidelines, and those relationships we forge when we are together in person, that prove invaluable. Finally and crucially, we can get out of our parochial boundaries at the PLC, as we gather from across the West, clergy and laity around the Bishop, to make manifest the larger Body of Christ.

We must build a spiritual and social camaraderie with each other. In fact, the Divine Liturgy—the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Faithful—may be explained in this way: community of the gathering, for the communication of the Word, to become One in communion with His Body—*community, communication, communion. That's the ideal of Parish Life Conferences, and it is still relevant today!*

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "+ Bishop Anthony". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized script.

+Bishop ANTHONY

**Bishop of Los Angeles  
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America**



# GREAT FOOD GREAT CAUSE

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GAZAN GIRL  
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*Your stem cells could save her life  
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NMDP will send you a free buccal swab kit by mail. NMDP was founded in 1987 as Be the Match and follows the strictest privacy protocols - all data is anonymized and secure

**PLEASE SEND THIS TO 10 ARAB PEOPLE**



**ST. JOHN'S  
PASCHA  
EGG HUNT**

**APRIL 19TH, 2025 | AFTER MORNING LITURGY**

**EGG HUNT, BRUNCH, ARTS & CRAFT, & MORE!!**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AND/OR DONATE  
PLEASE CONTACT RANIA KASHOU  
OR KIMBERLY BAILEY



**CALIFORNIA FISH GRILL IS PROUD TO SUPPORT  
St. John  
Church**

**Thursday, June 12 at 11AM-8PM  
2910 Ygnacio Valley Rd. Bldg. G  
Walnut Creek, CA 94598**

California Fish Grill will donate 25% of sales from this event back to the organization. Simply present this flyer, mention the organization upon ordering or **scan the QR code at kiosk.**

IN-STORE USE ONLY



If placing an order online, please enter code at checkout: **fund2025**

**A BETTER WAY TO** *Seafood™*

## Dine & Donate

A dine and donate fundraising event, where a portion of a restaurant's sales on a specific day are donated to our church when mention St. John and/or show the flyer. Essentially creating a win-win situation for both the restaurant and St. John. Plus you can gather with fellow community members and have no mess to clean. Additionally you don't have to cook or worry about what to eat that day. :)



JOIN US!



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St. John Orthodox  
Church

Thursday, Apr 24  
All day

The Kebab Shop  
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Walnut Creek, CA 94598

To participate in this fundraiser, show this flyer during checkout at the store or order online at [order.thekebabshop.com](http://order.thekebabshop.com) using the fundraiser coupon code below.

Code for online ordering:  
**FUNDRAISER**

This fundraiser event is between St. John Orthodox Church and The Kebab Shop. The Kebab Shop will donate 50% of qualifying food and beverage sales to St. John Orthodox Church. Additional sales exclusions may apply including: Delivery, Catering, any other promotions. Offer valid only on select date(s) and location(s). Offer void if flyer is distributed in or near the store. The Kebab Shop may impose additional terms and conditions.

**FORCE  
4 GOOD**  
FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISER

# St. John Financial Snapshot

Year to Date Actual Finances as of 03/31/2025

INCOME	2025 Year To Date	% of Total Income	2024 Year to Date	
Membership Pledges	\$ 38,908	21%	\$ 44,387	-\$5K difference vs. YTD 2024. -\$6K difference vs. 2025 Budget.
Tray Collections	\$ 4,271	2%	\$ 3,474	
Preschool Contribution	\$ 106,280	59%	\$ 58,172	
Crab Feed and Festival	\$ 21,011	12%	\$ 23,499	
Ladies Contribution	\$ 5,000	3%	\$ -	Related to prior year. Add'l \$5K expected in December 2025.
Other**	\$ 6,051	3%	\$ 5,221	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 181,521</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 134,753</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 159,491</b>		<b>\$ 99,198</b>	
<b>YTD Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 22,031</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>\$ 35,555</b>	

\*\*Other includes bookstore, candles, flowers, palms, coffee hour, memorials, weddings, baptisms, weddings, prior year pledges

Building Fund Balance \$ 761,943.83

Those who wish to see the full financial summary should contact Parish Council Treasurer Andrew Thayer

**St. John Orthodox Church**  
**501 Moraga Way**  
**Orinda, CA 94563**

You could use this QR code for your donation

