

+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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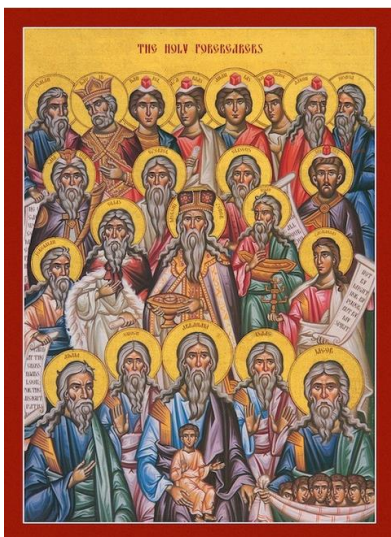
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024

TONE 8 / EOTHINON 3

**HIEROMARTYR ELEUTHERIOS, BISHOP OF ILLYRIA &
SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS (ANCESTORS) OF CHRIST**

MARTYR ANTHIA, MOTHER OF ELEUTHERIOS; VENERABLE PAUL OF LATRA



Holy Forefathers of Christ

On this day, we remember all the holy Patriarchs of the Old Testament who prefigured or foretold Christ: Adam the first Father, Enoch, Melchizedek, Abraham, the friend of God, Isaac, the fruit of the Promise, Jacob and the twelve patriarchs. We then commemorate those who lived under the Law: Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, David, and the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; the twelve minor prophets; Elijah, Elisha, Zachariah, and John the Baptist; and finally the Virgin Mary, the intermediary between mankind and her divine Son. Indeed, the Lord Jesus did not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to redeem humanity which bemoaned the weight of evil since Adam; to realize the promise made to Abraham; to change the Law of Fear into the Law of Love; and to give Resurrection and Life to mankind. This feast prepares us for the Nativity of Jesus Christ, placing

before us the anticipation and hope for His coming among us.

THE EPISTLE

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saint.

What shall we render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto us?

The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy. (1:8-18)

Timothy, my son, do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, and therefore I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know Whom I have believed, and I am sure that He is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit Who dwells within us. You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, and among them Phygelos and Hermogenes. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphoros, for he often refreshed me; he was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me eagerly and found me. May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

الرسالة

كريمٍ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ الرَّبِّ مَوْتُ بَارِهِ.
بِمَاذَا نُكَافِيءُ الرَّبَّ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا أَعْطَانَا؟

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى تِيموثَاوَسِ. (18-8:1)

يا ولدي تيموثاوس، لا تَحْجَلْ بِشَهَادَةِ رَبَّنَا، وَلَا بِي أَنَا أَسِيرُهُ، بَلِ اشْتَرِكْ فِي احْتِمَالِ الْمَشَقَّاتِ لِأَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِحَسَبِ قُوَّةِ اللَّهِ، الَّذِي خَلَصَنَا وَدَعَانَا دَعْوَةً مُقَدَّسَةً، لَا بِمُقْتَضَى أَعْمَالِنَا، بَلِ بِمُقْتَضَى الْقَصْدِ وَالنِّعْمَةِ الَّتِي أُعْطِيتَ لَنَا فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ قَبْلَ الْأَزْمِنَةِ الْأَزَلِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَظْهَرْتَ الْآنَ بِظُهُورِ مُخْلِصِنَا يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ، الَّذِي أَنْطَلَ الْمَوْتَ وَأَنَارَ الْحَيَاةَ وَالْخُلُودَ بِوَاسِطَةِ الْإِنْجِيلِ. الَّذِي جُعِلْتُ أَنَا لَهُ كَارِزًا وَرَسُولًا وَمُعَلِّمًا لِلْأُمَّمِ. لِهَذَا السَّبَبِ أَحْتَمِلُ هَذِهِ الْأُمُورَ أَيْضًا. لَكِنِّي لَسْتُ أَحْجَلُ، لِأَنِّي عَالِمٌ بِمَنْ آمَنْتُ، وَمَوْقِفٌ أَنَّهُ قَادِرٌ أَنْ يَحْفَظَ وَدِيعَتِي إِلَى ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ. تَمَسَّكَ بِصُورَةِ الْكَلَامِ الصَّحِيحِ الَّذِي سَمِعْتَهُ مِنِّي، فِي الْإِيمَانِ وَالْمَحَبَّةِ الَّتِي فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. احْفَظِ الْوَدِيعَةَ الصَّالِحَةَ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ السَّاكِنِ فِيْنَا. أَنْتِ تَعْلَمُ هَذَا أَنَّ جَمِيعَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَسِيَّا ارْتَدُّوا عَنِّي، الَّذِينَ مِنْهُمْ فِيجَلْسُ وَهَرْمُوجَانِسُ. لِيُعْطِ الرَّبُّ رَحْمَةً لِبَيْتِ أُنَيْسِيفُورُسَ، لِأَنَّهُ مِرَارًا كَثِيرَةً أَرَاخُنِي وَلَمْ يَحْجَلْ بِسِلْسِلَتِي، بَلِ لَمَّا كَانَ فِي رُومِيَّةَ، طَلَبْتَنِي بِأَوْفَرِ اجْتِهَادٍ فَوَجَدَنِي. لِيُعْطِهِ الرَّبُّ أَنْ يَجِدَ رَحْمَةً مِنَ الرَّبِّ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ. وَكُلُّ مَا كَانَ يَحْدُمُ فِي أَفْسُسَ أَنْتِ تَعْرِفُهُ جَيِّدًا.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

الإنجيل

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لُوقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّمْيِذِ الطَّاهِرِ. (24-16:14)

قَالَ الرَّبُّ هَذَا الْمَثَلُ: إِنْسَانٌ صَنَعَ عَشَاءً عَظِيمًا وَدَعَا كَثِيرِينَ. فَأَرْسَلَ عَبْدَهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعَشَاءِ يَقُولُ لِلْمَدْعُوعِينَ: تَعَالُوا فَإِنَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قَدْ أُعِدَّ. فَطَفِقَ كُلُّهُمْ وَاحِدٌ فَوَاحِدٌ يَسْتَعْفُونَ. فَقَالَ لَهُ الْأَوَّلُ: قَدْ اشْتَرَيْتُ حَقْلًا، وَلَا بُدَّ لِي أَنْ أَخْرُجَ وَأَنْظُرَهُ، فَاسْأَلْكَ أَنْ تَعْفِيَنِي. وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: قَدْ اشْتَرَيْتُ خَمْسَةَ فِدَادِينَ بَقَرٍ وَأَنَا مَاضٍ لِأَجْرَتِهَا، فَاسْأَلْكَ أَنْ تَعْفِيَنِي. وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: قَدْ تَزَوَّجْتُ امْرَأَةً، فَلِذَلِكَ لَا أَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ أَجِيءَ. فَأَتَى الْعَبْدُ وَأَخْبَرَ سَيِّدَهُ بِذَلِكَ. فَحِينِذٍ، غَضِبَ رَبُّ الْبَيْتِ، وَقَالَ لِعَبْدِهِ: أَخْرُجْ سَرِيعًا إِلَى شَوَارِعِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَأَزِقْنَهَا وَأَدْخِلِ الْمَسَاكِينَ وَالْجُدَّعَ وَالْعُمْيَانَ وَالْعُرْجَ إِلَى هَهُنَا. فَقَالَ الْعَبْدُ: يَا سَيِّدُ، قَدْ قُضِيَ مَا أَمَرْتَ بِهِ، وَبِئْسَ مَحَلٌّ. فَقَالَ السَيِّدُ لِلْعَبْدِ: أَخْرُجْ إِلَى الطَّرِيقِ وَالْأَسْجِجَةِ وَاصْطَرِّزْهُمْ إِلَى الدُّخُولِ حَتَّى يَمْتَلِئَ بَيْتِي. فَإِنِّي أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَا يَدُوقُ عَشَائِي أَحَدٌ مِنَ أَوْلِيَاكَ الرِّجَالِ الْمَدْعُوعِينَ. لِأَنَّ الْمَدْعُوعِينَ كَثِيرُونَ وَالْمُخْتَارِينَ قَلِيلُونَ.

Love Your Neighbor

December – Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

Leading the fight to end hunger, in partnership with our community and in service of our neighbors in need. We distribute food directly to low-income people at community sites and make food available for other nonprofit organizations serving the ill, needy and infants.

Rose Bake Sale

It is that time of the year for the Christmas Rose bake sale. Ladies: Please contact Denise Dudum at 925 360-3350 and let her know of your special sweets which you will bring for the bake sale, also those who suggested to bring already baked and boxed cookies to also inform Denise. Thanks!

Thank you for a Great Jolly Christmas Cars Event!

Our fourth Jolly Christmas Cars event was a success. Thank you to all the participants that made this tradition so much fun. It was very heartwarming seeing our parking lot being filled with so many decorated cars, pulling the community together, especially the little ones. God bless you and your family abundantly!



Annual Christmas Recital

Hi Everyone!

I want to extend a special thank you to Rania Kashou for organizing last Sunday's Christmas Cars event and to all of the families that participated! It was a beautiful turnout and another memorable event for our kids and the Church community. So many sweet, frosting-face smiles in the group photo :)

We are now less than 2 weeks away from our annual Christmas Recital which will take place on Sunday, December 15th! As we have done in previous years, I need at least 5 student volunteers to read sections of the attached poem, "Calling All Ancestors of Christ to the Feast of His Nativity." Please contact me at Paulakassouf25@gmail.com or (951)662-9387, if your child will participate and I will assign their lines.

After reading the poem, all students will participate in singing the below Christmas Carols and the Nativity Dismissal Hymn. Please take time with your kids to listen to both and practice before December 15th. The youth group will be instrumental to helping the younger students follow lines of each song/hymn. Please encourage their participation!

- O Come all ye Faithful: <https://youtu.be/BldRKXtn6MQ>
- Joy to the World: <https://youtu.be/TX6ThHbts5Y>
- Nativity Dismissal Hymn: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN27x6zW2KQ>

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, / has shed upon the world the Light of knowledge; / for they that worshipped the stars, learned there from to worship thee the Sun of Righteousness / and to know that from the East of the highest, Thou didst come / O Lord, glory to Thee!

All children should wear white, green, and/or red for the Christmas Play.

Any questions, let me know!

In Christ,
Paula

Poinsetta Flowers for Christams

Poinsetta Plants to adorn the Royal Doors during this holy season in loving memory of Nick Sr. and Helen Nicola offered by Georgianna and Raymond Rishwan, Nick Jr. and Najat Nicola, Ronald and Nancy Nicola, and families. Never forgotten, you live in each of us.

Upcoming Events

Every Sunday at 7pm	St. Anastasia Fellowship Meeting.
Tuesday, December 24th	3:30pm ninth hour, 4 pm Orthros/Matins and 5 pm Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of Christ

Coffee Hours

December 15th	Rose's Bake Sale – No Coffee Hour
March 2nd	In memory of Sal Freij (20 yr.) May his memory be eternal!



Holy Oblations

This week, Holy Oblations are offered by:

- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola, George Messih, Henriette Hilal** and **Aida Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Sam Nassab**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Fairouz Freij**. Many years!
- † Rocky and Nada Dudum for the good health of **Sandy Dudum Bennett**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **George Wahbeh**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Ron Jeha**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Yasmeen Kasouf** oh her name's day. Many years!
- † Dudum, Dietzmann, and Morgan Family in beloved memory of **Jimi and Rose Romley, Ray, Gloria,** and **Brad Zachariah** and **Sig Dietzmann**. May their memory be eternal!
- † Noha Shultze in memory of her mother **Mary Batruni** (20 years). May her 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!



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- † 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

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

You could use this QR code for your donation



Building Committee Update:

We are excited to announce that the parish has overwhelmingly (88 voted yes and 19 voted No) supported an additional \$1 million on our loan to support completing the church hall. We are submitting a letter to the archdiocese for the blessing of the Metropolitan to proceed. The Building Committee will be working closely with the contractor to ensure we can use these funds purposefully to bring us to our occupancy permit for the hall. While this will require some value engineering, and potentially deferments of some items, we can assure you that the building will be built to design specs and a building of which we can all be proud.

As you can see from the photos, work has started on installing the hand rails on the steps, and we are working with several parishioners who have expertise in finalizing the equipment needs and procuring such equipment for the kitchen.

Things should start picking up the pace now and we will do our best to keep you all informed of our progress. But please join us for services and see me afterwards for a look into the building and with any questions or recommendations you may have.

Steve Kreta, Building Committee Chair

St. Anastasia Fellowship Presentation

Thursday, January 16, 7:00 pm at Holy Trinity, Father Nikolas Delaveris will present his St. Anastasia model of Orthodox recovery. This uniquely Orthodox approach to addressing addiction has been successfully implemented on the East Coast. Anyone who struggles with addiction, supports persons with addiction, has been in a recovery program, or who simply wants to learn more about this subject is invited and encouraged to attend. The meeting will take place in the lower level of the church. Obviously, the hope is that this meeting might generate interest in establishing similar groups in the Bay Area.

Sunday, December 15th (6:00 pm) - Free Admission

Christmas Concert

St. John Church of Orinda

proudly presents



Al-Salam Choir

directed by Vocalist/Psalti

Nader Zaki

music by Taghreed Haddad

Cantors (by Alphabetical order)
Dalia Salman, Georgina Totah,
Ghada Zarzar, Maha Raie, Mira Aranki,
Suheir Khori, Windy Jizrawi, & Zain Qatami



501 Moraga Way, Orinda, CA 94563

St. Anastasia's Fellowship

A 12-Step Fellowship for Orthodox Christians seeking recovery from alcoholism and addiction in its many forms



Every Sunday @ 7pm

St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

**501 Moraga Way
Orinda, CA 94563**

Contact Joseph: (310) 227-9848

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.: 568/2024

“Nothing so arouses the soul, gives it wing, sets it free from the earth, releases it from the prison of the body, teaches it to love wisdom and to despise all the things of this life, as concordant melody and sacred song composed in rhythm.” +St. John Chrysostom (On Psalm 41)

Beloved Brother Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, and Christ-Loving Faithful,

Every year we set aside the second Sunday of December to remember and pray for our faithful church musicians. With God’s help and inspiration, they are always praying for us by chanting the sacred hymns of our Church. On this day we, in turn, say thank you and pray for them.

The hymnography of our Orthodox faith is an expression of theology. One could never pick up an academic or dogmatic book about the faith his entire life, but could still become a theologian by simply listening to and internalizing the words of these hymns.

At the same time, the richness of our hymns becomes even richer when they are chanted and sung correctly and with beauty. It is not by chance that countless numbers of people over the centuries were first attracted to the faith by the beauty of our services.

On the Sunday of Musician Appreciation Day, we extend heartfelt thanks to Ms. Marena Boosamra-Ball and all the members of our archdiocesan Department of Sacred Music for their commitment in supporting this sacred ministry. They continue to expend the possibilities for people to learn how to chant and sing praises to our Lord through various means. We are especially grateful that, for the first time this year, we have started our Antiochian Orthodox Online Ecclesiastical Music School that trains people in both Western and Byzantine Music, according to their preferences and interests. This, in addition to the various Sacred Music Institutes, and youth and parish workshops sponsored by the Department, helps us to further develop and train our current and future musicians.

We also gratefully honor all of our choir directors, singers and chanters, the vast majority of whom dedicate themselves to this sacred ministry for little or no compensation. For them, it is indeed a labor of love. Wishing you God’s every blessing, I remain,

Your Father in 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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