



# +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, FEBRUARY 11, 2024**

**TONE 3 / EOTHINON 3; SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**& SIXTEENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW**

**HIEROMARTYR BLAISE, BISHOP OF SEBASTIA, AND COMPANIONS**

THEODORA THE EMPRESS; NEW-MARTYR GEORGE OF SERBIA



## **Holy Hieromartyr Blaise, Bishop of Sebastia**

On February 11 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy Hieromartyr Blaise, bishop of Sebastia, and his companions.

Born in Cappadocia, Blaise (Vlassios) was meek and God-fearing from early childhood. During a period of violent persecution of Christians, Blaise encouraged his flock and visited the martyrs in prison, among them the famous Eustratius. Later in life, Blaise retired to the mountain of Argeos and lived there in a cave. Ferocious wild beasts, recognizing a holy man, came to him and he gently tamed them. Persecutors sent by the emperor Licinius found the saint in that hidden spot and took him for trial. On the way there, Blaise healed a boy who had a bone stuck in his throat and, at the petition of a poor widow, made the wolf that had taken her pig return it to her. The dark judges tortured him, flogging him terribly. By his steadfastness, Blaise brought many unbelievers to the Christian Faith. Seven women and two children were thrown into prison with him. Together, they suffered and were glorified on this day in 316. Blaise's prayers are sought for the health and well-being of domestic animals and for protection from wild beasts. He is also invoked against ailing and sore throats.

## **THE EPISTLE**

*Sing praises to our God, sing praises.*

*Clap your hands, all ye peoples.*

### **The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (6:1-10)**

Brethren, working together with Him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For He says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## الرسالة

رَتِّلُوا لِإِلَهِنَا رَتِّلُوا. يَا جَمِيعَ الْأُمَمِ صَفِّقُوا بِالْأَيْدِي.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولْسِ الرَّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى أَهْلِ كورنثوس.

يَا إِخْوَتِي، فَإِذْ نَحْنُ عَامِلُونَ مَعَهُ نَطْلُبُ أَنْ لَا تَقْبَلُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ بِاطِّلًا. لِأَنَّهُ يَقُولُ: "فِي وَقْتِ مَقْبُولِ سَمْعَتِكَ، وَفِي يَوْمِ خَلَاصِ أَعْنَتِكَ." هُوَذَا الْآنَ وَقْتُ مَقْبُولٍ. هُوَذَا الْآنَ يَوْمُ خَلَاصٍ. وَلَسْنَا نَجْعَلُ عَثْرَةً فِي شَيْءٍ لِنَلَّا ثَلَامَ الْخِدْمَةِ. بَلْ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ نُظْهِرُ أَنْفُسَنَا كَخَدَامِ اللَّهِ: فِي صَبْرٍ كَثِيرٍ، فِي شِدَائِدٍ، فِي ضَرُورَاتٍ، فِي ضِيقَاتٍ، فِي ضَرْبَاتٍ، فِي سُجُونٍ، فِي اضْطِرَابَاتٍ، فِي أُنْعَابٍ، فِي أَسْهَارٍ، فِي أَصْوَامٍ، فِي طَهَارَةٍ، فِي عِلْمٍ، فِي أَنَاةٍ، فِي لُطْفٍ، فِي الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ، فِي مَحَبَّةٍ بِلَا رِيَاءٍ، فِي كَلَامِ الْحَقِّ، فِي قُوَّةِ اللَّهِ بِسِلَاحِ الْبِرِّ لِلْيَمِينِ وَاللِّيسَارِ. بِمَجْدٍ وَهَوَانٍ، بِصِيَتِ رَدِيءٍ وَصِيَتِ حَسَنٍ. كَمُضِلِّينَ وَنَحْنُ صَادِقُونَ، كَمَجْهُولِينَ وَنَحْنُ مَعْرُوفُونَ، كَمَاثِيَتِينَ وَهَذَا نَحْنُ نَحْيَا، كَمُؤَدَّبِينَ وَنَحْنُ غَيْرُ مَقْتُولِينَ، كَحَرَائِي وَنَحْنُ دَائِمًا فَرِحُونَ، كَمُفْرَاءٍ وَنَحْنُ نُغْنِي كَثِيرِينَ، كَأَنَّ لَنَا شَيْءًا لَنَا وَنَحْنُ نَمْلِكُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ.

## THE GOSPEL

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (25:14-30 + Luke 8:8)

The Lord spoke this parable: A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying: "Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master." And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying: "Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master." He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying: "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master answered him, "You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." As Jesus said these things He cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

## الإنجيل

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ مَتَّى الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ.

قَالَ الرَّبُّ هَذَا الْمَثَلُ: إِنْسَانٌ مُسَافِرٌ دَعَا عَبِيدَهُ وَسَلَّمَهُمْ أَمْوَالَهُ، فَأَعْطَى وَاحِدًا خَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ، وَآخَرَ وَرْنَتَيْنِ، وَآخَرَ وَرْنَةً، كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ عَلَى قَدْرِ طَاقَتِهِ. وَسَافَرَ لِلْوَقْتِ. فَمَضَى الَّذِي أَخَذَ الْخَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ وَتَاجَرَ بِهَا، فَرَبِحَ خَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ آخَرَ. وَهَكَذَا الَّذِي أَخَذَ الْوَرْنَتَيْنِ، رَبِحَ أَيْضًا وَرْنَتَيْنِ آخَرَيْنِ. وَأَمَّا الَّذِي أَخَذَ الْوَرْنَةَ فَمَضَى وَحَفَرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَخْفَى فِصَّةَ سَيِّدِهِ. وَبَعْدَ زَمَانٍ طَوِيلٍ أَتَى سَيِّدُ أَوْلِيكَ الْعَبِيدِ وَجَاسَبَهُمْ. فَجَاءَ الَّذِي أَخَذَ الْخَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ وَقَدَّمَ خَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ آخَرَ قَائِلًا: يَا سَيِّدُ، خَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ سَلَّمْتَنِي. هُوَذَا خَمْسَ وَرَنَاتٍ آخَرَ رَبِحْتُهَا فَوْقَهَا. فَقَالَ لَهُ سَيِّدُهُ: نِعْمًا أَيُّهَا الْعَبْدُ الصَّالِحُ وَالْأَمِينُ! كُنْتُ أَمِينًا فِي الْقَلِيلِ فَأَقِيمُكَ عَلَى الْكَثِيرِ. أَدْخُلْ إِلَى فَرَحِ سَيِّدِكَ. ثُمَّ جَاءَ الَّذِي أَخَذَ الْوَرْنَتَيْنِ وَقَالَ: يَا سَيِّدُ، وَرْنَتَيْنِ سَلَّمْتَنِي. هُوَذَا وَرْنَتَانِ آخَرَانِ رَبِحْتُهُمَا فَوْقَهُمَا. قَالَ لَهُ سَيِّدُهُ: نِعْمًا أَيُّهَا الْعَبْدُ الصَّالِحُ الْأَمِينُ! كُنْتُ أَمِينًا فِي الْقَلِيلِ فَأَقِيمُكَ عَلَى الْكَثِيرِ. أَدْخُلْ إِلَى فَرَحِ سَيِّدِكَ. ثُمَّ جَاءَ أَيْضًا الَّذِي أَخَذَ الْوَرْنَةَ الْوَاحِدَةَ وَقَالَ: يَا سَيِّدُ، عَرَفْتُ أَنَّكَ إِنْسَانٌ قَاسٍ، تَحْصُدُ حَيْثُ لَمْ تَزْرَعْ، وَتَجْمَعُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ تَبْذُرْ. فَخَفْتُ وَمَضَيْتُ وَأَخْفَيْتُ وَرْنَتَكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ. هُوَذَا الَّذِي لَكَ. فَأَجَابَ سَيِّدُهُ وَقَالَ لَهُ: أَيُّهَا الْعَبْدُ السَّرِيرُ وَالْكَسْلَانُ، عَرَفْتُ أَنَّكَ لَمْ تَزْرَعْ، وَأَجْمَعُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ أْبْذُرْ، فَكَانَ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ تَضَعُ فِصَّتِي عِنْدَ الصَّيَارِفَةِ، فَعِنْدَ مَجِيئِي كُنْتُ أَخَذُ الَّذِي لِي مَعَ رَبًّا. فَخَذُوا مِنْهُ الْوَرْنَةَ وَأَعْطَوْهَا لِلَّذِي لَهُ الْعَشْرُ وَرَنَاتٍ. لِأَنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ لَهُ يُعْطَى فَيَزِدَادُ، وَمَنْ لَيْسَ لَهُ فَالَّذِي عِنْدَهُ يُؤَخَذُ مِنْهُ. وَالْعَبْدُ الْبَطَالُ اطْرَحُوهُ إِلَى الظِّلْمَةِ الْخَارِجِيَّةِ، هُنَاكَ يَكُونُ الْبُكَاءُ وَصْرِيرُ الْأَسْنَانِ. وَلَمَّا قَالَ هَذَا نَادَى مِنْ لَهُ أَدْنَانَ لِلْسَّمْعِ فَلْيَسْمَعْ.

## **Love Your Neighbor**

### **February – IOCC Gaza relief**

IOCC, in the spirit of Christ's love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond. We envision that, by God's grace, IOCC will enable those suffering and in need to continue to improve their own lives and communities and to have means to live with dignity, respect, and hope. This month's Love Your Neighbor collections will go towards their Gaza relief fund.

### **House Blessing**

Fr. Nicholas will be visiting parishioners for house blessings. You will receive a call from Fr. Nicholas or Evan to schedule. You may also call Fr. To schedule. God bless you all!

### **Parish Meeting**

Dear parishioners,

Last Sunday we had the General Parish Meeting. We discussed the organizations' reports. Approved the budget for 2024. We reviewed the progress of our Fellowship Hall building project. Also, we elected two new members for the parish council: David Kashou and Samir Youakim. In addition, Fr. Nicholas appointed one new member: Jordis Fasheh. Thank you to these 3 dedicated parishioners for their willingness to serve their parish in this capacity.

God bless you all!

### **Building Committee Update:**

A full discussion of the hall building status was discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting on February 4<sup>th</sup>. For your information, the written report is included in this week's bulletin.

### **Upcoming Events**

<b>Every Sunday at 7pm</b>	St. Anastasia Fellowship Meeting.
<b>February 25<sup>th</sup></b>	Prison Ministry card writing workshop after Divine Liturgy

### **Coffee Hours**

<b>February 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Rula Adranly
<b>February 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Evelyn Salem and Eddie Salem and family in memory of Sister Albertina Qubeen.
<b>February 25<sup>th</sup></b>	Sonia Neshiwat in memory of her father Jeries Neshiwat (42 years).
<b>March 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Denise Dudum

### **Memorial Services**

**Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.** For the handmaiden of God Sister Albertina Qubeen, offered by Evelyn Salem and Eddie Salem and family. May her 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 and Aida Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Haseeb Keileh**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Ghassan and Vivian Sruji**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Blanche Manneh**. Many years!
- † Nino family in memory of husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather **Elias Nino** (20 yr.) 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!



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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 and Maron Juha

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

You could use this QR code for your donation



THE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP OF  
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX  
CHURCH

~THE 45 TH ANNUAL CRAB FEED~

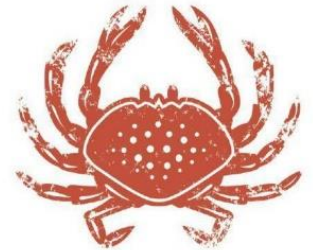


SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH, 2024

COCKTAILS 6:00 PM

DINNER 7:00 PM

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH  
1700 SCHOOL STREET, MORAGA, CA



ALL ~ YOU ~ CAN ~ EAT

APPETIZERS, PASTA, CRAB, SALAD, CHICKEN, GARLIC BREAD AND  
DESSERT

**FEATURING GREAT RAFFLE PRIZES**

ADULTS \$ 70

CHILDREN (UNDER 13) \$ 25

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*For information, tickets, or to volunteer please call: Parish Office (925) 258-4255, Or*

Dn Nicholas (Najeeb) (510) 207-1796

***YOUR DONATIONS ARE A HUGE PART OF EACH SUCCESS***

Crab Feed Placemat Donation For 2024: feature Business Card size ads for \$70,  
Medium size ads for \$150, Large size ads for \$250, and Premium Ads for \$450.  
Please make your Checks payable to St. John Orthodox Church. Or Contact Dn Nicholas  
at (510)207-1796



## Meeting Urgent Needs and Planning for the Future

Active in the Middle East since the 1990s, IOCC is using its deep experience and relationships to provide aid during the ongoing conflict in the Holy Land. Since conflict began in October, IOCC has remained in close contact with partners and staff on the ground.

From food and water to baby formula and medicine, IOCC has supplied essential support to thousands of displaced refugees in Gaza. Read more about how IOCC is providing emergency relief while planning for long-term needs.



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CrossRoad is a ten-day immersive summer program designed for YOU as you prepare to make big life decisions and start new adventures. By connecting with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition in a deep and meaningful way, you will find a place to form authentic and lifelong friendships, ask hard questions, and explore what it means to be an Orthodox Christian in the 21st century.



Application Deadline **February 20, 2024**

# Saint John Fellowship Hall

Annual Report to Parish Meeting

February 4, 2024

## Brief History of Saint John Orthodox Church

- The parish, founded in 1978, first held weekly services at the Orinda Masonic Hall
- In 1983, the property at 501 Moraga Way was purchased
- In 1989, the St. John Preschool/Day Care Center was launched
- In the late 1990s, the Administration Building was built
- In 2005, the interior and exterior of the church building was remodeled
- September 11, 2023. Broke ground for our Fellowship Hall



### PARISH COUNCIL

1. Father Nicholas Borzghol
2. Chair: Tania DeGroot
3. Vice Chair: Joe Sweiss
4. Secretary: Charlene Nassoura
5. Treasurer: Matthew Simon
6. Andrew Thayer
7. Norma Khalil
8. Neezar Samara
9. Raif Rihani
10. Samir Yoakim

### BUILDING COMMITTEE

1. Samar Adranly, Member
2. Steve Kreta, Chair
3. Father Nicholas, Member
4. Joe Sweis, Member
5. Ron Nichola (Past Member)
6. Chris Malki (Past Member)
7. Ray Nassif (Past Member)
8. Ziad Nassoura (Past Member)

### FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

1. David Hanna, Chair
2. Steve Kreta
3. Father Nicholas
4. Noha Schulze
5. Elias Shaheen
6. Rania Kashou
7. Ronald Nicola
8. Jason Dudum
9. Joseph Sweis
10. Kathy Adranly



## SAINT JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL PROJECT

Our parish family has always been unified in projects we have undertaken over the course of our forty plus years. While the Fellowship Hall Project is by far the largest our parish has undertaken, our parish's culture and history proves when we come together as one, we accomplish our goals. With God's blessing, fulfilling this goal will be no different.

### Fellowship Hall Project Highlights

- ❖ Total building area is 8,900 square foot with a 34 ft high ceiling.
- ❖ New paved parking lot for 112 cars
- ❖ Main hall is 5,000 sq. ft. with capacity for 300 people seated in Banquet Style and 700 people in theater style.
- ❖ Elegant foyer for receptions and the weekly coffee hour.
- ❖ Full Commercial Kitchen with top of the line equipment.
- ❖ Elegant bathrooms for men and women.
- ❖ A 1,500 sq. ft. patio overlooking playground
- ❖ Fully landscaped Central Plaza to accommodate Church functions
- ❖ EV Car Chargers for 12 cars
- ❖ Service Driveway for deliveries



# SAINT JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL PROJECT

## This Past Year Accomplishments and Next Steps

This past year, 2023, has seen major accomplishments for our Fellowship Hall. At the time of our last parish meeting, our contractor was busy excavating, moving dirt and erecting retaining walls for the parking lot area. Since then you can see the incredible improvements to our property which included new utilities (gas, electric, water, sewer, drainage, etc.), large reinforced concrete slab foundation, beautiful wood framing, and currently all interior framing and rough electrical, plumbing, and other work is being done. Many of you witnessed the raising of the top ridge beams after you signed your names and the names of your loved ones especially the ones who passed away who have contributed generously to our parish in the past. This was truly an exciting celebration by many parishioners who felt that with the Grace of God our dream is finally becoming a reality. In August, we used the unfinished Hall for the first time for a reception and silent auction that helped us raise more funds from many of our parishioners. The asphalt paving for the parking area and the concrete walkways were completed in early September, two week before our Annual Middle Eastern Festival.

Over the next few months the contractor will continue to complete all the interior rough installations for the plumbing, electrical, mechanical, Audio/Video, Fire Alarm, etc., complete the zinc tile roof, all porcelain tile walls for the building while improving the exterior grounds and the new Playground area. We expect the Aluminum Doors and windows to be installed in mid April which will be followed by City Inspections which will allow the contractor to start closing the walls, painting the interior, installing fixtures, etc. With God's will, your support, and the dedication of all those who are working on the project, we hope to reach substantial completion for this project around the Fourth of July!

<b>PROJECT MILESTONES</b>	<b>DATES</b>
<b>Schematic Design</b>	<b>2018 - 2019</b>
<b>Orinda Planning Commission Approval</b>	<b>Summer 2020</b>
<b>Construction Drawings</b>	<b>June 2021</b>
<b>Building Permit</b>	<b>September 2021</b>
<b>Start of Construction</b>	<b>September 2022</b>
<b>Substantial Completion</b>	<b>FOURTH OF JULY 2024!</b>

# SAINT JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL PROJECT

## FUNDRAISING

### Donor Recognition Levels for Donor Wall in Hall Foyer

<b>Founder</b> <b>\$1,000,000</b>		
<b>Cornerstone</b> <b>500,000</b>	<b>Pillar</b> <b>250,000</b>	<b>Patron</b> <b>100,000</b>
<b>Benefactor</b> <b>50,000</b>	<b>Provider</b> <b>25,000</b>	<b>Supporter</b> <b>10,000</b>
<b>Partner</b> <b>5,000</b>	<b>Friend</b> <b>1,000</b>	<b>Builder</b> <b>100</b>

### **Financial Considerations of the Fellowship Hall at start of project**

The estimated cost of the project is \$7.0 Million dollars. The cash in the Building Fund at the start of construction was \$2 million. We were able to secure a \$2.5 million Equity Loan through Summit Bank. The payments on this loan are being paid by parishioner pledges and donations to the church operating funds as well as the preschool contributions.

To complete the project, we set a fundraising goal from parishioners and friends of St. John 2.5 million dollars

### **Fundraising Efforts since Beginning the Project**

Through pledges, donations, fundraising events such as after church luncheons and meals at restaurants throughout the Bay Area, we have raised more than \$600,000. Additionally, from increased preschool contributions as well as parish events such as the crab feed and festival, we have raised about \$200,000.

This more than \$800,000 brings us to about one-third of the way toward our \$2.5 Million goal

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED LOVE & SUPPORT!**