

+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, SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

TONE 6 / EOTHINON 4

SUNDAY AFTER THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

MARTYRS SOPHIA AND HER DAUGHTERS FAITH, LOVE AND HOPE



Martyr Sophia and her Three Daughters at Rome

On September 17 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we continue to celebrate the Elevation of the Holy Cross; and we commemorate the Martyrs Sophia and her daughters Faith, Love and Hope.

This blessed family lived and suffered in Rome during the reign of Emperor Hadrian. Sophia was wise, as her name implies; she was widowed, and had established herself and her daughters well in the Christian Faith. When Hadrian's persecuting hand extended over the virtuous home of Sophia, Faith was only twelve years old; Hope, ten; and Love, nine. Brought before the emperor, these four held each other's hands "like a woven wreath," humbly but steadfastly confessed their faith in Christ and refused to offer sacrifices to the pagan idol Artemis. Before their suffering, the mother encouraged her daughters to endure to the end: "Your heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, is eternal health, inexpressible beauty and eternal life. When your bodies

are slain by torture, He will clothe you in incorruption and the wounds on your bodies will shine in the heavens as stars." The torturers inflicted cruel torments on each daughter and killed them. Sophia took the bodies of her daughters and honorably buried them. She remained at their grave for three days and nights, praying to God. Then she gave her spirit to God, flying off to Paradise, where the blessed souls of her daughters awaited her.

THE EPISTLE (For the Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross)

How magnified are Thy works, O Lord.

In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. (2:16-20)

Brethren, knowing that a person is not justified by the works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? God forbid! For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me.

الرسالة

الرسالة (للأحد الذي يلي رفع الصليب المقدس)

ما أعظم أعمالك، يا رب. كلها بحكمة صنعت.

باركي يا نفسي الرب.

فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى أهل غلاطية.

يا إخوة، إذ نعلم أن الإنسان لا يبزر بأعمال الناموس، بل إنما بالإيمان بيسوع المسيح. آمناً نحن أيضاً بيسوع المسيح لكي نبزر بالإيمان بالمسيح لا بأعمال الناموس، إذ لا يبزر بأعمال الناموس أحد من ذوي الجسد. فإن كنا ونحن طالبون التبرير بالمسيح وجدنا نحن أيضاً خطاة، أف يكون المسيح إذن خادماً للخطية؟ حاشى. فإني إن عذت أبنائي ما قد هدمت، أجعل نفسي متعدياً. لأتي بالناموس مثلاً للناموس لكي أحيأ الله. مع المسيح صليت، فأحيأ، لا أنا، بل المسيح يحيأ في. وما لي من الحياة في الجسد، أنا أحيأه في إيمان ابن الله الذي أحببني، وبذل نفسه عني.

THE GOSPEL (For the Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

الإنجيل

(للأحد الذي يلي رفع الصليب المقدس)

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس مرقس الإنجيلي البشير والتلميذ الطاهر.

قال الرب: "من أراد أن يتبعني، فليتكفر بنفسه ويحمل صليبه ويتبعني. لأن من أراد أن يخلص نفسه يهلكها، ومن أهلك نفسه من أجل ومن أجل الإنجيل يخلصها. فإنه ماذا ينتفع الإنسان لو ربح العالم كله وخسر نفسه؟ أم ماذا يعطي الإنسان فداءً عن نفسه؟ لأن من يستحي بي وبكلامي في هذا الجيل الفاسق الخاطيء، يستحي به ابن البشر متى أتى في مجد أبيه مع الملائكة القديسين." وقال لهم: "الحق أقول لكم، إن قوماً من القائمين ههنا لا يدوقون الموت، حتى يروا ملكوت الله قد أتى بقوة."

Love Your Neighbor

September – Archdiocese collection for Seminarian Fund

Each year in the Fall, the Archdiocese asks parishes to take a collection to help support the Antiochian Orthodox students studying at the seminaries in our country, including St Vladimir's, St Tikhon's and Holy Cross Seminary.

Monthly Lunches for the Fellowship Hall

The Ladies' Committee would like to revive our monthly sponsored lunches to help raise funds for the new fellowship hall! The idea is to have two families pick a date and together provide a meal to serve after Sunday liturgy. The Ladies' Committee will sponsor a lunch at the church on Father's Day, but would love to have volunteers lined up for the months following. Please contact Fadwa Samara with any questions or to sign up at 510.909.0119 or fvamara@gmail.com. Thank you!!

Festival News:

Cooking Demo recordings - we want to put together videos of our parishioners making their favorite middle eastern dishes. Record yourself or a loved one (on your camera phone) and send to Reem Munakash at rmunakash@comcast.net. The videos will be shown on a monitor in the Culture Room during the festival. No need to share a detailed recipe, just show us how it's done!!

Fashion Show Organizer needed to put together a 10-15 minute show for each day of the festival. Let's show off our beautiful traditional clothing to the community. Contact Samir Yoakim at svowakim@sbcglobal.net if you're interested.

Getting Ready for Sunday School

Dear Parents,

The 2023-2024 Sunday School Year starts on Sunday, September 17th and I need to be sure we have an accurate list of students and their grades before assigning students to each class.

If you did not receive my email to the parents 2 weeks ago or you are new to St. John the Evangelist and have a child/children ages 4 to 18, please contact me to sign them up for Sunday School (paulakassouf25@gmail.com or (951)662-9387).

Below (on the next page), you will find important dates for the upcoming school year.

I look forward to a fruitful and faith-filled school year.

In Christ, Paula Kassouf

Classroom locations:

- Pre-K and Kindergarten: The first room in the hall across from the kitchen
- 1-3: in the second room in the hall across from the bathrooms
- Gr. 4-8: in the admin building, center room
- Gr. 9-12: in the admin building, teen room

'23/'24 School year schedule- important dates to note:

- Sept. 17, 2023: First Day of Sunday School and [The Elevation of the Venerable and Life- Giving Cross](#) (Sept. 14)
Children will sit at the front of the Church for a special homily.
- Sept. 17, 2023: **First day of class!** Children go to assigned classrooms.
- Dec. 3, 2023: Christmas Cars Event after Sunday School
- Dec. 17, 2023: Christmas Play. **No Sunday School**
- Dec. 24, 2023: Christmas break. **No Sunday School**
- Jan 7, 2024: Sunday after Epiphany. Children stay at the front of the Church for the Blessing of Water. **No Sunday School**
- Feb 11, 2024: Creative Arts Project. Children go to admin building for arts and crafts for the 2024 Creative Festival. **No Sunday School.**
- March 18, 2024: First Day of Lent
- March 24, 2024: [Sunday of Orthodoxy](#). Commemoration of the Restoration of the Holy Icons. **No Sunday School.**
Children participate in a procession around the Church
- April 7, 2024: [Sunday of the Holy Cross](#). Children participate in a procession around the Church. **No Sunday School.**
- April 28, 2024: [Palm Sunday](#): **No Sunday School**
- May 5, 2024: [Easter Sunday](#): **No Sunday School**
- May 26, 2024: Last Day of Sunday School
- June 2, 2024: Sunday School Graduation. **No Sunday School**

Items Needed for the Festival

We are accepting monetary donations to purchase items for the festival such as oil, foil trays, paper plates, containers, etc. Thank you for your donation.

Thank You for Coming to the Fellowship Hall Party!

Our first event of many was successful! By God's glory, our awesome community with several generations was able to be under one roof - something we have dreamt about for decades. Thank you for everyone's enthusiastic participation, every single person who filled the room, every single donation, every single helping hand made our event successful. There were 150 attendees and we raised approximately \$71,000! We are all making our hall come to life. We are all family, all under God's home, our home!

Sincerely,

The Fundraising Committee

Upcoming Events

Sunday, September 17 at 7pm	St. Anastasia Fellowship Meeting (see flyer)
September 17	First day of Sunday School
September 13th at 6:00pm	Divine Liturgy to celebrate the feast of the Elevation of the Cross عيد رفع الصليب!
September 23-24	Our annual St. John's Middle Eastern Festival!
December 3rd	Christmas Cars Event
Every Sunday at 7pm	St. Anastasia Fellowship Meeting (see flyer)

Coffee Hours

September 17th	Sponsor Needed
September 23rd	Festival

Holy Oblations

This week, Holy Oblations are offered by:

- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola, Nadia Frangieh, Souhila Swies, Noha Schulze, George Messih and Aida Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Vivian Frangieh**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola**. Many years!
- † Ron and Ruth Jeha for the good health of **Michael Jeha**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Sophia Guajardo** on her name's day. 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!

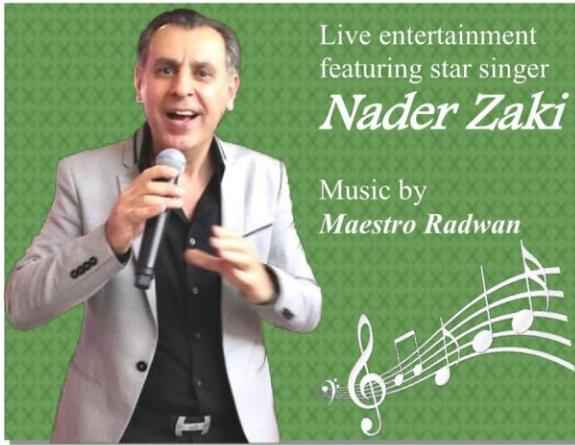


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- † Altar Servers: Nathan Sweis, Clayton Morgan, Elias Freij, Angelo Freij, Andrew Freij, Mazyn Haddadin, James Dudum, John Dudum and David Evans

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

You could use this QR code for your donation





29th Annual Middle Eastern Food Festival



St. John Antiochian Orthodox Church
501 Moraga Way in Orinda, CA

Sat. Sep 23, 2023 11am-8pm
Sun. Sep 24, 2023 12pm-7pm

Live music ~ Grand Prize Drawing ~ Delicious Food
Authentic Sweets ~ Children's Activities ~ Cultural Center
Vendor Booths

IT'S TIME TO POP THE CORN!

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

October 21, 2023 check-in 5pm
movie will start promptly at 6:30pm
Bring your snacks, blankets & chairs
to come enjoy a movie outside.

FREE for everyone!

Featured movie: Encanto

Popcorn will be provided

Please let Irene Guajardo know

if you are planning on joining

iyrini.nino@gmail.com



Fellowship Hall Progress!



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