ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA
Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

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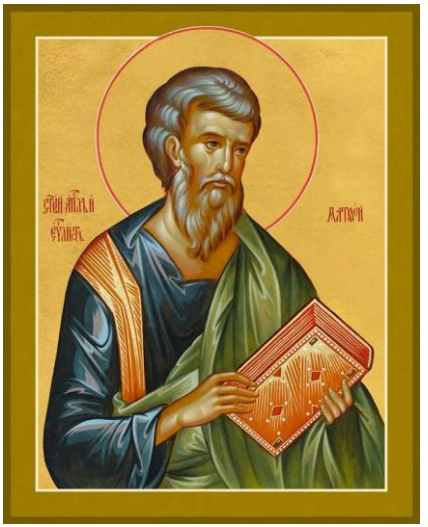


November 16, 2025

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

Martyr Ephygenia of Ethiopia, disciple of St. Matthew; Fulvian, prince of Ethiopia

القِدّيسِ متّى الإنجيلي

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن السادِس

إنَّ القُوّاتِ المَلائكِيَّةَ ظَهَروا على قَبْرِكَ الْمُوَقَّر، والحُرّاسَ صاروا كالأموات، ومَرْيَمَ وَقَفَتْ عِنْدَ القَبْرِ طالِبَةً جَسَدَكَ الطاهِر، فَسَبَيْتَ الجَحيمَ ولَمْ تُجَرَّبْ مِنْها، وصادَفْتَ البتولَ مانِحاً الحياة. فيا مَنْ قامَ مِنْ بينِ الأمواتِ، يا ربُّ المَجْدُ لَك.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST IN TONE THREE

O holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, intercede with the merciful God, to grant our souls forgiveness of sins.

أبوليتيكيون القدّيسِ متّى الإنجيلي باللحن الثالِث

أيُّها الرسولُ القدّيسُ متّى الإنجيلي، تَشَفَّعْ إلى الإلهِ الرحيمِ، أنْ يُنْعِمَ بغُفرانِ الزَلّاتِ لِنُفوسِنا.

APOLYTIKION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION IN TONE SEVEN

When, O Christ our God, Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, Thou didst reveal Thy glory to Thy Disciples in proportion as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light also enlighten us sinners, through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Thou Bestower of light, glory to Thee.

أبوليتيكيون تَجلّي ربّنا يَسُوعَ المَسِيح باللحن السابع

لمَّا تَجَلَّيْتَ أيُّها المَسيحُ الإلهُ في الجَبَلِ، أظْهَرْتَ مَجْدَكَ لِلْتلاميذِ حَسْبَما اسْتَطاعوا، فأَشْرِقْ لنا نَحْنُ الخَطَأة نورَكَ الأزَليّ، بِشَفاعاتِ والِدَةِ الإلهِ، يا مانِحَ النّورِ، المَجْدُ لك.

KONTAKION OF ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

The sacred treasury of God's holy glory, the greatly precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the Savior's most pure temple, free of stain and undefiled, into the House of the Lord on this day is brought forward and bringeth with herself the grace of the Most Divine Spirit; her do God's Angels hymn with songs of praise, for she is truly the heavenly tabernacle.

قِنداق عيدِ دُخول السيّدة باللحن الرابع

اليَوْمَ الهَيْكَلُ الذي لِلْمُخَلِّصِ، الكُلِّيُّ النَّقاءِ، العَذْراءُ الخِدْرُ ذو الثَّمَنِ الجَزيلِ، وَهِيَ الكَنْزُ الطَّاهِرُ لِمَجْدِ الإله، إِذْ تَدْخُلُ بَيْتَ الرَّبِّ، تُدْخِلُ نِعْمَةَ الرُّوحِ الإِلَهِيِّ مَعها. فَلْتُسَبِّحْها مَلائِكَةُ الله، لأَنَّها المِظَلَّةُ السَّماوِيَّة.

THE EPISTLE

His sound hath gone forth into all the earth.
The heavens show forth the glory of God.

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (4:9-16)

Brethren, I think that God has exhibited us Apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the scourge of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. Though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

الرسالة

في كُلِّ الأَرْضِ خَرَجَ صوْتُهُ.
السَّمَاوَاتُ تُذِيعُ مَجْدَ اللهِ.

فَصْلٌ مِنْ رِسالَةِ القِدّيسِ بولُسَ الرَّسولِ الأولى إلى أَهْلِ كورِنْثُوس. (4:9-16)

يا إِخْوَةُ، إِنَّ اللهَ أَبرَزَنا نَحْنُ الرُسُلَ آخِرِي الناسِ، كأَنَّنا مَجْعولونَ لِلْمَوْتِ. لأَنَّا قَدْ صِرْنا مَشْهَداً للعالَمِ والملائكةِ والبَشَرِ. نحنُ جُهَّالٌ مِنْ أَجْلِ المَسيحِ، أَمَّا أَنْتُمْ فَحُكَماءُ في المَسيحِ. نَحْنُ ضُعَفاءُ، وأَنْتُمْ أَقْوِياءُ. أَنْتُمْ مُكَرَّمُونَ، ونَحْنُ مُهانونَ. وإِلى هذهِ الساعةِ، نَحْنُ نَجوعُ ونَعْطَشُ ونَعْرَى ونُلْطَمُ ولا قَرارَ لَنَا. ونَتْعَبُ عامِلينَ. نُشْتَمُ فَنُبارِك، نُضْطَهَدُ فَنَحْتَمِلُ. يُشَنَّعُ عَلَيْنا فَنَتَضَرَّع. قَدْ صِرْنا كَأَقْذارِ العالَمِ وكأَوساخٍ يَسْتَخْبِثُها الجَميعُ إِلى الآن. وَلَسْتُ لأُخَجِلَكُم أكتبُ هذا، وإِنَّما أَعِظُكُمْ كَأَوْلادي الأَحِبَّاءِ لأَنَّهُ ولَوْ كانَ لَكُمْ رِبْوَةٌ مِنَ المُرشِدينَ في المَسيحِ، لَيْسَ لَكُمْ آباءٌ كثيرونَ. لأَنّي أَنَا وَلَدْتُكُمْ في المَسيحِ يسوعَ بالإِنجيلِ. فأَطلُبُ إِليكُم أَنْ تكونوا مُقْتَدِينَ بي.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (9:9-13)

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he rose and followed Him. And as He sat at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when Jesus heard it, He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

الإنجيل

فصلٌ من بشارةِ القديسِ متَّى الإنجيليّ البشيرِ والتلميذِ الطاهِر. (9:9-13)

في ذَلِكَ الزَّمانِ، فيما يسوعُ مجتازٌ رأَى إنساناً جالساً على مائدةِ الجِبايةِ اسمُهُ متَّى، فقال لهُ: "اتبعْني". فقام وتبِعَهُ. وفيما كانَ متَّكِئاً في البيتِ إذا بعشَّارينَ كثيرينَ وخَطأَةٍ جاؤُوا واتَّكأُوا مَعَ يسوعَ وتلاميذِهِ. فلَّما نظرَ الفريسيونَ قالوا لتلاميذِهِ: "لماذا معلّمُكم يأكلُ مع العَشّارينَ والخطأَة؟" فلَّما سمعَ يسوعُ قالَ: "لا يحتاجُ الأصِحَّاءُ إلى طبيبٍ لَكِنْ ذوو الأَسْقام. فاذهَبوا واعلَموا ما هو إِني أريدُ رحمةً لا ذبيحةً. لأنّي لم آتِ لأَدعوَ صِدّيقينَ بل خَطَأَةً الى التوبة."

KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) FOR ST. MATTHEW IN TONE EIGHT

His sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Alleluia.

كينونيكون للقدّيسِ متّى الإنجيلي باللحن الثامِن

في كُلِّ الأَرْضِ خَرَجَ صوْتُهُ، وإلى أقاصي المَسْكونَةِ كَلامُهُ. هَلِلويا.

TRISAGION PRAYER

3-9 Day Memorial Service in memory of Michel Mitri Filfili, offered by his son Rabih, his wife Marisa, their children Michel and Pierre and the Filfili family.

TRISAGION PRAYER

One Year Memorial Service in memory of Leon Atieh, offered by his daughter Ghazal and her husband George Labban and the Atieh and Labban families.

HOLY BREAD OF OBLATION

OFFERED BY: Fr. Samer, the Clergy and the parishioners for the good of the parish council members, the building committee and the Ladies Auxiliary and their families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Fr. Samer, the Clergy and the parishioners for the good health of all the families in Gaza, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Ukraine and all the countries has the unrest in the world. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Michel and Rima Gannage for the good health of their daughter Simone on the occasion of her birthday (Nov 13) and the good health of their daughter Catherine. For the good health of the Gannage and Smine families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Fr. Samer, Dimitry, Damian and Dominic Youssef for the good health of Kh. Julianna on the occasion of her birthday (Nov 15). For the good health of the Youssef and Neyman families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Bassam and Dima Khoury for the good health of their daughter Natalie on the occasion of her birthday (Nov 1) and the good health of Dima on the occasion of her birthday (Nov 15). For the good health of their children and grandchildren; Rawan, Mousa, Zayn and Amira Katwan, Natalie, Sleiman and David Araj. For the good health of the Khoury, Makhlouf, Katwan and Araj families. Many Years!

COFFEE HOUR AND MERCY MEAL

Offered By: Rabih and Marisa Filfili

(To host the Coffee Hour, please contact Wardeh Asfour @408-718-3339)
office@orthodoxredeemer.org
Online Link: https://holytransfiguration.breezechms.com/form/26c422

Services Schedule Every Week

Matins @ 9:00 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Vespers: Every Saturday @ 5:00 PM
(Please check your email in case of any cancellations for Vespers)

PARISH COUNCIL 2025

The Parish Council members' of 2025. Chair President; Bassam Khoury, Vice-Chair; Linda Salah, Treasurer; Dania Amireh Baker, Secretary; Maria Segal, Jad Bateh, Sana Eideh, Johnny Khamis, Didi Kreitem, Maher Fasheh and Rowida Barghouth. Sheila Veizades will represent the Antiochian Women Committee and Salem Aweiss will represent the Men Fellowship Committee.

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN 2025

The Antiochian Women Committee Leaders of 2025. Wardeh Asfour, Rowida Barghouth, Rima Gannage, Diana Khoury, Sheila Veizades and Hala Aboujudom (Sunshine).

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER YOUNG ADULTS

Young adults (college age and up to 39-1/2) meet on the first Sunday of the month and organize social, educational, and volunteer activities. For more information, please contact Fr. Theodor Sakellar @ 408-455-8145

SOYO (YOUTH GROUP 12-18 YEARS)

Our SOYO (Youth Group) is active through the leadership of the Advisors: Dominic Youssef and Caesar Haddad. The officers are: President; Riad Akery, Vice-President; Christina Alnweisser Secretary; Mila Haddad, Treasurer; Gabreilla Ajlouni, Social Media Coordinator; Adriana Ajlouni.

There will be Installation of the SOYO officers after the Divine Liturgy.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORNER

Sunday School Registration is now open. Please register your children ASAP. Registration forms are available at the church hall or on church Website: http://www.orthodoxredeemer.org/schoolregistration

School Schedule:
Sunday school starts 9/14/25 and ends 5/17/26. Sunday school graduation Ceremony will be on 5/17/26. Sunday school classes begin after communion and ends at 12:30pm.

Teachers: Samuel Hage, Hussam Ibrahim, Dimitry Youssef, Heather Simonovich, Randa Hanani and Jocelyn Mikhael. Caitlin Timothy and Alia Nystrom as back-up/support.

Orthodoxy 101 Class

Classes Schedule: November 16th
Sunday School Classroom after Sunday School is out

Join us as we explore one of the most beloved and inspiring works of early Christian faith. *On the Incarnation* by St Athanasius is a short, approachable book that beautifully explains why Christ came into the world and what His life, death, and resurrection mean for us today. Everyone is welcome—no theology background needed!

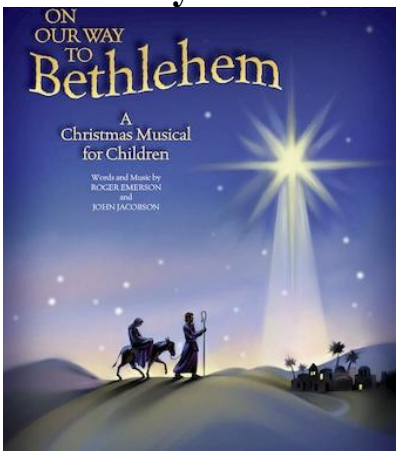
SPECIAL NOTE ON THE NATIVITY FAST

On November 15, we began, with God's help, the forty-day Nativity Fast in preparation for the great feast of the Nativity of Christ on December 25. Throughout this period, we abstain from meat, poultry, eggs and dairy. According to the Patriarchate of Antioch, it is not necessary to fast from oil, but people may choose to do so.

From November 15-December 11, fish, wine and oil are allowed every day, except Wednesdays and Fridays. But fish, wine and oil are allowed on November 21, the Entrance of the Theotokos, regardless on which day of the

week it falls. From December 12-24, we observe a strict fast with katalysis (relaxation) for wine and oil on Saturdays and Sundays, on commemorations of vigil-rank and intermediate-rank saints such as Nicholas and Ignatius, and for church patronal saints.

"On Our Way to Bethlehem"



CHRISTMAS PLAY
Sunday December 21, 2025

This year's Sunday School Christmas pageant is "On Our Way to Bethlehem" to be performed after Divine Liturgy on Sunday December 21st.

We will begin casting after church this Sunday October 5, 2025, and rehearse every Sunday for about 1 hour following the end of Sunday School. Dress rehearsal will be on Saturday December 20 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, and the play will be after Liturgy on Sunday December 21. Parents are requested to sign up their children this Sunday and to bring them to church/rehearsal every Sunday. Thank you! --Nancy Godfrey—email any questions to: pianogurl26@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CHURCH
Please save the date

- ***Advent Fast:*** *Fast starts November 15- December 24.*

- ***Blessing of the Girls:*** *November 23, blessing of the girls after the Divine Liturgy. Please make sure to bring your daughter to church.*
- ***Thanksgiving Agape:*** *Potluck Luncheon on Sunday November 23 after the Divine Liturgy.*
- **St. *Barbara Day:*** *December 7, sponsored by the ladies auxiliary. Please bring a pot of our traditional Burbara to share with everyone.*
- ***Christmas Play:*** *December 21, Christmas play after the Liturgy.*
- ***Christmas Services:*** *Evening, Divine Liturgy for the Nativity on Dec 24th @ 8:00pm.*

Impressions of a Visit, Part Two

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

When I asked a young man in his mid-twenties what had drawn him to the Orthodox Church, he replied:

> "I found spirituality there. I grew up in a type of Christian environment that was structured—rationalistic and orderly—within a society built on laws (codes) and material requirements. But my soul did not find the fulfillment for which it longed. At first, I didn't even know what that longing was. Later, I discovered it in the spiritual life of the Orthodox tradition, and I gave myself to it completely."

What is striking to me is that most people who have joined the Antiochian Orthodox parishes in Britain, whether they come from other Christian denominations or from atheism or agnosticism, did not do so because of any organized missionary effort, but through personal discovery. The Holy Spirit, often through the quiet witness of certain believers, prepared the way for this discovery. Personal testimony remains the most effective form of evangelism.

I experienced the universality of the Church vividly at the Parish of Saint Aidan, a sixth-century British saint. This parish brings together British faithful alongside families from Eritrea, Jamaica, Cyprus, Syria, and Palestine. They all gather around the Holy Chalice, becoming one Body of Christ despite their different skin colors. As Saint Paul writes: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

This living spirituality, the hidden treasure often unnoticed by those born into Orthodox families, is powerfully alive at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Essex. This monastery was founded by Saint Sophrony (Sakharov), the spiritual child of Saint Silouan the Athonite, whom he followed and learned from on Mount Athos between 1930-39. Elder Sophrony absorbed his teacher's spirit—especially his yearning for the salvation of the whole world—his imitation of Christ's humility, and his love for his enemies. From Saint Silouan, he also inherited a profound awareness of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the ascetic life of believers. This gave him a rare sensitivity toward human suffering and a unique ability to discern the path of salvation for each person and help them discover it.

I believe this was God's providential work preparing a form of true Christian witness suited for today's Western society. Modern humanity, worn down by endless work, crushed by industrial and urban life, and living in a culture that has dismantled the family and replaced community with individualism, continues to search, often desperately and without direction, for the meaning of existence.

What humans of the West need most is a touch of pure love and a glimpse of the joyful action of the Holy Spirit in their life. This is what shines clearly in that monastic community, which embodies the high spiritual vision awakened by Saint Silouan and carried forward by Saint Sophrony. Joy radiates from their faces. Their warmth and hospitality make every guest feel at home. They treat visitors with deep spiritual sensitivity, and they relate to the Western world around them with both discernment and humility, fully convinced that it is God, not they, who guides hearts to Him. They see their role simply as living the Gospel faithfully and intensely.

What is special about this monastery is that its distinctive character arose naturally from the circumstances of its founding, not from any personal plan of its founder. Such is God's way when He wishes to raise up a new kind of witness adapted to changing cultural realities. The first distinctive characteristic of this community is its communal prayer rule centered on the Jesus Prayer. The monastics pray together for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening in multiple languages, including the tongues of their guests. They do not ring bells to summon prayer, for they never compel visitors to attend; instead, they allow each person to come freely, moved by their own desire. The second characteristic is that the monastery is a mixed community of monks and nuns living separately but united in prayer and meals, complementing each other in the different areas of work and service the monastery requires.

The monastery, imbued with Elder Sophrony's spirit, stands as a spiritual beacon, a living witness to the joy of life in Christ and a concrete answer to the questions of our confused world. Thousands of visitors come each year. When I asked one of the brothers what work the community does, he said: "We sew garments for the community and paint icons, nothing more, because the service of hospitality takes all our time." Indeed, the large dining hall, which can seat two hundred people, is constantly full.

I remembered during an early summer visit (2009) seeing them set the tables twice in one evening to serve dinner for the many guests who could not all fit inside at once.

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Today's believers cannot afford to live their faith superficially or by habit. Inherited customs alone are not enough to bear witness to Christ in an age that urgently needs such witness. Faithful living, and the awareness of the treasure that cannot rust, be stolen, or taken away (Matt. 6:19-21) must take priority for both the individual believer and the Church community. Anything that does not serve this purpose is secondary, a waste of time and energy and, one might say, a betrayal of the Gospel.

Perhaps the greatest gift God has given us through Saint Silouan is the importance of knowing God through the Holy Spirit. Too often, as believers, we appoint ourselves as guides to God simply because we have read something about Him or memorized a few commandments. But the true guide is the one who has been purified and humbled so that the Holy Spirit dwells within him and shines through him.

In the end, God Himself is the only true Guide, and we are but instruments through whom He reveals Himself. God is perfectly capable of drawing people to Himself without us even though we consider ourselves to be His disciples. His Spirit moves where it wills. He passes over us when we grow lazy or distracted by our passions, for He desires that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). Our judgment will be great if we fail to recognize the value of the spiritual treasure entrusted to us, or the greatness of the calling we have received.

Lord, teach us to know You through the Holy Spirit personally, not theoretically. Teach us to rise above our faults and weaknesses until we behold Your radiant Face. Open our hearts fully to You, so that, before the joy of Your presence, all the pleasures of this world may seem small. Let us taste Your pure joy and make us worthy to be Your witnesses.

انطباعات من زيارة، الجزء الثاني

بقلم المتروبوليت سابا (اسبر)

أجاب شابّ، في منتصف العشرينيّات، عن سؤالي له: ما الذي جذبك إلى الكنيسة الأرثوذكسيّة؟ فقال:

> وجدت الروحانيّة فيها. فقد نشأتُ ونَمَوْتُ في مناخٍ مسيحيّ، منظَّم ومُعَقلَن جدّاً، وفي بيئة مدنيّة مؤسَّسةٍ على القانون والمتطلّبات المادّية. لم تجد نفسي الملء الذي تتوق إليه. لم أكن أعرف ماهيّته في بداية بحثي عنه، لكنّني عرفته في ما بعد، في الحياة الروحيّة، بحسب التقليد الأرثوذكسيّ؛ فأعطيته ذاتي بكليّتها.

الملفت لأمثالي، أنّ غالبيّة مؤمني الرعايا الأنطاكيّة، المُقبلين إلى الأرثوذكسيّة، إمّا من كنائس مسيحيّة، أو من إلحاد أو لا أدريّة، في بريطانيا، إنّما اهتدوا، لا بفعلٍ تبشيريّ، بل بفعلِ اكتشافٍ شخصيّ. لعب الروح القدس، من خلال بعض المؤمنين، الدور في تهيئة هذا الاكتشاف. الشهادة الشخصيّة هي التبشير الأكثر فعاليّة.

خبرتُ جامعيّة الكنيسة، بشكل محسوس، في رعيّة القدّيس إيدن Aidan، وهو قدّيس بريطاني من القرن السادس الميلادي. فهي تضمّ إلى جانب أعضائها الإنكليز، عائلات من أريتريا وجامايكا وقبرص وسوريا وفلسطين. يجتمعون كلّهم حول الكأس المقدّسة، ويصيرون جسد المسيح الواحد، بالرغم من الفروق الظاهرة في ألوان بَشَرتهم. "لا يهودي ولا يوناني، لا عبد ولا حر، لا رجل ولا امرأة، الجميع واحد في المسيح" (غلاطية ٢٨/٣).

هذه الروحانيّة الكنز، الذي لا يدركه كثر من المولودين في عائلات أرثوذكسيّة، تجدها حيّة في دير القدّيس يوحنا المعمدان، في منطقة أسكس. أسّس، هذا الدير، الشيخ الروحي القديس صُفروني. تتلمذ الأب صُفروني على القدّيس سلوان الآثوسي، في جبل آثوس، من العام ١٩٣٠ وحتّى رقاده في العام ١٩٣٩. تشرّب تعليم أبيه الروحي، وعلى الأخصّ، توقه لخلاص كلّ العالم، والتشبّه بتواضع المسيح، ومحبّة الأعداء. فاكتسب منه التأكيد على حضور الروح القدس وفعله، في حياة المؤمن النسكيّة، ما أكسبه رهافة مذهلة في التعاطي

مع البشر، وإدراكاً لآلامهم ومعاناتهم، وتالياً موهبة فريدة في رسم طريق خلاصهم، ومساعدتهم على اكتشافها.

في اعتقادي أنّ هذا قد حصل بإرادة إلهيّة، تهيئةً للشهادة المسيحيّة الحقّ، التي يتطلّبها المجتمع الغربي الحالي. فالإنسان المنهَك بالعمل المتواصل، في مجتمع صناعي ومديني طاحن، وفي بيئةٍ فكّكت العائلة، وأحلّت الفردية مكان الشركة، ووضعت أمامه بدائل لم تزل تؤكّد أنّها لا تملأه، مازال يبحث، بيأس، وعلى غير هدى، عن معنى وجوده.

هذا الإنسان يحتاج إلى لمسة حبّ نقيّ، ورؤية فعل حضور الروح القدس المفرِح، في حياته. وهو ما يبدو جليّاً في هذه الشركة الرهبانيّة، التي تتبع هذه الروحانيّة الراقية، التي فجرّها القدّيس سلوان في حياته، وأطلقها الشيخ صُفروني فيها. فالفرح يطفح من الوجوه، وحُسن الاستقبال والضيافة يُشعِر الضيف، وكأنّه في بيته. عندهم رهافة في كيفيّة التعامل مع ضيوفهم، وحسّ روحي رفيع في التعاطي مع المجتمع الغربي الذي يعيشون فيه، إلى جانب قناعة عميقة بأنّ الله، وليس هم، يهدي من يشاء. يعتبرون أنّ دورهم كامن في عيشهم للإنجيل بأمانة متطلّبة وشديدة.

ثمّة ما يميّز هذه الرهبنة. وقد جاءت هذه الميزات، بشكل طبيعيّ، بسببٍ من ظروف رافقت نشأتها، وليس بقرار شخصيّ من المؤسّس. هكذا يفعل الله عندما يريد أن يخلق شهادةً فيها شيء من الجدّة، التي يتطلّبها الواقع الثقافي المتبدّل. تظهر الميزة الأولى في قانون صلاتهم المشترك القائم على صلاة يسوع. يصلّونها، ساعتين صباحاً وساعتين مساءً، بلغات متعدّدة، يستعملون فيها لغات ضيوفهم أيضاً. لا يقرعون الجرس للصلاة، لأنّهم لا يجبرون ضيوفهم عليها، بل يتركون المجال لهم ليُقبلوا إليها من ذواتهم. أمّا الميزة الثانية فتظهر في شركة رهبانيّة مختلطة (رهباناً وراهبات)، يشتركون في الصلاة والطعام، ويتكاملون، مفترقين، في ميادين العمل والخدمة التي يتطلّبها الدير.

الدير، بروح الشيخ صُفروني، منارة روحيّة شاهدة على فرح الحياة التي في المسيح، وجواب حيّ عن أسئلة عالمنا الضائع. لذا يرتاده الناس بالآلاف سنوياً. سألت أحدهم ما هي الأعمال التي تقوم بها أخويّة الدير؟ فأجابني: الخياطة لأعضاء الشركة الرهبانيّة، ورسم

الأيقونات فقط، لأنّ خدمة الضيافة تستهلك وقتهم كلّه. هذا ما يبدو في غرفة الطعام الواسعة، التي تتسع لمائتي شخص.

تذكرت أنّني في زيارة سابقة (٢٠٠٩)، في شهر صيفي، شاهدتهم يحضّرون الطاولات مرتين لتأمين العشاء للضيوف الكثر، لأن صالة الطعام، التي بلغت حدّ الامتلاء الأقصى، لم تستوعبهم جميعاً.

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لا يمكن للمؤمن، في هذه الأيام، أن لا يكون مهتمّاً بعيش إيمانه بدقّة وفهم. فالممارسات التي ورثها من بيئته ليست كافية، لكي يكون شاهداً للمسيح، في زمن يحتاج إلى هذه الشهادة بأكثر ما يمكنه. العيش الأمين، ومعرفة الكنز الذي لا يصدأ ولا يُسرق، ولا يمكن لأحد انتزاعه (متى ٦: ١٩-٢١)، لهما الأولويّة، عند المؤمن والجماعة الكنسيّة على السواء. كلّ ما لا يصبّ في هذا المسعى، يبقى نافلاً، وهدراً للوقت والطاقات، إن لم نقل خيانة للإنجيل.

لعلّ أهم ما منحنا الله إيّاه، من خلال القدّيس سلوان، هو أهميّة معرفة الله بالروح القدس. لطالما نصّبنا أنفسنا، كمؤمنين، أدلاءَ إلى الله، لأنّنا قرأنا شيئاً عنه، أو حفظنا وصيّة أو أكثر. الدليل الحقيقي إليه، هو المؤمن الذي تنقّى وتواضع، فسكن الروح القدس فيه، وشعّ من خلاله. الله هو الدليل الوحيد في نهاية المطاف، وما نحن سوى وسائل يستخدمها ليكشف عن ذاته من خلالها.

الله قادر على أن يجتذب البشر إليه من دوننا، نحن الذين نعتبر أنفسنا تلاميذه. روحه يهبّ حيث يشاء. يتجاوزنا عندما نتقاعس ونتلهّى بأهوائنا، لأنّه يشاء للجميع؟ أن يخلصوا وإلى معرفة الحقّ يُقبلوا (١تيمو ٢: ٤). دينونتنا عظيمة إن كنّا لا ندرك قيمة الكنز الروحي الذي أُعطينا إياه، ولا نعي مدى سمو الدعوة التي دُعينا إليها ومدى أهميتها.

ربّي، علّمنا أن نعرفك بالروح القدس، معرفة شخصيّة لا نظريّة. علّمنا أن نتجاوز عيوبنا ونقائصنا باستمرار، حتّى نبلغ وجهك المضيء، وأن ننفتح عليك بكلّيّتنا، مستصغرين، أمام فرحك، كلّ مباهج هذه الدنيا. أذقنا فرحك الصافي، وأهّلنا لكي نكون شهوداً له.

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK LUNCHEON

Sunday, November 23rd – Following the Divine Liturgy

Join us for our Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Luncheon, hosted by the Ladies Auxiliary Community. Let us come together in gratitude to share a meal and celebrate our blessings.

Please sign-up during Coffee Hour or contact a member of the Ladies Auxiliary to let us know what dish you'll bring.

Items Needed:

Cooked turkeys, hams, hashweh, salad, dessert, yogurt, macaroni & cheese, or any favorite dish to

Thank you for your continued love and support!

LADIES AUXILIARY COMMUNITY

Redeemer Hands of Hope – A New Ministry of Service

A group of ladies from the Church of the Redeemer recently volunteered to cook for 30 guests at JW House next to Kaiser Santa Clara. The event was beautifully organized by Eva Katwan in the name of our church and a new charity initiative we are establishing to encourage parishioner involvement in community service while strengthening our bonds through acts of love and compassion.

This new ministry will be called "The Redeemer Hands of Hope." Its mission is to create more opportunities for our parishioners to serve others and work together for a good purpose.

Next Sunday, November 23rd, Eva Katwan and Dima Khoury will share more about this new initiative at the end of the Divine Liturgy and during the Thanksgiving Luncheon.

Let us thank God for inspiring this wonderful beginning and pray that many hearts will join in serving others through the Redeemer Hands of Hope.

🎄 Holiday Wish Drive 🎁

Help bring joy to children and adults in need this Christmas!

This season, our community is coming together to make holiday wishes come true. Please visit the Christmas Tree in the church Narthex and choose a card to sponsor a child or adult. Each card lists a special wish you can help fulfill.

Your generosity will make a meaningful difference and share the spirit of Christ's love this Christmas.

✨ Together, we can make the season brighter for everyone! ✨

Get ready to jingle and mingle!

Christmas FORMAL

Enjoy a live performance by Waseem and his band, a delicious dinner, and celebration of Christmas and the hall grand opening

6TH DECEMBER, 2025

at 4:45pm Ribbon cutting and prayer
5 o'clock for cocktails
6 o'clock for dinner
Followed by dancing

ST. JOHN BANQUET HALL
501 Moraga Way, Orinda

Tickets $110 per adult
$40 per child(13 or younger)

Purchase by Nov.21
Rania Kashou 415.722.0774

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DEANERY

ORDER OF ST. IGNATIUS & PARISH COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

Invites you and your spouses to the
Annual Christmas Dinner

$60 PER PERSON

DECEMBER 18, 2025 @ 6:30 PM

CAFE VITALE
987 FREMONT AVE. LOS ALTOS HILLS, CA 94024

RSVP BY DEC 6TH

KH. JULIANNA YOUSSEF(CO-CHAIR FOR THE ORDER OF ST. IGNATIUS OF THE DIOCESE)
408-375-5539, JULIANNA3DS@GMAIL.COM

OR

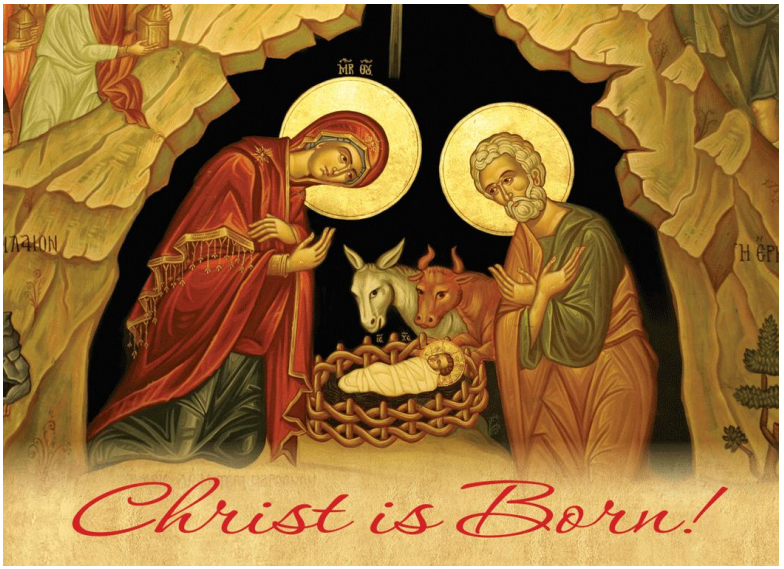
OFFICE@ORTHODOXREDEEMER.ORG

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD

Sunday school is having a Community Christmas Card fundraiser. This card is used to spread the greetings of Christ's birth to families and friends throughout the community. This Christmas, as you reflect your blessing and perhaps even on some of the challenges that have helped you grow; **take a minute to support the Sunday school in raising money that will go towards Four Homes of Mercy and to the Sunday school program**. By making a donation your name will appear inside the Community Christmas Card and it will be mailed to all members of the church. You can help donate by completing the form attached to this letter and return it to church office by December 8, 2025.

Online Donation Link: https://orthodoxredeemer.breezechms.com/give/online

Thank you for your participation and efforts in support of the Community Christmas Card Program!



Name_____

Address_____

_____

Donation $10_____ $20_____ $50_____ Other_____

DECORATING THE ALTAR

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. We invite all the parishioners to participate in decorating our Church Altar by donating Poinsettias as a tradition for the good health or in memory of your beloved ones. Please fill out the attached form and submit to the church office.

Online Donation Link: https://orthodoxredeemer.breezechms.com/give/online

Poinsettias for the Altar

This is my Donation to get poinsettia(s) for Christmas to decorate the Altar.

_____ **(Number)** of poinsettias **@ $10 each = $**_____ (Please Print)

For the Good Health of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Given by: _____