

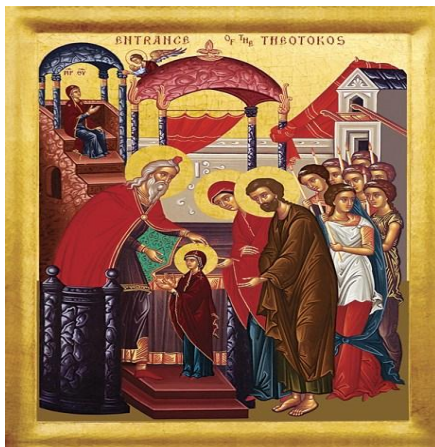


**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA
Diocese of Los Angeles and the West**

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
THE REDEEMER
380 MAGDALENA AVE, LOS ALTOS HILLS, CA 94024
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www.orthodoxredeemer.org

**V. REV. FR. SAMER YOUSSEF, D. MIN
REV. FR. THEODORE SAKELLAR, MTS**



NOVEMBER 23, 2025

**TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
& NINTH SUNDAY OF LUKE**

AFTER-FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

AMPHILOKIOS, BISHOP OF ICONIUM; GREGORY, BISHOP OF AGRIGENTUM

الاحد الرابع والعشرون بعد العنصرة والأحد التاسع عشر من لوقا
وداع عيد دخول والدة الإله الفاتكة القداسة الى الهيكل

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised: in the city of our God and in His holy mountain. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

God is known in her palaces for a refuge. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God.

Glory... Both now...

الانتيفونا الأولى

عَظِيمٌ هُوَ الرَّبُّ وَمُسَبَّحٌ جَدًّا فِي مَدِينَةِ إِيْلَهِنَا عَلَى جَبَلٍ قُدْسِهِ. فِيكَ قِيلَتِ الْمَفَاخِرُ يَا مَدِينَةَ اللَّهِ.

بِشَفَاعَاتِ الْوِدَّةِ الْإِلَهِي، يَا مُخَلِّصُ خَلِّصْنَا.

اللَّهُ مَعْرُوفٌ فِي قُصُورِهَا بِأَنَّهُ نَصِيرُهَا. مِثْلَمَا سَمِعْنَا كَذَلِكَ رَأَيْنَا فِي مَدِينَةِ رَبِّ الْقُوَاتِ فِي مَدِينَةِ إِيْلَهِنَا.

بِشَفَاعَاتِ الْوِدَّةِ الْإِلَهِي...

أَلْمَجْد ... الْآنَ ... بِشَفَاعَاتِ الْوِدَّةِ الْإِلَهِي....

THE SECOND ANTIPHON

The Most High hath sanctified His tabernacle. Holiness and majesty are in His sanctuary.

Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter in thereat.

Holy is Thy temple, and wonderful in righteousness.

Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...

الانتيفونا الثانية

الْعَلِيِّ قَدَسَ مَسْكَنُهُ، الْحَمْدُ وَالْبَهَاءُ قُدَّامَهُ، الْقَدَاسَةُ وَالْجَلَالُ فِي مَقْدِسِهِ.

خَلِّصْنَا يَا ابْنَ اللَّهِ، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، لِتُرْتَلَّ لَكَ. هَلْلُويَا.

هَذَا هُوَ بَابُ الرَّبِّ، وَمِنْهُ يَدْخُلُ الصِّدِّيقُونَ.

مِنْ قَدَاسَةِ هَيْكَلِكَ، أَنْتَ عَجِيبٌ فِي عَدَالَتِكَ.

الْمَجْدُ... الْآنَ ... يَا كَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ الْإِبْنَ الْوَحِيدِ...

THE THIRD ANTIPHON

Even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favor. The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. Virgins shall be brought to the King after her: her companions shall be brought unto Thee.

الانتيفونا الثالثة

لَوْجْهَكَ يَتَضَرَّعُ أَغْنِيَاءُ الشَّعْبِ. ابْنَةُ الْمَلِكِ فِي الدَّخْلِ، مُتَرَدِّيةً وَمُرَيَّنةً بِأُشْرَاطِ ذَهَبِيَّةٍ. تَأْتِي فِي إِثْرِهَا عَذَارَى إِلَى الْمَلِكِ، عَذَارَى مُقَرَّبَاتٍ مِنْهَا يُؤْتَى بِهِنَّ إِلَيْكَ.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

أبوليتيكيون القيامة بالحن السابع

حَطَمْتَ بِصَلِيبِكَ الْمَوْتَ، وَفَتَحْتَ لِلصِّ الْفِرْدَوْسَ، وَحَوَّلْتَ نَوْحَ حَامِلَاتِ الطِّيبِ، وَأَمَرْتَ رُسُلَكَ أَنْ يَكْرِزُوا، بِأَنَّكَ قَدْ قُمْتَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهَ، مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الرَّحْمَةَ الْعُظْمَى.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

Today the Virgin is the foreshadowing of the pleasure of God, and the beginning of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. Thou hast appeared in the Temple of God openly and hast gone before, preaching Christ to all. Let us shout with one thrilling voice, saying: Rejoice, O thou who art the fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation.

أبوليتيكيون عيد دخول السيِّدة بالحن الرابع

الْيَوْمَ الْبَتُولُ الَّتِي هِيَ مُقَدِّمَةُ مَسَرَّةِ اللَّهِ، وَابْتِدَاءُ الْكِرَارَةِ بِخَلَاصِ الْبَشَرِ، قَدْ ظَهَرَتْ فِي هَيْكَلِ اللَّهِ

عَلَانِيَةً، وَسَبَقَتْ مُبَشِّرَةً لِجَمِيعٍ بِالْمَسِيحِ. فَلَنَهْتَفِ نَحُوهَا بِصَوْتٍ عَظِيمٍ قَائِلِينَ: إِفْرَحِي يَا كَمَالَ تَدْبِيرِ
الخالق.

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 تَجَلَّى رَبَّنَا يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ بِالْحَنِ السَّابِعِ

لَمَّا تَجَلَّيْتَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ فِي الْجَبَلِ، أَظْهَرْتَ مَجْدَكَ لِلتَّلَامِيذِ حَسَبِمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا، فَأَشْرَقَ لَنَا نَحْنُ
الْخَطَاةُ نَوْرَكَ الْأَزَلِّيَّ، بِشَفَاعَاتِ وَالِدَةِ الْإِلَهِ، يَا مَانِحَ النُّورِ، الْمَجْدُ لَكَ.

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.

قِنْدَاقُ عِيدِ دُخُولِ السَّيِّدَةِ بِالْحَنِ الرَّابِعِ

الْيَوْمَ الْهَيْكَلُ الَّذِي لِلْمُخَلَّصِ، الْكُلِّيُّ النَّقَاءِ، الْعَذْرَاءُ الْخِدْرُ ذُو الثَّمَنِ الْجَزِيلِ، وَهِيَ الْكَنْزُ الطَّاهِرُ لِمَجْدِ
الْإِلَهِ، إِذْ تَدْخُلُ بَيْتَ الرَّبِّ، تَدْخُلُ نِعْمَةَ الرُّوحِ الْإِلَهِيِّ مَعَهَا. فَلْتُسَبِّحْهَا مَلَائِكَةُ اللَّهِ، لِأَنَّهَا الْمِظْلَةُ
السَّمَاوِيَّةُ.

THE EPISTLE

The Lord will give strength to His people.

Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, ascribe to the Lord honor and glory.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (2:14-22)

Brethren, Christ is our peace, Who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law of

commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And He came and preached peace to you, who were far off, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in Whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

الرسالة

الرَّبُّ يُعْطِي قُوَّةَ لِسْعِهِ قَدِمُوا لِلرَّبِّ يَا أَبْنَاءَ اللَّهِ.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى أَفَسُسَ. (22-14:2)

يَا إِخْوَةُ، إِنَّ الْمَسِيحَ هُوَ سَلَامُنَا، هُوَ جَعَلَ الْإِثْنَيْنِ وَاحِدًا، وَنَقَضَ فِي جَسَدِهِ حَائِطَ السِّيَاحِ الْحَاجِزِ، أَيْ الْعَدَاوَةِ. وَأَبْطَلَ نَامُوسَ الْوَصَايَا فِي فَرَائِضِهِ، لِيَخْلُقَ الْإِثْنَيْنِ فِي نَفْسِهِ إِنْسَانًا وَاحِدًا جَدِيدًا بِإِجْرَائِهِ السَّلَامِ. وَيُصَالِحُ كُلَّيْهِمَا فِي جَسَدٍ وَاحِدٍ مَعَ اللَّهِ فِي الصَّلِيبِ، بِقَتْلِهِ الْعَدَاوَةَ فِي نَفْسِهِ. فَجَاءَ وَبَشَّرَكُمْ بِالسَّلَامِ، الْبَاعِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالْقَرِيبِينَ. لِأَنَّ بِهِ لَنَا كُلَّيْنَا التَّوَصُّلَ إِلَى الْآبِ فِي رُوحٍ وَاحِدٍ. فَلَسْتُمْ غُرَبَاءَ بَعْدُ وَنُزَلَاءَ، بَلْ مُوَاطِنُو الْقَدِيسِينَ وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِ اللَّهِ. وَقَدْ بُنِيتُمْ عَلَى أَسَاسِ الرُّسُلِ، وَالْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَحَجَرِ الزَّائِيَةِ هُوَ يَسُوعُ الْمَسِيحُ نَفْسُهُ الَّذِي بِهِ يُنْسَقُ الْبُنْيَانُ كُلُّهُ، فَيَنْمُو هَيْكَلًا مُقَدَّسًا فِي الرَّبِّ، وَفِيهِ أَنْتُمْ أَيْضًا تُبْنَوْنَ مَعًا مَسْكَنًا لِلَّهِ فِي الرُّوحِ.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (12:16-21)

The Lord spoke this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night

your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As He said this, Jesus called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لَوْقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ. (21-16:12)

قَالَ الرَّبُّ هَذَا الْمَثَلُ: إِنْسَانٌ غَنِيٌّ أَخْصَبَتْ أَرْضُهُ. فَفَكَّرَ فِي نَفْسِهِ قَائِلًا "مَاذَا أَصْنَعُ؟ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِي مَوْضِعٌ أَخْزُنُ فِيهِ أَثْمَارِي." ثُمَّ قَالَ، "أَصْنَعُ هَذَا: أَهْدِمُ أَهْرَائِي وَأَبْنِي أَكْبَرَ مِنْهَا، وَأَجْمَعُ هُنَاكَ كُلَّ غَلَّاتِي وَخَيْرَاتِي. وَأَقُولُ لِنَفْسِي، يَا نَفْسُ إِنَّ لَكَ خَيْرَاتٍ كَثِيرَةً فَاسْتَرِحِي وَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَأَفْرَحِي." فَقَالَ لَهُ اللَّهُ: "يَا جَاهِلٌ! فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ تُطْلَبُ نَفْسُكَ مِنْكَ. فَهَذِهِ الَّتِي أَعَدَدْتَهَا لِمَنْ تَكُونُ؟" فَهَكَذَا مَنْ يَدَّخِرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَعْنِي بِاللَّهِ. وَلَمَّا قَالَ هَذَا نَادَى: مَنْ لَهُ أُذُنَانِ لِلسَّمْعِ، فَلْيَسْمَعْ.

TRISAGION PRAYER

3-9 Day Memorial Service in memory of Tancho Veizades, offered by her son Henry, his wife Sheila, their children Gregory and Michael, Marge Hanna and the Veizades family.



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: Hanna and Suad Eideh for the good health of their daughters; Sana, Lena and her husband Nick Khoury and the Eideh, Khoury and Hanhan families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Marwan and Yara Akkary on the occasion of their 2nd wedding anniversary (Nov 11) and the good health of their daughter Emma and the Akkary and Salloum families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Joseph Louis for the good health of his wife Najah on the occasion of her birthday (Nov 19) and for the good health of their children, grandchildren and the Louis family. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Mitch and Maria Segal for the good health of their son Matthew on the occasion of his birthday (Nov 22) and the good health of the Segal, McCrea and Snowden families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Mitch and Maria Segal in memory of their beloved son Andrew Segal. Memory Eternal!

OFFERED BY: Hanna, Suad and Sana Eideh in memory of beloved son and brother Imad Eideh. Memory Eternal!



COFFEE HOUR

Offered By: Thanksgiving Agape Potluck.

(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)

DECORATING THE ALTAR

Thank you for your donation:

Chip & Jennifer Lutton: For the good health of the Lutton family. In memory of Gladys and Richard Lutton, Michael Smith, Helen and Elias Bodron.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD

Thank you for your donation:

Jennifer & Chip Lutton & family.

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.

SOYO Activity:

The Youth Group will have **White Elephant Potluck** hosted by the Labban family on **December 12th at 6:00pm**. Please save the date for the youth age 12-17. For more information, please see the advisers; Dominic Youssef and Caesar Haddad



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

Today, Sunday Nov 23rd: Join us for a very practical class on prayer featuring a Q&A with Fr. Theodore. It will offer simple, concrete guidance for deepening your prayer life in everyday circumstances. All are welcome, and we encourage you to bring any questions you've been wanting to ask.

Next week: No class (Thanksgiving weekend)

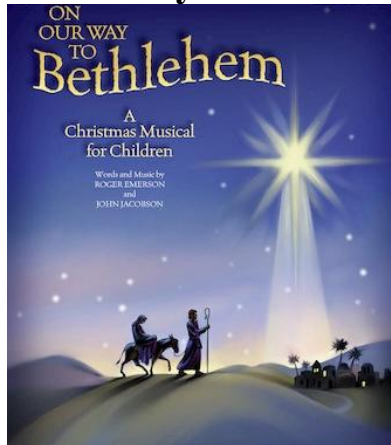
****SPECIAL NOTE ON THE NATIVITY FAST****

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*
- **St. Barbara Day:** *December 7, sponsored by the ladies auxiliary. Please bring a pot of our traditional Barbara to share with everyone*

- **SOYO Event:** *White Elephant Potluck, December 12th @ 6:00pm. Hosted by the Labban family. More details will be posted soon.*
- **St. IGNATIUS & Parish Council:** *Annual dinner December 18. Please see flyer for details*
- **Christmas Play:** *December 21, Christmas play after the Liturgy*
- **Christmas Services:** *Evening, Divine Liturgy for the Nativity on Dec 24th @ 8:00pm*

Blessing of the girls prayer
(Parent and Grandparents, please bring your young girls forward for a blessing.)

Priest: O God, our heavenly Father, who loves mankind and are most merciful and compassionate, have mercy on these young girls as You did on Holy Mary when she was presented in Your temple. We commend them to Your gracious care and protection. Be, O God, their guide and guardian in all their endeavors, lead them into the path of Your truth and draw them nearer to You as You did with our beloved Mother Mary. Help them to lead godly and righteous lives in your love and fear, doing Your will in all things. Give them grace that they may be temperate, industrious, diligent, devout and charitable. Defend them against the assaults of the enemy, and grant them wisdom and strength to resist all temptation and corruption of this life, and direct them in the way of salvation through the merits of Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, and the intercessions of His holy Mother and thy Blessed saints. Amen.

On Self-Criticism

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

Father Arseny (1893-1973) was a man of prayer and a high-caliber spiritual father. He spent eighteen years in a hard labor camp in Siberia during communist rule (1940-1958). Once, during a heated argument between two ideologically opposed groups of political prisoners, one of the leaders forcefully brought Father Arseny into the argument. The leader asked Father in front of everyone about his and the Church's position on the atheist government that arrests and kills priests, demolishes churches and monasteries, and relentlessly

fight the faith. This leader thought he would have fun embarrassing a “stupid” priest. Father Arseny hesitated to answer. He did not want to engage in the debate, especially since he had not engaged in such debates before. But, under pressure, he made the sign of the cross and began a detailed explanation, the conclusion of which was that the roots of atheism and hostility toward the Church were planted by the Russians’ own hands because of “the bad examples demonstrated by the intellectuals, the nobility, merchants and government employees. Yet we, the clergy, were the worst of all.” He concluded by saying: “I cannot point the finger at our authorities because the seeds of disbelief have fallen into the soil that we ourselves have prepared. We ourselves are guilty, too. We are only reaping what we sow.” In prison, Father Arseny suffered a great deal of persecution and paid a high price for his disposition. He presented an honest example of non-violence in the face of the terrible suffering he and his people were experiencing. Moreover, he offered a deep analysis of the reasons that led to their suffering. Our Orthodox spiritual teaching speaks of “self-blame,” which is based on discovering one’s personal role in transgressions or mistakes, rather than blaming others. We can also call this “self-criticism,” which we rarely find in our circles. We tend to blame and criticize others while considering ourselves “innocent of the blood of this just man.” A person does not mature at any level, nor do institutions advance and develop, unless they continuously follow the principle of frequent self-criticism or self evaluation. 1 On a personal level, if we’re not convinced that we have our share of flaws, and if we don’t examine and monitor them closely, then how can we get rid of them? Why do we have the right to see other peoples’ faults and slam them when we are full of the same faults? How applicable is the following gospel verse to our reality: “Why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye and do not care about the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, take the plank out of your own eye first, so that you can see clearly and remove the speck from your brother’s eye” (Matthew 7:3, 5). The true believer criticizes himself first, then denounces the wrong actions of other people rather than criticizing the people. In fact, we have too much experience criticizing rather than critiquing. The difference between the two aspects is huge. Criticism can be based on emotions, anger and complaints. It can be stained with subjectivity and irrationality, so the dialogue becomes insulting and destructive to the other. It can also be based on a superficial knowledge of the matter. Criticism can lack any effort to recognize the reasons that might lead to

consequences. Thus, the discussion leads to termination of the dialogue, causing participants to depart carrying nothing but feelings of anger, hatred and dissatisfaction. Criticism can be a negative act because situations remain unchanged. It can be mainly “venting” that is followed by more intense and turbulent emotional surges. Critique, however, is based on calmness and a deep analysis which investigates the inner core of matters to understand their flaws and the reasons behind them. Critique focuses not on the person but reaching an understanding of the mistakes he committed in order to correct them. Critique has its own components and standards that require strict adherence. It must be constructive and positive to lay out the foundations for evaluation and reform. Criticism deceives people into thinking that, by directing their anger at mistakes and blaming others for them, they absolve themselves of responsibility.

Whereas in critique, the critic can help to improve the state of decline, regression, or corruption. If our homes were filled with piety and the fear of God, and built on Gospel values and virtues, would they produce opportunists, self-seekers, and the weak? If we raised our children on truth, objectivity, and the meaning of true life, would there be any place for triviality, superficiality, and selfishness? “Do they pick grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?”

(Matthew 7:16). 2 We frequently encounter criticism of a variety of issues and people, many of which might be true. Yet the important task is inquiring and searching for causes that lead to these issues and reaching solutions to reduce errors and rectify their consequences. Most important of all is claiming personal responsibility for deficiencies and seeking ways to correct them. If we place blame on others, we will remain hostage to what we despise and complain about. Above all, ask questions and demand answers from yourself. Do not underestimate your role, no matter how minor and insignificant you might believe it is. You do have a part in spreading the culture of constructiveness but start without focusing too much on cultivating results. What matters is that you do your best. A simple and virtuous mother is incomparably better than an educated mother who lacks virtue. Dedicated schoolteachers who love their students produce a generation of positive students of integrity: a devout priest who is an apostle to others and changes their lives; a polite and ethical worker who contributes to building trust among members of society; a humble and patient intellectual who opens closed minds. God has given you one or more talents to advance and increase rather than wasting your time gossiping about others while remaining empty and trivial.

في النقد الذاتي

بقلم المتربوليت سابا (اسبر)

الأب أرساني (١٨٩٣-١٩٧٣)، رجل صلاة وأب روحيّ من الطراز الرفيع. أمضى في معتقل الأشغال الشاقّة، في سيبيريا، ثماني عشرة سنة، إبّان الحكم الشيوعي (١٩٤٠-١٩٥٨). مرّةً، وفيما كان بعض المعتقلين السياسيين، المتعادين فكرياً، يتجادلون بحدّة، إذا بزعيم إحدى المجموعتين يجلب الأب أرساني إلى حلبة الجدل، بالقوّة، ويسأله أمام الجميع: ما هو موقفه وموقف الكنيسة من الحكومة الملحدة، التي تقتل الكهنة وتعتقلهم، وتهدم الكنائس والأديرة، وتحارب الدين بلا هوادة؟ ظنّ ذاك المتزعم أنّه سيتسلّى بإحراج كاهن "غبيّ".

تردّد الأب أرساني في الجواب، رغبةً منه في عدم الدخول في السجال القائم. خاصّةً، وأنّه ما سبق له وشارك فيه من قبل. لكنّه، تحت الضغط، رسم إشارة الصليب، وبدأ شرحاً مستفيضاً، خلاصته أنّ التربة، التي أنبتت الإلحاد والعداء للكنيسة، قد هيّأتها الروس بأيديهم، بسبب "الأمثلة السيئة، التي قدّمتها لنا طبقة المثقّفين، والنبلاء والتجار والموظّفين في دوائر الحكومة. وكنا، نحن، في سلك الكهنوت أسوأهم جميعاً." ليخلص إلى القول: "لا يمكنني أن أوجّه إصبع الاتهام إلى سلطاتنا، لأنّ بذور عدم الإيمان سقطت في التربة التي أعدناها بأنفسنا." "نحن أنفسنا مذنبون أيضاً. إنّنا نحصد فقط ما زرعته أيدينا."

دفع الأب أرساني، في المعتقل، كثيراً من المضايقات، ثمناً لموقفه هذا. لكنّه قدّم مثلاً صادقاً في اللا انفعال أمام المعاناة الرهيبة التي يعيشها وشعبه في ذلك الحين، وعمقاً في التحليل حول أسباب نشوئها.

يتكلّم تعليمنا الروحيّ الأرثوذكسيّ عن "لوم النفس"، الذي يقوم على اكتشاف الدور الشخصي في التقصير أو الغلط الحاصل، بدلاً من تحميل وزره للآخرين. هذا ما نسّميه بلغتنا المعاصرة "النقد الذاتي"، الذي نادراً ما نجده في أوساطنا. فالجميع حاضر لإلقاء اللوم على غيره، وتوجيه سهام النقد إليه، فيما يعتبر نفسه بريئاً "من دم ذاك الصديق."

لا ينضج الإنسان، على أيّ صعيد، ولا تستمرّ أيّ مؤسسة في التقدّم والتطور، ما لم تتبع مبدأ النقد أو التقييم الذاتيين دوريّاً، وباستمرار.

فكيف لك أن تتخلص من عيوبك ما لم ترها، وتقتنع بأنها موجودة فيك؟ وبأي حق ترى عيوب غيرك، وتهاجمه، وأنت مليء بالعيوب ذاتها؟ ما أصدق كلمة الإنجيل التالية في واقعنا! "لماذا تنظر إلى القشة في عين أخيك، ولا تبالي بالخشبة في عينك؟ يا مُراءٍ، أخرج الخشبة من عينك أولاً، حتى تبصر جيداً فتُخرج القشة من عين أخيك" (متى ٧: ٣، ٥).

المؤمن الحق ينقد ذاته أولاً، ومن ثم ينقد العمل الخاطيء، لا الشخص المخطيء. في الواقع، نحن ماهرون في الانتقاد لا النقد. والفرق بينهما شاسع جداً. فالانتقاد يقوم على الانفعالات والعواطف والغضب والتذمر، وهذه تشوبها اللا موضوعية واللاعقلانية، فيغدو الكلام تجريحاً للشخص وتهشيماً له. كذلك يقوم على نظرة سطحية لموضوع الانتقاد، نظرة لا تكلف نفسها حتى عناء التفكير، بل تصوب السهام على ما تراه، دونما جهد لمعرفة الأسباب، التي أدت إلى ظهوره. وغالباً ما ينتهي النقاش بانتهاء الجلسة، ولا يحمل المشتركون فيه سوى مشاعر الغضب والكراهية والسخط على الواقع والأشخاص، موضوع الانتقاد. الانتقاد عمل سلبي بالكلية، فهو يُبقي الأمور على ما هي، ولا يساهم إلا في "فشة الخلق"، التي يعقبها جَيْشان له أقوى وأكثر.

أما النقد، فيقوم على التحليل الهادئ المتعمق، الذي ينظر في بواطن الأمور، وماضيها، بغية معرفة مواطن الخلل والأسباب التي أدت إليه. لا يقف عند مسؤولية الشخص إلا بمقدار ما يساهم، عن معرفة أو عن غير معرفة، في تغذية الأسباب المؤدية إلى الخلل. للنقد مقوماته ومعايره التي يجب التقيد بها، بدقة. ويجب أن يكون نقداً بناءً وإيجابياً، لتساهم النتائج التي يصل إليها في وضع أسس التقويم والإصلاح.

يجتمع الناس على الانتقاد لأنه يوجههم بأنهم إذا صَبّوا جام غضبهم على ظاهرة سلبية ما، وجعلوا مسؤوليتها كلياً على غيرهم، فإنهم يبرؤون أنفسهم من مسؤولية المشاركة فيها. أما النقد الموضوعي فيحمل الناقد مسؤولية شخصية في الوصول إلى حالة الانحطاط أو التقهقر أو الفساد، موضوع النقد.

لو كانت بيوتنا عامرة بالتقوى ومخافة الله، ومبنية على القيم والفضائل الإنجيلية، أكانت تُخَرَّج انتهازيين ووصوليين وضعفاء؟ لو كنّا نربي أولادنا على

الصدق والموضوعية ومعنى الحياة الحقّة، فهل كان للتفاهة والسطحية وأنانية مكان؟ "هل يجتنون من الشوك عنباً، أو من الحسك تيناً؟" (متى، ٧، ١٦).

أيّما ذهبت تسمع الانتقاد حول هذا وذاك من الأمور والأشخاص، ولعلّ معظمها صحيح. ولكن السؤال الأهمّ يجب أن يوجّه باتجاه البحث عن أسباب هذه الحالات، موضوع الانتقاد، ونحو التوصل إلى وضع جملة من الحلول للحدّ منها، وتقويم الاعوجاج الحاصل.

والأهمّ من هذا وذاك هو مطالبة الذات بمسؤوليتها عن حدوث الخلل، وعن السعي إلى تقويمه، في الوقت ذاته. فطالما أنّنا نضع اللوم على غيرنا، أيّاً يكن، سنبقى نرتع في ما نحن رافضون له ومتدمّرون منه.

طالب نفسك أولاً. ولا تستهن بموقعك، مهما كان صغيراً وغير ذي تأثير. لك دور في نشر ثقافة البناء، فعّله ولا تهتمّ بالنتيجة كثيراً. المهمّ أن تقوم بما هو في استطاعتك. فأتمّ بسببته وفاضلة أفضل بما لا يقاس من أمّ متعلّمة وتجهل الفضيلة. معلّم مدرسة مستقيم ومحبّ لتلاميذه يخلق جيلاً من الطلاب الفاعلين، الذين يحبّون الاستقامة بفضله. كاهن تقي ورسول يؤثّر في تغيير حياة الكثيرين. وعامل مهذب وخلوق يساهم في بناء الثقة بين أفراد المجتمع. ومثقف متواضع وصبور يفتح العقول المغمضة.

ما عندك إنّما هو موهبة أو أكثر منحك الله إياها، لتستثمرها وتزيدها، لا لتثرثر على هذا وذاك، وتبقى فارغاً وتافهاً.



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

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

To be read during the Feast of Thanksgiving
By Father Alexander Schememann

Everyone who is capable of thanksgiving is capable of salvation and eternal joy.

Thank you, O Lord, for having accepted this Eucharist, which is offered to the Holy Trinity – to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit – and which has filled our hearts with “joy, peace, and righteousness in the Holy Spirit”.

Thank you, O Lord, for having revealed Yourself unto us and for giving us a foretaste of Your Kingdom.

Thank you, O Lord, for having helped us to overcome all difficulties, tensions, passions, and temptations and for having restored peace, mutual love and joy in sharing the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you, O Lord, for the sufferings You bestow upon us, for they purify us from selfishness and remind us of “the one thing needed: Your eternal kingdom”.

Thank you, O Lord, for having given us this country where we are free to worship You.

Thank you O Lord, for this parish, where the Name of God is proclaimed.

Thank you, O Lord, for our families: husbands, wives and especially children, who teach us how to celebrate Your Holy Name in joy, movement and holy noise.

Thank you, O Lord, for everyone and everything. Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your works, and there are no words which are sufficient to celebrate your miracles.

Lord, it is good to be here! Amen.

Fr. Alexander offered this prayer in a sermon on Thanksgiving Day 1983. It was his last sermon. Two weeks later, he fell asleep in the Lord, after a long struggle with cancer. May his memory be eternal!

**The Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Redeemer wishes you a
Happy Thanksgiving!**

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: _____