



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

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
THE REDEEMER
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**V. REV. FR. SAMER YOUSSEF, D. MIN
REV. FR. THEODORE SAKELLAR, MTS**



DECEMBER 7, 2025

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
& TENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE**

**AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN; MARTYR ATHENODOROS OF MESOPOTAMIA;
VENERABLE GREGORY, FOUNDER OF GREGORIOU MONASTERY ON ATHOS**

الاحد السادس والعشرون بعد العنصرة والاحد العاشر من لوقا

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE ONE

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن الأول

إِنَّ الْحَجَرَ لَمَّا خُتِمَ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ، وَجَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ خَفِظَ مِنَ الْجُنْدِ، قُتِمَتْ فِي الْيَوْمِ الثَّالِثِ أَيْهَا الْمُخَلِّصُ،
مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الْحَيَاةَ. لِذَلِكَ قُوَّتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ، هَتَفُوا إِلَيْكَ يَا وَاهِبَ الْحَيَاةِ: الْمَجْدُ لِقِيَامَتِكَ أَيْهَا
الْمَسِيحُ، الْمَجْدُ لِمُلْكِكَ، الْمَجْدُ لِتَدْبِيرِكَ، يَا مُحِبَّ الْبَشَرِ وَحَدَّكَ.

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 بِاللْحِنِ السَّابِعِ

لَمَّا تَجَلَّيْتَ أَيْهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ فِي الْجَبَلِ، أَظْهَرْتَ مَجْدَكَ لِلتَّلَامِيذِ حَسَبَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا، فَأَشْرَقَ لَنَا نَحْنُ
الْخَطَاةُ نَوْرَكَ الْأَزَلِّيَّ، بِشَفَاعَاتِ الْوَدَّةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ، يَا مَانِحَ النُّورِ، الْمَجْدُ لَكَ.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to God the Word ineffably, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.

قنداق تَقْدِمَة المِيلاد بالحن الثالث

اليومَ الغدراء، تأتي إلى المغارة، لِتَلِدَ الْكَلِمَة الذي قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ، وَلِأَدَة لَا تُقَسَّرُ وَلَا يُنْطَقُ بِهَا، فَأَفْرَجِي أَيْتُهَا الْمَسْكُونَةُ إِذَا سَمِعْتَ، وَمَجِدِي مَعَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّعَاةِ، الذي سَيَظْهَرُ بِمَشِيئَتِهِ طِفْلاً جَدِيداً وَهُوَ إِلَهُنا الذي قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ.

THE EPISTLE

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (5:8-19)

Brethren, walk as children of light—for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true—and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.” Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

الرسالة

لَتَكُنْ يَا رَبُّ رَحْمَتَكَ عَلَيْنَا، إِبْتَهَجُوا أَتَيْهَا الصِّدِّيقُونَ بِالرَّبِّ.

فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى أهل أفسس. (5:8-19)

يا إخوة، أَسْلُكُوا كَأَوْلَادٍ لِلنُّورِ (فَإِنَّ ثَمَرَ الرُّوحِ هُوَ فِي كُلِّ صَلاَحٍ وَبِرٍّ وَحَقٍّ) مُخْتَبِرِينَ مَا هُوَ مَرْضِيٌّ لَدَى الرَّبِّ. وَلَا تَشْتَرِكُوا فِي أَعْمَالِ الظُّلْمَةِ غَيْرِ الثَّمَرَةِ بَلْ بِالْأُخْرَى وَبَخُوا عَلَيْهَا. فَإِنَّ الْأَفْعَالِ الَّتِي يَفْعَلُونَهَا سِرّاً يَفْبُحُ ذِكْرُهَا أَيْضاً. لَكِنَّ كُلَّ مَا يُؤَبِّخُ عَلَيْهِ يُعْلَنُ بِالنُّورِ. فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مَا يُعْلَنُ هُوَ نُورٌ. وَلِذَلِكَ يَقُولُ: اسْتَيْقِظْ أَيُّهَا النَّائِمُ وَقُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ فَيُضِيءُ لَكَ الْمَسِيحُ. فَانْظُرُوا إِذَنْ أَنْ تَسْلُكُوا بِحَذَرٍ لَا كَجُهْلَاءَ بَلْ كَحُكَمَاءَ، مُقْتَدِينَ الْوَقْتَ فَإِنَّ الْأَيَّامَ شَرِيرَةٌ. فَلِذَلِكَ لَا تَكُونُوا أَغْبِيَاءَ بَلْ افْهَمُوا مَا مَشِيئَةُ الرَّبِّ. وَلَا تَسْكُرُوا بِالْخَمْرِ الَّتِي فِيهَا الدَّعَاةُ بَلْ امْتَلَأُوا بِالرُّوحِ، مُكَلِّمِينَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً بِمَزَامِيرَ وَتَسَابِيحَ وَأَغَانِي رُوحِيَّةٍ مُرْتَمِينَ وَمُرْتَلِينَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ لِلرَّبِّ.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (13:10-17)

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrite! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" As Jesus said this, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by Him.

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لَوْقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ. (17-10:13)

فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ، كَانَ يَسُوعُ يَعْلَمُ فِي أَحَدِ الْمَجَامِعِ يَوْمَ السَّبْتِ، وَإِذَا بِامْرَأَةٍ بِهَا رُوحٌ مَرَضٍ مُنْذُ ثَمَانِي عَشْرَةَ سَنَةً، وَكَانَتْ مُنْحَنِيَةً لَا تَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ تَتَنَصَّبَ الْبَنَتُ. فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا يَسُوعُ، دَعَاهَا وَقَالَ لَهَا: إِنَّكَ مُطْلَقَةٌ مِنْ مَرَضِكَ. وَوَضَعَ يَدَيْهِ عَلَيْهَا، وَفِي الْحَالِ اسْتَقَامَتْ، وَمَجَّدَتِ اللَّهَ. فَأَجَابَ رَئِيسُ الْمَجْمَعِ، وَهُوَ مُعْتَاطٌ لِإِبْرَاءِ يَسُوعَ فِي السَّبْتِ، وَقَالَ لِلْجَمْعِ: هِيَ سِتَّةُ أَيَّامٍ يَنْبَغِي الْعَمَلُ فِيهَا، فَفِيهَا تَأْتُونَ وَتَسْتَشْفُونَ، لَا فِي يَوْمِ السَّبْتِ. فَأَجَابَ الرَّبُّ وَقَالَ: يَا مُرَائِي! أَلَيْسَ كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ يَحُلُّ نَوْرَهُ أَوْ حِمَارَهُ فِي السَّبْتِ مِنَ الْمَوَدِّ وَيَنْطَلِقُ بِهِ فَيَسْقِيهِ؟ وَهَذِهِ، وَهِيَ ابْنَةُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّتِي رَبَطَهَا الشَّيْطَانُ مُنْذُ ثَمَانِي عَشْرَةَ سَنَةً، أَمَا كَانَ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ تُطْلَقَ مِنْ هَذَا الرِّبَاطِ يَوْمَ السَّبْتِ؟ وَلَمَّا قَالَ هَذَا، خَزِيَ كُلُّ مَنْ كَانَ يَقَاومُهُ، وَفَرِحَ الْجَمْعُ بِجَمِيعِ الْأُمُورِ الْمَجِيدَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَصْدُرُ مِنْهُ.

TRISAGION PRAYER

40 days memorial service in memory of Elias Esber Youssef, offered by his wife Victoria Youssef, his sons: V. Rev. Fr. Samer Youssef (Kh. Julianna, Dimitry, Damian and Dominic), Amer, Eiad and his daughter Lina, and the Youssef 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: Fr. Samer, the Clergy and the parishioners for the good health of all of the Order of St. IGNATIUS members on the occasion of St. IGNATIUS month. David Aboujudom, Eddie Aboujudom, Salim Asfour, Wardeh Asfour, Hadi Barghash, Sana Eideh, Osama Elmasu, Fadi Hanani, Suad Kattuah, Johnny Khamis, Bassam Khoury, Joseph Louis, John Mogannam, James Newman, Henry Veizades, Sheila Veizades, Dania Amireh, Nancy Godfrey, Margaret Hanna, George Labban, Maha Elserougi, Irena Dibs, George Barghout, Paul Barghouth, Diana Khoury, Roula Haddad, Norma Hanani, Fayez Abboud, Jennifer Lutton. Kh. Julianna Youssef and their families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: John and Norma Mogannam for the good health of their son Anthony and his wife Adriana on the occasion of their Uncrowning, and the good health of the Mogannam and Abboud families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Hani and Nicole Bou Reslan for the good health of their daughter Capri on the occasion of her Churching, and the good health of their daughter Emma and the Bou Reslan family. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Sami and Ramza Haddad for the good health of their daughter Ruba on the occasion of her birthday (Dec 4) and the good health of their children and the Haddad and Sarkis families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: George and Ghazal Labban for the good health of their son Hanna on the occasion of his birthday (Dec 5), and the good health of their daughters; Merriam, Christina, Angelina and the Labban and Atieh families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Hani and Nicole Bou Reslan in loving memory of Issam Bou Reslan and Wedad Jadelrab. Memory Eternal!

Churching

Churching baby Girl, Capri. Her parents Hani and Nicole Bou Reslan and her sister Emma. Congratulations.

Uncrowning

Uncrowning the newlyweds Anthony and Adriana Mogannam. Congratulations.



COFFEE HOUR

Offered By: Kh. Julianna Youssef

Burbara offered by the Ladies Auxiliary on the occasion of St. Barbara Day

(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)

Christmas Eve Service December 24th.

MATINS at 6:00 PM and DIVINE LITURGY at 7:00 PM

St. Nicholas will come on the 24th Evening

After the Divine Liturgy

And pass out gifts to all the children...



December is the Order of St. IGNATIUS Month

In our Antiochian Archdiocese, the month of December each year is St. IGNATIUS of Antioch Month. During December, members of the Order of St. IGNATIUS will demonstrate their commitment to their parishes and to the Archdiocese by participating in the life of their church. This is done by taking on the responsibility each Sunday to usher, read the Epistle, take the collection, give a short Sermon about the Order as coordinated with the priest, and sponsor a charitable event.

Sermon: Kh. Julianna Youssef (Co-Chair for the Order of St. IGNATIUS of the Diocese)

Epistle: Arabic: George Labban

Epistle: English: Henry Veizades

DECORATING THE ALTAR

Thank you for your donation:

Fr. Samer & Kh. Julianna Youssef: For the good health of the Youssef & Neyman families. In memory of Elias Youssef and V. Rv. Fr. Nicholas Neyman.

Salem & Samia Aweiss: For the good health of the Aweiss family. In memory of Thurayah Aweiss and Zakieh Emsis.

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

John & Linda Salah: For the good health of the Salah family. In memory of Martha, George, Nuha and Essa Sackllah.

Osama & Hala Elmasu: For the good health of Elmasu, Kazaleh and Zuniga families. In memory of Bahiyeh, Hanna, Emile and Amal.

Horn family: For the good health of John, Mihaela and Florih. In memory of Alexahdru.

James & Gretchen Stroud: For the good health of the Stroud family. In memory of Bronnie and Annabella Stroud.

Ibtisam Kreitem: For the good health of Laila, Pierre, Samer, Sara, and Yasmin Kreitem. In memory of Issam Kreitem, Michael and Laila Halteh.

Hiyam Fasheh: For the good health of the Fasheh family. In memory of George Fasheh.

Diana Fasheh: For the good health of the Fasheh & Mukhar families. In memory of Suleiman Fasheh.

Yvonne Hanhan: For the good health of her daughters and their families. In memory of Simon Hanhan.

Gus & Cristina Anagnos: For the good health of the Anagnos family. In memory of Chris Skoby, Helen Skoby, Louie Skoby and George Anagnos.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD

Thank you for your donation:

Jennifer & Chip Lutton & family. Salem & Samia Aweiss. John & Linda Salah & family. Osama & Hala Elmasu. James & Gretchen Stroud. Samer & Rana Kassis. Fr. Samer & Kh. Julianna Youssef.

Happy St. Barbara Feast, Dec 4

On this holy day we cook wheat (Burbara) as a tradition in honor of St. Barbara, who was believed to witness a miracle while feeling prosecution. She ran through freshly planted wheat fields, which grew instantly to cover her path. This miracle is reacted symbolically today by planting wheat seeds (or chick peas, barley, grains, beans, lentils, etc.) in cotton wool on Saint Barbara's

feast day. The seeds germinate and grow up to around 6 inches in time for Christmas, when the shoots are used to decorate the nativity scene usually placed below the Christmas tree.

Thank you to all the ladies who sign up to bring Burbara to share with everyone.

General Parish Meeting Jan 25, 2026

The General Meeting of our Parish will be taking place on the third Sunday After the Feast of Theophany, January 25th after the Divine Liturgy.

The appointed nominating Committee Chaired by Salim Asfour and Osama Elmasu, will prepare the names to run on the Parish Council for 2026.

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.

Orthodoxy 101 Class

This week and next: We explore the Church and her worship. Join us as we learn, discuss, and grow together in understanding the heart of Orthodox worship.



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

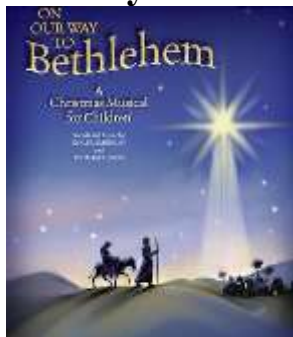
Website: <http://www.orthodoxredeemer.org/schoolregistration>

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.

"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*
- **SOYO Event:** *White Elephant Potluck, December 12th @ 6:00pm.*
- **Christmas Get Together:** *December 13th, 4:00pm – 8:00pm*
- **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 @ 7:00pm*

Male and Female, He Created Them, in Complementarity

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

It has long been repeated in popular Christian and secular discourse that Christianity is a “feminine religion,” evidenced by the predominance of women over men in Orthodox worship gatherings. This is not true everywhere. Now, some accuse Orthodoxy of being “masculine” simply because they have observed an increase in young men joining the Church. Yet this phenomenon does not apply to all parishes, and therefore this claim is not accurate.

Both assumptions rely on local realities that differ from one country to another, and from one historical circumstance to the next. In countries ruled by totalitarian (communist) regimes, for example, the elderly dominated the attendance of the few churches that remained open. Is it reasonable to rely on that observation alone to claim that Christianity is a religion “for the old”?

Priests in our Archdiocese report that the influx into Orthodox Christianity is not limited to young men, as some media reports have suggested, nor is it accurate to portray this phenomenon as “masculine.” Today’s pastoral reality clearly shows that families are coming to the faith at a rate equal to, if not greater than, that of single men. These families include fathers, mothers,

and children of all ages, all of whom find in Orthodoxy a deep spiritual environment, an integrated way of life, and a peace they desire to offer to their children.

These families also exhibit a mature awareness of complementarity between man and woman — not conflict, not competition. There are men who love their wives to the point of self-sacrifice and work together with them in managing their family, financial, spiritual, and social life with joy and gratitude. In turn, women find in the Orthodox Church a place where they can fulfill their spiritual and human femininity in peace, for they are treated with love, respect, and honor — and because the husband is commanded to love his wife “as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her” (Eph. 5:25).

And if some young men today seem to find in the Church a space to fulfill their authentic masculinity, women likewise find in it a space to fulfill their authentic femininity. The Church does not view man and woman in terms of dominance or control, but in terms of complementarity: “There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). Thus, interpreting the phenomenon solely through the lenses of masculine or feminine lacks accuracy and does not reflect the pastoral reality we observe in our ministry. For all these reasons, this phenomenon must be studied with true professional depth rather than addressed through superficial journalistic impressions or even cultural presuppositions.

The Orthodox Church’s teaching, rooted in Scripture, says: “You know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3), and, “For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church.” (Eph. 5:23) Orthodox teaching has always insisted on reading these passages in their fullness, not in isolation. For the same text continues: “Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her... He who loves his wife loves himself” (Eph. 5:25, 28). Orthodox Christians have long joked that “the man may be the head, but the woman is the neck—and she turns him however she wishes!”

Truly, many newly converted men and women find a peaceful life in the embrace of the Orthodox Church because Orthodox tradition preserves the dignity of both roles and offers a faithful interpretation of these texts. The man serves his wife and children with devotion, sensing that his masculinity demands this of him, while respecting his responsibility as the head of the household and his place as father and husband. The woman, in turn, finds inner peace knowing she is loved, respected, and supported by her husband. This is what we observe as pastors among our spiritual children in general.

Young people who have grown up amid comfort, softness, and an inability to face life’s hardships find in the Orthodox Church a spiritual fullness unlike what they experience in society. Thus, they are drawn to frequent fasting, long prayers, prostrations, confession, and living the Gospel commandments as they are — without humanistic reinterpretation. Most

importantly, both men and women find in the Church a spiritual fatherhood that society has come to lack. Some statistics even say that since the 1980s more than 30% of children grow up without a father.

There is a masculine psychology and a feminine psychology that many ignore today. Our pastoral experience teaches that a man seeks in his wife the tenderness of the mother he misses, and a woman seeks in her husband the reassurance of the father she misses. Does not the man find comfort laying his head in his wife's lap so she may stroke his hair when he is tired and anxious? And does not the woman find comfort laying her head on her husband's chest, stroking her when she is weary and troubled? I am not a psychologist, nor a psychiatrist, but a pastor of souls, and I share what I have witnessed among many married couples, and in my long experience as a spiritual father.

There is a complementarity between man and woman that the Orthodox Church proclaims. And it teaches that this complementarity requires a life of spiritual struggle and ascetic discipline, so that both may overcome the passions that push men to dominate women, and women to flatter or deceive men in self-protection. One does not gain his or her rights by imitating the other or by suppressing his or her own personality, but by realizing his or her own true self. A man does not gain his freedom by dominating a woman, nor by feminizing himself, nor by abandoning his masculinity. A woman does not gain her freedom by becoming a second man, nor by abandoning her femininity. Without the struggle to purify and elevate the self, through the cooperation of both man and woman, the world will continue to witness injustice here and confusion of roles there.

Even if the majority of our newcomers were, in fact, men, this should not cause us dismay; rather, we should remember that the Holy Spirit *bloweth where it will* (John 3:8). Perhaps He brings more women to this parish, more men to another, more elderly to yet another still. What concern is this of ours? Should not we rather choose to welcome them warmly, rejoicing with our Father in Heaven for them? Should not we work diligently to care for those He has entrusted to us in every community?

When we understand this complementarity in souls striving for spiritual perfection, we understand why young people today in particular are coming to the Orthodox Church. For in Orthodoxy there is neither masculinity nor femininity, but a striving for complementarity, through the purification of the self from its passions.

I hope some qualified social scientists will undertake a serious, professional, and in-depth study of this phenomenon. Their research would benefit current and future generations—as well as the entire Church.

ذَكَرًا وَأُنْثَى خَلَقَهُمْ، فِي تَكَامُلٍ مُتَبَادِلٍ بقلم المتروبوليت سابا (اسبير)

لظالما ذُكر في الأدبيات الشعبية المسيحية والدينيوية أَنَّ المسيحية ديانة أنثوية، بدليل تفوق عدد الإناث على عدد الذكور في اجتماعات العبادة الأرثوذكسية. هذا ليس صحيحاً في كل مكان. ثقة من يتهم الأرثوذكسية بالذكورية لمجرد ملاحظة تزايد عدد الذكور الشباب الملتحقين بها جديداً. مع العلم أن هذه الظاهرة لا تصحّ على جميع الرعايا، وتالياً فهي معلومة غير دقيقة.

تستند المقولتان إلى واقع محلي يختلف من بلد إلى آخر، ومن ظرف تاريخي إلى آخر. ففي البلدان التي حكمتها الأنظمة الشمولية (الشيوعية) كان حضور الكبار في السن هو الطاغى في الكنائس المتبقية مفتوحة، فهل يكفي الاستناد إلى هذه الظاهرة للقول بأن المسيحية ديانة العجائز؟

المُلاحظ رعوياً من قبل الكهنة، أقلّه في أبرشيتنا، أَنَّ الإقبال على المسيحية الأرثوذكسية لا يقتصر— على الشبيبة الذكور كما رُوّجت بعض التقارير الصحافية، ولا يصحّ اختزال هذه الظاهرة بوصفها "ذكورية." فالواقع الرعوي اليوم يُظهر بوضوح أَنَّ العائلات — وليس الأفراد وحدهم — تُقبل إلى الإيمان بوتيرة تُعادل على الأقل إقبال الرجال العزّاب إن لم تفقه. وتضمّ هذه العائلات آباءً وأمّهاتٍ وأطفالاً من مختلف الأعمار، يجدون جميعاً في الأرثوذكسية بيئة روحية عميقة، ونظاماً حياتياً متكاملًا، وطمأنينة يرغبون في تقديمها لأولادهم.

كما يُلاحظ في هذه العائلات وعيٌ ناضجٌ لتكامل الأدوار بين الرجل والمرأة، لا صراعٌ بينها ولا تنافس. فهناك رجالٌ يحبّون زوجاتهم حتى حدود التفاني، ويتعاونون معهم في إدارة شؤون الحياة العائلية والمادية والروحية والاجتماعية بفرح وامتنان. وفي المقابل، تجد النساء في الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية المكان الذي تُحقّق فيه أنوثتها الروحية والإنسانية بسلام، لأنها تُعامل بحبة واحترام وتقدير، ولأن الرجل يُطالب بأن يحب امرأته "كما أحبّ المسيح الكنيسة وضخّى بنفسه من أجلها" (أف ٥:٢٥).

وإذا بدا أن بعض الشبان يجدون في الكنيسة اليوم مجالاً لتحقيق رجولتهم الأصلية، فإن النساء أيضًا يجدن فيها مجالاً لتحقيق أنوثتهن الأصلية. فالكنيسة لا تنظر إلى الرجل والمرأة بمنطق الغلبة أو السيطرة، بل بمنطق التكامل: "لا ذَكَرٌ ولا أنْثى، لأنكم جميعًا واحدٌ في المسيح يسوع" (غلاطية ٣: ٢٨) لذلك، فإن تفسير الظاهرة على أساس ذكوري أو نسوي فقط يفتقر إلى الدقة، ولا يعكس الواقع الرعوي كما نعيشه نحن في الخدمة. ولهذا كله، فإن الحاجة ماسة إلى دراسة هذه الظاهرة بعمق اختصاصي، بدل الاكتفاء بانطباعات صحافية سطحية.

إن تعليم الكنيسة الأرثوذكسي المستند إلى الكتاب المقدس القائل: "تعرفون أن المسيح رأس الرجل، والرجل رأس المرأة، والله رأس المسيح" (١ كو ٣: ١١)، و "لأن الرجل رأس المرأة كما أن المسيح رأس الكنيسة" (أف ٥: ٢٣). لطالما استند (التعليم الأرثوذكسي) إلى فهم النص بكيته لا باجتراء جمل منه. فالنص نفسه يتابع ليقول "أيها الرجال أحبوا نساءكم مثلما أحب المسيح الكنيسة وضحي بنفسه من أجلها... من أحب امرأته أحب نفسه" (أف ٥: ٢٥، ٢٨). ولطالما تنذر الأرثوذكس بتفسير عبارة "الرجل رأس المرأة"، قائلين: بأن الرجل هو الرأس والمرأة هي رقبته التي تديره كيفما تشاء!

في الحقيقة يجد الكثير من الرجال والنساء المهتمين عيشة سلامية في حضن الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية، بسبب حفاظ التقليد الأرثوذكسي على كل من دور الرجل والمرأة، وتفسير أمين لهذه النصوص. فتجد الرجل يتفانى في خدمة امرأته وأولاده شاعراً بأن رجولته تفرض ذلك، محترم كونه رب البيت (الرأس)، وله مكانته كأب وزوج. بينما تجد المرأة اطمئناناً وسلاماً داخلياً كونها محبوبة ومحترمة ومسندة من قبل زوجها. هذا ما نلاحظه كراحة في أبنائنا بعامة.

فالشبيبة الطالعة من رخاوة العيش، وعدم القدرة على مواجهة مشاق الحياة، ترى في الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية امتلاءً روحياً، يختلف عما تراه في مجتمعاتها. لذا تراها تُقبل على الأصوام الكثيرة، والصلوات الطويلة، والسجود والاعتراف وتطبيق وصايا الإنجيل كما هي، دونما تفسير فذليكي إنسانوي لها. والأهم من ذلك كله أنهم، ذكوراً وإناثاً، يرون أبوةً بات مجتمعاتهم يفقدونها، لا بل حتى أن بعض الإحصاءات تقول بعدم وجود الأب عند ما يزيد عن ٣٠٪ من الأولاد، وذلك من بعد ثمانينيات القرن الماضي.

ثقة سيكولوجية رجولية وأخرى أنثوية يغفلها كثيرون اليوم. فخبرتنا كرامة تفيد بأن كل رجل يلتمس في زوجته حنان أمه التي يفقدها، وكل امرأة تلتمس في زوجها طمأنينة الأب الذي تفتقده. ألا يرتاح الرجل إلى أن يضع رأسه في حضن زوجته كي تعبث بشعره، عندما يكون تعباً وقلقاً؟ والمرأة بدورها ألا ترتاح إلى أن تضع رأسها على صدر زوجها وتعبث به عندما تكون متعبة وقلقة. أنا لست عالم نفس ولا طبيباً نفسياً، بل راعي نفوس، وأخبركم بما اختبرته من الأزواج المختلفين، وممارستي لدوري كأب اعتراف لسنين طويلة.

ثقة تكامل بين الرجل والمرأة تنادي به الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية. كما تؤمن بأن هذا التكامل يحتاج إلى حياة جهاد روحي ونسكي بغية غلبة الأهواء التي تدفع الرجل إلى التسيد على المرأة، كما تدفع المرأة إلى تملق الرجل وخداعه اتقاء لشره. لا يأخذ الإنسان حقوقه عندما يقلد الآخر أو عندما يجمع شخصيته الذاتية، بل عندما يحقق ذاته وشخصيته. لا يحقق الرجل حريته إذا تسلط على المرأة، ولا إذا تأنث، ولا إذا تنازل عن رجولته. ولا تحقق المرأة حريتها إذا صارت رجلاً آخر، ولا إذا تنازلت عن أنوثتها. من دون النضال في سبيل تنقية الذات وتطهيرها وسقوها، بتعاون الرجل والمرأة، سيبقى العالم يشهد ظلاماً هنا وخطأً للأدوار هناك.

يجب ألا نفزع في ما إذا صح القول أن أكثرية القادمين الجدد هم من الرجال، بالأحرى علينا أن نتذكر أن "الروح يهب حيث يشاء" (يو ٣: ٨). قد يرسل نساء أكثر إلى رعية، ورجالاً أكثر إلى رعية ثانية ومتقدمين في السن إلى الثالثة. دورنا ككنيسة أن نرحب بهم بحرارة، ونرعاهم بجد، لأنهم وثقوا بنا في أية رعية كانوا.

متى فهمنا هذا التكامل في النفوس الساعية إلى الكمال روحياً، نفهم لماذا يُقبل الشباب اليوم بالذات إلى الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية. حيث لا ذكورية ولا أنثوية في الأرثوذكسية، بل سعي إلى تحقيق التكامل عبر تحقيق الذات بتنقيتها من أهوائها.

أتمنى أن يبادر بعض الإخصائيين الاجتماعيين إلى دراسة هذه الظاهرة باختصاصية وحرفية وتعمق. ستفيد دراساتهم الأجيال الحالية واللاحقة، كما الكنائس كلها.



An Invitation

"Christianity is not a matter of persuading people of particular ideas, but of inviting them to share in the greatness of Christ. So pray that I may never fall into the trap of impressing people with clever speech, but instead I may learn to speak with humility, desiring only to impress people with Christ himself."

- Saint Ignatius of Antioch

The Ribbon & The Cross Is An Invitation To Become Part Of A Ministry

An Invitation Not Recognition

When you become part of the Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, you become part of a ministry. The Order is not a club that you join. It is not a secular status symbol for recognition. The Cross and the Ribbon that Order supporters wear is an invitation to become part of a ministry. It serves as an invitation to share with one another in the greatness of Christ by giving in a manner that is unconditional and quiet. Supporting the Order's projects, Archdiocese Departments and numerous programs as one group, with Christ in our minds and hearts, should be how we *invite* the world to become part the Order's ministry.

Initiate the Questions of What? & How?

When those supporting the Order wear their ribbon and cross, it is meant to initiate others to inquire about the Order and how they can help strengthen its ministry. When people see the red ribbon and Cross that we wear, it helps begin the conversation to share what the Order does and provide the initial welcome to help expand its ministry. It provides an opportunity to ask, "What does the Order do and how can I help?"

The Order Provides A Lesson In Giving

When you give to the Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, you are giving in a way we are all called to give ... unconditionally. Your gift is not individually recognized. You are not able to designate your gift to a specific need you select. You are giving without recognition, without conditions, without direct gratitude of the Order's recipients. This is the manner in which a "true gift" is made. A gift made in the way Christ directs us.

The Order Teaches Us How To Give

... the Order is teaching us how to share, the Order is teaching us how to give, the Order is teaching us how to sacrifice, and how to reach out for Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike. This is the miracle of The Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch."

- His Eminence Metropolitan Philip of Thrice blessed memory, Founder of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch



The Order of
Saint Ignatius
of Antioch

Let no man's place, or dignity, or riches, puff him up; and let no man's low condition or poverty abase him. For the chief points are faith towards God, hope towards Christ, the enjoyment of those good things for which we look, and love towards God and our neighbor.

- Saint Ignatius of Antioch

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Christmas Get-Together Dinner and Good Times

Celebrate the love and giving with the Birth of Jesus

Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 4:00 PM

380 Magdalena Avenue, Los Altos Hills, CA, 94024

***** Open to All *****

Tickets are \$50 for attendees 18 years and older.

Admission is free for Sunday School Students and SOYO Members.

Seats are limited to a maximum of 85 attendees.

Please register early, no later than Thursday Dec 11, to secure your seat(s)

Please text Roula Haddad cellphone at 650-861-1101
Or email the church office at office@orthodoxredeemer.org



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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: _____