

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 14, 2025

SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS (ANCESTORS) OF CHRIST

MARTYRS THYRSOS, LEUKIOS AND KALLINIKOS OF APOLLONIA;
MARTYRS PHILEMON, APOLLONIOS, HYPATIOS AND ARRIANOS OF
ALEXANDRIA

أحد الآباء الأجداد القديسين

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE TWO

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hades with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن الثاني

عِنْدَمَا انْحَدَرْتَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ، أَيُّهَا الْحَيَاةُ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ، حِينَئِذٍ أَمَتَّ الْجَحِيمَ بِبَرَقِ لَاهُوتِكَ. وَعِنْدَمَا أَقَمْتَ الْأَمْوَاتَ مِنْ تَحْتِ الثَّرَى، صَرَخَ نَحْوِكَ جَمِيعُ الْقُوَاتِ السَّمَاوِيِّينَ: أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ، مُعْطِي الْحَيَاةِ الْمَجْدُ لَكَ.

APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFATHERS IN TONE TWO

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and it was she who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

أبوليتيكيون الأجداد باللحن الثاني

لَقَدْ زَكَّيْتَ بِالْإِيمَانِ الْآبَاءَ الْقَدَمَاءَ، وَبِهِمْ سَبَقْتَ فَحَطَبْتَ الْبَيْعَةَ الَّتِي مِنَ الْأُمَّمِ، فَالْقَدِيسُونَ بِالْمَجْدِ يَفْتَخِرُونَ، إِذْ مِنْ زَرْعِهِمْ أُيْنَعَتْ ثَمَرَةٌ حَسِبِيَّةٌ، وَهِيَ الَّتِي وَلَدْتِكَ بِغَيْرِ زَرْعٍ. فَبِتَضَرُّعِهِمْ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ ارْحَمْنَا.

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 تجلّى ربنا يسوع المسيح بالحن السابع

لَمَّا تَجَلَّيْتَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ فِي الْجَبَلِ، أَظْهَرْتَ مَجْدَكَ لِلتَّلَامِيذِ حَسْبَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا، فَأَشْرَقَ لَنَا نَحْنُ
الْحَطَاةُ نورك الأزلّي، بِشَفَاعَاتِ وَالِدَةِ الْإِلَهُ، 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.

فنداق تقدمة الميلاد بالحن الثالث

اليوم العذراء، تأتي إلى المغارة، لتلد الكلمة الذي قبل الدهور، ولادة لا تُفسر ولا يُنطق بها، فأفرجني
أيئها المسكونة إذا سمعت، ومجدي مع الملائكة والرعاة، الذي سيظهر بمشيئته طفلاً جديداً وهو إلها
الذي قبل الدهور.

THE EPISTLE

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.

For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians. (3:4-11)

Brethren, when Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.

In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

الرسالة

مُبَارَكٌ أَنْتَ يَا رَبُّ إِلَهَ آبَائِنَا .

لَأَنَّكَ عَدَلٌ فِي كُلِّ مَا صَنَعْتَ بِنَا .

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى كُولُوسَي . (3:4-11)

يا إخوة، متى ظهرَ المسيحُ الذي هُوَ حَيَاتِنَا، فَأَنْتُمْ أَيْضاً تُظْهِرُونَ حَيَاتِكُمْ مَعَهُ فِي الْمَجْدِ . فَأَمِيتُوا أَعْضَاءَكُمْ الَّتِي عَلَى الْأَرْضِ: الرِّبَى، وَالنَّجَاسَةَ، وَالْهَوَى، وَالشَّهْوَةَ الرَّدِيَّةَ، وَالطَّمَعِ الَّذِي هُوَ عِبَادَةُ وَثَنٍ . لِأَنَّهُ لِأَجْلِ هَذِهِ يَأْتِي غَضَبُ اللَّهِ عَلَى أَبْنَاءِ الْعِصْيَانِ . وَفِي هَذِهِ أَنْتُمْ أَيْضاً سَلَكْتُمْ حِيناً إِذْ كُنْتُمْ عَائِشِينَ فِيهَا . أَمَّا الْآنَ، فَأَنْتُمْ أَيْضاً اطَّرَحُوا الْكُلَّ: الْغَضَبَ، وَالسَّخَطَ، وَالخُبْثَ، وَالنَّجْدِيفَ، وَالْكَلامَ الْقَبِيحَ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِكُمْ . وَلَا يُكْذِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً، بَلِ اخْلَعُوا الْإِنْسَانَ الْعَتِيقَ مَعَ أَعْمَالِهِ . وَالْبَسُوا الْإِنْسَانَ الْجَدِيدَ الَّذِي يَتَجَدَّدُ لِلْمَعْرِفَةِ عَلَى صُورَةِ خَالِقِهِ . حَيْثُ لَيْسَ يُونَانِيٌّ وَلَا يَهُودِيٌّ، لَا خِتَانٌ وَلَا قَلْفٌ، لَا بَرَبْرِيٌّ وَلَا اسْكِيثِيٌّ، لَا عَبْدٌ وَلَا حُرٌّ، بَلِ الْمَسِيحُ هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَفِي الْجَمِيعِ .

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

الإنجيل

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لَوْقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّمْذِيذِ الطَّاهِرِ. (24-16:14)

قَالَ الرَّبُّ هَذَا الْمَثَلُ: إِنْسَانٌ صَنَعَ عَشَاءً عَظِيماً وَدَعَا كَثِيرِينَ. فَأُرْسِلَ عَبْدُهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعَشَاءِ يَقُولُ
لِلْمَدْعُوعِينَ: تَعَالَوْا فَإِنَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قَدْ أُعِدَّ. فَطَفِقَ كُلُّهُمْ وَاحِدًا وَاحِدًا يَسْتَعْفُونَ. فَقَالَ لَهُ الْأَوَّلُ: قَدْ اشْتَرَيْتُ
حَقْلًا، وَلَا بَدْ لِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَأَنْظَرَهُ، فَاسْأَلْكَ أَنْ تَعْفِيَنِي. وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: قَدْ اشْتَرَيْتُ خَمْسَةَ فِدَادِينَ بَقَرٍ وَأَنَا
مَاضٍ لِأَجْرَبَهَا، فَاسْأَلْكَ أَنْ تَعْفِيَنِي. وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: قَدْ تَزَوَّجْتُ امْرَأَةً، فَلِذَلِكَ لَا أَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ أَجِيءَ. فَأَتَى
العَبْدُ وَأَخْبَرَ سَيِّدَهُ بِذَلِكَ. فَحِينِيذٍ، غَضِبَ رَبُّ الْبَيْتِ، وَقَالَ لِعَبْدِهِ: أُخْرَجْ سَرِيعاً إِلَى شَوَارِعِ الْمَدِينَةِ
وَأَرْقِطْهَا وَأَدْخِلِ الْمَسَاكِينَ وَالْجُدَّعَ وَالْعُمْيَانَ وَالْعُرْجَ إِلَى هَهُنَا. فَقَالَ الْعَبْدُ: يَا سَيِّدُ، قَدْ قُضِيَ مَا أَمَرْتَ
بِهِ، وَيَبْقَى أَيْضاً مَحَلٌّ. فَقَالَ السَيِّدُ لِلْعَبْدِ: أُخْرَجْ إِلَى الطَّرِيقِ وَالْأَسْجِجَةِ وَاصْطَرِّزْهُمْ إِلَى الدُّخُولِ حَتَّى
يَمْتَلَأَ بَيْتِي. فَإِنِّي أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَا يَذُوقُ عَشَائِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاكَ الرِّجَالِ الْمَدْعُوعِينَ. لِأَنَّ الْمَدْعُوعِينَ
كَثِيرُونَ وَالْمُخْتَارِينَ قَلِيلُونَ.



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: Fr. Samer, the Clergy and all parishioners for the good health of the choir director Nancy Godfrey, the head chanter Sami Haddad, Joseph Stroud and the entire choir and chanters. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Nawal Jaber for the good health of the Jaber family. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Salem and Samia Aweiss for the good health of their daughter Arwa on the occasion of her birthday (Dec 9) and the good health of their daughter Rasha and the Aweiss family. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Hanna and Rania Haddad for the good health of their daughter Roula on the occasion of her birthday (Dec 9) and the good health of their children Rami, Rabih, Rita and the Haddad family. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Amal Habib for the good health of her husband Joe on the occasion of his birthday (Dec 11) and the good health of their son Fadi on the occasion of his birthday (Dec 10), and the good health of Kate, Sean, Ramsey, Jenn, Isabella and Yousif Habib. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: George and Jeanette Omran on the occasion of their 64th wedding anniversary (Dec 10) and George's 89th birthday (Dec 14) and the good health of the Omran family. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Nawal Jaber in memory of her beloved sister Salwa Kashou, her nephew James Jaber, her parents; Maria and Said Jaber, and her beloved husband Nicola Jaber on the occasion of his heavenly birthday. Memory Eternal!

OFFERED BY: Fr. Samer and Kh. Julianna Youssef and Neyman family in memory of Arch Priest Nicholas Neyman (4 years memorial). Memory Eternal!



COFFEE HOUR

Offered By: Nawal jaber

(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: Bassam Khoury

Epistle: Arabic: Norma Hanani

Epistle: English: Sheila Veizades

St. Ignatius Month

As part of our tradition, during the Month of St. Ignatius, the members graciously host the Coffee Hour.

We kindly ask all members to bring an item on **Sunday, December 28th**, to help us celebrate the month and warmly greet all our parishioners.

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.

Mitch & Maria Segal: For the good health of the Segal, McCrea and Snowden families. In memory of Andrew Segal.

Nuha Naser: For the good health of Cynthia, Randa & Ronnie, Lora and their families. In memory of John, Bolus and Nabiha.

Peter & Maria Jammal: For the good health of Peter and Maria Jammal and family. In memory of Mansour, Hanne, Laila and Tony Jammal.

Rima & Michel Gannage: For the good health of the Gannage and Smine families. In memory of Hind, Wadad, Edouard and Randa.

Roula Haddad: For the good health of Roula's siblings and their families. In memory of Bahij and Afaf Haddad.

Johnny & Juliana Khamis: For the good health of all the people who are suffering in Palestine..

George & Jeanette Omran: For the good health of George, Jeanette, Desiree and Hend Omran. In memory of George Jr. Omran, Dib & Arifeh Totah, Saleem & Fareedeh Totah, Showki Jadallah, Elias Botto, Audi Dudum, Kamel Totah and Bruce Haste.

Nawal Jaber: For the good health of the Jaber family. In memory of Salwa Kahou, James, Nicola, Maria and Said Jaber.

Marwan & Mona Awad: For the good health of the Awad and Eid families.

Nicolas & Sonia Azar: For the good health of the Azar, Mansour, Halaby and Baillou families. In memory of Jameel, Ssayha, Basil, Valery, Mike and Johnny.

Dania & Jonathan Baker: For the good health of the Amireh, Rizkallah, Baker, Mitri, Hina and Saba families. In memory of Mahfouz Amireh and Shyla Baker.

Hanna & Suad Eideh: For the good health of the Eideh, Khoury and Hanhan families. In memory of Imad Eideh.

George & Rowida Barghouth: For the good health of the Barghouth, Mansour and Jurac families.

Jad & Elaine Bateh: For the good health of the Bateh family. In memory of Bob, John, Nadia and Issa Bateh.

George & Adele Kreitem: For the good health of the kreitem, Sakhel, Smith, Sheils and ElHihi families. In memory of Tina, Andoni and Virginia Kreitem, Michael and Margaret Sakhel.

Reyad & Eva Katwan: For the good health of Reyad, Eva, Erica, Mousa, Rawan, Michael, Janelle, Zayn, Milan and Amira.

Richard & Nancy Godfrey: For the good health of the Godfrey, Bitar, and Sharkey families, the Redeemer Choir, the sick, suffering, and unhoused everywhere. In memory of Nicholas and Nelly Bitar, Virginia, and Emily.

Abdallah & Hala Saah: For the good health of the Saah and Mitri families.

Henry & Sheila Veizades: For the good health of Henry, Sheila, Gregory, Michael, Marge, the Veizades and Hanna families. In memory of Taft, Harrisis, Tancho, Tamara, Iskandar, Antonio, Tamra, Louis, Grace, Steliani, Nicholas and Ioanis.

Nayla Sleiman: For the good health of the Sleiman and Kawar families. In memory of Wajih Sleiman.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD

Thank you for your donation:

David & Hala Aboujudom. Marwan & Mona Awad. Ibrahim & Nadia Akra. Salem & Samia Aweiss. Nicolas & Sonia Azar. George & Rowida Barghouth. Jonathan & Dania Baker. Jad & Elaine Bateh. Richard & Annette Eid. Hanna, Suad & Sana Eideh. Osama & Hala Elmasu. Diana Fasheh. Hiyam Fasheh. Maher & Dima Fasheh. Michel & Rima Gannage. Stephen & Aisha Gillett. Richard & Nancy Godfrey. Roula Haddad. Yvonne Hanhan. Marge Hanna. Nawal Jaber. Peter & Maria Jammal. Johnny & Juliana Khamis. Reyad & Eva Katwan. Bassam & Dima Khoury. Ibtisam, Laila & Pierre Kreitem. George & Adele Kreitem. George & Ghazal Labban. Joseph & Najah Luois. Chip & Jennifer Lutton. John & Norma Mogannam. Nuha Naser. George & Jeanette Omran. Abdallah & Hala Saah. John & Linda Salah. Mitchell & Maria Segal. Nayla Sleiman. Henry & Sheila Veizades. Fr. Samer & Kh. Julianna Youssef

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; Salim Asfour and Osama Elmasu, Bassam Khoury, Linda Salah and Dania Baker, will prepare the Names to run on the Parish Council for 2026.

There will meeting after the Divine Liturgy this Sunday, Dec 14th.

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.



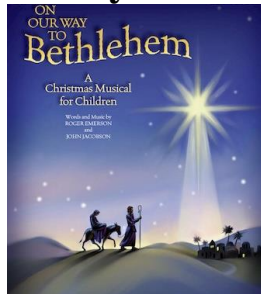
Sunday School Registration is now open. Please register your children ASAP. Registration forms are available at the church hall or on church Website: <http://www.orthodoxredeemer.org/schoolregistration>

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.*
- **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*
- **Blessing the Holy Water:** *January 5, 2026, Festal Orthos @6:00pm and Divine Liturgy @7:00pm for the feast of Theophany and blessing of the Holy water.*
- **General Parish Meeting:** *January 25, 2026.*

On Marital Relations

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

In 2019, His Beatitude Patriarch John X and the Holy Synod of Antioch released an important pastoral letter entitled [Family, the Joy of Life](#). This important letter was blessed, authorized and published by the Patriarch and Holy Synod and proclaims the teaching of our Orthodox Faith on family life. As such, it is a great help to all Orthodox faithful to understand the teaching of the Holy Church with regards to family life and so many of the issues that we face in the world today.

There is much confusion in contemporary culture about sexuality, marriage, and parenthood. The most basic assumptions of morality and religion about the relationship between man and woman are being called into question severely. In order for Orthodox Christians to live faithfully in today's context, we must remember how the Lord often used the wedding feast as a sign of the heavenly kingdom (e.g., Matt. 22:1-14) and also turned water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11). As St. Paul taught, the relationship between husband and wife is a sign of the relationship between Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:21-33). Marriage is so spiritually profound that the consummation of the heavenly kingdom is described as the wedding feast of the Lamb in St. John's Apocalypse (Rev. 19:6-9).

The use of such marital imagery is not accidental, for the original "one flesh" union of man and woman in Paradise was shattered by their disobedience as a paradigmatic sign of the fall. The narratives of the Old Testament, the pastoral challenges addressed by St. Paul, and common human experience to this day all bear witness to the tragic brokenness of this relationship. As the New Adam, the Lord made possible the healing of this troubled union at the request of the Theotokos, the New Eve, at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. With His blessing, marriage has been restored as a path for man and woman to return to Paradise and as a sign of the salvation of the world.

In the Orthodox wedding service, the bride and groom are crowned in the Name of the Holy Trinity. Their union is not merely a legal contract or social institution, but a vocation to grow in

communion with Christ in every aspect of their common life. Joined together as “one flesh” in the Body of Christ, they are called to the martyrdom of dying to the slavery of their passions through their sacrificial, faithful love for one another. The desires of their hearts are purified as they learn to love and serve Christ through and in one another. The many petitions for the blessing of children in the marriage ceremony reflect the expansive nature of the love of God in which they participate as embodied persons. The opportunities for healing from the passions through the ascetical struggles of submitting to one another, caring for their children, putting the interests of the family before their own, and conveying the hospitable mercy of the Lord to their neighbors are virtually endless. As the pastoral letter of our Antiochian Patriarchate *Family, the Joy of Life* states, “Conjugal love is not exclusively expressed in sexual relations, but in everyday mutual love and respect and self-giving that touches upon every aspect of life, bestowing upon it its glorious splendor” (paragraph 33). St. John Chrysostom taught that husbands and wives who respond faithfully to the opportunities for growth in holiness through marriage may attain a level of “perfection [that] will rival the holiest of monks” (Homily 20¹).

As implied by the petitions for childbearing in the marriage service, Orthodoxy does not teach that sexual marital intimacy is in any way sinful. Neither does the Church teach that intercourse in matrimony is merely tolerated for the sake of conceiving children, as does the Augustinian tradition of western Christianity. Nowhere in the New Testament does one find a denigration of sex in marriage or the view that it requires justification through procreation. St. Paul does warn, however, against excessive abstinence from marital relations: “Do not deprive each other, except by mutual consent and for a time, so you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again, so that Satan will not tempt you through your lack of self-control” (1 Cor. 7:5).

The discipline of marital fasting in Orthodoxy should be embraced freely by mutual agreement between the spouses in light of their current state of spiritual maturity, not as a matter of rigid law. Especially in this most intimate dimension of married life, misguided ascetical strictness may have disastrous consequences that are counterproductive to the healing and wellbeing of all concerned.

While children are certainly one of the great blessings of marriage and the Church encourages couples to “be fruitful and multiply,” there are no canons in the Church that forbid the use of non-abortifacient means of birth control by married couples—and some barrier method contraception was known in antiquity. The canons of the Church have detailed descriptions of sexual offences, but none limiting births apart from the condemnation of abortion. What some identify as the rare patristic condemnations of contraception reflect the identification of them with abortion considering the limited medical knowledge of those times. As *Family, the Joy of Life* teaches concerning family planning, “each family prayerfully makes its own decision in consultation with the family’s spiritual father or parish priest on the basis of its spiritual, health, economic and social circumstances” (paragraph 33). Doing so reflects the freedom of the spouses as persons who together offer themselves to God as best they can in light of their spiritual maturity and the practical challenges that they face.

Through their free cooperation with the gracious blessing of the Lord, every dimension of the relationship between husbands and wives may become an epiphany of the salvation of the world. With a common life oriented to the heavenly kingdom, spouses journey together along a path for the healing of their souls and the fulfillment of God's gracious purposes for their children and their family members and neighbors. Those who embrace the struggles and joys of marriage in this way will prepare themselves to accept the invitation to become guests at the wedding feast of the Lamb.

في العلاقات الزوجية بقلم المتربوليت سابا (اسبر)

في عام ٢٠١٩، أصدر غبطة البطريرك يوحنا العاشر والمجمع الأنطاكي المقدس رسالة رعوية هامة بعنوان: "العائلة، فرح الحياة". وقد نالت هذه الرسالة بركة واعتماد ونشر من قبل البطريرك والمجمع المقدس، وهي تعلن تعليم إيماننا الأرثوذكسي حول الحياة العائلية. وبذلك، تُعدّ عوناً كبيراً لجميع المؤمنين الأرثوذكس لفهم تعليم الكنيسة المقدسة فيما يخص الحياة العائلية والعديد من القضايا التي نواجهها في عالمنا اليوم.

هناك الكثير من الالتباس في الثقافة المعاصرة بخصوص قضايا الجنس والزواج والأبوة. فحتى أبسط الافتراضات الأخلاقية والدينية بشأن العلاقة بين الرجل والمرأة باتت موضع تشكيك شديد في بعض المجتمعات. ولكي يعيش المسيحيون الأرثوذكسيون بأمانة في سياق اليوم، يجب أن نتذكر كيف استخدم الرب مراراً وليمة العرس بمثابة علامة على الملكوت السماوي (متى ٢٢: ١-١٤)، وكيف حوّل الماء إلى خمر في عرس قانا الجليل (يوحنا ٢: ١-١١). وكما علّم الرسول بولس، فإن العلاقة بين الزوج والزوجة هي علامة على العلاقة بين المسيح والكنيسة (أفسس ٥: ٢١-٣٣)، والزواج ذو عمق روحي عظيم حتى إن اكتمال الملكوت السماوي يوصف بأنه "عرس الحَمَل" في سفر الرؤيا (رؤيا ١٩: ٦-٩).

إن استخدام الصورة الزوجية بمثابة علامة نموذجية للسقوط ليس صدفة، إذ إن الاتحاد الأصلي بين الرجل والمرأة في الفردوس قد تحطّم بعصيانهما. وتشهد روايات العهد القديم، والتحديات الرعوية التي تناولها الرسول بولس، والخبرة الإنسانية المشتركة حتى اليوم على هذا الانكسار المأساوي في العلاقة بين الزوجين. وبصفته آدم الجديد، جعل الرب شفاء هذا الاتحاد المضطرب ممكناً، بناءً على طلب والدته الإله، حواء الجديدة، في عرس قانا الجليل. وبركته، استُعيد الزواج باعتباره طريق لعودة الرجل والمرأة إلى الفردوس وعلامة لخلاص العالم.

في خدمة الإكليل الأرثوذكسية، يُتَوَجَّ العروسان باسم الثالوث القدوس. واتحادهما ليس مجرد عقد قانوني أو مؤسسة اجتماعية، بل هو دعوة للنمو في شركة مع المسيح في كل جانب من حياتهما المشتركة. وهما، إذ اتحدا كـ "جسد واحد" في جسد المسيح، يُدعيان إلى شهادة المحبة المضحّية والأمانة، عن طريق موتهما عن عبودية الأهواء. وتتطهر رغبات قلوبهما وتنقى بتدريب كل منهما لنفسه على محبة المسيح وخدمته من خلال الآخر وفيه. كما تعكس الطلبات الكثيرة في صلاة الإكليل، من أجل بركة الأولاد، الطبيعة التي تتسع لمحبة الله التي يشتركان فيها كشخصين. أما فرص الشفاء من الأهواء، من خلال الجهاد النسكي في الخضوع المتبادل، ورعاية الأولاد، وتقديم مصلحة العائلة على المصلحة الشخصية، ونقل رحمة الرب المضيافة إلى القريب، فهي لا تُحصى. وكما تقول الرسالة الرعوية "العائلة، فرح الحياة": «في هذا السياق، تذكّر [الكنيسة] بأن المحبة الزوجية لا تستعلن حضراً بالممارسة الجسدية، بل بالحب والاحترام المتبادلين يومياً ببذل الذات الذي يشمل ويطال كل أصعدة الحياة ووجوهها ويضفي عليها رونقها البهي» (فقرة ٣٣). وقد علّم القديس يوحنا الذهبي الفم أن الأزواج الذين يستجيبون بأمانة لفرص النمو في القداسة من خلال الزواج قد يبلغون مستوى من "الكمال ينافس أقدس الرهبان" (العظة ٢٠١).

كما يتبين من الطلبات التي تترتل في خدمة الإكليل، فإنّ الأرثوذكسية لا تُعلّم بأن العلاقة الجنسية الزوجية خطيئة بأي شكل، ولا أن الجماع في الزواج هو لأجل إنجاب الأولاد فقط، كما قال التقليد الأوغسطيني في الغرب. ولا نجد في العهد الجديد أي انتقاص من الجنس في الزواج أو القول إنه يحتاج إلى تبرير عبر الإنجاب. لا بل إنّ الرسول بولس يحذّر من الامتناع المفرط عن العلاقات الزوجية: «لا يمتنع أحدكما عن الآخر إلا على اتفاق وإلى حين، حتى تتفرغا للصلاة، ثم عودا إلى الحياة الزوجية العادية لئلا يعوزكم ضبط النفس، فتقعوا في تجربة إبليس» (١ كورنثوس ٧: ٥). كما ينبغي أن يُمارس صوم الزواج في الأرثوذكسية بحرية وباتفاق متبادل بين

الزوجين بحسب حالتها الروحية، لا كقانون صارم. فالتشدد النسكي الخاطيء في هذا البعد الحميم قد يؤدي إلى نتائج كارثية تعيق الشفاء والخير للجميع.

وبينما يُعدّ الأولاد أحد أعظم بركات الزواج، وتشجّع الكنيسة الأزواج على أن "يثمروا ويكثروا"، لا توجد قوانين كنسية تحرّم استخدام وسائل منع الحمل غير المُجهضة من قبل الأزواج، وقد عُرفت بعض هذه الوسائل في العصور القديمة. تصف قوانين الكنيسة بالتفصيل المخالفات الجنسية، لكنها لا تذكر شيئاً عن تحديد النسل سوى إدانة الإجهاض. قد تعكس بعض إدانات منع الحمل الصادرة عن بعض آباء الكنيسة خلطاً بينه [منع الحمل] وبين الإجهاض نظراً لمحدودية المعرفة الطبية آنذاك. وكما تقول رسالة "العائلة، فرح الحياة" بشأن تنظيم الأسرة: « أمّا التنظيم فيعني أن تتخذ كلّ أسرة قرارها الخاص في صلاة، وبالتشاور مع الأب الروحي للعائلة أو كاهن الرعيّة، وذلك بناءً على ظروفها الروحيّة والصحيّة والاقتصاديّة والاجتماعيّة» (فقرة ٣٣). وهذا يعكس حرية الزوجين كشخصين يقدّمان نفسيهما لله قدر استطاعتهما في ضوء نضجهما الروحي والتحديات العملية التي يواجهانها.

ومن خلال تعاونهما الحر مع بركة الرب، يمكن أن يصبح كلُّ بُعد من العلاقة بين الزوجين وسيلة لخلاص العالم. ومع حياة مشتركة موجّهة نحو الملكوت السماوي، يسير الزوجان معاً في طريق شفاء النفس وتحقيق مقاصد الله الصالحة لأولادهما وأفراد عائلتهما وجيرانهما. إن الذين يعيشون جهادات وأفراح الزواج بهذه الطريقة يُهيّئون أنفسهم لقبول الدعوة كي يكونوا ضيوفاً في "عرس الحمل".

Hope

The Order of St. Ignatius Supports

IOCC International Orthodox Christian Charities
Syrian Relief Fund
Project Mexico
Treehouse Ministries



Hope is the "real" gift you give that provides a needed "hand up" to the lives of those struggling to provide the basic necessities for their children and families.

The 3 Tenets Of The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch

Act Of Faith

Rooted In Love &
Compassion

All the way back to our earliest years as a child we are taught to share with others, especially those less fortunate. When we share, we give up what we believe to be control in our lives. We put our faith in God that He will provide for our needs in abundance. Through your financial commitment, you are allowing God to work through you for the benefit of others. Your gift to the Order is an expression of love and compassion for countless lives and most importantly ... it is an act of Faith.

A Sacrifice

Immeasurable In Its
Capacity

To sacrifice for one another is to love. Deciding to "do without" for the benefit of someone you don't know is the beginning of a true sacrifice. Your sacrifice helps a struggling family send their children to camp enabling them to experience God's world if only for a few days. It provides reassurance to a new parish, that it can meet its monthly financial obligations and continue its ministry. As a member of the Order you may consider your sacrifice to be small, but it is immeasurable in its capacity to change people's lives.

Infinite In Its Effect

Making A Difference
Together

Your annual gift, less than the cost of your daily cup of coffee, is merely a drop of water in a vast ocean of need. However, the ripple from your gift never ends. It expands to enrich the lives of our youth by strengthening their hearts and minds as future leaders of the Faith. It multiplies to help care for our retired clergy and our devoted seminarians. The ripple from your annual or lifetime gift touches the lives of so many that you would never have been able to reach alone.



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 abuse 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

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA

Ms. Mareena
Boosamra Ball



Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America

Chairwoman,
Dept. of Sacred Music

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

Musician Appreciation Sunday, December 14, 2025

Dear friends, our church musicians across the Archdiocese: Christ is in our midst!

Let me begin with a huge THANK YOU! Your service and dedication to our God-protected churches and communities is truly a blessing.

As I reflect on this past year, it is just astonishing how quickly time has passed since the writing of my last letter!

At my church's recent choir rehearsal, I brought out all the beautiful hymns that we will be singing for the Nativity of our Lord's divine services in just a few short weeks. It was like greeting an old, special friend who you haven't seen in a long time.

The familiarity of the music with those who have been singing in the choir for decades, combined with the introduction of these beautiful melodies to new members, resonates with unending possibilities. This blend ensures that our musical traditions will not only continue to thrive within our own churches but will also spread across the Orthodox world.

There is an instant synergy in the choir that blends the voices of the individual singers to create a single, beautiful tapestry of sound. With the antiphonal song of prayer between our beloved clergy and singers, our combined goal is to aid the faithful of our churches in prayer and worship. As church musicians, we never lose sight of our true purpose of spreading the word of God through our beautiful melodies.

Your dedication to the sacred music of our blessed Archdiocese has enriched our liturgical life and deepened the spiritual experience for the faithful across North America. I encourage you to continue to expand your musical horizons and stay strong by attending classes being offered through our Antiochian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Online Music School, becoming a student at our biannual Sacred Music Institutes to recharge your batteries, but most of all, approaching your ministry with love, humility and prayerfulness.

May our incarnate Lord bless you always and give you strength. Please remember that your Department of Sacred Music is always here to help you in any way we can.

With deepest appreciation and admiration, your servant in Christ,

Mareena Boosamra Ball
Chairwoman, Department of Sacred Music
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

358 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 5238, Englewood, NJ 07631-5238
(201) 871-1355 T Archdiocese@antiochian.org (201) 871-7954 F



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





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

DIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES & THE WEST

**THE YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRY**

DLAW YAM

WINTER *Retreat*

Join us on...

January 16th-18, 2026

at St. Nicholas Ranch

in Dunlap, CA

Early Bird

\$190

by **12/13**

Final Price

\$220

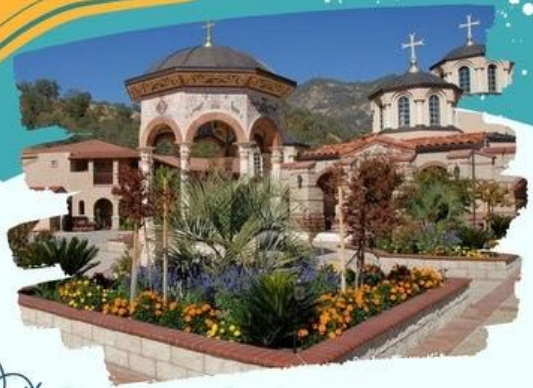
by **12/27**

Spēnd this winter weekend with us!

**Scan the QR code to
register!**



Link to register!



<https://dlawyam.com/2026-dlaw-winter-retreat>



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: _____



BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER
End-of-Year Campaign Update



- Raised: \$3.5M for the new hall & learning center
- County requirements nearly complete
- Promising discussions with school operators
- Goal: Break ground by mid-2026
- Remaining need: **\$750,000** for loan approval

If you are able, please consider an end-of-year tax-deductible gift to support our parish's future.



GIVE TO ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

<https://orthodoxredeemer.breezechms.com/give/online#>

