

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



November 15, 2026

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost & Eighth Sunday of Luke

Martyrs Guria, Shamuna and Habib the Deacon of Edessa

Thomas the New, patriarch of Constantinople; Venerable Paisios Velichkovsky

الاحد الرابع والعشرون بعد العنصرة والأحد الثامن من لوقا

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 باللحن السابع

حَطَمْتَ بِصَليبِكَ المَوْتَ، وفَتَحْتَ لِلِّصِّ الفِرْدَوْس، وَحَوَّلْتَ نَوْحَ حامِلاتِ الطِّيب، وأمَرْتَ رُسُلَكَ أنْ يَكْرِزوا، بأنَّكَ قَدْ قُمْتَ أيُّها المَسيحُ الإله، مانِحاً العالَمَ الرَّحْمَةَ العُظْمى.

APOLYTIKION FOR SS. GURIA, SHAMUNA AND HABIB IN TONE FIVE

Since Thou hast given us the miracles of Thy holy Martyrs Guria, Shamuna and Habib as an invincible battlement, by their entreaties scatter the counsels of the heathen, O Christ our God, and strengthen the faith of Orthodox Christians, since Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

أبوليتيكيون لِلقدّيسين غوريا وسامونا وحَبيب باللحن الخامِس

عَجائِبُ قِدِّيسيكَ الشُّهداءِ غوريا وسامونا وحَبيب، إذْ قَدْ مَنَحْتَنَا إيَّاها سوراً لا يُحارَبُ، أيُّها المَسيحُ الإله، فَبِتَوَسُّلاتِهِمْ شَتِّتْ مَشوراتِ الأُمَم، وأيِّدْ صوالِجَةَ المَمْلَكَة، بِما أنَّكَ صالِحٌ ومُحِبٌّ لِلْبَشَر.

APOLYTIKION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION IN TONE SEVEN

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

أبوليتيكيون تَجلّي ربّنا يَسُوعَ المَسِيح باللحن السابع

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

KONTAKION OF ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

The sacred treasury of God's holy glory, the greatly precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the Savior's most pure temple, free of stain and undefiled, into

the House of the Lord on this day is brought forward and bringeth with herself the grace of the Most Divine Spirit; her do God's Angels hymn with songs of praise, for she is truly the heavenly tabernacle.

قِنداق عيدِ دُخولِ السيّدة باللحن الرابع

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

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 يُعْطي قُوَّةً لِشَعْبِهِ قَدِّمُوا للرَّبِّ يا أَبْناءَ الله.

فَصْلٌ مِنْ رِسالَةِ القِدّيسِ بولُسَ الرَّسولِ إلى أَفَسُس. (2:14-22)

يا إخْوَةُ، إنَّ المَسيحَ هُوَ سَلامُنَا، هُوَ جَعَلَ الإثْنَيْنِ واحِداً، وَنَقَضَ في جَسَدِهِ حائِطَ السِياجِ الحاجِزَ، أي العَداوَة. وأَبْطَلَ ناموسَ الوَصايا في فرائِضِهِ، لِيَخْلُقَ الإثْنَيْنِ في نَفْسِهِ إنساناً واحِداً جَديداً بإِجْرائِهِ السَّلام. ويُصالِحَ كِلَيْهِما في جَسَدٍ واحِدٍ مَعَ اللهِ في الصليبِ، بِقَتْلِهِ العَداوَةَ في نَفْسِهِ. فَجاءَ وبَشَّرَكُمْ

بِالسَلامِ، البَعيدينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالقَريبين. لأنَّ بِهِ لَنَا كِلَيْنَا التَوَصُّلَ إلى الآبِ في روحٍ واحِدٍ. فَلَسْتُمْ غُرَباءَ بَعْدُ ونُزَلاءَ، بَلْ مُواطِنو القِدّيسينَ وأَهْلُ بَيْتِ الله. وَقَدْ بُنِيتُمْ على أَساسِ الرُسُلِ، والأَنْبياءِ، وحَجَرُ الزاوِيَةِ هُوَ يسوعُ المَسيحُ نَفْسُهُ الذي بِهِ يُنْسَّقُ البُنْيانُ كُلُّهُ، فَيَنْمُو هَيْكَلاً مُقَدَّساً في الرَّبِّ، وفيهِ أَنْتُمْ أَيْضاً تُبْنَوْنَ مَعاً مَسْكَناً للهِ في الروح.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (10:25-37)

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" And the lawyer answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And Jesus said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But the lawyer, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" The lawyer said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شَريفٌ مِنْ بِشارَةِ القِدّيسِ لوقا الإنْجيليِّ البَشيرِ والتلْميذِ الطاهِر. (10:25–37)

في ذلكَ الزمانِ، دَنا إلى يَسوعَ ناموسِيٌّ وقالَ، مُجرِّباً لهُ: يا مُعَلِّمُ، ماذا أَعْمَلُ لأرِثَ الحَياةَ الأبَدِيَّةَ. فقالَ لهُ: ماذا كُتِبَ في النَّامُوسِ؟ كَيفَ تَقرأُ؟ فأجابَ وقالَ: أَحْبِبِ الرَّبَّ إلهَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ قَلْبِكَ، ومِنْ كُلِّ نَفْسِكَ، ومِنْ كُلِّ قُدرَتِكَ، ومنْ كُلِّ ذِهْنِكَ، وقَريبَكَ كَنَفْسِكَ. فقالَ لهُ: بالصَوابِ أَجَبْتَ. إعْمَلْ ذَلِكَ فَتَحْيا.

فأرادَ أنْ يُزَكِّيَ نَفسَهُ فقالَ لِيَسوعَ: ومَنْ قَريبي؟ فَعادَ يَسوعُ وقالَ: كانَ إنسانٌ مُنْحَدِراً مِنْ أورَشَليمَ إلى أريحا، فوَقَعَ بَيْنَ لُصوصٍ. فَعَرَّوهُ وجَرَّحوهُ وتَرَكوهُ بيْنَ حَيٍّ ومَيِّتٍ. فَاتَّفَقَ أنَّ كاهِناً كانَ مُنحَدِراً في ذلكَ الطريقِ، فَأَبْصَرَهُ وجَازَ مِنْ أمامِهِ. وكذلكَ لاويٌّ، وأتى إلى المكانِ، فأبْصَرَهُ وجَازَ مِنْ أمامِهِ. ثُمَّ إنَّ سامِرِيّاً مُسافِراً مَرَّ بِهِ، فلَمَّا رآهُ تَحَنَّنَ. فَدنا إلَيْهِ وضَمَّدَ جِراحاتِهِ، وصَبَّ عَلَيْها زَيْتاً وخَمراً، وحَمَلَهُ على دابَّتِهِ، وأتى بِهِ إلى فُندُقٍ، واعْتَنى بِأَمْرِهِ. وفي الغَدِ، فيما هُوَ خارِجٌ، أخرَجَ دينارَيْنِ وأعْطاهُما لِصاحِبِ الفُندُقِ وقالَ لهُ: اعْتَنِ بِأَمرِهِ، ومَهْما تُنْفِقْ فَوْقَ هَذا فَأَنا أدْفَعُهُ لكَ عندَ عَوْدَتي. فَأيُّ هؤلاءِ الثلاثَةِ تَحْسَبُ صارَ قَريباً لِلَّذي وقَعَ بَيْنَ اللصُوصِ؟ قالَ: الذي صنَعَ إليْهِ الرَحْمَة. فقالَ لهُ يسوعُ: امْضِ فَاصْنَعْ أنْتَ أيْضاً كذلِك.

TRISAGION PRAYER

One Year Memorial Service in memory of Tancho Veizades, offered by her children; John, Lisa, Jeannette, Henry and his wife Sheila, her grandchildren 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: Marwan and Yara Akkary on the occasion of their 3rd wedding anniversary (Nov 11) and the good health of their daughters; Emma and Sophia, and the Akkary and Salloum families. Many Years!

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

OFFERED BY: Bassam Khoury for the good health of his wife Dima on the occasion of her birthday (Nov 15). For the good health of their children and grandchildren; Rawan, Mousa, Zayn, Amira and Malik Katwan, Natalie,

Suleiman, David and Kais Araj, and the Khoury, Makhlouf, Katwan and Araj families. Many Years!

OFFERED BY: Marwan and Yara Akkary in memory of Yara's beloved father, Ghassan Salloum. Memory Eternal!



COFFEE HOUR

Offered By: The Ladies Auxiliary

(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

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)

Fr. Samer will be out of town**.**
He can be reached by phone **@ 408-375-5673**

We would like to express our sincere thanks to **Fr. Theodore Sakellar** for **serving the Divine Liturgy** this **Sunday, Nov 15th**.
May God grant him many blessed years!

PARISH COUNCIL 2026

The Parish Council Members of 2026. Chair President; Bassam Khoury, Vice-Chair; Linda Salah, Treasurer; Henry Veizades, Secretary; Rima Gannage, Maher Fasheh, Sana Eideh, Johnny Khamis, Jake Timothy, Edmund Khinno and Sal Hanhan. Roula Haddad will represent the Antiochian Women Committee and Salem Aweiss will represent the Men Fellowship Committee.

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN 2026

The Antiochian Women Committee Leaders of 2026. Roula Haddad (Chairwoman), Dania Amireh (Vice- Chairwoman), Ibtisam Kreitem (Secretary/ Communication), Wardeh Asfour (Kitchen/Coffee Hour), Rima Gannage (Bookkeeping), Diana Khoury (Myrrh Barrier), 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 Dimitry Youssef (President of the Young Adults in the Diocese of Los Angles and the West) @ (408)364-5670, or 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 Nadine Safi. The officers are: President; Riad Akkary, Secretary; Mila Haddad, Treasurer; Gabreilla Ajlouni, Social Media Coordinator; Adriana Ajlouni.



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 8/30/26 and ends 5/16/27. Sunday school graduation Ceremony will be on 5/16/27. Sunday school classes begin after communion and ends at 12:30pm.

Teachers: Isabelle Achkar, Jennifer Lutton, Caitlin Timothy, Randa Hanani, Samuel Hage, Heather Simonovich and Hussam Ibrahim.

CHRISTMAS PLAY
Sunday December 20, 2026

Sunday School Christmas play rehearsals are as follows: Sundays from 12:15 to 12:45. Nov. 15, Nov. 22, Nov. 29, December 6, and Dec. 13. Dress Rehearsal is SATURDAY Dec.19 from 2:00 to 3:30PM, with performance on Sunday Dec. 20 after Liturgy. If your child ages 4 to 10 are not yet participating, there is still time left to join up until November 8th. Please see Nancy Godfrey for a script and the music!"

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CHURCH
Please save the date

- ***Advent Fast:*** *Fast starts November 15- December 24.*
- ***November 20:*** *Young Adults Friendsgiving @ 6:00PM*
- ***November 22:*** *Blessing of the girls after the Divine Liturgy. Please make sure to bring your daughter to church.*
- ***November 22:*** *Potluck Luncheon on Sunday November 22 after the Divine Liturgy.*
- ***December 6:*** *St. Barbara Day, sponsored by the ladies auxiliary. Please bring a pot of our traditional Burbara to share with everyone.*
- ***December 11:*** *Christmas party @ Tannourine Resturant*
- ***December 13:*** *Al-Salam Choir Christmas Songs at the church of the Redeemer @ 6:00pm*
- ***December 20:*** *Christmas play after the Liturgy.*
- ***December 24:*** *Christmas Services Evening, Divine Liturgy for the Nativity Matins @ 7:00pm and Divine Liturgy @ 8:00pm.*

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.

SAMARITAN HOUSE VOLENTEER APPOTUNITY

The Orthodox Church of the Redeemer and its SOYO group in participating will be volunteering this holiday season at Samaritan House. All SOYO, Youth and Young Adults are welcome. ***Please sign up with Fr. Samer or contact the office @ office@orthodoxredeemer.org***

https://samaritanhousesanmateo.org/

- *Saturday 11/28 from 8am to 11am, Group of 10 volunteers.*
- *Saturday 12/19 from 8am to 11am, Group of 10 volunteers.*

Please note that there is a minimum age requirement of 12-15 with an adult chaperone. 16+ year olds may attend without a chaperone. For anyone age 12-15, the agency requires a chaperone ratio of at least 1 adult to every 4 children. No tasks are suitable for youth ages 11 and below.

Practical Answers about Fasting

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

During this fasting season, we are often asked, as spiritual shepherds, detailed questions about how to fast, differences in fasting practices from one region to another, and related matters. In this brief article, I will shed some light on the questions most frequently discussed within the Archdiocese.

- Let us begin with the Church's guiding principle: the faithful prepare for a feast by fasting. For this reason, fasting periods generally precede the major feasts. On a personal level, a believer may also prepare by fasting for significant circumstances in life: a serious illness, a great tragedy, a decisive turning point, and so forth. This is

arranged with one's spiritual father.

- The same principle also holds that the greater the feast, the more rigorous and ascetical the fast becomes. Since Pascha, for example, is the greatest feast, the "Feast of feasts and Festival of festivals," we prepare for it with a fast that is both longer and more rigorous than the Nativity Fast. In Great Lent, fish is permitted only on the Annunciation and Palm Sunday, since both are feasts of the Lord and the Theotokos, directly concerning Christ and His Mother. During the Nativity Fast, however, fish and seafood are permitted during the first two weeks.

- In keeping with this principle, fish is not permitted during the final two weeks of the Nativity Fast. This is precisely because the feast is drawing near, preparation becomes more earnest, and ascetical restraint intensifies. For this reason, the celebration of the sacrament of marriage is also, as a rule, prohibited during this period.

We abstain from certain foods during a fast because abstinence teaches us self-control, helps us rise above the appetites of the belly, and deepens our solidarity with the poor and hungry in a tangible way. These foods are not considered unclean. This helps us understand why believers living in Mediterranean countries abstain from fish, while those in cold countries such as Russia and Ukraine eat it, since fish and seafood are abundant there and vegetables are almost unavailable during winter.

- Likewise, in coastal cities generally, the faithful have traditionally eaten seafood classified as mollusks, such as octopus and similar creatures, because it is readily available and inexpensive. Some attribute this practice to the absence of blood in these creatures, since blood of animals is not to be shed during a fast. In one of its meanings, fasting is a return to peace with creation. Permission to eat meat was given after Noah's flood, not at the beginning of human creation.

- As living conditions have changed, shellfish, for example, has

become very expensive in some countries. Eating it, therefore, does not fit with the spirit and purpose of fasting. A believer may discern and abstain from it even though the fasting rule permits it. The same applies to any food that is costly or expensive in the region where we live.

- The prohibition against celebrating the sacrament of marriage during Great Lent and the final part of the Nativity Fast has both spiritual and practical pastoral reasons. During an ascetical fast, married couples abstain, as far as they are able, from marital relations, following the Apostle's words: "Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer" (1 Corinthians 7:5). Weddings are also usually accompanied by festivities and banquets which do not accord with fasting. Moreover, most of the faithful do not consider a banquet worthy of the occasion unless it includes meat.

When many Churches adopted the Western calendar for the fixed feasts, including the Nativity, we retained the forty-day fast. The period during which marriages were prohibited, however, continued to follow the Eastern calendar, from December 20 to January 7. Twenty-five years ago, the Holy Synod of Antioch adjusted this period to five days, from December 20 to 25. This change responded to increasing emigration and employment outside the traditional territory of the Patriarchate of "Antioch and All the East." It also took into account both the availability of transportation and travel and the difficulty of obtaining leave from work at any time of the year.

- The faithful's reverence for the Theotokos, together with her place in the heart and doctrine of the Church, has made the fast preceding her feast on August 15 widely cherished and observed by the great majority of believers. Since the Theotokos is the model of virginity and chastity, the faithful have also traditionally refrained from holding weddings during this fast. Fasting practices vary, shaped both by devotion to the Theotokos and by the abundance of vegetables and fruit. Thus, some believers observe this fast without

oil, cooked food, or the use of fire.

- During Great Lent, the most important fasting season, we observe two forms of fasting: abstaining from all food and drink from the night before until twelve noon the following day, and then eating fasting food, free of meat and animal products.

- In decades past, abstinence from food and drink continued until sunset. Exercising the authority to bind and loose given to her by Christ, the Church changed this to 12:00 noon because the conditions in which the faithful lived had changed. Society was no longer agricultural; occupations had multiplied and diversified, and working hours had grown longer. Cities had also expanded greatly, requiring people to spend considerable time commuting and traveling each day. These and other structural changes have taken place and continue to do so.

- The Lenten observance includes the preparatory week (Cheese-fare) before the fast, during which we abstain only from meat; the six weeks of Great Lent itself; and then Holy Week, when ascetical restraint becomes more rigorous than during the other days of the fast.

Abstinence from olive oil has two aspects. First, it refers to every kind of oil. The liturgical books use the term "olive oil" because historically this was the oil available to the faithful; other vegetable oils were not known in earlier times. Today, therefore, the expression means all oils, not olive oil alone. For this reason, recently printed liturgical books use simply the word "oil." Second, abstinence from oil is practiced today in monasteries. Outside monasteries, most Orthodox Churches no longer regard it as obligatory. Many of the faithful therefore observe it voluntarily, under the guidance of their spiritual father.

- The Church has its fasting rules, but applying them to one's personal circumstances requires the help of a spiritual guide when a believer needs to relax the fast, break it occasionally, or cannot observe it as prescribed because of a health condition. These particular personal circumstances are addressed with one's spiritual guide: the parish

priest or father confessor. The believer keeps this guidance private and does not turn it into a general prescription to announce or recommend to others. Personal spiritual guidance is necessary and essential in every aspect and circumstance of a believer's life, not only in fasting.

- A believer who did not grow up in a household that observed the fasts begins fasting under the guidance of a spiritual father or parish priest, who gradually helps the person experience the fasts and enter their spirit and essence. This takes place through patient formation that considers the believer's health, physical condition, work, and psychological well-being. We are on the path of salvation. Some run along it; others walk calmly and steadily. Still others, carried away by enthusiasm, exceed their strength, grow tired, and must sit down for a little while to rest and regain their energy.

Any understanding that associates fasting with deprivation and self-torment is not Orthodox. We fast so that we may rise above our passions, be purified, and be sanctified in spirit, soul, and body. God asks us to fast for our own sake, for our salvation, because fasting benefits us, strengthens us, and makes us steadfast. God wants us to grow, mature, and attain the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

Everyone who has experienced something of life with God knows the sweetness of fasting and the benefit it brings.

أجوبة عملية بخصوص الأصوام

بقلم المتروبوليت سابا (اسبر)

كثيراً ما يُطرح علينا، في هذا الموسم الصيامي، باعتبارنا رعاة روحيين، أسئلة تفصيلية بخصوص كيفية الصوم والاختلافات الموجودة في ممارسته بين منطقة وأخرى وما إليها. لذا فإنني سأضيئ، في هذه العجالة، باختصار، على بعض النقاط الأكثر تداولاً في أوساط الأبرشية.

- بدءاً نقول إنّ القاعدة الكنسيّة تقوم على أنّ المؤمنين يتهيأون للعيد بالصوم. لذلك تسبق الأصوام الأعياد الكبرى عموماً. كذلك للمؤمن على صعيده الشخصي أن يتهيّأ لبعض المناسبات المهمّة في حياته بالصوم. أمام مرض مستعصٍ أو مأساة كبيرة أو حدث مفصلي في حياته...إلخ. هذا يرتّبه مع أب الاعتراف.
- كذلك تقول القاعدة إيّاها أنّ الصوم يشتدّ ويزداد تقشفاً ونسكاً كلّما كان العيد أكثر أهميّة. فلكون الفصح، على سبيل المثال، هو العيد الكبير، "عيد الأعياد وموسم المواسم،" نتهيّأ له بصوم أطول من صوم الميلاد وكذلك أشدّ نسكاً. ولا يُسمح فيه بأكل السمك إلّا يومي عيد البشارة والشعانين لكونهما عيدين سيّديّين (يختصّان بالسيّد المسيح ووالدة الإله مباشرة). أمّا في صوم الميلاد فيُسمح بأكل السمك وثمار البحر في الأسبوعين الأولين.
- تأكيداً لهذه القاعدة، يُمنع تناول السمك في الأسبوعين الأخيرين من صوم الميلاد. بالضبط لأنّ العيد يقترب ويشتدّ الاستعداد له ويتكثّف التقشّف. ولذلك أيضاً يُمنع، في الأصل، إتمام سرّ الزواج في هذه الفترة.
- لا يتمّ الامتناع عن أطعمة معيّنة في الصوم لأنّها نجسة، بل سبيلاً إلى التعفّف والتسامي عن شهوات البطن ولتنمية المشاركة حسيّاً بالفقراء والجائعين. من هنا نفهم لماذا يمتنع المؤمنون القاطنين في بلدان في حوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط عن السمك، بينما يتناوله مؤمنو البلاد الباردة مثل روسيا وأوكرانيا، حيث يتوفر السمك وثمار البحر بوفرة، وتنعدم الخضار تقريباً في فصل الشتاء.
- كذلك، في المدن الساحليّة بعامّة، اعتاد المؤمنون على أن يتناولوا من ثمار البحر التي ندعوها الرخويّات، كالأخطبوط وما إليه، لأنّها متوفرة ورخيصة الثمن. بعضهم

يعزو السبب إلى عدم وجود دم فيها، لأنّ الدم لا يُسفك في الصوم، إذ هو، في أحد معانيه، عودة إلى السلام مع الخليقة. تحليل أكل اللحم تمّ بعد طوفان نوح، وليس من بدء خلق الإنسان.

- مع تغيّر الظروف الحياتيّة، بات القريدس، وهو من الرخويّات، على سبيل المثال، غالي الثمن جداً في بعض البلدان (بلدان الشرق الأوسط على سبيل المثال)، وتالياً لا يتناسب مع روح الصوم وهدفه. فالمؤمن الواعي يمتنع عنه وإن كان مسموحاً به قانونيّاً. وينطبق القول ذاته على ما هو مكلف وغالي الثمن بحسب المنطقة التي نحيا فيها.

- منع إتمام سرّ الزواج في الصوم الكبير وفي القسم الأخير من صوم الميلاد يعود إلى أسباب روحيّة ورعائيّة عمليّة. ففي الصوم النسكي يمتنع الزوجان، قدر إمكانهما، عن المعاشرة الجسديّة، انطلاقاً من قول الرسول "لا يمتنع أحدكما عن الآخر إلّا على اتفاق بينكما وإلى حين، حتّى تتفرّغا للصلاة" (١كو ٧:٥). وكذلك لأنّ الزواج يترافق عادة بمظاهر الاحتفال والولائم وهذه لا تتناسب مع الصوم. كما أنّ غالبية المؤمنين لا يعتبرون الوليمة معتبرة إذا لم تكن تحتوي على اللحم.

- عندما اتّبعت العديد من الكنائس التقويم الغربي في الأعياد الثابتة ومنها الميلاد، بقينا محافظين على مدة الصوم أربعين يوماً. لكن الامتناع عن إقامة سرّ الزواج بقيت بحسب التقويم الشرقي (من ٢٠كانون الأول إلى ٧ كانون الثاني)، إلى أن عدلّها المجمع الأنطاكي المقدّس منذ خمس وعشرين سنة وجعلها خمسة أيام (من ٢٠ إلى ٢٥كانون الأوّل) تجاوباً مع زيادة ظاهرة الهجرة والعمل خارج الأرض التقليدية لبطريركية "أنطاكية وسائر المشرق"، وتوفر وسائل التنقل والسفر من جهة وصعوبة تأمين إجازة من العمل في أي وقت.

- توقير المؤمنين لوالدة الإله، ومكانتها في وجدان الكنيسة وعقيدتها، جعلت الصوم قبل عيدها (١٥ آب) صوماً شعبيّاً وتمارسه الشريحة العظمى من المؤمنين. وكون والدة الإله نموذج البتولية والعفّة ساهم في امتناع المؤمنين بالممارسة عن إقامة حفلات زواجهم في فترة الصوم. كذلك تتنوّع ممارسة الصوم بسبب التقوى المريميّة، من جهة وتوفر الخضار والفواكه من جهة أخرى. فترى كثيرين يصومونه من دون زيت أو طبخ أو استعمال نار.

- في الصوم الكبير، وهو الأهمّ، عندنا نوعان من الصوم: الامتناع عن الطعام والشراب من الليل وحتّى الثانية عشرة ظهراً من اليوم التالي، ومن ثمّ تناول طعاماً صيامياً (يخلو من اللحم ومنتجات الحيوان).

- كان الامتناع عن الطعام والشراب لعقود خلت يستمر حتّى غروب الشمس. وقد عدّلته الكنيسة، بما لها من سلطة الحلّ والربط المعطاة لها من المسيح، إلى الثانية عشرة ظهراً بسبب تغيّر الظروف التي اعتاد المؤمنون على عيشها. إذ لم يعد المجتمع زراعياً، وكثرت الوظائف وتنوّعت وطال الدوام فيها، وتضخّمت المدن كثيراً ما تطلّب من الناس قضاء وقت طويل في التنقل والسفر يومياً وما إلى ذلك من تغيّرات بنيويّة حدثت ولا تزال.

- يتألف الصوم الكبير من أسبوع الاستعداد الذي يسبق الصوم، ونمتنع فيه عن اللحم فقط، وستة أسابيع هي فترة الصوم الكبير، ثمّ الأسبوع العظيم، ويشتدّ التقشّف فيه أكثر من باقي أيام الصوم الأخرى.

- أما الامتناع عن زيت الزيتون فله بعدين. الأوّل هو أن المقصود به أي نوع زيت. تحوي الكتب الطقسية كلمة "زيت الزيتون،" لأنه الزيت المتوفر تاريخيا في أيدي المؤمنين؛ إذ لم تكن الزيوت النباتية معروفة قديماً. فالمقصود بالعبارة اليوم كل أنواع الزيوت وليس زيت الزيتون فقط. لذلك ترون في الكتب الليتورجية المطبوعة حديثا ورود كلمة "الزيت" فقط. أمّا البعد الثاني، فيتضمن أنّ الامتناع عن الزيت يُمارَس اليوم في الأديرة، أمّا خارج الأديرة فهو لم يعد مُلزِماً عند معظم الكنائس الأرثوذكسية، وتالياً يمارسه الكثير من المؤمنين اختيارياً بإرشاد الأب الروحي.

- قانون الصوم واحد في الكنيسة، لكن ممارسته الشخصيّة تتطلّب مساعدة المرشد الروحي، في حال اضطرار المؤمن إلى تخفيفه أو قطعه أحياناً أو عدم ملاءمة وضعه الصحي لممارسته كما هو مرسوم في الكنيسة. هذه الأوضاع الشخصيّة الخاصّة يرتّبها المؤمن مع مرشده الروحي: كاهن رعيّته أو أب اعترافه. ويحتفظ بإرشاد مرشده لنفسه ولا يجعله وصفة عامّة يصرّح بها أمام الآخرين ويصفها لهم. الإرشاد الروحي الشخصي لازم وضروري للمؤمن في كلّ صعد حياته وأوضاعه، وليس في الصوم فقط.

- يدخل المؤمن، إن لم ينشأ في بيت صيامي في ممارسة الصوم بإرشاد أب اعترافه أو كاهن رعيّته الذي يدرّبه تدريجيّاً على اختبار الأصوام والدخول في روحها وجوهرها. هذا يتمّ بالتربية الهادئة التي تلحظ وضع المؤمن الصحيّ والجسدي والعملي والنفسي. نحن على درب الخلاص؛ ثمّة من يركض فيه، وثمّة من يمشي بهدوء وثبات، وآخر يتحمّس أكثر من طاقته فيتعب ويضطر إلى الجلوس قليلاً طلباً للراحة والتزوّد بالطاقة.

أيّ فكر يربط الصوم بالحرمان وتعذيب الذات ليس أرثوذكسيّاً. نحن نصوم لكي نسمو ونتطهّر ونتقدّس روحاً ونفساً وجسداً. يطلب الله الصوم منّا من أجلنا، من أجل خلاصنا، لأنّه أي الصوم يفيدنا ويقوّينا ويشدّدنا. يريدنا الله أن نكبر وننمو ونصل إلى ملء قامة المسيح (أفسس ٤:١٣).

كلّ من اختبر شيئاً من العيش مع الله يعرف حلاوة الصوم وفائدته له.

SANTA MARIA
URBAN MINISTRY

Food pantry and neighborndoa resource

Since 1983, Santa Maria has worked alongside individuals and families, building community-centered programs, deepening neighborhood partnerships, and investing in long-term transformations.



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- Food & Clothing
- Education & Enrichment
- Health & Wellness
- Community Engagement
- Homelessness Assistance

DONATIONS NEEDED

We are collecting new or gently used clothing, shoes, and other essential items for people of all ages and genders.

Diapers of all sizes are needed to help children in need.

HOW TO DONATE

Please check your closets for items you no longer need. Sort donations by size and place them in the designated bins in the church hall on:

Sunday, November 22 & Sunday, November 29

Donations will be picked up the following week.

amazon | **Family & Baby Supplies** https://a.co/0fVJxNxo

amazon | **Everyday Essentials** https://a.co/0gil8xrW

QUESTIONS?

Please contact Roula Haddad, Ladies Auxiliary officers, or Church office.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

Orthodox Church of the Redeemer

Young Adult Annual Friendsgiving

Pan-Orthodox Gathering

Join us for our Annual Young Adult Friendsgiving Celebration!

A wonderful evening of fellowship, friendship, gratitude, and delicious food with young adults from Orthodox churches across the Bay Area!

Friday, November 20th | 6:00 PM

Potluck Style!

Please sign up to bring a dish to share for our Friendsgiving feast!



Come celebrate friendship, faith, and fellowship with our Orthodox young adult community!

Orthodox Church of the Redeemer

Celebrate and Build our Future

Christmas Party

All Proceeds to the Building Matching Fund

Tannourine Restaurant

120 W 25th Ave, San Mateo, CA 94403

Friday, December 11, 2026 at 7:00 pm

Full Mezza, Dinner and Wine

Featuring Singer

Sami Ihsane

Donation: $125 *Per Guest*

Your ticket price will be matched and doubled.

Purchase Your Tickets ASAP – Limited Seating!

RSVP by Dec 1st

For Tickets, Please Contact:

Ibtisam Kreitem @ 408-594-3000 | Church Office @ office@orthodoxredeemer.org

2026 PLEDGE MEMBERS

Thank you to all the members who submitted their pledges. 2026 pledges will roll into 2027. Please if you are able to increase your pledges to inform the office/ treasurer. These names are not the final list, if you do not see your name please submit your pledge online. For questions contact the treasure, Henry Veizades at treasurer@orthodoxredeemer.org. We are encouraging all parishioners to pledge online at www.orthodoxredeemer.org. Thank you for your love to Christ and His Church.

(If you want your name to be Anonymous, Please notify the office).

Members pledging	Members pledging	Members pledging
Abboud, Fayez & Rima	Gussous, Yazeed & Rawia	Mapar, Kevin & Victoria
Abboud Aida	Habib, Yousif & Amal	Mawla, Shawn & Carol
Aboujudom, David & Hala	Haddad, Sami & Ramza	Michael, Rizik & Sylvia
Aboujudom, Edmond	Haddad, Bachour & Jane	Mitri, George & Mona
Ajlouni, Amal	Haddad, Francois & Maya	Mogannam, John & Norma
Ajlouni, Basem & Maha	Haddad, Hanna & Rania	Mogannam, Anthony
Ajlouni, Yacoub & Inaya	Haddad, Roula	Naser, Nuha
Ajlouny, Edward & Nellie	Hadaddin, Angela	Nassif, Faris & Mabell
Akkary, Marwan & Yara	Hadaya, William & Aiya	Nicholson, Adla
Akkary, Johnny & Narmen	Hage, Samuel & Maya	Nijmeh, Anton
Akra, Ibrahim & Nadia	Halteh, Anwar & Diana	Nystrom, Alia
Amireh, Daad	Hanani, Elias & Wardia	Odeh, Rajai & Suhaila
Amireh, Nahida	Hanani, Maher & Randa	Omran, George & Jeanette
Anagnos, Gus & Christina	Hanhan, Sal & Laila	Oshana, Johnny & Mera
Appelton, Lovette	Hanhan, Yvonne	Otell, Daniel & Jocelyne
Araj, David & May	Hanna, David & Marta	Rubenstein, Sara
Asfour, Jeannette	Hanna, Margaret	Saah, Widad
Asfour, Salim & Wardeh	Horn, Bobby & Mihaela	Saah, Abdallah & Hala
Assefa, Helen	Jaber, Najla	Saah, David, Najwa & Rami
Awad, Marwan & Mona	Jaber, Nawal	Saba, Tony & Marianne
Aweiss, Salem & Samia	Jammal, Mary	Sakellar, Virginia
Azar, Bashar & Alexandra	Jammal, Michel & Therese	Sakkab, Hilda
Azar, Nicholas & Sonia	Jammal, Peter & Maria	Salah, John & Linda
Baker, Jonathan & Dania	Jarrouche, Yaacoub & Terry	Salah, Mary
Barghash, Hadi & Suzan	Kacker, Viraj	Salah, Paul
Bargouth, George & Rowida	Kakunda, Bishara & Marlene	Salameh, Majida
Bateh, Jad & Elaine	Kakunda, Michael & Leila	Salameh, Nader & Summer
Bateh, Nawal	Kassis, Samer & Rana	Skikos, Steve & Ida
Bateh, George	Kattuah, Suad	Samawi, Karam
Batmani, Nabil & Basma	Kawwas, Charlie & Carol Sara	Sara, Msalam & Majd
Batmani, Spir & Jehan	Kerba, Emile & Jacqueline	Saoud, Suzan
Baransy, Anan & Lubna	Kerba, Nabil & Josette	Swanson, Giselle Salloum
Bou Reslan, Hani & Nicole	Khamis, Johnny & Joulyana	Sayigh, Basim & Sonia
Daya, Anis & May	Khinno, Edmund & Maria	Segal, Mitchell & Maria
Dimes, Violette	Khoury, Bassam & Dima	Skaff, George & May
Doughert, Annemarie	Khoury, Richard	Sleiman, Nayla
Dughman, Sami & Amal	Khoury, Sami & Kamilia	Srouji, Almaza
DeVore, Noah	Kreitem, George & Adele	Stratton, Katherine
Eid, Richard & Annette	Kreitem, Ibtisam	Tarazi, Ibtisam & Dalia
Eideh, Hanna & Suad	Labban, George & Ghazal	Tarazi, Raja & Fadwa
Eideh, Sana	Lara, Christian & Yessica	Tepper, Maxx
Elmasu, Osama & Hala	Leopold, Weston & Angela	Theologides, Athanasios & Maria
Fasheh. Diana	Liwi, Adrena	Timothy, Jake & Caitlin
Fasheh, Hiyam	Liwi, Douglas	Vaisberg, Victor & Inessa
Fasheh, Maher & Dimah	Lomeli, Scott & Vivian	Veizades, Henry & Sheila
Gannage, Michel & Rima	Louis, Joseph & Najah	Xu, Esther
Ghattas, Hanna & Madlen	Lutton, Chip & Jennifer	Youssef, Dimitry
Godfrey, Richard & Nancy	Lutton, Richard	Youssef, Fr. Samer and Julianna
Green, David & Lauren		Zabaneh, Randy & Mary

BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

$500,000 MATCHING CHALLENGE!

By God's grace, we are closer than ever to beginning construction of our new Fellowship Hall, Sunday School classrooms, administrative space, and Preschool.
We have been blessed with an extraordinary $500,000 Matching Challenge. Every donation made toward the Building Project through December 31, 2026, will be matched dollar for dollar, up to $500,000. Your gift will have DOUBLE the impact!
$100 becomes $200 • $500 becomes $1,000 • $5,000 becomes $10,000
The Building Committee and Parish Council continue working diligently to finalize the general contractor selection and remaining project details. A General Parish Meeting will be held in October to present the latest project updates, financial information, and proposed construction timeline. The meeting date will be announced soon.
This is an important moment in the life of our parish. We prayerfully encourage every parishioner and friend of the Church of the Redeemer to participate and help us take advantage of the full $500,000 match. Together, we are building for our children, our families, our ministries, and future generations.

DOUBLE the Impact. DOUBLE the Blessing.
Give by December 31, 2026.

GIVE TO ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

https://www.orthodoxredeemer.org/funds



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, 2026.

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: _____