



# St. Elias Melkite Catholic Church

Serving San Jose Valley & Bay Area, CA

## Church Information

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## Mailing Address

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## Pastor

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo  
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## Sunday Service Time

Divine Liturgy: 11:00 am  
(Confession beforehand)

## THIS WEEK

### Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>

Following Divine Liturgy:  
One Year Memorial Service for  
Jubran Abughazaleh, Father of  
Ilham Khoury

### Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>

Online Bible Study @ 8:00pm

## Coffee Socials and Qurban

### This Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>

**Qurban:** Elham Khoury  
**Coffee Social:** Elham Khoury

### Next Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>

**Qurban:** Holly Handal  
**Coffee Social:** Isis Hinady & Laila  
Moussa

## Please pray for:

### The Orthodox Servants of God

The Khoury Family  
Joseph Halo  
Benjamin & Angele St. Hilaire

### The Orthodox Servants Asleep in the Lord

Jubran Abughazaleh  
Gladys Farah  
Iyad Naffa  
Holly Halo

If you have names you would  
like added to the list of  
commemorations, please send  
to [steliasmelkite@gmail.com](mailto:steliasmelkite@gmail.com)

**Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**12<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost – The Rich Young Man**

### Troparion of the Resurrection (3<sup>rd</sup> Tone)

Let all in heaven rejoice, and all on earth be glad, for the Lord has exerted power with His arm: By death He has trampled upon Death, and has become the firstborn from the dead. He has delivered us from the bosom of Hades and has granted to the world great mercy.

### **Troparion of the Transfiguration**

You were transfigured on the mountain, O Christ God, and you showed your disciples as much of your glory as they could hold. Let your eternal light shine also upon us sinners, through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Giver of light, glory to You.

### **Epistle** 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

I remind you of the Good News I preached to you, and which you received, and in which you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold fast to it as I preached it to you — otherwise you would have believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all what I had also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Kephas, and after that, to the Twelve. Then He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at one time, many of whom are still with us, while some have fallen asleep. After that, He was seen by James, then by all the apostles, and last of all, as by one born out of due time, He was seen also by me. For I am the least of the apostles, and am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted God's Church. But by God's grace, I am what I am, and His grace in me has not been fruitless — in fact, I have labored more than any of them, yet not I, but God's grace with me. Whether it be I or they (who speak), this is what we preach, and this you have believed.

### **Gospel** Matthew 19:16-26

At that time a certain young man came to Jesus and said, "Good Master, what good work shall I do to have eternal life?" He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but God. But if you will enter into life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which?" And Jesus answered, "Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and mother, and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The young man said to Him, "All these I have kept; what is still lacking in me?" Jesus said to him, "If you will be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard these words, he went away sad, for he had great possessions. But Jesus said to His disciples, "Amen I say to you, with difficulty will a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven. And further I say to you it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." The disciples, hearing this, were exceedingly astonished, and said, "Who then can be saved?" And looking upon them, Jesus said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **DORMITION FAST PACKETS**

If you were not able to receive a copy of the packets given out last Sunday: "The Fast of the Theotokos in the Home," there are more copies available this Sunday. Please take one home as a resource for your family in preparation for the Feast of the Dormition.

### **E-MAIL LIST**

If you are not receiving Parish e-mails, please make sure to write down your e-mail address on the clipboard that will be passed around at this Sunday's Coffee Social. You may also e-mail Holly Handal at [steliasmelkite@gmail.com](mailto:steliasmelkite@gmail.com)

### **ST. BASIL ICONOGRAPHY MEETING – FRIDAY, AUGUST 12<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 pm**

All are invited and welcome to attend! More information can be found on the homepage of our website: [steliasmelkite.org](http://steliasmelkite.org)

## Saint of the Day: Martyr Dometius of Persia {Credit: OCA.org}

St Dometius lived in Persia during the fourth century. In his youth he was converted to the Faith by a Christian named Uaros. Forsaking Persia, he withdrew to the frontier city of Nisibis (in Mesopotamia), where he was baptized in one of the monasteries, and also received the monastic tonsure. Fleeing the ill-will of some of the monks, St Dometius moved to the monastery of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in the city of Theodosiopolis. The monastery was under the guidance of an archimandrite named Urbelos, a strict ascetic, of whom it was said that for sixty years he did not taste cooked food, nor did he lay down for sleep, but rather took his rest standing up, supporting himself upon his staff. In this monastery St Dometius was ordained a deacon, but when the archimandrite decided to have him made a presbyter, the saint, considering himself unworthy, hid himself on a desolate mountain in Syria, in the region of Cyrrhus. Stories about him constantly spread among the local inhabitants. They began to come to him for healing and for help. Many pagans were brought to faith in Christ by Dometius. And one time, in the locality where St Dometius struggled with his disciples, the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363) arrived, traveling on his campaign against the Persians. By order of the emperor, soldiers found St Dometius praying with his disciples in a cave, and walled them up alive inside.

## FROM THE DIOCESE OF NEWTON: THE 12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST "SHINING LIKE THE SUN"

TOWARDS THE END of Jesus' public ministry He began preparing His disciples for His approaching death and resurrection. In *Mt 16* this scene concludes with the following prophecy: "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom" (v. 28). This is immediately followed by a fulfillment of this prophecy: the holy transfiguration of Christ. As St Gregory Palamas says in his homily on this feast, "It is the light of His own forthcoming transfiguration which He terms the Glory of His Father and of His Kingdom."

At Christ's transfiguration "some standing here" – Peter, James and John – witnessed the Lord in the glory of His kingdom, if only for a moment. He was not changed – they were. They were able to see what is always there but which they could not imagine before: that God dwelt in man.

St Gregory Palamas describes it this way: "Christ was transfigured, not by the addition of something He was not, nor by a transformation into something He was not, but by the manifestation to His disciples of what He really was. He opened their eyes so that instead of being blind they could see. While He Himself remained the same, they could now see Him as other than He had appeared to them formerly. For He is 'the true light' (*Jn 1:9*), the beauty of divine glory, and He shone forth like the sun."

As St Ephrem the Syrian expressed it, "They saw two suns; one in the sky, as usual, and one unusually; one visible in the firmament and lighting the world, and one, His face, visible to them alone" (*Sermon on the Transfiguration*, 8). In one sense we can say that Christ was not transfigured; it was the Apostles' ability to see Him which was transfigured.

### "What He Really Was"

For a moment Christ was revealed to the disciples as what He really was: God incarnate in our human flesh. "We believe that at the transfiguration He manifested not some other sort of light, but only that which was concealed beneath His fleshly exterior. This Light was the Light of the Divine Nature, and as such, it was Uncreated and Divine" (St Gregory Palamas, *Homily on the Transfiguration*).

This Light was manifested to the disciples in the radiance of His face and garments: "His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light" (*Mt 17:2*). As Mark describes it, "His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them" (*Mk 9:3*). The immaterial divine nature of the Son of God is manifested in the physical sign of a shining face and garments because this was all that the Disciples could absorb. As we sing in the troparion of this feast, Christ was "showing Your disciples as much of Your glory as they could behold." Over succeeding centuries, the Church deepened its understanding of the Incarnation, but not without disagreement. It took several hundred years and several Ecumenical Councils for the Church to articulate its faith in Christ as the incarnate Word of God. By the fourth century the Church was calling Christ "Light from Light, true God from true God... of one essence with the Father" but it took several more centuries and councils to grasp the implications of that statement.

As iconography developed it settled on one particular form to represent the divine nature of the light perceived by the Disciples. The *mandorla* is a design made up of overlapping geometrical shapes which surrounds the image of Christ in icons of the transfiguration. The basic mandorla – an Italian word meaning *almond* – contains three round or oval concentric circles, in shades of blue or gold, representing the Trinity. The innermost circle is of the deepest shade representing the unseen Father. Other geometrical shapes represent the energy of the divine light shining upon the Disciples. The mandorla is generally used in icons representing the glorified Christ at His transfiguration and resurrection and when receiving His Mother at her dormition.

### What We Are Meant to Become

In the mystery of Christ's transfiguration the Church has caught a glimpse of what those who are in Christ are meant to be: persons who in their humanity can have God dwelling in them, reflecting that presence as light. The Lord Himself tells us that at His second coming "the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (*Mt 1:43*). The custom of depicting saints and angels with haloes derives from this prophetic statement of Christ.

Becoming "righteous" is our task in this life, in preparation for the glory to come. In both the Old and New Testaments we are frequently instructed how we may become righteous. In the New Testament, however, these instructions are phrased in terms of God dwelling in us. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (*Col 1:27*) is the One whose presence within us guarantees our righteousness before God. This is the "mystery hidden from eternity" (*Col 1:26*), which the Greek Fathers called *theosis*, the process of our transformation by the presence of God within us.

This process of *theosis* begins with our baptism. As we sing so often in our services, "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (*Gal 3:27*). God dwells within us but requires that we "put on Christ" by the way we live. "We were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (*Rom 6:4*). Our cooperation with God dwelling in us to transform us is called *synergy* by the Fathers: the life-long task of consciously becoming God-like in our thoughts, words and actions in order to radiate the presence of God within us by Baptism.

Despite all our best efforts, none of us – not even the saints – can so unwaveringly combat our passions that we realize our potential on our own. And so Christ has given us an outward sign of His love in the mystery of the Eucharist to which we can return again and again. By sharing in this holy mystery we can reinforce our awareness of His saving presence in us and derive the strength we need for our daily ascent to God. Through the holy mysteries and our striving to live like Christ we can attain a likeness to God and union with Him so far as possible. We who are not holy by nature can become holy, and become partakers of glory.

### Looking to the Last Day

In the Second Epistle of St Peter we read his eye-witness account of the transfiguration (*2 Pt 1:16-18*). This is what follows: "And so we have this sure prophetic word, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (v.19). The Transfiguration is thus a prophetic anticipation of Christ's glorious second coming when the "morning star" (Christ) will fill us with His light.

The Transfiguration, then, symbolizes the life to come and thus the goal of every Christian pursuit. As St Gregory the Theologian expressed it in his Third Oration *On the Son*, the holy transfiguration of Christ initiates us "into the mystery of the future".

***O Giver of life, You bent down to the pit without falling into it and raised me up who had fallen. You bore my foul-smelling corruption untouched, and made me sweet-smelling with the myrrh of Your divine nature.***