



St. Elias Melkite Catholic Church

Serving San Jose Valley & Bay Area, CA

Church Information

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Pastor

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo
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Sunday Service Time

Divine Liturgy: 11:00 am

Confession Times

Wednesdays: 5:30-6:30 pm
Sundays: Before Divine Liturgy

THIS WEEK

Wednesday, August 24th

Bible Study @ 8:00pm
(Online and in Church Hall)

Coffee Socials and Qurban

This Sunday, August 21st

Qurban: Amal Gamoney
Coffee Social: Amal Gamoney

Next Sunday, August 28th

Qurban: Holly Handal
Coffee Social: Nabil Matta

Please pray for:

The Orthodox Servants of God

The Gamoney Family
Rosemary Hashimoto & Family
Amy Willis
Dorothy Feder
Rita Granahm

The Orthodox Servants Asleep in the Lord

William and Janet Chang
Janice Ligon

If you have names you would like added to the list of commemorations, please send to steliasmelkite@gmail.com

Sunday, August 21st 2016

14th Sunday After Pentecost – The King's Marriage Feast

Troparion of the Resurrection (5th Tone)

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our Salvation, for He was pleased to be lifted in the flesh upon the cross, and to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

Troparion of the Dormition

In giving birth you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

Epistle 2 Corinthians 1: 21-2:4

BRETHREN, the one who strengthened you and us in Christ, who anointed us, is God, who also stamped us with his seal and gave us the Spirit as a pledge in our hearts. Now, I call God to witness against my soul that it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth. Not that we lord it over your faith, but rather we are fellow-workers in your joy, for in faith you stand. (2:1) I made up my mind not to come to you again in sorrow. For if I make you sad, who can gladden me; save the very one who is grieved by me? And I wrote to you as I did, that when I come I may not have sorrow upon sorrow from those who ought to give me joy: for I trust in all of you that my joy is a joy to all of you. For I wrote to you in much affliction and anguish of heart, with many tears, not that you might be grieved, but that you might know the great love I have for you.

Gospel Matthew 22: 2-14 (*Parable of the Wedding Feast*)

The Lord told this parable: The kingdom of heaven is like a king who made a marriage feast for his son. And he sent his servants to call in those invited to the marriage feast, but they would not come. Again he sent out other servants saying: 'Tell those who are invited, behold. I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and fatlings are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.' But they made light of it, and went off, one to his own farm and another to his business; and the rest laid hold of his servants treated them shamefully, and killed them. But when the king heard of it, he was angry; and he sent his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The marriage feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; go therefore to the crossroads, and invite to the marriage feast whomever you shall find.' And his servants went out into the roads and gathered all those they found, both good and bad; and the marriage feast was filled with guests. Now the king went in to see the guests, and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' But he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, take hold of him, and throw him out into the darkness, where there will be weeping and the gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday Bible Study- August 24th @ 8:00 pm

Join us this Wednesday for our weekly Bible Study. **This week the Bible Study will be held in the Church Hall, with an option to log in online.** Fr. Sebastian will be hearing confessions in the Church from 5:30-6:30pm.

September Sign-Ups: Qurban and Coffee Socials

We need volunteers to sign up for Qurban and Coffee Socials for the month of September. Please sign up in the Church Hall at the Coffee Social this Sunday or e-mail Holly Handal at steliasmelkite@gmail.com Thank you!

Saints of the Day: Holy Apostle Thaddeus & Holy Woman Martyr Bassa and her Children {Credit: OCA.org}

- Thaddeus is the same apostle as James whose main feast is on June 19. When he came to Jerusalem for a feast day, he heard the preaching of John the Forerunner. After being baptized by him in the Jordan, he remained in Palestine. He saw the Savior, and became His follower. After the Ascension of the Savior to Heaven, St Thaddeus preached the good news in Syria and Mesopotamia. According to an ancient Armenian tradition, St Thaddeus, after various tortures, was beheaded by the sword on December 21 in the Artaz region in the year 50).
- The Martyr Bassa with her sons Theognis, Agapius and Pistus, lived in the city of Macedonian Edessa and she was married to a pagan priest. From childhood she had been raised in the Christian Faith, which she passed on to her sons. During the reign of the emperor Maximian Galerius (305-311), the husband denounced his wife and children to the governor. In spite of threats, the boys refused to offer sacrifice to idols, so they were tortured and put to death. St Bassa was thrown into prison and was weakened by hunger, but an angel strengthened her with heavenly food. Under successive tortures she remained unharmed by fire, water and beasts. When they brought her to a pagan temple, she shattered the statue of Zeus. Then they threw the martyr into a whirlpool in the sea. But to everyone's surprise a ship sailed up, and three radiant men pulled her up. After eight days St Bassa came by ship to the governor of the island of Alona. After beating her with rods, they beheaded her.

FROM THE DIOCESE OF NEWTON: THE 14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST "THE BURIAL OF THE THEOTOKOS"

AN INCREASING NUMBER of Byzantine churches are observing the Feast of the Dormition by conducting the Burial Service of the Theotokos. This observance comes to us from the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the traditional site of her death and burial. On the morning of August 14 a procession sets out from the Patriarchate, bearing the icon of the Dormition. They leave the Old City and cross the Kedron Valley, arriving at Gethsemane and the tomb of the Theotokos. There the people, passing beneath the icon, enter the church where the burial shroud of the Theotokos has been displayed for veneration. On the closing of the feast, August 23, another procession returns the icon and the shroud to the Patriarchate.

The Tomb of the Holy Virgin

We do not know when the site of the Virgin's tomb in Gethsemane, at the foot of Mount Olivet, became a place of Christian devotion. Some say that the first church there had been built by St Helena in the fourth century. There was clearly a church there in the fifth century. It is well documented that the first Patriarch of Jerusalem, St Juvenal, had taken the veil of the Theotokos from this shrine and sent it to the Empress Pulcheria who had asked him for the Virgin's "relics" after the Council of Chalcedon (451). The Patriarch replied, "Three days after her repose, the body of the Holy Virgin was raised up to heaven, and the Tomb in the Garden of Gethsemane bears only her Veil." The Patriarch then sent this relic to Constantinople where it was then enshrined in the Church of the Theotokos at Blachernae, a district of Constantinople.

A church was built at the site of the virgin's tomb in 582 by the Byzantine Emperor Maurice. This church was destroyed during the Persian invasion of 614 but rebuilt soon afterward. During the Crusades it was destroyed again, leaving only the crypt – the actual place of the tomb – and the steps descending to it. Today the crypt-church is served jointly by the Greek Patriarchate and the Armenian Patriarchate. The church also contains chapels used by the Coptic and Syriac Orthodox.

The Burial Service

The first record of such a service performed outside Jerusalem dates from the fifteenth century. In Russia rectors of churches dedicated to the Mother of God were encouraged to erect a tomb or bier on the solea in which the icon of the feast could be enshrined. Matins could then be served before this tomb.

It was also in the fifteenth century that the lamentations on the burial of Christ were composed in Jerusalem. They are sung today in the Orthros of Holy Saturday, one of the more popular moments in the rites of the Holy Week in the Greek and Middle Eastern Churches. Due to the interaction of Greeks and Italians in this period we often see a burial of Christ service, including the Greek melodies of the Lamentations, used by Italian and Spanish Roman Catholics as well.

Around one hundred years later, in 1541, the Greek Metropolitan Dionysios of Old Patras in western Greece composed the service for the burial of the Theotokos, in imitation of the service for the burial of Christ. It is this service which has spread throughout the Byzantine world today.

At first the principal image used in this service was the icon of the Dormition, as in Jerusalem. As the burial of the Theotokos came to be celebrated as imitation of the Burial of Christ, use of the shroud of the Theotokos became popular.

Passing through Death to Life

Some people feel that this imitation of the burial of Christ detracts from people's understanding of Pascha as the climactic event of world history, the death and resurrection of the Savior. The Holy Virgin, after all, did not rise from the dead as Christ did; she lived and died in a purely human, if immaculate way.

Since there is no mention of the Virgin's death in the New Testament, some Christians have come to believe that Mary did not die at all but was translated to glory without being subject to death. There is no evidence nor is there a tradition that this was believed in the Christian East. The Theotokos died by the necessity of her human nature, which is indivisibly bound up with the corruption of this world. Like us she was mortal. Unlike us, her natural mortality did not lead her to sin (spiritual death).

The Church believes that Mary died as all humans die, but that it was granted that she enter now in her body the glorification awaiting all the saints in the life of the age to come. The Theotokos thus becomes a sign confirming that Christ's death and Resurrection truly accomplished for all mankind, not just for Himself, the destruction of Hades and the defeat of Death. Her Repose demonstrates the reality of the transformation of death from a fearful enemy into a joyous passage to life.

Besides pointing back to the death and Resurrection of Christ, the Repose of the Theotokos points ahead to what is to come: that all who are in Christ will share in the life of the angels in the resurrected body. As Father Alexander Schmemmann put it, "Mary is not the great exception;" rather she is the great example given to us as a witness of what is meant for us all. As we say in the Creed, we "look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." The Feast of the Dormition gives us a glimpse of what that might be.

Lamentations at the Tomb of the Theotokos (*Third Stasis*)

Ev'ry generation to your tomb comes bringing its dirge of praises, O Virgin.	Pious Women with the Apostles now cry out their lamentations.	Let us be attentive God is now speaking with His most pure Mother:	"What will I bring You, O my God in heaven except my soul and body.
All of creation to the tomb comes bringing a farewell hymn to our Lady.	She who was at Cana at the marriage has been called with the Apostles.	"Behold now your Son comes to bring you into His home in the heavens.	The Father I glorify to the Son I sing a hymn the Holy Spirit I worship."
Christ's holy Disciples tend to the body of Mary, Mother of my God.	The Master descends now to Gethsemane with countless hosts of heaven.	Come indeed, My Mother, come into divine joy and enter into the kingdom."	
Orders of Angels and Archangels invisibly hymn her presence.	Let us go out quickly To meet the Lord Jesus Who comes once more among us.	"What will I bring You, O my Son, the God-Man" the Maiden cried to the Master.	