



# 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 Times

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

## THIS WEEK

### Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>

Bible Study @ 7:00pm  
(Online and in Church Hall)

### Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>

Ladies Group @ 11:00am  
Meet at Chili's on Almaden Expy

## Coffee Socials and Qurban

### This Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>

**Qurban:** Linda Kaldani  
**Coffee Social:** Areej Kildani

### Next Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Qurban:** Holly Handal  
**Coffee Social:** Amal Gamoney

## Please pray for:

### The Orthodox Servants of God

Khourieh Theresa Leonarczyk  
Anne Hashimoto and Family  
William Connelly  
Nicholas Lemme  
Louis Carnazzo  
Zachary Hynes  
Madelena Taurke  
Ryan & Maria Landry

### The Orthodox Servants Asleep in the Lord

Rosemary Hashimoto

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

Sunday, September 25, 2016

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday After the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – The Miraculous Catch

## Troparion of the Resurrection (2<sup>nd</sup> Tone)

When You descended to death, O immortal Life \* You put Hades to death by the splendor of Your divinity \* And when You raised the dead from below the earth \* all the heavenly powers cried out to you \* "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!"

## Epistle 2 Corinthians 11:31-33 & 12:1-9

BRETHREN, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, Who is blessed forever, knows that I do not lie. In Damascus, the Governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to arrest me, but I was lowered in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands. (12: 1) It is not fitting for me to boast: but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I do not know, or out of the body, I do not know: God knows) was caught up into paradise and heard secret sayings that man may not repeat. Of such a man I will boast; but of myself I will glory in nothing except my weaknesses. For if I do wish to boast, I shall not be foolish, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I give up, lest any man have an idea of me beyond what he sees in me or hears from me. And lest the greatness of the revelation puff me up, there was given to me a thorn for the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. Concerning this, I begged the Lord three times that it might leave me, but He said to me, "My grace is enough for you, for strength is made perfect in weakness." Gladly, then, will I glory in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may dwell in me.

## Gospel 1st Sunday of the Holy Cross Luke 5:1-11

At that time Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats moored by the lake, but the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. And getting into one of the boats, the one that was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And sitting down, he began to teach the crowds from the boat. But when he had stopped speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep, and lower your nets for a catch." And Simon answered and said to him, "Master, the whole night through we have toiled and have taken nothing; but at your word I will lower the net." And when they had done so, they caught a great number of fishes, but their net was breaking. And they called to their comrades in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish they had made; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you shall catch men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed him.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MEMORIAL THIS SUNDAY

+ Rosemary Hashimoto, mother of Anne Hashimoto of our parish, fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. We will be having a memorial service for Rosemary immediately following Divine Liturgy this Sunday. Please continue to keep the Hashimoto family in your prayers. +

### NEW LADIES GROUP GATHERING: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup> @ 11:00am

All ladies of St. Elias, please mark your calendars for our first Ladies Group gathering on Saturday, October 1st at 11:00 am! This will be a special time to visit together and support each other as sisters in Christ. Meet at Chili's: 5650 Almaden Expressway, San Jose CA 95118

## Saints of the Day: Venerable Mother Euphrosyne and our Holy Father Among the Saints Sergius of Radonezh

● **Euphrosyne**, the daughter of a very rich man, lived in Egypt in the fifth century. On the day appointed for her wedding, she left her parents' house secretly. With her hair cut short and dressed in a man's attire, she retired in a monastery where she lived a life of prayer and penance.

● **Kontakion of Euphrosyne:** When you longed for the life of the spirit, you turned away forcefully from the delights of the world: you put on a man's clothing and abandoned your earthly beloved for Christ your bridegroom. O Venerable Mother Euphrosyne, you are worthy of all praise.

● **Sergius of Radonezh** is one of the most beloved saints of Russia. Born to a noble and rich family sometime between 1314 and 1319, he gave up all earthly possessions and devoted himself to the moral rebuilding of his people, humiliated and demoralized by a century of domination by Tartar hords. Because of Sergius' humility, simplicity and love for God and neighbor, he is often compared to St. Francis of Assisi. He died on September 25, 1392

## FROM THE DIOCESE: 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY AFTER THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS: "PATRON OF CHURCH MUSICIANS"

One of the more popular chants in our Church is the kondakion of Christ's Nativity, "Today the Virgin gives birth..." What many do not know is that this hymn is an excerpt from a much longer work and that it was written by St Romanos the Melodist.

### Who is This Saint?

St Romanos was born in Homs, Syria (some say Damascus), to a Jewish family in the latter part of the fifth century. We do not know when he was baptized or whether his family was converted as well. As a young man he moved to Beirut and entered the service of the local Church. One source says that he was ordained a deacon there; others say that his ordination came later. During the reign of Emperor Anastasios (490-518) Romanos moved again, this time to Constantinople where the patriarch accepted him among the local clergy. He lived at the Monastery of the Theotokos in Kyros, a district of the capital. He ended his life as sacristan of the Great Church, an important position responsible for the vessels and other liturgical items of Hagia Sophia. It was here that he composed his poetic works. According to a popular legend, Romanos did not have a pleasing voice or any special skill as a chanter. To embarrass him at a service attended by the emperor (perhaps the Royal Hours) other clerics gave him a difficult piece to chant which drew attention to his limitations. Afterwards, while Romanos was resting before the All-Night Vigil for the feast, the Theotokos appeared to him in a dream, offering him a scroll to eat. As we say in the canon for this feast, "Appearing to you at night, the Ever-virgin, who truly gave birth to the incarnate Son of God, illumined your soul and filled your mind with divine understanding." That night Romanos mounted the ambo again and astounded the congregation with his hymn, "Today the Virgin gives birth..." From then on Romanos' poetic and music gifts became legendary. He has been called "Sweet Singer," "theorhetor" (God's poet), and "the Pindar of rhythmic poetry."

### Romanos' Verse Form, the Kondakion

Romanos' great contribution to liturgical poetry is the kondakion. The hymn to which we give that title in our services today is simply the first verse of the kondakia which Romanos and others after him had composed. Romanos' kondakia were more like the Akathist Hymns we know: a series of poetic verses sung by a soloist with recurring refrains sung by the people or choir. Romanos was often credited with composing the Akathist to the Theotokos, but this does not seem to be the case. Romanos did compose a number of kondakia, a number of which have survived although most of them are no longer used liturgically. A newer poetic form, the canon was popularized in the eighth century by two other Syrian saints, the step-brothers John of Damascus and Cosmas of Maiuma. Canons came to replace the kondakia in the services of the Byzantine Churches. Musicologists believe that the kondakion had its origin in a type of Syriac poetical homily called the *memrâ*, which was a sort of paraphrase of a Gospel passage, a kind of homily or sermon in verse that was chanted to music. A kind of *memrâ* is still heard today in the popular Arabic verses sung in honor of the participants at a wedding or baptism. Romanos blended this Syriac form with the conventions of classical Greek dramatic poetry.

### The Kondakion of the Nativity

The following are the first three (of the 24) verses of St Romanos' Nativity Kondakion which illustrate the style of this poetic form"

Today the Virgin gives birth  
to the Transcendent in Essence,  
And the earth presents a cave  
to the Inaccessible.  
The angels with the shepherds  
sing His glory  
And the Wise Men with the star  
travel on their way,  
For to us is born *a little Child*  
*who is God from all eternity.*

Bethlehem has opened Eden, come, let us see; we have found delight in secret, come, let us receive the joys of Paradise within the cave. There the unwatered root whose blossom is forgiveness has appeared. There has been found the undug well from which David once longed to drink. There a virgin has borne a babe and has quenched at once Adam's and David's thirst. For this, let us hasten to this place where there has been born *a little Child who is God from all eternity.*

The mother's Father has willingly become her Son, the infants' savior is laid as an infant in a manger. As she who bore him contemplates him, she says, "Tell me, my Child, how were you sown, or how were you planted in me? I see you, my flesh and blood, and I am amazed, because I give suck and yet I am not married. And though I see you in swaddling clothes, I know that the flower of my virginity is sealed, for you preserved it when, in your good pleasure, you were born *a little Child who is God from all eternity.*

"High King, what have You to do with beggars? Maker of heaven, why have You come to those born of earth? Did You love a cave or take pleasure in a manger? See, there is no place for Your servant in the inn, I do not say a place, not even a cave, for that too belongs to another. To Sara, when she bore a child, a vast land was given as her lot. To me, not even a fox hole. I used the cavern where willingly You made your dwelling," *a little Child who is God from all eternity.*

Down to the twelfth century this Christmas kondakion was performed by a double choir (from Hagia Sophia and the Holy Apostles) at the imperial banquet on the feast of Christ's Nativity.

### Romanos' Other Works

A number of other kondakia by this saint have been translated into English. Only two of them are still used liturgically, at least in part. The first verse of Romanos' Kondakion on the Victory of the Cross is sung on the Third Sunday of the Great Fast: "The angel's fiery sword will no longer guard the gate of Paradise, for the cross of the Lord has put it out wondrously. The power of death has been broken, the victory of Hades wiped out, and You, my Savior, have stood up and called out to all those bound in hell: 'Come now, and enter into heaven.'" The first verse of his Kondakion for the Palms is still sung on Palm Sunday: "O Christ God, enthroned in heaven and on earth riding upon a colt, You have accepted the praise of the angels and the hymns of the children who were crying out to You, 'Blessed are You who come to restore Adam.'"

We might reflect on these first verses of Romanos' Kondakion on the Passion which is no longer used in our services:

"Today the foundations of the earth were shaken. The sun was changed, for it could not bear to watch. For the One who gives life to all was being put on a cross, Paradise had been opened to the transgression of old – *Only Adam dances.*" Heaven, tremble and be amazed. Earth, sink down in chaos. Sun, do not dare to look on your Master willingly hanged upon the Tree. Let rocks be shattered, for the Rock of life is now being wounded by the nails. Let the veil of the temple be rent in two as the Master's body is pierced with a lance by the lawless. In short, let all creation tremble, groan at the passion of the Creator. *Only Adam dances.*"