



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

Monday, October 31st

Saints Day Party @ 5:30pm

Wednesday, November 2nd

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

Saturday, November 5th

Ladies Gathering @ 11:00am
Meet at Sweet Tomatoes
113 Bernal Rd. in San Jose

Coffee Socials and Qurban

This Sunday, October 30th

Qurban: Holly Handal
Coffee Social: Holly Handal

Next Sunday, November 6th

Qurban: Marie Elhage
Coffee Social: Marie Elhage

Please pray for:

The Orthodox Servants of God

Bishop John Elya
Leslie Griffin
Victoria Shelton
David Solis

The Orthodox Servants Asleep in the Lord

Evelyn Yered
John Courname
Nadine Dale

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

Sunday, October 30, 2016

6th Sunday After the Holy Cross – The Rich Man and Lazarus

Troparion of the Resurrection (7th Tone)

You destroyed Death by Your cross * You opened paradise to the thief * You changed the weeping of the myrrhbearers * and commanded Your apostles to proclaim * that You, O Christ God, have risen * granting to the world great mercy.

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22

BRETHREN, Christ is our peace. He it is who has made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and has broken down the intervening wall of the enclosure, the enemy, in his flesh. He has voided the Law of commandments expressed in decrees, so that of the two he might create in himself one new man, and make peace, and reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, having destroyed their enmity within himself. And as he came, he announced the good tidings of peace to you who were far away, and of peace to those who were near: because through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. Therefore, you are now no longer strangers or foreigners, but citizens with the saints and members of God's household: you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Cf. Is. 28: 16) with Christ himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole structure is closely fitted together and grows into a temple holy in the Lord; in him you too are being built together into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.

Gospel of the 6th Sunday of Holy Cross Luke 16:19-31 (*The Rich Man & Lazarus*)

At that time, the Lord told this parable; "there was certain rich man who used to clothe himself in purple and fine linen, and who feasted every day in splendid fashion. And there was a certain poor man, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. And it came to pass that the poor man died and was borne away by the angels into Abraham's bosom; but the rich man also died and was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes, being in torments, he saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham have pity on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember you in your lifetime have received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now here he is comforted whereas you are tormented. And besides all that, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, so that those who wish to pass over from this side to you cannot, and they cannot cross from your side to us.' And he said, 'Then, father, I pray you to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they too come into this place of torments.' And Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' But he answered, 'No father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not believe even if someone rises from the dead.'"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BISHOP'S APPEAL

In today's Gospel of the Rich Man and Lazarus, our Lord warns us that the time to act with mercy and generosity is NOW. "Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation." Let us open our hearts and hands to the needs of our Melkite brothers and sisters, and let us get personally involved in growing our Melkite Church for future generations, promoting our beautiful Liturgy and traditions. If you have not already done so, respond now with generosity to Christ's call by giving your gift today to the Bishops Appeal. Give joyfully from the heart for "God loves a cheerful giver." Thank you for your generosity!

SAINTS DAY PARTY - MONDAY, OCTOBER 31 @ 5:30pm

All parishioners are invited to attend our Saints Day Party. Children should come dressed like their favorite Saint from the Old Testament, New Testament, or Church History. We will have a brief evening prayer together, followed by dinner and games. One of the games will be "Guess that Saint." Bring a favorite candy to share. Dinner will be provided.

ST. ELIAS LADIES GATHERING - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5 @ 11:00am

All ladies of St. Elias are invited and encouraged to attend this gathering. This will be a special time to for the ladies to visit together and support each other as sisters in Christ. Meet at SWEET TOMATOES, 113 Bernal Rd, San Jose, CA 95119.

Saints of the Day: The Holy Martyr Zenobius and His Sister Zenobia

Zenobius and Zenobia were put to death by the sword under Emperor Diocletian after being thrown into boiling tar out of which they emerged unharmed.

FROM THE DIOCESE: 6TH SUNDAY AFTER THE FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS: "NO LONGER 'AFAR OFF'"

WE CONTINUE READING the Epistle to the Ephesians today, moving on to chapter two. Here St Paul reflects on the new reality in God's plan for the salvation of the world, the Church. The People of God is now more than the people of Israel – Jews and Gentiles have been brought together by the grace of God. As Paul tells his Gentile readers, "*Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ*" (Eph 2:12, 13).

In describing this new reality St Paul uses some terms which may seem strange to us today, but which would have made perfect sense to the original readers of this epistle. The first such term comes at the beginning of chapter two.

"The Prince of the Power of the Air"

St Paul uses this term to refer to Satan: "*And you He made alive, who were dead in the trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience...*" But why is he "the prince of the power of the air"?

Modern fundamentalists often point to radio and television or the internet as the power of the *airwaves*, which corrupt people. These media are therefore satanic, according to this interpretation. While there is much in these media to be avoided, St Paul is certainly not referring to them – the only airborne media existing in his day would have been smoke signals!

Others have pointed to meteorological phenomena as indications that there is a demonic presence in our midst. There is no basis in fact for such an assumption, other than that these phenomena take place "in the air."

Rather, in the understanding of the Jews at that time, there were three regions above the earth. The lowest was described as the air (in Greek, *aer*), the place of spiritual powers hostile to the human race. Above that were the heavens, or heavenly places, realm of godly spiritual powers, and above that the "heaven of heavens," the unapproachable dwelling place of God. St Paul identifies the ways of this world as being under the influence of these hostile spirits "of the air." In other words, the ways of the world, the spirit of the age – or as we might say "the way the world works" – are all subject to forces beyond us. Not only the airwaves, if you will, but also the politics, social and cultural movements of a world that does not acknowledge God, are all guided by a malevolent power.

"The Middle Wall of Separation"

Throughout the Mediterranean world of St Paul's day Jews and Gentiles lived side by side. The one place where they could not mingle was in the temple at Jerusalem. Non-Jews who wished to worship the true God could do so – and did – in the "court of the Gentiles," the outermost precinct of the temple. This area was separated from the "court of the Israelites" by a wall called the *soreg*, beyond which Gentiles could not pass. The Jewish historian Josephus, writing only a few years after St Paul, described it as follows: "There was a partition made of stone all round, whose height was three cubits [i.e. 5½ feet]: its construction was very elegant; upon it stood pillars, at equal distances from one another, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, that 'no foreigner should go within that sanctuary' for that second [court of the] temple was called 'the Sanctuary,' and was ascended to by fourteen steps from the first court" (*Jewish Wars* 5.5). It is this barrier to which St Paul refers.

Portions of this wall and some of the signs posted on the pillars survive to this day. One such inscription, in Greek, is found in the National Archeological Museum in Istanbul. It reads, "*No outsider shall enter the protective enclosure around the sanctuary. And whoever is caught will only have him-self to blame for the ensuing death.*"

St Paul describes this wall of separation as "*the law of commandments contained in ordinances*" which is abolished in Christ. This refers, not to all commandments of the Torah, but to those directions which set forth the required separation between Jews and Gentiles.

Faith in Christ and baptism eliminated the racial divisions between Jews and Gentiles in the Church, but there remained a division in worship still evident in the design of our churches. The Christian equivalent to the "court of the Israelites" is the nave where the baptized gather to worship. The place of catechumens in the early Church was in the narthex, since only those baptized into Christ are part of the new People of God, the Church. In some conservative monasteries and congregations only baptized Orthodox Christians are permitted to enter the nave to this day.

"A Holy Temple in the Lord"

The imagery of the temple continues to figure in this epistle. In vv. 19-22, the temple in question is not a structure in a given place like Jerusalem; rather it is the people who make up the Church, Jew and Gentile alike. "*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*"

St Paul describes all believers – Jew and Gentile alike – as the building blocks of this temple erected on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ being the cornerstone. An important aspect of this image is that St Paul does not see the structure as completed. Rather he tells his readers, and us, that we are still in the building process. The foundation is complete, but the structure of this temple, God's People, is still being formed in those who are open to God's work in every age.

Why "the Prince of This World?"

"Further, why does he call the devil the prince of the world? Because nearly the whole human race has surrendered itself to him and all are willingly and by deliberate choice his slaves. Not one so much as gives any heed to Christ, though He promises unnumbered blessings; while all yield themselves to the devil, who promises nothing of the sort, but sends them on to hell. His kingdom then is in this world, and he has, with few exceptions, more subjects and more obedient subjects than God, in consequence of our indolence."

(St John Chrysostom, Homily 4 on Ephesians)