



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

Tuesday, November 15th

Beginning of the Nativity Fast

Wednesday, November 16th

Vespers @ 6:00pm with St. Basil Community

Wednesday, November 16th

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

Saturday, November 19th

St. Elias Men's Gathering @ 11:00am
Vasona Lake County Park

Coffee Socials and Qurban

This Sunday, November 13th

Qurban: Elham Khoury
Coffee Social: Elham Khoury

Next Sunday, November 20th

Qurban: Amal Gamoney
Coffee Social: Amal Gamoney

Please pray for:

The Orthodox Servants of God
Rose, Simon, Merna, Samantha,
Nader & Elham Khoury
Areej Kaldani
Richard Hanna
Leslie Griffin
Emily Roca-Dalyan

The Orthodox Servants Asleep in the Lord

Jubran Abu Ghazaleh
Mousad Wardeh Khoury
Anita Deasis
Souad Elhage
Hanna Moussy
Afaf Moussy

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

Sunday, November 13, 2016

8th Sunday After the Holy Cross – The Good Samaritan

Commemoration of Saint John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople

Troparion of the Resurrection (1st Tone)

After the stone was sealed by the Jews * and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body * You rose, O Savior, on the third day * bestowing life to the world * Therefore the heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of life * "Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! * Glory to Your kingdom! * Glory to Your economy * O You Who alone are the lover of mankind!"

Epistle: Hebrews 7:26 – 8:2

BRETHREN, it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled (Cf. Lv. 16: 6), set apart from sinners, and become higher than the heavens. He does not need to offer sacrifices daily (as the other priests did), first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this latter he did once for all in offering up himself. For the Law appoints as priests men who are weak; but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son who is forever perfect. Now the main point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest who has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens, a minister of the Holies and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord has set up, and not man.

Gospel of the 8th Sunday of Holy Cross Luke 10:25-37 (*The Good Samaritan*)

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he 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 he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But he, 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?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BISHOP'S APPEAL - Today, we commemorate Our Father Among the Saints, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, whose Divine Liturgy our Church has celebrated for more than 1500 years. There is perhaps no better symbol of the beauty and uniqueness of our Melkite Church of Antioch than this exquisite Liturgy attributed to that great son of Antioch, St. John Chrysostom. Please join all the members of our Church in assuring that this precious liturgy and tradition is passed on faithfully to future generations, so that more and more people will come to experience the transcendent beauty and power of this heavenly Liturgy. It is the means by which "we have seen the True Light; we have found the True Faith; and we have received the Heavenly Spirit." Please respond with a generous heart to the Bishop's Appeal. If you have not already sent your gift, please do so today so that 100% of our parish will respond to Sayidna's call.

NATIVITY FAST: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15th

Remember that the Nativity Fast begins this Tuesday, November 15th.

VESPERS WITH ST. BASIL COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16th @ 6pm

St. Basil Community will be having Vespers this Wednesday, November 16th @ 6:00pm in commemoration of the beginning of the Nativity Fast.

ST. ELIAS MEN'S GATHERING: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19th @ 11:00am

All men are invited to the St. Elias Men's Gathering on Saturday, November 19th. Meet at Vasona Lake County Park: 333 Blossom Hill Rd, Los Gatos, CA 95032 for Lunch and Bocce Ball.

Saint of the Day: Our Father Among the Saints John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople

The feast of the Golden-mouthed is celebrated today instead of on the anniversary of his death on September 14 because of the Feast of the Holy Cross on that day. John Chrysostom was born in Antioch of Syria in 344 or 347. His father, Secundus, was a general in the Roman army and his Mother, Anthusa, a woman admirable in piety, devotion and faith. John was baptized by Melece, Patriarch of Antioch. Around the years 374-375, he retired to the solitudes around Antioch. He was ordained deacon in 386 by Flavian. He preached and commented the whole Bible to the people in the presence of His Bishop, Flavian. At the death of Nectarius, Archbishop of Constantinople, in 397, he was elected Patriarch of that city by all the bishops and by order of Emperor...

Arcadius, and was consecrated bishop of the Capital in 398. In his preaching he denounced the cupidity of Empress Eudoxia and was unjustly exiled by order of Emperor Arcadius. This first exile was of short duration. John was called back to his see to be exiled again in 404. He suffered much, being dragged from one place to another for three years. He died in one of these transfers at Comanus on September 14, 407. His eloquence earned him the title of Chrysostom, which means "Golden-mouthed." In 1908 Pope Pius X declared him universal Patron of all Christian Orators.

FROM THE DIOCESE: 8TH SUNDAY AFTER THE FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS: "PRIESTHOOD IN GOD'S PLAN"

THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF PRIESTS in the world. Most Eastern religions (e.g. Hindu, Shinto or Buddhist religions) have priests, generally for the performance of their temple rituals. What is the Christian priesthood and is it different from these examples or from the priesthood of the ancient Greco-Roman and Persian religions?

The Old Testament Priesthood

Chapters 28 to 30 in the Book of Exodus detail the choice, the anointing and vesting and responsibilities of the Israelite priesthood. We find some of this material summarized in the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews as well. The Israelite priesthood originated during the exodus from Egypt when Moses' brother, Aaron, and his descendants were designated as priests to offer the sacrifices in the "Tent of Meeting," the portable sanctuary which accompanied the Israelites in the desert. In the tenth century BC a temple was built in Jerusalem as a permanent sanctuary by King Solomon and Aaron's successors served as its priests.

Solomon's temple was destroyed during the Babylonian conquest in 586 BC. Once the Babylonians had been defeated and Jerusalem restored, a second temple was constructed and was dedicated in 515 BC. This was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD and has never been rebuilt. Jewish Temple sacrifices ceased, although some ultra-Orthodox Jews look to rebuilding the temple in Israel today. The Old Testament priests were charged with offering sacrifices daily in the sanctuary. These included animal sacrifices and offerings of grain, wine and incense. An animal sacrifice was called in Hebrew a *qorban*, a term translated into Greek as *prophora* in the Septuagint. Both these terms are used in connection with the Eucharist in Byzantine Churches today.

Sacrifices were offered in the temple each morning and evening as well as in connection with personal acts of devotion, such as thanksgiving, or reparation for transgressions of the laws found in the Torah. After the destruction of the temple these sacrifices were replaced in Jewish practice by specific prayers and the role of the priests was all but eliminated. Today Jewish priests (generally in families named Cohen or the like) have very restricted roles in the synagogue, such as giving the blessing at the end of the service ("The Lord bless you and keep you...").

Christ as the Eternal Priest

In the New Testament the Lord Jesus is proclaimed as "*high priest of the good things that have come*" (Heb 9:11). He is the one who replaces the priests prescribed in the Torah, because He fulfills the Torah in Himself. "*He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance*" (v. 15). He replaces the Temple itself, as He Himself prophesied: "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*" The Jews then said, "*It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?*" But He spoke of the temple of His body" (Jn 2:22, 24).

The work of Christ for our salvation is described in the Epistle to the Hebrews in terms of the priestly sacrifices in the Old Testament. To fully appreciate this comparison we need to understand how such a sacrifice (*qorban*) was offered. There were three steps: first the victim had to be killed. This was done, usually by the donor, in the temple courtyard. Secondly the victim was offered on the altar by the temple priest. Thirdly, it was assumed, the sacrifice was accepted by God in heaven. The sacrifice was then consumed, first by the priest; then the rest was given to the donor to be shared at his table.

According to this pattern, Christ the victim was killed outside the city of Jerusalem. Then the action moves beyond the earthly plane to the heavenly. As priest as well as victim, Christ offers Himself to God on the heavenly plane. "*He entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption*" (Heb 9:12). As a result, one single sacrifice offered by Christ was enough to fulfill the precepts of the Torah. "*He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself*" (v. 27). Since Christ's offering of Himself to the Father occurs in the heavens, it cannot be measured in earthly time. It is happening in eternity, "God's time." This is why, in the Divine Liturgy, we can connect with Christ's eternal gift of Himself to the Father and share in consuming what Christ offered – His own Body and Blood.

The Priesthood of the Church

When we are baptized and chrismated we enter into the Church, the Body of Christ. As such we become members of the royal priesthood of Christ. "*Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*" (1 Pt 2:4, 5). Our role as members of this holy priesthood is to offer sacrifice, but what just what "spiritual sacrifices" are we to offer?

First of all, as members of the Body of Christ, we offer in our earthly dimension the sacrifice of Christ which He eternally offers to the Father in the heavens. Thus, at the highpoint of the Divine Liturgy, the presiding priest proclaims in our name, "We offer You [*the Father*] Your own of what is Your own [*Your Son*], in all and for the sake of all."

Secondly, our "spiritual sacrifices" include the sacrifice of praise which is the prayer of the Church, the services of praise which the Body of Christ offers daily (vespers, orthros, etc.). Even when we pray these services privately in our own homes we do so in union with the entire Church at prayer: with the Head (Christ) as well as with the entire Body.

A third way in which we exercise our priesthood in Christ is described in St Paul's Epistle to the Romans: "*I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship*" (Rom 12:1). St Paul explains this in the next verse, "*Do not be conformed to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect*" (v. 2). "This age" summons us to one form of self-indulgence after another – greed, lust, gluttony, and the ultimate expression of pride, the belief that we can remake ourselves by redefining our gender, and re-purpose God's plan for man and woman. By resisting "this age," we sacrifice the pleasures such self-indulgence may bring in order to demonstrate that God's plan for us leads to the Kingdom of God rather than to the therapist's couch or the recovery group.

We no longer express our dependence of God by the ritual sacrifices of the Torah, but by the living sacrifice of a holy life, lived in temperance, sobriety and chastity.