



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

Saturday, November 19th

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

Monday, November 21st

Divine Liturgy @ 12:00 Noon
Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

Wednesday, November 23rd

Bible Study @ 7:00pm

Coffee Socials and Qurban

This Sunday, November 20th

Qurban: Amal Gamoney
Coffee Social: Amal Gamoney

Next Sunday, November 27th

Qurban: Holly Handal
Coffee Social: The Higareda Family

Please pray for:

The Orthodox Servants of God

The Gamoney Family
Areej Kaldani
Richard Hanna
Leslie Griffin
Emily Roca-Dalyan

The Orthodox Servants Asleep in the Lord in the Hope of the Resurrection

Vanda Kaldani
Siham Hanna
Anita Deasis
Jubran Abu Ghazaleh
Mousad Wardeh Khoury

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

Sunday, November 20, 2016

9th Sunday After the Holy Cross – The Fool

**Preparation of the Feast of the Entrance of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple
Commemoration of our Fathers among the Saints Gregory the Decapolite and Proclus,
Archbishop of Constantinople**

Troparion of the Resurrection (2nd Tone)

When You descended to death, O immortal Life * You put Hades 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!"

نشيد القيامة باللحن الثاني

لما نزلت الى الموت، أيها الحياة الخالدة، أمتّ الجحيم بسنى لاهوتك. ولما أقمت الاموات من تحت الثرى، صرخت جميع قوات السماويين: أيها المسيح ألهدنا، يا مُعطي الحياة، المجد لك.

Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-17

Brethren, be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of his power. Put on God's armor that you may be able to stand against the devil's wiles. For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness on high. Therefore take up God's armor that you may be able to resist on the evil day and stand perfect in all things. Stand, therefore, wearing the belt of truth. And the breastplate of holiness and with your feet shod in the readiness of the Good News of peace, and in all things take up the shield of faith with which you will be able to put out all the flaming darts of the most wicked one. And take for yourselves the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word.

Gospel of the 9th Sunday of Holy Cross Luke 12:16-22 (*The Fool*)

The Lord told this parable: "The land of a certain rich man brought forth abundant crops. And he began to consider, saying, 'What shall I do, for I have no room to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store up all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool, this very night, you must give up your life; and the things you have provided, whose will they be?' So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich as regards God." After he had said this, he cried out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BISHOP'S APPEAL

At this time of year when we offer thanksgiving for all God's blessings, Our Lord calls us in today's Gospel to store up treasure in Heaven and to become rich in the things of God. Let us give back to the Lord and His Church for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us. Let us give thanks to God for the precious gift of our Melkite Church and pay a tribute of thanksgiving to propel our Church into a future of growth and expansion. Offer your thanks to God by giving a generous gift to the Bishop's Appeal. Donation envelopes are available in the narthex. Thank you for your generosity.

MONDAY - DIVINE LITURGY @ 12:00 NOON

This Monday is the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple. We will be having Divine Liturgy at 12:00 Noon in honor of our Most Holy Mother. Please join us if you are at home or have time during your lunch break.

Saints of the Day: Saints Gregory the Decapolite and Proclus, Archbishop of Constantinople

- Gregory was one of the defenders of the true doctrine concerning the use of icons. He was the spiritual director of two composers of hymns, John and Joseph. He sent Joseph to Rome as a messenger to bring to Pope Gregory IV the details of the persecution waged by Emperor Theophilus against those who venerated the icons. He died in Constantinople on November 20, 842.
- Proclus, a disciple of St. John Chrysostom, was elevated to the See of Constantinople in the year 434, under Emperor Theodosius. He sent to the Church of Armenia a long exposition of the true faith in which he refuted the Nestorian heresy. He received in Constantinople the remains of St. John Chrysostom when they were being solemnly transferred to the capital in the year 438. He died in 446.

FROM THE DIOCESE: 9TH SUNDAY AFTER THE FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS: “ENOUGH VS. ABUNDANCE”

DAY AFTER DAY Christians say the Lord’s Prayer, asking God to “give us this day our daily bread,” that is, to provide us with what we need for today. The rich man in Christ’s parable (Lk 12:16-22) clearly has a different perspective. He is not just concerned about today but about tomorrow, finding his security in the “grain and goods” he has stored up.

The man’s approach seems eminently practical – we do the same with our IRAs and annuities. Nobody wants to end their days on earth in a welfare hotel. But if we put absolute confidence in any earthly resource we will be as foolish as this rich man for “*a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions*” (Lk 12:15).

The parable raises a number of questions for Christians: what are possessions for? Should a Christian’s use of his or her wealth differ from that of a non-Christian? Where do we find God’s will in these matters?

Need vs. Abundance

The Scriptures frequently speak about money or other assets. It has been estimated that there are over 800 indications in the Bible about using our resources. Perhaps the greatest clarity on this question is found in St Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians. He tells his readers that “*God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work*” (2 Cor 9:8). St Paul’s principle is clear: God provides – that we have “**enough** of everything” and “an **abundance**” for doing good.

What is “Enough”? – this refers to what we actually need: the “basics” (food, clothing, shelter, etc.). What is actually necessary varies over time and place as well as circumstances of life. We need things in our culture which others societies either did not require or did not have. Today we need health insurance, for example – something which did not even exist before our own age.

Similarly “need” is different for a family than for a single person. A single person probably doesn’t require three cars while a suburban family with a son or daughter in college might require just that. Need is different for a couple raising children than for a couple caring for an older relative or for grandparents living alone. The circumstances of our lives and of our society will dictate what we actually need to live the lives which we have been given. St Paul’s principle applies in all circumstances, however. Anything more than what we truly need is given to us by God for the doing of good.

The Age of Conspicuous Consumption

Sociologists have long described the modern age as a time of “conspicuous consumption” when people spend money on expensive or unnecessary items, not to meet their real needs but to display wealth or status. People often are pushed to acquire bigger and better houses, cars, flat screen TVs, etc. – not because they need them but in order to outshine their neighbors or social rivals. Products are marketed with an eye towards making people believe they need something they can never even use (Does anyone really need 400 channels?) In the past products were made to last and to be repaired if necessary; today those same items are designed to break down and be replaced by newer and “better” ones. We are taught to keep upgrading our possessions and thus “better” our lives.

This dynamic is not limited to the upper classes of society. The poor are perhaps more susceptible to the tendency to prove one’s real worth by the number of their possessions. The spectacle of teenagers being knifed for their sneakers demonstrates how far the concept of conspicuous consumption has penetrated our society.

Two automobiles have become icons of contrasting economic strategies in the world today. The “solid gold Cadillac,” title of a 1950s Broadway play and film, represents the world of conspicuous consumption, of spending for show rather than for need. The second automobile, symbolizing the Scriptural principle of spending for need, is the Fiat compact sedan in which Pope Francis rode during his 2015 American visit. People who had never heard of conspicuous consumption instinctively realized that the pope’s Fiat was saying something important about the ways of God on earth. God’s blessings abound, but they are not meant to be wasted on empty display. As the British newspaper *The Guardian* quipped at the time, “A Fiat is worth a thousand words.”

The Purpose of Our Abundance

Many people feel that they are just getting by, they have no “abundance” to share with others. This is often because we have come to believe the ad-men who say you absolutely need the latest model, style or title, especially when promoted by a celebrity. If Alex Trebek says you need it, who am I to judge?!

Once we take a realistic look at our needs we find that we can do without things which may be pleasurable or desirable but are not necessary for our life. We may then find that we have an abundance after all.

Each person’s life presents a countless number of opportunities to do good with our abundance. We may support – or increase our support for – charitable causes both at home or in our Mother Church, contribute to educational or philanthropic organizations. We will have no difficulty finding ways to use our abundance for good once we have decided that God has actually provided us with an abundance.

Help from the Tradition

Throughout its history the Church has given us a valuable tool to help us recognize that our needs and our desires are not always the same. The weekly fast days of Wednesday and Friday – practiced as early as the first century – and the four fast periods of the year are connected with liturgical observances, to be sure. They have another level of meaning as well. Our ascetic fasts are recurring reminders that “*a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.*” We put aside food and drink, leisure and entertainment periodically to remind ourselves of a lesson too easily forgotten: that we don’t need stuff, we need God.

Our tradition of fasting coupled with almsgiving may be especially important to us today since we live in an age when we can easily pamper ourselves every day and thereby weaken our resistance to evil. People who are addicted to luxuries are less likely to put them aside when forced to choose between keeping them or following the Gospel. As Pope St Leo the Great noted in the fifth century, “Against the threatened attacks of persecutors, against the terrifying shouts of the ungodly, they could not fight with bodily strength or pampered flesh since that which delights the outer does most harm to the inner man, and the more one’s fleshly substance is kept in subjection, the more purified is the reasoning soul” (Homily 70 On the Fast of Pentecost I).