



St. Elias Melkite Catholic Church

Serving San Jose Valley & Bay Area, CA

Church Information

14263 Mulberry Dr.
Los Gatos, CA 95032
(408) 785-1212
steliasmelkite@gmail.com
steliasmelkite.org
facebook.com/steliasmelkitechurch

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 26274
San Jose, CA 95159

Pastor

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo
Phone: (831) 229-8350
Sebastiancarnazzo@gmail.com

Sunday Service Time

Divine Liturgy: 11:00 am

Confession Times

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

THIS WEEK

Wednesday, January 11th

Bible Study @ 7:00pm

Coffee Socials and Qurban

This Sunday, January 8th

Qurban: Amal Gamoney
Coffee Social: Amal Gamoney

Next Sunday, January 15th

Qurban: Holly Handal
Coffee Social: The Higareda Family

Please pray for:

The Orthodox Servants of God

The Gamoney Family
Issa Sehak
David, Deborah, & Donna Solis
Mary Green
Kimberly Kalil
Patrick Negado
The Holley Family

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

Members of the Sehak Family
Emily Roca-Dalyan
Michael Harris
Yusra Aboudi

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

Sunday, January 8, 2017

Sunday After Theophany

3rd Day of Celebration of the Theophany

**Commemoration of our Venerable Mother Dominica
and of our Holy Father George the Chosebite (Class 5)**

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!"

نشيد القيامة باللحن الاول

إن الحجر ختمه اليهود، وجسدك الطاهر حرسه الجنود. لكنك قمت في اليوم الثالث، أيها المخلص، واهباً للعالم الحياة. لذلك قوات السماوات هتفت إليك، يا مُعطي الحياة: المجد لقيامتك أيها المسيح. المجد لملكك. المجد لتدبيرك، يا محب البشر وحدهم.

Troparion of Theophany

At your Baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was revealed: for the Father's voice bore witness to you by calling You his Beloved Son, and the spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words. O Christ God who have appeared to us, and enlightened the world, glory to You.

نشيد عيد الظهور باللحن الاول

في اعتمادك يا رب في نهر الاردن، ظهر السجود للتالوث، فإن صوت الأب تقدم لك بالشهادة، مسمىً أياك أبناً محبوباً. والروح بهيئة حمامة يؤيد حقيقة الكلمة. فيا من ظهر وانار العالم، أيها المسيح الاله المجد لك.

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13

Brethren, to each one of us the grace was given according to the measure of Christ's bestowal. Thus is said, "Ascending on high, he led away captives; he gave gifts to men (Ps.61:19). Now this ascending, what does it mean but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended, he it is who ascended also above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. And he himself gave some men as apostles, and some as prophets, and others as pastors and teachers, in order to perfect the saints for a work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ.

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17

Sunday After Theophany

At that time, When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen." From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Saints of the Day: Our Venerable Mother Dominica and our Holy Father George the Chosebite

- Dominica, born in Carthage, North Africa, lived a life of austere asceticism and died in Constantinople under the reign of Emperor Zenon (379-476).
- George the Chosebite, a Cypriot, was a monk at the Monastery of the Mother of God at Choseba, near Jericho. He died in 614 immediately before the Persian invasion.

FROM THE DIOCESE: SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY: "GLORY TO YOUR KINGDOM!"

THE LORD JESUS BEGAN His public ministry with the same message that St John the Baptist had proclaimed before Him, namely that the "Kingdom of God" or the "Kingdom of heaven" was at hand. What did their hearers understand by this announcement and what should we take it to mean today?

God's Kingdom in the Old Testament

Biblical reflection on the world saw it as the creation of God. Therefore He was its king from the beginning. We find this in a number of places in Scripture, such as Psalm 93 (LXX 92):

*"The Lord is king, in splendor robed;
Robed is the Lord and girt about with might,
For He has made the world firm
And it shall not be moved.
Your throne has been established of old;
You are from everlasting" (vv. 1-3).*

Here the Kingdom of God is **all creation**. We sing verses from this psalm as the prokimenon of vespers on Saturday evening.

Old Testament prophets also saw **Israel** as God's Kingdom. After the Babylonian exile the people of Israel were generally ruled by others – Syrians, Greeks or Romans – with brief interludes of independence. God's people increasingly looked for God to intervene in human history by reestablishing their kingdom. According to the Book of Daniel, God's instrument for restoring this kingdom would be the "*Son of Man*" (Dn 7) or "*Messiah*" (Dn 9). What was called the "Messianic Age" would usher in the Kingdom of God.

Jewish thought generally accepted the thought of the Prophet Isaiah that the great sign of God's Kingdom would be a time of universal peace and brotherhood on the earth, without crime, war and poverty when "*the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea*" (Isaiah 11:9). The coming messiah would inaugurate this Kingdom by defeating the powers warring against God's people. The rabbis therefore rejected claims that Jesus was the messiah, since greed and enmity still exist in our world. He had "failed," and died as a result. As the twelfth century Jewish thinker Maimonides wrote, failure or death is proof that a defeated leader is not the messiah: "If he does not succeed, or is killed in war, it is certain that he is not the messiah promised in the Torah" (*Mishnah Torah*, Hilchot Malakim 12).

The Lord Jesus and the Kingdom

The Lord Jesus clearly claimed to usher in the Kingdom of God. At the same time He resisted being declared king by the Jews: "*When Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone*" (Jn 6:15). His Kingdom, as He would tell Pilate, was "*not of this world*" (Jn 18:36). The New Testament presents a vision that **Jesus Himself is the presence of the Kingdom**, what the third-century theologian Origen termed the *autovasilieia* (the Kingdom in Himself). In Him there is perfect communion with the Father and an outpouring of God's love. The Gospels show Him as constant in prayer and in doing the Father's will. He manifests God's love for mankind in a way that no other has done. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "Jesus himself is the Kingdom; the Kingdom is not a thing, it is not a geographical dominion like worldly kingdoms. It is a person; it is he.... By the way in which he speaks of the Kingdom of God, Jesus leads men to realize the overwhelming fact that in him God himself is present among them, that he is God's presence" (*Jesus of Nazareth*, Part 1, p. 49).

The Kingdom Is Within You

While the Lord Jesus is the Kingdom of God in our midst, He tells us that this Kingdom may also be present in human hearts. When people are taken by the love of God and keeping His Commandments, the Kingdom of God is formed within them. When love is present, the God who is love is manifest as love within us. Citing the Scriptures, Origen connects them with the Lord's injunction to pray "Thy Kingdom come": "*'The Kingdom of God,' in the words of our Lord and Savior, 'does not come for all to see; nor shall they say: Behold, here it is, or behold, there it is; but the Kingdom of God is within you,' [Lk 17: 20, 21] 'for the word of God is very near, in our mouth and in our heart' [Deut 30:14]. Thus it is clear that he who prays for the coming of God's Kingdom prays rightly to have it within himself, that there it might grow and bear fruit and become perfect" (On Prayer, 25).*

Enduring for the Kingdom

Many Christians today feel that, because God loves His entire creation, this means that everyone will enter the Kingdom of heaven automatically. They find it difficult to harmonize God's love for us with the need to respond actively to that love. While rejoicing in God's love for us, we need to remember these sobering words of the Lord: "*Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few (Mt 7:13, 14)... Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it" (Mt 7:24-27).* Entering the Kingdom is possible for us, then, if we put the Lord's teachings into practice, something which may cause us great hardship. Living the Lord's way may cost us friends, a job, even family support. It will certainly cost us the freedom to live according to our own desires, unmindful of the needs of others. As the nineteenth-century elder of the Optina Monastery in Russia, St Anthony of Optina, wrote in a letter to one of his spiritual children: "Of course, it would be easier to get to paradise with a full stomach, all snuggled up in a soft feather-bed, but what is required is to carry one's cross along the way, for the Kingdom of God is not attained by enduring one or two troubles, but many!"

The Church and the Kingdom

The ultimate expression of the Kingdom will be in the age to come when Christ, seated at the Father's right, shall reign forever and ever. There He shall be surrounded by the saints – those who have allowed the Kingdom within them to mature fully through communion with God in prayer and faithfulness to His teachings in action. The Church on earth is, as it were, the "anteroom" of the kingdom of heaven: the vestibule through which we pass in order to enjoy the presence of God within. We enter this "vestibule" through the necessary doorway of baptism. As the Lord told Nicodemus, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God*" (Jn 3:5). Yet for those outside the Church their goodwill toward believers is a kind of baptism into the kingdom, the "baptism" of love. As we read in Christ's parable of the judgment, "*Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me'" (Mt 25:34, 40).*