



St. Elias Melkite Catholic Church

Proclaiming the Ancient and Orthodox Christian Faith in the Silicon Valley

14263 Mulberry Dr., Los Gatos, CA 95032

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July 2, 2017: 4th Sunday After Pentecost – The Centurion’s servant

Vespers (evening prayer)
Saturdays 5pm
Feastdays: See website Calendar

Orthros (morning prayer)
Sundays 10am
Feastdays: See website Calendar

Divine Liturgy
Sundays: 11am
Feastdays: See website Calendar

Confession
During Vespers and Orthros, or by appointment

Bible Study
Wednesdays: 6pm Online
See website for link

Sunday School
During Sunday Coffee Social

Contact the Pastor
Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo
Phone: (831) 229-8350
SebastianCarnazzo@gmail.com

Qurban and Socials

- This Sunday, 7/2
Qurban: Handal
Social: Kelly & Drake
- Next Sunday, 7/9
Qurban: Ciardella
Social: Higareda

Pray for the Servants of God
The Readers Cyril and Romanos
Handal Family (Qurban)
The Asfour Family (Holy Wine)
Laure Kelly, Ophelia Drake (Social)
Thomas Kalil
Kamal & Eugenie Neimat
Maryam Nemazie
Gary Potter
Leila Carnazzo
Linda Carnazzo
Hadaad Family
Kalil Family
Hynes Family
Scott & Barabra Johnson

Asleep in the Lord in the Hope of the Resurrection

Souad Elhage
Ernest & Marian Young
Fuad & Renee Kalil

PRAYER

O You who have granted us to pray together in harmony, and who promised that when two or three are gathered to call upon your name You will give what they ask: do You now fulfill what your servants ask, so far as it is good, granting us in the world to come, eternal life. For You are good, O our God, and You love mankind and we send up glory to You, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

HYMNS

Troparion of the resurrection (3rd Tone): Let all in heaven rejoice * and all on earth be glade, * for the Lord has exerted power with His arm: * by death He has trampled upon Death * and has become the firstborn of the dead. * He has delivered us from the bosom of Hades * and has granted to the world great mercy.

نشيد القيامة بالحن الثالث
لتفرح السماويات، وتبتهج الارضيات. لأن الرب صنع عزاً بساعده، ووطيء الموت بالموت، وصار بكر الاموات،
وأنقذنا من جوف الجحيم،

READINGS

Rom 6:18-23 BRETHREN, now that you have been freed from sin, you have come to serve justification. I speak in a human way because of the weakness of your flesh. For as you yielded your members as slaves to uncleanness and iniquity, so now yield your members as slaves of justification so as to be sanctified. For while you were the slaves of sin, you had nothing to do with justification. But what fruit did you gather then of those deeds of which you are now ashamed? For the end of such things is death. But now, set free from sin and become slaves to God, you have your fruit resulting in sanctification, and as your end, life everlasting. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is life everlasting in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew Mt 8:5-13 At that time when Jesus entered Capharnaum, there came to him a centurion who begged him, saying, “Lord, my servant is lying sick in the house, paralyzed, and is grievously afflicted.” Jesus said to him, “I will come and cure him.” But in answer the centurion said, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man subject to authority, and have soldiers subject to me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” And when Jesus heard this, he marveled, and said to those who were following him, “Amen I say to you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel. And I tell you that many will come from the east and from the west, and will feast with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom will be put out into the darkness outside; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; as you have believed, so be it done to you.” And the servant was healed at that hour.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Patronal Feast, St. Elias, is coming next month (July 20th). We will celebrate the feastday with a Divine Liturgy at 12noon and a Picnic Barbeque in the Park the following Sunday with the blessing of cars with Holy Water and the icon of St. Elias. Please mark your calendars. Anyone who would like to help with the organization of the Sunday Picnic please volunteer!

Fr. Sebastian will be in the Holy Land helping to lead the Eparchial Pilgrimage July 6th – 18th. Fr. James Babcock will be here to offer the services on the two weekends during the Pilgrimage. If you need a priest while Fr. Sebastian is away, you may call Fr. Anthony Hernandez, pastor of St. Basil Church (mobile: 408.449.7447; rectory 408.871.0919).

Confession: Remember that the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation is available every Saturday at Vespers (5pm) and every Sunday at Orthros (10am).

From the Dioceses

The year 1938 saw an escalation of warlike activities in Nazi Germany. In March Hitler invaded Austria and began to move against Czechoslovakia. Attacks on synagogues and Jewish businesses increased and thousands of German Jews were arrested. The response of one Russian-American, Irving Berlin, was to compose the song "God Bless America" which would become like a second National Anthem during World War II and the years that followed. From the first, however, there was opposition to the song by some. They felt that it seemed to be a statement that everything in American life was positive, despite obvious examples of racial, ethnic and religious prejudices that were rife in many places. They interpreted "God Bless America" to mean "God reward America."

Praying for the Nation

Christians have always prayed for their country, even when its leadership was persecuting them. The Lord Jesus was displayed on the cross as an anti-Roman revolutionary (the "King of the Jews"), yet He never advocated revolt as many Jewish zealots did. His approach was rather, "*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's*" (Mk 12:17). The apostolic writings, composed when Roman officials began repressing Christians, still insisted, "*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities*" (Rom 13:1). St Paul here offered his most elaborated statement on supporting the civil authority by prayer "*For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor*" (Rom 13:1-7). The main points in this passage would be repeated frequently in the apostolic writings and by the early Christian defenders of Christianity. The ultimate source of civil power is God and therefore it is God who has placed rulers in authority. The power of earthly rulers is legitimate, if limited to the temporal order. As St Justin the Philosopher (100-165) explained, "Whence to God alone we render worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your kingly power you be found to possess also sound judgment... as Christ intimated when He said, 'To whom God has given more, of him shall more be required'" (Justin, *First Apology*). From the start, the Church rejected the Empire's idolatry and emperor-worship. It condemned many of its cultural values as well and as a result it suffered greatly at the hands of the Empire's leaders, but in principle it respected the God-given place of the Empire and its Emperor. In St Paul's view civil authorities have a place in God's purposes: to insure "*that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence*" (1 Tm 2:2). When the state is at peace then believers are free to live godly lives, raising up their praises to God without hindrance. This passage is the inspiration for our prayer for civil authorities to this day. In the anaphora of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom the priest prays, "...for our civil authorities, for the government and the armed forces. O Lord, grant them peaceful rule that we too in their tranquility may lead a calm and quiet life in all virtue and honor." In the Liturgy of St Basil our prayer is similar, but with an added note. "Remember, Lord, this country and all those in public service whom You have allowed to govern on earth. Grant them profound and lasting peace. Speak to their hearts good things concerning Your Church and all Your people that through the faithful conduct of their duties we may live peaceful and serene lives in all piety and holiness. Sustain the good in their goodness; make the wicked good through Your goodness." We recognize that, while rulers may be legitimate, they may not always be godly.

The "Christian State"

In ad 313 the Edict of Milan decreed religious toleration in the Roman Empire. This was followed in a few years by the proclamation of Christianity as the state religion in the Empire. The state came to be seen as a servant of God. At the height of this development the Emperor was seen as a kind of secular deacon, wearing a sticharion and orarion as part of his imperial regalia and receiving Communion at the holy table.

There were also Christians who felt that God did not desire a "Christian state." The North African philosopher Lactantius viewed history this way in his synopsis of Christian thought, the *Divine Institutes*: "God might have bestowed upon His people both riches and kingdoms, as He had given previously to the Jews, whose successors and posterity we are. However, He would have Christians live under the power and government of others, lest they should become corrupted by the happiness and prosperity, slide into luxury and eventually despise the commandments of God. For this is what our ancestors did" (V, 23). When Constantine became Emperor he appointed Lactantius as tutor to his son Crispus. We do not know whether the philosopher's attitude to a Christian state changed after that.

In any case, while civic tranquility may free believers to pursue union with God, times of persecution or civil strife often bring out the strengths of some, adorning the Church with holy martyrs, confessors and passion-bearers. Each era and condition of life may become the arena for following Christ.

The Battle-Hymn of the Empire

One of our most frequently-heard prayers, the troparion of the holy cross, was originally a battle-hymn for the Christian Empire. The literal translation of the original Greek text is: "O Lord save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to our emperor over the barbarians and preserve Your dwelling-place by the power of Your cross." It is with this meaning that the hymn features into Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, where the troparion of the cross represents the Russian army successfully battling Napoleon and his troops. With the fall of the Eastern Christian Empires (Byzantium, Russia) the hymn has been adapted in various ways to remove the references to the emperor and the barbarians. One popular version says "grant victory to our country over its enemies." In some churches, however, the following is sung: "grant victory to Your people over their enemy (i.e. the devil)." This version stresses that the Christian people as a whole, rather than any earthly realm, is the dwelling-place of God and that our real enemy is not the nation next door but our spiritual foes, the powers of evil.