



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 9, 2016: 5th Sunday After Pentecost

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, 7/9
Qurban: Ciardella
Social: Higareda
- Next Sunday, 7/16
Qurban: Gomez
Social: Handal

Pray for the Servants of God

The Readers Cyril and Romanos

Ciardella Family (Qurban)

Higareda Family (Social)

Thomas Kalil and Family

Kamal & Eugenie Neimat

Maryam Nemazie

Gary Potter

Leila Carnazzo

Linda Carnazzo

George Haddad

Hynes Family

Scott & Barbara Johnson

Asleep in the Lord in the Hope of the Resurrection

Souad Elhage

Ernest & Marian Young

Fuad & Renee Kalil

Sebastiano and Alfia Carnazzo

Robert and Alice Robertson

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 (4th Tone): The women disciples of the Lord, * having learned from the angel the joyful announcement of the resurrection, * and having rejected the ancestral sentence, * proudly told the apostles: * Death is despoiled. Christ God is risen, * bestowing to the world great mercy."

نشيد القيامة بالحن الرابع

إن تلميذات الرب تعلمن من الملاك بشري القيامة البهيجة. ونبذن القضاء على الجدين، وقلن للرسلي مفتخرات: لقد سلب الموت، ونهض المسيح الاله، واهباً للعالم عظيم الرحمة

READINGS

Romans 10:1-10 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God in their behalf is for salvation. For I bear witness to them that they have zeal for God, but a zeal that is not informed. For ignorant of God's holiness and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to the sanctification offered by God. For Christ is the consummation of the Law in terms of justification for everyone who believes. For Moses has written that *the man who brings about that justification which is of the Law shall live by it.* (Lv.18: 5) But the justification which is of faith says, *Do not ask in your heart, who shall go up to heaven* that is, -- to bring down Christ. Or, *Who will descend into the abyss* (Dt.30: 12) that is, to bring up Christ from the dead? But what does it say? *The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.* (Dt.30: 14) that is, the word of faith which we preach. For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. For a man believes with the heart and attains justification, but he professes his faith with his mouth and attains salvation.

Matthew 8:28-9:1 At that time as Jesus reached the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two men who were possessed, coming from the tombs, so exceedingly fierce that no one could pass by that way. And behold, they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with you, Jesus Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" Now at a distance from them there was a herd of many swine, feeding. And the devils kept begging him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us into the herd of swine." And he said to them, "Go!" And they came out and entered into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed from the top of the cliff into the sea, and perished in the water. But the swineherds fled, and going away into the town, they reported everything, and what had befallen the men possessed by demons. And behold, the entire town came out to meet Jesus; and on seeing him they insisted that he leave their district. And getting into a boat, he crossed over and came into his own town.

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 during the weekdays, 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

In Eastern icons, such as the traditional representation of the Gergasene demoniacs, demons are often portrayed as little winged dark men-like figures. In the medieval art of the West the horned, bat-winged and fork-tailed red giant was the most popular representation of the devil. What is the origin of these images and what do they actually represent? Any representation of a demon in iconography, whether Western or Eastern, is an attempt to interpret Scriptural teaching. The imagery itself is not found in Scripture but strives to graphically depict a Biblical doctrine. Physical depictions of non-physical realities, however, are always doomed to fail. This is why in our Tradition depicting the Father or the Holy Spirit in human form is considered inappropriate since they were not incarnate. Icons of Christ, on the other hand, are considered so important because they point to the truth of His incarnation: that he actually became human to join His nature to ours. One artistic convention frequently employed in images of demons is the use of wings. This device “interprets” the Scriptural image of Satan as a fallen angel. As the Lord Himself said, *“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven”* (Lk 10:18). Since “everyone knows” that angels have wings, artists assumed that fallen angels have wings too.

The Size of Demons

The size of demons in icons or other images is a commentary on the power of Satan as understood by the artist and, ultimately by his Church. Medieval artists in the West often depicted Satan as larger than other figures in their paintings. They were interpreting Christ’s description of Satan as *“the ruler of this world”* (Jn 12:31) and St Paul’s characterization of him as *“the god of this age”* (2 Cor 4:4). A being of such power was in their eyes larger than life. But Christ had said that, as a result of His passion, *“the ruler of this world will be cast out”* (Jn 12:31). Thus in the Eastern icon of Pascha Satan is not depicted as a superman but as a colorless corpse bound in chains, defeated by the sacrifice of Christ. This image illustrates the teaching on Christ’s victory on the cross, *“that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”* (Heb 2:14). This is also why our Great Saturday liturgy puts these words in Satan’s mouth: *“My power has been swallowed up! ... Death’s power has lost its strength.”* In Eastern icons Satan and demons are regularly depicted as insignificant pests: tiny black creatures futilely attacking man. This illustrates the term for Satan used in all the Gospels, *Beelzebub* (“Lord of Flies” see Mt 12:24, Mk 3:22 and Lk 11:18). This is a satiric parody of the Canaanite title for their god meaning “Lord of the princes.” The Jewish parody used in the Gospels, “Lord of the flies,” points to the trivial nature of Satan before Christ’s power – little more than a gnat.

Demons in the Scriptures

The Old Testament presents Satan or the devil as “the Accuser” (in Hebrew, *ha satan*; Greek, *ho diabolos*) who accuses or slanders people and thus incites them to sin. He is depicted as a tempter, a persuader who convinces people to choose other than godly ways to live. When his influence spreads among the influential figures in society, an entire culture can be perverted. But Satan cannot force anyone to comply with his ways; we can always reject his temptations. Old Testament-era Jews also came to speak of other diabolical figures in addition to Satan. The devil had his minions, angels who fell with him and who sought to drag people down with them. As the New Testament Book of Revelation describes it: *“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him”* (Rev 12:9). By the first and second centuries BC, belief in demons active in Israel had become common in popular Judaism. Deliverance from demons was an important part of the ministry of Christ in the Gospels and of the apostles in Acts. It is assumed today that many of the people in the Gospel accounts believed to have a demon were actually afflicted with some form of psychosis. This does not explain the absence of demonic possession in Jewish writings before Christ. Could it be that the coming of the Messiah prompted a last ditch effort of Satan and his angels to assert power? Jesus became quickly known as a healer and exorcist, confronting physical maladies and the assault of demons: *“Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them”* (Mt 4:24). Jesus sent His disciples out to preach the kingdom of God and gave them authority over demons: *“He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease”* (Mt 10:1). They continued to exercise this power even after Pentecost (see Acts 8:7; 16:16ff.). The Church has continued to exercise this power over unclean spirits. The second-century apologist St Justin the Philosopher told a Jewish acquaintance named Trypho that “now we, who believe in our Lord Jesus, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, when we exorcise all demons and evil spirits, have them subjected to us” (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 76.6). By the third century it was common that people entering the Church through baptism first be freed from the power of any unclean spirits. In our Byzantine ritual today four prayers of exorcism are part of the reception of a catechumen, commanding Satan to “Depart, and admit the vanity of your power which could not even control the swine.” When blessing water, oil or sacred vessels or when consecrating churches, the bishop or priest first prays that the influence of unclean spirits be averted from this place or object. Our sacramental books also include prayers to deliver people from unclean spirits. In many places use of these prayers is on the increase as a result of people becoming involved with occult practices, thus opening themselves to influence by unclean spirits. A Coptic priest, Fr Sama’an Ibrahim, conducts prayers of deliverance weekly in his church carved into the rock of Moqattam Mountain, home of Cairo’s garbage collectors. Most of those who fill the 2000-seat church seeking deliverance are Muslims, says Father Ibrahim. “Christians rarely get possessed, because they are baptized as infants.”

First Exorcism of St. Basil the Great

O God of gods and Lord of lords, Creator of the fiery spirits and Artificer of the invisible powers, of all things heavenly and earthly: You whom no man has seen nor is able to see; You whom all creation fears and before whom it trembles; You who cast into the darkness of the abyss of Tartaros the angels who fell away with him who once was commander of the angelic host, who disobeyed You and haughtily refused to serve You: now expel by Your awesome name the evil one and his legions loose upon the earth, Lucifer and those with him who fell from above. Set him to flight and command him and his demons to depart completely. Let no harm come to them who are sealed in Your image and let those who are sealed receive power “to tread on serpents and scorpions and all the power of the enemy.” For You do we praise and magnify, and with every breath do we glorify Your all-holy name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.