



# St. Elias Melkite Catholic Church

Proclaiming the Ancient and Orthodox Christian Faith in the Silicon Valley

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**Sunday, October 1, 2017**

**Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos – Saints Ananias and Romanos**

**السبت 1 تشرين الأول 2016**

## 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: 7pm Online

See website for link

## Sunday School

During Sunday Coffee Social

## Contact the Pastor

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo

Phone: (831) 229-8350

[SebastianCarnazzo@gmail.com](mailto:SebastianCarnazzo@gmail.com)

## Qurban and Socials

- This Sunday, 10/1  
Qurban: Carnazzo  
Social: Kaldani
- This Sunday, 10/8  
Qurban: Higareda  
Social: Nadia Farah

## Pray for the Servants of God

Priests Christopher and Anthony

Readers Cyril and Romanos

Carnazzo Family (Qurban)

Khoury-Awad Family (Social)

Laure Kelly

Nabil Matta

Sr. Iliana

David Kalil

Shea family

Hynes family

Taurke family

Genevieve Gomez

Kamal & Eugenie Neimat

Isaac & Julia Kaldani

Maher & Therese Salama

## Asleep in the Lord in the Hope of the Resurrection

Sebastiano & Alfia Carnazzo

John, Mary, and Sheila Carnazzo

Robert & Alice Robertson

## HYMN

**Troparion of the Resurrection (8th Tone)** You descended from on high, O compassionate One, \* and consented to burial for three days \* that You might free us from suffering. \* O Lord, our life and our resurrection, \* glory to You!

نشيد القيامة – باللحن الثامن

إنحدرت من العلاء أيها التحنن، وقبّلت الدفن ثلاثة أيام، لكي تعنقنا من الآلام، فيا حياتنا وقيامتنا، يا رب المجد لك.

## READINGS

**Hebrews 9:1-7** Brethren, the first tabernacle also had ritual ordinances and a sanctuary, though an earthly one. For there was set up a tabernacle in the outer part of which were the lamp-stand and the table and the show-bread, and this is called the Holy Place. But beyond the second veil was the tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden censer and the Ark of the Covenant, overlaid on every side with gold. In the ark was a golden vessel containing the manna, and the rod of Aaron which had budded, and the tablets of the covenant and above it were the Cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy-seat. But of all these we cannot now speak in detail. Such then being the arrangements, the priests always used to enter into the first tabernacle to perform the sacred rites; but into the second tabernacle, the high priest alone entered once a year, not without blood, which he offered for his own and the people's sins of ignorance.

**Luke 10:38-42 & 11:27-28** At that time Jesus entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him to her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also seated herself at the Lord's feet, and listened to His word. But Martha was worried about much serving. And she came up and said, "Lord, is it no concern of Yours that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her therefore to help me." But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; and yet only one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken away from her." As He was saying these things, a certain woman lifted up her voice from the crowd, and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts that nursed You!" But He said, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it."

## COMMEMORATION

**The Holy Apostle Ananias**, a resident of Damascus, was inspired by God to baptize Saul (St. Paul), about the year 37 (Acts 9:10-19).

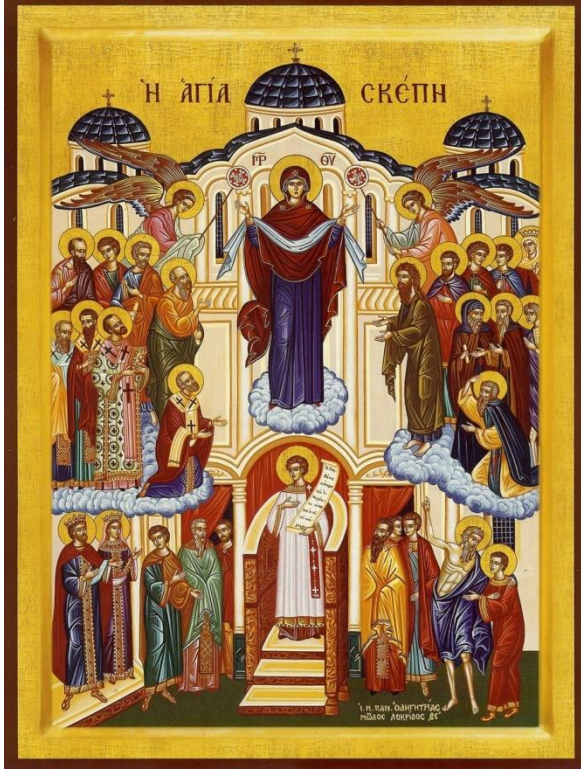
**St. Romanos the Melodist**, born in Emese of Syria, became deacon in the Church of the Resurrection in Berte (later Beyrouth). Under Emperor Anastasius, he joined the church of the Holy Mother of God in Cyrus, a suburb of Constantinople. The grace of the Holy Spirit inspired him to compose liturgical chants. One of the most famous of his compositions is the Kontakion of the Nativity (Today the Virgin Gives Birth). He was eventually ordained as a priest served until his death (c. 556).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Rummage Sale on Saturday 10/14:** Maurice Elhage will be heading up the organization of our first church rummage sale. Please start discerning what things you would like to give away and begin setting aside somewhere in your home (Don't bring them to church until the day of the sale). Ladies, let's also make this a bake sale so that those who come might also have food to purchase to take home or eat while they shop. The purpose of all of this is not to see how much money we can make but rather to have an opportunity to work together and attract people to the church. So let's take this seriously.

**Online Bible Study:** Having concluded our summer break, this past Wednesday we began are Online Bible Study again. The bible study is available online (see classroom link on website) every Wednesday at 7-8pm.

**Singing Practice:** We are now having singing practice every Saturday from 4-5pm. All are welcome to come learn and help.



### From the Dioceses

In 1917 the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, England acquired a third-century papyrus fragment of great historic interest. It contained the earliest known copy of a hymn to the Theotokos. The verse, still used in the liturgies of all the historic Churches, reads as follows: “Beneath your protection, we take refuge, O Theotokos. Do not despise our petitions in time of trouble, but rescue us from dangers, only pure, only blessed one.” This hymn shows that, from as early as the 200s, Christians have looked on the Holy Virgin as their protectress. Our liturgical year includes feasts celebrating the city of Constantinople’s reliance on the Theotokos to protect them. Today’s feast is the most iconic of these commemorations.

### The Panagia of Blachernae (Βλαχέρναι)

In the mid-fifth century, the emperors thought to enhance the city’s role as the Christian capital by collecting many relics from near and far. The patriarch of Jerusalem sent the holy mantle and robe of the Theotokos to the capital. A great church was built at Blachernae on the shore of the Bosphorus in honor of the holy Virgin with an adjoining shrine, the Hagia Soros (Holy Mausoleum) in which the mantle and robe, as well as relics of other saints, were enshrined. The church at Blachernae became known for the numerous healings and other miracles associated with the church’s principal icon of the Theotokos, the Panagia of Blachernae. This icon was frequently taken in procession around the city asking for the protection of the Virgin. Such a procession was held in 626 when the Avars, from the northern Caucasus, were besieging the city. Their fleet was sunk and, seeing this as divine intervention, the Avars fled. The Christians of Constantinople

saw this as a sign of the Virgin’s protection. The kondakion of the Akathist, which we know as We your servants (originally, I your city) was composed to celebrate this victory. During the latter years of the first millennium Constantinople suffered a series of assaults from hostile powers. When Persians besieged Constantinople in 677 and Muslim did the same in 717, people turned to the Virgin for protection. Both invasions were repulsed and the Virgin was praised for her protection. Orthodox Christians sought the Virgin’s protection over the Church during the era of iconoclasm. Every Friday an all-night vigil was celebrated before the Panagia of Blachernae.

### The Slavic Invasion of 860

In the 830s the Viking-Slavic peoples of Kievan Rus’ begin migrating south. When the Rus’ began raiding settlements on the Black Sea it was inevitable that their forces would come to the gates of Constantinople. In 860 a fleet of over 200 ships from Rus’ entered the harbor of Constantinople where they made a show of force before the city. On June 18, the inhabitants gathered with the emperor and the patriarch, St Photios the Great, in an all-night vigil at the Church of the Mother of God at Blachernae, near the shore. Imploring her to protect the city, St Photios took the robe in procession to the harbor, dipped it into the sea and then took it through the streets to Hagia Sophia. By June 25 the Rus’ began to withdraw from the harbor and entered into a treaty with the empire which led to the eventual Christianization of Rus’ in the next century. St Photios attributed the city’s deliverance to the “never-failing protectress of Christians” On July 2 the robe was returned to Blachernae in celebration, an event still commemorated in our Church every July 2.

### The Vision of St Andrew

The memory of these events, as well as the presence of the Virgin’s robe, made the Blachernae church the most popular shrine to the Theotokos in the imperial capital. It would become even more renowned with the events of October 1, 911. It was a Sunday and the all-night vigil was being served in the church at Blachernae. Among those present was St Andrew, a Slav who had been captured during a military incursion and sold as a slave. His master saw to it that Andrew learned to read and the young man became attached to the Church and its worship. He was inspired to adopt the *ascesis* of feigned insanity, being a “fool-for Christ.” He would pretend madness during the day, but pray all night. During the vigil, sometime after 3 AM, we are told in the Synaxarion that St Andrew “lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees, the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the ambo, she continued her prayer. “After completing her prayer, she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in the church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands glowed more than the rays of the sun.” Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, “Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?” “I do see, holy Father Epiphanius replied, “and am in awe.” For a long time, they observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation.” The icon of this feast shows this appearance of the Theotokos to St Andrew. Some icons, particularly those displayed for veneration on this feast, have a lower tier or an inset depicting St Romanos the Melodist chanting at the ambo. October 1 is also the feast day of this saint. This vision is celebrated in most Byzantine Churches on October 1. In the Church of Greece, however, the feast of the Protection of the Theotokos has been transferred to October 28 to coincide with the Greek national holiday, “Ohi” Day, marking the start of Greek resistance to the German and Italian occupation during World War II.

### The Church at Blachernae--Θεοτόκος των Βλαχερνών

The Church of the Theotokos was severely damaged by fire in 1070 but was rebuilt and restored by two successive emperors. Finally, the entire church complex, along with the surrounding quarter, was completely destroyed on February 29, 1434 when some children accidentally started a fire on the church roof. A few years before the fire, a portion of the robe had been sent to Russia. When the feast of the robe (July 2) was celebrated during the Tatar siege of Moscow in 1451 the Tatars were unaccountably seized with confusion and fled in disarray. Again, the Virgin’s protection was credited with the deliverance of a Christian city. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century a portion of the robe was being venerated at the Dormition Monastery in Khobi, Georgia. To this day this relic is carried in procession around that city for veneration on July 2.