



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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Sunday, October 8, 2017

Third Sunday after the Holy Cross

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

Sunday Socials

- This Sunday, 10/8
Nadia Farah
- Next Sunday, 10/15
Higareda

Pray for the Servants of God
Priests Christopher and Anthony
Readers Cyril and Romanos
Nadia Farah Family
Higareda Family
Anh Ciardella
Rose Khoury
James Ferguson
Amani Farah
Potter Family
Lardizabel family
Laure Kelly
Nabil Matta
Sr. Iliana
Genevieve Gomez
Michael
Rosalie Mendez
Jessica Lee
Kamal & Eugenie Neimat
Isaac & Julia Kaldani
Maher & Therese Salama

Asleep in the Lord in the Hope of the Resurrection
Gary Potter

HYMN

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 1: 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, giving life to the world. Wherefore, 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!"

READINGS

2 Corinthians 9:6-12 BRETHREN, he who sows sparingly, will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let everyone give as much as he has decided in his heart, not grudgingly or out of compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (Prv.22: 8) And God is able to make all grace abound in you, so that always having ample means, you may abound in every good work, as it is written, *He has scattered abroad and has given to the poor: His righteousness remains forever.* (Ps. 111: 9). Now, He who provides the sower with seed will both give you bread to eat and multiply your seed, and will increase the growth of the fruits of your justification — that being enriched in all things, you may contribute with simplicity of purpose, and thus through us evoke thanksgiving to God.

Luke 7:11-16 AT that time it came to pass that Jesus went to a town called Naim; and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. And as he drew near the gate of the town, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large gathering from the town was with her. And the Lord, seeing her, had compassion on her, and said to her, "Do not weep." And he went up and touched the stretcher; and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to thee, arise." And he who was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. But fear seized upon all, and they began to glorify God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us" and "God has visited his people."

COMMEMORATION

Our Venerable Mother Pelagia was born in Antioch toward the second half of the fifth century. After years spent in luxury and pleasure, she accepted the faith of Christ and received the baptism of salvation. She retired to the Mount of Olives, where she died after a life of penance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RUMMAGE SALE THIS SATURDAY!!! 10/14: This Saturday we will have a church rummage 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! I hope that everyone will get involved! See Maurice Elhage for more details.

SAINTS DAY PARTY - TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31 @ 5:00pm All parishioners are invited to attend our Saints Day Party. Children (and adults if you choose) should come dressed like their favorite Saint from the Old Testament, New Testament, or Church History. We will have a brief evening prayer together, followed by dinner and games. One of the games will be "Guess that Saint." Bring a bag of your favorite candy to share. Dinner will be provided.

Online Bible Study: Having concluded our summer break, we are now having our weekly Online Bible Studies again. The bible study is available online (see classroom link on website) every Wednesday, 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

Giving Back to the Giver



From time to time, Christians in a number of communities, including the ancient historic Churches, are encouraged to tithe to their congregation. Tithing – the giving of 10% of one’s income – is mandatory in some groups. Mormons, for example are required to tithe and only tithe-paying members are allowed to enter Mormon temples and to receive its “ordinances” (sacraments). Many Pentecostal groups teach that, if you are not tithing, you are robbing God.

Tithing in the Old Testament

The practice of tithing arose at the start of the Israelite nation. When the Israelites occupied the Promised Land, eleven of their twelve tribes were given a portion of the conquered territory. The twelfth tribe, Levi, which was set apart as the nation’s priests, received no land. The eleven landed tribes were to give their tithes to the Levites (temple assistants, comparable to our deacons). These mandatory tithes were used to support the priests, manage the temple, and provide relief for foreigners, orphans and widows (see Num 18).

The tithe was seen in the Torah as a recognition that all of creation was God’s: *“And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s. It is holy to the Lord. If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord”* (Lev 27: 30-32). If a person failed to pay the tithe or held back some of it he was considered to have robbed God. As the nation became more established and prosperous, the temptation to avoid paying the full tithe was not uncommon. The prophet Malachi thundered against this practice, but also promised that those who paid the tithe would be blessed: *“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts. “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it”* (Mal 3: 8-10). Malachi distinguishes between tithes and offerings. The tithe was the required tenth of one’s income which was God’s by right. An offering was whatever was freely given over and above the tithe. Sometimes such gifts are called “love offerings,” made from personal devotion rather than by law.

Tithing in the New Testament

Tithing was practiced regularly by Jews into New Testament times. In the Gospels, we see that the Lord Jesus criticized the Pharisees for being strict about determining tithes of everything they have received while ignoring more important matters: *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the Law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!”* (Mt 23:23, 24). He did not condemn tithing, only the mechanical performance of it while ignoring the spirit behind it. Similarly, in His parable of the Publican and the Pharisee (Lk 18:9-14), the Lord Jesus shows the Pharisee taking pride in his fasting and tithing. The Lord does not reproach the Pharisee for doing these things, but for taking pride in them. That even the poor sometimes gave more than was required was noted – and praised – by Jesus when He visited the temple: *“Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood”* (Mk 12:41-44).

Nowhere in the New Testament is tithing mandated. Generosity and openness in giving are recognized and praised while mean-spiritedness is condemned. In the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), two believers are reproached for pretending to give to the Church whatever they received for selling a piece of land. St Peter discerned the lie and said to Ananias, *“Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God”* (vv. 3, 4).

Giving in the Writings of St Paul

St Paul teaches several principles for giving in 2 Cor 9. First, in v.5 he notes that all giving should be *“a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.”* He then adds: *“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So, let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver”* (vv. 6, 7). In v.7 St Paul sees the individual believer as responsible for determining the amount he can give *“as he purposes in his heart”*. Instead of giving a set amount (the tithe), the believer is expected to give as his heart dictates, out of his faith that he is “in Christ.” Some, like popular Orthodox author Frederica Mathewes-Green, believe that a commitment to tithing, like fasting, can foster spiritual growth. She recommends, *“Aim to give a percentage of your income. Start with whatever percentage you give now, and raise it a little each year. In time, you will reach the tithe. Then you will be giving as generously as the people of the Bible, who lived in conditions we would see as abject poverty. ... there is no better indication of your priorities”* (*Christianity Today* 59.5). Many churches have annual pledge drives asking members to make a specific commitment of what they purpose to give in the year ahead. The introduction of set amounts for giving as “dues,” “pew rents,” or “fees” in some churches suggests that many Christians believe in paying only for services rendered.

The Ministry of Giving

St Paul indicates another principle for giving in Rom 12:4-8: *“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; **he who gives, with liberality;** he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”* Some Christians have been gifted to teach or lead the Church; others have been gifted to support the Church in a significant way. As good singers should use their voices to build up the Church, those with material abundance should use their wealth as a gift given them to support the Church over and above the average donor. The many believers who have built churches, shrines, schools or hospitals with their own resources have ministered in this way by using the gift they have received.