

**St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church of the San Fernando Valley**  
**a Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America**  
**16643 Vanowen Street; Van Nuys, California; 91406** [stmichaelvannuys.org](http://stmichaelvannuys.org)

His Eminence, Metropolitan SABA, of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian  
Archdiocese of North America [www.antiochian.org](http://www.antiochian.org)

His Grace, Bishop ANTHONY, Auxiliary to the Metropolitan  
Archpriest Timothy Baclig, Pastor [frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org)  
Rev. Deacon Andrew Monsue [armcopper@gmail.com](mailto:armcopper@gmail.com)  
Subdeacon Richard Tamoush [Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com](mailto:Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com)  
Subdeacon Elias Mankouche [eli\\_mankouche@hotmail.com](mailto:eli_mankouche@hotmail.com)  
Parish Council Chair - Michael Mitchell [mgmitchell3@gmail.com](mailto:mgmitchell3@gmail.com)  
Council Vice-Chair - Waleed Moujaes [wsmoujaes@icloud.com](mailto:wsmoujaes@icloud.com)  
Council Secretary - Fred Milkie, Jr. [mildief@aol.com](mailto:mildief@aol.com)  
Council Treasurer - Praneet Panga [praneet.panga@stepupconsultingco.com](mailto:praneet.panga@stepupconsultingco.com)  
Assistant Treasurer - Kris Thabit [kthabit66@hotmail.com](mailto:kthabit66@hotmail.com)  
Long-range Planning Chair - Michael Mitchell [mgmitchell3@gmail.com](mailto:mgmitchell3@gmail.com)

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of No. America (AOCWNA)

Chapter President - Charmaine Darmour [cdarmour@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cdarmour@sbcglobal.net)  
Choir Director - William Grundler [wgrundler@gmail.com](mailto:wgrundler@gmail.com)  
Church School Dir. - Rachel Grundler [superintendent@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:superintendent@stmichaelvannuys.org)  
Youth Director - Michelle Moujaes [michellemoujaes@gmail.com](mailto:michellemoujaes@gmail.com)  
Young Adult Ministry Coordinator - George Khouri [khourigj@gmail.com](mailto:khourigj@gmail.com)  
Men's Fellowship - Sam Azzam [mensministry@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:mensministry@stmichaelvannuys.org)  
Faithtree Resources Exec. Director - Michelle Moujaes [michelle@faithtree.org](mailto:michelle@faithtree.org)  
Stewardship Chair - Constantine Nasr [constantinenasr@icloud.com](mailto:constantinenasr@icloud.com)  
Communications Chair - Michael Paraskevas [michaelparaskevas13@gmail.com](mailto:michaelparaskevas13@gmail.com)  
Bookstore Manager - Bobbi Monsue [bobbi\\_monsue@att.net](mailto:bobbi_monsue@att.net)  
Golf Classic Co-Chairs - Don Meena [donmeena@sbcglobal.net](mailto:donmeena@sbcglobal.net)  
and Fred Milkie [mildief@aol.com](mailto:mildief@aol.com)  
Website - Dan Raju and Joseph Wang [jpw378@gmail.com](mailto:jpw378@gmail.com)  
Charity Coordinator - Cindy Tamoush [cindy.tamoush@gmail.com](mailto:cindy.tamoush@gmail.com)  
Usher Emeritus - Ramez Hage [jeddo.ramez@gmail.com](mailto:jeddo.ramez@gmail.com)

## **The Sixth Sunday of Pascha**

### **The Sunday of the Blind Man**

Apostles Andronikos and Junia of the Seventy;  
Athanasios the New, Bishop of Christianopolis

**Sunday, May 17, 2026**

**Tone 5; Eothinon 8**

### **Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 5)**

Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

### **Apolytikion for our Patron, Michael the Archangel (Tone 2)**

O ye foremost of the heavenly hosts, we beseech thee, though we are unworthy, pray that we may be encompassed with a shadow of thine unearthly glory; preserving us who kneel and cry endlessly: Deliver us from oppression since ye are the prince of the highest powers.

### **Kontakion of Pascha (Tone 8)**

Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of Hades, and didst arise as victor, O Christ God, calling to the myrrh-bearing women, Rejoice, and giving peace unto Thine Apostles, O Thou Who dost grant resurrection to the fallen.

### **Daily Readings**

THE EPISTLE (for the Sunday of the Blind Man)

*Thou, O Lord, shalt keep us and preserve us.  
Save me, O Lord, for the godly man is no more.*

### **The Reading from the Second Epistle of the Acts to the Holy Apostles (16:16-34):**

In those days, while we the apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us, and cried out saying: "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And she did this for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit: "I charge

you in the Name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers; and when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said: “These men are disturbing our city, and they, being Jews, are setting forth customs which are not lawful for us to receive or observe, since we are Romans.” The multitude then rose up together against them, and the magistrates tore their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. Having received such a charge, he cast them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one’s fetters were unfastened. And the jailer, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice saying: “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, “Men, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God.

THE GOSPEL (for the Sixth Sunday of Pascha)

**The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. John  
(9:1-38)**

At that time, when Jesus was passing, He saw a man blind from his birth. And His Disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him Who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in

the world, I am the light of the world.” As He said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man’s eyes with the clay, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” [which means Sent]. So he went and washed and came back seeing. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, “Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is he”; others said, “No, but he is like him.” He said, “I am the man.” They said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash’; so I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.” They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” There was a division among them. So they again said to the blind man, “What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age, ask him.” So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become His disciples?” And they reviled him, saying, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from.” The man answered, “Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my

eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He answered, “And Who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen Him, and it is He who speaks to you.” He said, “Lord, I believe”; and he worshiped Him.

## **The Synaxarion**

On May 17 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate Apostles Andronikos and Junia of the Seventy; and Athanasios the New, bishop of Christianopolis.

On this day, the sixth Sunday of Pascha, we celebrate the miracle wrought by our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ upon the man who was blind from his birth.

### ***Verses***

O Light of Light most perfect, and Light-provider,  
On the blind from birth, O Word, eyes Thou bestowest.

The Savior met this man, born blind and incurable after every human effort, while leaving the Temple on the Sabbath. Saints John Chrysostom, Basil the Great and Irenaeus teach that the man was born without eyeballs. Jesus spat into the dirt, made clay, rubbed it in his eye sockets and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam, a famous water spring in Jerusalem. The Savior did not send him there because his eye sockets were filled with clay, nor did the pool have healing power, but instead to test his faith and obedience. Jesus fashioned the eyes of the blind man from the dirt as God fashioned man from the dirt. The blind man proclaimed that Jesus healed him, but this confession caused him to be cast out by the enemies of the truth. Even his own parents would not defend him. However, the blind man followed Jesus from that moment forward.

By Thine infinite mercy, O Christ our God, Giver of light, have mercy on us. Amen.

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## The Fast of the Holy Apostles

**The Great Feast of Pentecost** (fifty days after the Feast of the Resurrection) is celebrated this year on Sunday, May 31st; ten days following **The Feast of the Holy Ascension** (the fortieth day; celebrated this year this Thursday, May 21). There is no fasting during the week following Pentecost. Each year, **The Sunday of All Saints** is celebrated on the Sunday following Pentecost, consistent with the theme of the Holy Spirit's descent. This year, the Sunday of All Saints appears on June 7th. (In the Western Church it is celebrated November 1st each year). It was in Antioch that The Sunday of All Saints began as a celebration of martyrs in the 4th century.

Each year **The Fast of the Holy Apostles** immediately follows the Feast of All Saints — on the Monday after the Great Feast of Pentecost, following a week of no fasting (June 8-28). When it appears on the calendar, The Apostles Fast prepares us for the celebration of the **Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul**, Patrons of the Patriarchate of Antioch, celebrated this year on Monday, June 29th. Having rejoiced for the fifty days following Pascha (Easter), the Apostles began to prepare for their departure from Jerusalem to spread Christ's message, as commissioned by the Lord at His Ascension (Mark 16:15-20). According to Holy Tradition, as part of their preparation, the Apostles began to fast with prayer to ask God to strengthen their resolve and to be with them in their missionary undertakings.

The scriptural foundation for the Fast is found in the four Gospels, when the Pharisees criticized the apostles for not fasting, Jesus said to them, "Can the children of the bridal chamber mourn, as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." In the immediate sense, Christ was referring to his being taken to be crucified; but in the wider sense it is understood in terms of his Ascension into heaven, and his commission to preach the Gospel, which can only be accomplished with prayer and fasting.

The tradition of the Fast has existed at least since Pope Leo I (461 AD), as is evidenced by his homilies, though it has subsequently been forgotten in the West.

The Fast is thought to have been instituted out of thanksgiving to God for the witness of the apostles of Christ. With this Fast, believers express their thanks for the apostles' endurance of persecution during their mission.

The period of this fast varies from year to year, depending on the date of Easter. It may begin as early as May 18 or as late as June 21. Thus, it may be as short as one day or as long as forty-two days in duration. This year, due to the late date of Easter (Holy Pascha), the Fast of the Apostles does not appear on the calendar. It is one of the four periods of fasting on our church calendar; the others include: a) Great Lent and Holy Week (in the late winter and spring), b) The Fast of the Holy Nativity (forty days before Christmas), and c) The Fast of the Holy Dominion (August 1-14).

The traditional fasting discipline is less severe from other periods of fasting on the church calendar; similar to the Nativity Fast. It includes: no meat, poultry, eggs, cheese, milk or other dairy products, fish, wine and olive oil on Monday, with *catalysis* (allowance) for wine and olive oil on Tuesday (some also permit fish on Tuesday).

## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

*NOTE: There is **no** fasting for the forty-day period:  
from Easter to the Feast of the Ascension (May 21<sup>st</sup>)*

### **Great Feast of the Ascension**

Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

### **Sunday of the After-Feast of the Ascension**

### **Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council**

Great Vespers – Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 5 p.m.

Orthros – Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

### **The Great Feast of Pentecost**

Great Vespers, Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 5 p.m.

Orthros – Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

[Note: The week of June 1-5 is a fast free week]

## **Memorial Day Services at Three Area Cemeteries**

Monday, May 25, 10 a.m. at St. Nicholas Memorial Gardens  
(Valhalla Cemetery; No. Hollywood)

'Ain Arab — Forest Lawn Memorial Park (Glendale) 11:30 a.m.

*Douma Section* — Forest Lawn Memorial Park (No. Hollywood) 1 p.m.

## **OFFERINGS**

Holy Bread is being offered this morning by Ron & Kathy Zraick in memory of Ron's sisters, Lorraine Ghiz (+17 May, 2003) and Audree Yacoub (+15 May, 2021). Memory eternal.

Holy Bread is also being offered this morning by Bobbi Monsue in memory of her sister, Virginia Canaday (+7 May, 2021). Memory eternal.

Special offerings and requests for prayer are being made . . .

for the repose of the servants of God Salim K. Srouf fifty-first year memorial (+17 May, 1975) and Elaine Srouf (+21 February, 2021).  
Memory eternal.

for the repose of Lody Younes (+14 May, 2026), beloved mother of  
George Younes. Memory eternal.

for the well being of James Boutross.

for Father George Ajalat, Pastor Emeritus of St. Simeon Church  
(Santa Clarita, California)

**Note to Coffee Hour hosts: coffee and paper goods will be provided each week.**

### **Holy Bread Offering List**

### **Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar**

May 21 - (Feast of the Ascension) open

May 24 - The Albert Bitar family

May 31 - (Feast of Pentecost) open

Jun 07 - (All-Saints) open

Jun 14 - open

Please contact Father Timothy (818/219-3761; [frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org](mailto:frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org)) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread or to host the Coffee Hour.

*Then the following dialogue is said between the priest and the faithful:*

Priest: Christ is risen!

**People: Truly, He is risen!** [repeated in various languages]

Al Maseeah qam! **Haq qan qam!** (*Arabic*)

Christos Anesti! **Alithos Anesti!** (*Greek*)

Kristos voskrese! **Voistinu voskrese!** (*Slavonic*)

Kristo esta resusitado! **Verdaderamente resusitado!** (*Spanish*)

Khristi ungal! **Vertet ungal!** (*Albanian*)

Le Christ est ressuscite! **En verite il est ressuscite** (*French*)

Kristos Inviat! **Adervaret inviat!** (*Romanian*)

Ua ala hou ‘o Kristo! **Ua ala ‘I ‘o no ‘oia!** (*Hawaiian*)

Christus is opgestaan! **Hij is waarlijk opgestaan!** (*Dutch*)

Kristus ist Auferstanden! **Sicherlich ist Auferstanden!** (*German*)

Khristus Zmartvikstau! **Zaiste Zmartvikstau!** (*Polish*)

Christos harjav i merelotz! **Orhniale harutjun Christosi!** (*Armenian*)

Kristos Tensiah! **Be-a-man Ten-si-a!** (*Tigrigna*)

Massih Miyayat! **Hatman Miyayat** (*Farsi*)

Kristo azukidde! **Kituufu azukidde** (*Luganda*)

Ha Mashiyach qam! **Ken hoo qam!** (*Hebrew*)

Yeshu Christo Wierthayairnaytoo! **Sathamyetoom Yeshu Christo wierthayairnaytoo!**  
(*Malayalam*)

Mesiah jee utha hei! **Such mei jee mutha hei!** (*Hindu*)

Kristo samawa, yomi gaimashta! **Hontoni yomi gaimashta!** (*Japanese*)

Priest: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by Death, and upon those in the tombs... **People: Bestowing life!**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Weekly Bible Study - Tuesday Evenings at 7 p.m.**

Join us this Tuesday evening, May 19th, at 7 p.m. for our weekly Bible Study. We will continue our study of the scriptural passages that is the basis of the practice of *nepsis*; the discipline of focusing our thoughts by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Sessions are recorded for those unable to attend who may also request the link to the study.

## **“Saturday of Souls” - May 30, 2026**

Each Saturday is the day of the week dedicated to the departed souls. There are also specific Saturdays of which a special Memorial Liturgy is prescribed for the departed when the departed of all time are remembered. One of these Saturdays is the day before the Great Feast of Pentecost (“Trinity Saturday”), this year, on May 30th.

**A Divine Liturgy is planned to take place at the altar of the St. Nicholas Memorial Garden at Valhalla Cemetery in No. Hollywood, and will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 30th.** All are encouraged to provide the clergy with the list of names of your departed family members for the service.

Other Saturdays when a memorial Liturgy is specifically prescribed includes the Saturday of Meat Fare (before Lent), the second, third and fourth Saturdays of Great Lent, and the Saturday prior to the Feast of St. Demetrios (October 26). For a complete explanation and historical outline of the commemoration of the departed souls and the commemoration of the departed souls on Saturday, see an article by Hieromonk Job (Gumerov); go to: <https://orthochristian.com/52107.html> The following is an excerpt of the article: “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he ceased from all His works which God began to do (Gen. 2:3). Saturday (Sabbath) for the Jews was a day of festive rest. Christ’s resurrection placed the beginning of the new Israel: a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9). The resurrection day of the Savior of the World became the seventh, festive day that completes the week. Sunday [in Russian, *voskresenie*, meaning “resurrection”) is a day of

prayer in church at Divine Liturgy and pious rest. From a day of earthly rest, Saturday became a symbol of joyous rest in the Kingdom of Heaven: There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his (Hebrews 4:9–10). This is where the custom, fixed by the Church Typicon, came from of having special services on Saturday for the commemoration of the dead. The establishment of the universal ancestral Meat Fare Saturday dates back to the first century of Christianity. In the Synaxarion for this day (*The Lenten Triodion*) it says that the holy fathers established, *having received it from the holy Apostles*, that on this day should be commemorated *all people from the ages who have reposed in faith and piety*. This day was chosen because Meat Fare week reminds us of the future Last Judgment. On the eve of this day, Saturday, as if preceding the Last Judgment, the Church prays especially for all of its reposed children, begging the Lord to have mercy on them and make them partakers of blessed eternal life.

### **Golf Classic Holy Sponsorship Deadline: May 25th**

We are excited to host **The 33rd Annual St. Michael Church Golf Classic** at the Wood Ranch Golf Club in Moorpark, CA, on Monday June 29th. Many of us are looking forward to a round of golf, then joining many more of our family and friends for an evening of fun and fellowship.

Thanks to all of our golf hole sponsors last year. Your generous support made it possible for St. Michael to continue serving the spiritual needs of our faithful and do the important work of our ministries. Your contributions to this event made a big difference.

Our church is growing and we need even more support to continue meeting the needs of our parish and community. Our goal this year is to increase hole sponsorships.

### **Can we count on your support this year?**

Join your St. Michael family for a day of fellowship and fun. You may now register by using the following link: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/stmichaelantiochianchurch/2085844> Show your creativity and design a gift basket for the tournament raffle or donate towards new items for

baskets (due June 12). Please contact: Marcelle Chaffin (818-516-1736) or DeAnne Abraham (818-389-0065)

# ST. MICHAEL GOLF CLASSIC

For Golf Questions Contact:

Don (661) 623-0340

Fred (818) 535-4243

## MONDAY, JUNE 29, 2026

## WOOD RANCH GOLF CLUB

10:00 Check-in & Lite Bruch

12:00 Golf

5:00 Cocktail

6:00 Dinner



Dinner with Fr. Timothy  
Will take place in Summer 2026

(Date TBD)

Contact:

Marcelle (818) 516-1736

DeAnne (818) 389-0065

Register Here for all events →

<https://app.tickettailor.com/events/stmichaelantiochianchurch/2085844>



### Metropolitan SABA's Teaching (in English and Arabic)

View the message from Metropolitan SABA here, available in English, Arabic, French and Spanish entitled, "Guidance on Reading": <https://www.antiochian.org/regulararticle/2809>

Registration will open shortly for the 41st annual [Summer Sacred Music Institute](#) from July 8-12 at the Antiochian Village. Auditions for the Youth Music Ministry program are now open through May 27.

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## Parish Life Conference 2026 July 2nd-5th, San Diego, CA

### Conference Highlights (Matins & Vespers Services Daily)

7/1 — Wednesday

**Registration, Bishop & Clergy Meeting**

7/2 — Thursday

**Clergy & Clergy Wives Brunch, Workshops, Young Adult's Event, Order of St. Ignatius Reception, Hospitality Night**

7/3 — Friday

**Organizations' Meetings, Antiochian Women Brunch, General Meeting and Bishop's Address, Bible Bowl, Social Event, Teen Dance**

7/4 — Saturday

**Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, Festival Awards Brunch, Oratorical Contest and Choir Festival, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration Dinner & Party**

7/5 — Sunday

**Hierarchical Divine Liturgy**

### MARRIOTT MARQUIS SAN DIEGO MARINA

**Room Rate - ONLY \$199**

Register and book your room today at [Antiochianevents.org](http://Antiochianevents.org) or by scanning this QR code to get these low room rates. You don't want to miss out!



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attractions & Seaport Village

Hosted by  
**St. George Antiochian  
Orthodox Church**

4175 Poplar Street  
San Diego, CA 92105



## SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

### SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN

APOSTLES ANDRONIKOS AND JUNIA OF THE SEVENTY  
ATHANASIOS THE NEW, BISHOP OF CHRISTIANOPOLIS

المسيح قام من بين الأموات، ووطيء الموت بالموت، ووهب الحياة للذين في القبور.

#### أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن الخامس

ليستح نحن المؤمنين ونسبح للكلمة، المسماوي لاجب والروح في الأزيئة وغمع الإبتداء، المولود من العذراء لخلصنا، لأنه سز بالجسد أن نعلو على الصليب، ونحتمل الموت، ونبهمش الموتى بقيامته المجيدة.

#### طوبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع

أبها المتقدمون على الأجداد السماويين، توتملن إليكم نحن غير المستحقين، حتى أكم بطلابكم تكتنوفونا بطلن أحجة مسجكم غير اليهودي، حافظين إيتانا نحن الجائين والصارخين غير فقير، انغفونا من الشدائد، بما أكم رؤساء مراتب القوات العلوية.

#### القداد الفصح باللحن الثامن

ولئن كُنت نزلت إلى قبر يا من لا يموت، إلا أنك زيمت قوة الحميم، وفمت غالباً أبها المسيح الإله، ولتبنوة حملات المطب فلت «أفرخ»، ولزلائك وهبت السلام، يا مباح الراعفين القيام.

### الرسالة

#### فصل من أعمال الرسل القديسين الأظهر.

في تلك الأيام، حدث بينما كذا داھين إلى الصلاة، أن جارية بها روح عرافة استفتلتنا. وكانت تكلمت منا يوماً مكسبنا كثيرا بعراقيها. هذه التبعث بولس وإيتا وصنرت قايبة: «هؤلاء الناس هم عبده الطيب، الذين ينادون لكم بطريق الخلاص». وكانت تفعل هذا إيتا كثيرة، فصنجر بولس والنفت إلى الروح وقال: «أنا المزمك باسم يسوع المسيح أن تخرج منها!». فخرج في تلك الساعة فلما رأى موليها أنه قد خرج زجاء مكسيهم، أمسكوا بولس وسبيلا وجزوهما إلى السوق إلى الحكام. وإذ أتوا بهما إلى الولاء، قالوا: «هذان الرجلان يبلبلان مدينتنا، وهما يهوديان، ويناديان بعواذ لا يجوز لنا أن نقبلها ولا نعمل بها، إذ نحن رومانيون». فقام اجتمع معاً عليهم، ومزق الولاء عبايتهم وأمروا أن يضربا بالحصي. فوضعا عليهما ضربات كثيرة والفهما في السجن، وأوصوا حافظ السجن أن يحرسهما بضابط وهو إذ أخذ وصية مثل هذه، فألفها في السجن الداخلي، وضبط أن جلها في المفطرة. ونحو نصف الليل كان بولس وسبيلا يصليان ويسبحان الله، والمسجونون يتبعونهما. فحدث بغعة زائلة عظيمة حتى تزعت أسانست السجن، فالتفتحت في الحال الأبواب كلها، وانفكت قيود الجميع. ولما استيقظ حافظ السجن، ورأى أبواب السجن مفتوحة، استل سيفه وكان مزعماً أن يقتل نفسه، طئاً أن المسجونين قد هربوا. فنادى بولس بصوت عظيم قائلاً: «لا تفعل بنفسك شيئاً ردياً! لأن جميعنا ههنا!». فطلب منوزاً والذفق إلى داخل، وخر لبولس وسبيلا وهو مرزعة، ثم أخرجهما وقال: «يا سيدي، ماذا ينبغي أن أفعل لكن أخلص». فقالوا: «امن بالرب يسوع المسيح فخلص أنت وأهل بيتك». وكلماء وجميع من في بيته بكلمة الرب فأخذها في تلك الساعة من الليل وضعلها من الجرحات، واعتمد في الحال هو والذين له أجمعون. ولما أصدت هماً إلى بيته قدم لها سائدة، وتهلل مع جميع بيته إذ كان قد آمن بالله.

## الإنجيل

### فصل شريف من بشارة القديس يوحنا

في ذلك الزمان، وفيما هو مختار رأى إنساناً أعشى منذ ولادته، فسأله تلاميذه قائلين: «يا معلم، هذا أم أبوه حتى ولد أعشى؟». أجاب يسوع: «لا هذا أحط ولا أبوه، لكن نظنر أحط الله فيه ينبغي أن نعمل أعمال الذي أرسلني ما دام نهار. يأتي لل حين لا يستطيع أحد أن يعمل. ما كُنت في العلم فإنا نوز العالم». قال هذا ونقل على الأرض وضع من الثقل طيباً وطلبي بالطين عيني الأعشى. وقال له: «ماذا أحطل في بركة سلوان» الذي تيسره: مرزعل، فمغنى واغتمل وأتى يصيرا. فأجروا والنين كانوا يترزونه قائلين أنه أعشى، قالوا: «النين هذا هو الذي كان يجلين ويستعطي؟». أجروا قالوا: «هذا هو». وأجروا: «إبته يترزونه». وأما هو فقال: «إني أنا هو». فقالوا له: «كيف التفتحت عيناك؟». أجاب ذلك وقال: «إنسان يقال له يسوع صنع طيباً وطلبي عيني، وقال لي: اذهب إلى بركة سلوان واغتمل. فمغضت واغتملت فأبصرته». فقالوا له: «أين ذلك؟». قال: «لا أعلم». فأتوا إلى الفريسيين الذي كان قبالاً أعشى. وكان سنث حين صنع يسوع الطين وفتح عينيته فسأله الفريسيون إيتنا كيف أبصر، فقال لهم: «وضع طيباً على عيني واغتملت، فإنا أبصر». فقال قوم من الفريسيين: «هذا الإنسان ليس من الله، لأنه لا يحفظ السبت». أجروا قالوا: «كيف يقدر إنسان خاطئ أن يعمل مثل هذا الإيتا؟» وكان يبينهم الشفاق. قالوا إيتنا للأعشى: «ماذا تقول أنت عنة من حيث إنه فتح عيناك؟». فقال: «إبته سي؟». فلم يصدق اليهود عنة أنه كان أعشى فأبصر حتى دعوا أبوي الذي أبصر. فسألوها قائلين: «هذا إنكمما الذي تقولان إنه ولد أعشى؟ فكيف يبرسر إن؟». أجابهم أبواه وقالوا: «نعلم أن هذا إننا، وأنه ولد أعشى. وأما كيف يبرسر إلا أن نعلم. أو من فتح عينيته فلا نعلم. هو كامل السن. أسألوه فهو يتكلم عن نفسه». قال أبواه هذا لأنهما كانا يخاصان من اليهود، لأن اليهود كانوا قد تعاضوا أنه إن اعترف أحد بأنه المسيح يخرج من تحت الجحيم. لذلك قال أبوا: «إبته كامل السن، أسألوه. فدعوا ثانية الإنسان الذي كان أعشى، وقالوا له: «أعط مجداً لله. نحن نعلم أن هذا الإنسان خاطئ». فأجاب ذلك وقال: «أخاطئ هو؟ لست أعلم. إنما أعلم شيئاً واحد: أنني كُنت أعشى والان أبصر». فقالوا له إيتنا: «ماذا صنع بك؟ كيف فتح عيناك؟». أجابهم: «فد فُتحت ألمي ولم أسمعوا لِمَذا فريزون أن نسمعوا إيتنا؟ الحكام التئم فريزون أن تصيروا له تلاميذ؟». فشمته وقالوا: «أنت تلميذ ذلك، وأما نحن فإنا تلاميذ موسى. نحن نعلم أن موسى كلمة الله، وأما هذا فما نعلم من أين هو». أجاب الرجل وقال لهم: «إن في هذا عجباً! إنكم لتتمتعون بغير علم من أين هو، وقد فتح عيني. ونعلم أن الله لا يسمع للخطاة. ولكن إن كان أحد يتق الله ويفعل مشيئته، فليدأ يسمع منذ الدهر لِمَ يسمع أن أحداً فتح عيني مولود أعشى. لو لم تكن هذا من الله لم يقدر أن يفعل شيئاً، أجادوا وقالوا له: «في الخطايا والذات أنت يملكك، وأنت تعلمنا». فأخروه خارجاً. فسمع يسوع أنهم أخرجوه خارجاً، فوجدته وقال له: «أؤمن يا ابن الله». أجاب ذلك وقال: «من هو يا سيدي لأؤمن به؟». فقال له يسوع: «قد رأيتك، والذي يتكلم معك هو هو!». فقال: «أؤمن يا سيدي!». وسجد له.

#### ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان يعني عمومية المشاركة فيه لذوي العقيدة الواحدة، إلا إن المشاركة في سر القربان المقدس هنا مقصّر على أعضاء الكنائس الأرثوذكسية والذين يحضرون القسميم بالصلاة والصوم والاعتراف منذ فترة قريبة وعلى كل حال، فإننا ندعو الجميع للمشاركة في الخبز المقدس الذي يوزع عند انتهاء مراسم القداس.

الرجاء مراجعة الكاهن إذا رغبت أن تصبح عضواً في الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية.

## Pastor's Sermon

### Sunday of the Blind man

by V. Rev. Timothy Baclig

May 17, 2026

Today is the Sunday prior to the Feast of the Ascension. A Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in our church this Thursday, May 21st at 10 a.m. The eve of the Feast of the Ascension is the conclusion of the festival season of Easter and is the “Leave-taking of Pascha” when the image of the crucified Christ will return to the Holy Cross. Each Sunday, since Holy Pascha, we have been reading lessons from the Gospel of St. John, beginning with chapter one on the night of Easter.

Today's Gospel lesson is remarkable: The Healing of the Man Born Blind was among the lessons read on the Saturday night of Easter, at the time when Christian catechumen's were baptized. It was chosen for the purpose of focusing upon the themes of the Feast of the Resurrection, namely: washing, illumination,

healing, faith, conversion and salvation. The uniqueness of this miracle, chosen among the baptismal lessons is that it highlights Christ's work in unity with the Father as a "new creation." The unusual miracle that dumbfounded many was unique because it is about a man whose choice was not to be blind. He was born blind and the Lord worked a miracle.

All of us, like the blind man in today's lesson, have contemplated at one point in our life: who we are. We have perhaps tried to understand something about what God intends for us to do – why we were born of a particular lineage, have certain predetermined traits, characteristics, dispositions, abilities or disabilities. In all honesty, we don't have all of the answers in this life. You and I are not God, and may have to consider it a matter of "luck." That is to say, live with "the cards that we have been dealt."

In a hymn from last the Saturday Vespers service we heard these words: *The blind man thought to himself and said: I wonder if I was born blind due to the sin of my parents? Have I become an example of the faithlessness of the Gentiles? I cannot stop asking: When is the night, when is the day? ...I have never seen the sun shining, nor have I seen my Creator in any form whatsoever. I beseech Thee, O Christ God, to look upon me and have mercy upon me.*

You may recall that in the Gospel last week, the paralytic had been paralyzed for 38 years, sat at the edge of the pool – the pool that... and when the Lord saw him he said, "Do you want to be healed?" At the end of the lesson we are told that on another occasion the Lord found the man at the Temple and admonished him to stop sinning in order that nothing worse would happen to him. In contrast to the lesson we hear today, the paralytic's illness we understood to be tied and related to sins he committed. This was not the case for the blind man.

Today's Gospel lesson is found within the full context of a section of St. John's Gospel where our Lord is teaching in the Jerusalem Temple courts during the Feast of Tabernacles – following the Feast of the Passover. On the final and most important day of the Feast, the Lord boldly declared that **He is the only source of living or life-creating water** (7:37-38); that He is "**the light of the world** (8:12); that He was **sent by the Father** (8:16); **that the Jews who failed to recognize him were not the true descendants of Abraham** (8:39). And then if

that was not enough to anger His audience, at the end of chapter eight in St. John's Gospel, we hear Him state that **"Before Abraham was, I AM"** (8:58). This statement infuriated his listeners that they began stoning him because He used the name of God for Himself; the name of God that was revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai. Upon leaving the Temple, Jesus immediately performs the miracle that demonstrates the truth of all that He claimed to be: He causes a man who was born blind to see, and imparts something even greater: *spiritual sight*.

St. John tells us that "as Jesus passed by, He saw a man that was blind from birth" (v. 1). Note that the man was not brought to Jesus. Nor did the man approach Jesus asking for mercy. It is clear that in this case Jesus took the initiative. The dialogue that follows between the Disciples and Jesus (vs. 2-3), clears up a misconception that was a common superstition of that time: the belief that the man's blindness was a judgment upon him for the sins of his parents or the result of his own sins.

In first century Palestine, the opinion of certain Epicurean philosophers was very prevalent. The Epicureans believed that the soul had a pre-existence, and that any sins committed in this pre-existent state then descended in an immaterial manner into the body. Jesus, rejected such a belief and clearly stated, **"Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him"** (John 9:3).

The belief of the Epicureans reminds me of some today who enjoy captivating people's attention, going around talking about their own interpretation or superstition of what they believe God's will is; especially when people are in search for answers that are never easy, if even possible to find.

If you or I feel the need or have the desire to pray for someone, we should do just that and never presume to know what God's will is. There are times when things of prayer are best never to be discussed with others. If God motivates you to pray for someone, do that. Don't talk about it. Remember your conversation is with God. You and I should never presume to know more than we do. One who prays should not go witch hunting. Nor should you or I take upon ourselves burdens which is not ours to carry. You and I are and will be accountable to God for what are our own responsibilities.

In today's lesson the followers of Christ were admonished to make use of the day in working out their salvation, for the *night of their death* will come when they will no longer be able to work. In verses 4 and 5 of today's lesson we hear Jesus say: *I must work the works of Him who sent me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.* The Son of God is the light of the world. His work on coming into the world is to enlighten every man (John 1:9). He must do this "while it is day", that is, as long as He is in the world (9:5). The "night comes, when no man can work" is that time when Christ will be delivered up by sinful men who prefer darkness, and He will go away. [Remember that later in the Gospel, at the time of Jesus' betrayal, it was night, and at His crucifixion, "darkness fell over the whole earth" (Luke 23:44).]

Just prior to performing the miracle, the Gospel records that Jesus spat on the ground and made clay of spittle, then anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay (recall the creation of Man in the Book of Genesis) and sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam. This instruction made by Jesus was not without purpose. First, remember that Jesus had been at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. Part of that feast involved bringing a large urn of water from Siloam on the first seven days – but not the eighth day, for the rites of purification. These rites were a figure of the true purification, which is in Christ. St. John Chrysostom comments that Jesus intended to prove that He was not estranged from the Law and Old Covenant. Further, the significance of using water from Siloam was to commemorate the Hebrews wandering in the desert when water miraculously came out of the rock of Horeb, when by God's command, it was struck by Moses (Exodus 17:1-6).

The remainder of St. John's Gospel speaks of the blind man's spiritual healing. This part of the miracle can be best summarized by the church's Wednesday morning ode of the canon: *When Thou didst open the eyes of him who could not see the perceptible light, Thou didst enlighten the eyes of his soul as well. Thou didst move him to glorify thee, for he had come to know Thee as the Creator, who out of compassion did appear as a mortal man.* The blind man goes from his knowledge of experiencing the physical miracle to a complete conviction about Jesus as the divine Son of God.

What follows is poetically described further in last Monday's morning hymn: *Blindness [came upon] those who supposedly had eyes that saw, for darkness seized their minds and souls and enshrouded their thoughts when they beheld the man who was blind regain [his] sight.* The Apostle Paul quotes the Law and the Prophets in writing the Romans to describe God's own doing. He first quotes Deuteronomy 29:4 and Isaiah 29:10 – *God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day.* And then quoting David's prophesy: *May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever (Psalm 69:22, 23).* This, the Apostle goes on to say was accomplished by God in order that those who were not Jews would be saved (Romans 11:11), and also that those who considered themselves "chosen" might be made envious.

The dialogue heard between the blind man and the Pharisees that follows, not only confirm the healing. What happens is that the blind man affirms his faith and conviction in declaring that the One who gave him sight does the will of God and did something never done before: "He opened the eyes of one born blind" (vs. 30-32). He has "to be of God" (v. 33).

In conclusion, we have heard about a man whose choice was not to be blind. He was born blind and the Lord healed him dumbfounding many, some who willfully chose to be blind; those who could not accept the truth, having great difficulty with what they witnessed and heard. Their minds rejected what is difficult for them to acknowledge. Third, and perhaps, the most shocking of all, we heard about God who prevented some from seeing and understanding. For it was God's purpose that those who were perceived as the ones condemned and outside of the promise would not be excluded but those who were "chosen" and ultimately saved.

### **Prayer**

O Christ our God, who by Thy pure touch did lighten the eyes of the man born blind, illumine our souls eyes making us sons of the day amidst a world of darkness. Illumine our hearts, O Master who loves mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge, and open the eyes of our mind to understand and to practice your message of forgiveness that has been at the heart of this Paschal

season. Implant in us also the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all fleshly desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the Illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thine unoriginate Father and Thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. A-men.