

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

His Eminence, Metropolitan SABA, of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of North America www.antiochian.org

His Grace, Bishop ANTHONY, Auxiliary to the Metropolitan

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Subdeacon Richard Tamoush Tamoush.Richard@gmail.com

Subdeacon Elias Mankouche eli_mankouche@hotmail.com

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Fall Multi-Cultural Festival - Rami Madain rmadain@hotmail.com

Website - Joseph Wang jpw378@gmail.com

Charity Coordinator - Cindy Tamoush cindy.tamoush@gmail.com

Usher Emeritus - Ramez Hage jeddo.ramez@gmail.com

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost and the Second Sunday of Luke

The Hieromartyr Hierotheos, Bishop of Athens; Hieromartyr Peter of Capitolia in Syria; The Martyrs Domnina and her daughters of Syria

Sunday, October 4, 2026

Tone 1; Eothinon 7

Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 1)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thine immaculate body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Saviour, granting the life unto the world. Wherefore, the powers of the heavens cried out to Thee, O Life-giver: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ. Glory to Thy Kingdom, Glory to Thy dispensation, O only Friend of man.

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 for the Theotokos (Tone 2)

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

*Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.
Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.*

**The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the
Corinthians (9:6-11)**

Brethren, the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let each one do according to what he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly, or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you; that you, having always all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. As it is written: "He has scattered abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever"; now He, who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in all things for every generosity, which works through us thanksgiving to God.

THE GOSPEL (for the Second Sunday of Luke)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. Luke (6:31-36)

The Lord said: "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

The Synaxarion

On October 4 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the Hieromartyr Hierotheos, bishop of Athens.

Verses

Of old Hierotheos to Thee was consecrated;
Now gone hence, O Word, he hath to Thee been united.
On the fourth dawn, the grave covered Hierotheos.

He was a friend of Dionysios the Areopagite, and received the Christian faith from the Apostle Paul a little after Dionysios. This Apostle later made Hierotheos the first bishop of Athens. At the time of the Dormition of the most holy Mother of God, Hierotheos arrived in Jerusalem, carried

by the clouds, and took part in the funeral. With his divine singing, he brought heartfelt joy to many and showed himself to be greatly inspired. He labored greatly for the sake of the Gospel, brought many pagans to the truth, governed his flock well and finally ended a martyr for Christ in the first century.

On this day, we also commemorate the Hieromartyr Peter of Capitolia in Syria; and Martyrs Domnina and her daughters of Syria. By the intercessions of thy saints, O Christ God, have mercy on us. Amen.

OFFERINGS

Holy Bread and the coffee hour is being offered for Michael Malouf on the occasion of his 80th birthday (October 5th), by his loving and grateful family. May God continue to bless Michael with good health, happiness and many years!

Holy Bread is also being offered by the O'Dea family, asking our Lord to protect and bless Shane O'Dea, celebrating his 10th birthday (October 12). May God grant him many years!

Holy Bread is being offered by the Chala family for the repose of the soul of Stella Grace Salhus (+29 September, 2026), beloved daughter of our dearest friend, David Salhus; asking God to comfort Dave in his grief with the loss of his daughter. Memory eternal.

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

for the continued good health of Ramez Hage, celebrating his birthday (October 6th), and for Rima & Ramez, celebrating their 54th wedding anniversary (October 7th). May God grant them a long, happy and healthy life. With our love, Teddy, April, Steven, Erin and their families.

for the repose of the newly-departed servant of God, Robert ("Robbie") Homsey, Jr. (+25 September, 2026), beloved son of Robert Homsey and the late Hannah Mitry Homsey (+20 February, 2020); the brother of Marianne Homsey Cheatham. Memory eternal.

[The Funeral Service and Graveside Trisagion is scheduled for Thursday, October 8, 2026 at 1:30 p.m. at the Pierce Brothers Valley Oaks Funeral Home and Memorial Park (5600 Lindero Canyon Road, Westlake Village, CA 91362)]

for the healing and continued health of Phil Maloof, by Gavin Nassif.

for the newly-departed servant of God, Habib Chala (+2 October, 2026) of Houston, Texas; beloved brother of: Abdallah Chala, Malvina Neyman, Tere Chala, Marcia O'Dea, and Salvador Chala. Memory eternal.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council The Fourth Sunday of Luke

Saturday, October 10th, Great Vespers, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 11th, Orthros, 8:15 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Included in our prayers throughout the month of October are those celebrating their birthday: Anthony Botezatu (10/1), Jonathan Rowihab (10/1), Madelyn Manning (10/02), Natalie Dawud (10/4), Joyce Salamy (10/4), Nicole Dunphy (10/6), Michael Malouf (10/5), Ramez Hage (10/6), Tom Homsey (10/6), Dalila Bodden (10/07), Edna L. Deeb (10/8), Marisah Yazbek (10/8), AJ Katerelos (10/9), Carrie Sadd Khouri (10/9), Bria McLinn (10/9), David Obenhaus (10/9), Christianna Randee Ababseh (10/10), Abigail Zaina Abughazaleh (10/10), Rami Jeries Madain (10,10), Glenn Terry (10/10), Leilaney Ababseh (10/11), John Malouf (10/11), Mary Sarchizian (10/11), Jessica Abughazaleh (10/12), Samantha Abughazaleh (10/12), Tina Coury (10/12), Paulina Nassif (10/12), Michael Nassir (10/12), Ed Chaffin (10/13), Michael Martsof (10/13), Jed Dabbour (10/14), Colin Gantus (10/14), Mark Nassir (10/14), Elie Yazbek (10/14), Aliyah Ababseh (10/15), Steven Abughazaleh (10/15), Nicole Lee Nasser Dunphy (10/15), Gavin Scott (10/15), Sophie Scott (10/15), Cathy Durrett (10/16), Bill Klimowych (10/17), Audrianna Hage (10/18), Vera Ababseh (10/19), Dena Sophia Nicola Swain (10/20), Christina Rygiol (10/20), Ameera Caroleen Abughazaleh (10/20), Michael Aldaya (10/20), Leila Salamy (10/20), Iain Patrick Blair (10/23), Leilah Yanni (10/23), Justin Charles Coury (10/24), Charmaine Darmour (10/27), Daniel Saidy (10/27), Sylvana Barney (10/28), Robert Homsey, Jr. (10/28), Natacha Yazbek (10/28), Keira Placeres (10/29), Ricky Nicola, Jr. (10/29), Alexandra Ibrahim (10/30), Dominique Ibrahim (10/30), Sherri Prewett Acri (10/30), Mallory Murr (10/31), Elaine Srouer (10/31); and celebrating their wedding anniversary: Mark & Alexandra Nassief (10/4), Collyn & Lisa

Nielsen (10/6), George & Janet Saade (10/6), Ramez & Rima Hage (10/7), Christian & Lisa Gascou (10/7), Leslie & Mark Henry (10/09), Robert & Amal Makhoul (10/10), Leilah & Daniel Lewin (10/11), Richard & Janice Khoury (10/20), Father Minas & Presbyteria Nicole Sarchizian (10/29). May God grant them all many years!

Included in our prayers for the departed during the month of October are:

William F. Cates +27 Oct. 1953	Evelyn Raies-Murr, +17 Oct. 2007
Elias Nassief +20 Oct. 1956	Philip Ryan, +18 Oct. 2007
Della H. Cates +11 Oct. 1963	Tove Kelsey, +3 Oct. 2008
Richard Zraick, +13 Oct. 1974	Miriam Saadeh, +1 Oct., 2009
Elsie Gallade, +4 Oct. 1978	Yvonne Rihbany, +21 Oct. 2009
Elsie Barkett Murray, +4 Oct. 1980	Josephine Nicola, +26 Oct., 2009
Cora May Spencer, +16 Oct. 1983	Eva Bandak, +10 Oct., 2009
Frank G. Farris, +27 Oct. 1985	Marion Deeb, +2 Oct., 2010
Peter Meena, +27 Oct. 1989	Ghalia Dares, +17 Oct, 2010
Elias Saadeh, +19 Oct. 1976	Somaya Ghawi Rizik, +3 Oct., 2011
Nicholas Barakat, +16 Oct. 1992	Khazma Makhoul, +7 Oct., 2011
Derek Jacob, +5 Oct. 1992	Esshak Sayegh, +10 Oct., 2011
Nafie Saba-Skaff, +14 Oct. 1995	Jack M. Malouf, +23 Oct., 2011
Sophie Yanni, +28 Oct. 1995	Fouad Azzam, +5 Oct., 2012
Rose C. Farris, +1 Oct. 98	Adele Muamar, +4 Oct., 2013
Hanna Sweis, +4 Oct.	Antoine Maalouf, +29 Oct., 2013
Toufic Thabet, +17 Oct.	George Saba, +22 Oct., 2014
Jacqueline M. Nassir, +12 Oct. 1999	Lucille Arakalian, +1 Oct., 2015
Frank Palmer, +16 Oct. 1999	May Kushida, +18 Oct., 2015
Ghazi Ababseh, +23 Oct. 1999	Evonne George, +11 Oct., 2016
Mitry Saadeh, +Oct. 13	Gretta Casalnuovo, +30 Oct., 2016
Tatsuo Kushida, +12 Oct., 1998	Kathleen O'Dea, +23 Oct., 2017
Robert Jurado, +28 Oct. 1998	Esma Khoury, +31 Oct., 2017
Lillian Saliba Murr +12 October 2000	Iuliu Gota, +29 Oct., 2019
Saide Simon, +13 Oct. 2000	Edward Brady, +7 Oct., 2020
Ramza Aboud, +18 Oct. 2000	Bill Saba, +9 Oct., 2020
Irene Hopkins, +26 Oct. 2000	Rose Christensen, +12 Oct., 2021
Nancy Lee Downing, +19 Oct. 2002	Clarence Frier, +12 Oct., 2022
V. Rev. Paul Romley, +26 Oct., 2003	Edward Chaffin, +24 Oct., 2022
Mary Homsy, +31 Oct., 2003	Linda Tamoush, +24 Oct., 2022

Marta Vaskis Erwin, +6 Oct., 2004
Guirguis Yostos, +22 Oct., 2004
Samia Malick, +8 Oct., 2006
Andrew Mittry, +Oct., 2007
Dn. Fadel Mubaraka, +15 Oct., 2007
Michael Abughazaleh, +17 Oct. 2007

Pamela Kushida, +7 Oct. 2023
Chuck Malouf, +3 Oct., 2024
Diana Nasser, +28 Oct., 2024
Huda Sweis, +2 Oct., 2025
Gloria Mittry, +22 October, 2025

Memory Eternal!

Please inform us if there are any omissions or corrections to the above listing of names.
Please bear in mind that some have chosen not to be included in our announcement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parish Council Nominations

On Sunday, November 15, 2026 we will be holding a brief Special Meeting of the Voting Membership solely for the purpose of receiving and accepting nominations for Parish Council members to be elected for there (3), three-year terms (January, 2027 to December, 2029). At this meeting the Nominations Committee will present their report and additional nominations will be open from the floor. The Vice Chair, Waleed Moujaes is the Chair of the Nominations Committee. All who are interested and are prepared to be committed in serving on our Parish Council for a three-year term (2027-2029) should be in-touch with Waleed at: wsmoujaes@icloud.com or Father Timothy Baclig, Pastor at: frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org

It is important that persons being considered be able to fulfill the commitment to serve. Therefore it is necessary that all nominees first be personally asked if they would accept nomination, and second be approved by the Pastor as someone who is qualified. The Parish Constitution prescribes that all nominees must be at least twenty-five years of age or older, have been a pledging members of the parish for at least one year and have fulfilled the canonical requirements of the Faith [Article VI, Sec. 2]. The nominees must also be committed in attending monthly Parish Council meetings held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month. If necessary, the Parish Council election will be held on two (2) consecutive Sundays: November 22 and 29.

**His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA**



**Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America**

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

Prot. no.: 536/2026

October 2026

Youth Month and Seminary Month

Beloved clergy and faithful of our God-protected Archdiocese,

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

The Church is always called to look toward the future—not simply by preserving what we have received, but by faithfully handing the Orthodox Christian life to those who will come after us. St. John Chrysostom reminds us of this sacred responsibility: “The care of children is the greatest of all arts.” The formation of our young people and the formation of those who will shepherd them are therefore inseparable responsibilities.

In the Antiochian Archdiocese, October is traditionally observed as “Youth Month and Seminary Month.” These two observances belong together because the young people of today are the faithful, parents, parish leaders, and clergy of tomorrow. At the same time, the seminarians of today are preparing to become the priests who will baptize and chrismate our children, teach the faith, celebrate the Divine Mysteries, counsel families, comfort the suffering, visit the sick, reconcile the penitent, and proclaim the Gospel of Christ to a world that desperately needs His truth and mercy.

Priests must possess knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, the teachings of the Fathers, theology, history, and pastoral ministry. But they must also be formed in prayer, humility, repentance, compassion, and love for the people whom they will one day serve. Education and spirituality must work together so that our future priests are prepared not only to speak about Christ, but to live and proclaim life in Christ.

Our seminarians depend upon the generosity of the faithful, and so do the institutions who help form them: St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, and the Archdiocese's own Antiochian House of Studies. Supporting these institutions is an investment in the spiritual life of our parishes.

Prayerfully consider making a generous contribution through your parishes to help prepare the shepherds who will serve our parishes and strengthen the Church that will nurture our children and grandchildren.

May our Lord bless our youth and our seminaries. May He bless you and your families and reward your generosity.

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Saba".

+SABA

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

Weekly Bible Study on Tuesday, October 6

Our next Bible Study will be held on Tuesday evening, October 6, at 7 p.m. Sessions are recorded for those unable to attend who may also request the link to the study.



Metropolitan SABA's Weekly Teaching (in English, Arabic, French and Spanish)

View the weekly teaching from Metropolitan SABA here, titled: "The Cross in Our Life, Part Four;" <https://www.antiochian.org/regulararticle/2955>

Today following Holy Communion Church School classes will meet.

Here is the Church School registration link for convenience: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfPUakWnXJX2JGCFo4ftytlKL0geTSTAc8LG1tfN9YtQUg7w/viewform?usp=header>



VOLUNTEER HERE!



Scan the QR Code above or
CLICK HERE to sign up!

Here is a link for easy access to volunteer: <https://bit.ly/4wZ7mat>



The poster features a background image of the St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church. At the top left is a circular icon of St. Michael the Archangel. The main title is 'ST. MICHAEL ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH' in a serif font, followed by '1ST ANNUAL' in a red oval and 'MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL' in large, bold, blue letters. Below the title is the date and time: 'NOVEMBER 8th, 2026 | 11:30 A.M.-9:00 PM | 16643 VANOWEN ST, VAN NUYS, CA 91406'. A blue banner reads 'LIVE PERFORMANCES FEATURING'. Below this are five performer portraits: Simo Samir (singing), Ricardo Hallak (with a 'MAN OF THE YEAR' award), Maurice Raad (smiling), Fouad Yazji (smiling), and a group photo for 'American & Latin Music' (labeled 'LIVE MUSIC'). To the right is a photo of Wisam Haddad & Band playing keyboards. A blue banner below reads 'ALSO WITH'. Below this are four activity photos: 'FOOD' (roasting meat), 'CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT' (a colorful play structure), 'DANCE PERFORMANCES' (a group in white costumes), and 'VENDORS AND MORE!' (a market stall). At the bottom are two white boxes: 'ADMISSION FEES: ADULTS- \$5 KIDS UNDER 10- FREE' and 'RAFFLE DRAWING ON NOVEMBER 8th, 2026 AT 9PM \$5,000 GRAND PRIZE PLUS OTHER VALUABLE PRIZES!'. The footer contains contact information and decorative icons of palm trees and tents.

**ST. MICHAEL ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**1ST ANNUAL
MULTICULTURAL
FESTIVAL**

NOVEMBER 8th, 2026 | 11:30 A.M.-9:00 PM | 16643 VANOWEN ST, VAN NUYS, CA 91406

LIVE PERFORMANCES FEATURING

Simo Samir

Ricardo Hallak

Maurice Raad

Fouad Yazji

LIVE MUSIC

EXA BAND

American & Latin Music

Wisam Haddad & Band

ALSO WITH

FOOD

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

DANCE PERFORMANCES

VENDORS AND MORE!

ADMISSION FEES:
ADULTS- \$5
KIDS UNDER 10- FREE

RAFFLE DRAWING
ON NOVEMBER 8th, 2026 AT 9PM
\$5,000 GRAND PRIZE
PLUS OTHER VALUABLE PRIZES!

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT FESTIVAL COORDINATOR:
RAMI MADAIN | (818)-383-9557 OR RMADAIN@HOTMAIL.COM

Important Video That Summarizes “AI In Our Lives”

The video (from a workshop at this year’s Parish Life Conference) probes the question: What kind of people is Artificial Intelligence making us? The workshop was led by Fr. Peter Samore, the Archdiocese Director of Communications, and Deacon Maxim Najim, who spent more than 20 years building software systems in the tech industry. The discussion explains how AI works technologically and thinks for itself, and how it impacts our daily lives and our very being. Here is the link: <https://www.antiochian.org/videonews/2941>

The Word Magazine

The September-October issue of the official periodical of the Archdiocese (The Word) is now available on-line. Go to: <https://www.antiochian.org/regulararticle/2163> Readers can swipe through the pages on their smartphones and tablets, as well as share individual articles via their email and social media. This issue includes a story about holding onto grace, a reflection about managing our lives, and clergy assignments from the Archdiocesan Office.

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

Holy Bread Offering List

Oct 11 - open
Oct 18 - Nicole & Robert Webster
Oct 25 - The Nasser family
Ron & Kathy Zraick
Nov 01 - open
Nov 08 (Feast of St. Michael)

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Nicole & Robert Webster
The Nasser Family

Multi-cultural Festival

Please contact Fr. Timothy (818/219-3761; frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread;
David Rodriguez at: (818-484-6157; droadpena@gmail.com) to sign-up for the Coffee Hour.

Upcoming Events (see the foyer bulletin board for more information)

[Note: You may now access our Google Parish Calendar to your personal calendar.

Simply go to: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/1?cid=YWRtaW5Ac3RtaWN0YWVsdmFubnV5cy5vcmcj>

St Michael Antiochian Women
is partnering up with our
Church School
for

SOCK-TUBER

Warm Feet. Warm Hearts.

ALL OCTOBER LONG

We are collecting
NEW SOCKS
of all ages!

**MUST BE NEW AND
IN UNOPENED PACKAGES**



Small
Donation.
Big
Impact.

*Together
we can
make a
difference!*

Suggested Socks:

- ♥ Men
- ♥ Women
- ♥ Children
- ♥ Babies
- ♥ Crew
- ♥ Ankle
- ♥ Athletic
- ♥ Diabetic
- ♥ All sizes and styles

Every pair makes a difference!



Your donation will help
provide, warmth, comfort,
and dignity to our
HOMELESS NEIGHBORS
and **FAMILIES IN NEED.**



**DROP OFF YOUR DONATIONS
THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF**

OCTOBER!

*Thank you for helping us
spread warmth and hope.*



Together, we can make a big difference—

One Pair at a Time.

St. Nicholas Cathedral Festival - Saturday, Sunday, October 17-18, 2026
Saturday, 3-11 p.m., Sunday, 12 noon to 10 p.m.

Diocesan Fall Gathering - Friday-Sunday, October 23-25, 2026
Hosted by St. Michael Church (Whittier, California); Register at:
<https://stmichaelwhittier.org/fall-gathering-2026-registration/>

St. Michael Feast Day and Multi-Cultural Festival - Sunday, November 8
[Note: Divine Liturgy will begin at 9 a.m., Orthros at 7:30 a.m.]

Church School Christmas Program - New Date: Sunday, December 20

Are You Sure You Have Father Timothy's Correct E-mail Address?

NOTE: Father Timothy's e-mail address is: frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org
Please do not use his former address and update his contact information on your computer. His phone number has not changed: 818-219-3761. He prefers that you do not text him by telephone for bulletin postings or announcements. Sunday Bulletin announcements are properly received by e-mail, however, prayer requests may be made by text, e-mail or voice call.

Do You Have the Convenient St. Michael Parish App?

The St. Michael Parish App will provide you with a "one stop" reference to:
a) the Sunday Bulletin, b) The Church Calendar, d) Parish Events, e) The Weekly Bible Study Link and Recordings, f) Monthly Financial Reports, g) Live-stream of Services, h) Past Live-streams, i) Past Sermons, j) Direct Link to Donations, k) Church Groups Contacts, l) Information on Days of Fasting, m) a Direct Link to the Church Website. Use this link to install the App on your phone: <https://tithely.app.link/st-michael-orthodox-church>
Should you need assistance, contact Joey Wang at: jpw378@gmail.com

Contributions In Support of Our Seminary Scholarships

In response to Metropolitan SABA's letter, your support of our seminaries may be made throughout the month of October on-line, <https://www.stmichaelvannuys.org/donate>, or by providing a check earmarked: "Seminary Scholarship (#402230)." Thank you for your support with this tri-annual appeal.

PASTORAL SERMON
The Second Sunday of Luke
By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig
October 4, 2026

Today's Gospel lesson is taken from our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. It includes what has been commonly known as The Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." It is the basic principle of morality presupposing all that we share in common with all human beings. You and I – all of us want to be treated fairly, especially when it pertains to matters which involve our role in society as citizens or members of an organization. Children can be very sensitive to the subject of fairness.

However, Christian morality only **begins** with the Golden Rule. Christian morality involves something more than the idea of fairness—and this is the point of today's lesson. **Christian morality is anchored not only on the principle of fairness, it goes beyond it.**

The Lord said, "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again."

Similarly, we hear the Holy Apostle Paul write: (Romans 12:9-21) Never pay back evil for evil... If it is possible, as much as (it) depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, *Vengeance is Mine, I will repay*, says the Lord. Therefore, *if your enemy is hungry feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink...* Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The entire context our Lord's teaching in the Gospel proves that Christian moral ethics is not the same as Judaic moral ethics. Over and over again, Jesus' words begin with the phrase: *You've heard it said... but I say unto you...*

In St. Matthew's Gospel we hear the same lesson beginning with the words: *You have heard it said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you:*

Love your enemies, [bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you], and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your heavenly Father in heaven. He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:43-45)

The Golden Rule heard in today’s Gospel is a case of simple justice—taught in the Old Covenant law: *an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*... however, in the Lord’s teaching: returning deed for deed is placed in positive terms.

In Jesus’ day, the Golden Rule was also taught in its negative form by Rabbi Hillel. Rabbi Hillel said: *do not do to others whatever you do not wish them to do to you*. Now, **why do you think that Jesus chose to express the Golden Rule in positive terms?**

The world we live in today is not very different from the mentality that preoccupied the thinking of people in Jesus’ day. We see and hear a great deal of bad news each day and experience tremendous sadness to the point that we become numb and callous about what can be done to change things; to make a positive difference in our world; to correct situations. Things that go wrong seem to be the norm. There is a great deal of injustice and fairness doesn’t seem possible.

As I was preparing for this message I gave a lot of thought about how difficult it is for children to understand this message in light of fairness. Being treated fairly is something that a child can become very sensitive to. It’s because children need our love and attention.

Today’s gospel lesson should not be interpreted in such a way to imply that Christians are pacifists. Any notion that practicing what is being taught in today’s lesson strips a Christian of his/her dignity is totally false. Christians believe in justice and mutual respect. Consequently, is not unchristian to act or respond for the cause of what is just and right. **Instead, the important point is that we do not respond in the same manner as others do.** There are ways to properly respond in each and every circumstance. Our response, however, is not to act or behave in ways that cause us to be identified with those whose purpose is to do evil or to harm others; or in cases of war - to become what our enemy is.

The personal price of a positive response is always greater for the Christian. This is because as **Christians we do not understand and perceive the struggle or**

the battle in the same way as others do. Hence it is necessary that a Christian recognize that **being a disciple requires personal sacrifices; and that this includes everything about our life: as a husband or wife, a father or mother, or even a person who may be single.**

We believe that Christ has overcome the world and all evil. His words recorded in St. John's Gospel are: "In the world you will have tribulation but take courage, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33b). Moreover, Christ triumphed over the Evil One; "trampled down death," transforming it to a means of life by His own Death. There is nothing more to be done or to think that what Christ has accomplished is somehow incomplete. What He has done was something that only He could do. His very words on the Cross were: "It is finished!" And so our battles, are battles of the Cross that each of us is called to accept. The Cross we bear, however, is the an armament for our salvation. It is called, "a weapon of peace."

Jesus taught the meaning of love by example. It is the principle of unconditional and sacrificial love. Christ's Golden Rule is taking one's neighbor upon oneself just as the Good Samaritan had compassion on the wounded Jew, a supposed enemy, and interrupted his own journey in order to help him.

Christ Himself is the supreme model of the Good Samaritan seeking to bind and heal humanity's wounds, and suffering persecution in the process. He voluntarily submitted to abuse, insults, beatings, betrayal and crucifixion by those whom He came to help! From the Cross He prayed: *Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing.* Christ lived out His own teaching about love: *The greatest love a person can have for his friends is to give his life for them (John 15:13).*

There are those who think that the teachings of Christ are extremely difficult and that we would be foolish to even try to practice them. They are partly correct. The teachings of Christ are not only difficult . . . they are impossible for those whose life has not changed, whose life is always about "getting even." A Christian believes that his or her life is living with a renewed nature; as one who has been forgiven and believes in the practice of forgiveness. As Christians we could not possibly live according to the teaching of Christ unless we lived in the spiritual realm of the grace of God.

Christian morality is not a matter of human efforts trying to measure up to the highest standards ever imaginable, which would always end up in failure, but it is a

way of life in union with Christ through which we receive forgiveness and spiritual power enabling us to live according to Christ's teachings. **You and I cannot forgive others unless we know and have experienced God's forgiveness for ourselves. Without this life will only be miserable. In fact without God's forgiveness, there is only hell's torment. In the same way you and I cannot be merciful if you and I do not know what it means to receive mercy. And finally no one will know how to love unconditionally unless he or she personally knows the full meaning of the Cross.**

The core of the Good News of Christ is not a set of ethical standards, but it is about living as a citizen of the Kingdom of God by being united to Christ. Jesus lived, taught and acted in the fullness of the Holy Spirit in complete submission to the will of His Father - our Heavenly Father. The Apostles preached and served others by the power of the Holy Spirit as men and women who knew that they were loved and forgiven; some, like Peter and Paul, who personally experienced God's mercy in ways that were unimaginable. We live our lives by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Thus Christian morality cannot be viewed in isolation from our total life as baptized Christians, who are here and now, today and tomorrow: citizens of God's Kingdom, and live by the power of God's grace.

EOTHINON 7

الايوثينا 7

TONE 1

اللحن 1

**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AND THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LUKE**

HIEROMARTYR HIEROTHEOS, BISHOP OF ATHENS; HIEROMARTYR PETER OF CAPITOLIA IN SYRIA; MARTYRS DOMNINA AND HER DAUGHTERS OF SYRIA

أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن الأول

إِنَّ الْحَجَرَ لَمَّا خُتِمَ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ، وَجَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ حَفِظَ مِنَ الْجُنْدِ، قُمْتَ فِي الْيَوْمِ الثَّالِثِ أَيُّهَا
الْمُخَلِّصُ، مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الْحَيَاةَ. لِذَلِكَ قُوَّاتُ السَّمَاوَاتِ، هَتَفُوا إِلَيْكَ يَا وَاهِبَ الْحَيَاةِ: الْمَجْدُ
لِقِيَامَتِكَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ، الْمَجْدُ لِمُلْكِكَ، الْمَجْدُ لِتَدْبِيرِكَ، يَا مُحِبَّ الْبَشَرِ وَحَدَكَ.

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع

أَيُّهَا الْمُتَقَدِّمُونَ عَلَى الْأَجْنَادِ السَّمَاوِيِّينَ، نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكُمْ نَحْنُ غَيْرَ الْمُسْتَحَقِّينَ، حَتَّى أَنْكُم بِطُلُبَاتِكُمْ تَكْتَنُفُونَنَا بِظُلٍّ أَجْنَحَةٍ مَجْدِكُمْ غَيْرِ الْهَيُولَى، حَافِظِينَ إِيَّانَا نَحْنُ الْجَائِثِينَ وَالصَّارِخِينَ بِغَيْرِ فُتُورٍ، أَنْقُذُونَا مِنَ الشَّدَانِدِ، بِمَا أَنْكُم رُؤَسَاءُ مَرَاتِبِ الْقَوَاتِ الْعُلُويَّةِ.

قُتْدَاقُ السَّيِّدَةِ عَلَى الْلَحْنِ الثَّانِي

يَا شَفِيعَةَ الْمَسِيحِيِّينَ غَيْرِ الْمَخْذُولَةِ، الْمُتَوَسِّطَةَ لَدَى الْخَالِقِ غَيْرِ الْمَرْدُودَةِ، لَا تَعْرِضِي عَنْ أَصْوَاتِ طُلُبَاتِنَا نَحْنُ الْخَطَاةُ، بَلْ تَدَارِكِينَا بِالْمَعُونَةِ بِمَا أَنَّكَ صَالِحَةٌ نَحْنُ الصَّارِخِينَ إِلَيْكَ بِإِيمَانٍ: بَادِرِي إِلَى الشَّفَاعَةِ وَأَسْرِعِي فِي الطَّلِبَةِ، يَا وَالِدَةُ الْإِلَهِ الْمُتَشَفِّعَةِ دَائِمًا فِي مَكْرَمِكِ

الرَّسَالَةُ

(لِلْأَحَدِ الثَّامِنِ عَشَرَ بَعْدَ الْعَنْصَرَةِ)

لِتَكُنْ يَا رَبُّ رَحْمَتُكَ عَلَيْنَا.

ابْنَهْجُوا أَيُّهَا الصِّدِّيقُونَ بِالرَّبِّ.

فَصَلُّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولْسِ الرُّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى أَهْلِ كُورِنْثُوسَ. (6:9-11)

يَا إِخْوَةُ، إِنْ مَنْ يَزْرَعُ شَحِيحًا، فَشَحِيحًا أَيْضًا يَحْصُدُ؛ وَمَنْ يَزْرَعُ بِالْبَرَكَاتِ، فَبِالْبَرَكَاتِ أَيْضًا يَحْصُدُ. كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ كَمَا نَوَى فِي قَلْبِهِ، لَا عَنْ ابْتِئَاسٍ أَوْ اضْطِرَارٍ. فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُعْطِيَ الْمُنْتَهَلَ. وَاللَّهُ قَادِرٌ أَنْ يَزِيدَكُمْ كُلَّ نِعْمَةٍ، حَتَّى تَكُونَ لَكُمْ كُلُّ كِفَايَةٍ، كُلَّ حِينٍ، فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، فَتَزِدُوا فِي كُلِّ عَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ. كَمَا كُتِبَ "إِنَّهُ بَدَأَ، أَعْطَى الْمَسَاكِينَ، فَبِرُّهُ يَدُومُ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ." وَالَّذِي يَرْزُقُ الزَّرْعَ زَرْعًا وَخَبْزًا لِلْقَوْتِ، يَرْزُقُكُمْ زَرْعَكُمْ وَيُكَثِّرُهُ وَيَزِيدُ غَلَالَ بَرِّكُمْ. فَتَسْتَعْنُونَ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، لِكُلِّ سَخَاءٍ خَالِصٍ يُنْشِئُ شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ.

الْإِنْجِيلُ

فَصَلُّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لُوقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ.

قَالَ الرَّبُّ: "كَمَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَفْعَلَ النَّاسُ بِكُمْ، كَذَلِكَ افْعَلُوا أَنْتُمْ بِهِمْ* فَإِنَّكُمْ إِنْ أَحْبَبْتُمْ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُ لَكُمْ؟ فَإِنَّ الْخَطَاةَ أَيْضًا يُحِبُّونَ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَهُمْ* وَإِذَا أَحْسَنْتُمْ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُحْسِنُونَ إِلَيْكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُ لَكُمْ؟ فَإِنَّ الْخَطَاةَ أَيْضًا هَكَذَا يَصْنَعُونَ* وَإِنْ أَقْرَضْتُمْ الَّذِينَ تَرْجُونَ أَنْ يَسْتَوْفُوا مِنْهُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُ لَكُمْ؟ فَإِنَّ الْخَطَاةَ أَيْضًا يَقْرَضُونَ الْخَطَاةَ لِكَيْ يَسْتَوْفُوا مِنْهُمْ الْمِثْلَ* وَلَكِنْ، أَحْبَبُوا أَعْدَاءَكُمْ، وَأَحْسِنُوا وَأَقْرَضُوا غَيْرَ مُؤَمِّلِينَ شَيْئًا، فَيَكُونَ أَجْرُكُمْ كَثِيرًا، وَتَكُونُوا بَنِي الْعَلِيِّ. فَإِنَّهُ مُنْعِمٌ عَلَى غَيْرِ الشَّاكِرِينَ وَالْأَشْرَارِ* فَكُونُوا رُحَمَاءَ كَمَا أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ هُوَ رَحِيمٌ.

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