

*The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
Of North America*

*The Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest  
Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Annunciation*

*كنيسة البشارة الأرثوذكسية الأنطاكية*

*3107-40<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Calgary, AB T3E 3J9*

*Rev. Fr. George Dahdouh, D.Min. Pastor.*

*Tel: Home (587) 353-3536, Cell (403) 993-7945*

*Email: [frdahdouh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:frdahdouh@sbcglobal.net)*



**Sunday December 13th, 2015**

**Tone 3 / Eothinon 6**

**Sunday of the Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ. أحد الأجداد.**

**Sunday Services:**

**Vespers on Saturday 6:00 PM, Sunday Matins 9:30 AM  
10:45 AM Divine Liturgy**

**RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE**

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

**APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFATHERS IN TONE TWO**

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and she it was who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

- **Now sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.**

## KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

### **(\*\*The original melody\*\*)**

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave where she will give birth in an ineffable manner to the Word Who is before all the ages. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest it heralded: Glorify Him, with the angels and the shepherds, Who chose to be seen as a newborn babe, the God Who is before all the ages.

### **الطروباريات:**

#### **(للقِيامة باللحن الثالث)**

لَتَفْرَحِ السَّمَاوِيَّاتُ/ وَلَتَبْتَهِجِ الْأَرْضِيَّاتُ/ لِأَنَّ الرَّبَّ صَنَعَ/ عِزًّا بِسَاعِدِهِ/ وَوَطِئَ الْمَوْتَ بِالْمَوْتِ وَصَارَ بِكِرِّ الْأَمْوَاتِ/ وَأَنْقَذَنَا مِنْ جَوْفِ الْجَحِيمِ/ وَمَنْحَ الْعَالَمِ الرَّحْمَةَ الْعَظْمَى.

#### **(طروبارية الأجداد – باللحن الثاني)**

لَقَدْ زَكَّيْتَ بِالْإِيمَانِ الْأَبَاءَ الْقَدَمَاءَ، وَبِهِمْ سَبَقْتَ فَخَطَبْتَ الْبَيْعَةَ الَّتِي مِنَ الْأُمَمِ، فَلِيَفْتَخِرِ الْقَدِيسُونَ بِالْمَجْدِ، لِأَنَّ مِنْ زَرْعِهِمْ أُبْنِعَ ثَمَرٌ حَسِيبٌ، مَهْمُ الَّتِي مَلَدَتْكَ بِغَيْرِ زَرْعٍ. فَبِتُوسَلَاتِهِمْ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهَ خَلِّصْ نَفُوسَنَا.

#### **ترتل طروبارية القديس شفيح الكنيسة**

#### **(للبشارة – باللحن الرابع)**

اليوم رأس خلاصنا، وإعلان السر الذي منذ الدهور، لأن ابن الله يصير ابن البتول، وجبرائيل بالنعمة يبشّر، فلذلك ونحن معه لنهتف نحو والدة الإله، إفرحي أيتها الممتلئة نعمة الرب معك.

#### **القتادق:**

اليوم العذراء، تأتي إلى المغارة، لتلد الكلمة الذي قبل الدهور، ولادة لا تفسّر ولا يُنطق بها، فإفرحي أيتها المسكونة إذا سمعت، ومجدي مع الملائكة والرعاة، الذي سيظهر بمشيئته طفلاً جديداً، وهو إلهنا قبل الدهور.

### **The Epistle:**

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.*

*For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.*

#### **The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians. (3:4-11)**

Brethren, when Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

### **الرسالة**

مبارك أنت يا رب إله آبائنا.

لأنك عدل في كل ما صنعت بنا.

#### **فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الى أهل كولوسي 3:4-11**

يا إخوة، متى ظهر المسيح الذي هو حياتنا فانتم ايضا تُظهرون حينئذ معه في المجد. فأميتوا أعضاءكم التي على الأرض: الزنى والنجاسة والهوى والشهوة الرديئة والطمع الذي هو عبادة وثن، لأنه لأجل هذه يأتي غضب الله على أبناء العصيان، وفي هذه انتم ايضا سلكتم حيناً إذ كنتم عائشين فيها. اما الآن فانتم ايضا اطرحوا الكل: الغضب والسخط والخبث والتجديف

والكلام القبيح من افواهكم. ولا يكذب بعضكم بعضا بل اخلعوا الانسان العتيق مع أعماله والبسوا الانسان الجديد الذي يتجدد للمعرفة على صورة خالقه حيث ليس يوناني ولا يهودي، لا ختان ولا قلف، لا بربري ولا اسكيثي، لا عبد ولا حر، بل المسيح هو كل شيء وفي الجميع.

## The Gospel

**The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (14:16-24)**

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

## الإنجيل

### **فصل شريف من بشارة القديس لوقا الإنجيلي البشير 24-16:14**

قال الرب هذا المثل: انسان صنع عشاء عظيما ودعا كثيرين فأرسل عبده في ساعة العشاء يقول للمدعوين: تعالوا فان كل شيء قد أُعدّ. فطفق كلهم، واحد فواحد، يستعفون. فقال له الأول: قد اشتريت حقلا ولا بد لي ان اخرج وأنظره، فأسألك ان تعفيني. وقال الآخر: قد اشتريت خمسة فدادين بقر وانا ماض لأجربها، فأسألك ان تعفيني. وقال الآخر: قد تزوجت امرأة فلذلك لا أستطيع ان اגיע. فأتى العبد وأخبر سيده بذلك. فحينئذ غضب رب البيت وقال لعبده: اخرج سريعا الى شوارع المدينة وأزقتها، وأدخل المساكين والجدع والعميان والعرج الى ههنا. فقال العبد: يا سيد قد قُضي ما أمرت به، ويبقى ايضا محلّ. فقال السيد للعبد: اخرج الى الطرق والأسيجة واضطررهم الى الدخول حتى يمتلئ بيتي. فاني اقول لكم انه لا يدوق عشائي احد من اولئك الرجال المدعوين، لأن المدعوين كثيرين والمختارين قليلون.

## **❖ Church Announcements**

- ❖ **Our Condolences to Paty Swaita:** for the passing on of her aunt in Ottawa, Sylvie Jabbur, may her memory be eternal.
- ❖ **3<sup>rd</sup> year memorial for Emile Takla:** our condolences to his wife Lucy Takla, and his children Angela and Andrew, may his memory be eternal.
- ❖ **General Assembly today:** We are going to have a general assembly today after Liturgy to decide on moving forward with the design and building of our church. All members are invited to attend.
- ❖ **A big thank you:** Thank you to all the ladies and men who worked hard last weekend for a successful bake sale. May God bless all of you.
- ❖ **Choir Sunday:** Today we honor all those who sing in the choir and chant during the services. Thank you from all of us for your dedication and commitment. May our Lord grant you health and many years.
- ❖ **Second Collection this Sunday:** There will be a second collection this Sunday. The money will be used **ONLY** for the needs of the new families arrived from Syria.

- ❖ **Services for the Nativity of Christ:** Thursday December 24<sup>th</sup>: The Hours at 8 AM. Thursday December 24<sup>th</sup>: Vespers Liturgy at 3 PM. Friday December 25<sup>th</sup>: The Nativity of our Lord- Orthros 10 AM followed by the Divine Liturgy at 11 AM.
- ❖ **Clergy Etiquette:** When writing an email, you should always start by writing: Dear Fr. George and ....., Father bless. This is the practice for all organizations including the parish council. This is an Orthodox practice.
- ❖ **Your Help:** Many of our new families arriving from Syria need help. We need Christmas trees and decorations for the season. If you like to help please see Father.
- ❖ **Visit this link for more resources on families and Sunday school teachers:** <http://www.antiochian.org/online-resource-list-parents-and-teachers>
- ❖ **Visit this link for education and encouragement:** <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/faithencouraged>
- ❖ **Planning ahead:** after January 6<sup>th</sup> the Feast of Theophany, Father will be visiting all the homes of our parishioners to bless it.
- ❖ **Orthodox Christian Mission Center:** A true community is one that produces bishops, priests, deacons, and monastics. Do you feel called to go and evangelize other nations? OCMC is planning many short term mission trips. There are mission trips to: Alaska, Albania, Guatemala, Kenya, Indonesia, Mexico, Uganda. Visit OCMC.org for more information or talk to Father.
- ❖ **The Bible in the Liturgy:** visit the following website: <http://almoutran.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/The-Bible-In-The-Liturgy.pdf>
- ❖ **Visit this website:** <http://www.antiochian.org/nativity> for more articles on the Nativity.

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**The Nativity Fast:** The Nativity Fast starts on November 15<sup>th</sup> and continues until December 24<sup>th</sup> at midnight. It is as follows: Fish is permitted on Saturday and Sunday. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays no meat, poultry, dairy products, cheese, fish, Olive Oil or alcohol are permitted. On Tuesdays and Thursdays alcohol and olive oil are permitted. From December 21-24, these are strict fast days. If you have any question or if you are taking medications, please speak to Father.

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**What Orthodox People Do:** Every time we prepare for a major feast, we fast, we spend more time in prayers, we give alms to the poor, we repent from our sins by going to confession. Father is reminding everyone to go to confession before the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas). As Orthodox Christians during the fast we refrain from parties and all kind of worldly celebrations to concentrate on repentance and prayers.

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### **UPCOMING DATES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDARS**

❖ **Christmas Play:** will be December 20<sup>th</sup> at St. Demetrius Greek Church from 4-8 PM. Tickets are \$15 adults, and \$10 for children. Please, print the flyer that you received in your email, cut out the ticket stub in the bottom right hand corner, fill it out with the number of adults and children. Give it to Mirna with your payment to reserve your seats. Space is limited so buy your tickets this week!

➤ **New Year's Party: 2016 NEW YEAR'S PARTY, December 31, 2015.**

**St. Stephen's Ukrainian Church Hall: 4903—45 St. SW, Calgary, AB.**

**Cocktails 6:30 pm, Dinner 8:00 pm**

**Prices: Adults \$70, children 6-10 Yrs. old \$35, Under 5 Yrs. Free.**

**Please see Hafiz or any parish council member for tickets.**

### **The Purpose of Fasting**

The purpose of fasting is to focus on the things that are above, the Kingdom of God. It is a means of putting on virtue in reality, here and now. Through it we are freed from dependence on worldly things. We fast faithfully and in secret, not judging others, and not holding ourselves up as an example.

- Fasting in itself is not a means of pleasing God. Fasting is not a punishment for our sins. Nor is fasting a means of suffering and pain to be undertaken as some kind of atonement. Christ already redeemed us on His Cross. Salvation is a gift from God that is not bought by our hunger or thirst.
- We fast to be delivered from carnal passions so that God's gift of Salvation may bear fruit in us.
- We fast and turn our eyes toward God in His Holy Church. Fasting and prayer go together.
- Fasting is not irrelevant. Fasting is not obsolete, and it is not something for someone else. Fasting is from God, for us, right here and right now.
- Most of all, we should not devour each other. We ask God to "set a watch and keep the door of our lips."

❖ **Giving back to God:** Everything we have belongs to God. If we come to church every few weeks or months and give only a few dollars, how can our church continue paying its bills? Give regularly and consistently. Give a portion of your income back to God. Look at the suggested guide below.

## **Guide to Proportionate Giving**

<b>Annual Income</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>\$25,000</b>	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	750
<b>\$35,000</b>	3,000	2,800	2,100	1,400	1,050
<b>\$40,000</b>	4,000	3,200	2,400	1,600	1,200
<b>\$50,000</b>	5,000	4,000	3,000	2,000	1,500
<b>\$60,000</b>	6,000	4,800	3,600	2,400	1,800
<b>\$70,000</b>	7,000	5,600	4,200	2,800	2,100
<b>\$80,000</b>	8,000	6,400	4,800	3,200	2,400
<b>\$90,000</b>	9,000	7,200	5,400	3,600	2,700
<b>\$100,000</b>	10,000	8,000	6,000	4,000	3,000
<b>\$120,000</b>	12,000	9,600	7,200	4,800	3,600
<b>\$150,000</b>	15,000	12,000	9,000	6,000	4,500

### **Stewardship Part 1: Scriptural Giving by Archbishop Mark (from OCA.ORG)**

I will prepare articles, based on the Holy Scripture, to help us to better understand the Biblical precepts of Proportionate Giving through tithes, offerings and sacrifices. We will make use of both the writing of the New and Old Covenant. In doing so, the instruction of Saint Paul’s charge to Timothy in his pastoral letter is helpful: “Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconnium, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work [2 Timothy 3:10–16].

In this passage of Scripture, Saint Paul is specifically referring to the writings of the Old Covenant, as many of the Books of the New Covenant had not yet been written and the ones that were had not yet been regarded as on the same level as the Scripture of the Old Covenant. With this in mind, we will begin our study of the Old Covenant passages, the Scripture of the early Church, related to offerings, sacrifices, and tithing, etc. Scripture being inspired by God Himself, let us not be dismissive of their instruction, as Saint

Paul says they are “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” Let us open our ears to hear what the Lord has taught through the Holy Scriptures and set aside all preconceived ideas. Let us remember the word of the Lord, spoken through Isaiah, the Prophet, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts [Isaiah 55:8-9].

When we read the Book of Genesis, we are told the Lord created the heavens and the earth and all it contains. The Hebrew verb for “create” used in Genesis specifically refers to creation *ex nihilo* – that is, God created *out of nothing*. This theme is also repeated in numerous passages of the New Covenant. Colossians 1:16-17 reads, “For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” Thus we acknowledge that all we have comes from the Lord. He is the source of all things. It *all* belongs to Him. Think of the words said at the gravesides of our loved ones: “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein [Psalm 24:1]. This psalm tells us not only of that which we accumulate during our lives or make use of is the Lord’s, but *we ourselves* belong to Him.

The only part of creation not created *ex nihilo* is mankind. In Genesis 2:7, we read, “Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Not only is mankind not created *ex nihilo*, but Genesis portrays God’s intimate involvement in the creation of mankind as a potter molding clay. Additionally, only mankind has the Lord breathing the breath of life into him. Mankind holds a unique position in God’s creation as he is created in the image and likeness of God and given dominion over creation. In Genesis 1:26-30, we read, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food;’ and it was so.”

This same theme is repeated in Psalm 8, verses 3-8: “When I look at Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast established; what is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast

put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the sea.”

Thus mankind occupies an exceptional place in the Lord’s creation, one of dominion, which entails responsibility and stewardship. Mankind does not own creation or even his self, but he is entrusted with their care during his brief sojourn in this life. As we will see as we continue our studies, mankind’s unique place in creation, as well as being in the Divine Image and Likeness, is a distinctive gift that comes with responsibilities. Mankind was given dominion over creation to fulfill a priestly role and one of stewardship in caring for God’s creation. The Lord blessed mankind with his very life, his gifts, his talents, abilities, good weather, fertile land, a bountiful harvest, multiplication of cattle, sheep and goats, etc., and as an expression of mankind’s gratitude and means of Communion, in his priestly capacity he offers back to God the very best of what the Lord blessed and gave to him. “Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee in behalf of all and for all.” There is nothing we can offer to God that is not already his, other than our free will and obedience.

## The Five Effects of Competent Orthodox Parish Leadership (from Orthodox Master Builders blog)

1. Parishioners feel both loved and valued by God and by the priest.
2. Parishioners know that spiritual intelligence acquired through worship, ascetic effort, learning and service are of primary importance.
3. Parishioners feel that they belong to the Body of Christ as manifested and experienced in the life of the parish.
4. **Parishioners feel that the offering of time, talent and treasure is meaningful and makes a difference in changing lives and saving lives.** They pull together to reach the identified goals and objectives of the parish.
5. Hope and charitable acceptance of others, together with humble purposefulness, are easily discerned as primary attributes of the parish - not every day or all the time (parishes have their occasional "lapses" just as every person does), but most days, most of the time, these attributes are palpable.