

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

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

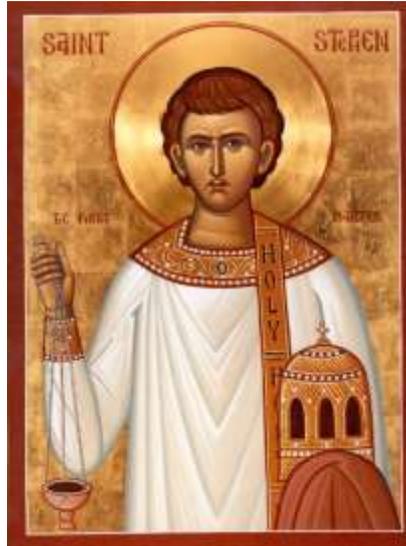
كنيسة البشارة الأرثوذكسية الأنطاكية

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Sunday December 27th, 2015

Tone 5 / Eothinon 8

Sunday after Nativity of Christ

Sunday Services:

Vespers on Saturday 6:00 PM, Sunday Matins 9:30 AM

10:45 AM Divine Liturgy

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

* I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will speak of all Thy marvelous works. In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation, the works of the Lord are great. (**Through the intercessions....**)

* They are sought out according to all His purposes. His work is honorable and glorious, and His righteousness endureth forever. (**Through the intercessions....**)

* Glory... Both now... (**Through the intercessions....**)

THE SECOND ANTIPHON

* Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; that delighteth greatly in His commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

* Glory and riches shall be in His house, and His righteousness endureth forever. *Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin*

* Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: He is gracious, full of compassion and righteous. *Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin*

THE THIRD ANTIPHON

The Lord said unto my Lord: sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send Thee a rod of strength out of Zion. With Thee is dominion in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints. *(Now sing the Festal Apolytikion: "Thy Nativity, O Christ.")*

(Troparion of the Nativity)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn there from to worship Thee, O Sun of justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.

Kontakion of the Nativity:

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent in essence; the earth offereth the cave to the unapproachable One; the angels with the shepherds glorify Him; and the Magi with the star travel on their way; for a new child hath been born for our sakes, God before the ages.

(الأنديفونا الأولى)

أعترف لك يا رب من كل قلبي وأحدث بجميع عجائبك (بشفاعة والدة الإله...) إن عمله اعتراف وعظم جلال، إن اسمه مقدس ورهيب (بشفاعة والدة الإله...) المجد... والآن... (بشفاعة والدة الإله....)

(الأنديفونا الثانية)

طوبى للرجل الخائف من الرب، المجد والغنى في بيته (خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من وُلد من البتول...) وبره يدوم الى دهر الداهرين (خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من وُلد من البتول...) المجد... (خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من وُلد من البتول...)

(الأنديفونا الثالثة)

قال الرب لربي اجلس عن يميني حتى أضع أعداءك موطئاً لقدميك، عصا قوة يرسل لك الرب من صهيون، معك الرئاسة في يوم قوتك (ميلادك لأبيها المسيح الهنا...)

(طروبارية الميلاد)

ميلادك ايها المسيح الهنا، قد اطلع نور المعرفة في العالم، لأن الساجدين للكواكب، به تعلموا من الكوكب السجود لك يا شمس العدل، وأن يعرفوا انك من مشارق العلو اتيت، يا رب المجد لك.

ترتل طروبارية القديس شفيع الكنيسة

(للبشارة – باللحن الرابع)

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

القنداق:

اليوم البتول تلد الفائق الجوهري. والأرض تقرب المغارة، لمن هو غير مقرب إليه. الملائكة مع الرعاة يمجدون. والمجوس مع الكوكب في الطريق يسرون. لأنه قد ولد من اجلنا صبي جديد. الإله الذي قبل الدهور.

The Epistle:

(For St. Stephen)

His voice has gone out into all the earth. The heavens declare the glory of God.

The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles. (6:8-7:5, 47-60)

In those days, Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel. The high priest said, "Is this so?" And Stephen said: "Brethren and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was
December 27, 2015 Liturgy Variables 3 Sunday after Nativity in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Depart from your land and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.' Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living; yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity after him, though he had no child. But it was Solomon who built a house for Him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is My throne, and earth My footstool. What house will you build for Me', says the Lord, 'or what is the place of My rest? Did not My hand make all these things?' You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, Whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it." Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they grinded their teeth against him. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The Gospel

(For the Sunday after Nativity of Christ)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (2:13-23)

When the wise men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him." And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region, who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice

was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.” But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” And he rose and took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

❖ Church Announcements

- ❖ **Christmas Community get together:** Father and Khouryia would like to invite the community to their new home in NW on December 27th from 4 PM. **No gifts please.** You may bring with you a dish to share, sweets, drinks or wine. Please, speak to Khouryia Manal. Address: 84 Hawkhill Road NW.
- ❖ **Thank you:** to all the teachers, the ladies, and all the men who made our Christmas Play for our children a success, may our Lord reward you with health and many years.
- ❖ **New Year Eve Liturgy:** We will celebrate the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ and St. Basil with Liturgy at 3 PM. There will be a service of thanksgiving for the New Year. May the New Year bring peace and health to all of you and your loved ones.
- ❖ **Visit this link for education and encouragement:** <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/faithencouraged>, and ancientfaith.com. Also visit: www.patristicnector.org
- ❖ **Planning ahead: January 6th the Feast of Theophany, there will be services on Tuesday January 5th and the 6th. 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 (2 weeks). There are mission trips to: Alaska, Albania, Guatemala, Kenya, Indonesia, Mexico, and Uganda. Visit OCMC.org for more information or talk to Father.
- ❖ **Make a donation to your church before the end of the year and get a tax break plus your reward will be great in heaven.**

➤ **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.

- ❖ **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

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

Stewardship Part 3: What can we offer to the Lord?

By Archbishop Mark

There are several passages in Genesis which make mention of offerings, designed to honor the Lord and serve as an expression of repentance, gratitude and thankfulness.

There are even times nothing is said about why the person is making an offering.

The first one of these types is found in Genesis chapters 6-9, which speaks of Noah and the flood.

After the waters of the flood had abated, in chapter 8, verse 16 ff, the Lord instructed Noah to bring every living creature that Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and every clean bird, and offered burnt offering. The Lord said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

The idea of a burnt offering literally means to "let ascend," as in the smoke. The whole animal was offered to God. As we look at this passage, it is unclear whether Noah is making an offering to atone for the sins of mankind in preserving Noah and his family. Yet, we know it is not God who needs man's offerings or sacrifices; it is man who needs repentance or as an expression of gratitude for His saving acts. Mankind needs something tangible to offer to God that is not already His?

The concept of offering something tangible or even costly to express repentance, love or gratitude is often for does not the “party who was wrong” often offer some type of gift to sooth the wounds? Perhaps the “peace of chocolates, or in extreme situations a trip? In our human relations, the weight of the matter is more on the gesture than the gift itself. Yet, the value or quality of the gift may also be perceived. The gift and attitude of the giver is also a reflection of how valuable the relationship itself is to the giver.

حقيقة الميلاد

بقلم المطران جورج خضر، جريدة النهار السبت ١٩ كانون الأول ٢٠١٥

ما أريد بالميلاد ذكرى حدث تاريخي ولكن التذكير بمعنى الحدث وهو ان يسوع الناصري مخلص العالم. أتباعه يقبلون حدث موته والكثيرون يؤمنون معنى التاريخ أي يقبلون معنى المحبة الذي كشفه بموته. ربما ما قبلت موته ولكنك تقبل حبه. هو معلم المحبة الكاملة المطلقة في تاريخ الفكر. أنت له وربما منه ان قبلت هذا كنت من ديانتته أم لم تكن. نحن لا نعرف في أية سنة أو أي شهر أو أي يوم ولد المسيح. الخامس والعشرون من كانون الأول اصطحنا عليه طقسياً لأنه كان عند الرومان عيد الشمس فاعتبرنا المسيح هو شمسنا. لم يهمنّا يوم العيد لأن المسيح هو العيد.

والأهم من معرفتنا يوم عيده ان نحياه هو عيداً فينا يجددنا بالتوبة إلى أبيه في الحب والطهارة. اسم العيد الحقيقي في التقويم عندنا هو الظهور الإلهي الذي أطلق في ما بعد على معموديته، عيد الميلاد عيد متأخر. عيدنا الوحيد هو الفصح لأن البدء ليس ظهور يسوع في الجسد ولكنّه الفصح الذي هو ظهوره في ضمير البشر. وفي البدء كنا نعيّد للمولد ولمعموديته في نهر الأردن ونسمي الحدثين عيد الظهور لندل على حقيقته للإنسانية الجديدة.

في الأداء الطقوسي عندنا ليس عيد الميلاد أهم من عيد الظهور أي الغطاس بالعامية لأن المراد في العمق اللاهوتي ليس المولد في الجسد ولكن ان يبدو المسيح مخلص العالم. والدليل على ذلك اننا لا نعرف بالدقة السنة أو الشهر أو اليوم التي ظهر فيها للعالم. كل هذا ذكرى والذكرى في القلب ولكن لا بد من الأعياد لأجل إذكاء المحبة.

في حقيقتنا الروحية نولد في الفصح. المسيح في كل أبعاده مولود على الصليب. حياته فينا بدت هناك. وحياته فينا تعني قهرنا للخطيئة. وعلى هذا القهر لا يزداد شيء لأنه هو الفرح.

الميلاد توطئة للفصح أي لموت المعلم الذي هو في معنى جوهره القيامة. والكنيسة ابتدأت التعييد بالقيامة والميلاد جاء في ما بعد لأننا نحن نولد بموته. المسيح تراه كلاماً أو معطي كلام ان لم تر موته. لا تستطيع ان تراه حياً. وهو ليس فينا شيئاً آخر عن هذا.

كل شيء عندنا حب. معموديتنا التي نفهمها موتاً مع المسيح وقيامته إن هي إلا حب. زواجنا ما كان عندنا اتصالاً بكائن آخر الا لأنه كان اتصالاً بيسوع. كل الكائنات بالغريزة تنزوج. نحن وحدنا نختار أي نحب لنتزوج. هذه العملية الجسدية بامتدادها تبدأ عندنا بالإيمان حتى نسمي القران سراً وبتحديدنا ان الزواج هو اقتران الرجل بالمرأة بدءاً بحب كل منهما لله. لأن الزواج ليس حصراً طبيعياً، هو لقاء مع الله.

في هذا العيد نولد من الله في حب المسيح إيانا وبه وحده نستطيع ان نحب الناس. التصاق الإنسان بالإنسان ان كان في المسيح اختيار. قبل المسيح أو بدونه الناس مع الناس أجساد وعقول. به يصيرون محبة. الميلاد يصير لك عيداً فقط ان رأيت المسيح ومنه وبه تلتقي الناس. به لا يبقون فقط أجساداً يصيرون أرواحاً محبة وهكذا تولد الناس بهم. الذي لا تحبه ليس موجوداً عندك. هو جسد. اذهب وأحب تصر. هذا هو تحررك من ذاتك. هي الحبس الكبير.