

ST. NICHOLAS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

كنيسة القديس نيقولاوس الانطاكية الأرثوذكسية

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REGULAR SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP:

Saturdays: Great Vespers 7:00pm-8:00pm

Confession 8:00pm-9:00pm (by Appointment only)

Sundays: 9:00am-12:00pm

(9:00am Orthros & 10:30am Divine Liturgy)

Agape Coffee Hour 12:00pm-2:00pm

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Social Networking: Salvation is not about me, but about us!

By Abbot Tryphon - All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, Washington.

Mindlessly spending hours on the internet, giving ourselves over to whole evenings sitting before our computers, communicating with people who are unknown to us personally, and who may not even be who they claim to be, are examples of squandering time that would better be spent in spiritual pursuits. Forgoing time with family and friends who are in the room, all the while text messaging someone who is somewhere else, is counterproductive to solid, healthy, relationships. Allowing ourselves to be consumed with on-line chat rooms, or endlessly texting on our cell phones, is a form of self-destruction, for it will ultimately lead to separation and alienation. Real relationships can only be enjoyed when we share time with others who are sitting with us. Communal relationships, where we grow spiritually and socially, are all important for anyone who desires to have a deeper relationship with God, for such relationships become the foundation stone for learning true love. It is not really possible to become a loving person if we turn ourselves over to a life immersed in technology. Students who sit in lecture halls, text messaging their friends, are not participating in the learning process that is the hallmark of the classroom. People who leave their cell phones in vibrate mode, while attending the divine services, are demonstrating that their friends are more important than communing with God. If we are going to mature in the faith, we have to take the steps that lead to a deepening of our relationship with God, just as we must do if we are to have successful marriages, or lasting friendships. The age of technological advancement has its advantages, but it also has a dark side. When we spend the majority of our waking hours text messaging, talking on mobile phones, and becoming lost in cyberspace, we succumb to an addictive behavior that blocks true spiritual, social, and mental growth. Living within the life of the Church, giving ourselves over to spiritual reading, personal prayer, frequent confession, and properly preparing to receive the Holy Mysteries, must be the priority of every Christian's week. Technology has its place, but must not be allowed to become a god unto itself. In guarding the precious time God has given us, we need to nurture our friendships, deepen our family ties, and build upon the important community building that makes for healthy relationships within the life of the Church. Our salvation is not about me, but about us.

WELCOME TO ARCHIMANDRITE KYRILLOS VISITING US FROM MT. ATHOS – GREECE.

Fr. Kyrillos is originally from Syria and is the Elder of St. Prokopios Skete (Vatopaidi Monastery) on Mt. Athos. His Skete is quite old and undergoing renovations to be a pioneer mission in establishing an Antiochian Monastic Brotherhood on the Holy Mountain. There are Antiochians on Mt. Athos already, however, this is the first Skete to use Arabic as their primary language. He is a professional Iconographer and experienced Spiritual Father. He is friend to Fr. Mark from the Balamand Seminary, and during Fr. Mark's recent pilgrimage to Mt. Athos in February, he was Fr. Kyrillos' guest at his Skete. Welcome Abouna Kyrillos & pray for us on Mt. Athos!

THE HOLY EPISTLE (Acts 2:1-11)

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontos and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

وَلَمَّا حَضَرَ يَوْمَ الْخَمْسِينَ كَانَ الْجَمِيعُ مَعًا بِنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَصَارَ بَغْتَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ صَوْتُ كَمَا مِنْ هُبُوبِ رِيحٍ عَاصِفَةٍ وَمَلَأَ كُلَّ الْبَيْتِ حَيْثُ كَانُوا جَالِسِينَ وَظَهَرَتْ لَهُمْ أَلْسِنَةٌ مُنْقَسِمَةٌ كَأَنَّهَا مِنْ نَارٍ وَاسْتَقَرَّتْ عَلَى كُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمْ. وَأَمْتَلَأَ الْجَمِيعُ مِنَ الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَابْتَدَأُوا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ بِاللِّسَانِ الْآخَرَى كَمَا أَعْطَاهُمُ الرُّوحُ أَنْ يَنْطِقُوا. وَكَانَ يَهُودٌ رِجَالٌ أَتَقِيَاءُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ تَحْتَ السَّمَاءِ سَاكِنِينَ فِي أُورُشَلِيمَ. فَلَمَّا صَارَ هَذَا الصَّوْتُ اجْتَمَعَ الْجُمْهُورُ وَتَحَيَّرُوا لِأَنَّ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ كَانَ يَسْمَعُهُمْ يَتَكَلَّمُونَ بِلُغَتِهِ. فَبُهَتَ الْجَمِيعُ وَتَعَجَّبُوا قَائِلِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ: ((أَتَرَى لَيْسَ جَمِيعٌ هَؤُلَاءِ الْمُتَكَلِّمِينَ جَلِيلِيِّينَ؟ فَكَيْفَ نَسْمَعُ نَحْنُ كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنَّا لُغَتَهُ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا: فَرِثِيُونَ وَمَادِيُونَ وَعِيلَامِيُّونَ وَالسَّاكِنُونَ مَا بَيْنَ النَّهْرَيْنِ وَالْيَهُودِيَّةَ وَكَبْدُوكِيَّةَ وَبَنْتُسَ وَأَسِيَّا وَفَرِيحِيَّةَ وَبِمَفِيلِيَّةَ وَمِصْرَ وَنَوَاجِي لِيبِيَّةِ الَّتِي نَحْوَ الْقَيْرَوَانَ وَالرُّومَانِيِّونَ الْمُسْتَوَطِنُونَ يَهُودٌ وَدُخَلَاءُ كَرِيتِيُّونَ وَعَرَبٌ نَسْمَعُهُمْ يَتَكَلَّمُونَ بِاللِّسَانِ بَعْظَانِمُ اللَّهِ!!)).

On this day—the fiftieth after Great and Holy Pascha—we commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the holy Disciples and Apostles in the form of tongues of fire. Numbering about 120, they who followed the Master gathered in Jerusalem in the upper room of a house to await the Lord's promise to send the Holy Spirit. At about the third hour of the day, there came a sound from Heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the house. Cloven tongues immediately appeared, like as of fire, and sat upon the head of each of them. The Apostles began to speak, not with the languages of their ancestors, but with other languages with which the Holy Spirit supplied them, as He inspired them. After the Apostle Peter explained what had happened, 3,000 people joined the Church on the inauguration of the priesthood of grace. The objectives of Pentecost are, namely, the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world, the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus Christ, and the completion of the undefiled hope of the Apostles. By the intercessions of the Holy Apostles, O Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

THE HOLY GOSPEL (St. John 7:37-52; 8:12)

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee? Has not the scripture said that the Christ is descended from David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" So there was a division among the people over him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. The officers then went back to the chief priest and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this man!" The Pharisees answered them, "Are you led astray, you also? Have any of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, who do not know the law, are accursed." Nikodemos, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and you will see that no prophet is to rise from Galilee." Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

فِي الْيَوْمِ الْأَخِيرِ الْعَظِيمِ مِنَ الْعِيدِ وَقَفَ يَسُوعُ وَنَادَى قَائِلًا: ((إِنْ عَطِشَ أَحَدٌ فَلْيَقْبَلْ إِلَيَّ وَيَشْرَبْ. مَنْ آمَنَ بِي، كَمَا قَالَ الْكِتَابُ، تَجْرِي مِنْ بَطْنِهِ أَنْهَارٌ مَاءٍ حَيٍّ)). قَالَ هَذَا عَنِ الرُّوحِ الَّذِي كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ مُزْمِعِينَ أَنْ يَقْبَلُوهُ، لِأَنَّ الرُّوحَ الْقُدُسَ لَمْ يَكُنْ قَدْ أُعْطِيَ بَعْدُ، لِأَنَّ يَسُوعَ لَمْ يَكُنْ قَدْ مُجِّدَ بَعْدُ. فَكَثِيرُونَ مِنْ الْجَمْعِ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا هَذَا الْكَلَامَ قَالُوا: ((هَذَا بِالْحَقِيقَةِ هُوَ النَّبِيُّ)). آخَرُونَ قَالُوا: ((هَذَا هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ!)). وَآخَرُونَ قَالُوا: ((أَلَعَلَّ الْمَسِيحَ مِنَ الْجَلِيلِ يَأْتِي؟ أَلَمْ يَقُلِ الْكِتَابُ إِنَّهُ مِنْ نَسْلِ دَاوُدَ، وَمِنْ بَيْتِ لَحْمٍ، الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَ دَاوُدُ فِيهَا، يَأْتِي الْمَسِيحُ؟)) فَحَدَّثَ انْتِشَاقُ فِي الْجَمْعِ لِسَبَبِهِ. وَكَانَ قَوْمٌ مِنْهُمْ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُمْسِكُوهُ، وَلَكِنْ لَمْ يَلْقَ أَحَدٌ عَلَيْهِ الْيَادِي. فَجَاءَ الْخُدَّامُ إِلَى رُؤَسَاءِ الْكَهَنَةِ وَالْفَرِيسِيِّينَ. فَقَالَ هَؤُلَاءِ لَهُمْ: ((لِمَاذَا لَمْ تَأْتُوا بِهِ؟)) أَجَابَ الْخُدَّامُ: ((لَمْ يَتَكَلَّمْ قَطُّ إِنْسَانٌ هَكَذَا مِثْلَ هَذَا الْإِنْسَانِ!)). فَأَجَابَهُمُ الْفَرِيسِيُّونَ: ((أَلَعَلَّكُمْ أَنْتُمْ أَيْضًا قَدْ ضَلَلْتُمْ؟ أَلَعَلَّ أَحَدًا مِنَ الرُّؤَسَاءِ أَوْ مِنَ الْفَرِيسِيِّينَ آمَنَ بِهِ؟ وَلَكِنَّ هَذَا الشَّعْبَ الَّذِي لَا يَفْهَمُ النَّامُوسَ هُوَ مَلْعُونٌ)). قَالَ لَهُمْ نِيقُودِيمُوسُ، الَّذِي جَاءَ إِلَيْهِ لَيْلًا، وَهُوَ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمْ: ((أَلَعَلَّ نَامُوسَنَا يَدِينُ إِنْسَانًا لَمْ يَسْمَعْ مِنْهُ أَوْلًا وَيَعْرِفُ مَاذَا فَعَلَ؟)) أَجَابُوا وَقَالُوا لَهُ: ((أَلَعَلَّ أَنْتَ أَيْضًا مِنَ الْجَلِيلِ؟ فَتَشَّ وَانظُرْ! إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَقُمْ نَبِيٌّ مِنَ الْجَلِيلِ)). ثُمَّ كَلَّمَهُمْ يَسُوعُ أَيْضًا قَائِلًا: ((أَنَا هُوَ نُورُ الْعَالَمِ. مَنْ يَتَّبِعْنِي فَلَا يَمْشِي فِي الظُّلْمَةِ بَلْ يَكُونُ لَهُ نُورُ الْحَيَاةِ))...

O heavenly King, the Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art in all places, and fillest all things, Treasury of good things, and Giver of life, come, and dwell in us, and cleanse us from every stain; and save our souls, O good One.

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise, having sent upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them Thou hast fished the universe, O Lover of mankind, glory to Thee.

June 30–July 3: Fr. Mark will be attending the PLC and will not be available.

July 2: No Vespers & July 3: Fr. Boulos Khayat will be substituting for Fr. Mark.

July 18–22: Fr. Mark will be attending the Clergy Symposium and will not be available.

DOGMA NOT DRAMA!

By: Fr. Stephen Allen (Pastor of Sts. Peter & Paul Church - Charlottetown PEI)

“Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice. Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” (John 18:37-38). It is the sickness of the day—self. We take self and “spiritualize” it by looking at the cosmos and then saying “where is MY place in it?” This is drama, a concept of eastern philosophical spirituality. And what is funny is we can twist this idea and try to fit it into Christian concepts but (and like I have said in the past—I am not a theologian) it seems to me the starting point is all wrong. It starts off by looking into oneself and our experiences as we relate to the created world (cosmos) that is around us. I am not saying that self-examination is a bad thing—no it is very Christian—and we cannot make a good Confession without it. Our starting point, however, should never be ourselves and the relative experiences of the world / society / environment that we find ourselves in or we set ourselves up for the circular trap of René Descartes' “I think therefore I am” (the poster boy for subjective idealism.) We need to begin in eternal truth not personal, subjective or relative truth—basing our beliefs not in self or cosmos but in the eternal source behind them—the Eternal and Unchanging Truth which we call Dogma and is absolutely necessary for Salvation. If that is not so than Jesus Christ was either insane or dishonest; for He said: “I AM the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). In the Orthodox Church we say the “Creed” which is our central “dogma”—our central expression of “God Revealed Eternal truth. ” And I shouldn't surprise any true-believing Christian that it has nothing to do with self even though it begins with “I” believe. The Creed (I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible...) contains all the saving “Eternal Truths” need for salvation. Any divination from this “Eternal Truth” —any addition or detraction to this “God Revealed Dogma” puts one outside the Church of Jesus Christ and the Holy Orthodox faith. This is not THE judgment of a person—it is a discernment of a false belief system that a misguided person may believe holds some relative and subjective ideology but is contradictory with the “Eternal Truth” as it was revealed by God through Jesus Christ. And the Bible tells us: “Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work. (2 John 1: 9-11). As Christians we are called to love, but loving others does not entail the bending or betrayal of our Orthodox Faith—and certainly not the condoning of others who do so. In fact if we did this we actually begin to love less because we would be cutting ourselves off from the only “True and Eternal” source of love—who is God: the Eternal Father, the Only Begotten Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, salvation is based in Dogma not drama—in the Person of Eternal Truth (Jesus Christ) AND not in subjective relativism. Our Lord tells us, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32). But let us keep in mind that it is not the mere assertion that we believe in the saving truths of Jesus Christ—but in living them daily.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

*Back by Popular Demand! St. Nicholas Annual HAFLI!
November 5 - Save the Date! More Details to come.*