

ST. NICHOLAS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

كنيسة القديس نيقولاوس الانطاكية الأرثوذكسية

80 de Castelnau Est, Montreal, QC, H2R 1P2

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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

BULLETIN: MAY 8, 2016 A.D.

SECOND BIRTH: At the time of our baptism the Church gives us the gift of a new birth from above, and welcomes us into the Body of Christ, which is the Church Herself. It is our membership in Christ's Church that gradually strengthens us as we progress in purity, receiving the fulness of the Grace we first received in Baptism. Immediately following our Baptism we are anointed with Holy Chrism, and receive the indwelling of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which consolidates the new life we have received in our Baptism. From this our life develops those hidden talents all of us received at the moment of our birth. And with the Baptism, God appoints us a guardian angel, who will be responsible for us throughout our lifetime and after our departure from this life. From this moment on Our Saviour clothes Himself with us and clothes us with Him. Christ, is the new Man, and the very image and likeness of God. Our human spiritual being is merged with this Christ, and Christ becomes our Spirit. This leads to the healing of our nature, and our renewal as children of the Most High. As Saint Maximus the Confessors says, "The nature of virtue in each of us is the unique Logos of God, because the nature of all virtues is Jesus Christ". From the moment of our Baptism Christ enters the deepest Sanctuary of our being, and will remain hidden. As we progress in virtue Christ becomes more and more evident within us, and causes us to be transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit, and others will know we "are Christians by our love".

JESUS NEVER APOLOGIZED FOR OFFENDING THE PHARISEES: The legalistic and cunning minds of the Pharisees, the basis of their hypocrisy, was the focus of much of Christ's condemnation. The Pharisees were good actors, seeming to be pious and staunch purveyors of correctly practiced religion, yet they were personally offended by the corrections delivered to them by this upstart rabbi. Just as they thought their coming together to challenge this man would silence Him, Christ told them they were facing divine wrath, and called them on their sin of pride. Even though they let it be known they were offended by Him, the Pharisees never received an apology from the man who called them on their hypocritical practice of faith in purely legalistic form. While they were strict in their Temple tithe, and their external forms of liturgical practice, they cared less about justice and love, and their love of God was surface only. Their practice of religion was purely external, but their religion lacked love and mercy. This Nazarene rabbi, Who was the source of all Goodness and Truth, and Who was quick to forgive the bodily corruption of those who repented, was unmoved by the practice of religion by those who turned their backs on mercy, humility, and love, as the primary principle of True Faith.

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

THE HOLY EPISTLE (1 John 1:1-7)

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life - the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us - that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing this that our joy may be complete. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

الَّذِي كَانَ مِنَ الْبَدءِ، الَّذِي سَمِعْنَاهُ، الَّذِي رَأَيْنَاهُ بِعُيُونِنَا، الَّذِي شَاهَدْنَاهُ، وَلَمَسْتَهُ أَيَّدِينَا، مِنْ جِهَةِ كَلِمَةِ الْحَيَاةِ. فَإِنَّ الْحَيَاةَ أَظْهَرَتْ، وَقَدْ رَأَيْنَا وَنَشْهَدُ وَنُخْبِرُكُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الْأَبَدِيَّةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عِنْدَ الْآبِ وَأُظْهَرَتْ لَنَا. الَّذِي رَأَيْنَاهُ وَسَمِعْنَاهُ نُخْبِرُكُمْ بِهِ، لِكَيْ يَكُونَ لَكُمْ أَيْضًا شَرِكَةٌ مَعَنَا. وَأَمَّا شَرِكَتُنَا نَحْنُ فَهِيَ مَعَ الْآبِ وَمَعَ ابْنِهِ يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ. وَنَكْتُبُ إِلَيْكُمْ هَذَا لِكَيْ يَكُونَ فَرَحَكُمْ كَامِلًا. وَهَذَا هُوَ الْخَبْرُ الَّذِي سَمِعْنَاهُ مِنْهُ وَنُخْبِرُكُمْ بِهِ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ نُورٌ وَلَيْسَ فِيهِ ظِلْمَةٌ لُبَّةٌ. إِنْ قُلْنَا إِنْ لَنَا شَرِكَةٌ مَعَهُ وَسَلَكْنَا فِي الظُّلْمَةِ، نَكْذِبُ وَلَسْنَا نَعْمَلُ الْحَقَّ. وَلَكِنْ إِنْ سَلَكْنَا فِي النُّورِ كَمَا هُوَ فِي النُّورِ، فَلَنَا شَرِكَةٌ مَعَ بَعْضِنَا مَعَ بَعْضٍ، وَدَمُ يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ ابْنِهِ يُطَهِّرُنَا مِنْ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ.

**NOTE: THE VESPERS SERVICES FOR MAY 14 & 21
WILL BE HELD AT 4:00PM.**

\$100 RAFFLE - May 31st

500 Tickets - 10 Draws (instead of 5) - More Cash Prizes & More Chance to Win!
Call the Church Office or Sylvia Mefrige (514-344-0550). 6pm Food & 8pm Ticket Drawing.

We thank Susan Kouri, Judy Hodhod, Helene Zakaib & their committee for the great Paschal Late-Night Reception! It was a refreshing & relaxing event after the long & deep Holy Week services. Thank you to all parishioners who attended and supported our Holy Week Prayers & Events!

On behalf of the Antiochian Women of St. Nicholas Church, I would like to thank everyone for their support and generosity towards our annual Bake Sale. It was a great success once again! I pray you have a Blessed Pascha! May God bless you all. Thank you again, Hala Zakaib.

The **Lebanese Syrian Canadian Ladies Aid Society** is hosting their Spring Luncheon on May 18 at Le Mont Blanc (1950 rue Notre-Dame-de-Fatima, Laval H7G 4X8. Tickets: \$60. Contact Karen Aziz for more information or to book tickets: 514-341-8331.

The **Antiochian Orthodox Union of Canada** is holding a Family Brunch on May 23 at 11:30am at Monastère de la Vierge Marie la Consolatrice (827 chemin de la Carrière, Brownsburg, QC J8G 1K5) on May 23 at 11:30AM. Followed by a tour of the monastery. Tickets are \$50 each for adults and \$25 each for children 3 to 12 years. Contact Hala Zakaib for tickets (514-449-0882) or e-mail unionorthodoxe@gmail.com

You are invited to participate at **St. George Antiochian Women's Walkathon** on Saturday, May 28. The cause is to benefit the West Island MS Self-Help Group while discovering Bois-de-Liesse Nature Park, Saint-Laurent. For registration and further information, please contact St. George Church.

THE HOLY GOSPEL (St. John 20:19-31)

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe." Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

لَمَّا كَانَتْ عَشِيَّةَ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَهُوَ أَوَّلُ الْأُسْبُوعِ وَكَانَتِ الْأَبْوَابُ مَغْلَقَةً حَيْثُ كَانَ التَّلَامِيذُ مُجْتَمِعِينَ لِسَبَبِ الْخَوْفِ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ جَاءَ يَسُوعُ وَوَقَفَ فِي الْوَسْطِ وَقَالَ لَهُمْ: «سَلَامٌ لَكُمْ». وَلَمَّا قَالَ هَذَا أَرَاهُمْ يَدَيْهِ وَجَنْبَهُ فَفَرِحَ التَّلَامِيذُ إِذْ رَأَوْا الرَّبَّ. فَقَالَ لَهُمْ يَسُوعُ أَيْضًا: «سَلَامٌ لَكُمْ. كَمَا أَرْسَلَنِي الْآبُ أَرْسِلْكُمْ أَنَا». وَلَمَّا قَالَ هَذَا نَفَخَ وَقَالَ لَهُمْ: «أَقْبَلُوا الرُّوحَ الْقُدُسَ. مَنْ غَفَرْتُمْ خَطَايَاهُ تُغْفَرْ لَهُ وَمَنْ أَمْسَكْتُمْ خَطَايَاهُ أُمْسِكْتُمْ». أَمَّا تَوْمًا أَحَدُ الْإِثْنَيْ عَشَرَ الَّذِي يُقَالُ لَهُ التَّوَمُّ فَلَمْ يَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ حِينَ جَاءَ يَسُوعُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ التَّلَامِيذُ الْآخَرُونَ: «قَدْ رَأَيْنَا الرَّبَّ». فَقَالَ لَهُمْ: «إِنْ لَمْ أَبْصِرْ فِي يَدَيْهِ أَثَرَ الْمَسَامِيرِ وَأَضَعُ إِصْبِعِي فِي أَثَرِ الْمَسَامِيرِ وَأَضَعُ يَدِي فِي جَنْبِهِ لَا أُوْمِنُ». وَبَعْدَ ثَمَانِيَةِ أَيَّامٍ كَانَ تَلَامِيذُهُ أَيْضًا دَاخِلًا وَتَوْمًا مَعَهُمْ. فَجَاءَ يَسُوعُ وَالْأَبْوَابُ مَغْلَقَةً وَوَقَفَ فِي الْوَسْطِ وَقَالَ: «سَلَامٌ لَكُمْ» ثُمَّ قَالَ لِتَوْمًا: «هَاتِ إِصْبِعَكَ إِلَيَّ هُنَا وَأَبْصِرْ يَدَيَّ وَهَاتِ يَدَكَ وَضَعْهَا فِي جَنْبِي وَلَا تَكُنْ غَيْرَ مُؤْمِنٍ بَلْ مُؤْمِنًا». أَجَابَ تَوْمًا: «رَبِّي وَإِلَهِي». قَالَ لَهُ يَسُوعُ: «لَأَنَّكَ رَأَيْتَنِي يَا تَوْمًا أَمَنْتَ! طُوبَى لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَرَوْا». وَأَيَّاتٍ أُخَرَ كَثِيرَةً صَنَعَ يَسُوعُ قَدَامَ تَلَامِيذِهِ لَمْ تُكْتَبْ فِي هَذَا الْكِتَابِ. وَأَمَّا هَذِهِ فَقَدْ كُتِبَتْ لِتُؤْمِنُوا أَنَّ يَسُوعَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَلِكَيْ تَكُونَ لَكُمْ إِذَا أَمَنْتُمْ حَيَاةً

SYNTAXARION:

On this day, the second Sunday of Pascha, we celebrate the inauguration of Christ's Resurrection, and the occasion whereon the Holy Apostle Thomas touched the Savior's side. Verses: If seals of neither womb nor of tomb could check Thee, then how could the seals of doors do so, O Saviour? This day is called New Sunday, Thomas Sunday or Anti-Pascha. The last term means "in place of Pascha" because Thomas did not immediately hear of Christ's Resurrection and disbelieved it. We remember his doubt but do not repeat it. After this Sunday, the Church dedicates Sunday to the Resurrection. As the Disciples were gathered together on the Sunday of the Resurrection, Jesus entered and greeted them in His usual way, saying, "Peace be unto you." Then He showed them His hands, feet and side. Jesus ate before His Disciples and reassured them of His Resurrection. However, Thomas was not with them at that time, and insisted upon seeing the Saviour's scars—the print of the nails in His hands and feet, and the spear in His side—before he would believe that Jesus was risen. Eight days later Christ appeared again to the Disciples, this time with Thomas present. The Master told Thomas to see and feel. Then Thomas immediately cried out, "My Lord and my God!" But Jesus tells His Disciples, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." This event also clearly illustrates the human and divine Natures of Christ.

PASCHAL MESSAGE BY H.E. METROPOLITAN EPHREM OF TRIPOLI, LEBANON

"From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise." (Matthew 21:16). That is what Jesus said to the chief priests and the scribes when they heard the children shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David". The children, the innocent, and the poor people are the ones who would experience salvation. Their hearts are purified just like children. Nowadays, blessed are such persons. At that time, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?". So Jesus called a little child to him and placed the child among them, and he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3). Nowadays, the world is witnessing a lot of wars and conflicts, and many people are manifesting intense hatred and injustice. Blessed are those who forgive; they shall acquire affection. In fact, resurrection is only about getting beyond sin, ego, and lust. The Resurrection of the Christ is our resurrection from the grave of sin and death to the grave of humbleness and repentance. That is what Saint Symeon the New Theologian said. The person who is bound to his own sins can not know Jesus. We, the real Christians of today, only have the humble and suffering Jesus - all we have to do is reach out to him through other people's distress in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, the Celestial Jerusalem. The Paschal season is this Passover from death to life. We can experience this at any time of our life. As Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." (John 11:25-26). Here is a controversy between the present and the future - "who was, and is, and is to come." (Rev.4:8). The secret of resurrection acts within us ever since baptism. Saint Paul also says: "we were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that...we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:4). At the moment of baptism, the same grace of the Holy Spirit that descended on the Apostles during Pentecost is ingrained in our deepest self, as Saint John Chrysostom affirms. This Divine Grace is a divine seed - a divine energy that is potential and not created. As Saint Diadochos of Photiki has instructed, this energy awaits the human's free initiative in order to act and transform into a kinetic energy. So how does this Divine Grace resulting from Jesus Resurrection act in us? Saint Basil the Great explains that this active Grace penetrates into all the body parts of the human being who is ready to accept it, reaching all the senses, so that we embrace the thinking of the Christ, the sight of the Christ and the hearing of the Christ... This is the first resurrection that we are living from this moment on. Dear beloved, the Orthodox Church's spirituality is a Paschal spirituality. The Passion of the Christ, the suffering of this world, and the suffering of the body should not cause any sadness, worries or despair. This agony drives the believer to reach the emanating light - the light of the Resurrected Christ. That is precisely where hope and joy reside. It is a glorious sadness which our Lord talked about to His disciples before His Passion: "You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy." (John 16:20). Dear brothers and sisters, life with the Christ within the church is a perpetual wedding feast - the mystical wedding of Jesus death and resurrection which is achieved through the union of the Christ with the church, with every soul that loves the Christ and is longing to Him, like the Virgin Mary when the angel saluted her saying: "Rejoice, O unwedded bride". Amen.

