

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, MARCH 03, 2024**TONE 6 / EOTHINON 6****SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON**

MARTYRS EUTROPIOS, KLEONIKOS, AND BASILIKOS OF AMASEA; HIEROMARTYR THEODORETOS OF ANTIOCH

- During the Little Entrance, chant the Resurrectional Apolytikion. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is "O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead..." After the Little Entrance, chant the hymns in the following order:

**RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION
IN TONE SIX****أبوليتيكيون القيامة بالحن السادس**

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

إِنَّ الْقَوَاتِ الْمَلَائِكِيَّةَ ظَهَرُوا عَلَى قَبْرِكَ الْمُوقَّرِ،
وَالْحُرَّاسَ صَارُوا كَالْأَمْوَاتِ، وَمَرِيْمَ وَقَفَتْ عِنْدَ الْقَبْرِ
طَالِبَةً جَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ، فَسَبَّيْتَ الْجَحِيْمَ وَلَمْ تُجَرَّبْ
مِنْهَا، وَصَادَفْتَ الْبَتُولَ مَانِحاً الْحَيَاةَ. فَيَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ
بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، يَا رَبُّ الْمَجْدُ لَكَ.

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

**KONTAKION FOR THE PRODIGAL
SON IN TONE THREE
(**On this day the Virgin**)****قنداق للإبن الشاطر بالحن الثالث**

Foolishly I sprang away * from Thy great fatherly glory, * and dispersed in wicked deeds * the riches that Thou didst give me. * With the Prodigal I therefore * cry unto Thee now: * I have sinned against Thee, O compassionate Father. * But receive me in repentance; * make me as one of * Thy hired servants, O Lord.

إِذْ عَصَيْتُ مَجْدَكَ الْأَبَوِيَّ بِجَهْلٍ، وَبِالْمَعَاصِي
بَدَّدْتُ غِنَاكَ الَّذِي أُعْطَيْتَ، فَبِصَوْتِ الْإِبْنِ
الشَّاطِرِ إِلَيْكَ أَهْتَفْتُ: أَيُّهَا الْآبُ الرَّؤُوفُ، خَطِئْتُ
نَحْوَكَ، فَتَقَبَّلْ مَذِي التَّوْبَةَ وَاجْعَلْنِي كَأَحَدِ أَجْرَائِكَ.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Sunday of the Prodigal Son)

الرسالة (للإبن الشاطر)

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance.

Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my God.

**The Reading from the First Epistle of
St. Paul to the Corinthians. (6:12-20)**

Brethren, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the authority of anything. Foods are for the belly, and the belly for foods; but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for

خَلِّصْ يَا رَبُّ شَعْبَكَ وَبَارِكْ مِيرَاثَكَ.

إِلَيْكَ يَا رَبُّ أَصْرُخُ إِلَهِي.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِّيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ الْأُولَى
إِلَى أَهْلِ كُورِنْثُوسَ.

يَا إِخْوَةُ، كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مُبَاحٌ لِي وَلَكِنْ لَيْسَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ
يُؤَافِقُ، كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مُبَاحٌ لِي وَلَكِنْ لَا يَتَسَلَّطُ عَلَيَّ
شَيْءٌ. إِنَّ الْأَطْعِمَةَ لِلْجَوْفِ وَالْجَوْفَ لِلْأَطْعِمَةِ،

fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body; and God both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up through His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid! Or, do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For, "The two," He says, "shall become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body, but whoever commits fornication sins against his own body. Or, do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

وَسَيُبِيدُ اللَّهُ هَذِهِ وَذَٰكَ. أَمَّا الْجَسَدُ فَلَيْسَ لِلزَّانِي بَلْ لِلرَّبِّ وَالرَّبُّ لِلْجَسَدِ، وَاللَّهُ الَّذِي أَقَامَ الرَّبَّ سَيَقِيمُنَا نَحْنُ أَيْضًا بِقُوَّتِهِ. أَمَّا تَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ أَجْسَادَكُمْ هِيَ أَعْضَاءُ الْمَسِيحِ؟ أَفَأَخَذُ أَعْضَاءَ الْمَسِيحِ وَأَجْعَلُ مِنْهَا أَعْضَاءَ زَنَى؟ حَاشَى. أَمَّا تَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ مَنْ اقْتَرَنَ بِزَانِيَةٍ صَارَ وَإِيَّاهَا جَسَدًا وَاحِدًا؟ لِأَنَّهُ قَدْ قِيلَ: "يَصِيرُ كِلَاهُمَا جَسَدًا وَاحِدًا." أَمَّا الَّذِي يَقْتَرِنُ بِالرَّبِّ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ رُوحًا وَاحِدًا. أَهْرُبُوا مِنَ الزَّانِي. فَإِنَّ كُلَّ خَطِيئَةٍ يَفْعَلُهَا الْإِنْسَانُ هِيَ فِي خَارِجِ الْجَسَدِ، أَمَّا الزَّانِي فَإِنَّهُ يَخْطَأُ إِلَى جَسَدِهِ. أَمَّا تَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ جَسَدَكُمْ هُوَ هَيْكَلُ الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ الَّذِي فِيكُمْ الَّذِي نَلْتَمُوهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ لَسْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ؟ لِأَنَّكُمْ قَدْ اشْتَرَيْتُمْ بِثَمَنٍ فَمَجِّدُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَجْسَادِكُمْ وَفِي أَرْوَاحِكُمْ الَّتِي هِيَ لِلَّهِ.

THE GOSPEL
(For Sunday of the Prodigal Son)

الإنجيل (للاثنين الشاطرين)

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (15:11-32)

**فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لَوْقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ
الْبَشِيرِ، التِّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ.**

The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father,

قَالَ الرَّبُّ هَذَا الْمَثَلُ: "إِنْسَانٌ كَانَ لَهُ ابْنَانِ، فَقَالَ أَصْغَرُهُمَا لِأَبِيهِ: يَا أَبَتِي، أَعْطِنِي النِّصِيبَ الَّذِي يَخْصُنِي مِنَ الْمَالِ. فَقَسَمَ بَيْنَهُمَا مَعِيشَتَهُ. وَبَعْدَ أَيَّامٍ غَيْرِ كَثِيرَةٍ، جَمَعَ الابْنُ الْأَصْغَرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ لَهُ، وَسَافَرَ إِلَى بَلَدٍ بَعِيدٍ، وَبَذَرَ مَالَهُ هُنَاكَ عَائِشًا فِي الْخَلَاعَةِ. فَلَمَّا أَنْقَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ لَهُ، حَدَّثَتْ فِي ذَلِكَ الْبَلَدِ مَجَاعَةٌ شَدِيدَةٌ، فَأَخَذَ فِي الْعَوْرِ. فَذَهَبَ وَأَنْصَوَى إِلَى وَاحِدٍ مِنَ أَهْلِ ذَلِكَ الْبَلَدِ، فَأَرْسَلَهُ إِلَى حَقُولِهِ يَرْعَى خَنَازِيرَ. وَكَانَ يَشْتَهِي أَنْ يَمْلَأَ بَطْنَهُ مِنَ الْخَرْنُوبِ الَّذِي كَانَتْ الْخَنَازِيرُ تَأْكُلُهُ، فَلَمْ يُعْطِهِ أَحَدٌ. فَرَجَعَ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ وَقَالَ "كَمْ لِأَبِي مِنْ أَجْرَاءَ يُفْضِلُ عَنْهُمْ الْخُبْزَ، وَأَنَا أَهْلِكُ

I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.” And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.’ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

جوعاً. أَقُومُ وَأَمْضِي إِلَى أَبِي وَأَقُولُ لَهُ "يَا أَبَتِ، قَدْ أَخْطَأْتُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَأَمَامَكَ، وَلَسْتُ مُسْتَحِقّاً بَعْدُ أَنْ أَدْعَى لَكَ ابْنًا، فَاجْعَلْنِي كَأَحَدِ أُجْرَائِكَ." فَقَامَ وَجَاءَ إِلَى أَبِيهِ. وَفِيمَا هُوَ بَعْدُ غَيْرُ بَعِيدٍ، رَأَاهُ أَبُوهُ، فَتَحَنَّنَ عَلَيْهِ وَأَسْرَعَ وَالْقَى بِنَفْسِهِ عَلَى عُنُقِهِ وَقَبَّلَهُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ الْابْنُ: "يَا أَبَتِ، قَدْ أَخْطَأْتُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَأَمَامَكَ وَلَسْتُ مُسْتَحِقّاً بَعْدُ أَنْ أَدْعَى لَكَ ابْنًا." فَقَالَ الْأَبُ لِعَبِيدِهِ: "هَاتُوا الْحُلَّةَ الْأُولَى وَالْبِسُوهُ، وَاجْعَلُوا خَاتِماً فِي يَدِهِ، وَجِذَاءً فِي رِجْلَيْهِ، وَأَتُوا بِالْعِجْلِ الْمُسَمَّنِ وَانْبَحُوهُ، فَنَأْكُلْ وَنَفْرَحَ، لِأَنَّ ابْنِي هَذَا كَانَ مَيِّتاً فَعَاشَ، وَكَانَ ضَالًّا فَوُجِدَ. فَطَفِقُوا يَفْرَحُونَ. وَكَانَ ابْنُهُ الْأَكْبَرُ فِي الْحَقْلِ. فَلَمَّا أَتَى وَقَرَّبَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ، سَمِعَ أَصْوَاتَ الْغِنَاءِ وَالرَّقْصِ. فَدَعَا أَحَدَ الْغُلَّامِ وَسَأَلَهُ مَا هَذَا. فَقَالَ لَهُ: "قَدْ قَدِمَ أَخُوكَ، فَذَبَحَ أَبُوكَ الْعِجْلَ الْمُسَمَّنَ لِأَنَّهُ لَقِيَهُ سَالِمًا." فَغَضِبَ وَلَمْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يَدْخُلَ. فَخَرَجَ أَبُوهُ وَطَفِقَ يَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْهِ، فَأَجَابَ وَقَالَ لِأَبِيهِ: "كَمْ لِي مِنَ السِّنِينَ أَخْدِمُكَ، وَلَمْ أَتَعْذَلْ لَكَ وَصِيَّةً قَطُّ، وَأَنْتَ لَمْ تُعْطِنِي قَطُّ جَدِيًّا لِأَفْرَحَ مَعَ أَصْدِقَائِي. وَلَمَّا جَاءَ ابْنُكَ هَذَا الَّذِي أَكَلَ مَعِيشَتَكَ مَعَ الزَّوَانِي، ذَبَحْتَ لَهُ الْعِجْلَ الْمُسَمَّنَ. فَقَالَ لَهُ: "يَا ابْنِي، أَنْتَ مَعِيَ فِي كُلِّ حِينٍ، وَكُلُّ مَا هُوَ لِي فَهُوَ لَكَ. وَلَكِنْ كَانَ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ نَفْرَحَ وَنُسَرَّ، لِأَنَّ أَخَاكَ هَذَا كَانَ مَيِّتاً فَعَاشَ، وَكَانَ ضَالًّا فَوُجِدَ."

• The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom continues as usual.

THE DISMISSAL

Priest: May He Who rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother;

الختم

الكاهن: أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهُنَا الْحَقِيقِي، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنَ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، بِشَفَاعَاتِ أُمِّكَ الْكُلِّيَّةِ الطَّهَارَةِ وَالْبَرِيَّةِ

<p>by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints, John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, whose Divine Liturgy we have now celebrated, of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; <i>of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community</i>; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.</p>	<p>مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ؛ وَبِقُدْرَةِ الصَّلِيبِ الْكَرِيمِ الْمُحْيِي؛ وَبِطُلُبَاتِ الْقُوَّاتِ السَّمَاءِيَّةِ الْمُكَرَّمَةِ الْعَالِمَةِ الْأَجْسَادِ؛ وَالنَّبِيِّ الْكَرِيمِ السَّابِقِ الْمَجِيدِ يُوْحَنَّا الْمَعْمَدَانِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسَيْنِ الْمُشْرِفَيْنِ الرَّسُلِ، وَسَائِرِ الرَّسُلِ الْمُشْرِفِينَ الْجَدِيرِينَ بِكُلِّ مَدِيحٍ؛ وَأَبِينَا الْجَلِيلِ فِي الْقَدِيسِينَ يُوْحَنَّا الذَّهَبِيِّ الْقَمِّ رَئِيسِ أَسَاقِفَةِ الْقُسْطَنْطِينِيَّةِ، كَاتِبِ هَذِهِ الْخِدْمَةِ الشَّرِيفَةِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسِينَ الْمَجِيدِينَ الشُّهَدَاءِ الْمُتَأَلِّقِينَ بِالظَّفَرِ؛ وَأَبَائِنَا الْأَبْرَارِ الْمُتَوَشَّحِينَ بِاللَّهِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسِ (ة) (فُلَانِ، فُلَانَةِ) شَفِيعِ(ة) وَحَامِي(ة) هَذِهِ الرَّعِيَّةِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسِينَ الصَّدِيقِينَ جَدِّي الْمَسِيحِ إِلَهِ يُوَاكِمِ وَحَنَّةً، وَجَمِيعِ قَدِيسِكَ، اَرْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا بِمَا أَنَّكَ صَالِحٌ وَمُحِبٌّ لِلْبَشَرِ.</p>
<p>Priest: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.</p>	<p>الكاهن: بِصَلَوَاتِ آبَائِنَا الْقَدِيسِينَ، أَيُّهَا الرَّبُّ يَسُوعُ الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهُنَا اَرْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا.</p>
<p>Choir: Amen.</p>	<p>الجوق: آمين.</p>
<p>These texts have been prepared by the Department of Liturgics of the Antiochian Archdiocese Portions of the Archdiocesan Service Texts include texts from <i>The Menaion</i>, <i>The Great Horologion</i>, <i>The Pentecostarion</i>, <i>The Octoechos</i>, <i>The Triodion-Holy Week</i>, and <i>The Psalter of the Seventy</i>, which are Copyright © Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, Massachusetts, and are used with permission. All rights reserved. These works may not be further reproduced, beyond printing out a single copy for personal non-commercial use, without the prior written authorization of Holy Transfiguration Monastery.</p>	

ANNIVERSARY OR OUR DEPARTED FOR THIS SUNDAY

<u>DAY</u>	<u>NAME OF THE DEPARTED</u>	<u>ANNIVERSARY</u>
26	Mounif Khouri	29
27	Jabra Shubeita	22
1	Leila Batchoun	11
1	Dorthoy Habib	38
1	Helen Ferris	65
2	Mary Ann Haddad	57
2	Kamel Bosada Ellis	50
2	Adele Mary Chamandy	39

- **Please**, pray for the health of the following parishioners: Ellen, Robert, Alex, Sam, Elias, Nassar, George, Nina, Sonia, George, Beshara, Irene, Nadia, Christine, Toni, George, Helena, Rami and Maien.

MEMORIAL

- **40 Days memorial service for Maani Abboud** offered by her daughters **Samar Haddad, Rana Haddad and their families**. May her memory be eternal!
The coffee hour is offered today in loving memory of **Maani Abboud** by her family.

ETERNAL LIGHTS

- **Mar 10:** In loving memory of Yvonne Younes from her family
- **Mar 24:** In loving memory of Jiries and Nahil Irbib from Nadim Irbib and family.
- **Apr 21:** In loving memory of Yousef and Sumayah Musallam from Nadim Irbib and family.

MAINTAINING SILENCE DURING THE SERVICE

- The congregation is expected to actively participate in worship. However, God's house is a place for reverence and worship, not loud and idle conversations (between each other or on cell phones). Please, turn off cell phones and any other devices when you are attending the Liturgy. If you have a situation that requires you to speak to other parishioners, please do that quietly outside the church or downstairs in the basement.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL REGISTRATION 2023-2024

- **Please see the attached QR code for registration.**

PRISON MINISTRY

- On Saturday, March 30, 2024 a small group from St. George will be going to Toronto South Detention Centre to hand out Easter packages to the over 1,550 inmates. This will be our 19th annual visit to this maximum-security prison. Those who are interested in participating in this blessed ministry, please contact Diane Younes at 416-464-5908. Financial donations would be greatly appreciated.

CHURCH OFFICE

- **Anyone wishing to church a child, removal of crowns, have a memorial service, or would like Fr. George to give communion or visit their loved sick ones, should contact the church office ahead of time (905) 731-7210. In case of emergency, call Fr. Georges Mokbel (416) 725-2888**

BLESSING OF HOMES

- **Father Georges is visiting our parishioners and blessing their homes. If you like to have your home blessed, please call Fr. Georges 416-725-2888 or email the office info@stgeorgeantiochianchurch.org with your name and address. Father prefers that those who live in apartment's building to arrange for few apartments to be blessed together.**

TEEN SOYO

- Congratulations to our newly elected TEEN SOYO Board Members...

President: Peter Mokbel

VP: Peter Novratidis

Treasurer: Helena Mokbel

Secretary: Michael Ishac

Social Media: Dima Alzidan

Coordinators: Lucas El Bouri, Mark Moussa and Paul Petro Youth Advisors: Angela Ghazal and Fadi Freiga

If you are interested in joining our Teen SOYO group please contact our Youth Advisors.

Note: members must be between the ages of 13-19 years old.

Angela Ghazal: 416-720-0308

Fadi Freiga: 647-829-6136

FIRE ROUTE, HANDICAPPED PARKING, AND PARKING LINES

- Please make sure not to park on the side of the church or in front of the Fire hydrant, for this is a fire route. Also ensure not to park in the spots designated for handicapped parking. Anyone who parks and does not show a handicap permit on the window will be tagged.

- **Kindly Submit your Contribution through the Following Methods: Connect to the Church Website www.stgeorgeto.org Click on *Donate***
 - **PayPal, or send your Cheque by Mail to: St. George Antiochian Church, 9116 Bayview Ave, Richmond Hill ON, L4B 3M9**
- Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice.**
(Psalm 112:5)

Dear Camp Transfiguration Families of St. George,

As you all are aware, the coach transportation to Camp T is not included in the children's camp costs. Each child must pay their own way to get to Quebec. In 2023, the cost for transportation was over \$15,000 and thank God, it was fully covered from funds raised through our annual Luncheon and Raffle as well as generous donations of parishioners.

This year, our annual Luncheon will be held on Sunday March 3rd at St George gymnasium at 1:00pm. The cost is \$30/adult and \$25/child ages 12 and under. (buffet lunch, dessert, coffee and drinks)

We will be selling tickets in the church basement after Liturgy starting this Sunday January 28, 2024.

You can also purchase tickets by contacting:

Reem Shami 416305684

Anita Novratidis 6473902955

Sana Besharat 4169386151

Lina Rizzik-Shnoudeh 6478012081

Tickets will NOT be available at the door.

We are also asking for your generous help in donations of gifts for the Raffle prizes. Some ideas, but not limited to, Apple Airpods, gift cards, small appliances or electronics. (brand new, not used please)

Individuals or businesses will receive a tax receipt for monetary donations.

We are counting on your support and looking forward to having yet another successful luncheon and raffle.

Best Wishes,

Camp T Bus Committee

St. George AOC

Services at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church – Toronto. Month: March 2024

	Date	Time	Service
1st Week	Saturday March 2 nd	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
		5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
	Sunday March 3 rd Sunday of the Prodigal Son	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
		10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
2nd Week	Thursday March 7 th Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebastia	6:00 pm.	Festal Orthros
		7:00 p.m.	Divine Liturgy
	Saturday March 9 th Saturday of Souls	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
		4:00 p.m.	Confessions
		5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
	Sunday March 10 th Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday)	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
		10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
3rd Week	Wednesday March 13 th	7:00 p.m.	Daily Vespers
	Saturday March 16 th	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
		5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
	Sunday March 17 th Forgiveness Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
		10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
4th Week	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday March 18 th , 19 th , 21 st	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
	Wednesday , March 20 th	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	Friday , March 22 nd	6:15 p.m.	1st Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
		7:30 p.m.	1st Lenten Supper, sponsored by Men Society (Antiochian Men)
	Saturday , March 23 rd	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
		4:00 p.m.	Confessions
		5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
	Sunday , March 24 th Sunday of Orthodoxy	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
		10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great & Procession with Icons
		7:00 p.m.	Great Vespers with Litia-Artoklasia Feast of the Annunciation
5th Week	Monday , March 25 th Feast of the Annunciation	7:00 p.m.	Vespereal Divine Liturgy
	Tuesday, Thursday March 26 th , 28 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
	Wednesday , March 27 th	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	Friday , March 29 th	6:15 p.m.	2nd Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
		7:30 p.m.	2nd Lenten Supper, sponsored by the YAM (Young Adult Ministry), the Teen SOYO & the Chanters
	Saturday , March 23 rd	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
		4:00 p.m.	Confessions
		5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
	Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas, March 31 st	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
		10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Activities at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church – Toronto.

Month: March 2024

Date	Time	Activity	Location
1st Week			
Friday March 2 nd	7:00 – 8:30 pm	Byzantine Music Class	Church Basement
	7:30 – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
	9:00 – 9:30 pm	“Know your Church” for Youths	Gathering Room at the Centre
Sunday March 3 rd	1:00 p.m.	Camp T Bus Luncheon	Gym at St. George Centre
2nd Week			
Tuesday March 5 th	6:00 – 7:00 pm	Bi-weekly Catechism Class	Church Basement
Thursday March 7 th	10:30 – 2:00 pm	Homeschooling Group	Church Basement
	8:30 – 11:00 pm	Basketball for the Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday March 8 th	7:00 – 8:30 pm	Byzantine Music Class	Church Basement
	8:30 – 10:00 pm	Spiritual Talk with Abouna Georges	Church Basement
Saturday March 9 th	6:00 – 8:00 pm	YAM Bible Study	Church Basement
Sunday March 10 th	After Communion	Sunday School	Church Basement
3rd Week			
Thursday March 14 th	8:30 – 11:00 pm	Basketball for the Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday March 15 th	7:00 – 8:30 pm	Byzantine Music Class	Church Basement
	8:30 – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
	9:00 – 9:30 pm	“Know your Church” for Youths	Gathering Room at the Centre
Sunday March 17 th	After Communion	Sunday School	Church Basement
4th Week			
Tuesday March 19 th	6:00 – 7:00 pm	Bi-weekly Catechism Class	Church Basement
Thursday March 21 st	10:30 – 2:00 pm	Homeschooling Group	Church Basement
	8:30 – 11 pm	Basketball for the Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday March 22 nd	8:00 – 9:00 pm	Byzantine Music Class	Church Basement
	8:30 – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
Saturday March 23 rd	6:00 – 8:00 pm	YAM Bible Study	Church Basement
Sunday March 24 th	After Communion	Sunday School	Church Basement
5th Week			
Thursday March 28 th	8:30 – 11:00 pm	Basketball for the Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday March 29 th	8:00 – 9:00 pm	Byzantine Music Class	Church Basement
	8:30 – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
	9:00 – 9:30 pm	“Know your Church” for Youths	Gathering Room at the Centre
Sunday March 31 st	After Communion	Sunday School	Church Basement

Lenten Calendar 2024

Saturday March 9 th	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy – Saturday of Souls
	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Meat Fare Sunday March 10 th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Saturday March 16 th	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Cheese Fare Sunday March 17 th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
	7:00 p.m.	Lenten Vespers with Ceremony of Mutual Forgiveness

The Great Lent this year starts on Monday, March 18th, 2024, and ends with the Resurrection on Sunday May 5th, 2024. During this period, we are not allowed to eat the following:

- 1) Meat and meat by-products.
- 2) Eggs, milk and dairy by-products.
- 3) Fish with backbones. (Octopus and Shellfish are allowed).
- 4) On the Feast of the Annunciation Saturday March 25th, and on Palm Sunday April 28th, fish is allowed after the Divine Liturgy.

Kindly notice the adjustment in the time of the Akathist (Madayeh) Services and respective dinners, along with the Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

First Week of Great Lent		
Monday , March 18 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
Tuesday , March 19 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
Wednesday , March 20 th	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday , March 21 st	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
Friday , March 22 nd	6:15 p.m.	1st Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
	7:30 p.m.	1st Lenten Supper, sponsored by Men Society (Antiochian Men)
Saturday , March 23 rd	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Sunday of Orthodoxy , March 24 th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great & Procession with Icons
	7:00 p.m.	Great Vespers with Litia-Artoklasia Feast of the Annunciation

Second Week of Great Lent		
Monday, March 25th Feast of the Annunciation	7:00 p.m.	Vesperal Divine Liturgy
Tuesday, March 26th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Wednesday, March 27th	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, March 28th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Friday, March 29th	<u>6:15 p.m.</u>	2nd Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
	<u>7:30 p.m.</u>	2nd Lenten Supper, sponsored by the YAM (Young Adult Ministry), the Teen SOYO & the Chanters
Saturday, March 30th	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas, March 31st	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	<u>10:15 a.m.</u>	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Third Week of Great Lent		
Monday, April 1st	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Tuesday, April 2nd	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Wednesday, April 3rd	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, April 4th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Friday, April 5th	<u>6:15 p.m.</u>	3rd Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
	<u>7:30 p.m.</u>	3rd Lenten Supper, sponsored by the Antiochian Women
Saturday, April 6th	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Sunday of the Holy Cross, April 7th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	<u>10:15 a.m.</u>	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, Followed by a Procession & Veneration of the Holy Cross

Fourth Week of Great Lent		
Monday , April 8 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Tuesday , April 9 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Wednesday , April 10 th	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday , April 11 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Friday , April 12 th	<u>6:15 p.m.</u>	4 th Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
	<u>7:30 p.m.</u>	4 th Lenten Supper, sponsored by the order of St. Ignatius
Saturday , April 13 th	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Sunday of St. John Climacus , April 14 th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	<u>10:15 a.m.</u>	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Fifth Week of Great Lent		
Monday , April 15 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Tuesday , April 16 th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Wednesday , April 17 th	7:00 p.m.	Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday , April 18 th	7:00 p.m.	Little Compline with the full Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete & the life of St. Mary of Egypt
Friday , April 19 th	<u>6:00 p.m.</u>	5 th Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
	<u>7:30 p.m.</u>	5 th Lenten Supper, sponsored by the Parish Council
Saturday , April 20 th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	10:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers
Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt , April 21 st	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	<u>10:15 a.m.</u>	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Sixth Week of Great Lent		
Monday, April 22nd	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Tuesday, April 23rd	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Wednesday, April 24th	7:00 p.m.	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, April 25th	7:00 p.m.	Great Compline
Friday, April 26th	10:00 a.m.	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 p.m.	Little Compline with the Canon of the Raising of Lazarus
Lazarus Saturday, April 27th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	<u>10:15 a.m.</u>	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom *
	4:00 p.m.	Confessions
	5:00 p.m.	Great Vespers with Litia-Artoklasia

*All Church School children and their parents, their Grandparents, and their Godparents, will attend the Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday and take Communion. Following the Liturgy, they will all have Brunch together with the Sunday School teachers.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR PALM SUNDAY AND HOLY WEEK

- 1) Candles for your children will be available at the Church Vestibule, donation \$5.00 per candle.
- 2) During the Divine Liturgy and the procession, you are kindly requested to keep proper decorum, let us all behave in order, in discipline and in peace so that we can pray in one mind and one heart, and that Our Lord may hear our supplications and bestow upon us His Blessings.
- 3) All beloved parishioners are requested not to park their cars in the driveways. The procession will start from the outside main door of the Church, turn left on driveway behind the building into the parking lot, around the Church back to the main door and into the Church.

Palm Sunday & Holy Week – 2024		
Palm Sunday, April 28th	9:00 a.m.	Orthros
	<u>10:15 a.m.</u>	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Blessings of Palms & Procession
	7:00 p.m.	1 st Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Monday
Great Holy Monday, April 29th	10:00 a.m.	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 p.m.	2 nd Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Tuesday
Great Holy Tuesday, April 30th	10:00 a.m.	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 p.m.	3 rd Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Wednesday
Great Holy Wednesday, May 1st	10:00 a.m.	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 p.m.	Holy Unction Service, Anointing of the Faithful with Holy Oil
Great Holy Thursday, May 2nd	9:00 a.m.	Orthros for Holy Thursday
	10:00 a.m.	Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great for the Institution of the Mystical Supper of Christ
	7:00 p.m.	Orthros with the Twelve Passion Gospels for Holy Friday – Gospels of the Crucifixion
Great Holy Friday, May 3rd	9:00 a.m.	The Great (Royal) Hours and Typika on Holy Friday followed by Great Vespers for Holy Saturday, the Taking down of Christ from the Cross
	7:00 p.m.	Orthros with the Lamentations for Holy Saturday
Great Holy Saturday, May 4th	9:00 a.m.	Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
	10:00 p.m.	Resurrection (Rush) Service, Paschal Orthros and Paschal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Great & All-Holy Pascha, Sunday, May 5th	7:00 p.m.	The Agape Vespers, The Baouth Service Followed by a procession
Bright Monday, May 6th ST. GEORGE'S FEAST	9:00 a.m.	Festal Orthros
	10:15 a.m.	Divine Liturgy

CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!

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Camp Transfiguration Camp T Bus Lunch and Raffle

Sunday, March 3, 2024
after the Divine Liturgy
at the St. George
Centre Gymnasium.

Adult \$30

Children (12 years and under) \$25

Lunch tickets WILL NOT be sold at the door and
we have sold out in previous years.

Lunch tickets and raffle tickets will be sold every
Sunday.

or by contacting

Anita (647) 390-2955 | Reem (416) 305-6848

Sana (416) 938 6151 | Lina (647) 801-2081



The Humble Person

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

The humble person is objective and aware of his duties and rights; he knows the extent of his impact on society and realizes his position and role within it. He does not monopolize his talents and abilities but is happy to share them with others, even if their talents end up exceeding his. He rejoices in other people's success and is thrilled by their growth and maturity. He knows neither jealousy nor envy, is thankful for everything, and flourishes on other's progress.

As for the arrogant person, he only views things through the lens of his own ego. He is immersed in boastfulness about himself and considers no one else but himself. He is condescending towards others and wants to seize everything for himself. Jealousy kills his soul, envy exhausts him, and he is constantly troubled by those who are more distinguished than him. He is demanding, has a bad temper, and is never satisfied, no matter how much success he might achieve.

The humble person realizes how enormous the universe is. Therefore, he is always receptive to other people and ideas. Great scholars tend to be humble because their vast knowledge makes them aware that what they do not know about the universe is much more than what they know. They constantly pursue more knowledge with a sincere zeal, whereas the less learned might be arrogant, haughty, and conceited about what they know. The latter are condescending toward those who are less knowledgeable than them, yet at the same time, they are intimidated by those who are more knowledgeable than them and avoid interacting with them.

The humble person is inhabited by love and views every person as a repository of love. He does not exalt himself, because love does not know exaltation. He deals naturally and spontaneously with others, since he does not know how to lie, falsify facts, or wear masks. More precisely, he has no need to act in such a manner because he does not feel insufficient and compelled to cover up or mask his inadequacy with fake or false interactions. Thus, he is a human being with no inferiority complex. In other words, his self-confidence is within normal limits: he

does not overstate his self-confidence, as this leads to arrogance and haughtiness, and he does not understate it, as this leads to cowardice and naivety.

The humble one is a balanced human being. He does not view himself based on how other people view him and, thus, does not have to act inappropriately in order to please others.

Humility is associated with self-knowledge, which is “a person’s awareness of his ability and a restless reminiscence of his slightest shortcomings” (as St. John of the Ladder says).

What has been said so far is a description that befits humanity in general. For Christians, pursuit of humility surpasses this description, because we strive to imitate our Lord, who says, “Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:29).

Humility might appear to be a downward descent, yet for believers it is an ascent to the highest and a closeness to the Lord and to Creation in general. Humility is deemed to be the third to the last step for those who seek perfection. In Orthodox spirituality, humility comes right before dispassion (*apatheia*) and love, which are the summit of the ladder of virtues.

The humble person anguishes at pridefulness and pities the arrogant, because he realizes that pride tears apart human nature while humility unites it. The haughty person seeks self-satisfaction through arrogance and cruelty towards others. He thinks that his existence depends on humiliating others, while the humble person understands that loving others is the basis of his and their existence.

The humble person knows that any judgment about others is distorted if it is tinged with pride, because it is not based on a pure and valid contemplation of reality. Conversely, humility leads to careful insight, devoid of passion, and therefore, to sound judgment.

While the arrogant person twists his view of life’s affairs to suit his selfish interests, the humble person’s approach is realistic, baptized with love. Therefore, the latter

re-establishes the true understanding of the affairs of life. The arrogant person is negative, accompanied by pessimistic darkness, hopeless and helpless. Meanwhile, the humble person is positive to the end, capable of accepting a changing reality, and accompanied by optimism and ongoing progress.

Our spiritual literature has not in vain said that trees devoid of fruit are erect and rise to the heights, while trees full of fruit are always bent. As a matter of fact, the more fruit they carry, the lower they are bent.

In Latin, the word humility means “fertile ground.” The humble one is like low-lying land that receives water and absorbs it, enhancing its fertility and increasing its fruits.

Humility leads to exaltation, while vanity leads to humiliation. For the Bible says that God “brought down the haughty and exalted the humble” (Luke 1:51). Exaltation is beautiful and good, but humiliation is repellent and distasteful.

The rooster is only aware of its own pen and is content, believing itself to be the mightiest and strongest. This is what an arrogant person is like—trapped in himself, believing that he is the center of the universe. The eagle, however, flies high and sees the earth and everything on it. It notices its tininess compared to other creatures, mocking the rooster and realizing the extent of the latter’s ignorance. Eagles are like humble people: they realize their status and role in the world (as Saint Silouan the Athonite says).

The humble person is soft-spoken and does not offend or hurt, unlike the arrogant person. “Treasure does not generate what it lacks.”

One might say, “I’m not arrogant.” This does not necessarily mean this person is humble. Not being arrogant is different from being humble. Here is what the great teacher John of the Ladder says: “Arrogance is different from not being arrogant, and both are different from humility. The arrogant one judges others all day long, and the non-arrogant one does not judge anyone but does not judge himself either. As for the humble person, he judges himself all the time, without being at fault.”

Pride accompanies individualism, which is why it seems to be a general feature in our current era. The more isolated the person is, the more scared he becomes and tries to protect himself with walls of pride. Pride is a sign of fear, avoidance of confronting oneself and one's flaws. It is an inherent lack of love, if not hatred. As for humility, it is the experience of intimacy and a joyful life that is open to others. The humble person does not share in the sins of others but overflows with mercy for those who are in sorrow. Nothing hurts the humble person more than pride.

Our spiritual fathers said that humility is the wall and the roof of the house that protects its children, meaning the virtues, from falling. It is indeed the manifestation of all virtues.

The arrogant person derives his existence from his own self, talents, knowledge, money, and the like, while the humble person is certain that his entire existence is derived from God. The humble one always sees himself as standing in God's presence. He constantly seeks to be fulfilled by God and does not waste his time with narcissistic actions that make him lose his best self.

A very beautiful girl came to Metropolitan Anthony Bloom for confession. She told him that she admired her beauty to the point of vanity and arrogance. He replied: Well, at least this is true. I advise you to stand in front of the mirror three times a day, look at yourself, and say, Thank you, Lord, for creating me beautiful, but my only contribution to this beauty you have given me is to distort it with my haughty gaze.

Pride arises from self-conceit, while humility comes from referring every good deed to God. The humble person attributes everything he has to God, not to himself. Thus, he thanks God, admires Him, and grows in love of Him.

The humble person, in short, is the one who realizes that he needs God's mercy, and his constant prayer becomes, like the tax collector, "O God, be merciful to me, the sinner" (Luke 18:13).

المتواضع

المتروبوليت سابا (اسبر)

المتواضع إنسان موضوعي، يعرف ما له وما عليه، يعي مدى تأثيره في المجتمع، ومكانته ودوره. لا يقبل بأن يحتكر المواهب والقدرات، ويفرح لوجودها عند غيره، ولو كانت تفوق ما عنده. يفرح لنجاح الآخرين، ويهزّه نضجهم ونموهم طرَباً. لا يعرف الغيرة ولا الحسد، شاكرًا لكلّ شيء، متوثباً لكلّ تقدّم.

أمّا المتكبر، فلا ينظر في شيء إلا من خلال أناه. هو غارق في العُجب بذاته، ولا يرى أخرى سواها. يتعالى على الناس، ويريد مصادرة كلّ شيء لنفسه. تقتله الغيرة، وينهكه الحسد، ويقلقه من يتميّز عنه بالأفضل. هو متطلّب، ونو مزاج عكّر، لا يرضيه شيء، مهما أصاب من نجاح.

المتواضع إنسان أدرك وسع الكون، الذي يحيا فيه، لذلك تراه منفتحاً على الآخر، دوماً، إنساناً كان أو معرفة. العلماء الكبار متواضعون، لأنّهم، بسبب من معرفتهم الواسعة، عرفوا أنّ الذي ما يزال مجهولاً، في هذا الكون، أكثر بكثير ممّا هو معروف لديهم. تراهم يتطلّعون، بشوق صادق إلى المزيد. أمّا أنصاف المتعلّمين، فتراهم متكبرين، متشامخين، مغترّين بما يعرفونه، ومرتفعين على من هم دونهم معرفة، ومتهيّبين، في الوقت ذاته، ممن يفوقهم معرفة، فيتهرّبون من مواجهته.

المتواضع إنسان مسكون بالحبّ، يرى في كلّ آخر موضعاً للمحبّة. لا يترقّع، لأنّ المحبّة لا تعرف الترقّع. يتعاطى بطبيعيّة وعفويّة مع الآخرين، لأنّه لا يعرف الكذب والتزوير وارتداء الأقنعة. بكلام أدقّ، لا يشعر بحاجة إليها، فهو لا يرى، في ذاته، نقصاً يشدّه إلى تغطيته، أو إخفائه بتعامل مزيف أو كاذب. من هنا، هو إنسان لا يشعر بعقدة نقص ما، أو بكلام آخر، ثقته بذاته، في حدودها الطبيعيّة. لا يفرط بالثقة الذاتيّة، فتقوده إلى التكبر والتشامخ، ولا يعدمها، فتشدّه إلى الجبن والسذاجة. إنّهُ إنسان طبيعيّ، لا يرى ذاته في عيون

الآخرين، فلا يضطر إلى التصرف بطريقة لا يرضاها لنفسه، لكي يحصل على رضاهم. يرتبط التواضع بمعرفة الذات، التي هي "إدراك المرء لمقدرته وذكر لا يهدأ لأصغر زلاته"(ق. يوحنا السلمي).

هذا وصفٌ يليق بالإنسان، عامّةً.

أمّا المؤمن فيزيده، في طلب التواضع، تمثله بربه القائل: "تعلموا مني، فإنني وديع ومتواضع القلب"(متى ٢٩/١١). مهما بدا التواضع، ظاهرياً، انحداراً إلى الأسفل، يبقى، عند المؤمن المتواضع، انطلاقاً إلى العلى، وقرباً من ربه، والخلقة عامّةً. يؤمن أنّ التواضع هو الدرجة الثالثة قبل الأخيرة، عند الذين يطلبون الكمال. يأتي التواضع، في الروحانية الأرثوذكسية، مباشرةً، قبل اللاهوى والمحبة، التي هي الدرجة الأعلى في سلم الفضائل.

يتألم المتواضع من الكبرياء، ويشفق على المتكبرين، لأنّه يدرك أنّ الكبرياء تمزق الطبيعة البشرية، فيما التواضع يوحدّها. المتكبر، في ترفعه وقسوته على الآخرين، يبحث عن الرضى الذاتي. يرى في إذلال غيره وجوداً له، بينما يرى المتواضع، في محبتهم، وجوداً له ولهم.

يعرف المتواضع أنّ أيّ حكم على الآخر يكون مشوّهاً إذا شابته الكبرياء، كونه لا يستند إلى تأمل نقيّ وسليم للواقع. بينما التواضع يقود إلى التبصّر المتأني، الخالي من الهوى، وتالياً إلى الحكم الصحيح.

فيما يلوي المتكبر نظره إلى أمور الحياة، بما يوافق اهتمامه الأناني، ترى المتواضع يرى إليها بواقعيّتها، المعمّدة بالمحبة، وهكذا، يعيد تأسيس الفهم الصحيح للأشياء. المتكبر إنسان سلبيّ، لا نفع فيه ولا منه، يلزمه التشاؤم والسواد؛ بينما المتواضع إيجابي حتّى النهاية، وقادر على تغيير الواقع، رفيقه التفاؤل والتطور المستمر.

ما قيل عبثاً، في الأدب الروحيّ، إنّ الأشجار الخالية من الثمار، هي الأشجار المنتصبة المتشامخة إلى العلاء، أمّا الأشجار المليئة بالثمار فهي، أبداً، منحنية، لا بل، كلّما ازدادت ثمارها، ازداد انحناءها.

تعني لفظة التواضع في اللاتينيّة "الأرض الخصبة". والمتواضع كالأرض الواطئة، التي تستقبل المياه، وتتشربها، فيزداد خصبها، وتكثر ثمارها.

يقود التواضع إلى العلو، أمّا الكبرياء فإلى التعالى. وقد قال الكتاب إنّ الله "حطّ المتشامخين ورفع المتواضعين" (لو ١٤/٥١). العلو جميل وحسن، أمّا التعالي فمفقوت وكريه.

لا يعرف الديك إلا حظيرته وما فيها؛ فيرى نفسه الأقدر والأقوى. هكذا هو المتكبر، إنسان مسجون ضمن ما عنده وفيه، ويعتقد بأنّه محور الكون. أمّا النسر، الذي يحلّق في الأعالي، وينظر الأرض وكلّ ما عليها، فيرى صغره، قياساً بالموجودات الأخرى، فيهزأ بالديك، ويدرك مدى جهله. إنّهُ كالتواضع الذي يعرف مكانته ودوره في العالم (القديس سلوان الآثوسي).

يتمتّع المتواضع بلسان دافئ، لا يؤذي ولا يجرح، على عكس المتكبر، لأنّ "الكنز لا يخرج ما لا يحويه".

قد تقول إنّني لست متكبراً. حسناً ولكنك لست بالضرورة متواضعاً. فعدم التكبر يختلف عن التواضع. إليك ما يقوله المعلّم الكبير يوحنا السلمي: "يختلف التكبر عن عدم التكبر وكلاهما يختلفان عن الاتضاع. فالتكبر يدين غيره طول النهار، وغير المتكبر لا يدين أحداً ولكنّه لا يدين ذاته. أمّا المتضع فيدين ذاته كلّ حين وهو غير مُلام".

تلازم الكبرياء الفرديّة، لذا تراها سمةً عامّة، في عصرنا الحالي. بقدر ما ينعزل المرء، داخلياً، يخاف، ويحاول حماية ذاته بسور الكبرياء. فالكبرياء علامة الخوف والحاجة إلى اتّقاء المواجهة الذاتيّة ومشاهدة العيوب الشخصية. إنّها ملازمة لعدم المحبة، إن لم نقل للكراهيّة. أمّا التواضع فصديق

الألفة والحياة البهيجة، والمنفتحة على الآخرين. لا يشارك المتواضع الخاطئين في آثامهم، إلا أنه يفيض رحمة على المومنين. وما من وجع عنده أقوى من الكبرياء.

قال أبونا الروحانيون بأنّ التواضع سور سطح البيت، الذي يحمي الأولاد، أيّ الفضائل، من السقوط. حقاً إنّهُ تكثيف كلّ الفضائل.

يستمدّ المتكبر وجوده من ذاته، ومواهبه، وعلمه، وماله... أمّا المتواضع فهو متيقن من أنّ وجوده، كلّهُ، مُستمدّ من الله. يرى نفسه أمام حضرة الله دوماً، فيسعى إلى الامتلاء المستمر، ولا يهدر وقته بأفعال نرجسية، تفقده أحلى ما عنده.

أتت فتاة فائقة الجمال إلى المطران أنطوني بلوم لتعترف. أخبرته بأنّها مُعجبة بجمالها، إلى درجة الغرور والتكبر. فأجابها: حسناً، فهذا صحيح على الأقل. أنصحك بأن تقفي أمام المرأة ثلاث مرّات يومياً، تنظرين إلى نفسك وتقولين: أشكرُك يا ربّ لأنك خلقتني جميلة. لكن مساهمتي الوحيدة في هذا الجمال الذي منحني إياه، هي تشويهيته بنظراتي المترفعة.

ينشأ الكبرياء من العُجب بالذات، أمّا التواضع فمن إعادة كلّ حُسنٍ إلى الله. يعيد المتواضع كلّ شيء عنده إلى الله، لا إلى ذاته. هكذا يشكر الله ويُعجب به، ويزداد محبةً له.

المتواضع، باختصار، من أدرك أنّه بحاجة إلى رحمة الله، فصارت صلاته الدائمة، على مثال العشار، "اللهمّ ارحمني أنا الخاطيء" (لو ١٨/١٣).