

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023

TONE 7 / EOTHINON 7

THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

MARTYRS CHRYSANTHOS, DARIA, AND THOSE WITH THEM OF ROME; MARTYR PANCHARIOS OF NICOMEDIA

الأحد الثالث من الصوم الكبير (السجود للصليب الكريم المحيي)

تَذْكَارُ الشَّهِيدَيْنِ خْرِيسْتَنْسَ وَدَارِيَةَ وَمَنْ مَعَهُمَا مِنْ رُومَا، وَالشَّهِيدِ بَنْخَارِيُوسَ مِنْ نِيْقُومِيْدِيَا

<p>**DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT**</p>	<p>قُدَّاسُ بَاسِيْلْيُوسَ الْكَبِيْر</p>
<p>THE FIRST ANTIPHON</p>	<p>الْأَنْتِيْفُونَا الْأُوْلَى</p>
<p>The light of Thy countenance is marked upon us. Thou hast given a sign to them that fear Thee, so that they may flee from the bow. Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us. Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive. Thou hast given an inheritance to those that fear Thy Name, O Lord. (Refrain) <i>Glory... Both now... (Refrain)</i></p>	<p>قَدْ ارْتَسَمَ عَلَيْنَا نُورٌ وَجْهَكَ يَا رَبُّ. أَعْطَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَرْهَبُونَ اسْمَكَ مِيرَاثًا، لِيَهْرُبُوا مِنْ الْقَوْسِ. اللازمة: بِشَفَاعَاتِ وَالِدَةِ الْإِلَهِ، يَا مُخْلِصُ خَلِّصْنَا. صَعِدْتَ إِلَى الْعَلَاءِ وَسَبَّيْتَ سَبْيًا وَأَعْطَيْتَ مَوَاهِبَ لِلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ اسْمَكَ يَا رَبُّ. (اللازمة) الْمَجْدُ ... الْآنَ وَكُلَّ ... (اللازمة)</p>
<p>THE SECOND ANTIPHON</p>	<p>الْأَنْتِيْفُونَا الثَّانِيَةَ</p>
<p>All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Let us worship at the place where His feet stood. Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, <u>Who art risen from the dead</u>; who sing to Thee. Alleluia. God is our King before the ages; He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. (Refrain) I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth. (Refrain) <i>Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...</i></p>	<p>فِي كُلِّ الْأَرْضِ رَأَيْنَا خَلَاصَ إِلَهِنَا، اسْجُدُوا عِنْدَ مَوْطِي قَدَمَيْهِ. اللازمة: خَلِّصْنَا يَا ابْنَ اللَّهِ، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، لِنُرْتَلَّ لَكَ. هَلْلُويَا. اللَّهُ هُوَ مَلِكُنَا مِنْذُ الْقَدَمِ. صَنَعَ الْخَلَاصَ فِي وَسْطِ الْأَرْضِ. (اللازمة) وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنِّي أَنَا هُوَ اللَّهُ. أَرْتَفِعُ فِي الْأَمَمِ وَأَتَعَالَى فِي الْأَرْضِ. (اللازمة) الْمَجْدُ ... الْآنَ وَكُلَّ ... يَا كَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ الْإِبْنَ الْوَحِيدِ...</p>
<p>THE THIRD ANTIPHON</p>	<p>الْأَنْتِيْفُونَا الثَّالِثَةَ</p>
<p>Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool. O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Feed them, and lift them up forever.</p>	<p>إِرْفَعُوا الرَّبَّ إِلَهَنَا وَاسْجُدُوا عِنْدَ مَوْطِي قَدَمَيْهِ. يَا رَبُّ، خَلِّصْ شَعْبَكَ وَبَارِكْ مِيرَاثَكَ، وَارْعَهُمْ وَارْفَعْهُمْ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ.</p>

- During the Little Entrance, after the verses of the Third Antiphon, chant the Apolytikion of the **Holy Cross**. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is “Come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead...” as on ordinary Sundays. After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:

<p>RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN</p>	<p>أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن السابع</p>
<p>Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.</p>	<p>حَطَمْتَ بِصَلَابِيكَ الْمَوْتَ، وَفَتَحْتَ لِلصَّيِّفِ الْفِرْدَوْسَ، وَحَوَّلْتَ نَوْحَ حَامِلَاتِ الطَّيِّبِ، وَأَمَرْتَ رُسُلَكَ أَنْ يَكْرِزُوا، بِأَنَّكَ قَدْ قُمْتَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ، مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الرَّحْمَةَ الْعُظْمَى.</p>
<p>APOLYTIKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE</p>	<p>أبوليتيكيون الصليب المقدس باللحن الأول</p>
<p>O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.</p>	<p>خَلِّصْ يَا رَبُّ شَعْبَكَ، وَبَارِكْ مِيراثَكَ، وَامْنَحْ عِبِيدَكَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْعَلْبَةَ عَلَى الشَّرِيرِ، وَاحْفَظْ بِقُوَّةِ صَلَابِيكَ جَمِيعَ الْمُخْتَصِّينَ بِكَ.</p>
<p>• Now sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.</p>	
<p>KONTAKION FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT (AND AKATHIST SATURDAY) IN TONE EIGHT</p>	<p>القنطاق لأحداث الصوم الكبير (وسبت المديح) باللحن الثامن</p>
<p>To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.</p>	<p>إني أنا عبدك يا والدة الإله * أكتبُ لكِ رياتِ العَلْبَةِ * يا جُنْدِيَّةَ مُحَامِيَّةَ * وَأَقْدِمُ لَكَ الشُّكْرَ كَمُنْقَذَةٍ مِنْ الشَّدَائِدِ * لَكِنْ بِمَا أَنَّ لَكَ الْعِزَّةَ الَّتِي لَا تُحَارَبُ * أَعْتِقِينِي مِنْ صُنُوفِ الشَّدَائِدِ * حَتَّى أَصْرُخَ إِلَيْكَ: إِفْرَحِي يَا عَرُوساً لَا عَرُوسَ لَهَا.</p>
<p>THE ANTI-TRISAGION HYMN</p>	<p>بدلاً من قدوس الله</p>
<p>Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify. (THRICE)</p> <p><i>Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.</i></p> <p>And we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.</p> <p>Dynamis!</p> <p>Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify.</p>	<p>لِصَلَابِيكَ يَا سَيِّدَنَا نَسْجُدُ، وَلِقِيَامَتِكَ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ نُمَجِّدُ. (ثلاثاً)</p> <p>أَلْمَجْدُ لِلآبِ وَالْإِبْنِ وَالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ، الْآنَ وَكُلَّ أَوَانٍ، وَإِلَى دَهْرِ الدَّاهِرِينَ. آمِينَ.</p> <p>وَلِقِيَامَتِكَ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ نُمَجِّدُ. قُوَّةً!</p> <p>لِصَلَابِيكَ يَا سَيِّدَنَا نَسْجُدُ، وَلِقِيَامَتِكَ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ نُمَجِّدُ.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">THE EPISTLE (For the Third Sunday of Lent)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">الرسالة (للأحد الثالث من الصوم)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.</i> <i>Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, O my God!</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (4:14-5:6)</p> <p>Brethren, since we have a great High Priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession. For we do not have a High Priest Who is unable to sympathize with our infirmities, but one Who has been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest, being taken from among the people, is appointed on behalf of the people in things pertaining to God, that he may offer up both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant and on those who are erring, since he himself also is encompassed with infirmity. Because of this he is bound, as for the people so also for himself, to offer up for sins. And no one takes the honor upon himself, but as being called by God, as was Aaron. So Christ also did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but it was by the One saying to Him, "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee." As He says also in another place, "Thou art a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">خَلِّصْ يَا رَبُّ شَعْبَكَ وَبَارِكْ مِيراثِكَ. إِلَيْكَ يَا رَبُّ أَصْرُحْ إِلَهِي. فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولْسِ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى الْعِبْرَانِيِّينَ.</p> <p>يا إخوة، إذ لنا رئيس كهنة عظيم قد اجتاز السموات، يسوع ابن الله، فلنتمسك بالإعتراف. لأن ليس لنا رئيس كهنة غير قادر أن يرثي لأوهاننا، بل مجرب في كل شيء مثلنا ما خلا الخطيئة. فلنقبل إذن بثقة إلى عرش النعمة، لننال رحمة ونجد ثقة للإغاثة في أوانها. فإن كل رئيس كهنة متخذ من الناس يقام لأجل الناس فيما هو لله، ليقرّب تقادم وذبايح عن الخطايا، في إمكانه أن يشفق على الذين يجهلون ويضلون، لكونه هو أيضاً مثلبساً بالضغف. ولهذا يجب عليه أن يقرّب عن الخطايا لأجل نفسه كما يقرّب لأجل الشعب. وليس أحد يأخذ لنفسه الكرامة، بل من دعاه الله كما دعا هارون. كذلك المسيح لم يمجّد نفسه ليصير رئيس كهنة، بل الذي قال له "أنت ابني وأنا اليوم ولدتك". كما يقول في موضع آخر "أنت كاهن إلى الأبد على رتبة ملكيصادق."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">THE GOSPEL (For the Third Sunday of Lent)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">الإنجيل (للأحد الثالث من الصوم)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (8:34-9:1)</p> <p>The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ مَرْقُسِ الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ، وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ. قَالَ الرَّبُّ: مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَّبِعَنِي فَلْيَكْفُرْ بِنَفْسِهِ وَيَحْمِلْ صَلَابَتَهُ وَيَتَّبِعَنِي، لِأَنَّ مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَ نَفْسَهُ</p>

<p>sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” And Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”</p>	<p>يُهْلِكُهَا، وَمَنْ أَهْلَكَ نَفْسَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي وَمِنْ أَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ يُخَلِّصُهَا. فَإِنَّهُ مَاذَا يَنْتَفِعُ الْإِنْسَانُ لَوْ رَجَحَ الْعَالَمَ كُلَّهُ وَخَسِرَ نَفْسَهُ؟ أَمْ مَاذَا يُعْطِي الْإِنْسَانُ فِدَاءً عَنِ نَفْسِهِ؟ لِأَنَّ مَنْ يَسْتَحِي بِي وَبِكَلَامِي فِي هَذَا الْجِيلِ الْفَاسِقِ الْخَاطِئِ. يَسْتَحِي بِهِ ابْنُ الْبَشَرِ مَتَى أَتَى فِي مَجْدِ أَبِيهِ مَعَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ الْقَدِيسِينَ. وَقَالَ لَهُمْ: الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنَّ قَوْمًا مِنَ الْقَائِمِينَ هَهُنَا لَا يَذُقُونَ الْمَوْتَ حَتَّى يَرَوْا مَلَكُوتَ اللَّهِ فَذَ اتَى بِقُوَّةٍ.</p>
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- *The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great continues as usual with the following variables.*

ST. BASIL LITURGY MEGALYNARION	تَعْظِيمَةُ لِقْدَاسِ الْقَدِيسِ بَاسِيلْيُوسِ
<p>All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace: the angelic hosts and the race of men. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virgins, of whom God was incarnate and became a little child, even our God who is before all the ages; for he made thy womb a throne, and thy body more spacious than the heavens. All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace. Glory to thee.</p>	<p>إِنَّ الْبَرَايَا بِأَسْرَهَا، تَفْرَحُ بِكَ يَا مُمْتَلِئَةً نِعْمَةً: مَحَافِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، وَأَجْنَاسِ الْبَشَرِ. أَيُّهَا الْهَيْكَلُ الْمُتَقَدِّسِ، وَالْفِرْدَوْسُ النَّاطِقُ، فَخِرُ الْبَتُولِيَّةِ مَرِيَمَ، الَّتِي مِنْهَا تَجَسَّدَ الْإِلَهُ، وَصَارَ طِفْلاً، وَهُوَ إِلَهُنَا الَّذِي قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ. لِأَنَّهُ صَنَعَ مُسْتَوْدَعَكَ عَرْشًا، وَجَعَلَ بَطْنَكَ أَرْحَبَ مِنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ. لِذَلِكَ يَا مُمْتَلِئَةً نِعْمَةً، تَفْرَحُ بِكَ كُلُّ الْبَرَايَا وَتُتَمَجِّدُكَ.</p>
KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) FOR THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT	كِينُونِيكُون (تَرْنِيمَةُ الْمُنَاوَلَةِ) لِلأُحْدِ الثَّالِثِ مِنَ الصُّومِ الْكَبِيرِ
<p>The light of Thy countenance is shown upon us, O Lord. Alleluia.</p>	<p>لَقَدْ أَرْتَسَمَ عَلَيْنَا نُورٌ وَجْهَكَ يَا رَبِّ. هَلْلُوِيَا.</p>

- *Post-Communion Hymn: Instead of “We have seen the true light”, sing the Apolytikion of the Holy Cross.*

PROCESSION OF THE HOLY CROSS

AS DONE ON THE THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

(See the separate file, which is based on the Liturgikon, fourth edition, P. 423-424)

- *If the procession is begun as the Great Doxology concludes in Orthros, the final "Holy God, Holy Mighty" is slowly chanted (traditionally, if possible, in the "Agia" style of Tone Four).*
- *If the procession follows "Blessed be the Name of the Lord" in Divine Liturgy, it starts with "Holy God, Holy Mighty" and is chanted in the same style as above, if possible.*

THE DISMISSAL	الختم
<p>Priest: May He Who rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother;</p>	<p>الكاهن: أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهُنَا الْحَقِيقِي، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنَ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، بِشَفَاعَاتِ أُمِّكَ الْكَلِيَّةِ الطَّهَارَةِ وَالْبَرِيَّةِ</p>

by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross—which we venerate today—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, Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, whose Divine Liturgy we have now celebrated;** of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community;* of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; **of the Martyrs Chrysanthos, Daria, and those with them of Rome; and the Martyr Pancharios of Nicomedia, whose memory we celebrate today,** and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ؛ وَبِقُدْرَةِ الصَّالِبِ الْكَرِيمِ الْمُحْيِي —
الَّذِي نُكْرِمُهُ الْيَوْمَ — وَبِطَلَبَاتِ الْقُوَاتِ السَّمَاوِيَّةِ
الْمُكْرَّمَةِ الْعَادِمَةِ الْأَجْسَادِ؛ وَالنَّبِيِّ الْكَرِيمِ السَّابِقِ
الْمَجِيدِ يُوْحَنَّا الْمَعْمَدَانِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسَيْنِ الْمُشْرَفَيْنِ الرَّسُلِ
الْجَدِيرَيْنِ بِكُلِّ مَدِيحٍ؛ وَأَبِينَا الْجَلِيلِ فِي الْقَدِيسِينَ
بَاسِيلْيُوسَ الْكَبِيرِ رَئِيسِ أَسَاقِفَةِ الْقَيْصَرِيَّةِ وَكَبَادُوكِيَا
كَاتِبِ هَذِهِ الْخِدْمَةِ الشَّرِيفَةِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسِينَ الْمَجِيدِينَ
الشُّهَدَاءَ الْمُتَأَلِّقِينَ بِالظَّفَرِ؛ وَأَبَائِنَا الْأَبْرَارِ الْمُتَوَشِّحِينَ
بِاللَّهِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسِ (فُلَانِ) شَفِيعِ وَحَامِي هَذِهِ الرَّعِيَّةِ
الْمُقَدَّسَةِ؛ وَالْقَدِيسِينَ الصَّدِيقِينَ يُوَاكِمَ وَحَنَّةَ جَدِّي
الْمَسِيحِ الْإِلَهِ؛ وَالشَّهِيدِينَ خَرِيسَنْثُوسَ وَدَارِيَّةَ وَمَنْ
مَعَهُمَا مِنْ رُومَا، وَالشَّهِيدِ بِنَخَارِيُوسَ مِنْ نِيْقُومِيدِيَا،
الَّذِينَ نُقِيمُ تَذْكَارَهُمْ الْيَوْمَ، وَجَمِيعِ قَدِيسِيكَ: اِرْحَمْنَا
وَخَلِّصْنَا بِمَا أَنْتَ صَالِحٌ وَمُحِبٌّ لِلنَّبَشْرِ.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

الكَاهِنُ: بِصَلَوَاتِ آبَائِنَا الْقَدِيسِينَ، أَيُّهَا الرَّبُّ يَسُوعُ
الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهُنَا، اِرْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا.

Choir: Amen.

الجُوقُ: آمِينَ.

These texts have been prepared by the Department of Liturgics of the Antiochian Archdiocese

Portions of the Archdiocesan Service Texts include texts from *The Menaion, The Great Horologion, The Pentecostarion, The Octoechos, The Triodion-Holy Week, and The Psalter of the Seventy*, 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.

ANNIVERSARY OR OUR DEPARTED FOR THIS SUNDAY

<u>DAY</u>	<u>NAME OF THE DEPARTED</u>	<u>ANNIVERSARY</u>
13	Albert Gorab	6
13	Ady Gandour	27
13	Fred Dabous	28
14	Salameh Kakish	12
14	William Nicholas Ellies	38
14	Rifka Khalilieh	28
15	Gertrude Vera Habib	59
15	Sam Peters	52
15	Najla Haddad	51
15	Roghieh Fekri	23
16	Sami Haddad	35
17	Nadim Semaan Elabou	3
17	Martha Aziz	32
18	Azizeh Issa Nasser	24
19	Mireille Mussawar	10

- **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 and Rami.

ETERNAL LIGHTS

- **Mar 19:** for the good health of Issa Bisharat and family.
- **Mar 26:** for the good health of Issa Bisharat and family
- **Mar 26:** in loving memory of Yousef and Sumayah Musallam from Nadim Irbib and family.
- **Apr 2:** for the good health of John Bisharat and family.
- **Apr 9:** for the good health of Mona, Romemel Alshammas and family.
- **Mar 16:** for the good health of Issa Bisharat and family.
- **Apr 23:** in loving memory of Jiries and Nahil Irbib from Nadim Irbib and family.

LENTEN LUNCHEONS

- **During Great Lent**, our church will be hosting a Falafel Luncheon every Sunday following Divine Liturgy. Please mark your calendar.

Sunday, March 19: **Foul Luncheon**

Sunday, March 26: Falafel Sandwiches

Sunday, April 2: Falafel Sandwiches

SCHEDULE FOR ORGANIZATION HOSTING MADAYEH DINNERS

- **We wish to thank the Antiochian Women for sponsoring the Madayeh dinner on Friday, Mar 10.**

Friday, March 17: hosted by the **Antiochian Women**

Friday, March 24: hosted by the **Order of St. Ignatius**

Friday, March 31: hosted by the **Parish Council**

Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. So, every Organization should be in the church and ready ahead of time. Thank you

FLOWERS FOR GOOD-FRIDAY AND EASTER LILIES

- **We are in need of flowers for Good Friday to decorate the bier of Christ. We also need Easter Lilies to decorate the church. If your family would like to donate towards flowers and Easter Lilies, please see **Mr. George Ghneim or call the office 905-731-7210****

PRISON MINISTRY

- On Saturday, April 1, 2023 a small group from St. George will be going to Toronto South Detention Centre to hand out Easter packages to the over 1,300 inmates. This will be our 18th 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.

HOMESCHOOLING GROUP

- The Orthodox Christian Homeschool (OCH) Group will begin meeting on January 12, 2023 (10:30 am) for homeschool support. Anyone wanting information about homeschooling can email ochstgeorge@gmail.com

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.

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.**

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.

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.

TEEN SOYO

- **SOYO = Society of Orthodox Youth Organizations** We are a dynamic group of Orthodox Christians that provides teens the opportunity to grow spiritually with fellow SOYO members within the community.
We focus on Spiritual, Fundraising, and Bonding Activities for ages 13-18

Are you between the ages of 13-18?

Do you want to get involved?

Do you want to see behind the scene photos?

Do you have any questions?

Join our WhatsApp group for direct communication for all our events.

Contact your Youth Advisors!

Angela Ghazal: (416) 720-0308 Or Fady Freiga: (647) 892-6136

You can also find us on...

Facebook @ St. George Toronto Teen SOYO

Instagram @ toronto.soyo

Email @ toronto.soyo@gmail.com

- Kindly Submit your Contribution through the Following Methods: Connect to the Church Website www.stgeorgeto.org Click on Donate
- “e-transfer” info@stgeorgeantiochianchurch.org Account Name: St. George Church
- 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)

Lenten Calendar 2023

Saturday February 18 th	10:00 am	Divine Liturgy – Saturday of Souls
	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Meat Fare Sunday February 19 th	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Saturday February 25 th	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Cheese Fare Sunday February 26 th	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
	7:00 pm	Lenten Vespers with Ceremony of Mutual Forgiveness

The Great Lent this year starts on Monday, February 27th, 2023, and ends with the Resurrection on Sunday April 16th, 2023. 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 Shell fish are allowed).
- 4) On the Feast of the Annunciation Saturday March 25th, and on Palm Sunday April 9th, fish is allowed after the Divine Liturgy.

First Week of Great Lent		
Monday, February 27 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
Tuesday, February 28 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
Wednesday, March 1 st	7:00 pm	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, March 2 nd	7:00 pm	Great Compline & Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete
Friday, March 3 rd	6:30 pm	1 st Lenten Supper, sponsored by Men Society (Antiochian Men)
	7:30 am	1 st Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
Saturday, March 4 th	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 5 th	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great & Procession with Icons
	6:00 pm	PAN-ORTHODOX VESPERS

Second Week of Great Lent		
Monday, March 6 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Tuesday, March 7 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Wednesday, March 8 th	7:00 pm	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, March 9 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Friday, March 10 th	6:30 pm	2 nd Lenten Supper, sponsored by the YAM (Young Adult Ministry), the Teen SOYO & the Chanters
	7:30 am	2 nd Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
Saturday, March 11 th	10:00 am	Divine Liturgy – Saturday of Souls
	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas, March 12 th	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Third Week of Great Lent		
Monday, March 13 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Tuesday, March 14 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Wednesday, March 15 th	7:00 pm	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, March 16 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Friday, March 17 th	6:30 pm	3 rd Lenten Supper, sponsored by the Antiochian Women
	7:30 am	3 rd Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
Saturday, March 18 th	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Sunday of the Holy Cross, March 19 th	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, Followed by a Procession & Veneration of the Holy Cross

Fourth Week of Great Lent		
Monday, March 20 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Tuesday, March 21 st	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Wednesday, March 22 nd	7:00 pm	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, March 23 rd	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Friday, March 24 th	6:30 pm	4 th Lenten Supper, sponsored by the order of St. Ignatius
	7:30 pm	Great Vespers with Litia-Artoklasia and the fourth stasis of the Akathist Hymn
Saturday, March 25 th Feast of the Annunciation	9:00 am	Festal Orthros
	10:30 am	Festal Divine Liturgy
	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Sunday of St. John Climacus, March 26 th	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Fifth Week of Great Lent		
Monday, March 27 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Tuesday, March 28 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Wednesday, March 29 th	7:00 pm	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, March 30 th	7:00 pm	Little Compline with the full Great Canon of Repentance by St. Andrew of Crete & the life of St. Mary of Egypt
Friday, March 31 st	6:30 pm	5 th Lenten Supper, sponsored by the Parish Council
	7:30 am	5 th Akathist Hymn (Madayeh Service)
Saturday, April 1 st	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers
Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt, April 2 nd	9:00 am	Orthros & Confessions
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Sixth Week of Great Lent		
Monday, April 3 rd	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Tuesday, April 4 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Wednesday, April 5 th	7:00 pm	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Thursday, April 6 th	7:00 pm	Great Compline
Friday, April 7 th	10:00 am	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 pm	Little Compline with the Canon of the Raising of Lazarus
Lazarus Saturday, April 8 th	9:00 am	Orthros
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom *
	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Great Vespers

*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. 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		
Palm Sunday, April 9 th	9:00 am	Orthros
	10:30 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Blessings of Palms & Procession
	7:00 pm	1 st Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Monday
Great Holy Monday, April 10 th	10:00 am	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 pm	2 nd Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Tuesday
Great Holy Tuesday, April 11 th	10:00 am	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 pm	3 rd Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Wednesday
Great Holy Wednesday, April 12 th	10:00 am	The Presanctified Divine Liturgy
	7:00 pm	Holy Unction Service, Anointing of the Faithful with Holy Oil
Great Holy Thursday, April 13 th	8:00 am	Orthros for Holy Thursday
	9:00 am	Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great for the Institution of the Mystical Supper of Christ
	7:00 pm	Orthros with the Twelve Passion Gospels for Holy Friday – Gospels of the Crucifixion
Great Holy Friday, April 14 th	10:00 am	The Great (Royal) Hours and Typika on Holy Friday
	3:00 pm	Great Vespers for Holy Saturday, the Taking-down of Christ from the Cross
	7:00 pm	Orthros with the Lamentations for Holy Saturday
Great Holy Saturday, April 15 th	9:00 am	Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
	10:30 pm	Resurrection (Rush) Service, Paschal Orthros and Paschal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Great & All-Holy Pascha, Sunday, April 16 th	7:00 pm	The Agape Vespers, The Baouth Service Followed by a procession
Bright Monday, April 17 th	9:00 am	Festal Orthros
	10:00 am	Divine Liturgy

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED, HE IS RISEN!

Francis Maria Scholarship Application 2023

Awards of \$5,000 each

Send all completed applications to:

Kh. Kathleen Purpura, Director

Scholarships@OrthodoxYouth.com



CHECKLIST

(This page is for applicant's use only. **Do not send.**)

Application Instructions: Complete the following pages **Forms A, B, C, D** and provide all requested materials. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. **Do not** send resumes, photos, or letters of recommendation. Only use the pages provided. Give **Form E**, Pastor's Evaluation, to your Priest. All materials must be **received by May 5th, 2023**.

Include the following material:

Student Information Form (Form A)

Parent Information Form (Form B) Parents fill out the financial section showing total income for both parents. This form must include all 3 signatures.

Church and School Activities Form (Form C)

Carefully organize this listing of your church service involvement and community activities as this is an important part of your application.

Short Essay (Form D)

The Essay is your opportunity to tell us about your faith. The Essay must be at least 400 words but not exceed 700 words or **one single-spaced page**.

Pastor's Evaluation Form (Form E) The Pastor's Form must be signed and sent directly from the Pastor of your Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese parish. If the applicant is the son or daughter of the Pastor, have Form E filled out by your Father Confessor or another Orthodox Priest.

Grades and Test Scores High School students must send official, signed transcripts and college students must send College **and** High School transcripts directly to Scholarships@OrthodoxYouth.com. Be sure they include your SAT or ACT Scores. Canadian students who have not taken the SAT or ACT are exempt from this requirement.

E-mail your completed Application to: Kh. Kathleen Purpura, Director
Scholarships@OrthodoxYouth.com

Do **not** send your application by USPS mail, overnight, registered, or certified mail. We will only accept applications sent to Scholarships@OrthodoxYouth.com.

For questions on this application, you may E-mail: **Kh. Kathleen Purpura, Director**
Scholarships@OrthodoxYouth.com

MARIA SCHOLARSHIP

Print Applicant's Name: _____

STUDENT INFORMATION FORM (Form A)

▼ To be filled out by the applicant ▼

Applicant's Name:	
Date of Birth:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Applicant's Phone Number:	
Applicant's E-Mail address:	
Home Address - Street:	
City:	Province/State:
Country:	Zip/Postal Code:
Citizenship: <input type="checkbox"/> USA <input type="checkbox"/> Canada You must be a U.S. or Canadian Citizen to apply	
Father's Name:	
Father's Occupation:	
Mother's Name:	
Mother's Occupation:	

All the above information is required, including the applicant's e-mail address.

1. Name of the College you are attending or plan to attend: _____

2. What year of college will you be in this coming fall?

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

3. What Academic Degree are you working on this fall? _____

4. What is your declared major? _____

I attest that all the information contained in this application is accurate and true:

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

MARIA SCHOLARSHIP

Print Applicant's Name: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____

PARENT INFORMATION FORM (Form B)

▼ To be filled out by the applicant's Parents/Guardians ▼

Confidential Financial Summary to be completed by Parent or Guardian. Please note total salaries of both parents before taxes by checking the category below. Please use the "total income" not the "adjusted income" line from your Federal Tax Forms.

Total Combined Gross Income for both Parents			
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$49,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 - \$79,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 - \$99,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 - \$149,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 – \$179,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$180,000 - \$249,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250,000 – \$499,999	<input type="checkbox"/> Over \$500,000

I attest that all the information contained in Form B is accurate and true:

Print Mother's Name: _____

Mother's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Father's Name: _____

Father's Signature: _____

Date: _____

MARIA SCHOLARSHIP

Print Applicant's Name: _____

CHURCH AND SCHOOL ACTIVITY FORM (Form C)

Church and Youth Group Activities for the last four years only:

Church organizations involvement	Membership/Office	Years

Church activities/events participation	What was your role?	Years of Participation

High School, Civic and College Information for the last four years only:

School organizations involvement	Offices Held	Years Office held

MARIA SCHOLARSHIP

Essay Instruction Page

The Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF www.ocf.net) under the Assembly of Bishops (www.assemblyofbishops.org) is our student ministry on many campuses.

Write (type, not handwritten) an Open Letter to the Board of Directors and Student Leadership of OCF with specific requests for help building up or establishing an OCF Chapter. If you have an established OCF, please include five (5) questions you have about the OCF Chapter at the college you are (will be) attending. If you do not have an OCF Chapter, write five questions you have about establishing one.

Your letter should express what would be helpful to you as a college student towards growing your Orthodox Faith and staying connected to Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church. Convey why connecting with other Orthodox Christian students, faculty, clergy, and nearby parishes is important to you. Please include the name of your college in this letter as we may send it to the Board of Directors of OCF to help them in their work.

Your essay should be at least 400 words but no more than 700 words.

MARIA SCHOLARSHIP

Print Applicant's Name: _____

**ESSAY
(Form D)**

MARIA SCHOLARSHIP

Print Applicant's Name: _____

▲ Name to be filled out by the Applicant. ▲

PASTOR'S EVALUATION FORM (Form E)

▼ To be filled out by the Pastor. ▼

Dear Father,

The Frank Maria Scholarship Committee appreciates your efforts in completing the Pastor's Evaluation Form. This form must be submitted **by the Pastor** and received by May 5th, 2023, to Kh. Kathleen Purpura, Scholarships@OrthodoxYouth.com

Church Community areas of participation and leadership positions held by the applicant:

SOYO _____

CHURCH SCHOOL _____

CHOIR/CANTOR _____

HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS _____

OTHER _____

Please write your personal comments and recommendation: _____

The applicant is a member of _____ Antiochian Orthodox Church.

Church City: _____ Church State/Province: _____

Print Pastor's Name: _____

Pastor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

The Approach to God: The East versus the West

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent, the Holy Church commemorates St. Gregory Palamas, one of the great fathers of the Church who lived in the fourteenth century and actively contributed to one of the most contentious theological debates of his time. St. Gregory defended the notion of theosis (divinization) and the uncreated grace of God that sanctifies humans. His defense was confirmed by two church councils, held in 1341 and 1351, which are ranked in the conscience of the Church as ecumenical councils for the importance of their teachings for the salvation of man, his role and his freedom.

In fact, it is in that century that the effects of the Great Schism between the Christians of the East and the West started to become manifest in major faith issues. For that Great Schism—in which faith and liturgical differences played a small role among political, social and intellectual disputes—was hiding within itself an equally important cause: the difference in mentality between the East and the West in regard to understanding religious matters, especially in what relates to their approach regarding how to understand God.

The Western Latin understanding, after the Schism, leaned towards Greek philosophy, which became the intellectual foundation for explaining the Faith. This method led to what later became known as scholastic theology: the method of approaching and understanding faith matters based on the rules of logic and rational deductions. This method gives a bigger importance to the human mind in explaining religious topics at the expense of the living divine experience. This opened the door for new teachings to penetrate Western theological teaching.

The East, on the other hand, remained dependent on the divine grace that is given to the righteous and purifies those who are pure and leads them to know God through a personal ontological knowledge, for they live in God and He in them. As for the mind, its role is to absorb this divine experience and articulate it in human language in order to explain it and transfer it to those who have not experienced it yet.

The dispute between these two mentalities, or two methods of approaching God, exploded in the fourteenth century around the topic of divine grace and its work in humans. The West maintained that unity with God is unachievable since He is incomparably transcendent above humans. In addition to that, the West affirmed

that the light experienced by the spiritually advanced is a created light and, thus, not itself the light of God. Furthermore, the West affirmed that the grace bestowed by God on humans is a gift from Him—something He gives to humans—and consequently is not a direct manifestation of the living God. On the other hand, the East continued affirming the experience of the divine revelation, as given to humans in the scriptures and continued in the life of those who were sanctified and illumined. And thus, the East taught that this light is an uncreated divine light—that is, the light of God Himself—and that the divine grace is the presence of the work of God Himself in humans and not merely the presence of a gift emerging from Him.

The role of St. Gregory Palamas, who was a great scholar and an experienced spiritual man, stood out in the distinction he offered between God's essence and God's energies. He taught that God remains unapproachable in His essence, while He can touch and sanctify humans through His divine energies.

Orthodox theology bases this teaching on the apostles' experience in the Transfiguration (Luke 9:28). The Gospel tells us that Christ's face shone like the sun and that the three apostles (Peter, James and John) saw that divine light with their physical eyes and experienced Him personally. The divine grace, according to the Orthodox understanding, is the full richness of the divine nature in its connection to humans. The illumined person is graced with the energies of God yet remains unable to see His essence.

The importance of this teaching—which might appear to some as a mere theoretical and intellectual dialogue—lies in man's journey towards holiness and divinization (theosis), which are the goals of the Christian life.

There is a big difference between knowing God through working our mind in what relates to Him and knowing Him through what He reveals to us from His divine energies. Knowing Him only intellectually puts us in danger of creating an image of Him that is very far from reality, because we would have deduced it through our human energies only. God is not known except through living with Him and in Him. He is a living person with Whom we share an experience of meeting, communion and life.

Western theology took an intellectual tendency to approach God and thus philosophy became the main foundation of studying theology; intellectual effort became the focus in the quest for divine knowledge. In the East, however, approaching God remained dependent on experience and unity with Him; the focus remained on the effort to be purified and cleansed.

The notion of the divinization of man remained distorted in the West, and thus, its theology faced many problems such as considering the body impure and a prison for the soul. Therefore, asceticism became a mortification that is based on torturing the body, insulting it, depriving it and contempt towards it. The East, however, continued in the spiritual tradition which taught that the experience of divinization is lived through the presence of divine grace in humans. Thus, asceticism and abstinence are seen as tools for humans to transcend spiritually and to sanctify their bodies and souls, in addition to transfiguring them and the world with them.

The West reduced the Christian life and the way for humans to transcend into legalistic instructions and rules based on reward and punishment — “what is permissible and what is prohibited” — in addition to contempt towards the material and the sanctification of the mind. The East, on the other hand, focused on purification as the means to attain illumination. In addition, it demonstrated the spiritual life as three successive phases that can overlap at times. The first phase is that of the “servant” that works out of fear of punishment; the second phase is that of the “hireling” who seeks the reward; and the third phase is that of the “son” who aims to resemble his father out of love for him. Throughout all this, the focus should always remain on attaining the phase of “sonship.”

The notion of divinization remains unknown to many, even in the East. Humans tend to be satisfied in their religious experiences with what is between their hands—that is, what eases their conscience. It is easier to be a servant or a hireling than to become a son and acquire our father’s attributes. The latter gives us a unique responsibility and requires from us a great love for the Lord and a longing to unite with Him. We can achieve that when we rise above the delights of the world. As St. Sophrony of Essex says, “Our longing and affectionate attraction to the celestial world is our joy, and it is what transforms a painful aging into a bright, dignified one that anticipates the mercies, consolations and embraces of the Father.”

Our religious life is not limited to rules, duties and moralities that we must follow to build a better world. It is rather a love and a longing for God, having realized that we are created in His image. We experience the movement of the remnant of God’s image in us, no matter how distorted it is, toward its origin. That movement is one that we are unable to resist unless we are drowning in ego and selfishness. God will visit us in diverse manners until He is able to open the eyes of our hearts to Him, yet He does not force us. He stays at the door knocking until we open for Him, and

then He enters and dines with us (Rev. 3:20). He shall reveal Himself to humans “as He is,” leaving for us the freedom to interact with Him as we wish.

A French poet once said: When God plays His harp, mountains dance. Who then can stop them?

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مقاربة الله بين الشرق والغرب

المترولوجيا سانا (أسير)

تقيم الكنيسة المقدّسة، في الأحد الثاني من الصوم الكبير، تذكّاراً للقديس غريغوريوس بالاماس، الذي يُعتبر من آباء الكنيسة الكبار. عاش في القرن الرابع عشر، وشارك، بفعاليّة، في السجال اللاهوتي، الذي كان حامي الوطيس آنذاك. ودافع عن مفهوم التألّه، ونعمة الله غير المخلوقة، التي تقدّس الإنسان. أقرّ الدفاع الذي قدّمه، مجمعان كنسيان، عُقدا في العامين ١٣٤١ و ١٣٥١، لهما، في ضمير الكنيسة الأرثوذكسيّة، مكانة المجمع المسكونيّة، لأهميّة التعليم، الذي جاء فيهما، بخصوص خلاص الإنسان ودوره وحرّيته.

في الواقع، بدأت مفاعيل الانشقاق الكبير، بين الشرق والغرب المسيحيّين، بالظهور في قضايا إيمانيّة أساسيّة، في ذلك القرن. فالانشقاق الذي حصل لأسباب، لعبت فيها الاختلافات الإيمانيّة والممارسات الطقسيّة دوراً صغيراً، إزاء الخلافات السياسيّة والاجتماعيّة والفكريّة، كان يجبّي، في طيّانه، سبباً لا يقلّ أهميّة: ألا وهو التباين في ما بين العقليّتين، الشرقيّة والغربيّة، في فهم القضايا الدينيّة، وعلى الأخص فيما يتعلّق بمقاربة الله .

فقد مال الفكر الغربي اللاتيني، بعد الانشقاق، إلى الفلسفة اليونانيّة، التي صارت القاعدة الفكرية، التي يُشرح الإيمان على أساسها. قاد هذا المنهج إلى، ما عُرف في ما بعد، باللاهوت السكولاستيكي، أي المدرسي؛ وهو طريقة مقارنة قضايا الإيمان وفهماها استناداً إلى قواعد المنطق والاستدلال العقلي. فرجحت كفة العقل البشري في تفسير المسائل الدينيّة، على حساب الخبرة الإلهيّة الحيّة، ممّا فتح الباب لدخول تعاليم جديدة إلى التعليم اللاهوتي الغربي .

أمّا الشرق فبقي معتمداً، بالأساس، على النعمة الإلهيّة، التي تحلّ على الأبرار، وتنير الأطهار، فيعرفون الله، تالياً، معرفةً كيانيّةً شخصيّةً، لكونهم يحيون فيه، ويحيا فيهم. أمّا العقل فدوره يكمن في استيعاب هذه الخبرة الإلهيّة، وصياغتها باللغة البشرية الممكنة، وذلك بغية تفسيرها ونقلها، للذين لم يصلوا بعد إلى اختبارها .

انفجر الصراع بين هاتين العقليّتين، أو الطريقتين المختلفتين في مقاربة الله، في القرن الرابع عشر، حول موضوع النعمة الإلهيّة وفعالها في الإنسان. فقال الغرب بعدم الاتحاد بالله، الذي يبقى أرفع بما لا يُقاس من الإنسان، وإنّ النور، الذي يراه المتقدّمون روحياً، إنّما هو نور مخلوق، أي ليس نور الله ذاته، وإنّ النعمة، التي يمنحها الله للبشر، إنّما هي هبة منه تعالى، أو شيء يعطيه للإنسان، وتالياً ليست ظهوراً مباشراً للإله الحيّ. بينما بقي الشرق معتمداً على خبرة الكشف

الإلهي، التي أُعطيَت للبشر بالكتاب المقدّس، واستمرّت في حياة الذين تقدّسوا واستناروا. فقال بأنّ هذا النور إنّما هو نور إلهي غير مخلوق، أي نور الله ذاته. فالنعمة الإلهية هي حضور فعل الله نفسه في البشر، وليست حضور هبة خارجة عنه .

برز دور القدّيس بالاماس، الذي كان عالماً كبيراً وروحانياً مُختبراً، في التمييز الذي قدّمه، بين جوهر الله وقواه. فبقي الله بجوهره غير مقترب إليه، في حين أنّه بقواه الإلهية، يلمس الإنسان ويقدّسه.

ينطلق اللاهوت الأرثوذكسي في هذا التعليم من خبرة الرسل في حادثة تجلّي المسيح (لو ٩/٢٨). يخبرنا الإنجيل بأنّ المسيح أضاء كالشمس، ورأى الرسل الثلاثة هذا النور الإلهي، بأعينهم الجسدية، واختبروه شخصياً. النعمة الإلهية، أرثوذكسياً، هي كلّ غنى الطبيعة الإلهية من حيث اتصالها بالبشر. يتنعم الإنسان المستنير بقوى الله، ويبقى عاجزاً عن رؤية جوهره .

تكمن أهمية هذا التعليم، الذي قد يبدو لبعضهم حواراً فكرياً نظرياً، في استقامة مسيرة الإنسان في بلوغه القداسة والتألّه المنشودين مسيحياً .

فالفرق كبير جداً بين معرفتك لله بواسطة أعمال عقلك فيه، أو من خلال ما يكشفه "هو" لك من قواه الإلهية. إنّ كنت تعرفه عقلياً فقط، فأنت معرّض لخطر ابتكار صورة له، قد تكون بعيدة كلّ البعد عن حقيقته، لأنك تستدلّ عليها من خلال قواك البشرية فقط. بينما الله لا يُعرف إلا بالعيش معه وفيه، ذلك لأنّه كائن حيّ، شخص تدخل معه في خبرة لقاء ومشاركة وحياة .

اتّخذ اللاهوت الغربي منحىً عقلياً في مقارنته لله، فصارت الفلسفة الركن الأساسي في دراسة اللاهوت، وتركز السعي إلى المعرفة الإلهية على الجهد العقلي. أمّا في الشرق، فبقيت مقارنته تعالى، معتمدة على عشرته والاتحاد فيه، وبقي التركيز قائماً على جهد التنقية والتطهير .

بقي مفهوم تألّه الإنسان في الغرب مشوّشاً، فوقع اللاهوت في مطبات عديدة، كالفصل بين الجسد والروح، واعتبار الجسد دنساً وسجناً للروح... فصار النسك إماتةً، تقوم على تعذيب الجسد وإهانته وحرمانه والازدراء به. أمّا الشرق، الذي استمر في التقليد الروحي القائل بعيش خبرة التألّه بواسطة حضور النعمة الإلهية في الإنسان، فرأى في النسك والتقشف وسيلةً لارتقاء الإنسان روحياً، وتقديسه جسداً وروحاً، وتجليه وتجلي العالم معه .

ضغط الغرب الحياة المسيحية في قوانين وتعليمات قانونية قائمة على الثواب والعقاب، والحلال والحرام، وتكفير المادة وتقديس العقل، للارتقاء بالإنسان. أما الشرق فركز على التطهر، بغية الوصول إلى الاستنارة، راسماً مراحل الحياة الروحية بثلاث، تسمو التالية منها على السابقة، لكنه عرف أنّها مراحل متداخلة من جهة عيشها. فقال بمرحلة العبد، الذي يعمل خوفاً من العقاب، والأجير، الذي يبغى المكافأة، والابن الذي يتشبه بأبيه حباً فيه. في حين يبقى الهدف مصوباً على بلوغ مرحلة النبوة .

ما زال مفهوم التأله مجهولاً عند الكثيرين، حتى في الشرق. فالإنسان، بالممارسة الدينية، قد يكفي بما بين يديه، ممّا يُريح ضميره. أن تكون عبداً أو أجيراً لأسهل من أن تكون ابناً، وتكتسب صفات أبيك الإلهي. هذا يحتملك مسؤولية رفيعة، ويتطلب منك حباً عظيماً للرب، وتوقاً للاتحاد به. هذا تبلغه بعدما تترفع عن مباحج هذا العالم، وتستبدلها بأفراحه التي لا تنتهي؛ على حدّ قول الشيخ صفروني زخاروف: "إنّ توقنا وانشدادنا بحنان إلى العالم العلوي هو فرحنا، وهو يحول شيخوخة موجهة إلى أخرى بهيئة جلييلة كلياً، بانتظار رحمت وتعزيات وإضمامات الآب وقبالاته."

لا تقتصر حياتك الدينية على قوانين أو واجبات أو أخلاقيات، عليك اتباعها بغية بناء عالم أفضل، بقدر ما هي حبّ وحنين لله، الذي عرفت أنّك مخلوق على صورته، واختبرت حراك صورته، الباقية فيك مهما كانت مشوّهة، نحو أصلها. هذا حراك ليس لك أن تقاومه إلا إذا كنت غارقاً في ذاتك وأنايتك. يفتقدك الله بأساليب متنوعة حتى يفتح عيني قلبك إليه، لكنه لا يغتصبك. يبقى على الباب واقفاً يقرع، حتى تفتح له، آنذاك يدخل ويتعشى معك (رؤ ٣ / ٢٠). يكشف "ذاته" للإنسان "كما هو"، تاركاً له حرية التفاعل معه كما يريد.

يقول شاعر فرنسي: عندما يعزف الله على قيثارته، ترقص الجبال. فمن يقدر على إيقافها؟

نُشر في الأصل عام ٢٠١٦ .