



**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of the British Isles and Ireland
St George's Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral**

Sundays 30 September- 07 October 2018

**Archbishop: Metropolitan Silouan Oner
Parish Priest: Archpriest Samir Gholam
Parish Deacon: Deacon Michael Touma**

**Newsletter Issue:
17/18**

Regular Services:

Saturdays: Vespers 16:30
Sundays: Matins 10:00
Liturgy 11:00

Orthodox Calendar:

24 September – Protomartyr Thekla, St Silouan of Athos
26 September – The Falling Asleep of St John the Evangelist
28 September- Chariton the Confessor
30 September – 2nd Sunday of Luke

02 October – Martyrs Cyprian and Justina & Theophilus
the Confessor
06 October – The Holy Apostle Thomas
07 October – 3rd Sunday of Luke



The Elevation of The Holy Cross

"I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14).

On Thursday 13 September, we celebrated The Elevation of The Holy Cross at St Georges Cathedral.



صلاة الغروب

الكثير من المؤمنين لا يداومون إلا على القداس الإلهي. وباتت كثرة من الرعاة، لأسباب عديدة، في أماكن عديدة، لا تقيم السخر في أيام الأحاد ولا الغروب في السبوت. هذه كارثة لأن طقسنا لا يحمل في القداس الإلهي من العيد ولاهوته ومعناه إلا الطروبارية (تشيد العيد). والذي لا يتابع الغروب والسخر يبقى خارج الدورة الليتورجية السنوية ولا يغتذي بها. وقد يقتصر العيد عنده على ما يرافقه من طقوس أو فولكلور. كما يستهل له هذا الجهل الانخراط في ممارسات تتناقض ودعوة العيد وروحانيته وأخلاقيته. أليس هذا ما يحدث في أحيان كثيرة!!! مثال آخر: "بمناسبة عيد ... تقام حفلة ساهرة ...!!! طبعاً حفلة دنويّة بكلّ معنى الكلمة.

في البلدان الأرثوذكسية يقيمون، في الأعياد الكبيرة، زياحات، فتراهم يقطعون مسافات طويلة بأعداد غفيرة والجميع ممسكون بسبحاتهم، وهم يتلون صلاة يسوع أو تراتيل العيد. أمّا عندنا، فقد استبدل الكثير من الروحانيات بالمهرجانات والأسواق الشعبية وما إليها!!! ثمة خدمة جميلة جداً، هي صلاة الغروب الكبير التي تقام فيها خدمة تبريك الخبزات الخمس. يمكننا أن نقيمها مساء كل عيد. يوقر المساء للمؤمنين إمكانية المشاركة في الصلاة، أيّاً يكن اليوم الذي يقع العيد فيه. نتكلّم خدمة الغروب عن العيد ولاهوته ومعناه. ويتمّ فيها الزياح بأيقونة العيد في داخل الكنيسة، ومن ثم طلبات إبتهالية وتبريك الخبزات الخمس التي يوزّعها الكاهن على المؤمنين في نهاية الخدمة. فقدنا هذه الخدمة في الكثير من الرعايا بسبب لجوئنا الدائم إلى القداس المسائي من دون دراسة وافية، "تماشياً مع السوق"، واستسهالاً استنسابياً.

يلزمنا دفع المؤمنين إلى المشاركة في القداس الإلهي، لا حضوره. بعض الطرائق التربوية استلهاماً من تراثنا الليتورجي، أكثر من ضروريّة. خبرة توزيع صلوات ما قبل المناولة (المطالبسي) على المؤمنين قبل التقدّم من المناولة وتلاوتها جماعياً أثبتت نجاحاً وإقبالاً. يقفون، أقله، في أثناء تحضير المناولة المقدسة، بدل أن يجلسوا في الوقت الذي يتطلّب منهم أن يكونوا في وضعية الاستعداد القسوي، تهيؤاً لاقتبال جسد الربّ ودمه. ثمة أسئلة على الراعي أن يطرحها انطلاقاً من متابعتة لأبناء وبنات رعيته، والتشاور فيها مع إخوته الكهنة ومطرانه بالأخص. على سبيل المثال لا الحصر: ماذا يعني إقبال المؤمنين على المناولة المتواترة في كلّ قدّاس، وعدم تقدّمهم من سرّ الاعتراف ولو مرّة في السنة؟ ما هي نسبة الذين يصومون قبل تقدّمهم من سرّ الشكر الإلهي، ولماذا لا يصومون؟ كيف تتعامل مع الذين يرفضون مصالحة أخ لهم بالجسد ويطلبون المشاركة في القدسات؟.... إلخ. للمؤمنين الواعين دور كبير في استنهاض الرعيّة إلى بهاء الليتورجيا وحيويّتها. اهتمامهم بكنيستهم بشراً وحجراً هو الأساس.

المتروبوليت سابا اسبر



St Thekla:

Saint Thekla was born into a prosperous pagan family in the Lycaonian city of Iconium. When she was 18 years old and betrothed to a young man named Thamyris, but when she heard Saint Paul the Apostle preaching, she was touched by his call to chastity and announced that she had vowed to remain a virgin for the sake of Christ, her mother became enraged and asked the governor to threaten Thekla with severe punishment. The governor complied with this wish and ruled that she was to be burned at the stake unless she renounced her faith in Christ.

When she refused to renounce her Heavenly Bridegroom, she was taken to the arena for punishment. As she was tied to the stake she saw a vision of Jesus Christ which gave her strength to face the flames. The fire was lit, but as the flames came near Thekla a thunderstorm suddenly arose and a great torrent of rain and hail came down from heaven and extinguished the flames. Embarrassed because his plan had failed, the angry governor released Thekla but commanded that she must leave Iconium at once. Upon her release, Thekla went to the outskirts of the city where she rejoined Paul. She told him of her trial and miraculous escape from punishment and asked for baptism. Paul refused to baptize her, saying that this would be accomplished in God's own way and time. Paul and Thekla then departed from the region of Iconium and traveled to Antioch in Syria. As they were entering the city a young nobleman named Alexander tried to seduce her, but Thekla fought him off, thus disgracing him in front of his crowd of friends. Alexander went to the governor of Antioch and He demanded that she be punished with death. Thekla's only reply was that she be allowed to preserve her virginity unto death. When Thekla was taken to the arena, a lioness was set free to attack her. But to the astonishment of the crowd, the lioness approached the Saint and sat tamely at her feet came and defending against all the other beasts. After crossing herself and praying for courage, the Saint noticed a large tank of water which was nearby, containing the aquatic animals. She climbed into the water, asking that she might be baptized by Christ as she did so. Seeing that the beasts were unable to harm Thekla, Alexander asked that the Saint be given over to him for punishment. He tied her to two large bulls in the hopes that they would pull her asunder. But when the bulls charged off in opposite directions, the ropes which held Thekla to them were miraculously loosened and she was spared. Seeing that no harm could be done to Thekla, the authorities released her. She went to the home of Tryphaena where she remained for eight days preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ and converting Tryphaena and her entire household. When she departed from Antioch, Tryphaena gave her a treasure in gold and precious jewels.

After she left Antioch, Thekla journeyed to Myra where she rejoined Paul, Who gave her his blessing to spend the remainder of her life as an ascetic. Saint Thekla continued her life of asceticism and then peacefully fell asleep in Christ at the age of 90. Shortly after her death a community of virgins went to live in her mountain cell, building a small chapel to enshrine her body. This Convent of Saint Thekla still exists today near the village of Ma'loula, Syria.

She is given the title "Equal-to-the-Apostles" because she accompanied St. Paul in founding churches because her witness converted so many others to Christ, and she was the first woman martyr for the Christian Faith.

Story and Lessons:

Forgiveness

There was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said "you have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there". The little boy then understood how powerful his words were. He looked up at his father and said "I hope you can forgive me father for the holes I put in you". "Of course I can" said the father.

Forgiveness comes easy for many people but the scars of the past, they never go away. Watch what you do today. Control your temper the next time you are tempted to say something you will regret.

Fathers quotes:

"We have such a law: if you forgive, it means that God has forgiven you; but if you do not forgive your brother, it means that your sin remains with you"

St Silouan The Athonite

"When bad thoughts are planted in you, then cry to God: "Lord, my Maker and Creator, You see that my soul is in agony from bad thoughts. Have mercy on me". Teach yourself to root out thoughts immediately. But when you forget and don't root them out immediately, then offer repentance. Work on this, so that you get a habit".

St Silouan The Athonite

"I ask you to try something. If someone grieves you, or dishonours you, or takes something of yours, then pray like this: "Lord, we are all your creatures. Pity your servants, and turn them to repentance", and then you will perceptibly bear grace in your soul. Induce your heart to love your enemies, and the Lord, seeing your good will, shall help you in all things, and will Himself show you experience. But whoever thinks evil of his enemies does not have love for God and has not known God".

St Silouan The Athonite

Announcements:

ببركة صاحب السيادة الميتروبوليت سلوان أونر ومجلس رعية كنيسة القديس جارجيوس سيتم افتتاح مدرسة تعليم اللغة العربية لأولادنا الأحباء من عمر أربع سنوات حتى عمر اثنتي عشرة سنة "مع بعض الاستثناءات" وذلك في نهار السبت القادم إن شاء الله، فعلى الراغبين تسجيل أسماء أولادهم لدى السيدة ماغي مخول مديرة المدرسة (07949187944)، ليبنى على الشيء مقتضاه.

His Eminence Metropolit Silouan Oner will **Ordain Deacon Michael Touma** to the Priesthood, on Sunday September 30th, at the Cathedral of St George London, you are welcomed.

Sunday October 7th 2018, the Antiochian Orthodox Society will hold its **Annual General Meeting** at 1.30pm in St. George's Cathedral. All welcome

Saturday November 17th, the Antiochian Orthodox Society will hold its **Annual Charity Dinner** at 7.30pm in the Royal Garden Hotel. Tickets will be available in October.

A Fair of handmade products is projected; who is interested to help, please get in touch with Deacon Michael Touma, the event will take place on Sunday 2nd of December after the Holy Liturgy.