



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

Sundays 25 November- 02 December 2018

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

**Newsletter Issue:
21/18**

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

Orthodox Calendar:

21 November – The entrance of the theotokos
25 November – St Catherine, 13th Sunday of Luke

30 November – St Andrew the first called Apostle
02 December – 8th Sunday of Luke

صوم الميلاد

تدخل الكنيسة الشرقية الارثوذكسية في صوم الميلاد الاربعيني اعتبارا من 15 تشرين الثاني وحتى 24 كانون الاول.

ليس الصوم حرمانا ولا كبتا ولا جوعا ولا عطشا ولا تعذيبا للجسد، انما هو وسيلة لنتجه نحو الله. الصوم هو الباب الذي يدخل منه النور الالهي الى الانسان، هو الاستعداد لتجسد الرب يسوع المسيح.

ربنا يسوع المسيح لم يكن بحاجة الى الصوم، لكنه صام قبل الالام أربعين يوما وأربعين ليلة لكي يعلمنا الصوم (لوقا 4:37). موسى صام اربعين يوما حتى استحق ان يعاين الله واخذ الوصايا العشر (خروج 28:34) وايليا صام اربعين يوما فاستحق ان يخاطب الله في حوريب، ودانيال صام ثلاثة اسابيع واهل نينوى ايضا. لهذا امر الرب بان يصوم شعبه فقال على فم يوئيل النبي : " قدسوا صوماً نادوا باعتكاف..." (يوئيل 1:14 و 2:15) " فلان يقول الرب توبوا بكل قلوبكم وبالصوم. " يستحيل على الانسان المنغمس في أمور العالم لأن يقبل سر التجسد الالهي ان لم يتهيء ويرتفع الى ما هو فوق الطبيعة، لذلك وضع الصوم، لتدريب النفس على التقدم في الحياة الروحية والمصالحة مع الذات ومع الله عبر أخي الانسان.

ولا يعتقدن احدا أن الصوم عن الطعام وحده يكفي لبلوغ الهدف المنشود، الا اذا صام صوما ذاتيا داخليا صام عن الاهواء (الغضب، الحسد، النسيمة،...)، "ليتنا لا نتق أن الصوم الخارجي عن أطعمة منظورة يكفي وحده لنقاوة القلب وطهارة الجسد ما لم يصاحبه صوم النفس" (القديس يوحنا الذهبي الفم). الصوم الحقيقي هو فعل المحبة التي تأتي بالدرجة الاولى. الصوم هو حمل الصليب وانكار الذات كما تعلمنا من المسيح المصلوب على الصليب ان ننكر ذاتنا وان نرفض كل ما حسبناه ربما في هذا العالم.

الصوم الحقيقي هو التوبة الحقيقية التي تجعل الصوم صوما، وبدونها لا يحسب الصوم شيئا. اذا الصوم بدون التوبة لا يبرر ولا يؤهل لاستقبال المخلص. اذا صمنا واكملنا هذه الطريق الى النهاية في هذه الروح وفي هذا الفهم فيكون وجه المسيح قد اشرق علينا وانا ذهننا حيث يتبدد كل كبرياتنا وضعفنا ونكون قد اتخذنا منه كل الصفاء والوداعة والاتضاع والمحبة والقوة، حينئذ نعلم ونفهم معنى الميلاد ونتذوق تجسده الفائق الطبيعة. مما يؤدي بنا الى ان نجعل قلوبنا مذودا دائما لولادة السيد المخلص ونرتقي الى العلي فرحا بولادته وان نحيا به فنصرخ مع بولس الرسول : " لا احيا انا بل المسيح يحيا في " (غلا 2:20).

صوم مبارك ومثمر للجميع

St Andrew the first called Apostle

The Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called was the first of the Apostles to follow Christ, and he later brought his own brother, the holy Apostle Peter, to Christ (John 1:35-42). The future apostle was from Bethsaida, and from his youth he turned with all his soul to God. He did not enter into marriage, and he worked with his brother as a fisherman. When the holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John began to preach, Saint Andrew became his closest disciple. Saint John the Baptist himself sent to Christ his own two disciples, the future Apostles Andrew and John the Theologian, declaring Christ to be the Lamb of God.

After the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, Saint Andrew went to the Eastern lands preaching the Word of God. He went through Asia Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, he reached the River Danube, went along the coast of the Black Sea, through Crimea, the Black Sea region and along the River Dniepr he climbed to the place where the city of Kiev now stands.

He stopped overnight on the hills of Kiev. Rising in the morning, he said to those disciples that were with him:



“See these hills? Upon these hills shall shine forth the beneficence of God, and there will be a great city here, and God shall raise up many churches. The apostle went up around the hills, blessed them and set up a cross. Having prayed, he went up even further along the Dniepr and reached a settlement of the Slavs, where Novgorod was built. From here the apostle went through the land of the Varangians towards Rome for preaching, and again he returned to Thrace, where in the small village of Byzantium, the future Constantinople, he founded the Church of Christ. The name of the holy Apostle Andrew links the mother, the Church of Constantinople, with her daughter, the Russian Church.

On his journeys the First-Called Apostle endured many sufferings and torments from pagans: they cast him out of their cities and they beat him. In Sinope they pelted him with stones, but remaining unharmed, the persistent disciple of Christ continued to preach to people about the Savior. Through the prayers of the Apostle, the Lord worked miracles. By the labors of the holy Apostle Andrew, Christian Churches were established, for which he provided bishops and clergy. The final city to which the Apostle came was the city of Patra, where he was destined to suffer martyrdom.

The Lord worked many miracles through His disciple in Patra. The infirm were made whole, and the blind received their sight. Through the prayers of the Apostle, the illustrious citizen Sosios recovered from serious illness; he healed Maximilla, wife of the governor of Patra, and his brother Stratokles. The miracles accomplished by the Apostle and his fiery speech enlightened almost all the citizens of the city of Patra with the true Faith. The pagan thought he might undo Saint Andrew’s preaching if he were to put him to death on the cross.

Saint Andrew the First-Called accepted the decision of the prefect with joy and with prayer to the Lord, and went willingly to the place of execution. The crucified apostle, having given glory to God, said: “Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit.” Then a blazing ray of divine light illumined the cross and the martyr crucified upon it. When the light faded, the holy Apostle Andrew had already given up his holy soul to the Lord. Maximilla, the wife of the prefect, had the body of the saint taken down from the cross, and buried him with honor.

A few centuries later, under the emperor Constantine the Great, the relics of the holy Apostle Andrew were solemnly transferred to Constantinople and placed in the church of the Holy Apostles beside the relics of the holy Evangelist Luke and Saint Paul’s disciple Saint Timothy.

Story and Lessons:

Nothing is impossible

During an intense war in the battle field, a young soldier was separated from his comrades while retreating. In defeat, the young soldier ran as fast as he could while the enemy troops gave chase. Alone and exhausted, the soldier knows the enemy was close behind. He spotted an old abandoned house and ran towards it. Quickly, he crawled into one of the dark rooms and hid. Feeling safe for a moment, he knows once the enemy troops find the house, he would be captured and killed.

Awaiting his doomed fate, he prayed to God “Lord, please protect me. My life is in your hands; may your will be done. I love and trust you”. After his prayer, a spider began to weave a web at the entrance of the room. The spider layered delicate threads one by one across the room’s doorway. The young soldier thought, “I asked God for protection from guns and bullets yet.... He sends a little spider to save me?” Enemy troops discovered the old house and began searching each room one after another.

The young soldier could hear his enemies’ footsteps moving closer toward his hideout. As the enemy troops reached the entrance of the room, they stopped and said.... “Nobody can be in that room. They would have had to break the spider’s web to enter. Let’s keep moving”. The enemy troops then backed away and searched elsewhere. In amazement, the young soldier fell to his knees and prayed.... “Lord, please forgive me for I lack faith. **Where there is God, nothing is impossible!**”

When we face times of distress, do not forget that **God works and protects in the most surprising ways.** “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” Matthew 19:26.

Fathers quotes:

“Today she who will receive the Holy of Holies, that is the Christ, through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit is, through an even greater sanctification, placed in the Holy of the Holies with holiness and majesty”

St. Germanus of Constantinople

“A vow was given by those who marvellously begot her to return her that was given to the Giver; so accordingly the Mother of God strangely changed her dwelling from the house of her father to the house of God while still an infant. She passed not a few years in the Holy of the Holies itself, wherein under the care of an angel she enjoyed ineffable nourishment such as even Adam did not succeed in tasting;”

St Gregory of Palamas

“At that time, the High Priest was in ecstasy, filled with the Spirit of God, and understood that the maiden was the dwelling place of divine grace and more worthy than he to stand always before God’s countenance. He remembered that the Law commended the Ark be placed in the Holy of Holies and straightway perceived that this ordinance pertained to the maiden”.

St Theophylact of Ochrid

Announcements:

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

The Annual Christmas Lunch will take place on the 16th of December 2018, at the Hilton London Metropole 2:00pm, for tickets please get in touch with Mrs Samira Abdel-Nour.

برعاية الميتروبوليت سلوان أونر تدعوكم مطرانية الجزر البريطانية و ايرلندا الانطاكية للروم الأرثوذكس الى **مؤتمر العام 2019**
بعنوان : **العمل في كرم الرب، رعاية الأطفال وتربيتهم على الإيمان**، وذلك من نهار الاثنين 27 لغاية 29 أيار 2019، الدعوة عامة،
للاستفسار الرجاء مراجعة الأب ميخائيل.