

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

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For Liturgy Names & Coffee Hour email the above

Saturday: Vespers at 4:30 PM followed by confession

Sunday: Orthros at 9:30 AM & Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM

Check out our website @ www.sainteliasny.com

ST. ELIAS
ANTIOCHIAN CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 24, 2023
HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN SABA, ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK AND
METROPOLITAN OF ALL NORTH AMERICA
HIS GRACE BISHOP ALEXANDER, AUXILIARY BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF
OTTAWA , UPSTATE NEY YORK AND EASTERN CANADA
REV, FR. MICHAEL IBRAHIM
DEACON NICHOLAS MAHSHIE

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‘DISCIPLES FIRST CALLED THEMSELVES CHRISTIANS IN ANTIOCH.’ ACTS 11:26

PROTO-MARTYR THEKLA, EQUAL-TO-THE-
APOSTLES
& FIRST SUNDAY OF LUKE
VENERABLE SILOUAN OF ATHOS
TONE 7/ EOTHINON 5

PRAYER ON ENTERING THE CHURCH

I WILL COME INTO THY HOUSE IN THE MULTITUDE OF THY MERCY: AND IN THY FEAR I WILL WORSHIP TOWARD THY HOLY TEMPLE. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before me, that with a clear mind I may glorify thee forever, One Divine Power worshipped in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

O Lord, sanctify those who love the beauty of your house.

When you enter the church, please remember that the church is a place of worship. Please do not disturb others as they worship God.

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES.

TROPARION OF THE PATRON SAINT OF THE CHURCH TONE 4:

O Angelic of body the founder and corner stone of the prophets, the second forerunner of the advent of Christ, O Elias, venerable and glorious, thou didst send grace from heaven to thy disciple Elisha to dispel diseases and to purify lepers wherefore he abounds with healing to all those who honor him.

أيها الملاك بالجسم قاعدة الأنبياء وركنهم، السابق الثاني لحضور المسيح، إلياس المجيد الموقر، لقد أرسلت النعمة من العلى لأليشع ليطرد الأسقام ويظهر البرص، لذلك يُفيض الأشفية بمكرميته دائماً"

WELCOME!

We welcome all of our visitors who are praying with us today. We are eager to share with you our spiritual treasures, and invite you to join us for coffee-hour in the Fellowship Hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you are a first-time visitor, please take a few minutes to sign our Guest Registry book and complete the white VISITORS INFORMATION CARD which may be found in the Narthex, and return it to an usher. As a friendly reminder, **only Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves through fasting, prayer and recent Confession may approach the Holy Chalice to receive Holy Communion. However all may come forward at end of Liturgy and receive blessed Holy Bread.** We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you personally to St. Elias. If you have any questions, please see Fr. Michael.

أهلاً بكم!

نرحب بجميع زوارنا الذين يصلون معنا اليوم ونحرص على مشاركتكم في كنوزنا الروحية، وندعوكم للانضمام إلينا لتناول القهوة معنا في قاعة الكنيسة بعد القداس الإلهي. إذا كانت هذه أول زيارة لكم، يرجى أخذ القليل من الوقت لتوقيع سجل الزوار واستكمال بطاقة معلومات الزوار البيضاء والتي توجد في صحن الكنيسة، وإعادتها إلى أحد مرشدي الكنيسة. وكتذكير ودي، يُسمح فقط للمسيحيين الأرثوذكس الذين أعدوا أنفسهم بشكل صحيح من خلال الصوم والصلاة واعتراف من زمن قريب بالاقتراب من الكأس المقدسة لتناول القربان المقدس. ولكن يُسمح للجميع الاقتراب في نهاية القداس لاستلام الخبز المقدس المبارك. ونحن نتطلع للقائكم والترحيب بكم شخصياً في كنيسة مار إلياس. يرجى توجيه الأسئلة إلى الأب مايكل مباشرةً.

PRAYER ON LEAVING THE CHURCH

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **The Holy Bread of Oblations is not being offered by Dona Savage, Nadine Savage and Family, James Rodgers and Family,** for the continued health and well being of Dona, Nadine and family, James and family. **Also being offered in loving memory of Douglas J Savage, Francis and Freida Savage, Raymond and Veronica DeSilva, Carly Marie Carter, John Simkulet, David Thier, Francis J savage Jr. Susan Manning. May their memories be eternal.**
- **Please pray for all the sick and suffering,** hospitalized and shut-ins of our community, especially Rana, Shadi, Simon Abboud, Janet Saba, Siham Ayoub, Salwa Makhoulouf, Kawthar Shomar, Elias Shamieh, Nada Tadros, Evelyn Gabriel, Eva Phillips.

saw Thekla. Being entranced by her beauty he rushed forward and 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 complained that this wandering girl had disgraced him, a nobleman, in public. He demanded that she be punished with death. The governor complied and ruled that Thekla would face the wild beasts in the arena. Thekla's only reply was that she be allowed to preserve her virginity unto death. Her wish was granted and she was given into the care of the noblewoman Tryphaena, a relative of Caesar, until the time of punishment.

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. A bear was then released, but as it came close to Thekla the lioness rose up to defend her and killed the bear. A large lion was then released. The lioness again came to Thekla's defense killing the lion, but losing her own life also. Then all the cages were opened and a large number of wild animals charged at the defenseless Thekla. 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. She informed him of all that had occurred, including her baptism and asked that she might be permitted to spend the remainder of her life as an ascetic. Paul gave her his blessing and she departed, leaving with Paul all the gold and jewels that Tryphaena had given her so that he might distribute them among the poor and needy.

Thekla then traveled again to Syria where she went up into the mountains for a life of prayer and solitude. Many years later a young pagan found her praying in an isolated canyon and resolved to harass her and spoil her virginity. As he approached her and blocked her only exit to safety, she prayed that her Bridegroom would protect her as He had so many times in the past. At that moment the canyon wall was miraculously split allowing her to escape through a narrow crack in the rock.

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.

Because of her many sufferings for the Faith the Church counts her as a "Protomartyr". And because she converted so many people to Christ-ianity she is also known as an "Equal-to-the-Apostles".

THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

On September 24 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy Great-Martyr Thekla, equal-to-the-Apostles.

She was born in Iconium of eminent but pagan parents. At age 18, she was betrothed to a young man named Thamyris at the same time that the Apostle Paul arrived in Iconium with Barnabas to preach the Gospel. Hearing Paul's testimony for three days and nights, Thekla converted to the Christian Faith, and vowed to live in virginity. Her mother, seeing that she was now ignoring her betrothal, tried to dissuade her, and then beat her and tortured her by starvation. Finally, this wicked mother turned Thekla over to the judge and demanded that Thekla be burned. The judge threw her into the fire, but God preserved her unharmed by pouring rain on the fire. Once in an arena and sentenced to death, Thekla saw a vat of water that contained carnivorous seals. Thekla jumped into the vat and baptized herself. Lightning killed all of the seals before they could eat her. Another time, a lioness protected her from other wild beasts. Once, as a group of arrogant young men were about to catch Thekla, a large rock opened up and hid this holy virgin. This rock in Maaloula, Syria was her refuge and her tomb, and the site of the monastery which she founded, the oldest Christian convent in the world. Thousands of pilgrims flock to it yearly for healing of ailments.

On this day, we also commemorate the Venerable Silouan of Athos, born in 1866 as Simeon Ivanovich Antonov of devout parents of Sovsk, Tambov, Russia. At age 27, he received the prayers of St. John of Kronstadt and went to Mt. Athos where he became a monk at the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon. He received from the Holy Theotokos the gift of unceasing prayer, and had a vision of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory in the church of the holy Prophet Elias adjoining the mill of the monastery. After the withdrawal of that first grace, he was oppressed by profound grief and great temptations for fifteen years, after which he received from Christ the teaching, "Keep thy mind in hell, and despair not." He reposed on September 24, 1938. He left behind his writings which were edited by his disciple and pupil, St. Sophrony of Essex.

By the intercessions of Thy saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Let us attend.

Reader: *God is wondrous among His saints.*

Bless ye God in the congregations.

Reader: The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy. (3:10-15)

Timothy, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet from them all, the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all, who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

عَجِيبٌ هُوَ اللَّهُ فِي قَدِّيسِيهِ .فِي الْمَجَامِعِ بَارِكُوا اللَّهَ .
فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِّيسِ بُولُسَ الرَّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى تِيْمُوثَاوَسَ .

يا ولدي تيموثاوس إِنَّكَ قَدْ اسْتَقْرَيْتَ تَعْلِيمِي وَسِرِّي وَقَصْدِي وَإِيمَانِي وَأُنَاتِي وَمَحَبَّتِي وَصَبْرِي.
واضطهاداتي وآلامي وما أصابني في إنطاكية وأيقونية ولسترة. وأية اضطهاداتٍ احتملتُ وقد أنقذني الربُّ
من جميعها. وجميع الذين يريدون أن يعيشوا بالتقوى في المسيح يسوع يضطهدون. أما الأشرار والمغشون
من الناس فيزدادون شراً مضليين ومضلين. فاستمري أنت على ما تعلمته وأيقنت به عالماً ممن تعلمت. وأنتك
منذ الطفولية تعرف الكُتُب المقدَّسة القادرة أن تُصيرك حكيماً للخلاص بالإيمان بالمسيح يسوع.

THE GOSPEL

PLEASE STAND!

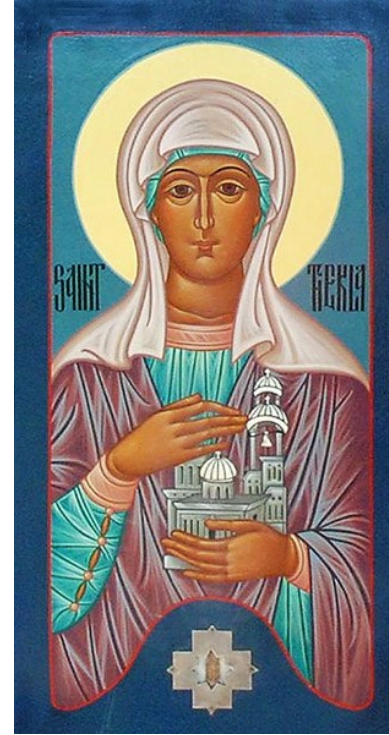
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (5:1-11)

At that time, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And He saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, Jesus asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when Jesus had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at Thy word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish, which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارَةِ القديسِ لوقا الإنجيليِّ البشيرِ والتلميذِ الطاهرِ.

في ذلكَ الزمانِ، فيما يسوعُ واقفٌ عندَ بحيرةِ جنيسارت، رأى سفينتين واقفتين عندَ شاطئِ البحيرة، وقد أخذَ منهُما الصيادونَ يَغسلونَ الشباك. فدخلَ إحدى السفينتين، وكانت لِسْمعانَ، وسألهُ أن يتباعدَ قليلاً عنَ البرِّ، وجلسَ يُعلِّمُ الجموعَ مِنَ السفينة. ولما فرغَ مِنَ الكلامِ، قالَ لِسْمعانَ: "تقدّمَ إلى العمقِ وألقوا شباككم للصيّد." فأجابَ سِمعانُ وقالَ له: "يا مُعلِّمُ، إنّنا قد تعبنا الليلَ كُلَّهُ ولمْ نُصبْ شيئاً، ولكنْ بكلمتِكَ ألقى الشبكَ." فلما فعلوا ذلكَ، اختازوا مِنَ السمكِ شيئاً كثيراً حتّى تحرقتْ شبكتُهُم. فأشاروا إلى شركائهم في السفينة الأخرى أن يأتوا ويُعاونوهم. فأتوا وملأوا السفينتين حتّى كادتَا تغرقان. فلما رأى ذلكَ سِمعانُ بطرسُ، خرَّ عندَ رُكبتي يسوعَ قائلاً: "أخرجْ عني يا ربُّ، فإنّي رجلٌ خاطئٌ." لأنَّ الإندھالَ اعترّاهُ هوَ وكلُّ مَنْ مَعَهُ لصيّدِ السمكِ الذي أصابوه. وكذلك يعقوبُ ويوحنا ابنا زبدي اللذان كانا رفيقين لِسْمعان. فقال يسوعُ لِسْمعانَ: "لا تخف، فإنّك مِنَ الآنَ تكونُ صياداً للناس." فلما بلغوا بالسفينتين إلى البرِّ، تركوا كلَّ شيءٍ وتبعوه.



Life of St. Thekla

According to ancient Syrian and Greek manuscripts, Saint Thekla was born into a prosperous pagan family in the Lycaonian city of Iconium (present-day Konya in south-central Turkey) in A.D. 16. When she was 18 years old and betrothed to a young man named Thamyris, Saint Paul the Apostle and Saint Barnabas arrived in Iconium from Antioch (Acts 14). Thekla's mother Theokleia prohibited her from joining the crowds which gathered to hear Paul preach. But Thekla found that if she sat near her bedroom window she could hear his every word. Thekla sat there for three days and three nights listening to Paul preach the word of God. She was particularly touched by his call to chastity. As it became apparent that Thekla was becoming interested in the new Faith, Theokleia and Thamyris went to the governor of the city and complained about Paul and his preaching. To pacify them and the other outraged citizens of Iconium, the governor had Paul imprisoned to await trial.

When Thekla learned of Paul's arrest she secretly went to the prison, and using her golden bracelets to bribe the guard, gained admittance to his cell. When she saw the Apostle she knelt before him and kissed the chains which bound his hands and feet. She remained there a long time listening to his message of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Being concerned at Thekla's prolonged absence, Theokleia and Thamyris asked her servant if she knew where she was. The servant said that Thekla had gone to visit an imprisoned stranger. Theokleia and Thamyris knew at once that she was with Paul. They decided to go again to the governor, this time demanding immediate judgement for the Apostle. After the governor chastened Paul for the disturbances he had caused in the city, he had him stoned and expelled from Iconium. The governor then admonished Thekla for her foolishness and commanded her to return home with her mother and fiancé. When Thekla 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 Thekla was to be burned at the stake unless she renounced her faith in Christ.

When Thekla 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 Thekla, 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