

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 بالاقتراب في نهاية القداس لاستلام الخبز المقدس المبارك. ونحن نتطلع للقائكم والترحيب بكم شخصياً في كنيسة مار الياس. 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 today is being offered by the Abdo Family.** Please pray for the spiritual and physical well-being of Wadu John & Cindy Abdo & Family, Corinne & Joseph Whitworth & Family, Wanda Abdo-Tonjes & Family. **Also being offered in loving memory of** Jason Abdo, George & Tatca Abdo. **May their memory be eternal.**
- **Today is the 40 Day Memorial for Jason Abdo. May his memory be eternal.**
- **Please pray for all the sick** and suffering, hospitalized and shut-ins of our community, especially Gary (Chip) George, Janet Saba, Salwa Makhlof, Elias Shamieh, Nada and Rima Tadros, Evelyn Gabriel.

*St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church*

*Rev. Fr. Michael Ibrahim*

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**For Bulletin Announcements** email at [office@sainteliasny.com](mailto:office@sainteliasny.com)

**For Liturgy Names & Coffee Hour** email the above

**Saturday:** Vespers at 5:00 PM followed by confession

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

**Check out our website @ [www.sainteliasny.com](http://www.sainteliasny.com)**



## ST. ELIAS ANTIOCHIAN CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

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 NEW YORK AND EASTERN CANADA

REV. FR. MICHAEL IBRAHIM

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



accompanied him on his apostolic journeys.

Shortly before his death, Saint Bucolus expressed his wish that Polycarp be made Bishop of Smyrna. When Saint Polycarp was consecrated as a bishop, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him. Saint Polycarp guided his flock with apostolic zeal, and he was also greatly loved by the clergy. Saint Ignatius the God-Bearer of Antioch (December 20) also had a high regard for him. Setting out for Rome where execution awaited him, he wrote to Saint Polycarp, "This age is in need of you if it is to reach God, just as pilots need winds, and as a storm-tossed sailor needs a port."

The emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180) came to the Roman throne and started up a most fierce persecution against Christians. The pagans demanded that the judge search for Saint Polycarp, "the father of all the Christians" and "the seducer of all Asia."

During this time Saint Polycarp, at the persistent urging of his flock, stayed in a small village not far from Smyrna. When the soldiers came for him, he went out to them and invited them in to eat. He asked for time to pray, in order to prepare himself for martyrdom. His suffering and death are recorded in the "Epistle of the Christians of the Church of Smyrna to the Other Churches," one of the most ancient memorials of Christian literature.

Having been brought to trial, Saint Polycarp firmly confessed his faith in Christ, and was condemned to be burned alive. The executioners wanted to nail him to a post, but he declared that God would give him the strength to endure the flames, so they could merely tie him with ropes. The flames encircled the saint but did not touch him, coming together over his head in the shape of a vault. Seeing that the fire did him no harm, the pagans stabbed him with a dagger. So much blood flowed from this wound that it extinguished the flames. The body of the hieromartyr Polycarp was then cremated. The Christians of Smyrna reverently gathered up what remained of his holy relics, and each year they celebrated the day of his martyrdom.

A story has been preserved about Saint Polycarp by his disciple, Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, which Eusebius cites in his ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY (V, 20):

"I was still very young when I saw you in Asia Minor at Polycarp's," writes Saint Irenaeus to his friend Florinus, "but I would still be able to point out the place where Blessed Polycarp sat and conversed, and be able to depict his walk, his mannerisms in life, his outward appearance, his speaking to people, his companionable wandering with John, and how he himself related, together with other eyewitnesses of the Lord, those things that he remembered from the words of others. He also told what he heard from them about the Lord, His teachings and miracles...."

"Through the mercy of God to me, I then already listened attentively to Polycarp and wrote down his words, not on tablets, but in the depths of my heart. Therefore, I am able to bear witness before God, that if this blessed and apostolic Elder heard something similar to your fallacy, he would immediately stop up his ears and express his indignation with his usual phrase: 'Good God! That Thou hast permitted me to be alive at such a time!'"

During his life the holy bishop wrote several Epistles to the flock and letters to various individuals. The only one that has survived to the present day is his Epistle to the Philippians which, Saint Jerome testifies, was read in the churches of Asia Minor at divine services. It was written by the saint in response to the request of the Philippians to send them some letters of the hieromartyr Ignatius (December 20) which Saint Polycarp had in his possession.

The composer H.I.F. Bibier (1644-1704) has written a Sonata "Scti Polycarpi" for eight trumpets in honor of the holy martyr.

## THE EPISTLE

**Priest: Let us attend.**

**Reader: O Lord, how magnified are Thy works.  
In wisdom hast Thou made them all.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul.**

**Reader: The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. (13:11-14:4)**

Brethren, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. But as for the one who is weak in faith, receive him, but not for disputes over opinions. For one believes he may eat anything; but the weak person eats herbs. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to be the judge over the servant of a stranger? To his own master he either stands or falls; but he will be made to stand; for God is able to make him stand.

ما أعظم أعمالك يا رب، كلها بحكمة صنعَت.

باركي يا نفسي الرب.

فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى أهل رومية. (14:4-13:11)

يا إخوة، إن خلاصنا الآن أقرب مما كان حين آمنا. قد تتهامى الليل واقترب النهار، فلندع عنا أعمال الظلمة ونلبس أسلحة النور. لنسلكن سلوكاً لائقاً كما في النهار، لا بالقصوف والسكر، ولا بالمصاحج والعهر، ولا بالخصام والحسد، بل لبسوا الرب يسوع المسيح ولا تهتموا بأجسادكم لقضاء شهواتها. من كان ضعيفاً في الإيمان فاتخذوه بغير مباحثة في الآراء. من الناس من يعتقد أن له أن يأكل كل شيء، أما الضعيف فيأكل بقلوباً. فلا يزدر الذي يأكل من لا يأكل ولا يدين الذي لا يأكل من يأكل، فإن الله قد اتخذ. من أنت يا من تدين عبداً أجنبياً؟ إنه لمولاه يثبت أو يسقط. لكنه سيثبت لأن الله قادر على أن يثبت.

## GOSPEL

**Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (6:14-21)**

The Lord said to His Disciples: If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father Who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes

and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ مَتَى الْإِنْجِيلِيّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيذِ الطَّاهِرِ. (21-6:14)

قَالَ الرَّبُّ: إِنَّ غَفْرَتُمْ لِلنَّاسِ زَلَّاتِهِمْ، يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ أَبُوكُمُ السَّمَاوِيِّ أَيْضاً. وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرُوا لِلنَّاسِ زَلَّاتِهِمْ،

فَأَبُوكُمْ أَيْضاً لَا يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ زَلَّاتِكُمْ. وَمَتَى صُمْنُكُمْ، فَلَا تَكُونُوا مُعَبِّسِينَ كَالْمُرَائِينَ. فَإِنَّهُمْ يُنْكَرُونَ وَجُوهَهُمْ

لِيُظْهِرُوا لِلنَّاسِ صَائِمِينَ. الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنَّهُمْ قَدْ أَخَذُوا أَجْرَهُمْ. أَمَا أَنْتَ فَإِذَا صُمْتَ، فَادْهَنْ رَأْسَكَ وَاغْسِلْ

وَجْهَكَ لِنَلَّا تَظْهَرَ لِلنَّاسِ صَائِماً، بَلْ لِأَبِيكَ الَّذِي فِي الْخَفِيَّةِ، وَأَبُوكَ الَّذِي يَرَى فِي الْخَفِيَّةِ يُجَارِيكَ عَلَانِيَةً.

لَا تَكْنُزُوا لَكُمْ كُنُوزاً عَلَى الْأَرْضِ، حَيْثُ يُفْسِدُ السُّوسُ وَالْآكِلَةُ وَيَنْقُبُ السَّارِقُونَ وَيَسْرِقُونَ. لَكِنْ اكْنُزُوا لَكُمْ

كُنُوزاً فِي السَّمَاءِ حَيْثُ لَا يُفْسِدُ سَوْسٌ وَلَا آكِلَةٌ وَلَا يَنْقُبُ السَّارِقُونَ وَلَا يَسْرِقُونَ. لِأَنَّهُ حَيْثُ تَكُونُ كُنُوزُكُمْ،

هُنَاكَ تَكُونُ قُلُوبُكُمْ.

### **KONTAKION FOR FORGIVENESS SUNDAY IN TONE SIX**

O Thou Who guidest to wisdom, and givest understanding and intelligence, the Instructor of the ignorant, and Helper of the poor, strengthen my heart and grant it understanding, O Master. Give me word, O Word of the Father; for behold, I shall not refrain my lips from crying to Thee, O merciful One, have mercy upon me who am fallen.

أَيُّهَا الْهَادِي إِلَى الْحِكْمَةِ، وَرَازِقُ الْفَهْمِ وَالْفِطْنَةِ، وَمُؤَدِّبُ الْجُهَالِ، وَعَاضِدُ الْمَسَاكِينِ، شَدِّدْ وَفَهِّمْ قَلْبِي أَيُّهَا

السَّيِّدُ، وَأَعْطِنِي كَلِمَةً يَا كَلِمَةَ الْأَبِ، لِأَنَّي هَاأَنْدَا لَا أَمْنَعُ شَفَّتِي مِنَ الصُّرَاخِ إِلَيْكَ: يَا رَحُومُ، ارْحَمْنِي أَنَا

الوَاقِعِ.

## **Great Martyr Theodore the Tyro (Recruit)**

Commemorated on February 17

The Holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit<sup>1</sup> was a soldier in the city of Amáseia in Pontus (Asia Minor) on the coast of the Euxine (Black) Sea, under the command of the Praepositus (regimental commander) Brincus. Saint Theodore was ordered to offer sacrifice to idols, but he proclaimed his faith in Christ the Savior in a loud voice. Brincus gave him a few days to think it over, during which time the Saint prayed.

Theodore was accused of setting a pagan temple on fire and destroying the idol of Rhea, and so he was thrown into prison to be starved to death. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him there, comforting and encouraging him. When he was brought before the Governor Publius, Theodore boldly confessed his faith, for which he was subjected to new torments and condemned to be



burnt alive. The Great Martyr Theodore mounted an enormous pyre, and after he made the Sign of the Cross, the wood was lit, but the Holy Spirit cooled the flames. Saint Theodore stood in the flames, praising and glorifying God. Then he gave his holy soul into God's hands, and the onlookers saw his soul ascending to Heaven, according to the author of his Life, who was also an eyewitness.

This occurred in about the year 306 under the Roman Emperor Galerius (305-311). Unharmed by the fire, Saint Theodore's body was buried under a widow's house in the city of Eukháita, not far from Amáseia. Later, his relics were transferred to Constantinople, to the church which bears his name. His head is in the city of Gaeto, Italy.

Fifty years after the Saint Theodore's martyrdom, Emperor Julian the Apostate (reigned 361-363), planned to commit an outrage upon the Christians during the first week of Great Lent. He ordered the city magistrate of Constantinople to sprinkle all the food in the marketplaces with blood which had been offered to idols. Saint Theodore appeared to Archbishop Eudoxios in a dream, and told him to inform all the Christians that no one should buy anything in the marketplaces, but to eat boiled wheat with honey (kolyva) instead.

In remembrance of this occurrence, the Orthodox Church commemorates the holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit each year on the first Saturday of Great Lent. On Friday evening, at the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, after the prayer at the Ambo, the Canon to the Holy Great Martyr Theodore, composed by Saint John of Damascus, is sung. After this, kolyva is blessed and distributed to the faithful. The celebration of the Great Martyr Theodore on the first Saturday of Great Lent was established by Patriarch Nektarios of Constantinople (381-397).

The Troparion to Saint Theodore is very similar to the Troparion for the Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths (on the Sunday Before the Nativity of the Lord). The Kontakion to Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

In iconography, Saint Theodore the Recruit is depicted in four different ways: either alone in military garb, battling a large snake, or together with Saint Theodore the Commander, standing upright or riding horses. He always wears his military uniform.

We pray to Saint Theodore the Recruit for the recovery of stolen articles.

## **Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna**

Commemorated on February 23

Saint Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who was "fruitful in every good work" (Col. 1:10), was born in the first century, and lived in Smyrna in Asia Minor. He was orphaned at an early age, but at the direction of an angel, he was raised by the pious widow Kallista. After the death of his adoptive mother, Polycarp gave away his possessions and began to lead a chaste life, caring for the sick and the infirm. He was very fond of and close to Saint Bucolus, Bishop of Smyrna (February 6). He ordained Polycarp as deacon, entrusting to him to preach the Word of God in church. He also ordained him to the holy priesthood.

The holy Apostle John the Theologian was still alive at this time. Saint Polycarp was especially close to Saint John, and sometimes

