

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 04, 2024
TONE 5 / EOTHINON 6; SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
& SIXTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

THE HOLY SEVEN SLEEPING YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS; RECOVERY OF THE RELICS OF MARTYR EUDOKIA OF PERSIA

- *During the Little Entrance, chant the Resurrectional Apolytikion. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is "O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead..." After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:*

<p align="center">RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FIVE</p>	<p align="center">أبوليتيكيون القيامة باللحن الخامس</p>
<p>Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.</p>	<p>لِنُسَبِّحْ نَحْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَنَسْجُدُ لِلْكَلِمَةِ، الْمُسَاوِي لِلآبِ وَالرُّوحِ فِي الْأَزَلِيَّةِ وَعَدَمِ الْإِبْتِدَاءِ، الْمَوْلُودِ مِنَ الْعَذْرَاءِ لِحَلَاصِنَا، لِأَنَّهُ سَرَّ بِالْجَسَدِ أَنْ يَغْلُوقَ عَلَى الصَّلِيبِ، وَيَحْتَمِلَ الْمَوْتَ، وَيُنْهَضَ الْمَوْتَى بِقِيَامَتِهِ الْمَجِيدَةِ.</p>
<p>• <i>Now sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.</i></p>	
<p align="center">KONTAKION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION IN TONE SEVEN</p>	<p align="center">القنطاق لتجلي ربنا يسوع المسيح باللحن السابع</p>
<p>Thou wast transfigured on the mount, and Thy Disciples, in so far as they were able, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; so that, when they should see Thee crucified, they would remember that all Thy suffering was voluntary, and could declare to all the world that Thou art truly the effulgent Splendor of the Father.</p>	<p>تَجَلَّيْتَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ عَلَى الْجَبَلِ، وَحَسَبَمَا وَسِعَ تَلَامِيذُكَ شَاهَدُوا مَجْدَكَ، حَتَّى عِنْدَمَا يِعَايِنُونَكَ مَصْلُوبًا، يَفْطَنُوا أَنَّ آلامَكَ طَوْعًا بِاخْتِيَارِكَ، وَيَكْرِرُونَ لِلْعَالَمِ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ بِالْحَقِيقَةِ شِعَاعُ الْآبِ.</p>
<p align="center">THE EPISTLE (For Sixth Sunday after Pentecost)</p>	<p align="center">الرسالة (الأحد السادس بعد العنصرة)</p>
<p><i>Thou, O Lord, wilt preserve us and keep us from this generation.</i> <i>Save me, O Lord, for the Godly man hath disappeared.</i></p> <p align="center">The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. (12:6-14)</p> <p>Brethren, having gifts that differ according to the grace that was given to us, let each use them accordingly: whether prophecy, let him prophesy according to the proportion of the faith; or ministry, let him give himself to the ministry; or the teacher, to the teaching; or he who exhorts, in the exhorting; he who gives, let</p>	<p>أَنْتَ يَا رَبُّ تَحْفَظُنَا وَتَسْتُرُنَا مِنْ هَذَا الْجِيلِ خَلِّصْنِي يَا رَبُّ، فَإِنَّ الْبَارَّ قَدْ فَنِيَ.</p> <p align="center">فَصَلُّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى أَهْلِ رومية. (١٢:٦-١٤)</p> <p>يَا إِخْوَةَ، إِذْ لَنَا مَوَاهِبُ مُخْتَلِفَةٌ بِاخْتِلَافِ النِّعْمَةِ الْمُعْطَاةِ لَنَا، فَمَنْ وَهَبَ النُّبُوَّةَ فَلْيَتَنَبَّأْ وَفَقَّا لِلِإِيمَانِ، وَمَنْ وَهَبَ الْخِدْمَةَ فَلْيَلْزِمِ الْخِدْمَةَ، وَالْمُعَلِّمُ التَّعْلِيمَ، وَالْوَاعِظُ الْوَعْظَ، وَالْمُتَصَدِّقُ الْبِسَاطَةَ، وَالْمُدَبِّرُ الْاجْتِهَادَ، وَالرَّاجِحُ الْبَشَاشَةَ. وَلْتَكُنِ الْمَحَبَّةُ بِلَا رِيَاءٍ.</p>

<p>him do it with simplicity; he who presides, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Love one another with brotherly affection; in honor preferring one another; in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing steadfastly in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse.</p>	<p>كونوا ماقْتِنِينَ لِلشَّرِّ وَمُلْتَصِقِينَ بِالخَيْرِ . مُحِبِّينَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا حُبًّا أَخَوِيًّا، مُبَادِرِينَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا بِالْإِكْرَامِ، غَيْرَ مُتَكَاسِلِينَ فِي الْاجْتِهَادِ، حَارِّينَ بِالرُّوحِ، عَابِدِينَ لِلرَّبِّ، فَرِحِينَ فِي الرَّجَاءِ، صَابِرِينَ فِي الضَّيْقِ، مُوَظِّبِينَ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ، مُؤَاسِرِينَ الْقَدِيسِينَ فِي اخْتِيَاجَاتِهِمْ، عَاكِفِينَ عَلَى ضِيَاةِ الْغُرَبَاءِ . بَارِكُوا الَّذِينَ يَضْطَهُدُونَكُمْ، بَارِكُوا، وَلَا تَلْعَنُوا .</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">THE GOSPEL (For Sixth Sunday of Matthew)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">الإنجيل (للأحد السادس من متى)</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (9:1-8)</p> <p>At that time, Jesus got into a boat, crossed over and came to His own city. And behold, they brought to Him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith He said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—He then said to the paralytic—"Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they marveled, and they glorified God, Who had given such authority to men.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">فَصَلُّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ مَتَّى الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ . (٩:١-٨)</p> <p>في ذلك الزمان، دَخَلَ يَسُوعُ السَّفِينَةَ وَاجْتَارَ وَجَاءَ إِلَى مَدِينَتِهِ . فَإِذَا بِمُخْلَعٍ مُلْقَى عَلَى سَرِيرٍ قَدَّمُوهُ إِلَيْهِ . فَلَمَّا رَأَى يَسُوعُ إِيمَانَهُمْ، قَالَ لِلْمُخْلَعِ: "ثِقْ يَا بَنِيَّ، مَغْفُورَةٌ لَكَ خَطَايَاكَ . " فَقَالَ قَوْمٌ مِنْ الْكُتَّابَةِ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ "هَذَا يُجَدِّفُ . " فَعَلِمَ يَسُوعُ أَفْكَارَهُمْ، فَقَالَ: "لِمَاذَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ بِالشَّرِّ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ؟ مَا الْأَيْسَرُ أَنْ يُقَالَ، مَغْفُورَةٌ لَكَ خَطَايَاكَ، أَمْ أَنْ يُقَالَ قُمْ فَامْشِ؟ وَلَكِنْ لِكَيْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ ابْنَ الْبَشَرِ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ الْخَطَايَا . حِينَئِذٍ قَالَ لِلْمُخْلَعِ "قُمْ، أَحْمِلْ سَرِيرَكَ وَاهْبِ إِلَى بَيْتِكَ . " فَقَامَ وَمَضَى إِلَى بَيْتِهِ . فَلَمَّا نَظَرَ الْجُمُوعُ، تَعَجَّبُوا وَمَجَّدُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَعْطَى النَّاسَ سُلْطَانًا كَهَذَا .</p>
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• *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom continues as usual.*

<p style="text-align: center;">THE DISMISSAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">الختم</p>
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<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; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving</p>	<p>الكاهن: أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهُنَا الْحَقِيقِي، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، بِشَفَاعَاتِ أُمَّكَ الْقَدِيسَةِ الْكُلِّيَّةِ الطَّاهِرَةِ وَالْبَرِيئَةِ مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ، وَبِقُدْرَةِ الصَّلِيبِ الْكَرِيمِ</p>
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<p>Cross; 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, John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, whose Divine Liturgy we have now celebrated; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; <i>of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community</i>; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of the Holy Seven Sleeping Youths of Ephesus, 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.</p>	<p>المُخَيِّ، وبَطْلِبَاتِ القُوَّاتِ السَّمَاوِيَّةِ المُكْرَّمَةِ العَادِمَةِ الأَجْسَادِ، والنَّبِيِّ الكَرِيمِ السَّابِقِ المَجِيدِ يُوْحَنَّا المَعْمَدَانِ، والقَدِيْسِيْنَ المُشْرِفِيْنَ الرُّسُلِ الجَدِيرِيْنَ بِكُلِّ مَدِيحٍ، وَأَبِينَا الجَلِيلِ فِي القَدِيْسِيْنَ يُوحَنَّا الذَّهَبِيِّ الفَمِّ رَئِيسِ أَسَاقِفَةِ القُسْطَنْطِينِيَّةِ، كَاتِبِ هَذِهِ الخِدْمَةِ الشَّرِيفَةِ، والقَدِيْسِيْنَ المَجِيدِيْنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ المُتَأَلِّقِيْنَ بِالظَّفَرِ، وَأَبَائِنَا الأَبْرَارِ المُتَوَشِّحِيْنَ بِاللَّهِ، والقَدِيْسِ (ة) (فُلَانِ، فُلَانَةَ) شَفِيعِ (ة) وَحَامِيِ (ة) هَذِهِ الرَّعِيَّةِ المُقَدَّسَةِ؛ والقَدِيْسِيْنَ الصِّدِّيقِيْنَ يُوَاكِمِ وَحَنَّةَ جَدِّي المَسِيحِ الإِلَهِ؛ والقَدِيْسِيْنَ الفَتِيَّةِ السَّبْعَةِ النَّائِمِيْنَ فِي أفسُسَ، الَّذِينَ نُقِيمُ تَذَكَارَهُمُ اليَوْمَ، وَجَمِيعِ قَدِيْسِيكَ، ارْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا بِمَا أَنَّكَ صَالِحٌ وَمُحِبُّ لِلبَشَرِ.</p>
<p>Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.</p>	<p>الكاهن: بِصَلَوَاتِ آبَائِنَا القَدِيْسِيْنَ، أَيُّهَا الرَّبُّ يَسوعُ المَسِيحُ إلَهُنَا، ارْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا.</p>
<p>Choir: Amen.</p>	<p>الجوقة: آمين.</p>
<p>These texts have been prepared by the Department of Liturgics of the Antiochian Archdiocese Portions of the Archdiocesan Service Texts include texts from <i>The Menaion</i>, <i>The Great Horologion</i>, <i>The Pentecostarion</i>, <i>The Octoechos</i>, <i>The Triodion-Holy Week</i>, and <i>The Psalter of the Seventy</i>, 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.</p>	

ANNIVERSARY OR OUR DEPARTED FOR THIS SUNDAY

<u>DAY</u>	<u>NAME OF THE DEPARTED</u>	<u>ANNIVERSARY</u>
29	Clemence Massad	8
30	Antoine Azar	43
30	Hanna Karra	26
31	Jalal Qaqish	1
31	Renee Tabangi	6
3	Joseph Mraud	42
3	Ferris Dabous	67
4	Cecil Chamandy	41
4	John Ansara	35

- **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, Rami and Maien.

MEMORIAL

- **3 and 9 Days memorial service for Aida Hanna Massad** offered by **Audette Taweel Massad, her children Hanna, Tony, Sophie, Grace and their families.** May her memory be eternal!
- **One-year memorial service for Faiq George Bsharat** offered by **his wife Lina, his children and their families.** May his memory be eternal!
The coffee hour is offered today in loving memory of **Faiq George Bsharat** by his family.

ETERNAL LIGHTS

- **Aug 18:** In loving memory of **Nahida Irbib** from **Nadim Irbib and family**

SCHEDULE OF USHERING FOR AUGUST, 2024

- **Head Usher:** Ra’ed Dallal
- **Ushers from the Parish Council:** Anita Novratidis Peter Qubti
- **Ushers:** Alexandra Morton Kevin Boon
Colette El-Hajj George Homsy

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**

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.

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.**

TEEN SOYO

- Congratulations to our newly elected TEEN SOYO Board Members...

President: Peter Mokbel

VP: Peter Novratidis

Treasurer: Helena Mokbel

Secretary: Michael Ishac

Social Media: Dima Alzidan

Coordinators: Lucas El Bouri, Mark Moussa and Paul Petro Youth Advisors: Angela Ghazal and Fadi Freiga

If you are interested in joining our Teen SOYO group please contact our Youth Advisors.

Note: members must be between the ages of 13-19 years old.

Angela Ghazal: 416-720-0308

Fadi Freiga: 647-829-6136

- **Kindly Submit your Contribution through the Following Methods: Connect to the Church Website www.stgeorgeto.org Click on Donate**
 - **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)



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

USHERS

Aug 4th, 2024

Ushers

Alexandra Morton

Kevin Boon

Colette El-Hajj

George Homsy

Ushers from the Parish Council

Anita Novratidis

Peter Qubti

Head Usher

Ra'ed Dallal

Holy Services at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church – Toronto.

Month: August 2024

Date	Time	Service
1st Week		
Thursday	August 1 st	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Little Supplicatory Canon
Friday	August 2 nd	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Great Supplicatory Canon
Saturday	August 3 rd	4:00 p.m. Confessions
		5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
Sunday 6 th Sunday of Matthew	August 4 th	9:00 a.m. Orthros
		10:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy
2nd Week		
Monday Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ عيد تجلي ربنا يسوع المسيح	August 5 th	5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
		6:00 p.m. Festal Orthros
		7:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy
Tuesday	August 6 th	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Great Supplicatory Canon
Wednesday	August 7 th	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Little Supplicatory Canon
Thursday	August 8 th	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Great Supplicatory Canon
Friday	August 9 th	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Little Supplicatory Canon
Saturday	August 10 th	4:00 p.m. Confessions
		5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
Sunday 7 th Sunday of Matthew	August 11 th	9:00 a.m. Orthros
		10:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy
3rd Week		
Monday	August 12 th	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Little Supplicatory Canon
Tuesday	August 13 th	7:00 p.m. Paraklesis with Great Supplicatory Canon
Wednesday Dormition of the Theotokos & Ever Virgin Mary عيد رقاد السيدة	August 14 th	5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
		6:00 p.m. Festal Orthros
		7:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy
Saturday	August 17 th	4:00 p.m. Confessions
		5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
Sunday 8 th Sunday of Matthew	August 18 th	9:00 a.m. Orthros
		10:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy
4th Week		
Saturday	August 24 th	4:00 p.m. Confessions
		5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
Sunday 9 th Sunday of Matthew	August 25 th	9:00 a.m. Orthros
		10:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy
5th Week		
Wednesday Beheading of the Holy Forerunner and Baptist John قطع رأس يوحنا المعمدان	August 28 th	6:00 p.m. Festal Orthros
		7:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy

Activities at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church – Toronto.
Month: August 2024

Date	Time	Activity	Location
<i>1st Week</i>			
Thursday 1 st	8:30 pm – 11:00 pm	Basketball for Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday 2 nd	8:00 pm – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
<i>2nd Week</i>			
Thursday 8 th	8:30 pm – 11:00 pm	Basketball for Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday 9 th	8:00 pm – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
<i>3rd Week</i>			
Thursday 15 th	8:30 pm – 11:00 pm	Basketball for Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday 16 th	8:00 pm – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
<i>4th Week</i>			
Sunday 18 th – Saturday 24 th		Camp Transfiguration	Quebec
Thursday 22 nd	8:30 pm – 11:00 pm	Basketball for Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday 23 rd	8:00 pm – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
<i>5th Week</i>			
Thursday 29 th	8:30 pm – 11:00 pm	Basketball for Adults	Gym at St. George Centre
Friday 30 th	8:00 pm – 11:30 pm	Families Gathering & Sports	Gym at St. George Centre
Saturday 31 st	8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Soccer Tournament	Markham Sports Dome



Antiochian Charities

www.childrenrelieffund.org

email: childrensrelieffund@gmail.com

“Whoever receives one little child like this in my name receives me.” (Matthew 18:5)

August 1, 2024

TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT AND DISTRIBUTED TO ALL PARISHIONERS

For over forty years the Children’s Relief Fund has provided financial support to help defray the cost of education for children in Lebanon and Palestine. Requests for such support have increased significantly in recent years. As a result of dire circumstances in Lebanon, many parents have become unable to pay tuition to send their children to Orthodox Christian schools. Our Orthodox schools are at risk of closing, and consequently many of our children will now have to attend a public school or to discontinue their schooling altogether.

With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan SABA, we are seeking your help. We have approximately thirty Lebanese children from the Archdioceses of Beirut, Koura, Tripoli, and Zahle who need assistance to continue their education at an Orthodox Christian school this coming school year. The tuition cost per student varies from \$750 to \$1200 per school year, depending on the school and the student’s grade level.

Donated funds will be wired directly to the Orthodox school in the child’s name. The child and their family will receive a notice of your support, and you will receive contact information so that you can communicate directly with the child if you wish. Children receiving a tuition scholarship will not receive any other funding from the Children’s Relief Fund. Sponsorship in any amount will be appreciated.

School begins in a few weeks, so if you can help, please contact CFR Administrator Amy Stiffler at: childrensrelieffund@gmail.com.

Children’s Relief Fund Scholarship Program

Antiochian Village
140 Church Camp Trail
Bolivar, PA 15923

God bless you for your consideration of this urgent request.

In Christ’s work,

Amy Stiffler, CRF Administrator & Executive Director
Anne Bourjaily Thomas, Charitable Outreach Chair

cc: His Eminence Metropolitan SABA

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Service of Entering the Newborn into the Church after Forty Days

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

Many questions surround the tradition of introducing a newborn child to the church after forty days.

The first question: Why forty days, and can it be done before that?

The number 40 carries spiritual significance in the Bible, dating back to the Old Testament. It symbolizes encounters with God. For instance:

- The Hebrew people wandered in the wilderness for 40 years before reaching the Promised Land.
- Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the Ten Commandments.
- Elijah, the prophet, fasted for 40 days.
- Most importantly, Jesus Christ Himself fasted for 40 days before starting His ministry.

This tradition echoes Leviticus 12, which says a newborn male child would be brought to the temple after 40 days, and a female child after 80 days. A sacrifice would be offered on their behalf. Following this practice, Joseph the Betrothed and the Theotokos presented the infant Jesus at the temple after 40 days (Luke 2:22-28). In the New Testament, the Church treated both male and female infants the same. By doing so, the Church followed the example set by Jesus.

This tradition continues today with a special service welcoming newborns into the church for the first time.

In ancient times, there was a crucial need for postpartum recovery and health. Mothers and newborns lacked the advanced medical care available today. Women typically remained confined to their homes, often bedridden, for several days after childbirth. During this period, they focused on nourishing themselves with wholesome food. Bleeding after childbirth was common, but it did not usually subside within a short time. Unlike today, there were no sanitary napkins, paper towels, or cotton swabs. This is why words like impurity, purity, and cleanliness are prevalent in the Book of Leviticus and the Old Testament. In the Gospel of Luke (2:22), we learn about the infant Jesus being presented at the temple on the day of purification.

In the past, newborns were often tightly wrapped in cloths for the first forty days. This practice aimed to keep the baby's limbs straight and prevent potential injuries like hip dislocation.

The forty-day timeframe was significant for both the mother's postpartum recovery and the baby's well-being. This period likely influenced the tradition of introducing the child to the church after forty days, further solidifying the timeframe's importance.

In today's world, thanks to advancements in medicine and healthcare, women often give birth in hospitals and are discharged within a day or two. They can quickly resume their normal activities. However, this modern reality prompts questions: Should a woman refrain from attending church until forty days have passed since her delivery? Should the newborn child not be taken to church before the forty-day mark?

The answers to these questions vary based on cultural norms and local customs. Nevertheless, the general pastoral approach emphasizes the importance of preserving the forty-day tradition. As mentioned earlier, the number 40 carries significant spiritual meaning. Disregarding this tradition might gradually diminish its significance and lead to the adoption of concepts that deviate from biblical teachings.

The next question is, can a newborn be brought inside the sanctuary? To answer this, we need to dive into the liturgical texts and explore the theological and historical reasons behind this tradition. By understanding the original meaning and the context in which it developed, we can arrive at a well-informed answer.

The Great Euchologion, a book for priests performing church services, offers specific instructions for postpartum women returning to church with their newborns:

After forty days, having completed her purification and ablutions (the washing of one's body, usually in a religious rite/meaning), the mother brings her child to the church. The future godfather/godmother (the person who will receive the child once baptized) is present as well. The mother stands with her child in the narthex, in front of the church doors. The priest, wearing his phelonion (outer garment), then approaches and says...

An addendum to this service states:

Know that if the child has not yet been baptized, the priest concludes the prayer, and the mother enters the church without the child. (In the margin of this note, the explanation is provided: Just as unbaptized adults, who are catechumens, are not allowed to enter the inner part of the church and remain in the narthex, the same rule applies for unbaptized children until their baptism.)

We can conclude from the previous text, that unbaptized individuals are not allowed to enter the sanctuary of the church. Instead, they remain in the narthex and observe the service from there.

After the Roman Empire converted to Christianity and paganism declined, the use of the narthex and consequently the category of catechumens diminished.

In many Orthodox churches located in countries that remained under Ottoman occupation for years—such as the Middle East, Greece, the Balkans, and parts of Bulgaria and Romania—extreme poverty and persecution led to the absence of a narthex. This resulted in the service for a newborn child being moved to the nave of the church. There, the priest holds the child in front of the icon of the Mother of God in the iconostasis, and recites the troparion, "Rejoice, O Mother of God, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." The answer to the preceding question is reaffirmed: neither male nor female unbaptized children enter the sanctuary for this ceremony.

However, should there be an urgent reason to baptize a child before the traditional forty-day period, the baptismal service makes no mention of the protocol for introducing the newly baptized into the sanctuary. In keeping with ancient tradition, only the priest and his assistant are permitted entry into the sanctuary during the service. We shall delve deeper into this subject in a forthcoming article.

Consequently, the priest is to conduct the service at the church's western entrance. Following this, he will proceed into the church with the child, accompanied by the mother or both parents, to the front of the iconostasis. There, in front of the icon of the Theotokos, the priest will bestow a blessing upon the child as previously described, before entrusting the child back to the care of the parents.

One remaining question is: when should this service be performed? It's actually an independent ceremony, flexible in timing. In the past, in smaller towns in Orthodox countries, access to churches was easier. Work schedules didn't prevent mothers

and children from attending on the fortieth day itself. However, in today's world, the service often takes place on Sundays. After the choir finishes chanting "Holy God" during the Great Doxology (in Orthros), the priest begins the prayers for the child and mother at the church's entrance. He then completes the blessing in front of the iconostasis, before returning the child to the parents. This practice allows the entire parish community, as one united church, to share the joy of welcoming a new member, the newborn child.

May God bless your children and keep them by His grace always.

خدمة دخول الطفل في اليوم الأربعين

المتروبوليت سابا (اسبر)

ثمة تساؤلات عديدة بخصوص خدمة إدخال الطفل المولود حديثاً في تمام الأربعين يوماً إلى الكنيسة.

السؤال الأول: لماذا أربعين يوماً؟ وهل يمكن إدخاله قبل ذلك؟

يحمل رقم ٤٠ دلالة روحية في الكتاب المقدس منذ العهد القديم. إنه رمز اللقاء مع الله. فالشعب العبراني تاه في البرية أربعين سنة قبل الدخول إلى أرض الميعاد، وموسى النبي صام أربعين يوماً قبل استلامه الوصايا العشر، وكذلك إيليا النبي، والرب يسوع المسيح نفسه صام أربعين يوماً قبل البدء ببشارته. من هنا كان التقليد في العهد القديم أن يؤتى بالمولود حديثاً في تمام الأربعين إلى الهيكل إذا كان ذكراً، وفي تمام الثمانين يوماً إذا كان أنثى (لا ١٢)، وتقديم ذبيحة من أجله. وهذا ما تمّمه يوسف ووالدة الإله بالطفل يسوع (لو ٢٢/٢٨-٢٩). أما في العهد الجديد فقد ساوت الكنيسة بين الذكر والأنثى واتبعت التقليد الذي تمّم مع الرب يسوع لكل من الذكر والأنثى.

اتبعت الكنيسة هذا التقليد منذ البدء ووضعت في ما بعد خدمة خاصة لإدخال الطفل إلى الكنيسة للمرة الأولى.

إلى ذلك ثمة حاجة صحية واستشفائية ضرورية آنذاك لمدة يقضيها الطفل ووالدته في البيت. فالعناية الطبية بالوالدة وبالمولود لم تكن متطورة ومتقدمة كما هي اليوم. فالمرأة كانت تلزم البيت، وغالباً الفراش أياماً عديدة بعد ولادتها وتتقوى بطعام معذّب. وإذا ما نزلت ما كان النزيف ينقضي بسهولة وخلال فترة قصيرة. ولم تكن المناديل الطبية والورقية والقطنية متوفرة. من هنا نفهم ورود كلمات مثل "نجاسة وطهارة ونظافة" في كتاب الأفعولوجي والعهد القديم. ورد في رواية دخول يسوع الطفل إلى الهيكل "ولما حان يوم طهورهما" (لو ٢٢/٢).

أما الطفل المولود فغالباً ما كان يُلفّ بقمط شديد لمدة أربعين يوماً. اعتُبر هذا الإجراء، في الماضي، ضرورياً لاستقامة جسده لئلا يصيبه أي خلع أو ما شابه من الأضرار الجسدية. استشفاء المرأة الوالدة وصحة واستقامة جسد الطفل المولود كانت تسغرق أربعين يوماً قديماً. ومما لا شك فيه أن تقليد دخول الطفل بعد إتمامه الأربعين يوماً إلى الكنيسة لعب دوراً في ترسيخ هذا الرقم أيضاً.

أما اليوم فبسبب تقدم الطب ووسائل العناية الطبية، صارت المرأة تلد في المستشفى وتخرج منها في اليوم التالي بعامة، وتستطيع ممارسة حياتها الطبيعية بعد فترة قصيرة جداً. لذا فالسؤال الذي يُطرح أحياناً هل تمتنع عن الذهاب إلى الكنيسة حتى تنقضي الأربعين يوماً على ولادتها؟ وهل يجب ألا نأخذ الطفل المولود إلى الكنيسة قبل الأربعين يوماً؟ هنا قد تتعدد الأجوبة بتعدد الثقافات والأوضاع في كل بلد. لكن التوجه الرعائي العام يأخذ بأهمية المحافظة على تقليد الأربعين يوماً لأن الرقم ٤٠ يحمل دلالة روحية مهمة كما سبق وذكرنا، ويتجاوز التقليد هذا سننسى مع الزمن دلالاته، وتالياً سنكتسب مفاهيم بعيدة عن تربية الكتاب المقدس.

السؤال الثاني هو حول جواز إدخال الطفل إذا كان أنثى إلى الهيكل كما هو الحال مع الذكر؟ هنا يجب العودة إلى كتب الخدمة الطقسية لنجد الجواب الأصيل. إذ إن معرفتنا النصوص الأصيلة والأسباب اللاهوتية والتاريخية التي دعت إلى وضعها هي التي تعطينا الجواب الصحيح.

جاء في كتاب الأفخولوجي الكبير (وهو الكتاب الذي يفصل كيفية إتمام الخدم الطقسية التي يتمها الكاهن للمؤمنين في مختلف الأعياد والمناسبات) بخصوص دخول المرأة النفساء إلى الكنيسة مع ولدها:

"في اليوم الأربعين من ميلاد الطفل تأتي أمه بعد تطهيرها واغتسالها لكي تدخله الكنيسة، ويكون حاضراً معها المزمع أن يتقبل الطفل من جرن المعمودية (العزّاب). فتقف الأم مع طفلها في النارتكس أمام أبواب الكنيسة. فيتقدم الكاهن لابساً بطرشييه ويقول".
وجاء في تنبيه ملحق بهذه الخدمة:

"اعلم أن الطفل إذا كان لم يتعمّد بعد، يختم الكاهن الصلاة فتدخل أم الطفل الكنيسة بدون أن تُدخل الطفل معها. (وجاء في حاشية التنبيه هذا الشرح: كما أن البالغين غير المعتمدين الذين هم بعد موعوظون لا يجوز دخولهم إلى داخل الكنيسة، بل يُقدّمون في النارتكس، كذلك لا يجوز إدخال الطفل غير المعمود إلى داخل الكنيسة، بل يصير إدخاله بعد تعميده.) نستنتج من هذا النص أن غير المعتمدين لا يستطيعون الدخول إلى صحن الكنيسة، بل يبقون في النارتكس ويتابعونها منه.

سقط استعمال النارتكس بعد تحول الامبراطورية الرومانية إلى المسيحية وزوال الوثنية، وتالياً الموعوظين. كذلك عدم وجود النارتكس في كثير من كنائس البلدان الأرثوذكسية الكثيرة التي ظلت سنوات تحت الاحتلال العثماني بسبب الفقر والاضطهاد الشديدين، مثل بلدان الشرق الأوسط الحالي ودول البلقان واليونان وأجزاء من بلغاريا ورومانيا، فقد انتقلت خدمة الطفل المولود حديثاً هذه إلى صحن الكنيسة، ومباركته أمام أيقونة والدة الإله المثبتة في الإيقونسطاس، إذ يتلو الكاهن أمامها، وهو يحمل الطفل طروبارية: "فرحي يا والدة الإله الممتلئة نعمة الرب معك". والجواب على السؤال المطروح تالياً يكون بأن لا الذكر ولا الأنثى يُدخل بهما إلى الهيكل لأنهما لم يعتمدا بعد.

أما إذا كان الطفل معتمداً قبل إتمامه الأربعين يوماً لسبب طارئ ما، فخدمة المعمودية لا تذكر شيئاً عن إدخال المعتمد حديثاً إلى الهيكل. إذ بحسب التقليد الأصيل لا يدخل إلى

الهيكل إلا الكاهن ومن يساعده في الخدمة، ولنا عودة خاصة إلى هذا الموضوع في مقال آخر.

نستنتج إذاً أنّ الكاهن يجب أن يتمم الخدمة عند باب الكنيسة الغربي، ومن ثم يدخل بالطفل ووالدته أو والديه إلى أمام الأيقونسطاس، وبارك الطفل كما أسلفنا أمام أيقونة والدة الإله، ومن ثم يسلمه لوالديه.

يبقى السؤال الأخير متى تتم هذه الخدمة. في الواقع هي خدمة مستقلة بذاتها يمكن أن تُتمم في أي وقت، خاصة وأنه في البلدان الأرثوذكسية قديماً كانت المدن صغيرة والوصول إلى الكنائس سهلاً، كما أن ظروف العمل لم تكن لتعيق إدخال الأم والطفل في تمام الأربعين يوماً بالضبط. أما حالياً فتتم الخدمة في أيام الأحاد، في نهاية الذكصولوجيا. يبدأ الكاهن بالصلاة على الطفل ووالدته بعد انتهاء الجوقة من ترتيل "قدوس الله"، في مدخل الكنيسة، ثم يتمم تبريكه أمام الأيقونسطاس وتسليمه إلى والديه. ذلك نظراً إلى أهمية مشاركة الرعية كلّها بفرح المولود (العضو) الجديد الذي سينتمي إلى هذه الرعية. بارك الله أولادكم وحفظهم بنعمته على الدوام.

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