



PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

You are welcomed & loved by St Anthony's Community

We are transformed through prayer, acts of love, forgiveness, service & stewardship

PARISH OFFICE: 978-685-7233

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Office E-mail: rectory@stanthonylawrence.org

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SCAN ME



VENMO



PAYPAL



WEEKLY
BULLETIN



DAILY
READINGS

لانجيل اليومي



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Sunday of the Announcement to Zechariah

أحد بشارة زكريا

BELIEVE AND
DON'T DOUBT

LUKE 1:1-25

LITURGIES INTENTIONS

Daily Liturgies

Season of the Glorious Birth of Our Lord

ANNOUNCEMENT TO ZECHARIAH

Saturday, November 16 (Eng.) *St. Matthew the Evangelist*

4:00 pm In Honor of Cecilia Hatem

+ Maroun Mouawad, *By his wife, Habouba, children, Simon, Michael, Renee, & their families*

Sunday, November 17 *St. Gregory the Wonderworker*

8:00 am + Private Intentions

9:30 am + Private Intentions

11:00 am + Jean El Helou, *By his son, Tony, his daughter, Lola, their spouses, & their families*

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE VIRGIN MARY

Saturday, November 23 (Eng.)

St. Sassine

4:00 pm + **40 Day Anniversary** - Afife El-Hachem, *By her children & their families*

+ Ghassan Raad, *By a loving parishioner*

Sunday, November 24 *St. Catherine of Alexandria*

8:00 am + Private Intention

9:30 am Gratitude Liturgy, *By Team Fantastically Fantastic*

11:00 am + **40 Day Anniversary** - Mary Ata Abdallah, *By Ibrahim Ata & family*

+ Mary Ata, *By her son, Tony Ata & family*

+ Said & Chafica Azzi, & Elham Azzi, *By Pierre Azzi & family*

Monday, November 18 (Ar.)

St. Romanos / Rom 4:1-12 / Jn 8:31-37

9:00 am + Mother Rita Chukrallah, Adla & Chukrallah Chukrallah, *By Mr. & Mrs. Wissam Merheb & family*

Tuesday, November 19 (Eng.)

Pope St. Pontian / Rom 2:1-8 / Jn 8:38-40

9:00 am + Private Intention

Wednesday, November 20 (Ar.)

St. Gregory / Rom 2:9-16 / Jn 8:41-45

9:00 am + Ghassan Raad, *By Dr. & Mrs. George Abou Ezzi*

Thursday, November 21 (Eng.)

Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the temple / Rom 2:17-29 / Jn 8:46-50

9:00 am + Larry & Dora M. Pereira, *By Dora Pereira*

9:30 am - Noon Eucharistic Adoration

Friday, November 22 **OFFICE CLOSED**

Sts. Joachim & Anne, Parents of the Virgin Mary / Rom 3:1-12 / Jn 8:51-55

Weekly Collections For the week of 11/17/2024

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Candles | 111.00 |
| Donation | 1,600.00 |
| Maronite Patriarchal Charity | 50.00 |
| Sunday Collection | 4,096.10 |
| Utilities, Fuel, & Electricity | 355.00 |
| Total | \$6,212.10 |

UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTION

Please remember to remit your Fuel/Utilities Envelope. Your contribution helps us keep the Heat on in the Winter and the AC on in the Summer. Thank you!

PLEASE NOTE

40 Day Liturgies are considered a priority. When necessary, they will be scheduled with other previously reserved intentions.



"The Silent Journey of Trust and Hope"

Dear Parishioners,

In the Gospel of Luke for the Sunday of Zechariah, we encounter a powerful moment when Zechariah, upon hearing the angel Gabriel's promise of a son, questions how this could happen given his and his wife Elizabeth's old age. As a result of his doubt, Zechariah is struck silent. What seems at first like a sanction—being unable to speak—reveals itself as an opportunity for reflection, prayer, and trust in God's timing.

God's timing is often mysterious and challenges us to deepen our faith. Zechariah and Elizabeth had likely prayed for years for a child, but when their prayers were finally answered, Zechariah struggled to believe. How often do we also question God's timing, especially when His promises seem delayed or impossible? In these moments, God invites us to wait patiently, trusting that His plan unfolds in ways we may not understand but that always aim at our ultimate good. Zechariah's silence is more than a punishment; it is an invitation to grow in faith. Without the ability to speak, he is drawn into a period of contemplation, giving him time to ponder the angel's words, to observe God's unfolding work, and to cultivate a deeper trust. In this silence, Zechariah's doubt is transformed into faith, and by the time his voice is restored, he is ready to proclaim the greatness of God with a renewed heart. For us, too, periods of silence or waiting can be gifts if we allow them to be. When answers to our prayers are delayed or when we face situations that test our faith, we can see these as opportunities to draw closer to God. Silence invites us to listen more carefully, to open our hearts, and to trust that God's promises will be fulfilled in their perfect time. So, Zechariah teaches us that God's timing is always purposeful. Let us embrace these moments of waiting and silence, not as sanctions but as sacred times to think, pray, and deepen our faith, knowing that God's plan is unfolding and that His promises will be fulfilled in ways far beyond our understanding.

As parishioners at Saint Anthony, preparing for the Christmas season and journeying together in this Year of Hope, let us see ourselves as *Pilgrims of Hope*, knowing that God walks with us in each moment, especially in times of waiting. We learn to trust that, like Zechariah, our moments of silence and reflection can be times of grace. Let us approach Christmas with renewed hope, confident that Christ's light shines through all our waiting, bringing peace and joy to each of us.

In Christ's love,

Fr. Neemtallah (Edgard) Oneissy

OFFICE HOURS:

M-TH 10:00 am-3:00 pm

FRI OFFICE CLOSED

SAT By Appointment

DAILY LITURGIES @ 9 am

MON & WED (Ar)

TUE & THU (Eng)

WEEKEND LITURGIES

SAT 4 pm (Eng)

SUN 8am(Ar) 9:30 am (Eng)

11 am (Eng.& Ar)

Holy days of obligation:

Vigil Liturgy @ 7:00 pm

MEET OUR PRIESTS:

Chorbishop Elie Mikhael

(305) 807-9087

Fr. Edgard -Neemtallah- Oneissy

(857)390-4838

pastor@stanthonylawrence.org

MEET OUR DEACONS:

Nadim Daou, James T. Demers,

& David Leard

Sub-Deacon: Antoine Nammour

CLERGY DAY OFF

Fr. Neemtallah: Wednesdays

SACRAMENTS

Baptism & Confirmation:

1 month in advance with the Pastor,

Donations: Church: \$200

Priest: Free Will

Matrimony: *Arrangements should be made by couples six months prior to the wedding date*

Donations: Church \$500

Priest: Free Will

Reconciliation: *One hour Before Thursday & Saturday Liturgies, or by appointment*

Anointing of the Sick: *Please notify the Rectory if a member of your family is ill, hospitalized, or unable to come to Church and would like to receive communion at home*

Please refer to our website for more Sacrament Celebrations Guidelines.



Purpose:

Form a Men of Saint Joseph (MSJ) group at Saint Anthony's church taking the earthly father of Jesus as a guide and intercessor, and create the opportunity to pray, share our experience and grow in faith together on our journey to eternal life promised to us by Jesus the crucified.

Monthly Meeting Schedule

Third Saturday of every month @ 8 am at Saint Anthony Maronite Church Hall.

Family of St Sharbel & Our Lady of Lebanon Ladies Guild



Thursday, November 21, 2024: Rosary @ 6:30pm followed by The liturgy & procession

Every Tuesday—Zoom Prayer @ 8pm

Zoom ID: 335616991

Passcode: 816342

Or you can join by clicking this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/335616991>

For more information email:

communications@familyofsaintsharbel.org

M-WINE

"We Serve Better Together"



Next event:

Monday, November 18, 2024

6pm - 7:30pm @ Church Hall

KNIGHTS OF THE ALTAR

Next Meeting:

Saturday, December 7, 2024,

11 am- 12:30 pm @ Church hall

Remember to bring your handbooks to the meetings.

New applicants are always welcome!

OBSERVANCES

Thanksgiving Day - Office Closed

Thursday, November 28, 2024

SANCTUARY LAMPS



In Honor of Cecilia Hatem

Book your Sanctuary lamp Online:

www.stanthonylawrence.org/sanctuary-lamp/

MARONITE YOUTH ORGANIZATION-MYO

Next Meeting:

Sunday, December 1, 2024 @ 6 - 7:30 pm

www.stanthonylawrence.org/myo/

KNIGHTS OF MARY

Next Session:

Saturday, November 16, 2024 @ 5 - 7 pm

www.stanthonylawrence.org/registration-form-

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Next Sessions:

Saturday, November 23 @ 5 - 7 pm

Please visit our website for the yearly calendar

www.stanthonylawrence.org/registrationform/

We are always looking for substitute teachers. If

you are interested please email us at

Lawrencereligious@gmail.com

Maronite Servants of Christ the Light

Come & See Retreat Weekend

For young adult women (ages 18-39)

November 29- December 1, 2024 @

Mother of the Light Convent, Dartmouth, MA

For more information or to register please visit

maroniteservants.org.

Christmas of Hope 2024 Program

Together, as one family and one community, we will celebrate the birth of our Savior and embrace the hope and renewal Christ brings into our lives. We warmly encourage each of you and your families to participate in the various gatherings, liturgies, and festivities.

Stay tuned for more details about each event as we approach the season!

- **Friday, December 6:** Women's Christmas Party
- **Sunday, December 8, 3-6 PM:** Christmas Tree Lighting
- **Tuesday, December 10:** Men's Christmas Party
- **Friday, December 13, 7 PM:** Christmas Recital
- **Saturday, December 14, 5 PM:** Kids Christmas Party
- **Friday, December 20, 9AM - 2PM:** Seniors Christmas Day
- **Saturday, December 21, 5 PM:** CCD Christmas Party

Christmas Novena:

Sunday, December 15 - Monday, December 23:

6 PM Confessions, 7 PM Novena (EN/AR)

Jingle and Mingle

please Join the Daughters of Saint Anthony for a holiday celebration

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2nd @ 12pm
Church Hall
Lunch \$5 per person

RSVP BY NOVEMBER 24TH
*Katy Abraham (978-682-2571) - Elaine Ferris (978-273-9772) -
Christine Hassan (978-937-9913)*

Add some festivities and bring \$5 scratch ticket if you would like to participate

YOU ARE INVITED TO

MWINE
Maronite Women in the New Evangelization
St. Anthony Maronite Church

LADIES CHRISTMAS PARTY

FEATURING DJ ROY C.
DINNER, RAFFLE BASKETS,
ENTERTAINMENT & MUCH MORE!!!

\$100 PER LADY

DECEMBER 6 AT 7:00 PM
FRIDAY

ATKINSON RESORT & COUNTRY CLUB
85 COUNTRY CLUB DR | ATKINSON, NH 03811

RSVP BY NOVEMBER 30TH TO
MARY FRANCIS (978)960 7479
AMALE CHANTIRI (978) 835 7382

NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

SAINT ANTHONY MARONITE CHURCH LAWRENCE PRESENTS

MENS CHRISTMAS PARTY

MUSIC - GAMES - FUN - CASH BAR

\$55

NO TICKETS AT DOOR

10TH DEC

**PHOENICIAN RESTAURANT
MICHAEL'S FUNCTION HALL
12 ALPHA STREET
HAVERHILL, MA**

DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM
DINNER SERVED AT 7:45PM

MENU INCLUDES:
APPS: HUMMUS, TABOULI, BABA, RAW KIBBEE, VEGETABLE PLATTER, FRIES
MAIN: CHICKEN KABOB OVER RICE PILAF, TENDERLOIN WITH PEPPERS & ONIONS

FOR INFO OR TICKETS CONTACT:
FRED COREY | ROD PICA | WISSAM MERHEB | ELIAS AZZI | DANNY AZZI



St. Anthony Thanksgiving Food Drive

Sponsored by
The Knights of Columbus

Help us reach our goal of providing food for needy families and the Maronite Monks at Petersham

Please consider donating a grocery bag with:

- Canned vegetables
- Brown rice & quinoa
- Canned diced tomato's
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Canned olives
- Dried fruit
- Canned tuna & chicken
- Walnuts
- Stuffing mix
- Soup & broth
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Boxed mac and cheese
- Baking ingredients
- Healthy breakfast cereal
- Old fashioned oats
- Herbal tea-decaf

Please drop off food items in the church lobby by November 21st

Thank you for your generosity & continued blessings

Join
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
for a
FALAFEL LUNCH



\$10
Falafel Wrap



\$2
Drink

ST ANTHONY CHURCH
LAWRENCE, MA

NOVEMBER 17, 2024

AFTER 9AM AND 11AM LITURGY
PRE-ORDER AVAILABLE



\$15
Falafel Plate - 6pc

PLATE AND DOZEN
INCLUDE
TAHINI - VEGGIES - BREAD



\$25
Falafel Dozen

To Pre Order - Contact:
Wissam Merheb @ 978.853.5145
Elias Azzi @ 978.651.1040

Cash
Or
Check

Winter Hats, Gloves, Mittens, and Socks Drive COMING SOON



Sponsored by Daughters of St. Anthony

Drop off Box will be in the church lobby
beginning of November

Thank you for your donation!

NOVEMBER
Sat, 23rd - Sun, 24th
9AM - 4PM

HOLIDAY BAZAAR AND CRAFT FAIR

FREE ADMISSION

CRAFTS, LEBANESE FOOD & PASTRY
GIFT BASKETS, HOME DECOR
FARMERS MARKET AND SO MUCH
MORE!

300 N. EASTERN AVENUE
FALL RIVER, MA 02723

FOR MORE INFORMATION
P: (508) 672-7653
OFFICE@SAOTD-FR.ORG

CONGRATULATIONS!

Baptized & Confirmed

James Michael Corey

Son of Fred & Bobbi Corey

Danielle Sfeir

Daughter of Elie & Michelle Sfeir

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." ~Mark 16:16

BIRTHDAY WISHES

- November 16:** Logan Gabriel, Leslie Hassan
- November 17:** Natasha Hashem, Pascal Zaarour
- November 18:** Chaouki Bouchrouche, Amale Chantiri, Andrew Dabrowski, Fadi Francis
- November 19:** Rana Abi-Rached, Ana Bradley, Ayla Jean, Nadine Sader, Wayne Swanson
- November 20:** Pierre Abdilmasih, Marie Akiki, Fred Corey, Cecelia Hatem, Roy Rached, Sharbel Saab, Michelle Sfeir
- November 21:** Louis Assaf, Rita Azzi, Gabriel Farhat, Michael Karam, George Saad, Erin Sadek, Bernice Spencer
- November 22:** Colleen Abraham, Helen Bouchrouche, Yvonne Phares, Meara Younes

ANNIVERSARY WISHES

- November 19:** Mounir & Antoinette Jermayn
- November 20:** James & Lisa Abdallah
Joseph & Maria Azzi,
Kenneth & Maureen Daher

LECTORS SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 16 - 4 pm - Ramona Yammine
Sunday, November 17 -
 8:00 am - Mouna Hbaiter
 9:30 am - Michael Faris
 11:00 am - (Eng) Mansour Chaya
 (Ar) Maribelle Spiridon

LECTORS SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 23 - 4 pm - Patricia Ferguson
Sunday, November 24 -
 8:00 am - Huguette Sfeir
 9:30 am - Catherine Abou Khalil
 11:00 am - (Eng) Anthony Ata
 (Ar) Roula Nassar

ST. AUGUSTINE SCHOOL
Forming Saints and Scholars Since 1914

OPEN HOUSE
 ENROLLING NURSERY - GRADE 8

Thursday, November 21st
 9:30 - 11AM | 5:30 - 7PM

Discover how we bring our mission of forming the next generation of saints and scholars to life. Come meet our faculty and administrators, explore our classrooms, tour the campus, chat with current parents and more!

We can't wait to welcome you!

26 Central Street, Andover MA

www.staugustineandover.org

Sunday of the Announcement to Zechariah

Book of Genesis 17: 15-22

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.' Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, 'Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?' And Abraham said to God, 'O that Ishmael might live in your sight!' God said, 'No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.' And when he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

Letter to the Romans 4: 13-25

The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations') in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 1: 1-25

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed. In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' Zechariah said to the angel, 'How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.' The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.' Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, 'This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.'

أحد بشارة زكريا

سفر التكوين 17: 15 - 22

قَالَ اللهُ لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ: «سَارَائِي أَمْرَأَتُكَ لَا تُسَمِّيهَا سَارَائِي، بَلْ سَمِّهَا سَارَةُ. وَأَنَا أُبَارِكُهَا وَأَرْزُقُكَ مِنْهَا ابْنًا وَأُبَارِكُهَا فَتَصِيرُ أُمَّمًا، وَمَلُوكٌ شُعُوبٍ مِنْهَا يَخْرُجُونَ. فَسَقَطَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ وَصَحِكَ، وَقَالَ فِي قَلْبِهِ: «الْإِبْنُ مِئَةَ سَنَةٍ يُوَلَدُ وَوَلَدٌ، أَمْ سَارَةُ وَهِيَ ابْنَةٌ تَسْعِينَ سَنَةً، تَلِدُ؟». فَقَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِلَّهِ: «لَوْ أَنَّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ يَحْيَا أُمَّامَ وَجْهَكَ!». فَقَالَ اللهُ: «بَلْ سَارَةُ أَمْرَأَتُكَ سَتَلِدُ لَكَ ابْنًا وَسَمِّهِ إِسْحَاقَ، وَأَقِيمُ عَهْدِي مَعَهُ، عَهْدًا أَبَدِيًّا، لِأَكُونَ لَهُ إِلَهًا لِنَسْلِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ. وَأَمَّا إِسْمَاعِيلُ فَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ قَوْلَكَ فِيهِ. وَهَاءَ نَدَا أُبَارِكُكَ وَأَتَمِّمُهُ وَأَكْثِرُهُ جَدًّا جَدًّا، وَيَلِدُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ رَئِيسًا، وَأَجْعَلُهُ أُمَّةً عَظِيمَةً. غَيْرَ أَنَّ عَهْدِي أَقِيمُهُ مَعَ إِسْحَاقَ الَّذِي تَلِدُهُ لَكَ سَارَةُ فِي مِثْلِ هَذَا الْوَقْتِ مِنَ السَّنَةِ الْمُقْبِلَةِ. فَلَمَّا أَنْتَهَى اللهُ مِنَ مُخَاطَبَةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، ارْتَفَعَ عَنْهُ.

رسالة القديس بولس إلى أهل رومة 4: 13-25

يَا إِخْوَتِي، الْوَعْدُ لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ أَوْ لِنَسْلِهِ بِأَنْ يَكُونَ وَارثًا لِلْعَالَمِ، لَمْ يَكُنْ بِوَاسِطَةِ الشَّرِيعَةِ، بَلْ بِالْبِرِّ الَّذِي نَالَهُ بِالْإِيمَانِ. فَلَوْ كَانَ أَهْلُ الشَّرِيعَةِ هُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ، لِأَبْطَلَ الْإِيمَانُ، وَالْغِي الْوَعْدُ؛ لِأَنَّ الشَّرِيعَةَ تُسَبِّبُ غَضَبَ اللهِ؛ وَحَيْثُ لَا شَرِيعَةَ، فَلَا تَعْدِي لِلشَّرِيعَةِ. لِذَلِكَ فَأَهْلُ الْإِيمَانِ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ، لِكَيْ تَكُونَ الْوَرَاثَةُ هِبَةً مِنَ اللهِ. وَهَكَذَا تَحَقَّقَ الْوَعْدُ لِكُلِّ نَسْلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، لِأَنَّ النِّسْلَ الَّذِي هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّرِيعَةِ فَحَسَبُ، بَلْ أَيْضًا لِلنِّسْلِ الَّذِي هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْإِيمَانِ، إِيْمَانِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، الَّذِي هُوَ أَبٌ لَنَا أَجْمَعِينَ؛ كَمَا هُوَ مَكْتُوبُ: «إِنِّي جَعَلْتُكَ أَبَا لَأُمَّمٍ كَثِيرَةٍ». فَإِبْرَاهِيمُ الَّذِي آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ هُوَ أَبٌ لَنَا أُمَّامَ اللهُ، الَّذِي يُخَيِّ الأَمْوَاتِ، وَيَدْعُو غَيْرَ الْمَوْجُودِ إِلَى الْوُجُودِ. وَقَدْ آمَنَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَاجِيًا عَلَى غَيْرِ رَجَاءٍ، بِأَنَّهُ سَيَصِيرُ أَبًا لَأُمَّمٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، كَمَا قِيلَ لَهُ: «هَكَذَا يَكُونُ نَسْلُكَ». وَلَمْ يَضْعُفْ بِإِيمَانِهِ، بَرَّغَمَ أَنَّهُ رَأَى، وَهُوَ أَبْنُ نَحْوِ مِئَةِ سَنَةٍ، أَنَّ جَسَدَهُ مَائِتٌ، وَأَنَّ حَسَا سَارَةَ قَدْ مَاتَتْ. وَبِنَاءِ عَلَى وَعْدِ اللهِ، مَا شَكَكَ وَلَا تَرَدَّدَ، بَلْ تَقَوَّى بِالْإِيمَانِ، وَمَجَّدَ اللهُ. وَأَيُّنَ مَلَأَ الْيَقِينِ أَنَّ اللهُ قَادِرٌ أَنْ يُنْجِزَ مَا وَعَدَ بِهِ. فَلِذَلِكَ حُسِبَ لَهُ إِيْمَانُهُ بَرًّا. وَلَمْ يُكْتَبْ مِنْ أَجْلِهِ وَحْدَهُ أَنَّهُ «حُسِبَ لَهُ بَرًّا»، بَلْ كُتِبَ أَيْضًا مِنْ أَجْلِنَا، نَحْنُ الَّذِينَ سَيُحْسَبُ لَنَا بَرًّا، لِأَنَّنا نُوْمِنُ بِالَّذِي أَقَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الأَمْوَاتِ يَسُوعَ رَبَّنَا، الَّذِي أَسْلَمَ مِنْ أَجْلِ زِلَاتِنَا، وَأَقِيمَ مِنْ أَجْلِ تَبْرِيرِنَا.

انجيل القديس لوقا 1: 1-25

بِمَا أَنَّ كَثِيرِينَ أَخَذُوا يُرْتَبُونَ رِوَايَةَ لِلأَخْدَاتِ الَّتِي تَمَّتْ عِنْدَنَا، كَمَا سَلَّمَهَا إِلَيْنَا مَنْ كَانُوا مِنْذُ الْبَدءِ شُهُودَ عِيَانٍ لِلْكَلِمَةِ، ثُمَّ صَارُوا خُدَامًا لَهَا، رَأَيْتُ أَنَا أَيْضًا، أَيُّهَا الشَّرِيفُ نَبُوفِيلُ، أَنَّ أَكْتُبَهَا لَكَ بِحَسَبِ تَرْتِيبِهَا، بَعْدَمَا تَتَبَعْتُهَا كُلَّهَا، مِنْذُ بَدَائِيتِهَا، تَتَّبَعًا دَقِيقًا، لِكَيْ تَتَيَقَّنَ صِحَّةَ الْكَلَامِ الَّذِي وُعِظَتْ بِهِ. كَانَ فِي أَيَّامِ هِيرُودُسَ، مَلِكِ الْيَهُودِيَّةِ، كَاهِنٌ أَسْمُهُ زَكْرِيَّا، مِنْ فِرْقَةِ أَبِييَا، لَهُ أَمْرَأَةٌ مِنْ بَنَاتِ هَارُونَ أَسْمُهَا إِلِيسَابَاتُ. وَكَانَا كِلَاهُمَا بَارَيْنِ أُمَّامَ اللهُ، سَالِكَيْنِ فِي جَمِيعِ وَصَايَا الرَّبِّ وَأَحْكَامِهِ بِلا لُومٍ. وَمَا كَانَ لهُمَا وَوَلَدٌ، لِأَنَّ إِلِيسَابَاتُ كَانَتْ عَاقِرًا، وَكَانَا كِلَاهُمَا قَدْ طَعَنَّا فِي أَيَّامِهِمَا. وَفِيمَا كَانَ زَكْرِيَّا يَقُومُ بِالْخِدْمَةِ الْكَهْنَوِيَّةِ أُمَّامَ اللهُ، فِي أَتْنَاءِ نَوْبَةِ فِرْقَتِهِ، أَصَابَتْهُ الْفُرْعَةُ، بِحَسَبِ عَادَةِ الْكَهْنُوتِ، لِيَدْخُلَ مَقْدِسَ هَيْكَلِ الرَّبِّ وَيُحْرِقَ الْبُخُورَ. وَكَانَ كُلُّ جُمُهورِ الشَّعْبِ يُصَلِّي فِي الْخَارِجِ، فِي أَتْنَاءِ إِحْرَاقِ الْبُخُورِ. وَتَرَاءَى مَلَكَ الرَّبِّ لِزَكْرِيَّا وَاقِفًا مِنْ عَن يَمِينِ مَذْبَحِ الْبُخُورِ، فَأَضْطَرَبَ زَكْرِيَّا جِينَ رَأَاهُ، وَأَسْتَوَلَى عَلَيْهِ الْخَوْفُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ الْمَلَكَ: «لَا تَخَفْ، يَا زَكْرِيَّا، فَقَدْ أُسْتَجِيبَتْ طَلِبَتُكَ، وَأَمْرَأَتُكَ إِلِيسَابَاتُ سَتَلِدُ لَكَ ابْنًا، فَسَمِّهِ يُوحَنَّا. وَيَكُونُ لَكَ فَرْحٌ وَأَبْتِهَاجٌ، وَيَفْرَحُ بِمَوْلِدِهِ كَثِيرُونَ، لِأَنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ عَظِيمًا فِي نَظَرِ الرَّبِّ، لَا يَشْرَبُ خَمْرًا وَلَا مُسْكِرًا، وَيَمْتَلِئُ مِنَ الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَهُوَ بَعْدُ فِي حَسَا أُمَّهِ. وَيَزِدُّ كَثِيرِينَ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَى الرَّبِّ إِلِهِهِمْ. وَيَسِيرُ أُمَّامَ الرَّبِّ بِرُوحِ إِبِلِيَّا وَقُوَّتِهِ، لِيَزِدَّ قُلُوبَ الأَبَاءِ إِلَى الأَبْنَاءِ، وَالعِصَاةِ إِلَى حِكْمَةِ الأَبْرَارِ، فِيهِبِي لِلرَّبِّ شَعْبًا مُعَدًّا خَيْرَ إِعْدَادٍ». فَقَالَ زَكْرِيَّا لِلْمَلَكَ: «بِمَادَا أَعْرِفُ هَذَا؟ فَإِنِّي أَنَا شَيْخٌ، وَأَمْرَأَتِي قَدْ طَعَنَتْ فِي أَيَّامِهَا!». فَأَجَابَ الْمَلَكَ وَقَالَ لَهُ: «أَنَا هُوَ جِبْرَائِيلُ الْوَاقِفُ فِي حَضْرَةِ اللهِ، وَقَدْ أُرْسِلْتُ لَأَكَلِمَكَ وَأَبَشِّرَكَ بِهِذَا. وَهَا أَنْتَ تَكُونُ صَامِتًا، لَا تَقْدِرُ أَنْ تَتَكَلَّمَ، حَتَّى الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي يَخْدُثُ فِيهِ ذَلِكَ، لِأَنَّكَ لَمْ تُؤْمِنْ بِكَلَامِي الَّذِي سَمِعْتَهُ فِي أَوَانِهِ». وَكَانَ الشَّعْبُ يَنْتَظِرُ زَكْرِيَّا، وَيَتَعَجَّبُ مِنْ إِبْطَانِهِ فِي مَقْدِسِ الْهَيْكَلِ. وَلَمَّا خَرَجَ زَكْرِيَّا، لَمْ يَكُنْ قَادِرًا أَنْ يَكَلِّمَهُمْ، فَأَدْرَكُوا أَنَّهُ رَأَى رُؤْيَا فِي الْمَقْدِسِ، وَكَانَ يُشِيرُ إِلَيْهِمْ بِالإِشَارَةِ، وَبَقِيَ أَبْكَمًا. وَلَمَّا تَمَّتْ أَيَّامُ خِدْمَتِهِ، مَضَى إِلَى بَيْتِهِ. وَبَعْدَ تِلْكَ الأَيَّامِ، حَمَلَتْ أَمْرَأَتُهُ إِلِيسَابَاتُ، وَكَلَّمَتْ أَمْرَأَتَهَا حَمْسَةَ أَشْهُرٍ، وَهِيَ تَقُولُ: هَكَذَا صَنَعَ الرَّبُّ إِلِيَّ، فِي الأَيَّامِ الَّتِي نَظَرَ إِلَيَّ فِيهَا، لِيُزِيلَ الْعَارَ عَنِّي مِنْ بَيْنِ النَّاسِ!

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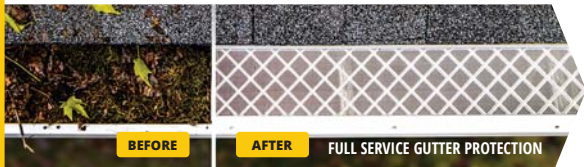
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