



The Cornerstone

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church
4988 Onondaga Road Syracuse, NY 13215
315.488.0388 sainteliasny.com steliasny@aol.com

WHAT'S COMING UP?

JANUARY

January 8 - Blessing of Water and Zalaby

January 9- Blessing of Homes begins
Please assist us with your cooperation

FEBRUARY

February 11- Valentine Dinner and Dance
Cavalry Club 6-11pm

February 27- Great Lent begins

MARCH

March - Antiochian Women Month
March 19 - Veneration of the Cross

MAKE A NOTE

2017 Festival Dates- July 6, 7, 8 & 9

THE CORNERSTONE

Production Team
Advisor- Very Rev. Fr. Elias K. Nasr, Archpriest
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Data, Printing & Processing- Dona Savage & Sheila Mazur
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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

March 15, 2017

Send articles, photos or questions to:
steliasny@aol.com 315.488.0388



A TIME TO RENEW

Dear Elians:

I greet you with a holy kiss, praying that this New Year of 2017 will usher in a new chapter in the history of mankind of peace and progress throughout the world.

The month of January brings to us a new beginning that comes with its new challenges. We at St. Elias must be always mindful that "there are many designs in the mind of man, but it is God's plan that comes to fruition". The month of January has been known as the month of two faces looking backward and looking forward. Looking backward we have witnessed a very successful new endeavor of a 4-day festival, successful Valentine's Day event, successful hafli, and recently completing the project of newly installed icons on the choir loft railing; and by looking forward to accomplishing the task of kitchen and hall renovation that was approved at our Annual Parish Meeting. To accomplish this task a Pledge Drive will commence soon and your continued unwavering support is vital to its success.



The month of January also is a month of resolutions, a time of rededicating oneself, or ones family to the edification of the faith by attending Liturgical services on time and more often, by lending oneself to reading Holy Scriptures and other beneficial books, and by putting God first in ones' life both in and out of the Church. It is God and God alone who has the power to reform the impossible in us and save us by his faithfulness of his Word "Jesus Christ". The month of January is a month of blessings, as we receive the bless-

Continued on next page

A Time to Renew *continued*

ings of our homes. It is a time where your home becomes an extension of the prayerful church as the priest prays with you asking the Almighty God to keep you and your dwelling safe. This is a holy Tradition of the Orthodox church from its inception. Your participation is a living witness to the faith and a seal of your new beginning.

Beloved, a year comes and a year goes, a century comes and a century goes, and in the final analysis, nothing lasts except the Almighty God, who reigns forever and ever. Let us as members of St. Elias lend ourselves to this new beginning, that we may reign with Him and experience his dwelling in our hearts.

May the shining Star of Bethlehem bathe you and your loved ones with its eternal light, bestowing upon you and yours a bountiful blessing.

Fr. Elias Nasr

Do you have family or friends in need of prayer?

A Prayer of Parents for their Children and for Relatives and Friends

O God, our heavenly Father, who lovest mankind, and art most merciful and compassionate, have mercy upon thy servants (*Name those whom you wish to remember*) for whom I humbly pray thee, and commend to thy gracious care and protection.



Be thou, O God, their guide and guardian in all their endeavors, lead them in the path of thy truth, and draw them nearer to thee, that they may lead a godly and righteous life in thy love and fear; doing thy will in all things.

Give them grace that they may be temperate, industrious, diligent, devout and charitable. Defend them against the assaults of the enemy, and grant them wisdom and strength to resist all temptation and corruption of this life; and direct them in the way of salvation, through the merits of thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, and the intercessions of his Holy Mother and thy blessed saints.

Amen.

www.antiochian.org

URGENT MATTER Liturgical Offering and Expectations

All Orthodox adult membership are expected:

- To attend all liturgical services if one is able
- To offer the Holy Bread of Oblation once a year
- To support financial obligation
- To have home blessed
- To support church organization activities
- To help with the church festival

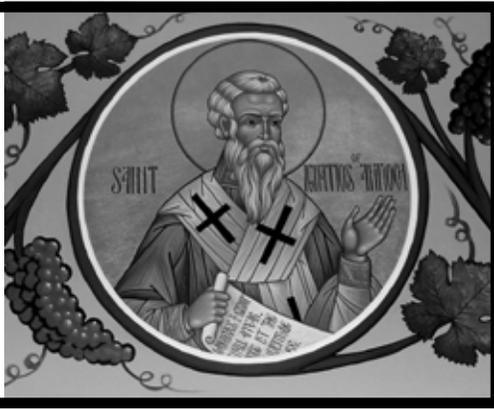
Thought for the Day

"This world of sin made the image of God in man ugly, but Christ in His incarnation has restored this image in man to its former beauty. May the Lord Jesus Christ restore the beauty of this image in each of our lives."



-- His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Order of St. Ignatius



ST. IGNATIUS SUNDAY HOMILY DECEMBER 18, 2016

ANDREW KANE

Not much is known about St. Ignatius' life until he began his famous last journey on foot to Rome, where he was thrown to the lions as portrayed in his icons. On his way to his death, many churches sent representatives to him, and fortunately for future Christians, he sent letters back to the churches. Thanks to St. Polycarp, seven of those letters survived; in them, we find some of the earliest teachings about the organization, practices, and beliefs of the Church. He emphasized the importance of loyalty and obedience to the bishop, as well as the salvific power of the Eucharist, "the flesh of Christ", "the gift of God", "the medicine of immortality." His short letters are radiated with love for Jesus Christ who came to our world in order to save us.

On December 20, 107, during the reign of Emperor Trajan, St. Ignatius ended his life in a Roman arena, torn to bits by beasts. Rather than discouraging the fledgling faith of Christianity as the Romans had hoped, his noble death ignited and strengthened the faith of many.

In St. Ignatius' most famous quote, he wrote to the Romans, "I am writing to all the Churches and I enjoin all, that I am dying willingly for God's sake, if only you do not prevent it. I beg you, do not do me an unkindness. Allow me to be eaten by the beasts, which are my way of reaching to God. I am God's wheat, and I am to be ground by the teeth of wild beasts, so that I may become the pure bread of Christ."

41 years ago, the late Eminence Met-

ropolitan Philip create The Order of St. Ignatius to enable the laity of our Archdiocese to organize and raise funds for various philanthropic endeavors that would make a difference in the lives of many. As you probably know, there is nothing more humbling in life than to learn that one's act of charity or philanthropy has made a difference in the life of another person.

I am sure many of you have spent time this week or last collecting clothes, toys and other presents to be given to a child or a family in need. How does it make you feel? Warm inside, emotional, loving, happy. And if you were lucky enough to see the child receive their gift...the glow in their face...the sparkle in their eye...their smile. Then you know that you have done a great thing...you have given this child the feeling of Joy.

And the same goes for giving to the Church. I am happy, as well as proud, that Holly and I have been able to give to the Church. Not only money but our time and talents. I look up at the Icons of the altar and I feel warmth knowing that we were able to donate the funds required for the Icons of the Saints that carry the same name of our boys, Thomas and Matthew. We get the same warm feeling when we donate our time and talents in planning Hafli's, working at the Festival, chairing various committees, sitting on the Parish Council, assisting with putting up icons, and the list goes on and on. We are not only happy that we could touch

a child's life, but we have touched all of your lives! That is what being part of a community means...being part of the Orthodox Church means.

St. Ignatius wrote, 'Let your baptism serve as a shield, faith as a helmet, love as a spear, endurance as full armor. Your works are your deposits so that you may receive the full sum due you. Therefore be patient with one another in gentleness, as God is with you. May I always have joy in you.'

'Your works are your deposits'... I interpret this as your faith, talent and donations are your way to Life Eternal. Faith in the Lord is not alone your door to Life Eternal but your time and riches devoted to the Church are also an important part.

The Church and faith need our talents as well as our finances to survive. We are not a huge community such as the Catholic Church...we have a limited market and we must develop that market. The Order of St. Ignatius is a great example of donating our time and riches to the Church and faith. One of the organizations that receives a large portion of the St. Ignatius membership dues is the Antiochian Village and the Antiochian Village Camp. What a great way to develop our market...

teach the young children as well as all ages what the faith is about. This is what the Antiochian Village does. The more involved young people are, the more likely they will remain involved when they move on to start their own families.

Wouldn't you like to feel the warmth inside by helping our Church educate the people about the Orthodox faith. Please join me and the other local members in this important mission.

I leave you with a quote from a St. Ignatius member...

"We make a living by what we get; we make a *life* by what we give."



The cost of membership is as low as \$1.39 a day... less than a cup of coffee.

TEENS SPREADING CHRISTMAS JOY THROUGH MUSIC...

Our Teen SOYO brightened the lives of parishioners who are homebound or in nursing homes.

They sang Christmas carols and the Communion Hymn, Sabihu Alraba (Praise Ye the Lord) in 3-part harmony.

The warmth and joy was felt by both those who were visited and by our teens! Visiting and singing for our parishioners is one of the highlights of the year for our teens. They are always grateful to have the opportunity to share the spirit of The Nativity!



SOYO



“Mom, there’s an angel in our house!”

SAMIRA MAHSHIE, PRESIDENT

There was nothing special heralding her arrival, no bright, white light or heavenly choir announcing her appearance, just a home health aide who comes to our house to help out with grandma and Gido. It is Christmas break and mom is taking care of my grandparents, while my sisters watch television. My mom yells up to my room and asks me to carry out some used books to the car parked in front of the house. The car belonged to the home health aide.



The aides are usually a series of faces that come and go, but this woman was different. It seemed as if she was happy to help my grandparents, and not just another aide. I could feel a sense of joy in her efforts. And, if you know my mom, she never stops talking, always conversing with anyone who is around. My mom begins talking to Pholia, the new aide, and found out she was beginning a mission just a few miles from our church. It’s a

mission designed to help supply the inner city community a safe haven for all ages. It also helps provide assistance to the homeless— which probably explained all the drywall I saw in her car while filling it with donations of clothing and books for her new mission. That’s when I decided to share with you that you can meet angels everywhere and anywhere. Anyone, whether it be on the street or in your own home, young, old, poor or rich, can be an angel and walk into your life

Mission: Mission of Prayer, Love, Community, Faith, Service

Founder: Pholia McArthur

Donations may be dropped off at: 1068 West Onondaga Street
Syracuse, NY, 13204



Samira Mahshie delivers a sermonette (October) about her time at Iconography Camp at the Antiochian Village.

Grace George, Samira, Aliah and Kailah Mahshie bring winterwear to the Samaritan Center in Syracuse. Warm clothing was donated by St. Elias parishioners.





As we at St. Elias begin a new year, I want to take a moment to thank each and every member of our community for allowing me to serve as council president. This year has marked several milestones, the irreplaceable loss of church members, the decision to embark on a building fund for much-needed renovations and the growth of our community with the addition of new members. Our community is talented and blessed and as I write this, my last cornerstone contribution, I know that I will remain active and involved; just as I ask our community members to remain engaged and committed to the

"Cheerfulness consists in not regarding things as our own, but as entrusted to us by God for the benefit of our fellow-servants. It consists in scattering them abroad generously with joy and magnanimity, not reluctantly or under compulsion." From St. Symeon the New Theologian (The Discourses; Paulist Press pg.156)

service of God. For we are all part of this church family and all are valued and loved. As your former council chairperson, I was humbled to serve our community and remain appreciative of all who serve the daily, weekly and long-term needs of our church.

I look forward to another year on the council with the leadership of council chairperson, Anthony Abboud. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all near and far that I have the honor to consider my church

family of St. Elias.

Respectfully,
Ronda T. Akl
Council Chairperson, 2016



FARIS SOUSOU

At last month's General Assembly Meeting, a motion was made and passed to spend up to \$300,000 on updates needed to the kitchen/hall, handicap ramp, parking lot, and roof.

A building fund campaign will officially kick off shortly after the new year with additional information such as a brochure and pledge cards. As funds become available, the kitchen/hall will be the focus first.

St. Elias Parish Council 2017

(newly elected officers)

Anthony Abboud - President
Kathy Fedrizzi - Vice President
Mai Makhoul - Secretary
Faris Sousou - Treasurer

NEWLY INSTALLED ICONS GRACE THE FRONT OF THE CHOIR LOFT!





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



REVIEW OF 2016 PAN-ORTHODOX CONTINUING EDUCATION CONFERENCES

Teacher Training I, 4 individuals completed the Church School Director courses and 8 completed Mat. Jenny's theme track. Participants came from the Greek, Romanian and Antiochian churches



The Department of Christian Education expanded training by taking "the show on the road" this year. Building on the success of "The Orthodox Institute for Continuing Education in the Faith," the department hosted three major events and several smaller trainings during the year with the goal of making training and spiritual enrichment accessible to those who cannot travel to Antiochian Village.

The first of our Pan-Orthodox Continuing Education Conferences was hosted by St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral, Ottawa, Ontario, on Friday evening and Saturday, September 23-24. Matushka Jennifer Mosher, a doctoral student in Christian Education, spoke on "Christian Education: Forming the Whole Person." We thank Fr. Ghattas Hajal, Pastor, and Kelly Hamwi, Church School Director, for arranging this event with Fr. Christopher Rigden-Briscall, Department Coordinator. At this conference, 28 teachers completed

in the area.

On October 8 Carole Buleza, Director, and Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick traveled to Brier, Washington, north of Seattle, where St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church hosted our second conference. Fr. Andrew lectured on his book "Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy" and signed copies for participants. Carole instructed 12 teachers in Teacher Training I. Thanks go to the Washington Orthodox Clergy Association for their efforts

to make this event a success, and to the hosts, Fr. James Bernstein, Pastor, and Anne Beach, Church School Director, and the hospitality committee.

Our final Pan-Orthodox Conference was hosted by St. John Chrysostom Church in York, PA, on October 14-15. Melissa Tsongranis, Associate Director for the Center for Family Care (GOA) presented on "Living the Faith in an Orthodox Home." Four new teachers and 2 Church School Directors received instruction while Melissa gave helpful tips and challenged participants to live the Faith with their families - including their church families. Our appreciation go to Fr. Peter Pier, Pastor, and Rebekah Yergo, Church School Director for hosting, and Fr. George Alberts, Diocesan Coordinator. Our participants were from Greek, OCA and Antiochian parishes.

Our Department Coordinators have also been busy planning smaller, local events. In addition to the sessions they hosted at each Parish Life Conference, there have been training and information sessions in Milwaukee, WI, Waterloo, ON, Oklahoma City, OK, San Jose, CA, Littleton, CO and Niagara Falls, NY.

www.antiochian.org



Sunday School children take time for a photo with Father Elias and His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER during his most recent visit.



ST. ELIAS DANCERS APPEAR ON PBS

DEBRA GEORGE

Julie Ann Sageer, better known to viewers as “Julie Taboulie”, is a rising star who has built a television career out of honoring her roots, not only her Middle Eastern heritage but her Central New York origin as well. St. Elias Church shares these two characteristics, and this has led to close ties developing between Julie and our church.

As most of you know, Julie has performed live cooking demonstrations along with autograph signings and photo opportunities at our festival for the past several years. But now the relationship between Julie and our church has taken an exciting next step, stretching well beyond the boundaries of Syracuse! This month, PBS will begin to nationally promote Julie’s brand new American Public Television series

“Julie Taboulie’s Lebanese Kitchen”. In all 13 episodes, not only will shots of our festival dancers be featured in her show opening but our church name will also be listed in her closing credits! The roll-out series premiere will begin airing across the country nationwide in Spring 2017, with an April 1 release date. This timing is intentionally scheduled so that it coincides with the national publication of her first cookbook Julie Taboulie’s *Lebanese Kitchen: Authentic Recipes for Fresh and Flavorful Mediterranean Home Cooking* published by St. Martin’s Press. Julie’s cookbook is currently available for pre-order with a publication date of May 2017.

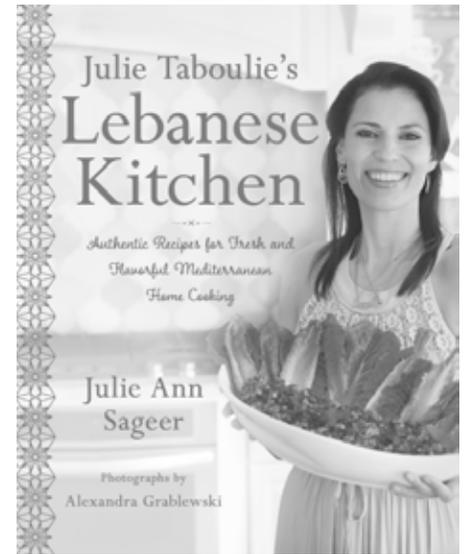
As a hometown and homegrown girl, Julie made lifelong friendships with some of our parishioners who grew up with her in the Liverpool school district. But in the past few years, Julie has counted herself as more than a friend of the St. Elias community. Julie expressed, “Father Elias Nasr, the parishioners, and the annual Middle Eastern Festival at Saint Elias has meant so much to me over the past few years. I am truly appreciative to



Julie and our teen dabke dancers taking a break to pose for a photo in Syracuse’s Clinton Square.

the community for their support and I am proud to support the church, and represent our culture, cuisine, and customs to the masses on a national platform. I most look forward to continuing to spread, share and shed a positive light, promising and peaceful future for our culture in America and throughout the world. Inshallah, God willing.”

As a first-generation and full-blooded Lebanese-American and



Julie’s cookbook is currently available for pre-order. Publication date: May 2017.

devout Catholic Maronite, Julie has great respect and appreciation for the Orthodox church as well. A few years ago for the first time, she was invited to perform a live cooking demonstration at our festival. Describing herself as “having a soft spot in my heart for churches”, she accepted and went on to perform not only that year but a couple of different times in the following years, each time at no charge. She even absorbed the associated costs. This benefitted St. Elias’ festival publicity outreach by attracting extra media attention. Additionally, Julie’s live photo opportunities, many



Julie and our young dabke dancers pose for a photo around two derbekis— traditional Middle Eastern percussion instruments.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



CHURCHING

Zane Najjar son of Lorraine (Zraik) and Emile Najjar

Eliana Laila Makhlof daughter of Ramzi and Diala Makhlof

Ana Totari daughter of Albert and Tamar Totari

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Bassel Sakkab

BAPTISM

Giries Sourì son of Nader and Diana (Zraik) Sourì

Basil George Qubti son of Samia (Makhlof) and Peter Qubti

REMOVAL OF CROWNS

Walid and Mary Alamir
Habib and Yara Alamir

BLESSING OF THE HOMES

Begins January 9, 2017. Please assist us with your cooperation!



What's a photo shoot without some fun? Julie and our young dancers cool off and enjoy a good laugh in the fountains in Clinton Square.

of which were posted, increased social media enthusiasm toward our event as she drew fans from throughout the region to attend.

We wish Julie the best with her brand new national PBS cooking show series and debut cookbook, thank her for all that she has given to St. Elias and especially for our national exposure.

If you are interested in learning more about Julie and staying on top of all the tasty developments, stay tuned for the launch of her new website with all the information at www.julietaboulie.com.



ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN SUAD JABAJI, PRESIDENT

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the ladies, their families and our fellow St. Elias parishioners.

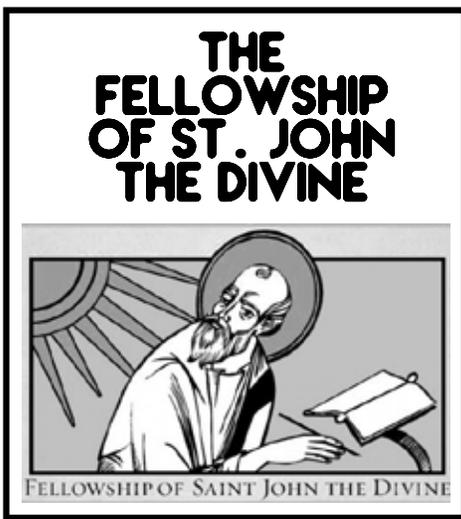
With 2016 behind us, I wanted to share with you some of the highlights of the end of the year.

We held our annual Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner in November (11/13). This is one of my favorite St. Elias traditions. It was nice to have such a good group of ladies working together – including new faces and spouses – to keep our traditions going. We had delicious food, a packed church and much to be thankful for.

In the beginning of October (10/09), we hosted a luncheon in honor of Bishop Alexander. We had a good attendance not only from the ladies but our entire parish.

Most recently, we held the annual Christmas Ornament Exchange (12/01). It was such a nice opportunity to spend time celebrating the joys of the season and catching up with the ladies. We saw many new faces joining us for the party, which is always a treat. The more the merrier.

With 2017 upon us, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the ladies for always being available to help and support the church. It is an honor working with every single one of you. I am really looking forward to a prosperous 2017.



SHEILA MAZUR, PRESIDENT

The Fellowship of St. John the Divine of St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church of Syracuse started with its purpose to promote fulfillment of fellowship and involvement at all levels in the church.

On November 17, we hosted our first ever Paint Night. Eleven attendees enjoyed creating artwork and sharing snacks. It was a lot of fun and we look forward to hosting more paint nights moving forward. The proceeds from our evening went to the building fund in support of the kitchen renovations.

On December 3, in celebration of The Nativity, a few volunteers helped decorate our church. The sparkle of the Christmas season could be seen in the tree upon the altar, in the garland hung from the choir loft and outside the main entrance of our church.

As president of St. John the Divine of St. Elias, I encourage everyone to come and participate in our future activities, whether its movie night, paint night, decorating the church or removing the decorations, your support and participation are what make our church, *our* church. Thank you for your support.

PAINT NIGHT!



THE NATIVITY DECORATING!



Sunday School children sing Christmas carols for parishioners after church.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



January

Lily Abboud	1
Fayez Abu Manneh	1
Nadia Abu Manneh	1
Khalid Ghrrayeb	1
Nuhaila Wazen	1
Jewell Gabriel	2
Samih Tadros	2
Josef Akl	3
Rita Algattas	4
Danial Humsi	4
Lina Akl	6
Tom Tadros	6
Matthew Tadros	7
Laraine Mahshie	9
Arkad Tadros	9
Karen Caporizzo	11
Elizabeth George	11
Nuha Sousou	12
Rami Vassallo	13
Bassel Sakkab	15
Hala Sawalha	15
Carolina Cotran	17
Nader Sourì	18
Joanna Tarazi	18
Betty Eassa	19
Albert Totari	19
Thomas Kane	23
John Rott	27
Janice Abdo-Rott	29
Zeina Akl	30

February

Salwa Ghrrayeb	1
Janice Peter	1
Julia Totari	2
Souhel Shehadeh	4
Alia Dayeh	5
Dana Nesheiwat	5
Elaina Atallah-Yunes	8
Karl Kissman	8
Elly Cotran	10
Jessica Khairallah	10
Tamar Totari	10
B.R.Kissman	11
Samantha Dayeh	12
Gideon Tyler	13
Michael Warner	13
Janet Saba	15
Olivia Sauro	17
Gary George	20
Kailah Mahshie	21
Lisa Dash	22
Nancy Dannoun	23
Sam Tadros	25
Munjed Essi	29
Khader Salameh	29

March

Angelica Underwood	1
Gada Jiries	3
Nujoud Makhlof	3
Musa Shamma	3
Abeer Tadros	3
Elias Tadros	7
Nabil Akl	10
William Vassily	11
Fahed Jiries	12
Amal Humsi	14
Ed Tyler	15
John Abdo	16
Suad Jabaji	16
Roula Khalifeh	16
Holly Kane	17
Sophia Tadros	17
Nader Atallah-Yunes	19
Tawfik Jiries	19
Simona Tadros	20
Suha Alamir	21
Nadine Arnold	21
Jeanette Mtanos	21
Sandra Bostrom	24
Julia Wachna	24
Charlotte Coville	25
Joseph Arnold	29
Layal Makhlof	30
Chrystal Mullen	30
Jordan Gunnip	31



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

February

Charles & Mary Kammar	10
Antoine Azar & Merian Tomeh	13
John Rott & Janice Abdo-Rott	19

March

Akram & Labiba Tarazi	13
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Memory



John (Jack) Rezak
Joseph Peter
Deifallah Tadros

Eternal

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INCLUDED IN OUR LIST OF BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES?

Please help us keep our records current by contacting Dona Savage at steliasny@aol.com! (Ascribed members of St. Elias only, please!)

January

Jeries & Aida Sourì	1
Mahfouz & Lina Abu-Manneh	9
Nabeel & Rita Algattas	17
Andre & Sana El-Amir	23
Michael & Rima Arnold	27

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