



# The Cornerstone

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

4988 Onondaga Road Syracuse, NY 13215

315.488.0388 [sainteliasny.com](http://sainteliasny.com) [steliasny@aol.com](mailto:steliasny@aol.com)

## JANUARY

January 5 - Liturgy for Epiphany 6pm

January 6- Epiphany

January 7- Antiochian Women make  
zalaby for Epiphany

## FEBRUARY

February 19- Great Lent begins

February 25- 1st Sunday of Great Lent

## MARCH

Antiochian Women's Month:

Women usher, read the Epistle, give homilies

March 4- Pan Orthodox at St. Elias

March 11- Veneration of the Cross

March 25- Annunciation &

March 25- Women host fish fry after Liturgy

## MAKE A NOTE

April 1- Palm Sunday

April 8- Easter

## THE CORNERSTONE

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## DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

March 15, 2018

Send articles, photos or questions to:  
[steliasny@aol.com](mailto:steliasny@aol.com) 315.488.0388

## WINTER 2018

# OUR PATH OF RESTORATION

Dear Elians:

I greet you with a Holy kiss during this festive season celebration of Holy Nativity, New Year and Theophany. I pray that these joyful celebrations

will be the instruments of our hope and guiding light throughout New Year of 2018.

Beloved, through the birth of Christ, "Nativity", the mystery of our salvation begins. The dawn of a new creation in the plan of our benevolent Theanthropic God begins to unfold for us so that we can tread on the path of salvation, a path of restoration of the likeness of God in us, so we can reflect the true image of God. This image of ours that was shattered by sin that has led many to live a life of darkness and misery instead a life lived and bathed in the eternal light and joy. Hence, Nativity brings forward Theophany "the manifestation of God in the flesh to the world" so all have the opportunity to be part of his new creation. For us who are baptized into Christ have put on Christ and we are clothed not with skin but



with the garment of light so that we can live a life of righteousness and holiness where enmity is replaced by friendship, hostility replaced by tranquility, fear replaced by trust, weakness by strength, lethargy by vitality, depression by hope, and stagnation by creativity. All this is possible because of the Nativity, Theophany of Christ.

Beloved, we have recently installed the Icon of the Annunciation in our Church flung on both sides of our Iconostasis, so by gazing on it we can be reminded that if we, with

*Continued on next page*

## Our Path of Restoration *continued*

vigor and fortitude, make our commitment to surrender our life to the will of God, as revealed to us by his holy Word, we will experience spiritual illumination and transformation in Christ. By this commitment we are assured that 2018 will be blessed with fruitfulness and our St. Elias family will overcome all challenges as it transcends from glory to glory. May the shining Star of Bethlehem bathe you and your loved ones with its eternal light bestowing upon you and yours a bountiful blessing.

In Christ,  
Fr. Elias Nasr

### REMINDER!

#### 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

P.S. Church service books are to remain in church.

## Break up your day...with prayer.

### THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

O heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art in all places and fillest all things; Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord.



Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (Thrice)  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

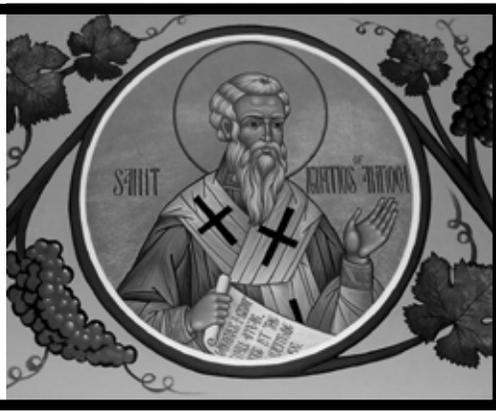
O Christ our God, who at this hour didst stretch out thy loving arms upon the Cross that all men might be gathered unto thee, help us and save us who cry out unto thee: Glory to thee, O Lord.

[Here may be added your own private devotions and intercessions, using your own words or the "Occasional Prayers". When you have finished, conclude with this prayer:]

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

[www.antiochian.org](http://www.antiochian.org)

# Order of St. Ignatius



## The Order of St. Ignatius & Its Role in Parish Life

Dona Savage

The Order is committed to not only the support of the Archdiocese but the local parishes as well. The Order supports many of the departments that deal directly with the parishes such as: Clergy Retirement, The Antiochian Village, Improvements to the Antiochian Village Camp and Heritage and Learning Center, College Conference/ Campus Ministry, Christian Education Department, Youth Workers Ministry, Department of Missions and Evangelism and the Clergy Counseling Center to name a few. Each member of the Order is expected to be a dedicated and active member of a local parish. Therefore,

**“LET NO MAN’S PLACE, OR DIGNITY, OR RICHES, PUFF HIM UP; AND LET NO MAN’S LOW CONDITION OR POVERTY ABASE HIM. FOR THE CHIEF POINTS ARE FAITH TOWARDS GOD, HOPE TOWARDS CHRIST, THE ENJOYMENT OF THOSE GOOD THINGS FOR WHICH WE LOOK, AND LOVE TOWARDS GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR.”  
ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH**

the financial support for the Order is NOT in deference to the local parish but above and beyond. Area fellowship chapters of The Order support and do good works on the parish level and in their local areas. Every December is St. Ignatius month throughout the Archdiocese and the Sunday closest to the Feast Day of December 20th is designated as St. Ignatius Sunday. Members of the Order are expected to participate more visibly in the life of the parish. They can be greeters in the Narthex, read the Epistle, take collection, sponsor the coffee hour, etc.

*Please join the Order of St. Ignatius and make a difference!*



## ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

Dear Parishioners,

I want to start by wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

In October, we held our cooking classes, and were blessed with a great turn out.

In November, we had our annual Thanksgiving dinner and I want to take this opportunity to thank all the parishioners who donated, cooked, served, helped and ate! It was a great success and we could not have done it without your tremendous support.

We celebrated Saint Barbara Day on December 3rd and thanks to all ladies who made the delicious burbara, that we all enjoyed.

We held our annual Christmas Ornament Exchange in early December. It was a great event for a great cause. Thank you Diane for a wonderful job.

Also in December, we prepared all the sweets for the Christmas bake sale.

As we welcome the New Year, we will be making Zalaby in January for Epiphany. We are looking forward to the event and to your support.

Your Sister in Christ,  
Rita Algattas, President

# Icon of the Annunciation

The icon of the Annunciation is one that presents the joy of the announcement of the coming of Christ. It is an icon of bright colors, depicting the Archangel Gabriel (left), who has descended from heaven, and the Virgin Mary (right), who has been chosen to be the Mother of God.

The Archangel is shown with his feet spread apart as if he is running to share the good news with Mary. In his left hand is a staff, the symbol of a messenger. His right hand is extended toward Mary as he delivers the message and announces the blessing bestowed upon her by God.

On the right side of the icon the Virgin sits on an elevated seat, indicating that as the Mother of God she is “greater in honor than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who without corruption gave birth to God the Word.” In her left hand she holds a spindle of scarlet yarn which depicts the task she was assigned of preparing the purple and scarlet material to be used in making the veil for the Temple in Jerusalem. Her right hand is raised in a gesture of acceptance in response to Gabriel’s message. Her posture expresses willing cooperation with God’s plan of salvation. Mary’s garments also have the three stars commonly used to represent her ever-virginity: before, during, and after the birth of Christ.

At the top of the icon the segment of a circle represents the divine realm, from which three rays emerge. This demonstrates the action of the Holy Spirit coming upon her. In other depictions of the same icon, Christ Himself – as a man – is shown in

this semi-circle.

This icon marks the crowning of our salvation and the revelation of the mystery before all ages. For the Son of God becomes the son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaims to the ever-virgin Mary: “Hail, O full of grace, the Lord is with you.”

## Q & A

Question: Why is the Holy Mother seated in this icon of the Annunciation?

Reply: I already mentioned the theology behind the seated pose. The Holy Mother is not always depicted in a seated position in the icons of the Annunciation. However, this example is very correct, because the seated position that refers to Christ and the Holy Mother denotes certainty. The seated position implies certainty - what is to ensue is a certainty. The Holy Mother is certain about what She is doing. She is accepting God’s proposal. And She does it, without knowing the facts analytically.

Question: Why is the event of the Annunciation depicted in an external setting?

Reply: In hagiography, we never depict an interior space (as for example the interior of a temple). All events are external; there is no internal space. Nothing is closed within walls

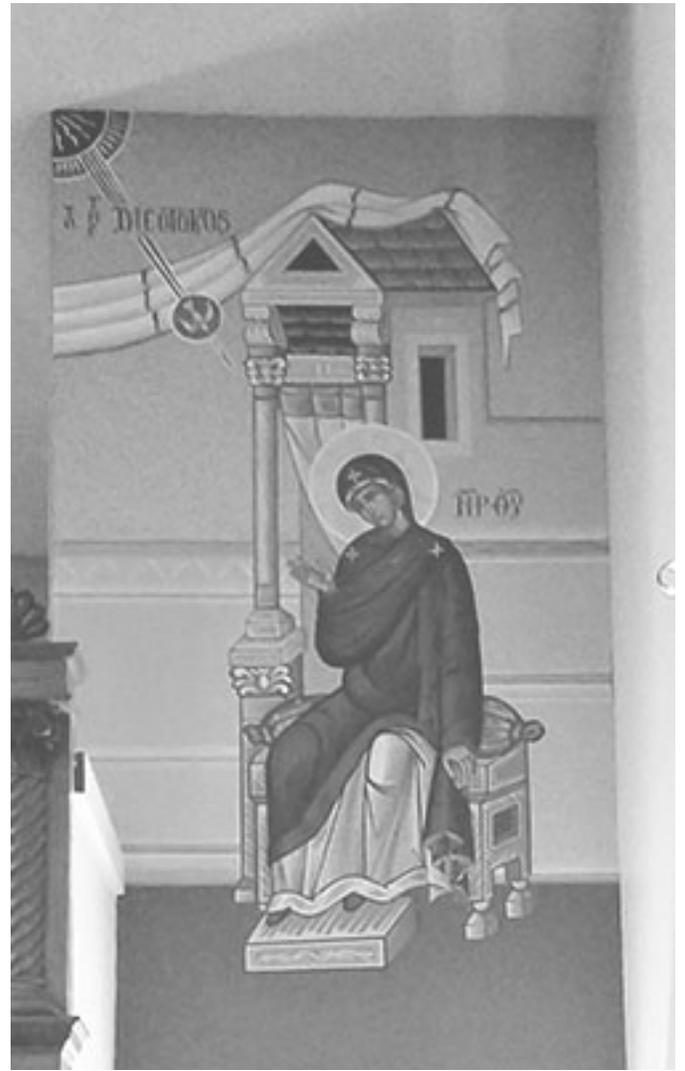
in hagiography. Everything exists outside. An event may take place somewhere inside, internally, but a house will be depicted as an outdoor setting. In hagiography we never close ourselves in. Everything is an exit. There is no interior. Even if a liturgy is depicted, you will never see where there is a closed temple, you will never see any walls. Because the Liturgy itself is an exit from the things of this world. Woe betide, if the Church were to be closed in, or performed a Liturgy for enjoyment, or to acquire solemnity, and nothing more. The Liturgy is an exit. And we participate in the Liturgy, so that we might acquire the potential to make an exit, towards the world, towards God and the others. There is never any closed space in hagiography. Never. Even when it refers to doubting Thomas, “with the doors closed”, where “the disciples were gathered for fear of the Judeans”, the Apostles are depicted in an open space. Even though the Holy Bible itself states “with the doors closed”, nevertheless, hagiography portrays them as standing outside. The same thing can be observed in the icon of the Pentecost - even though the Pentecost happened inside a loft.

Taken from an article by  
Fr. Constantine Strategopoulos

# Rejoice!

Rejoice, O Theotokos, O deliverance of Adam from the curse! Rejoice, O chaste Theotokos! Rejoice, O living bush! Rejoice, O lamp! Rejoice, O throne! Rejoice, O ladder and door! Rejoice, O divine chariot! Rejoice, O bright cloud! Rejoice, O temple, O most-gilded jar! Rejoice, O mountain! Rejoice, O tabernacle and table! Rejoice, O deliverer of Eve!

- Orthros of the Feast, Tone 2



## WELCOME NEW PARISHIONER

George Mounayer

## BAPTISM

Ana Gisel Totari daughter of Albert and Tamar Totari

The icons of the Annunciation are given to St. Elias Church in loving memory of Freida Khammar, beloved Mother and Sitto, by her children and grandchildren, and in loving memory of Andrea Monsour beloved Wife, Mother and Sitto, by Douglas and family.



# PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Parishioners,

I wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and all the best in the new year. This will be my last submission to the Cornerstone as your Parish Council Chairman. I would like to say thanks to all of you for your support this past year. I enjoyed representing our St. Elias family and it has been a pleasure working with Father Elias and the rest of Parish Council. Kathy Fedrizzi, Ronda Akl and I have completed two consecutive terms (6 years) of service. On the same token, I would like to congratulate and welcome the new Parish Council members - Antoine Azar, Rajai Fashho and Diane Sauro.

On November 19, 2017, we held a successful General Assembly meeting. The following motions were passed:

1. Motion #1 – Future Fund Motion: A motion is made to close the Future Fund, transferring the money into the Building Fund, renaming it the Building and Project Fund. On a going forward basis, we will also allocate 20% of the net proceeds of the Festival to the newly named Building and Project Fund. This Building and Project Fund will be earmarked to cover Building Renovations and other potential future projects that can create income for our Parish.
2. Motion #2 – Church Hall

**Painting:** A motion is made to spend up to \$15,000 to paint the interior of the church proper, to be paid out of the Memorial Fund.

Thank you to those who attended the meeting and voted to pass the above motions. The passing of motion #1 allows the Building Committee to re-open discussion with the contractors for the kitchen/hall renovation project. However, we still need your help. There are still other projects approved under this current building drive, including replacing the parking lot. This is a necessary project and cannot begin until funds are collected through the building drive. Please help by contributing to this campaign.

Thank you for a wonderful year.

Respectively,  
Tony Abboud  
Parish Council Chairman

Father is joined by young Andre Alamir as he blows out his candles! →



Rectory- deck and outside stairs of the rectory were replace, landscaping for both the church and rectory was done. Painting in the church proper was done to prepare for the installation of the new icons. along with the purchase and installation of the new shed to secure more storage space for equipment. Rectory driveway sealing to be done in the spring.

*Thank You!*

to all those who came and helped decorate the church for the Nativity season and to celebrate Father's birthday!



## St. Elias Council 2018

(newly elected officers)

- Mai Makhoulf - Chairperson
- Shukri Dayeh - Vice Chairperson
- Faris Sousou - Treasurer
- Sheila Mazur - Secretary

## St. Elias Council Members

- Mahfouz Abu-Manneh
- Habib Alamir
- Antione Azar (new)
- Rajai Fashho (new)
- Diane Sopp-Sauro (new)



Happy New Year to all of you! Our Sunday School has so much to be proud of! We kicked off the end of the year with a beautiful Nativity play and music played and sung by all of our children, who willingly participated.

What I found to be the best part of our presentation was the fact that the children were given the opportunity to showcase their talents. I think you can all agree, we have many talented musicians, actors and singers! My heart was beaming

with pride when ALL the children figured out a way to participate. Towards the end of our play practices, I had a few of the students come up to me and ask if they could they could play their instrument or sing a solo part.

It is the children who keep this church vibrant and alive! I've mentioned this before, in last year's sermonette, if the children are in church, this is a beautiful sign that we have a living parish.

We look forward to a new year filled with new lessons learned and exciting, teachable opportunities. If you haven't been to a Sunday school class this year, please take

the opportunity to bring your child to spend a morning with us, a spiritual experience they'll want to have again and again.

And finally, a special thank you to all the teachers for their dedication this last year, the parents for their commitment to Sunday school, the parish council for continued support and Father Elias for his spiritual guidance.

In Christ,  
Nujoud Makhoulouf



**Would you like to submit photos to The Cornerstone?**



Please use the following guidelines to help guarantee inclusion! The minimum file size is 4MB. You can check file size by right clicking the image file and then clicking on "properties". Make sure the camera setting, especially on your phone, is set properly! Email to [steliasny@aol.com](mailto:steliasny@aol.com)

# TEEN SOYO

**Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.**  
**-Timothy 4:12**

The teens are not just the future of our church but a real and vital part of it right now.

The teens have been extremely busy for these couple of months. On November 11th we went bowling, the teens played, bonded and planned their future events at the end of the night.

On December 18th we had a movie night where the teens watched "How The Grinch Stole Christmas", had pizza, played games, did karaoke and rehearsed for their caroling with Mrs. Diane Sauro.

On December 15, the teens met to prepare the food for their retreat, after the preparations were done the kids had time to engage in a spiritual game to further deepen their faith.

On December 16, the teens had their first retreat with the teens from New Hartford Church. The retreat was led by Father Nicolai Meyers. The teens participated in various icebreaking games and activities and they got to know more about themselves and each other. Later, they discussed modern day issues that face the teens and the church's view on these issues. Our own Lina Akl, was also there providing support for our teens and engaging them in multiple fun games. Deacon Nicolas joined us as well and went over social media and its effect on society and teens today. We concluded our retreat with Vespers. The retreat was a great experience, it helped the teens expand their knowledge and awareness of our modern day .

On December 17 the teens held their Poinsettia sale, which was very successful! We are thankful for everyone who supported the teens by purchasing them. Afterwards, the teens started their caroling by visiting houses and nursing homes, bringing joy and smiles to our parishioners.

On Dec 31st, our teens held their falafel dinner, the proceeds support our fundraising efforts to be able to attend the PLC in Halifax this year in June. Thank you to the Akls who donated and prepared for the dinner!

A special thank you to all who helped and supported our teens especially Father Elias whose commitment and devotion to our church and the teens has been overwhelming.

Your sister in Christ,  
Grace Khairallah, Advisor



Teens enjoying some dinner and conversation before watching How the Grinch Stole Christmas at their movie night celebration.



Father Nicolai Meyers from New Hartford leads a retreat for our teens and their visitors.

# Doing God's Work and Making Memories!



Generous donations from parishioners are sorted and counted before being donated to a local food pantry.



One of many stops for the teens during their annual Christmas caroling event where they enjoyed sharing the holiday spirit.



Some preparation for the teens' delicious falafel dinner.



Teens enjoy some 'down time' to celebrate all of their efforts over the past few months.



**BUILDING FUND  
CAMPAIGN (2017-2019)**

Year 1 of 3 has come to an end and we want to thank those parishioners who have donated or pledged to the Building Fund Drive in 2017.

Over \$50,000 has been committed along with the transfer of the Future Fund, which has allowed us to start discussions to begin renovations with the contractor for the kitchen and social hall.

We have two more years for parishioners and/or friends of St. Elias to help us reach our \$300,000 goal.

Please contact Kathy Rezak-Fedrizzi, Building Fund Chair at (315) 345-7402 or

kathyfed@twcny.rr.com

if you would like to donate or you have any questions.

We would like to thank the following Parishioners who have committed in 2017!

- Anthony Abboud for the overall efforts
- Anonymous for the overall efforts
- Nick & Yvonne Abdo for the overall efforts
- Dr. Mazen Beshara & Dr. Mary Abdulky for the overall efforts
- Wahid & Ronda Akl in memory of Joseph Akl
- Alex Eassa, Jr., in memory of Alexander B. Eassa, Sr.
- Andrew & Deborah Eassa, in memory of Frank A. & Sadie Eassa
- Thomas N. Eassa, in memory of Alex B. Eassa, Sr. & in honor of Betty B. Eassa
- Kathy & Bob Fedrizzi, in memory of Jack Rezak & in honor of his love & service for St. Elias
- Nabil & Annette Habayeb, in memory of Antoine & Samira Habayeb and Elvira Bajjaly
- Nassib & Reema Habayeb for the overall efforts
- Shibel & Anna Jabaji for the overall efforts
- Ramzi & Grace Khairallah for the overall efforts
- Mai Makhlof for the overall efforts
- Father Elias Nasr, in loving memory of Economos Zacharia, Khouria Nasra and Angela Nasr
- Faris & Lisa Sousou for the overall efforts
- Debra Taylor-Weiss for the overall efforts
- John Abdo for the overall efforts

Pledge forms are located in the narthex if you wish to join in the growing number of families who have pledged.



Happy Anniversary!

**January**

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

**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  
Eternal*

Edmon Salameh  
Eveline Abdo  
Nasser Totari

# B I R T H D A Y

# H A P P Y

## 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
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
Rami Al-Khoury	25
John Rott	27
Janice Abdo-Rott	29
Zeina Akl	30

## February

Salwa Ghrrayeb	1
Julia Totari	2
Souhel Shehadeh	4
Alia Dayeh	5
Dana Nesheiwat	5
Elaina Atallah-Yunes	8
Lana Hazou	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
Gerìes Sourì	18
Gary George	20
Kailah Mahshìe	21
Lisa Dash	22
Nancy Dannoun	23
Sam Tadros	25
Munjed Essi	29
Khader Salameh	29

## March

Leon Mazur	1
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
Julia Wachna	24
Saher Zawaideh	24
Charlotte Coville	25
Joseph Arnold	29
Loyal Makhlof	30
Chrystal Mullen	30
Jordan Gunnip	31

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](mailto:steliasny@aol.com)!  
(Ascribed members of St. Elias  
only, please!)

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## THINK ABOUT IT!

“No one will ever find true  
happiness and perfect  
prosperity without God or  
outside God.”

-- Bishop INNOCENT,  
Bishop of Kamchatka,  
the Kurilian and Aleutian  
Islands

