



THE CORNERSTONE

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

OCTOBER

Youth Month

NOVEMBER

15 - Nativity Fast Begins

20 - Evening Divine Liturgy - 6pm
Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary
into the Temple

22 - Pie Pick Up 12:30-2:30 pm

DECEMBER

6 - Barbara

8 - Evening Liturgy - 6pm
Conception of the Holy
Theotokos

25 - Nativity Fast Ends

25 - Nativity of Christ

THE CORNERSTONE

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Fall 2020

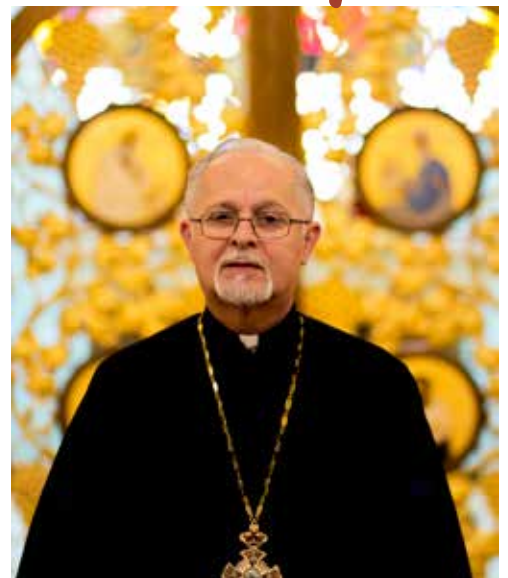
Restoring the Bond of Unity

Dear Elians,

I greet you with a holy kiss, praying that the Almighty protects you from harm and keeps you in the best of health and spirit.

Beloved, we just have entered Autumn; and whenever we enter this season it reminds us that even trees begin shedding their leaves in preparation of new growth next spring. We likewise, as we entered a new ecclesiastical year, must shed un-necessary thought through the power of prayer and repentance, especially during this pandemic and all the turmoil surrounding us. Unless we keep our focus on Christ and his commandment “to love one another” (St. John 13:34) and “to pray for our enemies” (Lk 6:27), then we will render our faith shallow, our hopes shattered, and our vision distorted.

In order to overcome our problems, we must realize our conviction of faith, that we are citizens of the Kingdom of God and that we are all are



members of the one body of Christ. The benefit of this unity of faith reflected in our actions and reactions indeed is priceless, for it assures our salvation in him and through him.

The bond of unity promotes healing, promotes warmth, stimulates life, and as proverbs 27:17 says, “Iron sharpens iron, and a man sharpens the countenance of his friend” as we in the fervor of the spirit and in love lift one another’s burden.

Continued on next page

During these stressful times, just as it was in the first century, we are to “make an effort, then, to meet more frequently to celebrate God’s Eucharist and to offer praise. For when you meet frequently at the same time and in the same place, the forces of Satan are overthrown, and his baneful influence is neutralized by the unanimity of your faith. (St. Ignatius of Antioch, To the Ephesians, ch. 13.)

With our limitation imposed, we ask you to register so as to have a seat available; and if you cannot register online you can call the office. Also we urge you, if not attending in person to participate virtually. If you have any concerns or wish to receive Holy Communion, please call me.

With the uncertainties of the times, we are assured beloved, that with fervent united prayers our Lord will carry us through it. In the mean time we will continue to keep you informed of any changes.

This year our church school will begin on Zoom; our Teens will meet on Zoom, as well as our Ladies. For your convenience, you can make your contribution by credit card on our website at .sainteliasny.com.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to assist the suffering people of Lebanon. May our Lord reward you with his heavenly blessings. Let us pray for effective vaccine. May our Lord bless you and your loved ones.

+ Fr. Elias

Order of St. Ignatius

Submitted by Dona Savage



Let us commend all our lives to Christ... St. Ignatius said, “A Christian does not control his own life, but gives his whole time to God!”

The 3 Tenets and Governing Principle of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch

“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.

-Saint Ignatius of Antioch

ACT OF FAITH

Rooted in Love & Compassion

All the way back to our earliest years as a child we are taught to share with others, especially those less fortunate. When we share, we give up what we believe to be control in our lives and put our faith in God that He will provide for our needs in abundance. Through your financial commitment you are allowing God to work through you for the benefit of others. Your gift to the Order is an expression of love and compassion for countless lives and most importantly... it is an act of Faith.

A SACRIFICE

Immeasurable in its Capacity

To sacrifice for one another is to love. Deciding to “do without” for the benefit of someone you don’t know is the beginning of a true sacrifice. Your sacrifice helps a struggling family send their children to camp enabling them to experience God’s world if only for two weeks. It provides reassurance to a new parish, that it can meet its monthly financial

obligations and continue its ministry. As a member of the Order you may consider your sacrifice to be small, but it is immeasurable in its capacity to change people’s lives.

INFINITE IN ITS EFFECT

Making a Difference Together

Your annual gift, less than the cost your daily cup of coffee, is merely a drop of water in a vast ocean of need. However, the ripple from your gift never ends. It expands to enrich the lives of our youth strengthening their hearts and minds as future leaders of the Faith. It multiplies to help care for our retired clergy and our devoted seminarians. The ripple from your annual or lifetime gift touches the lives of so many that you would never have been able to reach alone.

**Taken from the Order application packet*

Festival Financial Highlights

Our total food sales for just 11.5 hours totaled \$68,300 with a net profit of \$41,500!

Our raffle ticket sale generated \$15,900 with a net profit of \$9,400.

We are so grateful for the success of this event because we have been able to donate 10% of our food sale profit to help ease the pain of those affected by the situation in Lebanon.

St. Elias Middle Eastern Festival ON THE GO! is a HUGE hit!

Once it was clear that COVID-19 was becoming a big health threat and that it wasn't going away any time soon, food preparations for our festival came to a screeching halt. At that point, only ka'ak had been prepared, and with the health and wellness of the CNY community in mind, our 2020 festival was canceled.



Fast forward several weeks, with much forethought and support, our co-chairpersons, Nabeel Algattas and Rami Al-Khoury proposed a festival on the go. From there, the Town of Onondaga and the Onondaga County Health Department gave us the green light to move forward with a modified version of our annual festival.

With some quick action in the kitchen, an advertising plan, and the commitment

HERE'S WHAT PEOPLE SAID ABOUT OUR FESTIVAL

"This was amazing. Thanks so much to everyone working so hard to efficiently bring us delicious food!"

"Shout out to everyone working the event in this heat (with masks on)! It was absolutely amazing and we appreciate all of you!"

"We're speechless! Everything is just perfect! The organization, friendliness and taste are just SUPER! God bless your efforts wonderful people."

of our parishioners and friends, we held a drive-thru festival while meeting all of the mandated health guidelines.

The response from the community was more than we ever anticipated! Many of us even joined forces to prepare more food for day #2.

During all 13 hours of business, sheriff's deputies directed cars down the hill where we have overflow parking and back up to our parking lot. From there, orders were taken, paid for and filled without anyone having to leave their cars.

Although a modified version, we were still able to net a great amount of funds to help support our church. This year's raffle also generated great income. Tickets sold for \$50 each and offered a grand prize of a \$5000 AAA gift card. Our grand prize

and second- and third-place winners were thrilled!

Thank you to all who supported this year's event and to the Town of Onondaga, Onondaga County Sheriff's Deputies, CNY media outlets, and to our great CNY community!

Thank you to our co-chairs, Nabeel Algattas and Rami Al-Khoury and to all that labored for the love of God and St. Elias.

"We took our annual road trip from Oswego, arriving around 3:30pm. The line moved along steadily, and after about 20 minutes or so we were on our way back home, with great eats for 6 (spoiler alert: the honey balls did not survive the trip) A very smooth operation all the way around! Thanks so much to all who helped make the festival happen again, especially this year!"

"Food was amazing. I appreciate you all working hard in the heat and the rain."

"It was very well organized, I was impressed!"

We were blessed with beautiful weather and beautiful people! Even some of our college students came home to support the event!



Who Was St. Barbara?

The Holy Great Martyr Barbara lived and suffered during the reign of the emperor Maximian (305-311). Her father, the pagan Dioscorus, was a rich and illustrious man in the Syrian city of Heliopolis. After the death of his wife, he devoted himself to his only daughter.

Seeing Barbara's extraordinary beauty, Dioscorus decided to hide her from the eyes of strangers. Therefore, he built a tower for Barbara, where only her pagan teachers were allowed to see her. From the tower there was a view of hills stretching into the distance. By day, she was able to gaze upon the wooded hills, the swiftly flowing rivers, and the meadows covered with a mottled blanket of flowers; by night the harmonious and majestic vault of the heavens twinkled and provided a spectacle of inexpressible beauty. Soon the virgin began to ask herself questions about the First Cause and Creator of so harmonious and splendid a world.

Gradually, she became convinced that the soulless idols were merely the work of human hands. Although her father and teachers offered them worship, she realized that the idols could not have made the surrounding world. The desire to know the true God so consumed her soul that Barbara decided to devote all her life to this goal, and to spend her life in virginity.

The fame of her beauty spread throughout the city, and many sought her hand in marriage. But despite the entreaties of her father, she refused all of them. Barbara warned her father that his persistence might end tragically and separate them forever. Dioscorus decided that the temperament of his daughter had been affected by her life of seclusion. He therefore permitted her to leave the tower and gave her full freedom in her choice of friends and acquaintances. Thus Barbara met young Christian maidens in the city, and they taught her about the Creator of the world, about the Trinity, and about the Divine Logos. Through the Providence of God, a priest arrived in Heliopolis from Alexandria disguised as a merchant. After instructing her in the mysteries of the Christian Faith, he baptized Barbara, then returned to his own country.

During this time, a luxurious bathhouse was being built at the house of Dioscorus. By his orders, the workers prepared to put two windows on the south side. But



Icon of St. Barbara, donated by Thomas and Alexander Eassa in loving memory of their mother, Betty Barbara Eassa.

Barbara, taking advantage of her father's absence, asked them to make a third window, thereby forming a Trinity of light. On one of the walls of the bath-house Barbara traced a cross with her finger. The cross was deeply etched into the marble, as if by an iron instrument. Later, her footprints were imprinted on the stone steps of the bath-house. The water of the bathhouse had great healing power. St. Simeon Metaphrastes (November 9) compared the bathhouse to the stream of Jordan and the Pool of Siloam, because by God's power, many miracles took place there.

When Dioscorus returned and expressed dissatisfaction about the change in his building plans, his daughter told him about how she had come to know the Triune God, about the saving power of the Son of God, and about the futility of worshiping idols. Dioscorus went into a rage, grabbed a sword and was on the point of striking her with it. The holy virgin fled from her father, and he rushed after her in pursuit. His way became blocked by a hill, which opened up and concealed the saint in a crevice. On the other side of the crevice was an entrance leading upwards. St. Barbara managed then to conceal herself in a cave on the opposite slope of the hill.

After a long and fruitless search for his daughter, Dioscorus saw two shepherds on the hill. One of them showed him the cave

where the saint had hidden. Dioscorus beat his daughter terribly, and then placed her under guard and tried to wear her down with hunger. Finally he handed her over to the prefect of the city, named Martianus. They beat St. Barbara fiercely: they struck her with rawhide, and rubbed her wounds with a hair cloth to increase her pain. By night, St. Barbara prayed fervently to her Heavenly Bridegroom, and the Savior Himself appeared and healed her wounds. Then they subjected the saint to new, and even more frightful torments.

In the crowd where the martyr was tortured was the virtuous Christian woman Juliana, an inhabitant of Heliopolis. Her heart was filled with sympathy for the voluntary martyrdom of the beautiful and illustrious maiden. Juliana also wanted to suffer for Christ. She began to denounce the torturers in a loud voice, and they seized her.

Both martyrs were tortured for a long time. Their bodies were raked and wounded with hooks, and then they were led naked through the city amidst derision and jeers. Through the prayers of St. Barbara, the Lord sent an angel who covered the nakedness of the holy martyrs with a splendid robe. Then the steadfast confessors of Christ, Ss. Barbara and Juliana, were beheaded. Dioscorus himself executed St. Barbara. The wrath of God was not slow to punish both torturers, Martianus and Dioscorus. They were killed after being struck by lightning.

In the sixth century the relics of the holy Great Martyr Barbara were transferred to Constantinople. Six hundred years later, they were transferred to Kiev (July 11) by Barbara, the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenos, who married the Russian prince Michael Izyaslavich. They rest even now at Kiev's St. Vladimir cathedral, where an Akathist to the saint is served each Tuesday.

Many pious Orthodox Christians are in the habit of chanting the troparion of St. Barbara each day, recalling the Savior's promise to her that those who remembered her and her sufferings would be preserved from a sudden, unexpected death, and would not depart this life without benefit of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. St. Barbara is commemorated on December 4.

References:

Information taken from the OCA website's directory of Feasts and Saints Lives

Message from the Parish Council President

Mai Makhlof

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

As I write this message, our lives continue to be impacted by the Corona virus. In the current absence of a vaccine, the health department has determined that the best way to slow the spread of the disease is by social distancing (staying away from others by a distance of several feet) and wearing face masks when out and about. While we are holding Sunday liturgy services, we can have no more than 50 people in attendance at any given time to ensure that we can maintain this social distancing, and continue to require face masks during service.

The issue, of course, is one of charity: even if one does not care for one's own health, one wants to avoid giving the disease to another. Simply saying, "Trust God" is not an answer. But this present crisis teaches us a number of important lessons – a reminder of what our lives should be when centered around Christ and our faith. It

teaches us the importance of fervent prayer. It teaches us the virtues of patience and of perseverance. And it teaches us the importance and true nature of the Church, which is that of community and togetherness.

The very word "church" means gathering. Individual Christians gather together on Sunday, and the result of this action is a gathering, an assembly, a church. Christ has promised to be among His people when they gather like this, even if the gathering is a very small one consisting only of two or three people (Matthew 18:20). That is why the Church is the Body of Christ—Christ is present in and through this gathering.

During this present crisis, we are fasting from assembling in the same that we fast from certain foods during Great Lent. And in the same way that the discipline of fasting from food sharpens our appetite for that from which we fast, we now look forward to assembling again when the crisis has subsided, since we miss our church and congregating with our church family. We miss not only receiving communion, but we also miss seeing

our friends and family. Thanks to COVID 19, we will never again take for granted the Sunday Liturgy – celebrated together with our family in Christ. And while we must all continue to do our part to stay safe and keep everyone healthy now, we are still here for you. The parish council continues to meet – taking care of the church during these challenging times. We plan on holding a General Assembly meeting virtually via zoom; while not ideal, it is a better option than simply canceling. Father is always available should you need anything, as are the parish council members. You are not alone – we are here for you; you need only ask.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

Our meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 22 from 12:30 - 2:30pm.

If attending in person, we will be social distancing & wearing masks. You also have the opportunity to join via Zoom. Details will follow in an email.

Help support your local community through your purchase of a pie... or two!



Try our Apple & Pumpkin Pies this Thanksgiving for \$12 each and support our Thanksgiving Fundraiser!

For more info and to place your order: StEliasPieFundraiser.Eventbrite.com.

Pick-up Nov. 22 from 12:30-2:30pm



WELCOME NEW ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OFFICERS!

On Sunday, October 11, the new officers of the Antiochian Women were sworn into office by Father Elias. Please welcome:

Rima Nasr-President
Milia Alamir- Vice President
Yvonne Atallah Yunes- Secretary
Samantha Dayeh- Treasurer

Best wishes to our new officers and thank you so much to our outgoing officers!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

October

David & Rihab Daoud	2
Scott & Christine Gantos	3
Nader & Diana Soury	5
Rajeh & Salwa Makhlof	8
John & Diane (Sopp) Sauro	9
Issa & Sawsan Dannoun	20
Leon & Sheila Mazur	23
Charles & Eva Phillips	24

November

Andrew & Deborah Eassa	4
Ludwig Khoury & Rania Habib	7
Fadi & Roula Khalifeh	8
Nadim & Nabila Nasser	11
Wahid & Ronda Akl	12
Shukri & Samantha Dayeh	15
Issa & Dana Nesheiwat	25
Sami & Jihan Khoury	29

December

Walid & Mary Alamir	4
Samih & Lalia Tadros	6
Mazen Beshara & Mary Abdulky	13
Louis & Antoinette Rezak	15
Albert & Tamar Totari	15
Souhel & Vicki Shehadeh	16
Zouheir & Nadia Totari	17
Nabil & Diana Abdallah	26
Nassib & Reema Habayeb	27

Best Wishes

Our prayers and best wishes to Clair Abdo upon her move to Florida. May God be with her.

Congratulations to Nabil & Suad Jabaji on the birth of their grandson, Ziad Nadeem. Best wishes to parents Rawan & Waleed Khabbaz and big brother, Laith.

Congratulations to Michael & Elaine Buza on the birth of their granddaughter, Lexington Marie in Saratoga Springs. Best wishes to parents Christina (Buza) and Darren De Simone and big brother, Alexander Michael.

Holy Baptism

Simon Azar
Son of Antoine & Merian Azar

Memory Eternal

Mimi Daniel September 10, 2020

Welcome

Welcome to Andreh Alamir & family into the membership of St. Elias Church. May God Grant him & his family many years.

ST. ELIAS TEEN AMONG EIGHT 2020 FRANCIS MARIA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

On Tuesday September 22, 2020, His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph met online via Zoom with the eight 2020 Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese Francis Maria scholarship recipients. Among them was Aliah Mahshie.

Each of the eight students received \$5,000 in scholarship money. Father Joseph and Khouria Kathleen Purpura represented the Francis Maria Scholarship Committee and the Maria family at the meeting, in which the students were congratulated and encouraged by His Eminence. The Zoom meeting also included several of the parents of the scholarship recipients.

Since 2003 the Francis Maria Scholarship has granted \$317,500 in scholarships. Francis "Frank" Maria of Warner, New Hampshire established the Fund prior to his death. Originally an English teacher and coach in Massachusetts, Francis later served with the U.S. Marines and became an independent consultant and teacher, undertaking special assignments for government, industry and health care organizations. Mr. Maria served on numerous diplomatic, refugee relief and ecumenical initiatives.

In the 1950s, Frank presided over the Federation (predecessor to Senior SOYO) Convention in 1950 and represented the Antiochian Archdiocese several times at the National Council of Churches. Metropolitan Philip awarded him the Antonian Gold Medal in 1993.

Congratulations to Aliah!

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS



October

Katerina Atallah-Yunes	1
Nader Awwad	2
Majd Elias	2
Estelle Khairallah	2
Sheila Mazur	2
John Sauro	2
Shadia Tadros	2
Zuher Dabit	5
Matthew Kane	5
Trevor Rott	5
Walid Alamir	6
Gabrielle, Awwa	6
Nazar Awwad	10
Andrew Kane	10
Diana Abdallah	11
Henry Atallah-Yunes	11
Samira Fashho	11
Stefan Kontopoulos	11
Lisa Sousou	11
Evon Hodge	12
Ronda Akl	13
George Mtanos	15
Christian Aitchison	17
Lulu Abdo	18
Andrew Aitchison	18
Rosemarie Daoud	19
Justin Jiries	21
Louis Rezak	22
Edward Wazen	22
Cameron Aitchison	23
Nawal Tadros	23
Salim Fashho	24
Renee Gabriel	24
Annette Habayeb	24
Samir Azar	25
Michael Beshara	25
Wahid Akl	27
Cathy Khammar	27
Debra George	28
Anna Tarazi	29

November

Danna Sawalha	1
Andrew Mullen	2
Taghreed Tadrus	4
Kyle Fedrizzi	7
Fadi Makhlouf	7
Corinne Whitworth	7
Louise Gantos	8
Lordes Soto	9
Nadia Totari	9
Evon DeRoberts	11
Jane Essi	11
Margarette Furbeck	11
Andrew Mullen	12
Christine Wachna	12
Samira Sousou	14
Jeries Souri	16
Thomas Jiries	17
Lindsay Wachna	17
Kara Gantos	18
Grace Alamir	19
Sara El-amir	21
Philip Gabriel	21
Ziad Habayeb	23
Maya Beshara	24
Robert Cotran	25
Christine Gantos	26
Gloria Abdo	28
Samir Tadrus	30

December

Julia Alamir	1
Gloria Dayeh	2
Ludwig Khoury	2
Deacon Nicholas Mahshie	2
Father Elias Nasr	2
Jaiden Abdo	3
Mikaila Abdo	3
Yvonne Abdo	3
Alexandra Bronchetti	3
Edward Sabbagh	4
Jacqueline Eadi	6
Nabeeha Mahshie	7
Amanda Tarazi	7
Georgina Abu Manneh	
Al-Khoury	9
Marya Al-Khoury	10
Rima Tadros	10
Nabeel Algattas	11
Nassib Habayeb	12
Andre Alamir	14
Alexis Gantos	15
Michel Nasr	15
Haifa Gantos	16
Nisreen Tadros	16
Heather Awwad	18
Emilie Sousou	18
Luca Vassallo	19
Deborah Essi	20
Maha Essi	24
George El-Amir	25
Adam Furbeck	26
Isabella Essi	28

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The Cornerstone

A publication of:

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!
IN PERSON & VIRTUAL
General Assembly Meeting
Sunday, November 22
12:30-2:30 pm
Details to follow
via email.

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