



The Cornerstone

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church
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Winter 2020

JANUARY

January 5 - Epiphany-Blessing of the Water
January 5 - Ladies serving Zalaby
January 19 - Ladies' Falafel Dinner

FEBRUARY

February 22 - Great Vespers at
St. Michael's Church- Geneva
followed by Dinner
February 23 - Metropolitan JOSEPH's visit
to St. Elias Church

MARCH

Antiochian Women's Month
March 2 - Great Lent Begins
March 25 - Annunciation

THE CORNERSTONE

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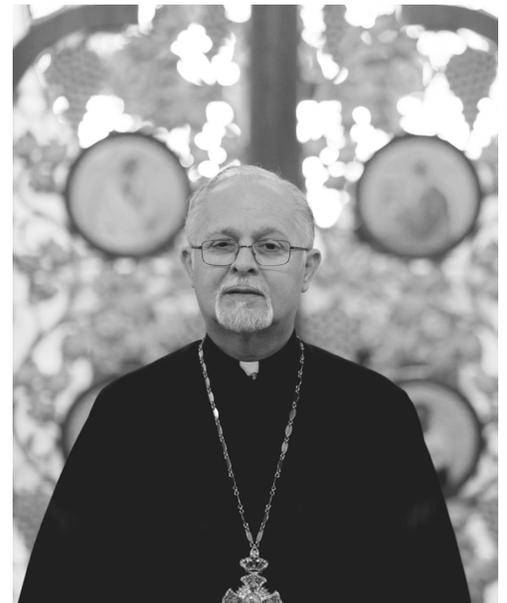
2020... Perfect Vision

Dear Elians:

I greet you with a holy kiss, praying that you and your loved ones have had a joyful Christmas celebration. Nativity kindles a new birth of hope in our hearts. The celebration takes its full meaning when we resolve to edify one another, becoming a spiritual beacon to those who are still battling within certain personal issues. Solace comes only by the invigoration of faith in us, by the means that the Holy Orthodox Church makes available. An invigorated faith is a living faith, a dynamic faith always productive bearing fruit.

Speaking of bearing fruit, 2019 was a year that is marked with successful endeavors of our church: we have achieved the first stage of our renovation. The Annual Festival outdid last year's success and church organizations are bearing fruits. This is the result of our faith and unity in the spirit. Our labor together is indeed blessed by our God and protected by St. Elias.

Now that 2019 is over, and we embarked on this new year 2020 we must not put our guards down, but rather be ready to face the challenges that are awaiting us



such as fixing the parking lot, and other projects. Although these are essential in order to maintain our beautiful facility, there are other challenges like finding dynamic and transitional ways to welcome and embrace new membership. We are all the children of God, and together we are the living, vibrant church of Christ overseen by our father in Christ his Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH and our Bishop ALEXANDER. Both hierarchs are blessing our endeavors and want to be very proud of our accomplishments.

Continued on next page

To see at first hand what we have accomplished our Metropolitan will be making his first visit to our family of St. Elias. He will preside over the Divine Liturgy Sunday Feb 23rd accompanied by Dn Emile Sayegh (chancellor of the Archdiocese) and Dn John El Massih (Metropolitan's personal Dn), and Fr. Gregory Murphy pastor of St. Michael's Church in Geneva.

Fr. Gregory and St. Michael's will host the Metropolitan for Saturday vespers Feb 22nd. I urge all of our parishioners to make plans to be with us for this historic visit.

Following his Eminence's visit we will turn our attention towards our Festival. As announced at the Annual Parish Meeting, our Co-Chairs for this year's Festival are Nabeel Algattas and Rami Al-Khoury. As usual, I urge all parishioners to give their support that it may be blessed for the glory of God.

May 2020 bring us strength of bond, health and tranquility; and may the Christ-child bestow his abundant blessings upon you and your loved ones.

Yours in the Christ-Child,
Fr. Elias Nasr



Christian Education

Submitted by Lina Abu-Manneh

Our kids were happy to participate in Sandwich Saturday on 12/14. I loved that our church was represented in a community event like that.

- Following their final rehearsal for their Christmas recital, the kids helped Samantha Dayeh, Milia Alamir, and Lana Zawaideh in baking some holiday cookies which were sold on Sunday to parishioners. The Sunday school kids did the selling and were responsible for their cookie 'shop'. We wanted to take advantage of the kids' energy to make something useful and meaningful.

SUNDAY SCHOOL, TEENS & PARISHIONERS HELP THE COMMUNITY ON SANDWICH SATURDAY

What is Rise Above Poverty?

Rise Above Poverty is a donation-based non-profit organization that assist students living in poverty. Its mission is to collect and distribute toiletries and apparel for students at Danforth Middle School which is in the Syracuse City School District.



Samantha and I believe we can get so much more out of them, if we provide the opportunity.

- In January, Samantha and I are thinking of having Altar Boys' Training, it's a one-day training where we show the altar boys the proper way to behave inside the church, the behavior that we expect to see. Also it sometimes feels like they don't know where to exactly stand or where to go after the little and great entrance. We would love if Father Elias is there with us as well as Tom Tadros or any other adult altar person.

Syracuse.com reports the school has an 8% homeless rate and a poverty rate of 70%. We also want to remove the financial, social & psychological hardships these students endure in order that they can focus and succeed academically.

St. Elias families came together to make sandwiches for those in need in support of Syracuse's Rise Above Poverty program.



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 ORDER OF ST. IGNATIUS ITS ROLE IN PARISH LIFE PURPOSE OF THE ORDER:

- To strengthen the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese as a spiritual, administrative and functional entity.
- To promote and propagate the teachings of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the welfare of the Orthodox faith.
- To financially support the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese through a lifetime commitment.
- To enhance the spiritual commitment of its members.

GOALS OF THE ORDER:

To expand the scope of Orthodox spiritual life and to be able to extend the reach of Orthodoxy by generating a minimum of million dollars annually to do good works throughout the Archdiocese and the world.

ROLE IN PARISH LIFE:

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. Each member of the Order is expected to be a dedicated and active member of a local parish. Therefore, the financial support for the Order is NOT in deference to the local parish but above and beyond. Area fellowship chapters of the 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 the collection, sponsor the coffee hour, etc.

St. Elias Antiochian Women



Submitted by Gloria Dayeh

Our Thanksgiving Luncheon went well. We had more people than expected and we raised \$2600. The leftovers were sent to the Samaritan Center.

Our second Potluck Dinner and Game Night was held on November 15. Ten families attended, which was significantly less than the first one. I am not sure if the weather played a role or if people just didn't like the event. We will not hold these events during the three winter months (December, January & February) and we will determine if we will hold another one in March.

Our ladies delivered Christmas gifts to the Galisano Children's Hospital. Thank you to all parishioners who generously donated.

The Annual Ornament Exchange took place on December 10th at Drumlins, it was a joyful event. Ladies generously donated to Vera House and the raffle proceeds, which totaled \$480, were donated to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of CNY.

We will be holding a Falafel Luncheon on January 19. Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$4 for kids.

Please join us!





Submitted by Mai Makhmour
Council President

My brothers and sisters in Christ.
Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Our brief time on earth is a precious gift from God and as faithful Christians, we are accountable for our stewardship of this precious gift. Our lifetime is a small bit of eternity – "...a fleeting shadow..." (Psalm 144) which we receive as stewards.

Time is a precious gift that we dare not waste. Like the three stewards in the Parable of the Talents, one day God will call each one of us to give account of how we have used the time entrusted to us.

The most personal, most appreciated and most unique gift that you can give is the gift of time – your precious time. Depending on your profession, your time may be worth hundreds of dollars an hour. But the time you give to another person and to St Elias is priceless. As Christians it is also important to value the time we spend at church, in worship, service and activities. Of the 168 hours in every week with which we have been blessed, how much time has God asked of us? How much time have we given? A few hours on Sunday morning for church services? An hour for Vespers Saturday afternoon? Coming a half an hour early for your children to attend Sunday School? As we offer ourselves and our time to church, we become part of something much bigger than we can imagine.



During this time of reflection, let us remember to welcome Jesus into our lives and live accordingly. Just as we budget our financial resources to reflect our priorities, we can re-set our allocation of time. We are all busy, but not all of that busy time is well-spent. We may need to say no to certain demands on our time, opening our schedule to God's prompting. St Elias needs you – but we need our church more! I hope you consider ways to give time back to St Elias – whether it is in supporting Church School or Choir, attending the different services throughout the week, or supporting the different organizations within the parish, your time is precious and always appreciated.

Your sister in Christ,
Mai Makhmour

Parish Council members are sworn in by
Father Elias on Sunday, January 5.

It is with great joy
that we welcome
Metropolitan JOSEPH
on February 23, 2020
for Divine Liturgy!



**CONGRATULATIONS
PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS**

Mai Makhmour- President
Antione Azar- Vice President
Faris Sousou- Treasurer
Victoria Hodge- Secretary

Council Members

Mahfouz Abu-Manneh
Habib Alamir
Rajai Fashho
Sheila Mazur
Diane Sopp-Sauro



CARE FOR THE ELDERLY AND INFIRM IN AN ORTHODOX SETTING

Bp Thomas Joseph and Peter Schweitzer

**Cast me not off in the time of old age;
forsake me not when my strength faileth.
(Psalm 71:9)**

Proper and loving care for the elderly should be a Christian concern for each of us. Whether we have aged or infirm parents or loved ones, we all know elderly people who need our attention. As Orthodox Christians, we have a duty to them before God. We have a duty to look after their physical and most importantly, their spiritual needs.

While elected officials grapple with the financial and moral questions concerning healthcare, the elder-



ly population continues to grow. In 2010, one-sixth of the adult U.S. population was older than 65; by 2030, about one-fourth will be. This presents a pastoral challenge for the Orthodox clergy and laity. All too often our elderly, infirm, and dying are isolated, in some cases abandoned. They may be found in nursing homes where no one visits them and they are unable to attend church services. In many instances, priests are not aware of their circumstances and they are left without confession and the other salvific Mysteries of the Church. When they repose, they may even be cremated as opposed to given a proper Orthodox burial. This may be the result of a family's ignorance of Church teaching or a desire to reduce the costs of a funeral. (An Orthodox funeral does not

have to be an expensive affair. There are Orthodox resources available that substantially defray costs while at the same time remaining faithful to our spiritual traditions.)

Countless holy fathers relate to us the importance and blessing of a holy death, that is one for which an Orthodox person is able to receive the Holy Mysteries, repent of past sins, and ask forgiveness of others. Of course, such a blessing requires work on our part. We can no longer presume that we live in tightly-knit communities where extended family members look after one another. Orthodox parishes must fill this void by creating communities of prayer and repentance where physical and spiritual support are offered. We have written a supporting

article on just such a community that has formed in Clearwater, Florida. The ministry provided by Most Holy Theotokos Rescuer

of the Perishing is replicable so that Orthodox communities across the country can support one another and take care of the physical and spiritual needs of the elderly and dying. We know of one such ministry in Father Josiah Trenham's parish of Saint Andrew in Riverside, California where members of the parish look after the final needs of Orthodox brothers and sisters in their final hours on earth. For more information on that wonderful ministry, please visit: <http://saintandrew.net/burialsociety.html>

The spiritual blessings of taking care of the elderly and the dying are untold. We can think of few other works we can perform that can have a greater impact on the eternal salvation of an Orthodox brother or sister.

A PRAYER OF MARRIED PERSONS

O merciful God, we beseech thee ever to remind us that the married state is holy, and that we must keep it so; grant us thy grace,



that we may continue in faithfulness and love; increase in us the spirit of mutual understanding and trust, that no quarrel or strife may come between us; grant us thy blessings, that we may stand before our fellows and in thy sight as an ideal family; and finally by thy mercy, account us worthy of everlasting life: for thou art our sanctification, and to thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

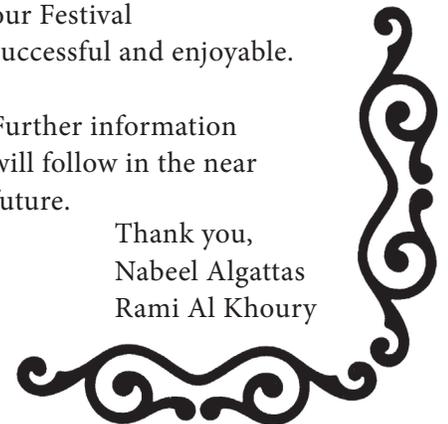
FESTIVAL CORNER

Dear Parishioners -

It's an honor to co-chair this year's Annual Middle Eastern Festival! We are looking forward to working with everyone and also looking for everyone's support and help to keep our Festival successful and enjoyable.

Further information will follow in the near future.

Thank you,
Nabeel Algattas
Rami Al Khoury



Special Moments

Churching and Holy Baptism

November 2019

Layana Azar

Daughter of Antoine & Merian Tomeh Azar



Don't Forget



Icon of St. Lucia of Syracuse has been donated to St. Elias by Kam and Beverly Gantos in honor of their new granddaughter, Lucia Cantonese.

Who is St. Lucia?

Lucia of Syracuse, also called Saint Lucia or Saint Lucy, was a Christian martyr who died during the Diocletianic Persecution. She is venerated as a saint in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Eastern Orthodox churches.

Saint Lucy the Virgin-Martyr (283-304), also known as Saint Lucia, was born in Syracuse, Sicily and was martyred for the Christian faith in the persecution of Emperor Diocletian around the year 304 AD. Her feast day is celebrated on December 13.

There is no doubt of the great veneration that was shown to St. Lucy by the early church. She is one of those few female saints whose names occur in the canon of Pope Gregory the Great, and there are special prayers and antiphons for her in his Sacramentary. She is also commemorated in the ancient Roman Martyrology. At the beginning of the 8th century the Bishop Aldhelm of Sherborne included a brief account of her life among the virgins praised in *De Laude Virginitatis*, and following him, the Venerable Bede inserted the story in his Martyrology.

OrthodoxWiki.Org

Antiochian Women's

Falafel Lunch

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

ADULTS: \$8

SUNDAY SCHOOL: \$4

5 & UNDER: FREE

Happy Anniversary

January

Jerjes & Aida Souri	1
Mahfouz & Lina Abu-Manneh	9
Juan & Rose Soto	9
Nabeel & Rita Algattas	17
Andre & Sana El-Amir	23

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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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Christians are good not merely out of obedience to law or harmony with nature, or in order to gain immortal bliss for the soul. Rather, they are righteous in anticipation of the age to come, the eschaton, the age of the fullness of creation in the incarnate Son of God. -

Orthodox Study Bible notes on Epistle for Theophany, Titus 2:11-14.

Birthday Blessings

January

Lily Abboud	1
Fayez Abu Manneh	1
Nadia Abu Manneh	1
Khalid Ghrayyeb	1
Nuhaila Wazen	1
Jewell Gabriel	2
Eleni Kontopoulos	2
Samih Tadros	2
Josef Akl	3
Rita Algattas	4
Lina Akl	6
Tom Tadros	6
Matthew Tadros	7
Karen Caporizzo	11
Elizabeth George	11
Nuha Sousou	12
Rami Vassallo	13
Bassel Sakkab	15
Hala Sawalha	15
Mary Alamir	16
Carolina Cotran	17
Nader Souri	18
Joanna Tarazi	18
Albert Totari	19
Thomas Kane	23
Rami Al-Khoury	25
John Rott	27
Janice Abdo-Rott	29
Zeina Akl	30

February

Salwa Ghrayyeb	1
Julia Totari	2
Nicholas Kontopoulos	3
Souhel Shehadeh	4
Alia Dayeh	5
Dana Nesheiwat	5
Elaina Atallah-Yunes	8
Lana Hazou	8
Thomas Madden III	9
Elly Cotran	10
Jessica Khairallah	10
Tamar Totari	10
Samantha Dayeh	12
Michael Warner	13
Violette Khabbaz	15
Janet Saba	15
Olivia Sauro	17
Geries Souri	18
Gary George	20
Kailah Mahshie	21
Lisa Dash	22
Nancy Dannoun	23
Sam Tadros	25
Munjed Essi	29

March

Leon Mazur	1
Angelica Underwood	1
Gada Jiries	3
Nujoud Makhlof	3
Musa Shamma	3
Abeer Tadrus	3
Elias Tadros	7
Nabil Akl	10
William Vassily	11
Fahed Jiries	12
Juan Soto	13
Amal Humsi	14
Layana Azar	15
John Abdo	16
Suad Jabaji	16
Roula Khalifeh	16
David Daoud	17
Holly Kane	17
Sophia Tadros	17
Nader Atallah-Yunes	19
Tawfik Jiries	19
Rose Soto	20
Simona Tadros	20
Suha Alamir	21
Jeanette Mtanos	21
Julia Wachna	24
Saher Zawaideh	24
Robert Furbeck	28
Angelique Guindy	28
Layal Makhlof	30
Chrystal Mullen	30



IT CAN BE EASY TO BE IN LOVE!

Love has everything to do with forgiveness, with respect, with loyalty, and commitment through times of sadness and happiness. Therefore, this kind of love is more than a feeling. The love of Christ is unconditional and when we love one another in an unconditional fashion, we are

emulating Christ. It is easy to be in love when things are good, but the real test is to be loving when you are down and out.

*Excerpt from Love & Forgiveness.
antiochian.org by Fr. George Shalhoub
Pastor, The Basilica of St. Mary,
Livonia, MI*

Parishioners- If you have not been receiving email from St. Elias and would like to, please give your current email to Dona Savage.

Also, if you have moved we need to update your address and phone number. We are attempting to update our database.

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A publication of:

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Metropolitan
JOSEPH
celebrates
Divine Liturgy
at St. Elias
February 23!

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