

# THE CORNERSTONE

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church  
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## JANUARY

6 Theophany - Evening Divine Liturgy - 6PM

10 - Zalaby

## FEBRUARY

1 Presentation of Christ into the Temple -  
Evening Divine Liturgy - 6PM

## MARCH

Antiochian Women Month

5 Great Lent Begins

24 Annunciation - evening Divine Liturgy - 6PM

## THE CORNERSTONE

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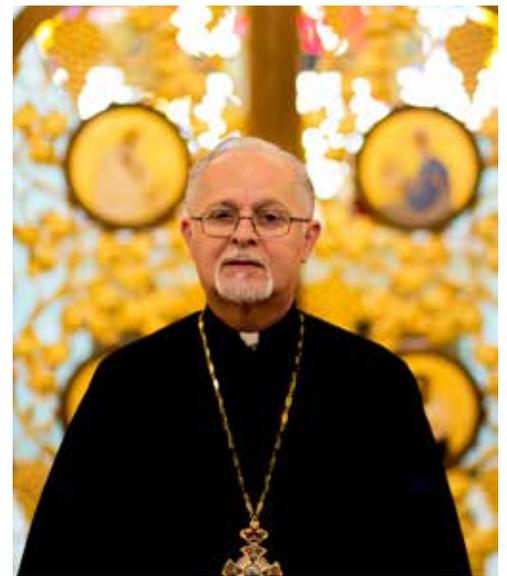
## Winter 2021

# Find Strength Together Through Faith

Dear Elians:

I greet you with a holy kiss, praying that this New Year of 2021 will usher in good will amongst all men as we collectively by the grace of God overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dearly beloved, having embarked on a New Year, we need more than ever to herald the call to keep our minds focused on the living Lord, “the bright Star of Bethlehem”, who will guide us through the troubled waters of life. The whole world at large and the church in particular has been affected. Evil is lurking everywhere, and everyone who loses the essential focus will make room for darkness to penetrate their soul. Yet by keeping our minds transfixed on the Savior Jesus who will guide us by his light into a safe harbor by remembering his divine words “and lo, I am with you till the end of the age”. This is the faith which our ancestors lived by and transmitted to us.



Indeed, 2020 was a year of unpredictability with many challenges that forced us into a new way of life with so many having difficulty adapting, and 2021 challenges are yet to be unfolded. In the midst of our challenges let us strengthen our faith lest we find ourselves enveloped by fear that gives birth to anger that gives birth to hatred and strife that leads to ultimate death of body and soul. Let us be wise and find strength in one another through the one faith we share.

*Continued on next page*

*Find Strength Together Through Faith Cont.*

In strength of faith beloved let us look beyond the pandemic to the bright horizon of this new year. Let us be charitable, loving, sacrificing and forgiving one another that our prayers will be pure, and our labor will be well pleasing and acceptable to God blessed and fruitful.

May the shining Star of Bethlehem bath you and your loved ones with its eternal light bring you a great measure of blessing today and throughout the year.

Fr. Elias Nasr



### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Even when your body does nothing, sin can be active in your mind. When your soul inwardly repulses the evil one's attack by means of prayer, attention, remembrance of death, godly sorrow and mourning, the body, too, takes its share of holiness, having acquired freedom from evil actions.

This is what the Lord meant by saying that someone who cleans the outside of the cup has not cleansed it inside, but clean the inside and the whole cup will be clean (Mt. 23:25-26). -- St. Gregory Palamas

## WELCOME (BACK) PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS



Newly elected Parish Council members take their oaths on Sunday, January 10. Please welcome officers: Habib Alamir (Pres), Mai Makhlof (Vice Pres), Faris Sousou (Treas), Sheila Mazur/Victoria Hodge (Sec) and newly elected/appointed members: Tony Abboud, Rami Al Khoury and Kathy Fedrizzi.

Father Elias, assisted by Deacon Nicholas bless the water as we celebrated the feast of Theophany, the baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the waters of the Jordan. The feast is called Theophany – a “revelation of God” – because the foreshadowing of the Holy Trinity in the Old Testament is made manifest. The God-Man, Jesus Christ, descends into the waters, the voice of the Father testifies to His Sonship, and the Holy Spirit confirms the proclamation of the Father through appearing in the likeness of a dove.



December was St. Ignatius Month. On Sunday, December 20, member Dr. Fadi Makhlof delivered a sermonette following Divine Liturgy. You can view his sermonette (and the entire Liturgy) on our Facebook page, Stelias Sundayliturgy.

**JOIN US EACH WEEK!**



# The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch

The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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December 11, 2020

Christ is in our midst!

During this Advent period of our Orthodox faith we prepare ourselves in joyful anticipation for the Greatest Gift of all ... our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On behalf of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch Governing Council, we want to express our sincere gratitude for your membership but more importantly for taking on "the responsibility" to become a part of our ministry that helps change countless lives. We pray that during this Blessed Season and throughout the year that you continue to receive God's blessings of grace, compassion and love along with His many other gifts to us that are both seen and unseen in our daily lives. May God bless you and keep you under His watchful care.

As a member of the Order and in a spirit of compassion, you not only give of what you have but you also strive to do it in a spirit of humility and love. You give without expecting anything in return and without recognition by the Order's recipients. Your gift is an unconditional, personal sacrifice. It is an act of Faith that is infinite in its effect.

In Fiscal year 2020 the impact of your gift to the Order has been felt by many and in countless ways. The Order's Fiscal Year 2020 actual expenses included \$297,014 to support our retired clergy, active clergy and seminarians. You helped fund \$390,924 for the youth of the Antiochian Archdiocese (including camp scholarships). \$254,988 was provided to support programs and departments for the development & growth of the Antiochian Archdiocese. You've also helped give \$43,000 toward outreach organizations which include but are not limited to Project Mexico, SOYO Special Olympics and the IOCC.

<b>Clergy</b>	<b>\$297,014</b>	<b>Archdiocese Development &amp; Growth</b>	<b>\$254,988</b>
Retired Clergy Housing Allowance	\$270,000	Missions & Evangelism	\$129,996
Married Seminarian Assistance	\$14,965	Parish Development / Mission Grants	\$24,996
Clergy Symposium & Convention Assistance	\$12,049	Internal Ministry	\$99,996
<b>Archdiocese Youth</b>	<b>\$390,924</b>	<b>Other Grants</b>	<b>\$43,000</b>
Summer Camp Scholarships	\$190,000	Project Mexico	\$10,000
Youth Ministry	\$120,000	SOYO Special Olympics	\$0,000
SOYO Leadership & Youth Worker Training	\$26,928	IOCC	\$25,000
Christian Education	\$39,996		
College Conference	\$15,000		

On behalf of all the members of the Order, we thank you for accepting "the responsibility" ... to take care of each other as we commit to financially provide for and reassure our retired clergy during their golden years, to strengthen our children in their Orthodox Faith, to help share and to reveal Orthodoxy throughout North America to people of any nationality, background or socioeconomic position and to become part of the families of our married seminarians by assisting them financially so they can answer God's call. We thank you in sincere gratitude and humility.

So as you contemplate your support of the Order over the years, encourage your family and friends to become a part of the Order, or consider becoming a part of The Order's ministry for the first time, we leave you with what we believe should be in your heart. These words are what guide our work as a Governing Council and come from the teachings of St. Ignatius himself ...

*"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."*

In His Service,

Roger J. David  
North American Chairperson  
The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch

# Heart to Heart, Hand in Hand, and Side by Side

## Together We Will Do Better

From the moment I was inducted as president, it was clear to myself and the St. Elias church ladies that this year was going to be different from those previous. As a result, it became time to adjust the activities typically done in the past and synonymously brainstorm new ones. Tailoring every idea according to the circumstances of the pandemic, we, as ladies, all agreed that our focus was not on the idea of making money, but rather, we chose to emphasize the importance of working together to, likewise, bring our community together, trusting more in the Lord. Through this, the closer we are to Him, the greater our love becomes among one another, and conversely, the extent to which our fear diminishes.

Basing our drives and our activities on the statement in Acts 20:35, "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak," remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' this was our goal for every project, whether humanitarian or religious. An overwhelming response of our parishioners in a fundraiser for Deb Midgley, a former president of the Ladies Group, and a member of our community diagnosed with ALS, highlights the very principles of love and faith that our group and church are based on. As Christians, the Bible is very clear throughout its pages that we are called to give generously and with sacrifice. Starting with a Fall pie bake sale, our Ladies Group delivered home-cooked pies to a fair number of elders

by Rima Nasr, Antiochian Women President

in our church community. Followed by our Christmas advent calendar, which was 25 days of various activities, which included sharing readings from the Bible, scarf and hat drives for donation, listening to chants and prayers, calling each other, cooking for people in need at Jamesville Pantry, in addition to holding an evening Zoom presentation from Dr. Sonia Nasr discussing "How the Star of Christmas Guides us in the Time of the Pandemic." In conjunction with these events, the Ladies Group also delivered Cyprus trees to those



Father Elias and Humanitarian Organizer, Kathy Fedrizzi, deliver a check for \$2500 to Deb Midgley's daughters, Robyn and Sarah. Monies were donated by parishioners and friends of Deb.

above the age of 80 years old in our church to remind them that they are loved, appreciated, and always have people to reach out to if needed. Ending the holiday season just as we started, we held a Christmas bake sale filled

with delicious, fast-selling baklava and spinach pies.

Beginning the year 2021 with food and clothes donations to the Samaritan Center and Rise Above Poverty, the heart to heart, hand in hand, and side by side drive continues, spreading love throughout February; as the Ladies Group, along with the St. Elias Church, donates even more toiletries, food, and money to those who are without a home during the current freezing winter months at Rescue Mission, We Rise We Above the Streets, and Diaper Bank. Following such endeavors, on January 17th, the Ladies Group will be distributing Holy Water to each parishioner of

the church who is above the age of 70 years old or those who place requests given the remaining supplies.

With March as the Ladies month, the group will be hosting a speaker every Friday on the topics of "How We Can Rely on Faith and Love to Find Calmness in this Challenging World" "Church and Raising Kids," "What is Our Role as Christian Women in the Orthodox Marriage," and "How To Apply Prayers to our Daily Life." John 34-35 states, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." These talks will serve as ways for the group members to connect and their relationship with God and their families.

With the year 2021 filled with only more compassion, love, support, and hope for the future, our Ladies Group is thankful for all that we have been able to accomplish and will always have you in our prayers. May you all have a blessed year, and remember to look to the Lord for all you need.



A worker at the Samaritan Center is pictured with food donations collected by Teen SOYO and the Antiochian Women. Donations were also delivered to the Jamesville-Dewitt Ecumenical Food Pantry and will be provided to We Rise Above the Streets.

## Our Antiochian Women (and Men) Have Been Very Busy!

### Thanksgiving Pie Sale



### Baklava and Spinach Fatayer Sale



FROM THE ARCHIVES OF  
ADVENTURES OF AN  
ORTHODOX MOM)

by Sylvia Leontaritis

One of the things parents constantly ask is how to keep their children involved during Lent. Here a list of activities, for week one, Find the remaining info on her blog: [orthodoxmom.com](http://orthodoxmom.com)

#### Week One

Monday- Choose a prayer or scripture verse to memorize. This could be the Jesus Prayer for smaller children or Psalm 50 or the Creed for older ones. Practice it daily during Lent.

Tuesday-Talk about temptation and resisting it. Make a batch of lenten

cookies and leave them on the table for them to eat the next day. #orthodoxresistance

Wednesday-Order your child a prayer rope of their very own. You can get one at your church bookstore any of these shops. They're both run by good friends of mine and I can vouch for their quality!

#### Komboskinaki

#### KomboskiniKaterini

Thursday-Bake Kyra Sarakosti "cookies." These are not to be eaten but your child will cut off one of her feet every Saturday as we count down to Pascha. Learn more about Lady Lent and find the recipe on her blog.

Friday-Read Verses Alpha through Epsilon of Rejoice, Panagia: Offering to Children The Akathist Hymn. Since we attend the Salutation services each Friday during Great Lent, this book provides an excellent introduction to the service to children (and adults!) Attend the service and let them bring their book.

Saturday-Talk about the First Sunday of Great Lent-The Sunday of Orthodoxy which we celebrate every first Sunday of Lent.

Sunday-Watch a Christian themed movie. Some of my favorites are the Storykeepers and Torchlighters series.

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

## January

Jerries & 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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## Teens Keep Busy Helping Others, Despite the Pandemic

by Aliah Mahshie, Teen SOYO President

To start out November, the Teens assisted the ladies in advertising, as well as handing out pies for their drive-by Thanksgiving pie sale. We had a large turn out of Teens and were happy to help.

We have continued with our can drive and coat drive and, we hope to get all of the items delivered before the winter season picks up.

To help out the ladies, the Teens took on the hobby of knitting scarves and hats to give to the needy.

To get into the Christmas spirit, the Teens assisted Maggie Mahshie in decorating the side entrance of the church with poinsettias, lights, garland, and snowflakes.

In this season of giving, we also started kindness bags. These are bags filled with granola bars, water, a warm pair of gloves, masks, dog treats, and candy canes. They are kept in the car and handed out to anyone you drive by that is homeless. A few have already been distributed and we have received many thank yous for our generosity.

We also assisted the humanitarian society with a project of their own. They acquired small Christmas trees and delivered them to the shut-ins and elderly in our parish. The Teens specifically helped in finding the decorations for the trees and putting them together.

Due to Covid-19, we have tried to stay as active as possible and appreciate those who have stayed to help, and we hope to make the rest of the year just as active and successful as those in the past!



Teens Grace George and Aliah Mahshie decorate the fountain located in the east entrance of the church. Thank you teens and Sheila Mazur and helpers for decorating (again) this year!



Grace George helps deliver donations to Jamesville-Dewitt Ecumenical Food Pantry. Food pantries have been hit hard during the pandemic, as more and more of those in our community are without jobs. Thank you to those who contributed to this effort.



Teens counted and logged donations for the annual Food for Hungry People effort. Last year 100 parishes in our Archdiocese reported participating in this much needed program. Additionally, 58 Antiochian parishes participated all year long, and distributing 500,269 pounds of food within our communities.

# BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS



## January

Lily Abboud	1
Fayez Abu Manneh	1
Nadia Abu Manneh	1
Khalid Ghrrayeb	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 Sourì	18
Joanna Tarazi	18
Albert Totari	19
Thomas Kane	23
Rami Al-Khoury	25
John Rott	27
Janice Abdo-Rott	29
Zeina Akl	30
Lauryn Abdo	31

## February

Salwa Ghrrayeb	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 Sourì	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
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
Loyal Makhlof	30
Chrystal Mullen	30

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.

Memory Eternal  
Nabeeha Mahshie- December 14, 2020