

# THE CORNERSTONE

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church  
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## JANUARY

- 5 Evening Divine Liturgy for Theophany at 6PM  
9 Zalaby

## FEBRUARY

- 1 Evening Divine Liturgy for the Presentation of Christ Into the Temple at 6PM  
6 Sunday School fundraiser - Chicken Schwerma and Fries

## MARCH

- Antiochian Women's Month  
7 Great Lent Begins  
24 Evening Divine Liturgy for the Annunciation at 6PM

## THE CORNERSTONE

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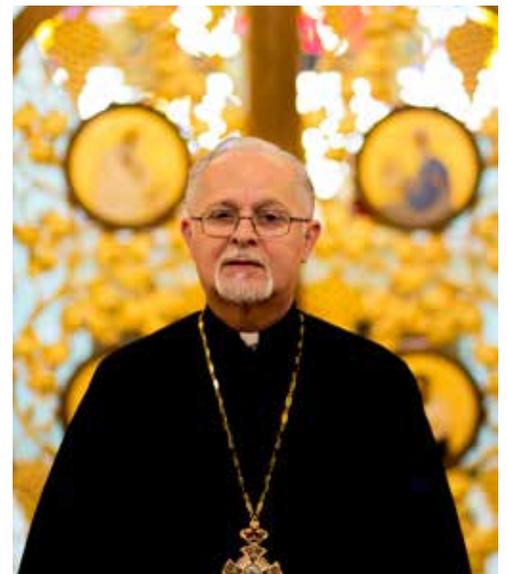
## WINTER 2022

### A Guiding Light to a Safe Harbor

Dear Elians:

I greet you with a holy kiss, praying that this New Year of 2022 will usher peace and good will among all. 2021 was a year pinned in the annals of history as a year of suffering, frustrations, uncertainty and struggles as each of us tried their best to cope with Covid-19 and its ramifications. Grateful to God for his compassionate mercy in inspiring the creation of multiple vaccines and medications for the survival of humanity. Slowly we are adjusting to a new way of life and the church is not immune from this. However we must keep our hope kindled knowing the Christ-Child was born to enlighten and strengthen our faith in the Almighty who alone has the power to restore us by our cooperation with him in living a life of righteousness and holiness.

Dearly beloved, in the month of January every year, we celebrate the Feast of our Lord's Baptism, and according to tradition, we have our homes blessed. This year we will continue the tradition with adjustments for pre-



caution purposes. Therefore, we will postpone blessing of homes 'till after Pascha. However, if you would like to have your home blessed before Easter, call Dona for arrangements at 315-488-0388.

In the same vein, the month of January is a month of planning future activities by our various organizations. As always, we need to be mindful that each person is an integral part of the body of Christ at our beloved St. Elias. As such, we look forward for the support of one another as we together carry

*Continued on next page*

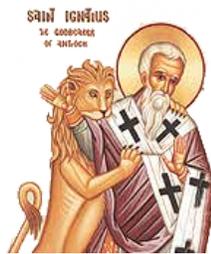
the burden of the church. With love, compassion and humility, our burden will be light; for Christ the Lord will be our strength and blessing.

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 bright Star of Bethlehem, “Jesus”, we will be guided by his light onto a safe harbor. So beloved, let us look beyond the immanent depressing moments to the rainbow in the far horizon.

With this being said, let us as one family work together with our new Parish Council and the officers: Habib F Alamir, (Pres), Kathy Federizzi ( V.P.), Tony Abboud ( Treasurer)’ and Mai Makhoulf (Secretary).

May the shining Star of Bethlehem bathe you and your loved ones with its eternal light bringing you a great measure of blessings today and throughout the year.

Fr. Elias Nasr



## THE ORDER OF ST. IGNATIUS

*Submitted by Dona Savage*

### **What’s Your Excuse?** *...for not joining The Order of St. Ignatius*

*I WANT TO TAKE CARE OF MY OWN PARISH. I SUPPORT MY CHURCH AND HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH THE ARCHDIOCESE.*

*The Order also wants to help take care of your parish! Look at what The Order impacts and actually saves the parishes money. At least 36% of the Archdiocese budget is from The Order for Christian education, music, evangelism and various other departments. The Order also contributes annually, 100% of the funds to the retired clergy housing allowance. Our young people enjoy a camping experience and the annual college conference sponsored by The Order. The future of the church as a whole does not rest on a few, but on many. With all of these important facets of parish and Archdiocesan life to the fund, the parishes cannot do it alone. We are all connected to the Archdiocese family in some way.*

*I HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN BY JOINING THE ORDER AND I GIVE TO MANY ORTHY ORGANIZATIONS AND WANT TO SPREAD MY GIVING.*

*To paraphrase the poet, Khalil Gibran, we should do what we can for our church and archdiocese, not ask what our church and archdiocese can do for us. (And you thought that John Kennedy said it first!) If we do not help our own who will? The*

*Order donates to many wonderful organizations throughout North America and the world touching many, many people with a budget of over \$1.5 million. You cannot do that alone.*

*I FEEL SILLY GOING UP TO THE ALTAR TO RECEIVE A “RED RIBBON” FROM THE BISHOP. IT’S TOO SHOWY.*

*In the Oath during induction it states: “May the cross (it is NOT called a ribbon) with which you will be invested be a reminder of Him who willingly accepted the Cross for our salvation...May the crimson of the ribbon recall the blood which the Martyr Ignatius shed for Christ.” We wear so much secular decoration today without feeling showy, drive fancy cars without feeling showy and we dress in the latest fashion without feeling showy. We set an*

Your SUPPORT to your parish is your OBLIGATION.

Your PARTICIPATION in the Order is a DONATION.

Please stop the excuses and PARTICIPATE TODAY!

*example to others through our behavior and there is no shame or showiness in this commitment. Standing before God and pledging our com-*

*mitment to Him is an honor. If you prefer, simply wear the pin that each new member receives.*

*THE ORDER IS JUST ABOUT MONEY. IT IS ONLY FOR THE RICH.*

*Yes it is and it isn't! In order to participate is this wonderful ministry you do have*

## DECEMBER IS ST. IGNATIUS MONTH

December is designated as St. Ignatius month. We celebrate the feast day of St. Ignatius on December 20, and the members of the Order recall their patron St. Ignatius during St. Ignatius Sunday. This annual celebration brings to mind the ministry of the Order that has become an integral aspect of the life of the Antiochian Archdiocese in the Western Hemisphere.

to pledge an annual donation but Order membership just does not stop there. You can get involved as much or as little as you like. Many of our members have created area fellowship chapters that raise money for their parishes and local charities, other members are involved on the local, diocesan and North American levels working to promote membership in The Order and some of our members simply choose to mail in their donation check once a year. It is up to you how involved you want to be. Remember Jesus sanctioned financial giving when he honored the poor widow who gave her last two coins. She gave from her need yet The Order asks you to give from your "leftovers". And, yes, The Order is only for the rich. Those rich in faith, service, and thankfulness! At \$1.35 a day how can you afford not to be a member? Members are from all walks of life: teachers, retirees, jewelers, housewives, computer programmers, auto mechanics, students, secretaries, dental hygienist, warehouse workers, postal workers, shoemakers, printers and there many young adult members who remember their time at camp with much fondness and want to give back. They give back through The Order. Anyone of any age can join and any member can utilize the electronic funds transfer system which makes donating so much easier (contact the Administrative Director for information).



Order member, Ramzy Khairallah, delivers a message on Sunday, December 19, explaining that when we leave this earth, our possessions are no longer ours!



## ST. ELIAS TEEN SOYO

### St. Elias Teens visit Brown Memorial United Methodist Church to help organize Christmas store for the less fortunate.

Our teens made a Sunday evening visit to Brown Memorial United Methodist Church in Syracuse to donate to and help organize a Christmas Shop for the less fortunate. As always, this act of kindness reinforced the saying, "Tis better to give, than to receive."



The Christmas Store available to those in need at Brown Memorial United Methodist Church in Syracuse.



Sydney Dash and mother, Lisa, help unpack donations and arrange tables so the store is ready for visitors.



SOYO President Roy Nasr and Advisor Ramzy Makhlof clean and organize the Christmas Store.

Photo credit to Sami Makhlof



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**Our Antiochian Women have been very, very busy!**

### **The Humanitarian Committee Reaches Out to the Community**

The Humanitarian Committee continues to reach out to those in need. There are a number of meaningful projects underway. To start, we had a successful poinsettia fundraiser sale thanks to all parishioners and friends for their support. In addition, the committee worked hard on organizing items to be donated and thanks to many generous supporters deliveries were recently made to Vera House and the Golisano Children's Hospital.

As you may have seen in the church hall, a Giving Tree has been set up nicely decorated for the season. We encourage you to visit the Giving Tree. It is full of love with intentions of spreading kindness and to promote giving back to those in need through hands-on service projects or offering financial assistance. Pick a tag and join



## **Antiochian Women Host a Successful Holiday Bazaar**



We are so excited to say that our Holiday Bazaar was a great success this year! From jewelers to bakers, and other hand-crafters, we were able to host 24 local vendors of the community at the Bazaar, even including some of our own parishioners!

The vendors brought so much to offer with them, along with a sense of holiday spirit that no one could deny!

Our hearts are full and content from the huge success we witnessed during this two-day event, and we cannot wait to host many more!

A big thanks to those who came out and supported this Bazaar, our church, and our vendors.

*Submitted by Georgina Abu Manneh  
Co-President Antiochian Women*

us in the spirit of giving! We are looking forward to more upcoming projects for both our church and other not-for-profit organizations in our community during 2022.

Suggestions, ideas and new committee people are welcome to join us in our meaningful work. Thanks again for your continued support. It has been such a blessing!

Kathy Fedrizzi & Reema Habayeb and The Humanitarian Committee

### **Parishioners Gather for Family Night, Sponsored by the Religious Committee**

The ladies' Religious Committee organized 3 "family night events". In each, Father Elias gave one part of a religious speech explaining the meaning of the Divine Liturgy and the sacrament of Communion. These were followed by an offering of a light dinner prepared by all attendees, then everyone engaged in fun activities, games, dances, and more!



## The Gift of Giving Continued Throughout the Christmas Season



Participants in the ladies' Ornament Exchange, held at Bellevue Country Club on December 8th, donate items to Golisano Children's Center. The Humanitarian Committee was happy to deliver gifts of Play-Dough, Crayola-brand items, Legos, books and more!



The Antiochian Women also visited Brown Memorial United Methodist Church in Syracuse and delivered items to help make life a little easier and better for others.



Antiochian Woman and St. Ignatius member, Maha Essi, serves up burbara during coffee hour on the Feast of St. Barbara.



Father Elias blesses the food and drink at one of three Family Night gatherings. Parishioners enjoyed learning more about their faith and the Divine Liturgy and spending time together!

*Excerpt from*

14 New Year's Resolutions for Orthodox Christians  
by Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

**1. Get serious about coming to church.** *This is eternal life we're talking about, not a religious club.*

**2. Come to church on time.** *When you show up late to church, it shows that you don't consider church very important.*

**3. Tithe.** *Nothing says you're serious like giving 10% of your income to something.*

**4. Pray at home.** *Even if all you do is say the "Our Father" when you wake up, you will notice a change in how you think and feel about your faith.*

**5. Sing along at church. and stand more.** *The choir and chanters are there to lead you in prayer, not to entertain you or pray instead of you.*

**6. Memorize a psalm.** *Memorizing Scripture is a great thing for many reasons, but psalms are especially powerful, because they are all prayers.*

**7. Encourage your priest.** *Your priest is a human being just like you are. And while he shouldn't live for praise, you can help him see that his hard work is appreciated by telling him so.*

**8. Invite someone to church.** *Think of at least one person you know who isn't in church. Make him or her a spiritual priority this year.*

**9. Visit a monastery.** *You won't believe how amazing monastic visits are until you go on one.*

**10. Read the old testament.** *If God prepared the world for the coming of Jesus by what He did in the Old Testament, how can we think we'll be prepared for His coming into each of our own lives without any of that same preparation?*

*Continued on next page*

**11. Attend an adult education class.**

*Don't sell yourself short. You are probably pretty smart about many things. Why don't you use that same talent to get smart about your faith?*

**12. Volunteer.** *Do something in your parish or in your community that benefits other people without giving you any kind of material gain. And do it without expecting recognition. Your recognition will come from God in His Kingdom. You don't need it from anyone else.*

**13. Go to confession.** *There are lots of Orthodox Christians who go to confession only once a year—or maybe even never. Like people who never go to the doctor, what that means is that you think everything is perfectly fine and you need no help. Literally, it means that you do not think you need the gift of forgiveness that comes in the sacrament of absolution.*

**14. Read a spiritual book.** *There are few things that get us into another story, another way of looking at life, like a good book. And a good spiritual book can help to retrain your mind to become like the mind of Christ. Most of us do not have the mind of Christ. We have the mind of something else. Our minds are filled with distractions, necessities and the cares of this world.*

Read the complete piece at <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/as-d/2014/12/14/14-new-years-resolutions-orthodox-christians/>



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It's really that easy!



Along with traditional carols sung by some of our choir members, chanters Ramzy Makhoulf, Rima Nasr, Milia Alamir and Sandy Nasr chant the Nativity odes.

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

## January

Jeries & Aida Sourì	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

Fayez & Nadia Abu Manneh	9
Akram & Labiba Tarazi	13



Aliah and Kailah Mahshie sell homemade Arabic anise cookies and hot chocolate at the Holiday Bazaar.

# 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
Lila Habayeb	8
Karen Caporizzo	11
Elizabeth George	11
Nuha Sousou	12
Rami Vassallo	13
Bassel Sakkab	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
Akl Zeina	30
Lauryl Abdo	31

## February

Hala Alamir	1
Salwa Ghrayyeb	1
Julia Totari	2
Nicholas Kontopoulos	3
Souhel Shehadeh	4
Alia Dayeh	5
Dana Nesheiwat	5
Elaina Atallah-Yunes	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
Martin Zablach	16
Olivia Sauro	17
Geris Souri	18
Gary George	20
Faisal Alamir	21
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 Tadros	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
Alysse Dowdle	20
Rose Soto	20
Simona Tadros	20
Suha Alamir	21
Jeanette Mtanos	21
Julia Wachna	24
Saher Zawaideh	24
Robert Furbeck	28
Layal Makhlof	30
Chrystal Mullen	30

## MEMORY ETERNAL



DOUGLAS MONSOUR  
November 12, 2021

SAMIRA SOUSOU  
November 21, 2021

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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