



ST. ANN MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH	
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Pastor: Father Dennis McCarthy Email: abounadennis@gmail.com Cell phone: 860 287 0677	December 3, 2023 14th Sunday After the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Intentions this weekend:

Saturday 5:00 pm Liturgy: For peace in the Middle East, Ukraine, and any place where there is armed conflict.

Sunday 8:00 am Spanish/English Liturgy: For the peace, health, and salvation of William Brown, the brother of Lisa and brother in law of Father Dennis.

Sunday 10:00 am Liturgy: For the peace, health, and salvation of Irene and Kathleen McCarthy, the mother and sister, respectively, of Father Dennis; also, for the repose of the souls of Thomas John McCarthy (father) and Matthew Brown-McCarthy (son). This is requested by Father Dennis and Lisa.

Please pray for: Peace in the Ukraine, Middle East, and anywhere in the world where there is armed conflict, hunger, and abuse. Pray that all leaders of the world have a spiritual awakening to dispose of their self-interest and, rather, care for their people, as Christ would want them to. Let them become peacemakers. As the priest prays on page 40 of our yellow booklets, ”for our public servants, for the government, and for all who protect us. O Lord, grant them peaceful rule that we too, in their tranquility, may lead calm and quiet life in all virtue and honor”.

Nativity Fast: In Melkite observance, this fast begins at sundown on December 10 and continues until sundown on December 21.

Please pray for: Ron and Mary Talge, Marino De La Cruz, Nick Rahal, Daniel Conigliaro, George Abbiati, Jr, Sandy Flaherty, Tanios Karam, Anna Villani, Dee Porlidis, Joyce Whelan, Father Ed Kakaty, John and Gloria Jeffords, Marie Antipoff, Irene McCarthy, Kathleen McCarthy, Sheila Burke, Marcy Davis, Abroze Gharios, Lisa Brown, Dina Matar, Robert Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McCurdy, Tommy Brown, Bill Curtis, Bobby Moutron and his sister Helen, Lisa Brown-McCarthy, Janice Carthy, Edward and Linda Zalonski, William Brown, Rebecca Moore and her son Karter Moore, Alexa Massad

Quote of the Day: “Advent’s intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope.”---Pope Benedict XVI

Meditation of the Day: “When our Lord bade us ‘to pray always’, He did not mean to ask us to be constantly in the act of prayer but, rather, to live in the state of prayer. Let us note the difference. To be constantly in the act of prayer would be to fill our life’s course with religious exercises alone. Even in the most contemplative lives, this is never done. There is always a place for certain activities that are more or less secular: work, meals, recreation, sleep and the like. Living in a state of prayer does not aim at an impossible existence. The part of our lives devoted to a state of prayer will mean that in all things, although it might be a question of secular action, we will have no other purpose than to give glory to God, always to have the *intention* directed as much as possible toward God”.---Father Raoul Lus, S.J., from his book *Uncommon Virtue*

Why does the Church use candles? They are so familiar to us that we don’t give them much thought, but what do they really symbolize? Every time we attend Divine Liturgy or other services, there are candles. In nearly every church, votive candles burn before icons and statues and sacred images. They are always present, automatically turning our thoughts and minds to prayer, to worship, to God.

Primarily, the candles, with their burning , light giving flame, represent Christ, the Light of the World. Candles are traditionally made of 100% beeswax, which symbolizes the pure flesh of Our Lord, received from His immaculate Mother. Although candles are not required to be pure beeswax, as they are expensive, they must contain some percentage of that wax. The wick, enrobed in the wax, represents His soul, and the flame—His Divinity.

Since we offer Christ Himself on the altar in the Divine Liturgy, it is only fitting that such a powerful symbol of Christ should be a required element in the Liturgy.

The layers of meaning in candles run deep. They symbolize our prayers rising up to God. They also contain the idea of sacrifice, since they are an offering made by human hands that we burn and which is consumed as it is used. During Divine Liturgy, candles give a vivid representation of Christ offering Himself to the Father through the hands of the priest.

Candles represent the burning light of faith that compels us to adore God and bring our petitions and intentions to Him. Flame reminds us of the Holy Spirit, the very Love of God dwelling within the hearts of the faithful (we are all temples of the Holy Spirit) and sanctifying our prayers and sacrifices.

Our use of candles need not be confined to those times that we are physically in Church. Many people light them in their homes at their Icon Corners, as part of their personal prayer. This practice becomes more common during the season of Christmas, where the flicker of the candlelight becomes a reminder of the coming light of Our Savior.---From the Catholic Company website

Please remember this every time you see a lighted candle in Church or light one in Church or in your home!

Bible Verse of the Day: “Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! Thou hast said, ‘Seek ye My Face’. My heart says to Thee, ‘Thy Face Lord, do I seek’. Hide not Thy Face from me. Turn not Thy servant away in anger, Thou Who hast been my help. Cast me not off, forsake me not, O God of my salvation!” ---Psalm 27: 7-9

NOTES, UPCOMING EVENTS:

53rd National Melkite Convention: Hosted by Our Lady of the Annunciation Melkite Catholic Cathedral at the Marriot Hotel in Quincy, Massachusetts from July 4-7, 2024. More information will follow, as we receive it from the Eparchy.

Sanctuary Lamp: The lamp will be illuminated during the month of December for the repose of the souls of Charles Facas, Jr. and Mary Jane Facas, requested by Gloria and John Jeffords. May their memories be eternal!

Coffee Hour: Many of our sister churches have a different family or individual sponsor the coffee hour on Sundays. They simply bring in some food to the coffee hour; the coffee is made by Pierre Hage. This is a great way to share food at table, as Jesus did so many times. It does not have to be elaborate-some cookies or pastry and maybe some fruit. It should not turn into a competition trying to outdo the last week’s efforts. Simple and easy is the key. I have put a sign up sheet on the table in the back of the church. The coffee hour is extremely important. It allows us to gather after the Divine Liturgy and have fellowship, which is a desire of our Lord. If you attend one of our other Divine Liturgies, this should not stop you from sponsoring the coffee hour and attending the Sunday, 10 am Liturgy that day. This is a way to serve your church and your brothers and sisters, and it is so easy. Please participate and have fun! Thanks to all who have volunteered. We have volunteers through December 31, 2023. **The schedule for the next 5 weeks is: Dec 3- Joumana and Gabriel Hajj; Dec 10-Dina Matar; Dec 17-Sean and Samantha Donkin; Dec 24- Fidel Alvarez and Carlina Portocarero; Dec 31-Bechara and Yolla El Khoury.**

Remember Me in Your Kingdom Memorial: This will occur at the end of 10:00 a.m. Liturgy on Sunday, December 3.

Reader List: There is a sign-up list on the table in the back of the Church for those who would like to read the Epistle on particular days. Father Dennis will teach you how to do it, if you need a refresher.

Divine Liturgy: Monday, December 4 at 5:30 PM: Saint Barbara’s Day. We will light sparklers at the end of Liturgy outside. Saint Barbara is the patron saint of artillerymen and artillery women, among others. This would be a fitting way to celebrate her Feast Day!

Divine Liturgy: Sunday, December 10 at 10AM: Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, will visit us and will give coins and gifts to the children at the end of Liturgy.

Christmas Schedule:

- ❖ Saturday, December 23, at 5:00 PM, regular Saturday Liturgy
- ❖ Sunday: December 24, at 8:00 AM; regular Spanish/English Liturgy
- ❖ Sunday: December 24, at 10:00 AM; regular Sunday Liturgy
- ❖ Sunday: December 24, at 5:00 PM; Feast of The Nativity of the Lord (**Change in time**)
- ❖ Monday: December 25, at 10:00 AM; Feast of the Nativity of the Lord

200 Club: If you wish to participate in the October 2023 to September 2024, 200 Club year, the cost is now \$60. The prizes remain the same. If you wish to join, you still can. Our first drawing took place on Sunday, October 8 after Liturgy. Our next drawing will be on December 16 after Liturgy at Coffee Hour.

Holy Rosary: On the second and the last Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm, unless we have a Feast Day Liturgy on that particular day; we pray the Rosary with a Byzantine approach using, as our guide, a book by Kenneth Chrusch. Please come and spend 60 minutes with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in Church! **In December, we will pray on Wednesday, December 13, and Wednesday, December 27, at 5:30pm. We are getting between 12-15 people at the Holy Rosary. If you are not attending, please try to come. It is beautiful!**

Financial update; bills paid last week:

- Eparchy: \$3,063.15 for November. This pays for our monthly assessment; \$1,006.52 (11% of what we collected last year on a monthly basis); health insurance for Father Dennis and Lisa: \$1,356.63 per month; and Priest retirement fund: \$700.00 per month.
- Father Dennis’ November Salary: \$2,383.22

Total bills paid the last week: \$5,446.37. Total collected last week \$2,347.00. We had a deficit last week of \$3,099.37. For the Fiscal Year, which began September 1, 2023 we have a deficit of \$5,451.92 in 12 weeks. **A bad start to the fiscal year!** Our spectrum of donations on a regular basis runs from \$3.00 per week to \$100.00 per week. The parishioners giving toward the higher end of the range are not necessarily the wealthiest, but they have made a commitment to God to give back a larger portion of their finances. It all belongs to God anyway! **“One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.” This is the word of God from Proverbs: Chapter 11, verse 24.** Almsgiving is a very serious matter to God, and a basic obligation of all Christians.

All donations for memorials, baptisms, marriages, priest stole offerings, and funerals are included in the collection total. Father Dennis does not personally accept money for the Sacraments.

Please consider tithing. That way we will not need to rely on extra events to support our church. For example, if you make \$50,000 per year, the tithe would be \$5,000. If you gave 5%, you would contribute \$2,500 per year. A \$5,451.92 deficit in 11 weeks of the new fiscal year is not sustainable! We are not a poor parish.

Would all parishioners consider giving an extra \$10.00 per week? That is the cost of a typical meal at McDonalds. I will lead, by example, and give this above my normal contribution weekly. Father Dennis

This Weekend	Saturday: Reader: Volunteer		Sunday: 10 AM Sean Donkin		Thanks to all who always make up their missed envelope, including Fuel and Building. Fund.
Next Weekend	Saturday: Reader: Volunteer		Sunday: Volunteer		
November 25 & November 26	\$2,347.00	50 Adults and 3 Children attended Liturgy last weekend.	Included in the collection: \$88.00 for candles,\$2.00 for Christmas offering, and \$525.00 for Hall Rental from Alcoholics Anonymous		