



ST. ANN MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH	
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Pastor: Father Dennis McCarthy Email: abounadennis@gmail.com Cell phone: 860 287 0677	December 10, 2023 10th 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: "The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, and the fruit of service is peace."---Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Meditation of the Day: "The devil didn't deal out temptations to our Lord only. He brings these evil schemes of his to bear on each of Jesus' servants and not just on the mountain or in the wilderness or when we are by ourselves. No, he comes after us in the city as well, in the marketplaces, in the courts of justice. He tempts us by means of others, even our own relatives. So what must we do? We must disbelieve him altogether, and close our ears against him, and hate his flattery. When he tries to tempt us further, by offering us even more, then we should shun him all the more. We aren't as intent on gaining our own salvation as he is on achieving our ruin. So we must shun him, not with words only, but also with works; not in mind only, but also in deed. We must do none of the things that he approves, for in that way we will do all those things that God approves. Yes, for the devil also makes many promises, not so that he may give them to us, but so that he may take them from us. He promises plunder, so that he may deprive us from the kingdom of God and of righteousness. He sets out treasures in the earth as snares and traps, so that he may deprive us both of these and of the treasures in heaven. He would have us be rich in this life, so that we may not be rich in the next."---Saint John Chrysostom

Bible Verse of the Day: "The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like the cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the House of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God." --- Psalm 92: 12-13

Calendars: The 2024 calendars are available on the table in the rear of the church. Please take one per household, so that we have enough for everyone.

Donation Envelopes: The 2024 Donation Envelopes will be ready for you **next weekend** on the table in the rear of the church.

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!

Remember Me in Your Kingdom Memorial: This will occur at the end of 10:00 a.m. Liturgy on Sunday, January 7, 2024.

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: 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.

What is the “Christmas Nail”? Maybe this Christmas, a friend will visit your house, and as they admire your Christmas tree decorated with lights, bulbs, and ribbons, they will spy a strange ornament hanging close to the trunk of the tree. It is almost invisible; hidden behind the branches and lights and other decorations.

It is a plain, long nail, much like the nails that pierced the hands and feet of Our Lord Jesus during His Passion. Your guest might wonder why such a nail would be found on a Christmas tree.

You'll explain to them that Jesus was born in Bethlehem so that, thirty-three years later, He would die for our sins on Calvary. The nail is a reminder of the passion this little baby would undergo, as innocent at death as He was at His birth. It reminds us of His sufferings and incredible love that motivated both His earthly nativity and His death. The nail decorates a Christmas tree, and the nails of His Passion were instruments of death on the Tree of the Cross.

The nail is not in a place of prominence, but almost hidden away near the trunk. It is not a decoration, but a prayerful reminder for the family and for those guests with particularly keen eyes.

If you have not started this tradition, try it this year. The Nativity and the Cross are both connected in God's plan. A poem explains the meaning of the Christmas Nail:

This is the Christmas Nail.

It is to be hung on a sturdy branch,

A branch near the trunk,

A branch that will hold such a spike without being noticed by well-wishers,

dropping by to admire one's decorated tree.

The nail is known to the home that hangs it.

Understood only by the heart that knows its significance.

It is hung with the thought that the Christmas tree but foreshadows the Christ-tree,

Which only He could decorate for us,

Ornamented with nails as this.

NOTES, UPCOMING EVENTS:

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. 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 **The schedule for the next 4 weeks is: Dec 10-Dina Matar; Dec 17-Sean and Samantha Donkin; Dec 24- Fidel Alvarez and Carlina Portocarero; Dec 31-Bechara and Yolla El Khoury.**

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 17 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:

- MES Shipman’s Fire Equipment Company: \$96.50 for fire extinguisher inspection
- Catholic Mutual Insurance: \$500.00. Our yearly bill for property insurance for the period 3/1/23-3/1/24 is \$8,009.00. We owe one more installment of \$500.00, payable by the end of February.
- Joan Van Ness: \$140.00 for lawn care
- Michael Tapteck: \$160.00 for cleaning of church, church hall, conference rooms, and bathrooms.
- Light bulbs for Church Altar: \$40.37
- Christmas Offering Envelopes: \$34.49
- Altar Server Robes (two): \$450.00
- Communion Cloths: \$24.00

Total bills paid the last week: \$1,445.36. Total collected last week \$1,506.00. We had a surplus last week of \$60.64. For the Fiscal Year, which began September 1, 2023 we have a deficit of \$5,391.28 in 13 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 \$5,391.28 deficit in 13 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: Volunteer		Thanks to all who always make up their missed envelope, including Fuel and Building Fund.
Next Weekend	Saturday: Reader: Volunteer		Sunday: Volunteer		
December 3 & December 4, 2023	\$1,506.00	41 Adults and 3 Children attended Liturgy last weekend.	Included in the collection: \$155.00 for candles,\$8.00 from the Poor Box, \$300.00 for Fuel, and \$50.00 for Christmas Offering.		