



# St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church



## A Parish Community of the Eparchy of Newton

### Bulletin for Sunday, February 5, 2023

Sunday of the Sunday of the Prodigal Son - Tone: 2 - Orthros Gospel: Luke 2:25-32 (Feast)

Community celebration of the feast of the Encounter of the Lord in the Temple (Feb. 2)

الأربعاء، 5 شباط 2023

عيد دخول ربنا يسوع المسيح الى الهيكل

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Web: [stjohnmelkite.org](http://stjohnmelkite.org) • FB: [facebook.com/StJohnMelkite](https://facebook.com/StJohnMelkite) • YouTube: [www.youtube.com/@StJohnMelkite](https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnMelkite)

Rev. Deacon Sami Jajeh & Rev. Deacon Elie Hanna, Parish Administrators

Rt. Rev. Archimandrite John Azar, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. George Gage, Celebrant and Rev. Dr. Thomas Flynn, Retired

Parish Advisory Council Chairperson - Deacon Elie Hanna - [deaconelie@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:deaconelie@stjohnmelkite.org)

Finance Council Chairperson - Deacon Sami Jajeh - [deaconsami@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:deaconsami@stjohnmelkite.org)

Cultural Center Manager - Jerome Hagley - [jerome.hagley@gmail.com](mailto:jerome.hagley@gmail.com)

10:00 AM – ORTHROS

10:30 AM – DIVINE LITURGY

Followed by Coffee Hour Fellowship in the Cultural Center.

### Parish Church Year Theme

(Liturgical Year – began Sept. 1, 2022 – ends Aug. 31, 2023):

"The God of heaven will give us success. We His servants will start rebuilding." (Nehemiah 2:20)

"إِنَّ إِلَهَ السَّمَاءِ يُعْطِينَا النِّجَاحَ وَنَحْنُ عَبِيدُهُ نَقُومُ وَنَبْنِي." (نحميا ٢:٢٠)

### ----- A WARM WELCOME TO ALL -----

**HAPPY TO HAVE VISITORS WITH US!** Please sign our Visitor's Guest Book in the narthex (entrance) of the church. If interested in receiving news, make sure we have an email address. And join us in the Cultural Center behind the Church to introduce yourself.

**INTERESTED-IN-BECOMING-CATECHUMENS/PARISHIONERS?** Please send email to [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org) or leave your contact information in the guest book in Narthex. We ask for an ongoing attendance period before requesting to be a member.

### ----- PARISH LIFE UPDATE -----

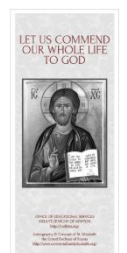
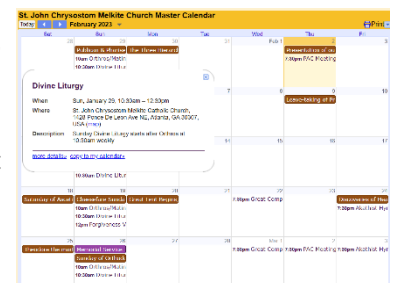
**NEW ONLINE CALENDAR LAUNCHED:** We have posted a new interactive online calendar. The calendar will have all the feasts of the church and will have specific events for our parish posted. Please give it a try by clicking [here](#). (only partial view on smaller mobile devices)

**NEW ONLINE LITURGY REQUEST FORM LAUNCHED:** We have posted a new form to request Liturgy Commemorations and Memorial Services. Please click [here](#) to request a Commemoration or Memorial Service.

**ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM:** The first three adult education sessions have been successful. We hope to see you at the next program on Jesus and Grace, John 1:1-18 and Ephesians 2:1-22.

**BAPTISM:** Congratulations to Laila Nassar daughter of Sami & Natalie (Kriss) Nassar who was given the Christian Mysteries of Initiation: Baptism, Chrismation & Holy First Communion on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023. Her Godparents are Michelle (Nassar) Tanory and Joseph Kriss.

**EDUCATIONAL LEAFLETS:** Twelve new leaflets from the diocese educational office have been printed and stocked in the leaflet wall in the Narthex. They are free and for your information. As we approach Great Lent, now is a great time to pick up a leaflet to read and learn more about our faith.



## ----- SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY -----

As a spiritual family, we encounter heaven on earth through the Divine Liturgy - the Lord's Day (*Kyriake* in Greek) as a priority for all families; making up of any missed financial support; and a resolve for all to let us live a renewed life in Christ through Church!

**COMMUNION:** If you are unable to make Divine Liturgy on Sunday due to health reasons, and you would like to receive the Holy Eucharist, please e-mail [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org) by Saturday so that clergy may visit you with Communion. As a reminder, Church school begins immediately after communion, so on school days, so teachers and students will exit into the pews first.

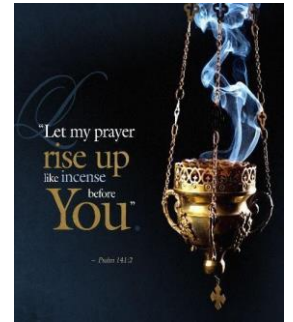
### THIS WEEK'S DIVINE LITURGY COMMEMORATIONS

#### REPOSE IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

+Meyasar Al-Zaraaneh, Requested by St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
+Sarina Lauren Shadeed, Requested by St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
+George Moosa, Godfather of Janice Peterson, Requested by the Peterson Family

#### HEALTH & SALVATION

Fr. Tom Flynn, Requested by St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
Paul Peterson, on his 73rd birthday, Requested by Janice Peterson  
Those in our Prayer Line, Requested by St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
Peace in the World, especially in the U.S., Middle East, Holy Land, Ukraine



## ----- UPCOMING AND IMPORTANT EVENTS -----

**TRIODION:** The Pre-Lenten period begins with the Sunday of the Pharisee and the Publican (Jan 29<sup>th</sup>), followed by the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, Meat Fare Sunday, and concluding in Cheese Fare Sunday.

### SUN, FEB 5 – COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF THE ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

**SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON:** The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is the second Sunday of pre-Lent, the weeks of preparation preceding Great Lent. It is the Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee and Sunday before Meat Fare Sunday. This pre-Lent is the start of the Easter cycle of worship in the Eastern Church.

**SUN, FEB 12 – MEAT FARE SUNDAY:** In preparation for Great Lent, the last Sunday to partake in meat and meat by-products.

**MEMORIAL SERVICE:** +Sarina Lauren Shadeed

**LADIES SOCIETY MTG:** The Feb. Ladies Society meeting will be held on Feb. 12.

**SUN, FEB 19 – CHEESE FARE SUNDAY:** In preparation for Great Lent, the last Sunday to partake in cheese and cheese by-products.

**SERVICE OF FORGIVENESS VESPERS:** After Sunday's Divine Liturgy, we will have the Forgiveness Vespers service. As we approach and prepare for Holy Week and Pascha (Easter), we start the season by asking for forgiveness from God and each other. Fellowship and coffee hour will follow Vespers.

**MON, FEB 20 – FORGIVENESS (or CLEAN) MONDAY:** The First Day of the Great Fast is Forgiveness Monday.

**GREAT LENT – WEDNESDAY's & FRIDAY's:** The deacons are preparing the calendar for Great Lent. Do plan on regularly attending Compline, Akathist, and the special services of Holy Week.

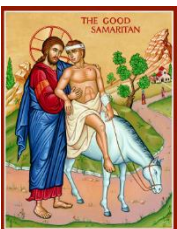
## ----- CHURCH TOURS RESTARTED -----

**SHARING OUR MELKITE FAITH:** A tour of the church including a discussion regarding the understanding of the Melkite faith, the Church of Antioch, and the Byzantine Rite, was presented by Dcn. Sami to our visitors from the Federation of North American Explorers. They enjoyed their visit tremendously, commenting, "... this visit was the most enjoyable and informative. Thank you for sacrificing your time and sharing your love of Christ and His Church with our youth today."

If you know of any groups that would like to visit St. John Chrysostom, please let the deacons know, so that we can continue to share our faith and rite with others.



## ----- GOOD SAMARITAN SOCIETY RESTARTED -----



As the parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us, we are all called to be good Samaritans to each other by sharing our love of Christ with the world through actions. The recently reestablished Good Samaritan Society, led by Suely Elias and Marie Hansen, are planning one activity per quarter for us to get started. They also plan on putting a permanent box in the Narthex for food donations. Hence, we can continually be providing food for the less fortunate. The program for Great Lent is to do a Toiletries Drive, enabling us to provide much needed items to the homeless and those without the funds to secure toiletries for their personal hygiene needs. Please give generously as these programs are announced. Thanks in advance for your cooperation and participation.

----- STEWARDSHIP (AL WAQF) IS A WAY OF LIFE -----

This is our being entrusted by God with the gifts of the earth and of our church. We are all stewards: earthly caretakers and managers for the Lord. Our return of Time, Talent, and Treasure to Him. It is a way of life!

**TIME AND TALENT: Volunteers Needed** to help lead various ministries. **Liturgical Participation:** Please consider joining the Choir, being a reader (see Eric Hansen), becoming an usher (see Joe M. or Jerome H.) or an altar server (contact Dcn. Elie).

**TREASURE:** [CLICK HERE TO DONATE NOW](#), or scan QR Code or send an email to [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org) to set up ACH donations. All checks should be made to "St. John Chrysostom Melkite Church" except for diocesan collections, which should be made out to "Diocese of Newton." We receive Zelle donations at [donate@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:donate@stjohnmelkite.org). Identify donation purpose of donations in memo field.



**FINANCIALS: (MONTHLY - JAN 2023):** Total Income \$13,650, including Ordinary Collections: \$11,965 with Total Expenditures of \$11,492, leaving a Net Difference **\$2,174**. As mentioned at the recent General Assembly meeting, the giving in the parish is uneven, and the biggest impact would be for families who are not on a regular (weekly or monthly) giving plan to start one. Thank you for your consideration.

**WHAT ABOUT TRADITION?** To be good stewards of tradition, we must not only learn it and grow spiritually but share it - perhaps by inviting a friend to the Divine Liturgy or praying for others, including those in our Prayer Line below.

----- THANK YOU TO THESE GOOD STEWARDS -----

In today's bulletin, we appreciate and give thanks to some of the businesses who have been generous stewards in providing free services or products to the Church, specifically:

**AtlantaScapes:** Thank you for the offer to fix the recent damage to the lawn.



**Aroma Ridge Coffee:** Thank you for continuing to provide coffee to the church.

**Ray's Pizza:** Thank you for the pizza luncheon. The pizza was delicious!



PRAYER IS A WAY OF LIFE -----

**COMMEMORATIONS:** Send a commemoration request to [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org) for a family member, friend, or colleague such as: (a) Repose of their soul, (b) health and wellness, (c) commemorate a special event in their life.

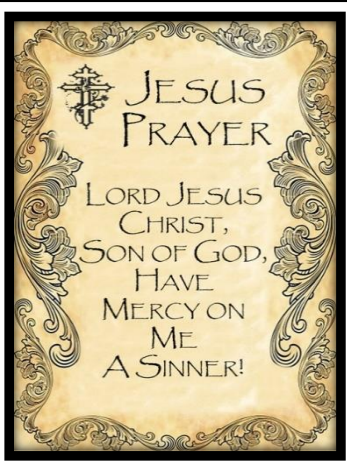
Please keep in your prayers...

- |                  |                    |                          |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Souren Palanjian | Vic Maloof         | Fr. Tom Flynn            |
| Shadeed Family   | Al-Zaraaneh Family | Abyad Family             |
| Munn Family      | Fr. John Azar      | Jean Pierre Garcia (Jay) |

- |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Those affected by the virus | Victims of natural disasters       |
| Those approaching matrimony | The Wandering Sheep of this parish |

*May the Divine Physician of our souls and bodies extend His healing hand over His servants and handmaids.*

For those in need of prayer and to keep us up to date on everyone's condition, please share at [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org).



## February Birthdays and Anniversaries



Note: The information below is from our Parishioner database. We apologize IN ADVANCE for anyone who is missing or any information which is mistaken. Please send corrections to [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org) so we

### Birthdays:

Paul Peterson	Scott Schreiber
Fr. John Azar	Mayy Wehbeh
Thomas Atalla	Camille Nassar
Mervat Al zaraaneh	Sumaya Kadadu
William Maakaroun	Mark Madanat
Louis (Vic) Maloof	

### Anniversary:

Dr. & Mrs. Shajih and Ghada Muhanna  
Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Patty Pharo  
Mr. & Mrs. Zahi and Suely Elias

## ----- MINISTRY LEADERS -----

**Adult Education** – Greg Pharo  
**Altar Servers** – Deacon Elie Hanna  
**Choir** – Sohel Elias  
**Children Education** – Viola Ghawi, Tyra Nuar  
**Cultural Center Rental** – Jerome Hagley  
**Friday Fellowship** – Rita Karroum, Vera Madanat  
**Gift Shop** – Joseph Manguno, Patty Pharo  
**Good Samaritan Society** – Suely Elias, Marie Hansen  
**Ladies Society** – Susie Hagley, Lina Muhanna (co-presidents)  
**Men's Club, Publican Society** – OPEN  
**Readers** – Eric Hansen  
**Sunshine Committee** – Matilda Ghawi  
**Ushers** – Jerome Hagley, Robert Ghawi, Joseph Manguno

## --- VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR ---

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 1-800-479-5910.

## --- The Prodigal Son ---

EVERY YEAR ON THIS SECOND SUNDAY of the Triodion we hear the Lord's story which we call the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In fact there are three important characters in this parable, recorded in Luke 15: the Prodigal, the loving Father and the older brother. Some commentators feel that the older brother is the most important figure in the story because of the occasion on which the Lord told this parable. To find this context we must look at the first verses of the chapter which precede it, which are not read this Sunday: *"Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.' So He told them this parable..."* (Lk 15:1-3).

The Lord then tells not one but three parables about the joy over a repentant sinner: the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin and the story of the Prodigal. The Lord's aim in each of them is to confront the self-righteousness of the Pharisees and scribes who saw themselves as properly observant Jews in contrast to those who collaborated with the Roman occupiers (the tax collectors) or those who ignored the precepts of the Law (the sinners). Thus each of the characters in the parable represents one of figures in the above three verses. We have the Rebel son, who represents the sinners, the Conformist son, who embodies the respect for the Law and tradition which characterizes the scribes and Pharisees, and the welcoming Father who is Christ Himself. The Rebel is truly a prodigal, disrespecting his father by demanding what would come to him at his father's death – in effect, saying "I wish you were dead." As we know, he goes off and eventually loses everything. Finally, he decides to return to his father, who receives him with love.

### The Second Brother

The focus of the tale now turns to the Conformist brother who has done everything by the book but is every bit as lost as his brother ever was. As Fr Henri Nouwen tells us in his reflection, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, (1992, p. 71): "Outwardly the elder son was faultless. But when he confronted his father's joy at the return of his younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface. Suddenly there becomes glaringly visible a resentful, proud, unkind selfish person, one that had remained deeply hidden."

Without realizing it, the older brother has gone off to a "strange land" just like the Rebel. He was no longer the faithful son of his father everyone thought he was. As his father's eldest son, his place would be at the center of the festive gathering, seeing that everyone was welcomed and cared for. Hospitality was – and remains to this day – one of the most important activities in a Middle Eastern household. Refusing to take part made the Conformist the exact opposite of what he appeared to be: the faithful image of his father. He had no cause to look down on his brother; he too had fallen victim to "the tyranny of the passions" (St. Maximus the Confessor) and publicly insulted his father by his actions. He not only refused to stand at his father's side before the guests; he even caused his father to leave them in order to deal with his son's feelings.

Like the Pharisee in last week's Gospel parable, the Conformist brother represents the scribes and Pharisees who are outwardly faultless. They observe all the precepts of the Law but look down on those who do not. Jesus does not tell them to ignore the Law, but to complete it with mercy and compassion. Elsewhere we find Him berating the Pharisees for this very reason: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others" (Mt 23:23).