



# St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church



A Parish Community of the Eparchy of Newton

Bulletin for Sunday, December 3, 2023

Fourteenth Sunday After the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – TONE 2

Commemoration of the Holy Prophet Zephaniah

الأحد، 3 كانون الأول 2023

الاحد العاشر بعد الصليب

**SATURDAY: GREAT VESPERS (5pm) – CONFESSIONS (4:30-5pm)**

**SUNDAY: ORTHROS (9:45am) – DIVINE LITURGY (10:30am) – CONFESSIONS: 9:30-10:00am**

**Followed by Coffee Hour Fellowship in the Church Hall**

**WELCOME VISITORS!** Please register on FlockNote to receive e-mails/texts and join us in the Church Hall. If you would like a tour or discussion about the Melkite Church, please let Fr. Elias know so that one can be arranged after coffee hour. Interested in being a catechumen or parishioner? Please send an email to [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org).

**COMMUNION:** If you are unable to make Divine Liturgy 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.

**HOUSE BLESSINGS:** Father Elias is ready to bless your house! To schedule yours, please e-mail [pastor@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:pastor@stjohnmelkite.org).



----- **DIVINE LITURGY COMMEMORATIONS** -----

**HEALTH & SALVATION**

Fr. Tom Flynn, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
Banks Thomas Davidson (AL), Requested by Fr. Justin Rose, St. George Melkite Church (AL)  
Lauren Makhoulouf, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
Scott Alexander, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community  
Dadul Namgyal, Requested by John Chambers

**REPOSE IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM**

+Rouviette Hanna, Requested by Jerome and Susie Hagley  
+Thomas Sweeney, grandfather-in-law of Subdeacon Riley Winstead, Requested by St. John Community  
+Butrus Jajeh, Father of Dcn. Sami Jajeh, Requested by the Hanna Family  
+Victoria Azzam, Mother of Matilda Ghawi, 15 yrs, Requested by Tony and Matilda Ghawi



**SUN, DEC 3<sup>rd</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**

- Community Celebration of the Feast Day of St. Barbara
- Asa's Alley is hosting an Art Market which children can participate in

**READING from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (Gal 3:23-29; 4:1-5):** BRETHREN, before the faith came, we were kept imprisoned under the Law, shut up from the faith that was to be revealed. Therefore, the Law has been our tutor unto Christ that we might be made holy by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all God's children through faith in Christ Jesus. For all you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he differs in no way from a slave, though he is the master of all; but he is under guardians and tutors until the time set by his father. So we too, when we were children, were enslaved under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, that he might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

**LUKE 18:35-43:** At that time when Jesus drew near to Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting by the wayside, begging; but hearing a crowd passing by, he inquired what this might be. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus Son of David, have mercy on me!" And they who went in front angrily tried to silence him. But he cried out all the louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then Jesus stopped and commanded that he should be brought to him. And when he drew near, he asked him, saying, "What would you have me do for you?" And he said "Lord, that I may see." And Jesus said to him, "Receive you sight, your faith has saved you." And at once he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people upon seeing it gave praise to God.

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

**NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING:** Our second, very successful gathering was held on Nov. 30th at the home of Tony and Matila Ghawi with a group of 24 parishioners from the area. The evening included fellowship, a brief prayer, a vegetarian meal, and a lively Q&A session. It closed with Little Compline, a brief but beautiful prayer service that is the traditional bedtime prayer of the Church at 8 PM. Several of the attendees stayed for additional fellowship and personal questions with Abouna. Stay tuned for the announcement of our next Neighborhood Gathering. Please see Deacon Elie if you are interested in hosting the next Gathering.

**HOMELESS CARE PACKAGE DRIVE:** The Good Samaritan Society is collecting items to distribute to men who are homeless. We hope to collect enough before Christmas to be able to hand them out during the Christmas season. A large bin has been set up in the Church Hall to collect donations. We plan to set aside a time one Sunday after Liturgy when the Sunday school teachers and students (and anyone else interested in helping) can get together to assemble these packs. If you prefer to provide a check or Zelle payment, The Good Samaritan Society will purchase the items on your behalf. Please put "Homeless Care Package" in the memo.

**BOOK FEATURING ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM:** Daniel Markham went to mass (or Divine Liturgy) in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Wash. D.C. He documented these church visits in a book titled *52 Masses*. St. John Chrysostom is the church he went to for the state of Georgia. If you would like to purchase the book, perhaps as a Christmas gift, the website is: <https://52masses.square.site/>

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

**SAT, DEC 2<sup>nd</sup> and DEC 9<sup>th</sup> – SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING MARRIAGE WORK (SEE FLYER ON BACK PAGE)**

**MON, DEC 4<sup>th</sup> – ACTUAL FEAST DAY OF ST BARBARA**

Saint Barbara, also known as the Barbara the Great Martyr, was alive during a time when Christians were commonly persecuted by the Roman Empire. She came from a place called Heliopolis, which at the time was in Phoenicia while Maximian was the emperor. Her father's name was Dioscorus, which was a well known idolator. Because of this, she had to practice her Christianity somewhat in secret because her family didn't share her beliefs. Barbara believed in the Holy Trinity and practiced her Christian faith in private, without letting her family know. However, her family did eventually find out. She gave away her beliefs because she had construction workers add a third window in the house against the father's wishes, and she inscribed a cross near it. When her father returned, he noticed and asked her why. She didn't lie to him. She became a martyr in the year 290, losing her life from beheading. Dioscorus, her father, did the act himself.



**NOTE REGARDING TROPARION OF ST. BARBARA:** Many Christians are in the habit of chanting the Troparion of Saint Barbara each day, recalling the Lord's promise to her that those who remembered her, and her sufferings would be preserved from a sudden, unexpected death, and would not depart this life without benefit of the Holy Mysteries of Christ.

**WED, DEC 6<sup>th</sup> – FEAST DAY OF ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER**

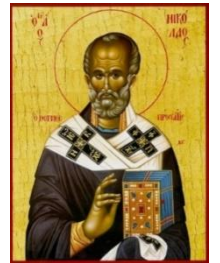
- Divine Liturgy at 7pm (Instead of Paraklesis on this date)

**FRI, DEC 8<sup>th</sup> – 7PM: PARAKLESIS SERVICE FOR NATIVITY FAST**

- Send First Names (only first names, no nick names) of the LIVING to [contact@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:contact@stjohnmelkite.org)

**SUN, DEC 10<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS – HEALING OF A CRIPPLED WOMAN**

- +Butrus Jajeh – 40 Day Memorial with Mercy Meal
- Community Celebration of St. Nicholas – Visit of St. Nicholas
- Annual Nativity Bakesale

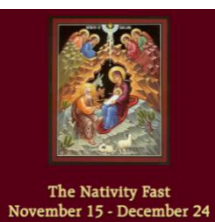


**SUN, DEC 17<sup>th</sup> – SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS**

- Children's Nativity Program with Lunch for the Children

----- WHAT IS A PARAKLESIS SERVICE? -----

A *paraklesis* is a service of prayers offered on behalf of the living. This service is most addressed to the Most Holy Theotokos, although it may be used to seek the intercessions of any saint. One unique thing about the service is a selection of music with hymns addressed to the saint whose intercessions are being sought. It is customary in our Melkite Diocese to chant this service during the Nativity Fast.



----- THE NATIVITY FAST AND THANKSGIVING -----

Once a priest-mentor of mine was asked about how to deal with Thanksgiving during the Nativity Fast. His answer was simple. Break the fast to enjoy the time with your family, and once your Thanksgiving celebrations are over return to the fast. The fast is not about food so much as it is about learning to discipline ourselves. It makes no sense to keep the fast perfectly if we go on sinning just as much (or even more because we are hungry and cranky). Another priest once told me that when it comes to the fast, a good rule is to "keep your eyes on your own plate." So, we each do the best we can. (Fr. Elias)

----- STEWARDSHIP IS A WAY OF LIFE -----

God entrust us with the gifts of the earth and of our church.  
Through Stewardship, we return it to Him. It is a way of life!

**TREASURE:** [CLICK HERE TO DONATE NOW](#) 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 are to be made out to “Diocese of Newton.” Identify purpose of any Zelle donation [donate@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:donate@stjohnmelkite.org) in memo field. You may also give via Flocknote if that is easier for you.

**FINANCIALS: (MONTHLY - NOV 2023 and JAN-NOV 2023):**

*Total Income:	\$16,975 (O.C. \$10,111)	\$147,2390 (O.C. \$103,132)
**Expenses:	\$19,343	\$270,993
Net Income:	<b>(\$2,664)</b>	<b>(\$123,744)</b>

\* O.C. – Ordinary Collections

\*\* YTD RENOVATION AND REPAIR EXPENSES: **\$98,554**

**FLOCKNOTE REGISTRATION AND TRAINING:**

Demystifying FlockNote – Open Office Hours at Coffee Hour by Dcn. Elie Hanna. Bring all your questions/comments and concerns. **REGISTER OR UPDATE YOUR REGISTRATION:** Scan the QR on the right to do that.



----- TIME AND TALENT-----

**Volunteers Needed** to help lead various ministries such as Men’s Club or Publican Society.

**Liturgical Participation:** Please consider chanting, being a reader (see Eric Hansen), becoming an usher (see Joe M. or Jerome H.) or an altar server (see Dcn. Elie).

----- MINISTRY LEADERS -----

- Adult Education** – Greg Pharo
- Altar Servers** – Deacon Elie Hanna
- Building Council Members** – Rani Ghawi, Sami Nassar
- Choir** – Sohel Elias
- Children Education** – Viola Ghawi, Tyra Nuar
- Church Hall 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)
- Readers** – Eric Hansen
- Sunshine Committee** – Matilda Ghawi
- Ushers** – Jerome Hagley, Robert Ghawi, Joseph Manguno

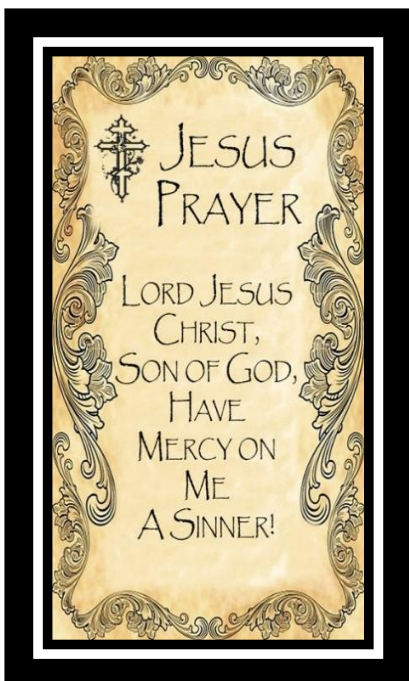


----- Middle East Emergency Relief Collection -----

All donations given to the Diocese of Newton for the Melkite Catholic Church are to be shared with the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), that has been serving the people of the region for over 75 years. With the increased violence, bloodshed, dispersion, and tension in the Middle East, we ask the faithful to pray for peace and to remember the words of Jesus, our Savior “Blessed are the peacemakers.” [Mt. 5:9] You may send donations to the “Diocese of Newton” or use the following link: [DONATE HERE](#)

----- 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.



**PRAYER LINE: Please keep in your prayers...**

Fr. Tom Flynn	Samira Jajeh	Lauren Makhoul
Serene Kadadu	Scott Alexander	Lina Muhanna
Dcn. Sami Jajeh and Family		

The Wandering Sheep of this parish	Those looking for employment
Victims of natural disasters	The homeless and poor
Those taking care of (grand)parents	Those preparing for marriage
Those consider ascription into the Melkite Church	
Areas of War and Violence, Including Holy Land, Ukraine, Syria, Lebanon	

*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).

## December Birthdays & 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 can update our database.

### BIRTHDAYS

Jessica Fron	Salma Layous
Tyoh Long	Michael Madanat
John Madanat	Maureen Maloof
Tyra Nuar	Luca Quatelas
Robert Thomas	

### ANNIVERSARIES

Dr. & Mrs. Craig and Melinda Ajmo  
Mrs. Evelyn Whalen

## --- SEEING THE LIGHT OF GOD ---

“I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD” (John 8:12). These familiar words of the Lord Jesus reflect one of the most popular images in the Scriptures, but what do they mean? How is Jesus the Light of the world?

The rest of this verse sheds light on what is meant here. “I am the Light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” Here and in a number of other places, Jesus is portrayed as a Beacon: one who guides along a right path, who illumines the way for us. He is the “Giver of light,” the One bringing light to our hearts. To say that He is light in this way is to talk about what he does.

But there is another way to see Christ as light. He is light, not only because of what He does for us, but because of what He is. “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). God is not described here as light illumining our minds or hearts, but as He is in Himself: Light in His innermost being.

Based on the Gospel, the Church proclaims the Lord Jesus as “Light from Light” (Nicene Creed), the “Joyful Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, the Heavenly, the Holy, the Blessed: Jesus Christ” (third-century Vespers hymn). As God is Light in Himself, so too the incarnate Christ is the Light of the Father. “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30).

As far back as the third century, the Fathers used our experience of the sun to illustrate this mystery. Like others before him, St Cyril, the ninth-century teacher of the Slavs, reflected, “Do you see in the heavens the brilliant sphere of the sun and how light is begotten and warmth proceeds from it? God the Father is like the sphere of the sun, without beginning or end. From Him is eternally begotten God the Son, like light from the sun; and just as there comes warmth together with light, the Holy Spirit proceeds. Each one is distinguished separately: the sphere of the sun, the light and the warmth – these are not three suns, but one sun in the heavens. So also, in the Holy Trinity: there are three Persons, but God is one and indivisible.”

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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)

FlockNote: <https://stjohnmelkiteatl.flocknote.com/register>

Rev. Elias Dorham, Pastor  
[pastor@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:pastor@stjohnmelkite.org)

Rev. Deacon Sami Jajeh, Administrator and Finance Chair  
[deaconsami@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:deaconsami@stjohnmelkite.org)

Rev. Deacon Elie Hanna, Administrator and PAC Chair  
[deaconelie@stjohnmelkite.org](mailto:deaconelie@stjohnmelkite.org)

Rt. Rev. Archimandrite John Azar, Pastor Emeritus  
+Rt. Rev. William Haddad, Founding Pastor  
Rev. Dr. Thomas Flynn, Retired

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

## --- 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 Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work

A Workshop for Married & Engaged Catholic Couples  
December 2nd and 9th, 8am to 12pm PST  
Online via Zoom

Learn effective, research-based strategies to help you:

- Foster respect, affection, and closeness
- Break through and resolve conflict gridlock
- Build and share a deeper connection with each other's inner world

...in a convenient, online program designed by relationship experts at The Gottman Institute and led by a trained Gottman Leader

**MEET YOUR CERTIFIED WORKSHOP LEADER**

Fr. Elias Dorham serves as the Pastor of St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church in Atlanta Georgia. He and Khouria Sylvia have been married for 30 years and have 10 children and three grandchildren. Prior to ordination, his professional experience encompassed coaching and leadership development across the military, federal/local government, and technology sectors. He holds a Doctor of Ministry from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary. His doctoral ministry project examined marriage enrichment and development. He also has a M.A. in Theological Studies from Christendom College, an M.S. in Information Systems Technology from the Naval Postgraduate School, and a