



St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church



A Parish Community of the Eparchy of Newton

Sunday, December 31, 2023

Sunday After the Nativity – Leave-taking of the Feast of the Nativity - TONE 6
Commemoration of the Holy Joseph, spouse of the Mother of God, James, David

الأحد، 31 كانون الأول 2023
الاحد الذي بعد عيد الظهور
تذكار القديس يوسف خطيب والدة الاله، ويعقوب اخي الرب
وداع الميلاد المجيد

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

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

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.

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 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.



----- 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
Hikmat & Najwa Faraj, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community

REPOSE IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

+Butrus Jajeh, Father of Dcn. Sami Jajeh, Requested by The Jajeh Family
+Richard Jabaley, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community
+Kh. Judy Handal, the wife of the late +Fr. Ephrem Handal, the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community



SAT, DEC 30TH – 5PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (4:30PM)

SUN, DEC 31ST – SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

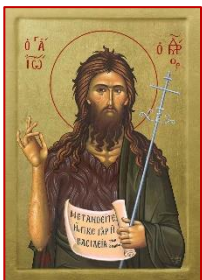
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, JAMES, DAVID

- Leave taking of the Feast of the Nativity

MON, JAN 1ST – FEAST DAY OF ST BASIL/CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

- No services on this date

Gospel: Sunday before Theophany, Mark 1:1-8 (The Preaching of John the Baptist)



The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send my messenger before you, who shall prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the desert, ‘Make ready the way of the Lord, make straight his paths,’” there came John in the desert, baptizing and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea went out to him, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and all were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “One mightier than I is coming after me, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

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

CALLED BY NAME: The “Called by Name” vocations program will start in a few weeks from the Vocations office, headed by Fr. Elias Dorham. Be on the lookout, as you will be asked to identify men who may be ready for a discernment to vocations.



FLOWERS COMMITTEE: A new year (2024) brings us a new ministry, the Flowers Committee, headed by Tyra Nuar. Men and women are needed to help beautify the church (God’s house) weekly and especially during feasts with fresh flowers. Please contact Tyra if you are interested in helping with this ministry.

CALENDARS ARE HERE!: Please see Deacon Elie in the Church Hall to receive your calendar and update our contact database. Thank you to Atlanta Scapes for sponsoring the 2024 Melkite Calendars here at St. John Chrysostom.

GREAT VESPERS TIME CHANGE: NOTE Starting Sat, Jan 6th that Great Vespers moves to 6pm, based on parishioner feedback.

SAVE THE DATE: The Annual General Assembly will be held after Divine Liturgy on January 21, 2024. Please plan on attending!

THANK YOU: Thank you to all of those who made all of the December programs successful including the extra liturgical services, Homeless Care Package Program, Mercy Meal, Bake Sale, Visit of St. Nicholas, and Children’s Christmas program. Your hard work and dedication are noticed and appreciated and a great blessing to our community. The bake sale was very successful and raised approximately \$2,450.



53rd NATIONAL MELKITE CONVENTION: SAVE THE DATES (July 4-7, 2024). The 53rd Annual National Melkite Convention. Consider taking the entire family to this important event. See WWW.MELKITE.ORG for details.

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

WED, JAN 3RD – 7PM – DAILY VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (6:30PM)

FRI, JAN 5th – 7PM: VESPERAL BASIL DIVINE LITURGY – GREAT FEAST OF THEOPHANY

- Agape Meal in Church Hall after Divine Liturgy

SAT, JAN 6th – **6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:30PM) - THE GREAT FEAST OF THEOPHANY**

SUN, JAN 7th – SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY - 2ND DAY OF CELEBRATION OF THE THEOPHANY – HOLY SYNAXIS IN HONOR OF THE PROPHET AND GLORIOUS FORERUNNER JOHN THE BAPTIST

- Great Blessing of the Waters after Divine Liturgy

WED, JAN 10TH – 7PM – DAILY VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (6:30PM)

SAT, JAN 13th – **6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:30PM)**

SUN, JAN 14th – SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY – LEAVE TAKING OF THE THEOPHANY

SAT, JAN 20th – **6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:30PM)**

SUN, JAN 21st – SUNDAY OF THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN

- Memorial Service for +Sarina Shadeed
- Annual General Assembly to be held in Church Hall after Divine Liturgy

SAT, JAN 27th – **6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:30PM)**

SUN, JAN 28th – SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



----- THE CHURCH NEW YEAR (SEPT 1st) vs. THE WORLD NEW YEAR (Jan 1st) -----

In the first years of the Church the principal festivals of the wider society were agricultural – praying for and then celebrating the harvest – or honoring the local divinities and their shrines. As the Church grew it began its own annual observances, geared to the celebration of the mystery of Christ. Most of our Church’s principal feasts can be traced to the first 500 years of Christianity. In all the Churches there are two dimensions to the liturgical year. The paschal cycle, focused on Pascha and Pentecost, is based on the date of Pascha, varying each year. Other commemorations such as Christmas occur on the same fixed dates every year. Together they form the annual observance of all that has been done for us.

In the Byzantine Churches the cycle of fixed feasts begins on September 1. At one time this was a civil observance; even today the fall marks the academic, judicial, musical and social new years. While every day there are commemorations of saints, icons, or historical events in the life of the Church, our principal celebrations are the Twelve Great Feasts celebrating the mystery of the incarnation in the lives of Christ and the Theotokos.

So, as we start the New Year, let us remember that our spiritual lives revolve around a calendar focused on salvation through Christ.

----- **CHURCH FINANCIALS** -----

END-OF-YEAR STATEMENTS AND GIFTS: Your End-of-year giving statement for the 2023 calendar year will be coming to you in early-to-mid January. If you would like any additional contribution to be considered a 2023 donation, please send it in as soon as possible.

2023 REPORTING COMING SOON

With a full year of data via ServantKeeper, we will be able to report on (non-anonymous) giving, including the number of givers in the following ranges:

- > \$5,000
- \$2,500 - \$5,000
- \$1,000 - \$2,500
- \$500 - \$1,000

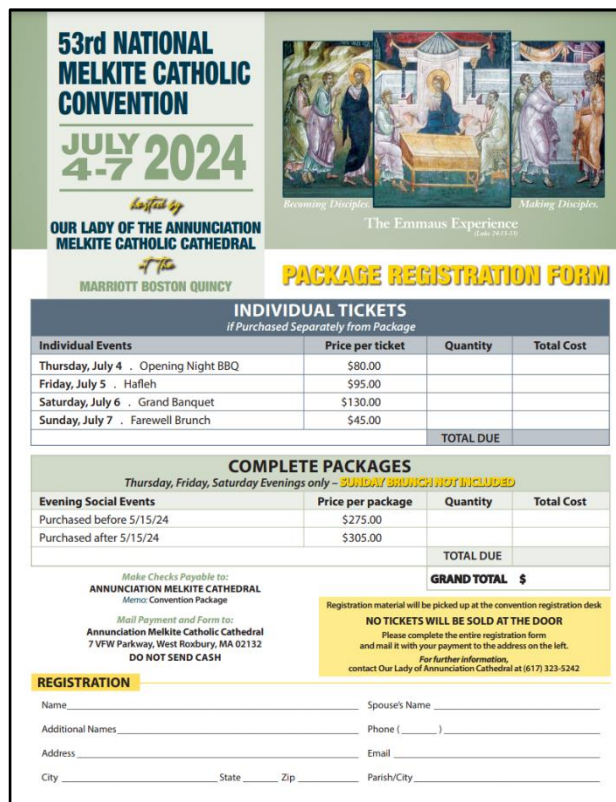
More reporting and analytics will be forthcoming.

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:	(\$2,664)	(\$123,744)

* O.C. – Ordinary Collections

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



53rd NATIONAL MELKITE CATHOLIC CONVENTION
JULY 4-7 2024
 Hosted by
OUR LADY OF THE ANNUNCIATION MELKITE CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL
 MARRIOTT BOSTON QUINCY

PACKAGE REGISTRATION FORM

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS			
If Purchased Separately from Package			
Individual Events	Price per ticket	Quantity	Total Cost
Thursday, July 4 . Opening Night BBQ	\$80.00		
Friday, July 5 . Hallelu	\$95.00		
Saturday, July 6 . Grand Banquet	\$130.00		
Sunday, July 7 . Farewell Brunch	\$45.00		
		TOTAL DUE	

COMPLETE PACKAGES			
Thursday, Friday, Saturday Evenings only – SUNDAY BRUNCH NOT INCLUDED			
Evening Social Events	Price per package	Quantity	Total Cost
Purchased before 5/15/24	\$275.00		
Purchased after 5/15/24	\$305.00		
		TOTAL DUE	

REGISTRATION

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____
 Additional Names _____ Phone (____) _____
 Address _____ Email _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Parish/City _____

NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR
 Please complete the entire registration form and mail it with your payment to the address on the left.
 For further information, contact Our Lady of Annunciation Cathedral at (617) 323-5242

----- **ANNUAL BISHOP'S APPEAL** -----



Please see the e-mail announcement via Flocknote for the Annual Bishop's Appeal. In Bishop François's Bishop Appeal Letter, he writes, "As Melkite Catholics, you and I know what it's like to feel a deep, familial connection with those far away— even with those whom we've never met. That's because we share the same tradition, the same heritage, and the same destiny. Every time we participate in the Divine Liturgy, we are connected with Our Lord and with one another across the miles and across the centuries." The full letter is found [HERE](#), where he shares his vision of the Bishop's Appeal helping with vocations, resources, and communications, as some of the important initiatives. You may donate to the Bishop's appeal on the website by clicking on this link [DONATE HERE](#) or using the QR Code.

----- **PRAYER IS A WAY OF LIFE** -----

COMMEMORATIONS: Send a commemoration request to 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.

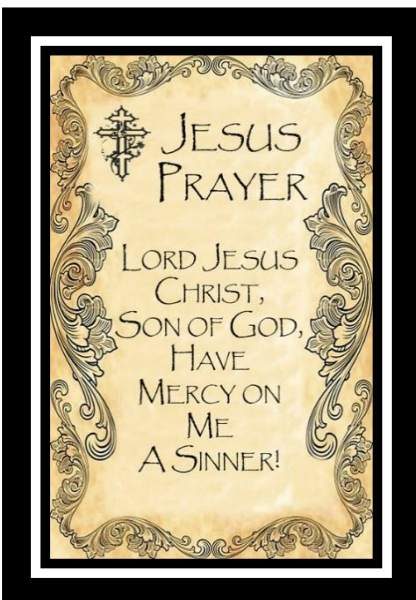
PRAYER LINE: Please keep in your prayers...

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Fr. Tom Flynn | Samira Jajeh | Lauren Makhlouf |
| Serene Kadadu | Scott Alexander | Dcn. Sami Jajeh and Family |

- The Wandering Sheep of this parish
 Victims of natural disasters
 Those taking care of (grand)parents
 Those considering ascription into the Melkite Church
- Those looking for employment
 The homeless and poor
 Those preparing for marriage

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.



December Birthdays & Anniversaries



Note: We apologize IN ADVANCE for anyone who is missing or any information which is mistaken. Please send corrections to 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

1428 Ponce de Leon Ave NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30307, Office:
(404) 373-9522, Fax: (404) 373-9755,

Email: contact@stjohnmelkite.org

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

YouTube: www.youtube.com/@StJohnMelkite

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

Current Parish Clergy and Staff

Rev. Elias Dorham, Pastor
pastor@stjohnmelkite.org

Rev. Deacon Sami Jajeh, Administrator and Finance Chair
deaconsami@stjohnmelkite.org

Rev. Deacon Elie Hanna, Administrator and PAC Chair
deaconelie@stjohnmelkite.org

Church Hall - Jerome Hagley (jerome.hagley@gmail.com)

--- DONATIONS ---

[CLICK TO DONATE](#) or email contact@stjohnmelkite.org to set up ACH donations. All checks should be made to "St. John Chrysostom Melkite Church" except for diocesan collections, made out to "Eparchy of Newton." Identify in memo field purpose of any Zelle donation given at donate@stjohnmelkite.org.

You may give via Flocknote. Register or update registration via QR code.



--- 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.

--- ST. STEPHEN – ARCHDEACON & MARTYR ---

In Acts 6:1-7 we read of the selection of seven "men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" to relieve the Apostles of the task of the "daily distribution" which was taking them away from their proper ministry of prayer and preaching.

The first believers in Jerusalem had a fund from which they assisted their needy members. In this they were continuing a Jewish practice, based on this precept of the Torah: "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the cities in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him..." (Deuteronomy 15:7, 8). Since there was no social service system in the ancient world, the synagogues were the place where needy Jews would go for food and other necessities. Jerusalem's first believers in Jesus did the same for their members in need, generally the elderly.

The dispute mentioned in Acts 6 was between the native Palestinian Jews and the Hellenized Jews, who had adopted the Greek language and culture dominant in the Roman Empire. The latter believed that their widows were being shortchanged by the natives. At the request of the Apostles, the community chose seven men to be responsible for this ministry, Stephen being the first among them. The Apostles then prayed and laid hands upon them. This laying-on-of-hands was understood in the Apostolic era as what we call "ordination." Thus deacons were considered a higher order. In his Epistle to the Philippians, for example, St Paul greets the deacons right after the bishops.

There is no further mention of the "daily distribution" in relation to the ministry of the seven. Stephen and Philip are described as preaching, catechizing and baptizing; the others are not mentioned again in the Scriptures although there are many references to them in the writings of the first century Church.

The rest of chapter 6 and all of chapter 7 of Acts are concerned with the story of Stephen's martyrdom at the hands of the leading Jews of Jerusalem. Stephen's eloquence in preaching Christ attracts the attention of some Jewish leaders and Stephen is brought before the Sanhedrin, "and all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel" (Acts 6:15). Stephen's defense of his faith in Jesus begins with a classical presentation of God's work in the history of Israel. But then he adds, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

"Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him...as he was calling on God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:56-60).

While there had been many Jews martyred for their faith in the one God, Stephen was the first to be slain for his faith in "the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."