



St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church



A Parish Community of the Eparchy of Newton

Sunday, January 28, 2024
SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON – TONE 2
الاحد، 28 كانون الثاني 2024
أحد الابن الشاطر

SATURDAY: GREAT VESPERS (6pm) – CONFESSIONS (5:30-6pm)
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.

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.

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
Fr. Roger Boucher, Requested by the Eparchy of Newton
Lauren Makhlof, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community
Evelyn Whalen, Requested by John Chambers
Janice Peterson, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community
Samira Jajeh, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community

REPOSE IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

+Kh. Judy Handal, the wife of the late +Fr. Ephrem Handal, the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community
+Thomas Whalen, Husband of Evelyn Whalen, Requested by Evelyn Whalen
+Tony Azzam, Brother of Matilda Ghawi, requested by Tony and Matilda Ghawi



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

SAT, JAN 27th – 4:15PM - FAMILY! FAITH! FORMATION

SAT, JAN 27th – 6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:15 PM)

SUN, JAN 28th – SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

WED, JAN 31st – * THERE WILL BE NO MID-WEEK VESPERS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE FEAST *****

THUR, FEB 1ST – 7 PM GREAT VESPERS FOR THE GREAT FEAST OF THE ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

FRI, FEB 2ND – 7 PM DIVINE LITURGY FOR THE GREAT FEAST OF THE ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

SAT, FEB 3RD – NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING – NORTHEAST – MORE INFO TO COME / SJC YOUNG ADULTS PRE-LENT PIZZA PARTY

SUN, FEB 3RD – 6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:30 PM)

SUN, FEB 4th – SUNDAY OF MEATFARE

- Memorial Service for Sue Maloof

WED, FEB 7TH – 7 PM VESPERS

SAT, FEB 10TH – NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING – NORTH (12-2PM) – MORE INFO TO COME

SAT, FEB 10th – **6PM GREAT VESPERS/CONFESSIONS (5:30 PM)**

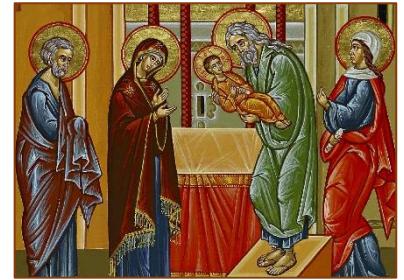
SUN, FEB 11TH – SUNDAY OF CHEESE FARE/FORGIVENESS SUNDAY/BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT

- General Assembly with lunch
- Forgiveness Vespers immediately following the General Assembly

--- FEAST OF THE ENCOUNTER IN THE TEMPLE ---

This feast, celebrated on February 2, is known in the Orthodox Church as The Presentation of Christ in the Temple. Another name for the feast is The Meeting of our Lord. Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians call the feast The Purification of the Holy Virgin. About 450 AD in Jerusalem, people began the custom of holding lighted candles during the Divine Liturgy of this feast day. Therefore, some churches in the West refer to this holy day as Candlemas. The Feast of the Presentation concludes the observances related to the Nativity of Christ, a period that opened on November 15 with the beginning of the Nativity fast.

Biblical Story - The story of the Presentation is told in Luke 2:22-29. Mary and Joseph were faithful Jews and observed their religious customs. An important custom was for the couple to take their first-born son to the Temple. The baby was taken to the Temple forty days after his birth and was dedicated to God. In addition, if the parents were wealthy, they were to bring a lamb and a young pigeon or a turtle dove to be offered as a sacrifice at the Temple. The custom provided that if the parents were poor, they were to offer two pigeons or two turtle doves for the sacrifice. Joseph and Mary were not wealthy, so they took two turtle doves with them to offer as a sacrifice at the Temple. When Jesus was forty days old, Mary and Joseph took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem. They were not wealthy, so they took two turtle doves with them to offer as a sacrifice at the Temple. As they arrived at the Temple, Mary and Joseph were met by a very old man named Simeon. He was a holy man and was noted as a very intelligent scholar. Simeon spent much time studying about the prophets of Israel. It was during his studies that he learned of the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to come and deliver Israel from their conquerors. From that time on, Simeon spent his time praying for the Messiah to come. He spent many years in prayer. Finally, while Simeon was praying he heard the voice of God. God promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. When Simeon saw Jesus, he took the baby in his arms and blessed the Lord and said: "Lord, now let Your servant go in peace according to Your promise, because my eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory to your people Israel." Also, in the Temple was Anna the Prophetess. She had been a widow for many years. Anna was about eighty-four years old and spent her time in the Temple worshiping, fasting, and praying. When she saw the Christ Child she praised God and spoke of him to all who were awaiting the Messiah. After Jesus was presented in the Temple, the family returned to Galilee to the town of Nazareth. The Bible tells us that Jesus grew and became strong, and was filled with wisdom.



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

SJC YOUNG ADULTS PRE-LENT PIZZA PARTY: Our SJC Young Adults group will host a pre-Lenten pizza party after Vespers on Saturday, February 3rd. All parishioners and friends of the community aged 18-40 are welcome to attend. Please join us for Vespers at 6:00 PM, and pizza afterwards. Fr. Elias will give a short talk, and then be available for an "Ask Me Anything" session. Finally, we will spend time discussing our vision for the group as well as various upcoming activities, to include service projects for the Lenten Season. Confession will be available before Vespers for anyone interested. Scan the QR Code to sign up.



SJC YOUNG ADULTS and SJC MEN'S GROUP: If you are interested in participating in either of our newly formed SJC Young Adults Group or SJC Men's Group, please add yourself to the SJC Young Adults and/or SJC Men's Group Flocknote Groups.

WOMEN DISCIPLES OF THE LORD: You are cordially invited to join Kh. Sylvia and women throughout the Eparchy as we continue the time-honored tradition of reading through the Psalter during the season of Great Lent. We will be using the book, "Songs of Praise" by S. Leontaritis to guide us and provide additional material for reflection. Copies of the book will be available for purchase in the bookstore. We would love to have you join us for this beautiful Lenten discipline. Scan the QR Code to sign up.



MID-DAY FOR MOMS! If you would like to receive correspondence and notifications of future events, please join the Mid-day Moms' Flocknote Group. We look forward to hosting this event again on Wednesday, February 21st, from 10 AM - 1 PM.

FLOWER COMMITTEE: A new year (2024) brings us a new ministry, The Flower Committee. 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.

CALENDARS ARE HERE! Please see Deacon Elie in the Church Hall to receive your calendar and update our contact database.

----- 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.

----- **GREAT LENT SCHEDULE STARTING WEEK OF FEB 12TH** -----

The Holy Week schedule will be published in the coming weeks. Please note that this year we will be celebrating the Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM on Lazarus Saturday (March 23), followed by a Pancake lunch and various youth activities. Stay tuned for additional details and please note the weekly Great Lent Schedule below:

- **WED – PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY – 7PM**
- **FRI – AKATHIST FOLLOWED BY COMMUNITY SUPPER – 7PM**
- **SAT – GREAT VESPERS – 6PM**
- **SUNDAY – ORTHROS (9:45AM) AND DIVINE LITURGY (10:30AM)**

A PRAYER FOR LENT: The Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian is traditionally said many times throughout each day during Great Lent, in addition to our daily prayers. This prayer lists all the negative and positive elements of repentance and constitutes a “check list” for our individual Lenten effort. Our effort is aimed first at liberating ourselves from certain spiritual diseases which shape our life and make it virtually impossible for us to even start turning to God. A second aspect of this effort is striving to attain the virtues necessary to grow in Christlikeness, which is how we live out our return to God.

Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, vain curiosity, lust for power, and idle talk. (Prostration)

But give to me, Your servant, a spirit of purity, humility, patience and love. (Prostration)

Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to condemn my brother, for blessed are You for ever and ever. Amen. (Prostration)

Next week, we will talk about the different weeks of Great Lent, and the various commemorations we observe each Sunday in Lent.

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

2023 REPORTING AND GIVING PATTERNS: Please consider revising your annual giving plan or starting one if you have not already. Our finance committee has identified a few challenges that have impacted the long-term health of our parish community that include inconsistent giving, a mismatch between increased giving and inflation, and fewer new members. Please review the giving patterns for 2023 to best plan for your tithing in 2024. Thank you for your consideration.

ANNUAL GIVING BY HOUSEHOLD

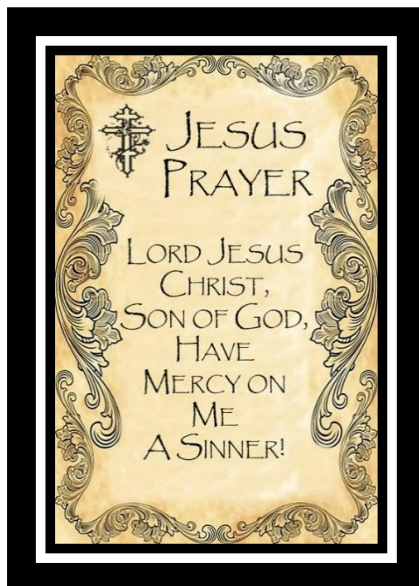
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|---|---|
| • \$7,500 - 10,000: Three (3) parishioner families | • \$500 – 1,000: Twenty-one (21) parishioner families |
| • \$5,000 – 7,500: One (1) parishioner family | • \$250 - 500: Eight (8) parishioner families |
| • \$2,500 – 5,000: Eleven (11) parishioner families | • < \$250: Forty-seven (47) visitors, friends, and parishioners |
| • \$1,000 – 2,500: Seventeen (17) parishioner families | |

2023 FINANCIALS: (MONTHLY - DEC 2023 and JAN-DEC 2023):

*Total Income:	\$16,845 (O.C. \$11,762)	\$164,094 (O.C. \$114,896)
**Expenses:	<u>\$24,781</u>	<u>\$295,775</u>
Net Income:	(\$7,937)	(\$131,681) * O.C. – Ordinary Collections, ** YTD RENOVATION & MAINT. EXPENSES: \$103,329

----- **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 Makhoul |
| Serene Kadadu | Julian and Nadia Muhanna | |
| Janice Peterson | Evelyn Whalen | |

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Those looking for employment | Those preparing for marriage |
| Victims of natural disasters | The homeless and poor |
| Those considering 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.

January 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

Adelaide, Cecilia & Tatiana Curry
Stephanie Delibrado Elias Elias
Luke Ghawi Tony & Matilda Ghawi
Dzovag Hanna John Jajeh
Kamil, Rita & Lillian Karroum
George Malouf Valerie Martinez
Gabrielle Nassar Shoghag Palanjian

ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Kareem & Arige Atalla
Mr. & Mrs. Peter & Tyra Nuar
Mr. & Mrs. Paul & Nohemi Oddo

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 •

YouTube: www.youtube.com/@StJohnMelkite

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

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.

--- A BRIEF HISTORY OF FASTING ---

The roots of fasting in the Christian Church are to be found in the Old Testament and the Jewish religion, both for certain days and certain foods. The first Christians practiced fasting for only two or three days a week, Wednesday and Friday. In the West, some places added Saturday. Over time the custom of fasting for 40-days before Easter developed, and was known by the time of the First Ecumenical Council (325).

Over time there was a gradual increase in the number of weeks for the Lenten Fast. Seven weeks were established in the East and six in the West by the mid-sixth century. The difference in the number of weeks was due to the inclusion in the West of Saturday as a fast day. In the East Saturday was not a fast day except the Saturday of Holy Week. During the seventh century, the West added four days before the beginning of the six weeks of Lent, starting with Wednesday, known as Ash Wednesday. The Church in the East added an additional week before the seven weeks, known as Cheese Week, to complete the 40 days of fasting in Lent before Easter, excluding the seven Saturdays and eight Sundays, which are non-fast days.

GENERAL RULES OF THE LENTEN FAST

Fasting is always tied to a religious event or feast. By itself, it has no meaning for Christians. Fasting is a means to growing in Christian virtues, as well as prayer, devotion and purity. It is also related to giving alms to the poor.

The Lenten Fast rules we observe today were established within the monasteries of the Orthodox Church during the sixth through eleventh centuries. These rules are intended for all Eastern (Orthodox and Catholic) Christians, not just monks and nuns. In the Christian East, these rules are seen as ideals for which we strive. Each year, we can try to get closer to the ideal than we did the previous year. Fasting is not for the sake of fasting alone. It is important to keep in mind our own personal circumstances, such as health, age, etc. What follows is an explanation of the Fast as an ideal, in its most strict sense. Each person should prayerfully discern how best to keep the fast, in consultation with their spiritual father or mother, or parish priest.

The first week of Lent is especially strict. For Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday some keep a total fast. Some eat a little each day after sunset. Others fast completely on Monday and then eat only uncooked food (bread, fruit, nuts) on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday, the fast is kept until after the Presanctified Liturgy. From the second through the sixth weeks of Lent, the general rules for fasting are practiced. Meat, animal products (cheese, milk, butter, eggs, lard), fish (meaning fish with backbones), olive oil and wine (all alcoholic drinks) are not consumed during the weekdays of Great Lent. Octopus and shell-fish are allowed, as is vegetable oil. On weekends, olive oil and wine are permitted. According to what was done in the monasteries, one meal a day is eaten on weekdays and two meals on weekends of Great Lent. No restriction is placed on the amount of food during the meal, though moderation is always encouraged in all areas of one's life at all times.

Fish, oil and wine are normally allowed on the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) and on Palm Sunday (one week before Easter). This year, because the Annunciation falls on Great and Holy Monday, fish will not be allowed. On other feast days, such as the First and Second Finding of the Head of Saint John the Baptist (February 24), the Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (March 9), the Forefeast of the Annunciation (March 24) and the Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel (March 26), wine and oil are permitted.