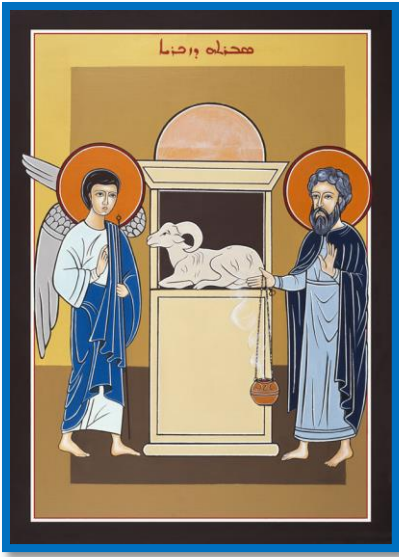


# Saint Joseph Maronite Catholic Church



## Announcement to Zechariah

November 17, 2019

Welcome all visitors to the beautiful heritage of Antioch

3 Appleton  
Street  
Waterville, ME  
04901  
Office Phone:  
207-872-8515

Pastor: Rev. Fr. James Doran, KHS  
Subdeacon: Mr. Stephen Crate  
website: <http://www.sjmaronite.org>  
e-mail: [stjoesinmaine@yahoo.com](mailto:stjoesinmaine@yahoo.com)

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*"For us, the men and women of the East are a symbol of the Lord Who comes again."* *Oriente Lumen*, John Paul II

- Qoorboneh (Masses):** Saturday 4:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m.; Tues. – Fr. 9:00 a.m. in the St. Jude Chapel  
The Miraculous Medal and the St. Jude Novenas are on Tuesday following the 9 a.m. Liturgy
- Sick Calls:** To receive the Eucharist and/or the Anointing of the Sick, please call the rectory.
- Confessions:** One half-hour before weekend Liturgies and by appointment.
- Baptisms:** *Parents* should refer to the website and then contact the parish through the parish e-mail address.
- Marriage:** Please refer to the parish website and contact the parish a **minimum 6 months before** finalizing the date of your wedding.
- Mass Intentions:** For *specific* dates requested, please submit at least **two months in advance**. Recommended stipends: weekday intentions \$10; weekend intentions \$15
- Monthly Memorials:** Sanctuary Candles \$20; Altar Bread \$25; Wine \$45

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**Catechists:** Lenore Boles, *Director & K-1<sup>st</sup>*; Shana Page, 3-5<sup>th</sup> **Choir Director:** Dame Fefa Marie Deeb, DSG **Parish Council President:** Lisa Grard **Ex-officio Council Members:** Subdeacon Steve Crate; Lenore Boles, *Religious Education*; Larry Mitchell, *Knights of Columbus*; Ruth Lunn, *Rosary Sodality*

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### Today's Gospel<sup>1</sup> St. Luke 1: 1-25

Because many have desired to write accounts of those events of which we have become fully convinced, according to what they handed down to us, they who from the first were eyewitnesses and ministers of that very word. It also seemed to me, being carefully acquainted with it all, that I should write everything down for you in an orderly way, most excellent

Theophilus, so that you may know the truth of the words with which you were instructed. In the days of King Herod of Judaea, there was a certain priest named *Z'chariah*, from the ministry of the house of *Abiyah*. His wife was also one of the daughters of Aaron; her name was *Elishba'*. Both of them were righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all His commandments and in the justice of the Lord. But they had no child because *Elishba'* was barren, and they were both advanced in years.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Syriac Peshitta Bible with English Translation*, Gorgias Press, New Jersey, 2012, ed. George A. Kiraz and Andreas Juckel

Now it happened while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his ministry, it fell to him, in keeping with the custom of the priesthood, to offer the incense, so he entered the Temple of the Lord.

All the assembly of the people was praying outside at the time of the burning of incense.

An angel of the Lord appeared to Z'chariah, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. When Z'chariah saw him, he was disturbed, and fear fell upon him.

The angel said to him,

*Do not be afraid, Z'chariah, because your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elishba' will bear you a son. You shall call his name Youhanon.*

*You will have joy and delight, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he shall be great before the Lord. He will not drink wine or liquor, and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even while in his mother's womb.*

*He shall turn many of the children of Israel towards the Lord their God, going before Him the spirit and power of the prophet Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers towards their children, and the disobedient to the knowledge of the upright, preparing a perfect people for the Lord.*

Z'chariah said to the angel, "How may I know this, since I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years?"

"I am Gabriel," the angel answered him.

*I stand before God and have been sent to speak with you and declare these glad tidings to you. From now on you shall be silent and unable to speak, until the day these things take place, because you did not believe these words of mine, which shall be fulfilled in their proper time.*

Now the people were standing and expecting Z'chariah, wondering why he stayed so long in the Temple.

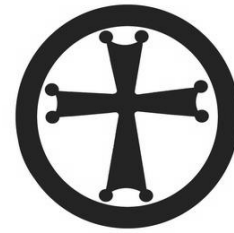
When Z'chariah came out he could not speak with them and they understood that he had seen a vision in the Temple.

He kept making signs to them, but remained speechless.

When the days of his service were finished, he returned to his home.

And it happened after that time that his wife, Elishba', became pregnant.

For five months she secluded herself, saying, "The Lord has done this for me, in the days when He has regarded me, taking away my disgrace among the people."



*You will progress in understanding the Holy Scriptures only to the degree that you yourself have made progress through contact with them.*

St. Gregory the Great (AD 540-604)<sup>2</sup>

## **ABOONA'S REFLECTIONS**

Paganism animates the natural world. It views spirit and power all around and places the creature in place of the Creator. Pagans worship the powers of the universe: thunder, weather, earthquakes, etc. Superstition is related; it sees power and ability in things that do not possess them.

Over these months, as we watch the progression of the baptismal ceremonies for Lorenzo and Alonzo, we should note the concreteness of the Church's rites. The Gospel encompasses the whole man, and nothing escapes redemption. Body, soul, mind, and spirit are all meant to be imbued by grace and eternal life. When we limit ourselves to a mode of thought - worldly, naturalistic, or materialistic, as examples - while still claiming the name "Christian", but live as the world, like "everyone else", we fall under the denunciations of our Lord as "hypocrites". When we claim two allegiances one must fall. We cannot serve

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<sup>2</sup> Homily 1.7.8 "on Ezechiel"

two “masters”.<sup>3</sup> “Hypocrite” means “actor”, and the beginning of a new liturgical year is an excellent moment for each of us to ask ourselves what is *true* in our lives, conformed to Christ, and what is *faked* or *acting*.

Today there is an aggressive resurgence of paganism where “spiritualities” abound *ad infinitum*.<sup>4</sup> What is called “spirituality” usually means something individual, ethereal, and disconnected directly from a person’s life. It’s the basis of the moronic phrase, “I’m spiritual, but not religious”. Meaning disembodied, idiosyncratic, and often self-absorbed. This is not surprising as the basic tenet of paganism is that everything is animated and nothing is integrated; or, rather, if integrated, that everything is pantheistically divine and nothing is its own self. For most pagans, everything become “idol” – “image” – symbolic of something else. Maybe this is not so for every pagan as many (most?) seek only that which makes them “feel good” or “at peace”.

Without recognizing the transcendent Divine Source and Origin of all, the cosmos itself loses any integral meaning, becomes fragmented, and disintegrates into a mere series of chance without purpose or meaning. Bleak is this view. In the end, it becomes a pursuit of one’s self and one’s “likes” rather than what the *whole* of creation truly is – reflection of the eternal divinity. In paganism, what a man does in the temple, or on the mountain top, or under the tree, has nothing really to do with what he does in his daily life. He acts in moments of need to get something for himself from the gods. Exam time? Go to the temple, ring the bell, and ask the goddess for excellent grades. Sadly, for some Christians, they see Christianity in just the same way: something disengaged from day-to-day life, something “spiritual” that has no direct influence on our lives economically, politically, publicly, or otherwise. They appear at the House of God when they “get” something for themselves. They are self-interested first and foremost, so too have pagans always been.

With the Gospel it is otherwise. In our conversion and baptism, we have been freed, anointed, plunged

into Christ, and raised up as new creatures in the New Creation. The Gospel frees us from an obscured and disintegrated view of reality. We learn to “see” all things in Christ. This is why the various paganisms throughout history have again and again collapsed when the light of the good tidings has appeared.

In Catholicism, the whole of the human person is taken up, consecrated, anointed, and re-integrated within the Savior. Grace touches not only the spirit, but also the physical life, domestic life, public demeanor, and one’s social relations, in short, all that is human is meant to be illuminated by the Resurrection. This is the *return to Paradise*, where each is renewed into the likeness of the Word Incarnate in which mankind was originally made.

One of the paganized views prevalent among many Christians is the idea that “heaven” is someplace where freed-up “souls” wing their way into a sort of Happy Hunting Grounds or eternal Party – that undefined “better place” to which one is supposed to go by simply kicking the bucket, and which so many glibly announce when someone dies – where the greatest thing that will happen is that we all get to see grandma once again. *Ugh!* Read the Gospels, hear the word, and listen to the Fathers; the “Life” that we receive from Christ is an integrated Presence with Him that begins now, and while not “of” this world this healing certainly takes place “in” this world. It is the re-introduction into the intimacy of the Divine Reality, and a re-animation from out the world of sin and death.

Our Lord makes it clear that the redemption into Life, and the Resurrection that awaits us in the fullness of His Appearance, is “to be” with Him.<sup>5</sup> What this will be we cannot imagine as it is by definition infinitely beyond our experience, but it is certainly not some etherealized vision of *this* wounded world. All we know is that when the fullness of this Life is given to us, we shall be wholly divinized, in *theosis*, transfigured through seeing even as we are known by the Hidden Good One.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew 6: 24

<sup>4</sup> II Timothy 4: 3 We live in a time, in the western world, when titillation, curiosity, and entertainment are our first concern – that is, as long as the electricity stays on, and there is still running water..... We are sad witnesses today of the “apostasy” (divorce) of so many who were once Christian. Sad, but not unforeseen.

Saint Paul, in the first generation, announced that this would happen. He called it “the apostasy of the nations”. Cf. II Thess 2: 1-5 “Spiritualities” fragment and unify nothing. They titillate curiosity and amuse the weak, for a time.

<sup>5</sup> St. John 17: 24

<sup>6</sup> I John 3: 2

These last couple months have allowed us the privilege to see together the baptismal ceremonies unroll as we witness the Redeemer take up Lorenzo and Alonzo, and introduce them into that reality which is Christ Himself. We have watched as new names of re-creation were imposed on them, and have witnessed the Church take them under her protection and guidance. She placed the *tau* (or the “cross”) on the forehead so as to mark them out for protection on the Day of Wrath when God’s Judgement will blaze forth on all creation, in a Fire that will simultaneously purify those faithful so marked and burn those who remain naked and exposed in their sinfulness. These were the rites we witnessed in September.

As the entire individual is consecrated anew in Christ, the whole of human life must also be renewed by grace. Everything human is to be taken up into the order of the New Creation. *Everything*.

Rather than plunge us further into the broken and fallen world, Christianity removes us by Exorcism into what is truly a better place and improved condition. She pulls one up from the mire of confusion and establishes the catechumen on a path of healing and re-integration. Thus, we all watched last week as our two young men were taken up by the Church and brought into the “field hospital” that is the Church and brought under her medicinal care.

Catholicism is the renewal of everything human, and as the baptized are anointed into the priestly, regal, and prophetic existence of the Messiah, so they are themselves placed in a *sacred, royal, and prophetic* state. Christian lives are meant to progress accordingly. The sacred is to touch everything we think, say, and do. The nobility and honor of divine transcendence are to elevate every aspect of human life; and, in the prophetic aspect of our Christian lives, our expression and communication to those around us is to give voice to the will of God and His plan of salvation. This is the reason why last week the boys faced the west – the place of the setting sun, the fading of light, and the realm of death – and lifted their hands in repulsion to renounce the world of darkness and sin from which they now turn resolutely toward the light of Christ. This turning to the Light was indicated by their physical turning to the East (liturgically) – the place of light, the *Oriens*, and the symbol of the Resurrection – in order to profess their faith in the Risen One. We all

accompanied them in this profession of Faith as the Church is one and her community is one. “We believe in one God ....” Her solidarity is not merely human; it is the mystical oneness of the Body of Christ within the Communion of Saints.

At this point, having publicly signified their conversion from out of confusion and darkness, and turning toward the Redeemer, these young men await the consecration and perfecting that will lift them into the New Creation, through the Divine Mysteries, at Epiphany, *Denho*.

This transformation of the whole of human life requires the individual to renounce all darkness, pomp, and vanity of the demonic – the emptiness of illusion. Paganism might titillate, but it does not heal. Deceptive “spiritualities” may make one “feel” special, but they do not illuminate the mind, and they certainly do not heal human life in the Risen One.

One of the greatest deceptions in the world – alongside what Pope Pius XII called the **greatest** sin of the twentieth century: “the *ignorance* of sin” – is the human respect that seeks to be “like everyone else” while thinking oneself still Christian. Being called by the voice of the Good Shepherd necessitates our difference from the world, a difference that will be made manifest in judgement. One expects pagans to live according to the world, but it is self-contradicting when Catholics do so. Our lives are meant to be integrated within the Christ Who is Priest, Prophet, and King, reflecting that nobility and goodness. Shouldn’t we embrace the divine beauty rather than collapse under the weight of human respect and suffocate under the mask of “what others might think”?

As we enter the season of the Announcements of the Divine Word we should pray that our ears be opened, and that our hearts be made luminous, so that what is said by grace through one ear does not pass out the other, leaving nothing to show in our lives as Catholics. As we do so, let us all pray for the young men among us who so gallantly place their feet on the path of the Gospel and embrace the Light which is so abundant to those who have eyes to see.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS

### ANNOUNCEMENT TO ZECHARIAH

November 17, 2019

**Rom 4: 13-25      St. Luke 1:1-25**

### ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE VIRGIN MARY

November 24, 2019

**Gal 3: 15-22      St. Luke 1: 26-38**

### VOCATION ICON

*"Request therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest."* St. Matthew 9: 38

Sun	Nov 17	Steve and Allison Crate
Sun	Nov 24	Sue Paré and Lolo Salazar
Sun	Dec 1	Lowell Hawes
Sun	Dec 8	Larry & Lisa Grard
Sat	Dec 14	Jim & Lenore Boles
Sun	Dec 22	Chris & Diane Wyder
Sun	Dec 29	Bruce & Doreen White

*Grant them health, and raise them up  
from their illness and make them  
to have perfect health of body and soul  
and strengthen them in spirit;  
for Thou art the Savior and Benefactor,  
the Lord of lords and Weaver of crowns,  
Thou art Lord and King of all. Amen*

**Those for whom we pray:** Doreen Nader, Louise Saliem, Virginia Poulin, John Scarpa, and Beverly Rideout.

### INTENTIONS FOR THE QOURBONEH (MASSES)

**Sat 16** †Charles Owen  
*(the Parish)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Sun 17** For the members of the Parish

**Mon 18** -----

**Tue 19** Anna Bearce  
*(Pam & Dan Casavant)*

**Wed 20** †Sleiman & Latiffy George  
*(Ghaphery Family)*

**Thu 21** †Nicholas & Nimnoom Ghaphery  
*(Ghaphery Family)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Fri 22** Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Sat 23** †Charles Owen  
*(the Parish)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Sun 24** For the members of the Parish

**Mon 25** -----

**Tue 26** Anna Bearce  
*(Pam & Dan Casavant)*

**Wed 27** †Thomas & Adal George  
*(Ghaphery Family)*

**Thu 28** †Carmen Welch  
*(Robert Welch)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Fri 29** Private Intention  
*(Abouna James)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Sat 30** †Charles Owen  
*(the Parish)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Sun 1** For the members of the Parish

**Mon 2** -----

**Tue 3** Anna Bearce  
*(Pam & Dan Casavant)*

**Wed 4** †John Jabar  
*(Ghaphery Family)*

**Thu 5** †Janet George  
*(Nicholas Ghaphery)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

**Fri 6** Private Intention  
*(Abouna James)*  
-- Catholic Extension Society & Donors

## LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

Regular Collection: \$1517.00

*Blessed be the Merciful One Who gives us the ability  
to sustain this apostolate.*



## Announcement to Zechariah

p 18

**Lighting of the Church:** LB\* p 5  
*Jesus Christ, O Source of Light*

**Entrance Hymn:** LB *imsheeho* 53B

**Glory:** SB *glory*

**Qolo/Hymn:** LB *safro* 54

Creed p 748

### PRE-ANAPHORA:

**Transfer of Gifts:** LB *The Lord Reigns*

**Incense Hymn Offertory:** SB *I'maryam yoldat*

### ANAPHORA:

**Saint John, the Apostle:** LB p 815

**Sign of Peace:** SB *tou ba*

**Communion:** SB *I am the Vine; Jesus is my Lord*

**Recessional:** SB *Glorious in majesty*

\*LB=Liturgical Book SB=Song Book

## Autumn Harvest Raffle

# \$10,000 GRAND PRIZE!!!!

RAFFLE TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE  
AFTER EACH MASS EVERY WEEKEND!

**EXCELLENT ODDS!!!!!!**

Cost of each ticket is \$100.00, with the winning ticket  
for the prize to be drawn Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Buy a raffle ticket today. What would djidoo say?



*Presentation of the God-fearing  
Virgin Mary in the Temple*

*November 21<sup>st</sup>*