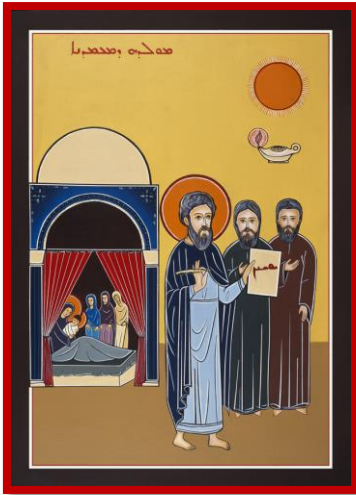


Saint Joseph Maronite Catholic Church



The Birth of John the Forerunner

December 6, 2020

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

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

- Qourboneh:** Masses: Sunday 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.; Tues. – Fr. 9:00 a.m.; Sat. 10:00a.m.
Sick Calls: To receive the Divine Eucharist and/or the Sacred Anointing, 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 \$30; Altar Bread \$25; Sacramental Wine \$45
Catechism: Lenore Boles, *Director* **Choir Director:** Dame Marie Fefa Deeb, DSG **Parish Council President:** Ex-officio
Council Members: Lenore Boles, *Religious Education*; Larry Mitchell, *Knights of Columbus*; Ruth Lunn, *Rosary Sodality*

THIS DAY'S EPISTLE¹ Galatians 4: 21-5: 1

Tell me, those of you who desire to be under the Law, do you not listen to the Law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the maidservant, and one by the free woman.
But the one from the maidservant was born according to the flesh while the one from the free woman was born through the promise. These are analogies² of the two Covenants. The one from Mount Sinai – the one giving

birth into servitude – is Hagar, for Hagar is a mountain of Sinai in Arabia. She corresponds to the present Jerusalem, and she works in servitude along with her children. But the other is the Jerusalem above; she is the free one who is our mother. For it is written:

*Rejoice, barren who do not give birth;
be joyful, and shout out,
you who have not been in labor pains,
because the children of the desolate
are more numerous
than the children of married women.*³

¹ Based on *The Syriac Peshitta Bible with English Translation*, Gorgias Press, New Jersey, 2012, ed. George A. Kiraz and Andreas Juckel

² Taken from *The Syriac Peshitta Bible*: the word *ܦܠܠܗܘܗ* (*phelothoh*) generally means "parable" or "proverb", or even

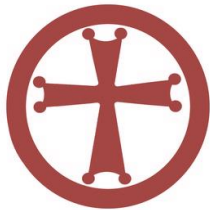
"symbol/image", and is used here as the translation of the Greek word *ἀλληγορούμενα*, which suggests something with more depth than the typical usage of the word, but the English "allegory" does not necessarily capture the comparative aspect of the two women; hence, "analogies".

³ Isaiah 54: 1

Now we, my brethren, like Isaac, are children of the promise.
 And just as it was then – that he who was born through the flesh persecuted the one born through the Spirit – so also it is now.
 But what does the Scripture say?

*Cast out the maidservant and her son
 because the son of a maidservant
 will not be an heir
 along with the son of the free woman.*

Thus, my brethren, we have not become children of the maidservant, but children of the free woman.
 Stand firm, therefore, in the freedom with which the Messiah has freed us, and do not place yourselves under the yoke of servitude again.



*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)⁴

ABOUNA'S REFLECTIONS

Saint Paul's admonition and encouragement to the Ephesians, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism", are echoed, from the beginning of Christianity, in the Church's axiom, "one community, one altar, one Eucharist". Unity in the Spirit of Holiness and peace are our vital reality.

The early churches were small not just because they were a minority among the pagan populations, but because the "brotherhood" that was the Gospel's creation was always intimate. It meant that what we now consider a large parish might be headed by a bishop. *Location* and *autonomy* designated the

need for episcopal headship, not the numbers of the faithful. This is why when Saint Gregory the Wonderworker became the shepherd of the church in Caesarea, in third-century Pontus, there were only seventeen baptized members. This is also reason why in places like Italy, or Lebanon, these ancient churches have many "small" dioceses and many bishops throughout the country. There are eleven bishops (ten eparchies/dioceses) in Lebanon, a country smaller than Connecticut.

Likewise, following this ancient logic, it would be as if the local Latin pastor in Waterville were a *bishop* by the Sacrament of Holy Orders, with priests collaborating with him working in Skowhegan, Vassalboro, Fairfield, Belgrade, etc. This changed dramatically once Catholicism was legalized in the Roman Empire in the fourth century, at which point the bishops began to be assumed by the Empire as regional administrators and government officials. This moved the Shepherds to an additional "official" duty, one more emphasizing administration than of "pasturing" and "feeding intimately" the flock of Christ; indeed, the word "diocese" is taken from a term referring to an imperial administrative district. "Eparchy" was the eastern designation of the same political unit.

Today, in both the Orthodox and Latin Catholic Churches the ration between chief shepherd and the flock is about 1: 230,000 – strikingly close to what it is here in Maine. This is hardly the days of Saint Gregory the Wonderworker, but the consecrated work of the episcopacy and priesthood remains essentially the same. Among us Maronites the proportion is much smaller and we enjoy a much more familial relation among ourselves, and in this detail we remain rather more similar to the early centuries of the Church.

The ancient notion of a "church" was grounded in its autonomy and its *complete and full nature as church*, that is, perfecting head and consecrated members, reflecting in its "wholeness" the localized Christ and His Mystical Spouse.⁵ A

⁴ Homily 1.7.8 "on Ezechiel"

⁵ This is one of the ancient meanings of the Greek word "catholic", and some would say the original one. In this sense it means "whole, complete", before it meant "universal".

church is a chief shepherd,⁶ elders,⁷ and the sanctified people of God. The episcopal office is necessary to have this fullness as it is the bishop alone who is able to propagate the mission of the Church by ordaining other priests and ministers. Each *parish* is an extension of the mother church, the eparchy, and “church” as such is the eparchy/diocese, and each eparchy and diocese share communion and relationship with all the other apostolic and catholic communities throughout the world. The unique and orthodox Catholic Church is an intercommunion of many churches, a *koinonia*.

One community, one altar, one Divine Eucharist: this was the intimate life of the Church as lived out for centuries. There would never be more than one altar in any given church and there would not be more than one Divine Sacrifice each day. This is why the eastern churches have retained the custom of concelebration by all priests present.⁸ As there would be only one Mass each day in a local church, those priests who were present would associate with either the bishop or another priest acting as chief celebrant in confecting the Divine Eucharistic Sacrifice. In the Middle Ages the Latin Church moved to multiply the number of Masses each day and any number could be offered on any given day. The Mass became dependent on the number of individual priests and was no longer an act of the whole sacred community; yet, to this day the *sacred canons*⁹ do not allow a priest to offer more than one Mass each day. The eastern churches, however, continued to respect the ancient tradition of one altar, one Eucharist per day.

For many, many years and centuries, well over a millennium, not only was there never more than one Mass offered at an altar on a given day, these Masses were always in the early part of the day. Priests were obliged to offer the Divine Eucharist from no earlier than one hour before dawn and no later than one hour after midday. This is why, in the Roman Church, the Midnight Mass of Christmas was completely unique. The excitement

and anticipation of the Holy Nativity (commemorating the entrance of the Incarnate Word into our world “during the watch”) from the early centuries in the Roman Church found the priests and faithful gathering at the wood remnants of the Manger of Bethlehem¹⁰ to offer the Holy Mass at the very earliest moment possible in the measured day – at Midnight. The practice of offering evening Masses on other occasions was introduced only in the late 1950s.

All things considered, although we are in the midst of a global health crisis, it would be a consolation to organize an additional Mass for Christmas. We would like to see if we can schedule a Liturgical Vigil Qourbonoh for the Holy Nativity, but this would require from us all a number of things.

During this pandemic, the Maine CDC has given to all the state many directives, these you have seen in our protocols as printed in this bulletin for months now. The recent spike of cases has brought about new directives, more stringent than before, for example, we have returned to our numbering of “50” at any given Mass.

The present directives require that bathrooms be cleaned after each usage. It is this directive that has had many restaurants, public rest areas, parks, and stores simply close their bathrooms rather than do the “impossible” and have an employee there to clean continually. We have been cleaning, but it is the Masses that take place within a given 24-hour period that are worrisome.

Having had to divide up our Sunday Mass into two in order to accommodate those who were coming, we had to institute a cleaning crew who diligently and faithfully have been sanitizing between those two Liturgies. The other days of the week have only one Qourbonoh every 24-period. A day that would have more than one Mass (i.e., “indoor gathering”) would require us to make a greater effort to sanitize/clean/disinfect between those Masses.

concelebrate the Mass was at the ordination of priests and the consecration of bishops.

⁹ “Canons” are the directives and laws of the Church.

¹⁰ The Empress, Saint Helena, had brought to Rome the wooden fragments from Bethlehem as part of her pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The relics are treasured at Saint Mary Major to this day.

⁶ “Bishop” in English comes from the Greek meaning “Overseer”. In our Syriac tradition, the bishop is called *rish cohneh*, “head of the priests”. His place as “chief elder” is clearly seen in this beautiful terminology.

⁷ “Elder” is the Greek *presbyter*, from which we have the English word “priest”.

⁸ The Latin Church has readopted this practice in recent years, but for many centuries the only occasion for priests to

On **Christmas Day**, there will be the usual Sunday schedule, with Masses at **9:00** and **11:00**.

In order to see together whether we can pull off a **third Alohoy Qourbonoh** within twenty-four hours we would need to set up the following:

1. The attendance, as with the other Masses, will be limited to **"50"**;
2. these fifty individuals will need to **pre-register** for us to be able to control those numbers. This must be done through the ushers at the next three weeks of Sunday Masses in order to **inscribe name and number of those who wish to attend**. No registration will be available by phone or email.
3. On this occasion, **phone numbers** will be asked so that we will have **contact-tracing information**.
4. There will need to be a **crew of at least three** generous individuals who will come in to **clean and disinfect** the bathrooms and church **after the 9:00 morning Mass** of Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24th.
5. There will need to be a **second** crew of at least three generous individuals who will need to **clean and disinfect the church and the bathrooms following the Christmas Vigil**.
6. We trust that our **regular** and faithful **crew from the Sunday Masses** will be able to commit themselves to do the same on **Christmas Day** as they do now on Sundays. If not, then we will need to organize a **third** cleaning crew to do this.
7. The Vigil would be at **5:00pm**.

If there is interest to add a third Mass to Christmas, and we can pull together to do what we need to do during the pandemic, then we will do so, but we will need to clearly commit in writing those who will make up the three disinfecting crews, along with a written list of those who wish to assist at a 5:00pm Vigil.

We take this moment to once again thank the generous individuals who already make our Sunday Masses possible by their devoted and

generous commitment in disinfecting and sanitizing between those Divine Liturgies. May the Mother of God obtain for you all the Hidden One's choicest graces and blessings for all that you do for the parish at this difficult time.

Three disinfecting crews are needed. Are there others who wish to do the same on Christmas Eve **morning** and after a possible Evening Vigil of Christmas?

May the Radiant Word bless you all during these glorious days of the Announcements; there are unfathomable treasures held out for our contemplation during these weeks. Although these days and months are stressful, and at times discouraging, we can remain steadfast when we consider the fidelity of God; He is always faithful.¹¹

<u>SCHEDULE OF READINGS</u>	
<u>THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE FORERUNNER</u>	
December 6, 2020	
Gal 4: 21-5: 1	St. Luke 1: 57-66
<u>THE REVELATION TO JOSEPH</u>	
December 13, 2020	
Eph 3: 1-13	St. Matthew 1: 18-25

VOCATION ICON

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

Sun	Dec	6	Bruce & Doreen White
Sun	Dec	13	Steve & Allison Crate
Sun	Dec	20	Sue Paré & Lolo Salazar
Sun	Dec	27	Daja Gombojav & Family
Sun	Jan	3	Larry & Lisa Grard
Sat	Jan	9	Jim & Lenore Boles
Sun	Jan	17	Chris & Diane Wyder
Sun	Jan	23	Michael & Gayle Misner

¹¹² Timothy 2: 13

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

(Budgeted: \$3,100.00)

Regular Collection Last Week: \$2,110.00

(Deficit 2020: \$34,148.00)

Second Sunday each month is a second collection
to cover our monthly fuel-oil costs.

Please remember to sustain the apostolic work of this
parish through regular contributions.

INTENTIONS FOR THE QOURBONEH (MASSES)

Sun	6	9:00 For the Members of the Parish 11:00 Catholic Extension Society
Mon	7	-----
Tue	8	†Edward Atkins (Barbara Atkins)
Wed	9	†Anita Marchetti (Mike & Maureen Martin)
Thu	10	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Fri	11	Private Intention (Abouna James)
Sat	12	†Rachel Salazar & Lucille Paré
Sun	13	9:00 For the Members of the Parish 11:00 Catholic Extension Society
Mon	14	-----
Tue	15	†Richard Elias (Cindy Elias)
Wed	16	†John & Mary Mitchell (Barbara Atkins)
Thu	17	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Fri	18	Misner Family
Sat	19	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Sun	20	9:00 For the Members of the Parish 11:00 Catholic Extension Society
Mon	21	-----

Tue	22	Steven Braunstein (Simon Misner-Elias)
Wed	23	†Michael & Bridget Kilroy (Barbara Atkins)
Thu	24	†Amin & Hoda Saad (Barbara Atkins)
Fri	25	9:00 For the Members of the Parish 11:00 Private Intention (Abouna James)

The Life-giving Cross

Please, take notice of our present protocols:

- 1.) All Catholics, of whatever Ritual Church, are more than welcome at Saint Joseph. We are all one Body of Christ.
- 2.) During this pandemic, there is no obligation to assist at the Divine Sacrifice.
- 3.) Those who are sick, or carry symptoms of sickness, must remain at home.
- 4.) All are recommended to give contact information (a list is provided at the door) in order to inform you if need arise from a case of the virus.
- 5.) All vulnerable, elderly, and at-risk individuals should remain at home and follow the Liturgies as posted on the parish's website.
- 6.) The **Vigil** Masses are suspended until further notice.
- 7.) All who are retired, or who may have a freer weekday schedule, are asked to consider assisting at Mass during the weekdays, **Tues-Fri, 9:00am**; and on **Saturday at 10:00am**.
- 8.) **Everyone is asked to wear a face-mask.**
- 9.) Hand sanitizers are available at the entrances and at the confessional.
- 10.) Seating at church must be "*first-come-first-served*" and will be closed at "50".
- 11.) Everyone must sit in such a way that there is *no one immediately in front* of them and *no one immediately behind* them. The pews have been blocked off for this purpose.
- 12.) To control crowd flow and bring greater security, **doors** will be **locked** at the beginning of each Liturgy.
- 13.) A *six-foot distancing* is to be observed by those who approach the Divine Altar and wish to receive the Divine Eucharist in **Holy Communion**.

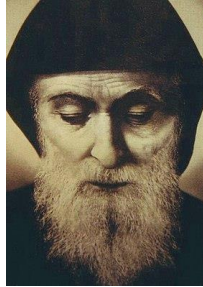
14.) And, lastly, at the end of Mass, those who wish to **remain and pray** in the church are welcome to do so, but all others are asked *not to linger and visit within the church*. Please exit through the Appleton Street doorway. If one wishes to visit, please do so outside the church, being *mindful of the proper physical distancing*.

The Birth of John the forerunner

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Please think about your *Christmas Giving opportunities!* Tell your friends

and family of the wonders of the Maronite tradition through her saints. We still have available Chorbishop Eid's wonderful introduction to **Saint Sharbel**, now updated and in its fourth edition. Chorbishop Joseph Eid was Vice-Postulator for the Beatification of Mar Sharbel, and originally he wrote this work to introduce the great hermit to an American audience.



This book is available online at the **parish website** and from the **sacristy** directly after Mass.

Beautiful brand-new hardcover edition, with dust jacket, only \$25

PLEASE NOTE **THE GIVING TREE** DURING THE SEASON OF **ANNOUNCEMENTS** IS DEDICATED TO CHARITABLE AID TO THE DOMESTIC ABUSE SHELTER.

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

Entrance Hymn: LB *msheeho* 62B

Glory: SB *al majdu*

Qolo/Hymn: LB *hoosoyoh* 63

Creed p 748

PRE-ANAPHORA:

Transfer of Gifts: LB *The Lord Reigns*

Incense Hymn Offertory: SB *l'maryam yoldat*

ANAPHORA:

Saint James, Brother of the Lord: LB p 794

Sign of Peace: SB *tou ba*

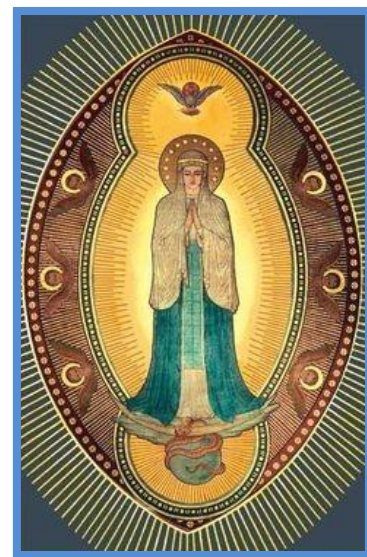
Communion: SB *Your Body is our Food; Arsal Allah*

Recessional: SB *O Come, O Come*

*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 our Savior and Benefactor,
the Lord of lords and Weaver of crowns,
Thou art Lord and King of all. Amen*

Those for whom we pray: Daja Gombojav, Anne El-Habre, Richard Karter, Lolo Salazar, and all those who suffer from disease, want, or depression.

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*The Immaculate Conception
Patroness of the United States of America
December 8th*