

Saint Joseph Maronite Catholic Church

The First Sunday after Epiphany

January 10, 2021

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 II Corinthians 10: 1-11

So then I, Paul, am making a request of you in the gentleness and submissiveness of the Messiah. I may be quiet when I am with you,

but I have much more confidence when I am far away.

My request is that when I arrive I may not be forced, given how confident I am, to be what I would think of as "bold" toward those people who think that we are living according to the flesh.

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

Indeed, although we do live in the manner as men, we are not its slaves, and the weapons we use for our service are not fleshly ones but rather ones that are filled with God's power; ones that have strength to pull down rebellious fortresses, and demolish arguments along with all pride that sets itself over and above the knowledge of God.

And we take captive all thoughts in order to make them obedient to the Messiah.

And we are quite ready to bring justice upon those who are disobedient, once you yourselves are being fully obedient.

Do you look merely at the exterior of men? If anyone is confident that he himself belongs to the Messiah, then let him properly appreciate that we belong to the Messiah as much as he.

If I am boasting, too, a great deal about the authority our Lord has given me, I am not ashamed of it. He gave this to me to build you up, not to pull you down.

But I hesitate, lest someone think that my letters are meant to terrify you, as there are some people who say, "his letters may be harsh and serious, but his physical presence is pathetic and his speech is unimpressive". But anyone who says this should think upon it, that when we are present we shall behave in the same manner as we do when we are at a distance in the words of our letters.



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)²

ABOUNA'S REFLECTIONS

There have been many things that we as individuals may have wished, and do wish, could be otherwise, but the providence of God in His inscrutable Mystery requires us to seek wisdom, patience, and charity in the paths that He manifests to us; these are not necessarily the ones we might wish.

This holds true also for a parish. We now live in a precarious moment of this pandemic when there has been enormous multiplication of infections and deaths each day – ten to twenty times greater than the daily numbers back in September. This has been an extreme change in events. It is dramatic and concerning. Our present course as a community needs to be infused with faith, wisdom, compassion, and prudence. We must act conscientiously, but without fear.

Spreading out attendance over the week is the easiest way to allow everyone to find a comfortable space and time to attend Mass as they can and as they wish; and *if they wish*.

The smaller numbers gathering during the weekdays make it fully possible to spread out with much distance, and with minimal contact among those attending. Everyone can attend Mass on a day comfortable to each. This act of charity is especially asked of those who are more free in their schedules so as to allow the young families and those who still need to work during the week the freedom to assist at Mass at least on Sunday when they are free from work to do so.

Only for the time being has the Sunday Vigil Mass has been suppressed. In fact, *all* liturgical vigils have been cancelled since the beginning of this crisis – the Ascension, the Assumption, All Saints, and the Immaculate Conception – not just Sunday; we have missed them all. Christmas has been the unique exception, which, while successful, took the great effort of many to pull off.

It is an ancient and time-honored tradition among the Maronites to give refuge to those in need and to show hospitality, often to those fleeing persecution;

² Homily 1.7.8 "on Ezechiel"

these things they have done for centuries. And because it will allow even greater possibility to show further respite to those in need, we do wish to restore a fuller liturgical schedule *as soon as prudence will allow*. It is our intent to re-establish a third Mass for the Lord's Day in the Sunday Vigil.

Prematurely, perhaps, we are attempting to establish the **disinfecting and cleaning crews** necessary to cover on Saturday morning, following the 10:00am Mass, and a second crew to disinfect following the Sunday Vigil. The volunteers' commitment must be for the long haul. When safer, once we begin this extra Mass, we need to be engaged until the end of the pandemic's danger. This will be rough, but if *four* crews could be established of four *members* each, each volunteer would need to be in harness every other week, or twice a month. One hopes that the first volunteers to commit themselves to these disinfecting crews will be especially from among those who most desire this Sunday Vigil to be re-established.

Still, we have to say "perhaps", as the conditions on the ground presently surrounding us in pandemical glory are not good. Other than the arrival of vaccines, things have worsened dramatically these last four months. Nevertheless, together, with merciful compassion to all, we might be able to move forward. In my opinion, presently, it does not seem to be the opportune moment to do so, but we must all keep our eyes set toward the future and begin now to prepare for the time when it will be safe and prudent to do so. When will the daily averages of death and infection decrease? Days? Weeks? Months? Only God can know.

We must do all that we do do for the sake of the honor of God, the sanctification of souls, and for peace to reign within hearts. We serve the hidden Good One, cherish grace within our spirits, and labor together to extend charity's comfort to all.

We all desire things to improve, to heal, to find one another again at coffee and muffins, free to visit, free to participate in catechesis, etc., but *wisdom* and *prudence* must balance the love with which we desire the fullness of the liturgical and parish life. They are the same qualities that must temper all our considerations, even as we come to discern the possibilities for these and other public gatherings.

As is well known, the numbers and level of infections have done nothing but grow exponentially since late summer. Some have asked not only for another Sunday Mass, but also for coffee and muffins to be restored after Mass. Each week of this pandemic in its second wave makes it more and more difficult to justify additional public gatherings at the church. For the same reason, it was difficult to see through to the end the last catechesis with the children in November. The classes did continue to mid-November as planned, but it was clear at that point that numbers were going to continue to surge in the pandemic.

Catechesis with the children has been postponed *at least until February* when we can re-evaluate our risks. The Sunday Vigil must be seen with the same calculation and judgement.

With charity to aid many, to satisfy others, and to extend the beacon of divine grace, we proceed with prudence.

It has been heartening to see more individuals taking advantage of the weekday Masses in order to cherish the Eucharistic Sacrifice and receive our Lord in the Divine Mysteries. In the midst of such difficulties, your service to the Lord is all the more admirable.

We will see what we might do as early as possible. This will require us all to pitch in and work together. On the brighter side, this does form us more coherently as a community. God always draws good from out of evil. Things will be easier when the contagion and infection numbers begin to decrease. The present rate of infection in our state is too great for us to add addition public gatherings. In the meantime, *we continue to follow Providence and do the best we can*, making decisions based on the conditions handed to us. We must walk with great hope, faces turned to the hidden Good One.

With only a few hiccups, you have thus far done this all smoothly and remarkably well. You have acted with generosity and with a great serenity of purpose.

Many, many, thanks to the generous individuals and families who have already stepped forward at this time of crisis to commit themselves to the

health and well-being of our parish by disinfecting and sanitizing. May God lavish a thousand-fold His blessings and grace upon you and your families for this devotion.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola set forth in his rules for the Discernment of Spirits that in desolation³ one is not to change course. We must hold to each step we take, individually and as a community, until such time as God's providence indicates otherwise a more secure direction.



Nothing is simple or easy, as you all know, during this global crisis. The Eternal Luminous One continues to light our way, and it is wonderful to see how well we have managed as a parish thus far into this present disaster.

We have other considerations also at hand.

Recently, the state of Maine has been operating more business and public venue **inspections** and handing out **citations** to a number of businesses in these last weeks. Multiplying our own gatherings and assemblies needs to be examined as to how prudent and wise it would be to do so right now. *We open ourselves to risks and difficulties as well as benefits with each new step we take.* These days are heavy with concern and anxiety.

As is well known, our tiny community does not have either the staff or extra means, as do the local Latin Catholic parishes, to make these types of things easy.

We cannot possibly foresee how things are going to progress over the next months, even with vaccines now being administered, and every decision brings with it unpredictable, and sometimes dramatic consequences. *Festina lente*, and hold on to what is sure.

³ "desolation" is the state of the spirit in which seeing is difficult and the mind rests obscured. It does not mean discouragement or depression, but that the path is not evident and clear. These last months, and our present times, have been ones of desolation.

This parish barque has been minimally disturbed by peaceably *following our course with small strokes* and little increments amidst the waves of uncertainty. "Convenience" and "personal preference" might be understandable motives, but they cannot be convincing reasons in the midst of so much uncertainty during this second-wave pandemic surge of infection and death.



We have from the beginning asked that everyone wear face-coverings, and while most attending are doing so, especially as they enter the church and take their places, as is done in the restaurants, the few who remain without masks make some feel ill at ease. Please, think first of others.

We must all be aware of this fear and show compassion at its presence. Charity should inspire us in each and all of our actions. Charity fosters the consideration and kindness to all, especially to those who might be managing with greater difficulty this public health crisis.

As a proposal, it seems good that we make it possible to assure at least regular opportunities in which the elderly and the especially endangered population might have the assurance that upon entering our sacred building they will be surrounded and enfolded *with the greatest sense of security possible*.

Reserving our choicest and most beautiful Liturgy of the week, one with full choir to the praise of God, directed by our beloved Dame Fefa,⁴ on

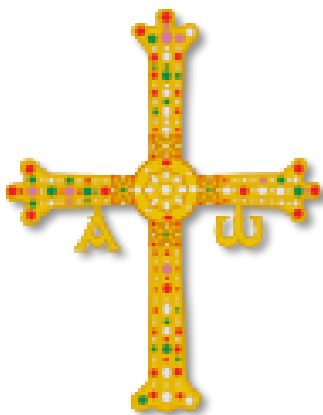
⁴ Who has been heroically faithful from the beginning of this crisis.

Sunday, January 17th, at the **9:00am** Mass, it will be mandated, obligatory, with no-arguments permitted, *required that everyone in the building wear a face-covering*. Again, this is for charity and mercy's sake; please, no quarreling in the matter.

Any individual who is unable for whatever reason is impeded from properly wearing the present mandated face-coverings, will need to attend a different Mass.

After our main concern for **charity**, our principal pursuit is to ensure **peace** and **security** among all those participating in the Divine Mysteries.

With charity to all and from all, these things will be done in an attempt to accommodate everyone, both those who are anxious or fearful, and those who cannot cover their face.



From **February onward**, then, and so long as this catastrophe endures, the **second Sunday** of the month, at the **9:00am** Mass will be strictly enforced the wearing of face-coverings and masks, to allow for the greatest peace of mind to those who may wish to attend.



Only as this crisis advances, ebbs and flows, will any other decisions or changes be able to be made. We are all at the mercy of Hidden Providence.

We all walk in the dark, but under the guidance of the Luminous One we petition His merciful grace that we may all walk together in patient fraternal charity.

We must all live in supernatural hope of the Most Holy, Who lets no moment escape without grace and aid. The light and charity that He pours out to us are both wonderful and consoling – if only we could avail ourselves of them completely.

We are **one Beit Maroun**; and we are all – old, new, historical, or recent – the sons and daughters of Saint Maron. He has called each one of us to Saint Joseph's, has he not? So let us strive to manifest the charity, patience, perseverance, and strength of our ancestors' centuries-long martyrdom that have been the outstanding characteristics of our Antiochene Syriac Church – and this for as long as it takes.

Schedule of Readings

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

January 10, 2021

II Cor 10: 1-11 St. John 1: 29-34

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

January 17, 2021

II Cor 4: 5-15 St. John 1: 35-42

A heartfelt "thank you" for your generosity to the pastor this Christmas season – all the more outstanding in these difficult times.



*May the Divine
Dawn console your days
and raise your spirits in
His radiant light all
throughout this new year
of grace!*



The Sanctuary Lamp
burns in January
in memory of
Bernard Thomas
at the request of his
daughters.

May his memory be eternal!



VOCATION ICON

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

Sat	Jan	9	Jim & Lenore Boles
Sun	Jan	17	Chris & Diane Wyder
Sun	Jan	24	Michael & Gayle Misner
Sun	Jan	31	Bruce & Doreen White
Sun	Feb	7	Steve & Allison Crate
Sun	Feb	14	Sue Paré & Lolo Salazar
Sun	Feb	21	Daja Gombojav & Family
Sun	Feb	28	Larry & Lisa Grard

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

(Budgeted: \$3,100.00)

Regular Collection Last Week: \$2896.00

(Deficit 2021: \$204.00)⁵

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

In November, we had to replace the **hot water heater for the bathrooms** in the parish hall. This cost us **\$596.40**. Any good and generous souls moved to contribute to this charitable work (who wants only cold water?) is invited to do so.

God bless you for your generosity.

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

INTENTIONS FOR THE QOURBONEH (MASSES)

Sun 10 9:00 For the Members of the Parish

11:00 †Susan Mitchell

(Barbara Atkins)

Mon 11 -----

Tue 12 Children of Mike & Maureen Martin

(Martins)

Wed 13 The Nicholas Family

(Mary Nicholas)

Thu 14 †Catherine Murphy

(Suzanne Paré)

Fri 15 Private Intention

(Abouna James)

Sat 16 †Rosanna Joseph

(Steve & Allison Crate)

Sun 17 9:00 For the Members of the Parish

11:00 Gladys Avcollie

(Cynthia Namer)

⁵ Deficit 2019: \$72,270.59 / Deficit 2020: \$34,473.00

Mon 18 -----
Tue 19 †**Paul Nicholas**
 (Mary Nicholas)
Wed 20 †**Madeleine Tondreau**
 (Suzanne Paré)
Thu 21 †**John Nicholas**
 (Mary Nicholas)
Fri 22 **Private Intention**
 (Abouna James)
Sat 23 †**Arthur Paré**
 (Suzanne Paré)
Sun 24 **9:00 For the Members of the Parish**
11:00 Private Intention
 (Abouna James)
Mon 25 -----
Tue 26 **Dana & Linda Hayes**
 (Misner-Elias Family)
Wed 27 †**Barbara Nicholas**
 (Mary Nicholas)
Thu 28 †**Daisy Johnston**
 (Mary Nicholas)
Fri 29 †**Eva Hakim**
 (Alexis Dragatsi)

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**.



Members of the **Rosary Sodality** wish to express their gratitude to the members of Saint Joseph's Maronite Catholic church for their generosity for this year's Giving Tree.

A check for **\$900.00** was sent to the **Family Violence Project** to help provide financial support to those families in need of a safe, supportive and stable environment.

Christmas Giving opportunities (still these weeks of the Epiphany)!

Make known to your friends and family 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. 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

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: Tala Poulin, Daja Gombojav, Anne El-Habre, Richard Karter, Lolo Salazar, and all those who suffer from disease, want, or depression.

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The first Sunday after the Epiphany

p. 107

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

Entrance Hymn: LB *msheeho* 81A

Glory: SB *al majdu*

Qolo/Hymn: LB *bo'outho* 82

Creed p 748

PRE-ANAPHORA:

Transfer of Gifts: LB *The Lord Reigns (Epiphany)*

Incense Hymn Offertory: SB *iqbal*

ANAPHORA:

The Twelve Apostles: LB p 754

Sign of Peace: SB *tou ba*

Communion: SB *O Lord, I am not worthy; We three Kings*

Recessional: SB *Majdu Maryam*



Saint Jacob of Nisibis

January 13th

