

Saint Rafka

Catholics of the East in the Upstate!



Announcement to Joseph Season of Announcement

Saint Rafka Maronite Catholic Church is a Parish of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. The Antiochene Syriac Maronite Church is one of over twenty Eastern and Oriental Catholic Churches in communion with the Bishop of Rome. Led by His Beatitude, **Bechara Boutros Rai**, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East in Berke, Lebanon, the Syro-Maronite Church has parishes and missions on six continents. Saint Rafka Parish was established as a mission in 2002. The community grew and flourished and was raised to the rank of parish in 2021.

**Most Rev. Gregory
John Mansour**

Bishop

109 Remsen Street,
Brooklyn, NY, 11201
718.237.9913

**Father Bartholomew
Leon**

Pastor

1215 S. Highway 14
Greer, SC 29650
864.469.9119

**Father Toni Jabbour,
OMM**

Parochial Vicar

1215 S. Highway 14
Greer, SC 29650
864.469.9119

OFFICE HOURS

10:00 AM - 4:30 PM,
Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday
10:00 AM - 2:30 PM,
Thursday and Friday

DIVINE LITURGIES

The Divine Liturgy is
celebrated on

Saturday,
12 PM, Arabic
4 PM Vigil
Sunday, 11 AM
7 PM
Tuesday, 10:00 AM
Wednesday, 7:00 PM
Thursday 10:00 AM
Friday, 10:00 AM

CONFESSIONS

Saturday, 3:15 PM
Sunday 10:15 AM
6:30 PM
Weekdays before
liturgy as requested

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Joseph Chebeir
Paula Howard-Casby
Tom Judge
[Dee Kalata](#)
[Ron Rossi, Sr.](#)
Marlene Saad
Richard Sleiman

Joseph Chebeir
Financial Administrator
864.469.9119
[Joe Chebeir](#)



Bill Leon
Secretary
864.469.9119
[Bill Leon](#)

Sam Jordan Amat
Organist
[Sam Amat](#)

Nadia Najm
Choir Director
Scott Herr
Assistant Director
[Nadia Najm](#)
[Scott Herr](#)

Jessica Dagher Allen
First Holy Communion
[Jessica Allen](#)
Lisa Advent
MRE Students
[Lisa Advent](#)

Lisa Advent
MYO/MYA Leader
[Lisa Advent](#)

Knights of Columbus
Jim Dyer
Grand Knight
[Jim Dyer](#)

Marlene Saad
Scripture Sharing
[Marlene Saad](#)
If Interested, Call
864.580.1054

Marie Kidd
Food Pantry
[Marie Kidd](#)

Hospitality Committee
[Marie Kidd](#)
[Hannan Saade](#)
[Mark Duffy](#)

Bridget Nevin
Garden Club
[Bridget Nevin](#)

Candice King-Palgut
Prayers and Squares
[Candice King-Palgut](#)

Building Committee
Phase 1
Richard Sleiman
Thomas Judge
Ron Rossi, Sr.



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MASS INTENTIONS

Mass intentions are a good way to remember and pray for your loved ones, alive or deceased.

If you would like to request an intention please remember to submit your intentions for Liturgy ASAP by calling the parish office at 864.469.9119 or by email at bill@saintrafka.org. Please remember that it is rare to be able to have your intention the following Sunday! **Masses are now generally booked up about three months in advance.**

BAPTISM & CHRISMATION

Baptism in the Maronite Rite is always accompanied by *Chrismation* (Confirmation). Both Sacraments are given by a priest, and always in the same ceremony. Preparation to receive the Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation is required. We encourage this to happen before the birth of your child. Please contact the [Church Office](#) for more details.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

The Anointing of the Sick is routinely offered during the Divine Liturgy on Wednesday evening and during pastoral visits by the priest to homebound and ill parishioners. Let me know if you will be in the hospital or have other special needs. Contact the [Church Office](#).

THE MYSTERY OF CROWNING (MARRIAGE)

Couples must contact the pastor **at least** six months prior to the desired date of the wedding. To initiate the marriage preparation process or if you have questions for weddings taking place at Saint Rafka. Contact the [Church Office](#).

PARISH REGISTRATION

Registration forms and welcome packets are available in the church office and the vestibule. Membership is a condition for the reception of the sacraments of baptism/confirmation, first reconciliation, first Eucharist, and Crowning (marriage). Registration is also required before the parish can issue a sponsorship certificate for those asked to be sacramental sponsors. You must be a registered, contributing member for at least three months before a certificate is provided.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Teenagers are invited to join our Maronite Youth Organization, aka MYO. Contact **Lisa Advent** lisaadventphotography@gmail.com for more information.

Ramsho (Evening Prayer)

Join us on Tuesday at 5:45 PM for evening prayer and prayers of intercession to Saint Sharbel.

WICKETT HALL AND ASHY PAVILION

Wickett Hall and Ashy Pavilion can be used by our registered and supporting parishioners for family events, reunions, etc. Others may request permission to rent the Hall or Pavilion. Please contact the [Church Office](#).

MARONITE RESOURCES

Daily [readings](#) for the Divine Liturgy.
Daily morning prayer and evening prayer of the Divine Office [here](#).

TRAVELING AND NEED TO GO TO MASS?

Where to go to Mass when traveling? Look here!
MassTimes.org
[The Catholic Directory](#)
[Parishes Online](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Please follow us at @saintrafkagreenville on **Instagram** and/or **St. Rafka Maronite Church** on **Facebook**. <http://www.facebook.com/strafka>
Also [YouTube](#)!

SAINT RAFKA FOOD PANTRY

Established in 2019, the Saint Rafka Food Pantry is for those who need immediate food assistance. Need food? Call the church office or come by, 10 AM - 2 PM. You can also email **Marie Kidd** who is coordinating this project. All gifts of food are anonymous. Donations of food are accepted either at the Church Office or the back of the church.

SCRIPTURE SHARING

Scripture haring discussion following the Carmelite Way with Saint Therese of the Little Flower and Saint John of the Cross

IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS [IDF](#) Individuals banning together help and make know the plight of the Christians in the Middle East and their suffering.

SHRINE OF THE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS in the United States. [Video here](#).

Scripture Readings

Matt 1:18-25

Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God; let it be deep as Sheol, or high as the sky! But Ahaz answered, "I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!" Then he said: Listen, house of David! Is it not enough that you weary human beings? Must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son, shall name him Emmanuel. Curds and honey he will eat so that he may learn to reject evil and choose good; for before the child learns to reject evil and choose good, the land of those two kings whom you dread shall be deserted.

Eph. 3:1-13

Because of this, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ [Jesus] for you Gentiles—if, as I suppose, you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit, [namely, that] the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly earlier. When you read this you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to human beings in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this I became a minister by the gift of God's grace that was granted me in accord with the exercise of his power. To me, the very least of all the holy ones, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the inscrutable riches of Christ, and to bring to light [for all] what is the plan of the mystery hidden from ages past in God who created all things, so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the principalities and authorities in the heavens. This was according to the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness of speech and confidence of access through faith in him. So I ask you not to lose heart over my afflictions for you; this is your glory.

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.



Reflection

The Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians today speaks of “the mysteries hidden in the wisdom of God”. In the Gospel these mysteries are being revealed to Blessed Joseph in his dream: He is clearly worried about Mary being pregnant prematurely with a child. This is a difficult challenge for Joseph. He is being tested. He needs divine help and direction which he graciously receives.

Like the Patriarchs, Jacob and Joseph of the Old Testament, the Joseph in the Gospel of Christ is now being guided by an angel in his dream. The contents of Joseph’s two dreams are amazing. His wife will have a child, but by the Holy Spirit; and there is trouble on the horizon. He needs to trust in God’s promise and his plan of salvation, in spite of the difficulties. Joseph’s trust and faithfulness will be manifested by his actions.

Likewise, in our Maronite prayers this Sunday, our meditation is focused on Saint Joseph’s incomprehension and doubts – before this great mystery before him – and then the reassurances that he receives from above that this is all God’s will. The *Qolo* (centered before the *Qadishat* and the *Mazmooro* after it), in the style of the *Syriac dialogue hymns*, address this issue

directly. We the church and her children, in hindsight, find ourselves in a position of sympathy with the divine ordinance. We encourage *the Joseph in us* to believe; to let his righteousness and fidelity come through so that he (and us too) may pass the test of faith!

The underlying lesson in this announcement to Joseph – as well as the other previous announcements to Zechariah, Mary, and Elizabeth – is that *God’s ways* are amazing and perplexing. They challenge the limits of our faith and vision – just as they did with Abraham and the patriarchs of the past in the first covenant. Like Joseph, with the help of divine grace, they open our hearts to the greater expectations of eternal salvation, and the promise of life in the Kingdom.

Clearly God wants to give us more than that little happiness – that we are normally willing to settle for! The Father wants to give us Christ Jesus, to be with us always, Emanuel – (Hebrew: God is with us) – that through him we may have life in its fullness; to let his Holy Family be ours; that we may dwell in the divine Trinity forever.

From generation to generation this *heavenly family* has been calling us to our home in the Kingdom. Now, as members of this *Holy Family* of Christ, let us welcome our King with all our hearts – with words of praise and actions of charity and hospitality towards others – that he may graciously grant us eternal citizenship in his Kingdom.

Steven Bonian, S.J.



Abouna's Corner

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Last Sunday I made the announcement that **Abouna Toni Jabbour, OMM**, will be transferred to [Saint Anthony's Maronite Catholic](#) Church in Glen Allen, VA. Abouna will be the Parochial Vicar to **Chorbishop John Faris** and assist in that large and vibrant parish. We will honor Father Toni on the weekend of December 28 and 29 with a farewell reception and dinner. Abouna will be missed!

With Father Toni's transfer, we will make a significant schedule change. Remember we have not changed our Sunday schedule in almost 15 years. Sadly, the 7 PM Last Chance Mass will conclude on December 29. I was reminded by several priests and officials of the Eparchy that Sunday evening Masses are not in our Maronite tradition. This is true and we have served a lot of people over the years with the late liturgy. Several Latin Rite parishes near us have evening Masses now so there was less need. We also have Masses of other Rites here on Sundays at 5 PM, so the evening is not totally out of the picture. Thus, the new schedule beginning on January 4-5, 2025 will be:

Saturday Vigil Mass, 4:00 PM

Sunday Mass, 8:30 AM

Sunday Solemn Mass, 11:00 AM

Other Ritual Mass, 5:00 PM (Latin, Syro-Malabar, Ukrainian(?))

Let's talk about upcoming Christmas events! This Friday, December 13, our children will present the **2nd Annual Christmas Recital** at 7:00 PM in the Church. **Chantal Dagher**, along with **Sam Alamat**, will lead the children as they sing and perform Christmas music ancient and new, Arabic and English and a few surprises along the way. The production will be broadcast live on Facebook for those who can't be here in person. View at <https://www.facebook.com/strafka/>

Speaking of Christmas, **Christmas Flower Memorials** are now at the back of the church building. Memorials that have been received are listed further back in the bulletin. If you would like to donate for the Christmas Flowers and have your family and friends listed in the memorials, please make your donation in the envelope provided and drop it in the collection plate or give it to the ushers. Thank you in advance!

Remember to pray for those who are ill and suffering in our community. We have several with long-term illness and several in hospice at this time. Pray also for those family members who care for them. May God grant them the strength and courage to continue their ministry of care and compassion.

Lastly, please remember I will never text you to "do me a favor" and get gift cards from Walmart, Target, etc. There are lots of scams involving the names of the local clergy and several parishioners have asked me if this particular text was fraudulent. THEY ARE!!!! IF I needed something, I would call you directly or talk to you in person, but I won't send out a text asking for money. Please be cautious!

Have a great weekend! See you in Church!

Ab. Bart

Prayers and Squares

Fundraiser A Giving Tree

A Christmas tree (right) has been set up in the Narthex of the Church. There are hundreds of hand made ornaments waiting for you. All you have to do is select the ornaments you want, leave your donation in the box, and take them home.

Ornaments make great keepsakes, they are the perfect little gift for your child's teacher, the mailman, or anyone you think should be remembered during the Christmas season.

It has been several years since we have needed to raise funds for the quilt ministry. God has been good to us, and we have gotten some incredible donations of fabric, and some amazing deals as well. But we need to buy batting(the center of the quilt), maintain machines, and we have worn out many of our cutting rulers. We ask that you support us as we continue our work of bringing comfort and the prayers of the church to those facing challenges in life. Thank you, from the quilt ladies!



Christmas Liturgy Schedule

Tuesday, December 24, 4:00 PM Vigil Mass

Wednesday, December 25, 12:00 AM, Midnight Mass*

Wednesday, December 25, 11:00 AM, Mass of Christmas Day

*Don't ask me what time this starts!!!!



Church Offerings and Attendance

December 8, 2024		
4 PM	65	\$1105.00
8:30 AM	27	\$404.00
11 AM	101	\$1394.00
7:00 PM	39	\$420.00
Mail		\$590.00
PayPal/Electronic		\$920.00
Total	232	\$4,833.00
Budget	225	\$4,100.00
+/-	7	\$733.00
Year to Date		\$206,580.00
Budget for year +/-		\$5,680.00
Second Collection		
4:00 PM		\$0.00
8:30 AM		\$0.00
11:00 AM		\$0.00
7 PM		\$0.00
Total		\$0.00
Holy Hour		0
Funeral		0
2024 Totals		
4:00 PM		4308
8:300 AM		176
11 AM		5639
7 PM		2067
Weekday Masses		4725
Holy Hour		286
Holy Day		525
Special Liturgy		157
Funerals		452
Weddings		60

Average Attendance

4 PM	8:30 AM	11 AM	7 PM
82	29	116	42

Facts regarding our bulletin!

Bulletins emailed last weekend: 681

Percentage opened 56% -

Opened emails: 378 + Unopened emails: 303 +

Masses, Sanctuary Lamp & Flowers

To have the Sanctuary Light for your relatives or intentions, please use the envelope provided at the entrance. Donation is \$5.00. [The Sanctuary Candle burns this week for a Special Intention.](#)

To have flowers for a memorial of a loved one, please use the envelope provided at the entrance. Donation is \$50.00 per Sunday.

If you would like a **Mass** offered for your loved ones, please call the church office at 864.469.9119 or secretary@saintrafka.org. Envelopes for Masses also available at the door of the church.



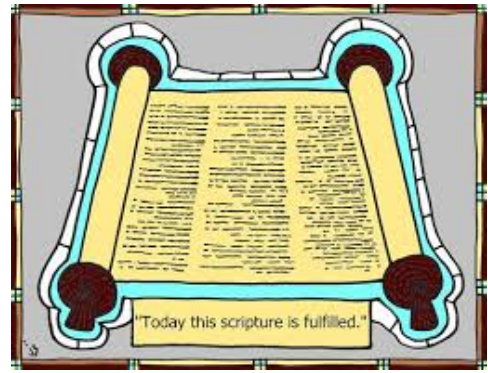
CATHOLIC
INFORMATION CENTER

<https://catholic.center/>



Liturgical Readings

Old Testament (English) Isaiah 7:10-16	Elias Saadeh
New Testament (Arabic) Eph. 3:1-13	Layla Kasir



Mass Intentions

December 14 - 15	Announcement to Joseph	
Saturday, 4 PM	Lee Mytych (L)	Barb Mytych
Sunday, 8:30 AM	Mary Pearson (L)	Barb Mytych
Sunday 11 AM	+Father Robert Falabella	Kristie Killough
Sunday, 7:00 PM	+Martimiano V. Quiterio	Bilma V. Saiz
Tuesday, 10:00 AM	Marlene Dowd, Birthday	Bob Dowd
Wednesday, 7:00 PM	Matt Mytych (L)	Barb Mytych
Thursday 9:00 AM	+Martimiano V. Quiterio	Bilma V. Saiz
Friday, 10:00 AM	+Martimiano V. Quiterio	Bilma V. Saiz
Saturday, 12:00 Noon	Holy Souls in Purgatory	Marie Kidd
December 21 - 22	Genealogy Sunday	
Saturday, 4 PM	+Martimiano Valverde Quiterio	Bilma V. Saiz
Sunday, 8:30 AM	Anna Warner	Ceil & Andy
Sunday 11 AM	Cheryl Pace (L) & +Erin Clark	Slusz Family
Sunday, 7:00 PM	+Martimiano V Quiterio	Bilma V. Saiz
Tuesday, 4:00 PM	Elaine Hermes	Ceil & Andy
Wednesday, 12:00 AM	Intenions of Parishioners	
Wednesday,, 11:00 AM	Intentions of the Parishioners	
Thursday 10:00 AM	Holy Souls in Purgatory	Marie Kidd
Friday, 10:00 AM	Holy Souls in Purgatory	Marie Kidd
Saturday, 12:00 Noon	Holy Souls in Purgatory	Marie Kidd

All men of the parish are invited to join men from Prince of Peace parish for breakfast and fellowship. The Catholic Men's Breakfast meets on the first Thursday of each month at 8:00 AM at the Eggs Up Restaurant, 3935 Pelham Road, Greenville. Please join us and feel free to bring a friend! Any questions call Jack Stewart, 864 787-7592.

Video on the Sainted Massabki brothers on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/NoursatEnglish/videos/1008068293229859>

Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
15 Joseph 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 5:00 PM Korean Mass 7 PM, Last Chance Mass CHRISTMAS NOVENA BEGINS	16	17 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	18 DAY OF CONFESSIONS 9 AM - 6:30 PM 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	19 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	20 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	21 12:00 PM Arabic Mass 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
22 Genealogy 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 5:00 PM, Syro-Malabar Liturgy 7 PM, Last Chance Mass	23	24 4:00 PM Vigil Mass	25 Christmas 12:00 Midnight 11:00 AM Mass of the Day	26 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy Baptism	27 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	28 12:00 PM Arabic Mass 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
29 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 7 PM, Last Chance Mass	30	31 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	January 1 Holy Day of Obligation 11:00 AM Divine Liturgy	2 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	3 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	4 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
5 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 3:00 PM, Holy Hour 5:00 PM, Korean Mass	6 Epiphany Holy Day of Obligation Divine Liturgy 7:00 PM	7 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	8 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	9 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	10 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	11 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy



Catholics serving Catholics

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Downtown Chapel
 639 North Main Street
 Greenville, SC 29601
 (864) 232-6733

Northwest Chapel
 6710 White Horse Road
 Greenville, SC 29611
 (864) 294-6415

Southeast Chapel
 1604 NE Main Street
 Simpsonville, SC 29681
 (864) 688-1600

Saints of the Day

December

December 14, Saint Nematallah Al-Hardini, Confessor (+1858)
December 20, Saint Ignatius, Bishop and Martyr, Patriarch of Antioch (+107)
December 25, Birth of Our Lord
December 26, Praises of the Mother of God
December 27, Saint Stephen, Protomartyr
December 29, Martyrdom of the Children of Bethlehem (Holy Innocents)
January 1, Saints Basil and Gregory, Doctors of the Church
January 2, Pope Saint Silvester I
January 3, Malachi the Prophet

Prayer List

Deacon Bob Smith, Richard Wickett, Anna Maria Portilla, Sandra Reece, Marcia Palmer, Mary Howard, Lisa Moman, Leslie Ziminsky, Dan Beckman, Lisa Bolt, Crysten Yammine, L. Stadler, Mary Killough, Thomas Sloan, Ciera D, Irene Ponce, Philomena Reed, Rick Argon, Sister Mary Emmanuel, OSC, Hewitt Dickerson, Brielle Sheriff, Carol, Gina, Jeni Yacu, Rodena and Bruce Thompson, Andrea Emilia Bernabey, Nadim Chebeir, Mike, Leo, B J Dursse, Deacon Dick Murtaugh, Vicki Gosnell, Sam Clutter, Michael Tierney, Paul Shimow, Betty Mileski, Doug Logan, Rita Charbonete, Frances Danton, Diane Hickey, Alan Frechette, Jacob and Jaxson Rivera, Andrea Wise, Patrizia, Susan Clarke, Andy Frisari, Beth, Mary Dowden, Karen Rodgers, Nancy Georgion, Rosemary & Jim King, Mark Knight, Stephen Wedgeworth, MR, Hilda Hix, Catherine Caul, Albert Martin, Nanine D'Aquin, Elizabeth Fallet, Anthony Kozakiewicz, Bill Riley, KG, Linda Crosby, Jenny Gould, Maurice Mercier, Breese, Jennifer Payne, Matt Smith, Leila Chebeir, Tammy Lopez, Anthony Fagliarone, Fernando, Carolyn Groner, Tim Eaton, Kelly Mullens, Carol Craven, Mel Casby, Vincent Howard, K.F., Eileen Howard, Jack Campbell, Hilda Hix, Sue Bauer, Chrisoula, Theresa Woodson, Noah Scott Kestler, Art and Judy Pape, Suhail Yousiff, Tom Craven, Jr., Michael Rau, Chris Davis, Pixie Geren, Mike Dyer, Christian Pereira, Art Newton, Nancy Georgion, Recovery of RS, Claire Barnett, Ethel Brassel, Katrina Shunk, George Vargo, Irma Galvan, Mary Cleary, Joe Lemire, Virginia LaFave, Nabeel

Birthdays

December

14, Austin Hill
15, John Paul Sleiman
15, Denise Sakran
15, Father Bart
15, Father Patrick Cooper
15, Louise Mary Tallarico
15, Elizabeth Tyte
17, Richard Wickett
17, Marlene Dowd
17, Rania Arida
18, Marie Ward
19, Faris Farah
20, Mary Howard (100)
21, Lukas Robinson
22, Lana Zattam Corrente
24, Dalida Meehan

Anniversaries

December

14, Joseph and Tiffany Chebeir
20, Deacon Bob and Lois Smith

No Anniversaries noted in January

February

9, Billy and Helen Rouch
10, Bassam & Suhair Nmair

Necrology

December

+Faye G. Tadross, December 26, 2006
+Bishop Stephen Hector Doueihy, December 17, 2014
+Mary Anne McAfee, December 21, 2020
+Barbara A. Sanfilippo, December 22, 2020
+James (Boo) Francis, Sr., December 26, 2020

January

+Charles W. Dusthimer, January 2, 2020

Important Dates to Remember

Christmas Recital, December 13
Children's Christmas Party, December 22
Directory Photos, January 17 & 18
Fast of Nineveh, January 21 - 23
Marriage Enrichment Day of Reflection, January 25
Haflī, February 22, 2025

Christmas Flower Memorials

Living & Deceased Members of Marie Bentz Family

- +William M. Englert, Jr.
- +Peter Lagosky Family
- +Richard Anthony Kalata
- +Anthony Joseph Kalata, Jr.
- +Dolores, George & George II Harvey
- +Helen, Alfred & Henry Wickett
- +Catherine & Anthony Kalata, Sr.
- +Hartsel & Betty Wilson
- +Captain Joseph E. & Margaret W. Leon
- +Our Parents

- Marie Bentz
- Eileen L. Howard
- Eileen L. Howard
- Kalata, Wickett & Wilson Families
- Kalata, Wickett & Wilson Families
- Kalata, Wickett & Wilson Families
- Kalata, Wickett & Wilson Families
- Kalata, Wickett & Wilson Families
- Kalata, Wickett & Wilson Families
- Abouna
- Ken & Annie Migut

Memorials received in the future will be placed here.



Special Announcements

MRE - Maronite Religious Education Classes

Our thanks to **Jessica Dagher Allen** preparing our children for First Holy Communion and to **Lisa Advent** and assistants for teaching our other children in our religious education program. Below is the schedule of classes for this “academic” year. Classes meet after the 11 AM Divine Liturgy.

December 22, January 12, January 26, February 9, February 23, March 9. First Confessions, Practice, etc. to be announced.

Marriage Enrichment

A Marriage Enrichment Day of Reflection will be held on Saturday January 25, 2025. The Day of Reflection will be given by **Vivian Akel, LCSW** (Clinical Social Worker). Vivian is a Maronite Catholic from Brooklyn, NY, and the Safe Environment Coordinator for the Eparchy of Saint Maron. She brings many years of social work, pastoral counseling and theology along with a deep commitment to the Catholic Faith. The day will include talks, prayers and lunch.

Blessed Are You
MYO Eparchial
Day Retreat

All in Grades 7-12
Encouraged to Attend

\$30
(PER PERSON)

Southern Region

DEC 7 Saturday, December 7
11 AM - 7 PM

Saint Sharbel Church
600 Mt. Vernon Church Rd
Raleigh, NC

MARONITE YOUTH ORGANIZATION
EPARCHY OF
SAINT MARON
OF BROOKLYN

Register online:
myoeparchystmaron.org
Registration Closes Nov 27

What Has Prayers and Squares Been Doing?

We make quilts! But we do other things also. We make prayer squares (small quilts) for the Neonatal Intensive care unit, as well as angel gowns and pouches for micro preemies through full term babies. At a time of such intense grief a parent needs to be able to say goodbye with some dignity. We have been sharing fabric with other catholic groups who are sewing for charity. We had an abundance of military fabrics, so we shared with a group that makes pillow cases for the veterans home. We donated enough fabric to get another church started with making quilts for the children's hospital. We have shared children's fabric with a group that makes quilts for the Ronald McDonald House. We also share fabric that goes to quilts made for Steps to Hope (a battered women and children's shelter). We use our long arm machine to quilt tops that have been made for Steps to Hope, and the Ronald McDonald house. We are Busy!!!

If you are facing physical, spiritual, or other life challenges, please request a prayer quilt. We want to wrap you in the comfort of God and the prayers of the church. Your name can remain private if you wish. We would love to give a quilt for every new baby born into the Saint Rafka church Family. Please let us know if you are expecting. Any church member who joins the military is also eligible for a quilt and a prayer square for the inside of their helmet. All you need to do is call the office with the name, and the prayers requested.

We need help. Come and sew with us on Tuesdays from 10 am to 2 pm. If you don't know how to sew, we are happy to teach you, we also have extra machines we can loan. Are you busy and can't come on Tuesdays? No worries, we have quilt kits that are ready to sew, and you can sew at home. We can make it work. If you prefer hand work, we need ties placed in quilts and labels sewn on.

We were blessed by a HUGE donation from Walmart this year. We got 600 bolts (2 pallets) of fabric from them. They are no longer selling fabric from bolts, and donated all the stock to us. What an amazing blessing! We also keep our eye out for estate sales. That is where all the military fabric came from. We got a lot of children's fabric from a friend who was downsizing. We are always happy to accept donations of cotton fabric suitable for making quilts. We need to purchase batting, replace worn out cutting rulers, service and clean our machines. We always need Thread in neutral colors, light gray, cream, and white. We go through a lot of blades for the rotary cutters, and we need to replace a couple of cutting mats. We purchased a used laptop, a floppy and CD drive. We can now start using the embroidery software that came with our original group of sewing machines. Thank you so much for all your support. Come quilt with us!!!



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Visit HelpOurMarriage.org to Register for an Upcoming Western Carolina Retrouvaille Weekend Retreat or Call (704) 702-2112 for Information
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Join us for our 4th Annual

Pink & Blue Gala

Friday, February 21, 2025

Discounted Early Bird Tickets on sale until Dec. 15th!

Our gala will be held at the lakeside Fluor Enterprises dining venue in Greenville starting at 6:00pm. You are invited to join us for a Mardi Gras themed evening with fine dining and a live and silent auction.

Our guest speakers will include Bishop Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS and Fr. Rhett Williams!



Find out more here!

We can't host a successful event without your help! If you are interested in sponsoring or have auction items to donate, scan QR code or visit stclareshomesc.org/pink-blue-gala.



Contact Colleen Chmiel for Questions
Stclaresvolunteer@charlestdiocese.org
843-259-1108

*February 22nd
2025*



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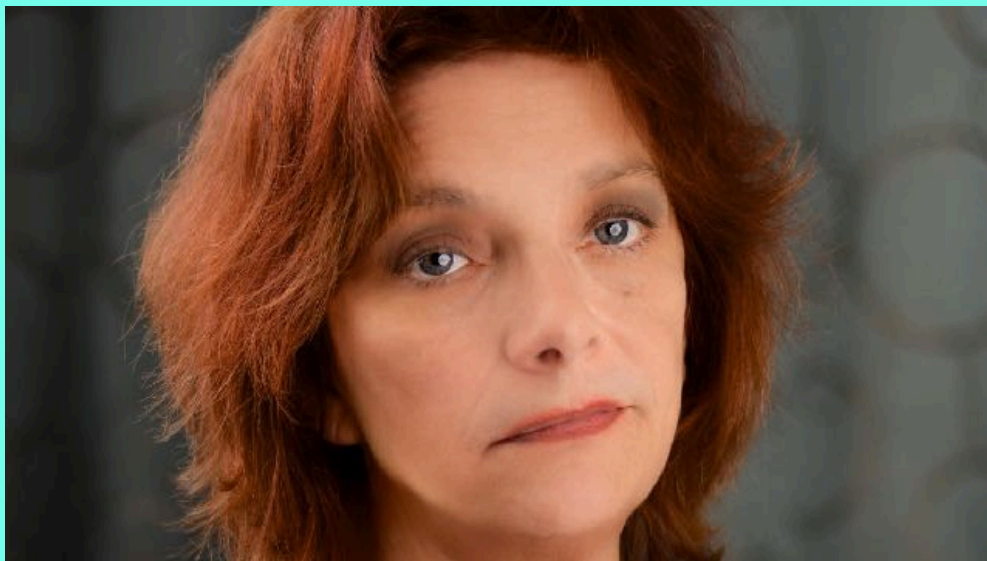
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Mary Dowden suffered a debilitating stroke on November 5, 2021 and she and husband Greg are in great need of having to add ramps, bars, etc. to their home as well as facing great medical bills. **Greg Dowden** has set up a [GoFund.Me page](#) for anyone who would wish to help with the great expenses involved. You can also write a check to Saint Rafka for Mary Dowden. Thanks to all who have reached out. May God continue to heal Mary and bless each one who helps this loving family in their time of need.



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