

# Saint Rafka

Catholics of the East in the Upstate!



## 1st Sunday of Epiphany Season of Epiphany

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

[chancery@stmaron.org](mailto:chancery@stmaron.org)



**Father Bartholomew  
Leon**

**Pastor**

1215 S. Highway 14  
Greer, SC 29650  
864.469.9119

[bartleon@gmail.com](mailto:bartleon@gmail.com)

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



**Bill Leon**  
Secretary  
864.469.9119  
[Bill Leon](#)

**Sam Jordan Alamat**  
Organist  
[Sam Alamat](#)

**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](#)  
Type to enter text

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

**NEW!**

**Anthony Sloan**  
Men's Bible Study  
Monthly Meeting  
Email for details  
[Anthony Sloan](#)



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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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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

Isaiah 40:6-11

A voice says, "Proclaim!" I answer, "What shall I proclaim?" "All flesh is grass, and all their loyalty like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower wilts, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it." "Yes, the people is grass! The grass withers, the flower wilts, but the word of our God stands forever." Go up onto a high mountain, Zion, herald of good news! Cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news! Cry out, do not fear! Say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm; Here is his reward with him, his recompense before him. Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, Carrying them in his bosom, leading the ewes with care.

2 Cor. 10:1-11

Now I myself, Paul, urge you through the gentleness and clemency of Christ, I who am humble when face to face with you, but brave toward you when absent, I beg you that, when present, I may not have to be brave with that confidence with which I intend to act boldly against some who consider us as acting according to the flesh. For, although we are in the flesh, we do not battle according to the flesh, for the weapons of our battle are not of flesh but are enormously powerful, capable of destroying fortresses. We destroy arguments and every pretension raising itself against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ, and we are ready to punish

every disobedience, once your obedience is complete. Look at what confronts you. Whoever is confident of belonging to Christ should consider that as he belongs to Christ, so do we. And even if I should boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for tearing you down, I shall not be put to shame. May I not seem as one frightening you through letters. For someone will say, "His letters are severe and forceful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." Such a person must understand that what we are in word through letters when absent, that we also are in action when present.

John 1:29-34

**T**he next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God,\* who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.'" Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

## Reflection

In the Gospel of John of Epiphany (of divine manifestations), Jesus reveals himself to us as Light to the world, as well as the Light for life in its fullness. Further on in the passage Jesus reveals his unique relationship to the Heavenly Father. This is a divine relationship of son-ship with the Father. Being one *with* the Father, he can speak *for* the Father, by using the divine expression: *I AM!*

Saint Paul, in his address to the Christians of Corinth, reminds them how through faith they have been given the grace to see Christ as he is – in the light of his divinity – while other people see him only partially – as Moses saw God with a veiled face.

In our Syriac Spirituality we find St. Ephrem speaking in mystical poetry of the light of Christ residing in every Christian: the same light that Moses saw on the mountain at the burning bush; that gleamed through Mary at his incarnation, and the river Jordan at his baptism. Ephrem envisions that we too will shine forth with Christ's light at our resurrection – for all eternity!

It is very important for us to come to know Jesus Christ, our Lord, in his true light: as he really lives in the light of the Trinity. It is the ultimate grace from God the Father to have Jesus revealed to us in his true Light. This grace can only be given to those who are willing to seek it: "ask and it will be given to you," the Lord says.

As the Lord is transfigured before us, so we also, come to be revealed to ourselves and to each other as Children of God – and the Children of the Light.

Our Church proclaims with joy to Christ at the *Sedro* on the Sundays of Epiphany:

You have clothed us with your baptism:

the robe of glory and the seal of the holy Spirit.

You have called us to be spiritual children through our second birth in baptism..

May the *Light* of Christ, the Risen Lord, continue to be the *Light* of our lives every day;

May it never leave any corners of darkness in us untouched;

May the forgiveness and healing his *Light* brings fully transform us;

That we too, the children of the Church, may truly become the *Light* of Christ for the world, as we pray before the altar at the end of our Eucharistic Celebration.

**Steven Bonian, S.J.**

# Abouna's Corner

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Good Friday morning from the church office! This is no ordinary Friday, but *Snowmageddon* Friday! As I type this section of the bulletin, we are preparing for snow, ice and possibly the end of time according to the news. More at 11! Seriously, stay home safe and warm. Look for email announcements regarding Saturday and Sunday liturgies. We can't really make decisions until we see the actual conditions of the roads in the area.

**UPDATE:** It was a busy Friday morning and early afternoon. I told the office staff when it starts to snow, go home. There was no need to endanger anyone. I heeded the same advice and stopped at Lowes Food Store to get a few groceries. There were people there but not terribly crowded and no one seemed like the end of the world was upon us! I got home, had some lunch and decided to finish the bulletin which should have been out by this time. So far it is not terrible, but it is best to be home and safe. Please know that you and yours are in my prayers for a safe snowstorm and a lack of black ice in the morning. All this snow drama is too much!

Thanks for all who have responded to the emails regarding taking family photos next weekend for our new Parish Directory. The directory company asks that we sign up in advance for set times. It is not too late to sign up. Simply go to:

[UCDIR.com](http://UCDIR.com) Church Code: sc303 Password: photos

On January 25 we will have the honor of hosting Vivian Akel, a lifetime member of the Maronite Cathedral Parish of Our Lady of Lebanon in Brooklyn, New York. Vivian is the child of Lebanese immigrants to the US and is married 39 years and is the mother of 2 adult children, aged 37 and 35. A New York State Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Licensed Bilingual Arabic Social Worker in the New York City Public School system, After retirement she became the Eparchy of Saint Maron's Safe Environment Coordinator for Child and Youth Protection and a member of the USCCB's National Review Board for Child Safety Protection. The Eparchial Couples Ministry grew out of an identified need for greater support for seriously dating, engaged and married couples of all ages throughout the Eparchy. This is a new ministry for the Eparchy. Recent Marriage Enrichment Days have focused on topics supporting and strengthening relationships while encouraging a shared prayer life. Marriages can be strengthened and enriched through a day of prayer and reflection together with Vivian. I urge you to attend and tell your friends. There is no charge for the day.

Pray for the sick and the shut in among us. There are more people than I realized that Father Toni, Deacon Clark and I were visiting in the time of illness, hospice or recovery. Pray also for their caregivers who need rest and refreshment to continue their ministry of love and care.

Have a wonderful and joyful Epiphany Season!

Have a great weekend! See you in Church!

Ab. Bart

## The Servants of Mary and Joseph Lay Carmelite Community

The Lay Carmelite is called to the Family of Carmel to be deeply involved in the mission of the Church and to contribute to the sanctification of the secular world through our charisms of prayer, community and service.

The Community meets on the First Saturday of every month from 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM at Saint Joseph Catholic Church, 1200 Cornelia Rd, Anderson, SC for the Liturgy of the Hours, Mass and meeting.

Catholic men or women interested in learning more may contact Jon at [joanelizabethrn@gmail.com](mailto:joanelizabethrn@gmail.com)



Join us for our 4th Annual

# Pink & Blue Gala

Fluor Dining Venue • FEB. 21, 2025 • 6:00pm

Discounted Early Bird Tickets on sale until Jan 15th!

You are invited to join us for a Mardi Gras themed evening with fine dining, an open bar, and a live and silent auction.

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



*Find out more here!*

We can't host a successful event without your help! Please consider becoming a sponsor today! Scan QR code or visit [stclareshome.org/pink-blue-gala](http://stclareshome.org/pink-blue-gala).



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Contact Colleen Chmiel for Questions  
[Stclaresvolunteer@charlestandiocese.org](mailto:Stclaresvolunteer@charlestandiocese.org)  
843-259-1108

## Church Offerings and Attendance

January 5, 2025		
4 PM	83	\$1665.00
8:30 AM	24	\$313.00
11 AM	124	\$1120.00
Mail		\$0.00
PayPal/Electronic		\$520.00
Total	<b>231</b>	\$3,618.00
Budget 2025	<b>230</b>	<b>\$4,350.00</b>
+/-	<b>1</b>	<b>-\$732.00</b>
<b>Year to Date</b>		\$3,618.00
Budget for year +/-		<b>\$732.00</b>
<b>Building Fund</b>		
4:00 PM		\$446.00
12:00 AM		\$239.00
11:00 AM		\$975.00
Total	0	<b>\$1,660.00</b>
Holy Hour		15
Funeral		0
<b>2024 Final Totals</b>		
4:00 PM		83
8:30 AM		24
11 AM		124
Weekday Masses		75
Holy Hour		15
Holy Day		96
Special Liturgy		
Funerals		
Weddings		60

## Average Attendance

4 PM	8:30 AM	11 AM
<b>83</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>124</b>

### Facts regarding our bulletin!

Bulletins emailed last weekend: 399+

Percentage opened 66%

**Opened emails: 265 + Unopened emails: 134 -**

## 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.

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](mailto:secretary@saintrafka.org). Envelopes for Masses also available at the door of the church.



**CATHOLIC**  
INFORMATION CENTER

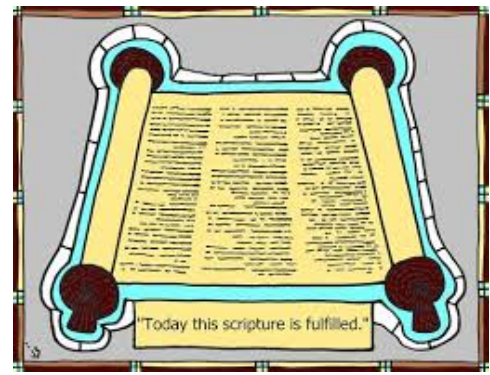
<https://catholic.center/>





# Liturgical Readings

Old Testament (English) Isaiah 40:6-11	<b>Marie Kidd</b>
New Testament (Arabic) 2 Cor. 10:1-11	<b>Layla Madbak</b>



## Mass Intentions

<b>January 11 - 12</b>	<b>1st Epiphany</b>	
<b>Saturday, 4:00 PM</b>	<b>+Christie Foertsch</b>	Larry & Iris Minette
<b>Sunday, 8:30 AM</b>	<b>+Patricia D. Rossi</b>	Ronald J. Rossi, Sr.
<b>Sunday 11:00 AM</b>	<b>Mrs. Rebecca Cabarea, +Virginia Guzman</b>	Marie & Tony Kidd
<b>Tuesday, 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Fr. Bart &amp; Fr. Toni</b>	Barb Mytych
<b>Wednesday, 7:00 PM</b>	<b>Matt Mytych</b>	Barb Mytych
<b>Thursday 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Lee Mytych</b>	Barb Mytych
<b>Friday, 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Mrs. Rebecca Cabarea, +Virginia Guzman</b>	Marie & Tony Kidd
<b>January 18 - 19</b>	<b>2nd Epiphany</b>	
<b>Saturday, 4 PM</b>	<b>+Tola Dinko</b>	Amos Hikes
<b>Sunday, 8:30 AM</b>	<b>President Donald J. Trump</b>	Bob Dowd
<b>Sunday 11:00 AM</b>	<b>Mrs. Rebecca Cabarea, +Virginia Guzman</b>	Marie & Tony Kidd
<b>Tuesday, 10:00 AM</b>	<b>+Frances Hikes</b>	Amos Hykes
<b>Wednesday, 7:00 PM</b>	<b>Lee &amp; Barb Mytych</b>	Barb Mytych
<b>Thursday 10:00 AM</b>	<b>In Honor of the Holy Face of Jesus</b>	Barb Mytych
<b>Friday, 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Mrs. Rebecca Cabarea, +Virginia Guzman</b>	Marie & Tony 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
<b>12 1st Epiphany</b> 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 3:00 PM, Holy Hour 5:00 PM, Syro-Malabar Mass	13	14 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	15 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	16 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	17 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy Directory Photo Shoot	18 Directory Photo Shoot 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
<b>19 2nd Epiphany</b> 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 5:00 PM, Korean Mass	20	21 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	22 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	23 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	24 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	25 Marriage Enrichment 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
<b>26 3rd Epiphany</b> 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 3:00 PM, Holy Hour 5:00 PM, Syro-Malabar Mass	27	28 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	29 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	30 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	31 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	<b>February 1</b> 11:00 AM, Funeral 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
<b>2 Presentation Sunday of the Priests</b> 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy Potluck Luncheon 3:00 PM, Holy Hour 5:00 PM, Korean Mass	3	4 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	5 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	6 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	7 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	8 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy



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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

### January

January 11, St. Theodosius of Antioch  
January 12, St. Tatiana  
January 13, St. Jacob of Nisibis  
January 14, St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitier  
January 15, Our Lady of the Seeds  
St. John Calybites  
January 16, Saint Peter in Chains  
January 17, Saint Anthony the Great of the Desert (+356)  
January 18, Saint Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria (+377)  
Chair of Peter in Rome  
January 19, St. Macarius the Egyptian

## Prayer List

Pat Moore, 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 Fagiarone, 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

### January

11, Candice Palgut  
12 Ted Bibbes  
12, Msgr. Christopher Lathem  
13, Liam Sharbel Aazan  
14, Elias Jowdy  
16, Mary Anne Vicaro  
16, Benjamin Jonathan Saad  
16, Michael Saad  
16, Luke Jonathan Saad  
20, Elizabeth Gallagher  
20, Samer George Sayah  
20, Peter Warzinski  
21, Zaid Qattan  
21, John Albanese  
21, Michael Yammine  
22, Donna Stafford

## Anniversaries

### No Anniversaries noted in January

### February

9, Billy and Helen Rouch  
10, Bassam & Suhair Nmair  
16, Tony and Marie Kidd

## Necrology

### January

+Margaret "Margie" Baranski, January 18, 2024  
+Evelyn Ghannam, January 20, 2010  
+Thomas Halley, January 21, 2021  
+Leroy J. Howard, January 25, 2023  
+Michel Hanna Saade, January 26, 2024  
+Joseph R. Shaluly, Sr., January 27, 2021  
+Madeline Majeed Issa, January 28, 2008

### Important Dates to Remember

Directory Photos, January 17 & 18  
Fast of Nineveh, January 21 - 23  
Marriage Enrichment Day of Reflection, January 25  
*Haflī*, February 22, 2025  
Pastoral Visit of Bishop Gregory, March 15-16

## 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.

**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.

## Church Directory Photos January 17 & 18



**Arise** Mother/Tween  
Daughter Retreat

A CHANCE TO HANG OUT,  
TALK ABOUT SOME IMPORTANT  
GIRL MATTERS,  
AND MOST IMPORTANTLY:  
**HAVE FUN!**

Friday-Saturday  
Jan. 31- Feb. 1



**HEART & RIDGE**  
Retreat and Cultural Center

# Marriage Enrichment Day

## Reflection & Prayer

Hosted by Saint Rafka Parish &  
Eparchy of St. Maron Couples Ministry



JAN 25, 9AM-2PM

Saint Rafka Church  
1215 SC-14  
Greer, SC 29650

EMAIL US TO RSVP:  
[saintrafkagreenville@  
gmail.com](mailto:saintrafkagreenville@gmail.com)

FOR COUPLES OF ALL AGES

Themes for Marriage Enrichment Day of Dialogue, Reflection and Prayer

1. How does a secular marriage differ from a Catholic marriage.
2. Qualities and habits that contribute to a successful marriage.
3. Virtues necessary to reach your 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.
4. What does Faithfulness to each other really mean?
5. Balancing children, parents and work obligations.
6. The role your community of faith plays in supporting your marriage and family life.
7. Praying together as a couple.

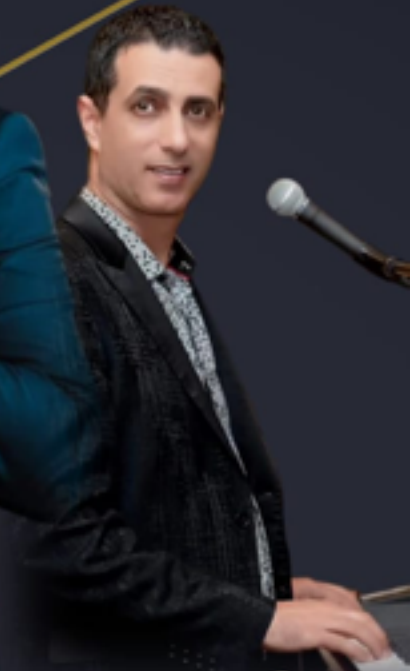


القديسة رفقا  
SAINT RAFKA  
MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Presents *The Annual Haffli* February 22nd  
2025



*DJ Khalil*



*Maestro Elias*

*Karim Jaber*

For Tickets Call: Paula Howard-Casby - (202) 538-1469

Lama Haddad (864) 978-1317

Hyatt Regency Greenville

Address: 220 N Main St, Greenville, SC 29601



القديسة رفقا SAINT RAFKA  
MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Feb. 22nd  
2025

# The Annual Hafli

Get Ready for The best Hafli In town

VIP Ticket  
\$300

Regular Ticket  
\$150

Children Under 12  
\$40

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## SHINING THE LIGHT ON THE DARKNESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Saturday, February 8, 2025

from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church

Parish Life Building

2252 Woodruff Rd., Simpsonville, SC 29681

“It is a call to take action ... If we close our eyes and ears, if we do nothing, we will be guilty of complicity.”

- Pope Francis

Join us as we listen to expert speakers to learn how to recognize how traffickers work, how to protect our families, friends and strangers from traffickers, how to ensure we are not inadvertently aiding the traffickers, and the Catholic role in efforts to help those impacted.

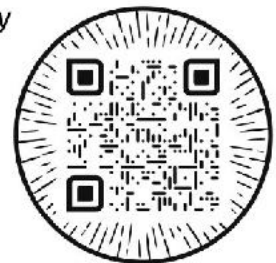
This program is recommended for adults, high school, and mature middle school students.

There is no cost for this event, and childcare is available, but we ask that you RSVP by February 3. Light refreshments will be provided.

To learn more about this event and to RSVP, please scan the QR code or visit [www.smmcc.org/rsvp-traf](http://www.smmcc.org/rsvp-traf).

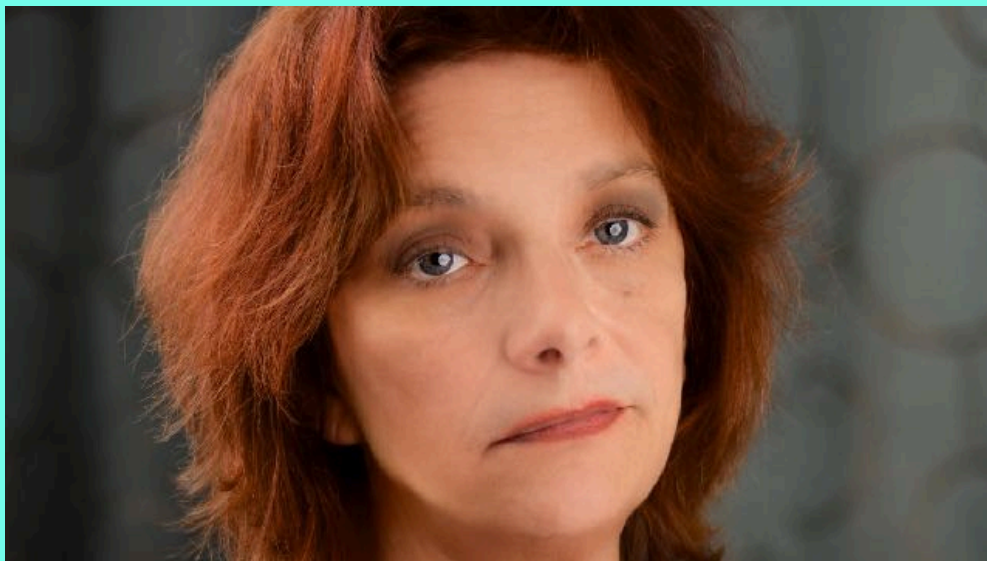
Please contact [respectlife@smmcc.org](mailto:respectlife@smmcc.org) if you have any questions.

*This event is sponsored by  
Respect Life Ministry.*





**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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