

# Saint Rafka

**Catholics of the East in the Upstate!**



## 2nd 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)

### OFFICE HOURS

10:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
Monday - Friday

### DIVINE LITURGIES

The Divine Liturgy is  
celebrated on

Saturday,  
4 PM Vigil  
Sunday, 8:30 AM  
11:00 AM  
Tuesday, 10:00 AM  
Wednesday, 7:00 PM  
Thursday 10:00 AM  
Friday, 10:00 AM  
Holy Days As  
Announced

### CONFESSIONS

Saturday, 3:15 PM  
Sunday 10:15 AM  
Wednesday 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 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.

**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

John 1:35-42

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter).

Jeremiah 1:4-10

The word of the LORD came to me: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, Lord GOD!" I said, "I do not know how to speak. I am too young!" But the LORD answered me, Do not say, "I am too young." To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you—oracle of the LORD.

Then the LORD extended his hand and touched my mouth, saying to me, See, I place my words in your mouth! Today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, To uproot and to tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.

2 Cor. 4:5-15

For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture 'I believed, and so I spoke' we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.



## Reflection

This Sunday we continue to celebrate the Light of Christ – that we carry in our hearts and share with the world – through our actions as *Children of the Light*. The Psalmist King David proclaims with joy: “Your word”, O Lord, “is lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps.119:105). Little did he expect that someday God would respond by making his *Word* incarnate – letting his light be reflected from *the face of Jesus*, radiating his divine peace and joy on us! Can we really *believe* that God would do this? This is the theme of today’s gospel message from St. John; the challenge of our faith!

Saint Paul, in his epistle declares: *God has shown in our hearts* that we may reflect the glory of Christ in our world. How awesome is this action of the divine Trinity: that we have been chosen to become a mirror reflection of Christ to the world! Now Christ’s Incarnation has extended its grace from *Mary* over to *us*. Saint Ephrem, in his poem meditations, images Mary – the Mother of Christ – for us as model carrier, and pure reflection of her son’s incarnate light.

And now, in *us* too, Saint Paul reminds us, shines that light of Christ: “to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Jesus Christ!” This is a treasure, he explains, that we hold in earthen vessels: through our feeble human nature – so that in *us* too the power of God may manifest itself as that divine gentleness and compassion – reflecting upon us from the face of the *God’s Beloved Son: Jesus!*

In our Hymn of Light of Saint Ephrem, the Church, like Mary, proclaims Jesus our Risen Lord, as: the Light of the just and the upright, who came to rescue us from darkness and to fill us with the radiance of his light!

In our sinful world today, it is not so easy to face the poor and powerless Jesus, and still *believe* in the power of God. Yet, God’s power shines through the gentleness, mercy, and kindness of his beloved Son, who has come into the world not to judge it, but to elicit human compassion; that he may re-fashion us into the image of his heavenly and merciful Father; that we too may have a share in his Kingdom of Light.

Jesus would often tell his followers not to hide their light under a stand, but to hold it up, so that others may also see it reflected in them! And now may the light from Jesus’ face – as from this altar – continue to

shine on us and through us. May it be reflected through our hearts, goodness, and our compassion for others. And because of us, *may the Church continue to be the Light of Christ for the world* – as we too like the Psalmist David pray and wish it so through the prayer of the priest at the completion of our Altar Celebration.

**Steven Bonian, S.J.**

St. Ephrem the Syrian writes beautifully in his Hymn on Epiphany, No. 8 concerning the Baptism of our Lord. St. Ephrem views the baptism of Christ in the water as analogous to the divine presence in the womb of Mary and therefore as the means by which we are “divinized” or made to partake in the divine nature. Also, using Moses as an example, he claims that just as God in his mercy limited Himself in coming to Moses, He does the same for feeble human beings. “God in His love stooped and came down, to mingle His love with the waters, and to unite the nature of His majesty with the weak bodies of humans. By means of the waters he found a way to come down and to dwell among us; like to the way of love He came down and dwelt in the womb. O the love of God Who seeks for Himself all occasions to dwell among us!

He stooped and came down to the cave in Horeb, and He extended His shadow of His majesty on Moses; He mixed His glorious splendor to a mortal. There was therein a figure of Baptism: For He came down to dwell in it, in the water he had tempered the might of His majesty, that He may dwell among the infirm. On Moses dwelt the Breath, and on you the plentitude of Christ. That might then none could endure; not Moses chief of deliverers, nor Elijah chief of zealots; and the Seraphim too veil their faces, for it is the might that subdues all. His love mingled gentleness in the water and the oil; that humanity in its weakness might be able to stand before Him when covered by the water and the oil.”

May Christ, baptized by John, renew our hearts and minds as we commemorate the sanctification of water and oil by which we receive Holy Baptism and Chrismation.

**Father Aaron Sandbothe**

# Abouna's Corner

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Well, we escaped *Snowmaggaden* unscathed and with little to complain about! I am grateful that we had so little snow and that our liturgical schedule was not interrupted. Now we wait to see what the next Arctic blast has to offer!

If you are on the schedule to have your picture taken for the Parish Directory this weekend, please be on time for the photographer. I am looking forward to seeing you there for this historic moment in our parish history.

We offer our deepest condolences to **Anthony Sloan** on the death of his father, **Thomas**, last week in Michigan. May he rest in peace and may his memory be eternal.

Next Saturday, 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 married for 39 years and 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.

Do you have your *Hafli* ticket yet? Please see the flyer further back in this bulletin for more precise details. Mark your calendar for this great social event before the beginning of Great Lent.

I want to thank all who are contacting me about not getting the bulletin, etc. by email. Usually it is a simple issue of adding you to the mailing list. Thanks for providing me with your email address and cell phone number. These are invaluable tools for our office and are never given out to anyone beyond our parish community.

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 12, 2025		
4 PM	82	\$836.00
8:30 AM	24	\$408.00
11 AM	121	\$1519.00
Mail		\$960.00
PayPal/Electronic		\$0.00
Total	<b>227</b>	\$3,723.00
Budget 2025	<b>230</b>	<b>\$4,350.00</b>
+/-	<b>-3</b>	<b>-\$627.00</b>
<b>Year to Date</b>		\$7,341.00
Budget for year +/-		<b>\$1,359.00</b>
<b>Building Fund</b>		
4:00 PM		\$90.00
12:00 AM		\$0.00
11:00 AM		\$0.00
Total	0	<b>\$90.00</b>
Holy Hour		0
Funeral		0
<b>2024 Final Totals</b>		
4:00 PM		165
8:30 AM		48
11 AM		145
Weekday Masses		138
Holy Hour		15
Holy Day		96
Special Liturgy		
Funerals		
Weddings		60

## Average Attendance

4 PM	8:30 AM	11:00 AM
<b>83</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>122</b>

### Facts regarding our bulletin!

Bulletins emailed last weekend: 402+

Percentage opened 77% +

**Opened emails: 281 + Unopened emails: 121 -**

## 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

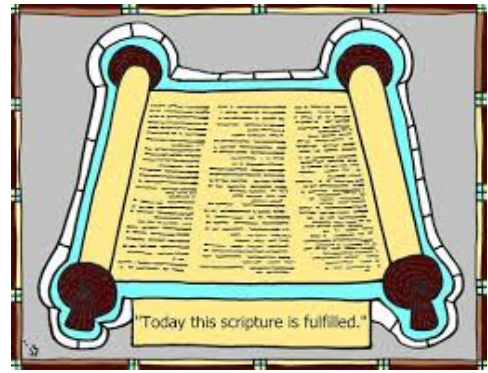
<https://catholic.center/>





# Liturgical Readings

Old Testament (Arabic) Jeremiah 1:4-10	<b>Joseph Chebeir</b>
New Testament (English) 2 Cor. 4:5-15	<b>Scott Herr</b>



## Mass Intentions

<b>January 18 - 19</b>	<b>2nd Epiphany</b>	
<b>Saturday, 4:00 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 10 Year Anniversary George &amp; Lama Aazan</b>	Marie & Tony Kidd Mouna Ayoub & Riad Ashi
<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
<b>January 25 - 26</b>	<b>3rd Epiphany</b>	
<b>Saturday, 4 PM</b>	<b>Thomas Dowd, Birthday</b>	Bob Dowd
<b>Sunday, 8:30 AM</b>	<b>Faithful Departed</b>	Annellett Hallett
<b>Sunday 11:00 AM</b>	<b>Sandra Ashy, 40 Day Memorial</b>	Family
<b>Tuesday, 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Steve Knight</b>	Ceil & Andy
<b>Wednesday, 7:00 PM</b>	<b>+Leila Chebier</b>	Ceil & Andy
<b>Thursday 10:00 AM</b>	<b>+Virginia Guzman</b>	Ceil & Andy
<b>Friday, 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Greg Mytych</b>	Barb Mytych



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>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 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</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
<b>9 Saint Maron Sunday of the Priests</b> 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM, Holy Rosary 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy 5:00 PM, Syro-Malabar Mass	10	11 10 AM Divine Liturgy Arabic Devotions to follow	12 6:30 PM, Holy Rosary 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy	13 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	14 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	15 3:15 Confessions 4:00 PM, Vigil Liturgy
<div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Fast of Nineveh</div>						



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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 18, Saint Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria (+377)

Chair of Peter in Rome

January 19, St. Macarius the Egyptian

January 20, St. Euthymius the Great

January 21, Saint Sebastian

January 22, Saint Timothy, Disciple of Saint Paul

January 23, Pope St. Sergius I

St. Marianne Cope (USA)

January 24, St. Francis De Sales

January 25, Conversion of Saint Paul

January 26, Saint Agnes

January 27, Saint Paula

## Prayer List

Pat Moore, Deacon Bob Smith, Richard Wickett, Anna Maria Portilla, Sandra Reece, Charles Howard, 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

### January

20, Elizabeth Gallagher

20, Samer George Sayah

20, Peter Warzinski

21, Zaid Qattan

21, John Albanese

21, Michael Yammine

22, Donna Stafford

23, Maria Angelica Sacayan

24, Moe Mercier

26, Robin Paul

27, Art Newton

28, Chris Beckman

### February

2, Rosemarie Sleiman

2, Hanan Saadeh

## 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 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.



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MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Presents *The Annual Haffli* February 22nd  
2025



*DJ Khalil*



*Maestro Elias*

*Karim Jaber*

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MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Feb. 22nd  
2025

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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.

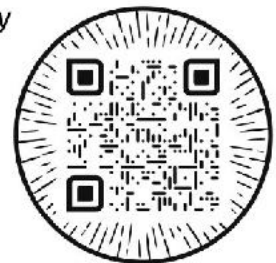
This program is recommended for adults, high school, and mature middle school students.

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).

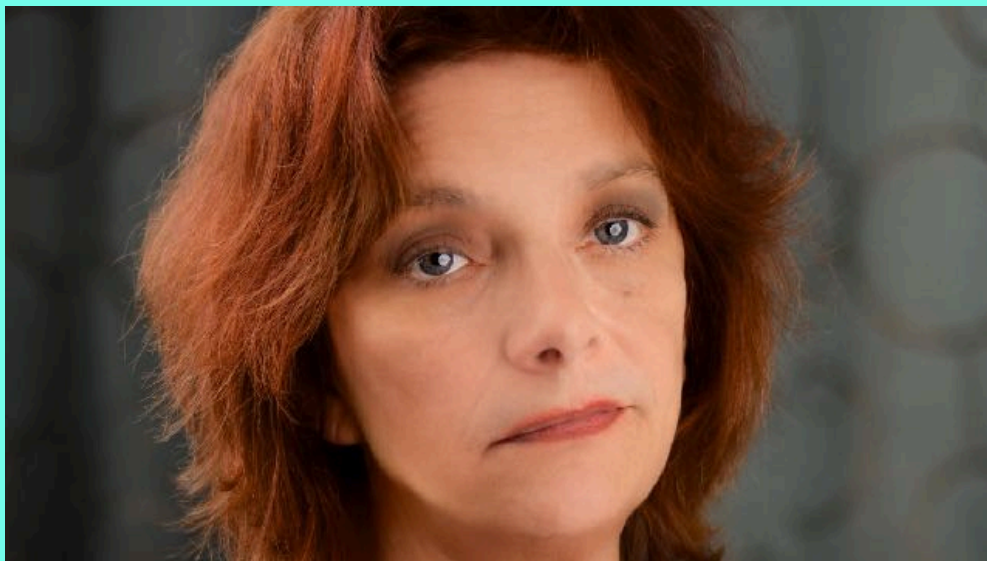
Please contact [respectlife@smmcc.org](mailto:respectlife@smmcc.org) if you have any questions.

*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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**Saint Rafka Council #15519**

2nd Monday of the Month, 7 PM, Wickett Hall



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