



Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church
Weekly Bulletin

Year XI – Issue 573 – December 27, 2009

النشرة الأسبوعية لرعية سيدة الأرز
السنة الحادية عشرة - العدد ٥٧٣ - ٢٧ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٩

Sunday After the Glorious Birth

الأحد بعد الميلاد

Divine Liturgy

Sunday 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM
Daily Mass: Tue - Sat at 6:30 PM

Sacrament of

Reconciliation/Confession

30 minutes before Mass upon request

Sacrament of

Crowning – Marriage

Notify the Pastor four months in advance for arrangements

Sacrament of Baptism

Parents should meet with the Pastor one month ahead to make arrangements

Sick and Hospitalized

Contact the Pastor for visitation

Church Office

Monday–Friday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Daily Readings

Sunday December 27: 2cor 11:1-9 Mt 23:29-24:2
إسطفانس الشهيد الأول - First Martyr Stephen

Monday December 28: Rev 21:9-10, 21-27 Mt 2:1-12

Tuesday December 29: Heb 11:23-31 Mt 2:13-18

Wednesday December 30: Acts 7:2, 30-37 Mt 2:19-23

Thursday December 31: Col 1:9b, 20 Jn 1:1-18

Friday January 1, 2010: Heb 7:1-10 Lk 2:21-24
عيد الختان - Feast Of The Circumcision Of Jesus

Saturday January 2: Eph 2:11-22 Jn 14:27-31

Sunday January 3: Heb 7:11-19 Lk 2:41-52
دخول المسيح إلى الهيكل - Finding In The Temple

Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church

11935 Bellfort Village Drive, Houston, Texas 77031

Telephone: 281.568.6800 – www.ourladyofthecedars.net

Pastor: Fr. Milad Yaghi, M.L.M. (frmilad@usa.com)

Associates: Fr. Andre Estephan, M.L.M. (fr_andremlm@yahoo.com) / Fr. Pierre El-Khoury, M.L.M. (frpierre@gmail.com)

Subdeacon: Jim Pinero (jimp1940@aol.com)

Secretary: Michelle Fuentes

Youth Coordinator: Stephanie Rocha



Welcome new members and visitors

Please provide address and other contact information using the forms in the lobby or by e-mailing frmilad@sbcglobal.net.

Almahaba Advertisements

Individuals and companies are encouraged to place ads in Almahaba. Please send an e-mail to almahabaolc@yahoo.com for more information.

New Year's Eve Banquet Dec. 31

Few tickets are still available for the New Year's Eve Dinner Banquet. Please purchase yours TODAY.

SUNDAY COLLECTION \$30,540

PLAYGROUND DONATIONS \$2,650

HELPING HANDS \$3,00

Parish E-mail List

Please add your email to the Church distribution list by emailing frmilad@sbcglobal.net. This is used for time-sensitive and important announcements only.

Christmas Season Mass Schedule

1/1/2010 New Year's Day Mass 5 PM

1/5/2010 Epiphany of Our Lord 7:30 PM

New Parish Programs

Everyone is encouraged to take part in all of our Parish activities and be part of our Parish organizations, especially the following programs that are new to our Parish:

"Family Altar Offering"

and

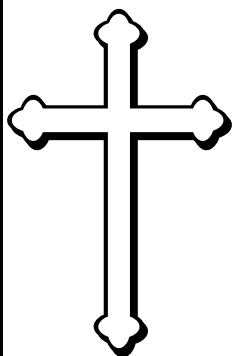
"Helping Hands"

Interested families can call the Church office during the week to sign-up. The Church secretary, Mrs. Michelle Fuentes, who maintains the calendar, will schedule families based on available Sundays, and then remind each family the week before.

Establishing ways and programs that extend a helping hand to those who are in need and are trying to achieve self-sufficiency.

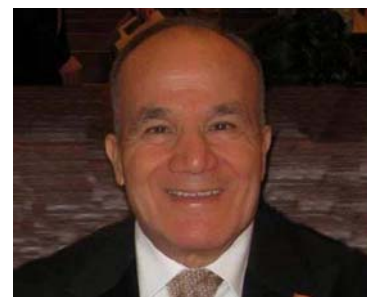
For assistance contact: Fr. Milad, Fr. Pierre, Nebal Nemry, Pierre Bechelani, or Carole Zehri.

من آمن بي وإن مات فسيحيا



Our Parish family has lost one of our own on Christmas Eve. **Mr. Antoine Boujaoude**, one of our long-time parishioners, returned to the Lord last Thursday night, after a long struggle with illness.

The Rosary will take place at Our Lady of the Cedars Church, TODAY at 5 PM, and the Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Monday December 28, at Noon, also here in the Church.



Our most sincere condolences to his widow Fadia, and his children, Pascal, Charbel, Ralph and Roy and their families. May the Lord grant His servant Antoine eternal rest, and give patience and strength to his widow and to his children and their families.

The family kindly requests that in lieu of flowers, donations to the Church be made in Mr. Boujaoude's name.

For all Parish information and daily news, visit www.ourladyofthecedars.net

Christmas Message of His Eminence Cardinal Nasrallah-Peter Sfeir Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

“He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him”

Dear brothers and sons and daughters,

The fact of the birth of the Lord Jesus in the flesh , which the Christian world has been celebrating for two thousand and nine years, has a flavor that overpasses all feasts. It is the feast of God who becomes incarnate, a feast of the liberation of humanity from the stain of the original sin in which every human being is born when he comes to the world, the feast of childhood, innocence and hope of a better tomorrow. Yes indeed “the People living in the darkness have seen a great light, on the dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen”.

The Savior in born in the flesh in the silent night, in a small village in Palestine, Betlehem. The angels announced it to shepherds, who were there, glorifying God saying : “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests”(Luke 2: 14). The chosen People has in fact been expecting this Savior for long, imagining him to be a powerful warrior who will overcome his enemies by iron and fire and free the People from its conquerors. But he was different from what they expected. Saint Paul says : “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman , born under the law, to ransom those under the law , so that we might receive adoption” (Gal.4: 4-5) .

The Savior came to give those who believe in him eternal life, as St. John says: “but to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation or by human choice nor by a man’s decision but of God” (Jn. 1 : 12) “Rather he emptied himself , taking the form of a slave, coming to human likeness ; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross”(Ph. 2: 7-8). A saint says: “ Time warns us that the birth of Christ the Lord is near and the world in its anxiety speaks about a nearby happening which will renew it. This assures us that we too have to wait for the rising Christ, the new sun” .

Christ the Lord came on earth to teach us to live as loving brothers and not as fighting enemies, to be a help to each other and not at war against each other. Lebanon today is mostly in need for this atmosphere of calm and cooperation among its communities and children. The social atmosphere has improved, the wave of assassinations has waned down and people, in general, lean towards understanding and keeping away from violence, which brings over only violence. This is a rather important thing which has been wished for since long.

However, faithfulness to the homeland requires that every group of citizens , moreover it is upon every citizen to work for his homeland and not for himself and his selfishness . The best example for us is found in Christ who did not work for himself, but for God, his heavenly father and for all of us. He sacrificed himself for us and accepted to be hanged on the cross and die on it to redeem all people , give us all a lesson about how to sacrifice for the other. Pope Benedict XVI said : “On the Infant Jesus’ birth among us, he should not find us negligent or busy decorating our houses with lights. Let’s rather prepare in our minds and families a suitable home where he will feel he is accepted among us with faith and love” .

Let’s come to this feast with the feeling of deep faith and thanks to God for the graces he has bestowed upon us in our life so that what the Lord said about his People does not apply to us when he said: “He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him” .

With these feelings, I present you, dear sons and daughters , the warmest wishes and best congratulations, asking God to make of this feast a season of good and blessing upon you all. We cannot forget the families which have suffered the loss of one of their members, they do not find him in the family circle on the occasion of this glorious feast. I ask him Almighty many returns for you, being in the best and most peaceful mind.

“Let Them PLAY”

The contract for the playground has been signed, and delivery of the structure is expected next month (January 2010). The playground will be community constructed so those who are interested in participating in the assembly should submit their names for consideration; 20 volunteers will be needed for a full day (10 hours) of sweat and joyful labor.

Financial participation is also encouraged; our goal is to reach 100% participation from all families with children under 13 years of age. Pledges to contribute are needed as soon as possible.



The complete project will include:

1. A playground system accommodating 75 children
2. An additional swing set
3. Ground cover and borders
4. Benches for parents to sit and watch the children comfortably
5. Shades for the benches
6. Water fountains