



Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church
Weekly Bulletin

Year XI – Issue 570 – December 6, 2009

النشرة الأسبوعية لرعية سيدة الأرز
السنة الحادية عشرة - العدد ٥٧٠ - ٦ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٩

Birth of John the Baptist

مولد يوحنا المعمدان

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 6: Gal 4:21-5:1 Lk 1:57-66

Birth of John the Baptist – مولد يوحنا المعمدان

Monday December 7: Rom 9:1-5 Lk 1:67-80

Tuesday December 8: Heb 7:11-17 Lk 11:27-32

Immaculate Conception – الحبل بها بلا دنس

Wednesday December 9: Rom 9:14-18 Mt 17:9-13

Thursday December 10: Rom 9:19-29 Mt 21:23-27

Friday December 11: Rom 9:30-33 Mt 11:16-19

Saturday December 12: Rom 10:1-13 Jn 5:31-36

Sunday December 13: Eph 3:1-13 Mt 1:18-25

Revelation To Joseph - البيان ليوسف

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



COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

Knights of the Cedars Dec. 9

The Knights of the Cedars will meet on Wednesday at 7:30 PM.

SUNDAY COLLECTION	\$3,703
PLAYGROUND DONATIONS	\$5,300
PLEDGES	\$1,700

CCE classes for children and the **Catholic Education lectures for adults** will meet next weekend, December 12.

CCE classes will meet from Noon to **3:30 PM**.

The **Adult Education** lecture topic is from the "Holy Sacraments" series. It is on the "*Sacraments of Penance (Reconciliation) & Anointing of the Sick (Chapters 18 & 19)*". The lecture will be presented by Charles Johnson. All parents are encouraged to attend while their children are in CCE.

Bible Study Dec. 8

Bible Study will resume on Tuesdays at 7:30 PM.

Prayer Group Dec. 10

The Prayer Group will resume meeting on Thursdays between 7:00 PM and 8:30 PM.

Parish E-mail List

To receive urgent notifications, please add your email to the Church distribution list by emailing frmilad@sbcglobal.net. This list is used for time-sensitive and important announcements only.

Christmas Novena Dec. 15

The Christmas Novena will start on December 15 at 7:00 PM, after the 6:30 Mass.

New Year's Eve Banquet Dec. 31

Tickets are on sale for the New Year's Eve Dinner Banquet. Please purchase your tickets TODAY.

Christmas Concerts Dec. 12-13

The Christmas Play and Choir Concert will take place next Saturday December 12 at 7:30 PM.

The CCE Christmas Program will take place next Sunday December 13 at 3:00 PM.

Altar Server Program

Children who have had their First Communion, both boys and girls, are encouraged to join the Altar Server Program. Just like CCE, this program benefits the spiritual growth and maturity of your children, by specifically providing an opportunity for them to practice Christian values, including:

- Learning and practicing service to the community and to God
- Serving the Altar in prayer and reverence to God
- Understanding the importance of the Holy Communion in their lives as Christians
- Modeling Christian values to other children

Please contact the Church office at 281-568-6800 for additional information.

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

Mary's Immaculate Conception

Although the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception was not declared until 1845, belief in Mary's Immaculate Conception goes back to the earliest days of Christianity. The angel Gabriel addresses Mary in a most extraordinary manner using the title "full of grace" which highlights the innermost state of her soul rather than using her given name. The use of this title is notable because it goes to the heart of Mary's formation in preparation for her vocation as mother of God and her participation in her son's work of redemption. In addressing Mary, the Angel Gabriel attests that she is endowed with grace of a permanent and singular kind, a perfection of grace or perfect holiness. This implies that the fullness of grace is both intensive and extensive: intensive - in that Mary's reception of grace was as complete as possible; extensive - in that it was applied to the whole of Mary's life, from the very moment of her conception.

Additional biblical support for Mary's Immaculate Conception is discovered in the Bible's exposition of Mary as the true Ark of the Covenant. God demanded that only the finest materials and the purest gold be used in the construction of the Ark. Similarly, the Holy Spirit used only the purest material to tabernacle the Divine Son. For in Mary "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us".

In her role as the New Eve, it is clear that Mary's victory in crushing Satan's head is complete through the infinite merits of her Divine Son. That would not be the case if for one moment Mary was under Satan's power through sin. For all eternity Satan could brag, "At least for that moment I possessed your mother." In addition, had Mary been conceived in Original Sin, God would have done something less for the Second Eve, the favorite daughter of the Father, the spouse of the Holy Spirit and the Mother of Jesus Christ, than he did for the first Eve.

The Birth of John the Baptist

The Church does not usually celebrate the earthly birthdays of saints, but rather their birthdays in heaven, namely the day of their deaths when they obtain their crown of glory. However, in the case of John the Baptist, we celebrate his earthly birth - his coming into the world to announce the Son. John's coming was filled with marvels. The angel announced his birth. Because of his doubt Zechariah was struck dumb. John leaped with joy in the womb of his mother when visited by the Virgin. He was sanctified at the time by the Holy Spirit. As soon as John was born, Zechariah was able to speak and sing the beautiful song of "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel," a hymn the Church continues to sing even today.

The angel predicted that many would rejoice at John's birth and that he would be great in the sight of God, and holy, ascetic, and just before the people. He will bring many back to God. He will be the Forerunner of the Savior and return the hearts of parents to their children, and the unbelievers to the wisdom of the just. He will prepare for God a holy people.

Family Altar Offering

On December 6, our Parish will start a new program for presenting the offerings during the 11 o'clock Mass. Two members of a family will carry the offerings in a procession with the Altar servers. Other family members can join the procession if desired. 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. Families will be expected to be in Church on time, and dress appropriately.

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“Let Them PLAY”

Our parish is in the early stages of planning the addition of a Playground for our children on our Church property. 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

The system is designed by a top USA manufacturer and will be made of non-corrosive galvanized steel coated with powder coating for a maintenance-free life-time of use. The project will cost about \$40,000.00. A pledge form and additional information will be available soon.

