

**Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church**  
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**Msgr. George M. Sebaali, Pastor**  
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Pastor's cell number: (804) 240-9820

***Genealogy Sunday and Christmas 2019***

**Sunday, December 22, 2019 at 11:00 o'clock**

President Rene Moawad, Colonel Joseph Ramia; Rene Kaado Moawad; Joseph Al Basha; Assad Anwar Mouawad; Yaakoub ElSakal; George Khawand; and Sayed Elias Moura

**Christmas Eve at midnight**

Members of Our Lady of Lebanon Church, living and deceased

**Christmas Day at 11:00 o'clock**

**Sunday, December 29, 2019 at 11:00 o'clock**

The Helou and Wehbe families

**Tuesday, December 31, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, January 1, 2020 at 11: 00 o'clock**

**Sunday, January 5, 2019 at 11:00 o'clock**

Faten Abou Chabki

**Monday, January 6, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, January 7, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, January 12, 2019 at 11"00 o'clock**

Toufic and Zahida Fahed

***Let us Pray the Rosary***

Please join fellow parishioners as we pray the Holy Rosary every **Sunday at 10:15 a.m.** in preparation for the Divine Liturgy and in honor of our Blessed Mother, Mary.

***Ushers***

**Sunday, December 29, 2019**

Halim Younes, Mark Malkoun, Billy Haddad and Joseph Nasr

***Parish Christmas Luncheon***

**Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Christmas Party, December 22,**

Please join our annual Christmas Luncheon on December 22, 2019 following Sunday liturgy. The program includes Nativity Play, Christmas Songs and Luncheon. **Santa and his helpers will also pay a visit.** We ask that to please bring canned food or imperishable items each Sunday to donate to the Collection Box downstairs in the Church Hall. We will be collecting the food items from now through December 22 to donate to Western Fairfax Christian Ministries which runs a food pantry for the Needy.

**2020 New Year's Eve**

Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church invites you to celebrate New Year's Eve on Tuesday, December 31, 2019 at Sheraton Tysons Hotel, 8661 Leesburg Pike, Tysons, VA. For more information, please contact Gebran Fattouch at (443) 600-9484.

***FYI***

**Bishop Gregory Mansour** of the Eparchy of Saint Maron has authorized a **special collection** for Christmas. This special collection is a gift for the personal use of the Pastor. Thank you for your generosity.

**Christmas Liturgical Schedule**

**Tuesday, December 24, 2019 (Christmas Eve)**

★ 11:30 p.m.: Pre-Liturgy Christmas Carols

★ 12:00 Midnight Divine Liturgy

**Wednesday, December 25, 2019 (Christmas Day)**

★ 11:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

**Sunday, December 29, 2019**

★ 11: 00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

**Tuesday, December 31, 2019 (New Year's Eve)**

★ **6:30 P.M.** Divine Liturgy

**Wednesday, January 1, 2020**

**Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and World Day of Peace is a Holy Day of Obligation**

★ 11: 00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

**Monday, January 6, 202 (Baptism of the Lord)**

★ 7:30 P.M. Liturgy and Blessing of the Epiphany water

**Epiphany or the Baptism of the Lord is a Holy Day of Obligation**



**Some of the Christmas Poinsettias in the Church are :**

**Poinsettias**

**Donated by:**

**Youssef and Freda Abi-Najm**

**Victor and Zina Beasley** In memory of Michael and Beasley families

**Montaha Feghali** In memory of Feghali and Aad families

**Ghassan and Mirna Touma** Deceased family members

**Ghassan and Mirna Touma** In thanksgiving for our children

**The Family of Saint Sharbel** Intentions of the Family of St. Sharbel

**Mr. And Mrs. Tony Zahrah**

**Michael and Kristine Salamon** In memory of Assad and Loudy Salamon

**Mr. and Mrs. Roland Hamrah** In memory of the deceased Hamrah family and the Farrage family

**Tony and Mirna El Khoury**

***Christmas Wishes***

*On this day when the Rich One was made poor for sake,*

*Let the rich man also make the poor man a sharer at his table.*

*On this day a Gift came to us without our asking for it, Let us then give alms to those who cry out and beg from us (St. Ephrem, Hymn on the Nativity, 194-95).*



***Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Peaceful 2020.***

May the Star of Bethlehem guide you always to "*where you find a Child wrapped in swaddling clothes.*"

## ***Birth of Our Lord***

The Maronite Divine Liturgy often mentions the title *Mary, Mother of the Light*. This title is rich in theological and spiritual significance and is indeed one of the treasures of the Maronite Church.

The image of light conveys a sense of joy, festivity and life. Religion uses the image of light to express the notion of purity and the presence of God. Since light is the element which is proper to the divine being, from ancient times the pagans adored the sun. At the end of December, the pagans celebrated a feast dedicated to the *unconquerable Sun*. In fact, on December 21st the nights, which had been becoming longer and longer, begin to shorten. The ancient celebrated this conquest of the light over darkness.

When Constantine granted freedom for Christians to worship publicly, it was appropriate to replace the celebration of the *Unconquerable Sun*, with the feast of the New Sun of the world, to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World (John 3:19).

The image of light is found throughout salvation history. The Aramaic Fathers of the Antiochene tradition teach us that creation is a preparation for the incarnation of the Son of God. All was created by the Father through the Son. Scripture tells us that the first thing that was created is the sun. It is the heavenly body which gives forth light, warmth and life itself. The sun is the image of the Son of God because Christ Himself is that light which comes from heaven. As a ray of light coming through a cloud, He appeared from the Virgin Mary. When God created the world, He separated the light from the darkness. In the New Testament, there is a

constant struggle between light and darkness.

The genealogy in the gospel of Matthew describes the human ancestry of Jesus in the flesh and, as such, lists the sinners whose sins Jesus had to bear. This is the side of darkness in the spiritual realm. St. John describes Jesus as coming from God, Light from Light.

The account of the birth of Jesus contains the image of light throughout. The shepherds saw a great light (Luke 2:9) and the Magi saw a brilliant star in the skies (Matt. 2:9-11). Throughout the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we find the image of light used to express His divinity. His baptism was a true revelation, a great enlightenment. During the transfiguration, Jesus was surrounded by light. When Jesus died on the cross darkness came upon the earth. The Resurrection itself was a blinding light (Matt 28:2). The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is described as *tongues of fire* (Acts 2:3). Upon seeing a great light and being thrown from his horse, Saul came to believe (Acts 9:3) While in prison, Peter saw a great light and was freed from his chains (Acts 12:6).

Just as the Magi and Shepherds saw and followed the light, we who have seen the Light must follow. This feast of the Birth of Our Lord should be an incentive for us to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).

The night shall be no more. They will need no light from lamps or the sun, for the Lord God shall give them light and they shall reign forever (Revelation 22:5).

