



Saint Maron Maronite Catholic Church

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Mass Schedule: Sundays: 11:15 AM

January 2018

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Beloved parishioners:

With the beginning of a New Year, people hope for good luck, happiness and success. Some believe that the first days of the New Year are a kind of a preview for the coming year.

Providentially, the first week of the year is significantly marked by the **Feast of Epiphany** (The Baptism of our Lord). This feast indicates God's bounty and His richest blessings. Through the Holy water blessed on Epiphany, lives get blessed and protected, and the entire material world gets consecrated to God's holy will.

The feast of Epiphany is the feast of the ultimate Divine manifestation, it embraces all the dimensions of the **Mystery of Incarnation** that is celebrated at Christmas, and aims to the Mystery of Redemption, the **Paschal Mystery** that is celebrated at Easter. At his baptism at the Jordan river by Saint John the Baptist, Jesus was publicly presented to the world as “The lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (Jn 1:29).

The word (επιφάνεια) / “*Epiphania*” in Greek or (ܕܢܗܘ) “*Denho*” in Syriac means “MANIFESTATION” or “APPARITION”; it indicates the revelation of the Triune God on the occasion of the Baptism of our Lord, and indicates, at the same time, the solemn beginning of Jesus’ Mission of salvation and the announcement of the Kingdom of God. At Jesus baptism the Holy Trinity was brilliantly manifested, the Father witnessing His Son made flesh, and the Holy Spirit hovering over Him in the form of a dove. Here we see the full and true light of God shining in our world.

Next to Easter, Epiphany is the oldest season of the Church year. In Asia Minor and Egypt, **Epiphany** was observed as early as the second century. The Festival of the Epiphany fell and still falls on January 6.

During the first three centuries of Christianity, Christians celebrated the **Birth of Our Lord** and the **Epiphany** as one feast. This date was chosen as Epiphany Day because it was the winter solstice, a pagan festival celebrating the birthday of the sun god. In 331 AD the solstice was moved to December 25, but January 6 continued to be observed in some Churches. The emphasis was upon the re-birth of light.

The Church in the East continued to celebrate Epiphany in terms of the **Baptism of Jesus** while the Western church associated Epiphany with the visit of the Magi.

Our world today as always is in need of renewal and consecration to the Spirit. This is what we do when we bless ourselves with the Holy water and sprinkle it in our homes and on our properties. This is the meaning of the ritual of immersing the **inflamed charcoal** in the water. It is like mixing fire and water, the fire represents divinity and the water represents our life and the physical world. Symbolically, when our Lord went into the water to be baptized by Saint John the Baptist, He sanctified the water, the essential element of life.

May the abundant blessings of Epiphany accompany us during the entire coming year.

Fr. Elie

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Church's News & Events

New Year's Day Mass

New Year's Day is a Holy Day of Obligation; it is the feast of the circumcision of our Lord, World Day for Peace, and the beginning of a Christian Year (2018Anno Domini). Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Monday January 1st at **6:00 PM**.

Feast of the Glorious Epiphany

The Glorious Feast of Epiphany (*Ghtas*) with the rite of blessing of Epiphany water will be celebrated on Friday January 5 at 7:00 PM.

Parishioners who would like to have their homes or properties blessed with Epiphany water please let the priest know.

Second collection

A second collection will be taken on Sunday January 28, for United States Catholic Bishops Worldwide Charities.

Parish Council meeting

A meeting for the parish council is scheduled for Tuesday January 16, 2017 at 6:00 PM at the church.

Maronite Calendars 2018

Maronite calendars 2018 are available at the church for a donation. The proceeds benefit vocations in our Eparchy.

Congratulations

Our congratulations and best wishes go to **Christopher Assi** who is now a Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine. Dr. Christopher graduated last December from Palmer college of Chiropractic Medicine in Daytona.

Fifty/Fifty Draw

A monthly fifty/fifty raffle to benefit the church is conducted on the last Sunday of the month.

Tickets (at \$10) are sold every Sunday after Mass.

Church Website

You may find more materials and forms on our church's website. Log on www.stmaronjax.com and click on Events/Announcements.

Maintaining God's House

We thank all families and individuals who tithe regularly and generously to the church. Please note that the annual registration dues (**\$250**) are meant to be just a part of tithing's fulfillment. Suggested tithe is **3%** of one's income and means.

All families/Individuals are urged to make this contribution unless they are financially

unable.

You can always mail your tithing and Sunday's offering to the church even though you may not be attending.

According to God's and Church's commandments, every salaried individual is required to tith to the church on a personal level as an essential part of true devotion.

Reflection of the month:

“What goes around comes around. Keep your circle positive. Speak good words. Think good thoughts. Do good deeds”.

Helen Barry

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Church Website/Donate on line

Our church introduced a “Donate on line” program using credit cards. The program is available through the church’s website: www.stmaronjax.com .

Your benefits from this program are: 1-You earn points on your credit card; 2-You keep accurate records of your donation; 3- You save time and stamps on writing and mailing checks; 4-Your donation is tax deductible.



For more information you may contact Mrs. Sana' Saliba at (904) 514-4114. If you would like to place an Ad on the website please contact Mr. Elias Trad at (561) 809-8668.



Cars Parked at the church

Please notify the priest anytime you need to leave your car parked in the church's parking after functions; you may call (904) 448-0203 and leave a message and indicate what time you are picking your car.

In case of a need to pull the rope at the parking entrance please make sure to pull it to the other end and not drive over it.

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EPARCHY OF SAINT MARON OF BROOKLYN 2018 DATES FOR SECOND COLLECTIONS

January 28, 2017 United States Catholic Bishops' Worldwide Charities

(This collection combines the **four** USCCB collections: Central and Eastern Europe, the Church in Latin America, Catholic Relief Services, and Operation Rice Bowl [which is part of CRS].

The total is divided accordingly.)

Lent: Feb. 12 - March 30, 2018 Eparchial Charities Appeal

March 30, 2018 Holy Land Collection

(**Good Friday**) (Part of this collection is sent through the USCCB to the Holy Land and another part is sent directly to the Maronite Eparchy of Haifa.)

April 15, 2018 Catholic Home Missions Appeal

(This collection is used for Missions in the USA. Our Eparchy has received large grants from the USCCB from this collection for several years.)

May 6, 2018 National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon

Feast of O. L. of Lebanon (All funds collected are sent from the Chancery directly to our Shrine in North Jackson, Ohio.)

May 27, 2018 Catholic Communications Campaign

(Following the norms established by the USCCB, 50% of this collection is sent to them for national Catholic television, radio and other media, and 50% is retained by our Eparchy for the Maronite Voice and any other communication needs we may have.)

June 24, 2018 Holy Father's Collection (Peter's pence)

Feast of Sts. Peter & Paul (The entire collection is sent to the Holy Father for him to assist with emergency financial assistance to aid the most needy throughout the world.)

September 9, 2018 Catholic University of America

(This collection provides funding for academic scholarships at CUA. Our own seminarians are given a 50% discount in tuition.)

October 21, 2018 World Mission Sunday

(As established by the USCCB, 91% of this collection goes to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, and 9% to the Catholic Near East Welfare Association [CNEWA].)

November 11, 2018 Maronite Patriarchal Charities

(All the proceeds from this collection are sent directly to our Patriarch for his charitable works.)

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