

ANNIVERSARY OR OUR DEPARTED FOR THIS SUNDAY

<u>DAY</u>	<u>NAME OF THE DEPARTED</u>	<u>ANNIVERSARY</u>
15	Suleiman Nawas	22
17	Raymond Ghandour	3
17	Abraham Ellies	28
17	Ida Jean Shallop	25
20	Naime Dahdaly	10

ETERNAL LIGHT

- Jan 20 in loving memory of Naime Dahdaly from her family
- Jan 24 In loving memory of Linda Kerba from her daughter Marie Gharghoury
- Feb 10 for the good health of Michael Ghneim and family from his parents
- Feb 24 in loving memory of Adel Younes from his family
- Mar 10 In loving memory of Yvonne Younes from her family

- **Next Week: One year memorial for Fouad El-Hage and 14 years for Ortanse El-Hage.**

- **Ushering for January 20:** Wail H. Kakish, Nabil Samaan, Habib & Nancy Tannous
- **Ushering for January 27:** Souheil El-Achhab, Ayoub Kakish, Fadia Boulos, Roula Skaf
- Engaged meeting, January 24 at 7:30 pm in the church basement.
- Sunday January 27 after liturgy, meeting with all the camp parents.
- January 29 Great Vespers with the blessing of the five loaves for the Feast of the Three Hierarchs.
- Friday February 1st Liturgy at 7 PM for the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.
- **Ladies meeting will be on Sunday February 3rd** after Liturgy at the Choir loft.
- Looking Ahead, mark your calendar: **Lent starts March 11, Palm Sunday is April 21st, Easter/Pascha April 28.**
- Please, pray for the health of the following parishioners: Attiah, Ellen, Lucy, Robert, Alex, Sam, Elias, Ezabel and Nassar. If you have any names of people who need prayers, email them to father.

- **Weddings:** Father is asking that couples must notify the church 6 months in advance. Couple should meet with Father first even before booking their venue for their reception. A preparation for marriage is required so couple can be prepared to face the vocation of marriage by meeting with Father for few times. One of the two witnesses (the best man or the maid of honor) must be an orthodox in good standing with the Church. There are days during the year when marriage is forbidden in the Orthodox Church.

- **Baptism:** The parents and the God parents need to meet with Father to go over baptism and the responsibility of the God parents and parents. At least one of the God parents needs to be an Orthodox in good standing with the church. If he/she are not members of our church, he/she needs to bring a letter from their priest indicating that they are in good standing. The parents need to be in good standing with the church, a practicing Orthodox, regularly attending services, partake of the sacraments regularly.

- **The Word:** The Word magazine is our Archdiocese magazine started by St. Raphael of Brooklyn. You can read it online here: <http://antiochian.org/regulararticle/217>
- **Young Adults Pot-luck will be on Saturday January 26 after Vespers, at 6 PM. All are welcome.**
- **Parish Council Meeting:** January 22nd at 7:30 PM.

FIRE ROUTE & HANDICAPPED PARKING, AND PARKING LINES

- Please make sure not to park on the side of the church or in front of the Fire hydrant, for this is a fire route, also ensure not to park in the spots designated for handicapped parking. Anyone who parks and does not show a handicap permit on the window will be tagged.
- Blessing of homes starts after January 6, please call Fr. George or fill out the form to have your home blessed.

Request for Blessing My Home

I am here requesting father to come and bless my home

Name: _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____

Postal Code: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

Best Time to bless your Home: Morning _____, **Evening** _____

The Virtues: Gratitude By Fr. Tom Hopko

The spiritual person is the one who is grateful for everything. He is the one who receives everything with thanksgiving, and who knows that he has nothing except what he has received from God (cf. Jn 3.27).

And from His fullness have we all received, grace upon grace (Jn 1.16).

In the Old Testament, thanksgiving was central in the life of God's people. The temple liturgy offered sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise, and psalms sang continually of thanksgiving to God.

Sing praises to the Lord, O you His saints, and give thanks to His Holy Name.

Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving. Let us enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name! It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High; to declare Thy steadfast love in the morning, and Thy faithfulness by night. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious, for His mercy endures forever! (Pss 30.4, 95.2, 92.1, 107.1).

In the New Testament, thanksgiving is the very essence of the Church's life. The word eucharist means thanksgiving, and the very center of the Church's liturgical worship of God is when, in remembrance of all His saving acts in Christ, the faithful "lift up their hearts" and "give thanks unto the Lord."

The apostolic scriptures and the lives of the saints abound with thanksgiving to God for all things.

Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor levity, which are not fitting; but instead let there be thanksgiving . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father (Eph 5.4, 20).

Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (1 Thess 5.16–18). Rejoice always in the Lord; again I say, Rejoice! Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Phil 4.4–7).

The spiritual person has thanksgiving and gratitude in all circumstances, in everything and for everything. This thanksgiving is rooted in the firm conviction of God's merciful providence and care in all things, in the steadfast faith that "God works in everything for good with those who love Him" or, as the passage may also be rendered, "everything works together for good with those who love God" (Rom 8.28). The spiritual teachers, especially Saint John Chrysostom (4th c), are very strict in this teaching. The spiritual man does not thank God only for what he considers to be good. Rather, he thanks God for everything, even for what appears to be bad, knowing that God's tender care is over all, and that the evil in this world—which is always present and inevitable (cf. Jn 17)—can itself be the vehicle for spiritual growth and salvation if rightly understood and overcome by the grace of God.

The opposite of gratitude is bitterness and complaining; it is bemoaning one's lot in life because of pride and covetousness. It is caused by the absence of humble trust in the Lord. It is rooted in an attitude of life which does not allow the person to exclaim with the righteous Job:

Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord (Job 1.21).

To thank God in everything and for everything is the result of faith and faithfulness in God. It is the result of absolute trust in the Lord who knows best what we need for our salvation and does all that He can within the evil conditions of the world to bring us to eternal life, to peace and to joy. It is the product of believing, with Isaiah, the Word of the Redeemer who says:

For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love will I have compassion on you.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts . . . And you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing . . .

Keep justice and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come . . . (Is 54.7–8, 55.8–9, 56.1).

A person is grateful to the extent that he trusts in the Lord and has love for God and man.