



Our Lady of Purgatory

Maronite Catholic Church



December 5-6, 2020

SEASON OF THE GLORIOUS BIRTH OF OUR LORD BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST



PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD! Today we commemorate the birth of John the Baptist, cousin and forerunner of Jesus Christ. The miracle of his conception shows us that God's plan of salvation is at work and by placing our faith in God everything is possible. How can we prepare the way of the Lord in our daily lives? John preached "repent for the kingdom of God is at hand." We must prepare

ourselves for the kingdom of God each and every day. By preparing ourselves, we not only live a productive and Christian life, we also guarantee the promises of Christ in the kingdom of heaven.

By John's birth, he introduces the Messiah to the world. His calling of being a herald of the truth converted the people of Israel and Gentiles alike to change their old ways and become followers of Jesus Christ.

How did he accomplish this? By being filled with the Holy Spirit and realizing that he was called by One much greater than ourselves. We are also filled with the power of the Holy Spirit through our baptism and adoption into the Church of Jesus Christ. And this is how we fill ourselves with the same love and zeal as John the Baptist.

Let us be heralds of the truth just like John the Baptist. As we continue to journey this world, let us Prepare the way of the Lord to those who need it and to those who do not know the truth. By doing so, we also prepare our way to the Lord and fulfill our calling as followers of Jesus Christ.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY AT OLOP

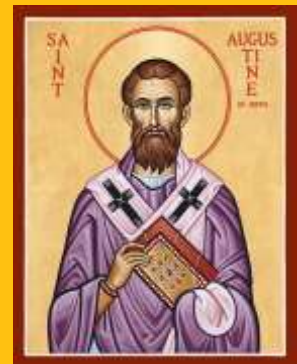
Monday, December 14, we will have adult bible study in the rectory basement. This will begin at 6:30 PM. If we have a large number of people attending, we will move to the Church in order to practice social distancing. There will be a sign-up link to follow this week. We ask you to please sign-up as you would for Divine Liturgy. I will send the link to you this week. I hope many of you will be able to join us.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/BibleStudy>

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels."

Saint Augustine



Fr. Vincent Farhat, Pastor | Rev. Mr. Jean Mattar, Deacon | Joseph Abraham, Sub-deacon

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OFFICE HOURS: The Church office will be open Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

On December the 25th, we celebrate the big one—the birthday of Jesus, the Word of God made flesh. The Church actually does not celebrate the birthday of the saints, except that of Jesus' mother. Generally, their special day in the calendar is the date of their death, their entry into eternal life. But there is one notable exception. Since we celebrate the birthday of the Word, we also celebrate the birthday of the Voice. We're referring to Jesus' cousin of course, John the Baptist, the Voice crying out in the wilderness.

John plays a unique role in the history of salvation. We call him the Baptist. Eastern Christians call him the Forerunner. Only Luke's gospel tells us of the marvelous circumstances surrounding his birth. But each of the four gospels tells us of his essential work in preparing the way for Jesus. But they also tell us something further—that John was a model of the key virtue of humility extolled by the first Beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount—Blessed are the Poor in Spirit.

Let's examine the record. Crowds were coming to hear John from all over Israel before anyone even heard a peep out of the carpenter from Nazareth. In fact, John even baptized his cousin which launched Jesus' public ministry, heralding the demise of John's career.

Most of us would not appreciate the competition. The Pharisees and Sadducees certainly did not. They felt threatened by Jesus popularity. But John actually encouraged his disciples to leave him and follow the Lamb of God. When people came, ready to honor John as messiah, he set them straight. He was not the star of the show, only the best supporting actor. Jesus, he said, was the one to watch. John may have been center-stage for a while, but now that the star had shown up, the Baptist realized that it was time for him to slip quietly off to the dressing room.

Or to use John's own example, he was like the best man at a wedding. It certainly is an honor to be chosen as "best man." But the best man does not get the bride. According to Jewish custom, the best man's role was to bring the bride to the bridegroom, and then make a tactful exit. And John found joy in this. "My joy is now full. He must increase and I must decrease."

The Baptist was joyful because he was humble. In fact, he shows us the true nature of this virtue. Humility is not beating up on yourself, denying that you have any gifts, talents, or importance. John knew he had an important role which he played aggressively, with authority and confidence. The humble man does not sheepishly look down on himself. Actually, he does not look at himself at all. He looks away from himself to the Lord.

At one time or another, every human being battles a nagging sense inadequacy. Pride is sin's approach to dealing with this. Proud people are preoccupied with self, seeing all others as competitors. The proud perpetually exalt themselves over others in hopes that this will provide a sense of worth and inner peace. Of course, it doesn't. Human history has proven that time and time again. Even the pagan Greek storytellers knew that hubris or pride was the precursor of tragedy. Pride always comes before the fall, as it did in the Garden of Eden.

Humility brings freedom from this frantic bondage. Trying at every turn to affirm, exalt, and protect oneself is an exhausting enterprise. Receiving one's dignity and self-worth as a gift from God relieves us from this stressful burden. Freed from the blinding compulsion to dominate, we can feel a sense of satisfaction when others recognize that God is God and honor him as such. We can even be free to recognize God in someone else and rejoice when others notice and honor God's goodness this person.

There is another aspect of John's character to reflect upon as we celebrate his birthday. Repeatedly, the gospels associate the Baptist with spiritual joy. At the presence of Jesus and Mary, he leapt for joy in his mother's womb (Lk 1:44). And it says that he rejoices to hear the bridegroom's voice (Jn 3:29-30).

But how do we reconcile this joy with John's stark call to repent? Because repentance is all about humility and humility is all about freedom. And freedom leads to inner peace and joy, joy in the presence of the Bridegroom. <http://www.catholiclane.com/birth-of-john-the-baptist/>

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

O Divine Ocean of Mercy and Compassion, be with us in our time of trial and difficulties. Today I make an act of spiritual communion with you, the Life-Giving Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At this time, I am not able to receive the sacred body and blood of my Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, but I choose to live in union with him and in the unity of the Holy Spirit. I offer my day, my daily life, my joys and sorrows to you, for those around me, and for the whole world. Be with us O life-giving Triune God, for we know that nothing in this world has power over us. O Lover of all people, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Amal Assaf, Officer Vincent Peters, Peter Helmer, Denise Magaletta, Fernanda Thomas, Hiam Cheiab, Leo and Ida Roderick, Theresa John, Laurette BouRamia, Annie Peter, Jeannie Francis, Mariam David, Norma Thomas, Zita Drouin, Lucienne Rodrigues, Ed Da Rocha, Edmond Salameh, and Alice Daher. If anyone is missing from this list, please contact the Church office.

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 5, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of St. Saba the Hermit)

Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Victoria Lahood requested by Subdeacon Joseph Abraham and Carol Ann Maslanka. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Ghaleb Saade requested by Daniel and Helena Tavares and family. May his soul rest in peace.

Sunday, December 6, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of St. Nicholas)

Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Fred Thomas, Joao and Fernanda Baptista, Mena Carvalho and Edigio Baptista requested by Fernanda Thomas. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Joseph and Louise Dupre requested by their family. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered as a 40 Day Memorial for the soul of George MouJabber by his family. May his soul rest in peace.

Monday, December 7, @ 6:00 PM, NO LITURGY

Tuesday, December 8, at 9:00 AM, NO LITURGY

Wednesday, December 9, at 6:00 PM, NO LITURGY

Thursday, December 10, @ 9:00 AM, NO LITURGY

Saturday, December 12, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe) liturgy is being offered for the soul of Ernest Hassey requested by Mike and Diane LeBlanc and family. May his soul rest in peace.

Sunday, December 13, @ 10:30 PM, (Welcome Me Into Your Kingdom) liturgy is being offered for the soul of Ann Farhat requested by her brothers and sisters. May her soul rest in peace.



EDUCATION FOUNDATION SNOW GLOBE AUCTION

OLOP Education Foundation is holding a fundraiser for scholarships to be awarded in the spring for our youth. We have 4 beautiful Thomas Kinkadee snow globes for auction. You may visit our website to visually see and bid on these snow globes. In addition, after each weekend Liturgy, you may see them and also place a bid for any or all four of these snow globes. Please visit our website for more details.

December Lector Schedule

Saturday, December 5,

Rose David

Sunday, December 6,

Joan Mello/Gaby Baroody

Saturday, December 12,

Carol Ann Maslanka

Sunday, December 13,

Ann Dupre/Jano Baroody

Saturday, December 19,

Rose David

Sunday, December 20,

Jean Barbour/Gaby Baroody

Thursday, December 24,

Joan Mello/Hiba Chedid

Friday, December 25,

Mae Dickinson/ Gaby Baroody

Sunday, December 26,

Smitty Cabral

Sunday December 27,

Mae Dickinson/Hiba Chedid

WINE AND HOST OFFERINGS

This month of December, the wine and bread offerings are in memory of the deceased members of the Baroody and Cheiab families requested by Gaby and Amal Baroody and family. May their souls rest in peace.

Anyone who would like to give an offering in memory of a loved one or for a special intention for the month of July 2021, please see Fr. Vincent. The cost for the month is \$75.00, which covers the cost of the communion bread and wine. Thank you and God bless.

CHRISTMAS NOVENA SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, December 15

Novena at 7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY, December 16

Novena at 7:00 pm

THURSDAY, December 17

Novena at 7:00 pm

FRIDAY, December 18

Liturgy at 6:00 pm

Novena at 7:00 pm

SATURDAY, December 19

Liturgy @ 4:30 pm

Novena at 5:30 pm.

SUNDAY, December 20

Liturgy @ 10:30 am

Novena at 11:30 noon

MONDAY, December 21

Novena at 7:00 pm

TUESDAY, December 22

Novena at 7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY, December 23

Novena at 7:00 pm

CHRISTMAS DIVINE LITURGIES SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

Vigil Liturgy 4:00 pm

Vigil Liturgy 5:30 pm

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25

Christmas Day Liturgy 10:30 am

WEEKLY COLLECTION FOR

November 28-29, 2020

Sunday Collection	\$ 914.00
Online Giving	\$ 60.00
Candles	\$ 36.00
Total:	\$ 1,010.00

Counseling ASSOCIATES

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[Sample bulletin block / graphic is optional / In email.]



Joseph & Marie Kenyon

*How empty life is without you.
Your Love and Patience has made
us into who we are today. Your
Guidance has set our path in life.
We Miss seeing your face, hearing
your voice, seeing your smile and
hearing your laugh. We Love you
and miss you even more with each
passing day*

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