



CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN MARY

216 - 8TH AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, 11215
TEL: (718) 788-5454, SMS: (646) 233-0092
WWW.CHURCHOF THEVIRGINMARY.NET
ABOUNA@MELKITESOFNYC.NET



It's Good to Celebrate

We read in the Gospel of Matthew:

“Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” (Mt 17:1-4)

And today, we feel like saying with St Peter: “Lord, it is good for us to be here; it’s good to celebrate your Resurrection, at the Church of the Virgin Mary.” Why?

- ◊ To reflect on who we are. To thank the Lord for our Identity given to us through our Baptism. To know our worth.
- ◊ To remember and create more good memories. Through memories we connect to the Lord, to each other and to our community. Without memories we would live in the void. When we forget we cease to exist for others and others cease to exist for us. God remembers us; we are in His thoughts. We were in Jesus’ mind when He was resurrected. We are always in His mind. He is always thinking of us.
- ◊ To be present. We’re celebrating Easter, the “Moment of all moments.” And thus, we become aware of God’s immense love, of our enormous value and the value of our parish and the people around us.

- ◊ To see how far we’ve come in our relationship with the Lord. And to contemplate and take a deep breath before we continue our journey. To find out something to improve in our spiritual life.
- ◊ To bring positive influence to others. To put a smile on their faces. To boost our self-worth and increase our motivation. To get inspired and inspire others. To contribute to the wellbeing of our community.
- ◊ To appreciate what we have. To live in gratitude and thanksgiving. To be healed from “The grass is always greener on the other side” decease. To become willing to water our side. To be free from jealousy, envy, lust, gluttony, and disloyalty. To learn how to trust the Lord God, the Risen Christ. To trust that He alone is enough, “He alone is our Shepherd, we shall not want.”
- ◊ Finally, because the Church of the Virgin Mary knows how to celebrate Easter, and how to celebrate it well.

Fr. Antoine Rizk, BSO
Pastor

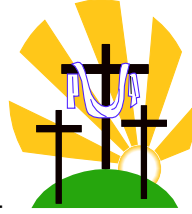
*Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.
-- St. Teresa of Avila*



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Monday, March 25th:

7:00pm: Great & Holy Monday - Service of the Bridegroom



Tuesday, March 26th:

7:00pm: Great & Holy Tuesday- Service of the Bridegroom

Wednesday, March 27th:

8:00pm: Benediction of the Oil

Thursday, March 28th:

10:30am: Vespers and Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (*Last Supper & Washing of the feet*)

8:00pm: Holy Thursday - The Crucifixion

Friday, March 29th:

2:00pm: The descent from the Cross

8:00pm: The Burial of the Lord



Saturday, March 30th:

10:30am: The blessing of the Light, Vespers and Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

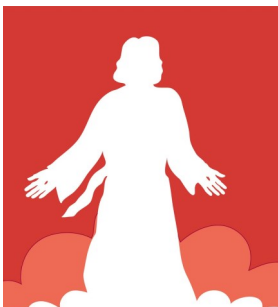
9:30pm: Pascha Liturgy - Al-Hajmat

Sunday, March 31st:

11:00am: Easter Liturgy

Confessions will be heard anytime upon your request.

“Christ is Risen from the death
And by His death He has trampled upon death
And has given life to those who are in the tombs”



HE IS RISEN!

**Christ is Risen!
He is truly Risen!**

OUR NEWS:

(Mid-August 2023 until now)

O LORD OUR GOD, CROWN THEM WITH GLORY AND HONOR: Congratulations to *Geony Ayyad and Marisa Ryan*; to *Andrew Pizzimenti and Gabriela Dekki*; on their weddings. We wish them happiness and God’s Blessings.



BAPTISED IN CHRIST: Congratulations to *Mazen and Annie Issa* on the Baptism of their son *Oscar*; to *Robertito and Lynn Navarro* on the baptism of their son *Mateus*; to *Frank and Pamela Coppola* on the baptism of their son *Dominic*; to *Jamal and Jana Lama* on the baptism of their son *Pierce*; to *Nadim and Mara Homsany* on the baptism of their daughter *Josephine*; to *Ramsey and Vijaya Homsany* on the baptism of their daughter *Leila*; to *Alain and Diana Rizko* on the baptism of their daughter *Kaiya*.



ASLEEP IN THE LORD: We mourn the death of *Violet Hajjar* at the age of 83. She is survived by her sister Yvonne and her brother Joseph and his children; of *Leona Borday-Salameh* at the age of 90. She is survived by her children: Pierre, Robert, Noel, and Denise; and their families; and by her sister Gloria Faran; of *George Dokamji*. He is survived by his daughter Carla and his grand-daughter Mariam; of *Philip Kayal* at the age of 80; of *Joseph Kayal* at the age 82. He is survived by his wife Patricia, and his children Michele (Satu) Limaye, Matthew (Christine) Kayal and Justin (Cally) Kayal; and his grandchildren Nazrana, Jack and Tess; of *Violet Gaafar* at the age of 86. She is survived by her son Maurice Saliba; and her daughter; and their families; of *Mouhiba Hanna Hourani* at the age of 90. She was the beloved wife of Mikhael Hourani and a loving mother to Nabil, Sami, Ghassan, Georges, Bassam, Samir, And Samira Hourani; of *Gloria Sawan* at the age of 92. She is survived by her daughters, Donna (James), Dolores and Georgette; her grandchildren, Michael, Emil, Thomas and Lea; her sister Rosalind. *May God rest their souls in peace.*

We remember with gratitude
Rt Rev. Romanos Russo,
 who passed away on June 8,
 2023.



He is deeply missed.
 May his memory be eternal!

**EVENTS and
 ACTIVITIES:**

LENTEN PRAYERS SCHEDULE

Monday – The Great Compline, 7:00 PM
 Wednesday – The Pre-Sanctified, 7:00 PM
 Friday – The Akathist, 7:00 PM

On Fridays: The Akathist at 7:00pm, followed by the guest speaker, then the supper.

February 16th: Lenten Supper – Sponsored by the Ladies’ Society.
Speaker: Msgr. Guy Massie



February 23rd: Lenten Supper – by NAMY/PRE-NAMY’s parents.
Speaker: Fr. Michael Falce

March 1st: Lenten Supper – by the Fraternity
Speaker: Sisters of Life

March 8th: Lenten Supper - by Men's Club
Speaker: Fr. Antoine

March 15th: Lenten Supper –by Hayat and Maroun Hayek
Speaker: Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio

March 22nd: (Lazarus Vespers) – by the Young Adults
Speaker: Msgr. Ronald Marino



THE WALK- OUR SUNDAY CHILDREN’S PROGRAM:

We resumed our program in Oct 2023. We aimed to meet every Sunday at 9:30am, before the Divine Liturgy. Due to the very low participation we moved the program to Saturdays and now is given via Zoom at 11am every Saturday. We are suffering to see the parents omitting this important task: to bring their children closer to the Lord within their parish and community.

PRE-NAMY/NAMY: We have successfully conducted our Pre-NAMY and NAMY meetings. Meetings are held every other Saturday of the month, 5:30pm – 7:30pm. 27 Preteens and teens are involved in the different Christ-Centered activities and events. The goal is to help them discover their value and how it is beautiful to live with the Lord and serve each other.



SUMMER CAMP: It took place on **Aug 20-23, 2023**, in New Hartford, CT. It was open to all Middle and High School Students. Leadership was the theme of the camp. We spent 3 nights; we had 8 meals; and we enjoyed the pool, low ropes course; and the different guided games and activities. A similar camp is to be organized this coming August as well. Please contact us if interested.

IRON CHEF: We had this fun event on Saturday, **Sep 30, 2023**. It was filled with joy and laughter. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship and had a great time. Thanks to the Fraternity for sponsoring it.



LADIES’ WINERY TRIP: The Ladies’ Society organized a bus trip to Larouta Winery in NJ, on **Saturday, Oct 7, 2023**, then a stop at a beautiful restaurant where we all shared a nice meal and a good laughter.

HALLOWEEN PARTY: The Fraternity organized a Spook-tacular Halloween Party with DJ Charbel on Saturday, **Oct 28, 2023**. All had a good time.

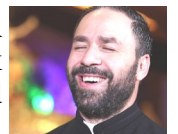
MAMOUNIEH BREAKFAST: The Ladies’ Society had a Mamounieh breakfast and sweet sale, on Sunday **Nov 12, 2023**. Many thanks to all women of our community.



THANKSGIVING DINNER: We had our Community Thanksgiving Dinner on **Saturday, Nov 18, 2023**. The hall was crowded. People brought their favorite dish along with family and friends, and shared the food together. We appreciate the spirit of fellowship, thanksgiving, and peace among our parishioners.

CONCERT WITH FR. PETER HANNA FOR THE PEACE:

It took place on Sunday, **Nov 26, 2023**. We had more than 400 attendees. Wonderful event. Thank you to Karla and Rami Sousou.



FEAST OF ST. BARBARA: On *Dec 3, 2023*, following the Divine Liturgy, the Ladies' Society had a Bake Sale and the traditional *Sleeka*.



NAMY/PRE-NAMY LOCK-IN: Our Youth groups had a Lock-in at our church, on *Fri-Sat, Dec 8-9, 2023*. Skits and games were prepared for our Christmas Talent Show.

BABY CLOTHING DRIVE: The Fraternity hosted a Baby Clothing Drive. All donations were collected by *Dec 17th* and then were delivered to the Sisters of Life to help women in need. Thank you for your generosity and support.



CHRISTMAS TALENT SHOW: We had a Christmas Talent Show, on *Sunday, Dec 17th*, following the 11am Divine Liturgy. NAMY and PRE-NAMY performed wonderful Christmas Skits. People shared their talents and gifts. Christ-centered Games were conducted and prizes were given. All attendees had a nice Italian dinner and had a great and wonderful time. You missed it.

NEW YEAR'S PARTY: On *Dec 31st*, we had our Annual New Year's Eve Party. The party was featured by Vicken & Paul. Many thanks to the Fraternity who organized it for our community.



YOUTH GROUPS PARENTS GATHERING: It took place on Saturday, *Feb 24th*. NAMY and PRE-NAMY cooked for their parents. A formal dinner was served. Parents were treated as kings and queens.

Skits were performed and questions-answers were exchanged. It was an unforgettable event. We are proud of our young children and we thank the parents for their commitment to bring their kids to the meetings and being a role models for them having God as ultimate priority in their lives.

BREAKFAST: The Ladies' Society had breakfast (Ful Mudammas), on Sunday, *March 10th*. Thank you to those who supported the event.

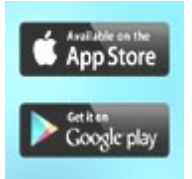


SIGHT & SOUND: The Fraternity is sponsoring a trip to SIGHT & SOUND THEATERS IN LANCASTER, P.A. on *April 26, 2024*, to see **Daniel, the Prophet**. Sold out.

Communication

LIVE VIDEO STREAMING: We are LIVE video broadcasting our Divine Liturgy on Sundays, and the different activities and events. *One of the primary objectives of our INTERNET Divine Liturgy is to reach out to sick and people who really cannot physically go to Church; you still need to receive the Holy Communion. Please come and receive the Holy Gifts.*

FIND US ON ROKU TV PLAYER: We have a Channel on **Roku**. You may search for "Melkites of NYC" and add our channel. You may also install our App on Apple and Android devices.



COMMUNICATION: Soon we will be using Flocknote platform for us and for the Diocese to communicate with you.

Other



RED ROSES: If you would like to make a donation towards the Red Roses distributed on Good Friday or the Easter Lilies that adorn the altars in memory of loved ones, you may contact the Rectory and/or send your check with a note naming your special intention.

NATIONAL MELKITE CONVENTION: The 53rd National Melkite Convention will be held at the Marriott Boston Quincy, July 4-7. Convention packages are available at <https://melkiteconvention.flocknote.com/signup/148976>.

DONATION: A sum of \$103,078.97 was entrusted to our parish by the late Violet Hajjar. May her memory be eternal.

DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Thank you to all who continue to support the parish by your participation and your presence at the Liturgy and various parish functions, and by your generous contributions.

Happy Easter everyone!

