



# CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN MARY

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WWW.CHURCHOFTHEVIRGINMARY.NET

## “You are the Best!”

Dear parishioners and friends,

I have spent almost a year as Administrator at the Virgin Mary in Brooklyn. And I would like to express my admiration to our parish and to you parishioners.

I admire all of you who are participating in different ways in the parish life, either by giving of their precious time, energy, talents, and experience, either by offering their love and prayers for the prosperity of the parish, either by contributing their money, or by receiving the different services the parish is offering. I can tell that it is a very active parish, with much potential; we are doing great and we can even do much better. This is why, I am reintroducing in this newsletter all the organizations, services, and possible activities, thanking those who are active, inviting those who don't yet participate to find their places, welcoming those who have talents, and stretching my hand to those who are not yet active. I am sure that you all care and have a warm spot in your hearts for this parish because you all belong to this community and you wish the best for its prosperity.

Walking in the Spirit of God and dwelling in His love, we may involve ourselves in the different elements of the parish life and take part of the different organizations of our parish with a high respect for each others, excellent communication skills, and self-giving spirit. God bless you all!

Fr. Antoine Rizk, BSO

### PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Nature:** The parish council must be apostolic in nature and mission and is advisory to the pastor or administrator who derives his authority from the Eparchial Bishop.

**Purposes:** The Parish Council shall act as a representative body of the whole Community of God in this Parish in common with one another and with their Pastor to meet, deliberate and act in common agreement on those matters for which they are responsible and which concerns the good of the Church, and the Parish: to confer with and advise the Pastor on any matters which are brought to its attention, and to promote the Christian life and the actions of the people of the Parish to the fulfillment of our Eastern Christian responsibilities.

### THE FRATORITY

**Purpose:** The purpose of this organization shall be to (1) promote the spiritual welfare of the members of “The Fratority” in accordance with the religious teachings and practices of the Catholic Church; (2) develop among its members a spirit of leadership, cooperation and devotion to the welfare of the parish; (3) foster the observance of periodic corporate Communion; (4) draw members together for social and cul-

tural purposes; and (5) support the Reverend Pastor in his duties as shepherd of his flock.

**Membership:** Membership shall consist of married couples. The couple, or one of them, must be a member of the Church of the Virgin Mary.

Meetings are usually held on the first Friday of every month at 8:00pm.

### THE LADIES SOCIETY

**Objectives:** The objectives of the Society shall be to (1) keep alive our devotion to our Blessed Mother both privately and publicly; (2) raise funds to assist in the support of our Church Parish; (3) be available to our Clergy whenever assistance is needed to fulfill the above obligations.

**Membership:** Membership shall be open to all ladies who are parishioners of the Church of the Virgin Mary and support the objectives of the Society.

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of every month after the Divine Liturgy and during the Coffee Hour.

### SATURDAY SCHOOL

The purpose of our Saturday school is to foster the love of God in our children. We strive to motivate them to read and study the Bible, and become cognizant of God's way. Our primary goal is to help our children achieve a well-balanced life through spiritual growth. We want them to get to know God through his word, and establish an intimate relationship with Him, so that they may reflect his light and magnificence to the world around them. We also offer to all of the members of our Parish, the opportunity to learn to speak, read and write the Arabic language, since it is part of our culture. In today's society, the Arabic language has become a treasured asset.

The school is held at Xaverian High School in Bay Ridge, every Saturday, 10:00am-1:00pm, September through April.

*Volunteers are welcome to teach Arabic or Catechism, or assist in all the other activities. Saturday School is the place where children will be benefited the most by your skills and talents! For more information please contact Fr Antoine at 718-788-5454 or Salwa Awad at 718-238-6355!*

### PRE-NAMY CLUB

**Our vision:** A group of preteens who are willing to initiate living the parish life in all its elements (community life, worship, discipleship, service, outreach), as little-disciples of Christ, fed by his words and example and having fun.

**The values of our program:**

- Initiating a life with Christ

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- Self-awareness
- Relationships
- Being open to serve others
- Having fun

Meetings will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month, at 7:00pm - 8:3pm.

### NAMY

The National Association of Melkite Youth (NAMY) is created to provide a common forum and activities for all youth 13-18 years of age (High School) within the Eparchy of Newton. The organization is to initiate, coordinate and implement *religious, social, educational* and *humanitarian* programs designed to promote the involvement of its membership in the Christian Faith and Melkite tradition.

*Teenagers! It is your club! Join us!*

### MAYA

MAYA stands for Melkite Association of Young Adults. It is created to unite Melkite Young Adults in fellowship, prayer, and spiritual growth while strengthening the bond between them and God. The organization was founded in 1994 by young adults who had graduated out of NAMY (the National Association of Melkite Youth, ages 13-18) and had no other group to join. MAYA was founded for those who are 18 years old and one year out of high school.

*Where are you young people? Don't be shy!*

### SOCIAL CLUB

It is a group that organizes social activities for the Parish. Some of our activities are open to all and others are age appropriate. Our activities have included: Bowling, baseball games, and parties. To become involved or suggest/plan activities please contact Fr. Antoine or Elizabeth Grace!

### PRAYER GROUP

Families and individuals meet together the first Friday of every month, at 8:00pm, to pray the Rosary and meditate the Mysteries. Followed by refreshments, questions regarding different subjects might be raised and discussed. *Join us!*

### BIBLE STUDY

The Bible is the best source of spiritual guidance and direction. The teaching of Jesus can lead you to a fulfilling spiritual life and true hope for eternal life.

To discover the love of God and his salvation, join our meetings which are held every other Tuesday of each month, at 8:00pm. *Everyone is encouraged to attend!*

### CHOIR

Is open to any member of our community who is willing to commit his/her time and glorify God with his/her voice. *Please share your voice with us!*

### ALTAR BOYS

Altar servers are needed to help assist the Priest during a religious service. Their responsibilities might include carrying the cross, candles or liturgical fans in processions and entrances;

maintaining the censer, loading it with incense and handing it to the priest or deacon when required; preparing the hot water in time for it to be added to the chalice at the Divine Liturgy; and any other necessary tasks the celebrant might need. The altar boys must be mature enough to carry out their duties without disrupting the sanctity of the altar. *We encourage you to join our great group of altar servers!*

### 200 CLUB

It is a fundraising club. Only 200 numbers are sold at \$10 each for a prize of \$1,000 drawn on the last Sunday of each month. Winner does not have to be present. If you want to buy a number, please call Al Corhan at 718-238-7054.

### PARISH ORGANIZATIONS CONTACT NUMBERS:

**PARISH COUNCIL:** Adel Baghdady (718) 748-7294

**FRATORITY:** George Sayad (718) 836-1030

**LADIES SOCIETY:** Wendy Dabbagh (718) 238-1781

**NAMY:** Ronnie Bache (718) 948-8106

**SATURDAY SCHOOL:** Salwa Awad (718) 238-6355

**CHOIR:** Barbara Giancola (718) 836-3653

**SOCIAL CLUB:** Elizabeth Grace (718) 857-6632

**200 CLUB:** Al Corhan (718) 238-7045

**COFFEE HOUR:** Julie Behette (718) 745-7363

### NOMINATION COMMITTEE:

Vincent Zaloom (718) 448-2008

Al Corhan (718) 238-7045

Ronnie Bache (718) 948-8106

Salwa Awad (718) 238-6355



### **O LORD OUR GOD CROWN THEM WITH GLORY AND HONOR:**

Congratulations to Regina Lian & Peter Iulo; to Rachel Henry & Edward Wahesh; to Leigh Dumoulin & Henri Tannous; Elizabeth Awad & Damon; and to Patrick Vangeli & Tania Baladi on their marriages. We wish them a long life together filled with love, happiness and God's blessings.

**NEWBORN:** Congratulations to Christine & Robert Moomjy on the birth of their son Alexander Albert and to George Simon & Jennifer Saffayeh on the birth of their child Simon George.



**BAPTIZED IN CHRIST:** Congratulations to Daniel and Mary Pinto on the baptism of their son Thomas; to John and Julie Sayad on the

of their daughter Gabriella; to Zuheir and Joumona Sahadi on the baptism of their son James Joseph; to Fadi and Christine Bseibes on the baptism of their son Christopher; to Roberto and Janine Monroy on the baptism of their daughters, Daniella and Adriana; and to Alfred and Mariela on the baptism of their daughter Mia Rosario Arab.



**ASLEEP IN THE LORD:** We mourn the death: of *Edward Jehamy*, at the age of 67; he is survived by his wife Rosemarie, children Matthew, Jennifer Bonerbo and Leila Chayut and sisters Claudette Saffaye, Eleanor Solieri, Margaret Beshara, and Violet Jehamy. He is the grandfather of 5; of *Bassam Al Shami* in Syria at the age of 61, he is survived by his father Youssef Al Shami, and his sisters Zakka Hechme, Mary Al Shami, Ghada Dekki, and Lilianne Khawam; of *Marie Nouneh* in Australia at the age of 80. She is survived by her children Adib, Nadia, Ferial and Imad, her brother George, her sisters Violet and Rosette, and her nephew Maurice Saliba; and of *Maria Sophia Tutunjian* at the age of 99; she is survived by her daughter Rosemarie Skaf, her son John, her seven grandchildren and five great grand children. Please remember them in your prayers.



**FAMILY PROFILE:** We would like to share with you our progress on the updating of our Church database. There are 693 addresses on our mailing list. So far only 202 families have answered our request and updated their family profile. About 500 families haven't replied yet. So, new Family Profile forms were sent out again to you in order to continue updating our database. 74 families answered our second request and 104 more addresses were added to our mailing list. We thank all the families who filled out the form. We ask that those who did not do so please take the time to fill it out completely and return it to the rectory so we may update our records. We thank you for your cooperation. This is for the benefit of our parish, our children and our future.



**PRE-NAMY:** The Church is forming a PRE-NAMY group for Children in grades 5-8 and/or ages 10-13. The club will be based on 5 essential elements of the parish life: Community, worship, discipleship, service, and outreach. The goal is to help preteens discover who Jesus is and embrace the relationship he has with them. The children will be involved in activities reflecting these areas and have fun.

**LADIES SOCIETY:** Congratulations to the *new officers* of the Ladies society. Wendy Dabbagh, President; Mirelle Seikali, Vice President; Alice Besheer, recording Secre-

tary; Georgette Dirani, Corresponding Secretary; Alia Fahme, Treasurer. We would like to also thank all the exiting officers for all their hard work.

**FRATORITY:** Congratulations to the *new officers* of the Fratority. George Sayad, President; Al Corhan, Vice President; Caroline Sayad, recording Secretary; Sonia Youssef, Corresponding Secretary; Al Dekki, Treasurer. We would like to also thank all the exiting officers for all their hard work.



**TRIP TO PHILADELPHIA:** On April 12<sup>th</sup>, our Saturday School went to Philadelphia. 56 students, teachers and parents enjoyed the day, having a tour guide in the city, visiting some historical buildings, and then spending a good time at the Star War Center and Musuem. Thanks to Salwa Awad for organizing this trip.

**HEALTH FAIR AND BLOOD DRIVE:**

On April 20th, the Church and New York Methodist Hospital held our Tenth Annual Health Fair. Many came to receive important health information and donate blood to help those in need. We were grateful for all the support. Thanks to Dr. Baccash and Josephine Lian for continuing to organize this very important event.



**SOLEMN COMMUNION:** At their baptism we give our children their first communion. As they grow in life they receive communion with more understanding of the sacrament of the Eucharist. On April 27, we celebrate their Solemn Communion. We congratulate the communicants and their parents. We wish that the children keep their souls pure and always have Christ in their heart. We would like to thank those who helped prepare them for this happy occasion.

**ART CLASS:** The Social Club offered an Introduction to Drawing class taught by Fr. Antoine, April through May. The class was open to adults of all abilities and covered the elements and principles of art.



**CONVENTION:** The 44<sup>th</sup> National Melkite Convention was held in San Diego, CA, on July 2-6, 2008, hosted by St. Jacob Melkite Catholic Mission. It was very successful. We wish all the best for the mission of Saint Jacob! Next year's convention will be held by the parish of St. Ann in West Paterson, NJ.




**WELCOME:** We had the blessing of welcoming Rev. Nadeem Shakour, the pastor of the Melkite parish of Mi'ilia, Israel; Sayedna Joseph Jules Zerey, Archbishop of Egypt and Sudan, recently


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chosen to be the Patriarchal Vicar of Jerusalem; and Fr. Imad Barakeh, BSO, who lives at Saint Basil's Seminary, Mehuen, MA.


**VISIT TO THE MARIAN SHRINE:** The Fraternity sponsored a visit to the Marian Shrine, Haverstraw, NY on July 13<sup>th</sup>. Everyone enjoyed the visit; it was a great opportunity to strengthen our relationships and grow in our spiritual life. Thanks to Adel Baghdadi who organized the visit!

 **PICNIC:** On July 20<sup>th</sup>, the Church is sponsoring its annual picnic at Breezy Point. So bring your BBQ and games and come enjoy a beautiful day together. Please reserve the date and for more information, please call Al Dekki at 718-680-7529.


**SATURDAY MASS:** On Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, a special liturgy will be held at 5:30pm so people planning to attend the picnic will have the opportunity to celebrate the Divine Liturgy.

 **FIRST HONORS:** Congratulations to Karen Matouk for receiving Academic First Honors, for the first, second, and third quarters, at Bishop Kearney High School.


**200 CLUB:** Congratulations to Mrs. Salma Quinn, Mr. Joe Seikali, and Mr. Joseph Gabriel, who won the \$1,000 prize of the 200 Club. 

 **BIBLE STUDY:** We closed our meetings for this year on Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, at Salwa Awad's house, at 6:30pm (BBQ had preceded the Bible Study). We will be resuming our meetings the next September.

**WEBSITE:** Our parish has new website address: [www.ChurchOfTheVirginMary.net](http://www.ChurchOfTheVirginMary.net). I would like to thank Dr. Issam El-Achkar for donating the cost of hosting and continually updating our website.

 **FR. ANTOINE'S TRIP TO LEBANON:** I am going to Lebanon to see my parents. I will leave the United States on August 18 and come back on September 6. Fr. Dany Tooma and Fr. Imad Barakeh will replace me during this period. Don't miss me!

**OUR ANNUAL DINNER:** We are organizing to have our annual dinner on Sunday, September 28. Archbishop Cyril Bustros will join us. Further information will be sent by mail. Please reserve the date!

 **FUTURE LITURGIES:** On July 20<sup>th</sup> for Mary Tutunjian (40 Day Mass) and on September 21 for Nicholas Manak (1st Anniversary).

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	<u>2007</u>	<u>Percentage of Income</u>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Assessable Income	\$ 243,610.24	88.03%
Non-Assessable Income	33,117.42	11.97%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<u>276,727.66</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
<b>Expense</b>		
Payroll Costs	61,981.54	22.4%
Altar Supplies	54.00	0.02%
Candles	413.07	0.15%
Utilities	23,129.19	8.36%
Telephone	1,440.39	0.52%
Bookstore	687.95	0.25%
Convention	797.29	0.29%
Household and Rent	6,480.90	2.34%
Hall and Banquet Supplies	1,433.51	0.52%
Diocesan Assessment	40,787.00	14.74%
Bank Charges	163.28	0.06%
Maintenance & Cleaning	4,842.46	1.75%
Office Expense	4,012.55	1.45%
Travel & Entertainment	50.00	0.02%
New Equipment	10,048.15	3.63%
Property Insurance	24,385.00	8.81%
Workers Comp & Disability	371.43	0.13%
Medical Insurance & Retirement	16,046.90	5.8%
Medical Co-Pays	364.00	0.13%
Automobile Expense	370.18	0.13%
Miscellaneous	9,255.00	3.34%
Taxes	844.02	0.31%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>207,957.81</u>	<u>75.15%</u>
<b>Excess of Revenue over Expense</b>	<u>\$ 68,769.85</u>	<u>24.85%</u>

**DONATIONS:** Thank you to all that continue to support the church by one, your presence at the Liturgy and various parish functions and two, by your generous contributions. It is these important things that help to make the Church of the Virgin Mary such a thriving community of faith.

**Because of the abundance of the content of this Newsletter, we couldn't include the adds and publish them on this page. Please accept our apologies!**