



# OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

**A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

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**REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, Pastor**

**RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)**

**REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry**

**REV. DEACON ROBERT SPENCER**

**REV. DEACON PAUL LEONARCZYK**

*"Enter the Church and repent ... for here is the physician, not the judge.  
Here one is not investigated, one receives remission of sins." (St. John Chrysostom)*

**December 21, 2014 - The Second Day of the Forefeast of the Nativity**

## **THE SUNDAY OF THE GENEALOGY OF CHRIST**

**Parish Advisory & Finance Council:**

KEN MONTY (*PRESIDENT*), RICHARD ASHOOH, ROBERT ANDERSON, ROBIN ANDERSON, MARY CULLEN, MARTHA DAGHER, MARYLOU LAZOS, TERRI LEONARCZYK, MATTHEW LOMANNO, PAUL MANSUR, NAJWA MOUSSOBA, JENNA NEHME, PAUL ST. GERMAIN, AND CHRISTELLE SLAYBE

**Parish Secretary:** ROBIN ANDERSON

**Cedars Society President:** MARYLOU LAZOS

**Sunday School Coordinator:** MARTHA DAGHER

**N.A.M.Y. Advisor:** ROBIN ANDERSON

**HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:** Before or after any service, or by appointment;

**HOLY MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN ILLUMINATION:** Please contact the clergy in advance to arrange for the required baptismal instructions;

**HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:** At least six months prior to the proposed wedding, please contact the clergy to arrange for the required interview and instructions;

**HOLY MYSTERY OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK:** Please contact the pastor at any time when this sacrament is needed;

**HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE SICK:** Anyone too infirm to attend our services may receive Communion in the home. Please advise the clergy whenever this sacrament is needed.

*Please remember to contact the church if a loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit from the priest. The hospitals do not always notify the church!*

## THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

### The Troparion of the Resurrection (3<sup>rd</sup> Tone) Page 52

### The Troparion of the Preparation of the Nativity of the Lord (4<sup>th</sup> Tone)

Bethlehem make ready, for Eden has been opened for all. Ephrata be alert for the Tree of Life has blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave. Her womb has become a spiritual Paradise wherein the divine Fruit was planted, and if we eat of it we shall live, and not die like Adam. Christ is coming forth to bring back to life the likeness that had been lost in the beginning,

### The Troparion the Holy Ancestors of Christ (2<sup>nd</sup> Tone)

Faith can accomplish great things. Through it the three holy young men rejoice in the flames as if they had been in refreshing water, and Daniel in the midst of lions is like a shepherd among his sheep. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls.

### The Troparion of the Dormition of the Theotokos (1<sup>st</sup> Tone): Page 16

### The Kontakon of the Preparation of the Nativity of the Lord (3<sup>rd</sup> Tone)

Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave where she will give birth to the Eternal Word of God in an ineffable manner. Rejoice therefore, O universe, when you hear this news, and glorify, with the angels and the shepherds, Him who shall appear as a new child, being God from all eternity.

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#### ***THE PROKIMENON:***

**BLESSED ARE YOU, O LORD, GOD OF OUR FATHERS,  
AND YOUR NAME IS WORTHY OF PRAISE AND GLORIOUS FOREVER!**

*For You are just in all You have done to us,  
and all Your works are true and Your ways right!*

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**Today's Readings: Hebrews 11: 9-10, 32-40 and Matthew 1: 1-25**

## LITURGY INTENTIONS

### Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Nabie Sahady (22<sup>nd</sup>), Sophie Ameen (59<sup>th</sup>), Florence Baroody (43<sup>rd</sup>), Fred Attalla (32<sup>nd</sup>), Louise Wihby (27<sup>th</sup>), George Kessop (20<sup>th</sup>), and Adma Solomon (11<sup>th</sup>)

### Sunday, 11:00 AM:

For the repose of John Raczka, the father of Fr. Philip Raczka,  
who fell asleep in the Lord on Dec. 7

### Next Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Louise Samara (26<sup>th</sup>), Frederick Solomon (12<sup>th</sup>),  
Margaret Marpes (37<sup>th</sup>), and Eva Abood (24<sup>th</sup>)

### Next Sunday, 11:00 AM:

For the repose of Ethel Steinmetz (20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary),  
by her son Fr. Tom, and Family



## Can you give a Christmas gift to help support your parish?

I am asking that each family prayerfully consider making a gift of \$100 to the church between now and Jan. 6. If you cannot afford a gift of \$100, then I ask you to give according to your means. If you can afford more than \$100, then I ask you to please be more generous.

When you make out your check to Our Lady of the Cedars Church please write: "Parish Christmas Gift" in the memo of the check. You may mail the check to the church or include it in the Sunday collection. Our goal is to raise \$15,000. So far we have raised \$7,500! Thank you for your generosity.

- Fr. Tom

## Christmas Carols: 7:00 PM on Christmas Eve!

Get in the spirit of the season! Come to church early on Christmas Eve and join in the singing of traditional Christmas carols, accompanied by Paul Spencer on the organ. The caroling will begin at 7:00 PM and conclude at 7:30 PM, when the Divine Liturgy begins.



**This weekend there will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> collection for flowers for Christmas.  
Next weekend there will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> collection for the mortgage.**

The 2015 offering envelopes are available in the back of the church. If you are not currently receiving envelopes and would like envelopes for 2015, please tell Father Tom.



## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

The Nativity of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ will be commemorated with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on:

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, at 7:30 PM**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, at 11:00 AM**

**Sunday School will not be held next Sunday, December 28,  
or on Sunday, January 4.**

**Attendance: Last Sat. 4:30 PM – 14 Last Sun. 11:00 AM – 101**

**Last Weekend's Collection: \$ 996.<sup>00</sup>**

*The average Sunday envelope donation: \$34.<sup>77</sup>*

*The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 307,675.<sup>70</sup>*

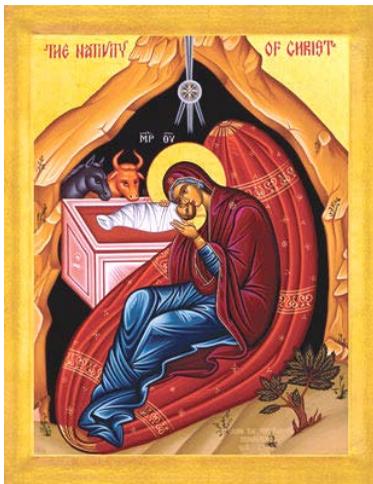
### SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Wed., Dec. 24	7:30 PM	<b>Divine Liturgy:</b> <i>The Nativity of Christ</i>
Thurs., Dec. 25	11:00 AM	<b>Divine Liturgy:</b> <i>The Nativity of Christ</i>
Sat., Dec. 27	4:30 PM	<b>Divine Liturgy:</b> <b>The Sunday After Christmas</b>
Sun., Dec. 28	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday Orthros</b>
Sun., Dec. 28	11:00 AM	<b>Divine Liturgy:</b> <b>The Sunday After Christmas</b>

## The Sunday of the Genealogy

On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to St Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths.

Today, as we celebrate the memorial of the Forefathers, let us the faithful raise a hymn to Christ the Redeemer, the Lord who magnifies them among all the nations, and faithfully performs extraordinary wonders, as he is mighty and powerful; and he showed forth from them a rod of power for us, pure Mary the Child of God who alone knew no man, from whom the flower, Christ, came forth, blossoming life for all and pleasure without cost and eternal life.



**O people,** let us celebrate the forefeast of the Nativity of Christ. Raising our minds on high, let us go to Bethlehem in spirit. With the eyes of the soul, let us gaze upon the Virgin as she hastens to the cave to give birth to our God, the Lord of all. When he beheld this wonder, Joseph thought he saw a mortal wrapped in swaddling clothes; but from all that came to pass, he understood it was the true God, who grants the world great mercy.

Make ready, O Bethlehem! Throw open your gates, O Eden! For He who exists forever comes to be that which He was not; and He who formed all creation now takes a form, granting the world great mercy.

Make ready, O cave, to receive the Mother who bears Christ within her womb. O manger, receive the Word who destroyed the sins of mankind. O shepherds, keep watch and then bear witness to the awesome wonder. O Magi, come from Persia and bring your gifts to the King. For the Lord has appeared from a Virgin Mother, yet she bowed to Him as a servant and spoke to Him within her heart saying, “How were You conceived in me? How did You grow in me, O Jesus, my Savior and my God?”

— *From Vespers for the Paramony of the Nativity of the Lord*

# Walking in the Midst of the Fire

Our secular society uses the word *economy* for financial matters exclusively; the term has other meanings in the Church, particularly in the East. “Divine economy” is the traditional way we refer to the way God interacts with the world, particularly in achieving the restoration of humanity to communion with Himself. Sometimes the term is paraphrased as *plan of salvation* or *dispensation*. The creation itself, and all the events connected with our redemption in Jesus Christ are included in the Church’s term *economy*. They are the way God “manages” His creation.

The highpoint of God’s plan for us is the Incarnation of the Word. Everything in the divine economy leading up to the coming of Christ is in some way a preparation for this event. The saga of Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites in Egypt, their exodus to the promised land and their subsequent history are all aspects of this plan which St Paul calls “*the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ*” (Eph 3:9).

One particular moment in the story of Israel figures prominently in our celebration during the Nativity Fast: the exile of the Jews to Babylon and the experience of three of them in the fiery furnace. These three young men are remembered along with the prophet Daniel on December 17 each year. They are also specifically invoked on the two Sundays before the Nativity because of the accomplishments of their faith.

## The Babylonian Exile

In 605 BC the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and made its king a vassal. Responding to several rebellious incidents the Babylonians pillaged the city in 597 BC and destroyed the temple built by Solomon. The Jewish king, his court and many prominent Jews were taken captive and deported to Babylon. Their exile would end in 538 BC when the Persian king Cyrus the Great defeated the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to return home.

## The Book of Daniel

The story of the exile and captivity of the Jews forms the background of the Book of Daniel. Its present form, written in Hebrew and Greek, dates to the mid-second century BC, but contains some original Aramaic tales dating from the exile as well. It is generally considered an apocalyptic book, offering its readers consolation that their present troubles (Greek and Roman occupation) would one day end as the Babylonian exile had ended: with the liberation of the Jews and the restoration of true worship.



Daniel was a highly placed Jew, highly regarded for his faithfulness to the Law in an era when the Law was largely neglected. The prophet Ezechiel, who lived through the Babylonian exile, puts Daniel in the highest company in this prophecy: *“The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: ‘Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,’ says the Lord GOD”* (EZ 14:14).

The first part of the book includes three dramatic and prophetic scenes concerning Daniel and three other young Jewish nobles. When they were taken captive, they were impressed into their captor’s service and given Babylonian names. *“Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles, young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king’s delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego”* (Dan 1:3-7). The book uses these names indiscriminately, which sometimes confuses readers.

From the first these young Jews refused to violate the Law. They would not eat the meats given them and would only eat vegetables. Nevertheless they rose to positions of responsibility in the Babylonian Empire.

When Nebuchadnezzar erected a golden idol on the plain of Dura, the three young men refused to worship it as the king had commanded, even though he had stipulated: *“whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace”* (Dan 3:6).

When confronted by the king the three Jews insisted, *“Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up”* (Dan 3:17-18). They knew that God could deliver them and believed that He would. But if that was not His will, they would not lose faith: they still were not going to worship the idol.

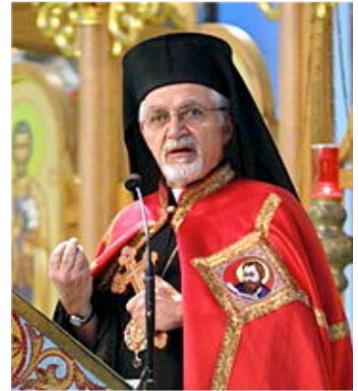
*“And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?’ They answered and said to the king, ‘True, O king.’ ‘Look!’ he answered, ‘I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like a Son of God’”* (Dan 3: 23-25).

The angel of God who protected these young Jews is seen by the Church as a type of Christ, the One who walks among His people at all times, in the midst of every circumstance, even when God seems absent. It is He whose coming in the flesh we are about to celebrate.

# THE BISHOP'S APPEAL

Give thanks to God for the Divine Gift of His Son and for all the blessings you received in 2014 by giving a generous gift to our Melkite Eparchy. The annual Bishop's Appeal officially ends in all our parishes on 31 December 2014.

**Remember the Melkite Church in your will:** Give the lasting gift of the Melkite Faith to your children's children, and help to ensure that our beautiful Melkite heritage continues to flourish for generations to come. Simply add the following statement to your last will and testament: *I hereby bequeath to the Melkite Eparchy of Newton the following sum: \$\_\_\_\_\_.* Contact Bishop Nicholas personally to inform him of your generous bequest: 3 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury, MA 02132.



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**Let us pray for:** Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi and Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim who were abducted on April 22, 2013, when gunmen stopped their vehicle near the battleground northern city of Aleppo

-Fr. Paolo Dall'Oglio, a Jesuit priest who was kidnapped by the militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, while walking in Raqqa July 29, 2013.

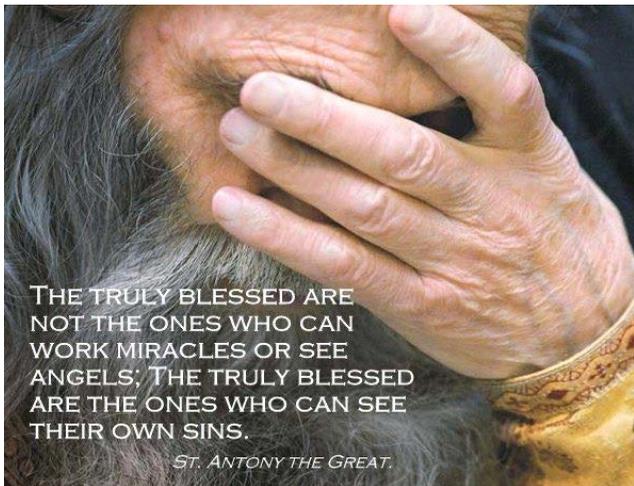
- For the more than 300 school girls that were kidnapped in Chibok, Nigeria in the Spring of 2014, who are being forcibly converted to Islam.

-Fr. Alexis Prem Kumar, a priest from southern India, who was abducted by Taliban members from a school for refugees that he was visiting in the village of Sohadat, Afghanistan on June 2, 2014.

- And for all persecuted for their Christian faith.

**Let us say for them all:**

**Kyrie eleison! Kyrie eleison! Kyrie eleison!**



THE TRULY BLESSED ARE NOT THE ONES WHO CAN WORK MIRACLES OR SEE ANGELS; THE TRULY BLESSED ARE THE ONES WHO CAN SEE THEIR OWN SINS.

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

SEE WHO GOD CALLS: THOSE WHO HAVE SPENT THEIR STRENGTH IN BREAKING THE LAW, THOSE WHO ARE BURDENED WITH THEIR SINS, THOSE WHO CAN NO LONGER LIFT UP THEIR HEADS, THOSE WHO ARE FILLED WITH SHAME, THOSE WHO CAN NO LONGER SPEAK OUT.

AND WHY DOES HE CALL THEM? NOT TO DEMAND AN ACCOUNTING, NOR TO HOLD COURT, BUT TO RELIEVE THEM OF THEIR PAIN, TO TAKE AWAY THEIR HEAVY BURDENS.

-ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

**Please remember** to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Ernie Ashooh, Louise Ashooh, Al Auclair, Alice Auclair, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Ted Baroody, Sarah Beadle, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Lucy Corriveau, Theresa Cullen, Jamileh Dagher, Sher Farrow, Declan Finn, Janet Drake, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, Christine Freitas, Kendall Gallant, Loretto Gauvin, Nick Haddad, Jean Hannoush, Lucille Harper, Howard Jabaley, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Shirley Lanoue, Roger Lawrence, Sadie Grace McCallum, Miriam McCallum, Susan Merrill, Margaret Mitchell, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Blaise Notter, Steven O'Leary, Denis O'Keefe, Helen Baroody Payne, Josephine Paquette, Sheila Quinn, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Nassim Sleiman, Salwa Sleiman, Tarrant Smith, Mary Stephen, Catherine Waldron, Laura Weingast, and Iris Angelina Velasquez.

**If you are visiting our church,** our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Please give us the chance to get to know you by joining us for some coffee, pastry, and conversation in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to know more about the Melkite Catholic Church, check out the brochure entitled *“Welcome to this Holy House,”* located on the table in the back of the church.



 <p><b>Joe Ashooh, Agent</b> 297 S Willow Street Manchester, NH 03103 Bus: 603-624-1000 joe@joesthere.com</p>  <p>State Farm, Bloomington, IL 1211999</p>	<p><b>NORTH HILLS REALTY GROUP, LLC</b> <i>Residential Real Estate Brokers</i> <b>Abraham Dagher, Realtor</b> <i>814 Elm St., Suite # 302 Manchester, NH 03101</i> <b>(603) 629-9988</b></p>	 <p>Personal Injury Medical Malpractice Call today for a <b>FREE</b> consultation. <i>“We Fight For You”</i> Robert Stephen, Esq. <b>STEPHEN LAW GROUP</b> www.StephenLaw.com • Call 663.1007 848 Elm Street, Suite 303, Manchester, NH 03101</p>
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<p><b>GLENWOOD INVESTMENT GROUP</b> CHARLES L. STEPHEN 814 ELM ST., SUITE 503 MANCHESTER, NH 03101 TEL # (603) 606-3391 TOLL FREE 1 (866) 491-9675 chuck@glenwoodinvestment.com www.glenwoodinvestment.com</p>	<p><b>GEORGE AZZO</b> <b>R&amp;G CONSTRUCTION, LLC</b> <i>NEW CONSTRUCTION, REMODELING, REPAIRS, ALL JOBS BIG AND SMALL!</i> <b>Free Estimates</b> <b>(603) 320-4203</b></p>	<p>Check out <b>www.melkite.org</b> -new educational material is posted regularly!</p>