



# OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

140 MITCHELL STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03103

TEL # (603) 623-8944 FAX # (603) 645-6017

Email: [oloc.church@comcast.net](mailto:oloc.church@comcast.net)

Website: [www.olocnh.org](http://www.olocnh.org)

VERY REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, PASTOR

REV. THEOPHAN LEONARCZYK, Eparchial Chancellor RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)

REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry

REV. DEACON THOMAS MOSES

*"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)*

Sept. 8, 2019

*The Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross*

## THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

Parish Advisory & Finance Council:

KEN MONTY (PRESIDENT), ROBERT ANDERSON, ROBIN ANDERSON, JOHN CULLEN,  
MARTHA DAGHER, TIM ERMATINGER, KEN KOMISAREK, MARYLOU LAZOS, JESSICA LOMANNO,  
MAURICE PARÉ, RAFAEL PESCHIERA, PAUL ST. GERMAIN, AND JOHN SIWIK

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.

# THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

## The Troparion of the Resurrection (4<sup>th</sup> Tone) Page 52

### The Troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (4<sup>th</sup> Tone 2X):

Your nativity, O Mother of God, heralded joy to the whole universe, for from you rose the Sun of Justice, Christ our God. Taking away the curse, He imparted the blessings, and by abolishing Death, He gave us everlasting life.

### Kondakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (4<sup>th</sup> Tone):

Through your holy birth, O Immaculate One, Joachim and Anne were delivered from the shame of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. Your people redeemed from the debt of their sins celebrate your birth crying out to you: The barren one gives birth to the Mother of God, the sustainer of our life.

#### THE PROKIMENON:

**O LORD, SAVE YOUR PEOPLE AND BLESS YOUR INHERITANCE!**

*To You, O Lord, I have called! O my Rock, be not deaf to me!*

**Today's Readings: Galatians 6: 11-18 and John 3: 13-17**

## LITURGY INTENTIONS

### Saturday (September 7) 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Charles Anton (29<sup>th</sup>), and Norman Ashkar (63<sup>rd</sup>)

### Sunday, (September 8) 10:30 AM:

For the repose of Bishop John A. Elya (40 Day Memorial)

For the repose of Jack Cullen (14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary), by the Cullen Family

### Next Saturday, (September 14) 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Philip George (8<sup>th</sup>), Carmine Abookalil (54<sup>th</sup>), Joseph Stephen (41<sup>st</sup>), Zahia Fawaz (35<sup>th</sup>), Queenie Ashooh (56<sup>th</sup>), Matilda Bachaalani (38<sup>th</sup>), Joseph Najin (76<sup>th</sup>), Farida Telage (40<sup>th</sup>), and Malvina Azzi (17<sup>th</sup>)

### Next Sunday (September 15) 10:30 AM:

For the repose of Bishop John Elya on the occasion of his 91st birthday, requested by all who love him

## Vocation View

Saints Joachim and Ann recognized that their child – as, indeed, all children - to be a gift of God, and they were willing to encourage her in any vocation God gave her for the good of His people. Do our married families encourage their sons to service as priests to serve His Church?

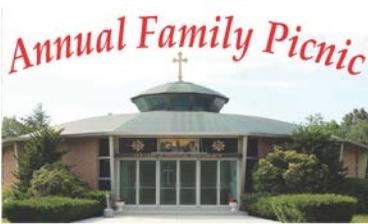
**Everyone is invited** to a luncheon in the church hall following the Sunday Divine Liturgy. The luncheon is in honor and memory of our father and shepherd, Bishop John Elya. On Sunday we are, along with all the parishes of the Eparchy, celebrating his 40 Day Memorial Liturgy.

## Sept. 14: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

In the early Fourth Century, St. Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine, was seeking the holy sites in Jerusalem when the True Cross of Christ was discovered. It is said that miraculous signs helped identify the Cross, including the restoration to health of a dying woman. This feast commemorates the recovery of the True Cross and has great importance in both the East and the West.

This is one of the two feast days which is held as a strict fast. The other is the commemoration of the Beheading of St. John the Forerunner on August 29.

**This great feast will commemorated with a celebration of Divine Liturgy on Friday evening at 7:00 PM.** At the end of the Liturgy we will celebrate the victory of the Cross by carrying a relic of the True Cross in a procession. This will be followed by distribution of flowers and an invitation to come forward and venerate this precious and sacred relic.



**Church Picnic:** Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church, located at 256 Hamilton St., Worcester, MA, will be holding their Annual Picnic on Sunday, September 8, 2019 from 12 noon – 5 PM. The event will feature Middle Eastern Food, Mitch Kaltsounas and band for music, activities for the kids, and free admission. All are welcome.

## Glendi 2019

### Saint George Greek Orthodox Cathedral

650 Hanover Street, Manchester, NH 03104

Friday Sept 13<sup>th</sup>, Saturday Sept 14<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday Sept 15<sup>th</sup>



**Attendance Last Sat. 4:30 PM: 21 Sun. 10:30 AM: 106**

**Last Weekend's Collection: \$1,093.<sup>75</sup>**

*The average Sunday envelope donation: \$30.<sup>48</sup>*

*The balance on our mortgage is: \$64,377.<sup>62</sup>*

#### SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Fri., Sept. 13	7:00 PM:	<b>Divine Liturgy: Exaltation of the Holy Cross</b>
Sat., Sept. 14	4:30 PM	<b>Divine Liturgy: The Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross</b>
Sun., Sept. 15	9:45 AM:	<b>Sunday Orthros</b>
Sun., Sept. 15	10:30 AM	<b>Divine Liturgy: The Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross</b>

## An explanation of the icon of the Nativity of Mary

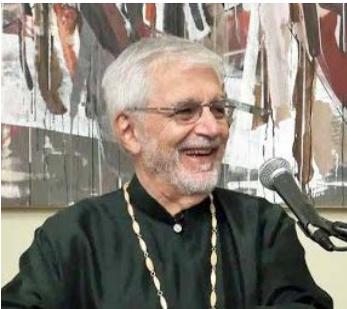
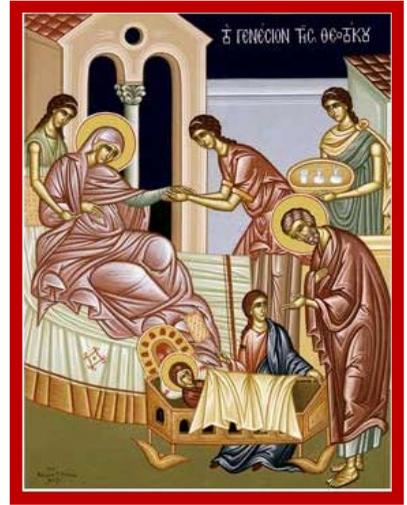
Together, the Great Feasts serve to tell the story of the Incarnation, which has its climax in the center of the year with the celebration of the “Feast of Feasts” – Pascha. It is therefore fitting that the first Great Feast of the Church year, which begins in September, is that of the Nativity of the Theotokos.

The Mother of God’s birth was miraculous, not because she was born of a virgin, but instead because she was born of a man and his barren wife in their later years: Joachim and Anna.

The icon of the Nativity of the Theotokos presents to us the central figures of Saints Joachim and Anna, Mary's parents, and the Mother of our Lord as an infant. Saint Anna is in the middle left of the icon gazing toward her daughter. Likewise, Saint Joachim, Mary's father, is gazing upon the young child, with his hand extended toward her. Anna is surrounded by attendants who have assisted with the birth.

The actions of Joachim and Anna direct our attention to Mary as the central figure in this feast. As we look at the image of Mary we can see that even as a baby she is being identified to us as the Mother of God. The Greek letters above her head are an abbreviation for “Mother of God,” And although she is a newborn, she has a halo, reminding us that she was sanctified from birth to be the Mother of God. She wrapped in a red mantle, signifying that she will be the one to carry the Divine in her womb, and on the mantle, three stars signify her perpetual virginity. The cradle that she is lying in has windows, like a church. It represents the temple, and reminds us that Mary herself will become the living temple

The icon also acknowledges the joy that was felt by Joachim and Anna as new parents with a child received through a promise from God. The liturgical texts of the feast remind us of this joy and confirm the special role of Mary as the Mother of the Incarnate God, Jesus Christ. At her birth, another step is made in sacred history in preparation for the entrance of Christ into the world.



### **Bishop Nicholas’ 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

**Thursday, October 3, 2019**

**Our Lady of Annunciation Cathedral**

**7 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury, MA**

**5 PM Divine Liturgy**

**followed by a Celebration Banquet at 7 PM**

**Invite your family and friends!**

**Ticket Donation: \$50 per person – *Deadline Sept 20!***

**More details available in the back of the church**

# On the Nativity of the Theotoks

*-St. Andrew of Crete*

The present Feast is for us the beginning of feasts. Serving as boundary to the law and to prototypes, at the same time it serves as a doorway to grace and truth. "For Christ is the end of the law" (Rom 10:4), Who, having freed us from the letter (of the law), raises us to spirit....

Here is the summit of Christ's beneficence towards us! ... The present God-graced day, the first of our feasts, showing forth the light of virginity and the crown woven from the unfading blossoms of the spiritual garden of Scripture, offers creatures a common joy....

Be of good cheer, it says, behold, this is the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin and of the renewal of the human race! The Virgin is born, she grows and is raised up and prepares herself to be the Mother of the All-Sovereign God of the ages. All this, with the assistance of David, makes it for us an object of spiritual contemplation. The Theotokos manifests to us her God-bestown Birth, and David points to the blessedness of the human race and wondrous kinship of God with mankind.

Let there now be one common festal celebration in both heaven and on earth. Let everything now celebrate, that which is in the world and that beyond the world. Now is made the created temple for the Creator of all; and creation is readied into a new Divine habitation for the Creator. Now our nature having been banished from the land of blessedness receives the principle of theosis and strives to rise up to the highest glory.

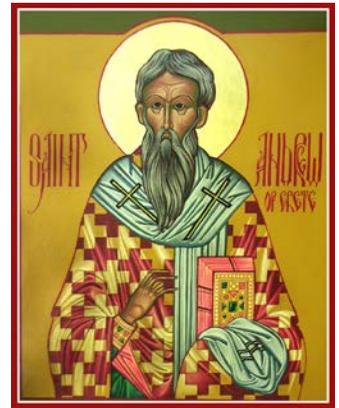
Today Adam offers from us and for us elements unto God, the most worthy fruit of mankind: Mary, in whom the new Adam is rendered Bread for the restoration of the human race. Now is opened the great bosom of virginity, and the Church, in the matrimonial manner, places upon it a pure, truly spotless pearl.

Today human worthiness accepts the gift of the first creation and returns to its former condition; the majesty darkened by formless sin, through the conjoining by His Mother by birth "of Him Beauteous by Goodness," man receives beauty in a most excellent and God-seemly visage. And this creating is done truly by the creation, and recreation by theosis, and theosis by a return to the original perfection!

Today a barren one has become a mother beyond expectation, and the Theotokos has given birth without knowing man, and she sanctifies natural birth. Now the majestic color of the Divine purple is readied and impoverished human nature is clothed in royal worthiness. Now, according to prophecy, sprouts forth the Offshoot of David, who, having eternally become the green-sprouting Staff of Aaron, has blossomed forth for us with the Staff of Power: Christ.

Today from Judah and David is descended a Virgin Maiden, rendering of herself the royal and priestly worthiness of Him Who has taken on the priesthood of Aaron according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb 7:15). Now the renewal of our nature is begun, and the world responding, assuming a God-seemly form, receives the principle of a second Divine creation.

..... This Virgin is the Theotokos, Mary, the Most Glorious of God, from whose womb the Most Divine came forth in the flesh, and by Whom He Himself arranged a wondrous temple for Himself.



# “The Beginning of All Holy Days”

SEPTEMBER 1 MARKS THE BEGINNING of the Byzantine Church Year. An important part of this annual cycle of feasts and fasts is the sequence of the Twelve Great Feasts which, together with the “Feast of Feasts,” Pascha, commemorates the major events in the life of Christ.

The first of the feasts in this annual cycle is observed on September 8, the Nativity of the Theotokos. Our “life of Christ,” then begins with the birth of His Mother, just as it concludes with the commemoration of her Dormition. “This day is for us the beginning of all holy days” (St Andrew of Crete) because the birth of Mary is the overture to the coming of Christ. The Church Year thereby affirms that one cannot glorify Christ apart from His Mother nor can we honor the Theotokos apart from her Son.

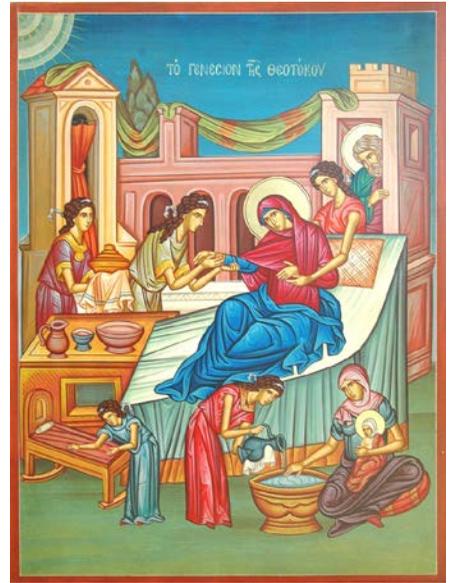
This connection is made clear in the troparion of the feast which passes quickly from honoring Mary to proclaiming Christ: “Your Nativity, O Mother of God, heralded joy to the whole universe, for from you rose the Sun of Justice, Christ our God. Taking away the curse, He imparted the blessings, and by abolishing Death, He gave us everlasting life.”

## The Source of Our Celebrations

The Gospels do not record anything about the Holy Virgin prior to the Annunciation. The account of her birth on which our feast is based is found in the *Protoevangelium of James*, a second-century collection of “infancy narratives,” stories describing the births of Jesus and Mary. The first part, which early manuscripts call *The Story of the Birth of Saint Mary, Mother of God* describes her nativity and her dedication to the temple, an event which we also celebrate in our Church Year (November 21).

Written in Greek, the Protoevangelium was translated into a number of languages and was known throughout the early Christian world. In the early third century, the Alexandrian scholar Origen referred to it as a dubious and recent composition, despite its claim to have been written by James, the brother of the Lord. Today it is thought that the Protoevangelium contains a mixture of apostolic traditions coming down from the first Christians along with narrative embellishments to “fill in the blanks” in the stories of the Lord and His Mother.

This desire to shed light on the hidden lives of Christ and His Mother is especially evident in another work popular in the first millennium, known as *The Book of the Nativity of Mary and the Childhood of the Savior* or the *Infancy Gospel of Matthew*. It combines the story of Mary from the Protoevangelium and apocryphal stories of Jesus from the second-century *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*.



## **The Story of Mary's Birth**

The tradition preserved in the Protoevangelium is that Mary was the daughter of Joachim and Ann, born to them late in life. The literary embellishment in this work tells how Joachim, although a generous donor to the temple, was mocked for being childless. Recalling how Abraham had been given a child in his old age, Joachim retired to the wilderness to pray for a similar blessing. In response, angels appeared to Joachim and Ann promising that their prayers had been heard and that Ann would conceive. Our feast of the Maternity of St Ann (December 9) recalls her conception of the Virgin Mary.

Then, "When her time was fulfilled, in the ninth month, Ann gave birth. And she said to the midwife: 'What have I brought forth?' And she said: 'A girl'. Then Ann said: 'My soul has been magnified this day.' ... when the days were fulfilled, Ann was purified, and gave her breast to the child, and called her name Mary" (Protoevangelium 5).

## **The Place of Mary's Birth**

The Protoevangelium does not identify the place where Mary was born. Different local traditions claim at least two possible locations: the village of Sepphoris, a few miles from Nazareth, and the neighborhood of the "shepherd's pool" in the old city of Jerusalem. Byzantine basilicas were constructed in both places in the fifth century with the Jerusalem basilica designated as "the place where Mary was born."

Mary's birth is celebrated by most of the historic Churches on September 8 (Copts and Ethiopians observe it on May 9). The first mention of this feast is at the beginning of the sixth century when a new church, dedicated to St Ann, replaced the basilica at the Shepherds' Pool. The present Church of St Ann, constructed by Crusaders in the twelfth century, occupies this site today. A shrine in the church's crypt commemorates the conception and birth of Mary.

## **Our Celebration of This Feast**

The principal theme of our feast is that "Today grace begins to bear fruit, showing forth to the world the Mother of God, through whom earth is united to Heaven for the salvation of our souls" (Vespers).

Other than the names of Mary's parents, almost none of the narrative details from the Protoevangelium find their way into the hymns of this feast. Rather the focus of our prayer is that now the mystery of our salvation in Christ is beginning to unfold. "Today the barren gates are opened and the Virgin, the Gate of God, comes forth... Today ends our nature's barrenness" (Orthros). Mary will become the one through whom the ancient prophecies will be fulfilled when Christ is incarnate in her. As St Andrew of Crete (650-740) expressed it: "Today's solemnity is a line of demarcation, separating the truth from its prefigurative symbol, and ushering in the new in place of the old... This day is for us the beginning of all holy days. It is the door to kindness and truth. Today an inspired Temple is provided for the Creator of all, and creation prepares itself to become the divine dwelling place of its Creator."

Andrew's contemporary, St John of Damascus (676-749) says, "The day of the Nativity of the Theotokos is the feast of joy for the whole world, because through the Theotokos the entire human race was renewed and the grief of the first mother Eve was changed into joy."

## Today's Readings:

### From the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (6: 11-18)

**BRETHREN**, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand! All those who want to please in a human way are forcing you to be circumcised merely to avoid persecution because of the cross of Christ. For not even the circumcised observe the Law: but they want you to be circumcised that they may boast of your subjection to external rites. But as for me, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision but a new creation is of any account. And whoever follow this rule, peace and mercy be upon them and on God's Israel. From now on, let no man give me trouble, for I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

الرسالة (غلاطية 6: 11 - 18)

يا اخوة، أنظروا بأي حروفٍ كتبتُ لكم بيدي. ان جميع الذين يُريدون أن يُرضوا بحسبِ الجسد، هؤلاء يُلزمكم أن تختبتوا. وانما ذلك لئلا يضطهدوا من أجل صليب المسيح. لان المختونين أنفسهم لا يحفظون الناموس، لكنهم يُريدون أن تختبتوا ليفتخروا بأجسادكم. أما أنا فحاشي لي أن أفتخر إلا بصليب ربنا يسوع المسيح، الذي به صُلب العالم لي، وأنا صُلبت للعالم. لانه في المسيح يسوع لا يستطيع الختان شيئاً ولا القلف، بل الخليقة الجديدة. وكل الذين يسلكون هذه الطريقة، عليهم السلام والرحمة، وعلى اسرائيل الله. فلا يُعنني أحدٌ فيما بعد، لاني حاملٌ في جسدي سمات الرب يسوع. نعمه ربنا يسوع المسيح مع روحكم أيها الاخوة، آمين.

### The Holy Gospel according to St. John (3: 13-17)

The Lord said, "No one has gone up into heaven except the One Who has come down from heaven: the Son of Man Who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that those who believe in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that those who believe in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God did not send His Son into the world in order to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

الانجيل (يوحنا 3: 13 - 17)

قال الرب: لم يصعد احدٌ الى السماء، إلا الذي نزل من السماء، ابنُ البشر الكائن في السماء. وكما رفع موسى الحية في البرية، هكذا ينبغي ان يُرفع ابنُ البشر، لكي لا يهلك كل من يؤمن به، بل تكون له الحياة الابدية. هكذا أحب الله العالم، حتى إنه بذل ابنه الوحيد، لكي لا يهلك كل من يؤمن به، بل تكون له الحياة الابدية، لانه لم يرسل الله ابنه الى العالم ليدين العالم، بل ليخلص به العالم.

**Please remember** to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Donna Andruskiewicz, Olivia Aragon, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Henry Bilodeau, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Sarah Cullen, Theresa Cullen, Sarah Dagher, Bishop John Elya, Sher Farrow, Julie Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, John Gallagher, Marguerite Ganem, Mary Ann Garvey, Loretto Gauvin, Bonnie Gomez, Gail Fisher, Laurice Haddad, Nick Haddad, Lucille Harper, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Leila Khoury, Shirley Lanoue, Susan Latvis, Diana Lebel, Haley Lesmerises, Ramona Matias, Susan Merrill, Maria Moser, Joanne Nader, Mimi Nasser, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Raymond Nehme, Samira Nehme, Stefan Notter, Steven O'Leary, Ellen Osgood, Alice Paymant, Marco Enrique Peschiera, MaryJo Pond, Ellen Powell, Sheila Quinn, Daniel Quintal, Deborah Roberts, Julia Rose, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Kara Salvas, Barbara Schultz, Raymond Sherburne, Tarrant Smith, Iris Angelina Velasquez, Catherine Waldron, George Webber, Martha Webber, Kathy Wise, and Marilyn Whitmore.

**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.





**Joe Ashooh, Agent**  
297 South Willow St  
Manchester, NH 03103  
603-624-1000  
[www.joesthere.com](http://www.joesthere.com)

Providing Insurance and Financial Services  
Call us for a free quote

**NORTH HILLS  
REALTY GROUP, LLC**  
*Residential Real Estate Brokers*  
**Abraham Dagher, Realtor**  
814 Elm St., Suite # 302  
Manchester, NH 03101  
**(603) 629-9988**



**Chuck Stephen**  
814 Elm Street, Suite 503  
Manchester, NH 03101  
Tel # 603.606.3391  
Toll Free 866.491.9675  
[chuck@glenwoodinvestment.com](mailto:chuck@glenwoodinvestment.com)  
[www.glenwoodinvestment.com](http://www.glenwoodinvestment.com)

**Glenwood Investment Group**  
*“Grow and protect your hard-earned wealth”*

**THE  
STEPHEN  
GROUP**

814 Elm Street, Suite 309  
Manchester, NH 03101  
Office 603.625.8825  
Cell 603.419.9592

**JOHN STEPHEN**  
*Managing Partner*  
[jstephen@stephengroupinc.com](mailto:jstephen@stephengroupinc.com)  
[www.stephengroupinc.com](http://www.stephengroupinc.com)




**Stephen  
LAW GROUP  
PLC**

**Robert Stephen, Attorney at Law**  
582 Chestnut Street  
Manchester, NH 03104  
phone 603-663-1007  
[www.StephenLaw.com](http://www.StephenLaw.com)

Check out  
[www.melkite.org](http://www.melkite.org)  
-new educational  
material is posted  
regularly!

**Your message  
here-  
\$300/year**



**Your Ad Here  
\$300 per Year**