

# St. John of the Desert Melkite Catholic Church



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Text the word "DESERT" to 84576 to sign up for Parish Updates  
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**Very Rev. Father Peter Boutros** | Pastor | FrPeter@Typicon.com

**Rev. Father Zyad Abyad** | Associate Pastor | FrZyad@icloud.com

**Rev. Deacon Marion Rimmer** | marionmrimmer@mail.com

**Kh. Simone Boutros** | simone@Typicon.com

**Kh. Jocelyn Abyad** | jabyad@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 2, 2025  
ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD



PLEASE JOIN US AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY  
FOR FAMILY CATECHESIS

## LITURGY INTENTIONS

For the Health & Salvation of Fr. Alam Alam

For the Health & Salvation of Kathy Richards by Kh. Simone

For the Health & Salvation of Sirach Roberts by Fr. Zyad and Kh. Jocelyn

For the Health & Salvation of Matilda Dingott by Fr. Zyad and Kh. Jocelyn

For the Health & Salvation of Kh. Simone by Arlette Khouzam

For the Repose of the Soul of George Bitar by Dunia Bitar

For the Repose of the Soul of Azar Afisa & Dunia Hattar by Abir & Bashar Dababneh

For the Repose of the Soul of Lisa Marie McCarthy

To request a Divine Liturgy intention, go to our website: [www.stjohnofthedesert.com](http://www.stjohnofthedesert.com)  
Requests must be submitted by Thursday to be included in the Sunday bulletin.

Readings  
of the Day

EPISTLE: HEBREWS 7:7-17

GOSPEL: LUKE 2:22-40

THE EPISTLE AND GOSPEL WILL BE READ IN ENGLISH AND REPEATED IN ARABIC



## THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

**Friday, February 7**

**9:00am Byzikids Homeschool Co Op**

**Saturday, February 8**

**5:00pm Faith Foundations**- Vespers, Potluck & Bible Study

**Sunday, February 9**

**10:20am Divine Liturgy** followed by Men's Group

Commemorating: +Lisa Marie McCarthy

## PRAYER REQUESTS

May our prayers bring healing and hope to those in our community who are sick, especially: Katharina Rimmer, Mary McGehee, Jose Serna, Penny Koppel, Maddie Carey, Marilyn Baiad, Nicholas Baiad, Fadia Loegering, Mary Popovich, Kh. Simone Boutros, Kathy Slonka, Dcn. Marion Rimmer, Paul Davis & Khalil Haker  
(Names remain on the prayer list for six weeks, please call the parish office to add any names)

## St. John of the Desert is Expanding!

Please help support the project and be a part of creating a beautiful home for our families for years to come! Scan the QR code to donate today!

Donate  
Now!



Church Expansion

# UPCOMING EVENTS & FINANCIAL UPDATES

Ladies Guild: February 16, 2025 Following Liturgy  
 Men's Group: March 9, 2025 Following Liturgy  
 Family Catechesis: March 2, 2025 @ 9:30 am  
 Forerunner Program: February 23, 2025 @12:30 pm  
 Byzikids & Byziteens: March 7, 2025 @ 9:00 am  
 Women at the Well: February 21, 2025 @ 9:30 am  
 Crafty Ladies: March 5, 2025 @ 10:30 am  
 Faith Foundations: March 8, 2025 @ 5:00 pm

Attendance: 124  
 Collection of January 26, 2025  
 Tithe: \$1,975.00 \* Stole Offering \$50.00  
 Coffee Collection:\$45.00 \* Candles: \$250.00  
 Flowers \$0.00 \* Bulletin Ad: \$0.00  
 Building Fund: \$10.00 \* Other: \$1,820.00  
 Online Giving: \$1,596.09  
**Income Needed Weekly: \$1,853.00**

## SPIRITUAL REFLECTION


**False prophets are known by their bad fruit...** What kind of fruit is your life bearing?

**From Holy Scripture...** Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits. (Matthew 7:15-20)

**In God's presence, consider...** Am I putting this Scripture passage into practice in my own life, discerning good fruit from bad? Am I vigilant to the dangers inherent in following the cult of personality? Do I put my trust in human beings or in God?




**Closing prayer...** Lord, protect me from the wiles of false prophets, and keep me from becoming one myself. Let me always bear only good fruit that is rich in truth and beauty and is pleasing to you.

*(Madrid, A Year with the Bible: Scriptural Wisdom for Daily Living.)*

Byzikids offers support to homeschoolers of all ages and stages! Infant to Teens are all welcome to join us! The Parents receive support as well!

1st Friday of Every Month  
 9:00am to 11:30am  
 Contact Kh. Jocelyn to join  
 jabyad@gmail.com

*Divine Liturgy & Memorial*  
**Saturday of the Dead**  
 February 22, 2025 at 10:00am

Holy Redeemer Cemetery  
 23015 N Cave Creek Rd  
 Phoenix, AZ 85024

Join us as we pray for all those who have died and bless the graves of our loved ones.

Celebrated on February 2nd, the Meeting of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is described in Luke 2:22-40. Forty days after His birth, Jesus was brought to the Temple at Jerusalem to fulfill the Jewish custom.

At this time the righteous Elder Simeon was living in Jerusalem. It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he beheld the promised Messiah. Saint Simeon received the divine Child in his arms, and giving thanks to God, he spoke the words repeated by the Church each evening at Vespers: "Now, Lord, you may dismiss your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all the peoples, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and glory for your people Israel." (Luke 2:29-32)

Also present in the Temple was Saint Anna the Prophetess. She gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who were looking for redemption of Jerusalem (Luke 2:38). In the icon of the Feast she holds a scroll which reads: "This Child has established Heaven and earth."



## Memorial Wheat Cooking Class

The Ladies Guild invites you  
to join us in Davis Hall on  
Friday, February 21, 2025 at 6:30pm



## House Blessings

SCHEDULE  
SOON!  
BLESSINGS  
MUST BE DONE  
BEFORE  
MARCH 1, 2025!

It is traditional after the Feast of Theophany to have your home blessed by the priest. Please make an appointment by calling or emailing Fr. Peter or Fr. Zyad.

### Friendly Reminders:

We like to keep it simple. By opening your home, you have already done something wonderful and beautiful. Keep your preparations simple so that we can focus on spending time together and praying.

A meal is not required and donations are optional. The blessing of the home is a gift from God and like all gifts, it is free. You may choose to offer something back to God for his blessings by giving to the church.



TITHE HERE



time, talent & treasure



VOLUNTEER



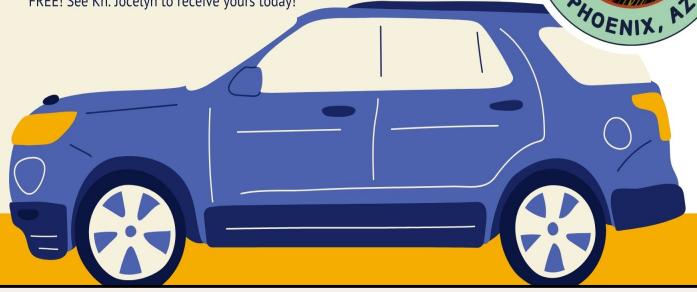
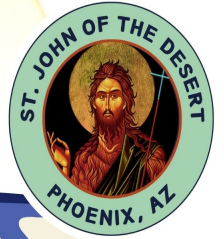
# Faith Foundations

Vespers, Potluck & Bible Study  
2nd Saturday of each month  
5pm to 8pm

# ST. JOHN CAR MAGNETS

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD!

FREE! See Kh. Jocelyn to receive yours today!



# Women at the Well

Meets the 3rd Friday of every month  
from 9:30am to 11:00am.

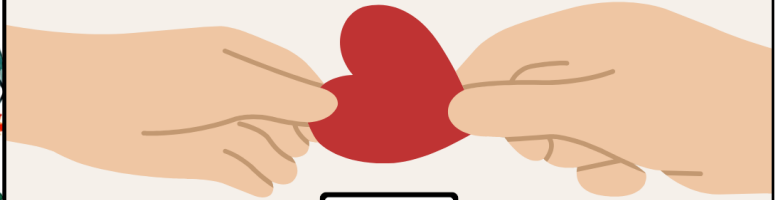
Contact Kh. Jocelyn for complete details!

[jabyad@gmail.com](mailto:jabyad@gmail.com)

or text 480-234-9974

# 5X MATCH

PLEASE HELP OUR CHURCH TO EXPAND BY DONATING TO OUR BUILDING FUND—OUR MATCHING DONATION IS STILL AVAILABLE!



Church Expansion



HOLY MYSTERY OF  
CONFESSION FOLLOWED BY

# Great Vespers

THIRD SATURDAY  
OF EVERY MONTH

CONFESSIONS BEGIN AT 4PM  
VESPERS TO FOLLOW AT 5PM

The Great Fast is almost here...  
Do you have a plan?!



# Parish Groups

## **Ladies Guild (Leader: Veronica Quednau, email v.e.quednau1@gmail.com)**

This group plans, reviews and coordinates our celebrations and social activities, including fundraising for the maintenance and sustenance of the Body of Christ. They promote hospitality and respond to the requests of the Parish.

## **Men's Group (Leader: John Nasser, email johnknasser@gmail.com)**

This group advises the Pastor on pastoral, spiritual, financial and maintenance matters.

## **Family Catechesis & Forerunner Program (Leaders: All Clergy and Educators)**

We are called to guide our children on the path towards Christ. On the first and last Sunday of each month, following the Divine Liturgy, both children and parents receive religious instruction.

## **Byzikids Home Educators Group (Leader: Kh. Jocelyn, email jabyad@gmail.com)**

This is an Eastern Christian homeschool Co-Op which seeks to provide support and encouragement to families as they live out their faith. They support each other, pray, and share crafts and activities that enrich their homeschool education.

## **Women at the Well (Leader: Kh. Jocelyn, email jabyad@gmail.com)**

Women of all ages gather to discuss a spiritual reflection and support each other.

## **Crafty Ladies (Leader: Kh. Simone, email simone@typicon.com)**

The Crafty Ladies work together to create beautiful blankets which are donated to various organizations throughout the state.

They conclude their gathering by going out together for lunch.

## **Society of Publicans (Leader: Deacon Marion, email marionmrimmer@mail.com)**

This is a prayer group that dedicates themselves to pray for the intentions of our Parish, the intentions of our Diocese, and our sister Churches in the United States. A weekly email is sent to the members of this group.

**STAY UP  
TO DATE**

**TEXT THE WORD "DESERT" TO 84576  
OR SCAN THE QR CODE!**



# Parish Guidelines

**MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING** - Members registered at St. John of the Desert and attend the Divine Liturgy at least three weekends each month, participate in the community life of the parish and contribute generously of their time, talent and treasure. **Members over eighteen years of age must be registered separately from their families.**

**MYSTERIES OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION (Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist)** - Expectant parents should contact the pastor prior to the birth of the child. The priest can come to pray over the baby and mother in the days after birth. After forty days, Churching Prayers welcome the baby for the first time and the mother back to Church. To request the Mysteries of Initiation (Baptism), parents must be members in good standing and attend baptism preparation with the Godparents. At least one Godparent must be a member in good standing of a Melkite Church. The other Godparent may be a Catholic or Orthodox Christian in good standing.

**MYSTERY OF HOLY CROWNING** - Couples who wish to be married at St. John of the Desert must be members in good standing. They should contact the pastor prior to setting the date or making any other arrangements and at least six months prior to the desired date. They will need to complete our marriage preparation program. The Byzantine wedding ceremony begins in the narthex of the Church and does not feature the father walking the daughter down the main aisle. The couple approaches the Holy Mystery together as equals. There are no vows exchanged in the Byzantine Crowning ceremony.

**MYSTERY OF HOLY CONFESSION** - You may go to confession before or after most services in the Church. To make an appointment for confession, please call the office.

**MYSTERY OF HOLY ANOINTING** - Upon the request of the ill person or his/her immediate family only.

**FUNERALS** - When someone passes away in your family, please contact the Pastor prior to making any arrangements with the Funeral Home. There are no eulogies given in Church. Family and friends may deliver eulogies at the mercy meal.

**There is no charge for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, however, an offering of thanksgiving is customary. For members in good standing, we suggest a donation of \$300 for Baptism, \$600 for Wedding, \$600 for Funeral, \$75 for Memorial, and \$10 for Remembrance. The use of the Davis Hall for members in good standing is \$250 and \$100 for cleaning (an extra \$100 for Insurance may be required, check with the Pastor)**



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