

**Our Lady of Mercy Maronite Catholic Church**

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Dear Our Lady of Mercy Parish family,

May the Lord give you His peace! I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good spirits.

As I begin this letter, I realize that I have been with you for less than 4 months! However, so much has happened to enrich our Parish and prayer lives. I am happy to report: Increased hours of Eucharistic Adoration, Saj Sunday, Major Fundraising Event, and an All Saints Day Party. I am truly humbled and grateful to be your servant, and know none of this can happen without your support, thank you.

Despite the challenges of transition and a major renovation taking place at the same time, with all gratitude to God, I am very pleased to say that there are so many positive things happening at Our Lady of Mercy! As Mother Lucille, CFR used to say “it’s a great life but the best is yet to come.” Yes, the best is yet to come and there are so many exciting things planned for our community and beyond. To name few:

- Arabic school Program beginning in January 2025.
- Our hall is available now for rental.
- God willing, we will have our first festival June 13-15. Please save the date and know we will need everyone to participate to make it a success. It will be a great time, I am certain.

Currently, so much is taking place: Adrian Bassim and the Pastoral Council are efficiently coordinating all the events in our parish. Aline Khoury and the Finance Council continue to oversee the financial aspects of our parish life. They are diligently working to make sure we are no longer in the red zone. This is why Tony Chamoun, on behalf of the council, spoke at the end of Divine Liturgy several weeks ago. If you recall he has asked every family’s cooperation by contributing \$50 per week. This will allow us to cover the parish monthly expenses. The Maintenance team is working on various projects around the parish, as the financial situation allows. We also established a Social Events Committee. We are working to revitalize the Maronite Young Adults (MYA), and the Maronite Youth Organization (MYO).

I am working with our Maronite Servants of Christ the Light to start a program for our younger children (age 12 and younger).

I am also hoping to establish a Hospitality Committee, an Altar Boys Group, a Women’s Organization, Men’s organization and an Ushers’ Committee in 2025. These additions will help our Parish Family to work even better in many ways.

At the end of the month of November, I hope many of you will join me in 33 Days to Morning Glory A Do-It Yourself Retreat. This is a great book by Fr. Michael Gaitley and a beautiful preparation to consecrate ourselves, our families and our parish community to Jesus through Our Lady on January 1st. I can’t think of a better way to bring in the New Year of 2025.

We know Rome was not built in one day. To make our parish thrive again will take time, prayers, sacrifices and everyone's cooperation and commitment, using the talents God has given each one of us. **"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work among you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus."** (Philippians 1:6). This work is not just in the immediate future, but for the long term and future of our parish. For this reason, I want to be sure that our financial arrangements are sustainable. I will need your help and appeal again for your financial support at the end of this year. Since my arrival, you have shown staggering generosity to Marise and I and for the parish, for which I can NEVER thank you enough. I am very confident that you will continue to provide financially, and help fulfill the goals we all have for Our Lady of Mercy Maronite Catholic Church. We all know that God will NOT be outdone in generosity.

Remember **"Whatever you do, do from the heart, as for the Lord and not for others, knowing that you will receive from the Lord the due payment of the inheritance"** (Colossians 3:23-24) and **"God loves a cheerful giver"** (2 Corinthians 9:7)

Together we have already accomplished so much. I look forward to continuing God's great work for our parish to flourish in faith. I will work with all of you to be sure EVERYONE feels loved, welcomed and cared for and that this is their home.

I thank you again for your great generosity to keep our parish safe and able to grow.

May God bless you for your support!

I wish you and your loved ones a very blessed, joyful and bountiful Thanksgiving.

Your faithful servant,

Father Peter