



ST. ELIAS MARONITE CHURCH

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January 4, 2021

Dear St. Elias Parish:

After much discussion, prayers and consideration concerning the planned events for January 16-17th, 2021 concerning the retirement celebration for Father Richard as pastor of St. Elias Church, the following decisions have been made due to continuing concerns with the COVID Pandemic:

1. Postponing the planned banquet to Honor Father Richard until tentatively the Saturday before the 2021 St. Elias Picnic, July 24th, 2021. We would roll any tickets already purchased to this event and will gladly refund anyone who wants a refund at this time. Just Contact the church office.
2. After the 5 pm Liturgy on January 16th celebrated by Father Richard and the Bishop, a 30-45 minute presentation in the church will occur. It will be livestreamed to the parish and consists of talks from Father Richard, Bishop Elias, Abouna Peter and presentations of some awards and gifts to Father Richard from the parish. We will have overflow in the Hall. Seating in the church will be limited on a first come first served basis.
3. After the 10:30 am Liturgy, which will also be celebrated by Father Richard and the Bishop on January 17th, 2021, a public reception until 2:30 pm in the church hall will occur. The attendance will be limited inside the hall at any one given time by holding people at the entrance doors if the crowd inside is too large and requiring all participants to be masked and socially distanced. A small box of sweets and commemorative prayer card will be given out as a parting thank you for all attendees.

We know that some parishioners will be disappointed that we are having to modify our plans for this special weekend but hope that everyone understands the circumstances warrant that we make adjustments while still having a true transition as Father Richard retires as Pastor of St. Elias Church after 48 years as pastor and 49 years as a priest.

Norman E. Bolus,
Special Task Force Chair for the St. Elias Pastoral Council to Honor Father Richard