

# ***St. George Maronite Catholic Church Chronology***

## ***1911-2014***

- May 1911                      Representatives of the community, led by Elias Rukas, a successful early settler, and including among others: Michael and Joseph Hanna, Joseph Badway, Michael Joseph, Louis Ziter George, Assad Michael, and a Mr. Bu Kalid, petitioned Bishop Harkins for a Maronite Church of their own and were granted their request. The Church was located at 85 America Street in Providence.
- July, 1911                      Father Joseph Ganem was the first Maronite Priest assigned to St. George.
- August, 1922                      Father Ganem left the Parish because he was reassigned to St. Elias Maronite Church in Birmingham, Alabama.
- April, 1923                      Reverend Nematallah Gideon became the second Pastor of St. George.
- May, 1944                      Church mortgage was cancelled. Initiated by Nosseff Joseph a group of men including Joseph Thomas, Louis Lobris, Mansour Badway, Ablan Haskell, Assad Murray and others who were assigned sectional areas, agreed upon collecting an assessment of \$75.00 from each family. This vast venture took almost an entire year.
- August, 1947                      Father Giddeon passed away and Father John Tully came to administer the Parish.
- December, 1948                      A new electric organ was purchased for the church.
- July, 1949                      The Altar Rosary Society was canonically established.
- November, 1949                      Father John Tully left the Parish.
- December, 1949                      Father Peter S. Hobeika came from Lebanon to become Pastor of St. George.
- March, 1954                      As a general exemption from provisions of the 4th Diocesan Synod, members of the parish were granted permission to be married on Sunday.
- September, 1955                      First Mahrajan was initiated by St. George Church.
- January, 1960                      Knights of Lebanon, formally known as the Knights of St. George, was formed. This society of Lebanese-Americans and friends agreed to build a hall in the neighborhood of the church, mainly for the benefit of the young generation. This did not materialize.
- June, 1961                      An appeal was made for a seminary to train Maronite Priests in Washington, DC and the Parish was assessed \$5,000 by Archbishop O'Boyle.

March, 1966	Maronite Apostolic Exarchate that was created by Pope Paul VI, appointed Bishop Francis M. Zayek the first Maronite Apostolic Exarch in the United States. The headquarters of the Maronite See was in Detroit, Michigan.
1970 - 1971	First formal Parish Council was created.
1973	Regional convention among Providence, Fall River and New Bedford churches was held. This was a liturgical and social conference concerning the youth organization mainly related to adapting the Liturgy to the youth of the church. The convention closed with a Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Zayek on "Father Hobeika Day" at the Venus DeMilo Restaurant. This event was attended by high ranking government and clerical officials.
April, 1977	Fr. Hobeika contacted Bishop Frederick Belden of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island regarding the sale of Trinity Episcopal Church in Pawtucket. Several meetings with Reverend Bruce Jacobson and his church council were held regarding the purchase details.
June, 1977	St. George Church entered into a purchase agreement.
October, 1977	Fr. Hobeika, Elias Badway, General Chairman, and Judge Raymond Thomas met with Bishop Belden's representative, Dr. Percy Hodgson and finalized transfer of title to St. George Maronite Catholic Church.
November, 1977	Dedication of the St. George Maronite Catholic Church and named by the Building Committee, out of respect for their Pastor, was "Hobeika Hall".
April, 1983	Father Peter S. Hobeika was elevated to Monsignor.
May, 1983	Monsignor Hobeika passed away and Father William Hakeem became temporary administrator until August 1983.
August, 1983	Father Paul F. Mouawad became Pastor of St. George.
December, 1983	Festivities related to the retirement of the Church mortgage with 310 parishioners and friends in attendance at the El Morocco Club in Johnston.
January, 1984	The 200 Club was formed and became a good source of income for the Church. This Club fostered togetherness through the monthly gatherings that were held.
January, 1986	Two new Icons were added in the sanctuary, dating back to the 5th Century, from the Gospel of Rabboula. These were donated by Mrs. Lena Khoury and family in memory of her late husband, Nabih.
April, 1986	Bishop Nasrallah Peter Sfeir was made Patriarch, the 76th of Maronite hierarchy.
May, 1986	A rectory on Walcott Street in Pawtucket, RI was purchased to provide additional facilities to our clergy and Bishop.

May, 1986	Family of the late Elias Badway established a Memorial Scholarship Fund to assist Maronite seminarians. The Foundation received \$2,335. They also donated \$500 to purchase a cross to be placed above the altar. That was the wish of the Building Fund Chairman before his untimely death on March 9, 1986.
June, 1986	The Diamond Jubilee Anniversary of St. George Maronite Catholic Church was celebrated with Vespers and a recital dinner at the church hall. A Grand Banquet was held at the Venus DeMilo in Swansea, Massachusetts.
August, 1986	Church Bulletin #135- Estate of the late Monsignor Peter S. Hobeika. A net of \$29,767.97 was deposited in a special savings account in the name of the church.
September, 1991	St. George Maronite Catholic Church hosted the NAM Regional Convention.
May, 1995	A new rectory, located at 50 Summit Street in Pawtucket was purchased.
July, 1996	St George Maronite Catholic Church Hosted NAM National Convention.
March, 1999	The Parish celebrated the 50th Anniversary of its St. Joseph's Hafli, which is its annual major fundraising event.
November, 2001	90th Anniversary Celebration.
January, 2003	The former Rectory located on Walcott Street was sold.
October, 2005	St. George Maronite Catholic Church destroyed by fire. The Holy Liturgy was temporarily held at the To Kalon Club.
November, 2005	St. Raymond's Church in Providence, RI offers to share their church for our needs.
January, 2006	A Building Search Committee was formed to look for a Church to purchase and convert or to put together a plan and budget to build a new Church.
July, 2006	The departure of Father Paul F. Mouawad, Pastor since August 1983, and the arrival of Father Edward T. Nedder as Pastor.
May, 2007	Twin River Road Rectory and Property purchased.
October, 2011	Centennial Celebration of St. George's Maronite Catholic Church.
November, 2010	The decision was made to abandon the plan to build a new Church, and instead purchase one that could be renovated according to the Maronite Rite.
December, 2012	Negotiations began with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence for a Purchase and Sales Agreement to purchase St. Ann's Church in Cranston, RI.

- April, 2013                    The Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, NY entered into an agreement with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence, RI to purchase the Church and Rectory of St. Ann's Parish in Cranston, RI.
- June, 2013                    The purchase was completed and became the new home of St. George Maronite Catholic Church.
- July, 2013                    The first Maronite Liturgy was celebrated on July 6, 2013. Fr. Ed will continue to celebrate weekly Roman Catholic Masses for the Parishioners of St. Ann, and extends a warm welcome to all.
- September, 2014            St. George hosts its first Annual Food Festival at the Church in Cranston, RI.
- October, 2014                The dedication of Saint George Maronite Catholic Church, Cranston, RI, was consecrated with a Liturgy of Thanksgiving celebrated by the Most Reverend Gregory John Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn, New York, on October 5<sup>th</sup> with Father Edward T. Nedder as Concelebrant.