

The History of the St. George Memorial Ad Book & Annual Hafli

In the late 1940's, Bedea Badway, made a promise to St. Joseph to collect funds enough to support a Church Dinner and gathering for parishioners of St. George Maronite Catholic Church. Bedea became the "Foundress" of what became known as "The St. Joseph Hafli". She was helped by Etta Alia and her committee, who went out and solicited friends, family, and parishioners, for small donations to make this a reality. These donations were compiled into a list of donors which was printed and passed out at the Hafli that year, and was known as the "Program Book".

In early 1965, Rose Mansour established 'The Memorial Ad Book' of the St. Joseph's Hafli for St. George Maronite Catholic Church, now located in Cranston, RI. With love, support and encouragement from her beloved husband, Joseph, and the installation of multiple phone lines, Rose worked diligently and persistently throughout the year. She contacted, hand-wrote and edited all returned ads from her husband's many business associates, parishioners and friends of St. George Church.

Rose enjoyed many years of great success generating a substantial amount of funds for the St. Joseph's Memorial Ad Book. On December 24th, 1976, at the Christmas Midnight Mass on America Street in Providence, RI, Father Peter Hobeika awarded Rose Mansour for her outstanding service to St. George's Church with the Massabki Medal from His Excellency, Bishop Francis Mansour Zayek.

Bede, Etta and Rose's passion, hard work, and dedication to the 'Program Book/Memorial Ad Book' of the St. Joseph's Hafli made it what it is today... a perpetual, successful revenue stream that annually supports the St. Joseph's Hafli and their beloved St. George Church.

Upon Rose's retirement, the torch was passed into the very capable hands of many dedicated parishioners who follow in her footsteps.

Besides the Memorial Ad Book, there were many others coordinating facets which contributed to the success of the Hafli. Countless volunteers, men and women, worked tirelessly in the kitchen helping to prepare volumes of delicious Lebanese foods. Everything was done in-house. Parishioners created the publicity campaigns, printed the tickets, controlled the traffic at the door, decorated the halls, created raffles, oversaw security, and were accountable for all the funds generated. Many of our parishioners contributed with their vocal and instrumental talents to make the Hafli come to life.

Throughout the years, a myriad of devoted parishioners have volunteered immeasurable amounts of time, talent, resources, and funds, determined to follow the legacy that Bedea, Etta and Rose established. Their goal was to insure that annually, the Memorial AD Book and the Hafli would

continue to grow and flourish as the major successful source of revenue for St. George Maronite Catholic Church, while it was being enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately, time passes without concern or regard to memory. Those precious gifts given by others are left up to us to preserve. We have lost too many loved ones, too many of our priceless records were lost in the fire, and our memories have faded. It is simply an impossible task to mention everyone who has assisted in making each annual Hafli a success; but, we can reflect on our own family members who dedicated themselves over these many years in support of our St. Joseph Hafli. St George is a family, a family that works together tirelessly, not for fame or recognition, but for the benefit and preservation of our St. George Church heritage and legacy.

Today, on the milestone occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the St. Joseph's Hafli, it is with great pride and joy to acknowledge that 'The Memorial Ad Book' and the Hafli continue to move forward successfully with the next generation of dedicated and faithful parishioners, setting the example for future generations of the St. George Maronite Catholic family to follow.