

Historical Summary Of St. Peter's Maronite Catholic Church In Windsor

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The Maronites 1920 - 2003. In the 1920's driven by their faith and ambition the first Maronite immigrants of Lebanon built St. Peter's Church at the location of Parent and Niagara Streets. The construction of this church was completed on February 7th 1924, on the feast of St. Maron. Growth and changes continued to occur in the following decades. The first Pastor was Monsignor Peter Farah. He arrived in Windsor from Hasroun Lebanon, in September 1923, and was granted permission by Bishop M.F. Fallon of the Windsor and London Diocese to administer his ministry among the Lebanese people of Windsor and surrounding areas.

On February 25th 1925, a commemorative plaque was placed in the church to recognize specifically the generosity of Mr. Louis Peters and his wife.

In October 1927, Msgr. Farah took a leave of absence and was temporarily replaced by Father Paul Carom until December 15th 1927, and by Father Emanuel Hanna from the Diocese of Damascus (February 1929 to September 1929).

In 1929, Hungarian Catholics and their pastor, Father John Mahy used St. Peter's Church as they waited for their own to be built. During this time, His Beatitude the Maronite Patriarch Elias Hoyawek recalled Msgr. Peter Farah to Lebanon where plans to build an orphanage and hospital.

In November 1930, Father J. Helou of the Maronite Order accepted the ministry in Windsor until June 10th 1932. Father Helou served both the ministries in Windsor, while at the same time serving St. Maron's Parish in Detroit. Msgr. Peter Farah, returned in 1932 and remained at St. Peter's until 1936, when he was appointed Pastor of St. Maron's in Minneapolis Minnesota U.S.A.

In April 1936 Father Sylvanus Abou Jowdy O.A.M. (Antonin Order) was appointed pastor, transferred from St. Maron in Minneapolis to Windsor. He served his community until his death on May 12th 1953. From June 1953 until December 1953 Msgr. J.J. White served as administrative priest.

In 1954 Joseph Fares Rizk from Atlanta U.S.A. was appointed pastor. For sixteen years he served the Maronite communities of Windsor and Essex County until his accidental death in May 5, 1970.

1970 - 1978

In 1970 Father John Dahdah O.A.M. (Antonin Order) was named administrator and later Pastor. He served from 1970 - 1978. His knowledge, talent, philosophy, and ambitious personality made a difference in the evangelization of the Maronite Rite and its community in Windsor. He was instrumental in the invitation and the establishing of the Antonin Order in Windsor, from the homeland in Lebanon. This eventually led to the founding of the Antonin Order's Monastery at Highway # 3 and Outer Drive in Oldcastle, for the education and training of monks and priests.

The civil war in Lebanon (which technically started in April 1975) altered the aims and objectives of the Antonin Order during its building formation on this location money was no longer available from Lebanon to carry out the long term objectives, that was invested in the land and house.

1978 - 1983

In September 1978 Father John Sader O.A.M. was assigned to St. Peter's as Pastor and Father Cesar Ashkar A.O.M. as co-pastor. Both of these priests were initially assigned from Lebanon to establish the Antonin Order at the Oldcastle location. Their service to the Maronite community had a stabilizing effect during the difficult assignments of priests to St. Peter's.

On November 30 1982, Father Cesar Ashkar was transferred back to Lebanon. Father Charbel Chidiac O.A.M. succeeded Father Cesar Ashkar, for a short term as assistant to Father John Sader, he then moved to Toronto, Ontario to establish Our Lady of Lebanon Church.

1986

Later on in this historical story, there arose a "Schism" among the parishioners of St. Peter's and the bishop, of the newly founded Maronite Diocese of Canada in Montreal. The problem was never resolved by the ad interior administration.

The result was that the Maronites of St. Peter's experienced an exodus of most of its founding and established families -

and in particular the "chartered" member families - which eventually led to the building of St. Charbel's Church at the Monastery location.

1990 - 2008

On May 1, 1990, Father Joseph Salame was appointed pastor at our parish. Father Joseph was born in Beirut, Lebanon on April 2, 1958. He attended the University of the Holy spirit and graduated with a degree in Theology. He was ordained on September 16, 1984 by His Excellency, Michael Doumitt. Father Joseph came to Windsor after a very successful assignment as pastor of Our Lady Of Lebanon Church in Quebec City.

On December 04, 1994, Father Joseph Salame was elevated to the rank of Periodut (Monsignor) for his untiring service, his many accomplishments and his love for our parish.

On October 18, 1992, Raymond Mady, a second generation parishioner, was ordained Deacon by Bishop George Abi Saber.



Acquisition of St. Clare of Assisi Church

On July 24th 2000 the Maronite Catholic community of Windsor purchased this rare and beautiful Art-Deco-Style Church and celebrated the first mass according to the Maronite liturgy on December 17th 2000.

Heritage Designation

On December 15th 2000 the Council of the Corporation of the City of Windsor designated the property, including lands and buildings a property of architectural and historical value under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Consecration of New Church

On March 23rd 2001 the Patriarch of Antioch and the Whole East and the Maronite Catholic Cardinal Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir brought great honour to the community by consecrating the "new" Church during his historical visit to the Maronite community of Windsor, Canada.

The Founding Of The Eparchy - Maronite Diocese Of Canada

Prior to the establishment of the Canadian Maronite Diocese in September 1982 and the appointment of its First Bishop His Excellency Elias Shaheen, St. Peter's had been under the jurisdiction of the London Diocese shepherded by five Latin Bishops; Bishop M.F. Fallon, Bishop J.T. Kidd, Bishop J.C. Cody, Bishop G.E. Carter, Bishop J.M. Sherlock and the present Bishop Donald Fabbro the community grew and matured in holiness.

After six years as the first bishop of our Diocese, Elias Shaheen was succeeded by Bishop George Abi Saber, in January 1995, Bishop Youssif Khoury bishop of the Maronites in Europe was appointed administrator for the Maronite Diocese in Canada. In February 21, 1996, he was appointed Bishop and enthroned as Eparch in Notre Dame Montreal February 9, 1997.

2008 - 2010

On March 2, 2008, Father Charles Saad was appointed pastor at our parish. Father Charles was born in Tourza, Lebanon on October 13 1967. He was ordained priest on September 26, 1992

1992- Received Holy Sacrament of Ordination by His Excellency Msgr. Francis Baisarri, Nov. 26.

2005- Publication of the book "The Marriage of Islam and Christianity" Jan.9 by publisher Harmattan of Paris (777 pages) (www.alapalage.com)

- Fr. Charles Saad was appointed: Pastor at our parish (Saint Peter's) and also at Saint Elias Parish (London, Ontario).

2010- Present:

