

People Are Born To Shine!

A newsletter rooted in the Christian faith created to inspire and support all people, irrespective of nationality, race, and religion.



ACTS OF KINDNESS

Christmas Caroling for a Cause 2011



For the second consecutive year, the “**Christmas Caroling For A Cause**” concert was organized in collaboration with The Naji Cherfan Foundation (NCF). The purpose was to share the spirit of Christmas and to reach all children, especially vulnerable kids coming from the poorest of the poor families and orphanages. This beautiful initiative was started by Patricia Cherfan, Co-Founder of The NCF.



Everyone deserves a joyous, merry Christmas.

Our mission was to celebrate with our children the true spirit of Christmas. It is the most wonderful time of the year. And yet, for others, it is a season to survive, a season of loneliness and sorrow. Everyone deserves a joyous, merry Christmas.

This unique event **mobilized 800 people from Lebanon and abroad**. The choir consisted of **mothers, daughters, sons and grandmothers**. Choir members came from various professional backgrounds including doctors, lawyers, architects, psychologists, cinematographers, producers, media professionals, IT specialists, business women, civil society activists and full-time mothers. The choir was conducted by the Choirmaster and Composer, **Reverend Father Khalil Rahme**. The stage direction was provided by **Ranya Rahbany**.

The **100 people on stage** who made up the symphonic band and choir were all committed to spending a different kind of Christmas. This year, the **Symphonic Band of LeBAM** was the accompanying youth orchestra **conducted by Serghei Bolun**. LeBAM, Lebanese Band Association for the promotion of Music, is the brainchild of Ghassan Moukhaiber and was created in collaboration with Ghassan Tueni and the late Dr. Walid Gholmieh, former director of the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music. From LeBAM, there were **50 musicians on stage**, ages 7 to 17 years old. For further info, please visit www.lebam.org.

We were honored to have guest performers from **The Lebanese School for The Blind and The Deaf**. Founded in 1953, the school's goal is to educate



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'Bad' Foods that are Good for you!
Foods previously banned from the healthy list are now considered good to eat.

NCF Christmas Mission 2011
It was year three of our mission visits to hospitals spreading Christmas joy.

Establish a Recycling Project
Environmentally conscious individuals choose to promote the healthy practice of recycling.

Celebrating the Birth of Jesus
A surprise Christmas visit to a family supported by NCF complete with gifts and plenty of Christmas spirit.

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NUTRITION

Five “bad” Foods that are Good for you!

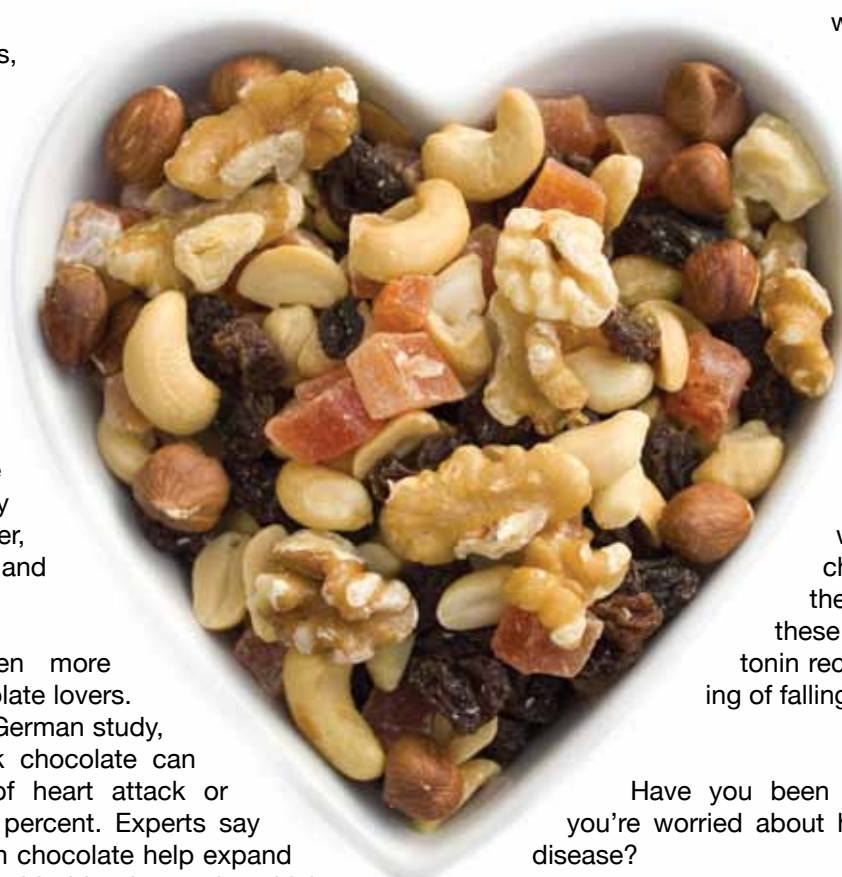
For years, there have been lists of foods that were banned for anyone wanting to be healthy. Today, some of those banned items have been moved back to the list of foods that can be eaten in moderation and some are actually considered good for you!

CHOCOLATE

In recent years, dark chocolate has been in the news for its healthy benefits. It contains an abundance of flavonoids, the same powerful antioxidants found in red wine, green tea, fruits and vegetables. Flavonoids have been associated with a decrease in the risk of coronary heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure and stroke.

Now, there’s even more good news for chocolate lovers. According to a new German study, small doses of dark chocolate can decrease the risk of heart attack or stroke by nearly 40 percent. Experts say the flavonols found in chocolate help expand the muscles found inside blood vessels, which can lead to a drop in blood pressure.

For the study which was published in the European



Heart Journal, researchers followed 20,000 people over eight years. It’s the first study to track the health benefits of chocolate over an extended period of time. But, there is always a caveat. When it comes to chocolate, it’s very easy to have too much of a good thing. Overindulgence

can lead to weight gain, which is a major risk factor for heart problems and strokes. Participants in the German study only consumed about six grams of chocolate per day, which is equivalent to one square of a chocolate bar.

Have you ever wondered why chocolate seems to be so universally loved? Apparently, it has to do with the mood-altering chemicals found within the chocolate. Experts say these chemicals trip the serotonin receptors and create a feeling of falling in love.

EGGS

Have you been avoiding eggs because you’re worried about high cholesterol or heart disease?

New research shows that healthy adults can enjoy

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Will You Further NCF’s Work?

If you like the work NCF is doing and wish to participate, we invite you to become a member of our Board. The goal is to share our inspiration and activities in your country. Please contact us for more information.

info@najicherfanfoundation.org

Quoteable!

I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world.

– Mother Teresa

NCF CHRISTMAS MISSION 2011

The Naji Cherfan Foundation Christmas Mission 2011



For the third consecutive year, The Naji Cherfan Foundation visited hospitals on December 25th. Our mission was to carol in the halls of the hospitals and celebrate the birth of Jesus with nurses, doctors, and the patients who were too sick to go home for the holidays.

The group consisted of a choir of four professional singers, conducted by Dr. Alain Chalhoub, and more than 15 volunteers from The Naji Cherfan Foundation. Father Joseph Abdel Sater, the foundation's spiritual father, led the group and gave special prayers to each patient we visited.



"Only now I felt Christmas," one lady said. "I saw Jesus in your faces tonight," another patient said. This yearly tradition brings comfort to hundreds of the sick and dying and to their families and caregivers. This year, in addition to sweets and candies, a special prayer of Saint Augustine for the sick and dying was distributed.

The hospitals toured this year were St. George Ajaltoun, Notre Dame Du Liban Jounieh, and St. Louis Maameltein (Lebanon). May the miracle of God's love and his free gift of eternal life and peace be yours this year and always. **Merry Christmas!**

Top photo: Choir conducted by Dr. Alain Chalhoub celebrating with patients.

Bottom photo: Father Joseph Abdel Sater praying with a patient.

PRAYER CORNER

Prayer for the Sick

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give your angels charge over those who sleep.

Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.

Rest your weary ones.

Bless your dying ones.

Soothe your suffering ones.

Pity your afflicted ones.

Shield your joyous ones.

And for all your love's sake. Amen.

— Prayer for Saint Augustine used by NCF volunteers during the Christmas Mission Hospital Tour this year.



Santa celebrating with the kids of the Christian Charity Association.

NCF Celebrates with the Children!

The NCF teamed up with the Christian Charity Association, Hadath to organize a Christmas event on December 26th for more than 600 children of needy families. "Christmas wouldn't have been present in their homes if they hadn't celebrated with us this year," said Mrs. Malvina Tarraf, President of the charity. The event was animated by a talented team, led by Giselle Hachem Zared of the Odeon Theater. They performed a beautiful play called TETA and offered a special discount for the event. In part, the event was made possible thanks to generous contributions made by Mr. Fadi Khalife, a board member of honor for the Christian Charity Association. **Merry Christmas!**

OUR DAILY BREAD

Choices and Consequences



*Sowing seeds of greed and hatred
Reaps corruption, loss, and pain;
But if we sow love and kindness,
We will reap eternal gain.*
—Sper

Read: Galatians 6:1-10

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.
—Galatians 6:7

BIBLE IN A YEAR: ZECHARIAH 5-8; REVELATION 19

At the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, England, the devastation of generations of enslaved men, women, and children is remembered. The price innocent people paid as a result of the greed of others is horrific, but theirs is not the only cost. Engraved in a wall of the museum is a profound observation made by Frederick Douglass, a former slave and crusader for human rights, which reads; “No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck.” In the act of dehumanizing others, we dehumanize ourselves.

The apostle Paul put it another way when he wrote, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” (Gal. 6:7) Paul’s words are a stark reminder that our choices have consequences, and that includes how we choose to treat others. When we choose to hate, that hate can return to us in the form of consequences for which we can never fully prepare. We may find ourselves alienated from others, angry with ourselves, and restricted in our ability to serve Christ effectively.

Instead, let’s choose “not [to] grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap... As we have opportunity, let us do good to all.” (vv.9-10)

The seeds we sow today determine the kind of fruit we’ll reap tomorrow.

Source: David C. Egner, *Our Daily Bread*, odb.org

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blind and deaf children and prepare them for effective participation within their communities as independent, contributing members. The event was sponsored by Audi Bank and featured Disney characters, donated by Coco Berry, who entertained the 450 children. Santa Claus was present and distributed snack boxes and gifts to all of the children!

The audience of “Christmas Caroling For A Cause” consisted of friends and deprived kids coming from the poorest of the poor families and orphanages.

BENEFICIARY ASSOCIATIONS:

- Oeuvre Social de la jeune fille du liban – les sœurs missionnaires du tres saints sacrement – Ain warka

- Ecole paradis d’enfants – Jounieh
- La colonie du Groupement Social Scout – Jounieh
- Association chrétienne caritative hadath.
- The group accompanying Father Aghapios Naous from St. Elie Orthodox Church – Rabieh



GO GREEN

Establish a Recycling Project!

Recyclebanon was formed by a group of environmentally conscious individuals who want to promote the healthy practice of recycling among Lebanese communities.

The goal is to work with schools, businesses and individuals and establish local initiatives that work on a smaller level and will eventually lead to a bigger resource chain.

ULTIMATELY, WE ASPIRE TO DO THIS BY FOCUSING ON THE FOLLOWING THREE GOALS:

1. **Make recycling easy.** By providing all the necessary resources and know-how needed, we can establish viable, long-lasting recycling systems.
2. **Make recycling information accessible.** Through being out there and involved with everyone, we can create a recycling information network that fuels enthusiasm and puts it to work.
3. **Educate, Educate, Educate!** It is vital that our children understand the impact our actions are having on the planet and how important it is to take steps to preserve our home.

WHAT WE GATHER:

1. Paper:
 - ✓ Newspapers, regular paper, magazines > Remove all scotch tape, wax and nylon covering
 - ✓ Cartons (cereal boxes, etc.) > Make sure they are flattened
 - ✓ Used copy books > No need to remove the metal spring
 - ✗ No boxes or papers with oil stains are acceptable (pizza or food boxes, etc.)
2. Plastics - Transparent:
 - ✓ All kinds of plastic transparent bottles (water, soft drinks, etc.) > Preferably crushed, but no need to remove the cap or labels
 - ✗ No cups, dirty food or oil containers
3. Plastics - Other:
 - ✓ All kinds of plastic gallon containers (detergents,



shampoos, etc.) > Preferably rinsed and crushed, but no need to remove the cap or labels

✗ No cups, dirty food or oil containers

4. Cans:
 - ✓ Soft drink cans (Pepsi, Coca Cola, Redbull, etc.) > preferably crushed
 - ✗ No canned food containers (Alwadi, etc.)

NEXT, WE'LL OUTLINE SIMPLE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO ESTABLISH A RECYCLING PROJECT IN YOUR OFFICE.

1. **Program Approval**
 - If your office manager is not informed, getting prior approval will be important. Change will be visible in the office.
2. **Recyclable Material**
 - Perform a waste assessment in your office and determine the types of waste produced. (paper, plastics, metals, etc.)
 - Consider ways to reduce the waste that is being produced.
 - For remaining waste items, think about what more you could recycle.
3. **Containers**
 - Determine how many recycling containers you will need. Generally, one container should be enough for two desks.
4. **Transportation**
 - Figure out how the collected materials will be transported to the nearest recycling company.
 - Determining how frequently it needs to be done and who will take on the task.
 - Is there a company car available?
 - Contact the recycling companies in your area and

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NCF Christmas Tour Celebrating the Birth of Jesus with a Family in Their Home

On Sunday, December 11, 2011, NCF volunteers and Santa Claus switched gears to prepare some special gifts, sweets, and lots of Christmas spirit for a surprise visit to a family supported by NCF during the year. The family of five was very excited and happy to welcome the volunteers. They were thrilled to be celebrating Christmas with a twist this year!

The happiness shown by the three children cannot be translated into words. These gifts might be the only ones they receive during the whole year. Thank you to the NCF volunteers and to Elias Abou Chedid for playing the part of Santa!

Mother Theresa wrote: "What we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not in the ocean,

I think the ocean would be less because of that missing drop".

Thank you to The NCF for making this visit joyful. Jesus is born! Halleluiah!

Source: *Diala Ghostine Nassrany*



The family receiving Christmas gifts from NCF volunteers.



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check on the options.

5. **Launching**

- Send an email to everyone providing details about the recycling project.
- Place wall posters in key areas to remind people to recycle while at work. Simple, eye-catching wall posters will do!

6. **Continuation**

- Monitor the project and engage as many colleagues as possible.
- Send reminder emails on a regular basis.

7. **General tips to follow!**

- Ink jet printers should be equipped with refillable ink cartridges. You will be able to use recyclable and recycled toner cartridges.
- Do two sided printing and copying.
- Review the materials your office purchases. Determine if they have recycled content, if they are recyclable or if there is a recyclable/recycled substitute.
- Conduct a review of all the reports and forms your company generates with the goal of reducing the

size and identifying unnecessary documents and paper.

- Make only necessary copies.

When built into your daily routine, these simple yet practical steps can greatly reduce the impact your offices has on the planet and help preserve it for generations to come.

For more information about the project, or to take part and/or start an initiative around you, please contact recyclebanon@gmail.com.

The Recyclebanon Team

The NCF is planning to initiate a recycling project within its Go Green projects. The objective is to find ways to recycle spiritual objects such as burnt religious candles, old bibles, torn Saints pictures, and used rosaries. The NCF will liaise with eco-friendly NGOs to formulate a sustainable approach to which all churches and communities at large can be linked.

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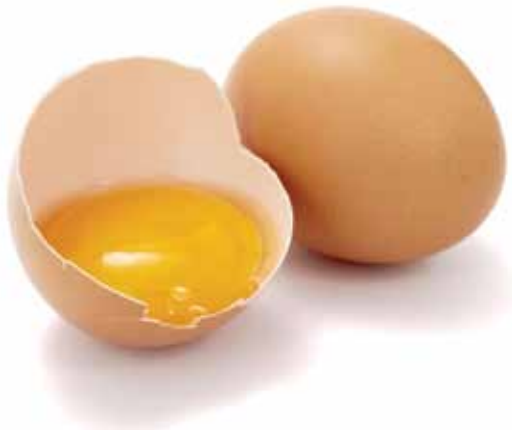
an egg every day without increasing their risk of heart disease. According to the American Heart Association, the lutein found in egg yolks actually protects against the progress of early heart disease.

Experts say eggs, which contain only about 70 calories each, are loaded with vitamins and minerals that maintain good vision and foster brain development and function, among other things. They are also a good source of high quality protein and one of the few foods containing vitamin D naturally. And, there are no nutritional differences between brown and white eggs.

AVOCADOS

The avocado, once banished for its high fat content, has made a comeback. While it's true the delicious, buttery fruit is high in fat and contains about 30 grams within a medium-sized avocado, nutritionists also say most of the fat is monounsaturated, or the 'good' kind, which actually lowers cholesterol.

Studies have also shown that avocados are rich in beta-sitosterol, another natural substance shown to significantly lower blood cholesterol levels. While adding avocados to your diet can provide some healthy benefits as well as great flavor, always remember that moderation is the key to preventing weight gain. A tasty tip: Replace the mayo on your sandwich with avocado slices.



MAPLE SYRUP

While the tasty pancake topping may be loaded with sugar and calories, real maple syrup also contains lots of healthy antioxidants. In fact, researchers from the University of Rhode Island found no fewer than 20 antioxidants within 20 liters of maple syrup harvested from Quebec. This included 13 antioxidants that have never been discovered in maple syrup before.

These healthy compounds include lignans, which are also found in flaxseed and whole wheat. This stilbene is in the same chemical class as the red wine extract, resveratrol. Maple syrup also contains flavonoids, which are known for their anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer and



antioxidant properties. In addition, there are phenolic acids that are commonly found in berries and coffee.

Not surprisingly, researchers remind us to use maple syrup in moderation to avoid weight gain. Also, keep in mind that the stated health benefits are associated with real maple syrup, not the commercial syrups containing maple flavoring.

NUTS

Worried about the fat content in nuts? Again, when eaten in moderation, nuts can be a healthy and delicious addition to your diet.

Many nuts, including almonds, walnuts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, brazil nuts, hazelnuts, pistachio nuts, and chestnuts, are good sources of monounsaturated fat, protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals that may help to prevent heart disease and cancer. Also, experts say that a few nuts can even facilitate weight loss, by preventing hunger and feelings of deprivation.

Source: 50plus.com

My sweet baby Jesus,

We celebrate your coming with music and sounds of joy. You filled our hearts with peace and our homes with blessings that will never end. The Magi offered you royal gifts, but I can offer you only my heart for you to clean and then to use in whichever way you want.

Please give my thanks to your loving mother for being such a pure instrument in God's hands to bring you into this world on Christmas day.

I love you so much
Carol Boulos

HOW I REMEMBER NAJI...

How do I remember Najji? He, who is present among us everyday.

Present with his allure, voice, always-innovative opinions, multiple demands, and unlimited ambitions. I remember his beautiful presence and his ready jokes for all occasions and events! Najji is in my prayers every day.

One night, when I was about to sleep, I was lying in bed, saying my prayers and I felt Najji's presence sitting at the edge of my bed. It was as if I heard him calling me, "Spera! Spera!" He was calling in a loud voice, a happy voice! I immediately recognized him. It

was Najji. Was this a dream or reality? I could not tell. I started seeing pictures in my mind, beautiful memories of times shared with Najji and his family. Najji, the young man, full of faith, full of ambitions, handsome, a true giver, racing with life, and speeding against time.

I spoke to him. I said, "I know you are in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ and surrounded with love and protection by the mother of the light, the Virgin Mary. I am certain you are in an eternal peace and a constant happiness. Knowing you Najji, I am sure you are praying for all of us, and

God knows how much we are all in need of your prayers, as we are still living in the darkness and you have passed to the light."

The day you passed was my birthday. I wish that day were never on the calendar. I've hated the numbers and the celebrations since your passing.

Until we meet again in the future, my beloved Najji, you are in my daily prayers. Please keep me in yours. I miss you.

Spera

God gave us His Son.

What are we giving?
Does giving make us happier?
Do we give and forget we did?
Why is it only at Christmas time that we remember to give? Or is it?
Today, we are given an opportunity to give a smile. To set a sparkle in a child's eye. To offer a laugh to a few who have forgotten what Christmas is all about. It is the season of giving and receiving. Together, let's remember how happy we are when we give. Let's all give each other a smile that lasts for the season. Together, let's forget how much we gave and strive always to give more. Let's try to render each day a Christmas Day and give a cheer to the ones in need. Together, let's make a promise to become better givers; givers of things you can't wrap!

Dr. Rana Skaf Sfeir



People Are Born To Shine!

People are Born To Shine is a bi-monthly, electronic newsletter owned by The Najji Cherfan Foundation focusing on spirituality and health. The objective of *People are Born to Shine* is to raise awareness among our readers on health challenges and disease prevention, while inspiring them to live a fuller, more abundant life guided by Christian values. This newsletter is dedicated to those affected by brain injuries.

The content has been carefully selected from sources considered reliable and accurate, however The Najji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information.

For subscriptions, comments, contributions and suggestions please contact us: info@najjicherfanfoundation.org

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