

# 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



**Theme of this year:** Spread Love and Peace, and Promote Tolerance  
**Interreligious Theme:** Three choirs from different faiths on stage (Christians, Sunnis and Shiites)



## *Non-Christians were our guests on stage to share with us our holiday and our joy.*

On December 9, 2012, 180 volunteers gathered on stage, committed to spending a different kind of Christmas; sharing these moments with children from associations and orphanages.

A unique event for the 3rd year, an amateur choir formed by all ages, three generations of friends and families conducted by the Choirmaster and Composer Reverend Father Khalil Rahme, and accompanied by the youth symphonic band, LeBAM conducted by Serghei Bolun.

LeBAM, the Lebanese Band Association for the promotion of music is the brainchild of Ghassan Moukhaiber. LeBAM was created along with Ghassan Tueni and Walid Gholmieh, director of the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music. The organization began with one school in Beit Meri three years ago, and is now in Baskinta, Jdeideh and Baaklin Chouf.

Students come from the surrounding areas, and instruments are free. Teachers, most from the National Conservatory, receive a nominal fee. For further information, visit [www.lebam.org](http://www.lebam.org).

The iconic May Arida was the Godmother of this event this year.

Non-Christians were our guests on stage to share with us our holiday and our joy.

## IN THIS ISSUE

### **Spreading Joy**

*A mission to celebrate Christmas with those unable to celebrate at home.*

### **Seven Health Benefits of Carrots**

*Carrots are known as the vegetable that is easy to grow, tasty and high nutrition.*

### **Car Safety Measures in Winter**

*Tips and advice to stay safe on the road.*

### **God's Gift to Humanity**

*Reflecting on the beauty of celebrating Christmastime together; a letter from George Cherfan.*

**CHRISTMAS** continued on page 2



**CHRISTMAS** continued from page 1

Nagy El Khoury from Interreligious Initiative of March 25, the annunciation of the Virgin Mary, joined the committee to organize this invitation.

In view of bringing to life the role of ‘Lebanon the Message’ which was brought forth by His Holiness Pope Jean Paul II, the Alumni Association of Notre Dame de Jamhour took the initiative as of March 25, 2007 to organize joint spiritual ceremonies entitled “Together Around Our Lady Mary.” On February 18, 2010 the decision of the Council of Ministers was to declare the 25th of March ‘The Day of the Annunciation,’ as an Islamic-Christian National Holiday; thus becoming the first joint formal holiday in the history of these two religions. For more information, visit [www.ndj.edu.lb](http://www.ndj.edu.lb).

Guests choirs included Al-Mabarrat Choir, conducted by Mohamad Meselmani. Through its orphanages, the Al-Mabarrat Association aims to build the character of orphans physically, intellectually, scientifically, spiritually and socially. It’s worth mentioning that 11 orphanages belong to the Al-Mabarrat Association, embracing 4,000 orphans across Lebanon. For more information, visit [www.mabarrat.org.lb](http://www.mabarrat.org.lb).

Fayha Choir, conducted by Maestro Barkev Taslakian was our guest for the finale. This group from Tripoli performs a capella (without instrumental accompaniment.) The choir is composed of 40 impressive members. They have won many awards, namely ‘Arabs Got Talent’ and first prize at ‘International Warsaw Choir Festival.’ For more information, visit [www.fayhachoir.org](http://www.fayhachoir.org).

This was not a fundraising event. Half of the audience paid for their tickets in order to invite the other half who came from unprivileged backgrounds.

For some, Christmas is a time of gifts, joy and time with family. But for others, it is a time for survival and sorrow. With a goal to help change this despair into hope, this was the third year we organized this event.

Tickets were sold out in one week, even without a promotional campaign.

Join the 11,000 people already following our event on

Facebook, or visit [www.ChristmasCarolingforaCause.org](http://www.ChristmasCarolingforaCause.org) LBC, our media partner, aired the show on Christmas Day.

Participant volunteers come from different career backgrounds including, medical doctors, lawyers, architects, pharmacists, psychologists, public health professionals, cinematographers, producers, media professionals, IT specialists, business women, civil society activists and full-time homemakers.

The stage was directed by Ranya Rahbany.

This event, an initiative and concept of Patricia Cherfan, was organized in collaboration with the Naji Cherfan Foundation.



# Spreading Joy

For the fourth consecutive year, volunteers of the Naji Cherfan Foundation toured hospitals on December 25th on a mission to celebrate Christmas with those unable to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the comfort of their own homes.

The Choir of St. Takla Church Sed El Boucheryei, led by Father Joseph Soueid, along with volunteers from his parish and students-priests led this group of family and friends to share the joy of the birth of Jesus.

St. Joseph Hospital was the main hospital visited. "We felt we were in heaven touring its streets" said

Father Joseph Soueid.

Prayers for St. Augustine were distributed and prayed in every room, in addition to distributing sweets and chocolate to everyone.

Patients and families, nurses and physicians celebrated Christmas with joy and laughter.

*Merry Christmas!*

## NUTRITION

# Seven Health Benefits Of Carrots



Carrots are known as the vegetable that is easy to grow, tasty and of high nutrition. Both children and adults like carrots because of its sweet taste and crunchy texture.

Carrots, or *Daucus carota*, is a vegetables grown throughout the year, especially in moist mountain areas that have cold temperatures, approximately 1200 meters above sea level.

Carrots are a good source of vitamin B1, vitamin B2, vitamin B6, vitamin K, biotin, fiber, potassium and thiamine. Here are seven health benefits of carrots for the body:

## 1. Prevent Cancer

Many studies have shown that eating carrots may help lower the risk of breast cancer, lung cancer and colon cancer. Recently, researchers have isolated a compound called falcarinol in carrots that may be largely responsible for its anti-cancer benefits.

## 2. Improve Vision

The retina of the eye needs vitamin A to function. Lack of vitamin A causes night blindness. Carrots are rich in beta-carotene, a substance which converts into vitamin A in the liver.

## 3. Prevent heart disease

Studies have shown that a diet high in carotenoids are associated with a lower risk of heart disease. Also, it is believed that regular consumption of carrots reduces cholesterol levels.

## 4. Reduce the risk of stroke

According to research from Harvard University, people who eat more than six carrots a week are much less likely to suffer a stroke than those who eat only one carrot a month or more.

## 5. Nourish Skin

Carrot has strong cleansing properties that are effective in detoxifying the liver, making them effective for preventing acne that is caused by toxins from the blood. Carrot is also useful for treating uneven skin tones because of pigmentation.

## 6. Anti-aging

Carrots contain a lot of beta-carotene, which serves as an antioxidant that helps the body to fight cell damage done to the body when dirt enters the bloodstream. It also help slows down the aging of cells.

## 7. Dental Health

Carrots can help clean your teeth, and offer the best way to keep your mouth clean after meals. They act as natural abrasives, helping to eliminate the sticky dirt from the teeth and stimulate gums.

*Source, healthonlinezine.info*

## Will You Further NCF's Work?

The Naji Cherfan Foundation was founded after the passing of the beloved Naji Cherfan. Our main goal is to praise the Lord through community work. The foundation works to improve the quality of life of the poorest of the poor of people, especially those affected by brain injury, while promoting Christian values.

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](mailto:info@najicherfanfoundation.org)

## Quoteable!

The flow of blessings in our life is directly related to our passing blessings along to someone else.

— Thomas Kinkaid

# Car Safety Measures in Winter



- Use wheel chains if necessary.
- Inspect the brakes.
- Keep windshield wipers in good shape.
- Keep your windshield fluid full.
- Keep battery terminals in good condition.
- Use antifreeze.
- Keep your gas tank over half full.
- Check heater and defroster conditions.

## YOUR TRIP

- Keep windows clear.
- Use your seatbelt.
- Drive with your lights on—but do not use high beams as they only reflect the snow and make it harder to see.
- Turn off cruise control when driving in snow or wet road conditions.
- Slow down—avoid sudden changes in speed or direction.
- Maintain a safe following distance between your car and the vehicle in front.
- Turn on four way flashers in case of extreme weather conditions.

## TIPS

- Do not panic. If you begin to slide, slowly take your foot off the gas pedal, do not use your brakes and steer your vehicle in the direction you wish to travel.
- If you get stuck in snow, straighten the wheels and accelerate slowly. Avoid spinning the tires. Use sand or cinders

under the drive wheels.

## SURVIVING A STORM

- Stay in your vehicle.
- Display a trouble sign.
- Occasionally run the engine to keep warm.
- Do light exercises.
- Don't stay in one position too long.
- Take turns sleeping.
- For warmth, huddle together.
- Insulate using available materials.
- Avoid overexertion
- Use emergency supplies/kit.

## PRAYER CORNER

*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 distributed during the NCF Christmas mission 2013*

## BEFORE GOING ON A TRIP

- Check road conditions and weather forecasts.
- Leave earlier to allow extra time to get to your destination.
- Know what your car can and cannot do in the snow.
- Inform others of your itinerary.
- Cell phone coverage is not available in all areas.

## WINTERIZE YOUR CAR

- Check tread and air pressure on your tires.

*Kunhadi is a non-governmental organization founded after the passing away of the beloved Hadi as the result of a car accident. Kunhadi's mission is to introduce a new driving culture among youth to keep them safe on Lebanese roads. Their goal is to reach a better community understanding of road safety issues, and to find solutions for underlying problems and factors leading to road deaths and injuries. For more information, please visit Kunhadi's website at [www.kunhadi.org](http://www.kunhadi.org).*

# A Message From God



*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son.*

—Hebrews 1:1-2

## BIBLE IN A YEAR: HEBREWS 1:1-9

In 1971, Ray Tomlinson was experimenting with ways people and computers could interact. When he sent a message from his computer through a network to a different unit in his office, he had sent the first e-mail. Now decades later, more than a billion e-mails are sent every day. Many contain important news from family and friends, but others may carry unwanted advertising or a destructive virus. A basic rule governing e-mail use is: "Don't open it unless you trust the sender."

God has sent us a message in the Person of His Son, and we can trust the Sender. In the Old Testament, God spoke to His people through the prophets and many rejected God's Word. But it was all leading to this: "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2).

We may be awed by the inexplicable mystery of Almighty God entering our world as a baby, yet remain hesitant to embrace Christ fully and place our lives in His hands.

Christmas is the unforgettable message of love, redemption, and hope sent by God. Will you trust the Sender and open His message today?

*Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die.  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth. — Wesley  
God's timeless message of hope is waiting to be received.*

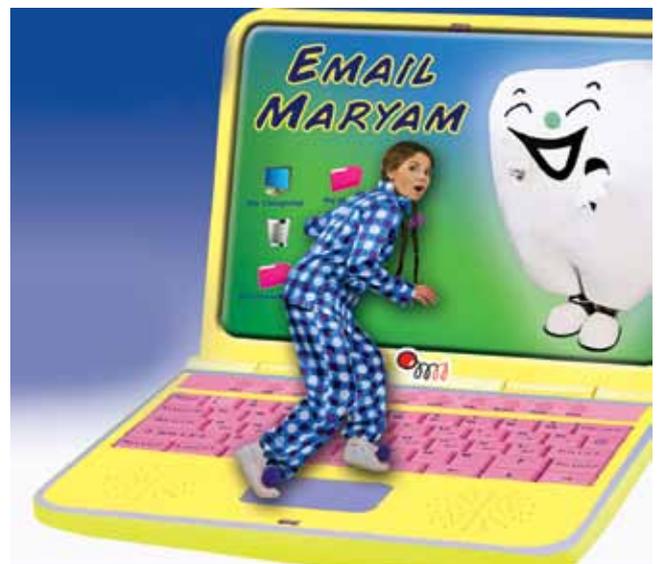
*Source, odb.org, daily bread, David C. McCasland*

## Sharing Christmas

The NCF teamed up with the Christian charity association Hadath to organize a Christmas event on December 31st 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, Odeon Theater, who gave a special discount for the event and performed the beautiful play called Email Myriam.

In addition Giselle, an excellent storyteller, took this opportunity to tell the Jesus story to the children present, as well as to sing Christmas songs with everybody!



# God's Gift to Humanity



Dear Friends,

Allow me to spend a few moments with you to reflect on the beauty of celebrating Christmastime together and the gift that God the Creator has sent to the world; the baby Jesus, in a manger.

The Bible says God loved the world so much that He sent his only son to become (Human) like ourselves in order to regain what Heaven had lost when Adam & Eve failed.

That gift is what we celebrate every Christmas season in remembering God's promise to send the Savior...and we in turn, exchange gifts, we renew our love, we put an end to our animosities, and we try to give back to God what we owe him (our existence, and life in this world and the new world to come.)

What can we give back to God, our Creator, who owns everything? Can we give Him anything? Yes we can give God a lot...namely our love and our hearts. This is what God wants from us. He does not want much!

- To love our neighbors as ourselves
- To love our enemies and forgive them
- To forgive those who may cheat us and/or take advantage of us
- To love all people regardless of race, color, rank, status, etc...
- To love the homeless, the poor orphans and poor widows who often have no bed or roof as shelter, or a loaf of bread to satisfy their hunger, or have no money to buy medicine
- To teach ourselves and our children to live as if we had nothing, to remain humble and willing to serve since life is a gift of God and health, success and fame, etc. are his blessings, too.

## EXAMPLES

- To teach ourselves and our children how to share what we have with those who are less fortunate and less privileged
- To encourage our children. This cannot be done only in telling them what to do and not to do, but mostly by being the right example (or model) for them in real life, especially as children often imitate their parents. For example:
  - Encourage them to have God first in their life (not as number 20 on their priority list)

- God is a Parent and we are his children if we accept this and believe in it
- He wants to have relations with us like Father and son, Mother and daughter, Grandpa & Grandma. However, many times we close our door in the face of God, due to many urgent priorities in life and that does make Him unhappy. Are we not unhappy when we are far away from our beloved ones?

God wants us to live forever, not only one hundred years, and to inherit everything He created for us just as we want our children to inherit what we have.

Above all, God wants everything in the world, in Heaven and below, to be ours to run and manage because when Jesus comes again, death will be no more. There will be no more wars, violence, killing and hatred since God, with the Saints and the Angels, will rule over an eternal world with no end.

The new world that God wants us to have will be without disease, poverty, lacking, or ageing, and without death. The Bible says that He will wipe away our tears and He will not allow any more the separation of our beloved ones!

This is the gift of God, the baby who was born 2000 years ago in a manger, to give us life eternal and to teach us how to forgive and to remain humble, no matter who we are!

To get this beautiful promise of eternal life, God is inviting all of us to follow His teachings and apply them in our daily life. The decision is ours... if we choose God's teaching we will live with our beloved ones, in the new world, forever and ever because God is the source of life.

***Merry Christmas and Best Wishes  
for a New Year full of Health,  
Peace and Joy to you all.***

—G.C. Cherfan

## HOW I REMEMBER NAJI...

It was during the mid-1990's and I remember walking into first period Science that morning. Everyone was discussing the events of the weekend, regardless of whether or not they were there to witness them. Those events almost always included Naji. I felt proud of my familial bond with Naji and that I could be the one to correct any of their misinterpretations. Naji had a charisma and charm that attracted every person in and out of school. He had a special talent of walking into a room and suddenly brightening the faces of all who surrounded him with admiration. This "special talent" was his love and enthusiasm for life.

Naji was slightly younger than me but I always thought of him as my second older brother. When that awful day came, and we heard news of the accident, his family was consoled by a great deal of caring friends who loved Naji like a brother as I did. It turned out, however, that Naji was the person consoling us! He did not give up for a moment. He was confident that he would find a way to recover and his enthusiasm had not diminished. Naji was never a victim of the events of his life. He was a person who explored life's thresholds. And when those thresholds pushed him to the ground, he got back up and tackled its flaws.



If someone should ask me about Naji, how could I possibly find words suitable to capture him. Naji is the boy who never lost his passion.

*Abeer Stefanou*

# 2013 Happy New Year!

from the Naji Cherfan Foundation to all of our friends around the globe.  
May the new year shower you with blessings and much love. . .

## People Are Born To Shine!

*People are Born To Shine* is a bi-monthly, electronic newsletter owned by The Naji 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 including the injured as well as their family members, caregivers and friends.

The content has been carefully selected from internet sources considered reliable and accurate to bring you good news of health and spiritual well being, however The Naji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information.

For subscriptions and comments, please contact us: [info@najicherfanfoundation.org](mailto:info@najicherfanfoundation.org)

Publisher: CCM Group; Editorial Consultant: George C. Cherfan; Editor in Chief: Christina A. Bitar; Layout: Art Department, CCM Group, USA; Contributors: Sana Cherfan, Kelley Nemitz, and Patricia B. Cherfan.

© 2012 by The Naji Cherfan Foundation. All rights including publication and distribution are reserved.