

the Maronite **Voice**



Following the words of Mary,

“Do whatever he tells you.” (JOHN 2:5)

the servants fill the water jars with water,
preparing for the first miracle of Jesus at Cana.



the Maronite **Voice**

BISHOP'S MESSAGE

- 4** **The Christian Vocation to Holiness**
by Bishop A. Elias Zaidan

SCHEDULES

- 6** **Bishop A. Elias Zaidan**
Bishop Gregory J. Mansour

Lenten Observances 2020

- 8** **Christ the Healer and Great Lent**
by Fr. David A. Fisher

- 13** **Catholic Extension Society Issues Grant**
Challenge to Maronite Eparchies in 2020

- 15** **Ordinations**

WORKER IN THE VINEYARD

- 16** **Educator Turned Deacon: Relationships are**
vital in schools, parishes.
by Brandon Shuleeta

LIVING CHURCH

- 18** **Saint Anthony of the Desert Church**
Fall River, Massachusetts
by Antoinette Zeina

- 20** **Cincinnati to Host the 57th NAM Convention**

Cover: Mosaic from the Church of the Holy Savior in Chora. Preserved in the Kariye Museum in Istanbul, Turkey.

22 **Caring for the Elderly in Lebanon**

23 **Msgr. Peter Vaccari to Lead Catholic Near East Welfare Association**

24 **Maronite Young Adults at the March for Life – Washington, DC**

by Hana Chemaly, MYA from Cincinnati, OH

27 **Visit to Caritas Lebanon's Food Processing Plant in Deir El-Ahmar**

by Deacon Joseph Chebli

28 **Delicious Lenten Dish Recipe**

29 **Annual Clergy Retreat Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon**

30 **Parish News**

GOING DEEPER INTO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE...

38 **Eucharistic Living**

by Sr. Therese Maria Touma, MSCL

39 **From the Editor**

THE MARONITE VOICE

A bi-monthly publication of Saint Maron Publications under the auspices of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn and Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles.
ISSN 1080-9880

Publishers

Most Reverend Gregory John Mansour
Most Reverend A. Elias Zaidan

Editor

Chorbishop John D. Faris

Managing Editor

Rev. Aaron Sandbothe

Art and Design Director

Ms. Glory Rasi

Production Coordinator

Subdeacon Michael Maynes

Parish News Editors

Dr. Mabel George Howard
(Eparchy of Saint Maron)
mabelgeorgehoward@gmail.com

Rev. Pierre Bassil
(Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon)
ptbassil@aol.com

Feature Writers

Brandon Shulleeta
Antoinette Zeina

· In order to be considered for publication, all submissions must be in electronic format and signed by the author with contact information. Images must be of high resolution and quality (minimal 300 dpi, jpg format).

· Subscription rates are \$25.00/year.

· Paid Advertising
\$150 - Quarter page full color
\$250 - Half page full color
\$400 - Full page full color
Additional discounts for six editions (one year).
All ads must be submitted electronically. High resolution jpg or PDF with embedded fonts required. No bleeds. Contact TheMaroniteVoice@gmail.com

Contact Us

Phone: 804.346.1160
Email: MaroniteVoice@gmail.com
Mailing Address:
4611 Sadler Road
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Office Hours

Monday - Friday | 9 am - 1 pm

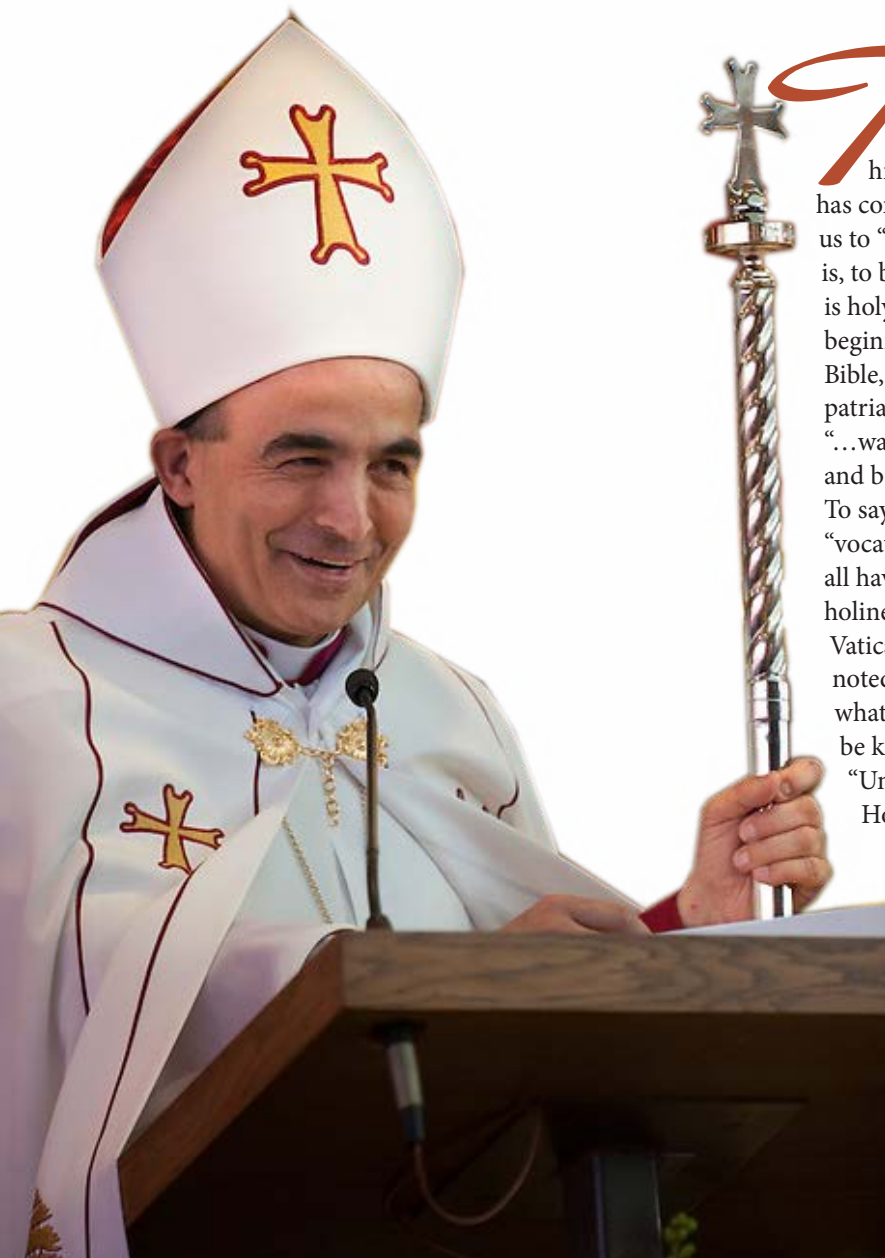
Printed in Richmond, Virginia



The Christian Vocation to Holiness

by Bishop A. Elias Zaidan

“Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Matthew 5:48



Throughout history, the Lord has constantly called us to “be perfect,” that is, to be holy as He is holy. In the very beginning of the Bible, God calls the patriarch Abraham, “...walk before me, and be blameless.” To say “call” is to say “vocation,” and we all have a vocation to holiness. The Second Vatican Council is noted for addressing what has come to be known as the “Universal Call to Holiness,” a call that is for each and every one of us (Lumen Gentium, 5). As recently as 2018, Pope

Francis wrote in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Christus Vivit* (Christ Lives), “To discern our personal vocation, we have to realize that it is a calling from a friend, who is Jesus.”

We must also understand that the calling to serve the Church as a priest or monk or nun is not the only vocation in the Church. Most Christians are called to marriage and family life, some to a single life. I use the word “called” because that is what it is to be married or living a life as single person, dedicated to leading a Christian life: a true vocation. Because most are called to the vocation of marriage, this state of life is of utmost importance to the Church. The holy covenant of one man and one woman for life that we call marriage, is a source of grace for the couple. Marriage is not just a contract between a man and a woman, it is a true calling for each partner of the marriage — a vocation to help the other realize

their individual call to holiness as well. The Mystery of Holy Matrimony is a covenant of love between a man and a woman.

Christ is the third “partner” in every Christian marriage. As St. Paul tells us in his Epistle to the Ephesians (5:25-33), a husband and a wife are a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His Church. In every Christian marriage we should see the same love that Christ has for us, His Church. Holy, strong and healthy marriages and families will translate into a holy, strong and healthy Church. Thus, every family becomes a “domestic church,” a school for holiness.

On February 14, Valentine’s Day, couples usually express their love for each other through various ways. St. Valentine, a martyr of the early centuries, gave his life for Christ. I hope and pray that every couple will renew their commitment to offer themselves for each other on a daily basis.

There are many challenges to marriage. Whether it is the permanence of a couple’s relationship, the growing apart of a husband and wife from each other, the temptations of daily life, financial issues, the interference of in-laws...each challenge could undermine and shake the covenant

that brought them together in the first place. While there may be some aspects that can be complex for couples, there are also graces of Holy marriage. Some of the rewarding parts of marriage include building a life together, children, and supporting each other every step of life. Although the realities and difficulties of marriage may seem daunting, couples are not alone.

God does help us in our calling to religious life or to marriage. Prayer is of utmost importance in discerning our vocation; studying our faith and staying close to the Lord through the sacramental life of the Church are also critical components in discerning our vocation. We also need to remember that we do not do this in a vacuum. Our family, our Church community, our friends also can be of immense help in understanding our calling. These same groups will continue to support us in our chosen vocation as well.

The discernment before marriage is essential as the couple looks into their compatibility, their understanding of each other, their standing on the issues and the essential elements of marriage and family. Definitely, the virtue of love was, is and will always remain the main foundation along with the grace of God in every marriage.

What do we need to think about in that process called discernment? In responding to God’s call, we must consider the needs of the world and serving the good of society at large. Discernment also looks inward — to our own talents and God-given gifts and how they can best be used in service to others. We must then also consider our inmost and deepest desires for our own life. Through a process of discernment, along with prayer and honest dialogue with God and with others, we can learn to trust these desires within us.

As we live out our lives whether in marriage, in priesthood or religious life, or as single persons, we will have to always give priority to God; we have to respond to the call to be holy, to be blameless and to be perfect. We also must keep in mind that we will fail in some ways, sometimes seriously, to live up to our calling. However, we should never fall to despair as the Lord always invites us to return and stand up again. Keep in mind that “a saint is a sinner who keeps trying.” In the end, however, it does not solely rest on our own human efforts, but more so on Christ’s life of grace within us. Our vocation in life, first and foremost, must be a response to the call to holiness. ■

Schedule BISHOP A. ELIAS ZAIDAN

- 23 FEBRUARY** Los, Angeles, CA | Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon-St. Peter Cathedral | St. Maron Celebration
- 29 FEBRUARY** San Jose, CA | Priestly Ordination of Deacon Fadi Bazouzi
- 1 MARCH** Orange, CA | St. John Maron Church | Pastoral Visit
- 2 MARCH** St. Louis, MO | Caritas Lebanon-USA Board Meeting
- 3-4 MARCH** St. Louis, MO | Eastern Catholic Bishops Meeting
- 6-8 MARCH** San Antonio, TX | St. George Church | Capital Campaign
- 13-15 MARCH** Minneapolis & Mendota Heights, MN | St Maron Church & Holy Family Church | Capital Campaign
- 20-22 MARCH** Phoenix, AZ | St. Joseph Church | Capital Campaign
- 27-29 MARCH** Cleveland, OH | St. Maron Church | Pastoral Visit
- 30-31 MARCH** St. Louis, MO | The Chancery | Presbyteral Council Meeting
- 8-11 APRIL** Houston, TX | Our Lady of the Cedars Church | Pastoral Visit
- 12 APRIL** St. Louis, MO | St. Raymond Cathedral | Feast of the Glorious Resurrection
- 17-19 APRIL** Birmingham, AL | St. Elias Church | Pastoral Visit

LENTEN OBSERVANCES 2020

The Most Reverend Bishops Gregory J. Mansour and A. Elias Zaidan have issued the following Lenten guidelines for the Maronites of the U.S.:

- All Maronites who are physically capable are to abstain from meat on Ash Monday (24 February 2020) and all Fridays of Lent.
- Ash Monday and the Great Friday of the Crucifixion (10 April 2020) are also days of fasting. Fasting in the Maronite Church involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon. The rest of the day normal meals can be taken, but without meat. All Maronites who are physically capable are to fast on these two days.

Distribution of Ashes

All parish priests are to bless and distribute ashes on Ash Monday during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy as indicated in our liturgical books. This ceremony may not be celebrated on the vigil of Ash Monday (Cana Sunday). For the convenience of some faithful of the Latin Church who may come to Mass at a Maronite Church on their Ash Wednesday, ashes that were blessed on Monday may be given to them after the Mass. However, ashes are not to be blessed again on this day.

Devotion of Lenten Fridays

All parish priests are to celebrate the Benediction with the Cross every Friday of Lent except for the Great Friday of the Crucifixion. This service may be preceded by Evening Prayer (Ramsho), Stations of the Cross, or even the Divine Liturgy. Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament should not take place on the Fridays of Lent.

Personal Observance

Great Lent and Passion Week, beginning on Ash Monday and ending at 12:00 (noon) on Saturday of the Light, is a season of penitence. In our Maronite Church each day of this season is considered to be a day of fasting and abstinence from meat and dairy products, (with the exception of Sundays and Holy Days). Although highly encouraged, this fast is not obligatory in this Eparchy. However, it is obligatory to abstain from meat on Ash Monday and all Fridays of Lent, and to fast on Ash Monday and Great Friday, as long as one is physically able to do so. ■

Schedule BISHOP GREGORY J. MANSOUR

- 15-16 FEBRUARY** Brockton, MA | St. Theresa Church | Pastoral Visit
- 22-23 FEBRUARY** Newtown Square, PA | St. Sharbel Church | Pastoral Visit
- 24 FEBRUARY** Philadelphia, PA | St. Maron Church | Ash Monday
- 25 FEBRUARY** Philadelphia, PA | Installation of Archbishop Nelson Perez
- 28 FEB - 1 MARCH** Lawrence, MA | St. Anthony Church | Pastoral Visit
- 2-4 MARCH** St. Louis, MO | Eastern Catholic Bishops Meeting
- 6 MARCH** Easton, PA | Our Lady of Lebanon Church | Benediction of the Cross
- 7 MARCH** Sleepy Hollow, NY | St. John Paul II Church | MYO/MYA Retreat
- 8 MARCH** Brooklyn, NY | Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral & 5 PM Manhattan Mission
- 9 MARCH** Washington, DC | Seminary and USCC Meeting
- 10 MARCH** Washington, DC | Eparchial Review Board Meeting
- 14-15 MARCH** Greer, SC | St. Rafka Church | Pastoral Visit
- 20 MARCH** Waterbury, CT | Our Lady of Lebanon Church | Benediction of the Cross
- 21-22 MARCH** Jacksonville, FL | St. Maron Church | Pastoral Visit
- 23-27 MARCH** Lutz, FL | Bethany Center | Priest Retreat and Chrism Mass
- 28-29 MARCH** Tampa, FL | Sts. Peter and Paul Church | Pastoral Visit
- 31 MARCH** New Jersey | Retreat for Armenian Orthodox Priests
- 2 APRIL** Washington, DC | American Taskforce for Lebanon | Gala
- 3 APRIL** Scranton, PA | St Ann Church | Benediction of the Cross
- 5 APRIL** Brooklyn, NY | Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral & 5 PM Manhattan Mission | Hosanna Sunday
- 6 APRIL** Somerset, NJ | St. Sharbel Church | Monday of Passion Week
- 7 APRIL** Brooklyn, NY | Diocese of Brooklyn | Chrism Mass
- 8 APRIL** Springfield, MA | St. Anthony Church | Rite of the Lamp
- 9 APRIL** Worcester, MA | Our Lady of Mercy Church | Great Thursday of the Mysteries
- 10 APRIL** Brooklyn, NY | Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral | Great Friday of the Crucifixion
- 11 APRIL** Brooklyn, NY | Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral | Great Saturday of the Light
- 12 APRIL** Brooklyn, NY | Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral | Feast of the Glorious Resurrection



ANNUAL LENTEN APPEAL 2020



The Maronite Bishops' Annual Appeal takes place during Lent each year.
Please be generous and help with the greatest needs of your Eparchy.

HOW DO YOU MAKE A GIFT?

YOU MAY MAKE A DONATION IN YOUR PARISH:

Please bring your gift to your Maronite Parish on any Sunday during Lent in a special envelope marked "Annual Appeal."

MAIL A GIFT OR MAKE A DONATION ONLINE:

Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn
109 Remsen Street
Brooklyn NY, 11201
www.stmaron.org

Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles
1021 S. 10th Street
Saint Louis, MO 63104
www.eparchy.org

Christ the Healer and Great Lent

by Fr. David A. Fisher

“Jesus said to them in reply, Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.”

Matthew 11:5-6

The Gospel readings during the Season of Great Lent in the Maronite Church direct our attention to the healing presence and power of Christ. Beginning with the entrance Sunday of the *Miracle of Cana in Galilee*; where in the first public miracle of Jesus, the sacramental signs of matrimony, water, and wine reveal the supreme and perfect act of healing, the re-establishment of *divine order* in Christ's victory over death.

This is followed by the *Cleansing of the Leper*, *Healing of the Hemorrhaging Woman*, *Parable of the Prodigal Son*, *Healing of the Paralytic*, and *Healing of the Blind Man*. Each Gospel reading in its own way reveals the nature of divine healing as the restoration of the order and beauty of creation whose exemplar is man and woman. In every reading there is a universal and cosmic dimension where the individual who is healed represents all of humanity. This is most clearly illustrated in the forgiveness given to the *prodigal son*. Here we see the connection between the self-centeredness of sin which creates isolation (death) and healing as the loving compassion and forgiveness of God (new life).

The Cleansing of the Leper

A leper came to him [and kneeling down] begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. — MARK 1:40-42

In the nineteenth century, the cause of Hansen's Disease or leprosy was researched and discovered; in fact, it can be easily cured if diagnosed early and is not easily transmitted from person to person. In the ancient world and indeed until the nineteenth century, leprosy was considered to be any incurable skin disease. The disease was accompanied by the fear of it being spread. For that reason, lepers were forced to live isolated from society, often in leper colonies, and were required to ring bells when encountering others on the road to avoid contamination. In short, leprosy was a sentence of walking death and total expulsion from society.

The healing of the leper illustrates a common element in the scriptural encounters of Jesus with those who seek healing from him: the necessity of *faith*. Christ never forces a miraculous healing upon anyone. Rather he heals in response to the cry of those who have faith in his healing power.



“Prayer to Jesus is answered by him already during his ministry, through signs that anticipate the power of his death and Resurrection: Jesus hears the prayer of faith, expressed in words (the leper... the woman with a hemorrhage who touches his clothes).” — THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, N. 2616

Faith is a response of the total person (reason, will and emotions) to the presence of *the divine*. In Jesus, the *Eternal God* invites us to be made anew, to come to full stature as beings of love; but this relationship by which we are healed of sin and death is never forced upon us, our response of faith is possibly the greatest act of freedom a human being can ever make.

Healing of the Hemorrhaging Woman

And a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years, who [had spent her whole livelihood on doctors and] was unable to be cured by anyone, came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped. And a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years, who [had spent her whole livelihood on doctors and] was unable to be cured by anyone, came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped. — LUKE 8:43-44

The healing of the hemorrhaging woman, like that of the leper, involves a person who is isolated from society not because of some moral or ethical failure, but because of a physical malady beyond their own power. In this case, according to the Mosaic Law, a person who had such persistent and uncontrolled bleeding was restricted in their involvement in the community. Also, like the leper, she has faith in Jesus that he alone can cure her and remove the hurt, shame, and isolation of her disease. “He said to her, Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace.” — LUKE 8:48

What is unique about her healing, which is also shared with the healing of the daughter of Jairus, is that merely to touch Jesus brings about healing. “And they ridiculed him, because they knew that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and called to her, ‘Child, arise!’ Her breath returned and she immediately arose.” — LUKE 8:53-55

Jesus is the presence of *divine order* and *divine love*. The healing of human infirmities are a foreshadowing of his victory over death and the reconciliation of humanity with the Father.

Christ the Healer and Great Lent

Continued from page 9

Healing of the Paralytic

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Child, your sins are forgiven.' Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, 'Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?' Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, 'Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth'— he said to the paralytic, 'I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home.' He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this.' — MARK 2:5-12

The healing of the paralytic reveals the connection between human frailness, suffering, and illness with human sin. We know from the Book of Genesis that God created all things and that he created all things *as good*, and he created man and woman to be stewards of his creation. Sin entered into God's creation as a consequence of the failure of human beings to exercise their free will for love of God and neighbor, and to turn inward in an attempt to usurp God's dominion over all. In their attempt to become the masters of life, the mystery of sin reached its ultimate expression in the mystery of death. The images of God who were created for the Kingdom of Heaven, a kingdom of love and peace; took their broken images to the Sheol, the Old Testament notion for the shadowy abode of the dead.

In the healing of the paralytic we see that Jesus the Son of God, the Son of Man, is the only one who can re-establish the beauty of creation and the bonds of love between God and human beings, and humans with each other. As Saint John Paul once shared in his reflections to a parish in Rome on this same Gospel of Mark:

Everything happens as Jesus has ordered. Jesus cures an incurable man. He works a miracle. By so doing, he gives the proof that he has the power on earth to forgive sins. And as the scribes have affirmed that only God has this power, they should now draw the conclusion of what they themselves had sustained in words. Jesus reaffirms the presence of God among the crowd. Jesus reaffirms the divine power, proper to him, of forgiving sins. Jesus proves, at the same time, that the evil of sin is more dangerous and worrying than physical illness (in this case, serious and chronic disease). He is the Savior who has come in the first place to remove this serious evil. — SAINT JOHN PAUL II, HOMILY TO THE ROMAN PARISH OF SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT IN MAGLIANA, 18 FEBRUARY 1979

The miraculous healings of Christ must always be seen in their connection to his Cross and Resurrection. Jesus is the Divine Physician not merely because he can cure our bodily illnesses, but because he destroys death, the cosmic result of the misuse of our freedom. As Saint Paul said to the Corinthians, "For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 CORINTHIANS 5:21) Only he who was present when the Father created us, as John says in his Gospel can bring us life:

*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.
What came to be through him was life,
and this life was the light of the human race;
the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it. — JOHN 1:1-5*

The reign of sin was only temporary, for the darkness of sin could never overcome the light of Christ. In Christ, the plan of God is fulfilled, that plan so

eloquently expressed by Saint Irenaeus: “the only true and steadfast Teacher, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself.” St. Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies*, Book V

Conclusion

The Season of Great Lent in the Antiochene Syriac Maronite tradition draws the person of faith into reflection upon the nature of sin, and the reality of salvation in Christ. We see how the result of sin is manifested in our lives, in our physical challenges, in our relationships with others and above all in our need to see through the eyes of faith the Savior of the world who invites us to a new life, in and through Him.

Sick, our nature demanded to be healed; fallen, to be raised up; dead, to rise again. We had lost the possession of the good; it was necessary for

it to be given back to us. Closed in the darkness, it was necessary to bring us the light; captives, we awaited a Savior; prisoners, help; slaves, a liberator. Are these things minor or insignificant? Did they not move God to descend to human nature and visit it, since humanity was in so miserable and unhappy a state?

— ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA, THE CATECHETICAL ORATION

The more we embrace the discipline of Great Lent and give honest reflection on our lives, the greater we will appreciate the Glorious celebration of Our Lord’s Resurrection, where his light scatters forever the darkness of sin and death. ■

Father Fisher is a Maronite priest of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon and Adjunct Professor of Eastern Christian Thought at St. Charles Seminary, Philadelphia, PA



SPIRITUAL DIRECTION I: ART OF ACCOMPANIMENT
May 18-22, 2020


SPIRITUAL DIRECTION II: ADVANCED TOPICS IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
June 22-26, 2020

Rev. Boniface Hicks, O.S.B.
Rev. Thomas Acklin, O.S.B.

The need for spiritual direction—or the accompaniment of a spiritual guide—is becoming more prominent in a world where so many are suffering from deep wounds. Through reading, lectures, and discussions, participants will learn the foundational dynamics of spiritual direction with the authors of *Spiritual Direction: A Guide for Sharing the Father’s Love*.

To learn more or to register for this weeklong course, please visit IMF.SAINTVINCENTSEMINARY.EDU.

300 Fraser Purchase Road • Latrobe • PA • 15650
724-805-2729 • Email: IMF@STVINCENT.EDU



LEARN
GROW
PROSPER
BE

2020 MYO NATIONAL RETREAT

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 28 - JULY 3 2020
WALSH UNIVERSITY • NORTH CANTON, OH
WWW.MARONITEYOUTH.ORG

GROW STRONG

IN THE LORD, WITH THE STRENGTH OF HIS POWER.

- Ephesians 6:10



MYO & MYA Lenten Retreat Day

How do Prayer, Fasting, & Almsgiving strengthen us on our faith journey?

Teens (Ages 12-18), Young Adults (Ages 19-35) & Chaperones from our Maronite Parishes in NY, NJ, CT, and PA are all invited to join us:

**SATURDAY, MARCH 7TH, 2020
11:00 AM - 8:00 PM**

St. John Paul II Maronite Catholic Church at Immaculate Conception
199 North Broadway - Sleepy Hollow, NY

COST: \$25 DONATION PER PERSON

➤ COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORMS & THE FEES MUST BE COLLECTED BY THE CHAPERONE AND HANDED IN ON THE MORNING OF THE RETREAT DAY.

RETREAT ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- ✓ GUEST SPEAKERS & SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS
- ✓ MEALS & SNACKS
- ✓ ICE BREAKERS & GAMES
- ✓ ADORATION, CONFESSION, & DIVINE LITURGY
- ✓ OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET NEW FRIENDS FROM OTHER PARISHES

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER PLEASE CONTACT:
FRANCES MOURANI 914-815-0813 OR SR. THERESE MARIA 508-965-6945



THE ORDER OF SAINT SHARBEL

PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE ORDER OF SAINT SHARBEL
OR RENEWING YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TODAY.
(ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS RENEW JANUARY 1ST EACH YEAR.)

TO ENROLL OR RENEW AS AN ANNUAL MEMBER
OR BECOME A PERPETUAL MEMBER
GO TO: www.orderstsharbel.org



Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn
109 Remsen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
saintmaron@yahoo.com

Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles
1021 S. 10th Street
Saint Louis, MO 63104
maroniteswest@yahoo.com

Catholic Extension Society Issues Grant Challenge to Maronite Eparchies in 2020

Exciting news! Catholic Extension Society recently announced that it will make a \$25,000 grant to each of the Maronite Eparchies in 2020 for their seminarian endowments if certain conditions are met.

Each Eparchy can earn the \$25,000 grant if they enroll at least 15 new Perpetual Members in the Order of Saint Sharbel by 31 December. Membership dues must be received by 31 December 2020 to qualify.

This is not the first time that the Eparchies have received matching grants from Catholic Extension. Catholic Extension made similar grants to the Eparchies in 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2016, after the Order of Saint Sharbel met similar challenges. The Eparchies were selected after a competitive application process each time.

Order of Saint Sharbel President, Jim Abdo of Minneapolis, immediately put out a call to Members of the Order to invite their friends, family members and fellow parishioners to recruit new Members or to make a gift of Membership, saying, "We do not want to waste this great opportunity!"

Perpetual Membership in the Order requires a donation of \$5,000. The payment can be made in one lump sum, or in four installments over the course of



Building Faith | Inspiring Hope | Igniting Change

a year. Information on enrolling in the Order can be found on the Order of St. Sharbel's website, www.orderstsharbel.org, or obtained by contacting any of the following people:

- **JAMES ABDO**, President of the Order (jabdo@abdobooks.com)
- **MARY MILTON**, Vice President, Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles (marymiltonremax@gmail.com)
- **CHARLENE HIFFA**, Vice President, Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn (mchiffa@bellsouth.net)
- **JOHN KUREY**, Stewardship Director, Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn and the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon (718-237-9913 / 314-231-1021; or saintmaron@yahoo.com / maroniteswest@yahoo.com). ■



Effective Ways You Can Help Your Eparchy!

Please consider the following ways in which you can help the Maronite Church!

Legacy Giving

This is a creative way to support the Church. Legacy Giving can involve contributing through your *will*, *insurance policy*, or *retirement assets*.

You can get a tax deduction today and provide yourself with a steady source of income in future years through a *charitable trust*.

How to Remember Your Church in Your Will

Suggested wording for a bequest to the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn:

"I give and bequeath to the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn _____% of the residue of my estate [or: the sum of \$_____]."

Suggested wording for a bequest to the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles:

"I give and bequeath to the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles _____% of the residue of my estate [or: the sum of \$_____]."

Tax-Smart Giving of Appreciated Stock or other Assets

The gift of an asset such as *common stock* or *mutual fund shares* that have increased in value can be a smart way to make a contribution and receive maximum tax benefits based on the value of the asset.

Gifts of other *appreciated assets* such as land, antiques, and homes, can also be utilized as potential gifts with valuable tax benefits.

Gifts of these assets should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For more information on any of these options,
please contact:

Stewardship Director
John F. Kurey, Esq., MBA
718-237-9913 or 314-231-1021
saintmaron@yahoo.com or
maroniteswest@yahoo.com

Ordinations

A December Full of Gifts: Two Deacons Ordained for St. Elias Church, Birmingham, AL

by Jeanette Wyrick

December was full of blessings for St. Elias in Birmingham, Alabama. Two subdeacons, Mark Ferris and Jimmy Wehby, were ordained to the Diaconate by Bishop A. Elias Zaidan. Chorbishop Richard Saad, Pastor; Father Rami Razzouk, Associate; and Father Milad Yaghi concelebrated the Liturgy with Bishop Zaidan.



The deacons had been ordained as subdeacons by Bishop Elias in March 2014 during his first visit as bishop to St. Elias. They have faithfully served St. Elias all these years while working to prepare themselves for the Diaconate.

Following the liturgy, family and friends celebrated with the Deacons during a reception in the church hall prepared by the Ladies' Altar Society.

In December, Father Rami Razzouk was assigned as Administrator at Our Lady of Lebanon in Millbrae, CA. The parish hosted a Farewell Dinner for him to thank him for his service to St. Elias and to wish him well in his new assignment. Deacon Peter Zogbi was assigned to St. Elias in December to assist in various aspects of the pastoral ministry and administrative duties of the parish. Deacon Peter will be ordained to the priesthood in June 2020.

An additional special event occurred on 10 January 2020 when a Lifetime Achievement Award from NAM was bestowed on our Pastor, Chorbishop Richard D. Saad. Following a 5 p.m. Divine Liturgy, celebrated by Reverend Albert Constantine, Spiritual Director of NAM, a Gala Banquet was held at The Club. Several NAM Board members and other out of town guests joined parishioners in honoring Chorbishop Richard.

In addition to all of our usual holiday activities — Jr. MYO sponsoring the Angel Tree and children of the parish presenting the Christmas play — these extra events brought us together for many special occasions. ■

Educator Turned Deacon: Relationships are vital in schools, parishes. *by Brandon Shulleeta*

Deacon Louis Peters retired as an educator after a 40-year career built on the idea that strong relationships with students is a vital ingredient in the recipe for reaching students. Now a deacon, he lives by a similar philosophy: church leaders must have healthy relationships with parishioners built on trust. “There’s a common thread,” Peters said. “First of all, you have to make sure what you’re telling them is the truth.”

Peters is the deacon of St. Raymond Maronite Cathedral in St. Louis, Missouri, and chancellor of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles. As deacon, he’s a spiritual leader for parishioners, and he also gives periodic sermons. As chancellor, he takes on administrative responsibilities and assists the bishop, among a wide array of church responsibilities. In many ways, Peters likens the role of chancellor to office manager.

Those are roles Peters is quite comfortable with after decades in education and Catholic Church leadership. In the 14 years prior to his education career retirement in 2013, he worked at Chaminade College Preparatory School in Creve Coeur, Missouri, a Catholic school for middle and high school boys.

Peters, who received Catholic school education in his youth and has a doctorate in educational administration from St. Louis University, was a Catholic theology teacher for the first seven years at Chaminade on the heels of what had already

been a decorated career in Catholic education. For the last seven years of his career, he was Chaminade’s principal.

In those roles, he connected with students on a personal level. As principal, he also sought out teachers who were knowledgeable in their subject areas but also had an ability to connect with students. The school’s Latin motto translates to “be a man,” which Peters believes is a powerful message for teenage boys when understood correctly. “That’s sometimes misunderstood as: You gotta be aggressive, you gotta be domineering, you gotta be the boss — that kind of interpretation,” Peters said. “That was not what the motto meant. . . . Being a man, you’re faithful to your commitments. You’re faithful to your friends. You’re faithful to your



spouse. You do what you can to provide for others, including your family.”

Peters, a 72-year-old veteran of the Air Force with the Defense Intelligence Agency, became a subdeacon in 1977 before becoming a deacon in 2005.

Bishop A. Elias Zaidan appointed Deacon Louis as chancellor shortly after he retired from his education career in 2013. He accepted the appointment, knowing his background positioned him well. “You start looking at the needs of the community, and then you look at yourself and your talents, or whatever you might have that might contribute to the community,” he said.

Over the past several years, Peters, who has Lebanese and Italian ancestors, has also given numerous speeches about the plight of Christians in the Middle East, speaking to audiences that are both Catholic and non-Catholic. Among the historical context, he notes that Christians have long been in the Middle East, despite some people’s misperceptions. “The Christians in the Middle East are really the indigenous people there,” Peters said. “Sometimes people say ‘What are they doing there? Why are they there?’ They’ve always been there. They go back before Islam, and they go back [in] time, in certain places, alongside the Jewish populations.”

For Peters, his background as an educator, his vast knowledge in Catholic theology, and his appreciation for meaningful relationships continues to make him a staple in the St. Louis area and throughout the Catholic Church community. ■

Brandon Shulleeta is a freelance journalist hailing from Glen Allen, VA.



Maronite Jewelry As unique as it is Beautiful!

- A. Large Antiochene Cross
- B. Small Antiochene Cross
- C. Rubbula Cross
- D. Saint Sharbel in Circle Cross
- E. Saint Sharbel Medal
- F. Large Saint Sharbel Medal
- G. Solid Rope Chain
- H. Solid Heavy Rope Chain
- I. Camel
- J. Gents Cedar Tree Ring
- K. Cedar Tree Cuff Links
- L. Small Circle Cedar
- M. Large Cedar Tree
- N. Serpent Bracelet
- O. Bangle Bracelet
- P. Antiochene Cross Ring

All available in Gold & Silver
Due to the fluctuation in gold & silver
please call for daily pricing

Available only at

cappiellojewelers.com

CAPPIELLO 
 **Jewelers**

Saint Anthony of the Desert Church

Fall River, Massachusetts *by Antoinette Zeina*

For 108 years, Saint Anthony of the Desert Maronite Catholic Church, in Fall River, Massachusetts, has stood as a parish abundant in faith, strong in its community, and committed to prosperity in the legacy of the church built by their ancestors.

The story of St. Anthony of the Desert began like many other Maronite parishes. In 1900, Maronites from Lebanon settled in the small town of Fall River, intending to adopt a new life in the United States. Not having a church of their own and eager to practice their faith, Maronites attended Divine Liturgies at various parishes in the city by priests who would occasionally travel from the Boston area.

In 1911, after spending three months in Fall River, Reverend Gabriel Corkemaz of Boston, purchased a wooden house and converted it to a small church. Divine Liturgy was held at this location until 1929 when the building was sold. Land was purchased for a church that was to serve the community for decades.

Like all families, the Maronite family of faith in Fall River has been tested and proved strong in courage and determination through times of trials and tribulations that shook the

foundation of the church. In the early 70s, the death of pastor Chorbishop Eid and a church fire all occurred in the span of one year, leaving many parishioners to question the future of their church community. Although devastated and confused by the events, the hard work, vision and tenacity of Father (later Chorbishop) Norman J. Ferris, who was appointed administrator of the parish on the death of Chorbishop Eid, brought the community to its feet and inspired the group of Maronites to rebuild their church once again, which is now where their spiritual home stands today.

The resilience and dedication of the parishioners of St. Anthony of the Desert is not just a part of its history, but rather a part of their present culture as a church. According to Monsignor James Root, it is what makes this church community of around 200 families so passionate and unique. The parish family comprises a mixture of Lebanese immigrants as well as first, second, third and fourth generation American-Lebanese members, all of whom have a strong helping hand in keeping the church running smoothly with its general operations.

“We stay very busy,” Monsignor James said. “We all work together as a unit to make this all possible.”

It’s the helping hands that have kept the church’s doors open for decades through an incredible collaboration of clubs and organizations across all generations. The parish holds several annual events that serve as major fundraisers but, more importantly, also serve as a way to bring families together.

- “The Holiday Bazaar” is held the weekend before Thanksgiving as a way to bring together parishioners as well as people from outside the church.
- A dinner is held in honor Saint Anthony every January to honor the blessed feast day of their patron saint.
- An annual hafli, put on every November to celebrate the anniversary of the parish, features the Lebanese culture with live Arabic entertainment and, of course, food.
- With the many events each year to keep the parish busy, the Maharajan that is held every summer serves as the biggest parish fundraiser of the year. The three-day festival known for its energetic atmosphere, cultural live music and delectable Lebanese cuisine has brought the people of Fall River together to experience the Lebanese culture. It is one of the most highly anticipated and respected events to happen annually in the community.

Before finding himself in the small town of Fall River, Monsignor James served as the rector of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Cathedral from 2007-2018 in Brooklyn, NY. After 11 years of service, he left his city roots behind and was assigned to Saint Anthony of the Desert where he has served for the last 18 months. Making the transition from the big city to the small town of Fall River presumably would come with trepidations. Fortunately, Monsignor James states he felt right at home the moment he set foot into the parish. Monsignor James feels blessed to work alongside three incredible deacons: Deacon Andre Nasser, Deacon Donald Massoud and Deacon Brian Dunn.

Where some parishes may struggle to keep the youth involved, St. Anthony of the Desert takes great pride in their eager youth involvement. If you attend a Divine Liturgy at St. Anthony, you will see the youth take part in responsibilities such as ushering, gathering collections, and lecturing (reading). One member of the parish has been serving as lector since he was five years old. You would also hear the joyful voices of their 27-member choir. The ensemble is made of up parishioners of multiple generations with many kids who play live instruments as well as perform the liturgic chants in English, Arabic,



and Syriac. The group also performs an annual Christmas concert that always sells out.

The parish also keeps the youth involved with their religious education classes that are offered for grades Pre-K—6th grade. Beyond, their 7th and 8th grade groups meet once or twice a month as part of the MYO. Creating this strong foundation of youth involvement at an early age has stayed with many when they decide to leave home for college in the later years. Despite being far from home, once they return, they always return to the altar, choir or wherever a helping hand is needed during Sunday Divine Liturgy.

“It’s something very unique about our parish,” Monsignor James proudly asserts. “What can I say, I am very lucky!”

Looking to the future, Monsignor James looks forward to more

opportunities to build the church, both the community and the building. There are already talks in preparation for the summer festival and the church will be undergoing major renovations in the upcoming year. With many churches closing their doors in the community, Monsignor James sees expanding as an opportunity to have their parishes arms spread wide. New roofs and a new parking lot are already in the works that will allow comfort and convenience for everyone. “These changes are not just for us, today, they are for the future members of our parish. We are building for the future.” ■

We are grateful to Antoinette Zeina for her many contributions to the feature column, “Living Church.” This is her last contribution, since other commitments require her time and attention. We look forward to big things from this talented young lady.

Cincinnati to Host the 57th NAM Convention

The National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM), St. Anthony of Padua Maronite Church, and the Maronite Convention 2020 Team, are looking forward to welcoming you from 8-12 July to the 57th NAM Convention in the Queen City of the Midwest, Cincinnati, OH.

The convention this year is reinvigorated: held at the newly renovated Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Cincinnati (only \$149/night) with specially-designed workshops, guest appearances, entertainment and excursions being planned to enrich our Maronite parish life and provide outstanding cultural experiences.

Workshops include:

- “Best Practices for Running a Successful Parish Festival”—for a large, medium or small community.
- “Cooking for the Maronite Feasts, Fresh is Best! Food, Faith, Nutrition”—with nationally renowned chef Julie Tabouli.
- “Safe Environment: Everyone Has a Role”—how to safeguard our children.
- “Commission on Lebanon and the Middle East”—featuring our Maronite Bishops, the Lebanese ambassador IDC and Caritas Lebanon.
- “National Maronite Business Social Mixer”—a highlight introduced this year as an opportunity for parishioners to meet, to network professionally, and to exchange business information.





- “Sharbel: A Disciple for Our World Today” with special guest participants, Fr. Hady Mahfouz, Lebanese Maronite Order of which St. Sharbel was a member and Fr. Wissam Akiki, pastor, St. Joseph Maronite Church, Phoenix, AZ, location of a documented, miraculous healing in the United States.

Special Liturgical Highlights:

- Thursday evening, Reverend Armando Elkhoury and the seminarians of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary, Washington, DC, will celebrate a Divine Liturgy in Syriac, the authentic language of our Maronite Church.
- Also, on Thursday evening, St. Anthony of Padua Parish Choir, along with the National MYA, is preparing a recital and an evening of prayer and meditation to celebrate the relics of our Maronite saints.
- On Friday, Seminarian Christopher Nahra will be ordained to the Minor Orders of Cantor, Lector, and Subdeacon.

The beloved Lebanese star, Tony Hanna, of the authentic Lebanese song, and Antoine Akkary will celebrate with us in a spectacular Banquet and Hafli. Debuting at the event will be the “Maronite International Anthem”!

Attractions include:

- The Ark Encounter featuring a full-size Noah’s Ark built to specific dimensions given in the Bible.
- The Bourbon Trail is an adventure to explore the numerous nearby distilleries and to taste and enjoy some of the finest bourbon this country has to offer.
- The Newport Aquarium (#1 aquarium in the Midwest) has thousands of aquatic fish and mammals.
- See the website www.cincinnatiusa.com for details of these attractions, as well as many more options illustrating why Cincinnati is known as the “Queen City of the Midwest.”

St. Anthony of Padua Maronite Church will donate 10% of the proceeds from the convention to a charity other than itself.

All of the latest information and updates are at www.nam2020.com.

Please register soon for the 57th NAM Convention and reserve your room as soon as possible, as Cincinnati typically hosts many conventions that compete for accommodation space. Registration is available through your parish NAM Delegate and online at www.namnews.org. ■



The seventeenth meeting of the Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches met in Atchaneh Lebanon 25 January - 1 February to discuss ecumenical issues related to marriage. Bishop Paul Rouhana and Chorbishop John Faris are members of the Catholic delegation.

Caring for the Elderly in Lebanon

The Missionary Sisters of the Very Holy Eucharist have a charism to serve women in Lebanon from childhood to old age. In addition to operating schools and orphanages, the Sisters serve a much-neglected group in Lebanon: the elderly.

In the village of Kfarmashoun, four miles from Jbeil, the Sisters operate **Saint Ann's Home for the Aged**, where 100 women ages 50 to 99 reside. Unlike almost every other old age home in Lebanon, the Sisters provide housing, meals, cleaning and laundry services, nursing care and even the Divine Liturgy every day — at no charge for those who cannot afford to pay.

In recent years, Saint Ann Home purchased a new washing machine, drier and other appliances thanks to the generosity of the Raskob Foundation, through a grant applied for by the Maronite Bishops in America. The Home needs to purchase 90 hospital beds and bedside tables, which its bedridden residents may use to eat their meals. ■



Room for elderly resident.

Donations for the Sisters may be sent to the Eparchy of Saint Maron, 109 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Please include a note with your check stating that it is designated for the Missionary Sisters' Home for the Aged.

Msgr. Peter Vaccari to Lead Catholic Near East Welfare Association

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, Chair and Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of Catholic Near East Welfare Association/Pontifical Mission for Palestine, has announced the Holy See has approved the nomination and election of Msgr. Peter Vaccari to succeed Msgr. John E. Kozar as president of CNEWA/PMP. Msgr. Vaccari initiated the process of transition as vice president on 1 January 2020. At a date yet to be determined, but in the near future, Msgr. Kozar will retire and concurrently Msgr. Vaccari will assume his responsibilities as president of CNEWA/PMP.

A priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn, Msgr. Vaccari, 67, concluded his term as Rector of Saint Joseph Seminary in Dunwoodie, New York, on 31 December. Ordained a priest in 1977, he has served as a parish priest, seminary professor, Chaplain with the Air Force Reserve, and Rector of Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington, before becoming Rector of Saint Joseph's Seminary in 2012.

Msgr. Kozar, a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, began his tenure as president of CNEWA/PMP in September 2011, after having served as National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies for 10 years. “A diocesan priest on loan to the missions,” Msgr. Kozar has encouraged the Eastern Catholic churches — which CNEWA is privileged to serve — as these communities continue in their renewal called for by the fathers of the Second Vatican Council.

“As I travel throughout CNEWA’s world, the men and women of these rich communities of faith demonstrate the church at her best, whether by wiping tears from the eyes of abandoned pensioners or in offering the Bread of Life to refugees in a camp.”

An agency of the Holy See with offices in Addis Ababa, Amman, Asmara, Beirut, Ernakulam, Jerusalem, New York, and Ottawa, Catholic Near East Welfare Association works for, through and with the Eastern churches throughout the Middle East, Northeast Africa, India, and Eastern Europe. Founded by Pope Pius XI in 1926, CNEWA provides aid to religious sisters caring for orphaned and abandoned children; helps displaced and refugee families; offers maternity and health care for the poorest of the poor; supports the formation and education of seminarians, religious sisters, and catechetical leaders; sponsors catechesis programs for children and young adults; and funds initiatives for the marginalized, especially the elderly and disabled.

On behalf of the Holy Father, CNEWA strives to build up the church, affirm human dignity, alleviate poverty, encourage dialogue, and inspire hope. ■



Msgr. Peter Vaccari, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, and Msgr. John Kozar

Maronite Young Adults at the March for Life – Washington DC

by Hana Chemaly, MYA from Cincinnati, OH

This year marked yet another fruitful March for Life. Running consecutively for 47 years, this year's peaceful protest was record-breaking. The crowd roared in support when President Donald Trump took the stage as the first President of the United States to deliver a speech at the March for Life in person. Accompanied by his family, he inspired the crowd reminding them, "When we see the image of a baby in the womb, we glimpse the majesty of God's creation. When we hold a newborn in our arms, we know the endless love that each child brings to a family." It was televised and heard across the record-breaking crowd of 500,000 people. Families, students, religiously affiliated groups and friends came to march together. Surveys show that the youth made up half of the crowd, proving yet again that they are the Pro-Life Generation.

Pro-Life Louisiana State Representative, Katrina Jackson, also spoke, bridging the political gap. Her passion shone through her words, "We know as believers that God does not conform to man's law," she continued, "At the end of the day, it is up to each of us to pray and stand in the gap in prayer for those who need our help and see things change for the better. In addition to being pro-life, let us also be pro-love," she challenged. "As Christians, we are not called to judge one another but help the least among us."

Being Pro-Life is not to shame those who have gone through or been affected by an abortion. It is to prevent that choice from being made in the first place. Powerful messages on signs resonated with us, such as, "I regret my abortion". A sizable group of





Maronites marched with the crowd, including Bishop Gregory Mansour, the Maronite Seminarians, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light, members from the Maronite Young Adults and the Maronite Youth Organization.

We broke our own personal record as MYA, having had seven National Maronite Young Adult Board members attend. They included Director Sr. Therese Maria, President Sami Shaia, Vice President Hana Chemaly, and honorary board members, Maya Khoury, Mira Aoun, Sandy Risha, Julie Lattouf, and Antony Harb. Overall, MYA members from eight states attended: NC, FL, OH, VA, MI, NJ, NY.

A Q&A session with Bishop Gregory was held following dinner sponsored by the Maronite Seminary. It was an interactive discussion on the difference between Palliative Care and Euthanasia, including professional insights and experiences from several attendees. This discussion ended with a short and informative presentation on Natural Family Planning by Marise Frangie.

It's always an act of courage to witness and participate in the March for Life. We pray for the souls of all the lives lost at the hands of abortion, and for healing and peace among all those who are affected. ■

12th Annual MYA Conference Presents

MARONITE LEADERSHIP

Forming Effective Leaders and Disciples

September 4-7th, 2020
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Registration Coming Soon
www.maroniteyoungadults.org
nationalMYA@gmail.com
WhatsApp MYA @ +1(310)400-0212



LEBANON IS PROUD OF YOU
BE PROUD OF YOUR ROOTS

The Maronite Foundation
Proudly Presents

THE MARONITE ACADEMY
INITIATIVE, **8TH ANNUAL SESSION**

in honor of the late HE **MICHEL EDDE**
Founder and honorary President
of the Maronite Foundation

Hosted by the Maronite Foundation
in the World and in collaboration with
the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik
(USEK)

Are you of
Lebanese descent,
living abroad
and aged between
20 and 30?

**REGISTER
ONLINE NOW**

to win a trip to Lebanon from
July 19 to August 3, 2020

**Candidates must be fluent in English*

Visit to Caritas Lebanon's Food Processing Plant in Deir El-Ahmar

by Deacon Joseph Chebli

Crossing the mountains from the Caritas headquarters in Beirut to Deir el-Ahmar in the Bekaa Valley takes about 2½ hours. Thirty minutes into our trip, the concrete buildings of the city faded and vast stretches of open fields and green began to emerge. André Koueik (Caritas liaison), my wife and I were going to visit a new Caritas Lebanon food processing plant. The two-fold purpose of the facility is to assist local farmers to package and market some of their crops and to provide jobs and job training for the local women and some refugees.

Upon our arrival, we were treated to coffee, some Lebanese treats, and water. André introduced us to the local team, who showed us around and explained the importance of every piece of equipment: the roaster, the jar-packing machine, the cucumber sorting machine for pickling, etc. The plant not only packages crops and processes pickling for the locals, but also provides some of these services to commercial entities.

At lunchtime, we were joined by the Mayor of Deir El-Ahmar, Mayor Hanna, who explained that the Bekaa Valley is one of Lebanon's most rural areas and has severe economic problems. With the influx of 1.5 million Syrian refugees, Deir el-Ahmar is economically devastated. Some locals lost their jobs because of cheaper labor.

As we toured the facility, we saw how our contributions to Caritas had been put to good use. We also noticed several unfinished projects: cinderblock walls and concrete floors that are incomplete; an electric generator that needs to be relocated from the basement to the outdoors because the facility is overcrowded; and other needs.

After visiting the factory and seeing the good work being accomplished with the financial assistance our parish had provided Caritas Lebanon, I am convinced that any assistance to Caritas Lebanon goes a very long way. ■

Deacon Joseph Chebli is a permanent deacon of St. Sharbel Church, Somerset, NJ



Caritas Lebanon is the official arm of the Catholic Church in Lebanon that serves the poor and refugees. It provides health care, emergency aid, education and humanitarian relief. Tax-deductible donations may be made online with a credit card at www.caritaslebanon.org, or by mailing a check payable to "Caritas Lebanon USA" to: Caritas Lebanon USA, 931 Lebanon Drive, St. Louis, MO, 63104. Volunteers interested in helping Caritas should contact Father John Nahal at rector@straymond-mc.org or 314-621-0056.



Local women process food at the Deir el-Ahmar plant.



EGG AND PARSLEY OMELET RECIPE*

(EJ-JET II-BA'DOO-NES)

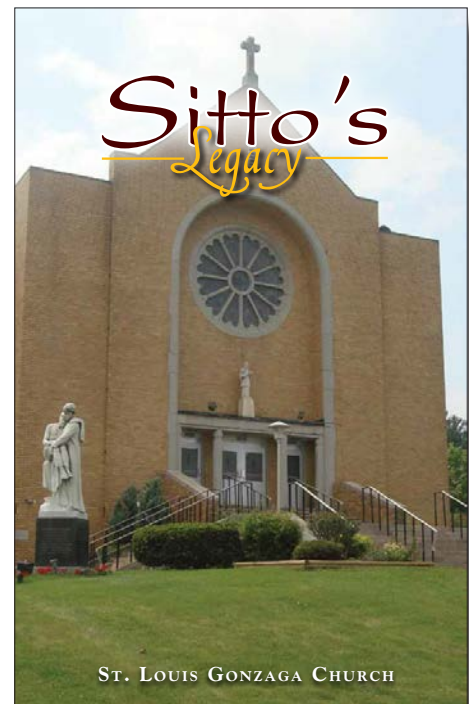
2 bunches of parsley, washed and chopped fine
12 to 14 eggs (can use egg substitute)
3 medium onions, chopped fine
6 to 8 cloves of garlic
½ teaspoon Allspice
1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped fine
½ teaspoon baking powder (optional)
Salt and black pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients, beat well.

In a skillet, put 1 tbsp. of oil and let it get hot.
Add 1 tbsp. of egg mixture and fry on one side.
Turn over and fry other side.

Delicious with cheese, olives, yogurt salad and
Lebanese Bread.

*RECIPE FROM "SITTO'S LEGACY" COOKBOOK
PUBLISHED BY THE ST. MARY'S GUILD OF
ST. LOUIS GONZAGA CHURCH, UTICA, NEW YORK



Annual Clergy Retreat

Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon

Bishop A. Elias Zaidan of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles led the priests of the Eparchy in a week-long Clergy Retreat at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, AZ, this past January.

The structure of the Retreat included daily Divine Liturgy, morning and afternoon prayers, quiet reflection, time for personal and communal prayer, and an opportunity for confession. Time was allotted for the priests to enjoy fraternal fellowship.

Chorbishop Seely Beggiani, Rector Emeritus of Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary in Washington, D.C., who served as Retreat Master, gave two daily talks on “Themes in Syriac Spirituality.” These talks explored the rich heritage of our Syriac Spirituality as it relates to *Creation, Image and Likeness of God, Revelation, Incarnation, Baptism, Penitence* and several other characteristics of our Rite.

The Retreat was a great opportunity for our Bishop and clergy to come together to offer their prayers for our parishes, members, and friends. It was also a time to reflect on the many blessings God has bestowed on all of us. The clergy left the retreat with a renewed sense of gratitude for the great privilege given to us and a renewed commitment to be faithful servants according to the mind and heart of Christ and His Church. ■



Parish News

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

St. Joseph Church Ministry Fair

by June Isaf

On the Sunday before Epiphany, St. Joseph's Church in Atlanta held its first **Ministry Fair**. The Ministry Fair followed our September "Igniting the Flame" Parish Renewal which focused on building the parish and the effectiveness of its ministries. Representatives from St. Joseph's 17 parish ministries encouraged parishioners to participate in various church activities. Numerous parishioners attending the event received a prayer entitled "Prayer for My Parish" along with a St. Joseph's Ministry Directory. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Father Tony Akoury led the congregation in reciting the "Prayer for My Parish."

The ministry leaders were assigned to individual ministry stations where they greeted parishioners and entertained questions pertaining to their particular ministry. Informational materials were distributed promoting each mission, and small token gifts such as: patron saint prayer cards, rosaries, and religious pamphlets were given to those interested in joining specific ministries. The Ministry Fair was a success adding 168 new active members to the varied ministries including a strong response from our youth and young adult ministries. Several ministries include: Respect Life, Ladies Altar & Rosary, Outreach, Prayer & Adoration, MYA, Young Marrieds, Knights of Columbus, Education Ministries, etc.

Additionally, the Order of St. Sharbel held a raffle to raise money for the support of our Maronite Seminarians. Our Ministry Fair concluded with parishioners socializing and enjoying delicious Lebanese Epiphany desserts. ■



TAMPA, FLORIDA

Sodality of the Maronite Sisters in Christ

On 8 December 2019, the Sodality of the Maronite Sisters in Christ of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Tampa, Florida, celebrated their 10th Anniversary as a religious group during the Divine Liturgy. The Sodality members were grateful to the Lord for allowing them ten years of praying together, serving the church, and working for the benefit of the community. The parishioners thanked them for their commitment and dedication in helping others in various ways including: prayer services for deceased parishioners, feeding over 150 homeless and poor during the Lenten Season, financial support to the church, and honoring the Mother of God during the month of May.

Following liturgy, a joyful Christmas Party was held at the Carrollwood Country Club to recognize the occasion. We wish the Sodality blessings and many more years of service to the Maronite Church and community. ■



Parish News

AUSTIN, TEXAS

Our Lady's Maronite Church Joins Texas Rally for Life

by Maria Gebara

On Saturday 25 January parishioners from Our Lady's Maronite Church joined the Texas Rally for Life, a statewide march to Texas' State Capitol. They marched alongside thousands of people from across the state of Texas as well as many pro-life dignitaries in supporting the sanctity of life. Our Lady's parishioners have been faithfully taking part in this march over the past years. ■

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you and before you were born, I set you apart" Jeremiah 1:5



HOUSTON, TEXAS

Counting and Sharing Our Blessings Our Lady of the Cedars

by Susie A. Hage

Our Lady of the Cedars Church in Houston had a very busy holiday season this year! November welcomed our very first Ignatian Silent Spiritual Retreat. Father Edward accompanied a group of ten parishioners for three days on this beautiful retreat. The participants were completely disconnected from the outside world and able to reflect and pray in total peace and quiet while preparing their hearts and minds for the Christmas Season and the rapidly approaching New Year.

At the end of November, we wrapped up Thanksgiving with a Family Service Project, which brought over 170 parishioners together on the Saturday after Thanksgiving to donate supplies and put together care packages and lunches. These packages were then distributed by the families to part of the homeless community in Downtown Houston. We provided over 500 lunches and more than 200 care packages. This project was also a first of its kind for our church and proved to be an amazing way to get the entire family involved in sharing their blessings.

As we dove into December, we celebrated each organization with their individual Christmas parties and ended with our annual Christmas concert and parish dinner which was open to the entire parish. CCE classes wrapped up

with a fun program. There were several stations of activities for the children to experience and enjoy.

To top it all off, this year, Santa and Mrs. Clause visited our parish on Sunday, 15 December and brought all the good boys and girls gifts! They also joined the entire parish for cookies and hot chocolate after Liturgy. This was a delightful event for both the children and their parents.

Our annual Christmas Drive benefiting the women veterans and their families was, and always is, a great success. The parish receives a list of gifts for the families and each parishioner is asked to fulfill a wish. We truly are blessed to have so many opportunities to experience the true meaning of the holidays and to be able find so much joy in giving to those in need.

We rang in the New Year, as usual, in style with a banquet attended by nearly 350 people! We had a DJ, Samba dancers, and of course, no Lebanese party is complete without our live band and singer!

Our parish wishes you and yours a wonderful New Year filled with abundant blessings. ■

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

Chorbishop Richard Saad Receives NAM Lifetime Achievement Award

by Diana Ayoub

On 10 January 2020, a joyous occasion was held in Birmingham, Alabama. Chorbishop Richard Saad was surrounded by his faithful community as well as members of the NAM Board, as he received the NAM Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedication and service to NAM. The gala was well attended, but the most heartfelt surprise was the attendance of Chorbishop Saad's two brothers who came in from Detroit to help us honor Chorbishop Saad.

Prior to the gala, NAM Spiritual Director Fr. Albert Constantine and Chorbishop Saad celebrated liturgy at St. Elias Maronite Church. Members of the NAM board and the Order of St. Sharbel processed into the beautiful church, where Chorbishop Saad has been a pastor for 47 years.

Following the liturgy, a gala was held at The Club, Inc., a private club held atop Red Mountain in Birmingham. With stunning views of the city behind us, Fr. Albert Constantine spoke beautifully of Chorbishop Saad, stating that he has always been a source of guidance and wisdom, a man who is a great leader and a true friend and loved by his community.

NAM President Rose Sahyoun addressed the attendees, sharing that Chorbishop Saad faithfully served as NAM's Spiritual Director from 2008-2016. St. Elias Maronite Church in Birmingham, under Chorbishop's leadership, has hosted three successful NAM conventions. As Rose eloquently stated, "we know him to be a man of character and leadership. He was always humbled and positive in leading our organization. He inspired us to do better." Chorbishop Saad spoke after Rose presented him with the Lifetime Achievement Award, thanking Rose and NAM for the award. He spoke of his experiences with NAM and joked that he was worried that he was going to be asked to host another NAM convention, making it his fourth!

Chorbishop Saad is ever so deserving of this award. His love for God is evident in his level of service and his willingness to serve his local parish, the Maronite Community, and NAM.



Great men like him, who trust and serve God with true love and compassion are willing to align themselves with the word of God. Great leaders like Chorbishop Saad lead by example, influencing the salvation, service, integrity and conduct of those who surround them, and the St. Elias community is an example of this.

Congratulations, Chorbishop Saad, and thank you for your selfless service and dedication to NAM! ■



Parish News

LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS

Christmas Season

Religious Education is a top priority for the families at St. Anthony Church in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Their thought provoking and challenging lessons encourage the children to think about how God fits into their lives and how to follow His commandments. During the Christmas season, the Religious Education students performed their annual Christmas Pageant, the retelling of the journey to Bethlehem. Grade four students portrayed the main characters, and grades K-6 sang the Christmas Carols. Grades 7-8 students served the liturgy, helped with the collection baskets, gave the greeting of peace, and read the intercessions.



St. Anthony Church is proud of the fact that their organization, Daughters of St. Anthony, is the oldest active women's Maronite organization in the United States. The ladies work tirelessly in the kitchen with their family members and friends preparing Arabic meals for all parish activities, events, and fundraisers. They have provided monetary and spiritual support to parishioners in need, donated Christmas gifts to local foster children and shelters, and visited the shut-ins. They believe that no act of kindness is too small to benefit the parish and community. The ladies have instilled a sense of family in working with other church organizations, and they try to socialize monthly with each other.



On 7 December, Most Holy Trinity Maronite Monastery held a Men's Day Retreat. The men who participated in the Retreat began the day by reciting the rosary followed by a spiritual discussion with Abbot Patrick Kokorian. The main theme, entitled "Men and Virtues," was an enlightening experience. Abbot Patrick serves as the Head Monk and spiritual leader for Most Holy Trinity Monastery in Petersham, Massachusetts. This Retreat certainly provided an opportunity for self reflection and prayer.

Finally, the St. Anthony MYO meets biweekly for faith formation, community service, and recreational fun. They are involved in several activities including: delivering Thanksgiving Care Packages to nursing homes, volunteering to prepare and serve Christmas Holiday meals at a local shelter for hundreds of less fortunate individuals and families, and attending a three-day MYO Adore Christmas Retreat. They bonded in faith, prayer, reflection, and renewal with 100 other MYO members at the Retreat. ■



UNIONTOWN,
PENNSYLVANIA

Christmas Season Activities

by Dr. Mabel George Howard

Several St. George Church groups were involved in the 2019 Christmas Holiday festivities. "The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the greatest intention." This quote by Kahlil Gibran, world renowned Lebanese writer, poet, philosopher, and artist, represents compassion through acts of kindness for one another. The parishioners of St. George Church in Uniontown strive to demonstrate this kindness through charity work. St. George's organizations joined forces to conduct their annual Food Drive to benefit the less fortunate in the community who are experiencing difficulties. They collected, organized, purchased, and delivered nonperishable food items and monetary donations to the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Uniontown. Through St. Vincent de Paul, the MCF (Maronite Christian Formation) helped to prepare Christmas stockings filled with gifts for needy children. Afterwards, the Ladies Guild sponsored a breakfast and Christmas party for the MCF held in the church hall. Santa Claus made an exciting appearance, and gifts and treats were distributed to the youth.

The MYO (Maronite Youth Organization) sang religious hymns to accompany the Live Nativity outdoor presentation at Mount St. Macrina. Mt. St. Macrina in Uniontown, a beautiful mansion and estate once owned by the late 19th century coal baron, J.V. Thompson, is home to the Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great. Mt. St. Macrina is the site to one of the largest religious pilgrimages in the United States and is a renowned resource for spiritual retreats.

The Ladies Guild and Altar & Rosary Society held their annual Christmas celebration in the parish hall. This was a wonderful opportunity for the ladies to unite with family and friends, enjoy a delicious meal, and win prizes. It was a time to recognize the efforts and hard work of these dedicated women.

Finally, congratulations to Subdeacon Dr. Mallard and Donna George who were installed as Perpetual Members of the Order of St. Sharbel on 22 December.

The holiday season is truly a time for self reflection. It reminds us of our Maronite faith and gratefulness for God's love and blessings at Christmas and throughout the year. ■



Parish News

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

Chorbishop Michael J. Kail Receives Chapter Service Award and Honorary Lifetime Member Status from Youngstown-Warren Chapter of The Society of St. John Chrysostom

by Diana L. Awad Scrocco



Chorbishop Michael J. Kail, who recently retired from his role as pastor at St. Maron Church in Youngstown, Ohio, received the 2019 Chapter Service Award from the Youngstown-Warren Chapter of The Society of St. John Chrysostom “for outstanding service in support of the Chapter’s mission of Universal Christian Unity (John 17:20-26) and by Unanimous vote of the Chapter membership, assembled and duly recorded on 13 December 2019.” In receiving this award, Chorbishop Kail is considered an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Youngstown-Warren Chapter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom.

Since coming to Youngstown in 2010, Chorbishop Kail has supported the Society of St. John Chrysostom, Youngstown-Warren Chapter. On 27 December 2019, the Society bestowed its very first Chapter Service Award to Chorbishop Kail.

To acknowledge this honor, Chorbishop Kail received a gift from the Holy Land: a 20” x 12” olivewood crucifix. This gift recognizes both his service to the Society of St. John Chrysostom and his retirement after 45 years of priestly ministry in the Maronite Church. He also received a note from the executive board and officers of The Society of St. John Chrysostom, Youngstown-Warren Ohio Chapter, at the Society’s Annual Meeting and Christmas party held in the St. Maron Church Antioch Hall on 27 December 2019.

In the note, the Society asked Chorbishop Kail to accept a gift of an olivewood crucifix, carved by Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land. This gift serves as a token of the Society’s gratitude for the outstanding and generous service Chorbishop Kail has extended over the course of his time in Youngstown. The

Society also recognized Chorbishop Kail’s significant role as a speaker, host parish, and home base for the Chapter, which has enabled the Society to further the goal of Christian Unity. Additionally, the Society acknowledged Chorbishop Kail’s forthcoming retirement after 45 years of faithful service to the Maronite Church. ■

Chorbishop Michael J. Kail Retires as Father Tony Massad Assumes Role as Pastor

At the end of 2019, Chorbishop Michael J. Kail retired from his role as pastor at St. Maron Church in Youngstown, Ohio. Chorbishop Kail, who first came to St. Maron’s Youngstown in 1974 as an assistant pastor, returned to St. Maron as pastor in 2010. Ordained to the priesthood in 1974 in Pittsburgh by Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, Chorbishop Kail was elevated to Chaplain to His Holiness Pope John Paul II in 1992. Patriarch Nasrallah Peter Sfeir named him as a Chorbishop in 1999, and Bishop John Chedid ordained him as Chorbishop on 15 August 2000.

To honor his contribution to St. Maron Church in Youngstown, the parish held a number of farewell events in December of 2019. During the annual children’s Christmas party, organized by Linda Awad, several teachers, students, and clergy members from the Maronite Catholic Faith program compiled photos and videos and presented their fond memories of Chorbishop Kail’s time at St. Maron. During a farewell liturgy, the parish supported the outgoing pastor with a robust attendance at liturgy and a celebratory brunch.

Replacing Chorbishop Kail as pastor of St. Maron Church in Youngstown is Father Tony Aziz Massad. Fr. Massad assumed his new role in January of 2020. Born in Sidon, Lebanon, Father Massad was raised in Flint, Michigan. He graduated from Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary in Washington, DC. He began his service to the Maronite Church as a parochial vicar in St. Maron’s in Cleveland, Ohio, before taking on the role of pastor at St. Rafka Church in Livonia, Michigan.

To welcome the new pastor, the parish at St. Maron Youngstown organized a welcome event on Sunday, 5 January 2020. Parishioners attended liturgy, where Fr. Massad introduced himself to the parish, delivered a homily about how we all must thoughtfully navigate our Christian journey as Jesus modeled, and extended an offer to bless the homes of parishioners during the Season of Epiphany. After the liturgy, Father Tony greeted parishioners, blessed the food at the parish brunch in Antioch Hall, and socialized with the members of his new parish. ■

CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

• A Night in Paris Presented by St. Sharbel Catholic Church

by Valerie Tamer Menassa

What an exceptional Paris night! Thank you to all those that attended on Saturday, 19 October, to all of our sponsors, donors and all that helped to make our annual gala a night to remember! We had a grand 600 people in attendance with performances by our beautiful and talented Suzie Hatty and to assist her, Kristin Glasgow. Usama Baalbaki finished the evening with everyone dabbing on the dance floor. One lucky person walked away with our Grand Raffle package for a trip for two to Paris, compliments of MEA Airlines! And many thanks to the Food Network star and Pastry Guru, Jonathon Elias for the made to order delicious crepes! Merci! ■



• Lebanon Day

by Khouloud Yammine

On Sunday, 24 November 2019, the community of St. Sharbel Church in Clinton Township celebrated Lebanese Independence Day following the 11:30 Divine Liturgy in the church hall. The event started with both American and Lebanese Anthems, then the children and the youth of St. Sharbel dabke troupes performed traditional dances of popular patriotic music. During the event, Chorbishop Badawi delivered a warm welcome to all attendees and a heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the event. At the end, all gathered around Chorbishop Badawi to cut the cake in honor of our beloved country Lebanon and to enjoy singing Lebanese patriotic songs! ■



• Liturgy filled with the Christmas Spirit

by Khouloud Yammine

On Sunday, 15 December 2019, during the Season of Announcements, the children of St. Sharbel Church in Clinton Township served the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Chorbishop Alfred Badawi and assisted by Deacon Michael Magyar. During the Liturgy, our children were highly engaged. They helped in serving the altar, reading the epistle, carrying the offerings, answering questions related to the homily and reading the intercessions. At the end of Liturgy, they played the nativity pageant while singing Christmas carols. Before giving his final blessing, Chorbishop Badawi thanked the children, parents, volunteers and choir director who put all the efforts together to make this day memorable and filled with the Christmas spirit. Following Liturgy, everyone was invited to enjoy lunch in the banquet hall with family and friends and to take pictures with Santa Claus. ■



Eucharistic Living by Sr. Therese Maria Touma, MSCL

“Dear Jesus, help me to spread Your fragrance wherever I go. Flood my soul with Your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly, that my life may only be a radiance of Yours.”

— Saint John Henry Newman

Cultivating an ongoing reverence and love for the Eucharist is key if we seek to be people of Eucharistic living. Attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday (or daily if your schedule permits) and spending quiet time in adoration before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament are two primary ways to encounter Jesus, the source of all love, healing and life. As God’s beloved sons and daughters, we have been given a tremendous gift in the Eucharist; Jesus’ precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Recent polls have shown that approximately 70% of Catholics do not believe in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. These statistics are alarming as the Eucharist is a central doctrine of our faith. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life (CCC #1324). If most people do not recognize or reverence Jesus in the Sacred Host, how will they recognize and reverence Jesus in their brothers and sisters?

As Baptized Christians, we are called to be living hosts broken and shared for others. We are given a perfect example of this at the Last Supper, when Jesus gave us his Body and Blood and showed us how to humbly give of ourselves in service, and live the Eucharist. Jesus knelt down to wash the feet of His Apostles, and He told them to go and wash the feet of others. “I give you a new commandment: love one another; you must love one another just as I have loved you. It is by your love for one another, that everyone

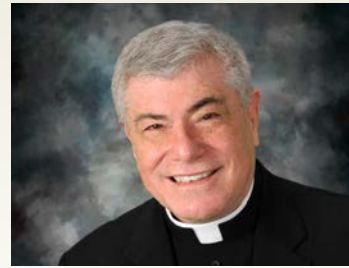
will recognize you as my disciples. (JOHN 13:34-45)

Eucharistic living is “going out of our comfort zones” to care for and be attentive to the needs of those suffering in our homes and parish communities; it is tangibly reaching out to the lonely, poor, sick, hopeless and the vulnerable. It is sowing words of peace, hope and forgiveness. It is carving out time to pray for those who need our prayers. It is seeking to love others and understand them with the compassionate heart of Christ. It is making a total gift of ourselves back to God so that our will can become one with His holy will.

We ask you Mary “Mother of the Eucharist” to lead us closer to your Son Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. We entrust to you our hearts. Give us the courage and generosity to give of ourselves without counting the cost. Arrange our hearts as you see fit and help us to be Love and credible witnesses of your Son, Jesus. Amen. ■



From the Editor



Just not for my son or daughter

During my junior and senior years of high school, my friend, Bill, and I spent Friday nights circling the parking lot at the Uniontown Shopping Center. Circling and circling — hoping to encounter some girls whom we had never met at school. Remember this was a town of 12,000 inhabitants — we were related or at least knew most of the population. Did we expect that new girls were going to fall down from Heaven?

There are many programs in our parishes that foster the prayer for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Praying and praying — hoping that God would send us young men and women with vocations. Do we expect vocations are to descend from heaven? There are young men and women in our parishes and families, but are we praying that the Holy Spirit bestow a gift of a vocation on one of them or are we asking the Holy Spirit to send vocations elsewhere? We don't want our own sons and daughters to make such a sacrifice. **A religious vocation is a good thing, but too often we say, “not for my son or daughter.”**

If it's a gift of the Holy Spirit, should we be so quick to reject it?

Of course, a religious vocation is a gift of the Holy Spirit. But Divine Providence uses many means to instill a calling:

- **Good examples of priests and religious.** These are men and women who are enthusiastic about their vocation and joyful in their lives.
- **Support of the community.** Support is not uncritical obedience to priests as in yesteryear. The “perks” are gone and society has changed — but that does not make a religious vocation any less important.
- **A good reason for a young man or woman to sacrifice a life for the mission.** In all simplicity, there is only one: the salvation of our brothers and sisters. We need to keep this point before our eyes when reflecting on the role of the priest or religious.

Let us seek our vocations in our families and in our communities — they will not fall from Heaven.

■ “The harvest is ready but the laborers are few.” MATTHEW 9:37

Chorbishop John D. Faris

THE MARONITE VOICE
ST. ANTHONY'S MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
4611 SADLER ROAD
GLEN ALLEN, VIRGINIA 23060-6108

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1370
GLEN ALLEN, VIRGINIA

Discover the Church's Best Kept Secret

It's CNEWA —
Catholic Near East Welfare Association

For nearly a century, CNEWA has been on a mission of hope for the Holy Father, accompanying the Eastern churches as these communities of faith care for those in need — especially those in the Middle East.

Join us as we help feed the poor in Lebanon, counsel the displaced in Jordan,
provide milk for children in Syria and offer catechesis for young adults
in Israel and Palestine.

Want to learn more? Visit cnewa.org • Call 1-877-284-3807 • Email info@cnewa.org

CNEWA *a papal agency for humanitarian and pastoral support*
1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022-4195