



# The Maronite Voice



A Publication of the Maronite Eparchies in the USA

Volume XV

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July - September 2018

## The Three Dimensions of the Maronite Priest



During the annual June Maronite Bishops' Synod, the preacher was Msgr. George Abi Saad, the Rector of the Maronite Seminary in *Ghazir*, Lebanon. A very insightful man himself, he based his preaching on the famous Maronite scholar and spiritual theologian Father Youkaim Moubarak of *Kfarsgheb*, North Lebanon. His reflection was on the priesthood, but the impact is for all of us in the Church. He said there are three dimensions to the Maronite priesthood:

1. The Maronite priest is close to the people. In fact, in farming communities he used to change the time of the daily liturgy to just before dawn so the people could attend, have breakfast and work the fields.
2. The Maronite priest is educated. The town-people call him *mouallem* (my teacher) for he used to teach the faith

under the *syndiane* (oak tree).

3. The Maronite priest is a man of prayer, not only action. The people would see him pray the rosary, his divine office and Divine Liturgy every day. One of the most treasured gifts that a priest bestows to another is his breviary (divine office). To this day, I still have the small Syriac office of Father Peter Mahfouz, whom I treasured.

These three dimensions of the Maronite priest throughout history are what make our Maronite priests small treasures for us today. Thank you, dear brothers, and your parishioners, for witnessing the beauty of being close to people, being well educated in the faith, and living a life of prayer and communion with God.

+ Gregory J. Mansour  
Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn

## Schedule of Bishop Elias Zaidan

### July 7 - 8, 2018

Pastoral Visit to Our Lady of the Cedars of Lebanon, Fairlawn, Ohio

### July 9 - 15, 2018

Clergy Conference and NAM Convention, Houston, Tex.

### July 22, 2018

Feast of St. Sharbel, Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon - St. Peter Cathedral, Los Angeles, Calif.

Banquet and Reception in honor of Melkite Patriarch Joseph Absi at St. Anne Melkite Cathedral, North Hollywood, Calif.

### July 28 - 29, 2018

Pastoral Visit to St. Sharbel, Portland, Oregon, and Ordination of Peter Zoghbi and Michael Shami to Subdeaconate

### August 5, 2018

Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon - St. Peter Cathedral, Los Angeles, Calif.

### August 6 - 9, 2018

Knights of Columbus Convention, Baltimore, Md.

### August 12, 2018

One Year Anniversary Mass for Bishop Robert Shaheen, St. Raymond Cathedral, St. Louis, Mo.

### August 13 - 15, 2018

Assumption Pilgrimage, Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine, North Jackson, Ohio

### August 17 - 19, 2018

Pastoral Visit to St. Rafka Church, Lakewood, Colo.

### August 25, 2018

American Lebanese Cultural Festival, Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon - St. Peter Cathedral, Los Angeles, Calif.

### August 27, 2018

Noursat/Telelumiere Board Meeting, Detroit, Mich.

### September 1, 2018

Pastoral Visit to Saints Peter and Paul Mission, Simi Valley, Calif.

### September 2, 2018

Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Coptic Catholic Church, Los Angeles, Calif.

### September 14 - 16, 2018

Pastoral Visit to St. Sharbel Community and Consecration of New Church, Clinton Township, Mich.

### September 22, 2018

100th Anniversary of *Besheley* Society Banquet, Los Angeles, Calif.

### September 23, 2018

Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon - St. Peter Cathedral, Los Angeles, Calif.

### September 24 - 30, 2018

Conference of the Marontie Bishops of the Expansion, Montreal, Canada. ☐

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- Most Reverend Bishop Gregory John Mansour
- Most Reverend Bishop A. Elias Zaidan

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#### **Editing and proofreading**

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#### **Maronite Convention 2018**

Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Catholic Church

**Houston, Texas**

**July 11 - 15, 2018**

For more information contact the NAM office at (914) 964-3070 or visit

[www.Namnews.org](http://www.Namnews.org)  
[www.Namconvention2018.com](http://www.Namconvention2018.com)



# North Jackson, Ohio

## 53<sup>rd</sup> Assumption Pilgrimage



August 13 - 15, 2018, marks the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in North Jackson, Ohio. "In July 2014 we received notification that the Shrine Church, named in honor of Christ the Prince of Peace, was raised to the great and awesome dignity of Minor Papal Basilica by His Holiness Pope Francis. This great news arrived just as the Shrine was preparing to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee of establishment. ... This great honor allows our Shrine to be one of only a few churches in the United States to share in this great dignity, and it also makes the Shrine a *special* church of our Holy Father. When you visit the Shrine you will see the insignia which demonstrates how this is a very special place," says Msgr. Anthony Spinosa, Rector.

### Monday, August 13

7 p.m. Father Robert C. Ramser, Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio, will celebrate a Roman Rite Mass. St. Christine Church Choir will serve the Mass. Candlelight procession and blessing with the Icon of Our Lady of Lebanon will follow.

### Tuesday, August 14

3 p.m. Confession

7 p.m. Bishop Milan Lach, S. J., Eparchy of Parma, Parma, Ohio, will celebrate a Byzantine Divine Liturgy.

8 p.m. Msgr. George Appleyard will lead a procession to the Tomb and prayers for the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

### Wednesday, August 15

*Feast of the Assumption*

12 noon Maronite Divine Liturgy with Anointing of the

Sick celebrated by Bishop A. Elias Zaidan and Bishop Gregory Mansour.

1 - 4 p.m. Rosary in the Tower Chapel

4 p.m. Adoration and Homily

7 p.m. Maronite Pontifical Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Gregory Mansour, Bishop Elias Zaidan, and Bishop Massoud Massoud. The Basilica Jubilee Choir will serve the Liturgy. Candlelight procession and blessing with the Icon of Our Lady of Lebanon will follow.

The National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon will open all three days at 9 a.m. Confessions will be available all three days. The Cedars Dining Hall will be open from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. with many varieties of ethnic foods and desserts.

The National Shrine is located at 2759 North Lipkey Road in North Jackson, Ohio. For further information on the Shrine call (330)-538-3351 or visit the website [www.ourladyoflebanonshrine.org](http://www.ourladyoflebanonshrine.org). ☐

## A Debt of Gratitude

For almost twenty-five years, Monsignor George Sebaali has been the Editor of *The Maronite Voice*, putting the Maronite Church in the United States "on the map," publishing eleven issues a year in an internationally praiseworthy effort, informing, inspiring, and making us proud. This will be the last issue published under his leadership. Monsignor George, we thank you for the steady, vibrant, and faithful service you have given in your quiet, no-nonsense style. Thank you also for making a good hand-off to Chorbishop John Faris, who will come after you. ☐



+ Bishop Gregory Mansour  
Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn

## A New Beginning

*The Maronite Voice* wishes its readers an enjoyable and God-filled summer. *The Maronite Voice* will not be published in August and September.

*The Maronite Voice* will appear again in late October 2018, under the leadership of Chorbishop John Faris. The deadline for the September issue is September 22, 2018.

Please send all correspondence to:  
**TheMaroniteVoice@Gmail.com**. ☐

## San Francisco, California *Mentorship Program*



On Friday, June 8, 2018, Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church in Millbrae [San Francisco], California, hosted the kickoff event to its MYO/MYA Mentorship Program. Members of the Maronite Young Adults were paired as mentors to members of the Maronite Youth Organization. Members of both groups signed up by listing some of their interests and were paired based on interests and values. The program is intended to expose both groups to one another so that young adults can share their experience and be a helpful voice to the youth.

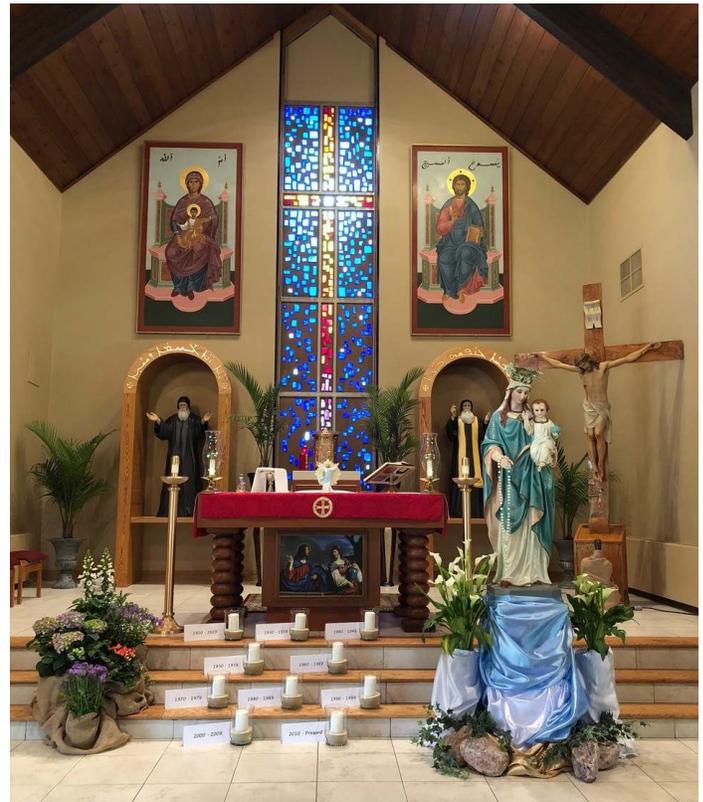
The kickoff event started with a Divine Liturgy led by Fr. Gary George. It began with a showing of a movie clip about Jesus as a child, and Fr. Gary challenged the group to think about what it must be like to be Jesus at a young age and the choices he had to make. Following the Liturgy a BBQ dinner, organized by parents, was served. The mentors and mentees had a chance to introduce one another and play games to learn more about each other. The night ended with dessert and s'mores by a fire pit. □

## Uniontown, Pennsylvania *Ladies Guild Memorial Ceremony*

by Dr. Mabel George Howard

On May 20, 2018, the Ladies Guild of St. George Church in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, celebrated its memorial liturgy honoring the deceased members of the Guild. The Ladies Guild has been in existence for seventy-eight years, and the women have continued this beautiful tradition so that the spiritual, cultural, and financial contributions of their loved ones are remembered for countless generations. The ladies began the memorial celebration by reciting the rosary and the litany, lighting candles on the altar to commemorate the memories of their loved ones, and attending the liturgy together. Following the liturgy, lunch was served in the church hall for the ladies.

After a delightful lunch, flowers were distributed to place at individual gravesites or to adorn the commemorative bricks of the deceased members in the Saint Rafka Grotto on the church grounds. This was a wonderful opportunity for quiet individual prayer and reflection. The religious life of



Saint Rafka, a Maronite Lebanese Nun and Patroness of those who suffer, inspired the Ladies Guild organization to design and dedicate the Saint Rafka Grotto to the deceased members of the Guild. The prayer Grotto contains an individually inscribed brick for each deceased member, commemorating her faith and commitment to the church. The annual Ladies Guild Memorial Ceremony pays tribute and appreciation to the legacy of many special women who not only served God and their church, but have touched our hearts forever. □

## San Antonio, Texas *Pastoral Visit*

by Regina Aune

The weekend of April 28 - 29, 2018, was a very special one for the parishioners of St. George Church in San Antonio, Texas, as they celebrated Bishop Zaidan's pastoral visit to the parish and the First Communion of eleven of its young members. On Sunday morning, the Bishop celebrated the First Communion Divine Liturgy. Father Charles Khachan, MLM, Pastor, and Father Milad Yaghi, MLM, Pastor of Our Lady of the Cedars in Houston, Tex., concelebrated. They were assisted by Deacon Thomas Billimek.

In his homily, Bishop Zaidan focused on the Gospel for the day where Jesus asks Peter three times if he loves him. Peter responds affirmatively to Jesus' question. Relating that conversation to the lives of the First Communicants and the parishioners, Bishop Zaidan emphasized that Jesus asks that question of all of us – do we love him more than anything we treasure in the world. He encouraged everyone to think of Jesus the first moment of the day and to give him our love above all else.

Following the liturgy, a luncheon reception for the First Communicants, their families, and parishioners was held in the Phoenician Ballroom. Many parishioners who remember when Bishop Zaidan was pastor at St. George enjoyed the opportunity to visit with him and renew their friendship. It was a memorable weekend for the First Communicants, their families, and all the parishioners. ☐

## Dartmouth, Massachusetts Anniversary Events



In the coming months, The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light will be hosting a few events to celebrate God's providence and blessings during the first ten years of the foundation of their order:

September 8, 2018: Open House at the Convent in Dartmouth, Mass.

October 13, 2018: Banquet at Our Lady of the Cedars, Jamaica Plain [Boston], Mass.

November 16, 2018: Liturgy of Thanksgiving at St. George Church, Cranston [Providence], Rhode Island. ☐

## Food For Thought

Faith in Jesus Christ frees us from sin, sadness, emptiness, isolation. It is the source of a joy that no one can ever take away.

*Pope Francis, June 25, 2018*

## Aljalton, Lebanon Bishop Visits Elderly Priest



His Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour visited Fr. John Andary, who served Saint Louis Gonzaga Church in Utica, New York, for many years, in his home in Aljalton, Lebanon. Fr. Andary is 96 years old. ☐

## Brockton, Massachusetts MYA Gathering



On the first Sunday of each month at 6 p.m., young adults from the New England area gather for Maronite Divine Liturgy and a pizza social at Saint Theresa Church in Brockton, Mass. If you are interested in attending this community of faith please contact Fr. Joseph Daief at (908) 323-8555 to add you to the Whatsapp group. ☐

## *Sisters' School Kitchen Completed and Awaiting Equipment*



The new school kitchen awaits equipment, appliances and accessories.

by John Kurey

The Missionary Sisters of the Very Holy Sacrament is a congregation of fifty-one religious sisters that was founded in 1966. They operate schools and medical clinics for the poor, take care of the elderly, and teach religious education and First Holy Communion. These activities take place through the Sisters' eight convents, most of which are located in rural regions of Lebanon.

The Sisters' largest school is at *Beit Habbak* (near *Jbeil* about forty miles north of Beirut), and draws students from thirty-one surrounding villages. There are 1,325 students in the school ranging from pre-school through high school. Eighty-five of the students are residential students (all girls) who are provided free accommodations, food, and medication because they are orphans or from dire domestic situations.

Recently, the Sisters completed the renovation of the school's 51-year-old kitchen. The kitchen is used for many purposes. In addition to preparing food for the students, the kitchen is used to teach classes in cooking and baking to female high school students with special needs. This is to give them a skill so that they might provide for themselves and their families in the future. Poor women from surrounding villages are also trained to work as cooks in private residences or to cook for their own families. The kitchen is also used to make desserts for the students and to sell, where the proceeds help cover part of the expenses of the very needy students.

Now, the Sisters need to purchase updated equipment, appliances and accessories for the kitchen – stoves, ovens, refrigerators, freezers, sinks, stainless steel tables, mixers and so forth. A list of some of the needs follows.

Tax-deductible donations can be made through the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. Bishop Gregory Mansour has visited the Sisters several times and will pass all donations along to the Sisters. You may send a donation to: Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, 109 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, NY, 11201. Please include a note with your donation stating that it is designated for the Missionary Sisters of the Very Holy Sacrament.

Thank you for considering the needs of the Sisters and those whom they serve. May God bless and reward you for your generosity!

### *Partial List of Items Needed For the School Kitchen*

- ◆ Stainless Steel Electric Pastry Oven with two Compartments
- ◆ Stainless Steel Horizontal Food Freezer
- ◆ Leon RIC-145 Stainless Steel Reach-In Refrigerator
- ◆ Variable Speed Mixer
- ◆ Speed Spiral Kneader
- ◆ Meat Mincing Machine
- ◆ Mixer Blender
- ◆ Twenty-five Black Iron Trays and Tray Trolley
- ◆ Work Table with Under shelf
- ◆ Twenty-four Aluminum Trays with Round Corners.

Each item ranges in cost from \$140 to \$12,826. □

*Save This Date!*  
*Thursday, October 4, 2018*



And join Bishop Gregory Mansour at the Eparchy of Saint Maron's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Benefit Dinner on Thursday, October 4, 2018 at the New York Athletic Club.

The proceeds of this Benefit Dinner provide essential funding for:

Seminarian Education  
Establishing New Maronite Parishes  
Caring for Retired Priests  
Ministering to the Faithful

Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn  
Phone: 718-237-9913  
Email: [saintmaron@yahoo.com](mailto:saintmaron@yahoo.com)  
Website: [www.stmaron.org](http://www.stmaron.org)

We look forward to seeing you there!  
Thank you for your support.

## Ukrainian Catholic Sisters Leave Large Bequest to Maronite Shrine



Mary Louise Macynski



Roxanne Macynski

by John Kurey,

### Faithful Sisters

Mary Louise and Roxanne Macynski, two sisters who lived together in Austintown, Ohio, prayed the Rosary daily and loved their Catholic faith. Being of Ukrainian decent, they were members of their local Ukrainian Catholic Church in Austintown, and sometimes attended the Ukrainian Catholic Church ten miles away in Youngstown. They were also frequent visitors to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in North Jackson, Ohio.

Mary Louise and Roxanne lived humble lives. They were never considered "rich." Roxanne worked as a nurse and enjoyed pottery, flea markets and entering floral contests. Mary Louise worked at Woolworth's for twenty-five years and liked bingo and sewing.

In April of 2015 Roxanne passed away at the age of 95. Four months later, Mary Louise died at the age of 93.

### Normal People Making an Extraordinary Impact

Chorbishop Anthony Spinosa, Rector of the Shrine, remembers the Macynski sisters fondly. "They were savers," he explained, "and they were 'normal people'. They didn't put on airs. But they loved the Shrine and, like many Catholics, they found a special devotion to Our Lady here."

Chorbishop Spinosa was right. The Macynski sisters saved so much that they left a generous legacy to several Catholic institutions when they died. Naturally, they included their Ukrainian Catholic parish in Austintown in their will; but they also left bequests to the Ukrainian Catholic parish in Youngtown and four other charities, including the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon.

The bequest from the Macynski sisters to the Shrine amounted to over \$300,000, and helped the Shrine in an immediate and profound way. The Shrine's forty-year-old parking lot, which was badly in need of repair, was fixed immediately. A spectacular pipe organ that became available at a deep discount was purchased to replace the Basilica's aging organ. The Shrine's past due bills were paid, and several other repairs were made. A small amount was put away for future costs.

### An Example for All

About the Macynski sisters, Chorbishop Spinosa says, "They set an example. Their bequest came at the perfect time for the Shrine, when we needed it most. And they helped several other places."

Many Roman Catholic parishes and dioceses have been receiving bequests for decades, but the concept is still new for Eastern Catholics. That's one of the things that makes generous people like the Macynski sisters so special. Several years after their deaths, they are remembered in Divine Liturgies at the Shrine.

Information on making a bequest to your Maronite Eparchy or parish appears nearby. To support the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon, send your donation to the National Shrine at 2759 N. Lipkey Rd., North Jackson, OH 44451. □

### Leaving a Legacy

Have you considered including the Maronite Church in your will? A will is an expression of your commitment to the principles, people and institutions that you cherish. As an active participant and supporter of your Church, a bequest can ensure that the work of the Maronite Church in America will continue. It is a lasting testament with great significance.

Remembering your Eparchy or parish in your will is easy. Here are examples of words you can use to do this:

"I give and bequeath to the [Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn] [Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles] [St. \_\_\_\_\_ Parish], located in CITY, STATE, \_\_\_\_\_% of the residue of my estate [or: the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_]."

Anyone who leaves a bequest to their Eparchy will become a Member of the Maronite Church's Legacy Society in that Eparchy.

For more information, please contact Stewardship Director John F. Kurey, Esq., MBA, at [saintmaron@yahoo.com](mailto:saintmaron@yahoo.com) or [maroniteswest@yahoo.com](mailto:maroniteswest@yahoo.com) or at 718-237-9913 or 314-231-1021. □

### Appeal from Caritas Lebanon

Christians in Lebanon are suffering! If you are able to relieve some of the suffering, please contact

**Fr. Elias Abi Sarkis, Director**

8315 South 107<sup>th</sup> East Ave.

Tulsa, OK 74133

Ph: 918-872-7400

or visit Caritas Lebanon at <http://www.caritas.org.lb>.

Checks may be made payable to Caritas Lebanon.

Thank you for your consideration. □



## Eparchy of Saint Maron Order of Saint Gregory the Great

**H**is Excellency Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron, requested that the Pontifical Honor of Knight or Dame of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great be bestowed on seven faithful of the Eparchy. The conferral of these honors would show how much the Church appreciates their efforts, while at the same time it would strengthen the solid bonds, which already exist, between the Maronite Church and the Holy See.

Below are the names of the faithful the Bishop proposed, with a brief *curriculum vitae*, which includes the merits on which he has based his request:

**Dr. Robert DiSibio:** Robert is 74 years old and has, for countless years, been an active and exemplary member of Saint John Maron Maronite Church in Williamsville, New York. He was always faithful to his attendance at Divine Liturgy, and participation in all Church services during the Holy Seasons. Robert has served as a lector at the parish and is truly a dedicated person who shares his time, talent, and treasure with everyone, without hesitation. He served as the President of the Parish Council, President of the Holy Name Society, and Chairman of the parish's Lebanese Festival for several years. Robert is a great example of a father, husband and Catholic, and he is loved and respected by all in his community.

**Mrs. Randa Nammour:** Randa is 44 years old and was born in Jordan, the only daughter among six brothers in her family. She helped her mother taking care of the family, and was truly a "mother" to her brothers. She went to a Catholic school in Jordan, and was a very involved in the Church there. In 1982, before completing high school, Randa married her husband, Saqer Nammour, in Jordan, and moved with him to the United States. They lived in Union City, New Jersey, and were very active in all aspects of parish life at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Cathedral in Brooklyn, New York. They then moved to Pleasantville, New Jersey, in 2001. She was one of those determined to start a Maronite parish in Pleasantville, and in 2011 our small community, led by her and her husband, acquired Saint Peter's Church from the Diocese of Camden, and the new Maronite Mission was dedicated. Thus, Randa was one of the founders of Our Lady Star of the East Maronite Church. In 2015, she became ill, her mobility and her speech started to get difficult. She is now almost completely disabled, and the cause is still unknown. She was one of the parishioners that made the dream come true of having a Maronite Church in Pleasantville.

(Continues on page 16)

### Schedule of Bishop Gregory Mansour

#### July 1 - 2, 2018

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Fr. James Doran, Waterville, Me.

#### July 8, 2018

Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

#### July 9 - 11, 2018

Annual Clergy Conference, Houston, Tex.

#### July 11 - 15, 2018

NAM Convention, Houston, Tex.

#### July 22, 2018

Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

#### July 30 - August 6, 2018

Personal Silent Retreat, Morristown N.J.

#### August 7-10, 2018

Knights of Columbus Annual Meetings, Baltimore, Md.

#### August 11- 13, 2018

Home Visit, Flint, Mich.

#### August 14 - 15, 2018

Feast on the Assumption, North Jackson, Ohio

#### August 19, 2018

One Year Memorial Liturgy for Bishop Robert Shaheen, Danbury, Conn.

#### August 24, 2018

Honoring seven persons from the Eparchy with the Order of Saint Gregory, Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

#### August 27 - 28, 2018

Noursat/Telelumiere Meetings, Detroit, Mich.

#### September 7, 2018

Theology of Tap with Young Adults, Brockton, Mass.

#### September 8, 2018

Tenth Anniversary of the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light, Dartmouth, Mass.

#### September 10 - 12, 2018

USCCB Administrative Committee Meetings, Washington, D.C.

#### September 12 - 13, 2018

Catholic Relief Services Meetings, Baltimore, Md.

#### September 23, 2018

Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

#### September 24 - 30, 2018

Bi-Annual Meetings with the Maronite Patriarch and the Maronite Bishops outside of Lebanon, Montreal, Canada. □



**The Nine Ways of Bodily Prayer by St. Dominic**  
*by*  
**Dr. Anne Borik**

**S**t. Dominic knew that the gestures of the body could powerfully dispose the soul to prayer. In this experience of prayer, the soul is lifted to God in an act of praise, thanksgiving, and supplication. These ways of prayer were the actual practice of St. Dominic and are a glimpse into his intense love for God.

***Bowing Deeply***

Bowing humbly before the altar as if Christ were really and personally present and not just symbolically. St. Dominic often taught the brothers to humble themselves before the crucified Christ saying, 'I am not worthy that you should come under my roof.' (Mt 8:8). As it says, 'The prayer of the person who humbles himself will pierce the clouds' (Sirach 35:21).

***Lying Face Down***

St. Dominic also used to pray throwing himself down flat on the ground with humility and would say the words from the Gospel, 'Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner' (Luke 18:13). He prayed with his entire body and taught his brothers to pray this way for God's mercy.

***Enduring Physical Discomfort During Prayer***

One must welcome all physical difficulties and endure patiently all kinds of bodily discomforts during prayer as part of prayer itself. This prayer practice is a way of offering one's body to God in praise.

***Kneeling***

St. Dominic would fix his gaze on the crucifix, looking intently at Christ on the cross and kneeling down over and over again, a hundred times perhaps like the leper in the Gospel who knelt down and said, 'Lord, if you will you can make me clean' (Mark 1:40). This way of prayer he taught more by the example of his practice than by what he said.

***Standing upright with his hands open, as if he were reading in the presence of God.***

At other times he joined his hands and held them tightly fastened together in front of his eyes intent in conversation with God. If one had seen his devotion as Saint Dominic stood there, erect in prayer, one would have thought one was looking at a prophet conversing with an angel or with God, talking, listening, and thinking quietly about what had been revealed to him.

***Standing Upright Praying with his Hands and Arms Spread Out Like a Cross***

This was how the Lord prayed when he hung on the cross, his hands and arms stretched out. St. Dominic taught that one should pray this way when he desired to move towards God, or rather, when he felt himself being moved by God in a particularly expansive way, through some hidden inspiration or special grace.

***Standing With Both Arms Pointed Upward Slightly Open as if to Catch Something From Heaven***

St. Dominic was often found stretching his whole body up towards heaven in prayer, like a choice arrow shot straight up from a bow (Is. 49:2). And it is believed that at such times he received an increase in grace from God. While he was praying like this he would often recite (Psalm 28:2), 'Hear the voice of my supplication while I pray to you and while I lift up my hands to your holy temple'.

***Sitting Quietly in the Presence of the Lord to Read (Lectio Divina)***

Sitting there quietly, he would open the Bible before him, arming himself first with the sign of the cross, and then he would read. (*Continues on page 20*)

# The God Who Shows His Face: An Oration on the Creed

by  
*Rev. David A. Fisher*

"Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love" - 1 John 4:8  
"God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob -- not of the philosophers and scholars" - Blaise Pascal

## *Introduction*

The reality of God is not a question to be solved by careful application of our rational faculties. Of course there is a valid place in the history of humanity in general, and in the history of religion in particular, for philosophers, theologians, and scholars. However, the "act of faith" and "ultimate trust" in God is more like falling in love than discovering quantum physics. As the apostle John proclaims to us in his gospel, that unless we love, how can we know the God who is Love.

Latin Church Father Saint Augustine of Hippo remarked in his Seventh Homily on the Letter of John, "*Dilige, et quod vis fac*" (love and do what you will), and he wrote this with the intention of saying that the punishment of a loving father for his child would be preferred to the deceiving kindness of a kidnapper; God is Our Loving Father.

The seventeenth century French philosopher, inventor, and Christian apologist Blaise Pascal wrote in his *Memorial*, which was his written remembrance of a mystical experience that strengthened his commitment to defend this Catholic faith, that his experience was not of a philosophical God, but the God who called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God who gave the Law to Moses, who inspired the Prophets of Israel, who sent his Word who became flesh and dwelt among us, died on the Cross, and resurrected by the power of the Father's Holy Spirit.

## *The Relational God*

The Fathers of the Church were confronted with the task of explaining the Christian faith to the Hellenistic/Greco-Roman world, a world that had a long tradition of not only polytheism (the belief in many gods) but also many philosophical schools of thought, with Neo-Platonism and Stoicism being predominant. Given this reality some of the Fathers, even Saint Augustine himself, tended to locate as the starting point of their reflections on God from the "Unitary" notion of God, the "Oneness" of God, which corresponded to the Neo-Platonic idea that the perfect being, that is God, is the Summus Bonum (the Greatest Good). Starting from the Oneness of God they then arrived at God as Trinity. Unfortunately, this line of thinking led to the study of God as One and God as Trinity as separate courses of study in the Medieval universities.

It is the work of the Fathers who defended the reality of God as revealed in Sacred Scripture and whose "face" is shown us in Jesus Christ, that is enshrined in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. It is through the sacrifices

and ministry of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, Saint Ephrem the Syrian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Basil of Caesarea, Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Saint John Chrysostom, and many more who defended the relational nature of God. The God revealed by Jesus Christ is not an isolated Monism as in Aristotle's Unmoved Mover, eternally happy with his own perfection. Rather the God revealed by Jesus is the God who eternally realizes in his nature: relationship, communion, trinitarian life. Jesus Christ shows us that God is Love from all eternity, and in the act of creation his divine love is extended in relationship to his "image and likeness" - human beings.

## *The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*

In the year 325, three-hundred and eighteen leaders of the Church met at Nicaea to counter the heresy of Arianism. This first Ecumenical Council was called by the Emperor Constantine, and while promulgating various canons for the sake of church order, the enduring work of the Council involved drawing upon the already existing baptismal formulas such as the "Apostles Creed" to produce the Creed of Nicaea.

In the year 381, the Emperor Theodosius convened the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople. The presiding bishop was Saint Gregory Nazianzen, and drawing upon what now seems to have been a baptismal formula used by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, who was in attendance, the Creed as we know it today, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol of Faith was promulgated as the "orthodox" expression of the Church's faith in the Triune God. By the sixth century The Creed began to be recited at the Eucharistic Liturgies of the Eastern Patriarchates and by the eleventh century began to be recited in the Latin Mass in Rome.

The Creed is more than just a recitation of dogma; it is in a real sense a prayer to and in the Holy Trinity. It is a proclamation and prayer of our faith in how the Eternal Trinity shares the divine life of "perichoresis" (the term used by the Fathers of the Church to express the interpenetrating life of the three persons of the Trinity), which is a life of eternal perfect love with us - the children of God.

The Fathers of the Church used the Greek term "*prosopon*" to say that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each had a "face." The term "*prosopon*," meaning person, had developed from the word "*prosopeon*," meaning mask, used in ancient Greek theater.

Continues on page 20

# *The Question Behind the Question*

by  
*Bishop Robert Barron*

On the afternoon of June 14, 2018, a rather spirited, fascinating, and unexpected debate broke out on the floor of the USCCB spring meeting in Ft. Lauderdale. At issue was the possibility of reconsidering "Faithful Citizenship," the 2007 statement of the U.S. Bishops on the formation of conscience regarding matters political. A group of bishops, including myself, had proposed that instead of producing another lengthy document to succeed "Faithful Citizenship," the bishops ought to write a brief and pointed letter on the political challenges of the present moment and then to create a video or a series of videos bringing forth the salient points of Catholic social teaching. Our thinking was motivated by recent research, which indicates that a very small percentage of Catholics actually read that formal statement from ten years ago. Though it had been taken in and appreciated by the bishops themselves, by lobbyists and political activists, and by members of the Catholic commentariat, it was largely ignored by the very people we were endeavoring to reach.

Once the formal proposal had been made, a number of bishops rose to speak against it and in favor of writing a document to replace "Faithful Citizenship." With considerable eloquence, they reminded us of the shift in emphasis that has taken place with the magisterium of Pope Francis. Concern for the environment, for economic justice, for the poor, for the victims of violence, for refugees and immigrants has been brought to the fore in a new way, and our teaching, they insisted, ought to reflect this change.

About midway through the discussion, I rose to make a clarification. I said that the members of our group were fully aware of what I called "the Franciscan shift" in emphasis and that we very much wanted the bishops' teaching to reflect this change. What was really at issue, I explained, was not so much the content of the teaching but the vehicle for its transmission. I said that practically all of the people in the room are on one side of the page/screen

divide, so that we rather naturally privilege written texts and find them more substantive. But the overwhelming majority of those under the age of, say, fifty are, I continued, on the other side of that watershed. They are far more oriented to the screen, far less likely to plow their way through a lengthy written text. I recalled that about fifteen years ago, a member of my staff called to tell me that an article I had written had been accepted by a major Catholic publication. I was delighted, but my excitement was curtailed a bit when he informed me that it would appear on that outlet's online edition and not in the print edition. Sensing my disappointment, my colleague said, "You know, this is much better. You'd rather have it online than in print. It will reach a much wider audience." That little episode was the beginning of a shift in consciousness for me.

With that clarification made, the conversation on the conference floor transposed to a different key, as the meta-question of communication became the focus. One bishop observed that on his flight to Ft. Lauderdale, he had noticed that no one around him was reading a book, but practically everyone had his or her eyes glued to a screen. Another bishop, an expert in the use of social media, applauded the shift to digital forms of communication but also expressed the concern that people will not pay attention to videos longer than a few minutes in length. How can the Church adequately convey its teaching in a sound bite? But still other bishops chimed in to say that nothing prevents us from producing a series of short pieces that, together, cover a good deal of ground. Finally, some wondered which protocols would govern the approval of videos rather than texts. I will confess that as this part of the lively discussion unfolded, a smile spread across my face, for I have believed for some time that this issue of how we communicate is perhaps as important as what we communicate—that is, if we are interested in moving the conversation beyond a very narrow circle.

Inevitably some commentators have tried to read the discussion as a fierce disagreement between the "Francis bishops" and their detractors. Nothing could be further from the truth. The overwhelming majority of the bishops want the full range of Catholic social teaching to be faithfully defended and they welcome Pope Francis' renewed emphasis on the environment and care for the marginal. The far more compelling conversation—and one that clearly engaged the interest of the bishops on the floor of the conference—had to do with how we propagate this teaching as widely and effectively as possible. □

*Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.*

## **Prayer For Priestly Vocations**

Father, in every generation You provide ministers of Christ and the Church.

We come before You now, asking that You call forth more men to serve our eparchies in the ministerial priesthood.

Give us priests who will lead and guide Your holy people gathered by Word and Sacrament.

Bless us with priestly vocations so that we can continue to be a truly Eucharistic Church, strengthened in our discipleship of Jesus Christ, Your Only Son.

Raise up, we pray, men who are generous in their service, willing to offer their lives and all their gifts for Your greater glory and for the good of Your people.

We make our prayer in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord.  
Amen.

# *First Holy Communion in the Maronite Eparchies in the U.S.A.*

## **Fort Lauderdale, Florida**



**S**imon Chamoun, Dylan Poulin, Tony Abou Semaan, Kayla Abou Semaan, Serena Hayek, and Christia Hayek received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at Heart of Jesus Maronite Mission, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. □

## **Roanoke, Virginia**



**C**ristopher Rodriguez, Caleigh Aremia, Carter Sisson, Maron Fortney, Jorge Becerra, Eduardo Munoz, Cesar Munoz, Jaiden Furrow, and Camron Furrow received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at St. Elias Maronite Church, Roanoke, Va. □

## **Williamsville, New York**



**A**lex Al Mekhtifi, Bedie Rittling, Eliana Maalouf, Mary Rose Khoury, Christian Kaban, Eleanor Habib, Isabella Khoury, Elias Jaoude, Makayla Khoury, Catherine El Khoury, Andrew Mansour, Lauren Frank, Ethan Khoury, Maria Farahm, Viviana Lattanzio, Gabriella Harfiouche, and Hanna Boctor received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at St. John Maron Church, Williamsville, N.Y. □

## **Fayetteville, North Carolina**



**A**lex Van Wy, Cameron Van Wy, Harper Philips, Maria Christina Southern, Jessie Southern, and Ulrika Nesbitt received their First Holy Communion on May 13, 2018, at Archangel Michael Maronite Church, Fayetteville, N.C. □

# *First Holy Communion in the Maronite Eparchies in the U.S.A.*

## **Cleveland, Ohio**



**J**oe Elzighondy, Dominic Haikal, Cole Hartman, Anneliese Martin, Julie Salloum, Aziz Tarakji, and Jack Tobaya received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at Saint Maron Church, Cleveland, Ohio.

## **Saint Louis, Missouri**



**S**ophia Polito, Gabriel Kevorkian, Cecilia Elking, Jackson Nasufovic, and Lila Black received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at St. Raymond Cathedral, Saint Louis, Mo. □

## **Minneapolis, Minnesota**



**S**ophia Gubash, Ema Khouri, Emilia Dahdah, David Mueller, Bruno Sawaya, JC Sawaya, Peter Dahdah, Toufic Abou Mourad, Angela Bedros, Ray Jacob, Kristy Maalouf, Jameson Dempsey, David Issa, and Oliver Farah received their First Holy Communion on May 13, 2018, at St. Maron Church, Minneapolis, Minn. □

## **Fairlawn, Ohio**



**A**ngeline Lababidi, Aaron Ruester, Teo Morcos, Anisa Stewart, Christian Nemr, Vincent Nemr, Andrew Jaoude, and Gabriel Jaoude received their First Holy Communion on April 29, 2018, at Our Lady of the Cedars of Mt. Lebanon Maronite Church, Fairlawn [Akron], Ohio. □

# *First Holy Communion in the Maronite Eparchies in the U.S.A.*

## **Worcester, Massachusetts**



**J**oe Chahine, George Daou, Giselle Jrieg, Jake Jreig, Nathan Jrieg, and Zoe Tannous received their First Holy Communion on May 5, 2018, at Our Lady of Mercy Church, Worcester, Mass. □

## **Watervliet, New York**



**S**andra Conney, Mason Nahal, and Henry Nahal received their First Holy Communion on May 20, 2018, at St. Ann Maronite Church, Watervliet [Troy], N.Y. □

## **Scranton, Pennsylvania**



**A**ntonio Jason Tayoun and Terez Maria Josephine Hashem, received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at St. Ann Maronite Church, Scranton, Penn. □

## **Glen Allen, Virginia**



**J**ames Abou Assi, Angela Atallah, Ursula Ann Borgerson, Tucker Conway Fodill, Anniston Habib, and Luke Salloum, received their First Holy Communion on May 13, 2018, at St. Anthony Maronite Church, Glen Allen [Richmond], Va. □

# First Holy Communion in the Maronite Eparchies in the U.S.A.

## Houston, Texas



Jenny Moubayed, Christian Saba, Joelle Moubarak, Sarah Wawi, Joyce Abi Salloum, George Jreissati, Danielle Dally, Lillian Cortez, Sarah Lineman, Lina Srouji, Krista Karam, and Samuel Wawi received their First Holy Communion on May 12, 2018, at Our Lady of the Cedars Church, Houston, Tex. □

## San Antonio, Texas



Samia Bou Faycal, Elie Elward, John Farah, Oliver Geha, Alexa Ghossoub, James Boothroyd, Adam Abdallah, Laith Abdallah, George Abdallah, Miriam Younis, and Yousef Younis received their First Holy Communion on April 29, 2018, at St. George Church, San Antonio, Tex. □

## Tulsa, Oklahoma



Vanessa Daber, Nathan Elias, and Kyleigh Elias received their First Holy Communion on May 13, 2018, at St. Therese Church, Tulsa, Okla. □

## San Diego, California



Michel Antunez, Christine Boiri, Rosalana Kelly, Stephan Gardy, Sophia Gardy, Nour Elhage, Zain Hanna, Virginia Iskandar, Donovan Jaboro, Lara Jlenkw, Maryam Matloob, Christine Matloob, Saeed Naeem, Daniella Rahi, Lucas Sawaya, Tia Saker, Talia Saker, and Nolan Yusif received their First Holy Communion on May 6, 2018, at St. Ephrem Maronite Church, San Diego, Calif. □

# *First Holy Communion in the Maronite Eparchies in the U.S.A.*

## **Portland, Oregon**



**T**haddeus Calko, Anthony Allam, Milad Alks Hamo, Joseph Massaad, Malak Alks Hamo, and Jude Gama received their First Holy Communion, May 6, 2018, at St. Sharbel Maronite Church, Portland, Oregon. □

## **Detroit, Michigan**



**J**oey T. Geagea and Max Isaac Rahi received their First Holy Communion on June 3, 2018, at St. Maron Church, Detroit, Mich. □

## **Springfield, Massachusetts**



**B**riana Abiassaf, Dora Mouawad, Grace McCarthy and Madison Pellissier received their First Holy Communion on June 10, 2018, at St. Anthony Church, Springfield, Mass. □

## **Order of Saint Gregory**

*Continued from page 8*

**Mrs. Camille Manning:** Camille is 66 years old and is truly a faithful Catholic. She has been working tirelessly for the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn for over 31 years. She began with the Eparchy during the tenure of Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, and continued to serve his successor, Bishop Stephen Hector Doueih, and then me. She has done everything for us from being a receptionist, a secretary, a bookkeeper, and an archivist. But her most valued trait is certainly her undivided loyalty to each Bishop, Vicar General, and Chancellor she has served, and her unwavering trustworthiness. Regardless of what she has experienced, seen, and heard, she continues to be a faithful practicing Catholic with unquestionable faith. She is remarkable in her dedication to the Church, the Eparchy, and to the clergy.

**Claire Habib:** Claire is 88 years old and has been a lifelong member of our Maronite Cathedral Parish in Brooklyn, New York. She earned her Bachelor's Degree from the Catholic College of New Rochelle in 1950. In 1957 she entered the Wall Street financial world and worked for Bankers Trust where she managed the billing system. She retired as a Vice President of that company in 1993. Claire has been actively involved as a volunteer and dedicated member of the Cathedral parish all of her life. She has helped on numerous occasions to organize banquets for various Church figures as well as events for the National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) and the Eparchial Order of Saint Sharbel. Claire has served on the Cathedral's Pastoral Council as well as the Cathedral's

# THE ORDER OF SAINT SHARBEL



## Perpetual Members

★ **Tony Elandary**

*Our Lady of Lebanon Church  
Lewisville, Tex.*

★ **Katy Habib**

*Our Lady of the Cedars Church  
Houston, Tex.*

## Annual Members

★ **Joanne Kahwaji**

*Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon  
Cathedral  
Los Angeles, Calif.*

The Order of Saint Sharbel is an organization of lay people and clergy who have pledged their spiritual strength and financial support for Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary and the retired Maronite clergy of the Maronite Eparchies in the USA.

For more information about the Order ask your Pastor, visit [www.orderstsharbel.org](http://www.orderstsharbel.org) or write to:

Eparchy of Saint Maron  
109 Remsen Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

or

Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon  
1021 South 10th Street  
St. Louis, MO 63104

Finance Committee. For fourteen years she has also served as a member on the Eparchial Finance Council. She was appointed a Trustee of the Cathedral and served in that capacity from 1990 to 2016, when she resigned due to age and health reasons.

**Faith Jarvis:** Faith is 71 years old and is an active member of Heart of Jesus Mission in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Faith was raised as a Methodist, but fell away from her faith after she left home. Her husband died suddenly when she was young, and so she went to work for State Representative Dale Kildee, a devout pro-life Catholic. My cousin introduced Faith to the Maronite Church, which was a large part of the reason Faith became Catholic and later changed rites to the Maronite Church. She and her husband joined St. Francis de Sales and began to volunteer in normal parish activities. For almost 12 years she was involved in Church life: training altar servers and coordinating the major liturgical celebrations. She and her husband moved closer to Our Lady of Lebanon in Washington, DC. There her husband became a Deacon. After a few years she and her husband moved to Ave Maria, Florida where Faith, after a year, was asked to serve as sacristan and is now the liturgical coordinator for the parish. When Heart of Jesus Maronite Church was established, Faith also assisted there in the sacristy as needed. But she had to curtail her activities for reasons of health. Faith is an outstanding example of a Catholic woman.

**Marie Feefa Deeb:** Is 92 years old and has been a lifelong member of Saint Joseph Maronite Church in Waterville, Maine. Throughout her many years, Feefa has been involved in all parochial events, whether they be liturgical observances or other celebrations. She is a faithful lector at Daily Mass, and has served as the organist and choir director of the parish for many years. In addition, she devoted her services to the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament at their convent in Maine. Feefa is loved by all, as she helps, not only her parish church, but also contributes her time, efforts, and charities to various Catholic works throughout her community.

**Rodney Thomas:** Is 78 years old and is a loving and good Christian example for his family. He grew up at Our Lady

of purgatory Maronite Church in New Bedford, Mass., and his love for the Church was nurtured at Assumption Prep School and Assumption College, in Worcester, Mass. Rodney is a supporter of his *alma mater* and enjoys strong bonds of friendship forged during his time there. Rodney demonstrated his commitment to the Church and his Maronite heritage, when he married his wife, Patricia Foskett, in 1966. He prevailed upon his Maronite pastor, in New Bedford, Massachusetts, to travel to Long Island, N.Y., to celebrate the marriage in the Maronite Rite, as there was no Maronite Church there. Upon settling in Providence, R.I., as a father of three and new parishioner of Saint George Maronite Church, Rodney introduced his family to the growing parish community. He was active in the purchase of a new Church and Parish Hall in Pawtucket. He enthusiastically motivated fellow parishioners to contribute to the re-dedication of the existing stain glass windows, making a large donation himself. He served as the Chair of the *Hafli* Committee on more than one occasion and served as the Master of Ceremonies of many celebrations. Rodney demonstrated wider support of his Catholic Lebanese heritage serving as Treasurer of the Holy Spirit University Foundation, in *Kaslik*, Lebanon which provided support to students at the only Pontifical Theological College in the Middle East. Rodney began his service to the Eparchy in 2006 serving on the Eparchial Finance Committee. When Saint George Church was destroyed by fire in 2005, Rodney took on a leadership role in guiding the future of the parish as he was appointed Chairman of the Building and Fundraising Committee. He chaired this initiative for seven years. Ultimately, this led to the parish finding its new home in Cranston, R.I. Throughout his life, Rodney has been a loyal friend and supporter of many priests. He consistently and quietly gives to support retired clergy and to seminarians. He has been a member of the Eparchial Order of Saint Sharbel since 1996 and is now a perpetual member. □

# Tune In To Our Saints

by  
**Brother John M. Samaha, S.M.**

Today more than ever we need saints and heroes to admire and emulate. The cult of the saints and its history has fallen out of focus in recent times with shifts in society, family life, and religious formation. But the veneration and invocation of saints still hold a place of considerable importance and value in the life of Christians and in the liturgy of the Church.

A brief historical review will shed some light on the situation.

In the beginning of Christianity the martyrs, bishops, and other saintly persons were held in veneration in the local church where they had lived. As time progressed some gained universal renown and found a place in the calendars of all churches. And for some mysterious reasons a small number of saints like St. Anthony of Padua and St. Rita of Cascia, and St. Pio of Pietrelcina in our day, became the objects of extraordinary popular devotion around the world, even though they never wandered far from home and their place in the Church's liturgy is rather moderate or nonexistent.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, is another topic altogether. To understand the cult of the saints it is important to trace its history from the beginnings of Christianity to our own time. Up to the sixth century there was one tradition for both East and West. Later a divergence developed. Twentieth century reforms improved on previous practice and highlighted the significance of the liturgical cult of saints in the contemporary Church.

## ***The History of the Cult of Saints***

In the East and in the West we find a double source for the liturgy of the saints: the cult of martyrs, whose anniversaries were celebrated by the communities gathered around their tombs; and the cult of bishops, whose memory was kept with devotion by the churches they headed. Each particular church developed its own calendar, which was gradually enlarged to include martyrs from other churches and also noteworthy figures like the apostles and others who played a basic role in the universal Church. Thus the "memory" of martyrs and bishops developed into the "feasts" of saints.

Tracing the evolution of the development is more than a historical exercise. Because we celebrate the saints in a uniform manner in our day, this will help us recapture the distinctive characteristics of each category of saints, and to understand what kinds of sanctity throughout the centuries the Church deems worthy of a cult.

## ***The First Six Centuries***

### **! *Martyrs***

From earliest Christianity the cult of the martyrs was one of the forms of honoring the dead. It was a cult of memory, a

way of ensuring that the deceased person lived on in the memory of the living. For the living it was a way of being nourished by the example and courage of those who gave their lives to attest to their faith. Recall that martyr comes from the Greek word for "witness." From the beginning the cult of the martyrs was distinguished from the cult of the ordinary deceased because the anniversary gatherings did not concern only the family but the entire local community. Those memorial gatherings lasted not only a few years but indefinitely. The Christian memory of the martyr is lasting.

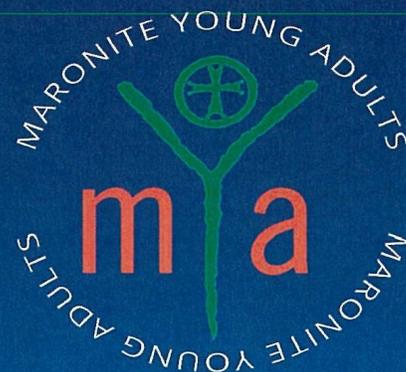
Records regarding the cult of the martyrs in the early centuries are sparse. The East preceded the West in documenting this practice. The earliest testimony concerns St. Polycarp, Bishop of *Smyrna*, who was martyred about 155 or 156 A.D. In a letter written some months after his death, the Christians of *Smyrna* indicated "We took up his bones . . . and laid them away in a suitable place. There the Lord will permit us, so far as possible, to gather together in joy and gladness to celebrate the day of his martyrdom as a birthday, in memory of those athletes who have gone before us, and to train and make ready those who are to come hereafter." Most likely this meeting included the celebration of the Eucharist.

In the West the earliest documentation was found in Carthage, at the time of St. Cyprian and the persecution of Decius (250 A.D.). In a letter to his clergy Cyprian gives this recommendation concerning the confessors of the faith: "You should keep note of the days on which they depart this life. We will then be able to include the celebration of their memories in our commemorations of the martyrs." In another letter about three martyrs of Carthage, Cyprian adds, "We never fail to offer sacrifices on their behalf every time we celebrate in commemoration the anniversary dates of the sufferings of these martyrs." These two texts demonstrate that the celebration of the martyrs was already customary at Carthage at the time of Cyprian and that it included the Eucharistic sacrifice.

In contrast Rome rendered no special cult to martyrs before the middle of the third century. The bloody persecution of Valerian in the summer of 258 A.D. caused a change. On August 6 Pope Sixtus II and six of his deacons were put to death, and on August 10 the deacon Lawrence. In June of that year the remains of St. Peter and of St. Paul were placed in safety. The Church of Rome wanted to preserve the memory of a summer that experienced such grief and trial.

The veneration of martyrs included a Eucharistic celebration at the grave on the anniversary of death. This veneration also expressed itself in written inscriptions near the martyrs' tombs to seek their intercession. Following Constantine's Edict of Toleration in 313 A.D. the Christians began to erect over the martyrs' graves small edifices marking their presence and sheltering the hallowed spot. Such a structure was known as a *memoria* or a *martyrium*. (continues on page 20)

10th Annual MYA Conference Presents



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Deadline is September 10, 2018.

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## ***An Oration on the Creed***

*Continued from page 9*

This term for mask eventually developed into the term for person, one who shows their face. The Fathers went further to say that although the three persons of the Trinity are "homousias" or "homoousian" (one in being, or consubstantial), their relationship within the divine *perechoresis* is "hypostatic," that is relational. The Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople expresses this by means of professing that the eternal relationships within the Trinity originate from the Father. The only-begotten Son from the Father is the one who becomes Our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit who dynamically proceeds from the Father is the one who sanctifies and confirms our faith in the Son who saves us.

This is the faith of the Church, faith in the God who shows us his "face," who reveals that he is Love, and calls us to take up our cross and follow our Lord through the door to eternal life, where our humanity will reach its full stature in relationship with the Holy Trinity. □

## ***The Nine Ways of Bodily Prayer***

*Continued from page 11*

And he would be moved in his mind as if he heard the Lord speaking to him. As the Psalm says, 'I will hear what the Lord God is saying in me, because he will speak peace to his people and upon his saints, and to those who turn to him with all their heart' (Ps. 85:8).

### ***Praying While Walking***

It was a time for him to meditate upon the scriptures and commune with the Holy Spirit. In this kind of prayer, St. Dominic acquired the power and boldness to preach fervently and a hidden intimacy with the Holy Spirit to know hidden things.

You may want to incorporate some of these prayer postures, asking the Holy Spirit to inspire and lead you in your daily prayer life. □

## ***Tune In To Our Saints***

*Continued from page 18*

### ***! Confessors and Bishops***

The risk and opportunity of martyrdom ceased with the end of the persecutions. Feeling impoverished, the Church sought new forms that would substitute for martyrdom.

Already in the third century it was customary to venerate persons, usually bishops, who had suffered either prison or exile for their faithfulness to Christ, but had not been put to death. These courageous witnesses were called confessors because they confessed their faith openly as did the martyrs.

### ***! Today***

Life today without the saints is unthinkable. The saints are for the ages, ours no less than others. Without saints life would be miserable. The saints are for everyone -- believing and unbelieving -- because they are the people who proclaim by their lives that life is valuable, life is worth living, that a provident God cares for us. Without them life would be a series of disasters. The saints personify Christian hope. We need their example and help.

Are you in touch with your patron saint? □

## ***Food For Thought***

We are called to assist the elderly, the sick and the unborn.

Life must always be protected and loved from conception to its natural conclusion.

*Pope Francis, June 28, 2018*