



# The Maronite Voice

*A Publication of the Maronite Eparchies in the USA*



Volume VII

Issue No. VI

June 2011

## *The Sacred Heart of Jesus Is the Representation of His Divine Love for Humanity. That Love Finds Its Total Fulfillment on the Cross*



*Dear Friends,*

The month of June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the heart and love of Christ.

The heart in biology is a muscular organ in vertebrates that receives blood from the veins and pumps it through the arteries to oxygenate the blood during its circuit. It is an essential member of our body. In a spiritual perspective, the heart is the center of emotion, sympathy, feeling and affection as it summarizes the person, "Blessed are the pure of heart for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8). We often read in the Gospels that Jesus' heart was moved with pity towards the hungry, the sick and the less fortunate. His heart felt broken at the betrayal of Judas and the false accusations of his persecutors.

This heart of Jesus still hurts even today because of our sins. He suffers from our indifference and lukewarm attitude; He cries at our selfishness and disregard of others. On the other side, our commitment pleases Him; He rejoices at our compassion, care and forgiveness; He celebrates with our repentance and reconciliation. His heart shares our joys and sorrows. He feels our pain and sufferings; He understands our struggles and challenges. However, He always desires that our heart will be modeled following the humility, modesty and compassion of His heart.

Moreover, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the representation of His divine love for humanity. That love finds its total fulfillment on the Cross: "There is no greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Christ has paid the ransom on our behalf. His love moved him to accept death in order to save us. During His life on earth Christ loved different kinds of people: friends, needy, sick and even enemies. By His example, He taught us how to love and to deal with our brothers and sisters. He will remain definitely the greatest teacher (by His word and deed) ever on love. Christ also summarized the Law by one double command: "You shall love the Lord your God with

all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). Thus, He wants us to extend ourselves and reach beyond towards God and others.

*(Continues on page 20)*

## Schedule of Bishop Robert Shaheen

**June 3 -15, 2011**

Maronite Bishops' Synod, Bkerke, Lebanon.

**June 27 - July 2, 2011**

Maronite Youth Retreat, Latrobe, Penn.

**July 4 -10, 2011**

Clergy Conference and Maronite Convention, Philadelphia, Penn. □



### Eparchial Condolences

**Father Nehmatallah El-Hayek** passed away on Tuesday morning, May 10, 2011. Born September 1, 1928 in *Bejje*, Lebanon, Father Nehmatallah was the son of Elias and Helen (Hage) El-Hayek. He was ordained a priest June 8, 1952, for the Patriarchal Eparchy in Lebanon.

He served as a priest in Lebanon until he moved to the United States in 1965. Father El-Hayek has done pastoral work in many Maronite parishes throughout the United States, including parishes in Wheeling, W.Va.; Scranton, Penn.; Springfield, Mass.; Akron, Ohio; Chicago, Ill.; Portland, Ore.; and Milbrae, Calif. He served the Church until his retirement in 1998.

Father El-Hayek leaves behind his brothers and sisters, Alice (Sarkis) Souiby, Maurice (Marmar) El-Hayek, Laurice El-Hayek, Nehmatallah (Lena) El-Hayek, Najat (Mounir) El-Hayek, all of Lebanon, and Dr. Mounir (Dr. Consuelo Mendez) El-Hayek of Canfield, Ohio; seventeen nieces and nephews and many great nieces and nephews. Besides his parents, he was preceded in death by a nephew, Charbel El-Hayek.

The Funeral Liturgy took place on Saturday, May 14, 2011. Condolences may be sent to his brother, Dr. Mounir El-Hayek, in care of Saint Maron Church, 1555 South Meridian Road, Youngstown, OH 44511.

Bishop Gregory Mansour, along with the clergy and faithful of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, and Bishop Robert Shaheen, along with the clergy and faithful of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, extend their heartfelt sympathy and the promise of our prayers to Fr. Nehmatallah's family.

May the Lord God grant Nehmatallah eternal rest in His Kingdom and consolation to his family and loved ones.

**Mirta de Perales**, the mother of Father Jorge Perales, died on May 3, 2011. She is survived by her son, Father Jorge, and her daughter, Mirta, as well as by her brother and sister, her grandchildren and nieces and nephews.

The Funeral Liturgy was celebrated by Father Jorge on May 4 at Saint Kevin's Church in Miami where he was assigned until this past February. Father Jorge is now Temporary Administrator of Mary, Mother of the Light Maronite Mission in West Palm Beach. A forty-day Liturgy is planned for late June at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Miami.

Bishop Gregory Mansour, along with the clergy and faithful of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, extend their heartfelt sympathy and the promise of our prayers to Fr. Perales and his family. May the Lord God grant Mirta eternal rest in His Kingdom and consolation to her family and loved ones.

**Sadie Abdallah**, the grandmother of Fr. Geoffrey Abdallah, passed away in Australia on May 18, 2011. She was born in *Ser'el*, Lebanon, and migrated to Australia in the 1950s, She is survived by her three sons, Michael, Bakhos, and Sarkis, as well as by her brother, Deeb Rizk, in Lebanon; ten grandchildren, great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Bishop Gregory Mansour, along with the clergy and faithful of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, extend their heartfelt sympathy and the promise of our prayers to Geoffrey and his family. May the Lord God grant Sadie eternal rest in His Kingdom and consolation to her family and loved ones. □

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*The Maronite Voice*, (ISSN 1080-9880) the official newsletter of the Maronite Eparchies in the U.S.A. (Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles and Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn), is published monthly.

Send all changes of address, news, pictures and personal correspondence to *The Maronite Voice* at the above captioned address. Subscription rates are \$20.00 per year. Advertising rates are available upon request.

#### Publishers

- Most Reverend Bishop Robert Joseph Shaheen
- Most Reverend Bishop Gregory John Mansour

**Editor** Msgr. George M. Sebaali  
**Consultor** Fr. Abdallah Zaidan, M.L.M.

#### Editing and proofreading

Mary Shaia  
Anne-Marie Condlin

Printed in Richmond, Virginia.

### Maronite Convention 2011

St. Sharbel Church  
Newtown Square, Pennsylvania

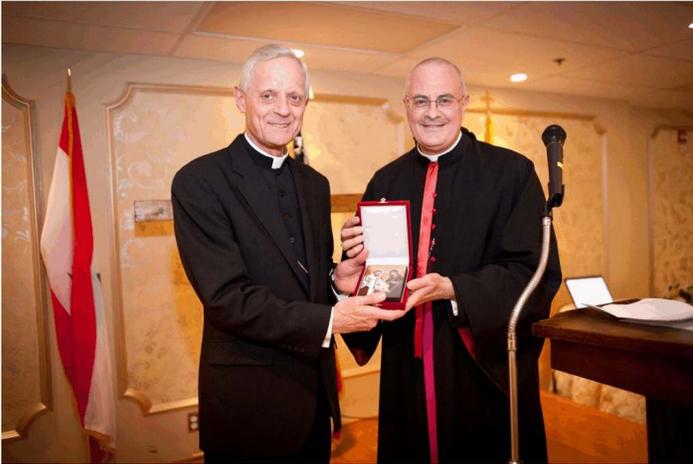
**July 6 - 10, 2011**

For more information  
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## Washington, D.C.

### *Area Benefit Dinner for the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn*

#### *Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, joined Bishop Gregory Mansour and Supporters of the Eparchy at Event*



Bishop Gregory John Mansour presents His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, with a gift at the conclusion of the Washington, D.C., Area Benefit Dinner for the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn on May 12.

*by John F. Kurey, Esq., MBA  
Stewardship Director  
Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn*

Over 150 people turned out on May 12, 2011, for a Benefit Dinner at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Parish and Seminary in Washington, D.C., to support the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. Joining Maronite Bishop Gregory John Mansour was Archbishop of Washington Donald Cardinal Wuerl, who delivered the keynote address on Blessed Pope John Paul II. Over \$80,000



His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, speaks with Maronite seminarians Alex Joseph, George Hajj, Imad El Chiti and Gabe Gubash.

was raised at the event.

Chorbishop Michael G. Thomas, Vicar General and Chancellor of the Eparchy, was Master of Ceremonies and kept the evening moving at a lively pace. The opening prayer was offered by Chorbishop Seely Beggiani, Rector of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary. Attendees viewed a brief, informative DVD prior to dinner. In addition to talks by Cardinal Wuerl and Bishop Mansour, after-dinner remarks were offered by John F. Kurey, Esq., the Eparchy's Stewardship Director, who encouraged the faithful to support their Church. The closing prayer was offered by Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

Local Lebanese restaurants provided the evening's entire fare gratis, and were organized by Donna Tschiffely, Principal of Conference Inc., a professional event planner who donated her services in organizing the many aspects of the Benefit Dinner. Parishioners Gebran Fattouche and Jano Nicolas played pivotal roles in handling logistics for the evening, along with Benefit Committee members Mary Ackourey, Terry Abdoo King, and Kim Richey. Benefit Committee Members also included Jean Abi Nader, Toufic Baklini, Charles Feghali, Dolly Gebeily, Richard Hibey, Dr. Gerard Moawad, Ina Rihani, Peter Tanous, and Dr. James Zogby, who helped generate enthusiasm and support for the event. A number of generous friends who wished to remain anonymous also provided great assistance in making the evening a success.

Among the distinguished guests in attendance were His Excellency Antoine Chedid, Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States, and renowned White House journalist Helen Thomas.

Bishop Mansour thanked everyone who attended the Benefit Dinner and those who could not but assisted in many ways.

Proceeds from the Benefit Dinner will be applied to the needs of the Eparchy, including the creation of a Maronite Chapel at the Basilica at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.; support for seminarians; help for retired priests; assistance for Maronite missions; and needed structural renovations to the Cathedral in Brooklyn. □

### *Eparchial Appointment*

His Excellency Robert Shaheen, Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, has appointed Fr. Gary George as Director of the Maronite Heritage Institute in St. Louis, Missouri, effective May 1, 2011. □

## *Pleasantville, New Jersey Dedication of Our Lady Star of the East*



His Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour sprinkles holy water to bless the newly dedicated Our Lady Star of the East Church in Pleasantville, N.J.

by *Mary Asmar Smith*

A dream more than nine years in the making was realized with the dedication of the new Our Lady Star of the East Maronite Catholic Church in Pleasantville/Atlantic City, New Jersey, on May 1, 2011, by His Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour. Chorbishop Michael Thomas, Vicar General; Msgr. Maroun Asmar, Mission Administrator; Rev. Paul Mouawad, Parish Assistant Administrator and Pastor of St. Sharbel Church in Newton Square, Penn.; Rev. Tony Akoury, Pastor of St. Sharbel Church, Somerset, N.J.; Rev. Elie Saade, member of the Lebanese Maronite Order; Rev. Ronald Falotico, Parochial Vicar of St. Mary of Mount Carmel Catholic Church; Rev. Patrick Brady, Pastor of St. Gianna Beretta Molla Catholic Church; and Rev. Paul Wise, Pastor of St. Monica Catholic Church, concelebrated. Subdeacon Joseph Chebli of St. Sharbel, Somerset, assisted.

The honored guests included the Syrian Orthodox Archbishop, Patriarchal Vicar of the Eastern Archdiocese, His Excellency Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim, and Atlantic City Mayor Lorenzo Langford.

The parishioners are excited to finally have a place to call home, and purchasing St. Peter's Church from the Diocese of Camden was well worth the wait. Bishop Gregory said "We are so thankful to Bishop Joseph Galante, to his Diocesan staff and to his priests for making the dreams of a small, yet faithful, flock of Maronites and friends come true." Founded in 1898, St. Peter's Church is a great example of Spanish colonial architecture.

Formerly known as St. Peter's Village, the complex includes a Church that can seat up to one thousand people, a school with four floors that previously had 250 students, a rectory with five bedrooms and three offices and two parking lots. Vaulted ceilings soar majestically and large stained glass windows depict scenes from the Bible throughout Church

grounds. The ambiance is peaceful and lends itself to deep meditation and reverence.

In a congratulatory letter to the parish, His Excellency Bishop Galante said, "We have our own unique histories and separate rites, yet we are united together in one Communion with our Pope, Benedict XVI. This unity is even more apparent in our diocese, as we are proud to have played such a major role in the development of your new church. I look forward to a future of cooperation and mutual support."

After liturgy Tommy Tedros, NAM President, Mike Naber, NAM Executive Director and Theresa Abi Habib, NAM Regional Vice President, presented the Massabki Brothers Icon to Msgr. Asmar and NAM Delegates Sammy Nammour and Raben Nammour and for the parish.

A reception followed at the Clarion Hotel with several hundred attendees. Fahed Nammour served as Master of Ceremonies. The American and Lebanese National Anthems were sung by the MYO. The reception began with the Invocation by Chorbishop Michael Thomas followed by Msgr. Asmar's welcoming remarks and Bishop Gregory's dedication speech. The NAM representatives presented two Silver Massabki awards to Issa and Mona Nammour, and Mousa and Rania Dababneh. The Faith of the Mountain Award was given to Jonathan Nammour. Rev. Paul Mouawad said the Benediction.

Msgr. Asmar expressed his gratitude to Sager Nammour, Council President, to the entire Church Council and all the parishioners, for working so hard over the last four months to meet the deadline for the dedication preparation. □

## *Weymouth, Massachusetts Maronite Servants Thank Parish*

by *Sr. Therese Maria Touma*

On May 25, 2011, after the 9:00 a.m. Liturgy celebrated at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Weymouth, Mass., the Maronite



The Sisters welcome parishioners and Fr. Larry Drennan for refreshments.

Servants of Christ the Light hosted a reception to express gratitude to the parish community for their generous hospitality during their two-year stay at the parish convent. In June 2009, Fr. William Salmon, Pastor of Immaculate Conception, graciously supported the mission by welcoming the Sisters to affordably live in the parish convent. The Maronite Servants of Christ are grateful for his kindness and the loving support of the parish staff.

Please take note that the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light can be reached at their new address: 856 Tucker Road, Dartmouth, MA 02747. □

## Waterbury, Connecticut Subdeacon Ordination

by Theresa  
Atallah Al Hayek

A sense of pride and joy filled the church as parishioners at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Waterbury, Conn., celebrated the Ordination of Subdeacon Camille Jean Atallah on Sunday, April 3, 2011. Through the Invocation of the Holy Spirit and the Imposition of Hands by Chorbishop Seely Beggiani,



Chorbishop Seely Beggiani, assisted by Fr. Jack Morrison, ordains Camille Atallah to the Order of Subdeacon.

Rector of the Maronite Seminary in Washington, D.C., Camille was ordained to the Orders of Lector, Cantor, and Subdeacon. Among the parishioners in attendance were numerous close family members and friends, as well as various political and religious dignitaries from across the state, including Camille's own spiritual Director, Father Vito De Carolis. The ceremony was followed by a reception at Cedars Banquet Hall, where parishioners gathered to congratulate Camille.

Camille's answer to God's call is truly an inspirational story of service and devotion to his faith. Born in Beirut, Lebanon, he was the fifth of ten children. His parents, Therese Hamawi and the late Jean Atallah, were humble and modest, and they fostered a deep faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ, and the Blessed Virgin Mary. At a very early age, Camille developed a strong sense of service to God and to His church. By age ten, Camille was serving as an altar boy and playing the harmonica during the Divine Liturgy. Camille attended the Holy Spirit University in *Kaslik*, Lebanon, where he graduated with a degree in Interior Design and Architecture. Among his favorite projects was the design and construction of lighting for the altar of Our Lady of *Bzummar* in Lebanon.

Camille's devotion to Christ took on a whole new meaning during the Lebanese Civil War that plagued the country. At a young age, Camille was fighting for the religious freedom of Maronite Christians in Lebanon. During the war, Camille was heralded for having risked his life during an attack to save a Druze family of five, a symbolic example of the very foundation of Christianity, to "love thy neighbor."

Shortly thereafter, Camille decided to make use of his passion to serve in a different way. He endeavored to pursue

missionary work and to preach in God's home. Curious about the possibility of becoming a priest, he journeyed on a pilgrimage during the Season of Great Lent, during which he spent three months at a Franciscan covenant and was selected to be one of the twelve apostles during Holy Thursday's "Washing of the Feet" ceremony. Although the experience was truly remarkable, Camille did not feel like he truly belonged there.

In 1988, Camille left Lebanon and immigrated to the United States of America, where he settled among family in Waterbury. He met his wife of twenty-two years, Marlene Jalkh, at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Easton, Penn., and they were married on May 27, 1989 at Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral in Brooklyn, N.Y. Together, they have four children, Marie Therese, Francis, Michelle and Rebecca.

According to Camille, "The church has always been a big part of my life. I always felt like I had to be by the Church's side." Perhaps the missing puzzle piece in his call to serve God came one day when Camille was approached by Bishop Gregory Mansour of the Eparchy of Saint Maron. Bishop Gregory asked Camille if he had ever thought of becoming a Subdeacon. It quickly became clear that God was calling him to pursue his vocation and to serve the Church. Following two years of theological studies and Maronite history and several retreats to Washington D.C., Camille was finally ordained to the Order of Subdeacon this year. His Ordination allows him to assist in all Liturgical Celebrations and to visit the sick, while continuing to promote spirituality and defend life.

An active parishioner at of Our Lady of Lebanon in Waterbury, Camille continues to serve as a member of the Church Choir, a Religious Education teacher, and an elected parish council member. In 2006, Camille was awarded the Silver Massabki Award from the National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) for his many achievements and continued devotion to his parish and the Maronite Church in general.

Camille is also an active member of the Knights of Columbus. Through his strong faith and devotion to Christ, Camille has become a good example to many parishioners at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Waterbury. We are truly blessed to have him in our lives and grateful for his continued service to the Church. □

## Buffalo, New York Western New York Festival

St. John Maron Church in Williamsville [Buffalo], N.Y., is kicking into high gear for its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Lebanese Festival to be held July 29 - July 31, 2011. There will be plenty of authentic Lebanese cuisine. Enjoy live entertainment by Amin and The Sultans and dancing by our Lebanese Festival Dance Troupe. You will find a wide variety of treasures at our Gift Shop. A new feature will be amusement rides for the children. Pulltabs, raffle with cash and prizes, backgammon tournament, Turkish coffee, and the beer and wine tent round out the three-day event that should be fun for all. Hours are Friday from 5 - 11 p.m.; Saturday noon to 11 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For further information and directions, visit the church website at [www.stjohnmaron.org](http://www.stjohnmaron.org). □

## New Castle, Pennsylvania *Ordination to Subdeacon*



From left to right: Altar Servers Matthew Hudson and Matthew Vanasco, Deacon Nicholas Mammi, Fr. Claude Franklin, Subdeacon Andrew Demko, Chorbishop Joseph F. Kaddo, Fr. Kevin Beaton, Fr. Richard Salley, and Altar Servers Michael Yeropoli and David Cuscino.

On Saturday, March 26, 2011, St. John the Baptist Maronite Church, New Castle, Penn., was filled with family and friends as Chorbishop Joseph F. Kaddo ordained Andrew Demko, Sr. to the Orders of Cantor, Reader and Subdeacon. Fr. Claude Franklin, Pastor, former pastor Fr. Kevin Beaton, Msgr. Anthony Spinosa, Rector of Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine, Fr. Richard Salley of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Deacon Nicholas Mammi and Deacon Richard Stone assisted. Among those in the audience was Andrew's wife, Patty, their children and grandchildren along with aunt, uncles and cousins. After the service, a reception dinner followed at St. Elias Church Hall to honor St. John the Baptist's first Subdeacon.

Andrew was serving St. John even before he became subdeacon. He helped Fr. Kevin and now Fr. Claude in daily and weekend liturgies as well as funeral liturgies. Thanks to these two priests, Andrew was prompted to pursue further studies toward becoming a Subdeacon. □



**Deadline for next month's issue** of *The Maronite Voice* is June 25, 2011.

*The Maronite Voice* is the official Newsletter of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon and of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn.

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Pictures must be original. Digital pictures must be in "JPG" format and in high resolution. The Maronite Voice is also available online, in PDF format, at [www.stmaron.org](http://www.stmaron.org). □

## Sacramento, California *New Church*



The Maronite Catholic Community of Sacramento, Calif., was founded in November 2009 as a mission under the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon to establish a Maronite Church in Sacramento to carry on the Maronite faith, culture and traditions to future generations.

Through the efforts and inspiration of Fr. Nabil Mouannes, Pastor of St. Ephrem in San Diego, on February 23, 2011, the Mission closed escrow on their new church, Our Lady of the Rosary, located at 6811 Fair Oaks Blvd., Carmichael, CA 95608.

On Friday, January 14, 2011, the Maronite Catholic Community of Sacramento held its first Liturgy at the new church location, hoping that it would become theirs.

During the Liturgy, Fr. Nabil Mouannes presented to everyone a picture of a Rosary that has twenty decades to include all four sets of mysteries.

Fr. Nabil asked that each working individual write their name on one bead, so that individual would be engaged in supporting the needs of the new church by paying \$10 a month. Already, 120 names have been signed. "Come and join them. Join your brothers and sisters in this great spiritual adventure where all people are welcome to join. Bring your friends, let your acquaintances know, and let us all glorify God for he looked upon us!" said Fr. Nabil. □

## Phoenix, Arizona *Talent Show*

On Sunday April 3, 2011, Saint Joseph Maronite Church had its annual talent show. The show was a great success! Many friends and families came to support the children of the church and express their talents in the beautiful weather! We had a variety of incredible talents such as singing, belly dancing, piano playing, joke telling, ballet, and much more! The children worked very hard in preparation for this day! Also, the MYO did a great job in sponsoring this event and setting up for this exquisite day! We had many volunteers who provided hamburgers and hot dogs for the audience and many who helped in the clean up. □

## St. Louis, Missouri *Ladies Retreat*



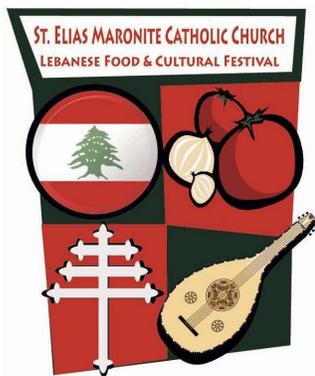
Fr. Gary George with the ladies who attended the retreat.

On April 2, 2011, the Ladies' Society of St. Raymond Maronite Cathedral, St. Louis, Mo., united as a group for a religious retreat. This retreat coincided with St. Raymond's 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. The activities were held at the Maronite Heritage Institute. Father Gary George, C.S.s.R., Rector of St. Raymond's, led the ladies through an inspirational day of prayer and presentations which touched all of the members. Everyone walked away from this retreat with a deeper understanding about the season of Lent, the love of our Almighty Father, the special sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the strength of our Blessed Mother and the similarities the ladies share with her as mothers. Bishop Robert Shaheen and Father Gary celebrated the Divine Liturgy with the ladies in the Bishop's Chapel in the Chancery. Each lady lit a candle at the altar to remember the person who inspired her faith. The ladies had the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The day ended with a ceremony at the Shrine of Our Lady of St. Louis honoring the Blessed Mother. □

## Birmingham, Alabama *Festival Benefits Tornado Victims*

by Wanda ElKhoury

St. Elias Maronite Catholic Church in Birmingham, Alabama, held its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Lebanese Food and Cultural Festival on April 29 - 30, 2011. Despite the devastating tornadoes that passed through the area only a couple of days prior to the festival, the spirit of the members of the church community showed through. Since numerous families were still without power, the Festival provided a refuge for some. Festival goers enjoyed good food, good music, and a much needed break from the devastation.



St. Elias started its Lebanese Food & Cultural Festival in 1999 to showcase to the citizens of Birmingham the rich heritage, culture and food that are a part of this Christian Lebanese community. The festival has always given a part of the proceeds to charity - over \$220,000 in the last twelve years. This is one way that its church family is working together to help with Christian causes here and abroad. This year, a decision was made to donate all remaining food and drinks to the relief effort. The food went to a neighboring community that lost almost everything in the tornado and to several shelters and was used to feed those most in need during this tragedy. In many ways, this was the Best festival ever because we celebrated our heritage and provided much needed food and drink to those most in need. □

## Brooklyn, New York *Fourth Annual Festival*

The Cathedral Parish of Our Lady of Lebanon in historic Brooklyn Heights, N.Y., hosted a most successful Fourth Annual Lebanese Festival June 3 - 5, 2011. The Parish welcomed an enthusiastic crowd of nearly ten thousand visitors from a five state region. The revelers were treated to delicious Lebanese cuisine, delicate desserts and a host of other treats. Entertainment abounded throughout the three days. Live music, dj, rides, games, competitions, a raffle and a bazaar rounded out the fun! Cultural events such as Middle Eastern music and song and folkloric dancing wowed the crowds.

Our hospitality was all encompassing...from good food to lively fun and games. There was great satisfaction in sharing our pride and delight in our heritage with friends and neighbors. It was agreed by many who attended that they would dance all the way home. □

## Flint, Michigan *MYO Activities*

The MYO of Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Flint, Mich., prepared themselves for Easter while working toward their Summer retreat. As a part of their volunteer efforts, the youths provided the parish with *falafel* dinners on two Fridays during Lent. These dinners were served during the social hour after the Friday Lenten Liturgy and Adoration of the Cross. The young people helped in preparing and serving the food. They also took care of cleaning up after the event. Parishioners generously donated money for the dinners, which will be put toward the MYO's retreat fund. This activity has added to the pastoral and spiritual life of our MYO and has given them a new sense of service to their parish. □



## Glen Allen, Virginia Festival Draws Rave Reviews



Joseph and Vince Nadder make *zalabia* at St. Anthony's Lebanese Food Festival.

by Chester Wade

"Marvelous!" "I never miss it." "Can't you do this more than once a year?" Those were some of the comments from attendees of the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Lebanese Food Festival held May 13-15 by St. Anthony Maronite Catholic Church in Glen Allen [Richmond], Va.

Visitors came from around from Virginia and as far away as Ohio and Michigan for this year's festival, which has become a much-anticipated event on the spring activity calendar of the Richmond area. Stormy weather kept the festival from topping last year's record of an estimated 25,000 guests. However, attendance was still strong and spirits were high.

"God blesses us every year," said Monsignor George M. Sebaali, St. Anthony's pastor. "This year we were blessed with a heavy downpour at dinner time Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday night. But we need to see the rainbow that came at the end of those storms. Those storms presented a challenge and our community of faith overcame it together. Challenges such as these are God's way of bringing us closer together, and - as always - He succeeded."

Among the special guests was retired Bishop Stephen Hector Doueihi, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. Bishop Doueihi celebrated Divine Liturgy for the parishioners on Sunday and visited with parishioners and festivals guests throughout the weekend.

As is tradition, preparations began with a kick-off meeting in January. Cooking started in February with items that could be frozen.

Parish Council President Cathy George helped promote

a competition between the two cooking teams: the Tuesday morning and afternoon team and the Thursday evening team. She updated the teams on how many pies, grape leaves, cabbage rolls and other items were prepared on each shift and challenged the other team to top it.

"This year's preparations were the best yet," Monsignor Sebaali said. "We actually finished much of the cooking ahead of schedule, which is quite an accomplishment given the amount of food we prepared."

For example, parishioners made 27,000 meat, spinach, cheese and cheese & spinach pies this year. The pie booth is typically one of the most-popular at the festival. Pie sales averaged one every five seconds during peak times of the festival.

Patrons watched wide-eyed as *shawirma*, *zalabia* and three types of *katayif* were made fresh in front of them. They also enjoyed a large selection of Lebanese pastries. Lebanese beer and wine also were popular.

Some attendees were already waiting when the festival opened each morning at 10 a.m. By noon each day, crowds spread out across St. Anthony's 15-acre complex. Most enjoyed making their selections ala carte, then sitting at the pavilion or in other outdoor seating. Still others opted for sit-down dinners served in the social hall.

About 100 parishioners - including some pre-schoolers participating in their first festival - performed traditional Lebanese folk dances throughout each day of the festival. Dancers rehearsed weekly for three months to get ready for the festival. Live Lebanese music was performed all three days by the Mazloom Family band, made up of one family from St. Anthony's parish. Hundreds of other parishioners staffed the kitchen, food and drink booths and dining room, and handled other logistics.

Along with cooking, volunteers from the 300-family parish also worked on other preparations, such as lining up tents, lighting, seating and other items as well as publicity. The festival drew coverage from all the major media outlets in the Richmond area, both before the festival and during the event. Because of its popularity, it even gets mentioned in the TV and radio traffic reports. During the week before the festival, preparations occurred almost around the clock.

"Everyone knows his job and does it well," said Monsignor Sebaali. "This is like inviting 20,000 people to your house for a home-cooked meal. You want everything to be just right and you want every guest to feel welcome."

The event is held traditionally the weekend after Mother's Day, so the dates for next year's festival are already tentatively set - Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 17-19, 2012.

Monsignor Sebaali said everyone at St. Anthony's wants to do everything possible to make the festival a pleasant experience for every guest, but there is one time he has to say "no."

"I tell them I am sorry but I cannot ask the parishioners to hold the festival twice a year," he said. "If I suggested that, they would send me to the *thousand islands* with an invitation to spend a year on each island. Once a year is definitely enough! It takes us until winter to recover." □

## Detroit, Michigan *Arabic Class Graduation*



**M**ay 22, 2011, was a joyful day at St. Maron Church in Detroit, Michigan, as we celebrated the Arabic class graduation.

While not all forty-five children were able to attend the ceremony, we are happy with their accomplishments. They are learning rather quickly to speak, write, read and sing in Arabic. The students have performed on more than one occasion as the choir during Liturgy.

Each student received a certificate of achievement from their respective teacher. The ceremony was followed by a lunch with cake, served in the church social hall. Congratulations to all, and many thanks to the dedicated teachers. □

## Warren, Michigan *Pie Fundraisers*



by Carolin Dwaihy

**T**he St. Sharbel Ladies Altar Society, Warren, Michigan, has been sponsoring spinach and meat pie baking sessions

by donating the supplies and manpower to prepare the pies and selling them after the weekend liturgies. So far, since December 2010, a total of \$7,000 has been raised. Thank you to the women and men of the parish who have been helping to make the pies. A very special thank you to our pastor, Father Joubran BouMerhi, for his great leadership and idea for this fundraiser and working right along side with us. □

### Schedule of Bishop Gregory Mansour

**June 1 - 16, 2011**

Maronite Bishops' Synod, *Bkerke*, Lebanon.

**June 19, 2011**

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

**June 20, 2011**

New York Bishops Meeting, New York, N.Y.

**June 21, 2011**

Committee Meeting for the preparation of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary, Washington, D.C.

**June 23 - 27, 2011**

Family Visit, Flint, Mich.

**June 27 - 28, 2011**

Annual Maronite Youth Conference, Latrobe, Penn.

**July 3, 2011**

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

**July 5 - 10, 2011**

Annual Clergy Conference and Maronite Convention, Philadelphia, Penn.

**July 17, 2011**

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

### **Food For Thought**

*The one triune God is an ocean that cannot be crossed or explored. High is the heaven, broad the earth, deep the sea and long the ages; but higher and broader and deeper and longer is [God's] knowledge. For [God] has been adorned by nature, [God] who created it from nothing.*

St. Columban, Irish Monk and Missionary, 6<sup>th</sup> century

# Why Go To A Priest for Confession?

by Rev. Robert Barron

Father Robert Barron is the founder of the global ministry Word on Fire and is the Francis Cardinal George Professor of Faith and Culture at University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Mich. He is the creator and host of a new ten-episode documentary series called "Catholicism" and host of a weekly program on WGN America, Relevant Radio, EWTN and at [www.WordOnFire.org](http://www.WordOnFire.org).



I recently wrote an article on the new and somewhat controversial Catholic Confession iPhone app. In the wake of that piece, I received a number of letters and e-mail communications about the practice of Confession. Many expressed a rather deep impatience with the whole idea of confessing one's sins to a priest. Why, some asked, do we require a mediator when seeking the divine forgiveness? Why can't we "go directly to God?" Others somewhat more darkly insinuated that the Catholic obsession with confession is tantamount to an abuse of power, the institutional church asserting its control over the inner lives of ordinary Catholics.

Well as you know, these are very old objections, going back at least as far as the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation. Young Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk with a somewhat unhealthy preoccupation with confession. It is said that Luther would finish an exhaustive rehearsal of his sins and peccadilloes and then return, almost immediately, to the confessional box, convinced that he had forgotten something. He tried, over and over again, to receive assurance of salvation from the practice of confessing and receiving absolution, but he never felt satisfied. One day, after many years of anguished wrestling, Luther was in the tower of the monastery studying the opening of Paul's letter to the church at Rome. A particular verse hit him with the force of a revelation: "The just man shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). What struck him with such power was the conviction that justice or salvation came, not from any external work of ours, but only from God's grace accepted in faith. And this faith, he surmised, was an act that took place in the believer's deepest interiority. On the basis of this experience, Luther sharply distinguished between what he called "the inner man" and "the outer man;" and he asserted that what is really vital in the spiritual order—the

acceptance in faith of the offer of grace—is a function of the inner man, while the works and efforts of the outer man remain relatively derivative and secondary.

Now one of the major implications of this distinction is that the "external" features of religion—liturgy, vestments, rituals, pilgrimages, sacramentals, and sacraments—become marginal. Thus, Luther reduced the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church to two - Baptism and the Lord's Supper - and declared that even these are not, strictly speaking, necessary for salvation. And he directed his particular ire against the sacrament of confession, which, in his judgment, the Lord had never commanded and which had become simply a means by which Roman authorities could exercise their power over the good people of Christ. I think it's safe to say that the vast majority of Protestants have followed the lead of Luther in this regard, many even going beyond him in their marginalization of the sacraments and their suspicion of confession in particular.

It is fascinating to mark how thoroughly our modern secular culture has been influenced by this typically Protestant bifurcation between the inner and the outer. How blithely most of us assume that what is really important is going on "deep down inside;" and how quick most of us are to relegate the body, behavior, and action to the realm of mere "externals." Relatedly, we are deeply suspicious of a person or institution that would impose upon us any sort of behavioral conformity. Even the most cursory acquaintance with contemporary culture reveals that freedom—the sovereignty of the inner self—is our supreme value.

Why precisely did the Catholic Church find itself in opposition to Luther's accounts of salvation, the inner man, and the sacraments? In a word, it was the abiding Catholic sense of the

Incarnation. In Jesus Christ, the absolutely transcendent God came close to us, spoke to us in a human voice, reached out to us with human hands, looked upon us with human eyes, and saved us with his crucified human body. As St. John put it so pithily, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" [John 1:14]. Accordingly, from St. Irenaeus onward, orthodox Christian theologians and spiritual masters have consistently resisted the temptation to drive a wedge between spirit and matter; for they knew that the pure Spirit of God addressed us precisely through the body of Jesus. Now the Church is nothing but the extension of the Incarnation through time and space, the vehicle by which Christ continues to touch and address the world. And this is why, for Catholic theology, externals matter very much indeed. Color, texture, voice, liturgical gesture, light, sound, bread, wine, oil, the touch of a hand are the material elements by which the Incarnation continues to find expression. To say that such things are secondary or peripheral is to say that the body of Jesus is secondary or peripheral.

One of the most powerful moves that Jesus made was to offer the forgiveness of sins. To the paralyzed man, he said, "My son, your sins are forgiven" [Mark 2:9]; and to the woman caught in adultery, he said, "Neither do I condemn you" [John 8:11]; and to the good thief, he said, "Today, I assure you, will be with me in Paradise" [Luke 23:43]. But in none of these cases did the Divine Spirit immediately commune with the human spirit; rather, the communication of forgiveness came through the voice, eyes, gesture, and embodied presence of the Word made flesh. As he administers the sacraments, the priest is operating, not in his own person, but in *persona Christi* (in the person of Christ). His

voice, his gesture, and his embodied presence are a sacramental representation, a bodying forth, of Christ's embodied presence.

Could God forgive outside of the rituals of the Catholic Church? Of course. God is held bound by nothing. But the stubbornly incarnational God, Catholics believe, has desired to convey his forgiveness through the body of the Church. And that's why we go to a priest, an embodied *alter Christus*, for confession. □

(Reprinted with permission)

## ***Is Hell Crowded or Empty? A Catholic Perspective***

by Rev. Robert Barron

An internet controversy is percolating around a soon-to-be-published book by well-known evangelical preacher Rob Bell. In this text, *Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*, Bell apparently advocates the "universalist" position on salvation, according to which everyone in the end is saved and that Hell, accordingly, is empty. Many of his evangelical co-religionists are arguing that this doctrine runs counter to classical biblical Christianity and is designed to appeal to a trendy post-modern audience for whom the only unforgivable sin is to be "exclusive." This dust-up over Hell made the main page of the CNN web site the other day [in March 2011] and has prompted tens of thousands of responses and questions. Obviously Hell is still (forgive the pun) a burning question among both believers and non-believers.

Of course, there is nothing new about this controversy. It has raged on and off for almost the whole of Christian history. Though many find this distasteful even to contemplate, the Biblical figure who speaks most often of Hell and damnation is none other than Jesus himself. Time and again in the Gospels, Jesus warns about "Gehenna" and its everlasting fire; he

also tells the parable of rich man and Lazarus in which the rich man is forever separated from the bosom of Abraham; and, in Matthew 25, he warns that those who neglect the needs of the poor will go off "to eternal punishment."

In the third century, Origen of Alexandria, one of the most remarkable and influential theologians in the entire tradition, formulated a teaching he termed *apokatastasis* (restoration). According to this doctrine, all sinners—and indeed all of the fallen angels, including Satan himself—would be, through Christ's grace, brought to salvation in the end. There might be hellfire, Origen thought, but it cannot be everlasting, for if it were, sin would prove more powerful than grace. Well, the official church reacted against Origen's universalism, for she saw it as insufficiently respectful of freedom, both human and angelic. If God's grace is simply irresistible, then the real freedom to reject God's love appears compromised.

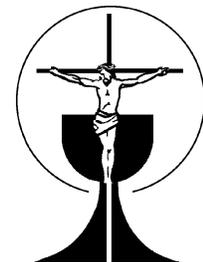
Now in the wake of this condemnation, other theologians moved practically to the other extreme. St. Augustine, fifth century bishop of Hippo, held that original sin had produced a *massa damnata* (a damned mass) of human beings, out of which God, in his inscrutable grace, has deigned to pick a few privileged souls. Thus, Augustine clearly believed that the vast majority of the human race would be damned to Hell. And though it makes me uncomfortable to admit it, my hero, St. Thomas Aquinas, followed Augustine in holding that a very large number of people are Hell-bound; he even taught that among the pleasures that the saints in heaven enjoy is the contemplation of the suffering of the damned!

In the twentieth century, the Protestant theologian Karl Barth moved back in Origen's direction and articulated a more or less universalist position on salvation. He maintained that the cross of Jesus had saved the world and that the church's task was to announce this joyful truth to everyone. The Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar was a friend of Barth's and a fellow Swiss, and he presented a somewhat Barthian teaching on this score, though he pulled back from complete universalism.

Balthasar argued that, given what God has accomplished in Christ, we may reasonably hope that all people will be saved. The condemnation of *apokatastasis* compelled him to draw back from saying that we know all will be saved, but his keen sensitivity to the dramatic power of the cross convinced him that we may entertain the lively and realistic hope that all people will eventually be drawn into the divine love.

My own conviction is that Balthasar has this more or less right. Catholic doctrine is that Hell exists, but yet the Church has never claimed to know if any human being is actually in Hell. When the Church says that Hell exists, it means that the definitive rejection of God's love is a real possibility. "Hell" or "Gehenna" are spatial metaphors for the lonely and sad condition of having definitively refused the offer of the divine life. But is there anyone in this state of being? We don't know for sure. We are in fact permitted to hope and to pray that all people will finally surrender to the alluring beauty of God's grace.

Think of God's life as a party to which everyone is invited, and think of Hell as the sullen corner into which someone who resolutely refuses to join the fun has sadly slunk. What this image helps us to understand is that language which suggests that God "sends" people to Hell is misleading. As C.S. Lewis put it so memorably: the door that closes one into Hell (if there is anyone there) is locked from the inside not from the outside. The existence of Hell as a real possibility is a corollary of two more fundamental convictions, namely, that God is love and that human beings are free. The divine love, freely rejected, results in suffering. And yet, we may, indeed we should, hope that God's grace will, in the end, wear down even the most recalcitrant sinner. □



# Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn

## Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors

### *By Priests or Deacons*

*The Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn publishes its Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons. The same policy is also available online at [http://www.stmaron.org/policy\\_sexual\\_abuse.html](http://www.stmaron.org/policy_sexual_abuse.html). The Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon has its own policy and it is also available online at <http://www.usamaronite.org/statement.html>.*

**A**s Christians and Maronites we consider the welfare and protection of our children a sacred responsibility. We hereby promulgate the following Eparchial norms as an implementation of Essential norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons approved by the Congregation for Bishops on December 8, 2002.

### **Definition**

Sexual Abuse of a minor includes sexual molestation or sexual exploitation of a minor and other behavior by which an adult uses a minor as an object of sexual gratification. The norm to be considered in assessing an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is whether conduct or interaction with a minor qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation of the sixth commandment.

### **Response**

- The healing of victims, their families and their community from the effects of sexual abuse by church leaders begins when the allegations of such abuse are received. When victims decide to disclose the abuse, it is important that the response they receive is compassionate and non-judgmental.
- Anyone receiving an allegation of abuse will respond in a pastoral, supportive manner, leaving investigative concerns to those who serve in that role.
- An allegation will be received without initial judgment as to the truth of the complaint. No intimation of blame will be made by the initial recipient of information.
- Individuals making allegations will be supported positively in their decision to disclose.
- The Eparchial Bishop will designate a competent person to coordinate assistance for the immediate pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused when they were minors by priests or deacons. This "assistance-coordinator" will assess and respond to the immediate and long term needs of the alleged victim and family, the alleged offender, parish communities and others that are affected by the disclosure of sex abuse.
- The assistance-coordinator will serve as a consultant to the eparchial bishop and the review board regarding the treatment needs of clients.

### **Review Board**

The review board is a predominantly lay board composed of a variety of professionals duly appointed to assist the bishop in a strictly confidential consultative capacity. It will have no final, decision-making authority, which authority will continue to reside exclusively with the bishop.

### **Board Functions**

1. To advise the eparchial bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of suitability for ministry;
2. To review eparchial policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors;
3. To offer advice on all aspects of sexual abuse cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively.

### **Membership**

The review board, established by the eparchial bishop, will be composed of five members of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church. The majority of the board will be lay persons who are not in the employ of the eparchy. These will include:

- ★ a person with particular expertise in the treatment of sexual abuse of minors;
- ★ a parent;
- ★ a parish priest;
- ★ an attorney; and
- ★ an individual with investigative experience.

The bishop may deem it desirable that the Promoter of Justice participate in the meetings of the review board.

### **Appointment**

Members appointed by the eparchial bishop will serve a five year term. All board members will adhere to the rules of strict confidentiality with regard to all deliberations and information received.

### **Reporting**

In all cases of alleged or suspected or known child abuse committed by a cleric, the Eparchy will comply with all applicable civil laws in respect to reporting the allegations and will cooperate with civil authorities in the investigation.

Any cleric, who knows from the external forum that a minor has been sexually abused is required to report that knowledge or suspicion to the Eparchial Bishop and to the civil authorities in accordance with the norms of canon law.

## ***Investigation***

- When an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon is received, a preliminary investigation in harmony with canon law will be initiated and conducted promptly and objectively (Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches [CCEO], c. 1468). The purpose of the eparchial investigation is to ensure that the bishop has a complete, thorough, and accurate report of the alleged incident. The investigation will be conducted by an investigator appointed by the review board. The investigator will report his findings in writing to the Eparchial bishop and to the review board.
- The accused will immediately be called by the Eparchial Bishop and made aware of the allegation against him and the identity of the accuser. The accused will remain in his position until the initial investigation is completed, which is to be done as expeditiously as possible. All appropriate steps shall be taken to protect the reputation of the accused and the accuser during the investigation. The accused will be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel and will be promptly notified of the results of the investigation.
- When there is sufficient evidence that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred, the eparchial bishop will notify the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. The Eparchial Bishop shall then apply the precautionary measures mentioned in CCEO, c. 1473 -- that is, remove the alleged offender from the sacred ministry or from any ecclesiastical office or function. The bishop may impose or prohibit residence in a given place or territory, and prohibit the public participation in the Most Holy Eucharist pending the outcome of the process.
- In every case involving canonical penalties, the processes provided for in canon law will be observed, and the various provisions of canon law will be considered. (1) Unless the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, having been notified, calls the case to itself because of special circumstances, the Eparchial Bishop will follow the directions of the Congregation on how to proceed. (2) If the case would otherwise be barred by prescription, because sexual abuse of a minor is a grave offense, the Eparchial Bishop shall apply to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for a dispensation from the prescription, while indicating appropriate pastoral reasons.
- For the sake of due process, the accused is encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. When necessary, the eparchy will supply canonical counsel to the cleric.
- The Eparchy will conduct a judicial process of the case according to the appropriate canons and practice of the Church.

- The alleged offender may be requested to seek, and may be urged voluntarily to comply with, an appropriate medical and psychological evaluation at a facility mutually acceptable to the Eparchy and the accused.
- In every instance, the Eparchy will advise and support a person's right to make a report to public authorities.

## ***Ministry/Service***

- No cleric removed from an eparchial position for allegations of sexual abuse of a minor will return to ministry or service before their case is assessed and fitness is determined by the Eparchial Bishop in consultation with the review board. The safety of children is the paramount consideration governing the formation of recommendations regarding the future ministry of one accused of abuse.
- An allegation of sexual abuse of a minor made against a cleric will be deemed established if, with due respect for the provisions of canon law:
  - The accused individual admits to conduct defined by this policy as sexual abuse; or
  - A civil court of criminal law finds the accused guilty of a crime that consists of conduct defined by this policy as sexual abuse, or the accused pleads guilty or no contest to a crime that consists of conduct defined by this policy as sexual abuse; or
  - The appropriate church tribunal finds the accused guilty of the crime.
- When an act of sexual abuse by a priest or deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate process in accord with canon law, the offending priest or deacon will be removed from ecclesiastical ministry, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state, if the case so warrants.
- If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g., for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate the Divine Liturgy publicly or to administer the mysteries. He will be instructed not to wear clerical garb, or present himself publicly as a priest.
- At all times, the Eparchial Bishop has the executive power of clerical governance, through an administrative act, to remove an offending cleric from office, to remove or restrict his faculties, and to limit his exercise of priestly ministry. For the sake of the common good and observing the provisions of canon law, the Eparchial Bishop shall exercise this power of governance to ensure that any priest who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor as described above shall not continue in the active ministry.
- The priest or deacon may at any time request a dispensation from the obligations of the clerical state. In

exceptional cases, the Eparchial Bishop may request of the Holy Father the dismissal of the priest or deacon from the clerical state ex officio, even without the consent of the priest or deacon.

- Care will always be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of the person claiming to have been sexually abused and the person against whom the charge has been made. When an accusation has proved to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken by the bishop to restore the good name of the priest or deacon falsely accused.
- No priest or deacon who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor will be transferred for ministerial assignment to another eparchy/diocese or religious province.
- Before a priest or deacon is transferred for residence to another eparchy/diocese or religious province, the Eparchial Bishop shall forward, in a confidential manner, to the local eparch/bishop or religious ordinary of the proposed place of residence any and all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a minor and any other information indicating that he has been or may be a danger to children or young people.
- The Eparchial Bishop will not consider receiving a priest or deacon into the eparchy from another jurisdiction without previously obtaining the necessary information regarding the moral and civil record of the priest or deacon in question.

### ***Prevention***

The Eparchy of Saint Maron will publish a code of ethics and integrity in ministry to be adhered to by all the clergy and persons in positions of trust in the Eparchy.

All eparchial programs designed to certify clerics, eparchial employees, and volunteers who serve children on a regular basis will include segments that address child sexual abuse. The training curriculum will include information concerning: signs and symptoms, dynamics of child abuse, impact of child abuse, intervention strategies, reporting requirements and community resources.

### ***Screening***

The Eparchy will study the psychological screening currently undertaken to assess all potential candidates for the priesthood and diaconate. The tests given will be reviewed from the perspective of identifying, to the extent possible, potential problems in the area of sexuality. Problem candidates will be disqualified.

A protocol or procedure, including a psychological evaluation, is to be developed to screen clerical personnel from outside the Eparchy before an assignment is given or confirmed by the Eparchial Bishop to minister within the Eparchy of Saint Maron.

## **Supplement**

### ***Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Seminarians, Religious, Eparchial Employees or Regular Volunteers***

The Norms listed above regarding sexual abuse of minors by priests or deacons, with the exception of those that deal specifically with priests or deacons according to canon law, are also to be applied to seminarians, religious, eparchial employees and regular volunteers of the Eparchy. In addition, there are these following norms.

### ***Reporting***

In all cases of alleged or suspected or known child abuse committed by a seminarian, religious, eparchial employee or volunteer of the Eparchy, the Eparchy will comply with all applicable civil laws in respect to reporting the allegations and will cooperate with civil authorities in the investigation.

### ***Investigation***

Besides any actions taken by the civil authorities, the Eparchy will conduct its own investigation of the alleged abuse.

Based on the results of the civil disposition, the eparchy's own investigation, and the advice of the Review Board, the Eparchial Bishop will determine the continued working relationship of the accused with the Eparchy.

During the investigation, the accused will be relieved from his or her responsibilities, and removed from any contact with minors.

### ***Screening***

The background of all eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors will be evaluated. Administrators must take due precautions to assure that only persons who are psychologically and temperamentally suited are chosen to work with children.

No applicant with a history of a felony or misdemeanor sex offense conviction will be considered for placement or hire.

Applicants for employment or to volunteer in a position with children contact in parishes and institutions of the eparchy must provide the hiring agent personal information adequate to assess their suitability for contact with minors. They must sign a waiver to conduct a criminal background check. They must supply names of three references, at least one from the most recent employer and none from close friends or relatives. And they must complete the screening interview process.

Hiring agents and/or volunteer coordinators must speak with all references provided by applicants for employment and examine and verify the employment history. The hiring agent

is to conduct a criminal records check of any person seeking employment or to volunteer at their facility. Any applicant who has not lived continuously for five years in the state of the eparchial parish or institution must also provide an FBI identification record or a waiver allowing the hiring agent to obtain it.

Pastors will require that any person or group who is hired through a third party contract, and who will have responsibility for the care, custody, or control of a child, must provide proof of a criminal background check.

Each parish or institution of the eparchy must establish procedures for gathering the information and completing the reference checks mentioned above. All information gathered will be retained in a confidential file at the location of employment for as long as legally required.

## *Code of Ethics and Integrity*

### **General Norms**

- Church personnel<sup>1</sup> will exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity.
- Church personnel will conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the discipline and teaching of the Catholic Church.
- Church personnel will not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse a minor or an adult.
- Church personnel will not engage in physical, psychological, written or verbal harassment of employees, volunteers, or parishioners and will not tolerate such harassment by other Church personnel.
- Church personnel shall provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.
- Church personnel shall not engage in sexual intimacies with the persons they counsel. This includes consensual contact, forced physical contact and sexually explicit conversations not related to counseling issues.
- Church personnel assume the full burden for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and counseling-related relationships.
- No counseling sessions should be conducted in private living quarters.
- Church personnel will share concerns about suspicious or inappropriate behavior with their pastor, the Vicar-General

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<sup>1</sup>Church personnel includes priests, religious, permanent and transitional deacons, seminarians, all paid and volunteer personnel who are employed by or work in eparchial parishes or institutions.

of the Eparchy, or the Eparchial Bishop.

- Church personnel will report any suspected abuse to the proper civil authorities.
- Church personnel will accept their personal responsibility to protect minors and adults from all forms of abuse.
- Houses used for residences of priests and religious are exclusively for the use of the religious. With the exception of occasional visits from immediate family members, minors are not permitted to be overnight guests in the residence of a priest or a religious.

## **Eparchial Review Board**

### *Members of the Eparchial Review Board*

- Dr. Martha Rashed (Psychologist, Washington, D.C.)
- Fr. Bassam Saade, St. Jude Maronite Church, Orlando, Florida
- Attorney Richard Hibey (Attorney), Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church, Washington, D.C.
- Anthony J. Shaia, MD, St. Anthony's Maronite Church, Glen Allen (Richmond), Virginia
- Lieutenant Michael Zohab, St. Anthony's Maronite Church, Glen Allen (Richmond), Virginia.

### **Victim Assistance Coordinator**

**Roseanne C. Solomon**

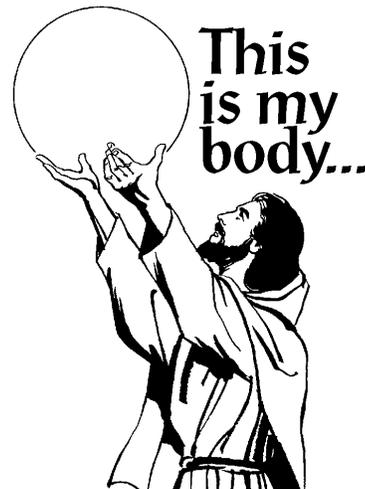
Telephone: (781) 828-5183

Mrs. Solomon can also be reached at:

c/o Our Lady of the Cedars of Lebanon Maronite Church  
61 Rockwood Street

Jamaica Plain (Boston), Massachusetts 02130

Telephone: (617) 522-0225 Fax: (617) 522-0194. □



## Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon *Stewardship Director*

of Mary, Mother of the Light Church in Greenacres [West Palm Beach], Florida, to Administrator of the same.

### *Effective August 1, 2011*

**H**is Excellency Bishop Robert Shaheen is pleased to announce that John F. Kurey, Esq., MBA, will join the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon as its Stewardship Director on June 1, 2011. As you may know, every Roman Catholic diocese in America has a Stewardship Office that helps provide for each diocese's financial needs. The value and need for such an office is undisputed.

Mr. Kurey was hired by Bishop Shaheen upon the recommendation of Bishop Gregory Mansour, the Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. Mr. Kurey currently serves as the Stewardship Director of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. Beginning on June 1, he will serve as the Stewardship Director for both Maronite Eparchies in America concurrently.

Mr. Kurey's education and experience has uniquely prepared him for his role. He holds a bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in history and political science, a juris doctor (J.D.) degree from the University of Michigan Law School and a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business. After practicing corporate law for nine years, Mr. Kurey served as President of the Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation for seven years and grew it into the largest financial supporter of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the world.

In a statement by both bishops, Bishop Shaheen and Bishop Mansour wrote: "Our Maronite Church in America is fortunate to have the services of John Kurey. It makes sense to have one person direct the Stewardship efforts of our Eparchies. We ask our faithful and clergy to welcome John as he serves the Church, the clergy, religious and lay faithful in stewarding their time, talent and treasure in the years ahead."

Mr. Kurey commented: "It is a privilege to serve the Maronite Church. I am humbled to be able to work for the good priests and people of both Eparchies who are so generous and committed to their Eparchies and parishes."

Mr. Kurey can be reached at the Chancery of Our Lady of Lebanon Eparchy at 314-231-1021, at the Chancery of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn at 718-237-9913, and by email at johnkurey@yahoo.com. □

## Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn *Eparchial Assignments*

**H**is Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, has made the following Eparchial Appointments:

### *Effective June 1, 2011*

- ★ **Reverend Joseph Akiki** to remain on Sabbatical for a period of three months
- ★ **Reverend Jorge Perales** from Temporary Administrator

★ **Monsignor Ronald Beshara** to remain on Sabbatical for a period of six months

★ **Reverend Georges Bouchaaya**, M.L.M., from Administrator of St. Ann Church in Troy, N.Y., to Pastor of the same for a period of six years

★ **Reverend Simon Elhadj** to part-time Administrator to the Maronite Mission in Aliquippa, Penn., while continuing as Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Victory Church in Pittsburgh

★ **Reverend Vincent Farhat** from Parochial Vicar of St. Anthony Church in Lawrence, Mass., to Administrator of St. Maron Church in Philadelphia, Penn.

★ **Reverend Nadim Helou**, M.L.M., from Administrator of St. George Church in Uniontown, Penn., to Pastor of the same for a period of six years

★ **Reverend Hanna Karam** from Administrator of St. Anthony/ St. George Church in Wilkes-Barre, Penn., to Pastor of the same for a period of six years

★ **Reverend Tony Mouannes** from Parochial Vicar of St. Louis Gonzaga Church in Utica, N.Y., to Administrator of St. Theresa Church in Brockton, Mass.

★ **Reverend Anthony Salim** from Pastor of St. Theresa Church in Brockton, Mass., to Pastor of St. Joseph Church in Olean, N.Y., for a period of for six years

★ **Chorbishop Michael Thomas** to Administrator of Heart of Jesus Mission in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., while continuing as Vicar General and Chancellor of the Eparchy

### *Effective September 1, 2011*

★ **Reverend Danny Abi-Akar** from Parochial Vicar of Saint John Maron Church in Williamsville, N.Y., to Administrator of Our Lady of Lebanon in Waterbury, Conn.

★ **Reverend Naji Kiwan** from Pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Waterbury, Conn., to Administrator of the Maronite Mission in Westchester, N.Y. □

## *Pontifical Appointment*

**T**he Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI appointed His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Peter Rai, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch, as member of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura. □

*(Vis, May 31, 2011)*

## Waterville, Maine May Crowning



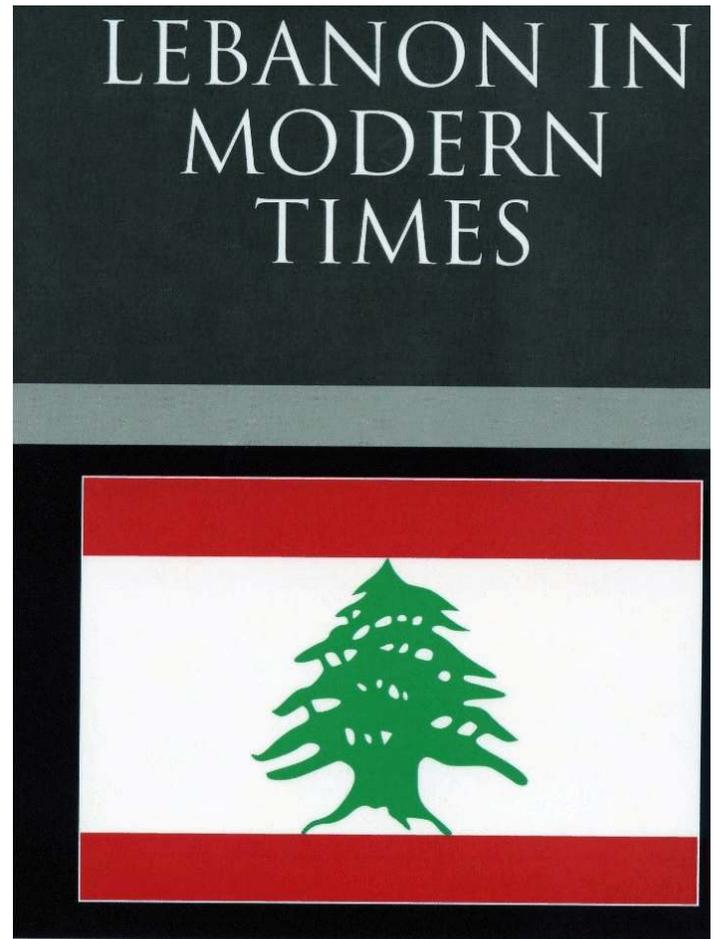
by Fr. Larry Jensen

St. Joseph Maronite Catholic Church in Waterville, Maine, celebrated its annual May Crowning on May 1, 2011. The procession into the church was led by Neveah Pease carrying the crown of Mary. Following her is Sierra Lee. Not visible in the picture is Anika Elias and Kaylee Raymond who placed the crown on Mary. Carrying the cross is Subdeacon Stephen Crate. □

## Newtown Square, Pennsylvania May Crowning

by Lillian Shahade

The Crowning of the Blessed Mother at St. Sharbel Church, Newtown Square, Penn., took place on May 8, 2011, after the Divine Liturgy and benediction. A procession of all the faithful took place outside on the grounds on a beautiful sunny day while continuing to sing Marian hymns. The crowning was performed by Nicole Estephan and Maya Alsaigh. After the crowning, everyone went to the hall for coffee and cake. □



A. J. ABRAHAM

Throughout its long and enduring past, Lebanon has been a microcosm for the entire Arab world. *Lebanon in Modern Times* is the first full-length, comprehensive study of modern Lebanon in fifty years. Abraham's study chronicles the history of Lebanon from the great Ottoman Turkish Conquest to present day events. By emphasizing the state's complex domestic and foreign problems from historical and psychological perspectives, Abraham highlights the state's foreign policy and identity crisis. This careful study of Lebanese politics and foreign policy reflects the problems we now face in the Middle East and offers democratic suggestions to the Muslim and third world.

A. J. Abraham (Ph.D., New York University) is professor of History and Middle Eastern studies.

For orders and information please contact the publisher

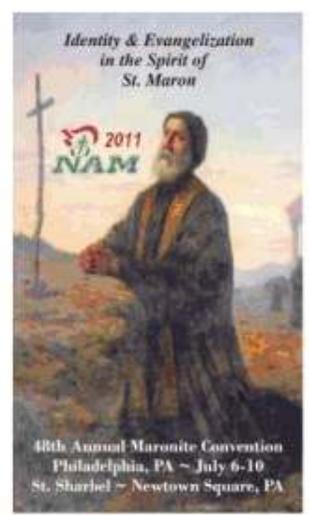
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Join us in Philadelphia this July to celebrate Independence Day, the birth of our nation and the freedom we have to enjoy our Maronite faith and heritage. Philadelphia is a vibrant city with an exciting blend of old and new. Visit the historic sites, check out the world renowned museums, and dine in the trendiest restaurants in the country. The convention theme this year is **"Identity and Evangelization in the Spirit of Saint Maron"** and our workshops will feature some of the most influential names in religious, and cultural life. Youth and Young adults can choose from numerous activities designed to showcase the city, strengthen your faith, and foster your friendships. The evening galas will offer fine dining accompanied by music and dancing provided by some of the most iconic Lebanese performers. Come early and enjoy the city of brotherly love and then give us five days to inspire and entertain you!

**EVENTS**

<b>Evening Entertainment/Gala</b>	
Wednesday July 6th	Dinner Under the Stars DJ Dance Music
Thursday July 7th	Concert Recital with Evangelical Singer Joumana Mdarwar
Friday July 8th	Silent Auction; Middle Eastern Cuisine; Yousef Chamour and Band
Saturday July 9th	Grand Banquet; Raffle; Lebanese Superstar Tony Kiwan
Sunday July 10th	Brunch
<b>Young Adults (18-35) and Young Professionals (21-40)</b>	
Wednesday July 6th	Young Adult Meet and Greet
Thursday July 7th	Flavors of Philadelphia Tour Theology on Tap Vango Lounge and Skybar <i>*Valid ID required for drink specials</i>
Friday July 8th	Spirit of Philadelphia Lunch Cruise Penn's Landing <i>Bridging the US to Lebanon through higher education by Notre Dame University</i>
Saturday July 9th	Ale and Arts Tour Philadelphia Art Museum
<b>Youth Organization (Age 12-17)</b>	
Thursday July 7th	Loua Party at the Pool
Friday July 8th	Historic Area Walking Tour
Saturday July 9th	The Franklin Institute & Rocky Statue at the steps of the Art Museum



Sponsored by  
National Apostolate of Maronites  
  
and Hosted by  
St. Sharbel Church of Newtown Square, PA

# WORKSHOPS

Making a difference in the Global Maronite Church “Commission on Lebanon”

Panelist: Jacque Kallasy, & Neemat Frem

General Assembly Guest Speaker: Rev. Simone Faddoul from Caritas

- “Back to the Roots - by USEK “Kaslik”
- Discovering Our “Faith of the Mountain”
- Lebanese Language in the 21st Century
- Saints of Lebanon and Our Pursuit of Another Canonization:  
The Massabki Brothers, Archbishop Samir Nassar (Maronite Bishop of Damascus)
- Maronite Liturgical Music
- Bridging the U.S. and Lebanon Through Higher Education - by NDU “Louaize”
- The importance of Vocations

## Hotel Information

Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel

201 North 17th Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Phone: 800.325.3525

Phone: 215.448.2000

\$119 per night single/double/triple/quad\*

Rates apply for July 4 weekend

## Ask for NAM Convention

- One night will be billed to your credit card as soon as you make your reservation
- Hotel reservations are separate of NAM convention registration;

Please contact the hotel directly to make a reservation by June 13th, 2011

## Parking - Self-Parking

\$10 day with in/out privileges for hotel guests with valid convention badge

## Visit the NAM convention at:

- [www.namnews.org](http://www.namnews.org)
- [saintsharbel.org](http://saintsharbel.org)
- advertise your business in our Ad book
- donate items to the silent auction
- purchase raffle tickets for exciting prizes

## Philadelphia Local Attractions

Discount tickets will be available for many attractions and restaurants:

[Atlantic City](#)

[The Constitution Center](#)

[The Franklin Institute](#)

[The Liberty Bell](#)

[The Philadelphia Museum of Art](#)

[The Philadelphia Zoo](#)



Mark your calendars and visit our websites at

[www.namnews.org](http://www.namnews.org) and [www.saintsharbel.org](http://www.saintsharbel.org) for more information.

Registration available online at [www.namnews.org](http://www.namnews.org) or mail complete registration form to:

NAM PO Box 717 Yonkers, NY 10701 FAX: 914.964.3071 Make checks payable to NAM CONVENTION; credit card payments acceptable

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## *The Sacred Heart of Jesus Is the Representation of His Divine Love for Humanity.*

(Continued from page 1)

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Unfortunately, when we look at our world today, we see the misconception about love. Love appears with a wide range of meanings: affection, friendship, loyalty, desire, liking, attachment. In fact, we love certain types of food. We love a car; we love a show; we love a person... Sometimes, our love is conditional if it meets my standards, or it is convenient when it fits me. Most often, love of others does not survive the storms of life. Our world suffers from the lack of true love.

We need to learn from the Sacred Heart of Jesus the true meaning of love. It is the giving love of parents for their children. It is the respectful and caring love of couples. It is the adoring love of God. It is the forgiving love towards the repentant. It is the compassionate love towards the needy. It is the true loyal love of a friend. Our world will be definitely uplifted by such kinds of love. Therefore, I appeal to every one of you to learn the true meaning of love from the Divine Master, Christ Himself and may our hearts be humble, modest and compassionate like Him.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



+Robert J. Shaheen, D.D.  
Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon

## *Dallas, Texas Holy Week Mission*

The Maronite Community in Dallas, Texas, has been blessed every year during its Holy Week Mission by the guest appearance of Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J., a well-known biblical scholar and frequent host on EWTN. Father Pacwa has the privilege of being bi-ritual, which means he can celebrate the Maronite Liturgy.

On Wednesday evening, April 20, 2011, over 300 parishioners attended Liturgy and the Rite of the Lamp. On Holy Thursday, Fr. ElBasha celebrated the Liturgy of the Washing of the feet. Fr. Mitch Pacwa's homilies inspired the congregation and all our guests. The Church had Eucharistic Adoration all night, and Fr. Pacwa with the assistance of Fr. ElBasha and Fr. Patrick Olaleye (Parochial Vicar at St Ann Church in Coppell, Tex.), heard confessions until 3:00 a.m. On Good Friday, the Church mourned the death of Jesus and recalled His death in a procession around the Church. Afterward, Fr. Assaad led the congregation in a Holy Rosary, while Fr. Pacwa and Fr. Olaleye heard confessions.

Easter Sunday, the children enjoyed the Easter egg hunt while the parishioners were treated to an Easter Reception prepared by the Ladies of the Church.

Our Lady of Lebanon is a small Maronite Catholic Church in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. The Church is well-known in the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Dallas and Fort Worth. Many Roman Catholics attended the Church's Holy Week Mission. □

