



The Maronite Voice

A Publication of the Maronite Eparchies in the USA



Volume XII

Issue No. VII

July - August 2016

The Martyrs

July is the month of the Massabki Martyrs: three brave lay men, who gave their lives in defense of their faith. But more than that, they were businessmen and family men who modeled their faith at home, way before they paid the ultimate price of martyrdom.

When we think of the Massabki Brothers, and all those who have witnessed to Christ and paid the ultimate price, we think how faithful they must have been. But martyrdom is not only about those who have received their crown; it is also about us. What are we doing to deserve a similar crown? Are we also that "faithful witness," as was Jesus in the Book of Revelations, willing to die, and just as important, willing to live and witness to "Jesus Christ, and him crucified"?

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, calls upon us to be Christ's witnesses, just as he asked us in this Jubilee Year to be Christ's mercy. He often reminds us that the integrity of our lives, that is, the "consistency" or "coherence," as he likes to say, must include all that we say, do, and live, as well as the way we die, as consistent with our faith in Christ.

Just as mercy is consistent with the Gospel of Christ, so too our witness to him must be consistent with our personal lives. We cannot say we believe in Christ, and then live as though Christ matters little in how we spend time, money, or make choices.

In Greek the word "martyr" means nothing more than "witness." A martyr who dies for his/her faith is the same as the faithful witness who lives his/her faith. We are truly Christ's witnesses, as were the early martyrs, the Massabki Brothers of 1860, and the martyrs of today, when we live the grace to witness to Christ well. May we then receive the crown he wore. □



The three Massabki Brothers.

+ Bishop Gregory J. Mansour
Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn

Schedule of Bishop Elias Zaidan

July 2 - 3, 2016

Visit to St. John Maron Church, Orange, Calif.

July 4, 2016

With His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Cardinal Rai, Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon Cathedral, Los Angeles, Calif.

July 5 - 10, 2016

NAM Convention, San Francisco, Calif.

July 17, 2016

Pastoral Visit to Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Simi Valley, Calif.

July 18 - 20, 2016

MYO Annual Conference, Latrobe, Penn.

July 31, 2016

60th Anniversary of Entrance into the Daughters of St. Paul of Sister Mary Augustine Nemer, St. Maron Church, Youngstown, Ohio

August 13 - 15, 2016

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

August 21, 2016

Subdiaconate Ordination of Seminarian Elie Yazbek, Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon Cathedral, Los Angeles, Calif.

September 3 - 4, 2016

Pastoral Visit to Our Lady of the Cedars Church, Houston, Tex. □

The Maronite Voice

4611 Sadler Road

Glen Allen, VA 23060

Phone: 804/270-7234

Fax: 804/273-9914

E-Mail: gmsebaali@aol.com

<http://www.stmaron.org>

<http://www.usamaronite.org>

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 \$25.00 per year. Advertising rates are available upon request.

Publishers

- Most Reverend Bishop Gregory John Mansour
- Most Reverend A. Elias Zaidan, M.L.M.

Editor Msgr. George M. Sebaali

Editing and proofreading

Mary Shaia

Printed in Richmond, Virginia.

Maronite Convention 2016

Our Lady of Lebanon Church

San Francisco, California

July 6 - 10, 2016

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



Eparchial Condolences

Capt. Ira E. "Gene" Livingston, USN, 77, the father of Brother John Baptist Livingston, who is a member of the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity in Petersham, Mass., passed away on June 6, 2016, after suffering complications from Alzheimer's Disease. Born on a farm in Farragut, Iowa, he was a son of the late Lora Edgar "Lew" and Daisy Dean (Lowry) Livingston.

In 1961, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy. Under Navy auspices, he earned Master's degrees from Harvard (International Relations) and the Naval War College (Strategic Studies). He completed more than twenty-five Cold-War patrols on seven U.S. nuclear (mainly ballistic-missile) submarines and one British fast-attack sub. He was Captain of the USS Nathanael Greene (SSBN 636).

Ashore, he was: Director of Officer Training, Sub School, Groton; Ocean Policy Branch Head, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Pentagon; Faculty Member, Naval War College; and Chief of Staff, COMSUBEASTLANT, NATO Maritime Command, Northwood, U.K.

Retiring from the Navy in 1991, he pursued a twenty-year career with Sonalysts, Inc. in Waterford, Conn. He developed training for the NRC and DOE, including projects in Russia and Ukraine. He often consulted at Los Alamos Laboratories and at many nuclear-energy sites.

He is survived by his wife of fifty-five years, Elaine; children, David Eugene of Petersham, Mass., Elizabeth Mary of Newington, Conn., and Nicole Marie (Curtis) and her husband, Alan, of Marietta, Ga.; sisters, Shirley Hall of Sidney, Iowa, and his twin Darene Gutschenritter of Imogene, Iowa; four grandchildren, Phillip, Benjamin, Sophia and Cecelia; and one great-granddaughter, Harmony Grace. He is predeceased by his brother Lora "L. E." Jr.

Memorials may be made to: Most Holy Trinity Monastery, Petersham, Mass. (maronitemonks.org); Fairview Nursing Home (fairviewct.org); or Alzheimer's Association (alz.org/ct).

Bishop Gregory Mansour along with the clergy and faithful of the Eparchy of Saint Maron extend their heartfelt sympathy and the promise of our prayers to Brother John and his family.

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

North Jackson, Ohio 51st Assumption Pilgrimage



August 13 - 15, 2016, marks the 51st 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 50th 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.

Saturday, August 13

7 p.m. Father Eric Orzech, Pastor of the Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus, Cleveland, Ohio, will celebrate a Roman Rite Mass. Candlelight procession and blessing with the Icon of Our Lady of Lebanon will follow.

Sunday, August 14

2 p.m. A Spiritual Conference by Louis Verrecchio "The Social Kingship of Christ."
4 p.m. A Spiritual Conference by Louis Verrecchio "Christian Marriage."

7 p.m. Archbishop William C. Skurla, Metropolitan Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, will celebrate a Byzantine Divine Liturgy. The Archeparchial Choir of Pittsburgh will serve the Liturgy.
8 p.m. Msgr. George Appleyard will lead a procession to the Tomb and prayers for the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Monday, August 15

Feast of the Assumption

10 a.m. Msgr. Anthony Spinosa, Rector, will celebrate *Tridentine Missa Cantata* High Mass. Schola Basilicorum and St. Cecilia Chorale Choirs will serve the Mass.
12 noon Maronite Divine Liturgy with Anointing of the Sick celebrated by Bishop A. Elias Zaidan, Bishop *Emeritus* Robert Shaheen and Bishop Gregory Mansour.
1 - 4 p.m. Rosary and Adoration in the Tower Chapel
4 p.m. A Spiritual Conference by Louis Verrecchio "Fatima and Guadalupe, Our Lady's Message for Our Time."
5:30 p.m. Lowellville Band Concert in the Cedars Hall
7 p.m. Maronite Pontifical Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Gregory Mansour, Bishop Elias Zaidan, Bishop *Emeritus* Robert Shaheen and Bishop Massoud Massoud. 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. □

the Deadline is... **Deadline** for the next month issue of *The Maronite Voice* is August 25, 2016.

The Maronite Voice is the official newsletter of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon and of the Eparchy of Saint Maron.

Send all changes of address, news, pictures and personal correspondence to:

The Maronite Voice

4611 Sadler Road

Glen Allen, Virginia 23060

Phone: (804) 270-7234; Fax: (804) 273-9914;

Email: Gmsebaali@aol.com

Digital pictures must be in "JPG" format and in high resolution (300dpi). *The Maronite Voice* is also available online, in PDF format, at www.stmaron.org. □

THE ORDER OF SAINT SHARBEL



Perpetual Members

★ **Veronica Pallos**

*Saint Joseph Maronite Church,
Atlanta, Ga.*

★ **Fr. Alex Harb**

*St. Maron Maronite Church,
Cleveland, Ohio*

Annual Members

★ **Gregory Butrus**

*St. Elias Maronite Church,
Birmingham, Ala.*

★ **Samir and Jeannie Farah**

*St. Maron Maronite Church,
Cleveland, Ohio*

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, 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

Eparchy of Saint Maron *Ordination to Priesthood*



Bishop Gregory Mansour ordains Deacon Joseph Abi Saad to the Priesthood. Deacon Aaron Sandbothe assisted the Bishop. (Photo by Elias Sader, copyright is for *BsousOnline*.)

On June 11, 2016, His Excellency Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, ordained Deacon Joseph Abi Saad to the Priesthood at his home parish of Notre Dame in *Bsous*, Lebanon. His Excellency Archbishop Paul Mattar, Archbishop of Beirut, joined a number of priests and religious for the ordination ceremony. Deacon Aaron Sandbothe of the Eparchy of Saint Maron assisted Bishop Mansour. Fr. Habib Elboueiz and the Parish's Festival Committee organized the ceremony.

A cocktail reception organized by the Parish of Notre Dame in *Bsous* took place at Our Lady of Sorrows Fraternity Hall.

On June 12, 2016, Fr. Joseph celebrated his first Liturgy of Thanksgiving at the same Church. □

Saint Louis, Missouri *Ordination of Two Subdeacons*

by Shelly Vitale

On Sunday, May 22, 2016, family, friends, clergy, laity and parishioners of Saint Raymond Maronite Cathedral, St. Louis, Mo., joined His Excellency Bishop A. Elias Zaidan, Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, for the Liturgy of Ordination to the Subdiaconate of Anthony Simon and David Wahby. Bishop *Emeritus* Robert J. Shaheen, Chorbishop Moussa Joseph, Rector of Saint Raymond Cathedral, Father Rodrigue Costantin, Director of the Office of Ministries for the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, concelebrated. Deacon Lou Peters, assisted and the Knights of Saint Gregory the Great served as Honor Guard. Reverend Robert-Bohdan S. Piorkowski, Pastor of Saint Mary's Greek Catholic Church, and Father Don Anstoetter from Kenrick Seminary attended the ceremony. Both Subdeacons' family members played important roles during the Ordination, including the readings, the Intercessions and the presentation of the offerings. Bishop A. Elias Zaidan gave an inspirational homily regarding these two



Bishop Elias Zaidan, Celebrant, with Bishop *Emeritus* and Chorbishop Moussa Joseph.

outstanding men. The Bishop mentioned that Anthony and David had been an integral part of Saint Raymond since their childhood; they received their First Communion from Bishop Shaheen and served as altar boys. They have continued to express their love and dedication for the Maronite Church and have raised their families in accordance with their devout beliefs. Anthony is following in his father George's footsteps; George has devotedly served as subdeacon for many years.

After the Liturgy, a luncheon reception was served at the Cedars Hall. The Subdeacons thanked everyone for their kind wishes and for sharing in their special day. The Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon and the Saint Raymond Family congratulate Anthony and David and wish them blessings on their spiritual journey. □

Tequesta, Florida *Subdeacon's Ordination*

Mary, Mother of the Light Mission (MMOL) in Tequesta [Palm Beach], Fla., celebrated the ordination of Elias Azzi to the Minor Orders of Cantor, Lector, and Subdeacon. Chorbishop Michael Thomas of Heart of Jesus Mission in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., conferred the Orders upon Elias on May 22, 2016, to a full church.

Chorbishop Michael was assisted by Fr. Jack Morrison, Director of the Office of Ministries as well as Administrator of MMOL. Fr. Leonard Basinow, former Administrator of MMOL, and local area clergy Fr. Pat Daugherty from Our Lady of Florida Retreat Center and Fr. John McGoldrick from St. Christopher's Church concelebrated. Deacon John Jarvis from Heart of Jesus Mission, Subdeacon Dennis from MMOL, and five altar boys served. The choir of MMOL, directed by Laurice Elhilow, with George Nehme at the keyboard, led the congregation in the liturgical hymns. Following the Liturgy, a catered reception of Lebanese food was held in the church hall.

Fr. Jack was delightfully amazed as the congregation sang Happy Birthday to him during the reception. The Azzi family had prepared beforehand to include a surprise celebration of Fr. Jack's birthday in this happy



Chorbishop Thomas with Fr. Jack Morrison and Subdeacon Azzi.

commemoration, and provided a birthday cake for the occasion. Fr. Jack's sisters had flown in from Connecticut for their brother's birthday, and were present at the ordination and reception.

When one of the parishioners mentioned to Fr. Jack that she would take the opportunity to ask his siblings more about him, she was told that "the sisters have taken a vow of silence!" □

Belleville, Illinois *Deacons and Subdeacons Retreat*

by Subdeacon Anthony Simon

Building on the success of the first annual retreat, His Excellency Bishop A. Elias Zaidan and the Office of Ministries for the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon headed by Fr. Rodrigue Constantin, held its second deacons and subdeacons' retreat at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Ill., on May 19 - 22, 2016. Twenty deacons and subdeacons along with spouses attended the retreat which opened on Thursday with *Ramsho* led by Chorbishop Moussa Joseph at St. Raymond Cathedral in St. Louis, Mo. This was followed by a Lebanese dinner hosted by Chorbishop Moussa and the parish at the Cedars Hall.

On Friday, the first presentation was given by Father Rodrigue on Pope John Paul II's "Theology of the Body," which is a series of talks given by the Pope during his Wednesday general audiences from 1979 to 1984. Fr. Rodrigue provided a straightforward overview of several key aspects of this theology, which is foundational to the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage and sexuality.



Visit of the Relics of Saint Sharbel **Boston, Massachusetts**



by Jerald Owen

After lunch and private time for prayer and reflection, His Excellency Bishop Elias Zaidan met with the deacons and subdeacons and provided an overview of the latest developments in the Eparchy. Bishop Zaidan also shared insights with the group and exhorted the attendees to strengthen their parishes by also providing time for prayer and self-study and time for their wives and families. Bishop Zaidan's talk focused on the three important dimensions of ministry: personal, familial and parochial. He emphasized the importance, for successful relationships and ministry, of words such as "May I," "I'm Sorry," and "Thank you." The meeting also provided time for the attendees to ask questions as well as share their blessings and challenges with Bishop Zaidan and each other. The first day was completed with the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Zaidan. After dinner, the attendees participated in a social hour to connect and bond with one another while feasting on delicacies provided by Subdeacons Tony Boukhalil and David Wahby.

On Saturday, after *Safro*, Fr. Rodrigue gave a second lecture on the Maronite Identity focusing on the five dimensions of the Maronite Church as discussed in the First text of *Bkerke's* Maronite Patriarchal Synod. These are the essential elements that constitute the Maronite identity and particularity within the universal Church. The Maronite Church is first an Antiochene, Syriac Church with a special liturgical heritage; second, she is a Chalcedonian Church; third, a Patriarchal Church with ascetic and monastic traits; fourth, a Church in full union with the Apostolic Roman See; and, fifth, a Church incarnated in her Lebanese and Eastern environment and the countries of expansion.

Saturday afternoon Deacon Lou Peters gave a lecture on "Love and Mercy" in light of the declaration of the Year of Mercy by Pope Francis. In his talk, Deacon Lou explained the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and the group identified and shared different ways that our parishes can practice such works. The day was completed with the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Fr. Rodrigue with a homily by Deacon George Geagea.

The retreat was very successful and all present hoped that more deacons, subdeacons and their wives would be able to attend this annual event. It concluded with the Divine Liturgy at St. Raymond Cathedral in St. Louis, and the subdiaconate ordinations of David Wahby and Anthony Simon, who were surrounded and greeted by their fellow subdeacons and brother deacons, as well as by members of their parish. What a blessing to end the retreat with such a joyful celebration! ☐

Saint Sharbel's Relics that have been touring the United States arrived at the oldest Maronite Church in the U.S., Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church in Boston, Mass., on Saturday, April 16, 2016, and were greeted by a full two-day schedule of Divine Liturgies, prayer services, devotions and two all-night vigils of quiet meditation.

Liturgies were celebrated in the Roman, Melkite, and Maronite rites and prayer services held according to a Syrian Orthodox service. The large number of people who attended the services, Maronite and non Maronite, is a testament to the love and esteem in which this great Saint is held.

Participating in this beautiful event were Knights of Columbus, the Order of Saint Sharbel, the St. Maron Society, the Daughters of Our Lady and the Knights of the Virgin Mary, as well as the scores of parishioners who kept order and security. They composed the honor guards, led in the recitations of the rosary and readings and served as hosts and hostesses and welcoming committee.

The overall planning, coordinating and ultimate success of this holy and memorable weekend was due to Msgr. Georges Y. El-Khalli, Pastor. The parish family of Our Lady of the Cedars of Lebanon Church wishes to acknowledge with gratitude his guiding hand. ☐

Fall River, Massachusetts

by Subdeacon Brian M. Dunn

On Friday - Saturday April 22 - 23, 2016, the Relics of Saint Sharbel were present at the Parish of St. Anthony of the Desert Church in Fall River, Mass. The Relics traveled throughout the United States celebrating the 50th Anniversary of this miraculous Saint's Beatification. The Church was open to the public both of these days, with various types of prayer services, praying the Rosary, *Safro*, *Ramsho* and the Divine Liturgy. On Friday evening Chorbishop Joseph F. Kaddo, Pastor, celebrated the Divine Liturgy, Father James Doran concelebrated. Priests and Deacons from the Diocese of Fall River along with the



Chorbishop Joseph F. Kaddo with the Relics of Saint Sharbel.



(From left) Fr. Claude W. Franklin, Jr., Fr. Richard Salley, Subdeacon Andrew Demko, and Deacon Richard Stone.

Parish's Deacons Andre Nasser and Donald Massoud and Subdeacon Brian Dunn were in attendance.

In the year 1954, Pope Pius XII signed a decree accepting the request to canonize the Hermit Sharbel Makhlof. On December 5, 1965, Pope Paul VI with the Maronite Patriarch Anthony Peter Khoreche celebrated the ceremony of beatification for Fr. Sharbel at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Synod.

In the year 1975 Pope Paul VI declared a miracle in order to canonize Fr. Sharbel as a Saint. The Ceremony of canonization was celebrated at the Vatican on October 9, 1977. Many of the parishioners of St. Anthony of the Desert Church attended Saint Sharbel's canonization.

The eparchial Order of Saint Sharbel was started at St. Anthony of the Desert Church in Fall River, to help support the Maronite seminarians and the retired priests. □

New Castle, Pennsylvania

On the weekend of May 14 -15, 2016, St. John the Baptist Maronite Church in New Castle, Penn., welcomed the Relics of St. Sharbel. The Parish felt blessed to have had the opportunity to not only have the relics present in the Parish, which is one of the smaller ones, but also to have been able to host them on a weekend. But it wasn't just any weekend, but the Feast of Pentecost! The Holy Spirit's presence could certainly be felt and many

commented how they felt such a sense of peace and calm in the Church.

On Saturday morning the Relics were received at the entrance of the Church and processed to the place prepared for them in the Sanctuary. Following the *Safro* (Morning Prayer), the greater community of New Castle and the surrounding environs had the opportunity to make a visit and pray in silence before the Relics, including one family from Akron, Ohio. Interspersed between the visitation times were various prayer services: *Safro* and *Ramsho*, Rosary and the Chaplet of St. Sharbel. Each of the services was followed by the *Ziyyah* [benediction] to St. Sharbel with the Blessing and Veneration of the Relics.

Many people from the Catholic and Orthodox Churches in the surrounding areas came to pray, asking St. Sharbel's intercession, including a Catholic Hermitess and four Orthodox Nuns from Holy Transfiguration Monastery, an Orthodox Convent in nearby Ellwood, Penn. The Very Reverend Richard Salley from St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church, a friend to St. John's Parish and people for many years, was also present. □

Houston, Texas Graduates Honored

by Nabil Joubran

On Sunday, May 22, 2016, Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church, Houston, Tex., honored all parish graduating seniors with a Liturgy and a small reception in the Cedar Hall. After the homily, the parish Youth Coordinator, Mrs. Melanie Tannous, called the names of thirteen High School graduating seniors, announcing their college destinations, and six college graduates, naming their degrees and future plans. Father George BouChaaya, Parochial Vicar, imparted a special blessing on the graduates, who also prayed together thanking God for their success and praying for a blessed future.

After the Liturgy, the entire parish was invited to a reception honoring the following nineteen graduates: From area high schools: Tracy Abi Najem, Joseph Asper, Anthony Charbel Boutros, Timothy Carrum, Lea Chemaly, George (gio) Elmessan, Wahib Fady, Celine Gebara, Eddie George,

Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts *Parish Award*



Msgr. Georges ElKhalli with Mrs. Frosina Zarthar, Award recipient.

On Sunday, June 12, 2016, the parish family of Our Lady of the Cedars of Lebanon, Jamaica Plain [Boston], Mass., gathered for the Annual Awards Breakfast. Each year, graduating high school students apply for a one thousand dollar scholarship award based on merit and academic achievement. The scholarships are funded by the Joseph & Alice Resha Memorial Fund. This year's recipients were Joseph Bukuras, Matthew Farah, Christina Norton, and Victoria Graham. Our Lady of the Cedars Parish would like its youths to remember that their spiritual home has been and will always be there for them. We are proud of our scholars and hope they will excel in their college experience and come back to visit us.

At the same time, Msgr. Georges El-Khalli, Pastor, uses this opportunity to recognize the "Man or Woman of the Year." Every parish has those tireless, sometimes invisible, workers who dedicate countless hours helping the Church. Our Lady of the Cedars Church is blessed with many such individuals. It is always difficult to select one, so this year, as last year, two people were given awards: Mrs. Therese Abouzeid, who unfortunately was not able to attend because she is in Lebanon visiting with her family, and Ms. Frosina Zarthar, familiar voice you hear, pleasantly greeting you when you call the Church office. She was certainly surprised and overjoyed to have her beautiful family there to congratulate her! □

Summer Break

The Maronite Voice wishes its readers an enjoyable and God-filled summer. *The Maronite Voice* will not be published in August. It will appear again in September. The deadline for the September issue is August 25, 2016.



Anees Joubran, Gabrielle Joubran, Mariam Ramy, Clarice Zehri; and college graduates, Jonathan Abou Jaoude, Bernadette Anne Carrum, Maria El-Hallal, Larissa Farah, Marc Ghosn, and Kenneth Michael Nassar. Congratulations to all the graduates. □

Dallas, Texas *Youth Ministry*



by Mattye Lee Thompson

On Friday, June 3, 2016, fifty youth of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church, Dallas, Tex., attended an evening of lessons in etiquette given by Jack and Jenny White, including how to properly use their utensils and how to speak with a lady. The youth enjoyed a formal dinner, prepared by professional chef and parishioner Kathryn Coe. After dinner it was dance time, with dance lessons and an open dance segment. The Youth Ministry Team, Elizabeth Hawbaker and Mayan Corioso, chaperoned the event. It was well received by the parents, youth, and the guests. Requests to hold more such gatherings were numerous, and plans are underway for more socials for the Parish youth. Fr. Assaad ElBasha, Pastor, oversaw the planning of the event and enjoyed the evening with the children. □

Lawrence, Massachusetts *Children's Choir*



On Sunday, May 22, 2016, the Children's Choir of Saint Anthony Maronite Church in Lawrence, Mass., visited Our Lady of Fatima Shrine in Sudbury, Mass., where they participated in the Divine Liturgy. Words cannot describe the joy expressed by the children upon their return. They were smiling and jumping for joy as they waited to tell their parents about the wonderful time they had. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, one of the advisors approached the Shrine's Choir Director and asked if the children could sing a hymn for the Blessed Mary. The permission was granted and the children sang a Maronite hymn, "Mother of God...." The Celebrant thanked them and invited them to visit again. The entire day was filled with activities and happy moments for all.

St. Anthony Parish would like to thank Sr. Raghida Younes, Wissam Merheb and his wife, Gretta, for their time to accompany the children and taking responsibility for the entire day.

Daughters of Saint Anthony



On a beautiful sun-filled day, the *Daughters of Saint Anthony*, Lawrence, Mass., gathered together and enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at the Seaglass Restaurant in Salisbury, Mass. Everyone shared laughter and fun memories as they looked forward to many more adventures in the wonderful new Saint Anthony bus. □

Schedule of Bishop Gregory Mansour

July 4 - 11, 2016

Clergy Conference and NAM Convention, San Francisco, Calif

July 16 - 17, 2016

Visit to Our Lady of Victory Church, Carnegie (Pittsburgh) Penn.

July 18 - 20, 2016

MYO Retreat, Latrobe, Penn.

July 21 - 24, 2016

Family Wedding, Miami, Fla.

July 31, 2016

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

August 4 - 5, 2016

Catholic Relief Services Board of Directors Meeting, Baltimore, Md.

August 7, 2016

Visit to St. Anthony/St. George Church, Wilkes-Barre, Penn.

August 14, 2016

Visit to Blessed Theresa of Calcutta Maronite Mission, Darlington, Penn.

August 14 - 15, 2016

Feast of the Assumption, Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine, North Jackson, Ohio

August 21, 2016

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

August 26, 2016

Meeting with area Bishops to Discuss The Holy Father's *Joy of Love*, Princeton, N.J.

August 28, 2016

Visit to Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary, Washington, D.C.

September 1 - 8, 2016

Personal Silent Retreat, Gloucester, Mass. □

From the Book Shelf

The Miraculous Soil of Saint Rafqa, written and illustrated by Sister Lea Lahoud, tells the story of Saint Rafqa, "a little girl who loved Jesus so much that she asked Him to share his pains: "God, why are you distant from me? Why are you leaving me alone? Why have you spared me any disease? Have you forgotten me, after I adored you?"

The Miraculous Soil of Saint Rafqa makes a perfect First Communion gift or a gift to any young person who wants to learn more about Saint Rafqa. The book is available for \$10 plus \$3 shipping from Saint Maron Publications, 4611 Sadler Road, Glen Allen, Virginia 23060 or gmsebaali@aol.com. Saint Maron Publications accepts Visa or Master Card. □

Four Lessons on Divine Mercy from the Woman at the Well

by
Bishop Robert Barron

I had the enormous privilege last week of addressing English-speaking priests from around the world who had gathered in Rome for a special Jubilee celebration of the Year of Mercy. I met Fathers from the States, Canada, Australia, Latvia, Ghana, Cameroon, Ireland, Nigeria, and many other countries. During the communion at the Mass which followed my talk, I saw hundreds of priests in their albs coming to the altar to receive the Lord, and I thought of the passage from the book of Revelation concerning the white-robed army gathered around the throne of the Lamb.

As a basis for my presentation, I used the wonderful story from the fourth chapter of John's Gospel concerning Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well. From this encounter, I derived four principles regarding the divine mercy. First, I argued, God's mercy is relentless. Customarily, pious Jews of the first century would have assiduously avoided Samaria, a nation, in their minds, of apostates and half-breeds. Yet Jesus, journeying from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north, moves right through Samaria. Moreover, he speaks to a woman in public (something that men simply didn't do) and he consorts with someone known to be a sinner. In all of this, Jesus embodies the love of God, which crosses barriers, mocks taboos, and overcomes all of the boundaries that we set for it. Thomas Merton spoke of the Promethean problem in religion, by which he meant the stubborn assumption that God is a distant rival, jealous and protective of his prerogatives. In point of fact, the true God is filled with *hesed* (tender mercy) and delights in lifting up human beings: "The glory of God is a human being fully alive."

And this conduces neatly to my second point, namely, that the divine mercy is divinizing. At times, we have the impression that God's mercy serves a reparative or healing purpose alone, that it solely binds up the wounds of our sin and suffering. That God's love heals is obviously true, but this tells but part of the story. Jesus asks the woman at the well for a drink, thereby inviting her to generosity. When she balks, citing the customary taboos, Jesus says, "If you knew who was asking you for a drink, you would have asked him, and he would give you living water." This, I told the priests in Rome, is a pithy expression of the central principle of spiritual physics, what St. John Paul II called "the law of the gift." As St. Augustine knew, we are all wired for God, hungry for absolute reality. But God, as St. John knew, is love. Therefore, to be filled with God is to be filled with love, which is to say, self-emptying. The moment we receive something of the divine grace, we should make of it a gift and then we will receive more of the divine grace. In a word, our being will increase in the measure that we give it away. This is the "water welling up to eternal life" that Jesus speaks of. God wants not merely to bind up our wounds; he wants to marry us, to make us "partakers of the divine nature."

The third principle I identified is that the divine mercy is demanding. I told the Fathers gathered in Rome that we tend to understand the proclamation of the divine mercy according

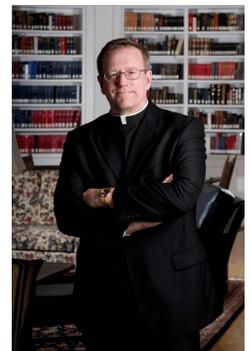
to a zero-sum logic, whereby the more we say about mercy, the less we should say about moral demand, and vice versa. But this is repugnant to the peculiar both/and logic of the Christian gospel. As Chesterton saw so clearly, the Church loves "red and white and has always had a healthy hatred of pink!" It likes both colors strongly expressed side by side, and it has an abhorrence of compromises and half-way measures. Thus, you can't overstate the power of the divine mercy, and you can't overstate the demand that it makes upon us. Jesus tells the woman that she comes daily to the well and gets thirsty again, but that he wants to give her the water that will permanently quench her thirst. St. Augustine accordingly saw the well as expressive of concupiscent or errant desire, the manner in which we seek to satisfy the deepest hunger of the heart with creaturely goods, with wealth and power, pleasure and honor. But such a strategy leads only to frustration and addiction and hence must be challenged. Indeed, Jesus shows that the woman exhibits this obsessive, addictive quality of desire in regard to her relationships: when she says that she has no husband, Jesus bluntly states, "Yes, you've had five, and the one you have now is not your husband." This is not the voice of a wishy-washy relativist, an anything-goes peddler of pseudo-mercy and cheap grace. Rather, it is the commanding voice of one who knows that extreme mercy awakens extreme demand.

Finally, the divine mercy, I told the priests, is a summons to mission. As soon as she realizes who Jesus is and what he means, the woman puts down the water jar and goes into town to proclaim the Lord. The jar symbolizes the rhythm of concupiscent desire, her daily return to worldly goods in a vain attempt to assuage her spiritual hunger. How wonderful that, having met the source of living water, she is able to set aside her addictions and to become, herself, a vehicle of healing for others. The very best definition of evangelization that I've heard is this: one starving person telling another starving person where to find bread. We will be ineffective in our evangelizing work if we simply talk, however correctly, about Jesus in the abstract. Our words of proclamation will catch fire precisely in the measure that we have been liberated and transformed by Christ.

Could I ask all who read these words to pray for the priests who gathered in Rome this past week? Beg the Lord that we might all become bearers of the divine mercy. □

About the Author

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



The Heart of a Maronite Servants' Vocation

by
Sister Marla Marie

We have been blessed with a fruitful mission in this Jubilee Year of Mercy. Pope Francis has said, "Let us not forget the beauty of walking with the people... I encourage you to go out to meet others, to open doors and reach out to families, the sick, young people, the elderly, there where they live, looking for them, being at their side, supporting them, in order to celebrate the liturgy of life with them." Our Maronite Servants' vocation to radiate the light of Christ by our consecrated life of service to our people is a privilege of walking with our brothers and sisters.

We have been "walking with the people" by our mission with youth, young adults, seniors, families, the poor in service to the works of mercy. We give God thanks for the blessing this past spring to have served at Our Lady of Lebanon in Norman, Oklahoma, Our Lady Star of the East in Pleasantville, N.J., St. Theresa Church in Brockton Mass., Our Lady of Purgatory in New Bedford, Mass, Our Lady of the Cedars in Boston, Mass., St. Anthony of the Desert in Fall River, Mass. In addition, we had several groups come for retreat and prayer at our convent in Dartmouth, Mass. The Sisters also had the blessing of visiting the sick, consoling the grieving, instructing children and adults at several area schools and parishes, serving the poor, reaching out to those from around the world who are seeking prayer and counsel via the phone or social media. Our daily life of contemplative prayer and sacrifices are offered for the people we walk with.



like Christ, servants of God and others."

Please pray that young women will discover God's call to serve our Church in a Maronite Servant vocation. Also, pray that these women will then say "yes" and take the first steps in trust and generosity to walk with God's people as spiritual mothers. We love our vocation of contemplation and the missions we serve. □





***If the Lord
is Calling
You,
The
Church
Needs
You!***

If you feel that you have a vocation to the Priesthood or religious life, please contact your Pastor or write to:

Fr. Gary George, Director
Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon
Office of Vocations
1021 South 10th Street
St. Louis, MO 63104

Or

Fr. Dominique Hanna, Director
Eparchy of Saint Maron
Office of Vocations
c/o St. Joseph Church
502 Seminole Ave. NE
Atlanta, GA 30307

Or

Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary
7164 Alaska Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20012

Our small band of sisters is often asked, "what do you do?" When we explain our vocation, some people understand and others just wonder why we don't open a school or a nursing home and get to work. I am taking the opportunity in this letter to tell you that we are at work in the "liturgy of life," happily and zealously. Our work for the most part is quiet and more hidden but most needed in the Church. We strive to imitate the hidden and quiet Mary who radiated Christ to the world. Pope Francis reminds us that our baptismal call is to be Christ to one another, "Christians are those who let God clothe them with goodness and mercy, with Christ, so as to become,

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

Lawrence, Massachusetts



Joey Aboukhalil, Rayan Alghoul, Christopher Azzi, Eli Bou-Chaaya, Carson Geha, Maria Geha, Wyatt Goldman, Stephen Laliberte, Michael Lalo, Steven Maroun, Michael Najjar, Christophe Phares, Louie Ramy, Elizabeth Saab, Charbel Sadek, Mariana Sadek, Joey Safi, Eden Sfeir, Tiah Tarabay, Valerie Tarabay, and Danielle Zaza received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Anthony Maronite Church in Lawrence, Mass. □

Glen Allen, Virginia



Cristiana Aboutanous, Jenna Chaoul, Molly Flammia, Alexandra George, Yasmeen Kakish, Alyssa Maust, Lily Nadder, Nicholas Nadder, George Oley, Thomas Shaia, Hailey Shibley, Stephen Shibley and Samantha Yago received their First Holy Communion on May 8, 2016, at St. Anthony Maronite Church, Glen Allen [Richmond], Va. □

Williamsville, New York



Joseph Khoury, Ethan Sobon, Angelina Damian, Adam Frank, Maya Atallah, Anthony Rittling, Lynn Ntanios, Francesca Olivieri, Lukas Ibrahim, Ruby Khoury, Joseph El Khoury, Naya Sabha, Jude Khoury, Angelina Zinaty and Joseph Moussa received their First Holy Eucharist on May 1, 2016, at St. John Maron Church, Williamsville, N.Y. □

Fall River, Massachusetts



Gabriel Boulos, Michael Sahady, Kate Pontes, and Daniel Howayek received their First Holy Communion on 1, 2016, at St. Anthony of the Desert Church in Fall River, Mass. Taylor Khoury (first row on the left) received the Sacrament of Chrismation (Confirmation). □

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

West Covina, California



Elie Abdul Karim, Joelle Assaf, Shawn Borja, Michael Boueiz, Matthew Francis, Savannah Francis, Michael Khoury, Raffka Korbrosly, Kyle Angel Mahfoud, Sophia Maksoud, Daniel Nalbandian, Anthony Pinaula and George Rameh received their First Holy Communion on May 7, 2016, at St. Jude Maronite Church, West Covina, Calif. □

Cleveland, Ohio



Jacqueline Yaacoub, Anna Khouri, Tina Lahoud, Reghan Boulos, Gabby Koussa, Sandra Zaarob, Jessica Marie Nader, Nikolas Richards, Mason Lahood, Anthony Lahood, Johnny Habr, Jason Badran, Jacob Merheb, Julian Alhayek, Charbel Boutrous, and Tannous Lubus received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Maron Maronite Church, Cleveland, Ohio. □

Youngstown, Ohio



Sami Aboujoude, Brayden D'Angelo, Joseph Beshara, Anna Choufani, Emma Choufani, Cheyenne Ishac, Jillian Palusak, Daniel Seeman, Alexander Simon, Justin Sudetic, and John Vantell received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Maron Maronite Church, Youngstown, Ohio. □

Dallas, Texas



Kevin Wood, Chidozie Ugochukwu, Dylan Morris, Everado Chihuahua, Allyson Bigger, Stephania Chaho, Maya Richa, Zelest Herrera, Natallia Herrera, Malika Elakattu, Dominic Bawi Thuan, Helena Ngun Cin Tial, Henry Tuan Cung Ceu, Jacob That Cung Sang, Peter Van Hung, Rita Hlawn Cer, Tha Hlei Thang, Cecilia Khua Tin Than, Than Than and Hlu Mana received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at Our Lady of Lebanon, Dallas, Tex. □



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

Jacksonville, Florida



Joy Zouein, Joseph Naddaf, Anabella Naddaf, George Bahri, Enzo Barakat, Sophie Akel, and Cassandra Abboud received their First Holy Communion on May 15, 2016, at Saint Maron Church in Jacksonville, Fla. □

New Castle, Pennsylvania



Dominic Miller, Gregory Measel, Travyn Perretti, Samuel Hanna, and Philip Jimm received their First Holy Communion on April 24, 2016, at St. John the Baptist Maronite Church, New Castle, Penn. □

Orlando, Florida



Melina Abi-Aoun, Megan Bassil, Joseph Boutros, Anthony Chater, Isabel Citterio, Emily Creaser, Matthew Domingues, Micah Fernandez, Preston Fernandez, Sophia Gegg, Valentina Genovese, Christopher Girem, Daniel Huang, Garaldgy Joseph, Alanis Martins, Nicholas Reece, Sophia Rojas, Michelle Santos, Joseph Sebaaly, Martha Sebaaly, Serina Sebaaly, Amanda Soufia, Giulia Soufia, Damien Sharma, and Jason Wanna received their First Holy Communion on April 30, 2016, at St. Jude Maronite Church, Orlando, Fla. □

Springfield, Massachusetts



Andrew Hannoush, Christopher Hannoush, Kayla Abiassaf, and Brianna Sayegh received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Anthony Maronite Church in Springfield, Mass. □



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

San Diego, California



Christine Chehadeh, Giovanni George, Leya Haddad, Ehmma Isaacs, Raneem Kassar, Yara Kassar, Laith Polus, Anthony Salameh, Rose Sulaiman, Christian Toma, Andrew Tomeh, and Einana Zebari received their First Holy Communion on May 7, 2016, at St. Ephrem Maronite Church, San Diego, Calif. □

Orange, California



Charbel Aboumerhi, Cody Al Raheb, Elio Al Raheb, Mabelle Alam, Michael Aoun, Alexander Assaad, Andrew Assaad, George Balta, Pierre Balta, Devin Batarseh, Ryan Batarseh, Charbel Dagher, Maron Dagher, Anthony Dakwar, Heidy Daoud, Rafael Daoud, Stephen Daoud, Nour El Helou, Chloe Elkhoeiry, Anthony ElKhoury, Anastasia ElKhoury, Julien Hage, Giovanni Klaib, Jennifer Maalouf, Samantha Rock, Andrew Saliba, Jenna Saliba, and Sara Saliba received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. John Maron Church, Orange, Calif.

Houston, Texas



Jacob Abboud, Michael Abboud, Elena Abi Aad, Anthony Atallah, Ralph Basbous, Megan Choufani, Isabella Dally, Anthony Dib, Daniel Dow, Emma Elkareh, Andrea Fakhoury, Mark Ghoussoub, Natalia Gonzalez-Chelala, Alexander Guajardo, Gabriel Kashou, Marian Keklikian-Rich, Celine Mekha, Chloe Moubarak, Mark Naddaf, Paul Naddaf, Nicole Nemry, George Shami, Joseph Stephan, Sarah Tahtouh, and Lianne Wakim received their First Holy Communion on May 14, 2016, at Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church, Houston, Tex. □

Livonia, Michigan



Chadi Chamoun, Antonio Abouaziz, John Paul Yacoub, Randel Moussi, Marylynn Korkmaz, Angelina Lebbos, Aya Haddad, and Dayla Chamoun received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Rafka Maronite Church, Livonia, Mich. □



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

Waterville, Maine



Leslie Page made his first Holy Communion with his daughter Helena on May 1, 2016, at St. Joseph Maronite Church, Waterville, Me. Leslie was baptized the day before into the Maronite Catholic faith. □

Raleigh, North Carolina



Raphael Mouawad, HopeMary Najm, Christina Najm, and Dany Najm received their First Holy Communion on May 15, 2016, at St. Sharbel Maronite Mission, Raleigh, N.C. □

Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Matthew Joseph and Faith Freshour received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at Heart of Jesus Maronite Mission, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. □

Watervliet, New York



Joelle Hannoush received her First Holy Communion on May 22, 2016, at St. Ann Maronite Church, Watervliet [Troy], N.Y. □



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

Detroit, Michigan



Jean-Paul Shemmai and George Lada received their First Holy Communion on May 22, 2016, at St. Maron Church, Detroit, Mich. □

Portland, Oregon



Olivia West, Sophia West, Janah Farah, Ambrose Waldron, Megan Karam, Ella Rask, Jack Grissom, and Roukos (Ricky) Tannoury received their First Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Sharbel Maronite Church, Portland, Ore. Following the Liturgy the communicants crowned the Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. □

Scranton, Pennsylvania



William Nicolas Soma, Madeleine Margaret Mackarey, Saree Badi Albert, Jason Angelo Tayoun, and Peter Joseph Tayoun, Jr., received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. Ann Maronite Church, Scranton, Penn. □

Saint Louis, Missouri



Chris Simon, Georgia Slinkard, Jack Hessler, and Will Vasel received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at Saint Raymond Cathedral, St. Louis, Mo. □



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

Fayetteville, North Carolina



David Marchlewicz, Nadia Phelan, and Rebekah Perts received their First Holy Communion on May 8, 2016, at Archangel Michael Maronite Church, Fayetteville, N.C. □

Worcester, Massachusetts



Samantha Roberge, Melissa Jreij, Tiana Chahine, and Sofia Gabriel received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at Our Lady of Mercy Maronite Church, Worcester, Mass. □

San Antonio, Texas



Kevin E. Ghossoub, Tarah Kay Yunes, Edmondo Mefarey, Ty Alexander Reynolds Garcia, Khalil A. Malouff, Ava Nicole Alhaj, and Lorenzo Jamil Melo received their First Holy Communion on May 1, 2016, at St. George Maronite Church, San Antonio, Tex. □

Save the Date

Please save the date Friday, October 7, 2016, and join the Eparchy of Saint Maron for the 50th Anniversary of the Presence of A Maronite Bishop in the U.S.

Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Details to Follow

Patriarch Rai's Outreach Activities

(Pictured on the following page)

- Christian - Muslim Summit at the Maronite Patriarchate - Bkerke, March 31, 2015.
- Patriarch Rai visits the Christian Refugees in Irbil, Iraq, with Cardinal Scola and Patriarch Sako, June 19, 2015.
- Maronite Patriarch Bechara Rai celebrated Holy Thursday with a Mass at the Roumieh Prison in presence of the prisoners, March 24, 2016.
- Patriarch Rai receives the Catholic and Orthodox Patriarchs with other representatives of the Churches in the East, at the Maronite Patriarchate summer residence – Diman, on August 1, 2014. □

Patriarch Bechara Peter Cardinal Rai's Outreach Activities



Warren, Michigan *Confirmation*

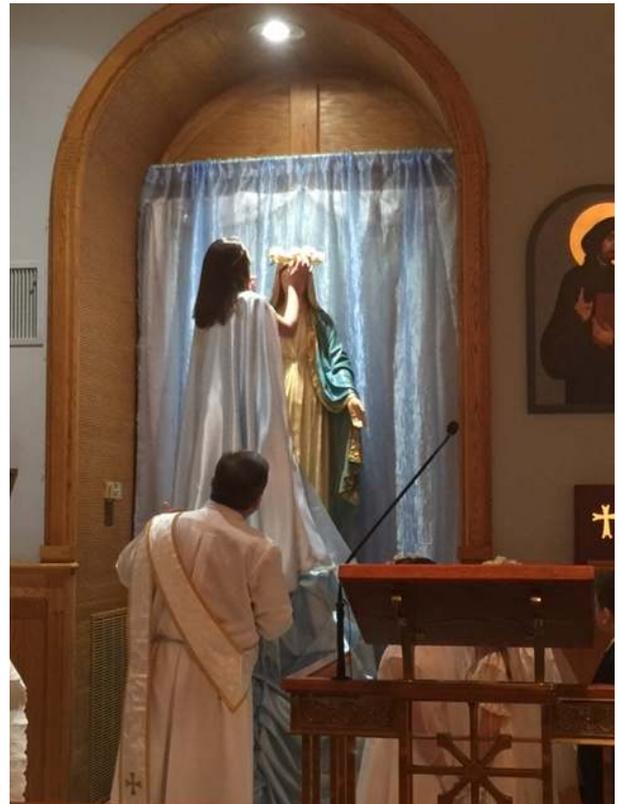


As St. Sharbel Maronite Church in Warren, Mich., celebrated the Feast of Divine Mercy on April 3, 2016, Ralph Mancini and Maria Elizabeth Nardecchia received the Sacrament of Confirmation. During the Liturgy, their sponsors accepted the responsibilities entrusted to them to support their spiritual direction as taught by their parents and the Maronite Catholic Church. Kristin Glasgow, a Music Minister for St. Sharbel Church, also received the Sacrament of Confirmation on this special Feast Day. Congratulations to Ralph, Maria Elizabeth and Kristin. May God continue to bless you on your spiritual journey with the outpouring of His Holy Spirit! ☐

Appeal from Caritas Lebanon

Christians in Lebanon are suffering! If you are able to relieve some of the suffering, please visit *Caritas Lebanon* at <http://www.caritas.org.lb>. Thank you for your consideration. ☐

Scranton, Pennsylvania *May Crowning*



On May 1, 2016, the Feast of Our Lady of Lebanon, Saint Ann Maronite Church in Scranton, Penn., celebrated May Crowning. May Queen Ava Marie Tayoun placed a crown of white flowers on the statue of the Virgin Mother to the singing of Marian hymns by the parish choir. The traditional event was coordinated by Tara Cawley Russo. Here, Ava is pictured crowning the statue of the Blessed Mother with the assistance of Subdeacon Said Douaihy. ☐