



The Maronite Voice

A Publication of the Maronite Eparchies in the USA

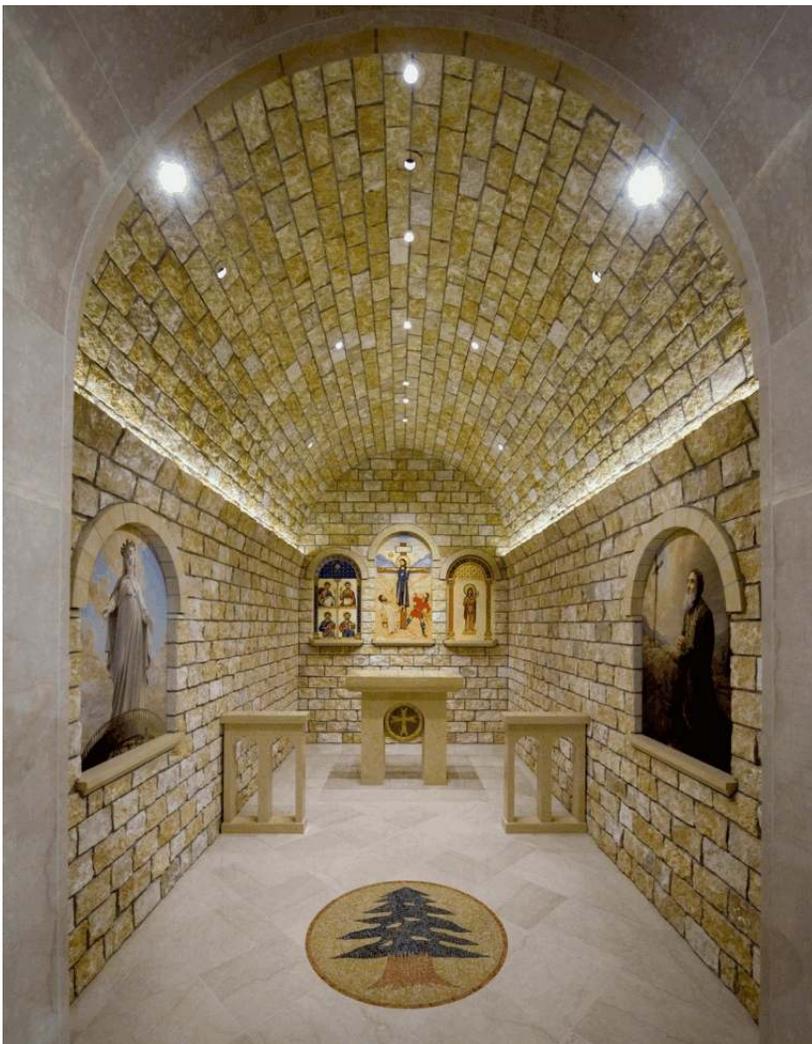


Volume VII

Issue No. IX

October 2011

The Maronite Church Needs and Deserves Your Help. Roll Up Your Sleeves as Did Your Predecessors in Faith! The Future Awaits Us



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A Cardinal, three Maronite bishops, more than forty priests, twenty deacons and subdeacons and their spouses, several members of the Order of Saint Sharbel and the National Apostolate of Maronites, members of the Maronite History Committee, choir and parishioners of Our Lady of Lebanon in Washington, our five seminarians, as well as several friends and dignitaries, gathered in Washington, D.C., September 23, 2011, to celebrate the dedication of the Maronite Chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Later that evening, another wonderful event took place celebrating the 50th anniversary of priesthood for Chorbishop Seely Beggiani and the 50th anniversary of our Maronite Seminary. The weekend also served as the annual gathering for the Order of Saint Sharbel and retreat for our deacons and subdeacons. These were grace-filled days filled with much gratitude and love.

In 1961, when the Seminary was opened, there were forty-five Maronite parishes in the United States, all under the jurisdiction of their local Latin bishops. We were only beginning in the United States to think of ourselves as one body in Christ. After many years of trying to raise funds and gather our parishes together, our efforts were starting to bear fruit. The Seminary was a joint effort of clergy and laity together. Priests would travel from city to city, sometimes by bus, to raise funds. Laity were working alongside the priests making this a real grass roots effort which was borne in the hearts of clergy and faithful alike who loved their Church.

The new Maronite Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

In 1962, Patriarch Paul Peter Meouchi came to dedicate the Seminary. Two years later, at the first convention of the National Association (later

Apostolate) of Maronites, the first graduate of the Seminary, our own Bishop Robert Shaheen, was ordained in the National Basilica, just a few steps away from the new Maronite Chapel! Two years later in 1966, Bishop Francis M. Zayek was assigned by the Holy Father to be our first bishop. The rest is history.

(Continues on page 20)

Schedule of Bishop Robert Shaheen

October 1- 2, 2011

100th Anniversary of Saint Maron Church, Detroit, Mich.

October 5 - 7, 2011

Meeting of the Maronite Bishops of the expansion, Heritage Institute, Saint Louis, Mo.

October 7, 2011

St. Raymond Cathedral, Solemn Divine Liturgy with Patriarch Bechara Rai followed by a grand banquet honoring the Patriarch at Cedars Hall, St Louis, Mo.

October 8, 2011

Visit to Saint Sharbel Church, Peoria, Illinois, with Patriarch Rai

October 9, 2011

Visit to Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Chicago, Illinois, with Patriarch Rai

October 10, 2011

Visit to Saint Maron Church, Cleveland, Ohio, with Patriarch Rai

October 11, 2011

Visit to Our Lady of the Cedars Church, Houston, Texas, with Patriarch Rai

October 12, 2011

Visit to Saint George Church, Saint Antonio, Texas, with Patriarch Rai

October 14 -16, 2011

Visit to Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon, Los Angeles, Calif., with Patriarch Rai

October 23, 2011

Annual Liturgy and dinner with Daughters of Saint Paul, St. Louis, Mo.

October 28 - 30, 2011

Visit to Saint Jude Church, Murray, Utah

November 5 - 6, 2011

Deacon Ordination, Chicago, Illinois.

November 13, 2011

St. Raymond Cathedral, St. Louis, Mo.

November 18, 2011

Feast of St. Raymond, Liturgy and Anointing of the Sick, St. Raymond Cathedral, St. Louis, Mo. □

The Maronite Voice

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Maronite Convention 2012

St. George Maronite Church

San Antonio, Texas

July 2 - 8, 2012

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

Eparchial Condolences

Sophie Theresa (Antoon) Faris (age 99), the grandmother of Chorbishop John Faris, Pastor of St. Louis Gonzaga Church in Utica, N.Y., died on Sunday, September 11, 2011, with her family at her side, after a brief stay at Mount Macrina Manor, Uniontown, Penn. She was born on November 8, 1911, in Richwood, W.V., to the late Joseph and Rose (Owen) Antoon.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, John Faris, Jr.; six brothers and sisters, Josephine Antoon, Edward Antoon, Louis Antoon, Theodore Antoon, Robert Antoon, and Amelia Jordan; three grandsons, Scott Michael Faris, Ronald Alan Faris, and Mark William Faris. Left to cherish her memory are five children, John Faris and wife, Goldie, of Plantation, Fla.; James J. Faris and wife, Raye, of Uniontown, Penn.; Ronald Faris and wife, Nancy, of State College, Penn.; Arleen Wilson and husband, Bob, of Uniontown, Penn.; and Richard Faris and wife, Valerie, of Uniontown, Penn.; twenty-one grandchildren; thirty great grandchildren; two sisters, Rose Marie Brower and Alice Lorraine Carbonara, both of Uniontown, Penn.; and a brother, Sam Antoon, of Butler, Penn.

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 Chorbishop Faris and his family. May the Lord God grant Sophie eternal rest in His Kingdom and consolation to her family and loved ones. □

West Palm Beach Death of Msgr. Ron Beshara

Monsignor Ronald Beshara, former Pastor of Mary, Mother of the Light Church in West Palm Beach, Florida, passed away on September 5, 2011. He was predeceased by his father, Nasry, and is survived by his mother, Imelda; his sister, Donna Marie Harrison; his brother, Paul Methot; and his nephews, Ben and Ronald Harrison and Luke and Peter Methot.



Monsignor Ron was born in Fall River, Massachusetts, on March 25, 1945. He attended Saint Mary's College Seminary in Saint Mary, Kentucky, and Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary in Washington, D.C. He earned a Licentiate in Theology from the Catholic University of America in 1971 and was ordained a priest that same year, on May 29, in Fall River.

After his ordination, he pursued graduate studies in Canon Law at the Catholic University of America, and in 1974 he earned his Licentiate in Canon Law from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy.

He was appointed as Secretary to the Eparchial Tribunal in 1974 and served as Pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Flint, Mich., from 1974 - 1978. He was the Chancellor of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn from 1978 - 1980, Vicar at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Los Angeles, Calif., from 1980 - 1981, and Pastor of Saint Anthony Church in Danbury, Conn., from 1981 - 1989. Subsequently, he founded Mary, Mother of the Light Mission and served as its Administrator until 2011. He served on various Commissions in the Eparchy. He also ministered in many capacities at health care facilities in the Palm Beach area since 1995.

Monsignor Ron was the author of several informational sources with regard to the Maronite Church, such as: *Mary, Ship of Treasures*; *Being Maronite Catholic*; and *Mary, Mother of the Light*. He was appointed Chaplain to His Holiness with the title of Monsignor in 1988.

The wake and *Ginnaz* for priests were held on Thursday, September 8, at Mary, Mother of the Light Church, Greenacres [West Palm Beach], Fla. His funeral was held on Friday, September 9, at Saint Juliana Catholic Church in West Palm Beach.

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 Msgr. Ron's family. May the Lord God grant his servant, Ron, eternal rest in His Kingdom and consolation to his family and loved ones. □

Brooklyn, New York Interfaith Memorial Service



Fr. James Root, Rector of Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, offers prayers at an interfaith memorial service on the Brooklyn Heights Promenade.

by *Salma Vahdat*

On Sunday, September 11, 2011, the tenth anniversary of the terror attack which devastated the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York, and the hearts and souls of all New Yorkers, the community of Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral in Brooklyn Heights participated in an interfaith memorial service on the Brooklyn Heights Promenade. It was particularly poignant to many of those attending since they had viewed the holocaust ten years ago, across the river, from this very same location.

Following the Divine Liturgy at Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, the parish processed to the Promenade where the Very Reverend James A. Root, Rector, contributed a prayer in the Maronite tradition to the memorial service. Representatives of the other houses of worship in Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill did likewise.

On that horrific day when it appeared that our hearts and minds were irretrievably broken, there surfaced a spirit of survival not seen on these shores in modern times. The motto, "*E PLURIBUS UNUM*" became the rallying point for all of us. In truth, "In Unity, Strength", served us well!

Like the one tree that survived the attack that day and was nurtured back to vigorous growth and replanted at the WTC site, so have New Yorkers rebounded! The pear tree, like us, has endured a terrorist attack, hard winters and recently the whipping winds of Hurricane Irene. Like the tree, we're here to stay! □

Food For Thought

Be submissive to good, unbending to evil,
gentle in generosity,
untiring in love, just in all things.

St. Columban



Maronite Patriarch Makes A Pastoral Visit to the U.S.

His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Peter Rai, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, will make his first pastoral visit to the Maronite Church in the U.S. from October 4 through October 24, 2011.



Schedule

Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon

Tuesday, October 4

Patriarch arrives in Saint Louis, Missouri

Wednesday, October 5 - Saturday, October 8

St. Raymond Cathedral, Saint Louis, Missouri

Saturday, October 8 - Sunday, October 9

St. Sharbel Church, Peoria, Illinois

Sunday, October 9 - Monday, October 10

Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Chicago, Illinois

Monday, October 10 - Tuesday, October 11

St. Maron Church, Cleveland, Ohio

Tuesday, October 11 - Wednesday, October 12

Our Lady of the Cedars Church, Houston, Texas

Thursday, October 13, 2011

St. George Church, San Antonio, Texas

Friday, October 14 - Sunday, October 16

Our Lady of Mount Lebanon Cathedral, Los Angeles, California

Eparchy of Saint Maron

Monday, October 17

St. George Maronite Church, Uniontown, Penn.,
6:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy and reception

Tuesday, October 18

St. Anthony of the Desert Church, Fall River, Mass.
4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Reception for Priests at the Rectory
6:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy and reception

Wednesday, October 19

12:00 p.m. Holy Trinity Maronite Monastery,
Petersham, Mass., Divine Liturgy,
lunch, and meeting with monks

Thursday, October 20

11:00 a.m. Manhattan - CNEWA Press Conference
and Lunch with an ecumenical
delegation

2:30 p.m. Reception at the Consulate General of
Lebanon in Manhattan
7:00 p.m. Dinner at Bishop's Residence for
Catholic Hierarchy

Friday, October 21

11:30 a.m. Meeting with Ban Ki Moon at the
United Nations followed by a Press
Conference
1:30 p.m. Lunch with Vatican Observer to the
U.N.
7:00 p.m. New York Eparchial Banquet -
Roosevelt Hotel

Saturday, October 22

6:00 p.m. Dinner at the Residence of Metropolitan
Phillip Saliba

Sunday, October 23

11:00 a.m. Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite
Cathedral in Brooklyn, N.Y., Liturgy
and Reception

Sunday evening or Monday departure for Lebanon.

Patriarch Rai was elected on Tuesday, March 15, 2011, as the 77th Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and All the East. He replaces Patriarch Nasrallah Peter Cardinal Sfeir, who had retired earlier this year at the age of 91 after twenty-five years as Patriarch.

The son of Youssef and Taminee Rai, he was born in *Hemlaya* (the town of St. Rafka) on February 25, 1940. He pursued his complementary and secondary studies at the Collège Notre Dame at *Jamhour*. He took his monastic vows with the *Mariamite* Order on August 31, 1962; was ordained a priest on September 3, 1967; and was consecrated Archbishop on July 12, 1986.

From 1986 to 1990 he served as a Patriarchal Vicar at *Bkerke*, and in 1990 he was appointed Archbishop of *Jbeil*. Patriarch Rai founded Notre Dame University in *Louaizé* and was its president from 1978 -1984. From 1982 to 1986 he presided over the Court of Appeal of the Maronite Tribunal. His Holiness Pope John Paul II named him as the Coordinator of the Synod for Lebanon (1990-1995). He chaired the Episcopal Commission for the Affairs of the Family (1997) and that of Communications since 2009.

Patriarch Rai holds a degree in philosophy and theology and a doctorate in canon and civil law from the University of Saint John Lateran (the Rota Tribunal in Rome). He taught Canon Law and theology at St. Joseph University in Beirut (USJ) and at Holy Spirit University in *Kaslik* (USEK) and at the Sagesse University.

Patriarch Bechara Rai is the first Maronite Patriarch to come from a religious order in more than 200 years. The last in date was Patriarch Toubia el-Khazen (1756-1766), who also was a monk of the *Mariamite* Order. □

Washington, D.C. *Dedication of Our Lady of Lebanon Chapel*



Bishop Gregory Mansour anoints the walls of Our Lady of Lebanon Chapel with the Sacred Chrism.

The new Maronite Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., was dedicated on Friday, September 23, 2011. The Most Reverend Gregory J. Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, presided over the ceremonies. Joining Bishop Mansour were Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington and Chairman of the Basilica's Board of Trustees, who was the homilist; Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services; Maronite Bishop Robert J. Shaheen, Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon; Bishop Stephen Hector Doueih, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn; Monsignor Walter R. Rossi, Rector of the Basilica; Mr. John Garvey, President of Catholic University; several priests and seminarians associated with the Shrine; and more than one hundred Maronite Catholics and other Catholic faithful who attended the momentous occasion.

"This is a beautiful day for the Maronites and for the



National Shrine," commented Bishop Mansour. "The Church breathing with both lungs."

Monsignor Rossi added, "With the dedication of the Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon, one of the most ancient Eastern Churches is now represented at the patronal Church of the United States. The Chapel visibly expresses the beauty of another distinct community in the Roman Catholic Church, the Maronite Church. Deep gratitude is extended to Bishop Gregory Mansour and the entire Maronite Community for their support of this project and most importantly for their devotion to Our Lady."

The Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon features a unique design, depicting a small Lebanese stone church. The Chapel was designed by the St. Jude Liturgical Arts Studio of Havertown, Pennsylvania.

The nation's only Maronite Seminary, Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary, which is located close to Catholic University of America in northwest Washington, D.C., celebrated its 50th Anniversary that evening, along with the 50th anniversary of the ordination to the priesthood of Seminary's Rector, Chorbishop Seely Beggiani. □

The Order of Saint Sharbel

The Order of Saint Sharbel provides much-needed financial support for Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary, for seminarians preparing to serve as priests in our Maronite Church in the United States and for our retired priests. Last year, members of the Order of Saint Sharbel in the Eparchy of Saint Maron provided \$49,000 in annual dues (\$500 donation per year) and donations. However, even when combined with the interest earned from the endowment created by Permanent Memberships in the Order (\$5,000 one time donation), both sources of income together were not nearly enough to support the Seminary.

The total cost of operating Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary and preparing Maronite seminarians for both Maronite eparchies in America was well over \$200,000 for last year alone.

The ability to keep Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary open to prepare Maronite seminarians for both Maronite eparchies in the United States depends on the generosity of good people like you. Likewise, our retired priests deserve every respect we can give them. Everyone's help is needed to keep the Maronite Church in the United States alive and well. To know more about the Order of Sharbel please contact your local pastor or the Chancery office.

Thank you for supporting our Maronite seminarians, Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary, and our retired priests!



Washington, D.C.

A Weekend Full of Celebrations



Chorbishop Seely Beggiani delivers the homily at his 50th anniversary Liturgy on September 23, 2011.

by Deacon John Jarvis

On Friday, September 23, 2011, the heavy rain could not dampen the joy in Washington, D.C., where dual but co-joined celebrations took place honoring the 50th anniversary of Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary and the 50th anniversary of Chorbishop Seely Beggiani's ordination as a priest. It was a wonderful day that began with the dedication of the new Our Lady of Lebanon Chapel in the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The dedication was presided over by Bishop Gregory Mansour along with Bishop Robert Shaheen. Chorbishop Beggiani read the Gospel and Cardinal Donald Wuerl of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., gave the homily.

After lunch at the Seminary, Chorbishop Beggiani presented a lecture titled, "Historical Perspective on the Seminary." Chorbishop Beggiani, in his introductory remarks, pointed with pride to the fact that the Seminary had produced seventy priests and two bishops. It was fitting that both current United States bishops are graduates. It was especially fitting that Bishop Robert Shaheen, the first ordination from the Seminary, was present. The lecture was very unique. After opening remarks, Chorbishop Beggiani had chosen a graduate from each decade of the Seminary's existence to speak about their experiences. Thus, you had the following presentations: Chorbishop Joseph Kaddo reading Msgr. Richard Saad's reflection on the 1960s (Msgr. Saad had to preside at a funeral), Rev. Anthony J. Salim, the 1970s, Rev. Peter Karam, the 1980s, Rev. Rololph Wakim, the 1990s, and Rev. Dominique Hanna, the Third Millennium. All the presentations included information decade by decade of the political and social upheavals of the last 50 years. The breakdown in sexual morality, the wars from Vietnam to Iraq, the political assassinations, the explosions in new technology, the impact of Pope John Paul II, and the Maronite Synod from 2003-2006. They also spoke about life in the Seminary, including the joy, disappointment, the bonding as brothers, and how the stability of the Seminary helped them each day. They also spoke of how the guidance of Chorbishop Beggiani allowed them to stay strong in their vocations. As Fr.

Dominique Hannah stated, "... Chorbishop Beggiani has cared for and nurtured every single vocation that entered the door of the institution."

The lecture was followed by the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Gregory Mansour. Bishop Robert Shaheen and Bishop Stephen Hector Doueih and Maronite clergy concelebrated. Chorbishop Beggiani was the homilist. Chorbishop Beggiani spoke movingly of what it has meant to be a priest for the last 50 years. He recognized that a priest is a man with all the human vulnerabilities and limitations. Yet, by God's Will, he is able to stand in the sanctuary and petition God on behalf of his people. As Bishop Gregory remarked, Chorbishop's homily was worth the entire weekend.

The day closed with a dinner honoring Chorbishop Beggiani attended by over 250 people. It was here that Chorbishop Beggiani spoke of his life. He talked of the importance of his family and of a young Maronite priest who came to America and so impressed his parents, they named their son [Chorbishop Seely Beggiani] in his honor. He thus knew he had a vocation from a young age. His studies followed in both the United States and in Lebanon. He wanted to teach and did that at St. John's College in Cleveland and at John Carroll University. He became rector of the Seminary in 1967, taking over from the first rector, Rev. Elias El-Hayek, and also started as a professor at Catholic University of America. He has written many spiritual and theological books. He was honored by President Gemayel of Lebanon in 1988 with the National Order of the Cedar. However, his 50th was truly a day of deserved recognition for his priesthood and the Seminary he helped create and guide.

The following morning many returned to the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception to attend the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Robert Shaheen in the Crypt Church. This was a very symbolic liturgy since it was almost fifty years ago that Bishop Shaheen was ordained as a priest, the first ordination of the Seminary and celebrated his first Liturgy of Thanksgiving in that very chapel. With Chorbishop Beggiani reading the Gospel, it seemed the two were truly tied together – the fruits of the Seminary with the long serving rector. While not officially rector until 1967, Chorbishop Beggiani had served the Seminary in some capacity from its founding. The Seminary will continue and more will be ordained to the priesthood. This 50th anniversary will be remembered by all who attended. □

Deacons and Subdeacons Retreat

This year's retreat for deacons and subdeacons and their wives was very special. It coincided with several important events. Many deacon and subdeacons arrived on Friday so they could attend and share in the dedication of the new Our Lady of Lebanon Chapel in the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The dedication was followed by the events and dinner surrounding Chorbishop Beggiani's 50th anniversary as a priest and the 50th anniversary of the Seminary. On Saturday a beautiful Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving was celebrated by Bishop Robert Shaheen in the Crypt Church of the Basilica in honor of his ordination there almost fifty years ago. It was a wonderful way to begin the retreat.



Bishop Mansour presides at the Deacons and Subdeacons retreat on September 24, 2011.

After lunch on Saturday, the four deacons and eleven subdeacons and four candidates, along with their wives attending, met with Bishop Gregory Mansour and Fr. Jack Morrison. It is always a grace to spend time with the Bishop and this meeting was no exception. Bishop Gregory had two questions for all those assembled. What is your favorite and your least favorite thing about serving as a deacon or subdeacon. What is your favorite part of the Divine Liturgy. These questions made for a lively discussion.

There were many varied likes and dislikes of serving the Church. On the positive side, people mentioned taking communion to the sick, being close to the altar at the time of the consecration, working with the youth, teaching and spreading the Gospel, trying to be a good witness for Christ, having the best of both worlds being both husband and deacon, and finally the spiritual focus that comes with being surrounded by people searching for God. On the negative side there were the duties that sometimes come with being an administrator of a church, the loss of health that limits service, the decline in the number of parishioners, and the lack of joy in people who proclaim their love of Christ. Although there was clearly a number of things that people disliked, overall the sentiment prevailed that being a deacon or subdeacon was an honor and was to be cherished as a gift from God.

It was also very interesting when the discussion turned to the subject of their favorite part of the Divine Liturgy. Some spoke of the point of elevation of the Holy Eucharist, the Creed, the Our Father, the prayers of forgiveness, etc. In the end, it was clear that the assembled found inspiration, solace, and most importantly Christ in the Divine Liturgy. It was the liturgy as a whole that made us fulfilled even though there was one part or another that stood out. The discussion closed with a deep theological reflection from Bishop Gregory on the importance of the Fraction, Consignation, Intinction and Elevation that take place just before the Our Father and its importance to the Church. It is the Living Christ offered to the Father whom we worship and thank at that time.

The day closed with *Ramsho* and dinner. To be able to pray together in a group is always special. It reminds us that

although we are spread across the Eparchy, we are one. After dinner time was taken to introduce all of the seminarians and each had a chance to speak about himself and what brought him to his vocation. It made one realize that the future is in good hands. It was a very good end to a wonderful day.

After attending Sunday Liturgy hosted by the Pastor and parishioners of Our Lady of Lebanon celebrated by Bishop Gregory with Chorbishop Dominic Ashkar as homilist, everyone departed. It was a very fruitful retreat. □

From the Book Shelf

The Maronite Icons, Saints of the Maronite Church: constitutes the second volume of Maronite Icons that have been painted by the Maronite Archbishopric in Nicosia, Cyprus. It contains a collection of icons that illustrate the most revered saints in our Maronite Church. The book is composed of four parts:

- ★ **Part One** presents icons depicting Old Testament figures who prepared for the coming of the Messiah
- ★ **Part Two** presents icons depicting evangelists, saints and apostles of the First Church
- ★ **Part Three** is dedicated to the icons of the most venerated saints in the Maronite Church
- ★ **Part Four** is an artistic reproduction of the most important icons of the Rabbula Gospel.

The Maronite Icons (both volume one and volume two) are available for \$50 each volume plus \$10 shipping.

The Maronite Pontifical by His Excellency Bishop Stephen Hector Doueïhi, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn.

The Maronite Pontifical contains all rites delegated to the bishop in the liturgical celebrations. It describes the actions which the pontiff, as a celebrant, performs and the prayers he says during these celebrations. It includes mainly the rites of ordination to the priesthood and the solemn consecrations reserved to the bishop in the Christian worship.

The Maronite Pontifical is available for \$20 plus \$5 shipping.

Maronite Book of Hymns according to the Antiochian Syriac Church, published in 2008 by the Patriarchal Liturgical Commission, contains Maronite Syriac tunes for the Maronite *Qurbano*; psalms as well as various Maronite and Marian hymns.

This 569 page hard cover book is available from Saint Maron Publications for \$25 plus \$7 shipping.

To order your copy (ies) please write to:
 Saint Maron Publications
 4611 Sadler Road
 Glen Allen, Virginia 23060

For further information, call (804) 762-4301, or visit www.stmaron.org. □

Brooklyn, New York Eparchial Benefit Dinner

by *Salma T. Vahdat*

The Second Annual Eparchial Benefit Dinner in Manhattan will take place at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York on Friday, October 21, 2011. The featured guest speaker will be our recently elected Maronite Patriarch, His Beatitude Bechara Peter Rai, who is making his first pastoral visit to the United States. The event will be attended by Maronites and their guests from the greater New York area and beyond. Registration information can be found at www.stmaron.org.

Proceeds from the Benefit Dinner will be applied to the financial needs of the Eparchy of Saint Maron. These needs include seminarian education and formation; support for missions; assistance for retired priests; and necessary structural repairs to Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral in Brooklyn Heights, a Historical Landmark site which is the seat of the Eparchy.

On Sunday, October 23, 2011, Patriarch Rai will preside at a Solemn Divine Liturgy that will be offered at the Cathedral with Bishop Gregory Mansour and clergy concelebrating. A reception will be held immediately following the Divine Liturgy in the Cathedral's Social Hall. Attendance at the reception is complimentary, but guests are asked to register in advance by calling 718-624-7228. □

Olean, New York Building Burns, But Church Survives

by *Fr. Anthony Salim, Pastor*

August 27, 2011, will for many years be imprinted on the minds and hearts of the parishioners of St. Joseph Maronite Catholic Church, in Olean, New York. That is the day a devastating fire destroyed our beloved church building, and with it the signs of the memories of church life in it. Worship was done here since 1919. As with all our parish churches, many of the sacramental Mysteries were prayed here, such as Baptisms, Christmations (Confirmations), receptions of the Holy Eucharist, Crownings (weddings), and many funerals.

The fire began at approximately 3:20 p.m. on Saturday, just forty minutes before the regularly scheduled Sunday Vigil Divine Liturgy. Since 3:00 p.m., faithful Sacristan Emil Ash and the reader for the Service that day, Joseph Hollister, were in the church preparing for Liturgy. Alerted by Emil's grandson that the exterior of the church was afire, both Emil and Joe escaped quickly, unhurt. Thanks be to God that the fire did not begin forty minutes later. Olean City Firefighter Steve Zlockie, a parishioner, was on duty that day, and had the sad task of helping to put out the fire in his own beloved church.

Of the many people who gathered to comfort the pastor, Fr. Anthony Salim, and so many parishioners, were the kind people of Olean, people who have a reputation for kindness



The fire consumes St. Joseph Maronite Church in Olean, N.Y.

and concern. Among these comforters were the Catholic clergy of Olean, all four of whom immediately offered assistance in many forms, such as prayers, offers to use their own churches, and encouragement to their own people to pray for St. Joseph's. Added to these have been sympathetic condolences from Maronite clergy and laity from all over the country, and even from friends of Fr. Anthony's in Lebanon and Europe. Currently, our parish is worshipping at Transfiguration Oratory in Olean. The support has been immeasurable. Bishop Gregory [Mansour] paid a visit to the parish to offer his own heartfelt condolences and support.

The committees recommended by Catholic Mutual, our insurers, are in the process of discerning what must be done next. These committees will assist Father and the congregation in the ultimate decision of the future of the parish.

Unsolicited money offerings have come in from Maronite parishes and individuals, as well as other countless concerned people. If any individuals or parishes or organizations would like to help us out, please contact us at: St. Joseph Church, 225 N. 4th St., Olean, NY 14760, Phone: 716-327-4311

No words can express to all our well-wishers the thanks we feel. We can only hope that this expression of thanks will be read by many of them so as to know how truly grateful we are. Blessings in the Lord's Name! □

Eparchial Condolences

Josephine Bassil, the mother of Fr. Pierre Bassil, Pastor of St. Ignatius of Antioch Church in Dayton, Ohio, died in Lebanon on August 15, 2011, with her family at her side.

In addition to Fr. Pierre, she is survived by her sons, Paul and Charbel; her daughters, Marcel Yazeb and Pierrette El Helou, and many grandchildren, along with her sisters, Wadad, Antoinette, and Micheline, and her brothers, Joseph, Tony and Micheal Beaino. Her husband, Tannous, preceded her in death.

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

Dartmouth, Massachusetts *Sisters Welcome Bishop Mansour*



From left: Fr. Morrison, Sr. Marla Marie, Bishop Gregory Mansour and Sr. Terese.

by Maronite Servants

On Saturday August, 2011, the Maronite Servants happily welcomed His Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour to their convent in Dartmouth, Mass. During his pastoral visit to the parish of Our Lady of Purgatory, New Bedford, the Bishop came to bless our Mother of the Light Convent and our growing community. We were deeply touched by his spontaneous, simple gestures and blessing, as he dedicated everything in our home, including our mission and the two present members to God, for the building of His Kingdom of love and peace. After the blessing, we offered the Bishop and Father Jack Morrison (Pastor of Our Lady of Purgatory) hospitality and refreshments in the main vestibule of the house. □

Utica, New York *Parishioner Honored*

by Chorbishop John Faris

Dr. Eugene Paul Nassar, a life-long parishioner of Saint Louis Gonzaga Church and a native of Utica, New York, was recently honored by Utica College.

Thirty years ago, Professor Nassar established the Ethnic Heritage Studies Center at Utica College as a venue for research, teaching and public service for the diverse cultures of the Mohawk Valley. Utica College celebrated the thirtieth anniversary by renaming the



center in honor of Dr. Nassar, now Professor Emeritus.

A Rhodes scholar, and graduate of Kenyon College and Oxford University with a doctorate from Cornell University, Dr. Nassar is a highly distinguished scholar whose many works include volumes on Wallace Stevens and Ezra Pound in addition to articles for numerous scholarly journals.

A Lebanese-American growing up in an Italian-American neighborhood, Dr. Nassar wrote his autobiographical memorials, *Wind of the Land*.

Chorbishop John Faris, Pastor of Saint Louis Gonzaga Church, noted the respect and high esteem that the parish family has for Dr. Nassar as Maronite scholar. Currently serving as archivist for the parish, Dr. Nassar is assembling a collection of books on Lebanese culture and history that will be the core of the parish library. □

Minneapolis, Minnesota *Cross Dedication*



A new cross adorns the sanctuary wall of St. Maron Church in Minneapolis, Minn.

by Msgr. sharbel Maroun

On the occasion of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the parish of Saint Maron of Minneapolis unveiled and dedicated an elegant *Qorbono* Cross in the sanctuary in memory of Lorraine Thomas.

The circle represents the unending, unconditional love of God, and the cross of salvation touches the four corners of the earth. The artist Paul Sirba carved it on oak wood with the vine design. The diameter of the cross is five feet. □



Washington, D.C.
Homily by His Eminence Cardinal Donald Wuerl,
Archbishop of Washington
Dedication of Maronite Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon

Before we begin these reflections on this Liturgy and the Gospel, I want to thank Bishop Gregory Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, for his gracious invitation to join the Maronite community on this day of special significance and to provide the homily. I also want to recognize Archbishop Timothy Broglio, Archbishop for the Military Services, Bishop Robert J. Shaheen, Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles, brother bishops, chorbishops, priests, deacons, women and men in consecrated life, distinguished guests, friends of the Maronite community, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Today we gather here in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for the dedication of the new Maronite chapel. Here we will celebrate Mary under her special title, Our Lady of Lebanon. The devotion of the Maronite faithful to the Blessed Virgin Mary has long been recognized as a visible sign of their national identity and personal commitment to the Lord. Here in this Basilica, Mary is now honored in a chapel that reflects both the Maronite faith heritage and the material so associated with Lebanon.

I feel particular joy because, as Chairman of the Board of the National Shrine, I have watched with anticipation and excitement - as have all of you - as the chapel emerged from plans and drawings to stone, wood and beautiful religious art. Here the Maronite faithful find a chapel truly reflective of your history, heritage and faith.

The design of this chapel is reminiscent of the many churches found in the mountains of Lebanon. The Maronite people, fleeing persecution, would seek refuge in the mountains to pray. They would create churches and chapels carved out of the natural stone and rock. This new chapel reflects both the rock and the history.



Cardinal Donald Wuerl delivers the homily at the Dedication of the new Maronite Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Why has there always been great love among the followers of Jesus for his mother, Mary? Why from the very beginning of Christianity has there been such deep devotion for Mary, the mother of our Lord? Everywhere Christianity spread, there are signs of profound veneration of the mother of Jesus: chapels and churches bearing Mary's name, prayers in which Mary's name is invoked and generations of children bearing the name, "Mary," or some form of it.

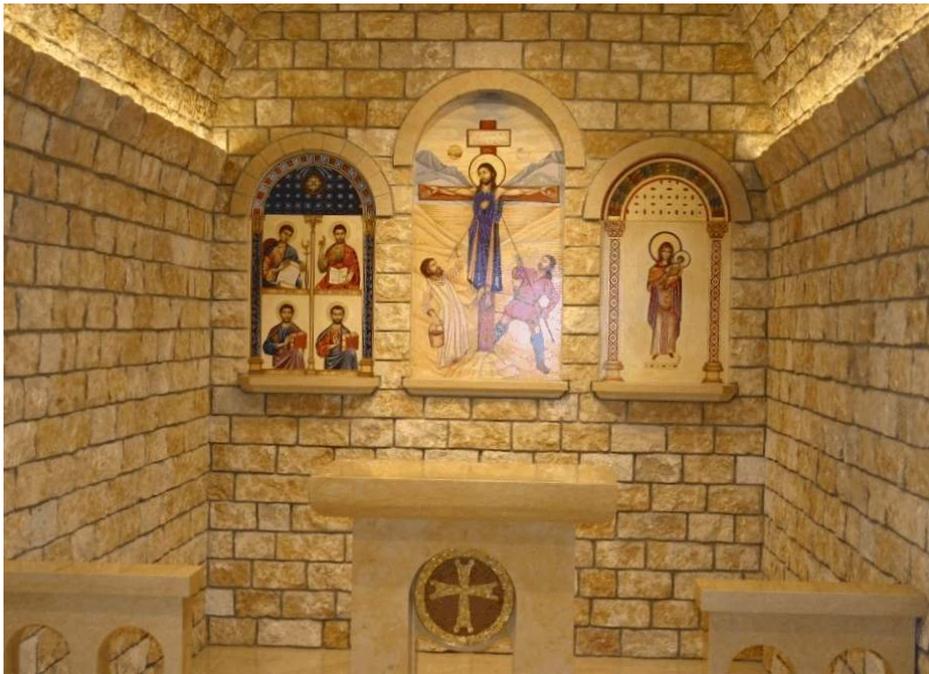
This very basilica is a splendid example of Catholic devotion to Mary. What prompted the bishops, clergy, religious and laity of the Church in the United States to make the sacrifices that culminated in this temple dedicated to the glory of God and honor of God's Holy Mother?

The same question can be asked about

the Lebanese Catholic community - the faithful of the Maronite Church. What has prompted the sacrifices that result in this splendid chapel? The answer to all of these questions is the same.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church offers a clear answer: "Only faith can embrace the mysterious ways of God's almighty power. This faith glories in its weaknesses in order to draw to itself Christ's power. The Virgin Mary is the supreme model of this faith, for she believed that 'nothing will be impossible with God'" (273).

The Gospel reading selected for this dedication ceremony calls us to see with the eyes of faith as Mary did. We do not know or understand, but we believe. We place our faith in what God has said to us and what the Church has carefully and faithfully relayed to us.



The altar of Our Lady of Lebanon Chapel

Because of that fact, we can also, like Mary, announce "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior."

What defines us as a people of faith and what has long been an identifying factor of the Maronite Church is the acceptance of the revelation of God proclaimed in his Church. Because we accept God's Word, we believe his promises. Thus we are able to see the meaning and purpose of our lives, even if we often face challenge. As we gather for the dedication of this chapel, surely we can join in Mary's canticle, "The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name."

The story of our redemption through the body and blood of Jesus brings us face to face with the person of Mary - the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of God. Our attention to and love for Mary is based on her relationship to Jesus Christ. Her son is God's Eternal Word come among us, the Word of God made flesh, the Word that is come from the presence of God, from the very unity and inner life of God, to dwell with us. The center fresco at the back of the chapel is the crucifixion. Here we see the visible representation of the action of our redemption. This theme is repeated in the marble altar with the Syriac cross inlaid in mosaic.

We who live now as God's adopted children can sing with Mary: "His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him."

Mary is the model of what our faith should be. Like us, Mary was a human being who had to be open to hear and accept God's word and to grasp the mysterious ways in which God works. She did so with such consummate fidelity that she is forever the example of what we mean by faith - true, profound faith.

The history of the Maronite Church contains its own examples of the faith lived in an heroic way - even in the face of great opposition, oppression and suffering. Clearly Saint Maron reflected God's grace so strongly that he gave his very name to those who held steadfast both to the profession of faith and to the communion of that faith with Peter.

The challenge to live by faith brings us into confrontation with the increasingly secular world fostered by our modern culture and nurtured by many who derive their inspiration for life elsewhere. Yet we know that Our Lady is always there to hear us and to take our needs, cares and concerns to her Son.

This chapel will be a constant reminder that it is in the strength of our faith that

we are able to walk in the pathway set for us by Christ and that we are able, in the words of his mother, Mary, "do whatever he tells us."

There is yet another title of Mary that relates her to each of us in a particular and personal way. Mary is also our mother - she is Mother of the Church and, therefore, of each believer. Our Lady of Lebanon is holy mother not only of the Lord of the Maronite Church but of every faithful member of the Church.

Today as this chapel is blessed and dedicated, we can proclaim with Mary, with Our Lady of Lebanon, and with all who honor her and her Son: "His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him."

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my savior."

The chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon is not only a strikingly beautiful addition to this great Basilica but it is a sign of the Maronite Church's place in the Universal Church. It also says something to us of pride, of hope and of the future.

"He has lifted up the lowly, and filled the hungry with good things..."

Only a Church that is peaceful in its identity and confident of its future would have produced this tribute to Our Lady of Lebanon. Every time you visit the Shrine and pray to Our Lady may it be a reminder to you and to all who are remembered in the Shrine that the Maronite Church looks to the future. It is the home of generations yet to come who will find here a testimony to the faith of all of those who preceded them, a witness of the faith of all of those gathered here today and a pledge of God's grace well into the future.

May Our Lady of Lebanon continue to smile on that land, its people, its faith and bring them always to her Son. □

*Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
September 23, 2011*

Glen Allen, Virginia 100th Anniversary Kick-Off



by Brandon Shulleeta

St. Anthony Maronite Catholic Church in Glen Allen [Richmond], Va., is celebrating its 100-year anniversary with events designed to continue the church's long tradition of faith, unity and appreciation for those who have made the church strong.

The centennial events, scheduled through February, kicked-off on September 12 with daily liturgies, adoration and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and social gatherings.

"The church is built on faith," Msgr. George M. Sebaali said of the anniversary celebrations. "Everything is centered around the church, around prayers and faith."

Each daily liturgy, during the first week of the centennial celebration, was dedicated to a specific intention. "Monday night, we prayed for the founders of the church. A handful of people were pioneers ... the ones who pushed to establish the church," Sebaali said. "On Tuesday, we prayed for all the families in the church. Wednesday, we prayed for the youth. Thursday, we prayed for the clergy who served the church here. And on Friday, we prayed for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the next 100 years."

The kick-off week ended with a day of social gatherings. A parish picnic was held on September 17, followed by liturgy as well as a dinner and *hafli* in the social hall. The celebration will continue through February with various parish events, including a celebration next month of the congregation's most senior parishioners.

Parishioner Gloria Nadder, who had attended most of the daily liturgies during the kick-off week, said celebrating the anniversary with liturgy and adoration each day was "a beautiful idea. ... The parish is a tight-knit community that is strong in its faith," Nadder said.

"We come from strong families. They have strong backbones. They started this church; they stuck with it through thick and thin," she said. "It is cousins, aunts, uncles, people that just know each other and know how hard our parents and our grandparents worked to get this church together, and it's just our way of life."

Nadder said that she also values the richness of the

liturgies and the continuity of the priests. Sebaali, for example, has led St. Anthony Church since 1984. His predecessor, Msgr. Beshara Salwan, had been the church's priest since 1960.

"There's just a bond there between the people. It's a strong religion. It's a strong faith. It's what our parents have instilled in us, and then we instill it in our children," Nadder said. "I can't imagine belonging to another parish."

The parish began taking form after Lebanese Maronites migrated to the U.S. in the late-1800s. The founders initially attended St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in the Church Hill area of Richmond -- a now century-and-a-half-old church with Irish traditions. The founders of St. Anthony's Church eventually began holding a Maronite Liturgy in the Richmond home of William Moses Soffee and were later granted use of St. Patrick's Church to host Liturgy on Sunday mornings.

The Maronite parish had worshiped at numerous Richmond-area locations before the current church in Glen Allen was built in 1979. □

Minneapolis, Minnesota Touch of Lebanon Festival



The Parish of Saint Maron of Minneapolis, Minn., held its 20th Annual "Touch of Lebanon Festival" on September 24 - 25, 2011.

The Festival was a huge success and attracted thousands of people from the Twin Cities and beyond to taste the delicious food and enjoy the live music as well as the auctions and the games.

The Festival was a great opportunity for the community to share the Lebanese tradition and culture with the people who visited from different faiths and walks of life. □

Thought of the Month

Let us throw ourselves into the ocean of His goodness, where every failing will be canceled and anxiety turned into love.

St. Paul of the Cross

St. Louis, Missouri Annual Pilgrimage



Fr. Gary George and Bishop Robert Shaheen.

by Shelly Vitale

The annual pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in North Jackson, Ohio, was awe inspiring for the parishioners of St. Raymond Maronite Cathedral in St. Louis, Mo. A large group attended, including some new faces. The majority of them rode by bus giving them the opportunity to pray together, support one another, and really bond as a community. Bishop Robert J. Shaheen and Father Gary George, Rector of St. Raymond, are great teachers of the Maronite faith. They share a deep devotion for Our Lady. Father Gary planned many activities for the youth, including watching him have his hair cut as a donation for a wig for children with cancer.

The Maronite Liturgy was held daily, and the "Anointing of the Sick" on Saturday was attended by hundreds of pilgrims receiving the holy oil from Bishop Robert J. Shaheen and Bishop Gregory J. Mansour. On Monday evening the Maronite Pontifical Liturgy was celebrated by the Bishops followed by the final candlelight procession. It was a spectacular evening. The weather cooperated for the beautiful outdoor Liturgy. The procession was brilliant with light as the pilgrims walked with their candles and sang praises to Our Lady. The celebration ended with an illuminating fireworks display. St. Raymond Parish looks forward to even more pilgrims attending in 2012 for the Feast of the Assumption. □

Bay Area, California First Annual Lebanese Festival

The Lebanese population is just one of the many ethnic groups representing the Bay Area's diversity. Over 3,000 people attended the Bay Area's first Lebanese festival, enjoying the food, culture, and music of the Lebanese community.

Residents from Sacramento to San Jose came to visit the



Community Activities Building in Redwood City where the festival was held. Highlights of the festival included a performances of the children, youth group, and professional singers, and all the delicious/healthy food.

It was a day of merriment and a sharing of traditions from the Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church Community in Millbrae, California. For more information, visit www.lebanesefestivalbayarea.org. □

Troy, New York Feast of Saint Ann



The Feast of St. Ann is a very special occasion for the parishioners of St. Ann Church of Troy, New York. To celebrate this special day, a week-long novena was led by Reverend George Bouchaaya. His Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour joined the Parish on Saturday, July 23, despite his busy schedule for the celebration. Musical entertainment was provided by a trio of high school students. The Bishop's visit culminated in Sunday Liturgy followed by a luncheon. Parishioners paid tribute to the elder parishioners who have made lifelong contributions to the Parish. The St. Ann Children's Dance Troupe provided entertainment.

St. Ann Church is in the process of renovating a property which will become its new home. Bishop Mansour toured the under-construction building and offered advice. The parishioners thank Bishop Mansour for his help and support in this endeavor. The new property will house a larger church layout, a meeting hall with kitchen, office space, and classrooms for religious education. The parish has attracted more Maronites with growing families, and the new church property will be able to accommodate all who wish to join. □

New Bedford, Massachusetts St. Thomas More Award



From L to R: Atty. George Thomas; his son, Michael; wife, Reggie; niece, Casey; daughter-in-law, Cindy; and niece, Allie.

On Sunday, September 25, 2011, the Most Reverend George Coleman, the Bishop of the Diocese of Fall River, presented Attorney George M. Thomas, the father of Chorbishop Michael Thomas [Vicar General of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn], the Saint Thomas More Founder's Award on behalf of the Massachusetts Bristol County Bar Association at the annual "Red Mass" for the judicial and legal community.

Attorney Thomas was born in New Bedford in 1919, to immigrant parents, both from Lebanon. That is where he learned his Arabic. He attended Saint Hyacinth Elementary School, where he learned French very well, and then attended Holy Family High School where he became quite proficient in Latin. He worked his way through Providence College and then onto Boston University School of Law, where he graduated in 1943.

Immediately after graduation, he entered the United States Navy where he served for three years. He was given a three-day leave in order to be sworn in to the Massachusetts Bar in 1944, and then went on to serve our country in Iwo Jima and, during his last few months of service in Guam. When he returned to New Bedford in 1946, he and his older brother, Fred, formed the law firm of Thomas and Thomas, the firm that was later joined by his son Peter and his daughter-in-law, Cynthia.

Attorney Thomas was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court in 1950. He was licensed to practice before the Tax Court, and admitted to practice in the Bankruptcy Court and the United States District Court. He actively practiced law for about sixty years, retiring at the age of 87.

In 1956 he married Réjeanne Valois, and they had four boys: Michael, Daniel, Peter, and James. Daniel passed away at a very young age and became the angel who has constantly watched over the family. Michael became a priest, Peter a lawyer, and James a physician. George and Reggie worked

hard to make their children proud of their Lebanese and French backgrounds: the foods, the languages, the music, and the faith.

Attorney Thomas has always been overly proud of his Catholic Faith and his Maronite heritage. He has been a life-long communicant of Our Lady of Purgatory Church in New Bedford, and a member of the Knights of Columbus since 1946, where he served in every chair of the third and fourth degrees, as well as District Deputy. For over thirty years he has been a member of the Order of Saint Sharbel. Now, at the age of 92, he has been truly honored and deeply touched to be the first recipient of the Joseph P. Harrington Founder's Award. Attorney Harrington was a dear friend of his and they shared a mutual admiration and respect for each other. Both men, with countless others in the legal profession, were committed to their families, their Church, and their legal community. □

Schedule of Bishop Gregory Mansour

October 4 - 8, 2011

Meeting of Maronite Bishops and Superior General with Patriarch Rai, Saint Louis, Mo.

October 9, 2011

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

October 14 - 16, 2011

100th Anniversary of St. George Maronite Parish, Providence, Rhode Island

October 17, 2011

Visit to St. George Church, Uniontown, Penn., with Patriarch Rai

October 18, 2011

Visit to St. Anthony of the Desert Church, Fall River, Mass., with Patriarch Rai

October 19, 2011

Visit to Holy Trinity Monastery in Petersham, Mass., with Patriarch Rai

October 20, 2011

New York with Patriarch Rai; CNEWA Press Conference and Ecumenical Lunch. Afternoon Reception at the Lebanese General Consulate in New York

October 21, 2011

The United Nations with Patriarch Rai. Eparchial Benefit Dinner in the evening,

October 22, 2011

Dinner at the Chancery of Metropolitan Phillip Saliba with Patriarch Rai

October 23, 2011

Liturgy and reception at Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y., with Patriarch Rai

October 28 - 30, 2011

100th Anniversary of St. Anthony/St. George Church, Wilkes-Barre, Penn.

November 5, 2011

Blessed John Paul II Maronite Mission, Concert with Joumana Medawar, Westchester, N.Y. □

Uniontown, Pennsylvania Annual Rosary Walk



Fr. Nadim Helou, M.L.M., Pastor of St. George Church in Uniontown, Penn., begins the first decade of the rosary for the 22nd annual Rosary Walk at the stone grotto of the Blessed Mother in the parish Garden of Prayer.

The sun was shining again for the more than 250 people from the Uniontown, Penn., Catholic Churches who participated in the 22nd annual Rosary Walk that has been sponsored by St. George Altar & Rosary Society since its beginning in 1989.

This unique event begins annually in the Garden of Prayer at St. George Maronite Church where the first decade of the rosary is prayed. The procession progresses to the five other Catholic Churches in Uniontown, stopping at each for a decade of the rosary and a hymn especially chosen by the parish.

The spiritual event concludes at the last Church with the Litany of the Blessed Mother followed by Benediction. Many people, unable to walk, drove the route to all of the churches in order to be a part of this spiritual day.

The intention of the walk is always in glory and honor of Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary. This year, the members of the Altar & Rosary Society also made the walk in memory of Dorothy Sanner who had co-chaired the annual Rosary Walks until her death on February 14 of this year. Dorothy was a charter member of the organization and held the office of secretary at her death. Family members and friends also made the walk this year in her memory. Patricia Rogers and Susan Thomas co-chaired the Rosary walk. □



Madrid, Spain World Youth Day

by Sarah Tarabey
Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Chicago, Ill.

This summer, Madrid, Spain, hosted the mother of all pilgrimages: *La Jornada Mundial de la Juventud*, or World Youth Day. Two million gathered in Spain's

capital from every crevice of the globe for the event, which takes place internationally every two to three years and is presided over by the Pope (this year, Pope Benedict XVI). While its emphasis is mainly on Catholicism, World Youth Day welcomes "all young people who want to take part in a festive encounter with their contemporaries centered on Jesus Christ," according to the WYD Madrid 2011 website.

Strolling through Madrid's cobblestone streets, the presence of the youth could instantly be felt. Everywhere there waved flags from the 193 attending nations. Groups who hardly knew each other stopped to pose for pictures, exchanged small souvenirs bearing symbols of their nations, and generally embraced the diversity of cultures and expressions of faith. Some sang, others danced or chanted in their native tongues, but the atmosphere was still one of respect and openness.

About a week before the Pope's arrival, I met up with a youth group from the Holy Land. About 150 total, we traveled to a quaint coastal town named Xàtiva (pronounced Chativa in Spanish), which would be our home until the long trek back to Madrid for our celebrations with the Pope.

The coming days were filled to the brim: we toured ancient cathedrals and historic landmarks in both Xàtiva and nearby Valencia; learned the intertwined histories of Spain and Catholicism; and immersed ourselves in Spain's rich culture. There were numerous festivals - with dozens of stands full of unique African and European goods - where we would see youth groups from Poland, Kenya, and Honduras. At night, we often gathered near Xàtiva's center: an ornate Baroque cathedral with statues of Borgia Pope Alexander VI and Pope Calixtus III at its entrance, both of whom were born there. Once, we climbed hundreds of spiraling stairs to the top of its tower, rang the bells, and gazed at the expanse of Spain for hundreds of miles in every direction.

As entertaining as those first experiences were, it was what I learned from the other members of my youth group that defined my trip. They really were some of the most open people I have ever encountered, and we hardly knew each other at first.

Together, we would attend Masses hours long, wherein they sang more songs and recited more prayers than I even knew existed, and with such passion and commitment that I came to better understand what it means to give oneself over to faith. They never seemed to tire of learning about Christianity and reenacting Jesus' messages of love and forgiveness; nor did they ever shy away from telling people exactly who they were: the Youth of the Holy Land, and proud to be so. There was strength in that, strength derived from being a Christian minority in Israel. Still, the emphasis was never really on making a political statement, but finding those key factors in everyone's lives for which we could all come together.

In this way, I began to see the real beauty and diversity of Christianity, even within the Catholic branch. To think that I was part of only one group out of the hundreds of nations around the world, each practicing their faith in a unique way, was utterly eye-opening. It matters not how one shows his or her belief, I concluded, but merely that he or she does believe. And while those days flew very quickly, I will never forget this lesson.

Back in Madrid, the entire city was in on World Youth Day, fully transformed with celebratory signs. Everyone

received a red and yellow backpack with "JMJ 2011 Madrid" on the front, so one could instantly spot the youth by those blaring colors.

On August 18, Pope Benedict XVI arrived and that night, a welcoming ceremony was held. The next day, we all met around City Hall (which looks more like an ornate castle) to observe the Way of the Cross. Basically, the whole area - from Plaza de Colon to Plaza de Cibeles - had been transformed into three-dimensional scenes of the fourteen Stations of the Cross. Youth from various nations carried a large cross before the front of each Station; members of my group actually initiated the event. Both before and after the ceremony, the Pope made his way down the street in the papal motorcade. He kissed a baby right in front of where I stood, and the crowds went wild.

I left before the closing Mass on August 21, but from what my group told me afterwards, the Pope's final message at Cuatro Vientos Air Base stressed the importance of the world's youth and their potential impact on others' lives, especially in spreading the faith and holding steadfast to their convictions. Having experienced the impact of fervent faith, I fully second this motion. □

Pope Benedict XVI Urges Young People to "Love the Church" 1.5 Million Attend Madrid Youth Day

by Inma Álvarez

You cannot live your faith alone, Pope Benedict XVI told the young people gathered at the Cuatro Vientos Air Base in his homily during the closing Mass of the 26th World Youth Day.

The Pope arrived at Cuarto Vientos at 9:15 a.m. in the popemobile and, traveling along the base's main road, he circulated among the young people, which he was unable to do Saturday evening for the vigil, due to security concerns.

Pope Benedict XVI greeted the 1.5 million young people -- according to figures confirmed by the Spanish National Police -- who had slept all night on the ground. His first remark was: "I thought a lot about you; I hope you were able to get a little sleep."

Accompanied by the Spanish royalty, the Pope made his way to the altar to preside at the eucharistic celebration in which the sending of the young people out to evangelize their peers in the world was also celebrated.

The Pontiff, as he had also done in his address in the opening ceremony of World Youth Day in Plaza de Cibeles, warned the young pilgrims against the danger of individualism, one of the most significant threats that the new generations of Christians face.

"Following Jesus in faith is to walk with Him in the communion of the Church. You cannot follow Jesus alone," he explained.

The Pope then cautioned them against the temptation of "going it alone" and "of living the faith according to the individualistic mentality that predominates in society" because in this way there is "the risk of never meeting Jesus Christ, or of ending up following a false image of Him."

"Having faith means leaning on the faith of your brothers,

and that your own faith in the same way serves as a support for that of the others," he added.

In light of this the Bishop of Rome called on the young people to "love the Church," concretely inserting themselves in "parishes, communities and movements," and "to participate in the Eucharist every Sunday, to approach the sacrament of Reconciliation frequently and to cultivate prayer and meditate on the Word of God."

"From this friendship with Jesus there will also arise the drive that will lead to bearing witness to the faith in the most different environments, including those where there is rejection and indifference," he said. "It is not possible to meet Christ and not introduce him to others."

The world, the Pope stressed, "needs the witness of your faith, it certainly needs God," exhorting the young people to be "disciples and missionaries of Christ in other lands and countries where there is a multitude of youth who aspire to great things and, glimpsing in their hearts the possibility of the most authentic values, do not let themselves be seduced by the false promises of a lifestyle without God."

At the end of the celebration, Cardinal Stanislaw Ryko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, thanked the Pope on behalf of the young people.

"Here before you, Your Holiness, there is a young Church, full of the joy and enthusiasm of faith. They are young people who are proud to belong to Christ and to His Church. ... It is truly a generation that seeks God," he said.

In particular he thanked the Pope for the creation of the Youcat, the youth catechism that was included in each pilgrim's backpack, and the World Youth Day cross, which the Pontiff blessed at the conclusion of the Mass and symbolically entrusted to five young people. □

Zenit.org, August 22, 2011

Catholics And Orthodox Dialogue On Question of Primacy

On September 24, 2011, the Holy Father met with fifteen representatives from the Orthodox Churches in Germany gathered in the main hall of the Seminary of Freiburg im Breisgau. Germany has a total of 467 Byzantine Orthodox communities with some 1,300,000 faithful belonging to various autocephalous Churches.

Having greeted Metropolitan Augoustinos, President of the Orthodox Episcopal Conference in Germany, and thanked him for his words, "so full of confidence," the Pope reaffirmed that "among Christian Churches and communities, the Orthodox are theologically closest to us; Catholics and Orthodox both have the same basic structure inherited from the ancient Church. So we may hope that the day is not too far away when we may once again celebrate the Eucharist together.

"With interest and sympathy the Catholic Church follows the development of Orthodox communities in Western Europe, which in recent decades have grown remarkably," the Pope added. He then went on to express his satisfaction at "the increase of pan-Orthodox cooperation, which has made significant progress in recent years. ... May the work of these episcopal conferences strengthen the bond between the

Orthodox Churches and hasten the progress of efforts to establish a pan-Orthodox council."

On the subject of dialogue between Catholics and Orthodox, the Holy Father highlighted the importance of continuing efforts "to clarify theological differences. ... The resolution of these questions is indispensable for restoration of the full unity that we hope and pray for. Above all it is on the question of primacy that our continuing efforts towards a correct understanding must be focused. Here the ideas put forward by John Paul II in the Encyclical 'Ut Unum Sint' on the distinction between the nature and form of the exercise of primacy can yield further fruitful discussion points."

He also expressed his appreciation for "the work of the Mixed International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. ... The results so far obtained allow us to grow in mutual understanding and to draw closer to one another," he said.

"In the present climate, in which many would like, as it were, to 'liberate' public life from God, the Christian Churches in Germany - including Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Christians - are walking side by side along the path of peaceful witness for understanding and solidarity among peoples, on the basis of their faith in the one God and Father of all. At the same time they continue to place the miracle of God's incarnation at the centre of their proclamation. Realising that on this mystery all human dignity depends, they speak up jointly for the protection of human life from conception to natural death."

In closing, Pope Benedict reiterated how "faith in God, the Creator of life, and unconditional adherence to the dignity of every human being strengthen faithful Christians vigorously to oppose every manipulative and selective intervention in the area of human life. Knowing, too, the value of marriage and the family, we as Christians attach great importance to defending the integrity and the uniqueness of marriage between one man and one woman from any kind of misinterpretation. Here the common engagement of Christians, including many Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Christians, makes a valuable contribution to building up a society equipped for the future, in which the human person is given the respect which is his due." □

Vatican Information Service (VIS) September 25, 2011

Pope to Parents Talk With Your Children, Listen to Them

Notes the Importance of School Years

Pope Benedict XVI is reminding parents of the fundamental importance of conversing with their children. Sunday [September 18, 2011] after praying the midday Angelus with crowds gathered at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, the Pope mentioned the start of the school year in his French-language greeting.

He invited parents to dedicate time to their children and to talk with them about what they are experiencing. The Holy Father stressed the importance of the years spent in school.

"One learns to structure the mind and broaden the field of knowledge," he noted. "In school one also learns to live together."

The Pontiff reminded the parents that they are the "first educators of their children." And he invited them to "encourage [your children] in their work."

"Take time to listen to them and speak with them about what they are experiencing," he exhorted. "In this way you will help them to make the right decisions."

Pope Benedict XVI described the family and school as the "good earth in which the humanity of tomorrow is tilled." "That is why I ask you to pray," he added, "so that every child everywhere will be able to receive the education to which he has a right." □

Zenit.org, September 20, 2011

Project Roots

Project Roots is a program initiated by the Maronite Bishops in the United States and is designed to help Maronites, as well as others without discrimination, to connect with relatives in their homeland of origin in the Middle East. It provides other services such as aiding newer generations in obtaining or regaining the citizenship of their parents or grandparents.

For American citizens with Middle Eastern roots, it is patriotic to establish and cement relations with their relatives in their original homeland. It is also being patriotic to America, to obtain or regain that citizenship, since this will further strengthen ties between America and countries of the Middle East by bringing balance to Middle Eastern societies. To that end, those involved with Project Roots will do all they can to help those Americans and those of other nationalities who wish to connect to their roots in the Middle East.

Bringing balance back into Middle Eastern societies means that those Americans who obtain or regain such citizenship would have a say in what goes on in their country of origin. They can help foster social justice which is a requirement for those wishing to walk in the footsteps of Christ. Bringing balance back into society will help all their relatives in more than one way: It will usher in moderation, security to individuals and groups, as well as prosperity and a higher quality of life for relatives and all others who call their Middle Eastern country of origin their homeland.

Project Roots is ready to help any and all Americans of Middle Eastern origin, from all sectors of society, who wish to obtain citizenship of the country of their roots. The Project's office in the U.S. is available to provide information, help with formalities here and in their country of origin, and help in connecting with relatives there.

Contact information by phone is via (310) 276-1939; Fax (310) 858-0856. On the internet the e-mail is projectroots@live.com. □



NAM Vocations Awareness Winners

NAM 2011 Vocations Awareness Contest Winners

The National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) sponsors annual contests that receive wide participation by Maronite youth throughout the country. The vocation contests take place during the year and the results are announced at each convention. At this year's national convention in Philadelphia, Penn., the following winners were recognized for their achievements and contributions.

NAM 2011 Vocations Awareness Contest Winners

Essays

Kindergarten / Grade One

Write a prayer thanking God for a priest, deacon, subdeacon or religious

Audrey Brittain St. George, San Antonio, Tex.
Raphael Makhraz Westchester Maronite Catholic Mission, White Plains, N.Y.
Christina Elward St. George, San Antonio, Tex.

Grades Two And Three

Write a prayer thanking God for those studying for the priesthood

Maron Salame Westchester Maronite Catholic Mission, White Plains, N.Y.
Roxanne Sawyer St. Anthony, Glen Allen, Va.
Aaron Hyatt St. Ephrem, El Cajon, Calif.

Grades Four Through Six

Write a letter of thanks to a priest, deacon, subdeacon or religious.

Melanie Safi Our Lady of Lebanon, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Will Shulleeta St. Anthony, Glen Allen, Va.
Grace Khouri St. Maron, Minneapolis, Minn.

Grades Seven Through Nine

Write an essay describing an event in your life, where a priest, deacon, subdeacon or religious made a difference

James Haddad Our Lady of Lebanon, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Gaielle Harb St. George, San Antonio, Tex.
Sarah Sleiman St. Sharbel, Somerset, N.J.

Grades Ten Through Twelve

Write an essay describing the process of discernment needed to discover if one has a vocation [subdeacon, deacon, priest or religious].

Crystel Harb St. George, San Antonio, Tex.

Poster Winners

Kindergarten / Grade One

Priest, Deacons, Subdeacons, Religious Having Fun!

Colette Giganti St. Ephrem, El Cajon, Calif.
Martha Toursarkissian St. George, San Antonio, Tex.
Joy Jowdy St. Anthony, Danbury, Conn.

Grades Two And Three

Families "Grow" Vocations

Mathew Ledney St. Anthony, Danbury, Conn.
Jacob Mile St. George, San Antonio, Tex.
Lauren Alvarez St. Maron, Torrington, Conn.

Grades Four Through Six

God Is Calling, Are You Listening?

Marissa Carney St. Anthony, Fall River, Mass.
Natalie Garrison St. Maron, Torrington, Conn.
Natalie Thomas St. Sharbel, Warren, Mich.

Grades Seven Through Nine

God Needs You to Lead His Flock

Cary Hyatt St. Ephrem, El Cajon, Calif.
Jazelle Johns St. Jude, Murray, Utah
Gabriel Allam St. Jude, Murray, Utah

Grades 10 - 12

The Plan of God Is Written in Our Hearts

No entries

Multimedia

Grades 7 - 12

Compose a 3-5 minute PowerPoint or video presentation that shows a day in the life of a seminarian, subdeacon, priest, bishop or religious

Makiya Johns St. Jude, Murray, Utah
Kathryn Meadows St. Anthony, Glen Allen, Va.
Sassine Makhraz Westchester Maronite Catholic Mission, White Plains, N.Y. □



NATIONAL APOSTOLATE OF MARONITES
MIDWEST REGIONAL CONVENTION

Hosted by: SAINT MARON CHURCH, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

SAVE THE DATES...

Friday, Nov. 18, 2011

- 5-8 PM Registration (Antioch Hall)
- 7 PM Ramsho (Church)
- 7:30 PM Welcome *Sahra* (Antioch Hall)
Finger Foods, Refreshments, & DJ

Saturday, Nov. 19, 2011

- 9 AM Safro (Morning Prayer)
- 9:45 AM Workshop I (St. Ephrem Center)
- 11 AM Workshop II (St. Ephrem Center)
- Noon Regional Delegate Meeting (TBD)
- Afternoon Free
- 6-7 PM Cocktails (Maronite Center)
- 7 PM Banquet & Hafli (Maronite Center)
Entertainment by: **Tony Mikhael Band**

Sunday, Nov. 20, 2011

- 11 AM Closing Liturgy (Church)
- 12 Noon Farewell Brunch

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT ACTIVITIES ALSO PLANNED

Convention Hotel: HAMPTON INN & SUITES CANFIELD
6690 Ironwood Blvd.
Canfield, OH 44406
330-702-1900
FAX 330-702-1915



Room Rate: Standard/2Queen \$99.⁰⁰ / Standard/King \$99.⁰⁰
Mention NAM when making reservations (deadline: October 18th)



All events and activities on Church property located at
1555 South Meridian Road
Youngstown, Ohio 44511

More information & details will follow shortly. For now, mark your calendars and plan on joining us for a great weekend this Fall!

The Maronite Church Needs and Deserves Your Help

Continues from page 1

What struck me most as I joined in the celebrations of this past month was the spiritual maturity of the clergy, religious, and laity present. I could not help but think that our Lord would be pleased with His Church. Nonetheless, there is still much more to do. Our beloved Patriarch is coming and we want to receive him with much love and respect. This issue of the Maronite Voice contains news about that, as well as the recent celebrations.



Fresco of Our Lady of Lebanon

The next fifty years of life in the Maronite Church in the United States depends on you. This Church needs and deserves your help. Roll up your sleeves as did your predecessors in faith! Seminarians, clergy, religious and laity, young and old - the future awaits us. Christ Himself awaits and hopes for a generous response. May God continue to bless His Church!

+ Bishop Gregory Mansour
Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn

Springfield, Massachusetts Assumption Celebration



Picture by Nora T. Dahdah Blaisdell

by Kathy LaBella

On Sunday, August 14, 2011, Fr. George Zina, Pastor of St. Anthony Maronite Church in Springfield, Mass., celebrated the Divine Liturgy in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Rosary was prayed before Liturgy, followed by a procession around the Church. □

