



# Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

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[www.stsharbel.org](http://www.stsharbel.org)

## December 10, 2017

Season of the Glorious Birth  
The Birth of John the Baptist



**Next Sunday**

***The Revelation to Joseph***

**Eph 3:1-13** (Commission to Preach God's Plan)

**Mt 1:18-25** (The Birth of Jesus)

## Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for November 26th - December 3rd

Online.....\$120.00

Collection.....\$3,927.00

Weekly Total.....\$4,047.00

YTD Total.....\$92,409.00

YTD Goal.....\$90,454.00

YTD Difference.....**\$1,955.00**

## Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, December 10th, 10:30 am

+*Antoine & Georgette Zogbi*

Monday, December 11th

*Available*

Tuesday, December 12th

*Available*

Wednesday, December 13th

*Available*

Thursday, December 14th

*Available*

Friday, December 15th

*Available*

Saturday, December 16th

*Available*

Sunday, December 17th

*Available*

***Adoration/Exposition every Sunday at 9:30 am before the morning Liturgy.***

***Confession every Sunday at 9:45 am before the morning Liturgy.***

***Also join us to pray the Rosary on Sundays at 10:00 am before the Liturgy begins.***

## Altar Sponsorship

**December 8th & 10th**

Allam Family

**Sunday, December 17th**

Torker Family

# Parish Events

## Parish Council

+Bruce Ashford  
(Treasurer)  
Charlie Ashou  
Gus Bekahi  
Nick El Hajj  
Agopos  
Ghossein  
Adib Karam  
+Claude Karam  
Anne Marentette  
(Secretary)  
Doug Raab  
+Thaddeus Rask  
Nadia Redmond  
Mitch Siekmann  
Laif Waldron

Ex Officio  
+Deacon Tony  
+Deacon Wadih

+Finance  
Committee

## Feast of the Immaculate Conception

For those interested we will have Immaculate  
Conception Mass  
**Friday, December 8, 2017**  
at **10:30am**.

## End of Year Reminder

In order for us to reach financial goal for the year, we need to ensure we receive outstanding pledge towards the match, but also receive the giving that some of you have explained would be made by the end of the year.

In addition, parishes normally remind parishioners around this time that should God have given you a windfall this year and you were to donate some of that church it would help the church. This gift would be completely tax-deductible.

## "For heights and depths no words can reach, music is the soul's own speech"

All of the children of the parish ages 3 and up are invited to participate in the singing ministry this fall. We will be learning beautiful music to be sung in annual Christmas Play on Christmas Eve. The scheduled rehearsal dates are the following Sunday immediately after Holy Mysteries:

### December 10th

Please mark your calendars. We will have a short social activity and snacks to really make this fun and memorable for the kids.

Please contact Gladys at 503-747-8689 or  
alunui3r@frontier.com.



**Question:** Ever wonder what Papa Noel (Santa) eats for breakfast on Sunday morning (after his communion fast) this time of year?

**Answer:** Zaytoon (Olives), Labneh (Kefir cheese), scrambled eggs, baked ham, hash browned potatoes, fresh coffee, sliced cucumbers and tomatoes and pita bread...the rest of the week he has oatmeal... all while enjoying Fairuz and Bing Crosby Christmas Carols

Please join Papa Noel and the Crossroads Youth Group for breakfast on **Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup>** after liturgy in the basement. Photos with Santa afterwards (he has a new suit this year)!

Tickets are \$7.00 and the food has already been donated so all of the proceeds go to help the poor at Christmas. Please come and share some joy and love with your parish family...Santa's watching you know.

And may the distinctive joy and love that is The Incarnation of Christ warm your hearts and bless your families.

Love,

**Santa**

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM:

"To all parents who have children and youth in Sunday School, Music Ministry, and MYO: All Catholic parishes are required to provide annual training to all our children and youth that participate in our programs. I have been trained in the Call-to-Protect program and as before, I will be providing the training to our children and youth on the following dates:

**MYO-\*****NEW DATE\*** Sunday, January 7, 2018 @9:15am

Please contact me if you would like to see the Call-to-Protect curriculum for children and youth.

Appreciate your understanding and support,  
Nadia Redmond [503-671-0440](tel:503-671-0440)"

# Community Events

## SEMINARY WEEKEND: April 13-April 15, 2018

Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary will be holding a discernment weekend from Friday April 13 to Sunday April 15 in Washington DC for men considering the celibate priesthood. Contact Fr. Gary George, Eparchial Vocations Director ([314-363-3300](tel:314-363-3300)) for more information.

## PRAYER FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

*O Lord, Heavenly Father, we call upon you to protect all Christians who are being persecuted for the sake of Your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ! Come to their aid in their desperation and deliver them from all evil which seeks to destroy them because of You.*

*Awaken our nation to their cries and help them in whatever ways! Awaken all Christians of the plight of their brothers and sisters that they might give them material help spiritual prayers, and affect a change in politics to their benefit!*

*Grant rest to all the souls of those who have died professing You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Amen!*

# Reflection

## *The Birth of John the Baptist*

Lk 1:57-66

*Most High and Incomprehensible God, You established the ages in Your goodness and brought them into being, You made heaven in Your wisdom and adorned it with the stars, and by Your will You caused a fruitless and barren womb to beget the Voice to herald Yourself.*

This is the first half of a prayer begins the Maronite celebration of the Birth of John the Baptist. The same God Who has made and gifted all created things to mankind in the beginning has sent His herald, John the Baptist, to herald Him. But what exactly does heralding mean? The task of the herald of a king was to carry the crest of the king's family, and act as a forerunner – go ahead of the king to deliver messages, and make known his coming – both by his words and by the sign of the house crest of the king.

It is appropriate, then, that we say John the Baptist heralds Christ, his Lord and God. As we heard at the Announcement to Zechariah, John's father, God was sending John into the world "to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Luke 1:17). John is running ahead of his king, the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, to deliver His message and make way for His coming. Today, we celebrate John's arrival to "go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people" (Luke 1:76b-77).

As mentioned previously in the reflection in the Announcement to Zechariah, John's very existence when he is conceived from a barren womb makes known that God shall come to make even the barren fruitful if they follow Him. But John's entire life becomes devoted to heralding the Lord. The office of the herald exists solely for the service of his lord, and so John made his life in service to his Lord. In preparation for the coming of his King, he made it known the absolute necessity of repenting and obtaining the forgiveness of sins, preparing the People to receive the Lord of All. Another task of a herald was carrying his lord's armor and weapons for battle at times, and John offers us the very weapons and armor of our Lord in baptism. As the Syriac Father Jacob of Sarug says in his homily on Epiphany, the Holy Spirit made the Jordan, where John baptized Christ, a forge for the armor and weapons of the Holy Spirit.

The armament that John prepares the way for is much greater than iron or steel. When we put on the armor of the Spirit, as St. Paul tells us, we put on Jesus Christ Himself (Gal. 3:27) to stand against all evil (Eph. 6:13). And just as armed soldiers do not stand idly thinking their armament is sufficient, to be baptized alone does not suffice. We must use what we have received in baptism to prepare the way – in prayer, in fasting, in almsgiving, and in good deeds to all people. These are the battles of Christ on earth – the serving the Kingdom of God. Though, to earthly eyes, it would seem like John the Baptist failed because he was killed, he heralded the way once again for the true Way, Jesus Christ, Who chose freely to die so as to give life to the world. Perhaps we will suffer what seem losses and defeats on earth, whether the small insults or large persecution, but we must not be deterred from doing the work of the Lord in John's example for the wage for true service to God is eternal life amongst the righteous and just united to Christ, as we know John the Baptist achieved. May his prayers be a rampart to us.

- Article Credit: St. Rafqa Parish





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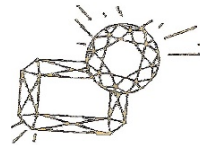
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