



# Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214

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[stsharbelpdx@gmail.com](mailto:stsharbelpdx@gmail.com)

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

## February 11, 2018

### Miracle of Cana in Galilee



**Next Sunday**

***Cleansing of the Leper***

**Rom 6:12-23**(Freedom from Sin/Life in God)

**Mk 1:35-45** (Jesus Leaves Capernaum/The Cleansing of a Leper)

## Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for January 28th - February 3rd

Online.....\$140.00

Collection.....\$634.16

Weekly Total.....\$774.16

YTD Total.....\$7,591.43

YTD Goal.....\$9,230.00

YTD Difference.....**-\$1,638.57**

## Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, February 11th, 10:30 am

+Karam Karam

Monday, February 12th

Available

Tuesday, February 13th

+Helen Mouwad

Wednesday, February 14th

+Yvonne Foulia

Thursday, February 15th

+Chakour & Adail Chakour

Friday, February 16th

+Mike Hreiz

Saturday, February 17th

+Joseph & Manne Atie

Sunday, February 18th

+Lutfieh Alsahwi

***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

Sunday, February 11th

Available

Sunday, February 18th

Available

# Events

St. Maron Feast Day Mass — **Friday, February 9, 10:30am**  
 Ash Monday Mass — **February, 12, 7:00pm**  
 Stations of the Cross in English and Arabic — **Fridays during Lent, 7:00pm**

## 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

Parishioners,

Please note two new posts on our parish website. They can be found at the bottom of the main page, [stsharbel.org](http://stsharbel.org)

One post highlights the Parish Financials. In an effort to make things more transparent and accountable, Abouna Christopher has provided a snapshot of the financials from 2017.

The second post contains reminders for the Upcoming Lenten/Holy Week 2018, as well as, dates and times for all events.



## ST. IGNATIUS CHURCH

SE 43rd Ave. and Powell Blvd.

## ITALIAN DINNER

OUR 83rd YEAR!

Sunday, February 18th

Noon to 6 p.m.

Adults \$13.00

Seniors \$10.00

Children \$6.00

Under 5 FREE

Spaghetti

Ravioli

Meatballs

Take out available, too!

## CALLING BUSINESS OWNERS!

We are looking for Businesses who would like to advertise in our church bulletin. If you are interested please contact Nisreen Mouammar for more information and to set up your ad!

[nisreen.mouammar@gmail.com](mailto:nisreen.mouammar@gmail.com)



The National Apostle of Maronites is having their annual Vocations Awareness Poster Essay Multimedia Contest for students K-12th Grade.

More details and rules are attached to the parish email in a brochure for those who would like to enter.

# **Reflection**

## *Miracle of Cana in Galilee*

### *Lk 2:1-11*

A great banquet requires great planning. Anyone who hosts guests knows the anxiety of arranging a perfect party. In today's reading from Gospel, Jesus saves the hosting couple from utter embarrassment at their own wedding when they run out of wine – the main drink of the day. In His mercy, Christ performs His first miracle by turning six huge jars of water into wine – and not just any wine, but the best vintage. While it might seem strange that we commemorate a party before the start of the fasting of Lent it is no accident. The following Sundays of the Lent all commemorate the merciful acts of our Lord, the Lover of Mankind, on those whom He takes pity (such as the Leper next week, Mark 1:35-43). Each merciful act of Christ in healing the sick and suffering reveals to humanity that He is the Divine Physician Who has come to heal our souls and bodies. But all this climaxes with a banquet. Before His passion He gave us His body and blood, which truly given when crucified and shed the following day, at the Last Supper – a banquet. The banquet at Cana points us to what to await at the end of Lent – the commemoration of Christ, Life Himself, giving us the flesh of life at His banquet. And these two banquets point to the ultimate banquet in the resurrected glory of Easter at the end of time in heaven, which we celebrated at the Consecration of the Church, for the Church is the wedding party preparing for the banquet. For this reason, before we begin fasting we recall the banquet of Cana, which Christ gave us as a foreshadowing.

When we receive an invitation to a party we make sure not to fill up on junk food that day. In fact, sometimes we do not eat so that we can eat more delicious food at the banquet. Similarly, in the spiritual life we must prepare for the banquet of Holy Thursday, Easter, and the end of time to enjoy it properly with Christ. If we fill our souls with junk food pleasures of this world to fulfill our immediate desires, like Adam in the Garden eating the apple, we have less room for God. This is why Christ has given us a powerful means of preparing spiritually, which we traditionally associate with Lent – fasting. If Adam had fasted, he would not have transgressed the commandment of God when tempted by Satan. Christ shows us, when He fasts and is tempted by Satan, that He triumphs over him (Matt. 4:1-11). Fasting controls our passions, and is an imperative of Christ, which He reminds will be rewarded by the Father (Matt. 6:18).

In the pastoral care of the Church, the canonical obligation of fasting is not regularly required (i.e. it is not a mortal sin if you do not fast), but it is also not required to bring armor to battle, and as the Syriac Father Aphrahat tells us fasting is “Accounted like treasure in heaven. It is armor against the Evil One, and a shield against the Enemy's arrows” (On Fasting). Fasting is an integral part of our tradition for thousands of years because of the spiritual assistance it grants. One should try to do as much as they healthily can. According to the Maronite tradition, fasting is not eating until noon Monday through Friday, followed by two meals of just what one needs to eat, and it excludes animal products (meats/fish with a spine, dairy, egg) and alcohol. It is daunting at first but one must remember it is for one's preparation to receive the Risen Christ and the Kingdom. Of course, our tradition is also very sensible – we are not legalists, but adherents to the Spirit. If this fast is too much, one should ask their priest how they can make it more manageable – perhaps try just Wednesday and Friday this Lent or abstaining from meat. But the important thing to remember is that it is not an athletic competition to see how much we can not eat, but preparation for Christ's coming, both back from the dead at Easter and on the last day.

But fasting does not just include not eating. St. Isaac of Nineveh reminds us there are spirits besides angels that do not eat but they also do not pray – demons. Fasting is an opportunity to remove the junk food from our lives during a fasting period to focus better on the spiritual life. If one, for instance, does the fast above they could replace breakfast with praying a couple psalms from the Book of Psalms. Ultimately, we must prepare our whole selves for Christ, not just our stomachs. Aphrahat, once again, says that your body, which is a temple of God, has one doorway through which the King Jesus Christ enters for communion. A man would not drag manure and trash out the door a king will enter – likewise, as we fast, we must strive to fast from all sorts of hateful language, gossip, and trouble-making for our Lord said, “That which enters man does not defile him but what comes out of him from the mouth defiles him” (Matt. 15:11).



### Gibran N Zogbi

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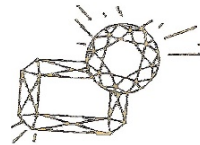
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