



Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214

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stsharbelpdx@gmail.com

www.stsharbel.org

August 25, 2019

The Fruit of the Message to the Gentiles



Next Sunday

Preaching the Word

1 Cor 3:1- 11 (Ministers of a New Covenant/Contrast with the Old Covenant)

Lk 8:1-15 (The Parable of the Sower)

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for August 11th - 17th

Online.....\$1,020.00

Collection.....\$0.00

Weekly Total.....\$1,020.00

YTD Total.....\$60,096.76

YTD Goal.....\$60,918.00

YTD Difference.....**-\$821.24**

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, August 25th 10:30 am

+George Jannorah & +Jamileh Jannorah

Monday, August 26th

Available

Tuesday, August 27th

Available

Wednesday, August 28th

Available

Thursday, August 29th

Available

Friday, August 30th

Available

Saturday, August 31st

Available

Sunday, September 1st

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

Sunday, August 25th

Available

Sunday, September 1st

Available

Parish / Community 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



September 25 - November 3
40 DAYS FOR LIFE®

2019 Fall Campaign

Prayer & fasting • Community Outreach • Peaceful Vigil

40 Days for Life is the largest internationally coordinated pro-life mobilization in history, helping people in local communities end the injustice of abortion.

Let's bring a message of hope
to the people of Portland.

Opening Mass

with Fr. Matt Libra and Deacon Brian Diehm

Saturday, September 14th, 5:30 PM

St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church

2727 NE 54th Avenue

Portland, OR 97213

join us!

Opening Prayer Vigil

with Archbishop Alexander K. Sample

Friday, September 20th, 6 PM

Lovejoy Surgicenter

933 NW 25th Avenue

Portland, OR 97210

www.40daysforlife.com/portland

Reflection

The Fruit of the Message to the Gentiles

This upcoming week we celebrate the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. It seems odd that we would celebrate the beheading of a saint, but his beheading is really the culmination of the glory of his life as the forerunner of Christ! To understand why, one must understand John's exemplary life, of whom Christ Himself said, "Among those born of women there is no one greater than John" (Luke 7:28).

John is "the lamp who was sent out before the Sun (i.e. Christ)," as the Maronite prayers for his feast say – he was a flicker in the dark to preview what the sun's dawn means. Even in the womb, John "prepare[d] the way of the Lord" (Is. 40:3). If we recall, he leapt and danced in the womb of Elizabeth, his mother, when Mary, pregnant with Jesus, visited her. He already began to point the way to God even before being born. John's father was the high priest of the Temple in Jerusalem at the time, which made John from the hereditary priestly tribe. He spent his entire life in fasting and prayer in the wilderness, preaching to the Jews to prepare their hearts for the coming of Christ. He is called the Baptist because he began baptizing before Jesus Christ established baptism, and Christ commanded John to baptize Him, forerunning Christ's sending the Apostles out to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus sent John to preach repentance and the Kingdom before His own earthly ministry. John suffered for the truth and foreshadowed Christ's own suffering, as John rebuked Herod for his evils. In the end, John was beheaded when Herod's daughter asked for his head on a platter, forerunning Christ's own death at the hands of the wicked. But such a life seems a grim topic for a feast!

Just as John was Christ's forerunner in life, so was he in death. John went to the dead, where it said he did not stop preaching for he loved God, and so gave a chance to those who never heard of Christ to accept Him. And, having served God with all his life, entered into heaven and he will be raised in body on the Last Day. His entire life summarized by his short saying,

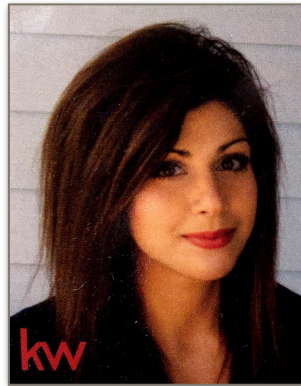
"He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). We celebrate John's beheading because he gave everything he had to preparing the way for the Lord, including his own head. God had blessed him from the beginning of his life, and he gave everything back to God. For this, God has raised John up to the Kingdom where he lives eternally and we remember him each year in the Church. This is why Christ said, "Among those born of women there is no one greater than John."

But in the same breath, Christ says, "Yet the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he (John)." John is certainly a faithful servant of Jesus – but how could we hope to enter the Kingdom of God when we are competing with having to be greater than accepting to be beheaded? Christ says elsewhere, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). Those who impoverish themselves by decreasing and letting Christ increase in their lives become greater than "the lamp who was sent out before the Sun." We celebrate John because he teaches us that even as a little flickering lamp compared to the great Sun, we can bring the illumination of God in the world. The worst threat the enemies of Christ can make, in the end, is only temporary – for Herod beheaded John, but now we call it his crowning for by it he entered into eternal life. We probably will not be put in a situation to be beheaded, but even in the same ways we can make show Christ in the world by diminishing ourselves will lead us to be greater than even the great John the Baptist.

**Gibran N Zogbi**

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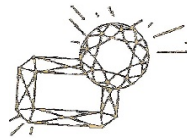
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