

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

March 1, 2020

Cleansing of the Leper



Next Sunday

Healing of the Hemorrhaging Woman

2 Cor 7:4-11 (Call to Holiness/Paul's Joy in Macedonia)

Lk 8:40-56 (Jairus's Daughter and the Woman with a Hemorrhage)

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for February 16th - 22nd

Online.....\$405.00

Collection.....\$1,629.00

Weekly Total.....\$2,034.00

YTD Total.....\$13,183.00

YTD Goal.....\$12,922.00

YTD Difference.....\$261.00

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, March 1st 10:30 am

Available

Monday, March 2nd

Available

Tuesday, March 3rd

Available

Wednesday, March 4th

+ Vickie Martinez

Thursday, March 5th

Available

Friday, March 6th

Available

Saturday, March 7th

Available

Sunday, March 8th

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, March 1st

Available

Sunday, March 8th

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

Lenten Schedule

Stations of the Cross in English and Arabic — **Fridays during Lent, 7:00pm**

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament — **Sundays during Lent, 9:00am**

Holy Week Schedule available at stsharbel.org

The Cedars of Saint Sharbel Youth Group Discussion Schedule:

All meetings held in upstairs classroom immediately following Sunday Mass.

MAR: 8th - Sacraments and Mysteries : Their meaning, Grace

22nd - What does it mean to be a man?...a woman?...a family?

APR: 19th - The Truth About God and Human Sexuality

MAY: 17th - Social Event: TBA

St. Sharbel MYA (Maronite Young Adults) Group

The group for ages 18+ is restarting monthly meetings at the Parish.
They will meet the first Sunday of the Month.

Meetings will take place after mass in the Upper room of the church at 12pm.

Reflection

Cleansing of the Leper

Osyō Tobo – the Good Physician is one of the most common phrases and images used by the Syriac Church Fathers to describe our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Ephrem, St. Jacob of Sarug, and St. Aphrahat use it perhaps more than anyone else. And in listening today's Gospel of the cleansing of the leper it is no surprise such an image is used, which summarizes our Lord's aspirations for humanity in His salvific Incarnation.

In today's Gospel we see the voluntary mission of the loving and merciful Christ, our God, is one of healing the broken state of man. In each of the Gospel readings during the Sundays of Lent Christ miraculously heals someone – whether they be leprosy, blind, hemorrhaging, deaf, and so on. All these small, separate episodes indicate and point to His greater overall mission as the Good Physician come to heal us of all our infirmities of sin which we incurred through the debt of Adam and our own injuries of sin. This image so aptly conveys not only the mission of Christ, but also prefigures the life-saving mysteries He undertakes for us during Holy Week and Easter Sunday for which we use Lent to prepare, namely His life-saving institution of the Eucharist, passion, harrowing of the dead from Sheol and resurrection. This image of the Good Physician is a lens through which our Lenten journey can be seen – Lent is our spiritual recovery room.

But what is it that caused Christ to descend from heaven, become man and heal us? After all, if He is God, He has no need of anything here – He has created everything. In fact, by becoming man and lowering Himself, He puts Himself at risk – we hear in today's Gospel that Christ asks the leper not to repeat what He did for him. We later see in the Gospel that whenever He heals the sick His enemies question Him, reject Him as God, say He is a blasphemer, and ultimately will be the same people who torture and kill Him. But Christ knew this before He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary and chose, nonetheless, to become man because He so greatly loves humanity and love for us is only motivation. God has no need of us, He is not magnified by our praise nor does He become stronger because of our sacrifice. However, motivated by His own sacrificial love He came down from heaven to be near His creation and take away from it the death man incurred upon himself through sin – and the cure for the death of man was the death of Christ. Knowing this price, the Immortal Christ wanted to cure us of our infirmity and died for us.

In the end, the Good Physician cut out the abscess of death and in its place gave us the opportunity for life eternal if we follow Him in what He asks. Another common phrase in Syriac theology is what St. Ignatius of Antioch, our second patriarch of Antioch, calls *samo dhaye*, or the Medicine of Life. The love of God for His people was so great that He did not only want to simply remove the injury which Adam inflicted upon himself in the Garden – Christ granted Adam the fruit he initially sought! The Medicine of Life is the Eucharist Christ has made available for ourselves from His own suffering. What other physician would not only work for free, but then give his own flesh and blood to his patients for their own survival? The Eucharist, which is truly Christ's flesh and blood, is exactly that – the Good Physician's prescription for eternal life and the remission of sin.

Christ the Good Physician's care is freely given, but He asks that we give one thing in return, which we gladly accept by taking the name "Christian." This one thing He asks is the golden rule: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and Love your neighbor as yourself." In fact, it was the very rejection of this principle inscribed upon our hearts in creation that caused the illnesses of sin and death – Adam came to love himself more than God and other. Having received the Medicine of Life, Lent is our recovery room in which we strive to fulfill what the Good Physician has asked – the fulfillment of this golden rule. All the fasting and preparation of Lent is aimed and oriented towards preparing us that we, having been healed, may now turn and love one another and God.

**Gibran N Zogbi**

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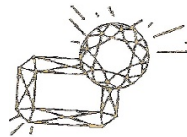
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