



Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214

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www.stsharbel.org

March 22, 2020

Healing of the Paralytic



Next Sunday

Healing of the Blind Man

2Cor 10:1-7 (Accusation of Weakness)

Mk 10:46-52 (The Blind Bartimaeus)

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for March 8th -14th

Online.....\$1,220.00

Collection.....\$1,030.00

Weekly Total.....\$2,250.00

YTD Total.....\$18,621.00

YTD Goal.....\$18,460.00

YTD Difference.....\$161.00

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, March 22nd 10:30 am

+Hoda Helou

Monday, March 23rd

Available

Tuesday, March 24th

Available

Wednesday, March 25th

Available

Thursday, March 26th

Available

Friday, March 27th

Available

Saturday, March 28th

Available

Sunday, March 29th

+Doris Sellikan

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 22nd

Redmond Family

Sunday, March 29th

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

LETTER FROM ABOUNA

Brothers and sisters,

Know that I am praying for you daily as I offer a private Mass for your intentions. We must all continue, united in prayer, especially during this time. Last week I was worried about people becoming ill, this week I remain concerned but now worry about financial security. Let us recall that all things are made easier with God on our side.

We must follow the lead of civil authorities which prohibit gatherings, we are also choosing to follow Archbishop Sample's guidelines which call for all Masses to be cancelled through Holy Week, including Easter. Stay tuned for options were you might be allowed to come pray at church but only in very small numbers. I am hopeful that the restrictions might ease, but Easter is very close and it will be difficult to manage but let us not give up hope. I have a few ideas but I must vet them with the bishops, and the local authorities.

The Evil One wants to catch us during this time of weakness and the answer is clear and simple -- prayer! Here are ideas:

- Gather as a family, pray the Divine Office* especially on Sunday mornings
- Gather a family or in very small group and pray the rosary on any day
- Make an Act of Spiritual Communion, do this on Sundays especially

In other news, **we have no choice but to cancel the Mother's Day Haffi.** Know that I am convening the Parish Finance Council to review our finances, but my initial assessment is we are in adequate state for at least 4-5 months. That assumes we don't run the heat and we are prudent.

The most important thing to me is your health and safety, and your salvation. As long as we stay together as a community -- calling one another, sharing resources, gathering in prayer, we will be fine.

I can honestly say, now more than ever, that I love each of you as my own family.

You are in my constant prayer, day and night.

God bless,
Abouna

*The Deacons or Gibran Zogbi can help direct you to the Divine Office -- Kristina might be able to post it. It is also posted on www.maronitefaith.com (choose Sunday morning prayer).

It's that time again for NAM's annual Spring Raffle - see flyer.

Contact Nadia Redmond email: n.redmond@comcast.net or call: 503-671-0440 if you are interested in purchasing a ticket for yourself or as a group.

We have 4 tickets to sell out of 450 tickets that are sent to all the Maronite parishes. Deadline is April 1st.



*The National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM)
Presents*

*The 27th Annual Spring Raffle - 2020
Only 450 Tickets are printed
Donation: \$100 per ticket*

This just may be the year your lucky number is chosen!!!!

Cash Prizes!!!

1st	\$10,000.00
2nd	\$3,000.00
3rd	\$2,000.00
4th	\$1,500.00
5th	\$1,000.00

This year's drawing will be held on **April 26th, 2020** at St. Joseph, Sandy Springs (Atlanta), Georgia;

Thank you for your support in previous years for this raffle fund-raiser, as it is an important part of the NAM annual budget. We are counting on your generosity once again, to support our community projects.

To purchase a personal ticket(s), your parish NAM Delegates have 4 tickets to sell, please contact Christopher or Nadia Redmond at 503-671-0440 or email: n.redmond@comcast.net

All requests and payments must be received by **April 1st, 2020.**

www.namnews.org

Readings

Sunday March 22, 2020

1Tim 5:24-6:5 (False Teaching & True Wealth)

The sins of some people are conspicuous and precede them to judgement, while the sins of others follow them there. So also good works are conspicuous; and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden.

Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church; rather they must serve them all the more, since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved.

Teach and urge these duties. Whoever teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that is in accordance with godliness, is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words. From these come envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, and wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

Mk 2:1-12 (The Healing of a Paralytic)

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralysed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.'

Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 'Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?'

At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, 'Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven", or to say, "Stand up and take your mat and walk"? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins' he said to the paralytic 'I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home. And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this!'

Reflection

Healing of a Paralytic

Once again this week we reflect upon Christ's love for humanity in His capacity as the Divine Physician looking to the Gospel passage of His healing of the paralytic. This healing, as the weeks past in this Lent, elucidate Christ's coming to the world to heal mankind of our illnesses – physical, but even more the spiritual, which we cannot heal by any medical knowledge. In faith they ask for the paralytic to be made whole, and our Lord restores him both in body and soul as He is our good and merciful God.

Moved by compassion for those made in His image, Christ seeks to forgive us at the first sign of remorse. But there have always been those blind to the mercy of God. The teachers of the Law, those well studied in the Scriptures, immediately accuse Him of blasphemy for forgiving sins. But had they truly read the Scriptures praying to understand God's message, instead of using it to their own advantage, they would have seen that Jesus Christ is the Messiah foretold in all of the Jewish Scriptures (2 Cor. 3:14). If they truly knew the Scriptures past the memorization of words they would have known at the moment Jesus forgave the man's sins the endless times He spoke through the prophets, such as when He said through Ezekiel, "For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!" (Ez. 18:32) or through King David, "he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us." (Ps. 103:10, 12). To make His love for humanity and divine power even clearer Christ heals the man's paralysis, after which they all praise Him if but for a moment. This is not the first time that those well versed in the Law, such as the scribes, priests or Pharisees, cannot see Who the Law is about or Who wrote the Law because they lack faith and refuse to ask God for an increase of it.

Yet how easily is their opinion swayed when they receive the sign they wanted with a miraculous healing? It is the same fickleness that made them the people who in the week of the Passion of our Lord shouted "Hosanna" on Sunday and "Crucify Him!" on Friday. Knowing all this in advance, Jesus our God still accepted to become man in His love for us. He chose, in His compassion, to make us whole that we might choose life with Him. As a beautiful hymn in the Maronite Holy Week prayer book says, "By His hand, He healed a withered hand and it was straightened out which would strike Him upon the cheek. He opened a mouth for His glory and the mouth spat in His face." This hymn is referring to the man with a withered hand (Mark 3:1-6) and the mute (Mark 7:31-37) whom Christ heals in His love for humanity, despite knowing it is His fellow Jews that will turn against Him and crucify Him. But even if they shall only be made whole to use their divine gifts against Him Christ gives them the chance.

We should be indignant at the idea of accepting the Lord's generosity only to later use it against Him. But how often do we act similarly? Those healed by Christ and those who witnessed it might have been genuinely praising Christ in the moment they received something, but when they were asked to make an act of faith and say the sickly Jesus, captured and beaten was God they trusted their senses rather than in the faith of God. Perhaps we are not condemning people to death, but each sin is a rejection of God. He has gifted us with 24hrs. in a day, do we say we are too busy to pray? He has gifted us with our comforts, do we refuse the poor a meal or the Church financial support? He has gifted us with our very existence, do we discourage others'? As humans, we are bound to fail in these regards – that is why we need Christ. An acknowledgment of these failures is not to just feel guilty because such guilt is useless. Instead, it should compel us to turn to Christ, our Divine Physician, and ask Him to forgive us our failures, resolving to amend our ways. We do not have the veil over our hearts like those who accused Christ of blasphemy for we know that He is truly God and can take away our sins. Nonetheless, we do fail – and perhaps often – which is why Christ has made available to us healing from our wounds of sin. This Lenten time of penance is one of them. Let us not despair in our sins but rejoice in the generosity of Jesus Christ's certainty of healing.



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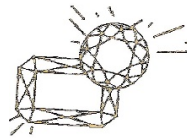
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