



Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214

503.231.3853

stsharbelpdx@gmail.com

www.stsharbel.org

December 6, 2020

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 Nov 22nd -28th

Online.....\$1,125.00

Collection.....\$3,118.00

Weekly Total.....\$4,243.00

YTD Total.....\$90,584.83

YTD Goal.....\$86,762.00

YTD Difference.....\$3,822.83

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, December 6th, 10:30am

+Marie and Wadih Germanos

Monday, December 7th

+Pat Stokes

Tuesday, December 8th

Berna Sheehan

Wednesday, December 9th

Available

Thursday, December 10th

Available

Friday, December 11th

Michael Robert Saleman

Saturday, December 12th

Available

Sunday, December 13th

+Andrew Thomas Walther; 40 day
Memorial

**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, December 6th

Available

Sunday, December 13th

Available

Parish / Community Events

Sunday, December 6, 2020, 10:30am

Youtube Channel Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi8CEQIEnX-VeERKBMqhKRA>

We'll be using this same link every week since it connects to St. Sharbel's Youtube Channel. Once there click on the appropriate date for mass.

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 Mass

Tuesday, December 8, 12:00pm

If you would like to attend the mass on Tuesday, please use Sign Up genius to reserve your spot. Follow the link to sign up.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EA9AF23A4FC1-mass1>

YOUTH GROUP

Calling All Youth ages 13-18!!

The Cedars of Saint Sharbel is a "family" of young people who will meet in virtual meetings to discuss real life and how it relates to our faith in God and His tremendous love for humankind. We'll dig deep to answer some of life's greatest questions while developing friendships and having fun at the same time.

The next meeting will be December 12 at 1pm via Zoom

Watch for invitation in your inbox

Please email Gennifer Karam for questions or to sign up for the email list:

jmjkaram3@gmail.com

In-Person Mass Sign Ups

We are switching over to using Sign-Up Genius for our weekly in person sign ups. The system will allow you to access at any time and register or alter a reservation. It is able to update in real-time, where as I am not.

Here is the link in case you need to check or alter your reservation.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EA9AF23A4FC1-mass1>

COVID MASS POLICIES

- You will need to come with a mask. Mask may be removed to receive Communion obviously. We don't have masks to give you so please bring one.
- I cannot give Communion outside of Mass – this means in your cars, on the sidewalk, etc. Communion for the homebound is suppressed also at this time.
- Sit only in spot marked on pews. Remain physically distant as you enter and exit the church through the basement entrance only.
- No lingering after Mass, you will need to leave directly.
- If your name is not of the sign up list the ushers cannot allow you to come in. We will need to be strict about this and apologize in advance for problems that might arise.
- I request you only use the downstairs entrance, below the main stairs, the other doors will be closed, this will help us to be able to clean commonly touched surfaces.
- We will not allow use of missals, or other books in the pews. Do your best with the responses.
- Only people who are members of the parish are eligible at this point to attend our limited Masses. If you have been coming regularly, and are not registered elsewhere but have not registered with us, now is the time to do this. Archbishop has asked that we keep people going to the parishes they are registered as a way to respect fair and equitable access to all.

Reflection

It is telling that we celebrate the birth of a man – St. John the Baptist – in the season leading up to the great celebration of the birth of our Lord and God, Jesus Christ. It reveals much about the divine plan of salvation, but I would like to identify in particular what it says of the relationship between God and man. It seems obvious to say that Christ's salvation of mankind was for the sake of mankind. But what is often taken for granted in speaking about the divine action in the world is that it is out of His benevolence and love of mankind that God acts. God does not act in the abstract, far from humanity, but salvation is wrought amongst men and using the free will of men. John the Baptist is an example of mankind's intimate involvement in our own salvation. Even Christ becoming man was His involvement of our very nature in His plan to sanctify us and elevate us to participate in His divinity.

We celebrate John the Baptist this Sunday because he is the saint sent ahead of Christ by Christ to prepare His way, "the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord'" (John 1:23). As we recall from the Announcement to Zechariah, not only is John's mother, Elizabeth, very old, she was also barren for her entire marriage to Zechariah. Yet, God has deemed it fitting in His love for mankind to make the barren fruitful, and so Elizabeth begets a child in her old age – but not just any child, but the prophet of the Most High. John goes before Christ to prepare the way to announce the Gospel. It is John who first baptizes, and, in fact, it is John who baptizes Jesus, which He humbles Himself to just as He humbled Himself to be born of the Virgin Mary. In God's greatness, He has come down to us that He might bring us up to Himself and He involves us only by our own free will. The miraculous birth of John is the answer to Elizabeth and Zechariah's prayers, and John's ministry is his response to the call of the Lord.

Knowing God is infinitely good and seeking to involve us in our own sanctification, how do we respond? The prayers of the Syriac Maronite tradition give us profound insight:

O God most high and incomprehensible, Who in His goodness established the worlds and brought them into being, in Whose wisdom created heaven and adorned it with stars, by Whose will a voice, which announced before Himself, was begotten from a barren and fruitless womb, now beget in us sweet voices of Your praises, noble exaltations of Your thanks and choice acclaim of Your wonders. Make us worthy all the days of our lives that with purity and holiness we may give thanks to You, worship You and glorify You, and Your Father, and Your living and Holy Spirit, now and at all times, forever. Amen. (From the Syriac Maronite Vespers for the Feast of the Birth of John the Baptist)

This prayer begins by acknowledging the God we address is He Who created all things, not out of obligation, but in His goodness. In the same goodness, He called John to go before Him from a barren womb. Just as God did before, we ask Him to now again beget in our, at times, barren selves His own praises. It is a deception of the devil to believe there is an insurmountable gap between God and man – for in God's goodness, He has bridged it by becoming man Himself. Therefore, even in all our limitedness and failings, by the power and grace of God, Who has created us in His image, we are lifted up to His glory if we only ask. We are each called by God to give glory to Him in our own way – just as Elizabeth was called to birth John, John was called to be the prophet of Christ, and the priest is called to offer sacrifice, each of us are to play our own role in purity and holiness.

**Gibran N Zogbi**

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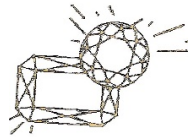
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