



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

January 3, 2021

Sunday of the Finding in the Temple



Next Sunday

First Sunday of Epiphany

2 Cor 10:1-11 (Accusation of Weakness)

Jn 1:29-34 (John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus)

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for Dec 20th - 31st
END OF YEAR TOTALS

Online.....\$4,960.00

Collection.....\$1,900.00

Weekly Total.....\$6,860.00

YTD Total.....\$115,788.83

YTD Goal.....\$94,146.00

YTD Difference.....\$21,642.83

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS
CONTRIBUTIONS!**

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, January 3rd, 10:30am

+*Carl Nunzio Chiarolanzio*

Monday, January 4th

Available

Tuesday, January 5th

Available

Wednesday, January 6th

Available

Thursday, January 7th

Available

Friday, January 8th

Available

Saturday, January 9th

Available

Sunday, January 10th

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, January 3rd

Available

Sunday, January 10th

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

Sunday, January 3rd, 2021, 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.

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 January 9, 2021 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

Christmas seems to be the most joyous time of the year, and rightfully so as we celebrate the day our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world in His love to save us. It is interesting to ask, why, then, do we celebrate two dark events the week of Christmas – the martyrdom of St. Stephen, the first martyr (Dec. 27) and the Holy Innocents, slain by King Herod (Dec. 29)? Why would we celebrate two feasts about death during the same period we celebrate the birth of God as a man? The answer to the “why” can be found in looking exactly “what” both feasts are.

St. Stephen’s feast comes two days after Christmas every year. He was one of the men appointed to be a deacon by the Apostles. In Acts 7, St. Stephen recounts how God has always guided His people, as Pope Benedict XVI says, to prove how Jesus Christ is the completion of God’s plan of salvation for all He has done for us. The Jewish Sanhedrin, or council of leaders, was enraged by this, as well as the rest of his preaching of Christ, and they had him stoned to death. But, imitating Christ’s own words on Good Friday during His crucifixion, St. Stephen prayed that God receive his spirit and forgive those who killed him. As such, St. Stephen is known as the first martyr (coming from the Greek word witness) to the faith of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Innocents, then, are considered in their own way to also be first martyrs. As Matthew writes in the second chapter of his record of the Gospel, Herod met the Magi before they made it to the Christ Child and so he heard the King of the Jews had been born. King Herod feared that such a king should be born in his jurisdiction and threaten his own rule, so he commanded that all boys in Bethlehem under the age of two be killed so as to kill Christ. Jesus, Mary and Joseph successfully fled to Egypt to avoid Herod’s persecution, but unfortunately Herod slaughtered many children. The Maronite Office likens Herod to the Pharaoh in Exodus:

Two Kings traveled on two paths: they made war against infants. Pharaoh, the wicked king, and Herod, hater of truth. Pharaoh drowned infants to lessen the children of Israel and Herod killed youths for he willed to kill the Lord of All. Woe to both of them for they fought against truth. Behold, they [the children] were made heirs of the Garden of Eden, and torment is reserved for the kings.

Why, then, do we celebrate the death of saints so near to the birth of Christ? In both their own ways, St. Stephen and the Holy Innocents were martyred (that is, witnessed) for Christ, Who is the Truth – St. Stephen in his words, and the Holy Innocents in the purity of their being. Because of their witness, they are known as the first martyrs. But by witnessing to Christ, they did not die. They were killed in body, but as the prayer above says, “They were made heirs of the Garden of Eden” while those who persecuted them will receive torment. As we reflected last week, by Christ’s birth He has united His divinity to our humanity. Those who witness to Him will receive life eternal in heaven, even if they should be killed – as Christ Himself says, “Whoever loses their life for me will find it” (Matt. 16:25). Christ was killed on Good Friday but He rose on Easter Sunday because He Himself is life – and He has united His life to those are Christian.

Each of us who call ourselves Christian must witness to Christ. Certainly only a few are called to physically die in profession of Christ, but persecution comes to all Christians, in one form or another. We are called to profess Christ in all we do for, as Christ has told us, “My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day” (John 6:40). After the Birth of Our Lord in the flesh, we celebrate St. Stephen and the Holy Innocents’ entrance into eternal life through the same Lord – may their prayers be a rampart to us.

**Gibran N Zogbi**

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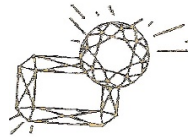
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