



# Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

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[www.stsharbel.org](http://www.stsharbel.org)

## September 19, 2021

1st Sunday After the Holy Cross



### Next Sunday

2nd Sunday After the Holy Cross

2 Phil 2:1-10 (Wrong Conduct and Our Goal/Live in Concord)

Mt 24:23-31 (The Great Tribulation/The Coming of the Son of Man)

## Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for September 5th - 11th

Online.....\$1,465.00

Collection.....\$415.00

Weekly Total.....\$1,880.00

YTD Total.....\$66,303.47

YTD Goal.....\$68,302.00

YTD Difference.....**-\$1,998.53**

## Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, September 19th, 11:00am

+Faris Shemali

Monday, September 20th

Available

Tuesday, September 21st

Available

Wednesday, September 22nd

+Catherine Johann

Thursday, September 23rd

Available

Friday, September 24th

Available

Saturday, September 25th

Available

Sunday, September 26th

+Grandpa Pat Redmond

**Adoration/Exposition every Sunday at 10:00 am before the morning Liturgy.**

**Confession every Sunday 10:35-10:50am before the morning Liturgy.**

**Also join us to pray the Rosary on Sundays at 10:30 am before the Liturgy begins.**

## Altar Sponsorship

Sunday, September 19th

Redmond Family

Sunday, September 26th

Available

## Parish / Community Events



Our first Maronite Young Adults (MYA) meeting will be on 9/26, in person, after the Holy Mysteries in the area outside the sacristy. The MYA is a group of men and women ages 18-40 (ish) which meets once a month for fellowship, prayer, and social activities. If interested, please contact Claude Karam at [claudetrazzafoods.com](mailto:claudetrazzafoods.com)

### Parish Council

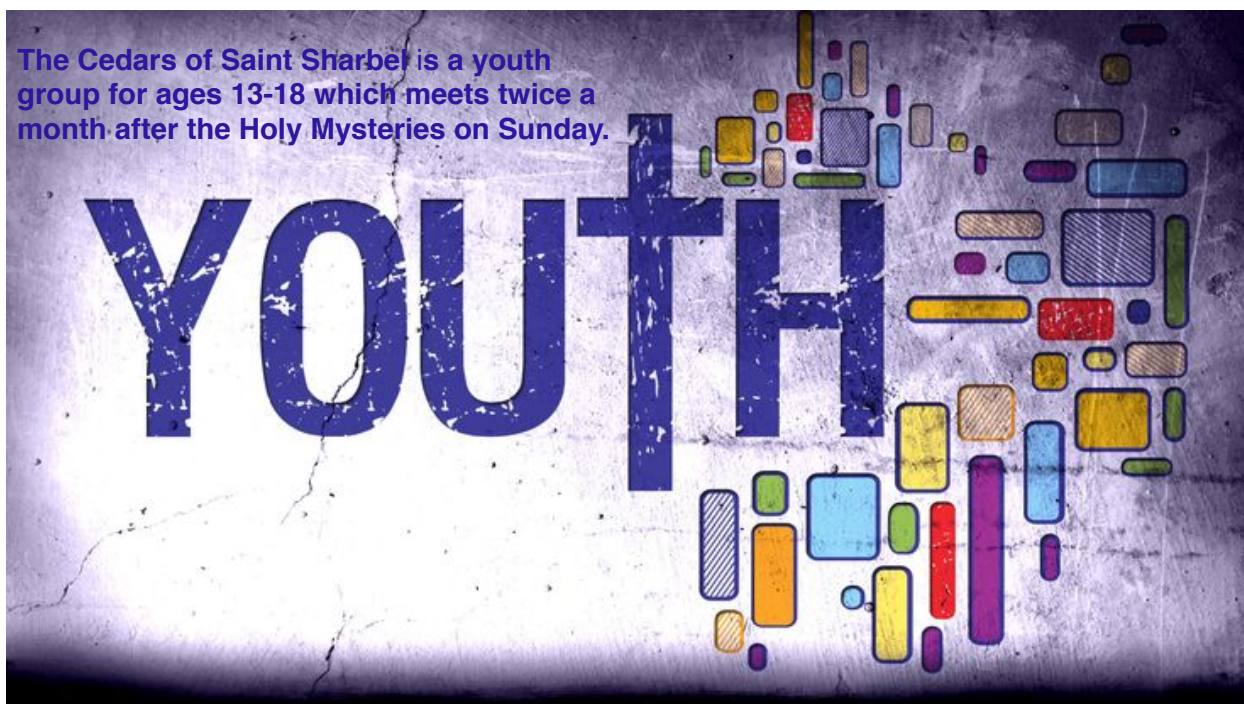
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Adib Karam  
+Claude Karam  
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(Secretary)  
+Doug Raab  
+Thaddeus Rask  
Nadia Redmond  
Mitch Siekmann

Ex Officio  
+Deacon Tony  
+Deacon Wadih

+Finance  
Committee

### All Families with children age 6 to 12 (grades: 1-7):

**St. Sharbel Sunday School Program** will begin on Sunday, October 3, 2021. The goal of this program is to prepare our kids for the Sacraments and to build a strong relationship with each other and their parish. Please email Nadia Redmond at [n.redmond@comcast.net](mailto:n.redmond@comcast.net) to register for the program and for more information.



Meeting dates are posted here and sent out in email. For more information, contact Gennifer Karam: [jmjkaram3@gmail.com](mailto:jmjkaram3@gmail.com)



## Reflection

*So great is the faith of the Thief whose Lord was crucified upon the Tree and Whose forgiveness he requested. With nails in His hands and feet, he said to Him, "Forgive me my transgression!" Behold, Simon who had seen denied [Him], John stood afar, and the Thief cried out, "Remember me when You come!" (From the prayers of the Feast of the Holy Cross)*

In mostly every other situation, it would be odd to hold up a thief as an example of how we should behave. But throughout the Syriac tradition, the Fathers constantly call our attention to how exemplary the Thief crucified next to Christ is (Luke 23:39-43). Simon Peter, who only shortly before the Passion professed that he would never abandon Christ, denied him and ran away. John, known as the Beloved Disciple and who laid his head on Jesus' chest at the Last Supper, now stands afar. But it was a thief, who admitted his execution was deserved, is raised up as our saintly example even above the first Bishop of Rome and an apostle. From the Thief, we learn three salient lessons.

The Thief sees with what the Syriac Fathers call the "Eye of the Spirit." Christ was beaten and about to die, yet to the Thief He was clearly the Lord of All. While others taunted Him to save Himself, the Thief understood that He was the One without Whom His persecutors would cease to exist. Peter, though he had seen Christ manifest His godly glory at the Transfiguration, still did not understand. But the Thief in his heart understood well when Christ said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die" (John 11:25). That day, the Thief gained eternal life in heaven by dying in faith, but Peter died by denouncing God until he would repent.

The Thief's plea for mercy from God reminds us that we should and must call out to God to save us from our sin. Even in the day of his death, the Thief still had hope because Jesus is the Hope of the Hopeless. Whereas an external observer would say the Thief died and Peter lived by fleeing, we know that the Thief gained eternal life and Peter had rejected the Lord of Life at that moment. The Thief knew that no sin, even one that brought him to death, was larger than the mercy of God – his name is a reminder, in that we remember him by his crime but laud him for his faith. God is the judge of heart and mind, and not restricted to human concepts of justice. He is always eager to have mercy – and when Peter repented from his denunciation of Jesus, he too was forgiven and became the highest bishop of the Church.

The last lesson from the Thief is that we are reminded God is the Judge of Judges – not us. It can be difficult not to judge people by their pasts and appearances, but we must remember we not determine who is worthy of the forgiveness or blessing of the Most High God! After all, it was Sts. Peter and John, apostles and bishops, who ran or stood afar. It was the Thief who was pleasing to God in that moment. But the temporary lapse of Peter also did not define the rest of his life – with sincere repentance came perfect reconciliation!

Like the Thief, let us seek God with spiritual eyes instead of the judgment of man. Like the Thief, let us call out to God at all hours, in spite of how hopeless our situations may look. Like the Thief, let us not try to replace the judgment of God with our own but be confident in His steadfastness! May prayers of the Thief be a rampart to us!

**Gibran N Zogbi**

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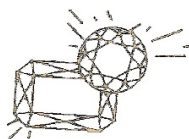
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