



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

March 12, 2023

Parable of the Prodigal Son



Next Sunday

Healing of the Paralytic

1 Tm 5:24-6:5 (False Teaching and True Wealth)

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

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for February 26th - March 4th

Online.....\$483.30

Collection.....\$5,245.00

Weekly Total.....\$5,728.30

YTD Total.....\$18,057.45

YTD Goal.....\$20,772.00

YTD Difference.....**-\$2,714.55**

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, March 12th, 11:00am

Available

Monday, March 13th

+Francesca Rooney

Tuesday, March 14th

Available

Wednesday, March 15th

Available

Thursday, March 16th

Available

Friday, March 17th

Available

Saturday, March 18th

Available

Sunday, March 19th

Available

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, March 12th

Available

Sunday, March 19th

Redmond Family

Parish Council

Bruce Ashford
 Charlie Ashou
 Gus Bekahi
 Ben El Hajj
 Agopos Ghossein
 Adib Karam
 +Claude Karam
 Lydia Massaad
 +Doug Raab
 +Thaddeus Rask
 Nadia Redmond
 Peter Rizk
 Mitch Siekmann

+Finance
 Committee

EPARCHY OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON OF LOS ANGELES REGULATION FOR GREAT LENT

The Church has always helped us fulfill these words of Jesus by prescribing very definite penance for all Catholics. Accordingly, the Pope, the Patriarch, and the American bishops have outline obligatory fasting and abstinence. Our Eparchial Regulations are:

- **Ash Monday (February 20, 2023) and Great Friday (Good) Friday (April 7, 2023)** are days of abstinence for all Catholics *over the age of 14*. On these two days, *fasting* as well as abstinence is also obligatory for those *from the ages of 18-59*. Abstinence means abstinence from meat and meat products. Fasting means no food from midnight to noon, except for plain water. No Catholic will lightly excuse himself or herself from this obligation.
- **All other Fridays of Lent** are days of *abstinence* from meat (and meat products) for everyone 14 years of age and older. Here again, Catholics will not hold themselves lightly excused.
- **If there is a serious health problem, the obligation of fasting and abstinence would not apply.**
- **Fasting from midnight to noon daily is optional.**
- **We strive to make all days of Lent a time of prayer, penance, and charitable assistance toward the less fortunate and needy.**

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4925 NE 9th Ave. Portland, OR 97211



PARISH COUNCIL & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

SUNDAY, MARCH 19
 FOLLOWING MASS

SPRING FORWARD

Daylight Saving Time Begins



Sunday, March 12,
 2023 at 2:00am

SECOND COLLECTIONS

Next Collection

**February 22-April 9,
 2023**

Eparchial
 Development Appeal

Parish Programs



St. Sharbel's MYO or "The Cedars of Saint Sharbel" gathers in the upstairs meeting room immediately after mass. The group is for boys and girls ages 13-18.

Upcoming Meeting Dates Are:

3/12 Cedars Meeting with Surprise Guest
3/26 Cedars Meeting with Mental Health Focus
4/16 Cedars Meeting and last dabke rehearsal
4/30 Cedars Dabke for/with St. Sharbel Families
5/7 Cedars Movie Day - last meeting until the Fall

Please contact Gennifer Karam at jmjkaram3@gmail.com to register

Maronite Young Adults (MYA)

MYA is a local chapter of a national Maronite organization for single and married men and women ages 19+



Next Event:

TBA

For more info on the MYA, contact Claude@trazzafoods.com

Religious Education

To ALL Families with children between Ages 6-11



For Information about family catechesis and sacrament preparation Contact Nadia Redmond, Coordinator of Religious Education, n.redmond@comcast.net

Please continue to pray for our parish and ministries

Invitation to all Sisters in Christ,

A year ago, we formed a group of 7 sisters in Christ to join the Seven Sisters Apostolate, <https://sevensistersapostolate.org/>. Catholic parishes across the United States have joined this beautiful apostolate to pray for our priests.

The Seven Sisters Apostolate is a call to strengthen the Church by ensuring that a Holy Hour is prayed each day of the week for the sole intention of a specific priest or bishop—a "holy wasting" (cf. Mt. 26:10) or lavishing of prayer for his deeper conformity to Christ.

St. Sharbel's 7 sisters are committed to pray for one Holy Hour per week for Abouna Christopher.

If the Holy Spirit is calling you to make this commitment, please contact Nadia Redmond at 503-671-0440 or email: n.redmond@comcast.net

Reflection

When we view a conflict in hindsight we often think about the gravity of the offense – what was done, how much damage was caused, who was hurt. And we should be mindful of the effects of our offenses, especially when they are sins directed at God. In today's Gospel, we see the Prodigal Son makes clear that he wished his father was dead, asking for his inheritance in advance and then going away to waste it all – truly a serious offense. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son it would seem that the Prodigal Son deserves nothing but punishment in our estimation of justice and rightfully so – previously he could not have cared about his father or family and left to enjoy himself, only to return when things went wrong. But the offense of this misbehaving son only receives a couple verses out of the entire story, and Christ does this one purpose. The story of salvation is not focused on the offenses of humanity against God, though great they may be, but on the infinite generosity of God's mercy to the contrite person.

Why does Christ present us with this parable, and why does the Maronite Church read it during the Fast of Lent? Sin is our death, and every time we stray towards sin we choose our own interests in spite of the abundant generosity of God – essentially saying we care that God neither lives nor dies, but we shall go our own way from the generous Father to see to our own lives. But it is not simply enough to react to sin, and to disavow sin; if we are reacting to sin, sin remains the center of our lives. The way to return back from death to life is through Life Himself, our Lord, who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). The means to return to Christ is through constant repentance from our sin. When the older son is outraged that the father so warmly greeted the Prodigal, he responds, "We had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again" (Luke 15:32) reminiscent of when God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel, "For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God. Repent and live!" (Ez. 18:32).

Repentance is not to despair in our depraved we are because of our sins, but the acknowledgment of how much greater God is than our sin and His ability to wipe them away. Sin and death killed Adam in the Garden, but, by His cross, our Lord killed sin and death. If He did not intend to make available for us the forgiveness of sins, He would not have taught us in the Our Father to say, "Forgive us our trespasses" (Matt. 6:12). But Christ in His infinite mercy has made forgiveness available to those who simply and sincerely ask for it, in spite of their offense like the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

But how can we repay God for all He has given us in His generosity? Just like the Prodigal Son, we cannot now nor ever repay Him, but the first step begins with trying not to repeat the repayable offense – not because our relationship with God is some kind of transaction, but because we love God and do not wish to repeatedly harm those we love. By Christ's life, death and resurrection, He destroyed the sin we could never overcome ourselves. But out of our love, though our praise or fasting adds nothing to His greatness, we must offer Him our best, just like the widow who deposits the two coins in the Temple and her offering is more pleasing to God than the large donations of the wealthy (Luke 21:1-4).

God has no need for our fasting nor is He magnified by our praise, but we offer both of these during Lent because, like a child making gifts for his parents from construction paper of little monetary value, we love the Lord and He loves us. Let all we do be for the reunification with the generous father who welcomes us prodigal sons back in spite of our offenses.

Bulletin Sponsors



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