



Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214

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stsharbelpdx@gmail.com

www.stsharbel.org

August 20, 2023

13th Sunday of Pentecost



Next Sunday

14th Sunday of Pentecost

1 Thes 2:1-13 (Paul's Ministry Among Them)

Lk 10:38-42 (Martha and Mary)

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for August 6th - 12th

Online.....\$1,487.82

Collection.....\$761.00

Weekly Total.....\$2,248.82

YTD Total.....\$61,707.97

YTD Goal.....\$73,856.00

YTD Difference.....**-\$12,148.03**

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, August 20th, 11:00am

Unavailable

Monday, August 21st

Unavailable

Tuesday, August 22nd

Unavailable

Wednesday, August 23rd

Unavailable

Thursday, August 24th

Unavailable

Friday, August 25th

Unavailable

Saturday, August 26th

Unavailable

Sunday, August 27th

Unavailable

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, August 20th

Redmond Family

Sunday, August 27th

Available

Parish Council

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

SECOND COLLECTIONS

Next Collection:

September 10, 2023

Catholic University



Wanted ONE Holy Hour per Week!

Contact Nadia Redmond

503-671-0440

-or-

Email: n.redmond@comcast.net

More info at:

<https://sevensistersapostolate.org/>

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Maronite Young Adults (MYA)

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

SAVE THE DATE:

NEW DATE - September 16th

Barbecue and Bonfire at Claude and Gennifer's home in Dundee.

Starting @3:00PM

For more info on the MYA,

SAVE THE DATE BBQ PARTY



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.

CEDARS OF SAINT SHARBEL

**Mandatory Parent Mtg.
Sunday, August 27**

After the Holy Mysteries — We will meet to discuss the needs and goals of the youth group this year!

Reflection

The monastic fathers in Syria were known for their amazing, severe and mythic-sounding practices by which they intended to grow closer to God. Our father in faith, St. Maron, was one of them. Through prayer, fasting, solitude and exposure to the elements, St. Maron sought to leave the things of this world to focus on the glorification of God. Another Syrian monastic who lived at about the same time and place as St. Maron was St. Simeon the Stylite, whose feast we celebrate this Sunday, September 1. He was called a stylite because he sat on a stylos (Greek for pillar) for nearly forty years. The natural question arises why do we venerate a man for sitting on a pillar for a really long time, and what does that have to do with God?

The prayers in our Syriac tradition tell us that the great ascetics, like St. Simeon and St. Maron, labored in the spiritual vineyard of the Lord and achieved victory in their athleticism against Satan. Intuitively, however, it might seem like they did little by fasting and isolating themselves, whether on a pillar or in the mountains. After all, it is odd to think of St. Simeon sitting on a pillar as a victory or triumph. But it is because we have lost a sense of this asceticism that it strikes us as odd. Even Christ, Who is God Himself, withdrew to the desert in solitude and fasting to give us an example, and to fight against Satan (Matt. 4:1-11).

What, then, is godly about asceticism? Angels are not the only beings that do not eat: demons too abstain from food. Isolation or not eating in itself is not godly. The difference is in what is done with solitude or fasting – angels, for instance, glorify and pray to God, whereas demons distance themselves and mislead humans. St. Simeon removed himself to a pillar for an extended period of time because he sought God so greatly he speaking to Him to be his only task. He fasted, both as a physical sacrifice of things of this world and so that pleasures of this world should not distract him from speaking with God. His triumphs and victories in the spiritual race were fought in the same spot: standing upon the pillar, praying to God to glorify Him and have mercy on others. Prayer and fasting are not a last resort or inactivity, but our greatest recourses – when we pray we invoke the Almighty Creator of All Who has power over life and death. If anyone can help us in our endeavors it would be Him Who knows all before it happens. We celebrate St. Simeon because he is an example to us – we are called to participate in the same diligent labor in the spiritual vineyard of the Lord, the same rational athleticism, and the same victory over Satan.

Does that mean we must all go sit on a pillar for forty years? Absolutely not! Just like “fasting” (i.e. not eating) does not help demons grow closer to God, sitting on a pillar would probably actually be a distraction for most of us in trying to approach our victory (i.e. intimacy with God). St. Simeon fasted and retreated to his pillar of solitude to remove himself from the noise and distractions of the world to be closer to God in prayer according to his own strength and God-given mission. In our own ways we can do the same, even though they might not make stories of such mythic proportion. If we look at our phones two hours a day, perhaps we can cut out ten minutes and read the Scripture to know God better. Instead of an hour of Netflix or television, we could have a one-thirty minute episode of prayer. Rather than having a \$5 Starbucks every day, we could sacrifice it even just once a week and give the money to a charity that feeds the poor. Through these little steps we can daily ascend our own pillars towards God.

O Lord, equip us with Your truth and perfect us with Your hope as You perfected the athleticism of just St. Simeon. He was equipped like a warrior in the physical combat not in vain, and he joyfully endured the pillar for a long time in external and interior war. Make us worthy that, like him, we may triumph over all our opponents who adversarially stand against Your truth. Let us receive total victory from You, and we shall offer glory and thanks to You, and to Your Father, and to Your living and Holy Spirit. Amen. (Trans. from the Syriac Maronite Morning Prayer for the Feast of St. Simeon the Stylite)

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