

# Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214 503.231.3853 <u>stsharbelpdx@gmail.com</u> <u>www.stsharbel.org</u>

# December 3, 2023

Visitation of the Virgin to Elizabeth



Next Sunday Birth of John the Baptist

Gal 4:21-5:1 (An Allegory on Christian Freedom) Lk 1:57-66 (The Birth of John)

# Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for November 19th - December 2nd

Online	\$643.00
Collection	\$852.00
Weekly Total	\$1,495.00

YTD Total	\$86,067.88
YTD Goal	\$108,476.00

YTD Difference......\$22,408.12

### **Liturgy Intentions**

Sunday, December 3rd, 11:00am +Chorbishop John Trad Monday, December 4th Available Tuesday, December 5th Available Wednesday, December 6th Available Thursday, December 7th Available Friday, December 8th Berna Sheehan on her birthday Saturday, December 9th Available Sunday, December 10th 40 day Memorial +Agopos Ghosshein

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, December 3rd Available Sunday, December 10th Available

News Events

#### **Parish Council**

Chair: Lydia Massaad

Charlie Ashou Eva Bekahi Ben El Hajj Adib Karam +Claude Karam **Michael Layoun** +Doug Raab +Thaddeus Rask Nadia Redmond Peter Rizk Mitch Siekmann Gibran Zogbi

+Finance Committee



Next Collection:

December 3rd

Maronite Patriarchal Charities

THE POLITICS OF **ABORTION: CHALLENGING THE** NARRATIVE JANUARY H 2024 Doors open at 1:30 with **Resource Organizations** 2:00-4:00 Expert Speakers \$10 Admission **Students/Children Free** JOHNSON CENTER COLUMBIA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 9101 E BURNSIDE

To Register and follow event updates:



PORTLAND OR

**MYTH VS TRUTH IN THE PRO-LIFE DEBATE** 



Begins December 16, Concludes December 24th



you're invited to Breakfast with Santa

Sunday December 17th

Breakfast with Santa 🚓 @ St. Sharbel

**Following Mass** 

Parish Programs

#### Maronite Young Adults (MYA)



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

NEXT MEETING: TBA

#### Wanted ONE Holy Hour per Week!



Contact Nadia Redmond 503-671-0440 -or-Email: <u>n.redmond@comcast.net</u> More info at: https://sevensistersapostolate.org/

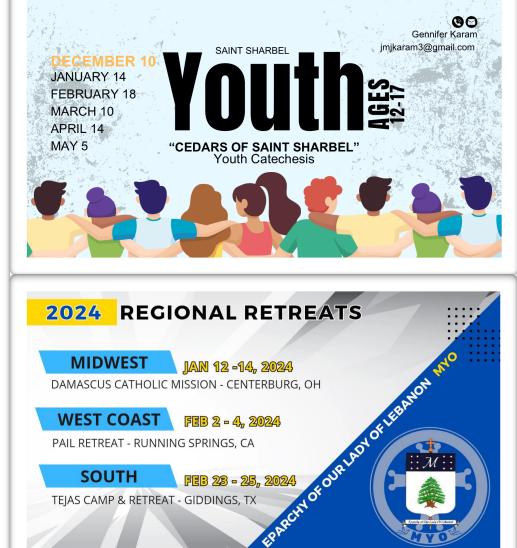




EVERY SUNDAY BEFORE MASS WE PRAY THE ROSARY AT 10:30AM.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PERSON OR WITHIN YOUR OWN FAMILY TO PRAY THE ROSARY TOGETHER.

SUNDAYS 10:30AM





### **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, <u>n.redmond@comcast.net</u>

Please continue to pray for our parish and ministries.



Today's Sunday follows the seasonal theme of announcements, but instead of a message from an angel this Sunday commemorates Mary, already pregnant with our Lord Jesus, visiting her cousin, Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. Though the Gospel passage is fairly short the imagination of Syriac Fathers drove them to write much on the encounter because it conceals many truths about our faith in Christ. Many of the Syriac Fathers write about Mary "going in haste" (Luke 1:39) to Elizabeth because, for the sake of her virginal birth by the Holy Spirit, other women already gossiped against her and accused her of adultery. The holiest, purest, and most ideal servant of God being slandered should not be surprising – as Christ will later say, "blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me" (Matt. 5:11) because even He Himself knew that He would later suffer death at the hands of jealous slanderers for the truth. So why does Elizabeth bless Mary upon greeting her, and why does John leap for joy in Elizabeth's womb if others slander them?

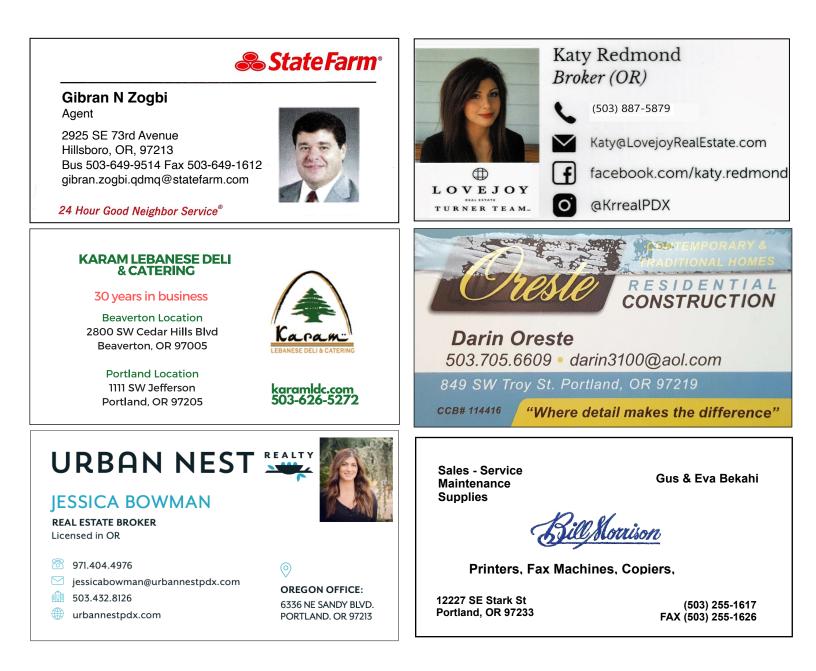
The Syriac Aramaic verb *s'ar* means both to visit and to cure/make whole, and this is exactly the way the predecessors of our tradition would have seen the Visitation. All things have been created by God, and God wishes that we be united to Him. However, since Adam's transgression in the Garden and the various failures of Israel against the commands of God down through the ages there was damage done to the relationship between God and man. Humanity had become sick, progressively poisoned by continually choosing to drink the very sin that was poisoning it! Humanity chose sin again and again, which brought death as St. Paul tells us (Rom. 5:12). But in spite of our choice of sin, God made it clear that He does not rejoice in the death of a sinner (Ez. 18:23), and would not give up on humanity. As He tells us, He is life (John 14:6) because all existence comes from Him, and He wishes to raise all to life eternal. So Elizabeth and John rejoice for Life Himself, Christ our God, has visited them. By His very visitation, while carried in the womb of His mother, He brought them happiness for anyone who receives the Lord's presence is made whole and healed from sin for God Himself is Being and the Giver of All Good Things.

John, Christ's Herald, could see as a fetus in his mother's womb what the grown men of Jesus's time were blind to – that Christ is the Lord of All. It does not change once Christ is born, nor a grown man. Christ multiplied food for 5000 people, made the blind see, made the paralyzed walk, and still certain people at His time accused Him of being a servant of Satan (Matt. 12:24). It was false reasoning that led those to denounce Christ, whereas even a child in the womb could plainly see that He is God. So we too must decide whether we will reject Christ and His servants, or acknowledge Him and welcome Life Himself into our lives Who wishes to visit us and bring us to Himself in life eternal. If we choose the latter in sincerity, we can pray with confidence in Christ:

Transcendent, hidden and incomprehensible God, in Your dispensation You dwelt in the Virgin Mary for our salvation and visited in Your caring Your Herald in the barren and sterile womb of old Elizabeth; now visit/heal our souls and bodies, which have fallen into sin, by Your divine assistances, and sanctify our spirits by Your holiness that we may excellently and holily give thanks to You for Your graces towards us, and we may worship and glorify You, and Your Father, and Your living and Holy Spirit, now and at all times, forever. Amen. (Trans. from the Maronite Evening Prayer for the Visitation)

-Article Credit St. Rafka Parish

### Bulletin Sponsors



#### Want to Advertise Your Business?

Contact Nisreen Mouammar to set up your advertisement today!

nisreen.mouammar@gmail.com