



The Maronite Voice

A Publication of the Maronite Eparchies in the USA



Volume VI

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Maronites Mourn A Churchman



On September 14, 2010, the Feast of the Holy Cross, we were saddened to hear of the passing to eternal life of our beloved Archbishop Francis M. Zayek.

In 1966 Maronites of the United States heard great news. We were no longer orphans. A bishop was appointed for our Church, and he truly proved to be a great father to all of us. Since our Churches began to exist in the late 1800s we were like sheep without a shepherd. Our parishes, scattered throughout the United States, were under the jurisdiction of the local Latin Ordinary. We were considered as small ethnic communities that soon would disappear. Suddenly, the scene changed. As soon as he arrived, he began to unite our Maronite parishes under one head. One of his first priorities was to unify the Divine Liturgy as it was celebrated in different ways in different parishes. Liturgy for our beloved bishop was the heart of the Maronite Church. It was not just a way of praying but it was a catechism that could instruct our people in the Faith on their pilgrimage of life.

He was a man of vision and many years ahead of his time. He had attended as a young bishop the sessions of Vatican II and certainly was aware of the work of the Council Fathers and especially the vision of Pope John XXIII.

Our Church in the United States began to grow and flourish. The Liturgy became alive and a new era began. If it were not for our beloved bishop, I do not think our Church would have grown. Each of us has his own memory of our beloved Bishop Zayek.

Our church has lost a great leader. Although he had been retired for many years, his influence was felt by many and he was truly loved until the last day. His memory will be in our hearts for many years to come. History will record him as one of the most loved and cherished leaders of our day.

The Eucharist and the Virgin Mother Mary were his companion during life, and I am sure he rests joyfully in the Kingdom of Heaven.

May he rest in Peace.

+ Bishop Robert J. Shaheen
Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady Of Lebanon

Schedule of Bishop Robert Shaheen

October 3, 2010

Annual Liturgy for Daughters of Saint Paul, St. Louis, Mo.

October 8, 2010

History Committee Meeting, St. Louis, Mo.

October 9 - 25, 2010

Middle East Synod, Rome, Italy

October 29 - 31, 2010

Order of Saint Sharbel Retreat and Meeting, St. Louis, Mo.

October 30, 2010

History Committee Meeting, Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, Pastoral Center, St. Louis, Mo.

November 5-7, 2010

Hundred Years Celebration. Saint Elias Church, Birmingham, Alabama

November 12-14, 2010

Kick off weekend: Hundred Years of Saint Raymond Parish, St Louis, Mo. □

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St. Sharbel Church
Newtown Square, Pennsylvania

July 6 - 10, 2011

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Eparchial Appointments

His Excellency Bishop Gregory Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn has made the following Eparchial assignments:

Fr. Tony Mouanes has been assigned as Parochial Vicar at Saint Louis Gonzaga Church, in Utica, New York, effective September 1, 2010.

Fr. Claude Franklin has been assigned as Pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in New Castle, Penn., effective November 1, 2010.

His Excellency Bishop Robert Shaheen, Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, has made the following Eparchial assignments:

Msgr. Jibran BouMerhi has been appointed Pastor of St. Sharbel Maronite Church in Warren, Michigan, effective November 1, 2010.

Rev. Gary George, CSsR has been appointed Rector of St. Raymond's Cathedral in St. Louis, Missouri, effective November 1, 2010. He will continue to be the Director of the Office of Youth.

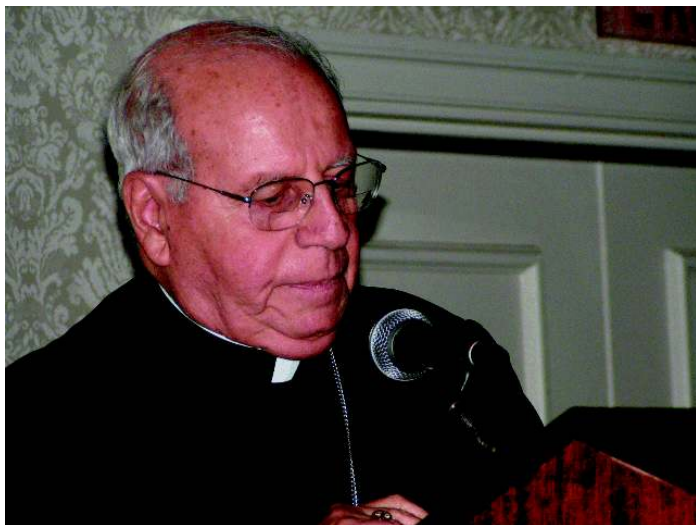
Rev. Jean Yammine, MLM has been appointed Administrator of Our Lady of Lebanon Mission in Norman, Oklahoma, effective November 1, 2010.

Rev. Gaby Hoyek has been appointed Administrator of St. Rafka Maronite Mission in Livonia, Michigan, effective November 1, 2010.

Mr. Michael Birlin has been appointed Eparchial Webmaster, effective November 1, 2010.

Rev. Tony Massad has been appointed as Assistant Vocations Director, effective November 1, 2010. □

The Maronite Church in the U.S. Mourns the Death of Its First Shepherd



Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, Bishop Emeritus and founder of the Eparchy of Saint Maron, passed away on September 14, 2010, in Lebanon.

The son of Mansour and Mariam (Khoury) Zayek, he was born on October 18, 1920, in Manzanillo, Cuba. In 1931, the family immigrated to Lebanon. After seminary studies in Lebanon and in Rome, he was ordained a priest in Rome on March 17, 1946. After completing a doctorate in Canon Law in Rome, he was appointed to serve the Maronite community in Cairo, Egypt, where he also worked in the Apostolic Nunciature. He later returned to Rome and served as the Promoter of Justice at the Roman Rota.

On May 31, 1962, Pope John XXIII appointed him to serve the Maronites in Brazil, and he was consecrated a bishop on August 5, 1962 in *Dimane*, Lebanon, by His beatitude Patriarch Paul Peter Meouchi.

Archbishop Zayek was one of the last surviving bishops who attended all of the sessions of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) as a bishop.

On January 10, 1966, Pope Paul VI established the Maronite Apostolic Exarchate in the United States and appointed Bishop Zayek as the first Exarch [Bishop]. He was installed on June 11, 1966, in Detroit, Michigan, where he was to establish his See.

Pope Paul VI raised the Exarchate to the rank of Diocese or Eparchy on November 20, 1971, and appointed Bishop Zayek as the first bishop of the Diocese of Saint Maron for all Maronites of the United States. He was installed as such on June 4, 1972. (The See was moved to Brooklyn, New York, in 1977.)

In recognition of his pioneering work in the United States, he was given the personal title of Archbishop by Pope John Paul II on December 10, 1982. Upon reaching the canonical age, Archbishop Zayek retired in 1996.

Archbishop Zayek was predeceased by two brothers and three sisters. He is survived by his brother, Elias, in Brazil, and his sister, Lydia, in Lebanon, and several nieces and nephews.

A Forty Day Divine Liturgy is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 27, 2010**, at Our Lady of Lebanon

Cathedral, 109 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, NY, at 7:00 p.m. A Meal of Mercy will follow in the Cathedral hall. All clergy, religious and laity are invited to attend to pay tribute to this true churchman and to pray for the repose of his soul.

The Maronite Church in the United States is deeply indebted to this great man for his zealous efforts in establishing the strong, vibrant Maronite community we have today.

Their Excellencies Bishops Gregory Mansour, Robert Shaheen and Bishops Emeritus John Chedid and Stephen Hector Doueih, along with the clergy and faithful of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon and of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, extend their heartfelt sympathy and the promise of our prayers to Archbishop Zayek's family. May the Lord God grant his servant Francis rest in His Kingdom and consolation to his family and loved ones. □

The Eulogy of His Beatitude Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir

On Thursday, September 16, 2010, His Beatitude Patriarch Nasrallah Peter Cardinal Sfeir presided at the Funeral Service for His Excellency Archbishop Francis Zayek at the Parish Church in Ghazir, Lebanon. He delivered the following eulogy. It was translated by Msgr. Ignatius Sadek.

“You are an industrious and reliable servant. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share your master's joy.”

By the death of the late Archbishop Francis Zayek, our Maronite Church loses an excellent student, a zealous bishop and an fearless conqueror.

He was an excellent student. He prepared himself very well for his priestly ministry. For that purpose he acquired a solid theological knowledge, first at the Seminary of Saint Maron in *Ghazir*, his home town, then in Rome, where he was among the very advanced students. He was fluent in Arabic and Syriac as well as in French, Spanish and Italian, and then in Portuguese and English.

He was raised in a very Christian family; first in Cuba where his parents were living; then in Lebanon where they moved when he was nine years old. He was impressed by his uncle, Fr. Georges Zayek, who served the parish of *Ghazir* for many years, and he wanted to follow his example. He entered the Seminary of *Ghazir* with the blessing of Bishop Elias Richa, the Archbishop of *Baalbeck* at that time and whose residence was in *Aramoun*, close to *Ghazir*.

When his bishop noticed in him signs of great intelligence he transferred him from the seminary in *Ghazir* to that of Rome where he acquired a diploma in philosophy, and doctorates in theology and canon law from the Lateran University.

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Pastoral Reflection on the Passing of Archbishop Francis M. Zayek

by
Bishop Gregory Mansour



Archbishop Francis Zayek (left) with Bishop Robert Shaheen.

There was something about Archbishop Zayek that drew the best out of all those who came to know and love him. I knew this personally from the first time I met him in my third year of college.

When he first came to the United States from Brazil, there were three noble efforts to gather Maronites that preceded his arrival: the establishment of the Maronite Seminary in Washington, D.C., in 1961, the beginning of the National Apostolate of Maronites in 1964 and the beginning of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in North Jackson, Ohio, in 1966. These efforts showed great promise for a bright future, and bore much fruit. However, it was left to Archbishop Francis to bring these efforts to fruition and to

galvanize the Maronite clergy and laity into one Diocese.

By the grace of God, and notwithstanding some difficulties, there was enough kind support and love that enabled him to secure our steps on the path that has led to the growth and good order of the Maronite Church in America.

Archbishop Francis was able to guide us in liturgy, catechesis, diocesan organization, youth programs and vocations. He wrote and taught copiously. From 1966 to 1994 he guided the one diocese that comprised the entire United States. Then the Holy See created a second diocese for the Maronites which he along with the help of his auxiliary, Bishop John G. Chedid, carefully planned so that both dioceses could succeed and have a bright future.

In all these matters Archbishop Zayek was father and wise guide. He continued to serve as founding Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn until he retired in 1996.

All throughout his retirement years, Archbishop Francis remained an invested father, interested in the Church's well being and that of each of her children. He was, until his last day, a churchman. Cardinals stayed in regular contact with him, as did Bishops, several priests and many others.

Archbishop Zayek used his retirement years, as he would say, to reflect on his life and to ask for God's mercy as he prepared himself for the next life. He used the time to write a reflection for the Stations of the Cross, to re-edit his work on Mary published in the Maronite Voice, and to write his memoirs. He also wanted to write on the Eucharist as Bread of Life and New Manna, but did not have the strength.

Until his last day, Archbishop Francis M. Zayek was a true gentleman, a faithful priest and a devoted bishop. His family, friends and Church felt a loving closeness to him. Upon his death I thought to contact individually all those priests, deacons, subdeacons, laity and religious who felt a close bond to him; there were so many, I did not know where to begin!

We will certainly miss the man chosen by God to be our founding bishop, spiritual father and model in faith.

Sayedna Francis:

Go in peace O Good Shepherd, Prudent leader, Guide of our souls. Rock of the Church, you were like Peter and like Paul, your life's work was serving God. Through our Savior Christ, you were one with all holy men. In zeal you were like Elias. Pure in heart like John most loved, may God grant you grace and may you pray for us!

Toe Bashlom - Entrance Hymn for the Welcoming of a Bishop. □



Archbishop Francis Zayek joins Bishop Gregory Mansour for blessing the ground for the future Mary, Mother of Light Church in Palm Beach, Florida.



Archbishop Francis M. Zayek passed on the staff of leadership to Bishop Stephen Hector Doueihi on February 5, 1997.

Archbishop Francis M. Zayek (1920 - 2010) by Bishop Stephen Hector Doueihi

The 14th of September, Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Archbishop Francis M. Zayek left us to join his Lord.

Who is Francis M. Zayek?

I will not dwell on his many qualities or achievements. I will only note three aspects of his life.

1: When he came to us, to the United States of America, from Brazil, the Maronite Church was composed of many parishes spread all over the states. Each one parish was dependent upon the local Latin Bishop. They were many parishes and, at the same time, many jurisdictions. They were totally independent from each other. Francis M. Zayek came to the States and worked out, in order to make out of these independent parishes, an Eparchy, that is a

Church, a living Church, with all its institutions and direction in life. He succeeded in uniting all the Maronites in the United States. That was his great achievement. And he can be called, without any exaggeration, the Founder of the Maronite American Church.

2: I am not going to dwell on his many qualities, intellectual, ecclesial, or personal ones. I will remember one of them by which he touched all of us and was able to reach the four corners of the United States. He let the Spirit do his work. As the Head of the Church, he let those who surrounded him do their work, according to their talents in the mission. He was surrounded by a group of young American priests, intelligent, talented, zealous (where are they now?!) who gave the best of themselves to the establishment and expansion of their Church. He guided and inspired us, but he let the Spirit in each of them expand. All various fields, apostolic and ecclesial, were covered through him, by others. This is, in my opinion, the main quality of a true leader.

3: On another note, he was the first Maronite Bishop to sit on an equal level among the 300 American bishops in the Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C. He represented us, he spoke in our name. Many American bishops were able to know him and to know us through him. They remembered him and his name, and had great esteem for him.

Today, we became truly a living ecclesial body, inspiring, dynamic, evangelizing and true Maronite Catholic Church.

In my speech at my Consecration as Bishop, January 11, 1997, in Our Lady of Lebanon in *Harissa* in Lebanon, I turned toward him, sitting at my right, with Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros [Peter] Sfeir and the whole body of Maronite bishops, and proclaimed:

"This is the course that His Excellency Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, first Eparch [Bishop] and founder, has charted for us in the United States, for thirty years. He united us and strengthened us, built our churches, organized our parishes, ordained our priests and broadened the horizons of our mission. He has taken us back to our true liturgical roots and its living religious origins.

"He has been for us a father, a teacher, a leader, a wise builder and a good shepherd."

This is Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, my predecessor, the one I venerate, admire and keep his memory in me.

May he rest in peace in the Lord he served so well during his long life.

And may he, from heaven, keep holding in his heart and in his hands, this Maronite American Church he loved so much.

Let us pray for him. □

The Legacy of Archbishop Francis M. Zayek A Personal Reflection

Chorbishop John D. Faris, Pastor of Saint Louis Gonzaga Church in Utica, New York, and former Vicar General/Chancellor of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn offers his personal reflection on Archbishop Zayek.

Archbishop Francis M. Zayek passed away on September 14, 2010, the Feast of the Holy Cross. He would have celebrated his ninetieth birthday on October 18. This year marked the 48th anniversary of his ordination as a bishop. He was one of the few bishops alive who had attended all the sessions of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).



Because I was a close collaborator of Archbishop Zayek for so many years, I have been asked to write my own personal reflection about him. Archbishop Zayek lived and worked in so many lands—five continents to be exact—and had a complex set of relationships. He touched the lives of so many people; anyone who knew him could write their own memories of this great man and they would all be correct. What follows is neither majestic nor formal, but rather a personal, simple reflection on the character and vision of a man who served as our bishop for three decades.

From his youth, Archbishop Zayek felt that it was his vocation to be a Franciscan missionary. While he was not called by the Church to take the Gospel to non-believers, in some way this missionary vocation was fulfilled by Divine Providence. After serving in Vatican Offices and teaching in Rome, in 1962 he was appointed the first Maronite Bishop in history to serve outside the Middle East. It was his task to take the Maronite tradition and implant it in Brazil. This responsibility was to be prepare him for even greater challenges ahead.

In 1966, Pope Paul VI created the Maronite Apostolic Exarchate and appointed Bishop Francis M. Zayek as its first exarch. There had been a great deal of turmoil regarding this appointment, because everyone in Lebanon, Rome, and the United States had their own candidates.

The cathedral was unfinished and there was no residence or office. The new bishop (who had only a basic knowledge

of English) took up residence in the unfinished and unfurnished rectory. Nevertheless, Bishop Zayek took the advice given to him by Ukrainian Archbishop Ambrose Senyshyn: get a typewriter, a table, and a chair and announce to your people and the American bishops that the Maronite Chancery is open.

John Cardinal Dearden, the Archbishop of Detroit, invited Bishop Zayek to his home and presented him with a porcelain statue of Saint John (hanging in my home today as a gift from Archbishop Zayek for my twentieth anniversary) and \$50,000. With these funds the Exarchate began to function.

All of the above was recounted to me—I was still in high school at the time. In 1969, I met with Msgr. George Webby, then vocation director, and applied to be accepted as a seminarian for the Maronite Exarchate. I later met Bishop Zayek and was told that I would be studying at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit, Michigan. In all candor, I must confess that my direct contact with Bishop Zayek during this period was minimal; he was an old man (he was 49— at 18 everyone appears old) and I did not want to disturb him. I was happy and things were fine at the seminary, so why bother him?

At some point that spring, I did have an extensive meeting with Archbishop Zayek. He told me that everyone around him had said that I was very intelligent, but that he didn't see it. What did he just say!!!! How do I respond!!!! I just sat there. This was not the last time that he would offer me a frank appraisal regarding my abilities and performance.

His appreciation of my academic abilities must have improved because he sent me to Rome for theological studies. He shared with me all his memories of Rome during the



Ordination to Minor Orders at Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary in Washington, D.C.



Archbishop Zayek at a meeting with some of his close collaborators: Msgr. Joseph Kaddo and Fr. Francis Marini.

Second World War, the University of Propaganda Fide where he studied, the *Rota* where he worked and San Pietro in Vincoli where he lived. His times were not easy; even food was short, but Archbishop Zayek was able to find humor in the situations and recall them with warmth and humanity. It prepared me for a beautiful experience in the Eternal City.

After ordination in 1976, I was assigned half-time at the Cathedral [St. Maron Cathedral in Detroit, Mich.] as an assistant pastor to Msgr. Joseph C. Feghali and vice chancellor at the chancery, where I worked in the organization of the archives. This was my beginning of close collaboration with Archbishop Zayek.

Being a canonist and a former Vatican official, Archbishop Zayek was demanding regarding the operations of the Chancery. It had to be open, with someone answering the phones, from 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on all weekdays except national holidays and holy days. No exceptions. Letters had to be carefully read, recorded, and responded to in a timely manner. Decisions had to be properly documented. This was the way he worked the entire time he served as bishop. To take a phrase from a classic work, I could describe work in the Chancery as the best of times and the worst of times. From the outset, I realized that I was privileged to be working with the greatest man I was ever likely to meet: Archbishop Zayek was a man of deep faith, had a vast experience in various cultures, spoke many languages, and was a skilled canonist. I could not have found a better mentor! Further, I was witnessing and participating in the creation of an Eastern Catholic Church in the western hemisphere.

They were also very difficult times. The Maronite Church faced a variety of enormous challenges. Perhaps the greatest among these was the character that the Maronite Church in America was going to take. Some felt that it was to be a *Lebanese* Church that would replicate the Church in Lebanon here in the United States. Others had almost the opposite opinion that this was to be an *American* Church, with little concern or regard for Lebanon, the mother country. Archbishop Zayek emphasized that our Church was to be a Catholic Church, with its apostolic roots in Lebanon, but transplanted and able to flourish in the Western world. Archbishop Zayek was convinced that we Maronites are the

stewards of a rich tradition that is to be shared with the entire world. Naturally, it will require adaption to the needs of the people.

This adaptation meant translation of our liturgy and music, a task that continues almost five decades later. We can be proud that many of the liturgical innovations that took place in the Maronite Church began here in the United States and later evolved in Lebanon. All this took place in the context of a Church that was undergoing a dramatic transformation of its life and mission subsequent to Vatican II.

The establishment of a Maronite Church in the United States also took place as Lebanon was undergoing a terrible civil war. Starting out as a Muslim-Christian conflict, it soon devolved into Christian rivalries. Archbishop Zayek was aware that such partisan rivalries were a threat to the unity of our Maronite Church in America, but also wanted to be helpful to the Christians—especially the poor—who were suffering the horrific effects of war. This required skillful diplomacy at all levels. The war also resulted in a new wave of emigration. The “newcomers” brought new life and ideas to the local parishes, but at times, it was difficult to integrate the Lebanese-born and the American-born.

Three institutions were always dear to the heart of the Archbishop: Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary, Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine, and Holy Trinity Monastery in Petersham, Massachusetts. The Seminary—established prior to his arrival—has always been the lifeblood of our Church, forming priests to serve in our parishes. The Shrine also predated the establishment of the Exarchate. It was a more modest facility than it is today. In fact, it was a tower surmounted by the lovely statue, some picnic tables and a \$90,000 debt (in 1960s currency, this was an astronomic amount of money). Since our Church is fundamentally the result of a monastic movement, Archbishop Zayek wanted a monastic presence here in the United States: the monastery today is a source of holy pride for all of us. At one point, Archbishop Zayek expressed the desire to be buried there.

At the time of his arrival, there were forty-three parishes, each operating independently under the local Latin bishops. It was the task of Bishop Zayek to create a unity among the parishes—and the priests who served them. Neither was an easy task. But, thank God, the churches were either



Archbishop Zayek in deep conversation with the now Bishop Gregory Mansour.

renovated or new ones built or purchased. The priests learned to share a common brotherhood, vision and solicitude for the entire Exarchate. An invaluable unifying tool has been *The Challenge* and *The Maronite Voice*.

The National Apostolate of Maronites pre-existed as the National Association of Maronites, a lay apostolate that is still vibrant in America and an example for the entire Maronite Church. The vision of Archbishop Zayek was that the burden of the Church had to be borne by not only the bishop and the priests, but also by the laity. His vision also found expression in the establishment of the Order of Saint Sharbel, a group of dedicated, generous men and women who work to support our seminary and retired priests.

What is the legacy of Archbishop Zayek to all of us? I would offer that it is his vision of Church. As seminarians, he shared with us his understanding of the Maronite Church in America and communicated his enthusiasm for the task ahead of us. We, the young priests—now the old priests—readily took up the task! May his vision remain fresh in our hearts and invigorate us to carry on this important apostolic mission.

Lord, be good to your faithful and devoted servant, Francis. □

Address of Archbishop Francis M. Zayek to His Holiness Pope John Paul II on the Occasion of His Golden Jubilee of Priestly Ordination

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, my brother priests,

It is with a sense of profound gratitude to the Lord that I stand among you today, fifty years after my priestly ordination, in the Chapel of Collegio Di Propaganda Fide, on the Feast of Saint Patrick. The time I spent during the war among seminarians from thirty different countries made me aware of the universality of the Church and instilled in me a desire for the foreign missions.

In his own ways, the Lord granted me my desires. As soon as I finished my studies in canon law, instead of returning to Lebanon, I was sent to Egypt. After several years in Egypt, I returned to Rome to serve on the Roman Rota. In 1962, I was appointed first Maronite Bishop in Brazil and in 1966 transferred to serve as the first Maronite Bishop in the United States. I shall always recall with vivid memory my experience of the Second Vatican Council; this great event was to inspire and guide me in my apostolate.

In serving in four different continents I was naturally confronted with the obstacles of culture, language and mentality. There were also the changes and upheavals subsequent to the Second Vatican Council.

Permit me to reflect a few moments upon this ministry. In his desire to foster and promote the Eastern Churches outside the Eastern territories, Pope John XXIII of happy memory sent me as Auxiliary Bishop to Cardinal Jaime de Barros Camara, Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, who was also the Ordinary of the Eastern rites. It was my task to serve the



The late Archbishop Zayek with His Holiness the late Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in Rome.

Maronite community by gathering the Maronite faithful together, determining a place for the See and building a Cathedral.

In 1966, His Holiness, Pope Paul VI transferred me to the United States with a See in Detroit, with the warm welcome of Cardinal Dearden. The task given to me was similar to that in Brazil. It was my responsibility to serve a community dispersed over an entire continent, create new parishes, create catechetical programs, build and renovate facilities, support the seminary and foster a sense of unity among all the faithful. Thanks to the care of the Bishops in the United States, certain Maronite parishes were already created. I was to collaborate with them.

Everywhere I went, I placed my diocese under the care of Mary; she has blessed these communities, protected and fostered them.

After serving twelve years in Detroit, I obtained permission from the congregation of the Eastern Churches to transfer the See of the Eparchy to Brooklyn, New York, where it has been now for the past eighteen years. The transferral of the see of the Eparchy was to lay the seeds with the eventual establishment of two eparchies in the United States. The transfer to New York was also providential because both Cardinals Cooke and O'Connor have been so solicitous for the Christians in the Middle East, especially in these last years of war and suffering.

I shall always recall the words of Pope John XXIII when he sent me to Brazil, "What you Maronites have does not pertain to you alone but is part of the treasure of the Catholic Church." In many ways the spiritual and liturgical patrimony



Chorbishop Joseph Kaddo presents Archbishop Zayek with a token of gratitude from the clergy of the Eparchy of Saint Maron on the occasion of his Golden Anniversary of Ordination.

of the Antiochene Maronite Church was unknown outside the Eastern territories. It was for this reason that I considered it my responsibility to translate liturgical books into English. Books dealing with the liturgical, spiritual and disciplinary aspects on the Maronite Church were to follow.

In moments of difficulties and anxieties in Brazil and the United States, I found my brother priests and bishops to be of great help. Their friendship was and is a source of consolation to me.

On this great occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of His Holiness, I wish to convey to our Holy Father the best wishes of the great Archdiocese and region of New York along with my own best wishes and those of the Eparchy of St. Maron.

The example that His Holiness has given and continues to give, as Supreme pastor of the Church, as the herald of the Good News, as the missionary Pope and as the Messenger of Peace, has been for all of us a great inspiration, a source of strength, and an incentive to continue in the service of the Lord and his Church. May the Lord grant His Holiness many years of health and vibrant ministry to God's people.

In closing, I reiterate the motto of my priesthood, *In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in aeternum.* □

The Eulogy of His Beatitude Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir

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He worked for some time as judge at the *Rota* Tribunal and as an advisor in Canon Law at St. Anselm College and at the Lateran University.

He inaugurated his priestly life in Egypt where the late Bishop Boutros Deeb, the Maronite Archbishop of Cairo, appointed him as Rector of the Holy Family Cathedral. He also served as an assistant to the Papal Nuncio there and a judge in the Catholic tribunals in the city.

He was a zealous bishop. At that time there arose a need for a priest endowed with virtues and knowledge and in 1962 he was chosen to be the first Maronite Bishop of Brazil. After some time he was transferred to the United States of America, where a great number of Maronites reside.

He had to establish the Maronite Eparchy and to visit for that purpose the Maronite communities in order to exhort their good will for building Maronite churches in their areas. Despite all the difficulties of traveling and of gathering the Maronites scattered all over that huge country, he was able to unify the groups and to add more parishes to those that already existed under the local Latin Ordinary.

It was not an easy job. But he knew how to handle it and thanks to the help he asked for from above, he achieved what he wanted. Thus the Maronites had an Eparchy covering almost all of the U.S. with parishes and parochial charitable and social organizations. This flourishing life is still alive through his good successors.

He was a fearless conqueror. Despite all the obstacles he encountered, he did not wane. He stayed relying on help from the Good God; from his Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary; and from his fellow Maronites, gathered around him.

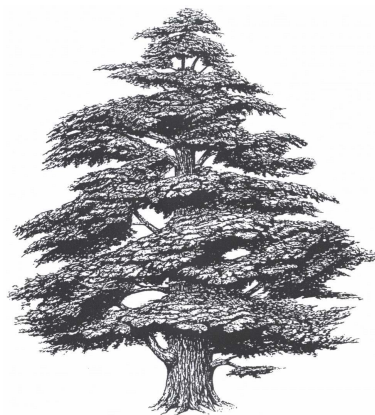
Having reached the canonical age, he presented his resignation from his episcopal duties. It came at the time when the Eparchy had been divided in two; one for the East and one for the West. He returned to his former country, Lebanon, to live among his own who always had profound respect and appreciation for him.

He is now leaving us for his heavenly dwelling to enjoy the reward prepared for him by the High Priest, Our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we are partaking of the fullness of His Priesthood.

With this promising hope, we present our heartfelt condolences to his successors, Their Excellencies Bishop Gregory Mansour of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn and Robert Shaheen of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon. They asked us to convey their expressions of sympathy to his brother and sister, to the widows of his late two brothers, his nephews and nieces and to the entire Zayek family.

May God bestow upon them his divine consolation and grant him eternal rest in His eternal Kingdom.

Ghazir, September 16, 2010
Nasrallah Peter Cardinal Sfeir
Patriarch of Antioch and all the East □



The Cedar of Lebanon

New York, New York *Catholic-Oriental Orthodox Dialogue Annual Meeting*



Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, and Chorbishop John D. Faris, Pastor of St. Louis Gonzaga Maronite Church, Utica, New York, both members of the national Oriental Orthodox - Roman Catholic Dialogue, participated in the annual meeting of that group on September 20-21, 2010.

by Fr. Ron Roberson

The United States Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation held its 2010 meeting at the Passionist Spiritual Center in Bronx, New York, on September 20 and 21. The meeting, co-chaired by Catholic Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, New York, and the Right Reverend Chor-Episcopos John Meno of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, focused primarily on pastoral issues facing both churches.

They discussed the pastoral responses of the churches to proselytizing efforts—the seeking of converts from members of other Christian communities—of certain Evangelical and Pentecostal groups both in the United States and in the countries where these churches originated. From a Catholic perspective, Father Juan Luis Calderon of the Archdiocese of Newark gave a talk entitled, “The Follower, the Seeker and the Convert: Hispanics and Their Experience of God.” Additional reflections were offered by Father Daniel Findikyan, who focused on the Armenian Church, and by Father Yacob Ghaly, who drew on the experience of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt, where such efforts have weakened this ancient church.

The members also heard a report from Brother David Carroll, FSC, on the policy of the Holy See regarding the Holy Land and the final status of Jerusalem. In his talk, Brother Carroll reviewed the history of this issue, the major negotiations that have taken place in recent decades, and the Holy See’s position, which advocates the preservation of the religious characteristics of Jerusalem, equality of rights of the communities of the three major religions found in the city, the

preservation of the holy places, and freedom of worship and access to them for residents and pilgrims alike.

The meeting also included reports on the situation of the individual Oriental Orthodox Churches, information about the January 2010 meeting of the International Catholic-Oriental Orthodox dialogue, the theological dialogues between the Catholic Church and the two Oriental Orthodox churches in India, as well as the Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum Coetibus, which foresees the establishment of Personal Ordinariates in the United States and elsewhere for former Anglicans.

The members had an opportunity to pray together during a Vespers service celebrated in the Coptic Orthodox tradition. In addition Bishop Hubbard announced that Father Aelred Cody, OSB, a longtime member of the Consultation, had resigned due to his age. Father Columba Steward, OSB, Director of the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library at St. John’s Benedictine Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, replaces him as a permanent Catholic member.

The Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation was established in 1978, and is sponsored jointly by the Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches America, which includes representatives from the Armenian (Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin), Coptic, Ethiopian, and Syrian Orthodox Churches. For more information, visit:

http://www.usccb.org/seia/oriental_orthodox.shtml. □

Project Roots

The Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn and the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon join together to help people reconnect with their Christian spiritual roots in Lebanon and the Middle East. An office in Los Angeles, Calif., under the responsibility of Fr. Abdallah Zaidan, M.L.M., will assist those interested to:

- ★ Obtain their sacramental records from their country of origin
- ★ Connect with family members living in their place of origin and throughout the world where they emigrated
- ★ Obtain Lebanese citizenship, if desired
- ★ Obtain immigration records, if desired
- ★ Remain connected with the Maronite Church here and throughout the world.

No eparchial funds will be used, but the office will accept financial help from those willing to help. For more information contact:

Father Abdallah Zaidan, M.L.M.
333 South San Vicente Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90048
310-275-6634 □



Dartmouth, Massachusetts Maronite Servants Offer Catechesis on St. Maron



Sister Marla Marie.

by *Therese Touma*

In response the 1600th anniversary commemorating the death of Saint Maron, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light have creatively developed a curriculum on Saint Maron for religious formation to present to grades K-6, teens in MYO, and the MYA.

In presenting these interactive lessons, the Sisters use various props, Scripture, visual technologies and activities, to help the youth to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Maronite spirituality, traditions, and way of prayer. St. Theresa's Maronite Church in Brockton has already requested the Maronite Servants to offer this program as part of their Heritage Day catechesis.

The presentations on St. Maron will teach his history, his importance in the founding of our Maronite Church, and his current influence on Maronite spirituality, and way of worship. In the teen presentation, the Sisters discuss growing in virtue and weeding out vice in our lives. St. Maron compared this to the analogy of cultivating the garden of our hearts, to make them fertile in receiving and living God's Word.

Overall, this curriculum will provide children with inspiring information about St. Maron and engaging activities to reinforce the lesson. If your parish is interested in these presentations, contact Sister Marla Marie at sister@maroniteservants.org or phone 781-331-3290. □



NAM Announces Its Scholarship Winners

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the winners of the NAM Scholarships for the 2009-2010 school year. Each winner will receive a \$1000 scholarship pending notification of enrollment in college. This scholarship may be renewed for one additional year provided the recipient maintains a 3.0 or better average on a 4.0 scale and enrolls for an additional year in college.

John A. Solomon Memorial MYO Scholarship winners are:

Cody George, St. Maron Parish, Cleveland, Ohio
Christopher Issa, St. Elias Parish, Birmingham, Alabama

Naomi and Paul Kassouf NAM Scholarship winners are

Joelle Abi-Habib, Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, New York
Leah Miro, St. Rafka Parish, Denver, Colorado

Thomas and Jennie Ayoob Memorial NAM Scholarship winner is:

Johannes Weisson, St. George Parish, San Antonio, Texas

The five winners from last year are asked to contact the NAM office at 914-964-3070 or nam@namnews.org for verification that each qualifies for the second \$1000. Last years recipients were: **Christine Zaccak**, Our Lady of Lebanon Parish, Washington, D.C.; **Curtis Michael Taylor**, Our Lady of the Cedars Parish, Fairlawn, Ohio; **Kimberly Ababseh**, Our Lady of Lebanon Parish, San Francisco, California; **Maurice Hajjar**, St. Jude Parish, Orlando, Florida; and **Michael Saba**, Our Lady of Victory Parish, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. □

NAM Scholarships In Lebanon

The National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) Proudly announces Scholarships for a semester in Lebanon at:

- ★ **University of the Holy Spirit (USEK)**, Kaslik (Five Summer Semester). It includes full tuition; Dormitory and \$500 once completed.
- ★ **Notre Dame University (NDU)** (One Fall Semester and one Summer Semester 2011 scholarship). It includes full tuition; dormitory; and \$500 once completed.

For more information and applications contact your pastor, NAM delegates, online: WWW.NAMNEWS.ORG, email: nam@namnews.org, or call NAM at 914-964-3070. Applications Deadline is October 20, 2010. □

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Annual Lebanese Food Festival



by Michael Saba

As a result of our parishioner's gracious donations of their time, talents, and treasures, this year's Lebanese Food Festival at Our Lady of Victory Church, Carnegie [Pittsburgh], Pennsylvania, held September 17-19, 2010 proved to be the most successful ever! The Lebanese-American community was even honored by the City Council of Pittsburgh with the official recognition of Lebanese-American Day in Pittsburgh September 19, 2010 for years of dedication and achievements to the city in all categories.

This honor was graciously accepted by Father Rudolph Wakim, Pastor. The festival drew large crowds all three days. This can be attributed to the wide array of delicious Lebanese cuisine and the huge assortment of delectable deserts offered; the live Lebanese band performance Saturday night under a Lebanese styled café tent and DJ all three days; the fun games and goodies for the children to enjoy; the cultural booth which sold many imported Lebanese products and the heritage informational booth to educate guests about our culture; the daily fresh "saj" bread being made outside in the cultural area for all to see (smells were free); and of course the courteous and smiling faces that were serving our guests...known as Lebanese hospitality.

Father Rudolph was greatly impressed by the attitude of cooperation and workmanship exhibited by each volunteer of every age. This enthusiastic attitude promises a more successful future for Our Lady of Victory Church! □

Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Annual Picnic

The Maronite Community of Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, held its annual picnic on August 29, 2010. The day started with an outdoor Divine Liturgy celebrated by Fr. Rudolph Wakim, Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Maronite Church in Carnegie [Pittsburgh]. A buffet lunch was served, and the children had fun staying cool with water games. □

North Jackson, Ohio Qannoubine Project

by Sister Lina El-Khawand,
Planning and Supervision of the project

On the occasion of celebrating the Jubilee Year of one thousand six hundred years since the death of our patron, Saint Maron, which urges us to pray, meditate, revive and relive our Maronite tradition, and the instructions of the 25th Letter of His Beatitude Nasrallah Peter Cardinal Sfeir, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, Lent 2010, that reads:

"We invite you all to organize religious celebrations, processions, ceremonies, and cultural and social activities, and to organize pilgrimage visits to holy Maronite places and patriarchal sites. We designated the sites in which absolution is granted during this Jubilee Year as follows: Monastery of Saint John Maron, Kferhay; Monastery of Our Lady of Elige; Monastery of Our Lady of Qannoubine; Monastery of Our Lady of Bkerke, and the Site of Saint Maron in Brad near Aleppo, Syria", the Antonine Sisters Congregation, who is in charge of Our Lady of Qannoubine's Monastery in the Holy Valley, north of Lebanon, has decided to launch an electronic project to introduce the historical and ancient value of the monastery to the Lebanese and foreign pilgrims and visitors, as follows :

Program of the Visit:

- ★ An electronic detecting System will be activated to indicate the arrival of visitors to the beginning of the *footpath* and accompany them with Syriac music;
- ★ It greets the visitors at the time of their arrival to the monastery and guides their visit;
- ★ It welcomes them and introduces the historic and spiritual significance of the monastery;
- ★ Handing out of flyers
- ★ A short break for water and refreshments;
- ★ A slide show presentation about the history of the monastery and the Holy Valley;
- ★ Visiting of the main areas in the monastery, as sketched and numbered on a map handed out to visitors following the presentation;
- ★ Directions will be given to the following:
 - the church location
 - the sanctuary of votive candles;
 - the gift and souvenir shop;
 - a snack area where refreshments will be available.
- ★ Thanking the visitors for their visit and bidding them farewell.

The cost of this project will be approximately \$44611 (Forty four thousand, six hundred and eleven American dollars). Since the monastery does not have any financial income, your generous contribution is highly needed to carry out this worthy and much needed project. With the hope that your kind interest meets with our mutual efforts in the service of God's people, we thank you in advance for your care and concern, and ask God to reward you with his blessings. For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.antonines.org/events.php?idEvent=17> □

Jacksonville, Florida

Blessing of the Foundation Stone



Fr. Elie Abi Chedid (left), Deacon Elias Shami, and Bishop Gregory Mansour lay the foundation stone of the future St. Maron Church in Jacksonville, Fla.

by Mrs. Tracy Ross-Fares

The weekend of September 11-12, 2010, was truly glorious and cause for much happiness for the community of Saint Maron Maronite Catholic Church in Jacksonville, Florida. It was wonderful at Sunday's Liturgy to have the church full and our Bishop Gregory Mansour among us. Later that evening, the celebration of the formal Blessing of the Foundation Stone for our new building took place.

This historic event prompts me to reflect back on where our church community began, the evolution of Saint Maron Maronite community up to this point, and the promising future we have before us. I recall the small Liturgies at Christ the King Catholic Church Chapel; the many places we gathered to worship before we had a church home of our own on Bowden Road; and when we worshiped outside, literally on a concrete slab before the church/hall was built in the year 2001. We have grown over the past ten years and now we are thrilled with the reality of the cornerstone being laid for the foundation of our new church building by Bishop Gregory Mansour, Bishop Victor Galeone of the Saint Augustine Diocese, Fr. Elie Abi Chedid, Pastor, and Deacon Elias Shami, who joined also with other priests from Eastern Churches in Jacksonville.

After the Blessing of the Foundation Stone, a reception and a fundraising dinner took place in the church hall at full capacity. It was exciting to see and experience this awesome event Sunday night with joyous fellowship shared by our church family members and other guests.

In his remarks Bishop Mansour expressed his joy and encouraged our community to continue to work together in unity and self-offering love; he underlined the special importance of building a church that bears the name of Saint Maron in this Jubilee year commemorating 1600 years since his death. (It might be the sole church for Saint Maron being built in this jubilee in the world.)

Tony Mahfoud, chairman of the Building Committee, gave a presentation on the church building project. In his address, Fr. Abi Chedid welcomed everyone to "this important symbolic beginning of the milestone towards our new House for God"; and extended a special welcome to Bishop Victor Galeone of the Diocese of Saint Augustine, Bishop Gregory Mansour of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, other clergy and distinguished guests.

Father Abi Chedid expressed the appreciation of St. Maron Church to Bishop Galeone and the Diocese of Saint Augustine for granting our church a loan to make this project feasible; and thanked all of those who already made generous contributions towards the Building Fund. He said: "I am relying on God's help to see us through, as we prayed at the Blessing of the Foundation Stone in Psalm 127: 'Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.'" □

Orlando, Florida

1600th Anniversary of the Death of St. Maron



Fr. Bassam Saade (center), Pastor, celebrates the Divine Liturgy with Catholic clergy from the Orlando Diocese in honor of St. Maron.

by Henriette Khoury and Ann Geagea

It was with great joy and pride that we received the wonderful news that St. Jude Maronite Church, Orlando, Florida, was designated a Pilgrimage Site for the Jubilee celebrating the 1600th anniversary of the death of St. Maron. We were one of six churches from the Eparchy of St. Maron to receive this honor.

The St. Maron Jubilee Divine Liturgy and Celebration took place at St. Jude on Sunday, August 29, 2010. We were honored with clergy concelebrating from all over the Orlando Diocese: Very Reverend Richard Walsh, Administrator of the Diocese of Orlando and Pastor of Margaret-Mary Church, Winter Park; Very Reverend Edward McCarthy, Rector of the Basilica of the Shrine of Mary Queen of the Universe; Very Reverend John McCormick, Rector of St. James Cathedral; Father Augustine Clark, Pastor of St. Charles Borromeo; Father Stuart Gullan-Steel, from the Diocese of Westminster, London, England, and former Pastor of St. Patrick Church, Ravena, New York; and Deacon Dave Gray, from St. James Cathedral and Director of the Diaconate

Program for the Diocese of Orlando. St. Jude parishioners and honored guests from all over the State of Florida gathered in the church to pay tribute to our very own St. Maron. Ten Deputies from the Knights of Columbus, dressed in their formal regalia were first to enter the church. Side by side they walked down the aisle with much pride and dignity. The

Knights formed salute to our altar servers, guest clergy and our pastor, Fr. Bassam M. Saade.

The Divine Liturgy was touching and in true Maronite tradition. A professional choir of fifteen young ladies joined St. Jude Choir. Capturing the Divine Liturgy was a film crew from CCTN, a local Catholic TV Station. A photographer was also present from the Florida Catholic Newspaper. We received front page, full coverage in the Florida Catholic Newspaper which is distributed state wide. It was our wish to spread the "Good News" of St. Maron, our church and especially to spread awareness of our beautiful Maronite Rite.


A banquet was arranged after the Divine Liturgy by enthusiastic and ardent members of our parish. St. Jude Church Hall was transformed into a magnificent banquet room in honor of St. Maron. It was a wonderful opportunity for our parishioners to host such an event and to celebrate with many from all over the Diocese of Orlando.

This event proved that the unity of the Maronites and other Catholic Churches has been, and always will be, a fruitful one. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated to enhance understanding and knowledge of our St. Maron in our parish and in the Orlando Diocese. Pilgrimages for Orlando Catholic schools are being organized for students to visit our church, discover St. Maron, learn about the Maronite Church, attend Divine Liturgy and enjoy a fun filled day. October 19th, Holy Family Catholic School will be the first of many schools to attend throughout the year. Holy Family Catholic School has chosen to visit the pilgrimage site the traditional way, by walking the 2 miles from school to St. Jude Church. There will be almost 250 students, from 6, 7 and 8th grades, with teachers, and parents. Other events have also been scheduled.

With the leadership of our beloved Fr. Bassam M. Saade and the help of the St. Jude Women's League, the St. Jude Parish Council and our parishioners, we will succeed in spreading the Good News of St. Maron!

St. Jude Maronite Catholic Church is just a few miles from Walt Disney World. If you are visiting Orlando anytime in the near future, please pay us a visit. We would love to meet you. Consider our church your home away from home! Website: www.saintjudechurch.org; Address: 5555 Dr. Phillips Blvd., Orlando, Florida 32819; Telephone: 407-363-7405. □

Deadline for next month's issue of *The Maronite Voice* is October 25, 2010.

the Deadline is...  *The Maronite Voice* is the official Newsletter of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon and of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn.

Send all changes of address, news, pictures and personal correspondence to: *The Maronite Voice*

4611 Sadler Road

Glen Allen, Virginia 23060

Phone: (804) 270-7234; Fax: (804) 273-9914

Email: Gmsebaali@aol.com

Pictures must be original. Digital pictures must be in "JPG" format and in high resolution. The Maronite Voice is also available online, in PDF format, at www.stmaron.org. □

Schedule of Bishop Gregory Mansour

October 6, 2010

Co-host for Muslim, Jewish and Christian Prayer Service for Peace in the Middle East, Brooklyn, N.Y.

October 7, 2010

Presbyteral Council Meeting, Brooklyn, N.Y.

October 9 - 25, 2010

Bishops Synod on the Middle East, Rome, Italy.

October 27, 2010

Archbishop Zayek's 40 Day Memorial Liturgy, Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

November 1, 2010

Feast of All Saints, Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Waterbury, Conn.

November 4, 2010

Theology on Tap for Young Adults, Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Easton, Penn.

November 6, 2010

Dinner to Kick Off the Capital Campaign for Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

November 7, 2010

Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

November 10, 2010

First Eparchial Benefit Dinner with Archbishop Dolan, New York, N.Y.

November 12, 2010

USCCB Catechetical Committee Meeting, Baltimore, Md.

November 14, 2010

Divine Liturgy at Our Lady of Lebanon Church at 11:00 o'clock, Washington, D.C.; 2 - 5pm: USCCB Pro-Life Committee Meeting

November 15 - 17, 2010

USCCB Meetings, Baltimore, Md.

November 18, 2010

Seminary Alumni Day, Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary, Washington, D.C. □

Dartmouth, Massachusetts *The Sisters Request Aid for Their New Home*



Left to right: Tresa Van Heusen, Sister Marla Marie and Therese Touma .

by the Maronite Servants

The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light Sisters now have a place to call home, "Mary, Mother of the Light Monastery," in Dartmouth, Massachusetts. "This home will help our current and future Sisters to live a life of prayer, ministry, and study. Our doors are open to welcome you, the faithful, for retreats, conferences, days of prayer and other apostolic works and activities," said Sister Marla Marie, superior.

Founded in 2008 in collaboration with Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, this new Congregation of nuns serves the faithful in our Maronite parishes. Sr. Marla Marie accepted the first two candidates this past February, Therese Touma and Tresa Van Heusen. These young women are in the formation program preparing to consecrate their lives in service to the Church.

The recently purchased home is situated on five acres and had served as the former novitiate of the Dominican Sisters of Hope, who owned this home since 1960, after acquiring it from the Prescott Family, who had it built in 1895. Over the years, as the Dominican Sisters declined in numbers and advanced in age, the property became too much for them to maintain. "We are grateful to be able to purchase this property, thanks to the help of seed money from the Eparchy of St. Maron and a mortgage," Sr. Marla Marie explained. "We are happy to think that soon we will be able to move into this permanent home, but before we can move in, much required renovation work must be done."

This is a lovely house, but it is in need of great repair. The

Sisters' immediate needs are to repair the roof and gutters; update the plumbing; install furnace safety valves; install a security fire/alarm system; paint the interior; bring the electrical service up to code; and upgrade the bathrooms, among other renovations.

"I ask for your help to provide the needed funds to get this new Monastery up and running so that we can move in before Christmas," requests Sr. Marla Marie, adding, "Would you please donate to our renovation fund and enlist others to help us, too? Our postulants, Tresa and Therese, and I have a huge task at hand, but with your help our burden will be considerably lightened."

For more information on how to help the Sisters refer to the "News and Event" section of their website: maroniteservants.org, or call Sister Marla Marie at 781-331-3290. Donations can be mailed to Sr. Marla Marie, 1199 Commercial St., Weymouth MA 02189. Thank you. □

From the Book Shelf

The Prayer of the Faithful, three volumes of morning and evening prayer of the faithful in English, is available from Saint Maron Publications.

Volume One (Sundays of the Church; Season of Announcements; Birth of the Lord and Epiphany) is available for \$40 plus \$5 shipping.

Volume Two (Seasons of Great Lent and Resurrection) is available for \$40 plus \$5 shipping.

Volume Three (Seasons of Pentecost and Holy Cross) is available for \$30 plus \$5 shipping.

The Maronite Pontifical by His Excellency Bishop Stephen Hector Doueihy, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn.

The Maronite Pontifical contains all rites delegated to the bishop in the liturgical celebrations. It describes the actions which the pontiff, as a celebrant, performs and the prayers he says during these celebrations. It includes mainly the rites of ordination to the priesthood and the solemn consecrations reserved to the bishop in the Christian worship.

The Maronite Pontifical is available for \$20 plus \$5 shipping.

The Maronite Icons according to the Maronite Liturgical Year and the Feasts of the Saints was prepared by the Icons Workshop at the Maronite Eparchy of Cyprus. It consists of 60 icons (41 for Sundays and Holy Days and 19 for Maronite Saints). This collection of icons (14" x 20") along with a booklet explaining each icon is available from Saint Maron Publications for \$100 plus \$10 shipping.

To order your copy, please write to:

Saint Maron Publications,
4611 Sadler Road,
Glen Allen, VA 23060.

For further information, call (804) 762-4301. For a complete listing of publications carried by Saint Maron Publications, please visit www.stmaron.org. □

Portland, Oregon *Lessons That Never Die*



Members of St. Sharbel Parish's youth group.

by Jaimee Haddad and Antoine Zogbi

"Turn again, O God of Hosts! Look down from Heaven, and see; protect what thy right hand has planted" (Psalm 80:16).

This passage has been the embodiment and cornerstone of the Saint Sharbel Parish youth group in Portland, Oregon known as "Crossroads." Our group, now in its fifth year, began with the goal of fostering an attitude of spiritual strength in youth, so that we may be able to combat the struggles, temptations, and peer pressures of our everyday lives. We, the youth of St. Sharbel, often find ourselves in even more arduous spiritual battles than that of our parents' generation. At the same time, we used to think that our Maronite Catholic Faith made us "stick out like sore thumbs" in the various schools we attend. However, we soon found out that when a group of "sore thumbs" gathers together, they no longer look so sore.

Our first lesson was on the necessity of grace. I distinctly remember one of our teachers describing an eternal soul without grace. He began, "Imagine that you, all of a sudden, are 10,000 feet below sea level in the depths of the ocean, yet you have no oxygen mask and cannot swim to the top fast enough. You would drown." We went on to have a discussion on the beauty of God's grace in our lives, and the essential nature of grace in reuniting us with our Eternal Father in Heaven. The discussions only grew deeper from there.

In the following weeks, we discussed the virtues, both cardinal and theological. On another night, we peeled a banana and tried, with much difficulty, to patch it up again. The banana symbolized the soul that had sinned but chose not to seek forgiveness, trying instead to repair itself. This is an impossible feat, both for the banana and a human soul. These lessons of the first year, and the following years, remain with us, traveling alongside on whatever path the Lord takes us.

The second year gave Crossroads the opportunity to discuss "The Theology of the Body" by Pope John Paul II,

following the condensed version by Christopher West. On a dismal, rainy November night, we were gathered together and the electricity went out. In the true spirit of Crossroads, we diligently continued our discussion in candlelight, continuing with the topic of our sacred body, which is indeed created in the image and likeness of God.

Our apologetics unit led to one of our most engaging and faith-driven discussions, guided by our instructors, but primarily led by us youth. We learned that in order to defend our faith, our faith must be fortified by not only the word of God, but also a strong, well-exercised conscience. As the years passed by, Crossroads blossomed into a wonderful group of committed individuals, seeking the Truth.

The lessons we have learned from Crossroads have brought us far. We pray that the least we can do is share a small part of our experiences with the world, providing a meager candle in a sea of tears. We want to send our deepest thanks to all the souls that made this program possible for us teenagers. Without your guidance, prayers, gracious hearts, and warm love, we would not be the maturing young men and women we are today.

Indeed, through Crossroads, we have been able to help protect what our Lord's right hand has planted. A strong foundation of faith has been laid for us, the next generation of Maronites, to build upon for the rest of our lives. □

Akron, Ohio *Annual Food Fair*



Some of the parishioners just before the doors opened to the public.

by Mary Beth Abraham

Our Lady of the Cedars Maronite Church in Fairlawn [Akron], Ohio, celebrated its 22nd annual Food Fair on August 7, 2010. In addition to being a successful fundraiser, the Food Fair and preparation also provide a wonderful time of fellowship for our parish family, led by our pastor Fr. Toufic Nasr. □

Saint Louis, Missouri *Order of St. Sharbel Fall Retreat*

A Fall Retreat, sponsored by St. Raymond Cathedral in St. Louis, Missouri, will be held for the members of the Order of Saint Sharbel, their spouses and guests, who may be interested in the Order, on October 29 - 31, 2010 at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Saint Louis.

The weekend promises to be filled with spiritual richness and joyful fellowship. All of the retreat activities will be held at the Pastoral Center Complex of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon.

The weekend package, which includes all meals and activities, is \$200 per person. Please make check payable to St. Raymond's Cathedral.

The Drury Plaza Hotel is located at 4th and Market Street and is five minutes from St. Raymond's Cathedral. The room rate is \$99 per room. To make reservations please call the hotel at (314) 231-3003 and mention the Order of Saint Sharbel.

Please Fax your arrival/departure information to the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon at (314) 231-1418 or by email to: Mdenny@usamaronite.org.



Uniontown, Pennsylvania *Annual Rosary Walk*



The annual Rosary Walk through the streets of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, was again sponsored by St. George Altar & Rosary Society of St. George Maronite Church on the third Sunday in September, for the 21st consecutive year.

As pilgrims gathered in the Garden of Prayer, they were welcomed by coordinator Patricia Rogers who explained the route to them.

Before beginning the recitation of the first decade of the rosary, Fr. Nadim Helou, MLM, of St. George Maronite Church, led the worshipers in a Marian Prayer of Blessed Cardinal John Henry Newman which asks our Blessed Mother for a mother's protection and watchful care.

Following the first decade of the rosary, the group sang a traditional Maronite hymn to Mary, "We Run for Protection to You."

The procession then moved to each of the five Catholic Churches in the city, stopping to pray a decade of the Holy Rosary and sing a hymn to Mary at each church. Many walked the trip through the city but those who could not walk traveled by private cars.

A fitting conclusion to the Rosary Walk was at the sixth church to be visited where the Litany of the Blessed Mother was recited at the outdoor grotto of Our Lady followed by Benediction inside the church.

The annual walk is coordinated by Patricia Rogers and Dorothy Sanner, who are both officers in the St. George Altar & Rosary Society. Fr. Nadim Helou is the Parish Administrator. □

Food For Thought

*Our faults are like a grain of sand beside
the great mountain of the mercies
of the good God.*

St. John Vianney

Name _____

Date Arriving _____

Airline _____

Flight No. _____

Arrival Time _____

Date Leaving _____

Airline _____

Flight No. _____

Departure Time _____

Email _____

Cell Phone _____

San Diego, California "A Time to Choose"

Voting Catholic Principles Direction for an Informed Conscience

A clear and simple voting guide for Catholics in the upcoming election

by Patricia F. Hansen, Director
Mother of Life Pro-Life Center
Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon

As we approach the November 2nd national election, perhaps the most important in our history, we again are confronted with the decision concerning our involvement and choices in the political process. Polls say the number one issue for Americans is the economy. But as Catholics, can we really afford to make the economy our most decisive issue? Will God really bless a nation economically, when His people disregard his most precious gift of life? American Catholics must wake up or we will not only continue to suffer economically, but more importantly, we could suffer eternal consequences. As Catholics we make up 29% of the electorate and we literally hold the decisions of life and death in our hands.

Although the Church does not specifically endorse candidates for which to vote, we are given moral principles to form our consciences and to guide us in order to comply with the teaching authority of the Church: Candidates and issues should first be evaluated on their opposition to the five moral issues about which there can be no compromise for faithful Catholics: abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, cloning and, homosexual "same-sex marriage." The Church regards these as intrinsic evils, and consideration of them takes highest priority.

Preferred candidates would be those that come closest to the defense of life and family on these issues. Afterwards candidates can be evaluated regarding their stand on other important issues such as the economy, war, poverty, immigration, education, taxes, etc. Although, these issues also have moral elements, they do not carry the same moral weight and priority as the fundamental life issues. Unfortunately, Catholics have often confused second order "social issues" with first order "moral issues."

Pope John Paul II recognized this when he wrote: "Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights - for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture - is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and conditional for all other personal right, is not defended with maximum determination" (Christifideles laici, no. 38, emphasis in original).

As faithful Catholics, how do we best defend life with maximum determination? As citizens of this nation we take part in the political process by first registering to vote. All citizens age 18 and older have a duty to register to vote and those who have changed addresses must re-register. Then we vote for candidates and issues taking priority consistent with our Catholic faith. The Bishops of the United States have stated in their document Faithful Citizenship: "It is essential

for Catholics to be guided by a well formed conscience that recognizes that all issues do not carry the same moral weight and that the moral obligation to oppose intrinsically evil acts has a special claim on our conscience." (Faithful Citizenship no. 37).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church also emphasizes this point: "Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life" (CCC 2270).

Holy Scripture also admonishes to make our choices with life as the highest priority: "I call heaven and earth to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live (Deuteronomy 30:19).

Today the challenge again rings out as we as Catholics face a similar decision as we exercise our moral duty to vote. As Fr. Pavone of Priests for Life has said, "We will either embrace deadly pro-abortion policies and thus choose death, or we will abide by the teaching of the Gospel of Life and choose life." This choice affects both the soul of our nation and our own personal spiritual lives.

To vote as true Catholics, we must lay aside partisan politics and self-interest, and objectively vote for candidates and issues that uphold the most fundamental moral principles of our Faith: The defense of human life from the moment of conception until natural death and the definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman.

It is time that Catholics with consciences well formed, take our Faith into the public square. As Christians we are called to be "salt and light" in our culture. Yet, do we not bear responsibility for the Culture of Death that has darkened our nation? We can, however, transform our culture into one of Life. This will happen if Catholics unite in voting for candidates and issues that uphold the fundamental moral values of the Faith while opposing intrinsic evil.

Let us as members of the Church, and citizens of this nation, ask God to give us the wisdom and courage to make sound moral choices in the upcoming election by voting with an informed Catholic conscience. Then and only then, can we unashamedly ask God to bless our nation and its economy, and experience the bountiful blessings that He longs to give us.

For more information on the Church's moral position on the issues and for aid in voting, please see the following:

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church;
USCCB Faithful Citizenship;
Priests for Life Political Responsibility EWTN a guide to
Catholic Teaching and Voting;
Catholic Answers Voters Guide for Serious Catholics;
Voter Guide - Catholic Advocate, CatholicVote.org. □*



When the Kids Grow Up and Find Out About the Test Tubes

When I do presentations on in vitro fertilization, audience members sometimes ask whether test tube babies experience psychological problems as they grow up. Although they clearly face elevated health risks for a number of diseases and physical disorders, the psychological effects on these children have not been thoroughly studied. Nevertheless, children born from other, closely related technologies, like anonymous sperm donation, are starting to be tracked, and researchers are finding that these children face significant difficulties in dealing with their feelings and emotions as they grow older. They oftentimes struggle with their own sense of dignity and identity, with their need for a father, and with a desire to understand their family connection.

A recent online article in Slate Magazine entitled "The Sperm Donor Kids Are Not Really Alright" describes one such study and includes some thought-provoking personal testimony from a British writer named Christine Whipp. Ms. Whipp, herself conceived by anonymous sperm donation, expresses the feelings that some donor offspring have of being, in the pointed words of the article, a "freak of nature" or a "lab experiment." She puts it this way: "My existence owed almost nothing to the serendipitous nature of normal human reproduction, where babies are the natural progression of mutually fulfilling adult relationships, but rather represented a verbal contract, a financial transaction and a cold, clinical harnessing of medical technology."

A growing number of children born this way instinctively sense how that "cold, clinical harnessing of technology" can never quite measure up to the warmth and commitment embodied in the life-giving marital embrace of a mother and a father. The absent father who

donates sperm anonymously, the financial exchanges involved, and the depersonalized laboratory environment surrounding their origins imply an element of being "used." It can be difficult for such children to put into words what they are really feeling and experiencing, as a young man named Craig emphasizes in his online comments following the Slate Magazine article:

"The confusion I felt growing up was not your normal run of the mill confusion. I didn't even begin to understand the inner turmoil I felt until I found out about my beginnings. My suggestion to you would be that before you start giving suggestions to others about how to live in a mixed family, come to know what it's like to be a child who knows something is wrong but you just don't know why. Know you're different... but you just don't know why. Live with a question mark over your head every day of your life and not be able to put words to that question."

Another young person in the same situation poignantly comments:

"I am a product of sperm donation and I can tell you that I always hated growing up without a dad. I can't tell my mom how I feel because I said something to her when I was little and she got very hurt and upset and tried to explain to me that a lot of kids grow up without dads and kinda went into all of this women can do this and women can do that and most women really don't need a man and blah blah blah. So I now keep all of my feelings to myself. I can tell you that for as much as I love her, inwards I still hate her for doing this to me and thinking that she had a right to decide if I needed a dad or not."

All children deserve to have a mother and a father as they grow up. We should never intentionally choose to set up situations where a child will be conceived in a manner that deprives him or her of a parent. Every child, moreover, is entitled to the full respect of being conceived and brought into the

world only through the marital acts of committed parents, through the intimate, loving embrace of husband and wife, not in petri dishes and test tubes.

Because awareness of our own human roots is critical to our sense of personal identity, and because of our vulnerable "sense of self" as humans, we have a particular responsibility to avoid creating a subclass of those who have "different origins" from the rest of us. It ought to come as no surprise that subtle psychological burdens may be placed upon children born from donor sperm as they subjectively struggle with broken or absent relationships, and experience a sense of being a "commodity" or an "object" because of how they were created. These dark and morally troubling aspects of modern reproductive technologies need to be more fully acknowledged and discussed in our society, as they unleash powerful forces that profoundly affect the future of the human beings who are thereby brought into the world.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org. □



Cape Ann, Massachusetts *Maronite Divine Liturgy*

The Maronite community of Cape Ann, Massachusetts, was honored to have Bishop Gregory John Mansour offer a Maronite Divine Liturgy at St. Ann's Church, Gloucester, Mass., on August 26, 2010.

Chor bishop Joseph Lahoud, Rev. Georges El-Khalli, Rev. Dennis Como, Monsignor Peter Azar, Rev. Vincent Farhat, Rev.



Anthony Salim, Rev. Leonard J. Basinow, Rev. Tony Mouanes, Rev. David Michael, and Rev. Ronald J. Garibaldi concelebrated. Music was provided by members of St. Theresa's choir of Brockton, Mass. Joseph Salah delivered words of appreciation for remembering the deceased and living members of our community

Following the Liturgy a dinner reception was held in the church hall and was attended by over 125 people. Bishop Gregory greeted attendees warmly as he circulated among the tables.

Following the Liturgy Bishop Mansour was to begin an eight-day retreat at Gonzaga, a Jesuit retreat house located in Gloucester. □

Pilgrimage Sites

Bishop Gregory has designated the following parishes as official Pilgrimage Sites to commemorate the "Year of Saint Maron," proclaimed by Patriarch Sfeir in his Lenten letter of 2010:

- Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral in Brooklyn, New York
- Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary Chapel in Washington, D.C.
- Saint Anthony Church in Lawrence, Massachusetts
- Saint Louis Gonzaga Church in Utica, New York
- Saint Anthony Church in Glen Allen, Virginia
- Saint Jude Church in Orlando, Florida

Pastors are strongly encouraged to promote and/or organize groups from their parishes and missions to make a pilgrimage to one of these sites, in celebration of the Jubilee of the 1600th year of the death of our Father, Saint Maron. Anyone making one of these pilgrimages, from June 29, 2010 – March 2, 2011, will receive an Indulgence according to the usual conditions. □

Pope Benedict Notes Rewards of Friendship With Jesus

Pope Benedict XVI reflected on the benefits of friendship with Jesus at the end of the general audience on September 22, 2010, when he offered his customary greeting to youth, the sick and newlyweds. "May friendship with Jesus, dear young people, be for you a font of joy and a reason to carry out challenging decisions," he said. The Holy Father added: "For those of you who are sick, may this friendship give you comfort in difficult moments and infuse serenity into body and spirit.

"Dear newlyweds, in the light of friendship with Jesus, strive to correspond to your vocation with reciprocal love, in openness to life and in Christian witness." □

(Zenit.org, September 22, 2010)