

Parish Bulletin

August 2011



"The Just Man shall flourish like a palm tree and like a Cedar of Lebanon shall he grow"

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From the Desk of Father Ghattas:

During the month of August, many of our children rejoin their schools to return to their daily duties and activities. With that, most of the parishioners have returned from their vacations. As a Church we continue to live the events of the season of Pentecost. The Church is living with Jesus, suffering with Him and traveling to proclaim with Him the presence of the Kingdom of God. In Her Journey, She experiences the harshness of the persecutions and temptations. Also, She is living a time of courage and joy like the time of transfiguration, when she tastes the presence of the Lord in her midst. However, the situation is a warranty of salvation and hope that the Lord God is controlling death and life. We have another station that is the Ascension of Mary or the Dormation of our Lady. We look at her as the first fruit of salvation that ended her journey to be glorified in Heaven. Mary has exalted to be the Triumphant Church with the Martyrs and Confessors and all who were sealed by the seal of the Holy Spirit. All those adjectives that qualify Mary to how the Lord bestowed upon her all the graces are in reality for everyone who is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. When we honor her, it is our duty to do so because of God who honors her and who honors the humble ones. She started to become the greatest because she was a good listener to the Word of God. She is blessed because of her faith, which was a key of accomplishment to the plan of salvation. In the litany, we call to her: the gate of heaven pray for us. We do not hesitate to pray her rosary to become like her the hand maid of the Lord and the Lord would fulfill his word: "blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God."

Announcements

Divine Liturgy: Saturdays 6:00 PM **AND** Sundays 11:00 A.M.

- **Monday August 15th** Dormation, Assumption of Mary; Divine Liturgy **7:00 PM**
- **Sunday August 21st** 11th Sunday of Pentecost; Special Intention
- **Sunday August 28th** 12th Sunday of Pentecost; Special Intention

Activities:

- **Festival:** Mark your calendars for the St. Joseph annual festival, this year held on November 4, 5, 6 2011. We need everyone's support to make our 10th annual Festival a big success.
- **Folk Dancing:** All the adults, youth and children (6 & up) are invited to participate in folk dancing during the Festival. For the children and youth please call Marlene Boulos or the rectory for more information.
- **Arabic & Catechism School:** The parents who have children for school need to begin registering them for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year. Please visit our website www.stjosephaz.org for registration because classes begin September 4th. There is a \$100.00 fee per student but if you are having financial difficulty please do not hesitate to call the rectory.
- **Pastors Vacation:** My vacation to Lebanon was a big success filled with many wonderful moments. I was able to share in the feast of St. Sharbel, entertain a visit from the Patriarch to my hometown and receive the special blessing of Mar Becharra our Patriarch. His beatitude will be visiting America October 2011. I would also like to thank Father Anwar for celebrating the Divine Liturgy in my absence.

List of Lectors for August

Arabic

English

Sola Elters & Maroun Gorayeb 8\7\11

Rana Ghazoul & Karen Shammass 8\14\11

Andree Ashkar & George Khalaf 8\21\11

Maggy Makhoul & Grace Matta 8\28\11

The Assumption of Mary Mother of Jesus Christ

Last Sunday, the Church celebrated the Transfiguration of the Lord. It is a great event on the mountain when Jesus revealed His glory to His disciples Peter, John and James. THIS REVELELATION IS PRESENTING THE REAL IDENTITY OF Jesus, his origins and his power. However his personality has been a mystery through the history. There is necessity to confirm our faith with a special revelation. Nevertheless, the event of transfiguration is revelation and proves of authenticity of Jesus of Nazareth and that of Jesus of Resurrection. He is the God of Glory who is living in a limited weak body. His plan is to humble Himself, so that the earthly beings put on the Robe of Glory, that Adam and his offspring, put aside. The Assumption of Mary, the New Eve, has assumed the Divine Nature of Christ. Her death was a "dormation" to open her eyes in heaven. For the Faithful, her Feast is a joyful occasion that reminds them of their identity and the future Glory. Also with her, the Christians form His Mystical Body, the Church. They recognize her as the first one who assumed the glorious life with her Son.

Mary is the Chosen one to be the first among the faithful. She believed that what God promised would be fulfilled at time. Through her whole life, Mary has oriented to one God, who sent His Son to become man through her. With her generous heart, she accepted with faith the Plan of Salvation. Therefore, she is worthy to be called blessed. Unlike the first Eve, Mary was humble and obedient to the Word of God. Therefore, Saint Ephrem called her "New Eve", and the Mother of Life. Unlike our Mother Eve who gave death to our Humanity, Mary gave a new life in Christ. With her cherished Fruit, the generations "will call her blessed." With God, they exalted her because her perpetual intimacy relationship with God. Voluntarily, she participated to the Plan of Salvation with her heart and her mind. Mary was a heaven on Earth. In her womb, she carried the One who sustains the Universe. Mary never separated from her Son. When His enemies persecuted Him, Mary was suffering next to Him. For example: she was next to the cross listening to last words of Jesus. Her presence was meaningful. With Her, and the Beloved Disciple, the New Humanity has been born. With her submission to the will of God, She represents the Creation. Her humble and obedient life accessed her to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Upper Room. With the Apostles they experienced His gifts.

The new Community of Faith is the New Offspring of the New Creation that has born from the side of Jesus. Saint John, in his Gospel speaks of the birth by Water and Spirit. "But to those who did accept him, he gave power to become children of God." This privilege she received is a prophecy of the New Creation in Christ. Unlike the offspring of Eve, who procreated a sinful humanity, which needs to be redeemed by God, Mary's offspring is Jesus Christ. With her obedience, God pour His graces upon our humanity. With her privilege, Mary opposed the rebellious Eve, and her offspring. She is the first fruit of the acts of Salvation of God. With her privilege, Humanity sees in her the hope that never failed. With her Prayers, the Christians look at her as the one who arrived in the Harbor of Peace. Other tradition calls her the "Morning Star" that announces the coming of the day after a long darkened night. She announced to the old couple Zachariah and Elizabeth the coming of the Savior. With her, the hopeless humanity found hope.

With the woman's movement, Mary comes first, who honors Woman and the Motherhood. Some Movements have the tendency to honor the Mother Earth and fertility. The natural force has a great service over human life. Through the earth, human being and animals survive. The Motherhood of Mary and the heavenly vocation are more important. Mother earth is generating the natural life. Jesus, who appeared from Mary, gave the Everlasting Life. She is the Mother of the Word of life that gives life to the new Humanity.

Mary honors the Women through her faith, and her humble life. Therefore, no one among the Saints has her honor. She is on the Right of Jesus the King as mediator of graces. This privilege of mediation is extended through her to her new children in Christ.

In her feast, Mary is worthy to have this privilege, because of her humility and obedience to the Word of God. By accepting His plan, she opened the way to our sinful humanity to the flood of graces to our human race. In this way, we have the same privilege because of our birth from the womb of our Mother Church, through baptism and our new life. May the prayers of Mary be with us? Amen.

Fr. Ghattas Khoury

Transfiguration of the Lord and The Experience of Prayer:

The New Law that Jesus renewed the Old Law and gave the new personally. According to Matthew, The scene was very simple, Jesus his disciples and the crowd. There was no preparation, like the experience of the people and Moses.

The figure has five different categories:

- 1- Jesus that is the Son of God who presented the New Law. Today is the Mountain in Galilee that has the act of transfiguration.
- 2- Moses who was the Mediator of the Old Law as St. Paul the Law of condemnation.
- 3- Elias the great prophet who had a great zeal that he returned by his debate the hearts of the people. They abdicated the convenient gods to proclaim the real God is the Lord of Israel. After that, He experienced the presence of the Lord.
- 4- The Apostles of Jesus

While Jesus was praying they experience a calm and peaceful time. Their vision has been changed. It was not the regular figure of Jesus THAT was suffering of the is an ordinary face.

We can say, the transfiguration was a taste of heaven. It is transcendence over time and place. It is similar of the mystical experience of Paul.

During that time, a white cloud came to cover that and they heard a voice from it saying, this beloved son, listen to him.

1-The three disciples experienced the Divinity of Jesus and what Peter said one time and without touching it, that Jesus is not an ordinary figure similar to Moses and Elias or Jeremiah.

2- Jesus is the Son of God we have to listen to his Law and his words.

3_ Moses appeared to confirm the fullness of revelation came through Jesus>

4-By his death on the Cross, Jesus transforms the heart of the people by faith and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The meaning of the transfiguration

Knowing Jesus not only according to the flesh but according to the Spirit> if the Lord reveals himself by humble way, it does not mean he would lose his dignity. .

What is the meaning of this experience?

Who is this person that I turned him down or hurt his dignity?

First of all he is the image of God

The one who has been transformed by the amazing grace to become Christ wise AND CANDIDATE TO BE IN THE Kingdom of God.

Second the different figures that from the Old Law and the prophecy are fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth.

The Apostles are the new figure that is the witnesses of the superiority of the new Law that has been written inside the hearts of the New People.

Every Sunday, is similar to the transfiguration scene.

We remember that three witnesses are always with Jesus with his experience of the agony of Gasmen.

The three joined the others to experience the powerful presence of Jesus Christ that he gave his peace and his forgiveness.

Saint Matthias Apostle

Feastday: August 9,2011

How does one qualify to be an apostle?

The first act of the apostles after the Ascension of Jesus was to find a replacement for Judas. With all the questions, doubts, and dangers facing them, they chose to focus their attention on finding a twelfth apostle. Why was this important? Twelve was a very important number to the Chosen People: twelve was the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. If the new Israel was to come from the disciples of Jesus, a twelfth apostle was needed.

But Jesus had chosen the original twelve. How could they know whom he would choose?

One hundred and twenty people were gathered for prayer and reflection in the upper room, when Peter stood up to propose the way to make the choice.

Peter had one criterion, that, like Andrew, James, John, and himself, the new apostle be someone who had been a disciple from the very beginning, from his baptism by John until the Ascension. The reason for this was simple, the new apostle would must become a witness to Jesus' resurrection. He must have followed Jesus before anyone knew him, stayed with him when he made enemies, and believed in him when he spoke of the cross and of eating his body -- teachings that had made others melt away.

Two men fit this description -- Matthias and Joseph called Barsabbas. They knew that both these men had been with them and with Jesus through his whole ministry. But which one had the heart to become a witness to his resurrection. The apostles knew that only the Lord could know what was in the heart of each. They cast lots in order to discover God's will and Matthias was chosen. He was the twelfth apostle and the group was whole again as they waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

That's the first we hear of Matthias in Scripture, and the last. Legends like the Acts of Andrew and Matthias testify to Matthias' enthusiastic embrace of all that being an apostle meant including evangelization, persecution, and death in the service of the Lord.

History of Saint Titus feast august 25

The story and history of Saint Titus. Titus was a convert from heathenism, a disciple of St. Paul, one of the chosen companions of the Apostles in his journey to the Council of Jerusalem, and his fellow-laborers in many apostolic missions. From the Second Epistle which St. Paul sent by the hand of Titus

to the Corinthians we gain an insight into his character and understand the, strong affection which his master bore him.

Titus had been commissioned to carry out a twofold office needing much firmness, discretion, and charity. He was to be the bearer of a severe rebuke to the Corinthians, who were giving scandal and were wavering in their faith; and at the same time he was to put their charity to a further test by calling upon them for abundant alms for the church at Jerusalem. St. Paul meanwhile was anxiously awaiting the result. At Troas he writes, "I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother." He set sail to Macedonia. Here at last Titus brought the good news. His success had been complete. He reported the sorrow, the zeal, the generosity of the Christians, till the Apostle could not contain his joy, and sent back to them his faithful messenger with the letter of comfort from which we have quoted. Titus was finally left as a bishop in Crete, and here he, in turn, received the epistle which bears his name, and here at last he died in peace in 107 AD in Gortyn, Crete.

St. Lawrence - Martyr
Feast day: August 10

Saint Lawrence was one of seven deacons who were in charge of giving help to the poor and the needy. When a persecution broke out, Pope St. Sixtus was condemned to death. As he was led to execution, Lawrence followed him weeping, "Father, where are you going without your deacon?" he said. "I am not leaving you, my son," answered the Pope. "in three days you will follow me." Full of joy, Lawrence gave to the poor the rest of the money he had on hand and even sold expensive vessels to have more to give away.

The Prefect of Rome, a greedy pagan, thought the Church had a great fortune hidden away. So he ordered Lawrence to bring the Church's treasure to him. The Saint said he would, in three days. Then he went through the city and gathered together all the poor and sick people supported by the Church. When he showed them to the Prefect, he said: "This is the Church's treasure!"

In great anger, the Prefect condemned Lawrence to a slow, cruel death. The Saint was tied on top of an iron grill over a slow fire that roasted his flesh little by little, but Lawrence was burning with so much love of God that he almost did not feel the flames. In fact, God gave him so much strength and joy that he even joked. "Turn me over," he said to the judge. "I'm done on this side!" And just before he died, he said, "It's cooked enough now." Then he prayed that the city of Rome might be converted to Jesus and that the Catholic Faith might spread all over the world. After that, he went to receive the martyr's reward. Saint Lawrence's feast day is August 10th.

Your Contribution to St. Joseph is needed to support our plan to develop the Place of Worship and develop our friendship center for our Future Generations.

Pastor, Fr. Ghattas Khoury

Advisory Council: Monty Coury-Chairman, Dr. Marwan Ghazoul, Maroun Gorayeb-Vice chairman, Marie Medawar-Secretary, Elie George, Joseph Chemali, Youssef Khalaf, Toufic Faddoul, Rania Karam

Church Organizations

St. Rafka Guild, Sola Khalaf, President, 623-363-9353; MYO, Marlene Boulos 480-585-2551; MYA Coordinator Marie Medawar 602-485-4501, George Khalaf, President 480-560-5917; Maronite Outreach, Elias El Ters 480-898-9096; Festival Chairman Dr. George Ayoub; Choir Director, Zouheir Faddoul 623-872-5399; Sound System, Toufic Faddoul 602-312-5091; Lectors Coordinator Elias El Ters 480-898-9096; Ushers, Elie George 480-820-2928