

Parish Bulletin

February 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:

Many times, we criticize the influence of new technological and mass media like the Internet, Facebook cell phone and others. Parents complain about how they have lost control of their children to technology. They do not know what kind of information they receive and how much time they are spending on the Internet or their cell phones. As a Pastor of the Church, I must be alerted of the possibility of damaging young souls who are not ready to claim their freedom by themselves because of their lack of experience, like the Prodigal son of the Gospel. We are very conservative with that is going on in terms of the flood of information overflowing the memory of the new generation. It is generally easy to refuse and complain about the overflow of information. When I was in High School, information was limited and we were not burdened with extra information. Actually, the students today have more information than their teacher because of their ability to acquire it through new technology. More than that, the students today can communicate and find friends everywhere to discuss many subjects like freedom and the dignity of the human being. Recently, Facebook penetrated the narrow society and cleaned up its consciences from Taboos. Many are conscience of what is going on in the Middle East from the Cedars Revolution to Tunisia to Egypt. There, they overcame the taboo of religion and fear to arrive to the dignity of the human being. For Christians, it is not necessary to use Facebook to remember our freedom and our dignity because it is a gift of goodness to each individually. In addition, it is an opportunity to use new technology to proclaim the Good News.

Announcements

Divine Liturgy: Saturdays 6:00 PM **AND** Sundays 11:00 AM

- **Sunday February 6th** Divine Liturgy; 5th Sunday of Epiphany (Gal 1:11-17) & (Jn 4:46-54); Elias Roukoz, Mary Kharma & Youssef Nkoula El Hajj by Takla Moussalem
 - **Wednesday February 9th 7:00 PM** Divine Liturgy; Saint Maron Feast day
- **Sunday February 13th** Divine Liturgy; Sunday of the Priests (1Tim 4: 6-16) & (Luke 12: 42-48); Fares el Hajj by Toufic and Souhila El Hajj
- **Sunday February 20th** Divine Liturgy; The Righteous and Just (Hebrews 12: 18-24) & (Matthew 25: 31-46); Special Intention by the Celebrant
 - **Tucson Mass 5:00 PM**
- **Sunday February 27th** Divine Liturgy; The Faithful Departed (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11) & (Luke 16: 19-31)
 - **El Paso Mass 6:00 PM**

Activities:

- **MYA:** The Maronite Young Adults are putting on their annual Valentines Day Party on **February 12** at **6:00 PM**. If you have any questions about the party or if you would like to reserve tickets please talk to George Khalaf.
- **Sunday School:** We will be having school on **Sunday February 6th** **AND** **Sunday February 20th**
- **Barbeque:** As a fundraiser for the church, we will be having a barbeque after mass on **February 20th**
- **Condolences:** Our sympathies and condolences go out to Siham Ashkar and her family for the passing of her mother Marta Mimassi, in Lebanon. May God help her soul rest in peace.
- **Note from Abouna:** I would like to thank Suzanne Sabbagh for her zeal and hard work for St. Joesph's. I wish her the best and may the Divine Providence protect her during her service. We pray for her safety and return to Phoenix.

List of Lectors (Arabic & English)

Sunday February 6th Liliane El Ters Francis & Myrna Ghorayeb

Sunday February 13th Marie Rose Faddoul & George Khalaf

Sunday February 20th Aziz Saliba & Yara Boulos

Sunday February 27th Andree El Ashkar & Raymond Baraket

Sunday March 6th Sola El Ters & Janice Ashkar

Sunday March 13th Rania Karam & Christopher Zlaket

Sunday March 20th George El Ters & Kristianna Faddoul

St. Malatius the Confessor, Patriarch of Antioch

On this day of the year 381 A.D., St. Malatius (Miltius) the Confessor, Patriarch of Antioch, departed. He was ordained a bishop for Sebaste in the year 357 A.D. He left it because of the rudeness of its people and lived a solitary life nearby the city of Halab in Syria. In the year 360 A.D., he was chosen a patriarch for Antioch during the days of Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great. He was an eminent, learned and meek man, who was loved by everyone. When he entered the city of Antioch, he resisted the Arians and kept them away from the churches. When the Emperor heard that, he exiled him in the same year that he was enthroned patriarch. The noble men of the city of Antioch, the bishops and the priests met and wrote to the Emperor asking for the return of the Patriarch. The Emperor returned St. Malatius in shame to them. When St. Malatius came back in the year 362 A.D., he did not cease resisting the Arians, excommunicating them and all those who believed in their doctrines. He made clear to them their errors and explained to them their blasphemy. He declared, preached and confirmed that the Son was of the same essence as the Father, consubstantial with Him in essence and in Godship. The followers of Arius returned to slander St. Malatius before Emperor Valens, who exiled him again to a country further away than the one to which he was exiled first. When he arrived to his exile, the bishops and the fathers that were exiled from different countries came and gathered around and stayed with him. St. Malatius did not slack in teaching and interpreting what was difficult to understand in the Holy Scriptures. His epistles reached his flock, in spite of the distance, confirming their faith in the Holy Trinity, preaching the faith of the Council of Nicea and refuting the teachings of Arius. He was in exile for many years until his return to Antioch in the year 378 A.D. He was present in the Council of Constantinople in the year 381 A.D. Then he departed in peace. St. John Chrysostom (Golden Mouthed) praised St. Malatius on his feast day declaring his greatness and that he was not in any less stature than the

apostles in honor for what he suffered from exile and humiliation for the sake of the Orthodox faith. May his prayers be with us and Glory is to our God forever. Amen.

James of Cyr: Disciple of St. Maron (February 19)

James of Cyr was a hermit and one of the disciples of St. Maron. These disciples of Maron are an extension of their spiritual Father and Founder: they went to his school of asceticism, learned from him and were directed by him. These disciples are described by Theodoret as flowers in the garden of Maron.

Many of the disciples never met the saint, but only heard about his life and virtues and his new school of asceticism and solitude. They wanted to imitate his life of devotion and sacrifice, so they became his followers. The disciple James was still alive when Theodoret wrote about him.

James was instructed in the heavenly way by the great Maron who loved him very much. He lived with Maron for a while and then went off to live by himself. However, James excelled his master in his acts of penance and good deeds. Maron accepted as his dwelling the ruin of a temple, and for clothes he used the skins of goats to protect him from the cold and the rain. James refused all of this and lived in the open air, saying that the skies were his roof. James thus exposed himself to the intemperate weather, quite often being drenched with rain and submerged in the snow and the ice. In the summer, he was exposed to the burning sun. He accepted everything with great patience, as if he were not enduring all of the sufferings in his own body, but in the body of a stranger. He sustained everything with the strength of the Spirit. It seemed that his body did not suffer from all of these mortifications. Indeed, it seemed as if he did not have a body at all, saying with Saint Paul, "We do indeed live in the body, but we do not wage war with human resources. The weapons of our warfare are not merely human. They possess God's power for the destruction of strongholds. We demolish sophistries and every proud pretension that raises itself against the knowledge of God; we likewise bring every thought into captivity to make it obedient to Christ. We are ready to punish disobedience in anyone else when your own obedience is perfect" (2Corinthians 10:3-6). He spent his time looking for the exercise of virtues. In seeking solitude, he went to the mountains, far from the city. This mountain became famous because of him and people would go there and take soil from this place, which they considered holy. This place is still referred to today as "Sheikh Khouros," or "the holy one from Khouros."

Bishop Theodoret wrote that he himself went out to see James and to observe him. After remaining with the holy hermit, Theodoret wrote of many examples of James' holiness and life of penance.

St. Agatha (February 5)

St. Agatha, the patron saint of Catania, Sicily, where her festival is celebrated on the 5th of February. The legend is that she was a native of Sicily (probably of Catania, though

Palermo also claims her), of noble birth and great beauty. She repelled the advances of the Roman prefect sent by the emperor Decius to govern Sicily, and was by his orders brutally tortured and finally sent to the stake. As soon as the fire was lighted, an earthquake occurred, and the people insisted on her release. She died in prison on the 5th of February 251. The rescue of Catania from fire during an eruption of Mount Etna was later attributed to St. Agatha's veil.

St. Maron (February 9)

St. Maron also known as Saint Maron, was a 5th century [Syriac Christian monk](#) who founded the Maronite spiritual movement.^[1] The Church that grew from this movement is the [Maronite Church](#). St. Maron was known for his missionary work, healing and miracles, and teachings of a monastic devotion to God.

St. Maron, born in the middle of the 4th century in Syria, was a [priest](#) who later became a [hermit](#), retiring to a mountain of [Taurus](#) in the region of [Cyrrihus](#), near [Antioch](#).^[2] His holiness and miracles attracted many followers, and drew attention throughout the empire. [St. John Chrysostom](#) sent him a letter around AD 405 expressing his great love and respect, and asking St. Maron to pray for him.

Maron is considered the Father of the spiritual and monastic movement now called the [Maronite Catholic Church](#). This movement had a profound influence in [Lebanon](#). St. Maron spent all of his life on a mountain in Syria. It is believed that the place was called "Kefar-Nabo" on the mountain of Ol-Yambos, making it the cradle of the Maronite movement.

The Maronite movement reached Lebanon when St. Maron's first disciple Abraham of Cyrrihus who was called the Apostle of Lebanon, realized that there were many non-Christians in Lebanon, so he set out to convert them to Christianity by introducing them to the way of St. Maron. The followers of St. Maron, both monks and laity, always remained faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church. St. Maron's [feast day](#) is celebrated on [February 9](#).

St. Valentine February 14

Valentine was a holy priest in Rome, who, with St. Marius and his family, assisted the martyrs in the persecution under Claudius II. He was apprehended, and sent by the emperor to the prefect of Rome, who, on finding all his promises to make him renounce his faith in effectual, commended him to be beaten with clubs, and afterwards, to be beheaded, which was executed on February 14.

The Martyrs of Tyre, Lebanon February 19

The Bishops Tyrannous, Silvanus, the Priest Zenobius and 500 Martyrs died during the persecution of Decilianus in 304 AD.

The Priest and his Responsibility

By Fr. Ghattas Khoury

In the memory of the Deceased Priests, I would like to explain to you the importance of the priest in the midst of the People of God. Actually, even the Catholics are the 20% of America population; they are living in evangelical Culture, the reform Church. Many would question of the necessity of the presence of an ordained minister, priest, to serve the People of God.

Before, his departure to the Father, the Lord organized his house by appointing twelve Apostles who are representing the tribes of Israel. He chose Simon to be the head of his households.

Many time, people has reduced this ministry to a social position. Without knowing, what is our responsibility as people of God toward the Great Mystery of Faith? The Church revitalized the principal role of the priests that “they share in the ministry of Christ, a ministry whereby, the Church, here on earth is unceasingly, built up into the people of God” (Vatican II P. O. 1)

In his letter to his disciple Timothy, St. Paul opened the eyes of the young minister of the Mystery of Devotion, Faith, which is Jesus Christ who was manifested in flesh, in the Church, that is the Pillar and the foundation of the truth. He was vindicated in the Spirit who revealed to the Church the reality of Jesus Christ. He entered his glory and gave the order to proclaim him among the nations.

In the Second Letter to his disciple, Paul urged his disciple to remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead a descendent of David. This is the topic of Paul’s proclamation. (2 Timothy 2:8)

This priest has a duty to proclaim diligently the truth. There is only one truth that has been manifested through the experience of the disciples. This truth came from faith that is the gift from God to those who believe in it. Obey your leaders and defer to them, for they keep watch over you and will have to give account, that they may fulfill their task with joy and not with sorrow, for that would be of no advantage to you” (Hebrews 13:17)

There are many responsibilities other than the proclamation. To be sincere, the priest should be a good example in speech, conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

Another obligation is reading the scriptures, meditating in the Word of God, and teaching the teaching of the apostolic tradition. He has to remember his new identity as the guard of the Church. He is in charge of the morality of the people.

Most of the time, the man of God is facing many difficulties because many refuse the truth. In this ambience, the man of God has to be courageous to proclaim the truth whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convenience reprimand, encourage through all

patience all teaching. Whatever the situation, the man of God should be self-possessed put up with hardship; perform the work of evangelist; fulfill his ministry (2 Tim 4:4) To ameliorate the role of the man of color, the people of God has to know that Jesus came to save his people. He organized his Church to provide spiritual nourishment. He put in charge, the ordained ministers, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. They are directly the shepherds of the People of God.

Without them, there would be confusion. The man of Color reminds us of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his ministry among us. He is the visible sign of the presence of God among us.

St Maron

February 9, the Maronite Church celebrates the feast of her Patron Saint. Many would come to his beatitude to congratulate him in this occasion. Many would be amazed to have a hermit from the fourth century a Patron of a Church raised up during the time of depression from a humble monastery in the Holy Valley. In addition, this reality would be impossible.

This humble hermit from North Syria was a revolutionary, like many of his friends, like St Anthony or Basil or St Benedict, the Father of the European Civilization. Unlike, Chi Guevara, His revolution, unlike the French revolution, or Algeria and other tragedies that cost them thousands of casualties, it is totally personnel repentance. They had a revolution of the conscience of a Church that should be faithful to her beloved in purity. Many leaders abused their position to follow the regulations of the worldly. What is amazing is that Maron and the others were faithful to the Church; however, the condition, they persevered with their personal agony until the end. They never criticized or complain of system food. They were quiet.

Unlike the worldly revolution, the disciples of St Maron persevered during life, with joy and hope, to receive their crowns after their death. During the ordinary revolution, the man loses his bread; he would become a wolf with wolves to have snatched a piece of bread for his family.

For Saint Maron revolution is always peaceful one. Instead, to accuse the others, the person goes deep inside of his soul to rediscover the love of God and the anointed of the Spirit. With that, he will live in peace that is coming from the one who rose from the dead.

Actually, many would long to the spirituality of the Holy Valley. It is the source of our perseverance during the time of oppression. With it, we become truly, the children of the revolution of Saint Maron.

All the revolutions ended by tragedies. It seems the revolution of Jesus and many like St. Maron his that is retrieving our Christian vocation that is Love and with love, there is no fear.

ثورة مار مارون

ايام معدودة تحتفل الكنيسة المارونية بعيد شفيعتها مار مارون. وهو عيد... رسمي في لبنان؛ تعطل الدوائر الرسمية فيتوافد الاعيان والزعماء الى البطريركية المارونية والى كل الاماكن لتقديم النهائي بمناسبة عيد ابي الطائفة المارونية

هذا الثائر اسمه مار مارون، لم يكن كباقي الثوار لا على طريقة تشي غيفارا او هوشيمنه. لم يصنع ثورة ذات شعارات كالثورة الفرنسية او الثورة الجزائرية وغيرها من الثورات التي نعرفها العجب في مار مارون وسائر النساك، انهم قاموا بثورة احتجاج داخل كنيسة المسيح على الاوضاع الشاذة ، دون ان يهرقوا قطرة دم من الشعب. صار عنده تلاميذ يحذون حذوهم في الجهاد الروحي. اصحاب هذه الثورة لم يتشكوا او يمتعضوا بل بالعكس كانوا يتحملون الالهات برباط جأش. عندنا مثال عندنا القديس شربل. كانت ثورته صامته في الاعماق. هذا الاسلوب في الثورات لا يتفق مع منطق العالم الذي يستعمل العنف ليصل الى هدفه المنشود

في المجتمعات تحصل ثورات على الظلم لكن الاوضاع الشاذة في المجتمعات لا تقمعهما ثورة الدماء انما تزيدها سوء . فإذا كان في البيت خبز ونفذ اثناء الثورة ولم يعد للعائلة اي طعام. يضطر رب البيت ان يصير ذئبا ليصارع الذئاب على لقمة العيش اما ثورة مار مارون كانت ثورة في العمق في اكتشاف الحرية النائمة والهوية المكبلة بقيود نزوات النفس التي اهملت المواعيد او بالاحرى انية من الخزف غير جديرة بحمل المسحة المقدسة. من هنا تبدأ الثورة لتنتعش الروح وتظهر المحبة والحرية النائمة بسبب عبودية الخطيئة. هذه الثورة لا تتوخى القضاء على الاخرين بل بالاحرى القضاء على الانسان القديم، اي الانسان المثقل بالنزوات، لينتعث الانسان الجديد الذي هو على صورة المسيح القائم من بين الاموات في عيد عيد مار مارون ، لا بد لنا نحن الموارنة ان نعيد حساباتنا بفحص ضمير، اذا كنا بالفعل ابناء هذه الثورة ام اننا نسير بركاب سائر الثورات التي انتهت غالبا بالفشل او احرقت ذاتها او اكلت اولادها

اليوم يتحدثون عن العودة الى روحانية قنوبين . هي دعوة ايجابية للثورة في العمق. هذه الثورة بدأت مع يسوع الناصري والذي حارب الارهاب بالمحبة فانتصرت على الصليب. فذا كانت دعوة الموارنة دعوة انجيلية الى الثورة في العمق فعلينا ان نبدأ هذه الثورة ولا عنف العالم يقضي علينا. كل الثورات انتهت الى الفشل الا الثورات الحقيقية التي تبدأ بالعمق بالجهاد لنش المحبة والحرية التي اعطيت بالمعمودية وبمسحة الميرون المقدس

By: Ghattas Khoury...