

Our Lady of Lebanon Church - Easton

CANA SUNDAY

Volume 2009, Issue 8

Sunday, February 22, 2009

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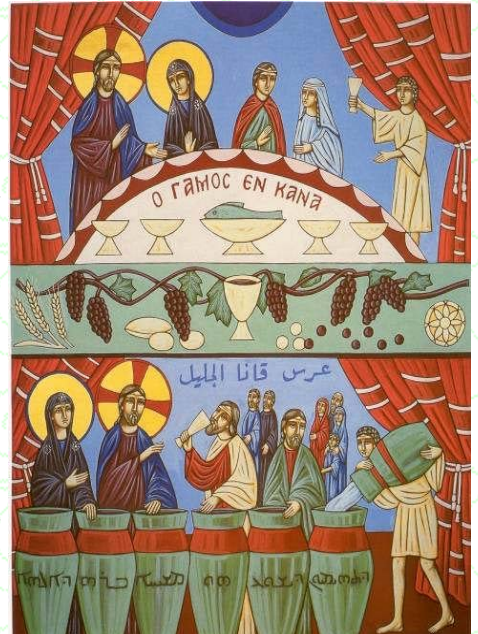
Special points of interest:

- *Vote against FOCA*
- *The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything.*
- *Ignorance of scripture is ignorance of Christ." (St. Jerome)*
- *Information not shared is lost*
- *A lot of Kneeling will keep you in good standing*

MARY AT CANA WEDDING

The mystery of her who, in the words of St. Leo, "conceived God in her mind before she conceived Him in her body," gives full meaning to the twofold presence of Mary in the mystery of salvation: her presence before God and her presence among men, both in the fellowship of one life, in one body. Here indeed two utterances made at Cana find their lasting meaning.

The first is addressed to Christ, telling Him of men's thirst: "They have no wine"; the second to men, telling them to hope for God's gift and to give their cooperation: "Do whatever He tells you." (RENE LAURENTIN)



Season of Great Lent

Sunday, February 21, 2009, marks the beginning of the Season of Great Lent. This Season of the Church consists of seven Sundays (weeks) of preparation for the Great Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord. Briefly, the Church gives us the Season of Great Lent as a time to prepare for the Resurrection of the Lord. Fasting, acts of penance and self-denial, as well as intense self-reflection, mark this season. In addition, the Maronite Church has a unique approach in her presentation of this season: each Sunday commemorates one of the great miracles of Jesus. These miracles focus on healing by the Lord as signs of his power over sin and death pointing to his true identity as the long-awaited Messiah. Tradition ascribes to one of our great teachers of spiritual life, St. Ephrem, the following prayer:

"O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of laziness, faintheartedness, lust of power, and idle talk. Rather give to Your servant the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love. Grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother; for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen."



THIS WEEKEND * WEDDING OF CANA SUNDAY *****

Sat., February 21 – 5:00 P.M. – Joseph & Ida Stevens by children & grand children (birthday remembrance)
 Sun., February 22 – 10:00 A.M. – Nakia Milan by Family

WEEKDAY LITURGIES

Monday	February 23	6:30 P.M	Ash Monday - for all who are in need of our prayers
Tuesday	February 24	6:30 P.M	Anna John by Mr. & Mrs. Peter Shaheen
Wednesday	February 25	*****	*****
Thursday	February 26	6:30 P.M	Catherine Melan by Mary Shumar
Friday	February 27	6:30 P.M	Helen Melhem by Sara Koury & Family

NEXT WEEKEND * SUNDAY OF THE LEPER *****

Sat., February 28 – 5:00 P.M. – Rose Keschl by Katherine Howard
 Sun., March 1 – 10:00 A.M. – John & Bargoot Jabour & children Mazel, Helen, Anthony & Jeanette by family Marie Hanni (6th year anniversary)



BINGO	CALLER	KITCHEN	PAYOUT
February 24th	Amine Nehme	Aziz Koury	Antonios Jabbour Owtill Karam



Collection Sunday, February 1, 2009	\$ 690.00
Collection: Saturday, February 7, 2009	\$ 455.00
Collection Sunday, February 8, 2009	\$ 467.00
Saint Maron Feast (Sunday)	\$ 731.00

**THANK YOU
&
GOD BLESS**

Readers

Saturday, Feb. 21:	Frances Melhem
Sunday, Feb. 22:	Simon Koorie
Saturday, Feb. 28:	Marie Hanni
Sunday, March 1	Marc Bou Jaoude
Saturday, March 7	Jeanette Kassis
Sunday, March 8	Maroun koorie

Scripture Readings

Sunday of Cana Wedding

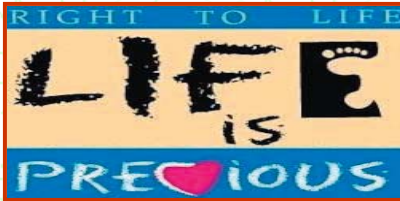
Rom 14: 14-23

Jn 2: 1-11



AS OUR BLESSED MOTHER brings us to her Son Jesus, it is our task also to bring others to the Lord. Is there someone you can invite to explore the Catholic faith . someone who is not baptized, or baptized in a non-Catholic Christian tradition? Perhaps you know what the Catholic faith might hold for them. Think about it during Lent.

DAY OFF Please be advised that the Rectory's office will be closed on Wednesdays. No phone calls will be answered . For emergencies ONLY (Hospital calls), please call Abouna on his cellular.



Abortion

Abortion is never right. In every abortion there are two deaths, the baby and the heart of the mother. (Fr. Jack Spaulding)

We take a special moment in our day as we pray for all the sick in our parish, the shut-ins, and those recovering from any illness, surgery, or treatments. May the Good Lord touch them with His healing and restore them to a good health of body and soul.

Please remember in your prayers this week: Katherine Howard, Mary Tony, Julia Stevens & George Koorie

SUNSHINE

It has been brought to my attention that many shut-ins and people in nursing homes desire to have company once in a while. For this reason, we call upon all of you if you are interested to be a part of a Sunshine Committee which consists of the ministry of visiting the elderly and nursing homes and bringing a smile to those who are lonely and longing for someone to talk to. If you have the time to serve on this committee, please contact the rectory at (610) 252-5275 . This ministry will help all of us grow in humanity and the love of God and our neighbors.

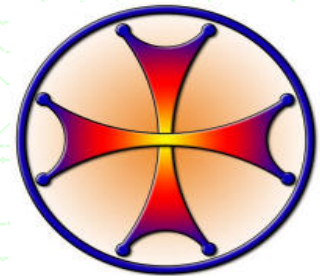
ASH MONDAY

Ash Monday Service will be held at 7:00 P.M .

Ashes will be blessed during mass and then distributed to parishioners.

Please remember that Ash Monday is a day of fasting and abstinence. (No meat or dairy products).

Question & Answer:



“What kind of pain or punishment do you endure in hell?”

Answer: Hell is the exclusion of being in our majestic God’s presence (Matt.5:20, 7:21-23, Luke 12:24-28, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:21, 2 Thess. 1:9). This is the primary pain of hell. Human beings were made for union with God and are intended to be with Him for all eternity. Some theologians speculate a person in hell will be forced to contemplate his intended destiny with God and how his selfishness kept him from this. He will see the emptiness of his excessive self-love and will have a vivid knowledge of his offenses. He will also see the many gifts God offered and how he rejected them.

Is the “fire” of hell literal or merely symbolic of severe punishment?

Theologians differ about that. Certainly, hellfire is different in many respects from the ordinary fire we know. Scripture speaks of hell as the “outer darkness,” which is hard to understand if hellfire is like the fire we know. Also, the fire of hell is perpetual and capable of punishing spiritual beings – again, something very different from conventional fire. We know from Scripture that God is love (1 John 4:8). Because those in hell are cut off from the source of love (God), they will hate God. The souls in hell will know the goodness of God and will hate it. Again, the most painful part of hell is the incompleteness we will always feel because we will not have union with God. It will be a perpetual frustration and torment that will never end.



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Lent 2009

Prot. No. 086/1/09

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Every year I appeal to you to assist in our many Eparchial services. Over the years you have responded generously because you know that together we can do so much more than we can separately. As persons and parishes we are more effective when we work together so that good things happen in the name of Christ.

We train our seminarians (5 of them) and support our retired priests (13 of them), develop programs and catechetical texts for our children and youth. We have programs for our deacons and subdeacons and help our Missions. We are preparing translations of our Liturgical texts.

We assist our Patriarch and Bishops in Lebanon to reach out to the poor, we began a solid program of financial accountability and transparency in the Chancery and in every parish and institution.

We do all of this and more, because of your confidence and generosity; yet we have so much more to do. Please open your hearts, once again, even during these hard times, to help your Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn to fulfill her God-given imperative to make known the face of Christ in the world. Your donation to our annual appeal is greatly appreciated and much needed.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Gregory J. Mansour

GJM/cm

2009 Bishop Appeal Assessment

For our parish

is

\$ 6000.00

LENTEN GUIDELINES

Bishops Robert Shaheen and Gregory Mansour have issued the following Lenten guidelines for the Maronites of the United States: All Maronites who are physically capable are to abstain from meat on Ash Monday (February 23rd) and all Fridays of Lent.

Ash Monday and the Great Friday of the Crucifixion are also days of fasting. Fasting in the Maronite Church involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon. The rest of the day normal meals can be taken but without meat.

All Maronites who are physically capable are to fast on these two days. All parish priests are to bless and distribute ashes on Ash Monday during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy as indicated in our liturgical books. This ceremony may not be celebrated on the vigil of Ash Monday (Cana Sunday). For the convenience of some faithful of the Latin Church who may come to Mass at a Maronite Church on their Ash Wednesday, ashes that were blessed on Monday may be given to them after the Mass. However, ashes are not to be blessed again on this day.

All parish priests are to celebrate the Benediction with the Cross every Friday of Lent except for the Great Friday of the Crucifixion. This service may be preceded by other devotions such as Evening Prayer (Ramsho), Stations of the Cross, or the Divine Liturgy. Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament should not take place on Fridays of Lent.

Clergy, religious and laity who wish to observe the more traditional Maronite practice of fasting and

abstinence are encouraged to do so. That practice is summarized in the following taken from the Synod of Mt. Lebanon (1736): Every weekday of Lent (Monday through Friday) is a day of fasting and abstinence from meat and dairy products (eggs, butter, milk etc.) Fasting involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon. The rest of the day normal meals can be taken but without meat or dairy products. Dairy products are excluded because they are animal

byproducts. **Saturdays and Sundays are exempt from fasting and abstaining, as are the following three feast days: St. Maron-February 9th, The 40 Martyrs-March 9th, and St. Joseph- March 19th.** According to the new code of Canon Law for Eastern Churches and the Particular Law of the Maronite Church: The law of abstinence binds all Catholics over 14 years old. The Law of fasting binds all Catholics between the age of 18 and 65. All the faithful between the ages of 14 and 65 years of age must abstain from meat during the Season of Great Lent unless there is any particular reason to dispense from it.

A Time to Laugh

Oooooooops!

One day at kindergarten a teacher said to the class of 5-year-olds, "I'll give \$2 to the child who can tell me who was the most famous man who ever lived."

An Irish boy put his hand up and said, "It was St. Patrick." The Teacher said, "Sorry Sean, that's not correct."

Then a Scottish boy put his hand up and said, "It was St. Andrew." The teacher replied, "I'm sorry, Hamish, that's not right either."

Finally, a Jewish boy raised his hand and said, "It was Jesus Christ." The teacher said, "That's absolutely right, Marvin, come up here and I'll give you the \$2." As the teacher was giving Marvin his money, she said, "You know Marvin, since you're Jewish, I was very surprised you said "Jesus Christ." Marvin replied, "Yeah. In my heart I knew it was Moses, but business is business."

Children Bingo night

We will have a children Bingo night on Saturday February 28, 2009 at 6:30 pm. Prizes, Food and beverages will be provided for the children by the MYO.



Talent Show

The MYO will be sponsoring a talent show on Saturday, March 21, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m. in the church hall. Snacks and refreshments will be available. Each child is allowed three talents at the show. All children who are interested in being in the talent show must sign-up by 3/14/09 with Rhonda Elias @ 610-905-050. Thank You !!

MYO / Lent Dinner

The MYO will be hosting another meatless dinner this year. The meatless dinner will be help on Friday, March 27, 2009 in the church hall @ 5:00 p.m. A formal menu will follow. Anyone who would like to make donations is to contact Rhonda Elias or Peter Koorie.



MYO / MYA annual retreat will be held this year at Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral in Brooklyn, NY , on march 6-7, 2009. the retreat will be given by Fr. Jean Younes, Fr. Geoffrey Abdallah and Fr. Jim Root. The theme will be: **“ Obsessed or Possesed”**. It will focus on various forms of addiction from drugs and alcohol to internet use. You must register with Rhonda Elias or Peter Koorie before march 1st. For more info and details check our website: www.mountlebanon.org

FORGIVENESS

A story tells that two friends were walking through the desert. During some point of the journey they had an argument, and one friend slapped the other one in the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything, wrote in the sand: ***"Today, my best friend slapped me in the face."***

They kept on walking until they found an oasis, where they decided to take a bath. The one who had been slapped got stuck in the mire and started drowning, but the friend saved him. After he recovered from the near drowning, he wrote on a stone: ***"Today, my best friend saved my life."***

The friend who had slapped and saved his best friend asked him, "After I hurt you, you wrote in the sand and now, you write on a stone, why?" The other friend replied: "When someone hurts us we should write it down in sand where winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But, when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where no wind can ever erase it."

[learn to write your hurts in the sand and to carve your benefits in stone.]

{They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but then an entire life to forget them.}

Reflection for Today

The holy Church, the *Crowned Bride* of Christ, is about to enter the Season of the Great Lent – the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ our Lord. She is about to enter into the full passion of Christ so that she may live by the life of his resurrection. From this very beginning of the spiritual and mystical journey she looks on forward with hope to the end-goal of her salvation: the victory of the Luminous Cross of Christ her Lord. Her eyes of faith are fixed on this end-goal reflected in the *Wedding Feast of the Kingdom* – with Christ – *her Beloved* – at the center. Today, through the lens of the gospel of Cana, *the Bride Church* remembers how it all began – when she was first betrothed to her Lord at Cana – at the *mysteries-filled* ceremony of the water and the wine! We are likewise reminded – at the beginning of this our Lenten journey – of our immigrant church communities who have journeyed out (from Lebanon) in times of hardship and struggle, and yet, continue onward looking with faith and hope. The symbolic power and the spiritual meanings of this gospel-mosaic of the *Wedding Feast at Cana* has not escaped many of our Eastern Christian saints as well as seers from early times to the recent. In our modern times, Gibran, has visualized this wedding scene at Cana as if it was being held in a village in Lebanon. In his book *Jesus Son of Man - Cana Wedding*, Gibran speaks for the bride as she looks forward, with longing, to Jesus' coming to her wedding celebration that evening. He intuitively draws near to that ancient Christian understanding of Christian Matrimony as a union – not the two spouses only – but of three: the bride, the bridegroom, and Christ! Moreover, our *Hoosoyo* prayers today, reveal the intentions of the Bride-Church as she re-embarks on this spiritual journey of Lent: the Passion, and Resurrection of Jesus, her beloved. She calls on Christ, her heavenly bridegroom, who poured out for her at Cana the wealth of his graces, and appeals to him: *...in your grace shine upon us. Open the treasure of your abundant compassion to us. Enrich us with your good gifts...Seat us at the table of your kingdom and let us drink from your new wine. Give us the joy of your eternal feast and let us rejoice in the splendor of your face.* Likewise her children call upon him saying: *O Christ, the true wine ...quench our hearts with the wine of your love!* The intimacy expressed in these prayers has its roots in the faith of the holy fathers and saints of our Maronite-Syriac Church – who always felt Christ being very close with them, as they called out in songs and prayer: *Amono Moryo* – the Lord is with us! Christ Jesus is forever intimately present with his Church especially through the hidden *Mysteries* of the our sacraments. Saint Ephrem spell it out: *In a new way his body has been fused with our bodies, and his pure blood has been poured in our veins. His voice too is in our ears and his splendor in our eyes. The whole of him with the whole of us is fused by his his mercy. And because he loved his Church greatly, he did not give her the manna of her rival; He became the Bread of Life for her to eat him.* And now, again, at the beginning of this Lenten Journey, we too ask that Christ's Love, Peace, and Joy may remain with his beloved Church – that his grace-filled *Mysteries* may be a renewed source of strength and reassurance for us, her children. **Fr. Steve Bonian,**

LENT SEASON BEGINS

Lent, the 3rd season of the Maronite calendar serves as a preparation for the Paschal Mystery and consists of fifty days. The period is composed of two distinct cycles: a proper liturgy of the Sundays of Lent numbering seven: Cana, the Leper, the Hemorrhaging Woman, the Prodigal Son, the Paralytic, Bartimaeus the Blind and Hosanna Sunday – and an independent weekday cycle composed of six weeks divided into three stages initiating the pattern of Christ's public life. They include the Week of Lent, the Week of Miracles and Hosanna Week. The weekday cycle reflects man's estrangement from God and his need for conversion. The readings and prayers are designed to exhort the worshiper to take courage and to turn back by imitating Christ through penance. Here Lent commemorates the penitential aspect of the Lord's forty day fasting. The Syriac fathers have traditionally described this movement toward God as a nautical journey whose destination is the Harbor of Life. "Bless our fasting ... Make it a journey which will lead us to the harbor of salvation." The liturgies for the Sundays of Lent call to mind the power of God and His mystery over creation, hence the miracle accounts designated for the Sundays before Easter. The readings and prayers reflect an ascending movement toward the glory of resurrection. In this case Lent recalls the Lord's progressive journey toward Jerusalem. The recurring theme is the imminent glorification of the divine Word and through Him the restoration of all creation to peace and harmony. Here one notes the eschatological aspect of Lent. "O Source of love as your peace rescued Noah from the flood, opened a way through the sea for Moses and calmed the raging waters for the disciples so now may it establish peace in your Church and fill her children with joy."

OUR LADY OF LEBANON CHURCH**Maronite Catholic Church**

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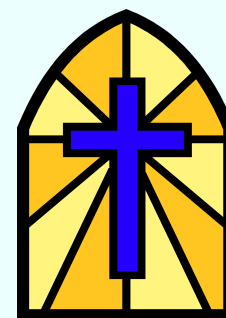
You can find us also at:

www.catholicweb.com church ID : 55071

*“Remember, You Are
Dust and Unto Dust
You Will Return”*



Dust and ashes are signature symbols of Lent, the 40-day liturgical season of prayer, reflection and discipline intended to open us more fully to God’s redeeming and healing presence. On Ash Monday –the first day of Lent in the Maronite Church– blessed ashes are spread on our foreheads in the form of a cross –signifying the penitential nature of Lent. Those ashes, which come from the burning of palm branches used on the previous Passion Sunday, are spread by the priest as he says the somber words of Genesis 3:19, “Remember that you are dust and will return to dust,” or the clear admonition of Mark 1:15, “Turn from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.” Ashes denote traditional Lenten goals that we are encouraged to strive for in our relationship with God and with others –for repentance and sorrow; for sin and spiritual sloth; for humility in the face of God’s greatness; for awareness of our human weakness, fragility and mortality; for “good grief” and appropriate mourning for all the inevitable losses in our lives. To show that he was at the end of his rope and could do nothing else but throw himself on the mercy of God, Job sat on the ash heap and spread ashes over his head (Job 42:6; 30:19). The psalmist even declares, “I eat ashes like bread . . .” (Psalm 102:10). Jesus cited the need “to repent in sackcloth and ashes.” (Mt. 11:21) We may be tempted to shy away from the Lenten symbolism of dust and ashes because it seems too negative. Instead, we would be wise to open our minds and hearts to what the Church offers us each year as a healthy dose of realism about God and God’s mercy, and about ourselves and human life.



Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during Lent, we will celebrate the Mass at 6:30 p.m. and Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m., followed by Benediction of the Cross.

Indulgences

The Church encourages the faithful to practice this devotion, and has granted a plenary indulgence to those who piously exercise the way of the cross, preferably when it is done in a Church or any place where the stations have been placed with Church approval. ("Enchiridion of Indulgences," No. 63).

The conditions are to walk from station to station while meditating the sufferings of Our Lord. Those who cannot do it in such manner may still gain a plenary indulgence by meditating on the Passion and sufferings of Our Lord for at least half hour.