

Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church

Saint Sharbel, Pray for Us!

1804 SE 16th Ave., Portland, OR 97214

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www.stsharbel.org

March 15, 2020

The Parable of the Prodigal Son



Next Sunday

Healing of the Paralytic

1Tim 5:24-6:5 (False Teaching & True Wealth)

Mk 2:1-12 (The Healing of a Paralytic)

Liturgy Intentions

Sunday, March 15th 10:30 am

*For Health and Wellbeing of
Parishioners and the Faithful*

Monday, March 16th

Available

Tuesday, March 17th

Available

Wednesday, March 18th

Available

Thursday, March 19th

Available

Friday, March 20th

Available

Saturday, March 21st

Available

Sunday, March 22nd

+Hoda Helou

*Adoration/Exposition every Sunday at 9:30
am before the morning Liturgy.*

*Confession every Sunday at 9:45 am before
the morning Liturgy.*

*Also join us to pray the Rosary on Sundays
at 10:00 am before the Liturgy begins.*

Your Gifts To God

Offering Report for March 1st -7th

Online.....\$325.00

Collection.....\$356.00

Weekly Total.....\$681.00

YTD Total.....\$16,371.00

YTD Goal.....\$16,614.00

YTD Difference.....**-\$243.00**

Altar Sponsorship

Sunday, March 15th

Available

Sunday, March 22nd

Redmond Family

Lenten Schedule

Stations of the Cross in English and Arabic — ~~Fridays during Lent, 7:00pm~~
(Cancelled for the Time Being)

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament — **Sundays during Lent, 9:00am**

Holy Week Schedule available at stsharbel.org

Parish Council

+Bruce Ashford
(Treasurer)

Charlie Ashou
Gus Bekahi

Nick El Hajj

Agopos Ghossein
Adib Karam

+Claude Karam
Anne Marentette
(Secretary)

Doug Raab

+Thaddeus Rask

Nadia Redmond

Mitch Siekmann

Laif Waldron

Ex Officio

+Deacon Tony
+Deacon Wadih

+Finance
Committee

The Cedars of Saint Sharbel Youth Group Discussion Schedule:

All meetings held in upstairs classroom immediately following Sunday Mass.

MAR: 22nd - What does it mean to be a man?...a woman?...a family?

APR: 19th - The Truth About God and Human Sexuality

MAY: 17th - Social Event: TBA

It's that time again for NAM's
annual Spring Raffle - see flyer.

Contact Nadia Redmond email:
n.redmond@comcast.net or
call: 503-671-0440 if you are
interested in purchasing a ticket
for yourself or as a group.

We have 4 tickets to sell out of
450 tickets that are sent to all
the Maronite parishes. Deadline
is April 1st.



*The National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM)
Presents*

*The 27th Annual Spring Raffle - 2020
Only 450 Tickets are printed
Donation: \$100 per ticket*

This just may be the year your lucky number is chosen!!!!

Cash Prizes!!!

1st	\$10,000.00
2nd	\$3,000.00
3rd	\$2,000.00
4th	\$1,500.00
5th	\$1,000.00

This year's drawing will be held on **April 26th, 2020** at St. Joseph, Sandy Springs
(Atlanta), Georgia;

Thank you for your support in previous years for this raffle fund-raiser, as it is an
important part of the NAM annual budget. We are counting on your generosity once
again, to support our community projects.

To purchase a personal ticket(s), your parish NAM Delegates have 4 tickets to sell,
please contact Christopher or Nadia Redmond at 503-671-0440 or email:
n.redmond@comcast.net

All requests and payments must be received by **April 1st, 2020**.

www.namnews.org

Reflection

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

We can often become dulled to how beautiful something is when we pass it frequently. Even if it is a rare piece of art or a famous building we forget it in familiarity. But there are moments when we stop to ponder such an object we realize the value of what we have taken for granted. The Parable of the Prodigal Son is such a gem – it is perhaps one of the most used stories from the Gospel. We hear it on all sorts of occasions, and it is no wonder why – the Parable of the Prodigal Son is the story of any Christian and no matter how many times we might hear or read it it yields a new lesson each time.

Part of our familiarity with the story removes the scandal of the events we know so well. The younger son of the father comes to ask for his inheritance and so the story goes on. What is often glossed over is the fact that the son has asked for his inheritance while his father is still living. What a bold act – not only does the son wish to abandon his house but asks his father while he still lives for what he would have received upon his death. This son takes for granted everything his father has given him until that point as well as the life of his father. But without a fight his father indulges him and grants the son what he asks. Though we normally focus on the actions of the prodigal son, the love of the father is an excellent window into the mercy of God, the Good Physician, Who has come to give us all things to our advantage.

Once the son realizes that he has spent all his inheritance and is no longer having fun he feels bad for himself and intends to return as a servant to the comfort of his father's house. But the father does not even let him even finish his apology before having him clothed and a party thrown in honor of his return. The true and constant good in this story is the mercy of the father, which was never withheld from the ungrateful son. This is evermore the case in the Christian life. Just as the son, we have received everything as a gift from God – time, health, life – but when deprived of the smallest part we sense a great injustice against us as though it is due to us. Worse, how often do we turn from God after having received from Him the comforts for which we asked without even a thanks?

But God is long-suffering and endures any injustice we might inflict on Him. As the Maronite prayers for Good Friday narrate, the angels of fire wanted to drop lightning and fiery coals upon those crucifying their Lord Christ but Christ Himself commanded that they not do so for love of the crucifiers. Christ even washes the feet of Judas on the night of his betrayal, knowing well that Judas is the culprit. The Lord God is omnipotent – He has no need of the Judases or crucifiers of the world, but He still loves them in spite of their acts and calls them to repentance for their sin is their own death (Rom. 6:23), but the repentance is life (Ez. 18:32). This is why the father in the Parable says, "We had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again" (Luke 15:32). God's mercy is available to all if they ask for it in faith and our God of Life celebrates when we choose life in love rather than the death of sin. St. Peter committed the same offense as Judas in denying Christ our God, but St. Peter trusted in the mercy of God while Judas thought God's mercy could not overcome his offense – this is why St. Peter is a saint and Judas is not. We, as Syriacs, reflect upon God's mercy in all things, knowing full well that God could destroy all sinners as He did in the time of Noah with the flood, but have the assurance that He would never do so (Gen. 9:11). Instead of destruction for our sins God blesses us with the abundance of our lives.

Some failure in life is inevitable – as is God's mercy for those who seek it. Let us continue to use our Lent to seek the Good Physician's merciful healing by our fasting and repentance. Let our senses not be dulled to the greatest treasure God offers us in His mercy as we pray, "True Father, You received the Prodigal Son after he squandered Your possessions in debauchery and drunkenness. You took him by the neck and kissed him, slaughtered a fattened calf and received him – receive Your servants, O Compassionate One, who return and come to Your sheepfold while the angels and watchers rejoice in the hope there is for the repentant" (From Sunday Maronite Morning Prayer).



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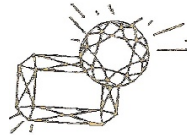
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