



The Maronite Cross of Rabboola

Dear Friends of the Maronite Servants,

I am pleased to share with you the good news of Sister Therese Maria Touma's admittance to take First Vows as a consecrated religious. Congratulations Sister! On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 2012, Sister Therese Maria will



vow the Gospel counsels of obedience, chastity and poverty as expressed in our congregation's Typicon. Invitations will be sent out with the details of this special day. Please keep Sister especially in prayer as she prepares to consecrate her life in service to our Church as a Maronite Servant of Christ the Light.

Sister Therese Maria looks forward to this special step in her journey of religious life. She said, "I hope with God's grace that I may be faithful in carrying out his loving will for me, in bringing many others to the fountain of his limitless love, healing and light."

It is a beautiful gift for each of us when a member of our faith family steps forward to generously lay down her life in service to Christ and his Church. Let it be our ardent prayer that many other young women from our parishes will respond to God's call to be "all for Jesus".

We have recently produced a promotional video explaining the mission of the Maronite Servants, and it can be found on our blog or YouTube, search "Maronite Servants". Would you take a few minutes to view it and then post it to your Facebook or email list? This is a small way you can help us spread the news of our mission.

As you will see from the pages of this newsletter, we have had a summer of fruitful apostolic service. We are grateful to God for these opportunities to serve and make known Christ the Light.

We keep you close in prayer each day. Please pray for us.

In Mary, Mother of the Light,

Sister Marla Marie

Hymn for the Feast of the Glorious Cross

Your cross, O Lord, was concealed by the oppressors. Queen Helen found it. Its light shone over the creation and the entire earth, lost in the darkness of idols, was then illumined. In the four corners of the world, the Church worships and exalts the cross: through it she was saved from error; by it she has inherited the heavenly kingdom.

Your cross, O Lord, became the key to the kingdom. It opened the gates of paradise which Adam, in his folly, had closed. May your cross be a tower of mercy for us. By it we cross the place of punishment; by it we enter the abode of light, the paradise of joy.

May your cross, O Lord, be a tower of protection for the holy and faithful Church from one end of the earth to the other. Remove from her disputes, harmful divisions and scandals. May peace and tranquillity reign in her midst for ever and ever. May all her children be shielded under the wings of the cross.



A Week of Summer Fun!



Jesus is the Light of Life was the theme of our first *LoL Club* summer bible program for children ages 4-12 held on July 23rd through the 27th at our convent in Dartmouth. We hosted 18 children from the New Bedford and Fall River parishes, with the capable support of three teen helpers and three young adult assistants. Father Jack Morrison, pastor of Our Lady of Purgatory, New Bedford came each day to speak with the children about the Maronite faith and join in the fun activities and games. On the final day, Father Jack offered Divine Liturgy for the children, parents and LoL team leaders. The Liturgy was followed by entertainment by the LoL Club members, a pot-luck cookout and games for the children.

Our lively program focused on teaching the children the virtues of love, trust, courage, patience and perseverance. To help the children to grow in these virtues we showed them selected DVD bible stories, crafts, skits, Bible activities, singing, dancing, and catechesis focused on the Maronite Liturgy and traditions.



Studies in Syriac Theology

In the first week of August we had classes with Chorbishop Seely Beggiani, rector of the Maronite Seminary in Washington D.C. We covered an array of vital themes in Syriac Theology such as: God- Divine Mystery and Divine Intimacy, Creation and Sin, the Incarnation, Divine Revelation, the Redemption, the Holy Spirit and Divinization, the Church, Mary, the Mother of God, and the Mystery of Baptism.

These classes were insightful as they further opened our eyes to the hidden mystery of who God is as “Father of Lights”, and expanded our hearts in praise and gratitude as we learned more of God’s “passionate” love for us and all of his creation. Chorbishop Beggiani constantly pointed out how these ideas are expressed so beautifully in the Maronite Liturgy, the Sacred Scriptures, the hymns of Ephrem and the writings of James of Seroug and other Syriac writers.

Catechist Training and MYO Lock-in - Atlanta

We served at St. Joseph's in Atlanta September 1-3 where Sister Marla Marie offered two days of workshops for the parish catechists, and Sister Therese Maria assisted with the parish MYO retreat. Thank you Father Dominique Hanna for inviting us.



Women's Retreat—California

The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light traveled to Southern California to facilitate a women's retreat for Saint John Maron parish in Orange County. A parishioner opened her home in Lake Arrowhead for the venue which offered a beautiful setting for retreat. We began with 20 women on Friday evening August 24th and concluded Sunday morning with Divine Liturgy back at the parish church.

Fr. Antoine Bakh, pastor, and the retreatants warmly welcomed us with their gracious hospitality. On the Saturday evening, Fr. Tony came to the mountain home to hear confessions and to bring the Blessed Sacrament for Eucharistic Adoration.

During the retreat, Mother Marla Marie gave three presentations on: finding strength, light and healing in the prayers of the Maronite Liturgy, how to reflect on the scriptures through Lectio Divina, and the importance and blessings of the Mysteries of the Eucharist and Penance.

Below are reflections from two of the retreatants:

"Your presence and spiritual guidance, at our first Saint John Maron women's retreat made the occasion ever more special and meaningful. Hearing how God called you into your vocations gave witness to His love and mercy in all of our lives. I believe the light you radiated at the retreat gave us all greater insight, knowledge, respect and appreciation for our Maronite traditions and provided that feminine dimension of our church, that is so much needed here, in the United States.

Seeing you later, meeting, greeting, and speaking with our parishioners and youth gave me such a great feeling of hope for our church." *Pattie*

"The Woman's Retreat was such a success in so many ways. Everyone of the woman have not stopped talking about how each of them were ministered to in such a beautiful way with much love and kindness. The combination of the teachings and the holiness of our Maronite Prayers, Songs and Tradition made it perfect for all the woman. It would not of been the same if we had arranged to have the retreat with someone else. Thank you for giving of yourselves completely this weekend and all of us are looking forward to you coming back in 2013." *Regina*



NAM Convention 2012—San Antonio



National MYO Workshop 2012—St. Louis



Radiate His Light NEWS
Servants of Christ the Light
856 Tucker Rd.
Dartmouth, MA 02747

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EMAIL—sister@maroniteservants.org
WEBSITE—maroniteservants.org
BLOG—RadiateHisLight.blogspot.com
VOCATIONS—Vineyardofthelord.com
PHONE—(508) 996-1753

MAILING ADDRESS
Maronite Servants
856 Tucker Road, Dartmouth, MA 02747