

Radiate His Light NEWS



The Maronite Cross of Rabboola

Dear Friends,

We are now in the Season of the Glorious Cross, and it is a reminder that the cross is our sign of great light and hope in a troubled world. The Maronite Liturgy refers to the cross as a sign of divine protection: "Be for us, night and day, the attentive guardian who will not allow the evil one to conquer us."



Our hearts and minds have been on Iraq and the other countries plagued by violence and persecution. The images and stories from social media have been confronting, as our sisters and brothers have been crying out to the world for help. In an urgent appeal dated August 25th, Patriarch Louis Raphael Sako, President of the Assembly of the Catholic Bishops in Iraq wrote: "What has happened is terrible and horrific, therefore, we need an urgent and effective international support from all the people of good will to save the Christians and Yezidis, genuine components of the Iraqi society from extinction, knowing that silence and passivity will encourage ISIS fundamentalists to commit more tragedies! The question is who will be next?"



In a recent conversation with Mother Olga Jacob, an Iraqi and foundress of the Daughters of Mary of Nazareth in Boston, she explained to me how we are able to help our suffering sisters and brothers: "For there is nothing that is impossible for God. He is our hope and our Rock in the midst of such a horrifying storm. Ask people to pray, offer Rosaries, Masses, other devotional prayers, and fasting if people are able to offer small penances for the conversion of hearts of those who have brought such darkness of death and disaster. There is no doubt that help is needed to save those who are devastated. At the same time, we have to work hard for the conversion of ISIS and those who support them, so that this tragedy will never be repeated."

Let us join our daily prayers and sacrifices to the cross of Christ --the "tree of life," sign of reconciliation and protection-- and offer them for the end to the violence in Iraq and all troubled countries.

Our daily prayers for you in Mary, Mother of the Light,

Sister Marla Marie

Illuminate Your Soul

The Glorious Cross

O Christ our God, by your precious cross you have given us perfect salvation and made us worthy to celebrate this feast with hymns of praise, proclaiming:

Blessed are you, O Wood of the Holy Cross, for you erased Adam's curse and restored his banished children to their inheritance.

Blessed are you, O Holy Cross, for you united heavenly and earthly beings.

Blessed are you, O Holy Cross, for you fulfilled the words of the prophets, enlightened the apostles in their preaching, crowned the martyrs for their faith, and honored the confessors for their loyalty.

Now, O Christ our Savior, we ask you, with the fragrance of this incense (prayer), to make the celebration of the feast of the exaltation of your holy cross a sign of security and peace. By your cross, exalt your holy Church, guide her shepherds, adorn her priests with virtue, purify her deacons, help the elderly, educate the children, direct the young, protect orphans, care for widows and grant rest in your dwellings of light to our brothers and sisters who have died hoping in you. May we find refuge in the shadow of your cross on the great day of your second coming, that we may raise glory and thanks to you, to your Father, and to your Holy Spirit, for ever. Amen.

Feast of Dormition—Ohio

We enjoyed several days of prayer and visiting with friends at the National Shrine to Our Lady of Lebanon, North Jackson, Ohio in celebration of the Dormition of the Mother of God.



On the day of the Feast of the Assumption, Friday August 15, we celebrated the Maronite Pontifical Liturgy outside beside the shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon. The Liturgy was followed by a huge candlelit procession around the entire shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon, and concluded with a beautiful display of fireworks above the shrine, and festivities in the Cedars Hall.

We remembered you in our prayers during these holy days of pilgrimage at the Shrine and we especially remembered our persecuted brothers and sisters in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. Our Lady of Lebanon, pray for us.



MYO National Workshop—Pittsburgh

From Monday, June 30 to Wednesday, July 2, 2014, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light spent some time with 250 of our Maronite youth on their annual retreat at La Roche College in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Father Gary George, eparchial youth director, offered an outstanding retreat on the theme "We Believe," with a particular focus on the articles of our Catholic faith in the Nicene Creed.

National Life Teen Conference—Arizona

Beginning Sunday evening to Wednesday June 11, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light attended the annual Life Teen Catholic Youth Ministry Training Convention along with over 700 youth ministers from around the U.S., including a vast number of priests and Bishops

The presentations included a key note speakers and theologians such as Dr. Scott Hahn, who spoke to us about the significance of the Eucharist as portrayed in Sacred Scripture.



The conference was invaluable in our ongoing formation and development as we continue to minister to our Maronite youth.



Visit with Ruthenian Nuns—Ohio

On our way back home from the Assumption Pilgrimage in Ohio, we stopped by for a visit to our friends, the Ruthenian Catholic nuns of the Christ the Bridegroom Monastery in Burton, Ohio. The Bridegroom Nuns are a new Byzantine Catholic monastic community of women in the Eparchy of Parma. We were blessed to visit with them, share a meal with them and partake of their hospitality. May God continue to bless them and their community with vocations.

Our Lady of the Cedars Festival—Boston

On Saturday, August 9, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light attended the annual festival hosted by Our Lady of the Cedars Church, Boston, in honor of Our Lady's Assumption. We enjoyed meeting and greeting the parishioners, and participating in the festivities.



We had the blessing to meet the Maronite Archbishop of Cyprus, His Excellency, Youssef Soueif. His Excellency was very encouraging and supportive of our mission as Maronite Servants, and was delighted to see the growth in our congregation.

NAM 2014—Pittsburgh

By Natalie Salameh

The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light participated in the annual NAM Convention 2014 hosted by the parish of Our Lady of Victory, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. It was wonderful to see so many Maronites from all over the US, and some from Canada and Lebanon come together for faith sharing, fellowship and community. A special thanks to Fr. Rudolph Wakim, Pastor of Our Lady of Victory, and his parishioners, for all their efforts and outstanding hospitality.



A personal highlight for me was hearing Fr. Tony El-Khawli, O.L.M. speak about his personal conversion story and entrance to religious life. Many may remember Fr. Tony under his name of fame, Rabih El-Khawli, when he was one of Lebanon's biggest names in the music industry in the 1980s and 1990s. It was amazing to hear how Jesus had touched and moved him to give it all up for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. He has an absolutely beautiful voice, which he has now offered to the Lord to praise him alone.

In commemoration of the centennial of St. Rafqa, two sisters from her order and convent in St. Joseph, Jrabta, spoke about the continued legacy of St. Rafqa. May her prayers be with us all!

It was wonderful to see so many of our Maronite young adults at the Convention. We accompanied them one evening to a Theology on Tap. We were able to listen to their genuine concerns and questions about our Catholic Faith, especially how we live our faith in our somewhat confused world.

We met so many of our lovely people, and were so fortunate to celebrate daily Divine Liturgy with our Bishops and clergy, not to mention the numerous social gatherings. God willing, we plan to visit Cleveland, Ohio for next year's NAM!

Parish Visit to St. Joseph's Maronite Church—Phoenix

The weekend of June 7, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light greeted the parishioners of St. Joseph's Maronite Church, with the support of Pastor, Father Ghattas Khoury.

On both the Saturday and Sunday Divine Liturgies, Mother Marla Marie addressed the parishioners and introduced the members of the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light to the congregation. Mother Marla Marie informed and updated the parishioners about the mission of the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light and asked them to pray for vocations to the mission. The parishioners were warm and welcoming of our mission in the Maronite Church.



Car Appeal Update

We are still in need of donations to purchase a new car for the convent.

Please consider helping us. Donations can be offered via credit card on our website or a check in the mail. Thank you again to those who have already contributed to this appeal.



Vocation Prayer

The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light invite young women to consider a vocation to the consecrated life.

We therefore implore you, O Christ, guard your Church as one flock, under one pastor. Call to your service the young men and women chosen by you. Deepen the love of those you have called for the religious life and help them to become more perfect in following your precepts. May those whom you have chosen, hear your call to the works of evangelization. May your Church be an instrument of sanctification and salvation; let her increase according to your plan, and grow to full stature. Through her may we reach your kingdom, and glorify and praise you, forever. Amen.

(Prayer taken from the Maronite Divine Office)

ON THE WEB

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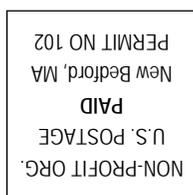
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