

Radiate His Light NEWS



Dear Friends of the Maronite Servants,

Pentecost peace and blessings. I would like to share with you our Monastery events and daily life which have been a blessing to Tresa, Therese and myself. Lately, folks have been asking me "what do you do all day?" I don't think they doubt that we keep busy at the Monastery, but they often wonder if we are camped out in the Chapel all day. I used to think that about nuns until 1983; that is the year I entered the convent.

Our life in community is carefully structured to form and sustain the whole person through a balanced rhythm of prayer, work, study, meals, fellowship and recreation, silence and solitude, exercise, leisure and rest. I like to tell the postulants that a well balanced day is a rhythm that we enter into which carries throughout the day, and from one to the next. We seek to live as a loving Christian community giving witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We worship at Divine Liturgy each day, and are grateful to have this prayer in the Monastery on Tuesdays and Fridays when Father Anthony Salim comes to us from Brockton. After Liturgy, Father offers classes on Scripture and Doctrine. Each weekend we worship at one of the area Maronite parishes. You can be certain that you are remembered in our daily Divine Liturgies, and morning and evening prayers.

During these past few months, our travels have taken us to the Maronite parishes of: St. Anthony, Danbury CT; St. Anthony of the Desert, Fall River MA; Our Lady of Lebanon, Brooklyn NY; St. Theresa, Brockton MA; Our Lady of the Cedars, Boston MA; St. Anthony, Springfield MA; Our Lady of Purgatory, New Bedford MA; St. George/ St. Anthony, Wilkes Barre PA; the Mission in Aliquippa PA; St. George, Providence RI; St. Anthony, Lawrence MA; Our Lady of Mercy, Worcester MA.

It goes without saying that we do housework and homework. In addition, we serve at the Weymouth Food Pantry once a month, and while in session we taught in the parish weekly religious education program. On the second Thursday of each month we host a Ramsho & Supper night, welcoming area Maronites to join us for this evening prayer of our tradition followed by a great meal. On page 3 you can see photos of some of our travels and events.

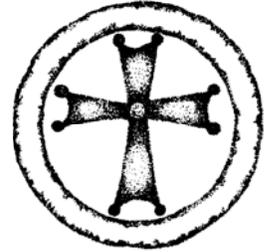
A highlight of our mission activity was to offer a teen girl's overnight retreat inviting area Maronite parishes. Please take a moment to read about this written with enthusiasm by one of the teen participants (page 2).

During the summer, we look forward to more travels with plans to study for a few days at the Maronite Seminary in Washington DC in early June; attending the two ordinations of both Eparchy's in Michigan at the end of June; participating in the NAM Convention in Birmingham Alabama in July; followed by attending the MYO Annual Retreat week in La Trobe PA.

We journey each day with the Mother of God, our model, as we strive to serve you as spiritual mothers by radiating the light of Christ's merciful love through our prayers, sacrifices and mission. Please remember us.

Yours in Mary, Mother of the Light,

Sister Marla Marie



The Maronite Cross of Rabula

Illuminate Your Soul

Year of Saint Maron

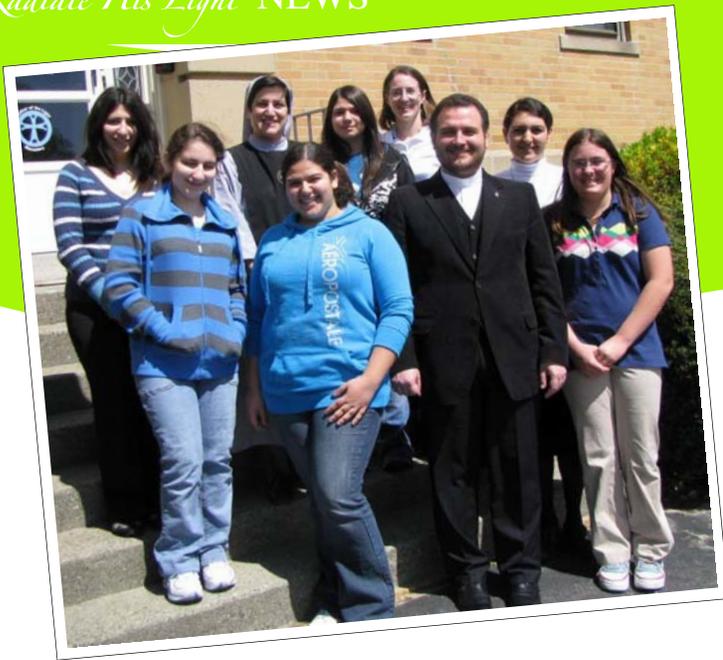
PRAYER

*Lord God,
you called your chosen one, Saint Maron,
to the monastic life,
perfected him in divine virtues,
and guided him along the difficult road
to the heavenly kingdom.*

*During this jubilee year,
commemorating 1600 years since the death of
your chosen one, Saint Maron,
when he was called to the house
of your heavenly Father; we ask you,
through his intercession, to immerse us in your
love that we may walk in your path, heed your
commandments, and follow in his footsteps.*

*May his holy example resonate
throughout our lives.
With your love, may we achieve that final
destination reached by our father,
Saint Maron, and carry your
Gospel throughout the world.*

*Through his intercession, may we attain the
glory of the resurrection and
everlasting life in you.
Glory and thanks are due to you,
to your blessed Father,
and to your living Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.*



Teen Retreat at Monastery

By Evette Franjeh

The "Radiate HIS Light" Retreat with the *Maronite Servants of Christ the Light* is a time in my life in which I will keep close to my heart and in my memory forever. Sister Marla Marie and her two postulants, Tresa and Therese, prepared a wonderful time at their convent where I and four other girls learned to open and feed our spiritual hearts and ask Jesus to come into our lives.

This remarkable retreat included lectures and reflections about Jesus' Light and how it provides warmth, guidance and purification for our souls. Lectures by Tresa and Therese consisted of our history as Maronites, the Maronite Saints, Scripture and The Cell Phone versus the Bible, which put our daily lives into perspective. I was thankful that we were not allowed to bring cell phones, makeup or iPods, because it was an escape from the frantic world and the distractions from Jesus.

This retreat was not only comprised of lectures, but also fun activities which coincided with the main topic of the retreat. We played games like Marco-Polo, to ensure in us that we need Light to be shown our path in life and guidance through Scripture. We also had the pleasure of painting pots to grow our own plants (which also need light to grow).

By the end of the retreat, the other girls and I connected all the activities and lectures around His Light. We also attended liturgy and prayer with the Maronite Servants. Father Nadim Helou conducted Liturgy, provided a lecture, a time for reconciliation and shared a wonderful meal with us. At the end of the first day we watched a movie highlighting a young girl's journey in choosing to start her vocation and we concluded with a traditional Dabke dance and a midnight prayer. We awoke the next day and were greeted by blessed weather, where we took a brief walk with Therese and Tresa to a nearby pond.

The retreat was so peaceful and very much needed in this hectic time in my life, dealing with being a senior, college, exams, graduation and the unnecessary drama of school. Sister Marla Marie and her Postulants were very inspirational and encouraging. They introduced to us new inspiring songs that got stuck in my head for the rest of the week.

I was very saddened to go, but we did not leave empty handed. Sister Marla Marie, Tresa and Therese not only gifted us with a goodie-bag but with the chance to open our hearts and invite Jesus into our lives. This was an amazing opportunity for young Maronite girls, like myself, to learn more about our rich history and become closer to Christ.

I will share with you one quote which sums up what I took away from my time at the convent, and has become my favorite quote that was focused on during the retreat " Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a Light to my path" Psalm 119:105.

(Evette is a member of the MYO at St. Theresa Parish, Brockton MA.)



Studying at Yale Divinity School

By Tresa Van Heusen

The Maronite Servants travelled to New Haven, Connecticut to visit with Abouna Elias Kesrouani, a visiting Professor of Ethnomusicology at Yale University. As an expert in Syriac Music, Abouna Elias gave a class to the Maronite Servants with an overview of the development of the Syriac language and music and how it became an integral aspect of our Maronite faith.

Abouna Elias, a Maronite Priest and Professor, earned his Ph.D in Musicology from the Sorbonne in 1989 with highly honorable mention, with a dissertation on the Syriac Scales. He also holds two M.A. degrees in Philosophy and Musicology and three B.A. degrees in Theology, Philosophy and Musicology from the Lebanese University and the University of the Holy Spirit respectively.



Out & About...



Aliquippa Mission Supports the Maronite Servants

By Therese Touma

The Maronite Servants drove from Boston to Aliquippa, PA (near Pittsburgh) to attend their 8th Annual Grand Haflé April 30th, at the Club at Shadow Lakes. We were warmly invited by Abouna Rodolph Wakim, Pastor of the Mission Church of the Maronite community there, and also the pastor of the Maronite parish in Pittsburgh.

At the beginning of the Haflé, Mother Marla Marie was asked to address the audience and speak on the mission of Maronite Servants of Christ the Light. After Mother concluded her talk expressing gratitude to those in attendance, she was pleasantly surprised by Abouna Rodolph's generous presentation of a \$5000 gift. This donation was collected from a 50/50 fundraiser raffle organized by Mark and Suzanne Betters (members of the mission Church). They sold 100 tickets valued at a \$100 each to the community of Aliquippa and in two weeks sold out. An awesome effort!

We are grateful and appreciate Mark and Sue's dedication, warm hospitality and enthusiastic commitment to support our growing mission. A big thank you to the Maronite Community of Aliquippa for your charity and goodness!



Please Help Our Mission

If you wish to make a tax deductible donation, a monthly or quarterly contribution will really help us to meet our expenses. Donations can be made by check and mailed or by PayPal via our website or blog. Thank you.

Parish Based Fundraisers

Parish fundraisers with the pastor's approval are another way to help us. Since 2009, these parishes have hosted fundraisers: St. Anthony/St. George in Wilkes Barre PA; St. Joseph in Atlanta GA, and the Aliquippa mission mentioned above.

Other Gifts...

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Help us to save on postage & paper by sending us your email address.

On the Web

Check our blog up-dated every Friday. Visit our website for a copy of this newsletter. Also, friend Sr. Marla Marie Lucas on FACEBOOK and LINKEDIN.

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