



The Maronite Cross of Rabboola

**Dear Friends
& Family,**

We have recently returned from our visit to the Maronite Church in Sydney, Australia. You will see in this issue some of our apostolic efforts during our two-week stay. Sister Therese Maria actually went one month before me to visit with her family and to prepare our mission itinerary. A blessed fruit of our trip are the women who plan to make



an extended visit with us in the coming months to discern. Please note on page 2 our apostolic programs that we are offering for the Year of Faith.

Today's world and the lightning speed of global news keeps before us many intentions for prayer. Our hearts remember our suffering fellow Christians in all the Middle-East, especially in Syria and Egypt. At Mother of the Light convent, we have been joining the Church in praying for the election of the next Pope. Each day after Saftro (morning) prayer, we remember this intention using the prayer included below.

While in the midst of this season of the Great Fast, the Church challenges us to focus on prayer. Sometimes people make Lenten resolutions to pray more or to start praying again after misplacing it in the hectic pace of life. My resolution is to be more attentive at prayer because it can easily be reduced to a routine. This has refreshed my gaze on the face of Christ, a face radiant with love and mercy.

You too are kept close each day in our community and personal time of prayer. Please pray for us and email or call in your special intentions. May you enjoy a blessed season of the Glorious Resurrection!

Sister Marla Marie

Prayer for a Pope

O Lord Jesus Christ, Supreme Pastor of Your Church, we thank you for the ministry of Pope Benedict XVI and the selfless care with which he has led us as Successor of Peter, and Your Vicar on earth.

Good Shepherd, who founded Your Church on the rock of Peter's faith and have never left Your flock untended, look with love upon us now, and sustain Your Church in faith, hope, and charity.

Grant, Lord Jesus, in Your boundless love for us, a new Pope for Your Church who will please You by his Holiness and lead us faithfully to You, who are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Amen.

Why Fast?

First, there are physical reasons to fast prudently. Many studies have shown that if one fasts without then indulging in gluttony, substantial health benefits accrue. It is good to look after the body, which is, after all, the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). But even this is to serve our supernatural aim—holiness. Second, fasting is a powerful means of mortification. One feels in one's very body that one has struggled to make sincere atonement. Third, fasting strengthens the will. Our Lord said that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak (Matthew. 26:41). Fasting enables the spirit to exercise its will over the flesh.

Further, fasting facilitates self-examination, because under the influence of the fast we see ourselves quite differently. Our sense of ourselves is conditioned how we eat and drink. Changing our intake of food and drink immediately upsets our conditioned patterns of reaction. We acquire new perceptions and feelings through the unaccustomed sense of hunger, and the unaccustomed impression of depriving oneself of food and flavored drink. Self-examination, of course, enables us to make better confessions ...

(read the full text of this article on our blog)

Year of Faith Program – for Your Parish

“The Year of Faith is a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Savior of the world.” (Porta Fidei)

In response to this call to share the beauty and richness of our Catholic Faith, the *Maronite Servants of Christ the Light* have a Year of Faith program, to inspire people (all ages) in the Maronite Church to grow in the knowledge of their faith and rediscover its transformative power of love.



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

Our engaging presentations include: Sacred Scripture, Maronite traditions, prayer, videos, ice-breakers, hymns, theology, the Creed, interactive discussions and spiritual reflections. We endeavor, by God’s grace, to radiate Christ’s joy and merciful love in sharing the good news of our faith and to deepen in each person their call to be holy and joy-filled witnesses of the risen Lord.

If you are interested in bringing a group from your parish to our convent in Dartmouth or having us come to your parish please contact Sister Marla Marie at 508/996-1753 or email sister@maroniteservants.org. Our presentations can be adapted to the age level and needs of your group.

“May this Year of Faith make our relationship with Christ the Lord increasingly firm, since only in him is there the certitude for looking to the future and the guarantee of an authentic and lasting love.” (Porta Fidei)

Friend-Raiser Events

The Sisters of the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light were invited to a "friend raiser" luncheon hosted at the home of a parishioner of Saint Joseph's Maronite Church in Sydney, Colette Assif. The Sisters spoke on Great Lent and on the charism of the Congregation addressing 40 friends invited by the hostess. This event spread



awareness of the Maronite Servants' mission, gaining the support of new friends who promised to assist the Sisters in spreading the word about vocations. Also, many of the women generously offered donations to help the work of the Maronite Servants.

If you are interested in hosting a similar "friend raiser" event in your home on behalf of the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light, please contact Sister Marla Marie at 508/996-1753 or email sister@maroniteservants.org.



Voice of Charity Radio, Australia interviewed us for a program on our mission.



We enjoyed a blessed visit with His Excellency, Bishop Ad Abikaram, Beit Maroun at the chancery in Strathfield.



We presented a lesson on Saint Maron to the children of St. Joseph's parish during their visit to St. Maroun's Cathedral in Redfern.



We facilitated a women's sharing at the Lenten Retreat for St. Joseph's in Croydon.



After a witness at the youth Liturgy at Our Lady of Lebanon in Harris Park, we attended a social with Monsignor Shora and young adults.



At St. Charbel's in Punchbowl, we presented to the young adult group, Guardians, on the Year of Faith.

We visited His Excellency, Bishop Robert Rabbat of the Melkite Diocese of Australia who is our friend from his days at Annunciation Cathedral in Boston.



At St Charbel's College in Punchbowl, we spoke to the grade 12 girls on vocation.

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Prayer for Vocations

We currently have three women visiting us in the next few months for a “come and see”. Please join us in praying for vocations to the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light. Also, spread the word about vocations to young women in your parish. Promote our mission on your Facebook page.



Photo Gallery Update

Our website has a photo gallery which chronicles our mission. You will find a recent folder on our visit to Sydney.



ON THE WEB

Check our blog updated every Friday. Visit our website for a copy of this newsletter. Also, find Maronite Servants on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.



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