

# Radiate His Light NEWS



## Illumine Your Soul

### Jubilee of Mercy Prayer

By Pope Francis

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved. Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief. Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified. You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God. Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

Dear Friends and Family,

We have been blessed with a fruitful mission in this Jubilee Year of Mercy. Pope Francis has said, "Let us not forget the beauty of walking with the people... I encourage you to go out to meet others, to open doors and reach out to families, the sick, young people, the elderly, there where they live, looking for them, being at their side, supporting them, in order to celebrate the liturgy of life with them." Our Maronite Servants' vocation to radiate the light of Christ by our consecrated life of service to our people is a privilege of walking with our brothers and sisters.



Since our spring news issue we have been "walking with the people" by our mission with youth, young adults, seniors, families, and the poor in service to the works of mercy. We give God thanks for the blessing to have served at Our Lady of Lebanon in Norman Oklahoma, Our Lady Star of the East in Pleasantville NJ, St. Theresa's in Brockton MA, Our Lady of Purgatory in New Bedford MA, Our Lady of the Cedars in Boston, and St. Anthony of the Desert in Fall River. In addition, we had several groups come for retreat and prayer at our convent in Dartmouth. The Sisters also had the blessing of visiting the sick, consoling the grieving, instructing children and adults at several area schools and parishes, serving the poor, reaching out to those from around the world who are seeking prayer and counsel via the phone or social media. Our daily life of contemplative prayer, sacrifices, and works of mercy are offered for the people we walk with.

Our small band of sisters is often asked, "what do you do?" When we explain our vocation, some people understand and others just wonder why we don't open a school or a nursing home and get to work. I am taking the opportunity in this letter to tell you that we are at work in the "liturgy of life", happily and zealously. Our work for the most part is quiet and more hidden but most needed in the Church. We strive to imitate the hidden and quiet Mary who radiated Christ to the world. Pope Francis reminds us that our baptismal call is to be Christ to one another, "Christians are those who let God clothe them with goodness and mercy, with Christ, so as to become, like Christ, servants of God and others."

Please pray that young women will discover God's call to serve our Church in a Maronite Servant vocation. Also, pray that these women will then say "yes" and take the first steps in trust and generosity to walk with God's people as spiritual mothers. We love our vocation of contemplation and the missions we serve. I would like to share that Petra Nakhoul, a postulant since last June, has returned home to tend to some medical needs. Please join us in keeping her in prayer as she continues to seek God's will in her faith journey.

Thank you for your support of prayer and friendship. We hope to see some of you this summer at the NAM Convention in San Francisco, the MYO Workshop in La Trobe, and the Assumption Pilgrimage at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in Ohio. We remember you each day and keep you close in prayer.

In Mary, Mother of the Light,

*Sister Marla Marie*

## Studying in Washington DC

The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light were in Washington D.C. from Wednesday, May 25th to Sunday May 29th for music classes at our Maronite Seminary with Fr. Geoffrey Abdallah, rector. The Maronite Divine Praises (the Maronite Liturgy of the Hours) is currently under review in Lebanon. Fr. Geoffrey taught us several of the new hymns, tones, chants for Morning and Evening Prayer. Syriac Chant is the authentic chant of the Antiochene Syriac Maronite Church.



## MYO Day at Mother of Light Convent

On Pentecost Sunday, May 15th, the MYO (Maronite Youth Organization) from Lawrence, Boston and New Bedford came to the Mother of Light Convent to celebrate Divine Liturgy and enjoy a day of retreat with the Sisters.

Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Monsignor David George, who set the tone of the day in his homily when he asked the teens to remember that their lives are a proof of God's love, and challenged them to witness to this everyday. Msgr. George asked them to consider whether people recognize them as children of God by their actions, not just by their words.

Later in the afternoon, in his presentation on "Jesus as the visible face of the Father's mercy", Msgr. George spoke to the teens about the parable of the Prodigal Son, which he later renamed, the parable of the Merciful Father. Msgr. George emphasized to the teens that God is the only constant in their lives; that He is ever-present, ever-watchful, ever-waiting and ever-ready to meet us wherever we are. We need not be afraid of our past or apprehensive about our future, God is always there for us in loving attentiveness to embrace us and bring us home.

In our small group discussions, we discussed how we can bring the Father's mercy to others in practical ways, such as, community service, praying for the sick and suffering, and befriending the outcast in our schools and playgrounds.

We had so much fun throughout the day with basketball, soccer, kan jam, and potato sack races. A special thanks to Msgr. David George for his presence during the day, it was an absolute blessing! A special thanks to all the chaperones and teens.



## First Communion – New Bedford

On Sunday May 1st, the Feast of Our Lady of Lebanon, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light attended the First Holy Communion Liturgy of the children at Our Lady of Purgatory Parish, New Bedford. The children who received are Joseph Chedid, Theresa Coury, Anna Higgins and Grace Schwartz. Fr. Fadi Rouhana, pastor, offered the Liturgy and Sr. Therese Maria was the catechist.





## Mercy Mission-Pleasantville, NJ

During weekend of March 11-13th, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light were on mission at our Lady Star of the East in Pleasantville, New Jersey. We were invited by pastor, Reverend Kamil Al-Chouefete to give a parish-wide retreat on Mercy.

The weekend included a children's retreat from 9AM to noon on Saturday, then visits to the sick and home bound. In the evening, Mother Marla Marie spoke on vocations and the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light mission at the Divine Liturgy. Later in the evening, we guided the parish in Eucharistic adoration and healing service,

which included confession. We also had an interactive evening and sharing with the MYO on mercy and forgiveness in our lives.

## Retreat with Star of the East Parish - Dartmouth MA

*By Sister Natalie Sayde*

During weekend of April 8-10th, the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light facilitated a retreat for 12 ladies from the Maronite parish of Our Lady, Star of the East at the Mother of Light Convent. The ladies journeyed on Thursday night (April 7) from Pleasantville, New Jersey and journeyed back to their homes on Sunday, April 10th. The theme of the weekend's retreat was the life and spirituality of Our Blessed Mother, Mary, depicted vividly in the four different mysteries of the Rosary.

Mother Marla Marie emphasized that the Rosary is first and foremost a meditation, a means of contemplating the life of Christ while journeying with Mary. The women were guided in a holy hour of adoration before the Holy Mysteries in our convent chapel. On the second day, the holy hour of adoration was one centered on the prayer of healing and forgiveness, as each lady was encouraged to lay their burdens at the feet of Jesus.



We watched the movie, "Mary of Nazareth" which depicts the life of Mary from her childhood through the Resurrection of Jesus. The film vividly captures the essence of Mary's profound faith and trust in God amidst the great mysteries that she lived with as the Mother of the Messiah. Many of the ladies were deeply moved, as they each shared on what captured them in the film. The days of retreat were interspersed with prayer, presentations, recreation and relaxation, Divine Liturgy and confession. All of the women had a wonderful, rejuvenating time, and thanked us for helping them in their prayer life and spirituality. Some said that their lives had been changed by this retreat and they are returning to their homes as new women. Praise God!



## Camp Covecrest – Georgia

Sister Therese Maria was invited to help chaperone a Life Teen retreat at Camp Covecrest in Tiger GA. She accompanied the Good Shepherd youth group from Tallahassee FL led by Kelly Colangelo, youth director, and assisted in their core team. Sr. Therese Maria said she gained great insights and plans to share this experience in MYO ministry to lead our teens closer to Christ. An added bonus during the week at camp was an opportunity to go white water rafting, zip line and lots of fun with over 200 teens.

## Our Maronite Servants' Mission

The Maronite Servants of Christ the Light are a congregation of consecrated religious serving the Church in the parish as spiritual mothers in imitation of Mary, radiating the Light of Christ in their mission to children, youth, young adults, families, the sick, the dying, the grieving... They serve alongside the priests in pastoral ministry reaching out with a maternal touch to many needs of the parish family.

*"Grant the wisdom needed for vocational discernment, so that in all things the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth. May Mary, Mother and guide of Jesus, intercede for each Christian community, so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit, it may be a source of true vocations for the service of the holy People of God."*  
--Pope Francis



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