



## Saint Maron Maronite Catholic Church

7032 Bowden Road

Jacksonville, FL 32216

Ph: (904) 448-0203 / Fax: (904) 448-8277

E-mail: [StMaronJax@Comcast.net](mailto:StMaronJax@Comcast.net)

Pastor: Father Elie Abi Chedid

Deacon: Elias Shami

**Mass Schedule: Sundays: 11:15 AM**

**March 2014**

**Volume 14 - Issue 3**



### **Beloved parishioners:**

As we enter the Season of the Great Lent we start an intense spiritual journey. This spiritual journey helps bring us closer to a rite of passage for our eternal life with God. Our eyes are set on the end-destiny: the *Wedding Feast of the Kingdom* – with Christ at the center. Lent is a favorable time to be reconciled to God, to others and to the whole creation. We are called to profoundly reflect upon the theme of our sinfulness and God's forgiving love.

Throughout His salvific ministry, our Lord Jesus made us aware of the serious disease of sin which causes the death of our soul. At the same time he made us aware of the cure that can be found in His merciful heart. During this spiritually intensive season it is absolutely essential to find time of stillness before God, listening to His voice that dwells deep in our heart. We must tirelessly seek closeness to God through purification and repentance asking God with the psalmist: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a

new and right spirit in me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me". (Psalm 51:10-11).

Our Lenten obligations are: Fasting and abstinence, prayer, practicing acts of reconciliation and penance, and almsgiving.

Also during the Liturgical season of Lent, the Annual Lenten Appeal for the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn takes place. The Eparchy relies upon you to keep open our Maronite parishes, like this one, and train our future Maronite priests. Every family is asked to participate in the Appeal at a level which is meaningful for them and be as generous as possible. Please give what God has put on your heart to give.

A copy of a letter from Bishop Gregory is printed in the newsletter.

Please be generous in supporting our Eparchy. If you wish to forward your donation directly to the Eparchy you can send it to this address:

Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn,  
The chancery,  
109 Remsen Street,  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Enclosed is the Bishop's letter.

Fr. Elie

## Lent 2014

Dear brothers and sisters,

**I am thankful that you support your Parish and Eparchy and thus make the life of the Church flourish. Your donations make possible all of the services that the Church offers - everything from the celebration of the Sacraments to Youth Ministry to Religious Education to educating future priests.**

**This year during Lent, can you make a special effort to help:**

- Educate the Young: We offer religious education to young people so that they have an opportunity to learn about their faith from an early age.**
- Assist the Elders: We support retired priests who have given so much of themselves for us.**
- Prepare Priests for the Future: We educate qualified young men to be priests in parishes.**
- Lebanon: We help the Church in Lebanon and Syria during their most difficult days.**

**Every year you have responded generously to our appeal to support the Eparchy because you know that the Church relies upon you for help. Your generosity has enabled much to be accomplished. In 2013 we ordained Alex Joseph, Raymond Khallouf, Elias Khalil and Antoine Kairouz to the priesthood! Yet there is much more work we need to do.**

**Please open your hearts once again to help your Eparchy so that the Church may**

continue to do the work of Jesus Christ in today's world.

In order to be worthy of your continued trust, the Eparchy has a thorough program of financial transparency in every parish and institution and our Eparchial Offices are audited by an outside accounting firm which monitors all aspects of the Eparchy's financial dealings. Our annual financial report is published annually in the *Maronite Voice*.

Each person in the Eparchy is asked to help at a level that is meaningful for them. Anything you are able to give goes to our greatest needs. Thank you for your kind consideration and generosity.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

+ Gregory

+ Gregory J. Mansour

\*\*\* \*\*



### Prayer to Saint Joseph

To you, O Saint Joseph, we come with confidence trusting in your powerful protection. Your loving service to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and your fatherly affection for the Child Jesus inspire us with faith in the power of your intercession before the throne of God.

We pray, first of all, for the Church that it may be free from error and corruption, and be a shining light of universal love and justice.

We ask your intercession for our loved ones in their trial and adversities, that they may be inspired by the love, obedience and affection of the Holy Family and be to each other a mutual source of consolation and Christian fidelity.

Keep us one and all under your protection so that, strengthened by your example and assistance, we may lead a holy life, and come to the possession of everlasting happiness in Heaven. Amen

*(The month of March is dedicated to Saint Joseph, May his prayers be a shield of protection for us and for all our families).*

## Some directives for the use of the new church

- A new missal is being used in the new church. Please make sure to follow closely this new missal since some of the wording in Liturgy is now different.
- **We have 120 books. Each family/ individual is called to help defray the cost of this new missal (\$30 each). Also Sponsors for the new books are welcome.**
- Missals must not be removed from church nor handled by small children.
- **No food or drinks are allowed in the new church facility (including cry-room).**
- Mezzanine is not to be used except when no other seats are available in the nave (main sanctuary).
- **Special attention should be given (in particular to kids) to not touch fire alarm levers, the alarm will go off instantly, and we will be charged a fine (\$250 minimum). It is better not to mess with any switches or volume controls in the church.**
- Only toddlers 4 years of age and under are to be in cry-room with one of the parents. Cry-room is not a playground but a training ground. Please don't let kids wander in hallways during Mass.
- **It is preferred to use the eastward entrance door (closest to the hall) until landscape is finished. Drop-off area is to be used especially by elderly and in raining weather.**
- Normally the right-side of doors will be unlocked. The sacristy's door is a service door to be used only by clergy.
- **Since the pews are not screwed to the (marble) floor, do not force the pews to move when sitting.**
- Please always try to occupy the front of the church and be punctual. Readers, choir members and altar boys should be at church at least 10 minutes before Mass, and are required to be dressed with appropriate church attire.
- **Please make a special effort not to use restrooms during Mass since this is most disrespectful to God and disrupt the people around, and not to let small kids unattended in bathrooms. And please make sure all sanitary products are placed in trash receptacles.**
- All phones and devices are not allowed in the church or are to be turned off during Mass.
- **Smoking is not allowed by any church's entrance door. Also chewing gums are not allowed in church; Gums should be disposed of in trash cans.**
- Fellowship will be taking place immediately after Mass in the social hall not in church.
- **Hymnal sheets will be placed on the entrance table; kindly return them to the table at the end of the Mass.**
- The drop-off area is not a parking place; that area should remain unblocked.



## Church's News & Events

### **Ash Monday**

According to the Maronite Liturgical calendar Lent starts this year on Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>; Mass and distribution of Ashes will be celebrated on Monday evening at 7:00 PM.

### **Fast and Abstinence during Lent**

Fast is obligatory on Ash Monday and on Great Friday of Crucifixion. Abstinence from meat is obligatory on Ash Monday and all Fridays during the Lenten Season.

### **Adoration of the Holy Cross**

Every Friday during the Season of Great Lent the Service of the Blessing with the Holy Cross is held at 7:00 PM.

### **Choir practice**

Choir practice will take place every Friday during Lent at 6:00 PM (before the service of the Holy Cross). We need more members to join the choir.

### **Second collections**

A second collection will be taken for 'Bishop's Appeal' on all Sundays of Lent.

### **Dedication committee**

A large committee is needed to prepare and oversee the formal dedication of the new church. If you would like to serve on the committee please give your name to the priest.

### **Commemorative Ad Book**

A Commemorative Ad Book to mark the dedication of our church will be published along with the consecration Mass and ceremony. This publication will feature warm messages, greetings, memorials and tributes to loved ones from businesses, families and individuals. You are asked to place an ad in this book and also help find sponsors.

The ad/message can include pictures, letter-heads and logos.

You can either mail or e-mail your advertisement to the church at [stmaronjax@comcast.net](mailto:stmaronjax@comcast.net). Please make checks payable to "Saint Maron's church". All donations are tax deductible.

- Full page full color \$1,500
- Full-page Gold Border \$1,300
- Full page Silver Border \$1,000
- Full page regular \$750

- Half page B/W \$500
- Qtr page B/W \$250
- Business card size B/W \$150
- Back Cover Full page/ Full color \$2,500**
- Inside Front Cover Full color \$2,000**
- Inside Back Cover Full color \$2,000**

Thank you for your support, promotion and consideration.

### **Use of the church hall**

Even though our church hall is in need of some renovation especially floor replacement, it will be available for use for your celebrations. Please contact the church for reservations.

### **Sponsors for new Missals**

Each family/ individual is asked to help defray the cost of the new missal (**\$30 each**). Also Sponsors for the new books are welcome.

Missals must not be removed from church nor handled by small children.

### **LED Candles**



LED candles operating on battery for use in processions (instead of wax candles), are available at the church. They are practical, clean and safe. Donation: \$15 each.

### **Birth congratulations**

Our congratulations go to Daoud and Marcelle Naddaf for the birth of their new daughter **Leia Rita** on February 4, 2014. May God bless her and the entire family.

### **Condolences**

Our sincere condolences are extended to Elias Trad and his family upon the death of his sister **Jacqueline Trad Boueirya** in Lebanon on February 8, 2014.

Our sincere condolences are also extended to Antoinette Ghantous and her family upon the passing of her mother **Thurayya Francis** in Lebanon on Feb 5, 2014.

May Almighty God receive their soul in His heavenly dwellings.

## Forty days Memorial Mass

A forty days Memorial Mass will be offered in memory of Matroune (Antoinette) Saikali on Sunday March 9, 2014.



## Eucharistic Congress 2014 / *In Him We Are One*

All our parishioners are strongly encouraged to participate in the annual Eucharistic Congress organized by the Diocese of Saint Augustine.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for this spectacular event, slated for March 28-29, 2014, at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center in Jacksonville (free admission). To learn more, visit: <http://www.floridaeucharist.org>

## Fulfillment of pledges

We are very grateful to our parishioners that have pledged and fulfilled their pledges for the building fund; however, there are still many parishioners who have not yet fulfilled their pledges or did not yet contribute to the building fund. We expect all our parishioners to be part of building God's House according to their ability; for those who have already made contributions towards building fund we hope they can be all the more generous and do a little more according to their means.

The balance for the completion of remaining items for the new church's construction, after loan (\$411,000.38), is now around **\$9,000.00**.

## ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE NEW CHURCH

- Tree of life	\$2,200.00
- Dedication booklet printing	\$3,500.00



## Maintaining God's House

We thank all families and individuals who give their annual dues / assessment. You are urged to make this contribution (\$250) for the year 2014 unless you are financially unable. You can always mail your tithing/ Sunday's offering and/ or assessment to the church even though you may not be attending.

According to God's and Church's commandments, every working individual that receives a salary is required to tithe to the church on a personal level.

You are strongly encouraged to use the offering envelopes that are available at the church on the entrance table. The use of these envelopes enables you to get an accurate credit of

your donations throughout the fiscal year, and help facilitate the church's financial procedures.

## Church Website/Donate on line

Our church introduced a "Donate on line" program using credit cards. The program is available through the church's website: [www.stmaronjax.com](http://www.stmaronjax.com).

Your benefits from this program are: 1-You earn points on your credit card; 2-You keep accurate records of your donation; 3- You save time and stamps on writing and mailing checks; 4-Your donation is tax deductible.



For more information you may contact Mrs. Sana' Saliba at (904) 519-6619. If you would like to place an Ad on the website please contact Mr. Elias Trad at (561) 809-8668.

## A reminder of the obvious

Out of respect first for God and second for those who are in church to worship Him, there needs to be a sincere effort to dress appropriately and decently, arrive on time, control your children, and keep your phones and all electronic devices off until after Mass.

\*\*\* \*\*

## Protecting God's children

Pamphlets outlining the pro-active policy of the United States Catholic Bishops to protect children are available at the Church, or by logging on to [www.usccb.org/ocyp/](http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/). Likewise information on our own Eparchial policy on sexual abuse can be found on our Eparchial website [www.stmaron.org](http://www.stmaron.org). It takes a dedicated team effort to safeguard our children.

\*\*\* \*\*

## Project Roots



The Maronite Eparchies of Saint Maron and of Our Lady of Lebanon join together to help people reconnect with their Christian spiritual roots in Lebanon and the Middle East. An office in Los Angeles will assist those interested to:

1. Register their vital life events.
2. Obtain their sacramental records from their country of origin.
3. Connect with family members living in their place of origins and throughout the world where they emigrated.
4. Obtain Lebanese citizenship if desired.
5. Obtain immigration records if desired.
6. Remain connected with the Maronite Church here and throughout the world.

For more information you may contact: Main office (CA) Ph: (310) 275-6634 / (310) 276-1939 MLM 333 South San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048. Or visit websites: [www.projectroots.net](http://www.projectroots.net) & [www.registerlebnani.com](http://www.registerlebnani.com)

Project Roots is an endeavor of the two Maronite Eparchies in the US in collaboration with the Maronite Foundation in the World / Christian Lebanese Foundation (CLFW).

**Register in Lebanon** with us and **spread the word** about the need for registration. Your registration will NOT jeopardize your American citizenship. It will help Lebanon maintain the demographic and political power-sharing balance and prevent the Christians there from becoming only **10%** of the population.

Contact one of **Project Roots** representatives **today** and start the process. You can even use the website ([www.projectroots.net](http://www.projectroots.net)) to register online and get a chance to win **free tickets to Lebanon**.

If you have already tried to register without success, sign the **Lebanese Citizenship Petition**:

[www.yes-i-want.com](http://www.yes-i-want.com). Together, we can effect change!

\*\*\* \*\*

## Bequests and Planned Giving

Have you considered including your Parish in your will? A will is an expression of your commitment to the principles, people and institutions that you cherish here on earth. As an active participant and a supporter of your Church, a bequest in your will ensures that the work of the Maronite Church can continue after you are gone. It is a lasting testament that has great significance.

Remembering your Parish in your will is easy to do. Here is an example of the words you can use to do this:

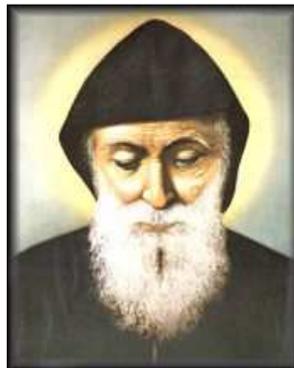
"I give and bequeath to St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church, located on 7032 Bowden Rd in Jacksonville, Florida, \_\_\_\_\_% of the residue of my estate [Or: The sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_."

### Tax-Smart Giving of Appreciated Stock or other Assets

The gift of an asset such as common stock or mutual fund shares is a smart way to make a contribution and receive maximum tax benefits based on the value of the asset. Gifts of other appreciated assets such as land, antiques, and homes, can also be utilized as potential gifts with valuable tax benefits. Gifts of these assets should be considered on a case-by-case basis and discussed with an accountant or tax adviser.

\*\*\* \*\*

## Order of Saint Sharbel



Bishop Gregory Mansour has asked all clergy in the Eparchy of Saint Maron to assist in enriching the order of Saint Sharbel both spiritually and on the level of involvement.

The order of Saint Sharbel, established in 1980, is an organization of lay people and clergy who have pledged their spiritual strength and financial support to the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn.

Its first objective is to direct financial assistance towards educating the seminarians

of our Eparchy.

When it will be possible the second objective is to provide additional benefits to our retired clergy in order for them to live with dignity and make it easier for them to share the wisdom of their years.

One way in sharing in the Order's objectives is to become a member. There are two forms of membership annual and perpetual. All billing comes from the Chancery Office and is paid to the Chancery.

**Annual Membership**

An Annual Member is one who pledges to donate \$500.00 annually or four equal installments of \$125.00 yearly (yearly membership starts from the month you join).

**Perpetual Membership**

A Perpetual member is one who makes a one-time donation of \$5,000 to the Order's Trust Fund. Perpetual members can choose to make four equal installments over a one-year period.

For more information you may visit the Eparchy's website: [www.stmaron.org](http://www.stmaron.org)

\*\*\* \*\*

**Reflection of the month:**

**“Christ has no body now but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours”**

**St. Teresa of Avila**

**Reflection and motto of the year**

**“Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things,  
Nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
Nor any other creature will be able to separate us  
From the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Romans 8:38-39

\*\*\*\*\*