



## 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)

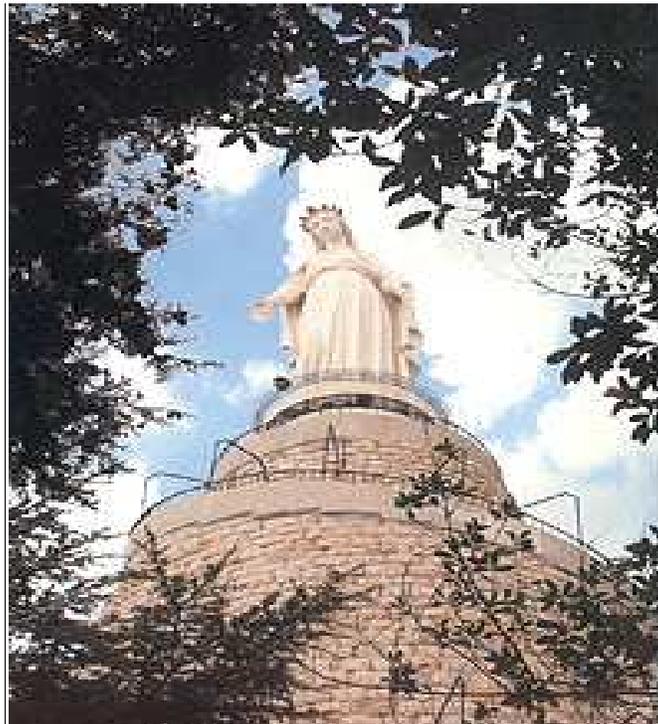
Pastor: Father Elie Abi Chedid

Deacon: Elias Shami

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

**May 2015**

**Volume 15 - Issue 5**



### **Beloved parishioners:**

I want to wish you all a Blessed month of May; this beautiful month of spring and of roses is dedicated to the Mother of our Lord and our heavenly Mother, the Virgin Mary. This month comes after the celebration of Easter and during the Resurrection season appropriately indicating that all the fruits of the Paschal Mystery were first realized in her.

The first Sunday of May in the Maronite Church is consecrated to the solemn celebration of the feast of **Our Lady of Lebanon**. This feast was established by Patriarch Howayek in the year 1908 on the occasion of the dedication of the great national shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon erected on the hill of Harissa-Lebanon. This shrine was built to mark the Golden jubilee of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception that was declared by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, and the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Lourdes, France.

This Marian shrine and pilgrimage site is meant to be a sign of consecration of the tiny Mediterranean country of Lebanon to the Mother of Our Lord. The Maronite Patriarch of Antioch named her the "Queen of Lebanon" in 1908 upon completion of the shrine. Overlooking the bay of Jounieh, the shrine has become a major tourist attraction and an international Marian site.

Maronite Patriarch Elias Howayek and the Apostolic delegate in Lebanon and Syria, the Archbishop Carlos Duval were the first to come up with the idea of building the sanctuary of Our Lady of Lebanon in order to honor the Virgin Mary and to indicate the great love of the Lebanese people for her throughout all generations.

In 1907, the French-made, painted in white, 20 tons-bronze statue of the Virgin Mary, was placed on the top of a natural stones tower erected on top of a hill, 650 meters above sea level, in the village of Harissa, 25 km north of Beirut. It was made up of seven sections. The stone base has a bottom perimeter of 64m, an upper perimeter of 12m and with an overall height of 20m. The height of the statue is 8.50m while its perimeter is 5.50m.

In 1954, Saint Pope John XXIII, then Cardinal Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, was delegated to Lebanon as representative of Pope Pius XII to preside over the Centennial jubilee celebrations of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and the Golden jubilee of the erection of the national shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon.

Saint Pope John Paul II visited the shrine when he made an official visit to Lebanon on May 10, 1997. He celebrated Mass in the modern Basilica.

On December 8, 1998, the Vatican announced that the World Day of the Sick would be celebrated on February 11, 1999 at Our Lady of Lebanon in Harissa. In his message for the World Day of the Sick, Pope John Paul II prayed that Our Lady of Lebanon who had watched over the agonizing suffering of the Lebanese people could help all those who were suffering in the world.

Pope Benedict XVI launched an appeal for peace in Lebanon and the Middle East on January 28, 2007 by invoking the protection of Our Lady of Lebanon. He said, "To Christians in Lebanon, I repeat the exhortation to be promoters of real dialogue between the various communities, and upon everyone I invoke the protection of Our Lady of Lebanon." Pope Benedict XVI visited also the shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon during his apostolic visit to Lebanon in September 2012 and celebrated private Mass in the old chapel. The Papal Embassy and the residences of four Eastern Rite Catholic Patriarchs are located in the vicinity of Our Lady of Lebanon's shrine of Harissa.

As Maronites and Eastern Catholics, our entire history was combined to our immense love to the Virgin Mary; in spoken Lebanese we affectionately address her with “Adra”. We promptly invoke her name in our needs and distress.

On her Feast Day, we rededicate our Churches and families, as well as our homeland, Lebanon, to her motherly care evoking the words of the Holy Bible in this regard: “You are all beautiful, my beloved, and there is no blemish in you. Come from Lebanon, my bride, come from Lebanon, come”! (Song of Songs 4:7-8).

We pray through her intercession for peace in the world, particularly in the tormented countries of the Middle East. Amen

Father Elie

## “REGINA CEILI LAETARE”

### PRAYER

**Queen of Heaven, rejoice, Alleluia.  
The Son whom you merited to bear, Alleluia.  
Has risen as He said, Alleluia.  
Pray for us to God, Alleluia.  
Rejoice and be glad O Virgin Mary, Alleluia!  
For the Lord is truly risen, Alleluia.**

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## Church's News & Events

### Marian prayers

The Ladies of the Rosary will have Marian prayers at the church during the month of May on Thursdays at 11:00 AM; everyone is invited and welcome to join them.

### First Holy Communion Congratulations

Our congratulations go to:

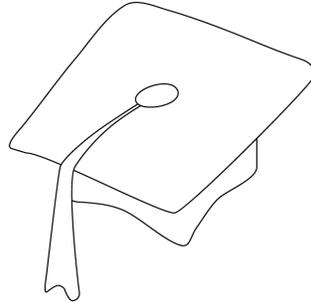
- Gabriella Camille Naddaf
- Paul Pierre El-Hajj
- Isabella Salim Akel
- Keanu Dany Hajjar
- Mary-Joe Tony Bahri



On the occasion of their first holy communion; we pray for God's blessings upon them. The First Communion ceremony in our church will be held on Sunday May 10, 2015.



## Graduation Congratulations



Free Printables - Family Family Portal  
www.kidspost.com

Our wholehearted congratulations go to:

- Grace Bahri
- Christina Bahri
- Nicholas Saikali
- Donna Mahfouz
- George Assi
- Charbel Assi
- Ashley Nammour
- Nicole Antar
- Tony Sleiman
- Jonathan Barakat
- Rada Naddaf
- Samantha Dagher
- Johnny Barakat

For their graduation from high school.

Our congratulations and best wishes also go to **Christine Sacre** for her graduation with a Master degree in health sciences to become a nurse practitioner (Christine has not only made accomplishment in Academics but she also has her first songs album released on *I Tunes*).

## Second collections

A second collection will be taken on Sunday May 3rd, 2015 for the National shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in North Jackson, Ohio. A second collection will be also taken on Sunday May 10 for Catholic communications campaign.

## Condolences

Our sincere condolences go to the Bahri family upon the passing of their daughter and sister **Amal Bahri** occurred on Monday April 13, 2015 in Jacksonville.

May Almighty God grant His servant **Amal** eternal rest in His heavenly kingdom.

Our sincere condolences are also extended to Mais Baroutjian and her family upon the passing of her father **Samir Mitri** on Saturday April 18, 2015 in Damascus, Syria.  
May Almighty God grant His servant **Samir** eternal rest in His heavenly kingdom.

### **Thank you**

Father Elie would like to thank everyone for their thoughts, loving support and prayers at this sorrowful time for him upon the loss of his father Semaan Abi Chedid.

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### **52<sup>nd</sup> Annual NAM Convention**

This year's NAM (National Apostolate of Maronites) Convention will be hosted by Saint Maron's church in Cleveland, Ohio from July 1 to 5, 2015.

For reservation at the **Renaissance Cleveland**, 24 Public SQ. Cleveland, OH 44113 you may call: 1-800-HOTELS-1 code NAM.

For more information log on to: [www.namnews.org](http://www.namnews.org)

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### **Parish Council News**

Saint Maron's parish council held its meeting on April 28, 2015. The following items of discussion were on the agenda:

- 1- Opening of a saving account with St Augustine diocese.
- 2- Hall Use
- 3- 50/50 raffle
- 4- Festival
- 5- Mother's Day Party
- 6- NAM and MYO Delegates
- 7- St. Charbel Order
- 8- Donate on line status
- 9- Rails for altar
- 10- Parish Car
- 11- Naming of the Hall

#### ***1- Diocese Account***

The church currently holds bank accounts only with REGIONS Bank and a saving account with the diocese of St Augustine that provides about 1.07 % interest rate.

- The council would like to encourage parishioners first to give their tithing on a regular basis, and second to help pay off the church's loan as soon as

possible thus saving additional payments on interest. Any raised fund towards loan payment will be matched from the church's saving account and paid at once.

## **2- Hall use**

- Advertisement is needed.
- Abouna should be informed before scheduling or confirming any date for hall use in order to avoid any scheduling conflict.
- The hall use terms should be implemented; every hall user should **sign** the hall use agreement, and **make full payment** before event date.

## **3- 50/50 Raffle**

- It was suggested that a monthly 50/50 raffle be carried out for church benefit. Dr. Gabi Bahri will be in charge of this activity, and will update the parishioners with the results and proceeds of this event at the end of each month.

## **4- Festival**

- It was decided that a food festival organized by the church be held in Mid October.

## **5- Mother's Day party**

- Mother's Day party was rescheduled, and will take place jointly with Father's Day on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2015 at our church hall.

## **6- NAM and MYO Delegates**

- Our parish is asked to have NAM delegates. It was suggested to nominate Mr. Nicholas Antar and Mr. Nammour Nammour as delegates since they usually attend the NAM convention.
- Our church will place an Ad in the NAM annual commemorative book. Abouna won't be able to attend the convention this year.
- Our parish is also asked to provide a MYO delegate/contact person. Two names were suggested by Abouna for the MYO delegates: Dr. Gabriella Assi and Sara-Marie Saliba.

## **7- St. Charbel Order**

The Eparchy reported that there are no members of St Charbel order from our community. Membership to this order helps in first place our seminary in Washington DC and if possible with clergy retirement. Perpetual membership is one time contribution of \$5000. Annual membership is \$500. More information can be found on the Eparchy's website [www.stmaron.org](http://www.stmaron.org).

Note: Membership to St Charbel order is a personal initiative; it deals directly with the Eparchy, not with our church or with Father Elie.

**8- Donate Online:**

- Our church is securely using PayPal for Donate on line feature on the church's website. We have a very limited number of parishioners donating online.
- We need to keep reminding our parishioners of this convenient and beneficial service.

**9- Altar rails:**

- Two brass rails will be installed to help with access to the altar. The project is on its final stage.

**10- Parish Car**

- This issue was discussed and the two options of buying or leasing were discussed. This matter will be further assessed depending on car model and dealerships' offers.

**11-Naming the Hall:**

- It was unanimously decided to name our church hall "*St. Charbel Hall*".

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**Loan payment**

Our next goal for the coming year is to pay off the church loan (\$361,111.38). We hope before long we can organize a "Mortgage Burning Party".

Donations towards loan payment are welcome.

**Caritas Lebanon**

Christians in Lebanon are suffering. Please pray for Lebanon! If you are able to relieve some of the suffering, please visit: [www.caritas.org.lb](http://www.caritas.org.lb).

**Seating in church**

Please always occupy the pews in the front of the church (The last four or five pews on each side are not to be occupied unless there are no free pews in the front).

Please be punctual for Mass. Readers, choir members and altar boys should be at church at least 10 minutes before Mass.

Everyone is required to be dressed with appropriate church attire.

## **Entrance door during Mass**

In order to maintain quiet and undistracted atmosphere at Mass. The entrance door to be used during Mass is from the drop-off area.

## **Dedication Commemorative Ad Book**

The Commemorative Ad Book published on the occasion of the dedication of our new church is available for purchase. Donation: \$25.



## **Maintaining God's House**

We thank all families and individuals who tithe regularly and generously to the church. Please note that the annual registration dues (\$250) are meant to be just a part of tithing fulfillment. Suggested tithe is 3% of one's income and means.

All families/Individuals are urged to make this contribution, which is usually taken at the beginning of the year, unless they are financially unable.

You can always mail your tithing and Sunday's offering 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.



## **Use of the church hall**

Our church hall is available for use for your special celebrations. A 30% discount will be granted to active members of the church. Please contact the church for reservations.

## **Policy for the use of Saint Maron Hall**

**7032 Bowden Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32216  
Ph: (904) 448-0203**

The Hall capacity is 160 people (Provided dance space).

- 1- Security deposit/Registration in the amount of \$400 is required upon registration for the hall. This deposit is refundable after damage assessment.
- 2- In case of cancellation, a notification is requested at least two weeks ahead of the event; otherwise half of the registration fee will not be refunded.
- 3- The fees for the use of the hall are in accordance to the number of occupants for the event and the hours of operation:

Up to 75 people: \$650 / Up to 100 people: \$750

Up to 130: \$850 / Up to 160: \$950

- 4- Any damage occurring to the hall or to any artifacts within the perimeter of said property will be deducted from the security deposit. Debris from food and drink including candy wrappers etc.

must be disposed of properly. Cans and bottles should be emptied and recycled; no liquids should be trashed in garbage bags. Damages exceeding the security deposit will be the responsibility of the undersigned.

- 5- The hall is and shall remain a smoke free environment. Remains from smoking are to be kept in proper containers outside of the building.
- 6- The hall is to be evacuated by 11:45 PM. A charge of \$100 will be added when that time is exceeded.
- 7- Decoration attached with tapes or tacks on walls and / or drapery, removing items from walls, the use of confetti, standing on chairs and tables, are strictly prohibited. Decorations on tables and suspending from the ceiling are allowed.
- 8- An additional fee in the amount of \$200 is to be charged for food preparation in the kitchen.
- 9- Table linens are available if desired; fees are negotiable.

\* **Attention:** Set up and decorations should take place on the same day of event, if needed to be done one day in advance or to take more than five hours, an additional charge will apply. In case of the preparation of food in the kitchen takes more than four hours or needed to be done a day before, an additional charge will apply also.

Respectful communication should be observed to the landlord at all times and strict adherence to the rules above.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Policy for Saint Maron Hall Use  
Disclaimer Proclamation**

I, the undersigned.....,

am aware and agree that I am fully responsible for any damages

and accidents that occur on the premises of Saint Maron property

during my occupancy. This includes all persons and personal

property affiliated with me or my function.

In the case of monthly use I agree to pay the proper deposit and advanced payment at the beginning of the month.

I also agree to be responsible to make sure all utilities, electrical and water, are properly turned off, and doors locked at the end of the function.

**Signature**

**Date**

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**Policy for the use of Saint Maron Hall  
7032 Bowden Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32216  
Ph: (904) 448-0203**

Name.....

Address.....

Phone number.....

Date of event: .....

Duration of function: From..... To.....

Time of Hall's set up and opening.....

Type of food preparation.....

Type of Music.....

Number of guests.....

**Requirements:**

\*A photocopy of Driver License or Photo ID.

\*Deposit payment.

\*Full payment a week before function if paid by check.

\*Hall is to be cleared by 11:45 PM.

Signature

Date

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**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) 514-4114. If you would like to place an Ad on the website please contact Mr. Elias Trad at (561) 809-8668.

## 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). 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, please 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.
- **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.
- **Unless for emergency, please use bathrooms in the hall. 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.

## **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 hall, 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.

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## **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!

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## 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:

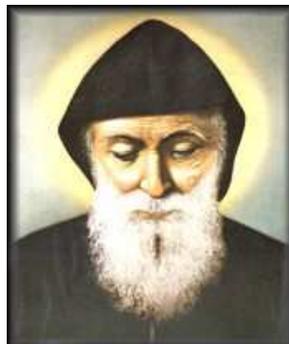
"I give and bequeath to St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church, located on 7032 Bowden Rd in Jacksonville, Florida, \_\_\_\_\_% of the residue of my estate [Or: The sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_."

## 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.

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## 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 Charbel both spiritually and on the level of involvement.

The order of Saint Charbel, 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)

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### **Reflection of the month:**

**"All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."**

**Edmund Burke**

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