

January 24, 2016  
Bulletin #4

## ***Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church***

2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

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Msgr. Bakhos Chidiac, Pastor

Evelyn Ghaphery, Organist



### ***Sunday of the Righteous & Just***

- \***Weekend Masses:** Saturday evening at 4:00 p.m. [Rosary & Litany start 20 minutes before Mass]  
Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. [Rosary & Litany start 20 minutes before Mass]
- \***Weekday Masses:** Tuesday to Friday at 12:05 p.m. [Rosary & Litany start 20 minutes before Mass]  
Monday No Mass
- \***Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament:** First Saturday of the month at 3:30 p.m.  
First Sunday of the month after 10:30 a.m. Mass
- \***Confession:** Saturday: 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. or any other time by appointment
- \***Baptism:** Please call the Pastor as soon as baby is born; at least one Godparent must be Catholic
- \***Weddings:** Please make arrangements at least six months in advance before any other plans are made
- \***Sick Calls & Anointing of the Sick:** Please notify the Pastor at 304-233-1688
- \***Parish Council:** Lou Khourey, Carol Dougherty, Mike Linton, Rita Strawn, P.J. Lenz, Mary Stees
- \***Choir Members:** Earl Duffy, George Thomas, Lou Khourey, Robert Harris, Shelly Hancher, Ted Olinski
- \***Bulletin Coordinator:** Thomasina Geimer
- \***Altar Server:** Mike Linton
- \***Altar Boys:** Dalton Haas, Shaun Hancher & Luke Lenz
- \***Cedar Club:** Linda Duffy, President 304-242-6853
- \***Women's Society:** Sandra Dusick, President 304-232-7395



- \***Bulletin Announcements:** Submit all Bulletin Information to Msgr. Bakhos by Noon on Tuesday every week
- \***New Parishioners:** We welcome you with great joy & invite you to officially register as one of our parishioners
- \***Cedar Hall Rental Fees:** Call the Church Office at 304-233-1688 or 304-639-1372
- \***Parking:** Saturday & Sunday parishioners may park in both lots; Monday-Friday park ONLY in the 3 Alley spaces
- \***Remember the Church in your Last Will & Testament:** Her prayers will accompany you to heaven

## ***Gospel Reflection: Sunday of the Righteous & Just***

Readings: Heb 12: 18-24 and Mt 25:31-46

This is one of the most vivid parables which Jesus ever spoke, and the lesson of it is crystal clear. The lesson is this — that God will judge us in accordance with our reaction to human need. God's judgment does not depend on the knowledge we have amassed, or the fame that we have acquired, or the fortune that we have gained, but on the help that we have given. But there are certain things which this parable teaches us about the help which we must give.

It must be help in simple things. The things which Jesus picks out— giving a hungry man a meal, or a thirsty man a drink, welcoming a stranger, cheering the sick, visiting the prisoner are things which anyone can do. It is not a question of giving away thousands of pounds, or of writing our names in the annals of history; it is a case of giving simple, human help to the people we meet every day. There never was a parable which so opened the way to glory to the simplest people.

It must be help which is quite uncalculating. Those who helped did not think that they were helping Christ, and thus piling up eternal merit; they helped because they could not stop themselves helping. It was the natural, instinctive, quite uncalculating reaction of the loving heart. Whereas, on the other hand, the whole attitude of those who failed to help was: 'If we had known it was YOU we would gladly have helped; but we thought it was only some common man who was not worth helping.' It is still true that there are those who will help if they are given praise and thanks and publicity; but to help like that is not to help, it is simply to pander to self-esteem. Such help is not generosity; it is simply disguised selfishness. The help which wins the approval of God is the help which is given for nothing but the sake of helping. Jesus confronts us with the wonderful truth that all such help which is given is given to himself, and all such help which is withheld is withheld from himself. How can that be? If we really wish to delight a parent's heart, if we really wish to move him to gratitude indeed, then the best way to do it is to help his child. God is the great Father; and the way to delight the heart of God is to help his children, who are our fellow-men.

### ***Divine Liturgy Schedule***

**This Weekend, January 23-24: Sunday of the Righteous and Just**

**Saturday, January 23 at 4:00 p.m.:**

- ✠ Elizabeth A. Magnone (4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) by Mary Zaid Stees & Libby G. Magnone
- ✠ Tom George by Sandra DeMuth & Family

**Sunday, January 24 at 10:30 a.m.:**

- ✠ Intentions of Lisa Breiding (Birthday) by her children Dalton & Gina Haas
- ✠ Intentions of Lou & Charlotte Khourey by Kay Garvey

#### **Weekday Masses**

**Monday, January 25: No Noon Mass. Msgr Bakhos Day Off**

**Tuesday, January 26 at 12:05 p.m.:**

- ✠ Toni Bedway (4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) by his wife Nancy and Family
- ✠ John Wilson by Dr. Victor Canestraro

**Wednesday, January 27 at 12:05 p.m.:**

- ✠ Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her Will
- ✠ Sister Mary Thomasina John by Sylvia Long

**Thursday, January 28 at 12:05 p.m.:**

- ✠ Julia Tappe by OLOL Women Society
- ✠ Bob Wise by Lou & Charlotte Khourey

**Friday, January 29 at 12:05 p.m.:**

- ✠ Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL) & his special intentions
- ✠ Julia Tappe by Sandra Dusick

<b>Next Weekend and the following weekdays, Jan. 30-Feb. 5: Masses for the Faithful Departed</b>
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Before Great Lent, the church urges parishioners to remember their parents and beloved ones in the offering of the Mass which is the pleasing to God; it is the offering of love of the Son of God on the Cross.

**6 Masses will be offered for the following Faithful Departed:**

- † Frances Linton (9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) by sons Steve & Mike
- † Deceased of the Kourey & Howard Families by Lou, Charlotte, Emmalena & Louie
- † Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen by her Will
- † Deceased of the Saad & Joseph Families
- † Deceased of the Thomas, Splatt & Nutter Families by John & Kathy Thomas (MN)
- † Deceased of the Chidiac, Linton & Albaugh Families
- † Deceased of the Bine & Gaudio & Paesani Families by Shirley Bine
- † Deceased of the Habdo & Dougherty Families by Bill & Carol Dougherty
- † Catherine Arthur by her daughter Carol Burkhart
- † Suzanne Linton by her husband Mike
- † Frances & Joseph Linton by sons Steve & Mike
- † Adib & Sadie Chidiac (parents), Nadim (brother) & Mona (sister) by Steve & Mike Linton
- † Deceased of our parish by Steve & Mike Linton
- † Deceased of the Yost & Garvey Families by Kay Garvey
- † Deceased of Zaid & Abdo Ferris Families by Mary Zaid Stees & Libby G. Magnone
- † Deceased of Giovanna & Nicola Magnone by Mary Zaid Stees & Libby G. Magnone
- † Tom Schlog by Bob & Fran Saseen
- † Deceased of the Thomas & Frenn Families by Dr. Adel, Diane, Andreah & Justin Frenn
- † Deceased of the Condelli and Long Families by Sylvia Long
- † John, Sally, Jake, Marie & Fuzzy Jacobs by Sandra Dusick
- † John, Don, Patty John Jr. Dusick by Sandra Dusick
- † Deceased family of Thomasina Geimer
- † Matt, Margaret and Marion Simonetti by Richard & Mary Ryncarz
- † Thomas and Stella Ryncarz by Richard & Mary Ryncarz
- † Grandparents of the George & Porchiran Families by Kathleen George & sons & grandsons
- † Tom George by Kathleen, Jeff and Christopher and families
- † Eddie and Betty George by Kathleen, Jeff and Christopher and families
- † Rudy & Virginia Porchiran by Kathleen, Jeff and Christopher and families
- † Mary & George Popovich by Nikki & Joe Popovich
- † Mr. Frank Sharkey by Nikki & Joe Popovich
- † Helen Fielding and Augie Montalbano by Nikki & Joe Popovich
- † The Keegan Family by the Louis John Family
- † The Joseph John Family by the Louis John Family

### *Calendar of Parish Events at a Glimpse*

<b>Ash Monday</b> Mon., February 8	<b>Mass &amp; Distribution of Ashes</b> – at 8:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
<b>Cedar Club Meeting</b>	<i>Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Cedar Hall</i>
<b>Soup &amp; Hoagie Sale</b>	<i>– sponsored by the Women’s Society</i>
<b>Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup></b> → →	<b>Order &amp; Payment Due</b>
Mon. & Tue, February 15, 16 →	<b>Work Day for Soup &amp; Hoagie Sale</b> – starting at 9 a.m.
Wednesday, February 17 → →	<i>11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. <b>Pick Up Day</b> for Soup &amp; Hoagies in the Cedar Hall</i>
Thursday, February 18 → →	<i>11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. <b>Pick Up Day</b> for soup &amp; Hoagies in the Cedar Hall</i>
<b>St. Maron Dinner</b>	<i>[more information in future bulletins]</i>
Week of March 7	<b>Work Days for St. Maron Dinner</b> – starting at 9 a.m.
Sunday, March 13	St. Maron Dinner served – 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
<b>Palm Sunday, March 20</b>	<b>The Passion of the Lord</b>

<b><u>Easter Sunday, March 27</u></b>	<b>The Resurrection of the Lord</b>
<b>Hall Rental</b>	<i>Saturday, April 16, 2016</i>
<b>Hall Rental</b>	<i>Saturday, October 8, 2016</i>
<b>Mahrajan (Festival)</b>	<i>Sunday, August 14 (Mass at 10:30 a.m. and booths open at noon)</i>

### ***Cedar Club Meeting*** (Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. in the Cedar Hall)

The Cedar Club Meeting will be held on Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Cedar Hall. Hosting the evening will be Rita Strawn and Thomasina Geimer.

### ***Soup & Hoagie Sale*** (Orders Due: Mon., Feb. 8; Pick-up Days: Wed. & Thur., Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>)

The Women's Society of Our Lady of Lebanon Church has scheduled its Soup & Hoagie Sale.

Quarts of **Homemade Soups** Include: *Chicken Noodle Soup, Chicken & Rice Soup, Chili, Ham & Bean Soup, Lentil Soup, Potato Soup, Vegetable Beef Soup, Meatless Vegetable Soup* available for \$6.50 per quart and *Stuffed Pepper Soup* available for \$8.00 per quart.

**Three Hoagies will be available:** Ham & Swiss, Italian or Turkey & Cheese. Cost is: \$7.00 each.

**Deadline for Order Form & Payment: Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.** (Be sure to mark the day and time you wish to pick up your order on the form). Orders and payment may be mailed to the church or placed in the weekly offering basket.

**Pick-Up-Days: Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; OR Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

To make this event a success we need several volunteers Tuesday and Wednesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. We need helpers to assemble, label and package the Hoagies and to packing the orders for pick up. We also need several volunteers to make and donate desserts. In the past items such as: *Pies, Texas Sheet Cake or other cakes, brownies, any flavor fudge, Lebanese treats (such as twist cookies, coconut cake, pizzelles), sugar free or nut free items, etc.* If you can offer a few hours, call Charlotte at 304-639-1372 or 304-277-3230 & leave a message.

You should receive order forms in the mail soon; additional order forms will be available soon at the church entrance. Order early – quantities are limited; Take Out Only.

Thanks to all individuals who have already volunteered to make and donate soup, to make and donate desserts, to give of your time and talent for our sale, or to make a Cash Donation which help defray expenses.

Note: **Thanks to Kathleen George who volunteered to coordinate Chili and to Shirley Bine & Rita Strawn for volunteering to coordinate the Vegetable Beef Soup.**

If you can help peel & chop the vegetables for the Vegetable Beef Soup on Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, in the Cedar Hall please contact Charlotte (304-639-1372) or Shirley Bine. The Cedar Hall Kitchen will be used by Rita Strawn on Tuesday, February 16, to prepare the Chicken Noodle Soup. And the Stuffed Pepper soup will be prepared in the Cedar Hall on Saturday & Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. Anyone else wanting to schedule a day to prepare their soup in the church kitchen is asked to coordinate the day by calling Charlotte.

## ***Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List***

### **Please Remember Those Hospitalized Recently in Your Prayers**

Jonas George, Kay Garvey, Dolores Oser, Gene Howard (brother of Charlotte Kourey)

### **Also Please Pray for Those Who Asked Us to Pray for Them**

Josephine Weidman, Lucille Gibbons, Nick Bedway, Paige McCoy (niece of Millet, Gina & Linda), Peggy Justice, Clara J. Morris, Shirley & Jim George, Mary Margaret Blum, Jim Thomas (father of Diane Frenn), Carrie Jane (Powell) Parodi (daughter of Eva Lee Powell), Barb Sobota,

## ***Happy Birthday***

January 26     Chris DeMuth  
 January 28:    Nikki Popovich  
 January 29:    Sandra Dusick, Matthew Deeb

February 2: David John, Doug Bratton  
 February 4: Lindsay Carl  
 February 9: Msgr. Bakhos Chidiac  
 February 10: Sandra DeMuth, Betty Shia  
 February 11: Charlotte Khourey  
 February 14: Diane Frenn  
 February 15: Nettie Seidler  
 February 16: Dave Sengewalt

### ***Your Church Support Last Week***

\$1,617.00	Sunday Collection
39.00	Candles
75.00	Mahrajan – Space rental
30.00	Donation to Poor Families
\$1,761.00	<b>Total Deposits:</b> <i>May God reward you abundantly for supporting your spiritual home!</i>

### ***What's New?***

#### ***Memorial Stone 2<sup>nd</sup> Invoice***

Dear Parishioners,

Please read the attached second invoice from Walters Construction Inc. regarding the work done on the inside of the Memorial Stone construction. This bill is about the dry wall and painting on the inside of the new construction and the new ramp outside the Cedar Hall kitchen. The church appreciates all your donations and we are happy to show you where your money is spent. --Msgr. Bakhos

#### ***One Bulletin Ad Space is Still Available for the Entire 2016 Year***

The Weekly Bulletin Ads on the last page help defray the cost of printing the weekly bulletins and at the same time help promote businesses or are Memorials to deceased loved ones. We have one ad space left for \$120.00 a year. More than 5,000 bulletins are printed every year and many are mailed out of town. Please consider buying this space and use it for your business or memorial. Ask Fr. Bakhos or Charlotte for more info.

#### ***Old Basement Remodeling***

A new company has started installing new dry walls in the old basement which replaces the dark paneling. A new electric light LED system will replace the old lighting. The old hall will be used for other church use in case of emergency if the Cedar Hall is rented and for other small events. This job will cost the church around \$20,000. If anyone is blessed enough to contribute toward this project we will appreciate donations in any amount.

#### ***Memorial Stone Plaques***

Dear Parishioners,

Please look for any mistake in these two plaques before we send them to the printer. It is easy now to correct them but once printed, it will be very hard to fix the mistakes. Call Msgr Bakhos at 304-233-1688

#### **First Plaque for those who served our country:**

##### **During WWII**

Peter J. **Abraham**, Nicholas **Bedway Sr.**, John **Betras**, Louis "Pete" **Betras**, Moses **Betras**, Tom **Betras**, Larry **Breiding**, David **Bris**, Joseph **Bryan**, Nicolas G. **Cater**, Nick **Coram**, Charles **Coury**, Eva **Coury**, Louis **Coury**, Bill **Daniel**, Sam **Elias**, Eddie **George**, Joe **George**, Philip J. **George**, Saline **George**, George **Habdo**, Edward **Jalad**, Michael **Jalad**, Fred **John**, John T. **John**, John J. **John**, Alphonse **Joseph**, Campbell **Joseph**, George **Joseph**, Joseph F. **Joseph**, Michael Nimon **Joseph**, Nick **Joseph**, Tom **Joseph**, Peter J. **Khoury**, Samuel A. **Khoury**, George **Lewis**, Joseph **Linton**, Louis **Maroon**, Lula Marie **Maroon**, Thomas J. **Maroon**, David **Moses**,

George **Moses**, John **Moses**, James **Murad**, John P. **Murad**, Joseph J. **Murad**, Louis **Nassif**, Thomas **Nassif**, Thomas **Palmer**, Mike **Rouhana**, Rouhana **Rouhana**, Bob **Saseen**, George **Saseen**, Jerry **Saseen**, Louis **Saseen**, Philip **Saseen**, Edward **Shia**, John **Shia**, Shipley **Shipley**, Betty **Simon**, Michael J. **Simon**, Sam **Simon**, Tom **Thomas**, William G. **Thomas**, Melo J. **Wakim**, Thomas G. **Wakim**

#### **During Korean War**

Mike **Betras**, Leo **Bleifus**, Eddie **Brice**, Ronald J. **Bris**, Don **Dusick**, John **Dusick Jr.**, Louis **John**, Marjorie Keegan **John**, Kenneth **Joseph**, Edmund **Monseur**, Michael **Monseur**, Cecil **Moses**, Louis **Rohanna**, Elwood H. **Rose**, Robert **Sengewalt**, George **Shia**, George J. **Thomas**, George **Thomas**, John **Thomas**, Ernest **Vargo**

#### **During Vietnam War**

Kenneth **DeMuth Jr.**, Al **Depto**, Millet L. **Fadoul**, George **Fahey**, Richard W. **Frazier**, Thomas E. **George**, Alfred D. **Ghaphery**, Nicholas A. **Ghaphery Jr.**, Thomas **Hicks**, David **John**, Mike **Linton**, Frank **Lish**, Joe **Popovich**, Fred J. **Simon**, Michael G. **Simon**

#### **Other Veterans who served**

Holly **Bine**, Orval **Carter**, James **Dellget**, Bill **Dougherty**, Earl P. **Duffy**, John **Shiben**, Rex **Strawn**, Christopher **Wakim**

Second plaque for the benefactors:

**Please remember in your prayers the following benefactors  
who contributed toward the Memorial Stone Project 2015**

**—Msgr. Bakhos Chidiac, Pastor**

#### **Diamond (\$500 & over)**

Msgr. Paul **Abraham** & Peter **Abraham** (Memorial), Thomas A. **Abraham** (Memorial), **Altmeyer** Funeral Homes, Leo **Bleifus**, Mike & Nicole **Breit**, Msgr. Bakhos **Chidiac**, Michael **David**, Andrew **DeGarmo**, Bill & Carol **Dougherty**, Donald **Fielding**, Helen **Fielding** (Memorial), David & Jessie **Frey**, Thomas & Kathleen **George**, Ann **Gocsik**, Paul & Judy **Harris** & Family, Michael T. **Hatty** (Memorial), Chris **Hess** Foundation, Lou & Charlotte **Khourey**, Drs. Rajai & Nahla **Khoury**, P.J., Nikki, Lindsay & Luke **Lenz**, Joe **Palmer** DDS (Memorial), Bob & Fran **Saseen**, Nettie **Seidler** & Family, John & Deanna **Shiben**, Eileen **Simon**, Joseph R. **Simon**, Aundrea **Spain**, Rex & Rita **Strawn**, Emily **Vince** (Memorial), George & Jean (Joseph) **Weisner**, Randy **Weisner**,  
**Women Society of OLOL,**

#### **Gold (\$200-\$499)**

Betty **Abraham** (Memorial), Joseph & Josephine **Abraham**, Shirley **Bine**, Clara **Carter** (Memorial), James & Patricia Saseen **Connell**, Garry & Pauline **Ferrell**, Larry & Becky **Ferrera**, A **Friend**, Kenneth & Catherine **Gaudio**, Thomasina **Geimer**, Evelyn **Goodson** (Memorial), Larry **Joseph** TX (Memorial), Kenneth & Nancy **Joseph**, **Kalkreuth** Roofing & Sheet Metal, The Mary Ann **Khoury** Family, Mary Seabright **Lish**, The Asad **Maroon** Family, Emilia (Thomas) & Peter **Misko**, Joe & Nikki **Popovich**, William “Bill” **Shaheen** (Memorial), Mark Alan **Shroeder**, George & Mary **Thomas**, Chris & Jeannette **Wakim**, John & Judy **Wilson**, Dr. & Mrs. Lawrence **Wright**, Genevieve John **Zambito**

#### **Silver (\$100-\$199)**

Denny **Albaugh**, Mary Margaret **Blum**, The Michael **Boury** II Family, Rena & Doug **Bratton**, Lisa **Breiding**, Orval & Clara **Carter**, Rosalie **Conti**, William & Mary **Daniel**, William S. **Daniel** Jr., Bassam & Jodi **Deeb**,

Sandra **DeMuth**, Al **Depto** & Mary C. **Davis**, Shirley A. **Dietz**, Millet & Susie **Fadoul**, George & Patty **Fahey**, Thomas A. **Ferris**, Kay **Garvey**, Dalton & Gina **Haas**, Mark & Catherine **John**, Alphonse & Georgette **Joseph** Family (Memorial), **Kepner** Funeral Homes, Sylvia J. **Long**, Julian H. **McGlumphy** (Memorial), Dr. John & Rose **Palmer**, Paula Jo **Perilli**, Patrick **Petros** Family, Eva Lee Thomas **Powell** & Family, Chamse Rouhana **Rahi**, **Riesbeck** Food Market, Ferris **Shia**, Mike & Judy **Sofka**, Bill & Adele **Storm** and Family, Shawn & Cyndi **Tobias** (MN), Anthony & Carmelina **Vargo** and children, Dr. Dianna M. **Vargo**, Ernest & Minnie Shia **Vargo**, Ernest & Trisha **Vargo** and children, Giuseppe & Leslie **Vargo** Lancia and children

## *Around Us*

### *Saint Maron Dinner in Pittsburgh* (Saturday, February 6, 2016)

Where: Le Mount restaurant, Pittsburgh

When: Saturday, February 6, 2016 starting at 6:00 p.m.

Dinner and live Lebanese music.

Cost: Adults: \$70; students: \$50-- Reservation: 412-278-0841

### *Fish Fry* (Fridays during Lent)

Where: Our Lady of Seven Dolours Catholic Church, Chapel Hill Road, Triadelphia

When: All Fridays during Lent starting February 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am until 5:30 p.m.

Information: 304-547-5342

## *Prayers for children*

We pray for the children who put chocolate fingers everywhere, who like to be tickled, who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants, who sneak popsicles before supper, who erase holes in their math workbooks, and who can never find their shoes.

We also pray for those who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire, who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers, who never counted potatoes for the family meal, who were born in places we wouldn't be caught dead in, who never go to a circus, and who live in an X- rated world.

We also pray for children who bring us sticky kisses and fists full of dandelions, who sleep with their dog and bury goldfish, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money, who cover themselves with band aids, who slurp their soup, who sing off key and squeeze toothpaste all over the sink.

We also pray for those who never get dessert, who have no safe blanket to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die, who can't find bread to eat, who don't have any room to clean up, whose pictures aren't on anyone's dresser, and whose monsters are real.

We also pray for children who spend all of their allowance before Tuesday, who tantrum at the grocery store and pick at their food, who like ghost stories, who shove dirty clothes under the bed and never rinse the tub, who get visits from the tooth fairy, who squirm in church and scream into the phone, whose tears we sometimes laugh at, and whose smiles can make us cry.

We also pray for those whose nightmares come in the daytime, who will eat anything, who have never seen a dentist, who aren't spoiled by anyone, who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep, and those who live and move, but have no being.

We pray for children who want to be carried and for those who must. We pray for those who never give up and for those who don't usually get a second chance. We pray for those who we smother with affection and for those who will grab the hand of anyone kind enough to offer.

## *Spirituality: Atheist Feast Day*

In Florida, an atheist created a case against Easter and Passover Holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days.

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood objecting to the ruling saying, "Your honor, How can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays."

The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, counsel, is woefully ignorant."

The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists."

The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fools Day. Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned."

## *Story: St. Alexander*

Once upon a time there was a forest in Rumania where a man called Alexander, whom people sometimes called Alex for short, used to live. Alexander was a Charcoal Burner. He used to collect little twigs and thin branches from the trees in the forest, and he made little fires and burned the sticks very slowly so that they turned into black sticks called Charcoal. (If he was in too much of a hurry they turned into White Ashes instead and he would have to begin all over again.) People use Charcoal for quite a lot of things. They draw with it, and make fires with it, and use it for medicine, and make shoe polish with it. So you can see what a useful job Alexander had.

So Alexander looked after his little fires by himself all day and he learned to be very patient because if he was impatient his Charcoal would turn into Ashes. In a quiet job like that the birds and the animals get used to the person who is working and take no notice. Alexander saw baby squirrels playing, and mother foxes taking their cubs to roll in the sun, and all kinds of things that we never see. It made him think how quiet and patient God must be. "Here is this enormous forest," he thought to himself, "and it is full of living things: plants and animals and birds and insects. They all lead busy lives; not one of them is lazy, and yet very few people even know that they are there! There must be hundreds of them that are too shy even for me to see. And yet God knows all about them and what they do all day. He never frightens them however near he is because he is so still."

While Alexander was quietly living in the forest and burning his Charcoal and thinking about God and watching the birds and animals, there were great Goings On in the town where he sold his Charcoal. And this is what was happening. At first there had been very few Christians in the town, but as time went on there were more and more. At last the priest said that they really ought to have a Bishop of their own instead of belonging to a Bishop called Gregory who lived a very long way off and scarcely ever had time to come and see them. So it was decided that Bishop Gregory should come, and that everybody should say which priest they wanted to be the new Bishop. Well, some wanted This priest and some wanted That priest and some didn't know whom they wanted but they didn't want either of Those. At last they collected seven priests who wanted to be the Bishop, and they wrote and told Gregory that they wanted him to come and choose.

The Town Hall was all ready with a Throne at the end of it for Bishop Gregory and chairs and seats for all the people. When everyone was settled, the First man who wanted to be the Bishop came in. He was tall and thin with a big nose and a very Grand expression. He looked at the crowds of people as if they were too Common for Words. The people who wanted him to be the Bishop clapped and cheered as he went and stood in front of Gregory. "Do you think that you would be a good Bishop?" asked Gregory. "I am sure I would," said the man. "I think that you are too Proud," said Gregory. "Next please!"

The Second man had silk clothes and a jeweled crucifix, and he had a rosary made of real rubies in his hand. "Would you keep all those lovely things for yourself, if you were the Bishop?" asked Gregory. "Of course I should. They are my own property," said the man, and he held them a little tighter. "You are too Covetous, I think," said Gregory. (Covetous means selfish and miserly.) "Next please!" said Gregory.



The Third man had the most brightly colored clothes and a smiling face and beautiful curly hair. He winked at all the people, and the ladies clapped their hands because he was so handsome. "Do you want people to go on thinking that you are handsome and clever when you are the Bishop?" asked Gregory. "But of course!" said the man, and he looked quickly at the people to see if they were listening. "Even a Bishop must have his bit of fun." "I think that you are too fond of Pretty Ladies," said Gregory. "Next please!"

The Fourth man had black hair and a frowning face. He stared at the people angrily and then went and stood in front of Gregory. The people who wanted him clapped for him, but he shook his head at them and they stopped. "If you were the Bishop, would you be Strict with the people and punish them severely if they broke the rules?" asked Gregory. "I would," said the man. "They are a lazy, sinful lot, but I'd not put up with any of their nonsense!" And he glared at Gregory. "You get Angry too easily," said Gregory. "Next please!"

The Fifth man was very fat indeed, but he looked kindly at the people, and he waved his hand at the ones who wanted him. As he stood in front of Gregory, he pulled a buttered bun out of his pocket and began to eat it. "Excuse me!" he said. "Couldn't you have waited until after the Choosing to eat your bun?" asked Gregory. "Not me!" said the man, "I wouldn't miss my tea for anyone on earth. It keeps a man good-tempered to be fat." "I think that you are too Greedy," said Gregory. "Next please!"

The Sixth man was thin and mean-looking, he did not look happy. He stared at all the priests who had already seen Gregory. (They were standing at the back of the Throne, waiting to see who would be Chosen.) "Well," said Gregory, "what is the matter? Aren't you happy? Don't you want to be Bishop after all?" "No good my wanting it," said the man. "I've no good looks like that man over there, or riches like that one, or a nice house like that one, or a kind family like that one. I never get the things that Other People have." "You are too Envious to be happy," said Gregory. (Envious means being so jealous of other people's things that you haven't time to see what nice things you have yourself.) "Next please!" said Gregory. But no one came.

"Next please!" said Gregory, looking around. "I thought you said that there were seven people who wanted to be Bishop," he whispered to the Mayor who was standing beside him. "I've only seen six." "NEXT PLEASE!!" shouted the Mayor, and all the people laughed. Then the door banged, and in came an untidy man with ruffled hair and shoes undone. He was yawning and rubbing his eyes. "Sorry, my Lord," he said to Gregory. "As I was the last one, I thought that I'd have a nap while I was waiting, and I didn't hear you call."

"Do you always have naps when you can?" asked Gregory. "Always, my Lord," said the man solemnly. "A man can't have too much sleep, I always say." "I think that you are too Lazy," said Gregory. All the people rustled and coughed and sat up and shuffled their feet. They stared at Gregory and waited for him to say which of the seven priests would be the Bishop. "Well," said Gregory, and he looked around at all the people, "I am sorry but I don't think that any of them would do for a Bishop."

The people started talking among themselves, then someone shouted: "But we must have one of them! There isn't anyone else!" "No," said Gregory. "They may not be bad as ordinary people go, but they would not be good as Bishops. You couldn't have a Bishop who was Proud or Greedy or Lazy or any of the other Seven Deadly Sins, now could you?" "You're too Choosy," said the people. "You can't have a Perfect man." "No," said Gregory, "but he ought to try to be Perfect, and these men don't."

All the people started arguing again, and in the noise Gregory said to God: "Please, God, if you really want a Bishop here, will you choose one for yourself? It is very difficult for me with all these seven, and the people are getting so cross." Just then someone shouted: "You'd better have Alexander the Charcoal Burner if you can't think of anyone better!" All the people laughed because they couldn't imagine having sooty, raggy Alexander for a Bishop! But Gregory knew that this was God's answer to his prayer, so he held up his hand for the people to stop laughing, and said: "Who is this Alexander?" "I was only joking," said the man who had shouted. "He is a Charcoal Burner and he lives in the forest." "Will somebody please go and get him?" said Gregory. The people all stared. What was Gregory thinking? Did he really mean to see if Alexander would do? Yes, he did. So Alexander was brought along. First he washed the black marks off his face and hands, then he went to Bishop Gregory and knelt and kissed his ring. Then he stood up and waited to see why the Bishop had sent for him. "Alexander," said Gregory, "do you think that you would be a good Bishop?" "Me, my Lord?" said Alexander; "no, I have no learning. I don't know anything at all."

"Would you like a Rosary made of Rubies?" "Why no, thank you, my Lord," said Alexander, "I have a very nice wooden one; it will last me a lifetime." "Do you like Parties and Pretty Ladies?"

“I don’t know any,” said Alexander. “I’ve never been asked to a Party myself, but a bit of fun now and then is good for everybody.” He wondered why Gregory was asking him all these questions in front of the townspeople.

“Do you think that the Townspeople are a lazy, sinful lot?” asked Gregory.

“Oh no, my Lord, please don’t think that! There’s good in everyone if you look for it.” Alexander had quite forgotten how mean the people were in paying for their Charcoal.

“Have you had your Tea yet?” asked Gregory. “I don’t have it as a rule,” said Alexander, “only when it is raining and I can’t burn my charcoal. I eat when I am hungry, and that does me nicely.” “Are you happy?” asked Gregory. “Have you everything that you want?”

“I’m very happy, my Lord,” said Alexander. “I love my work, I have enough to eat, I have my own little house, and God is good to me. “Would you change your work for something quite different?” asked Gregory. “I would if God wished it,” said Alexander.

Gregory stood up. He walked down the steps of his throne and put his arm round Alexander’s shoulders. “Here is your new Bishop,” he said to the people. At first they all sat with their mouths open. Surely it could not be true! Surely the Bishop was having a joke with them! Then, as they began to think, they saw that Alexander was just the opposite of all the other seven, and they looked at Alexander. And looking at him they loved him. So Alexander the Charcoal Burner became a Bishop, and he was one for years and years.

## *A Time to Laugh (281)*

### *Switch Roles*

A man was sick and tired of going to work every day while his wife stayed home. He wanted her to see what he went through so he prayed: “Dear Lord: I go to work every day and put in 8 hours while my wife merely stays at home. I want her to know what I go through, so please allow her body to switch with mine for a day. Amen.”

God, in His infinite wisdom, granted the man's wish. The next morning, sure enough, the man awoke as a woman. He arose, cooked breakfast for his mate, awakened the kids, set out their school clothes, fed them breakfast, packed their lunches, drove them to school, came home and picked up the dry cleaning, took it to the cleaners and stopped at the bank to make a deposit, went grocery shopping, then drove home to put away the groceries, pay the bills and balance the check book. He cleaned the cat's litter box and bathed the dog.

Then it was already 1:00 p.m. and he hurried to make the beds, do the laundry, vacuum, dust, and sweep and mop the kitchen floor. Ran to the school to pick up the kids and got into an argument with them on the way home, set out cookies and milk and got the kids organized to do their homework, then set up the ironing board and watched TV while he did the ironing. At 4:30 p.m. he began peeling potatoes and washing vegetables for salad, breaded the pork chops and snapped fresh beans for supper. After supper he cleaned the kitchen, ran the dishwasher, folded laundry, bathed the kids, and put them to bed. At 9:00 p.m. he was exhausted and, though his daily chores weren't finished, he went to bed where he was expected to make love which he managed to get through without complaint.

The next morning he awoke and immediately knelt by the bed and said, "Lord, I don't know what I was thinking. I was so wrong to envy my wife's being able to stay home all day. Please, oh please, let us trade back." The Lord, in His infinite wisdom, replied, "My son, I feel you have learned your lesson and I will be happy to change things back to the way they were.

You'll just have to wait nine months, though. You got pregnant last night."

### *Grandma*

A little boy and his brother went to visit their grandma. As the little boy said his night prayers, he was shouting at the top of his voice, “Please, God, send me a bicycle, send me a tool chest,” and all that. His brother said, “Not so loud. For crying out loud, God isn’t deaf.” The little boy replied, “Yes, I know, but grandma is.”