

Saint Sharbel Feast Day

Readings: Rom 8:28-39 and Mt 13:36-43

"From the top of the cedar, from the highest branch I will take a shoot and plant it myself on a very high mountain...this branch will bear fruit and become a noble cedar". (Ezekiel 17:22-26)

The Story of Charbel

On May 8, 1828 in a mountain village of Beka'kafra, the highest village in the near-east, Charbel was born to a poor Maronite family. From childhood his life revealed a calling to "bear fruit as a noble Cedar of Lebanon". Charbel "grew in age and wisdom before God and men". At 23 years old he entered the monastery of Our Lady of Mayfouk (north of Byblos) where he became a novice. After two years of novitiate, in 1853, he was sent to St. Maron monastery where he pronounced the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Charbel was then transferred to the monastery of Kfeifan where he studied philosophy and theology. His ordination to the priesthood took place in 1859, after which he was sent back to St. Maron monastery. His teachers provided him with good education and nurtured within him a deep love for monastic life.

During his 19 years at St. Maron monastery, Charbel performed his priestly ministry and his monastic duties in an edifying way. He totally dedicated himself to Christ with undivided heart to live in silence before Nameless One. In 1875 Charbel was granted permission to live as a hermit nearby the monastery at St. Peter and Paul hermitage. His 23 years of solitary life were lived in a spirit of total abandonment to God.

Charbel's companions in the hermitage were the Sons of God, as encountered in the Scriptures and in the Eucharist, and the Blessed Mother. The Eucharist became the center of his life. He consumed the Bread of his Life and was consumed by it. Though this hermit did not have a place in the world, the world had a great place in his heart. Through prayer and penance he offered himself as a sacrifice so that the world would return to God. It is in this light that one sees the importance of the following Eucharistic prayer in his life: "Father of Truth, behold Your Son a sacrifice pleasing to You, accept this offering of Him who died for me..."

On December 16, 1898 while reciting the "Father of Truth" prayer at the Holy Liturgy Charbel suffered a stroke. He died on Christmas Eve at the age of 70. Through faith this hermit received the Word of God and through love he continued the Ministry of Incarnation.

On the evening of his funeral, his superior wrote: "*Because of what he will do after his death, I need not talk about his behavior*". A few months after his death a bright light was seen surrounding his tomb. The superiors opened it to find his body still intact. Since that day ablood-like liquid flows from his body. Experts and doctors are unable to give medical explanations for the incorruptibility and flexibility. In the years 1950 and 1952 his tomb was opened and his body still had the appearance of a living one.

The spirit of Charbel still lives in many people. His miracles include numerous healings of the body and of the spirit. Thomas Merton, the American Hermit, wrote in his journal: "Charbel lived as a hermit in Lebanon--he was a Maronite. He died. Everyone forgot about him. Fifty years later, his body was discovered incorrupt and in short time he worked over 600 miracles. He is my new companion. My road has taken a new turning. It seems to me that I have been asleep for 9 years---and before that I was dead."

At the closing of the Second Vatican Council, on December 5, 1965 Charbel was beatified by Pope Paul VI who said: "...a hermit of the Lebanese mountain is inscribed in the number of the blessed...a new eminent member of monastic sanctity is enriching, by his example and his intercession, the entire Christian people...May he make us understand, in a world largely fascinated by wealth and comfort, the paramount value of poverty, penance, and asceticism, to liberate the soul in its ascent to God..."

On October 9, 1977 during the World Synod of Bishops, Pope Paul VI canonized Blessed Charbel among the ranks of the Saints.

"The just will flourish like the palm tree, like the Cedar of Lebanon shall he grow." (Psalm 92:13)

Divine Liturgy Schedule

This Weekend, July 21-22: Saint Sharbel Feast Day

Saturday July 21 at 4:00 p.m.:

- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt
- ✠ Bob Saseen by the Saseen Family
- ✠ Special Intention

Sunday, July 22 at 10:30 a.m.:

- ✠ Margaret C. Emmerth by her sister Helen Benline
- ✠ George Thomas by the Cedar Club

Weekdays Masses

Monday July 23: No Mass. Pastor's Day off

Tuesday July 24 at 12:05 p.m.:

- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by his grandchildren: Jeff, Courtney and Patrick
- ✠ Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL) & his special intentions

Wednesday July 25 at 12:05 p.m.:

- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by his grandchildren: Jeff, Courtney & Patrick
- ✠ Sylvia Long and her Family by her last will

Thursday July 26 at 12:05 p.m.:

- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by his grandchildren: Jeff, Courtney & Patrick
- ✠ Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her Will

Friday, July 27: No Mass. Pastor's Day off

Next Weekend, July 28-29: 11th Sunday of Pentecost

Saturday July 28 at 4:00 p.m.:

- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by his wife Sally Sengewalt
- ✠ William Bentz (Birthday) by Millet & Susie Fadoul
- ✠ Special Intention

Sunday, July 29 at 10:30 a.m.:

- ✠ Sam Khoury (Anniversary) by his wife Esther Khoury
- ✠ Bob Saseen by The Cedar Club

Calendar of Parish Events

Mahrajan (Festival)	<i>Saturday, August 11th from Noon to 8:00 p.m.</i> <i>Sunday, August 12th from Noon to 7:00 p.m.</i>
Spaghetti Dinner	<i>Sunday, October 14 (more information in coming bulletins)</i>

Birthdays' Wishes in the coming month:

Upon request of some parishioners who want to wish Happy Birthdays to others, we will put in the bulletin the birthdays within a month period from the date of the bulletin. If you want to remove your name from the birthday list or correct the dates or add other names, please call Msgr Bakhos at 304-233-1688.

- July 22: Grace Klein, Mark Boehm
- July 26: Anna Marie Duymich
- July 30: Dee Shiben, Susan John Burns
- August 2: Rosella C. DeMuth
- August 3: Jim George, Sr.
- August 7: Rita Strawn

August 10: Kory Bratton, Thomasina Geimer
 August 14: Mary Thomas
 August 16: Tara George Musilli
 August 17: Judy Bedway
 August 20: Tricia Committee
 August 22: Kathleen George

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List

(Note: Please call Msgr. Bakhos if you need your name added to our Prayer List. HIPPA regulations)

Kay Roxby (mother of Joe Roxby), Shirley & Jim George, Justin Frenn, Sandra Dusick, John Shibben, Diane Palotay, Jim Thomas (father of Diane Frenn), Carrie Jane (Powell) Parodi, Mike O’Kane (brother-in-law of Nikki Popovich),

<i>Your Church Support Last Week</i>	
\$1,375.00	Sunday Collection
77.00	Candles
810.00	Mahrajan (Festival)
150.00	Parking
5.00	Utilities
146.00	Donation to the poor
\$2,563.00	Total Deposits: <i>May God reward you abundantly for supporting your spiritual home!</i> The Finance Committee: Lou Khourey, Mary Stees, Linda Duffy & Mike Linton

Miracles of Saint Sharbel

<p>The first miracle to support the cause for the beatification of Saint Sharbel. Miracle of Sister Kamarie</p>
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"I am sister Kamarie of the village of Hammana, Lebanon. I joined the Congregation of the Two Holy Hearts in Bickfaya at the age of 16 on the 8th of September, 1929. I had always enjoyed good health, but in the year 1936, I began to suffer from pains in the abdomen and could not bear to eat any food whatsoever. The doctors were unable to offer any help at all. Their treatments brought me no relief and for several months I vomited continuously.

"During the summer of 1936 my condition became much worse. I was treated in Hammana by an Egyptian doctor who specialized in abdominal ailments, Dr. Marajel, who diagnosed an ulcer and advised an x-ray to confirm the diagnosis. Medicine was prescribed but it had no effect. I then went to consult Dr. Elias Ba'aklini, a well-known surgeon. He cleaned out my stomach several times with a stomach pump, but this brought no relief. He finally performed surgery, lasting several hours, which revealed a large ulcer. The liver, bile duct and one kidney were no longer functioning normally.

"The incision was left open to drain and to allow treatment of the ulcer. Once the wound had healed, the nausea returned and my condition became suddenly worse. The doctors met in consultation and a new operation was advised. This was carried out with disastrous results. My intestines and stomach had been reduced to a malfunctioning mass following the reappearance of oversized polyps. It was not possible to remove more than a small part of this without endangering my life. What is more, the bile duct was producing a liquid which was causing perpetual nausea.

"During the following fourteen years, my suffering increased. During the first four, I was able to walk within the confines of the convent but I ate very little and vomited after practically every meal. I became more and more feeble and experienced pain in every part of my body.

"In 1942, when I had been more or less bed-ridden for two years, new symptoms appeared and my right hand became paralyzed. I was able to move only with the aid of a cane. To reach the church only a few yards

away, where I went to attend Mass, I had to be supported by another sister. Moreover, because of my condition, my teeth had begun to fall out. Considered by now unlikely to live much longer, I was given the last rites. It was then that I heard about Father Sharbel and begged him to intercede for me.

“Allow me,” I asked him, “If you wish to cure me, to see you in a dream.” That very night, I did see him in a dream. I was in a small chapel, on my knees, praying. The tapers suddenly glowed brightly and I saw Father Sharbel kneeling. He was blessing me with outstretched arms.

This was a sign from heaven. Immediately afterwards, on Tuesday the 2nd of July, 1950, I went to Saint Sharbel Monastery accompanied by the Mother Superior and two other nuns. I was carried up to the car on a chair. It was an exhausting trip for me. When I arrived, they carried me to the tomb of Saint Sharbel. Many sick people were already there. They lifted up my chair so that I could touch the stone and kiss it. The moment I placed my lips on the stone, I felt as though an electric shock had passed down my spine! They took me out to rest in a small room with a bed. I then went along with the other invalids to pray beside the old coffin that had held Sharbel.

“The next morning, I was once more carried to the oratory, where I heard three Masses beside the tomb. I prayed and received Holy Communion. As I fervently recited the prayer for the sick, my eyes fell on the spot where Father Sharbel's name was engraved on the tomb. I noticed that it was covered with drops of shining sweat! Hardly daring to believe my eyes and wishing to make sure that what I saw was real, I propped one side of myself against my chair on one side and against the wall on the other. There could be no mistake. It was true. I took out my handkerchief and said to myself, “These drops of water are a gift from Father Sharbel.” I raised myself up, wiped them up with the handkerchief and immediately rubbed them onto the sore places on my body.

“As soon as I had done this, without thinking, I got up and walked in front of everyone. The bells began to ring out to celebrate my restoration to health and to glorify God. The stunned crowd followed me out of the oratory, praising God and marveling at my recovery. Doctors gave their testimony.

<p>The second miracle to support the cause for the beatification of Saint Sharbel. Miracle of Alexander Obeid</p>
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Alexander was a blacksmith from Baabdat, Lebanon. He had lost his sight resulting from a blow to the eye. Dr. T. Salhab declared that the pupil had been destroyed. At the French Hospital, Sacred Heart, in Beirut, Dr. Nakarier advised Alexander to go home, lie down and rest for seven days. At the end of this time, a repeat examination was carried out, but there was no improvement. Dr. Salhab imposed an additional two weeks rest upon Obeid, but this brought no change in the condition of his eye. Dr. Salhab and Nakarier then advised surgery to remove the eye in an attempt to prevent any infection from passing to the second one.

Several months passed and Alexander -now handicapped- never ceased to pray and to receive Communion daily.

One night, in a dream, he saw a monk who spoke to him; “Go to the monastery of Saint Sharbel and you will be cured.” Alexander set out immediately and spent the night in prayer and remained near the hermit's tomb. The following day he attended Mass, received Communion, and returned home.

From the very first day he began to feel pain in his injured eye, pain which increased two days later to the point that it became unbearable. To the friends who came to call on him, he repeated with confidence, “I shall get well, God willing, for this pain that I feel is a sign.”

The pain increased again and his family begged him to see a doctor. Alexander refused, saying, “From now on, Sharbel is my only doctor,” and he began to cry like a child.

It was not until about four o'clock in the morning that he finally went to sleep. During his slumber, he felt as though he were being carried to the door of the Monastery of Saint Sharbel, and was given the task of unloading a truck. It seemed to him that the driver plunged an iron bar into his eye and then pulled the organ out and threw it onto the ground. He cried out in terrible pain, “Oh, you have pulled out my eye.” His wife woke up and asked, “Why are you crying out like that?”

“It's nothing,” he continued, “cover me up, I feel so cold!”

He fell asleep again and this time he dreamt he was standing in front of the very same monastery. A monk appeared and asked what was troubling him. “My eye is so sore,” Alexander replied.

“Have you been here a long time?” inquired the monk. “Since morning,” answered Alexander. “Why didn’t you notify us? We would have come earlier to cure you,” and with these words the monk withdrew, only to return a few minutes later. Then he said, “I am going to put this powder in your eye. It will be extremely painful and your eye will swell. Don’t be afraid, for it is going to cure you.” He dusted Alexander’s eye with the powder and disappeared. Alexander then saw Father Sharbel’s name inscribed in the asphalt near the church. He gave forth a great cry and awoke. He asked his wife if his eye was swollen. “But it is,” she marveled, “very much so!”

It was at this moment that an admirable scene took place. Joyfully, Alexander said to his wife, “Bring me the picture of Father Sharbel.” He covered his healthy eye with a handkerchief and gazing at the image with his damaged one, made the sign of the cross and cried out, “I can see it, I am cured!”

The neighbors came running. With one impassioned voice, they praised God and offered up thanks for His benevolence. Dr. Salhab was summoned and could only verify the recovery. He periodically examined Alexander on subsequent occasions and consulted other specialists. The same gentlemen took up the study of this phenomenon and all unanimously declared: “Alexander, who lost the use of one eye thirteen years ago, now sees normally with both eyes. The deteriorated iris, which no longer permitted light to pass through, is now perfectly healthy.”

A canonical inquiry was convened which verified the miracle. The entire village of Baabdat testified that Alexander, blacksmith by trade, had been blind in one eye, and that he had recovered the use of his blind eye by the intercession of Father Sharbel.

A Time to Laugh (368)

Mozart Beyond the Grave

When Mozart passed away, he was buried in a churchyard. A couple days later, the town drunk was walking through the cemetery and heard some strange noise coming from the area where Mozart was buried.

Terrified, the drunk ran and got the priest to come and listen to it.

The priest bent close to the grave and heard some faint, unrecognizable music coming from the grave.

Frightened, the priest ran and got the town magistrate.

When the magistrate arrived, he bent his ear to the grave, listened for a moment, and said, "Ah, yes, that's Mozart's Ninth Symphony, being played backwards."

He listened a while longer, and said, "There's the Eighth Symphony, and it's backwards, too. Most puzzling."

So the magistrate kept listening; "There's the Seventh... the Sixth... the Fifth..."

Suddenly the realization of what was happening dawned on the magistrate; he stood up and announced to the crowd that had gathered in the cemetery, "My fellow citizens, there's nothing to worry about. It's just Mozart decomposing."

KFC & the Pope

After watching sales falling off for three straight months at Kentucky Fried Chicken, the Colonel calls up the Pope and asks for a favor. The Colonel asks, “I need you to change the daily prayer from ‘Give us this day our daily bread’ to ‘Give us this day our daily chicken.’ I will donate 10 million dollars to the Vatican.” The Pope replies, “I am sorry. That is the Lord’s prayer and I cannot change the words.” After another month of very flat sales the Colonel panics and calls again, “Listen your Excellency, I really need your help. I’ll donate 50 million dollars to the Vatican if you change the words of the daily prayer to ‘give us this day our daily chicken. Please?”

And the Pope responds, “It is very tempting Colonel. The church could do a lot of good with that much money. It would help us to support many charities. But, again, I must decline. It is the Lord’s Prayer and I cannot change the words.”

The disappointed Colonel hangs up only to call the Pope back two months later. The Colonel is desperate. “This is my final offer, your Excellency. If you change the words of the daily prayer to ‘give us this day our daily chicken’ I will donate \$100 million to the Vatican. So the next day, the Pope calls together his bishops and says, “I have some good news and I have some bad news. The good news is that Colonel Sanders is going to donate \$100 million to the Vatican. And the bad news is we lost the Wonder Bread account.”