

**St. Sharbel**  
**Pray for us!**

# Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church Las Vegas

## Sunday of the Birth of John the Baptizer

**December 2021**

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**Pastor: Fr. Nadim Abou Zeid**

**Our Services HOLY MASSES**

**DAILY:** Monday–Friday 8:00 AM Eng,

**SATURDAY VIGIL:**

**4:30 PM English**

**SUNDAY: 9:30 AM English**

**& 11:30 AM Arabic/Aramaic/English**

**1st Sunday : 4:30 PM**

Rosario y la Misa en Español

**2nd Sunday: 4:30 PM**

Tagalog Mass

**1st SUNDAY /YOUTH MASS**

9:30 AM & 11:30 AM



### MASS SCHEDULE

#### **Christmas Eve**

*(Friday) 12/24/2021*

**8 AM** Not Christmas Obligation

**4:30 PM** (English)

**11 PM** (Arabic & English)

#### **Christmas Day**

*(Saturday) 12/25/2021*

**9:30 AM** (English)

**11:30 AM** (Arabic & English)

**4:30 PM** (English)

**10325 RANCHO DESTINO RD,**

**LAS VEGAS NV 89183**

**PHONE: 702-616-6902**

**www.stsharbellasvegas.org**







## SUNDAY OF THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER

Reading: Galatians 4:21-5:1

Gospel: Luke 1:57-66

*“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways.” (Luke 1:76)*

The Church does not usually celebrate the earthly birthdays of the saints, but rather their birthdays in heaven. We celebrate John the Baptizer's earthly birth, because this serves as an announcement that the birth of Christ is imminent.

John's birth was the cause of much rejoicing for his family and his people. He would be great in the sight of God. He would be the forerunner of the Savior. He would make the doubtful see the wisdom of the just and in this ways prepare them for the teachings of the Lord. John is the bearer of the lamp illuminating the path which Christ would take.

What does the birth of John teach us? It gives us a message that when a child is born, it comes to prepare the way of God, and that each of us has a mission in this life to continue the work of God.

*Rev. Fr. Nadim Abou Zeid*



### **LET US PRAY:**

O God, come and touch our lips:  
to praise and glorify Your name.

We praise and thank You God for all the gifts You  
have given us,

the grace of life, children, good health and  
especially the things that we take for granted.

Give us strength to carry on  
and continue Your work. Amen.

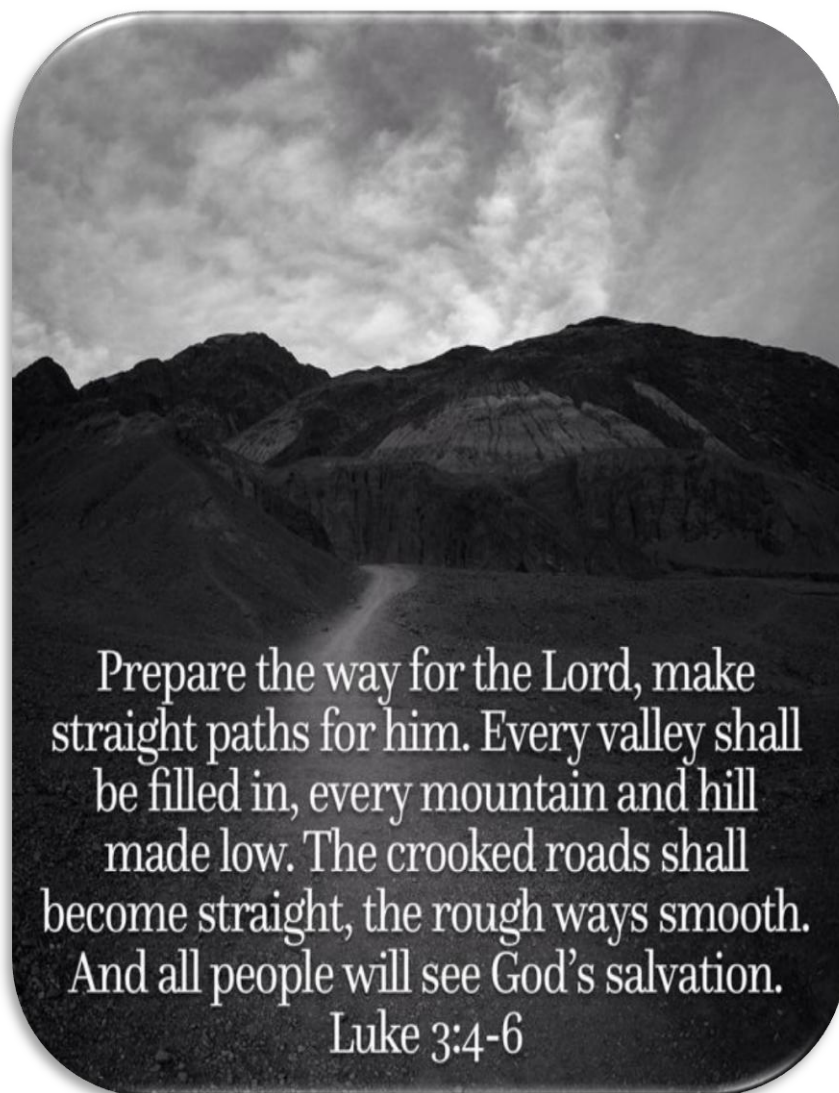
## **A Time to Prepare the Way for the Lord**

We have begun the good work of living the spirit of Advent with trust, hope, and love. Today we are reminded by St. Paul to persevere in this praiseworthy undertaking. John the Baptist is our trusted guide in the all-important work of our spiritual renewal in preparation for the commemoration of Christ's birth.

To prepare the way for the Lord is to make straight the winding roads of our moral uncertainties and inconsistencies; to fill up the ravines of our past shortcomings and failings; and to level down the peaks of our pride and arrogance. And as we are engaged in this work of "spiritual landscaping,"

our love for God and neighbor should increase ever more, that we may be found pure and blameless at the coming of our Lord.

On December 8 we will conclude the "*Year of St. Joseph*." As we thank the Lord for the many blessings He has granted us during this observance, let us also renew our commitment to practice the virtues that characterized this great Saint, especially his humility, purity, and readiness to do God's will.



Prepare the way for the Lord, make  
straight paths for him. Every valley shall  
be filled in, every mountain and hill  
made low. The crooked roads shall  
become straight, the rough ways smooth.  
And all people will see God's salvation.  
Luke 3:4-6



## OUR HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS TO BARTHOLOMEW: WORKING TOGETHER MAKES OUR COMMUNION VISIBLE

Pope Francis expresses his spiritual closeness to Patriarch Bartholomew in a letter for the feast of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, celebrated on 30 November, the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle. Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, led the Holy See delegation to Istanbul for the occasion.

The president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Kurt Koch, led the delegation of the Holy See to Istanbul for the feast of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, celebrated on 30 November, the liturgical feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle.

The Cardinal was accompanied by Bishops Brian Farrell and Andrea Palmieri, Secretary and Undersecretary of the Dicastery. In Istanbul, the delegation was joined by Msgr. Walter Erbi, Chargé d'affaires at the Apostolic Nunciature in Turkey.

A Tuesday statement from the Holy See Press Office said that the delegation took part in the solemn Divine Liturgy presided over by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in the Patriarchal Church of Saint George at Phanar.

Cardinal Koch also presented the Ecumenical Patriarch an autographed message from Pope Francis, which he publicly read at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

### **The Pope's message**

In the message, Pope Francis expressed his closeness to the Ecumenical Patriarch on the occasion of the feast of Apostle Andrew, the "first-called and brother of the Apostle Peter, and patron saint of the Church of Constantinople and the Ecumenical Patriarchate."

The Holy Father also highlighted the fraternal friendship and the "ancient and profound bond of faith and charity between the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople" and assured them of his spiritual closeness through the delegation he sent to convey his "good wishes for joy and peace" to the bishops, clergy, monks and lay faithful gathered for the Divine Liturgy.

### **Working together despite differences**

Pope Francis recalled that during Patriarch Bartholomew's recent visit to Rome, they were able to share their concerns regarding the present and future of our world and to express their shared commitment to addressing issues of crucial significance to the human family, including the care of creation, the education of future generations, interreligious dialogue and the pursuit of peace.

In this way, the Pope noted, "we as Pastors, together with our Churches, strengthen the profound bond that already unites us, since our common responsibility in the face of current challenges flows from our shared faith in God" who "harmonizes differences without abolishing them".



### *Pope Francis and Bartholomew I, Patriarch of Constantinople*

He urged that united in this faith, we should "seek with determination to make visible our communion" in spite of theological and ecclesiological questions that may remain, and encouraged Catholics and Orthodox to increasingly work together "in those areas in which it is not only possible, but indeed imperative that we do so."

### **Full unity, a gift from God**

The Pope noted that while we continue along the path towards full communion between the Churches, "we are sustained by the intercession of the holy brothers Peter and Andrew, our Patron saints".

He said that "the full unity for which we yearn is, of course, a gift of God, through the grace of the Holy Spirit," and prayed that Our Lord may help us to be ready through prayer, interior conversion and openness to seeking and offering pardon.

Concluding his message, the Pope reiterated his heartfelt sentiments and good wishes for the feast of Saint Andrew.



## MARONITES IN CYPRUS HOPE POPE CAN HELP SAVE THEIR CULTURE

As day breaks over a tiny hamlet in north-west Cyprus, some 20 people in an ancient Church observe a morning liturgy in an even more ancient language. For centuries, this small community of Maronites have retained a distinct identity rooted in their Catholic faith.

Ancestors of Christians who settled in Cyprus after fleeing what is now Lebanon and Syria in waves from the 8th century onwards, many were forced to move again when the island split in two almost half a century ago.

Some fear that unless more of them are allowed back to their homes, their community and its language will die out; they are hoping a visit this week by Pope Francis will help their cause.

"What we would want from the Holy See is for it to extend a hand ... to change this situation so the coming generation retains its identity, as Maronites," Father Iosif Skender, a Maronite priest, said.

"If we lose our villages, we lose our identity."

One of the main events of the pope's visit to Cyprus will be held at the Maronite cathedral in Nicosia. The Vatican never discloses beforehand what he will say, and Turkish Cypriot authorities were not immediately available for comment.

The hamlet, Kormakitis, is the largest of four communities dispersed after a Turkish invasion triggered by a brief, Greek-inspired coup divided Cyprus in 1974 among its mainly Orthodox Greek Cypriots and its Sunni Muslim Turkish Cypriots.

Less than 200 of the hamlet's 2,000 strong community remained after the split, although a Turkish Cypriot relaxation on crossings in 2003, and permission in 2010 for Maronites to resettle there, has now boosted the population to about 250.

Families from the other three villages form part of a small displaced Maronite minority in the south, which is run by an internationally-recognised Greek Cypriot government.

The melodic service at the Church of St. George in Kormakitis takes place in Greek, Arabic and Syriac-Aramaic, the ancient tongue spoken by Jesus and passed on down by their forefathers.

"There is the beauty of these three languages, but essentially it's Aramaic which is the basis of the tradition of Maronites," Skender said.

The Maronite Church is headquartered in Lebanon, where most of its members still reside, but beyond the doors of the church in Cyprus, another hybrid Aramaic has evolved, spoken by only about 800-900 Cypriot Maronites.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic (CMA), also known as "Sanna" was passed down phonetically from generation to generation and went unwritten for centuries until an alphabet was established several years ago.

The community now has a textbook for language classes but fears difficulties in learning it in isolation.

"I'm the last generation that speaks it," said Antonis Skoullos, whose family is from Kormakitis. "In 50 years this language will only be heard on YouTube."

"It's a heritage ... it's not a line on your CV".

In the local coffee shop at Kormakitis, men chat animatedly among themselves in Sanna, also known as "Arabika", politely switching seamlessly to Greek for strangers.

The language is unique to Kormakitis and the forced separation of the community, along with assimilation and a focus by Cypriot authorities in the 1960s on teaching Maronites Greek, has eroded its use.

"Our children know Arabika but their children don't, so we are forced to switch to Greek, and that's how our language is gradually being eroded," said Iosifis Skordi. His wife Chrystalla, 93, nodded her head vigorously in agreement.

Skordi, who still drives a pickup at 92, said he would do his utmost to see the Pope during his Dec. 2-4 visit. "He is second to God," he said.



**SAINT N'IMTALLAH – GRACE OF GOD (1808–1858)****SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME IN ADORATION BEFORE THE HOLY EUCHARIST**

Yousef (Joseph) Kasaab was born at Hardine – Batroun in 1808. In 1828 at the age of twenty, he left and entered the religious life at the Monastery of St. Anthony in Qozhaya where he pronounced his religious vows on 14 November 1830. In 1833, he was ordained to the priesthood and on 25 December, was appointed spiritual director of the young novices and students of his order. Among his pupils from 1853 until 1858 was Fr. Sharbel Makhlouf who was canonized a saint in 1977. After his ordination, N'imtallah was appointed three times as assistant to the Superior of his order. (1845-1848), (1850-1853), (1856-1858). This holy man performed many miracles during his life-time and was revered as a “saint” both before and after his death on 14 December 1858. Many astonishing miracles and cures were obtained through the intercession of St. N'imtallah, especially raising a child from the dead. He was canonized on 16 May 2004.


**FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION – DECEMBER 8**

Dec. 8 is the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrated in the Roman Catholic and related Christian churches. The Immaculate Conception of Mary is a belief of the Roman Catholic Church, expressing the conviction that the Virgin Mary was free from original sin and filled with sanctifying grace from the moment of her conception in her mother's womb.

People prepare themselves for this day by novenas (an act of devotion where a prayer is said for nine days) and nocturnal vigils. Special prayers and hymns are offered to the Virgin Mary. One of the most popular liturgical prayers said is *Tota pulchra es*. Inspired by words of praise from the book of Judith and Song of Solomon, the prayer glorifies the Virgin Mary's holiness and beauty:

*You are all beautiful, Mary. and the original stain [of sin] is not in you. Your clothing is white as snow, and your face is like the sun.*

*You are all beautiful, Mary.  
and the original stain [of sin] is not in you.  
You are the glory of Jerusalem, you are the joy of Israel,  
you give honor to our people.  
You are all beautiful, Mary.*

The tradition of having a Feast Day for the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary was widespread both in the Eastern Orthodox and Western Roman Catholic churches since the 7th century. However, it was only in 1854 that Pope Pius IX proclaimed: "the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by the Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin" (*Ineffabilis Deus*).

Since then, the Feast of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary was observed on December 8 and is considered to be a Holy Day of Obligation (days where the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass).

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been famously depicted in paintings for centuries. Typically, a young woman, representing the spirit of Mary, is depicted in a heavenly realm bowing her head to God with the moon underneath her feet and a halo of 12 stars surrounding her head.





## Feast of Guadalupe

*Sunday Dec. 12*  
*Rosary @*  
*5:20 pm*

*Mass @ 6 pm*  
*Followed by a*  
*Fiesta*



## Simbang Gabi Christmas Novena Schedule



Dec. 15, 2021 Wed. 6:00 PM Fr. Nadim Celebrant;  
Dec. 16, 2021 Thur. 6:00 PM Fr. Ding Salditos, Celebrant  
Dec. 17, 2021 Fri. 6:00 PM Fr. Ding Salditos, Celebrant  
Dec. 18, 2021 Sat. 4:30 PM Fr. Nick celebrant & mass  
Dec. 19, 2021 Sun. 5:00 PM Fr. Gus Opalalic Celebrant  
Dec. 20, 2021 Mon. 6:00 PM Fr. Ding Salditos, Celebrant  
Dec. 21, 2021 Tue. 6:00 PM Fr. Ding Salditos, Celebrant  
Dec. 22, 2021 Wed. 6:00 PM Fr. Ding Salditos, Celebrant  
Dec. 23, 2021 Thur. 6:00 PM Fr. Nadim, Celebrant

The National MYO presents

# behold

an evening of reflection

Sunday December 5, 2021  
8PM EST, 7PM CST, 5PM PST

Live on Instagram  
@maroniteyouth

## SET FREE

2022 Eparchy of OLOL MYO Regional Retreats

Southwest  
January 28-30  
Running Springs, CA

Register at [www.maroniteyouth.org](http://www.maroniteyouth.org)



## FESTIVAL NEWS

We are happy to announce that our Annual Festival in October made **\$85,000 net profit**. Congratulation and THANK YOU to all of you that volunteered or donated to our cause. We did it ! We will see next year on October 7, 8 & 9, 2022  
Website: [Lebaneseamericanfestival.com](http://Lebaneseamericanfestival.com)



## Marriage Banns

We announce the upcoming marriages:

- ❖ Ethan Patrick Budner of Las Vegas, NV to be married to Alexis Lea Harris of Las Vegas, NV on February 26, 2022
- ❖ Khaled Awwad of Roseville, MI to be married to Michelle Nicholas Massis of Las Vegas, NV on April 23, 2022



**SAINT SHARBEL MIRACLE:****SHE CAME AND PRAYED ASKING ST. SHARBEL TO CURE HER ST. JOSEPH MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

January 18, 2016 was not just your ordinary day in Phoenix, Arizona. It is a day that will always be remembered as the day that Dafne Gutierrez, a young blind Hispanic woman and mother of four children got her vision restored to normal through the intercession of St. Sharbel.

Faith and confession is what Dafne Gutierrez continues to repeat time and time again when asked about her healing. "I was desperate when I walked into St. Joseph Maronite Catholic Church." Dafne continues, "I felt like God never heard me before, but this time was different, just different." Mrs. Gutierrez is not a member of the Maronite Rite and never heard of St. Sharbel before but she came with faith and prayed in front of the Relics of St. Sharbel, went to Confession and was blessed with the Holy oil by Fr. Wissam Akiki, the Pastor of St. Joseph Maronite Church. Within four days, her vision was restored to normal with a completely normal eye examination.

Mrs. Gutierrez was diagnosed with Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension in 2013. Despite aggressive medical and surgical treatment, her vision progressively declined leaving her completely blind in both eyes. Surgical interventions including ventriculo-peritoneal shunts as well as lumbo-peritoneal shunts were performed in attempt to lower the intracranial pressure in the brain and thus decrease damage to the optic nerve. Unfortunately, it did not work. "After trying every medication, I had two surgeries to decrease the pressure in my brain that failed and now there is nothing else to do. They want to put me in a nursing home because they said I can't take care of myself or my children." Mrs. Gutierrez immediately notified Fr. Wissam, as she was convinced that her healing occurred through the intercession of St. Sharbel in his church. At that point, Fr. Wissam consulted a group of physicians to investigate this occurrence. An extensive review of Mrs. Gutierrez's medical records took place as well as repeat examinations. According to Dr. Anne Borik, a board certified Internal Medicine physician, "This is something we just don't see. A long standing damaged optic nerve causing blindness does not just all of a sudden look normal in two days with complete restoration of vision." According to the medical committee "We have no medical explanation and therefore believe this to be a miraculous healing through the intercession of St. Sharbel."

Fr. Wissam Akiki, Pastor of St. Joseph Maronite Catholic Church has not stopped hearing confessions and ministering to those in search of healing through the intercession of St. Sharbel. According to Fr. Wissam, "In the midst of hundreds of people, I remember saying to Dafne's children, "Your mom will be able to see you again. Just have faith!"

It has been over one month since Dafne Gutierrez was healed through the intercession of St. Sharbel and her vision is still perfect! As a gesture of Thanksgiving to God, Divine Liturgy and Blessing with the Holy oil of St. Sharbel took place on February 18, 2016 with his Excellency Bishop Zaidan in Phoenix, Arizona. Bishop Zaidan said, "We look at the case of Mrs. Dafne Gutierrez and we thank God for the gift of healing she received at the occasion of the visit of the Relics of St. Sharbel, the Maronite Saint from Lebanon who spent 23 years of his life in a hermitage. During the visit of the Relics of St. Sharbel from January 15-17, 2016 at St. Joseph, she came and prayed asking St. Sharbel to cure her."



***Dafne &  
Fr. Wissam***

He continues, "St. Sharbel is well known for his intercessory prayer on behalf of many people afflicted with various diseases. So many cases of healing have been attributed to the intercession of St. Sharbel. What is evident at this time is that Mrs. Gutierrez has regained her sight. We raise a prayer of thanksgiving to our Loving and Merciful God for His Providence and Graces. May this healing of the sight of Dafne be an inspiration for all of us to seek the spiritual sight, in order to recognize the will of God in our lives and to act accordingly. Let us all together follow the example of St. Sharbel in living our life as a pleasing offering to the Almighty God!"

On the 18th of every month, Divine Liturgy and Blessing with Holy Oil of St. Sharbel will take place at 7pm at St. Joseph Maronite Catholic Church in Phoenix, Arizona. In addition, the first Tuesday of every month will be dedicated to Prayer and Reflection of the Chaplet of St. Sharbel and Holy Rosary at 7pm. All are welcome!



***Bishop Zaidan & Dafne***

# The Joy of Giving



## Year-End Gift to Your Parish!

Please remember your spiritual home of St. Sharbel at the end of this year. Please, consider giving a year-end tax-deductible gift to your parish of St. Sharbel.

We all need to give and the Church is one of the best places to give an offering. Check with your accountant to find out what tax-deductible gift you can give before December 31<sup>st</sup>. Please, note that we also accept stock donations. For more details, please contact our parish office 702-616-6902



### **AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT FOR AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDS (Auto pay)**

St. Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church,  
10325 Rancho Destino Rd Las Vegas, NV 89183

**You are highly encouraged to consider using this program to give to your Church. Please note that this transaction is free of charge and confidential**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bank:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ABA Bank Routing #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Account #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount:** \_\_\_\_\_



The necessary amount for payment of pledge due in respect of the above mentioned agreement on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of each month. All such withdrawals from my account by you shall be treated as though they have been signed by me personally. I understand that the withdrawals hereby authorized will be processed by computer through a system known as the ACH (Automatic Clearing House), and I also understand that details of each withdrawal will be printed on my bank statement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**





# Filipino News



## PINOY BISHOP A STEP CLOSER TO SAINTHOOD

The Vatican has affirmed the heroic virtues of the late Filipino archbishop Teofilo Camomot, bringing him a step closer to sainthood, an official of the Archdiocese of Cebu said yesterday.

Fr. Mhar Balili, vice postulator for Camomot's cause, said all nine members of the Vatican's theological commission of the congregation for the causes of saints unanimously approved the "positio" or the collection of accounts that would prove Camomot's heroic virtues and fame of sanctity when he was serving the archdiocese.

"With this favorable outcome, the cause of beatification and Canonization of Bishop Camomot will be forwarded for further examination to the Commission of Bishops and Cardinals of the congregation," Balili said in a statement.

After the examination, Camomot's "positio" will be forwarded to Pope Francis before the late archbishop will be declared "venerable," a title given to a deceased individual who is recognized formally by the pope as having lived heroic virtues. Once Camomot is declared venerable, at least one miracle has to be attributed to him before he can be declared "blessed" through a beatification process. A second miracle is needed before Camomot will be declared a saint through a canonization ritual led by Pope Francis.

Camomot was born in Barangay Cogon, Carcar town in Cebu on March 3, 1914.

He was appointed parish priest of the Sta. Teresa Parish in Talisay Cebu in 1943, and Titular Bishop of Clisma and auxiliary bishop of Jaro, Iloilo on March 26, 1955.

Camomot was known for his simplicity and for living a simple life when he was serving the Catholic Church.

He died in a road accident in San Fernando, Cebu on Sept. 27, 1988, at the age of 74 years.



His strength is in the Lord: Archbishop Camomot in his twilight years, still officiating in one of his many functions as parish priest of St. Catherine of Alexandria in Carcar City. Taken in 1986 when he was 72 years old.



*Fr. Mhar Balili, vice postulator for Camomot's cause, said all nine members of the Vatican's theological commission of the congregation for the causes of saints unanimously approved the "positio" or the collection of accounts that would prove Camomot's heroic virtues and fame of sanctity when he was serving the archdiocese.*



**NUESTRO NOTICIAS DE LA COMUNIDAD ESPAÑOLA**

El Grupo Guadalupano de la Iglesia de San Charbel

Te invita a que asistas a la Misa y El Rosario que se celebran el primer domingo cada mes comenzado,

**DIA: Domingo 12 de Diciembre del 2021**

**HORA: Rosario 6pm Misa**

**DONDE: Iglesia Catolica de San Charbel  
10325 Rancho Destino Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89183**

Despues de la Misa te invitamos a que nos acompañes a una pequeña recepcion donde compartiremos: café, postres, y bocadillos con todos los asistentes.

Si tienes alguna duda communicate con:  
Oficina de la Iglesia 702-616-6902



## **MILAGRO DE SAN CHARBEL EN VENEZUELA**

La fe se mueve por senderos más allá de nuestro propio entendimiento y el amor siempre es el motor de las más grandes historias. Sólo Dios conoce sus caminos.

El joven Hanna Jabbour tiene sólo 16 años, pero la vida le preparó una historia tortuosa y a su vez maravillosa. Afectado por una infección en la sangre, según pudimos recoger de su relato con motivo de la Misa a San Marón el pasado 12/02/2012 en el Monasterio San Charbel; viajó desde Margarita (Estado Nueva Esparta), ciudad en la que reside, hasta Caracas en busca de un tratamiento médico que mejorara su situación. El neoespartano aquejaba fuertes dolores que no lo dejaban ni mantenerse en pie, sus días eran un suplicio. Los doctores detectaron que la situación era peor de lo que esperaban y diagnosticaron que un 95% de sus células eran dañinas (Presuntamente leucemia) y que las expectativas no eran para nada alentadoras. Pero Hanna y su familia, aferrados a su fe y a la profunda devoción católica por San Charbel, santo patrono del Líbano, de donde es la familia Jabbour; pedían con vehemencia en favor de su recuperación.

"Los doctores me dijeron que era una enfermedad muy grave (...) Yo jamás perdí la fe y siempre seguía rezándole a San Charbel. Una noche mi papá me trajo dos fotos de él (San Charbel) y las puse debajo de mi almohada (...) ese día me habían hecho una (prueba en la) médula y me habían sacado líquido y a los dos días me dijeron que tenía un 95% de células malas (...) le recé a San Charbel, mi papá me puso las fotos debajo de la almohada y a la mañana siguiente no tenía nada en el cuerpo" dijo mientras hacía una pausa visiblemente conmovido: "Cuando me levanté tenía la foto bajo mi espalda llena de sangre... sola". Una semana después los exámenes revelaron que la infección había desaparecido.

Todo indica que es un milagro que debemos atribuir al santo libanés, que ya en otras tantas latitudes del planeta ha intercedido por numerosas personas.

Mientras tanto, en Venezuela Hanna Jabbour es testimonio viviente de la grandeza de Dios y una fiel muestra de que mientras no perdamos la fe, las esperanzas seguirán intactas.





## YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS:

“STOP CHECKING YOUR PHONE DURING MASS”: A NOTE TO MYSELF

I love God and I also love football. You might be able to see why Sundays are, in my opinion, the absolute best day of the week. Being able to consume the body and blood of Christ is the best thing you can do any day, but also being able to watch one of the most entertaining sports in the world on the same day is a nice touch to the day. During one particular Sunday, my favorite team was playing while I was at Mass. I was trying my hardest to pay attention to the readings and immerse myself in the Mass but I cracked. **I decided to take a look at my phone before the homily started.** While it took nothing more than a few seconds for me to open my phone, look at the score, and then turn my phone off, my focus for the rest of the Mass was completely gone. **While I was physically in the Mass, my mind was somewhere completely different.** A glance at your phone during Mass may seem harmless enough, but what it does to your attention and connection to the Eucharist is immeasurable.

## The Respect of Attention

Our attention is sacred. You probably haven't thought of it as such but undivided attention to one particular subject is a true gift. While it may be great to receive, there are some scenarios where attention is practically expected.

Imagine going to grab dinner with a great friend that you love dearly. You don't get to see this friend as often as you like, so you cherish the time that you do have with them. Right after you order your food and you're about to see how they are doing, their attention has now vanished for an app on their phone. Rude, right? That's what we're doing when we pull out our phone during the Mass.

**When we choose to look at our phone during Mass, we're putting our God second, and whatever is on our phone is first.** Are we really going to pull ourselves away from a celebration as beautiful as the Mass for pixels on a screen? It doesn't matter what text, tweet, snapchat, or sports update it is; There is no notification on your phone that is more important than what is happening in the Mass.

When our attention and focus leave whatever we're focused on, we also lose some of its importance to us. To go back to the dinner analogy, if someone was to look at their phone during that time, than a little bit of time that should've been between two people is now gone. No matter what happens at that dinner, possible experiences and memories are now gone. The dinner has, more than likely, become less of an experience.

**Similarly, when we choose to look at a screen during Mass, our attention is diminished and we might get less out of the Mass.** Mass is a celebration but when we look at our phone, we might not get the full message of what that Mass has to offer. In order to get the full effect of the Eucharist, we need to give full attention to everything in the Mass.

## Noise-Cancelling

The question in front of us now is “How do we receive the most we can during Mass?” There are two aspects that are important if you want to be paying full attention to the Mass. The first aspect is having no distractions during the Mass itself. My parish back home (they're the coolest) always reminded the congregation before mass to “turn your phone to prayer mode”. The way that I view that statement is that your phone should be on airplane mode or simply turned off. The other aspect of getting better at focusing during the Mass actually takes place outside the Mass itself. I've found that if I go into Mass having read the readings for that day, it becomes much more easier to focus. Instead of encountering a reading for the first time, I can now see how the readings connect with each other or get something out of a particular phrase that I didn't the first time. By taking some time before Sunday and doing some “homework” before Mass, we can be much more attentive to the service and possibly attain more out of it than we could before.

Similarly, using a guide for the readings before a Sunday will immensely help you take in the word of God. For my fellow podcast aficionados, check out [Mark Hart's](#) weekly Sunday reading reflection. Not only are they pretty short (about 7 minutes per episode), but they give some extra context to the readings. If you're feeling extra awesome, then I cannot recommend Ascend enough. It's an incredibly deep guide to the weekly readings that is great to meditate on before you go to Mass.

## BRB Gotta See God

Unplugging from society is hard no matter what the situation is. Our attention is important is sacred, so let's make sure that our God has all of it when we do see Him.

Is it hard for me to tune out of football for a few hours on Sunday? Yes, but that sacrifice is necessary for me to fully enter the Mass. Our phones might be cool but when the Eucharist is about to be right in front of us, whatever is on our phone pales in comparison to what is about to be on that altar.





## HOLY MASS INTENTIONS

### WEEKEND

**Saturday 4:30pm Dec 4**

\*Antonio Edles Sr.

\*Roberto Mendoza

+Hernando Hernando

**Sunday 9:30 am Dec 5**

+Hernando Hernando

**Sunday 11:30 am**

+ Sabet Halaseh (40 days)



*Healing of the Sick*

**DAILY 8AM**

**MONDAY Dec 6**

+Hernando Hernando

**TUESDAY Dec 7**

+Hernando Hernando

**WEDNESDAY Dec 8**

Thanksgiving to Mary:  
The Immaculate Conception

\*Keilana & Donnie Fisher

+Hernando Hernando

**THURSDAY Dec 9**

+Winston Posados

+Hernando Hernando

**FRIDAY Dec 10**

+Gloria Javier



## COMMUNITY LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS



**1. 2<sup>nd</sup> COLLECTION** will be held this weekend, December 4 & 5 for Maronite Patriarchal Charities

**2. TUESDAY:** 6:00 P.M. Rosary in the Chapel followed by Anointing of the sick

**3. IMMACULATE CONCEPTION:** is a Holy day of Obligation – December 8<sup>th</sup>  
Mass 8:00 AM only.

**4. GOD OUR FATHER DEVOTION:** This Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> after the 9:30 Mass in the Chapel. All are welcome.

**5. MONTHLY SPANISH MASS** has been moved to Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM & Rosary at 4:30 PM.

**6. PARENTS:** We encourage families to purchase our First Holy Communion Maronite Catechism for Pre-K and First Grade level so that the students are prepared for Catechism class to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist.  
Book price - \$20.