

January 4, 2009
Bulletin # 1

Our Lady of Lebanon Church

(Maronite Catholic Rite)

Faith † Family † Friends

2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

Rectory: (304) 233-1688 • Fax: (304) 233-4714

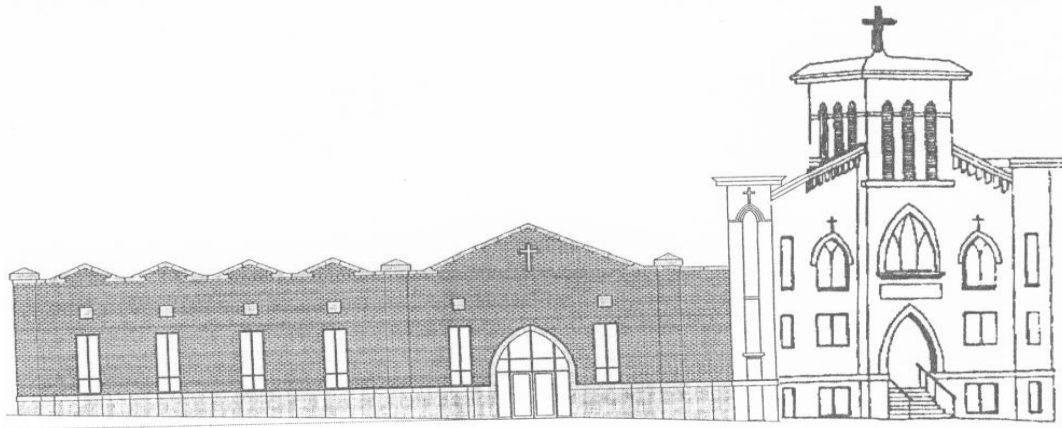
E-Mail: ololwv@Comcast.net • Web Site: www.ololwv.com

Rev. Bakhos Chidiac (Pastor)

Evelyn Ghaphery (Organist)

Charlotte Khourey & Thomasina Geimer (Secretaries)

Christmas Season ***Epiphany***



Schedule of Divine Liturgies

- ***Weekend Masses:** Saturday evening at 4:00 p.m.
Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. [Rosary & Litany start at 10:10 a.m.]
- ***Weekday Masses:** **At Noon.** Please refer to the Mass schedule on page 3 of this bulletin for Mass times and changes due to special events. Thank you for your cooperation.
- ***Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament:** Every 1st Saturday of the month at 3:30 p.m. & 1st Sunday after Communion
- ***Miraculous Medal Novena:** Every 2nd Sunday of the month at 10:00 a.m.
- ***Reconciliation:** Saturday: 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. or any other time by appointment
- ***Baptism:** Kindly phone the Pastor as soon as the baby is born. Godparents must be Catholics.
- ***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 any time at (304) 233-1688
- ***Parish Council:** Lou Khourey 277-3230, Linda Duffy 242-6853, Tom George 336-7142, P.J. Lenz 242-5606 and Carol Dougherty (740) 782-0146
- ***Choir Members:** Rita Thomas Strawn, Shirley George, Allison Duffy, George Thomas, Ted Olinski, Earl Duffy, Lou Khourey, Robert Vawter, Jody & Abbie Seabright, Tracey Dierkes
- ***Altar Boys:** Louie Khourey & Dalton Haas
- ***Cedar Club:** Linda Duffy, President 242-6853
- ***Women's Society:** Sandra Dusick, President 232-7395



- *Remember the Church in your Last Will – Her prayers will accompany you to heaven
- *Please support Our Lady of Lebanon Church by patronizing our Advertisers
- *If you support the Church and need a Bulletin mailed to you, please call the Rectory
- ***Bulletin Announcements:** Submit all Bulletin Information to Fr. Bakhos. Deadline: Every Tuesday by Noon
- ***New Parishioners:** We welcome you with great joy and invite you to be officially listed as one of our parishioners
- ***Parking:** Saturday & Sunday—all spaces for parishioners; Monday through Friday—park ONLY in the 3 ALLEY spaces

Gospel Reflection: Epiphany

Readings: Tit 2:11-3-7 & Lk 3:15-22

“*Shout for joy, O daughter Zion!*” the prophet Zephaniah declares in this season of joyful expectation. Like Mary, who carried Jesus in her womb, we should exult in the Lord who is in our midst. God embraces us like a bridegroom and renews us with songs of love. “*Cry out with joy and gladness,*” the prophet Isaiah sings. When we are weak and afraid, we can say God is a “*mighty savior.*” When we are empty and sad, God fills us with joy from the fountain of salvation.

Paul repeats the glad refrain, “*Rejoice!*” Lest we forget, he says it again, “*Rejoice!*” Paul urges us to dismiss anxiety and gratefully present our needs in prayerful petition. Then, the peace that is beyond human understanding will stand guard over our hearts and minds. Like Paul, we will be released from the dungeons of worry and fear.

“*What must we do?*” we ask. John the Baptist speaks to each life situation: Be honest, don’t abuse one another, don’t blame others for our own misdeeds, be satisfied with what we have. We must humbly recognize the One greater than ourselves. John baptizes with water for repentance. Jesus comes with the purifying grace of the Holy Spirit.

A Thank You Note from the Pastor

Dear Beloved Parishioners and Best Friends,

Words could not express my gratitude and thanks to each and every one of you for the love and support you showed me on the occasion of my 17th Anniversary to the priesthood, Christmas, and for the New Year. I was overwhelmed by your generosity and appreciation and I felt humbled and overburdened with your goodness that I am unable to repay as long as I live. Together we worked hard in the last eight years and with the Grace of God we achieved a building we are all proud of. I am sensing in every smile and reading on every face a portion of the pride that we are sharing. Thanks be to God and to the Blessed Mother who used our gifts and talents to built their home so that our generation contributed something to the Glory of God in the history of salvation.

Again thanks a millions for your support toward my car which will be used for my personal and the church business. My goal is to keep the budget of the church on the safe side in this economic crisis so that whatever we do we don’t have to undertake a loan. I am looking forward to work with you and paint the church in the near future. May the Lord of Mercy shower you and your family members with many blessings.

With my love and prayers,

--Fr. Bakhos

2009 New Year Best Wishes to You

I wish for you, comfort on difficult days; rainbows to follow the clouds; laughter to kiss your lips; sunsets to warm your heart; gentle hugs when spirits sag; friendships to brighten your being; beauty for your eyes to see; confidence for when you doubt; faith so that you can believe; courage to know yourself; patience to accept the truth; and love to complete your life. God Bless you!

I asked the Lord to bless, guide and protect you as you go along your way. His love is always with you. His promises are true, no matter what the tribulation. You know He will see us through. So when the road you’re traveling on, seems difficult at best; Give your problems to the Lord, and God will do the rest.

New Year: Day of Peace

O day of peace that dimly shines, Through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
Guide us to justice, truth and love; Delivered from our selfish schemes.
May swords of hate full from our hands, Our hearts from envy find release,
Till by God’s grace our warring world Shall see Christ’s promised reign of peace.
Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb Nor shall the fierce devour the small;
As beasts and cattle calmly graze, A little child shall lead them all.
Then enemies shall learn to love, All creatures find their true accord;
The hope of peace shall be fulfilled, For all the earth shall know the Lord.

Epiphany – the Baptism of Our Lord – Symbols & Graces of Baptism

Why are we baptized as infants? And what are the Graces of baptism?

1- ORIGINAL SIN & WATER

What sin has an infant committed? None.

Before he/she reaches “the age of reason” (6 or 7 year old) a youngster has a very hard time distinguishing right from wrong. Rather this child –like all of us– is born with Original Sin.

Because the first human beings turned away from God (the story of Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis), all humanity since that time has suffered the consequences. Simply put, we are born into a spiritual vacuum. Baptism fills that void with the Holy Spirit.

According to early Church, the Baptism of small children has been a part of the Church’s tradition since apostolic times. Gradually, by the fifth century, it became the norm.

- a- To baptize (from the Greek word “to dip”), then, is to purify. To be baptized is to be reborn.
- b- To commemorate Jesus’ own baptism in the Jordan river (Mk1:9-11)
- c- The water of Baptism is seen as both death and life – death to sin: We bury our body born with Original Sin. Life with Christ: we wear a spiritual body with the Lord.
- d- Jesus descends into the water of the Jordan and receives the Spirit in baptism, so that through the waters of the baptismal font, we might be born of the Spirit.
- e- The baptismal font represents a spiritual womb. St. Ephrem said, “baptism is the mother who engenders each day spiritual infants and gives to God new and holy children.”

2- THE HOLY SPIRIT & CHILDREN OF GOD

- a- The descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ becomes a pledge of our receiving the Spirit at baptism.
- b- Baptism brings with it the gift of the Holy Spirit. Aphraat teaches that at baptism, when the priests invoke the Holy Spirit, the heavens open and the Spirit descends upon the waters. The baptized are clothed with the Spirit, and are no longer subject to the rule of death.
- c- As the priest pours water on the infant, Jesus’ words are spoken, “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19). = (TRINITY)
- d- Jesus taught us how to pray: “Our Father...” and St. Paul said: “We did not receive a Spirit of slavery leading us back into fear, but a Spirit of ADOPTION through which we cry Abba (That is Father). The Spirit himself gives witness with our spirit that we are CHILDREN OF GOD.” (Rom 8:15-16).
- e- In Baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit whom the Risen Christ sent. St. Paul said: “Repent and be baptized. Your sins will be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38)

3- SALVATION:

- a- Jesus said: “Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned.” (Mk 16:16).
- b- Jesus said: “Unless a man is born through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.” (Jn 3:5).
- c- We baptize children in order to give them salvation in case of early death.
- d- BAPTISM (as infant) = CIRCUMCISION (on the 8th day).

4- CHRISM (Myron):

- a- One of Jesus’ titles: the Christ = the anointed one.
- b- The priest uses chrism (perfumed oil that has been blessed by the bishop) to anoint the baby.
- c- In ancient times, it was priests, prophets, and kings who were anointed = blessed with oil. Now the priest’s anointing the crown of the baby’s head identifies the little one with Christ: Priest, Prophet, and King. And it enrolls him/her in the fellowship of God’s people.
- d- Myron = Seal against the evil spirits.
- e- Myron = Distinguished mark on our forehead on Judgment Day.
- f- PASSOVER = BAPTISM. As God saved the houses signed by the blood of the Lamb; so Christ will save those who are signed by the Myron (Chrism).

5- WHITE GARMENT = (the Robe of Glory)

- a- In Syriac tradition, as a sign of their sanctification, Adam and Eve were originally vested in a “robe of Glory.” By sinning, this robe was lost. Christ is represented as restoring the robe of glory through baptism.
- b- Dried off, the baby is clothed in a white garment to represent the gift of new life in the Lord. He/she is “clothed... with Christ” (Gal3:27). The garment is white so it calls to mind the clothing worn by the transfigured Jesus (Lk 9:29).

6- GODPARENTS:

- a- They are the parents in spirit of the baptized.
- b- There is an impediment of marriage between the godparents and the child.

7- THE BAPTISMAL CANDLE:

Represents the light of the parents and godparents that enlightens the way of the child lest to stumble.

8- UNITY & EMPOWERMENT:

All the baptized are brothers and sisters in Christ. They form the Mystical Body of Christ which is the CHURCH.

9- PATRON SAINT:

Because when we name a child after a saint, we are calling on that special saint to watch over, pray for, and protect that baby. He or she then becomes that child’s Patron Saint.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: “In Baptism, the Lord’s name sanctifies man, and the Christian receives his name in the Church. This can be the name of a saint, that is, of a disciple who has lived a life of exemplary fidelity to the Lord. The patron saint provides a model of charity; we are assured of his intercession. The ‘baptismal name’ can also express a Christian mystery or Christian virtue. Parents, sponsors, and the pastor are to see that a name is not given which is foreign to Christian sentiment.” (#2156)

Mass Intentions

THIS WEEKEND, January 3-4: “Epiphany of the Lord & Blessing of the Holy Water”**Saturday, January 3:**

At 3:30 p.m.: **Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament**

At 4:00 p.m. **Mass & Blessing of Holy Water:**

Mike Sobota by Bill & Tricia Committee and Family

Anies, Adele & Joseph Canaan by Rev. Richard & Lourice Tinker (NY)

Sunday, January 4 at 10:30 a.m.: Mass & Blessing of Holy Water followed by Benediction

Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL) & his special intentions

Charles, Sophie & Jim Amien by Rev. Richard & Lourice Tinker (NY)

Weekday Masses

Monday, January 5: No Mass. Pastor’s Day off

Tuesday, January 6 at Noon: (Epiphany Day)

Mike Sobota by his wife Barb Sobota

Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL) & his special intentions

Wednesday, January 7 at Noon:

Mike Sobota by Cecilia Ammar

John Jacobs by M/M John Pifko (PA)

Thursday, January 8, at Noon:

Rose George Family including Tellie, Bill, Philips, George & John by Rev. Richard & Lourice Tinker

Mike Sobota by Bob & Jean Rodgers

Friday, January 9 at Noon:

Matilda Tinker by Rev. Richard & Lourice Tinker (NY)

Intentions and good health of Sam & Bernadine Elias by Mrs. Kay Garvey

NEXT WEEKEND, January 10-11: "1st Sunday after Epiphany"**Saturday, January 10 at 4:00 p.m.:**

Mike Sobota by Lucille Gibbons
Kenny Hill by Mrs. Nettie Seidler

Sunday, January 11 at 10:30 a.m.:

Nancepe Saseen (on his Anniversary) by Rosella Saseen
Joe Bittengle by Mrs. Nettie Seidler

I Want to Help the Church. What Can I Do?**1- Help with the Church Painting Fund**

It has been about 20 years since the church was last painted and it needs done at this time. The scaffolding, patching and painting will start when we raise the cost of painting, which is \$30,000 according to the estimate we have received. The Blessed Mother will help us once more to raise funds to brighten her church (we hope by May or June 2009) as we raised the \$1.5 million to construct our new hall. All donations will be earmarked toward the "Church Painting Fund." A special plaque will be mounted in the church stating: **"Please remember in your prayer these benefactors who painted the church in 2009"**. Please make a generous contribution and become a member of this prayer list. Thank you for your cooperation and generosity.

The Generous Benefactors who painted the church in 2009: (Total Raised: \$5,946)

Nancy Joseph (\$100), Manell Brice (\$500), Mike Sobota (Memorial) (\$635), Paul & Irene Schuler (\$100), Charles Mattes (brother of Betty Shia) [MD] (\$500), Betty Shia (\$500), Cedar Club (Pre-Holiday Sales) \$1,150, Rose Karsten (MN) (\$20), Bob & Fran Saseen (\$100), Millie & Sister Jeanne Vidonic (\$50), Rob & Mary Thomas (OH), (\$40), Robert & Virginia Pockl (\$100), Tom Ferris (\$25), Mary Custer (\$108), Denny Albaugh (\$25), Sylvia Long (\$100), Joseph & Carmella (Babe) Dallison (\$100), A Friend (\$100), Anna Jalad (\$100), Shirley Dietz (\$500), Mike & Maryann Carl (\$1,000), Women's Society 50/50 Fundraising (\$93),

2- Help with the Endowment Fund to Keep Our Church Open and Alive (Total Raised: \$325)

Fr. Bakhos opened at Main Street Bank an Endowment Fund CD account exclusively for our church maintenance for the years to come. Many parishioners –primarily those who have no one to inherit their property or money– are willing to donate all or part of their assets to the church. These earmarked donations will be saved in this Endowment Fund. Only the yearly interest will be withdrawn and spent to pay for church utilities and general maintenance.

We understand that some members of our community cannot support our church as they would like to because of the need to retain funds for their retirement years. But after their death, their donation can bring stability and security to the future of the church. All benefactors will be enrolled in the daily Mass offering. Please put into writing in your will as Fr. Eugene Jacobs did. The following is suggested wording:

(I, , hereby give, devise and bequeath the sum of \$..... (or specify described real or personal property) to the Church of Our Lady of Lebanon, a non-profit organization located at 2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. I want my donation to be deposited in the Endowment Fund account designated to maintain and support the church. I also wish to be enrolled as benefactor in the daily Mass intentions.) We thank each of the following individuals for their generous contribution to this Endowment Fund.

Bill & Mary Stees (\$200), Tom Ferris (\$25), Sylvia Long (\$100),

Leave a permanent Memorial on the Cedar Tree of Life & Golden Cedar Book

The Cedar Tree of Life, designed by Fr. Bakhos and manufactured by the Baum Company of New Jersey, is a piece of art in the new building addition which allows you to permanently designate a memorial for you or a loved one for a donation of \$500 or more. It is made out of cedar wood that links us to the Cedar of Lebanon –used in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Most brass leaves are sold, only few are still available. Contact the parish office and engrave your Memorial on a brass leaf and you will also gain daily prayers from the altar of our church. Donations of lesser amounts will be listed in the Golden Cedar Book.

\$1,000	Alexandrite Leaf for Susan John & Ron Burns (12.27.2008)
\$400	Altmeier Funeral Home [monthly payment of previous pledge] (12.27.2008)

3- Wish List for Our Lady of Lebanon Church

Please share your blessings and sponsor any of the below needed items:

- a- A commercial quality, used heavy-duty Slicer for our new kitchen (approximately \$1,500)
- b- A used grill for Mahrajan and church steak fry from General Rental (\$700)

Thanks to Tom George for sponsoring a Laptop Computer which will allow us to make Power Point presentations in our new Cedar Hall.

Thanks to Mrs. Peggy Justice for sponsoring the Deep Fryer for use frying Falafels or Zelaybee in our new Kitchen and at our Mahrajan (\$75-100) and for Don Henning's help in selecting the best deep fryer.

May the generous benefactors receive their reward many fold.

<i>Our Lady of Lebanon Community Calendar</i>	
Monday, January 12	Cedar Club Meeting – at 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 25	Women's Society Next Meeting – after 10:30 a.m. Mass
Sunday, January 25	Women's Society 50/50 Painting Fund Raffle Drawing – after 10:30 a.m. Mass
Thursday, February 5	Reverse Raffle & Dinner – Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres at 6 & Dinner at 7 p.m.
Saturday, February 21	Soup & Hoagie Sale (look for more information in upcoming bulletins)

Cedar Club Meeting (Monday, January 12, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.)

Come to the Cedar Club's first meeting of the new year on Monday, January 12, at 7:00 p.m. The hostess for the evening will be Linda King. Our drawing on December 7 for the YMCA 1-year membership was won by Carol Burns of Wheeling. Congratulations from the Cedar Club. An extra \$100 was made from items sold during the Cookie Sale for our Pre-Holiday Sale – the total Painting Fund donation is now \$1,150.

Women's Society January Meeting (Sunday, January 25, after 10:30 a.m. Mass)

Plan to join the Women's Society at our January meeting to discuss plans for our upcoming Soup and Hoagie Sale and our other upcoming spring events. Everyone is welcome to join.

Monthly 50/50 Building Fund Raffle (Drawings: Sunday, January 25th)

The Women's Society continues to sponsor the Monthly 50/50 Building Fund Raffle. Tickets cost \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Proceeds will now be designated to the benefit the Church Painting Fund.

The drawing from entries received **from the January tickets** (printed on blue paper) are provided at the church entrance and in the weekly church bulletin and will take place in the Cedar Hall after Mass on **Sunday, January 25th**.

Buy or sell the tickets, and return the completed stubs as soon as possible in the collection or mail to: Our Lady of Lebanon Church, 2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. Please write as "Memo": 50/50 Raffle.

For more information or additional tickets, contact the church office at (304) 233-1688. May the Blessed Mother reward you manifold and we ask for your continued support. Congratulations to the November 50/50 winner of \$92: Kenny & Patty Billick who are parents of Beth George (daughter-in-law of Tom & Kathleen).

First Maronite Reverse Raffle Dinner (Thursday, February 5, 2009, 6:00 p.m.)

Our 1st Maronite Reverse Raffle and Dinner scheduled for Thursday, February 5, 2009, at the Wheeling Country Club. Cocktails and Hors D'oeuvres begin at 6:00 p.m.; a sit-down dinner at 7:00 p.m. Come and experience the excitement of the night. Winners need not be present.

Deadline to purchase tickets is: Sunday, February 1, 2009. Costs are:

\$ 50.00	1 Raffle Ticket only
\$ 75.00	1 Dinner & 1 Raffle Ticket
\$100.00	2 Dinners & 1 Raffle Ticket

For tickets call Mickey (Joseph) Morgan at 304-277-1642, Lois Rutter at 304-242-3922; or

- 1) complete the attached order form

- 2) Make your check payable to: **Our Lady of Lebanon Church** with “Memo Line:” *Reverse Raffle*
 3) Mail both the form and the check to:
- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| Our Lady of Lebanon Church | or | Linda Duffy |
| “Attention, Reverse Raffle” | | “Attention, Reverse Raffle” |
| 2216 Eoff Street | | 43 Garland A venue |
| Wheeling, WV 26003 | | Wheeling, WV 26003 |

Soup & Hoagie Sale (Saturday, February 21)

Let’s chase away those winter blues and take a break from cooking! The ladies of Our Lady of Lebanon are having a **Soup and Hoagie Sale** on Saturday, February 21st. You will be able to purchase and pick up from our church hall an assortment of delicious hoagie sandwiches and homemade soups to eat at home or stock the soup in your freezer to enjoy another day.

Here’s how the Soup Sale works: We’re asking for church volunteers to make and donate a batch of your favorite soup using your largest soup kettle. We’ll supply containers and labels featuring your soup’s name. All soups should be ordered in advance and will be available for take-out purchase with or without hoagie sandwiches. Please help out by calling and pledging to make your favorite soup available for this sale.

Here’s how the Hoagie Sandwich Sale works: The famous hoagie sandwiches –made by Don Henning, retired owner of Don’s Corner Market– should be ordered in advance and will be available for purchase during the sale with or without the purchase of soup.

This fundraiser will benefit the church Painting Fund. You can help make this sale a success by sharing your time, talents and treasure: (1) volunteer to cook and donate your favorite soup, (2) volunteer to help prep the sandwiches, (3) volunteer to help during the sale day on Saturday, February 21, (4) distribute flyers announcing our event (5) purchase some of our delicious homemade soups or (6) purchase some of Don’s famous Hoagies (7) get orders from your friends, neighbors and co-workers.

Please pre-order a specific a kind and quantity of soup and/or hoagie sandwich by using the **“Soup & Hoagie Sale Order Form.”** which will be available in our weekly bulletins. You may also place your order by calling the church office at (304) 233-1688. Completed Order Forms may also be faxed to the church at (304) 233-4714.

All Soups and Hoagies will be available on a take-out basis only.

Happy Birthday

January 3:	Sue Brubach
January 6:	Anna Jalad, Gina Stees
January 7:	Jacob Wilson
January 8:	Paul Schuler
January 10:	Marjorie John, Mary Petros
January 11:	Jennifer Klein
January 17:	Richard Elwartoski
January 18:	Marge Saseen
January 23:	Dale Seidler Jr., Lisa Haas
January 25:	Marion Wellman
January 28:	Nikki Popovich
January 29:	Sandra Dusick

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List

Please Remember Those Hospitalized Recently In Your Prayers:

Bill Daniel, Eva Lee Powel, Sam Elias, Catherine Arthur

Also please pray for those who asked us to pray for them:

John John, Laura & Marion Wellman, Jim & Judy Miller, Mary Piko, Theresa Sofka, Bernard Olako, Kathy Siebieda (daughter of our architect), Gene Singleton (Parkersburg), Ervin Splatt (WI), Debbie Laughlin (Columbus), Jennie Bedway (PA), Virginia Khourey Bryan (aunt of Lou Khourey in Toledo, OH), Richard & Mary Ryncarz (Shadyside, OH), Manell Brice (Arlington, VA), Rose Mary Bris-Roybal (Albuquerque, NM), John Vawter and his mother (brother and mother of Dr. Rob Vawter)

Your Church Support Last Week

4,309	Collection
1,400	Building Project
95	Candles
1,000	Painting Fund
321	Utilities
50	Fundraising
7,175.00	Total. May God reward you many fold

What's New?

Congratulations

Bill and Lou Anne Blazier celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on January 1st. They were united in marriage at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church by the late Reverend Robert Lee on January 1, 1959. In honor of their anniversary they were recently honored at a reception.

Spirituality

Fr. Bakhos is willing to enhance the spiritual life in the parish. The day of the week and time is flexible: Please call Fr. Bakhos at 233-1688 to register for the following: Bible Study, First Communion Class (age 7 or older), Confirmation Class (ages 12-15). Classes will start if enough candidates are interested.

Poor Box

Please consider sharing your blessings with the brothers and sisters of Christ who knock at our door daily. Many people in the area need assistance in many ways. Some are in dire need some are not, but God alone knows what's in each one's heart. The Poor Box is located at the rear of the church near the Holy Water font. Fr. Bakhos is using his judgment to help the poor on your behalf and asks each of them to pray for you.

Around Us

Free Lecture/Concert on Beethoven (Wednesday, January 14, at 7 p.m.)

What: Maestro Andre Raphael Smith will discuss "Beethoven: The Heroic Period (Prelude to a Festival)
Where: Christ United Methodist Church, Washington Avenue & National Road, Wed., Jan. 14 @ 7 p.m.
Featuring: A short performance by The Pittsburgh Piano Trio followed by a dessert reception
Reservations: Call 232-6191

Maronites = Catholics of the East

History of the Maronites (31)

The Maronite Church is one of the largest Eastern-Rite communities of the Catholic Church, prominent especially in modern Lebanon; it is the only Eastern-rite church that has no non-Catholic or Orthodox counterpart. The Maronites trace their origins to Saint Maron, a hermit of the late 4th and early 5th centuries, and Saint John Maron, patriarch of Antioch in 685-707, under whose leadership the invading Byzantine armies of Justinian II were routed in 684, making the Maronites a fully independent people.

The Maronites were always in union with the Roman see. In 1584 Pope Gregory XIII founded the Maronite College in Rome, which flourished under Jesuit administration into the 20th century and became a training center for scholars and leaders. Hardy, martial mountaineers, the Maronites valiantly preserved their liberty and folkways. The Muslim caliphate (632-1258) could not absorb them, and two caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty (661-750) paid them tribute. Under the rule of the Ottoman Turks, the Maronites maintained their religion and customs under the protection of France, largely because of their geographic isolation.

In the 19th century, however, the Ottoman government incited a neighboring mountain people of Lebanon, the Druzes, against the Maronites, a policy that culminated in the great Maronite massacres of 1840 and 1860. As a result of these incidents, the Maronites achieved formal autonomy within the Ottoman Empire under a nonnative Christian ruler.

In 1920, following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the Maronites of Lebanon became self-ruling under French protection. Since the establishment of a fully independent Lebanon in 1943, they have constituted one of the two major religious groups in the country. The government is run by a coalition of Christian, Muslim, and Druze parties, but the president is always Maronite. The immediate spiritual head of the Maronite church after the pope is the "patriarch of Antioch and all the East," residing in Bekerki, near Beirut. The church retains the ancient Aramaic liturgy, even though the vernacular tongue of the Maronites is Arabic. Contact with Rome has been close and cordial, but it was not until after the second Vatican Council that the Maronites were freed of papal efforts to Latinize their rite.

Maronites are also found in southern Europe and North and South America, having emigrated in the 19th century under the pressure of persecutions and the famine during World War I.

Story: A Few Good Men & One DARN Good Older Man!

As I came out of the supermarket that sunny day, pushing my cart of groceries towards my car, I saw an old man with the hood of his car up and a lady sitting inside the car, with the door open.

The old man was looking at the engine. I put my groceries away in my car and continued to watch the old gentleman from about twenty five feet away. I saw young man in his early twenties with a grocery bag in his arm, walking towards the old man. The old gentleman saw him coming too and took a few steps towards him. I saw the old gentleman point to his open hood and say something.

The young man put his grocery bag into what looked like a brand new Cadillac Escalade and then turn back to the old man and I heard him yell at the old gentleman saying, "You shouldn't even be allowed to drive a car at your age." And then with a wave of his hand, he got in his car and peeled rubber out of the parking lot. I saw the old gentleman pull out his handkerchief and mop his brow as he went back to his car and again looked at the engine. He then went to his wife and spoke with her and appeared to tell her it would be okay. I had seen enough and I approached the old man. He saw me coming and stood straight and as I got near him I said, "Looks like you're having a problem."

He smiled sheepishly and quietly nodded his head. I looked under the hood myself and knew that whatever the problem was, it was beyond me. Looking around I saw a gas station up the road and told the old man that I would be right back. I drove to the station and went inside and saw three attendants working on cars. I approached one of them and related the problem the old man had with his car and offered to pay them if they could follow me back down and help him.

The old man had pushed the heavy car under the shade of a tree and appeared to be comforting his wife. When he saw us he straightened up and thanked me for my help. As the mechanics diagnosed the problem (overheated engine) I spoke with the old gentleman. When I shook hands with him earlier he had noticed my Marine Corps ring and had commented about it, telling me that he had been a Marine too. I nodded and asked the usual question, "What outfit did you serve with?"

He had mentioned that he served with the first Marine Division at Tarawa, Saipan, Iwo Jima and Guadalcanal. He had hit all the big ones and retired from the Corps after the war was over. As we talked we heard the car engine come on and saw the mechanics lower the hood. They came over to us as the old man reached for his wallet, but was stopped by me and I told him I would just put the bill on my AAA card.

He still reached for the wallet and handed me a card that I assumed had his name and address on it and I stuck it in my pocket. We all shook hands all round again and I said my goodbye's to his wife. I then told the two mechanics that I would follow them back up to the station. Once at the station I told them that they had interrupted their own jobs to come along with me and help the old man. I said I wanted to pay for the help, but they refused to charge me. One of them pulled out a card from his pocket looking exactly like the card the old man had given to me. Both of the men told me then, that they were Marine Corps Reserves. Once again we shook hands all around and as I was leaving, one of them told me I should look at the card the old man had given to me. I said I would and drove off.

For some reason I had gone about two blocks when I pulled over and took the card out of my pocket and looked at it for a long, long time. The name of the old gentleman was on his card in golden leaf and under his name.... "Congressional Medal of Honor Society."

I sat there motionless looking at the card and reading it over and over. I looked up from the card and smiled to no one but myself and marveled that on this day, four Marines had all come together, because one of us needed help. He was an old man all right, but it felt good to have stood next to greatness and courage and an honor to have been in his presence.

"Remember, old men like him gave you FREEDOM for America." America is not at war. The U.S. Military is at war. America is at the Mall. If you don't stand behind our troops, PLEASE feel free to stand in front of them! God Bless America, our Veterans and Troops. Contentment is not the fulfillment of what you want, but the realization of how much you already have in the little and simple things that we take for granted.

Prayers: 5 Finger Prayer

This is beautiful and surely makes the 5 finger prayer a worthwhile part of our lives.

1. Your thumb is nearest to you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."

2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, dentists, physicians, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

5. And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

Joke (523)

Daddy Got Two Shots

The cold and flu season had come to our church, and I was talking to one of the first graders after she and her father had missed a Sunday due to illness. I asked her if she was feeling better, and she replied with a proud voice, "Yes, I'm all better now, but Daddy and I had to go to the doctor."

Sensing there was more to the story, I asked, "And what did you think about visiting the doctor?"

She answered with a small, sad voice, "I didn't like it very much. I had to get a shot, and it hurt."

But before I could begin to comfort her, she suddenly looked up with a great big, beaming smile and said, "Yep, had to get a shot, but my daddy had to get two shots, and that made me feel lots better!"

Save a Little Money

Save a little money each month, and at the end of the year you'll be surprised at how little you have.

Shark Fishing

A priest was walking along the cliffs at Dover when he came upon two locals pulling another man ashore on the end of a rope. "That's what I like to see," said the priest, "a man helping his fellow man."

As he was walking away, one local remarked to the other, "Well, he sure doesn't know the first thing about shark fishing."

Pews Harder Than Rocks?

As a woman watched her husband fishing for hours, sitting on the rocky shoreline of the lake, she said to her friend, "Can that possibly be the same man who complains every Sunday about uncomfortable pews?"

He's Got a License to Run

Two men were fishing when a game warden slipped up on them and asked to see their fishing licenses. One of the men took off running. The warden started chasing the man along the river through the brush and marshes. After about ten minutes he caught the man and asked him for his fishing license. The man reached into his wallet and produced a current fishing license. The game warden inspected the license carefully and asked the man why he had run away. The man smiled at the warden and answered, "So you wouldn't ask to see the other guy's license."

Teaching Worms to Swim

A man saw a young boy who was fishing without permission in his private lake. He approached the boy. "This lake is clearly posted with No fishing signs. So why are you fishing in my private lake?" "I'm not fishing, sir," the boy politely answered. "I'm just teaching these worms how to swim!"

Slow Boat to Ice Fishing

A couple of fellows from Alabama loved to fish. They had heard that ice fishing was a great sport, and they wanted to give it a try. If they were going to do it, though, they were going to do it in Canada to get the full effect of the sport. When they arrived at a frozen lake in Canada that was famous for its ice fishing, they stopped at a bait shop to get the very best bait and tackle for the lake. The shop owner told them that they would need an ice auger. It was a bit expensive, but the men did not hesitate; they purchased the auger to drill holes in the ice.

In a short while they had gathered their equipment and arrived on the ice. They began to prepare for a great day of ice fishing.

About two hours later they returned to the shop and asked the shop owner for another ice auger.

The shop owner was confused. "What's wrong with the one I sold you?"

"Nothing," the men answered, "it works fine."

"Then why do you need another one?" the owner asked.

"It's cold out there. The holes keep freezing after a while, and we haven't been able to fish yet. At the rate we're going, we're not even going to get the boat in the water before dark!"