

September 20, 2009
Bulletin # 38

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)

1st Sunday after the Holy Cross



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
 - *Confession: 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 304-277-3230, Linda Duffy 304-242-6853, Tom George 304-336-7142, P.J. Lenz 304-242-5606 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 304-242-6853
 - *Women's Society: Sandra Dusick, President 304-232-7395
- ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠
- *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 is: 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 – both parking lots are for parishioners; Monday through Friday – park ONLY in the 3 ALLEY spaces

Gospel Reflection: 1st Sunday after the Holy Cross

Readings: 2Tim 2:1-10 & Mk 10:35-45

Scarcely has Jesus, for the third time, recalled the destiny that awaits him in Jerusalem, than the disciples' ambition gets the better of their momentary fear. After Peter's confession at Caesarea and the dispute along the road as to which of them was the greatest, it is easy to imagine the ambition of the sons of Zebedee to secure for themselves two good places in the messianic kingdom approaching at the end of time in the race for favored positions, they know what they want, and so do the other disciples, in spite of their virtuous indignation.

But no, they do not know, and Jesus reveals it to them. It is about another ministry that he speaks, correcting in passing their popular conception of merit, according to which man acquires rights over God. The true disciple can aspire to only one thing: to share the passion of his master. As for the reward, it eludes every possible claim. God is free to do what he likes with his gifts. The Christian likewise will have his share in the condition of servant which was that of Jesus: that is to say, he will participate in the life and death of Jesus for others'. For true Christian greatness consists in serving, and not in playing the master. Such are the bases of government of a Church which is built up by the work of ministry. Ministry after the example of the Son of God who, like a slave, washes the feet of his disciples, and offers for the multitudes the Suffering Servant's sacrifice of atonement. Too often, in the course of history, the government of the Church has been seen as power or domination. This was a failure to relate her mission to the mission of Christ dead and risen. According to the gospel, the way of ruling is to serve: our king himself has shown that to us. 'Princes of the Church', if they exist, ought to have no other ambition.

Spirituality: Self-Discipline

The principal cause of all unhappiness is unregulated desire –wanting more than is needed or wanting what is harmful to the spirit. The modern world is geared to increase our desires and our wants by its advertising, but it can never satisfy them. Our desires are infinite; the supply of any good on earth is finite. Hence our unhappiness and anxieties, our disappointments and our sadness. The only exit from this state is by control of the senses through mortification. This is what Our Lord meant when He said: ***“And if your hand, or your foot scandalize you, cut it off, and cast it from you. And if your eye scandalizes you, pluck it out, and cast it from you”*** (Mt.18:8-9). Because, in our modern civilization, the biological is divorced from the spiritual, because freedom is isolated from dependence on God like a pendulum cut off from a clock, because liberty is interpreted only as freedom *from* something and not as freedom *for* something, it is especially necessary to revive the Christian practice of self-discipline. --Bishop Fulton Sheen, *Peace of Soul*, 1949, p. 183

Mary, the First Disciple

Maronite have a special devotion to Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. We do not worship her or pray to her as God, as some people mistakenly believe. But we do honor her as the mother of God, and at times we ask her to approach Jesus with a special need or concern. She is the only person besides Jesus whom Catholics believe was born without original sin, and at her death we believe she was taken up directly to heaven.

But Catholics wouldn't believe any of these things about Mary if we did not first believe that she was the first follower, the first disciple, of Jesus. Her "YES" to the angel Gabriel in the Gospel of Luke (1:26-38) made it possible for Jesus to come into the world. In the Gospel of John, Mary is the first person to believe that Jesus can work miracles, at the wedding feast of Cana (2:1-11). At the cross Jesus tells the beloved disciple, "Here is your mother" (John 19:27), which the Church teaches has the symbolic meaning that Mary is the mother of all believers. And Mary was present at Pentecost (Acts 1:14), receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, and without a doubt she was very active in spreading the Gospel message about her son in those first years after Jesus ascended into heaven.

What an amazing woman! What trust she had in God, what heartache she suffered on account of her son, and what faith she had in Jesus and his message. Mary is a model for all who wish to follow Jesus more closely. She is our loving and patient mother, and we do well to honor her and ask for her prayers on our behalf -she will never turn a deaf ear to our requests.

Mass Intentions

THIS WEEKEND, September 19-20: 1st Sunday after the Holy Cross

Saturday, September 19 at 4:00 p.m.:

Ronald Canestraro by his wife Charlotte Canestraro & Family

Martha Ruggiero by Frances & Michael Zeno

Sunday, September 20 at 10:30 a.m.:

Mary K. Ferris by her husband Tom & daughter Denise

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

Weekday Masses

Monday, September 21: No Mass. Pastor's Day Off

Tuesday, September 22: No Mass. Pastor's Day Off

Wednesday, September 23 at Noon:

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

Mike & Sadie Thomas & Deceased Relatives (MN) by Ervin & Rosemary Splatt (WI)

Thursday, September 24 at Noon:

Intentions of Dr. A.D. Ghaphery by the Ghaphery Family

Mary Piko by her granddaughter Debbie Laughlin

Friday, September 25: : No Mass. Pastor's vacation day

NEXT WEEKEND, September 26-27: 2nd Sunday after the Holy Cross

Saturday, September 26 at 4:00 p.m.:

Sue Linton by her husband Mike Linton

Martha Ruggiero by Pamela Bowman

Sunday, September 27 at 10:30 a.m.:

John Jacobs & Family by Sandra Dusick

Nancepe Saseen (on his Birthday) by his daughter Rosella Saseen

Donate to the Church Maintenance Fund

Help with the Endowment Fund to Keep Our Church Open and Active (Total Raised: \$1,365.00)

Please donate toward the Endowment Fund CD account that is meant exclusively for our church maintenance for the years to come. Only the yearly interest will be withdrawn and spent to pay for church utilities and general maintenance. All benefactors will be enrolled in the daily Mass offering. Please put into writing in your will the following 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, Phone (304) 233-1688. 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. They will be remembered in every Mass: *Bill & Mary Stees (\$200), Tom Ferris (\$275), Sylvia Long (\$100), Catherine Arthur (Memorial) (\$100), Women's Society Fundraising total (\$690),*

Donate to Our Parish Families Assistance Fund

A special account called "**Parish Families Assistance Fund**" had been opened to help exclusively the families of our parish who are in dire need. You can make a donation to the church earmarked toward the "Poor of the Parish" or drop your donation in the Poor Box located at the back of the church. The Poor Box money located at the back of the church will be divided between the poor of our parish and the "Poor of Wheeling" through cooperative effort with the 18th Street Catholic Neighborhood Charity Center. All donations are tax deductible. May God reward those who share their blessings with the brothers and sisters of the Lord.

Our Lady of Lebanon Community Calendar

Date	Event
Sunday, September 27	Women's Society Meeting & 50/50 Raffle Drawing – after 10:30 a.m. Mass
Thursday, October 1	First Communion – from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Arabic Language Classes – from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 4	Spaghetti Dinner – 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 4	Women's Society Gift Basket Drawing – at Spaghetti Dinner
Thursday, October 8	Confirmation – from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Bible Study – from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Fri., Oct. 31, -Fri., Nov. 6	Week of All Souls Masses
Sunday, November 29	Parish Christmas Party – 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. – see note below



Other Church Events

Lebanese Folklore Dance Troupe "Dabke" Classes Forming

Our Lady of Lebanon Church is willing to establish a Lebanese Folkloric Dance Troupe under the guidance of trainer, Natalie Committee. The troupe will be able to perform at our 2010 Mahrajan and at local events in the greater Wheeling area. Fr. Bakhos is willing to order a traditional folkloric costume from Lebanon for each age. Please register first by calling Fr. Bakhos at 304-233-1688. Training day (either Saturday or Sunday) and time will be decided when 6 or more candidates have expressed interest.

Dance Troupe students: *Emmalena & Louie Khourey, ??*

Women's Society Monthly 50/50 Raffle (after Mass: Sunday, September 27)

The Women's Society continues to sponsor the Monthly 50/50 Raffle. Tickets cost \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Proceeds now will benefit the maintenance of our church through the "Endowment Fund."

The drawing from entries received **for the September 50/50 Raffle Tickets**, which will be provided at the church entrance and in the weekly Church Bulletins, will take place in the Cedar Hall after Mass on **Sunday, September 27.**

Please check the ticket sheets carefully to be sure you are completing the correct ticket stubs. All raffle tickets are now printed on white paper only. 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 August 50/50 winner of \$80.00: Latif Thomas (PA).

First Communion & Arabic Classes (Thursday, October 1st)

4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.: First Communion (??)

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.: Arabic Language (*Lou, Emmalena & Louie Khourey, Kim Gibbons, Dalton Haas, Linda Duffy, Luane Frazier, Thomasina Geimer, Mike Linton, Carol Dougherty, Ted Olinski, ??*)

Fall Spaghetti Dinner (Sunday, October 4th, from 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

Save Sunday, October 4, on your calendar so you can come to enjoy the Fall Spaghetti Dinner at our beautiful Cedar Hall. Chairperson Tom George and our parishioners invite you and your friends to come and enjoy our food and hospitality. Help our Church make this our best Spaghetti Dinner yet! Invite your friends, co-workers and neighbors to attend. **Please note that this fall the dinner will end at 5:00 p.m.**

Parish Council has decided that because of the current economic situation, our church is not in a position to lose by preparing too much food for an uncertain number of people attending the dinner. We encourage you

to buy your tickets in advance and help us to have a more accurate count of meals for which we will place our food orders and prepare food. Therefore, prices are as follows:

\$7.00 Adults; \$4.00 Children (under 12) for Advance Tickets Sales – if PAID by September 30th
\$8.00 Adults; \$5.00 Children (under 12) for Late Ticket Sales – if PAID October 1st thru 4th
(Late ticket sales includes ALL at-the-door payments)

To purchase tickets in advance, contact one of our parishioners or mail your payment and ticket(s) request to the church. Only a limited number of tickets will be available for purchase at the door.

Menu: spaghetti & meatballs or marinara sauce, salad, roll, dessert & coffee, ice tea or lemonade.

Advance Ticket Sales by Parishioners: If you are able & willing to help sell tickets to make our dinner a success, please pick up a packet of tickets from our Church office. **Unsold tickets & payments must be returned by Sunday, September 27.**

Baked Goods Needed for Sale: Parishioners are being asked to help make our *Baked Goods Sale*– held simultaneously with the dinner– a huge success. Please make and donate an item– cookies, cake, pie, fudge, Lebanese specialty, etc.

Desserts Needed for Eat-In Dinners: Parishioners are being asked to also bake and donate a dessert for use at the dinner so that we may offer a variety of choices to go with the meal (*take-out desserts are already arranged*). **Drop off of Baked Goods and Eat-In Desserts:** Saturday, October 3th, before 4:00 p.m. Mass or Sunday, October 4th, after 10:00 a.m.

Women's Society Gift Basket Raffle (*Drawing: Sunday, October 4*)

The Women's Society's next Gift Basket Raffle – held on Sunday, October 4th, at the Spaghetti Dinner. It will featuring many items to help you create your own "Kitchen Magic." This Gift Basket contains: *a beautiful, idea-filled "Bake Sale" Cookbook, Chef Mate mini food processor, tri-color pasta, a grater, pasta sauce, kitchen shears, a spoon rest, soup mix, a bread platter, wooden spoons, spatula, measuring cups, kitchen towels, stainless steel tongs, an ice cream scoop, and a bottle of Sangria and more.*

The Gift Basket Raffle proceeds benefit the maintenance of our church through the "Endowment Fund." **Won't you take a chance ... or two ... or eighteen!** Tickets cost \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00 **or triple your chances of winning by sending in 18 ticket stubs (3 sheets of tickets) at one time for only \$10.00.**

All Gift Basket and 50/50 Raffle Tickets are now printed on white paper in the bulletins so please check the ticket sheets carefully to be sure you are completing the correct ticket stubs. Buy or sell the tickets, and return the completed stubs as soon as possible in the weekly collection (with Gift Basket Raffle noted on the front of the envelope) or write Gift Basket Raffle on the "Memo" line of your check when you mail it to: Our Lady of Lebanon Church, 2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. Tickets are available now at the church entrance and in our weekly Bulletins or call Kay at 304-232-0492.

Winner of the August basket was Mary Custer. Congratulations.

Confirmation & Bible Study Classes (*Thursday, October 8th*)

4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.: Confirmation (??)

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.: Bible Study, (*Nikki Popovich, Mike Linton, and ??*)

Commemoration of All Souls (November 2nd)

Please Remember Your Parents & Beloved Ones during the Week of All Souls: *All Masses from Saturday, October 31st until Friday, November 6th, 2009, will be offered for the repose of their souls.* Forgotten souls are those parents and grandparents whose un-grateful children and grandchildren chose not to offer at least a yearly Mass for the repose of their souls. The church is reminding you to bring happiness to the souls of your parents who carried you in their arms and loved you unconditionally. Please complete the attached Form.

All Masses will be offered for the Repose of the Souls of:

Living & Deceased members of the Nicholas & Nimnoom Ghaphery Family & the David Abraham Ghaphery Family by the Ghaphery Family
Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL)

Deceased of the Chidiac Family by Fr. Bakhos Chidiac, Pastor

Deceased of the Habib & Nabiha Khourey Family by Virginia Khourey Bryan

Deceased of the Khourey & Howard Families by Lou & Charlotte Khourey, Emmalena & Louie

Deceased members of the Jacobs & Dusick Families by Sandra Dusick

Siham Frenn & LaVerne Thomas (mothers of Adel & Diane Frenn) by Adel, Diane, Andreah & Justin Frenn

Deceased grandparents of the Frenn & Thomas Families by Adel, Diane, Andreah & Justin Frenn

Deceased family members of Thomasina Geimer

Christmas Party (Sunday, November 29th, from 5:30 until 9:30 p.m.)

Singer George Suhon is booked to entertain our parishioners on Sunday, November 29th, from 5:30 until 9:30 p.m. in the Cedar Hall. Read more details in upcoming bulletins.

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List

Please Remember Those Hospitalized Recently In Your Prayers:

Ferris Shia, Kathleen George, Richard Ryncarz, Joe Gonot, Edith Fahey, Frank Lish, Millie Hoskinson, Pat McNeil (FL) niece of Kay Garvey

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

Rosella Saseen, Barb Sobota, Laura Wellman, 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 & Pat (brother & mother of Dr. Rob Vawter)

Happy Birthday

September 21: Abraham George, Joseph Schultz
 September 22: John Jay Thomas
 September 24: Luane Frazier
 September 25: Mary Rose Kukula, Natalie Committee
 September 27: Chester Kloss
 October 6: Joe Popovich
 October 7: Emily Saseen
 October 9: Susie Fadoul
 October 10: Linda Duffy
 October 12: Gina Haas
 October 15: Nini Miller

Your Church Support Last Week

\$940	Collection
50	Candles
80	Parking
203	Spaghetti Dinner
429	Mahrajan (Pop Returned Refund)
\$1,702	Total. May God reward you many fold

What's New?

New Baby Congratulations

Our warmest wishes and congratulations go out to Abby Ruggiero on the birth of her daughter Maricle Lynn on August 27th. Maricle Lynn is the great granddaughter of parishioners Lucille Gibbons and the late Martha Ruggiero as well as the granddaughter of Cindy & Philip Ruggiero. May the Lord God and his Blessed Mother bless her and grant her a healthy life and bright future.

Lamb Shish Kebab and Other Mahrajan Food for Sale

If you would like to purchase some Mahrajan food items, which are frozen, and at the same time help our church recover the expense for this item, please ask Fr. after Mass or call the church office at 304-233-1688. Items available for sale include: **Shish Kebob**: \$17 pkg. of 5 skewers; **Cabbage Rolls** (extra lg.): \$8.00 pkg. of 6 **or** \$15.00 a dozen; **Spinach Pies**: \$2.00 each **or** \$7.00 pkg. of 4; **Zattar Bread**: \$1.50 pkg. of 2; **Wheat** (#1 fine and #2 medium): \$3.50 pkg. of 2 lb.

Around Us

Whose Cuisine Will Reign Supreme? (Saturday, September 26th, at 6:30 p.m.)

What: Steel Chef VI sponsored by the Wheeling Symphony Auxiliary pits Mike Pickens (Belmont Hills Country Club chef) against David Wohlfeil (Metropolitan Citi Grill). Enjoy light refreshments, door prizes and cash bar
When & Cost: Begins at Saturday, September 26th, at 6:30 p.m. Cost: \$25.00 each
Contact: Wheeling Symphony Office at 304-232-6191 or 800-395-9241 for tickets or more information

Shopping and a Show in New York City (October 9th to 11th)

What: Join Wheeling Symphony Auxiliary members on a Bus Trip to NYC to eat, drink and shop 'til-you-drop or take in a Broadway Show
When: Bus leaves the First State Capitol building 10 p.m. Friday, October 9th, arrives NYC about 7 a.m. Saturday, October 10th; returns to Wheeling about 6 a.m. Sunday morning, October 11th
Cost: \$99 person covers bus trip, snacks and drinks. Make reservations now. Payment due ASAP. ("Jersey Boys" 2 p.m. show tickets available for our group for additional \$106 discount price)
Contact: Barbara Knutsen at 304-215-0522; 304-242-3133 or email: barbaraknutsen@hotmail.com

Boatsie's Stockings for Soldiers (Due by Monday, November 16th)

What: Make a donation or make or buy a Christmas Stocking; list items and their value; fill stocking with items and slip stitch top or secure to prevent items from "spilling out."
Suggestions: Variety of candy, gum, hot chocolate, DVD's, cards, travel toiletries, athletic socks, phone cards, black watch caps, etc. (Suggested value of stocking contents is \$20-25; checks or money is gratefully accepted).
When: Stockings or donations are due by Monday, November 16th. (See flyer at church entrance)
Contact: Janell 'Zoomie' Loh, Special Project Coordinator for Boatsie's Boxes at (304) 243-0675

Story: The Great Stone Face

In a pleasant, sunny valley, surrounded by lofty mountains, lived a boy named Ernest. On the side of one of the mountains, in bold relief, nature had carved the features of a gigantic face.

From the steps of his cottage, the boy used to gaze intently upon the stone face, for his mother had told him that some day a man would come to the valley who would look just like the Great Stone Face. His coming would bring joy and happiness to the entire community.

"Mother", said the boy, "I wish that it could speak, for it looks so kind that its voice must be pleasant. If I were to see a man with such a face, I should love him dearly." So, Ernest continued to gaze at the Great Stone Face for hours at a time.

Several times the rumor spread that the long-looked-for benefactor was coming, but each time when the man arrived, the rumor proved to be false. In the meantime, Ernest had grown into manhood, doing good wherever he could. The people in the village loved him. Everyone was his friend. And as he became an old man, Ernest was still looking for the arrival of the long-expected one.

One day a poet came into the valley. He had heard the prophecy about the Great Stone Face, and at evening, when the sun was setting, he saw Ernest talking to some people. As the last rays of light flooded the massive outlines on the distant mountainside, they fell on Ernest's face. The poet cried aloud, "Behold! Behold! Ernest himself is the likeness of the Great Stone Face."

Then all the people looked, and sure enough, they saw that what the poet said was true. By looking daily at the Great Stone Face, Ernest had become like it.

If we gaze intently on Jesus as our Teacher and Example, we will become more like Him.

Maronites = Catholics of the East

Who Are the Lebanese?

To understand the Lebanese in America, it is necessary to go back in time and distance to their country of origin, their ancestral land of Lebanon, and to examine its complex historical past with its continuous commingling of diverse peoples, races and religious sects on its ancient soil.

The small, strife-torn nation of Lebanon, located at the farthest eastern end of the Mediterranean and at the crossroads of three continents – Asia, Africa and Europe – was the ancient home of Lebanese Americans.

Successive waves of nomadic invaders from the Arabian Desert, sea peoples from the Mediterranean and mountain tribes from Iran and Anatolia have, in the course of more than 7,000 years of history, repeatedly assaulted Lebanon and given its inhabitants a diverse racial makeup.

If we examine closely the *mélange* of races that intruded upon Lebanon, mingled with the original inhabitants and left some vestiges of their culture on present-day Lebanese, we discern two dominant ethnic strands – the Semitic, represented by peoples largely of desert origin such as the Canaanites, Babylonians, Aramaeans, Phoenicians and Arabs, and the Indo-European element, for the most part, peoples of mountain origin represented by the Hittites, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Franks and Armenians.

Despite the great diversity and numbers of races who have invaded Lebanon and inundated the country with their different cultures, the Lebanese have proven themselves throughout their long history as a people very adaptable to change. Whatever the circumstances – catastrophic or fortunate – in which the natives of Lebanon have found themselves in their long past, they have always adapted to changed conditions and managed to survive and thrive.

When the Canaanites around 3,000 B.C. poured out of the Arabian Desert and overwhelmed ancient Lebanon, the original natives of the country adopted the language and culture of the Canaanites and even acquired the first name for their region – Canaan. Lebanon, or Phoenicia, as it was known in ancient times, became the center of the Canaanite culture, though the Canaanites were oriented toward Egypt, with whom they had extensive commercial and cultural contacts.

The Canaanites never formed a single united nation but developed independent city-states which became the typical governmental apparatus for ancient Lebanon, particularly during the Phoenician period. The famous city-states of Byblos, Aradus, Sidon and Tyre were founded during the heyday of the Canaanites.

In addition, the Canaanites were predominantly skilled metalworkers and peaceful traders. From them the native Lebanese acquired their metalworking skills and trading habits and in general assimilated the higher culture, civilization and language of the Canaanites. Thus the original natives of Lebanon managed to become an integral part of the Canaanite people and culture and advanced and prospered in their midst.

The natives of Lebanon managed to survive other historical upheavals in ancient times and were able to adapt readily to changed conditions. Despite domination by more powerful and more aggressive neighbors, they were able to flourish and prosper in the midst of oppression, repression and even persecution and attempts at their annihilation. During the period when the mighty empires of Egypt, Babylonia, the Hittites, Assyria and Persia dominated ancient Phoenicia, Lebanese absorbed the best of the advanced cultures of these ancient civilizations, embellished them further and transmitted them in turn, largely through commercial activity, to the Greeks and Western Europe. Phoenicia thus became the repository of ancient advanced Middle Eastern cultures – Egyptian, Babylonian, Hittite, Assyrian and Persian – which fused on Lebanese soil and were assimilated by the native Lebanese.

The Hittites, a mountain people of Asia Minor, who were the first distributors of iron in the Near East and who taught the Lebanese to become skilled ironworkers, with their superior iron weapons, were able to wrest control of Phoenicia from the Egyptians and ruled until the dissolution of their empire in the early 12th Century B.C. The Hittites were the first conquerors of Phoenicia to introduce an Indo-European strain into the makeup of the Lebanese, who prior to the Hittites were predominantly Semitic, influenced by early invaders from the Arabian Desert.

Another Indo-European strand was introduced into the Lebanese makeup in the 7th Century B.C. when conquerors from the Iranian plateau engulfed the entire Middle East, including Phoenicia and her surrounding

neighbors. Under the benign Persian rule, with their strong central administration, a good network of highways safe to travel, a uniform metallic currency, their encouragement of the spread of Aramaic as the lingua franca of the entire Persian realm, and the fusion of the Semitic and Indo-Iranian cultures, the adaptable Lebanese benefited considerably from the liberal policies of the Persian rulers.

The Persians divided their empire into 20 satrapies or provinces, one of which comprised Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Cyprus, with the city of Sidon chosen as the capital of the province. Four Phoenician city-states – Sidon, Tyre, Byblos and Aradus – were accorded almost complete autonomy by the tolerant Persian rulers. Under the long 'pax Persica' lasting for more than 200 years, the Phoenician cities enjoyed considerable commercial prosperity and were even allowed to establish fresh Phoenician colonies, especially in Palestine and Egypt. Phoenicians too, because of their construction and navigational skills, constituted the backbone of the Persian navy. The King of Sidon served as an important admiral of the Persian fleet, which was comprised largely of war galleys built by Phoenicians.

--(to be continued in next bulletin)

Story: Child of God

A seminary professor was vacationing with his wife in Gatlinburg, TN. One morning, they were eating breakfast at a little restaurant, hoping to enjoy a quiet, family meal. While they were waiting for their food, they noticed a distinguished looking, white haired man moving from table to table, visiting with the guests. The professor leaned over and whispered to his wife, "I hope he doesn't come over here." But sure enough, the man did come over to their table. "Where are you folks from?" he asked in a friendly voice. "Oklahoma," they answered. "Great to have you here in Tennessee." The stranger said. "What do you do for a living?" "I teach at a seminary," he replied.

"Oh, so you teach preachers how to preach, do you? Well, I've got a really great story for you." And with that, the gentleman pulled up a chair and sat down at the table with the couple.

The professor groaned and thought to himself, "Great... Just what I need... another preacher story!" The man started, "See that mountain over there? (pointing out the restaurant window). Not far from the base of that mountain, there was a boy born to an unwed mother. He had a hard time growing up, because every place he went, he was always asked the same question, 'Hey boy, Who's your daddy?' Whether he was at school, in the grocery store or drug store, people would ask the same question, 'Who's your daddy?' He would hide at recess and lunch time from other students. He would avoid going in to stores because that question hurt him so bad.

"When he was about 12 years old, a new preacher came to his church. He would always go in late and slip out early to avoid hearing the question, 'Who's your daddy?' But one day, the new preacher said the benediction so fast he got caught and had to walk out with the crowd.

"Just about the time he got to the back door, the new preacher, not knowing anything about him, put his hand on his shoulder and asked him, 'Son, who's your daddy?' The whole church got deathly quiet. He could feel every eye in the church looking at him. Now everyone would finally know the answer to the question, 'Who's your daddy?' This new preacher, though, sensed the situation around him and using discernment that only the Holy Spirit could give, said the following to that scared little boy.....

'Wait a minute!' he said. 'I know who you are. I see the family resemblance now. You are a child of God'. With that he patted the boy on his shoulder and said, 'Boy you've got a great inheritance. Go and claim it'. With that, the boy smiled for the first time in a long time and walked out the door a changed person. He was never the same again. Whenever anybody asked him, 'Who's your daddy?' he'd just tell them, 'I'm a Child of God'." The distinguished gentleman got up from the table and said, "Isn't that a great story?" The professor responded that it really was a great story!

As the man turned to leave, he said, "You know, if that new preacher hadn't told me that I was one of God's children, I probably never would have amounted to anything!" And he walked away.

The seminary professor and his wife were stunned. He called the waitress over and asked her, "Do you know who that man was who just left that was sitting at our table?"

The waitress grinned and said, "Of course. Everybody here knows him. That's Ben Hooper. He's the former governor of Tennessee!"

Someone in your life today needs a reminder that they're one of God's children! Amen.

<i>Joke (559)</i>

Evaluating Your Efforts

A young boy was excited when he successfully pulled a cornstalk out by its roots. When his father patted him on the back, the boy beamed and said, "Just think, the whole world had hold of the other end of it."

Pig in the Parlor

An old proverb says, "You can bring a pig into the parlor, but that doesn't change the pig" –but it certainly changes the parlor!

Pigs in the Family

A couple drove several miles down a country road, not saying a word. An earlier discussion had led to an argument, and neither wanted to concede his or her position. As they passed a barnyard of mules and pigs, the wife sarcastically asked, "Relatives of yours?"

"Yep," the husband replied, "in-laws."

Outlaws Don't Promise

One big difference between outlaws and in-laws is that out laws don't promise to pay it back.

Convincing Proof of Hell

A young woman returned home early from a date with a long look on her face. Her mother asked her what was bothering her. The girl explained, "My boyfriend just proposed marriage."

Her mother asked, "What's so bad about that?"

The girl answered, "He also told me he is an atheist. He said there is no way he could ever believe there was a hell."

The mother consoled her daughter: "Don't let this bother you. Marry him anyway. With a little time and between the two of us, we will be able to convince him there is a hell."

Fine Line Called the Rio Grande

A Texan was visiting south of the border when he heard a Mexican say, "I Loco Gringo!"

"You have to remember," he replied, "that there's a fine line between genius and insanity."

"Si, senior! We call it the Rio Grande."

Comparative Thankfulness

Eight-year-old Tommy was invited to a neighbor's home for supper. The neighbor asked little Tommy, "Are you sure you can cut your meat, Tommy?"

Tommy answered, "Yes, thank you. We often have it just as tough as this at home."

Wrong Man - Wrong Finger

A woman who had been married for just over a year was visiting her mother-in-law, who noticed that this woman was wearing her wedding ring on the wrong finger. When asked why this was, the daughter-in-law said, "For the first six months of our marriage I wore the ring on the right finger, but after that I started wearing the ring on the wrong finger."

"Why did you change?" her mother-in-law asked.

The young woman answered, "I changed my ring to the wrong finger when I realized that I was married to the wrong man."

Insulting Alligators

Never insult an alligator until you've crossed the river.

--Cordell Hull