

**December 6, 2009**  
**Bulletin # 49**

## ***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

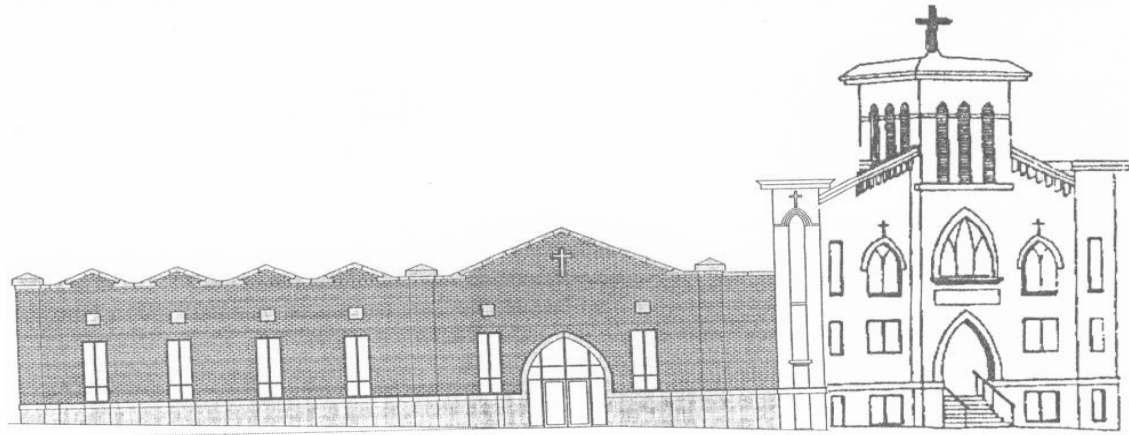
E-Mail: ololwv@Comcast.net • Web Site: www.ololwv.com

**Rev. Bakhos Chidiac (Pastor)**

Evelyn Ghaphery (Organist)

Charlotte Khourey & Thomasina Geimer (Secretaries)

### ***Birth of Saint John the Baptist and Immaculate Conception***



### ***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 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 3:30 p.m. & 1<sup>st</sup> 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, 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



- \***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.
- \***Hall Rental Fees:** Call the Church Office 304-233-1688.
- \***Parking:** Saturday & Sunday, both parking lots are for parishioners. Monday through Friday – park ONLY in the 3 ALLEY spaces.
- \*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.

## ***Gospel Reflection: Birth of St. John the Baptist***

*Readings: Gal 4:21-5:1 and Lk 1:57-66*

Today's Gospel contains two interesting points both connected intimately to the naming of this new baby. "**He is to be called John,**" says his mother Elizabeth. But how did she know that? Her husband, having spoken not a word in months, could not have told her. Women being illiterate in those times, he could not have written the name for her. Scripture does not record Elizabeth having been visited by an angel who told her. But she knew. The other is: once Zechariah confirmed his wife's response in writing - "**His name is John**" - his tongue was loosed. Why, or why then? He at once praised God. But wouldn't he have that if he'd been allowed to speak earlier? In fact, wasn't he already doing that without speaking?

As we ponder these points, we readily understand why "**Fear came over all their neighbors,**" and all wondered what would become of the child named John, because "**Indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.**"

## ***Christmas Reflection: Once Upon a Christmastime***

Once upon a Christmastime the angels sang with joy,  
to herald the coming of a precious Baby Boy.  
Their shouting filled the heavens and shook the mighty earth,  
and sent the shepherds searching for the place of his glorious birth.  
And when they found the manger and gazed upon his face,  
they knelt in adoration in that low and holy place.  
Oh, Father, fill me with the love that filled the earth that night,  
a love that reaches throughout the world, and fills it with Your light.

## ***Christmas Prayer: A Prayer for Giving***

Dear God,

As this Christmas season, please open my heart, may I learn to be a giver, not a taker; for only thus can I feel blessed. Make of me an instrument of Your peace, that peace might fill my world. May Your abundant mercy touch my life. May my heart so give and so receive as to expend to touch the stars. May I so learn to live with love, that I might know of heavenly bliss while still on earth. May the miracle of Christmas be a miracle in my heart. Amen

## ***Mass Intentions***

**This WEEKEND, December 5-6: Birth of John the Baptist**

### **Saturday, December 5**

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

**4:00 p.m.: Mass**

Cathy (Sharp) Howard (on her Birthday) by the Sengewalt Family

Special Prayer for Maya's success

### **Sunday, December 6 at 10:30 a.m.: Mass will be followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament**

Living & Deceased members of the Nicholas & Nimnoom Ghaphery Family & the David Abraham

Ghaphery Family by the Ghaphery Family

Deceased Family members of the Habib Khourey Family by Virginia Khourey Bryan

### **Weekday Masses**

**Monday, December 7:** No Mass. Pastor's Day Off

**Tuesday, December 8 at 5:00 p.m.:** **Immaculate Conception Feast Day: (Day of Obligation)**

Living & Deceased members of the Nicholas & Nimnoom Ghaphery Family & the David Abraham

Ghaphery Family by the Ghaphery Family

**Wednesday, December 9:** No Mass. Pastor's Day of vacation

**Thursday, December 10:**

Larry Gibbons by the OLOL Women Society

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

**Friday, December 11:**

Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL) & his special intentions  
Larry Gibbons by Eva Moffat (FL)

**NEXT WEEKEND, December 12-13: Revelation to Saint Joseph**

**Saturday, December 12 at 4:00 p.m.:**

Larry Gibbons by Mary Rose Kukula  
Jerry Werner by Bernard & Elizabeth Olako

**Sunday, December 13 at 10:30 a.m.:**

Dale Seidler Sr. by his wife Nettie & Family  
Larry Gibbons by Nettie Seidler

**Donate to the Church Maintenance Fund**

**Help with the Endowment Fund to Keep Our Church Open and Active (Total Raised: \$2,030.00)**

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. Deposit my donation in the Endowment Fund account designated to maintain and support the church. Also, I wish to be enrolled in the daily Mass intentions as a benefactor.)*

We thank the following individuals for their generous contribution to this Endowment Fund. They will be remembered in every Mass: *Bill & Mary Stees (\$250), Tom Ferris (\$325), Sylvia Long (\$100), Catherine Arthur (Memorial) (\$100), Women's Society Fundraising total (\$1087), Donation (\$67), Mary Custer (48), Irene & Paul Schuler (\$53),*

**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 18<sup>th</sup> 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***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
Sat. & Sun, Dec. 5 & 6	<b>Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament</b>
Tuesday, Dec. 8	<b>Immaculate Conception – Day of Obligation. Mass at 5:00 p.m.</b>
Thursday, December 10	<b>Bible Study – from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.</b> <b>Lebanese Language – from 6:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.</b>
Sat. & Sun., Dec. 12-13	<b>Christmas Cookie, Candy, etc., Exchange &amp; Sale</b>
Sunday, December 13	<b>Parish Children's Christmas Party – following Sunday Mass</b>
Sunday, December 13	<b>Christmas Poinsettia – <u>Deadline</u></b>
Sunday, December 20	<b>Donation of Non-Perishable Food – <u>Deadline</u></b>
Sunday, December 20	<b>Women's Society Gift Basket Drawing – at Fr. Bakhos' Anniversary Luncheon</b>
Sunday, December 20	<b>Fr. Bakhos' Anniversary to the Priesthood Luncheon – following Sunday Mass</b>
Sunday, December 27	<b>50/50 Monthly Raffle Drawing</b>

Friday, January 15

Cedar Club after Holiday Dinner – 6:30 p.m. - ?? at the Tikki Bar &amp; Restaurant



## Community Events

### **Immaculate Conception Feast Day** (Tuesday, December 8, Mass at 5:00 p.m.)

On the occasion of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which is a day of obligation, we will have a Mass at 5:00 p.m.

### **Christmas Cookie, Candy, etc., Sale & Exchange** (Sat.-Sun., Dec. 12-13)

Our parish's third Christmas Cookie, Candy, etc., Sale & Exchange has been scheduled for Saturday & Sunday, December 12 & 13. Here's how it works:

1--Make and bring extras of your favorite Christmas treats so that plenty will be available for sale.

2--**So your donated items will be ready for another person to enjoy and to avoid contamination, please plate or package them by the half dozen.**

3--You may then buy goodies that another person brings **OR**

4--You may choose to "exchange" half your treats for an equal amount that another person brings. (If you wish to take home 2 dozen treats, please bring 4 dozen – **half for you to exchange and half for others to buy**; if you want to take home 3 dozen, bring 6 dozen, etc.)

*Donated cookies or other treats may be dropped off beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>; however, those who wish to "exchange" half their cookies donated should plan to come between 10 and 11 a.m.*

Goodies remaining after the "exchange" are available for sale by the half dozen. Anyone can buy our treats (you do not have to bring anything to exchange). Just remember to come during the sale hours:

**Saturday, December 12, from 3:00-4:00 p.m. and immediately following the 4 p.m. Mass; and Sunday, December 13, following 10:30 Mass.**

Please make some goodies – any holiday treat will be welcomed: Lebanese specialty (Baklava, Mamouls, Sesame Twist Cookies, Namoura, Makaroons, Ghroubeh), Biscotti, Pizzelles, Nut Horns, Pecan Sandies, Thumbprint Cookies, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Peanut Butter Blossoms, Oatmeal Cookies, Raisin Cookies, Chocolate Peanut Butter Cookies, Shortbread Cookies, Russian Tea Cookies, Snicker Doodle Cookies, 7 Layer Bar Cookies, Anise Cookies, Feniki Cookies, Coconut Bon Bons, Truffles, Hard Tack Candy, Buckeyes, Fudge (any flavor), Nut Rolls, regular or mini-size quick breads with or without nuts (any kind), etc.

If you can prepare favorite goodies, please let us know so we can tempt people by listing the items. Remember more than one person can make the same item. *So far, donations this year will include: Buckeyes, Pecan Tassies, Pizzelles, ... ???...* Church office: 304-233-1688 or Charlotte: 304-277-3220.

### **Children's Christmas Party** (following Mass on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>)

The Women's Society invites all who attend Our Lady of Lebanon Church to bring their children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews to the Children's Christmas Party planned for Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, following 10:30 a.m. Mass. Santa will come to the party to visit with each child.

### **Christmas Poinsettias** (Deadline: Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>)

Every Christmas our church looks beautiful when decorated with poinsettias grown by Nikki's Garden Center, \$25.00 each. Your generosity contributes to the beauty of the church.

#### **2009 Christmas Poinsettias are offered in Memory of:**

\$25 Louise N. & Louis H. Khourey Sr. & Gladys Howard by Lou, Charlotte Khourey & family

\$25 Fred Oser by Dolores Oser

\$25 Freddie Oser by Dolores Oser

\$25 Ron Canestraro by the Oser family

\$25 The deceased members of the Oser & Gongola families

\$25 In honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Dolores Oser

\$30 For a Special Intention by "a Friend"

\$25 John F. Kukula by his wife Mary Rose Kukula & family

- \$25 *Helen Fielding by her husband Don Fielding (FL)*  
 \$25 *Joseph, Victoria & Minnie John by Marge & Lou John*  
 \$25 *Gloria & John J. John by Marge & Lou John*  
 \$25 *Marian & John Keegan by Marge & Lou John*  
 \$25 *Mary K. Ferris by her husband Tom & her daughter Denise*  
 \$25 *Ed Shia & Helen Mattes by Betty Shia*  
 \$25 *Arthur & Mark Long by Sylvia Long*  
 \$25 *Suzanne Linton by her husband Mike Linton*  
 \$25 *Frances Linton by her son Mike Linton*  
 \$25 *Parents of Bob & Virginia Pockl by Bob & Virginia Pockl*  
 \$25 *Barkett & Sadie Coury by Lucille Gibbons*  
 \$25 *George & Rose Fadoul by the family*  
 \$25 *For the Habdo & Dougherty Families by Bill & Carol Dougherty*  
 \$25 *Mike Sobota Sr. by his wife Barbara Sobota*  
 \$25 *Helen Bauerle & John & Sophie & Steve Olako by Bernard & Elizabeth Olako*  
 \$25 *Deceased members of the McCutcheon family by Peggy Justice & Ann Lee Bauduin*  
 \$25 *Deceased members of the Jalad Family by the Schuler family*  
 \$25 *Deceased members of the Schlog & Saseen Families by Bob & Fran Saseen*  
 \$25 *Deceased of the Shiben & McFarland Families by John & Dee Shiben*  
 \$25 *Joseph A. Saseen by Joe & Susie Saseen*  
 \$25 *Gloria & John John (parents) by daughter Dianne John Harrell (NC)*  
 \$25 *Family members of Constantine & Anna Shia by Rose Vargo*  
 \$25 *Camille & Mimi Rohanna Family members by the family*  
 \$25 *Nimon & Mariam Joseph Family by the family*  
 \$25 *Deceased of the Wakim Family & John Saab by Blanche Wakim*  
 \$25 *John & Millie Saab by the Family*

### ***Christmas Barrel of Non-perishable Food*** (Deadline: December 20<sup>th</sup>)

A barrel has been placed at the upper lobby where we enter the Church for non-perishable food items to be given to those who are in need this Christmas Season. Our church will give a monetary gift from the "poor box" donations along with the food items to families with children. Please be generous if you can share your blessings.

### ***Fr. Bakhos' 18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to Priesthood Luncheon*** (Sun., Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>)

Plan to join the members of the Women's Society at a luncheon to honor Fr. Bakhos' 18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the Priesthood on Sunday, December 20, after Mass. (*He was ordained on December 21, 1991.*) May we continue to be blessed with many more years of his leadership as our pastor. Look for more information in upcoming bulletins.

### ***Women's Society Gift Basket Raffle*** (Drawing on Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>)

The Women's Society's next Gift Basket Raffle drawing will be held on Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, at the luncheon to honor Fr. Bakhos' anniversary to the priesthood. The "Wine & More for the Holidays" Gift Basket includes one bottle of the following wines: Bolla Chianti & Valpolicello; Oak Leaf Shiraz & Merlot; Sutter Home White Zinfandel; Lindemans Cabernet Sauvignon; a four-bottle wine rack; two Italian-made wine goblets; a cheese cutting board, with cleaver, knife, & cheese plane – for Christmas & New Year's joy.

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 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. Tickets are available in our weekly bulletin and at the entrance to the church at that time also.

Buy or sell the tickets, and return the completed stubs as soon as possible in the weekly collection (note Gift Basket Raffle on "Memo" line of your check and front of envelope) or mail to: Our Lady of Lebanon Church, 2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. Congratulations to October's winner - Richard Ryncartz.

## ***2009 Christmas & New Year Schedule***

Monday, December 21:

5:00 p.m.: **Mass followed by Christmas Novena** (*Rosary starts 20 minutes before Mass*)

Tuesday, December 22:

5:00 p.m.: **Mass followed by Christmas Novena** (*Rosary starts 20 minutes before Mass*)

Wednesday, December 23:

5:00 p.m.: **Mass followed by Christmas Novena** (*Rosary starts 20 minutes before Mass*)

**Thursday, December 24: Christmas Eve:**

4:00 p.m.: **Christmas Children's Mass.** (Choir will sing)

10:00 p.m.: **Christmas Midnight Mass.** (Choir will sing)

**Friday, December 25: Christmas Day: (Day of Obligation)**

10:30 a.m.: **Christmas Day Mass.** (No choir)

**Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup>: New Year's Eve:**

5:00 p.m.: **New Year's Eve Mass.** (No Midnight Mass)

**Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010: New Year's Day: (Day of Obligation)**

10:30 a.m.: **New Year's Day Mass**

***Women's Society Monthly 50/50 Raffle*** (*Drawing: Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>*)

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 **December 50/50 Raffle Tickets**, which can be found at the church entrance and in the Weekly Church Bulletins, will take place in the Cedar Hall after Mass on **Sunday, December 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 Irene Schuler who won the December prize of \$53 and donated it to the Endowment Fund for the maintenance of our church.

***40-Day Mass of John Saab*** (*Saturday, January 2, 2010*)

The 40-Day Mass Memorial for John Saab of Morgantown will be celebrated at our church on Saturday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010. His family will attend the Mass.

***Cedar Club "After Holiday Dinner"*** (*Friday, January 15, at Tikki Bar Restaurant*)

The Cedar Club "After Holiday Dinner" starts at 6:30 p.m. at the Tikki Bar & Restaurant. Everyone is welcome. Wear your Hawaiian attire and order from the menu – pay as you go. Reservations required; call Nini 304-243-0057 or Allison at 304-242-6853.

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

**Please Remember Those Hospitalized Recently In Your Prayers:**

Barb Sobota, Mary Custer, Joe Gonot, Dick Shiben (brother of John), Bob Dougherty (brother of Bill), Edith Fahey,

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

Frank Lish, Dolores Oser, Rosella Saseen, Sam Elias, Justin Frenn, Gary West, Louis John, Laura Wellman, Virginia Khourey Bryan (aunt of Lou Khourey in Toledo, OH), Manell Brice (Arlington, VA), Rose Mary Bris-Roybal (Albuquerque, NM), Pat & John Vawter (mother & brother of Dr. Rob Vawter)

## *Happy Birthday*

December 7:	Christina Committee
December 12:	Lou Khourey
December 14:	Joe Betras, Donnie Musilli
December 15:	Lottie Elwartoski
December 18:	Ronni Burns
December 20:	Julia Tappe, Emily Stephens
December 21:	Domenique George
December 22:	Millet C. Fadoul

## *Your Church Support Last Week*

1,249	Collection
58	Candles
299	Utilities
20	Parking
400	Donation to Church
150	Donations for Poor Families
50	Hall Rental
125	Christmas Flowers
53	Reimbursement
70	Christmas Dinner Party
240	Bulletin Ads
2,714	Total. <i>May God reward you many fold</i>

## *What's New?*

### ***Many Thanks***

Many Thanks to Mrs. P. Bargiel Allen of Wheeling for donating \$50.00 toward the Poor Families of the parish in memory of her two sisters: Anna and Frances. May your good deeds shine like the sun in heaven.

### ***Christmas Party Thanks & Congratulations***

Thanks to each of the men and women of our parish who jumped in to help make our Parish Christmas Dinner and Party such a wonderful event. Whether you donated an item, seated people, sold raffle tickets, dressed the salads, served salads to the tables, served at the buffet, served at the beverage bar, helped bus the tables, helped clean up the silverware, tables and kitchen, or helped in another way, each of you did your part to enhance the evening. Once again, George Suhon did a terrific job entertaining everyone and getting them to join in the dancing. All the food was from "As You Like It," Bob Bailey's catering business, and it was delicious. If you want him cater for you call: 304-242-2811.

Our winner of \$60 for the evening 50/50 was Blanche Wakim. Door Prize winners were: Diane Baker, Ann Bauduin, Bill Blazier, Leo Bleifus, Sue Brubach, Carol Dougherty, Susie Fadoul, Kim Gibbons, Lucille Gibbons, Anna Jalad, Peggy Justice, Sharon McCutcheon, Bruce McNeil, Lillian Siebieda, Maya Stokes, Rita Strawn, Emily Vince and Jackie Wach. Congratulations to each of you.

### ***Poor Box***

Please consider sharing your blessings with the brothers and sisters of Christ. 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. Half of the money from that box is deposited in our "Parish Families Assistance Fund" and the other half is given to the nun at the Catholic Charity on 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Wheeling to be used for the poor and homeless. May your good deeds toward the brothers and sisters of Christ shine in the kingdom of God.

## *Around Us*

### ***Pierogi Sale*** (*Orders accepted until December 6*)

What: Precooked Homemade Potato & Cheese Pierogi  
Where: St. John Church, Benwood  
Cost: \$6.00 per dozen. Information: 304-232-7558

## ***Maronites = Catholics of the East***

### ***Lebanon in the Holy Scriptures (11)***

**By Cornelia B. Horn**

Ph. D. candidate in Early Christian Studies Program, The Catholic University of America

#### **D. Lebanon and the Temple**

Vermes showed that the Palestinian haggadah saw a connection between Lebanon and the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. Yohanan ben Zakkai, the last survivor of the Great Sanhedrin, who managed to escape the attack and siege of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus, reinterpreted two prophetic passages, Isaiah 10:34 and Zechariah 11:1 as referring to the catastrophe.

Yohanan ben Zakkai's reinterpretation of Zechariah 11:1 is recounted in Yoma 39b as follows: "Our masters taught: Forty years before the destruction of the Sanctuary . . . its doors opened of themselves, and remained open until Yohanan ben Zakkai rebuked them, saying, 'O Temple, Temple, why are you afraid? I know that finally you will be destroyed. Zechariah son of Iddo has already prophesied concerning you: Open, O Lebanon, your doors, and let the fire devour your cedars.'"

Using Isaiah 10:34 and reinterpreting it, Yohanan ben Zakkai also predicted to Vespasian that he would become emperor of the Romans, because Lebanon, i.e., the Temple, could only be destroyed by a king.

The following story can be found in the Palestinian haggadah: "Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai went forward among the soldiers of Vespasian and asked them: 'Where is the king?' They went to tell him: 'A Jew desires to greet you.' He replied to them: 'Let him come.' When he was in his presence, he said to him: 'Vive Domine Imperator!' [i.e., May you live, Lord Caesar!].

Vespasian said to him: 'You give me a royal greeting although I am not king. Should the king hear this, he would kill me.' Yohanan answered: 'If you are not yet king, you shall be later. Indeed, this Temple shall not be destroyed except by a king, for it is written, "And Lebanon shall fall by the majestic one.'"

It is less relevant here that Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai's quote of Isaiah 10:34 does not correspond exactly with the version of the verse of Isaiah as found in the present text of the Hebrew Bible. It may be part of ben Zakkai's reinterpretation, or a form of the verse as found in extra-biblical traditions.

The Habakkuk Commentary of Qumran contains a disconcerting exegesis of the word "Lebanon" in connection with Habakkuk 2:17. Habakkuk Commentary 12.3-4 states that "Lebanon is the Council of the Community, and the beasts are the Simple of Judah." Vermes was able to explain that this identification of "Lebanon" with the "Council of the Community" had its roots in the interpretation of "Lebanon" as "Temple," which had become a tradition in Jewish exegesis before 200 BC.

--To be continued

## ***Christmas Story: The Origins of the Christmas Crib***

It happened in the third year before his death that St. Francis decided, in order to arouse devotion, to celebrate at Greccio with the greatest possible solemnity the memory of the birth of the Child Jesus.

So that this would not be considered a type of novelty, he petitioned for and obtained permission from the Supreme Pontiff.

He had a crib prepared, hay carried in and an ox and an ass led to the place. The friars are summoned, the people come, the forest resounds with their voices and that venerable night is rendered brilliant and solemn by a multitude of bright lights and by resonant and harmonious hymns of praise. The man of God stands before the crib, filled with affection, bathed in tears and overflowing with joy.

A solemn Mass is celebrated over the crib, with Francis as deacon chanting the holy Gospel. Then he preaches to the people standing about concerning the birth of the poor King, whom, when he wished to name him, he called in his tender love, the Child of Bethlehem.

A certain virtuous and truthful knight, Sir John of Greccio, who had abandoned worldly military activity out of love of Christ and had become an intimate friend of the man of God, claimed that he saw a beautiful little boy asleep in the crib and that the blessed father Francis embraced it in both of his arms and seemed to wake it from sleep.

Not only does the holiness of the witness make credible this vision of the devout knight, but also the truth it expresses proves its validity and the subsequent miracles confirm it. For Francis' example when considered by the world is capable of arousing the hearts of those who are sluggish in the faith of Christ.

The hay from the crib was kept by the people and miraculously cured sick animals and drove away different kinds of pestilence.

Thus God glorified his servant in every way and demonstrated the efficacy of his holy prayer by the evident signs of wonderful miracles.

## *Joke (570)*

### *Having Mom Over for Dinner*

Brian invited his mother over for dinner. During the course of the meal, Brian's mother couldn't help but notice how beautiful Brian's roommate, Jennifer, was. Brian's Mom had long been suspicious of the platonic relationship between Brian and Jennifer, and this had only made her more curious.

Over the course of the evening, she started to wonder if there was more between Brian and Jennifer than met the eye. Reading his mom's thoughts, Brian volunteered, 'I know what you must be thinking, but I assure you, Jennifer and I are just roommates.'

About a week later, Jennifer came to Brian saying, 'Ever since your mother came to dinner, I've been unable to find the beautiful silver gravy ladle. You don't suppose she took it, do you?' Brian said, 'Well, I doubt it, but I'll send her an e-mail just to be sure.' So he sat down and wrote:

Dear Mom,

I'm not saying that you 'did' take the gravy ladle from the house, I'm not saying that you 'did not' take the gravy ladle. But the fact remains that one has been missing ever since you were here for dinner.

--Love, Brian

Several days later, Brian received an email back from his mother that read:

Dear Son,

I'm not saying that you 'do' sleep with Jennifer, I'm not saying that you 'do not' sleep with Jennifer. But the fact remains that if Jennifer is sleeping in her own bed, she would have found the gravy ladle by now.

--Love, Mom

LESSON OF THE DAY – NEVER LIE TO YOUR MOTHER!

### *California Statehood*

Do you know what happened this week back in 1850, 159 years ago? California became a state. The State had no electricity. The State had no money. Almost everyone spoke Spanish. There were gunfights in the streets. So basically, it was like California today; except women had real breasts and men didn't hold hands.

### *Acts 2:38*

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services, when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: 'Stop! Acts 2:38!' (Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven.)

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done. As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.'

'Scripture?' replied the burglar. 'She said she had an Ax and Two 38's!'

### *Quick Laughs*

--A man, shocked by how his buddy is dressed, asks him, "How long have you been wearing that bra?" The friend replies, "Ever since my wife found it in the glove compartment."

--A grandmother is watching her grandchild playing on the beach when a huge wave takes him out to sea. She pleads, 'Please, God, save my grandson. I beg of you, bring him back.' With that, a big wave washed the boy back onto the beach. The grandmother looks up to heaven and says, 'He had a hat!'"