

Our Lady of Lebanon Church

(Maronite Catholic Rite)

2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

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

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

New Year 2010

*Happy New Year
With Love and Prayers
from all of us*

Pastor: Rev. Bakhos Chidiac

Secretaries: Charlotte Kourey & Thomasina Geimer

Organist: Evelyn Ghaphery

**Choir Members: Rita Strawn, Lou Kourey, Allison Duffy,
Dr. Rob Vawter, Shirley George, George Thomas, Ted Olinski,
Earl Duffy, Jody & Abbie Seabright, Tracey Dierkes**

**Parish Council Members: Lou Kourey, Linda Duffy,
Tom George, P.J. Lenz, and Carol Dougherty**

Altar Servers: Sam Elias, Bob Kupchak, Bob Sengewalt & Mike Linton

Altar Boys: Louie Kourey & Dalton Haas

Members of the Women Society & President: Sandra Dusick

Members of the Cedar Club & President: Linda Duffy

Bulletin Coordinator: Julia Tappe

New Year's Best Wishes

May New Year's Eve find you seated around the table, together with your beloved family and cherished friends. May you find the food better, the environment quieter, the cost much cheaper, and the pleasure much more fulfilling than anything else you might ordinarily do that night.

May you get a clean bill of health from your dentist, your cardiologist, your gastro-enterologist, your urologist, your proctologist, your podiatrist, your psychiatrist, your plumber and the IRS

May your hair, your teeth, your face-lift, your ABS and your stocks not fall; and may your blood pressure, your triglycerides, your cholesterol, your white blood count and your mortgage interest not rise.

May what you see in the mirror delight you, and what others see in you delight them. May someone love you enough to forgive your faults, be blind to your blemishes, and tell the world about your virtues.

May the telemarketers wait to make their sales calls until you finish dinner, may the commercials on TV not be louder than the program you have been watching, and may your check book and your budget balance – and include generous amounts for charity.

May you remember to say "I love you" at least once a day to your spouse, your child, your parent, and your siblings; but not to your nurse, your secretary, your masseuse, your hairdresser, your tattoo artist or your tennis instructor.

And may we live in a world at peace and with the awareness of God's love in every sunset, every flower's unfolding petals, every baby's smile, every lover's kiss, and every wonderful, astonishing, miraculous beat of our heart.

Gospel Reflection

Heb 7:11-19 and Lk 2:21-24

And behold there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. Not alone from angels and prophets, from shepherds and parents, do the Children of the Lord receive testimony, but also from elders and from the just. Every age and either sex, and the wondrous things that happened to them, add to our faith: a virgin has a child, she that was sterile brings forth, the dumb speak Elizabeth prophesies, the Magi adore, he that was enclosed in the womb exults, the widow confesses to the Lord, the just man awaits him; and he is truly a just man, who was seeking, not his own, but the consolation of his people, for himself desiring only that he be freed from the bonds of earthly infirmity, waiting however to look upon the One that was promised; for he knew that blessed are the eyes that would see him. Now, he says, You may dismiss your servant!

Behold the just man, who is as it were shut up in the prison of this earthly body, desires to be set free, that he may begin to be with Christ; for to be dissolved and to be with Christ is far more perfect. He then that desires to be free, let him come to Jerusalem, let him look for the anointed of the Lord, let him receive in his hands the Word of God, and let him embrace it with the arms of his faith. Then let him be dismissed; as he sees not death who has looked upon the Life.

See how at the birth of the lord his grace is poured out on all men; and prophecy, denied to the unbelieving, is given to the just. Thus Simeon prophesies that the Lord Jesus Christ is come, and for the fall and for the resurrection of many, that he may disclose the payment of just and unjust; that he the true and just Judge may decree reward or punishment, according to the quality of our deeds.

--St Ambrose

Happy New Year from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners and Special Friends,

At the beginning of this New Year 2010, I would like you to focus on your relationship with the Lord and the church. The church has been the source of sanctification for many holy people and saints. We need the Lord at all times not only when we get sick or in trouble. And we need the church to stay clean, well maintained and supported financially so that we feel proud when we have baptisms, confirmations, marriages, or burial services for our family members. The church reflects every parishioner's face as if visitors were looking in a mirror and seeing each of you. Each of you needs to continue to do whatever you can to keep our church and our Cedar Hall beautiful and in good shape. I am confident that every one of us feels the miracle of being able to finish our new \$1.7 million dollar facility without incurring any debt. Keep the good work up.

I would like to take a moment to address all wives and mothers: Ladies, give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God. The religious life and the faith of your husband and children is your responsibility. When you get up in the morning and prepare yourself to go to church to attend Mass, your husband and children would get up also and go with you. If they remain lazy and asleep, don't be afraid to have a few words with them. Tell them that six days are for work and one day is for the Lord. The family that prays together stays together. Pray for your good health and success, invite your pastor to meet your family and talk to them. And remember that the more you thank the Lord, the more His graces and blessings remain in your house. And when you turn your back to the Lord, pray that He treats you not as you deserve but according to His mercy.

I chose these Best Wishes for you for 2010:

May peace break into your house and may thieves come to steal your debts.

May the pockets of your jeans become a magnet for \$200 bills.

May love stick to your face like Vaseline and may laughter assault your lips!

May happiness slap you across the face and may your tears be that of joy.

May the problems you had forget your home address!

In simple words, May 2010 be the best year of your life!!! --Fr. Bakhos

Mass Intentions

NEXT WEEKEND, January 2-3: Finding of Jesus in the Temple

Saturday, January 2:

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

At 4:00 p.m.: 40-Day Mass for John Saab (of Morgantown) by his Family

The Henning & Bott Families by Don & Roberta Henning

Sunday, January 3 at 10:30 a.m.: Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament after Mass

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

Ghaphery Family by the Ghaphery Family

--Nicholas Abraham Ghaphery Sr. by the Ghaphery Family

Weekday Masses

Monday, January 4: No Mass. Pastor's Day Off

Tuesday, January 5 at 5:30 p.m.: Eve Epiphany of Our Lord (Day of Obligation)

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

Blake Halverson grandson of Joe Ann Lee Bauduin by his grandparents

Wednesday, January 6 at 5:30 p.m.: Epiphany of Our Lord (Day of Obligation)

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

Adib & Sadie Chidiac (parents) & Mona Chidiac (sister) by Fr. Bakhos

Thursday, January 7 at Noon:

Tommy Corey (St. Paul, MN) by Bob Hill
Edward & Aimee Padden by Tom & Nancy Padden & Family

Friday, January 8 at Noon:

Tommy Corey (St. Paul, MN) by Bob Hill
Edward & Aimee Padden by Tom & Nancy Padden & Family

NEXT WEEKEND, January 9-10: First Sunday after Epiphany**Saturday, January 9 at 4:00 p.m.:**

Larry Gibbons by Sue & Jim Brubach
Special Intention

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

Nancepe Saseen (on his Anniversary) by his daughter Rosella Saseen
Kenneth Hill by his wife Joan Hill

Donate to the Church Maintenance Fund**Help with the Endowment Fund to Keep Our Church Open and Active. (Total Raised: \$3,283.00)**

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.) Many thanks to December donors: Irene & Paul Schuler (\$53), A Friend (\$50), Women Society (\$180 –Dec. gift basket & \$23 –Dec.50/50), Lou & Charlotte Khourey (\$1,000),

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.

Many Thanks to December donors: Dennis Albaugh (\$100),

Our Lady of Lebanon Community Calendar

Date	Event
Tue. & Wed., Jan. 5 & 6	Epiphany of Our Lord – Holy Day of Obligation – Masses at 5:30 p.m.
Monday, January 11, 2010	Cedar Club Meeting – 7:00 p.m. in the old basement hall
Friday, January 15, 2010	Cedar Club after Holiday Dinner – 6:30 p.m.-??at the Tikki Bar & Restaurant
Sunday, January 24, 2010	Women’s Society Meeting – following Sunday Mass
Sunday, January 31, 2010	50/50 Monthly Raffle Drawing – following Sunday Mass
Sat., Feb. 6–Fri., Feb. 12	Week of Faithful Departed Masses
Thurs., February 11, 2010	Reverse Raffle & Dinner – cocktails & hors d’oeuvres at 6 & Dinner at 7 p.m.
Monday, February 15	Ash Monday
Wed. & Thur., Feb. 24 & 25	Soup & Hoagie Sale – 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.



Community Events

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 2nd, 2010. His family will attend the Mass.

Epiphany of Our Lord (Tuesday and Wednesday, January 5 & 6)

Epiphany which means the Baptism of Jesus at the Jordan River is a Holy Day of Obligation. During Epiphany we bless the Holy Water and distribute bottles to the congregation. See Mass time above. Please try to make time to attend Mass on one of these days and make a great start for the new year.

Cedar Club Meeting (Monday, January 11, in old basement hall)

The next Cedar Club meeting is on at 7 p.m. in the old hall. Try to attend. Hostesses will be Alison Duffy & Nini Miller.

Maronite Clergy Retreat (January 11 to 15, 2010)

Fr. Bakhos will attend the Maronite clergy retreat in Phoenix, Arizona, so no masses will be scheduled from Monday, January 11th to Friday, January 15th.

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.

Women's Society Meeting (Sunday, January 24th, after Mass)

Plan to join the Women's Society for their next meeting scheduled for Sunday, January 24th, after Mass. We will complete our plans for the upcoming events.

Women's Society Monthly 50/50 Raffle (Drawing: Sunday, January 31)

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 next drawing from entries received for the **January 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, January 31**.

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 L.B. Thomas who won the December prize.

Week of the Faithful Departed (Saturday, February 6th, to Friday, February 12th)

It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead. Think of how anxious you'll be to be remembered in the Masses and prayers of your relatives and friends when you die. All of us hope and pray that we'll never be forgotten and that our loved ones will pray to God for us every day. Your deceased relatives and friends are just as anxious for you to offer for them a Mass which is the best offering pleasing to God the Father because it is the pure Body and Blood of His Son. They are depending upon God's mercy and your good works to bring about their union with the Holy Trinity, our Blessed Mother and all the saints. The Church is here to remind you to pray for your parents and beloved ones who are deceased. Remember them and pray for them, so that your children and friends will pray for you after your death. You can be sure that your prayers and your

sacrifices for the dead will be rewarded when they join the Community of Saints and speak to God in your behalf. Please complete the attached **Mass Form** and return it via the collection basket.

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

Deceased family members of Fr. Bakhos Chidiac

Deceased members of the Habib Khourey family by Virginia Khourey Bryan

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

Deceased members of Kay Garvey Family by Kay Garvey

Deceased family members of Thomasina Geimer

Second Maronite Reverse Raffle Dinner (Thursday, February 11, 2010)

Our 2st Maronite Reverse Raffle and Dinner is scheduled for Thursday, February 11, 2010, 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. (each dinner purchase includes 2 drink coupons). Come and experience the excitement of the night. Everyone who attended last year really enjoyed the event – especially those who always work at our events. They were able to enjoy the event while being waited upon by the courteous, efficient staff at the Wheeling Country Club.

Winners need not be present. Plan now to attend.

Deadline to purchase tickets is: Sunday, February 7, 2010. Costs are:

\$ 50.00 1 Raffle Ticket **only**

\$ 75.00 1 Raffle Ticket & 1 Dinner (with 2 drink coupons)

\$100.00 1 Raffle Ticket & 2 Dinners (with 2 drink coupons for each dinner)

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

Linda Duffy at 304-242-6853 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, “Attention: Reverse Raffle”

2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

Soup & Hoagie Sale (Wed. & Thur., Feb. 24th & 25th, from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.)

Chase away the winter blues and take a break from cooking! The ladies of Our Lady of Lebanon have scheduled a **Soup and Hoagie Sale** on Wednesday and Thursday, February 24th and 25th, from 10:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. 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 freeze to enjoy another day. We will also have an assortment of desserts (*cake, pie, brownies, cookies, Lebanese treat, etc.*) available from our **Bake Sale Table** for you to take home to enjoy them with your soup and hoagies. (Donors are asked to bring desserts Tuesday, February 23rd, between 9:00 a.m. and Noon or on Wednesday or Thursday, February 24th and 25th, between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m.)

Soups will be available by the quart (32 oz. container) or by the pint (16 oz. container).

The famous hoagie sandwiches made by Don Henning, retired owner of Don's Corner Market, will include (1) *Ham & Swiss Hoagie*, (2) *Italian Hoagie* and (3) *Turkey & Cheese Hoagie*

Men and women of the parish can help make this sale a success by sharing your time, talents and treasure. Call the office at 304-233-1688 to volunteer.

(1) **Volunteer to cook and donate your favorite soup;** (2) **Volunteer to make and donate a dessert** for our **Bake Sale Table;** (3) **Volunteer Tuesday, February 23, to prep ingredients for the hoagies** from 9 a.m. to Noon; (4) **Volunteer Wednesday or Thursday, Feb. 24th or 25th, during the sale:** 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; (5) **Distribute or post flyers** announcing our event; (6) **Purchase some** of Don's delicious, famous Hoagies, some of our scrumptious homemade soups and/or some of our mouth-watering desserts from our Bake Sale Table; (7) **Get orders** from your friends, neighbors and co-workers

Look for more information and order forms in future bulletins.

Women's Society Gift Basket Raffle *(Next Drawing at our 2010 St. Maron Dinner)*

The Women's Society's next Gift Basket Raffle drawing will be held at our 2010 St. Maron Dinner which has yet to be scheduled. The "Wine and Chocolate" Gift Basket will include various wine and chocolates. (NOTE: Ladies, if you have an item to donate, please bring it to Carol as soon as possible so the basket can be displayed as soon as she can assemble it.)

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 December's winner – Peggy Justice.

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List

Please Remember Those Hospitalized Recently In Your Prayers:

Lottie Elwartoski, Larry Breiding, Barb Sobota, Josephine Joseph, Theresa Snedeker,

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

Dolores Palotay, Charles Gibbons, Mary Custer, Bob Dougherty (brother of Bill), Edith Fahey, 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

January 1: Nancy Joseph
 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 22: Nick Bedway
 January 23: Dale Seidler Jr., Lisa Haas
 January 26: Chris DeMuth
 January 28: Nikki Popovich
 January 29: Sandra Dusick

Your Church Support Last Week

\$3,940	Collection
334	Candles
321	Utilities
15	Fundraising
120	Ads
320	Reimbursement
5,175	Donation to Church
1,073	Donation (Endowment Fund)
100	Donation (to Women Society)
\$11,398.00	Total. <i>May God reward you many fold</i>

What's New?

In our Mailbox

Fr. Bakhos lost this year his friend farmer, Chuck Ferrell of Dallas Pike. During his Eulogy, all who were present had tears in their eyes. His brother Garry and his wife wrote this note to Fr. Bakhos. This amount will be used to paint the altar. A plaque will be affixed in memory of Chuck.

“Dear Fr Bakhos,

We are giving you this gift (\$4,000) in memory of my brother Chuck. We thank you for being his friend. The love and friendship you two shared was very special. We would like you to use this gift for what ever your church might need. We thank you for all the prayers and support. You may hunt or visit anytime you want. All our love, your friends, Garry and Pauline Ferrell.”

Thanks to the Many Kind and Caring Parishioners Who Help

With appreciation and gratitude to the wonderful ladies and gentlemen who help out at our Mercy Meals. No matter when you call them, they drop everything and come to assist in this very trying time – hopefully, to ease the burdens of the bereaved. These events not only include ordering the proper amount of food and beverages, but it involves setting up the Cedar Hall for the service, preparing the salads and desserts, serving the meal at the buffet and cleaning up after the event. There are times when some have other commitments, but we always have enough people to do the job. Thank God for every one of them.

Do You Need Lebanese Citizenship?

Lebanese citizenship for yourself and your family members, please contact Fr. Bakhos for details by calling him at 304-233-1688 If you were born in the USA and your parents were originally from Lebanon and you want to obtain a

Parishioner Profile: Sandra Dusick

“Parishioner Profile,” written by Carol Dougherty, is a feature in our Weekly Bulletin planned for publication approximately once-a-month. It will introduce one or more of our parishioners and include their life’s reflections, memories, etc. – each as unique as the individual. Please allow yourself to be interviewed when called upon by Carol so others may get to know you better.

Our January “Parishioner Profile” is about our much beloved Sandra Dusick. Sandra was born in Wheeling to John and Sally (Jacobs) Dusick. She is the youngest of five children. There were three girls: Shirley, Patty (who tragically passed away at the age of fourteen) and Sandra; and there were also two boys: John Jr., and Don. Sandra and her sister Shirley Dietz are the only surviving members of the children. Shirley lives in Wheeling and is the mother of four boys and one girl. John Jr. had two daughters; and Don had two sons. She says there are many grand nieces and nephews. Sandra attended school here at Our Lady of Lebanon until it closed. She then went to Cathedral Grade School and then on to graduate from St. Joseph’s Academy.

After high school, Sandra went to work at Saseen’s Restaurant as a short order Cook and continued there for more than thirty years. She jokingly asked for a chef’s hat but Lou Saseen told her that if he gave her one, he would have to raise her salary. Travel is one thing that she enjoys. She belongs to a travel group called Opals. Among the many places she has visited are Hawaii and Cape May. She also takes many day trips and recently returned from the Amish Country. Another of her interests is meeting every month for dinner with eleven ladies with which she attended grade school. They enjoy trying the different restaurants. One regret she has is that she cannot have a dog because living on the sixth floor makes it too difficult. She remembers that as a child she always had a canine companion. When asked what her hobby was, she said, “Working for Fr. Bakhos.” In addition to helping at all current events, she has helped at every event that our church has held since the 1950’s when, as a teenager, she belonged to the Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality. One day recently, after helping at an event, Father Bakhos treated Sandra and a few other helpers to a trout dinner – ones that he had caught. He was teasing Sandra and asked her who she would get her fish from when he leaves. Without missing a beat, she replied, “Coleman’s.” Sandra has been president of Our Lady of Lebanon Women’s Society for so long that she forgets exactly how long that it has been. We won’t let her leave the position. Our pet name for her is “The Pink Bunny,” because she keeps on going and going. When the word dedication comes to mind, I think of Sandra; when the word loyalty comes up, I think of Sandra; when I think of the definition of a very good friend, I think of Sandra. She is one of a kind and hopefully we will be able to enjoy pleasant times with her for many years to come.

New Year Resolutions

New Year's Day is the time for resolutions. It's the time when we resolve to make changes so that things will not be as they were before. So, in this tradition, I would like to suggest three resolutions for a happy and blessed New Year. I call them "Pull back," "Pick up," and "Put down."

First: Pull back.

Dr. Gerald Jampolsky wrote a book a few years ago entitled, *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*. In that book he asks this question: "Have you ever given yourself the opportunity of going through just one day concentrating on totally accepting everyone and making no judgments?" He goes on to say, "Everything we think or say reacts on us like a boomerang. When we send out judgment, in the form of criticism, fury, or other attack-thoughts, they come back to us. When we send out only love, it comes back to us."

So I suggest this. Try this once a month: for one day, suspend all judgments. Spend one day of acceptance. Pull back from judging, and just look and accept. See the difference it makes in your life. Pull back.

Second: Pick up.

Pick up on what others have started. Some of you have known losses. You've lost spouses, you've lost children, you've lost relationships, you've lost health, you've lost equilibrium. You name it -there are losses scattered all over the landscape. But you have your choice about these losses. Your choice is either to turn in on yourself and forever cry "woe is me," or you can pick up on those who turn tragedy into discipleship. Remember the story of a little Japanese girl who was one of those kids who was caught in the bombing of Hiroshima, and who saw her mother and father and her family destroyed before her; and she herself had severe radiation burns.

She was in a hospital, fundamentally waiting to die, and she knew she didn't have long. But instead of bemoaning the tragedy, she said: "This can never happen again to people. People can't be this cruel to one another. So each day I'm going to cut out and make a white crane, and I'm going to send it to somebody and ask them to be a disciple for peace." Well, she did that every day for 683 days and then she died. And those who knew this little girl had their choice. They could be so outraged over the bombings that they'd be consumed by a desire to go out and bomb the rest of the world in revenge, or they could pick up on what she started, and they did. And so they made a 684th white crane, and a 685th, and so on ad infinitum, and those white cranes still go throughout the world saying that life can be better.

Instead of getting angry and blowing up the world, do something to make life better: say "no" to drugs, say "no" to sexual promiscuity. Instead of only being angry at drunk drivers, join M.A.D.D., Mothers Against Drunk Driving. There are homeless people to house, there are hungry people to feed. There are cranes to be cut out and sent. It's a good resolution, isn't it? Pick up on what others have done. Continue the decent people's love and spirit which will turn the world around.

Third: Put down.

Put down last year's garbage. A woman relates this story: I was telling my new workplace friend, Alice, about how awful my former boss had been, when she laughed and said, "So forget him. Why not just enjoy it here?" Then she went on to tell me a little story about herself.

I'm reminded of the time I moved a few years ago, she began. I was making enough money to have a professional mover pack for me, and when he asked what I wanted him to pack, I just waved my arm and said "Everything!" So when I got to my new place, I saw that he had taken me literally. Along with my furniture he had packed up all my trash bins as well, and there I was in my beautiful new place with all my old garbage, including old newspapers, empty ketchup bottles, and grapefruit peels! It's a little story, all right, but it packs a big meaning. You have a beautiful New Year ahead of you. Leave the emotional garbage behind.

So, there you are. Three succinct New Year's resolutions: Pull back. Pick up. Put down. Pull back from judgment. Pick up on the positive. Put down the emotional garbage. That should make for a Happy New Year.

Maronites = Catholic of the East

By Cornelia B. Horn

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

E. "Lebanon" in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 5:15 "His legs are columns of marble resting on golden bases. His stature is like the trees on Lebanon, imposing as the cedars."

Song of Songs 7:5 "Your neck is like a tower of ivory. Your eyes are like the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim. Your nose is like the tower on Lebanon that looks toward Damascus."

Hosea 14:5-9 "I will heal their defection, I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them. I will be like the dew for Israel: he shall blossom like the lily; He shall strike root like the Lebanon cedar, and put forth his shoots. His splendor shall be like the olive tree and his fragrance like the Lebanon cedar. Again they shall dwell in his shade and raise grain; they shall blossom like the vine, and his fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim! What more has he to do with idols? I have humbled him, but I will prosper him. "I am like a verdant cypress tree" – Because of me you bear fruit."

In the Songs of Songs in the Holy Scriptures, Lebanon is used to express and illustrate individual aspects of the relationship between God and the people He loves. The last passage quoted above, from the writings of the prophet Hosea, also indicates what will happen to God's people when, in the end, they will return to their God. In several other eschatological passages in the scriptures, Lebanon has a significant role to play in the end of times. Aspects of this function shall be reviewed below.

F. Lebanon in Eschatological Texts

Lebanon is referred to in several eschatological texts of the Old Testament scriptures (Isaiah 35:2, 40:16; Zechariah 10:10; Psalms 72:16; cf. Psalms 104:16). It is the place where the Theophany of the Lord will occur (Psalms 29:5 ff.; Ezekiel 31:15), as the following passages indicate.

Psalms 29:5-6 "The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon leap like a calf and Sirion like a young bull."

Psalms 72:16 "May there be an abundance of grain upon the land; on the tops of the mountains the crops shall rustle like Lebanon; the city dwellers shall flourish like the verdure of the fields." *(To be continued)*

Story: Bank Account

A 92-year-old, petite, well-poised and proud man, who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with his hair fashionably combed and shaved perfectly, even though he is legally blind, moved to a nursing home today.

His wife of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary. After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, he smiled sweetly when told his room was ready.

As he maneuvered his walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of his tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that had been hung on his window. I love it,' he stated with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

Mr. Jones, you haven't seen the room; just wait.'

'That doesn't have anything to do with it,' he replied.

Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged ... it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it. 'It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up. I have a choice; I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do.

Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open, I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away... Just for this time in my life. Old age is like a bank account. You withdraw from what you've put in.

So, my advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories! Thank you for your part in filling my Memory Bank. I am still depositing.

Joke (574)

Sunday School Hours

Two children were walking home after Sunday school. One of the boys turned to the other and informed him, "I think I'll be a Sunday school teacher when I grow up; I like the hours."

Pilots and Chopits

The chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force decided that he would personally intervene in the recruiting crisis affecting all our armed services. So he directed that a nearby air force base be opened and that all eligible young men and women be invited. As he and his staff were standing near a brand-new F-15 fighter a pair of twin brothers who looked like they had just stepped off a marine corps recruiting poster walked up to them.

The chief of staff turned to them, stuck out his hand, and introduced himself. He looked at the first young man and asked, "Son, what skills can you bring to the air force?"

The young man looked at him and said, "I'm a pilot!"

The general got all excited, turned to his aide, and said, "Get him in-today, all the paperwork done, everything, do it!" The aide hustled the young man off.

The general looked at the second young man and asked, "What skills to you bring to the air force?" The young man said, "I chop wood!"

"Son," the general replied, "we don't need wood choppers in the air force. What do you know how to do?" "I chop wood!"

"Young man," huffed the general, "you are not listening to me. We don't need wood choppers; this is the twentieth century!"

"Well," the young man said, "you enlisted my brother!"

"Of course we did," said the general. "He's a pilot!"

The young man rolled his eyes and said, "Well, think about it, man—I have to chop it before he can pile it!"

Vice President of Peas

The new vice president was flaunting his title so much that one of his coworkers finally said to him, "These days vice presidents are a dime a dozen. In fact, the title is getting so ridiculous; my supermarket even has a vice president in charge of peas."

The new V.P. was insulted-and skeptical. So he phoned the store and asked for the vice president in charge of peas. The voice on the line asked, "Canned or frozen?"

Promise to Smile

Frank Bettger was a major league ballplayer who turned to sales management after an injury. He later became famous for his inspirational speeches. He would ask people to make a promise to smile for thirty days. Here is what Frank said, "I have asked thousands of men and women in audiences all over the country for a pledge to smile, just for thirty days, their happiest smile at every living creature they see. Easily 75 percent of the people in each audience willingly raised their hands. What has been the result? I quote from one letter received from a Knoxville, Tennessee, man. It is typical of several letters that come to me.

My wife and I had just about agreed to separate. Of course, I thought she was entirely at fault. Within a few days after I began to put this idea into action, happiness was restored in my home. I then came to realize that I had been losing out in business because of a sullen losing attitude. At the end of the day, I would go home and take it out on my wife and children. It was all my fault, not my wife's at all. I am a totally different man from what I was a year ago. I'm happier because I've made others happy too. Now everybody greets me with a smile. In addition, my business has shown surprising improvement.

This man was so excited about the results he got from smiling that he kept writing me for years about it.