



Our Lady of Purgatory

Maronite Catholic Church



September 5-6, 2020

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST



The Story of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Church has celebrated Mary's birth since at least the sixth century. A September birth was chosen because the Eastern Church begins its Church year with September. The September 8 date helped determine the date for the feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. Scripture does not give an account of Mary's birth. However, the apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James* fills in the gap. This work has no historical value, but it does reflect the development of Christian piety. According to this account, Anna and Joachim are infertile but pray for a child. They receive the promise of a child who will advance God's plan of salvation for the world. Such a story, like many biblical counterparts, stresses the special presence of God in Mary's life from the beginning. Saint Augustine connects Mary's birth with Jesus' saving work. He tells the earth to rejoice and shine forth in the light of her birth. "She is the flower of the

field from whom bloomed the precious lily of the valley. Through her birth the nature inherited from our first parents is changed." The opening prayer at Mass speaks of the birth of Mary's Son as the dawn of our salvation, and asks for an increase of peace.

Reflection

We can see every human birth as a call for new hope in the world. The love of two human beings has joined with God in his creative work. The loving parents have shown hope in a world filled with travail. The new child has the potential to be a channel of God's love and peace to the world. This is all true in a magnificent way in Mary. If Jesus is the perfect expression of God's love, Mary is the foreshadowing of that love. If Jesus has brought the fullness of salvation, Mary is its dawning. Birthday celebrations bring happiness to the celebrant as well as to family and friends. Next to the birth of Jesus, Mary's birth offers the greatest possible happiness to the world. Each time we celebrate her birth, we can

confidently hope for an increase of peace in our hearts and in the world at large.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/nativity-of-the-blessed-virgin-mary/>

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Behold Jesus Christ crucified, Who is the only foundation of our hope; He is our Mediator and Advocate; the victim and sacrifice for our sins. He is goodness and patience itself; His mercy is moved by the tears of sinners, and He never refuses pardon and grace to those who ask it with a truly contrite and humbled heart."

Saint Charles Borromeo



Fr. Vincent Farhat, Pastor | Rev. Mr. Jean Mattar, Deacon | Joseph Abraham, Sub-deacon

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OFFICE HOURS: The Church office will be open Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

REFLECTION ON MOVING PAST DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Pope Francis has said there is “no point” in people going to church if they do not follow the teachings of the Bible in their daily lives. The head of the Catholic Church took a stand against what he termed “Christian parrots”, who talk a lot about their religion but don’t do good deeds. “If I say I am Catholic and go to mass, but then don’t speak with my parents, help my grandparents or the poor, go and see those who are sick, this does not prove my faith, there’s no point,” he told young residents of Guidonia, a village near Rome. “Those who do this are nothing but Christian parrots – words, words, words,” said the Pope, according to Italian newspaper *La Stampa*. “Christian faith is expressed with three things: words, the heart, and the hands.” Canon law requires Catholics to go to church “on Sundays and other holy days of obligation” and to abstain from work or other business that would inhibit their worship on those days. During his conversation with the parishioners, Pope Francis also said it could be difficult to forgive people when they have hurt you, or even, in some cases, committed crimes against you. “It’s difficult, I knew an old woman who was strong, bright, whose husband used to hit her. You should always forgive but sometimes to forget is difficult,” he said, according to *La Stampa* and a more detailed report on the website *Famiglia Cristiana*. “When you’re at war with someone, your heart is wounded by hate and hostility, and those wounds can hurt, but you need to forgive them and not go to that person to forgive them like an enemy. “Forgiveness needs to be given with the heart, even if you don’t say it out loud, by treating that person as if nothing had happened.”

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/pope-francis-catholic-church-no-point-if-you-dont-believe-in-it-help-the-poor-christian-parrots-a7529631.html>

I share this reflection from Pope Francis because many of us struggle with moving forward after we are confronted with difficult situations. Oh, how it hurts, even after many months or years. And this hurt can, many times, cloud our thoughts and make us read into

situations that normally we would have never read before. At times we blame others for circumstances we are in because perhaps we may feel like it is their fault that we are in that situation. What did I do or say to make this person react to me in that manner? Why do people always pick on me---I didn’t do anything to deserve this.

I am a firm believer that there are always two sides to a story. And in between lays the truth, for the simple reason that when we have a problem with others, the smallest and most insignificant word or action is magnified 10 times more because of our distrust and disdain for others. We all want to believe we are right. We all want to believe that our accounts are the correct ones because we can validate our perception as the only valid one. And there is no need to talk about it with each other because “I am right!” Now how do we get past this idleness and stalemate? “Likewise, you younger members, be subject to the presbyters. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for: God opposes the proud but bestows favor on the humble. So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you. Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for [someone] to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings. The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ [Jesus] will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little.” **1 Peter 5:5-10**

How do we explain our trials and tribulations? Is this the will of God? We have our answer in the passage stated here. “Your opponent, the devil, is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” That is what the devil does. He wants to interrupt God’s goodness in His creation. That is his main goal---to cause division among God’s people. The only unity the devil is in favor of is the unity of division and the destruction of the people of God. Once we

recognize this and see it for what it is, only then can we move past the division that we are faced with. Pope Francis leaves these following words as his last words in this reflection. “*Forgiveness needs to be given with the heart, even if you don’t say it out loud, by treating that person as if nothing had happened.*” For many of us these words don’t make that much sense. How can we forgive with our hearts and act as nothing ever happened? The answer is simple. If we realize that there are two sides of a story and in between lays the truth, it is much easier to get past this hurt we feel by acknowledging that perhaps both parties had a hand to play in the devil’s work. That not one person is always right. That our perception of a situation can be tainted by a dislike we may have for others. And it is at that moment that healing and forgiveness can begin to take root. If someone who you feel has hurt you have invited you to talk about it, take them up on that offer. And if you don’t want to do that forgive with the heart by treating that person as if nothing ever happened. Take that from Jesus who was and always will be the epitome of this quote. God bless all of you.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY AT OLOP

Beginning Monday, September 21, we will begin adult bible study in the rectory basement. This will begin immediately following Divine Liturgy which begins at 6:00 PM. If we have a large number of people attending, we will move to the Church in order to practice social distancing. There will be a sign-up link to follow this week. We ask you to please sign-up as you would for Divine Liturgy. I will send the link to you this week. I hope many of you will be able to join us.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Peter Helmer, Denise Magaletta, Fernanda Thomas, Hiam Cheiab, Leo Roderick, Theresa John, Laurette BouRamia, Annie Peter, Jeannie Francis, Mariam David, Norma Thomas, Zita Drouin, Lucienne Rodrigues, Ed Da Rocha, Edmond Salameh, and Alice Daher. If anyone is missing from this list please contact the Church office.

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, September 5, @ 5:00 PM, (Feast of St. Theresa of Calcutta) Liturgy is being offered for the soul of JoAnne Yozefek requested by her family. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of George and Mary Saba requested by their family (FM). May their souls rest in peace

Sunday, September 6, @ 10:30 PM, (Feast of St. Michael the Archangel) liturgy is being offered for the souls of Kaffa and Isaac Abraham requested by their family. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the Police, Firefighters, First Responders and Armed Forces on this feast of St. Michael.

Monday, September 7, @ 6:00 PM, LABOR DAY NO LITURGY

Tuesday, September 8, at 6:00 PM, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Liturgy is being offered for the living and deceased members of the Farhat family requested by Patty Farhat.

Wednesday, September 9, at 6:00 PM, (Feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne) WELCOME ME INTO YOUR KINGDOM LITURGY

Thursday, September 10, @ 9:00 AM, liturgy is being offered for the soul of Mary Alice Abood requested by Ida Farhat. May his soul rest in peace.

Saturday, September 12, @ 5:00 PM, liturgy is being offered for the souls of Joseph and Marie Kenyon requested by their family. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered in memory of Helen Pittsley, Amelia Bramwell, Bechara Thomas, and Emily Nemer requested by Sub-deacon Joseph Abraham and Carol Ann Maslanka. May their souls rest in peace.

Sunday, September 13, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross) Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Jean d'arc El Khoury requested by Tony and Elaine Barbour. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is offered as a 40 Day memorial for the soul of Barbara David Bennett requested by her family. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is offered for the souls of George and Mary Saba by family (FM). May their souls rest in peace.

FEAST OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Saint Michael the Archangel isn't a saint, but rather he is an angel, and the leader of all angels and of the army of God. This is what the title "Archangel" means, that he is above all the others in rank. St. Michael has four main responsibilities or offices, as we know from scripture and Christian tradition. The first is to combat Satan. The second is to escort the faithful to heaven at their hour of death. The third is to be a champion of all Christians, and the Church itself.

And the fourth is to call men from life on Earth to their heavenly judgment.

Very little is known about St Michael other than what we know from scriptures, which themselves are sparse. In Daniel, St. Michael is mentioned twice. The first time as one who helped Daniel, and the second time he is mentioned with regard to the end times of the world when he will stand for the "children of thy people." His next mention comes in the Epistle of St. Jude, where St. Michael is said to guard the tombs of Moses and Eve and has contended with Satan over the body of Moses. The final mention is in Revelation, where St. Michael and his angels, do battle with the dragon. There are other scriptures where St. Michael is implied, but not mentioned by name, such as the angel; who defends the gate to Paradise, who defends against Balaam, and "who routed the army of Sennacherib." Today, St. Michel is invoked for protection, especially from lethal enemies. He is also the patron of soldiers, police and doctors.

WINE AND HOST OFFERINGS

This month of September, the wine and bread offerings are in memory of Joanne Sarkes Yozefek requested by her family. May her soul rest in peace.

Anyone who would like to give an offering in memory of a loved one or for a special intention for the month of April, 2021, please see Fr. Vincent. The cost for the month is \$75.00, which covers the cost of the communion bread and wine. Thank you and God bless.

CCD CLASSES TO BEGIN IN THE FALL

Dear Parents and CCD Students, After meeting with the Deacon Jean and all of the religious education teachers, we are happy to inform you that we will begin formal classes once again in the fall. The format will be in person following all the guidelines for social distancing and protective wear. Because of the special circumstances with the Covid 19, we will begin our meetings once a month on Saturday afternoons from 1:00 – 4:00PM. This seems to be the best format at the present time until we have put Covid 19 to rest once and for all. Details will be following in the near future and you can expect the meeting times to begin at the end of September. I will be making a schedule available in the near future so that you and your children can plan ahead. I am hoping that this will be a great start to bring our children back, learning about our faith, and rejoining them each other in the hopes that they can feel normalcy slowly coming back into their lives. Registration forms will be emailed in the next week. I ask you to please send those back to the Church office as soon as possible.

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT AT OLOP

Dear Parishioners, The Parish Council is sponsoring a family "Movie Night" at OLOP, on Saturday, September 19, following Divine Liturgy. This special event will take place on the lawn of the parking side of Church. A movie projector and screen will be made available for this evening. We will have pizza, popcorn, soda's, hot chocolate, and other goodies for the kids and parents. Please bring a blanket to sit on the lawn or you may bring lawn chairs if you wish. God willing it will be a beautiful evening outside. Social distancing will apply. Below is the link for the sign-up sheet for the movie. This link will open up on Sunday, September 6, after 12:00 NOON. The movie will be announced in the near future but will be geared towards the kids. I hope you will be able to join us.

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/OLOP/MovieNight9_19

WEEKLY COLLECTION FOR

August 29-30, 2020

Sunday Collection	\$ 937.00
Candles	\$ 42.00
Donation	\$ 500.00
Total:	\$ 1,479.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY BY SENDING IN YOUR WEEKLY COLLECTIONS VIA MAIL. THIS HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL FOR THE CHURCH. GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.



Joseph & Marie Kenyon

How empty life is without you. Your Love and Patience has made us into who we are today. Your Guidance has set our path in life. We Miss seeing your face, hearing your voice, seeing your smile and hearing your laugh. We Love you and miss you even more with each passing day

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