



Our Lady of Purgatory



Maronite Catholic Church

July 30-31, 2022

NINTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

AN ACCEPTANCE OF SUFFERING

By Bert Ghezzi

We are tempted to believe that just by being good Christians we can make suffering go away. We imagine that God's promise of blessing means that he will spare us all pain. But it doesn't work that way. Jesus made suffering a normal part of the Christian life. He promised his disciples multiple blessings, but tacked onto the end of the good things he said they could expect was a promise of suffering: "There is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, mother, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times as much, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land—and persecutions too—now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30). So suffering is not an option for Christians. It's a guarantee.

At root, the word *suffering* means enduring pain or distress, sustaining loss or damage, being subject to disability or sickness, and ultimately submitting to death. It comes in all shapes. Daily nuisances frustrate us. Repeated failures discourage us. Bills we cannot pay pressure us. A disintegrating relationship racks us. Depression defeats us. Violence wounds us or harms a loved one. Illness ravages us or overtakes a family member. Suffering afflicts everybody.

Jesus not only promised suffering; he also made bearing personal crosses a

daily requirement for all of his followers (see Luke 9:23, NIV). Making the sign of the cross proclaims our yes to this condition of discipleship. When we sign ourselves, we are taking up our cross and accepting whatever suffering comes our way. With that ancient gesture we are saying that we welcome suffering on God's terms. And we are subordinating our will—that would rather not endure pain—to God, just as Jesus subordinated his will to his Father when he gave himself to the cross. So, tracing Christ's cross over our body has serious consequences.

Safety in the Shadow of His Wings

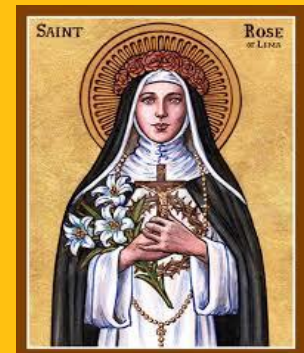
Christians attempt to comfort sufferers by touting the benefits of suffering. "Suffering builds character," we say. "I don't want character," says the sufferer. "I want relief." Then come the inevitable questions: "Why does God let bad things happen?" and "Where is God when it hurts?"

The care that parents give their children suggests answers to both questions. For example, suppose a seven-year-old girl is taking her first ride on a bicycle. Her father, running alongside her, sees that she is about to hit a rough spot on the road but restrains his impulse to reach out and steady the bike. The dad wants his little girl to learn how to ride with confidence, so he does not prevent her fall. When the bike bounces off the bump, the girl panics, tumbles to the pavement, and scrapes her elbow and knee. The dad scoops her up into his arms and comforts her. Then he carries her into the house, cleans and dresses

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Without the burden of afflictions, it is impossible to reach the height of grace. The gift of grace increases as the struggle increases."

St. Rose of Lima



her scratches, holds her on his lap, and tells her a favorite story.

God is like that dad. He lets us navigate our way, but he stays alongside us. He does not prevent bad things from happening because he wants us to learn to deal confidently with hardship. But when we suffer, God scoops us up and stays with us. He shares our pain, sustains us, and consoles us.

That's the message of the cross and signing ourselves opens us to hearing it. God's only Son became a man in Christ. In his human nature, God himself suffered rejection, humiliation, ridicule, abandonment, buffetings, scourging, crucifixion, and death. He embraced suffering as a man so that he could comfort us in our suffering.

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.

When we make the sign of the cross, we invite the Lord to join us in our suffering. We touch our forehead and move down to our breast, telling the Lord with this gesture that we want him to bend down to us. Then we cross our shoulders in a movement that asks him to support us—to shoulder us—in our suffering. In many psalms, David sings of taking refuge beneath the Lord's wings, which the Church Fathers understood as a prophecy of our finding safety in the shadow of his crucified arms (see Psalms 17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 61:4; 63:7). The Lord's outstretched arms pledge that he understands our suffering and shares it with us.

Just as the psalms anticipate the grace of Christ's crucifixion, the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy provided another foreshadowing of the cross as a place of refuge. It reported Moses' farewell address, in which he seemed to describe the silhouette of the cross in the far distance. He assured Israel that the arms of the Lord would uphold them through all their troubles: "The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27, RSV).

Today we see the cross clearly as a sign of God's mercy and consolation. I take advantage of the grace and support the Lord offers me with his outstretched arms. When trouble strikes, I sign myself often, saying, "Lord, scoop me up in your everlasting arms, carry me through this trial, and comfort me." Strengthened by his response to that simple gesture and prayer, I find the hardship endurable.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/personal-prayer-life/experiencing-prayerful-moments/an-acceptance-of-suffering/>

OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences to the family of Jean Coury who passed away last week. Jean was the aunt of Pam, Nadine, Edward, Melissa, and Jennifer Coury, Joseph, and Michael Thomas, Claire DaSilva, and the sister-in-law of Lucienne Rodrigues and Flora Azar. May Almighty God welcome Jean into His kingdom and may her soul rest in peace. Allah yerhamma.

FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER'S APPRECIATION DINNER

We will have an appreciation BBQ for the volunteers who worked so hard for the festival on Saturday, August 6, immediately following the 4:30 PM Divine Liturgy. I ask all those who helped prep food, set up, assisted during the two-day festival and breaking down on Sunday, to please email me at the office to RSVP for the BBQ. Please contact the Church office via email at ourladyofpurgatory@gmail.com

Once again, thank you to all who helped make the festival a great event for OLOP. Blessings to all of you.

CCD REGISTRATION TO BEGIN

As we enjoy the summer break with our families and friends, it is also time to prepare for the beginning of our CCD Program this Fall. We have begun to prepare a wonderful program for our children. As we begin to transition to our new home, our CCD program can now be offered in a facility that will entice this program to flourish and to offer our children the tools that will help them understand the importance of having God in their lives and to understand His great love for us.

CCD classes will revert to Sunday mornings after 10:30 AM Divine Liturgy. The Church Hall will provide all the necessary ingredients to allow the parents to gather for coffee and pastries while their children are having classes. The children will also be able to gather to enjoy other children in the parish. We will also provide snacks for the children during their class.

I am sure that I need not inform the parents of the importance of our CCD program. In this ever-changing secular world, it is the Churches obligation and priority to help our children understand and implement the teachings of Jesus. These teachings begin with you and we, the Church, are here to support and guide your efforts.

I pray that all of you who have children will take advantage of this opportunity. This is a commitment on your part, but a commitment that is vital and necessary in educating our children in the faith. Please be sure to sign your children up for our program. Blessings to all of you.

SAVE THE DATE MYO GATHERING

Parents and youth are invited to the MYO Kickoff on Saturday, August 20, after 4:30 Divine Liturgy. We will have a BBQ as well as talks with the youth and parents so that we may plan special events for our children throughout the year.

These events will encircle religious talks, social events, invitations with other parishes MYO groups, out-reach programs, and movie nights, just to name a few. The MYO/MYA organizations have held a special place in my heart, and it is my hope that we can begin to build these organizations, so our children and young adults never feel that they are lost in the shuffle. Please RSVP to the office email at ourladyofpurgatory@gmail.com

MARONITE YOUTH ORGANIZATION



SAINT JOSEPH SODALITY NEWS

Periodically we will be publishing news and coming events from the St. Joseph Sodality. The Sodality is the oldest organization in the Parish, having been founded in 1918. Through their devotion to St. Joseph, Sodality Members seek to emulate the life and faith of St. Joseph, and by doing so, hope to achieve eternal happiness as he did. The Sodality encourages you to consider becoming a member.

WINE AND HOST OFFERINGS

The altar bread and wine for the month of July is offered in memory of the living and deceased members of the Daher and David families requested by Mariam David and family. May their souls rest in peace.

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, July 30, @ 4:30 PM (Feast of Saints Abdon and Sennen). Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Sophie Moujaber requested by Subdeacon Joe Abraham and Carol Ann Maslanka. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Ibrahim Hanna, Journalist Joseph Assad Harden, John, Malvina, and Joseph David requested by Rafic and Family. May their souls rest in peace.

Sunday, July 31, @10:30 AM (Celebration of The 350 Martyrs, Disciples of Saint Maron, feast of Saint Ignatius of Loyola). Welcome Me Into Your Kingdom Liturgy. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Lauretta Mello requested by Matt and Cathy Thomas and family. May her soul rest in peace.

Monday, August 1, @ 9:00 AM, (Feast of Saint Shmouni and Her Sons). Maronite Sisters of Christ the Light convent.

Tuesday, August 2, @ 9:00 AM, (Translation of the Relics of Saint Stephen, the First Martyr).

Wednesday, August 3, @ 6:00 PM, (Feast of David the Prophet).

Thursday, August 4, @ 7:00 PM, (Feast of Saint John Vianney). Arabic Liturgy.

Saturday, August 6, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of The Transfiguration of Our Lord). Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Barbara and Christopher Forde requested by Subdeacon Joe Abraham and Carol Ann Maslanka. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Diab and Mary Hardin, Saba and Anna Ramia requested by Rafic Abi Ramia and family. May their souls rest in peace.

Sunday, August 7, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Saint Doumit). Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Mansour Barbour requested by family. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Charbel Baroody requested by Charles Baroody. May his soul rest in peace.

CONFESSION

Please know that confession is available before liturgies. You may also call to set up an appointment.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Angela Scorza-Anderson, Renee Helmer, Terry Amsden, Lisa Mello-Frost, Ziad Al-Ghoubry, Natalya Sarkis, Joe Reid, Octavia David, Jacob Rego, Amal Assaf, Peter Helmer, Denise Magaletta, Fernanda Thomas, Leo Rodrick, Theresa John, Laurette Bou Ramia, 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.

DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF 8/1-8/6/22

Monday:

Acts of the Apostles 18:18-28

Luke 11:33-36

Tuesday:

Acts of the Apostles 19:1-10

Luke 11: 37-41

Wednesday:

Acts of the Apostles 19:11-22

Luke 11:42-46

Thursday:

Acts of the Apostles 19:23-29,35-40

Luke 11: 47-51

Friday:

Acts of the Apostles 20: 6-16

Luke 11: 52-54

Saturday:

2 Corinthians 3: 7-17

Mark 9: 1-7

LECTORS FOR JULY 2022

Saturday, July 30,

Carol Ann Maslanka

Sunday, July 31,

Ann Dupre/Rana Choubah

(If you are not able to read on your given day, please contact Mae Dickinson)

THE SANCTUARY CANDLE BURNS FOR....

This week the sanctuary candle burns for a special intention requested by Gaby and Amal Baroody. Anyone who would like to offer the sanctuary candle for a loved one or special intention, this will be offered each week. An offering of a \$10.00 donation is appreciated.

LECTORS FOR AUGUST 2022

Saturday, August 6,

Smitty Cabral

Sunday, August 7,

Mae Dickinson/Jano Baroudi

Saturday, August 13,

Rachel Higgins

Intercessions: Anna & Helen Higgins

Sunday, August 14,

Joan Mello/Gaby Baroody

Saturday, August 20,

Carol Ann Maslanka

Sunday, August 21,

Ann Dupre/Hiba Chdid

Saturday, August 27,

Mae Dickinson

Sunday, August 28,

John Barbour / Rana Choubah

WEEK OF JULY 23-24, 2022

Sunday Collection	\$ 1,831.00
Building Fund For OLOF	\$ 250.00
Coffee Hour	\$ 25.00
Candles	\$ 56.00
Total	\$ 1,912.00

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.

All are invited to come and join us. Festivities will go on come rain or shine! Under the tents or in our climate controlled hall!

SAVE THE DATE

St. Anthony of the Desert Church
300 N. Eastern Avenue, Fall River, MA 02723

Lebanese Mahrajan Food Festival

Friday, August 26th ~ 5pm to 11pm
Saturday, August 27th ~ Noon to 11pm
Sunday, August 28th ~ 11am to 7pm

Hookah
Live Entertainment
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Joseph & Marie Kenyon

Eternally in our hearts and in our thoughts. We miss seeing your face, hearing your voice, seeing your smile and hearing your laugh. We cherish the day we will join you in GOD's Heavenly Kingdom. We Love you and miss you even more with each passing day.

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