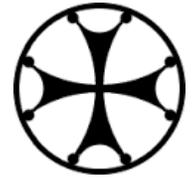




# Our Lady of Purgatory

## Maronite Catholic Church



March 6 - 7, 2026

### PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON



#### DON'T LET THE PAST STEAL YOUR FUTURE

There is a difference between remembering the past and living trapped inside it.

Memories are part of who we are. Regrets, failures, betrayals, missed opportunities, they shape us. But they were never meant to imprison us. The enemy of our peace loves to whisper, "It's too late. You messed up. That's just who you are." God never speaks that way.

Throughout Scripture, God is always doing something new. The Cross itself looked like the end, yet it became the beginning. What felt like defeat became redemption. That is how God works: He transforms what seems ruined into something redeemed.

So, when we say, "Don't let the past steal your future," we are not pretending the past didn't hurt. We are choosing to place it into hands stronger than ours. How the Past Steals from Us The past steals our future when: We define ourselves by our worst mistake. We refuse to forgive ourselves or others. We keep replaying old wounds instead of healing them. We allow shame to silence our calling. We believe change is impossible. Shame says, "You are your failure." God says, "You are My

child." There is a difference. The past becomes dangerous when it controls our present decisions. A broken relationship can make us afraid to love again. A failure can make us afraid to try again. A betrayal can make us suspicious of everyone. But fear is not God's language. Trust is.

**A STORY FROM THE HEART:** A woman once carried guilt for years because she had walked away from her faith in her younger years. During that time, her children drifted from the Church as well. Later in life, she returned to God with sincerity, but she could not forgive herself. She would say, "If only I had been stronger if only I had led them better." Her past haunted her.

One day, a priest gently told her, "You cannot rewrite yesterday. But you can witness today."

Instead of drowning in regret, she began praying daily for her children without lecturing them. She became joyful in her faith instead of guilty about it. Slowly, one by one, her children began to return not because she forced them but because they saw peace in her.

The past did not disappear. But it no longer stole her future. Let It Be in God's Hands.

We often say, "I give it to God," but we take it back the next morning in our thoughts.

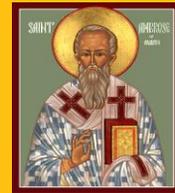
**Giving the past to God means:** Accepting that His mercy is greater than our mistake. Trusting that He can bring good even from what was broken.

Believing that redemption is real — not poetic, but practical.

When Jesus forgave, He did not say, "I forgive you, but remember forever what you did." He restored dignity. If God is not holding your past against you, why are you?

#### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"No one heals himself by wounding another"*  
*Saint Ambrose*



#### Practical Suggestions for Real Change name it honestly.

Don't bury the past. Bring it into prayer. Say it clearly before God. Healing begins with truth. Seek reconciliation where possible. Apologize if you must. Forgive even if it's not reciprocated. Freedom begins there. Stop rehearsing old accusations in your mind.

Replace them with truth: "God has forgiven me. I am not who I was." Do one new faithful act daily. The future is built by small consistent choices, prayer, kindness, patience. Be kind and mean it. Sometimes we carry hardness because of what we've endured. But choosing kindness softens not only others' hearts, it heals ours.

Kindness is not weakness. It is strength under control. Following in God's Footsteps. We say we want to follow God. But following Him means walking forward, not backward.

God is never stuck in yesterday. He is always moving toward resurrection, restoration, renewal.

To follow Him truthfully means: We stop using our past as an excuse. We stop defining others by theirs. We live as forgiven people. We offer others the same.

Fr. Vincent Farhat, Pastor | Rev. Mr. Jean Mattar, Deacon

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Email: [ourladyofpurgatory@gmail.com](mailto:ourladyofpurgatory@gmail.com) | Facebook Page: Our Lady of Purgatory Catholic Church - Maronite Rite |

Office Email: [officeolop@gmail.com](mailto:officeolop@gmail.com)

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

mercy we have received.

When we truly place our past in God's hands, something shifts inside us. We become lighter. More compassionate. Less judgmental. More patient. Because we know what it feels like to be restored. From the Heart. If you are carrying regret today, hear this gently: Your story is not over. The mistake did not disqualify you. The betrayal did not destroy you. The failure did not define you. God wastes nothing not even your worst chapter. Let Him write the next one.

**Do not let yesterday steal tomorrow.** Place it in His hands. Walk forward. Be kind. Forgive deeply. Trust boldly. And mean it when you say, "Lord, I want to follow You." Because the future with God is always bigger than the past without Him.

### OBSERVANCE

The Most Reverend Bishops Gregory Mansour and Elias Zaidan have issued the following Lenten guidelines for the Maronites of the U.S.:

. All Maronites who are physically capable are to abstain from meat on Ash Monday and all Fridays of Lent.

. Ash Monday and Great Friday of the Crucifixion are also days of fasting. Fasting in the Maronite Church involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon. The rest of the day normal meals can be taken, but without meat. All Maronites who are physically capable are to fast on these two days.

### Personal Devotion

Clergy, religious, and laity who wish to observe the more traditional Maronite practice of fasting and abstinence are encouraged to do so. That practice is summarized in the following, taken from the Synod of Mt. Lebanon (1736):

*Every weekday of Lent (Monday through Friday) is a day of fasting and abstinence from meat and dairy products (eggs, butter, milk, etc.) Fasting involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon.*

*The rest of the day normal meals can be taken, but without meat or dairy products. Dairy products are excluded because they are animal products. Saturdays and Sundays are exempt from fasting and abstaining as are the following feast days: The 40 Martyrs- March 9, St. Joseph- March 19, and the Annunciation- March 25.*

### CLERGY RETREAT

Fr. Vincent will be out of town from **Sunday, March 8, until Friday, March 13**, for our annual Clergy retreat. Please keep us in your prayers as we will do the same. The office will be open and for any emergencies, please contact Deacon Jean.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS/ ADORATION OF THE CROSS

Beginning Friday, **February 20**, we will begin Stations of the Cross/Adoration of the Cross. We will have services every Friday during Lent with **English** service at **12:00 noon** and **English/Arabic** service at **7:00 PM**. I Hope you will be able join us.

### CHOIR PRACTICE

We invite all interested people to choir practice beginning **Thursday, March 12, from 6:30-8:00 PM**. Practices will take place every Wednesday evening in the Church. Please consider joining our Liturgical Music Ministry as we begin to prepare for Holy Week and Easter. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

### CHANGE THE CLOCKS



This is a friendly reminder to move your clocks forward at **12:00 Midnight, Sunday, March 8**. We do not want you to miss Divine Liturgy. Blessings.

### ANNUAL BISHOP'S APPEAL

The Annual Bishop's Appeal has now begun. Every year our Parish is asked to raise \$3,500.00 to the Bishop's Appeal. This money assists in educating our Seminarians, helping the retired clergy of our Eparchy, sending funds to Lebanon, and to replenish the Eparchy's Endowment Fund.

You have been generous throughout the years in reaching our goal. I thank you in advance for your help this year. There will also be a second collection in during Lent to help us reach this goal. Thank you for your generosity and kindness.

### FISH FRY FRIDAYS

Fish Fry Fridays are here once again. We will begin Friday Lenten Dinners on Friday, **February 20**, beginning at **5:00 PM and ending at 8:00 PM**. Fish Fry Fridays will be held every Friday during Lent. Tickets are available for purchase by contacting the office at: 508-996-8934 or by email to: [officeolop@gmail.com](mailto:officeolop@gmail.com)

You may join us before or after Stations/Adoration of the cross

### SAINT JOSEPH FEAST DAY INSTALLATION AND BRUNCH

On **Sunday March 15**, the St. Joseph Sodality will be observing the Feast Day of St. Joseph. During the Divine Liturgy, the newly elected officers will be installed along with new members of the Saint Joseph Sodality. Immediately following Divine Liturgy, the Sodality will be offering a beautiful brunch in the Church Hall which you are all invited to attend. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jacques Barbour or Rana Choubah.

### SNOW PLOWING SPECIAL SECOND COLLECTION

As you know, we have had our share of snow this year. With the last snowstorm, our expenses for plowing have exceeded what was normal for the past six years, we have spent **\$15,000.00** thus far for snow removal. To keep up with our normal monthly expenses, we will have a special collection on **Sunday, March 15**, at our weekend Divine Liturgies. I appreciate your assistance with this collection and thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity.

SAVE THE DATE!  
**MYO RETREAT**  
2026

March 20-22 | Where: Our Lady of Mercy Maronite Church  
341 June St, Worcester, MA 01602  
Who: 9-12 graders

QUESTIONS?  
CONTACT SOPHIE ELHALLAL  
(240) 708-9987  
SOPHIE.ELHALLAL@GMAIL.COM

REGISTRATION  
COMING SOON!

## LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Saturday, March 7, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of the Seven Young Men of Ephesus).** Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Joseph and Marie Kenyon requested by family. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Art Irish requested by Ida Farhat. May his soul rest in peace.

**Sunday, March 8, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Saint Frances of Rome).** Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Theresa Macedo requested by the family. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Frank Olivieri. May his soul rest in peace.

**Tuesday, March 10, @ 9:00 AM, (Feast of Saint Auxentius). NO LITURGY.** From 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Eucharistic Adoration. **NO ADORATION.**

**Wednesday, March 11, @ 9:00 AM, (Feast of Saint Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem). NO LITURGY.**

**Thursday, March 12, @ 9:00 PM, (Feast of Pope Saint Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Church). NO LITURGY.**

**Friday, March 13, Station of the Cross/ Adoration of the Cross, @ 12:00 PM, English and @ 7:00 PM, English/ Arabic.**

**Saturday, March 14, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Saint Euphrasia).** Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Malvina and Joseph J. David requested by the family. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Joseph Tavares requested by Helena Tavares and Family. May his soul rest in peace.

**Sunday, March 15, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Saint Benedict, Founder of Monastic Life in the West).** Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Joseph and Margueritte Chedid requested by the family. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Bobbie Cushman. May her soul rest in peace.

## THE SANCTUARY CANDLE BURNS FOR....

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.

## CONFESSION

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

## WINE AND HOST OFFERING

The altar bread and wine for the month of March is offered in memory of Samir and Georgette Sawaya requested by Zakhia and Hiba Chdid.

## LECTORS FOR MARCH, 2026

**Saturday, March 7,**

Rachael Higgins

Intercessions: Anna & Helen Higgins

**Sunday, March 8,**

Rana Choubah / Halim Choubah

**Saturday, March 14,**

Smitty Cabral

Intercessions: Eric Tavares

**Sunday, March 15,**

Mae Dickinson / Joumana Chedid

**Saturday, March 21,**

Annemarie Espindola

Intercessions: Smitty Cabral

**Sunday, March 22,**

Cayla Barbour / Jano Baroody

**Saturday, March 28,**

Eric Tavares

Intercessions: Annemarie Espindola

**Sunday, March 29,**

Ann Dupre / Gaby Baroody

(If you are unable to read on your given day, please contact Mae Dickinson).

## PALM SUNDAY BAKE SALE

We will be having our annual Palm Sunday Bakesale on Saturday, March 28, and **Sunday, March 29**, immediately following Divine Liturgy. Pre-order forms are now available.

## IN OUR PRAYERS

Dawn Marie Hogan, Ashley Leaver, Reggie Thomas, Beverly Landreth, Dawn Marie Hogan, Michael Morad, David Matos, Gayla Matos, Genevieve Tayeh, Nayeli Nassif, Maria Baptista, Sophie Correa, Stephen DaCosta, Kenneth Macedo, Muriel Moline, Patricia Farhat, Ghada Karam, Beverly Parlapiano, Michael Bruce, Debbie Freedenberg, Efrangieh Daou, Sharon Conti, David Techlin, Peter Helmer, Renee Helmer, Jacob Rego, Amal Assaf, Denise Magaletta, Fernanda Thomas, Theresa John, Angela Scorza-Anderson, Annie Peter, Mariam David, Norma Thomas, Zita Drouin, Lucienne Rodrigues, Ed Da Rocha, and Edmond Salameh. If anyone is missing, please contact the office.

## WEEK OF FEBRUARY 28- March 1, 2026

Sunday Collection	\$ 1,247.00
Online Giving	\$ 1,121.33
Capital Campaign	\$ 2,020.00
Bishop's Appeal	\$ 497.00
Host and Wine	\$ 75.00
Lebanese Market	\$ 30.00
Coffee Hour	\$ 75.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,065.33</b>

**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.**

*Our Lady Of Purgatory Church*

*Palm Sunday Bake Sale*

**Saturday, March 28 - Sunday, March 29**  
AFTER LITURGIES



**MAAMOUL**



**BAKLAWA**



**KAAK**



**GHRAYBEE**

*And Assorted Pastries*

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*Palm Sunday Bake Sale*



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**MAAMOUL (1/2 DOZEN)**  
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Pistachios : \$12.00 x Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**KAAK (1/2 DOZEN)**  
Plain : \$ 8.00 x Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates : \$ 10.00 x Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GHRAYBEE (1/2 DOZEN)**  
6 pieces : \$8.00 x Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**BAKLAWA (1/2 DOZEN)**  
6 pieces : \$10.00 x Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cash  Check  Credit/Debit

\*\*\*You can submit your orders by email at: [officeolop@gmail.com](mailto:officeolop@gmail.com)\*\*\*  
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**MARCH 22**

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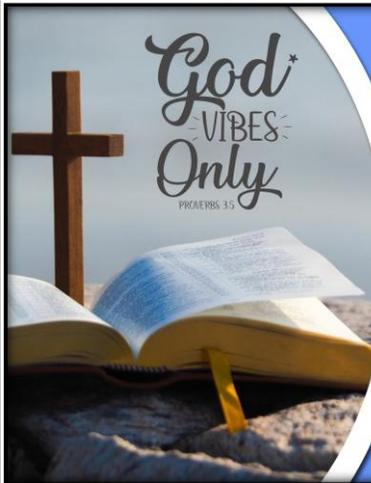


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*Eternally in our hearts and in our thoughts. We miss seeing your face, hearing your voice, seeing your smile and hearing your laugh. We cherish the day we will join you in GOD'S Heavenly Kingdom. We Love you and miss you even more with each passing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

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