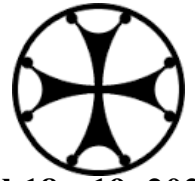




Our Lady of Purgatory



Maronite Catholic Church

April 18 - 19, 2026

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE RESURRECTION



Lent and Resurrection have a way of stripping things down to what is real. Not just what we say we believe but how we actually love when it costs us something. And nothing costs more than loving difficult people or even our enemies considering what is going on in the world today.

When Jesus Christ says, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you", it sounds beautiful until we have a face, a name, and a wound attached to it. Because now it's not the verse anymore. It's a battle.

A TRUE STORY

There was a man in a parish community who had been deeply hurt by someone he trusted, a close collaborator in ministry. Words were said behind his back. His reputation was quietly damaged. Invitations stopped coming. He found himself isolated, confused and angry. What made it worse was this: the person who hurt him continued to serve in church, smiling, praying, acting as if nothing had happened.

Every Sunday, there they were just a few pews away. The man tried to pray. But every time he closed his eyes, resentment rose like a storm: "Lord, how can this be right? Why should I be the one to suffer?"

Why should I forgive?"

One day, during Adoration, he felt a quiet but piercing conviction not a voice, not a vision but something deeper: "You want to be close to Me but you are holding someone away from your heart." He resisted it. "Lord, I didn't do anything wrong." And the answer that came was even harder: "Neither did I." hat broke him.

Because suddenly, the Cross was no longer abstract. It was personal. Crucifixion of Jesus where forgiveness was given not after apology, not after justice was restored, but in the middle of betrayal: "Father, forgive them..."

What he did (practically) This man didn't suddenly feel love. That's important. He started with obedience, not emotion. He began praying for the person by name. Not vague prayers. Specific ones: "Lord, bless him. Give him peace. Take care of his family." At first, it felt fake. Even painful.

But he kept going. He refused to speak negatively about him. Even when others invited it. Even when he had every "right" to explain his side. He chose silence over justification.

He made one concrete act of kindness. A simple one. Quiet. Unnoticed. Not to fix the relationship but to free his heart. He surrendered the need for fairness. This was the hardest. He placed justice back into God's hands. What changed Not the other person at least not immediately. What changed was him. The tightness in his chest began to loosen. The constant replaying of the wound started to fade. Peace, slowly, quietly, returned. And one day, he realized something unexpected: He no longer needed that person to apologize in order to be free. That is the miracle of forgiveness. What does this mean for us this Lent?

Loving difficult people is not about liking them. It is not about pretending the wound didn't happen. It is not about removing boundaries or enabling harm.

It is about this: Refusing to let someone else's sin turn your heart into something hard. Because that is the real danger. A deeper truth: We often think: "If they change, then I will love them." But the Cross teaches the opposite: Love first. Even when they don't change. That is what makes it divine. A simple Lenten path (we can start today) Name the person honestly before God. No filters. No pretending. Pray for them daily especially when you don't feel like it. Fast from negative speech about them. Do one hidden act of good toward them (or for them). Offer your pain to God instead of feeding it.

FINAL REFLECTION

At the end we don't just want to say: "I prayed more" or "I sacrificed something." We want to be able to say: "My heart became more like His." Because on the day we stand before God, it will not matter how right we were It will matter how much we loved. And sometimes, **the clearest sign that Jesus Christ is alive in us is that we can look at someone who hurt us and still choose mercy.**

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"He who knows how to forgive prepares for himself many graces from God. As often as I look upon the cross, so often will I forgive with all my heart."

Saint Faustina

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

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Email: ourladyofpurgatory@gmail.com | Facebook Page: Our Lady of Purgatory Catholic Church - Maronite Rite |

Office Email: officeolop@gmail.com

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

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

I publish the Third Banns of Marriage between Vincent Michael and Sylvie Moujabber. If any of you know cause or just impediment why these two people should not be joined in Holy Matrimony, you are to declare it.

HALL FLOORING

We are very close to beginning our facelift of the church hall. All the chandeliers have been donated. The flooring is the major expense which will cost \$16,000.00 and the painting we will do ourselves. Here is the latest count of our fundraising efforts.

Flooring Material & Install: \$16,000.00

Donations Received: \$ 4,800.00

Needed to Begin: \$11,400.00

Chandeliers 9 Total: \$ 5,400.00

Donations Received: \$ 5,400.00

Needed: \$ 00.00

The walls have been prepared, spackled, and cleaned so that we can begin the process. Of course, I will be asking for help from the parish so please consider giving your time to this effort. Thank you all who have donated your time and treasures. There is still plenty of work to be done but we have come a long way. Thank you very much.

HALL RENOVATION SCHEDULE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The dates are set to begin the work at the hall. I am asking for volunteers to help do the painting. Please let me know if you can assist with the painting. Below is the tentative schedule for the work to be done.

May 26-30 Painting of the hall.

**Most of the work will be done after
5:30 PM.**

June 1-5 Chandeliers installation

June 8-12 Flooring installation

All the chandeliers have been donated. Thank you for your generosity. We are still in need of donations for the flooring. Once the work is complete, there will be a plaque displayed in the hall for all donations received. This plaque can have your family name or in memory of a loved one engraved on it. A form will be available for those who donated to fill out what name you would like on the plaque. Please complete the form and return it to the office. Thank you in advance for your help.

2026 EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Applications for the 2026 Education Foundation Scholarships will be emailed this week. The Education Foundation Members have worked very hard to replenish monies needed to award our young men and women a scholarship to help in their education.

Any High School Senior who will be attending college in the fall, and any Undergraduate College student are encouraged to apply for these scholarships. There will be up to 2 scholarships awarded for the 2026 school year.

These scholarships will be emailed and must be completed by and returned by **Sunday, May 31, 2026**. Please follow the instructions and supply the necessary documents to be considered for these scholarships. If you have any questions, please reach out to any of the foundation members or Fr. Vincent.

WINE AND HOST OFFERING

The altar bread and wine for the month of April is offered for the deceased members of Abou Kheir and Farhat Families requested by Elie and Micha Abou Kheir.

THE SANCTUARY CANDLE BURNS FOR....

This week the sanctuary candle burns for Joann Sarkes Yozefek by the Family. 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.

MOTHERS DAY BRUNCH

Calling all men, fathers, husbands, and sons who would like to help. We will have a special Mother's Day Brunch on **Sunday, May 10**, immediately following Divine Liturgy. This is our way of saying thank you to all the women in our lives. I hope you will join us on this special day honoring our mothers.

MOTHER'S DAY RAFFLE

The Education Foundation is sponsoring a Mother's Day Raffle. You can enjoy a **\$200.00 gift certificate to M Aesthetics Spa**. All the proceeds will benefit the Education Foundation Scholarship program. This will allow this foundation to continue to offer scholarships to our high school seniors and undergraduate college students to help with their education. Please support these efforts. God bless.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

The Vocations Team for the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn has printed these beautiful prayer cards for each family. Vocations take on different ways of life such as a priest, religious brother or sister, deacons, subdeacons, holy married couples, parents, and generous single people. In all these vocations does the beauty of our Catholic Faith shine and draws us closer to Christ, to know Him, love Him, and serve Him more.

We ask that you take a copy of these prayer cards home with you and pray this prayer with your family every night. Our Lord listens to our prayers. May the fire and zeal for our Lord foster vocations worthy to serve Him.

HALL RENOVATION MEMORIAL PLAQUE FORM

For those who have donated toward the renovation of the hall, please fill out the form that will be displayed on the plaque. **You may have your family name or in memory of a loved one.** Please return this form to the office.

Donation by: _____

Name on Plaque: _____



LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, April 18, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Saint Thais the Penitent). Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Michele Sr., Anna, Michele Jr., and Baldassare Magaletta requested by Joann, Anthony, and Lorraine David. May their soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Dennis Mooney requested by Ida Farhat. May his soul rest in peace.

Sunday, April 19, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Saint Timon the Deacon). Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Arthur and Annie Thomas, and Edward and Rose Mattar requested by the Family (FM). May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Beverly Farhat Granger. May her soul rest in peace.

Tuesday, April 21, @ 9:00 AM, (Feast of Saint Anselm, Doctor of the Church). Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Everatt Pittsley and Saseen and Marina Thomas requested by the Family (FM). May their souls rest in peace.

From 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Eucharistic Adoration.

Wednesday, April 22, @ 9:00 AM (Feast of Saint Theodore of Sykeon).

Thursday, April 23, @ 9:00 AM, (Feast of Saint George). NO LITURGY.

Saturday, April 25, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist). Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Fadi Hardin requested by Mariam David and Family. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Jack Cushman requested by Ida Farhat. May his soul rest in peace.

Sunday, April 26, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Pope Saint Anacletus). Remember Me In your Kingdom Liturgy. Liturgy is being offered for all the souls in the Book of Life. May all the souls in the book of life rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Norma Thomas requested by the Family (40-Day Mass). May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Anibal, Therese and Roland Abi Chedid requested by Samir and Joceline Abi Youness Family. May their souls rest in peace.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

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

IN OUR PRAYERS

Theresa Saab, Reggie Thomas, Beverly Landreth, 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, Zita Drouin, Lucienne Rodrigues and Edmond Salameh. If anyone is missing, please contact the office.

LECTORS FOR APRIL/ MAY 2026

Saturday, April 18,
Smitty Cabral

Intercessions: Annemarie Espindola

Sunday, April 19,
Ann Dupre / Hiba Chdid

Saturday, April 25,
Eric Tavares

Intercessions: Mae Dickinson
Sunday, April 26,

Ann Dupre / Joumana Chedid
Saturday, May 2,

Smitty Cabral
Intercessions: Eric Tavares
Sunday, May 3,

The First Communicants
Intercessions: The First Communicants
Saturday, May 9,

Mae Dickinson
Intercessions: Annemarie Espindola
Sunday, May 10,

Ann Dupre / Elie Abou Kheir
Wednesday, May 13,

Mae Dickinson / Hiba Chdid
Saturday, May 16,

Eric Tavares
Intercessions: Smitty Cabral
Saturday, May 17,

Cayla Barbour / Jano Baroody
Saturday, May 23,

Annemarie Espindola
Intercessions: Smitty Cabral
Sunday, May 24,

Halim Choubah / Joumana Chedid
Saturday, May 30,

Smitty Cabral
Intercessions: Annemarie Espindola
Sunday, May 31,

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

A TASTE OF ITALY

Please join us for A Taste of Italy at Our Lady of Purgatory on **Saturday, April 18, 2026, from 5:30-7:30 PM.**

Reservations are recommended so please call the office with your reservation. We look forward to seeing you then.

Our Lady of Purgatory Church's



Please join us for an Italian Dinner

Eggplant Parmigiana Chicken Marsala
Baked Sausage Ziti Fettuccini Alfredo
Ratatouille - Salad - Garlic Bread
Desserts - Coffee

Saturday, April 18, 2026
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Donation: \$18.00

Our Lady of Purgatory Church Parish Center
4254 Acushnet Avenue New Bedford, MA 02745

For More Info - Please call (508) 996-8934

DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF 04/20-04/25/26

Monday:

1 Peter 2: 18-25

Luke 24: 44-49

Tuesday:

1 Peter 3: 1-12

John 6:28-33

Wednesday:

1 Peter 3: 13-22

John 6: 34-40

Thursday:

1 Peter 4: 1-11

John 6: 41-47

Friday:

1 Peter 4:12-19

John 2: 48-59

Saturday:

1 Peter 5: 1-14

John 6: 60-71

WEEK OF APRIL 11-12, 2026

Sunday Collection	\$ 1,769.00
Second Collection	\$ 856.00
Hall Renovation Donation	\$ 1,200.00
Lebanese Market	\$ 15.00
Coffee Hour	\$ 15.00
Candles	\$ 195.00
Total	\$ 4,050.00

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.

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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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