

They devoted themselves to the teaching
of the apostles and to the communal life,
to the breaking of the bread
and to the prayers.

ACTS 2:42

Issue 5 | December 2022

Peace of Christ!

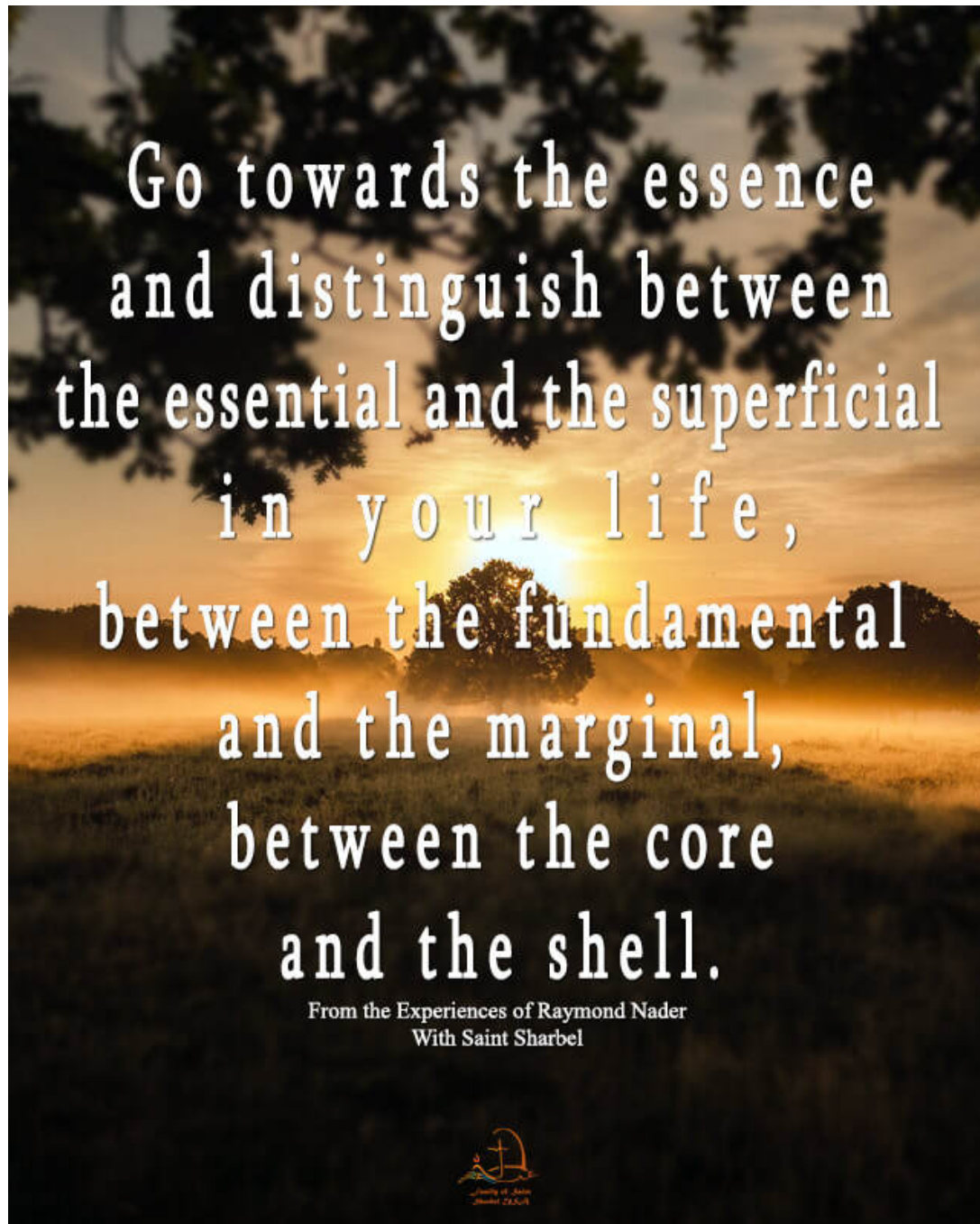


Happy New Year Friends!

The Family of Saint Sharbel USA
presents its latest Newsletter, to
highlight past and future events, our
spiritual content, and noteworthy
projects. We are happy to have you
onboard! **Please spread the word
among your family and friends, we
would love to have you all join us.**

Contemplation Corner

A Reflection for 2023...



During the season of the Glorious Birth of Our Lord, we are called to open up and welcome the child Jesus into our hearts. However, if we have too much clutter and "junk" in our hearts, we won't be able to allow in the Light. The excerpt above speaks of the awareness of the self and offers a great reflection as we enter 2023. Allow the following questions to guide your meditation and

resolutions as well and feel free to go as deep as you need:

What is *essential* and what is *superficial* in my life?

I will reflect on the habits I want to break and the ones I want to develop in 2023.

What is holding me back from strengthening my relationship with God?

Reflecting on my prayer life, do I give time to nourish my spirituality?

Referring to the excerpt, what are my core values?

Be assured of our prayers for you and if you enjoyed reflecting on this image, find more of our spiritual designs [HERE](#)

What's Ahead: Our Schedule and Events

The Glorious Epiphany of Our Lord

**On this day of your
manifestation at the Jordan,
we praise you and give you glory.**

Maronite Liturgy



<https://www.familyofsaintsharbel.org/spiritual-designs/archives/01-2022/2>

We look forward to celebrating the Glorious Epiphany which in the Eastern Churches is known by two names: Epiphany and Theophany. The Greek word, "Epiphany" means "a manifestation" or "an apparition" and the word, "Theophany, "an appearance of God." On this day, January 6, 2023, we celebrate the appearance or manifestation of Christ among us as God's Son...

The feast of the Epiphany is intimately connected with the mystery of our Lord's birth. The Child who was born for us and the Son who was given to us is manifested before us to be the Son of the Most High. Christ begins his public life with his baptism by John in the Jordan river. At his baptism, Christ is seen as the fulfillment of John's preaching: he is the Messiah and the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The Father and the Holy Spirit are witnesses to Christ for he is the beloved Son of the Father and upon him, the Spirit rests. Thus at the baptism of the Lord, we have not only an epiphany or manifestation of Christ as God's Son but also a theophany or manifestation of the Holy Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The feast of the Epiphany reminds us not only of the baptism of Christ but also of our own baptism. St. Ephrem in his Hymn on Epiphany says: “our blessed Lord came to be baptized with sinners and because of his glory the heavens were opened. The One who purifies all creatures, desiring to cleanse them, went into the waters and sanctified them for our baptism.” It is for this reason that we bless water on this day.

Source: Excerpts from the Prayer of the Faithful According to the Maronite Liturgical Year

In Case You Missed It: Past Events

The Family of Saint Sharbel's 2022 Christmas Retreat



<https://www.familyofsaintsharbel.org/our-news/the-family-of-saint-sharbels-christmas-of-2022-retreat>

A group of the Family of Saint Sharbel, USA, attended a Christmas retreat (December 8 to 11) at Most Holy Trinity Monastery of the **Maronite Monks of Adoration** in Massachusetts. Those who attended were given various talks and one was given by Bishop Gregory Mansour (Bishop of the Maronite Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn) about the relationship with God.

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE & access more media content of the retreat!

Saint Spotlight

Welcome to the newest section of the FSS Newsletter! Here, we will spotlight saints of each month, give you helpful resources to learn more, and provide a space to get to know Eastern Saints.

Saint Ephrem the Syrian, Doctor of the Church



<https://www.maronitevoice.org/articles/2019/6/21/st-ephrem-the-syrian-harp-of-the-holy-spirit>

Saint Ephrem the Syrian's feast day is **January 28th**. He was born in Mesopotamia in 306 and diligently studied Holy Scriptures under the tutelage of Saint Jacob, a preacher of Christianity and denouncer of heretics. Saint Ephrem earned many titles like "the Harp of the Holy Spirit" and his writings greatly influence the Eastern Church. The originality, imagery, and skill of his hymns

captured the hearts of the Christians so well, that Saint Ephrem is given credit for awakening the Church to the importance of music.

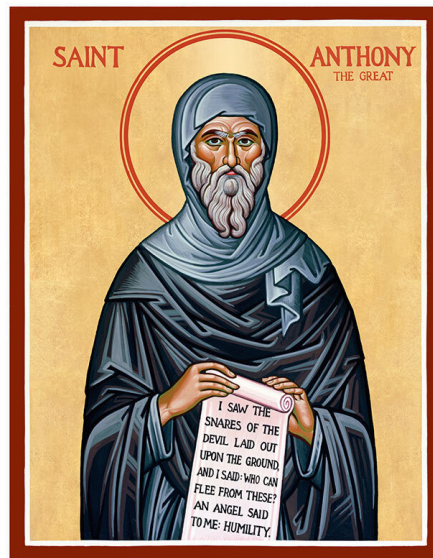
No one in the early Church wrote about Mary more than Saint Ephrem. He called his devotion to the Blessed Mother "The unlocking of the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem." The advice he gave to his disciples at the time of his death was: "Be humble and love one another, do not eulogize me and bury me in my religious clothing. Distribute whatever money collect at my funeral to the poor".

Saint Ephrem died in 378 and was declared a Doctor of the Universal Church by Pope Pius XI in 1925. May his prayers be with us.

Source: *The Maronite Synaxarion*

Editor's Pick: The Beginnings of Monastic Life...

Saint Anthony the Great



Feast Day: January 17

There are many saints that aren't discussed as frequently in mainstream media and we have given this space to spark curiosity and conversation about an Eastern saint you may not know about, every month.

Saint Anthony the Great was born around the year 251 in Coma, Egypt, and

was the son of well-off parents. Upon the death of their parents, he and his sister inherited their possessions. Saint Anthony had the desire to imitate the life of the Apostles and the early Christians, and one day, on hearing in the church the Gospel words: "If thou wilt to be perfect, go and sell all thou hast." He received them, as spoken to him, he gave his sister her share and disposed of all his property and goods devoting himself exclusively to religious exercises.

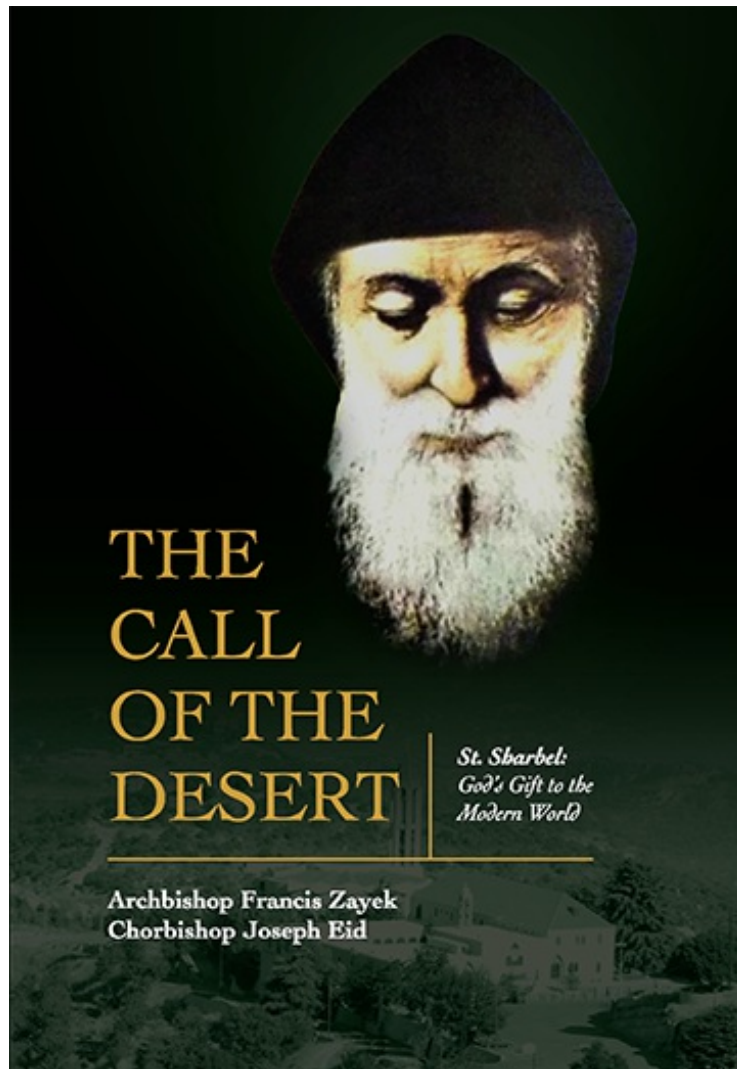
He took his abode in a tomb near his native village where strange conflicts with demons in the shape of wild beasts took place they inflicted blows upon him that was almost fatal on multiple occasions. In time this place became the first monastery, established in 305. This is why Saint Anthony is known as the Father of Monasticism. From this brotherhood sprouted many more throughout the world. He died in 356 at the age of 105 and instructed two of his monks to bury him secretly which they did. May his prayers be with us.

For more information on the Monastic Life of the Church, click [HERE](#)

Source: The Maronite Synaxarion

Reading Nook

The Call of the Desert | St. Sharbel: God's Gift to the Modern World.



<https://www.maronitevoice.org/articles/2019/5/10/the-call-of-the-desert>

Title: *The Call of the Desert | St. Sharbel: God's Gift to the Modern World.*

Author(s): Archbishop Francis Zayek & Chorbishop Joseph Eid

Abstract: This is a new edition of Chorbishop Joseph Eid's book on Saint Sharbel, first published in 1955, but now in its third and updated edition. In addition, it has been expanded with the writings of Archbishop Francis Zayek, founding bishop of the Maronite Eparchy in America. This new edition has a completely new introduction to the whole work, and a letter from Bishop Gregory Mansour, present Maronite Eparch of Brooklyn, recommends reading it as a whole.

Language: English

Publisher: N/a

Publication Year: 1955/ 2019

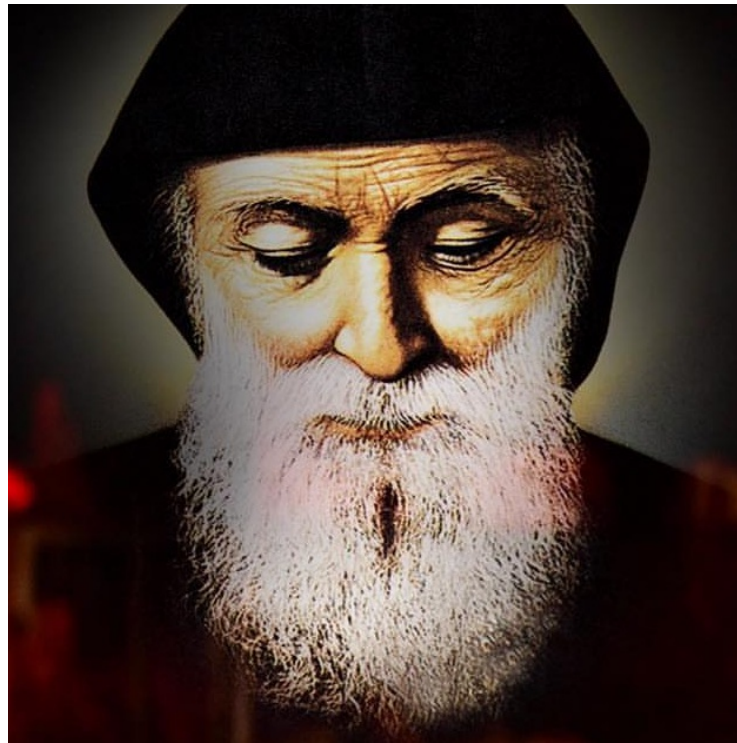
You can purchase the book using the following links:

Saint Joseph Maronite Church Website

Our Amazon Shop

Articles and More

The Healing Testimony of Patricia Pierre Tannouri



You can now see testimonials and even sort by country on our new Testimonials page [HERE](#)

Mrs. Patricia Pierre Tannouri born in 1983, in Zalka, is married to engineer Alan Aoun from Qatin and Hedab. She is an engineer, a mother of three, and currently resides in Qanabat Broumana. She recounts her health based on medical records.

“On the 5th of January 2022, I was admitted to Saint Joseph Hospital as I had shortness of breath and swelling extending from my head down to my face. After tests, I was diagnosed with cancer. It spread through my breast and my lymph nodes... Before undergoing this examination, Saint Sharbel appeared to my husband in a dream...*Read the rest of the Testimonial* [HERE](#)

Our Weekly Zoom Prayer Meetings

Join us for our Arabic Prayer Gatherings!



Every Tuesday night at 8:00 PM (EST), the Family of Saint Sharbel from all over North America gets together to pray the Ramsho (evening liturgy of the hours) in Arabic. A priest will lead the celebration, cantors sing the hymns and lectors read Scripture passages. The priest then reads the Gospel of the day and gives a short homily. Following the prayers, the priest proceeds to give the scheduled teaching and engage in a Q&A session.

Email office@familyofsaintsharbel.org to become a part of this awesome prayer group that has been meeting every Tuesday since 2020!

More Links & Resources

The Family of Saint Sharbel offers a free subscription to FORMED, a Catholic online platform with thousands of resources for spiritual growth, from video series, audio talks, movies for children and adults, and much more.

FORMED

To gain access to all of FORMED's content, follow these simple steps:

Go to: <https://formed.org/signup>, Enter: Family of Saint Sharbel, Enter your name and email address and you're in!

After you subscribe, you can also get the free FORMED app for your phone to stream and download any video or talk to listen to on the go! (Also available on ROKU and AppleTV).

Check out this trailer to see what FORMED is all about [HERE](#)

Below are the links to FORMED on social media:

Instagram: [formedcatholic](#)

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YouTube: [Formed](#)

Support us on Amazon Smile



We are happy to announce that you can now support the Family of Saint Sharbel USA every time you make a purchase on AmazonSmile.

What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, **at no cost to you**. AmazonSmile is available

at **smile.amazon.com** on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. When you shop with AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that **AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.**

So please consider choosing The Family of Saint Sharbel USA, as every little bit counts!

To support us on AmazonSmile, remember to always shop at smile.amazon.com (instead of amazon.com).

For more information about AmazonSmile, please [click here](#).

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HERE -**

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**God Bless
The Family of Saint Sharbel USA**



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