

THE WAY TO PARADISE

Saint Ann Maronite Church

Scranton, PA

INFORMATION BOOKLET



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**THE FAITH AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH
ARE EMBODIED IN HISTORY
HANDED ON BY TEACHING
EXPRESSED THROUGH LITURGY
AND
MEMORIALIZED IN ARCHITECTURE**

Msgr. Ronald N. Beshara

OUR PAST ...

Maronite history has its origins in Antioch where the early Christians received their faith from Saint Peter after he fled persecutions in Jerusalem. According to Acts 11:26 the followers of Christ were called Christians for the first time in Antioch. The seat of the Church remained there for 7 years before being transferred to Rome. Prior to 741 there were 7 Syro-Catholic Popes, 5 of them were Syro-Maronites.

Antioch was a Hellenistic city while Edessa to the Northeast maintained a Syriac-Aramaic culture followed by the Christians who later were to be called Maronite. Their tradition followed the language, theology and liturgy of Christ and His Apostles thus reflecting their mentality. After divisions and persecutions the Christians gradually migrated to the safety of the mountains in Lebanon. Thus the liturgical roots of the Maronite Church can be traced to Antioch and Edessa.

In the 4th century Saint Maron, a friend of Saint John Chrysostom, fought the heresies that beset the Catholic Church at that time, particularly Arianism, Monophysitism and Nestorianism. His monastery became the principal center of pastoral and spiritual care for the area. The monks and followers, then called Maronites, were continually called upon and willing to sacrifice their lives for their religious convictions.

In the 7th century the Emperor Justinian tried to seize both the Pope in Rome and Saint John Maron in Mount Lebanon and bring them to Constantinople. The Pope was protected by followers, but the Maronites suffered pillaging and plundering by Justinian's army when seeking the Patriarch, thousands of Religious and Maronites were massacred. After reaching Tripoli his forces were then completely routed by the Maronites of Lebanon.

In the early centuries only the Maronites were powerful enough to challenge the Roman Emperors of Constantinople and to fight against the various heresies. The historian Darras refers to Maronites in caves of Mount Lebanon who sheltered their faith from persecution. He says also this little nation glories in having always held to the true faith and union with the Holy See.

OUR PRESENT... OUR FUTURE...

Maronites were called upon to endure sufferings and death for (heir faith from that time to the present. They remained secluded in the mountains fostering their monastic spirit and protecting their tradition, as given them by the Apostles. They later welcomed and aided the Crusaders, ties with Catholic France and Rome then became closer and Latinizations were incorporated.

Since the dawn of history, the religious played a significant role in the politics of the East, thus the influence of the Eastern Catholic Church is vitally important for Catholicism. Christians in the East have suffered and face extinction in many countries. Of all those countries throughout the entire Middle East and North Africa, Lebanon alone remains strongly Catholic. The number of Christians, many of whom are non-Catholic, ranges from a low of less than 1% in Turkey to 12% in Egypt and Sudan. Lebanon numbers 50% Christian. Of the 1 Eastern Patriarchs, 4 reside in Lebanon. Now the Catholic Church looks to the Maronites and the Eastern Churches to defend Christianity in that area.

Popes have recognized the necessity of Eastern Churches reverting to their tradition but it remained for Vatican II to strongly encourage Maronites to restore their ancestral traditions and customs not only for their own sake but for the entire Catholic Church and for their role in ecumenism. Our present Pope, John Paul II, encouraged and blessed the Assembly of the Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops of the Middle East at their first Congress in Lebanon. The Congress members included 1 Patriarchs, 8 Cardinals, 118 Bishops, 32 Religious Superiors, lay people and advisors. They came from The Vatican and 21 different countries. His Excellency Theodore McCarrick of New Jersey represented the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in America. There were delegates from the Protestant Churches as well.

As we are now in the third millennium, Pope John Paul II asks all people of East and West to offer themselves to God with the pure hands of reconciliation. Then the people of the world will have reason to believe and hope.

PRESENT EASTERN AND WESTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES

JESUS
|
JERUSALEM
|
APOSTLES
|

ENTIRE CATHOLIC CHURCH

WESTERN	EASTERN - CENTERS OF TRADITION				
ROME	ANTIOCH	EDESSA	ARMENIA	ALEXANDRIA	CONSTANTINOPLE
Roman	West Syriac Maronite Syriac Malankar	East Syriac Chaldean Malabar	Armenian	Coptic Ethiopian	Romanian Russian Ruthenian Albanian Bulgarian Byelorussian Greek Hungarian Ital- Albanian Melkite** Slovak Ukranian Yugoslav
** - Melkite church was originally Antiochene Note: All the Eastern Catholic Churches have an Orthodox counterpart except for the Maronite Church.					

OUR TRADITION

The early Syriac tradition is important to us and the Catholic Church because the Maronite and sister Eastern Churches form the basis of the Christian tradition in the language and mentality of Christ and the Apostles. This richness cannot be lost since it beautifies and enriches all of Catholicism and Christianity. The Maronite tradition and teachings of the Councils (Nicaea 325; Constantinople 381; Ephesus 431; Chalcedon 451) were upheld by Saint Maron and the Monks that followed him

Throughout the turbulent era of divisions within the church, Saint Maron and the Syriac speaking people maintained the teachings of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, namely, that indeed Jesus Christ was both Divine and human. 350 Maronite Monks were martyred defending the teachings of that council. The Maronites have never failed to hold to this same position throughout their history. Pope Hormisdas in 518, acknowledged the persecution of Maronites because of their faith. The history of Maronites is a history of martyrdom.

The Maronite liturgy was derived, in part, from the Judaic tradition of Saint James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem. It was written in Aramaic and expresses the spirit of Eastern monasticism. The Maronites preserve in their heritage the oldest anaphora known in the Catholic Church, the Anaphora of Third Peter or Sharar. Thus, our liturgy is very close to the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. Our prayers reflect the imagery and symbols of the Gospels. The Maronite Church is unique also from its inception; it combines the richness of the Aramaic Church of the West and EaSaint The Roman Church itself is adopting many of the Eastern customs which more closely relate to the Apostolic teachings.

The Maronites continue to represent within the Church a special theology, liturgy and spirituality which preceded the Hellenization and Latinization of the Church. The Maronites were vigorously pursued since they were steadfast in obedience to the Pope and to this day remain the predominant Christian presence in the Middle East. This fidelity led to many Roman adaptations over the years and as a result the Maronites have fallen away from their original traditions. Maronites have withstood and survived many centuries of invasions and persecutions, but social malaise is a modern threat in this country. The future of Maronite direction is to preserve and keep alive the torch transmitted to them and hand it to future generations as a beacon of the Light of Christ and by keeping this tradition they enrich the entire Catholic Church.

Pope John Paul II states that there is "unity in diversity" when referring to the Eastern Churches. Other Popes have stated "A lawful freedom must be allowed to each and every people of the Eastern Churches in all things which derive from their history." The Apostles and their Disciples preached the Gospel message throughout the Middle East and the people who responded in faith expressed that faith through worship in their own language and culture.

"In light of Vatican II wishes, the Eparchy of Saint Maron has launched a journey of rejuvenation and liturgical renewal. While at times it may be difficult and even painful for the Maronite Church to return to its ancestral ways, it is absolutely necessary to do so." (Msgr. Beshara) Now is the time for all Maronites to courageously keep their faith despite the attacks of materialism and from those determined to destroy the Catholic way of life as given to us by Christ's Apostles. To deny ones roots in the Maronite and Eastern Churches, which are directed by Christ and His Apostles, is a blow to Christianity itself.

HOW TO BE TRULY EASTERN AND LIVE IN THE WEST

This is the challenge presented to an encounter of the Eastern Bishops and Religious Superiors of America and Oceania hosted by His Eminence Bernard Cardinal Law in Boston, MA. Another question How to belong to the West without denying Eastern origins? Still another addresses the ecumenical aspect as it relates to Orthodox and non-Catholic churches. Bishop Stephen Hector Doueihy states "Take notice of this encounter and show interest in its works..... read the multiple signs around us regarding our presence in the New World...Our Churches have come of age, indeed.

OUR CHURCH

THAT GOD MAY BE ACCESSIBLE TO EARTH-DWELLERS

HE HAS BUILT HIMSELF A HOUSE

AMONG THOSE WITH BODIES.

HE HAS ESTABLISHED ALTARS LIKE MANGERS

WHERE THE CHURCH MAY FEED ON LIFE.

MAKE NO MISTAKE!

THE KING IS HERE; LET US ENTER THE SANCTUARY

SO THAT WE MAY SEE HIM.

Hymn of Chorbishop Balai

With the spirit of rediscovery, the Maronite Church in the USA is in the process of gradually returning to its roots which are older than both the Western and Byzantine Churches. Along with the reform of the liturgy is a renovation of the church building itself to a more Antiochene or Syriac style. This is done in order to better enhance those Maronite traditions.

It is with this intention that Saint Ann Maronite Church underwent major interior renovation with Msgr. Kenneth Michael as Pastor. The Maronite tradition and our Church, reflect the simple life of the peasant and perhaps, more importantly, the monastic life that is at the root of our spirituality. The icons, paintings and murals while not as elaborate as the Byzantine, are not merely symbolic but represent the reality that Christ is truly present in the Church.

The interior including the Mural of Paradise, Murals of Saint Maron and Saint Charbel, the Tabernacle Table, marble Altar and the entrance doors all serve as guides and reminders that indeed God is here. The Maronite Church focuses attention on *the awaited Second Coming of Jesus the Anointed One*. It unfolds this central theme in its liturgy and architecture. In Syrian Antiochene tradition the attention of the worshippers is directed to:

- Christ in the Scriptures at the Bema — The Service of the Word
- Christ in the Eucharist at the Altar — The Service of the Holy Mysteries
- Christ in His Second Coming — at the East wall.

The simplicity of the Maronite Church and the relative stark-ness is a constant reminder of who we are before God. As Job said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)

The uniqueness and simplicity of our architecture reflects our roots in: biblical patterns, the life-styles of the Fathers of Jerusalem, Antioch and Edessa, and the monastic life of Saint Maron and his followers. Architecturally, there is an evolution from the Jewish Synagogue which served as a symbol of God's presence, as a house of prayer and a place for communal worship. There is a similarity of the Jewish prayer form with our Service of the Word.

The Churches of our Eparchy, while striving to restore our ancestral liturgical traditions, must also revive, as much as possible, our ancient church architecture and monastic spirit of simplicity and beauty. This is necessary in order for the community to experience and to celebrate good and meaningful worship in the Maronite Church.

The Latin Church has begun to implement many of the Eastern and Maronite focal points for good worship, thus it is all the more reason for the Maronites to return to their tradition so that we may serve as an example of good and communal worship rooted in the oldest forms of Christian liturgy and architecture. For even the architecture of our Church must be faithful to our history and glorious traditions. Thereby we shall keep alive and memorialize our distinct and unique personality within the Catholic Church.

OUR PARISH

From its humble beginning on Ninth Avenue in 1903, the spiritual aspirations of our ancestors continue to be fulfilled in our present Church. The first settlers in this area arrived in 1884 gradually learning the language and customs. In 1902 a larger influx of immigrants followed them. They attended services in other Churches in the area, especially Saint Joseph Melkite Church. In 1902 - 1903 Father Elias Ayoob, a priest visiting from Lebanon encouraged them to establish their own parish and Church. The parish began in 1903, then the Church became a reality in 1904.

In 1903 Father Anthony Zogby arrived in Scranton, Saint Ann Maronite Parish began; the Church was formally dedicated in January 1904. They rented a store on the corner of West Lackawanna and Ninth Avenue for their first services as a parish. Later they purchased a two story building on North Ninth Avenue. The chapel was in the basement. Father Zogby, our first priest, lived on the first floor while the second floor was rented to help finance the new Church.

In 1913, a once Protestant church, located at our present site on Sumner and Price Street, was purchased from

the Silk Underwear Manufacturer. It was remodeled, and then dedicated by Bishop Hoban on August 24, 1913.

The structure was demolished by fire in 1952. Maronite services were held in Saint Patrick's lower Church while a new Church was being built on Oram Street. This Church was to serve both the Maronite community and Saint Patrick parishioners in that area. The parishioners of Saint Ann, in their steadfast resolve to rebuild their own Church at the present site, raised over \$100,000 for that purpose. This resolve convinced Bishop Hafey, and later Bishop Hannon, to allow the construction at its original location. The new Saint Ann Maronite Church was dedicated in 1955 at the present and original site.

Major remodeling to conform with Eastern architecture was accomplished by Msgr. Kenneth Michael. Our present priest is Father Claude Franklin.

OUR PASTORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

In 1902 and 1903 Rev. Elias Ayoob encouraged the formation of a parish. He was a visiting priest from Lebanon and returned there.

1903-1907	Rev. Anthony Zogby	First Pastor
1907-1909	Rev. Mobarak Bellamah	Pastor
1909-1911	Rev. Jos. Yazbeck Jomaha	Pastor
1911-1913	Rev. Arsanious Hayeck	Pastor
1913-1918	Rev George Aziz	Pastor
1918-1919	Rev. Joseph Kaddah	Pastor
1919-1921	Rev. George Sebalani	Pastor
1921 -1929	Msgr. Stephen El-Douaihy	Pastor
1929-1932	Rev. Simon Acle	Pastor
1932-1952	Rev. Joseph Solomon	Pastor
1952-1956	Rev. Joseph Barrett	Latin Rite Pastor
1953-1956	Rev. George Webby	Assistant Pastor
1956-1969	Rev. George Webby	Pastor
1970-1972	Rev. Assad Awad	Pastor
1973-1974	Rev. Nehmatallah El-Hayek	Administrator
1975-1977	Rev. Joseph Shaheen	Pastor
1977	Rev. Paul Hage	Administrator
1977-1978	Rev. Elias Hoyek	Administrator
1978	Rev. Elias Njeim	Administrator
1978-1979	Rev. Paul Hage	Administrator
	Returned from retirement.	
1980-1981	Rev. William Decker	Pastor
1981 -1990	Rev. Kenneth Michael	Pastor
1990-1997	Rev. Fahed Azar	Pastor
1997-1998	Rev. Kevin Beaton	Pastor
1998-2003	Rev. Claude Franklin	Administrator
2003-present	Rev. Francis J. Marini	Pastor

From 1969 to 1979 Latin priests served when Maronite priests were not available. Note that Father Solomon served for 20 years; Father Webby for 16 years.

ENTERING SAINT ANN

We enter the Church from the West and proceed to the East, from dark to light. At the Westernmost main doors we first encounter Christ as "The Way, The Truth And The Life". When we take the way of Christ we next discover at the inner doors that Christ is the "Light Of The World" leading us to the East, to the Altar which is the Lamb of God and on the Eastern wall the Mural of Paradise. They all depict the important stages of the life of Christ and also of our life with Him. They also help to remind us to order our own lives into proper context, that is, 'to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness'.

Also on the Eastern wall is the Tabernacle with the "Bread of Life". Flanking the Altar are two murals depicting the greatest Maronite Saints, Saint Charbel and Saint Maron. On either upper side of the Mural of Paradise are two alcoves with small stained glass windows. That on our left depicts a Bible, inscribed with Alpha Omega, representing Service of the Word, on the opposite side the Mysteries, the Body and Blood, representing Service of the Holy Mysteries. The two compose the Divine Service of the Holy Mysteries, our Liturgy. Thus the Priest, when celebrating the Divine Liturgy, is never alone. He is surrounded by reminders of where we are from and what we hope to attain.

The architecture of the church, the murals and icons, indicate that this is a 'House of God'. Although relatively simple compared to the Latin Cathedrals and to the Byzantine, it does serve to remind us of the very purpose that we go to Church, to keep focused on the central aspects of faith. The simplicity of the Maronite Church is a constant reminder of who we are before God.

We remake our baptismal vows each time we enter this Church. The victorious Christ, the Olaph and the Tau, looms large behind the Altar to remind us of His great love for us. If we follow Him and keep His commandments, as did His surrounding Prophets and Apostles, we will join them in giving Him eternal praise in Heaven.

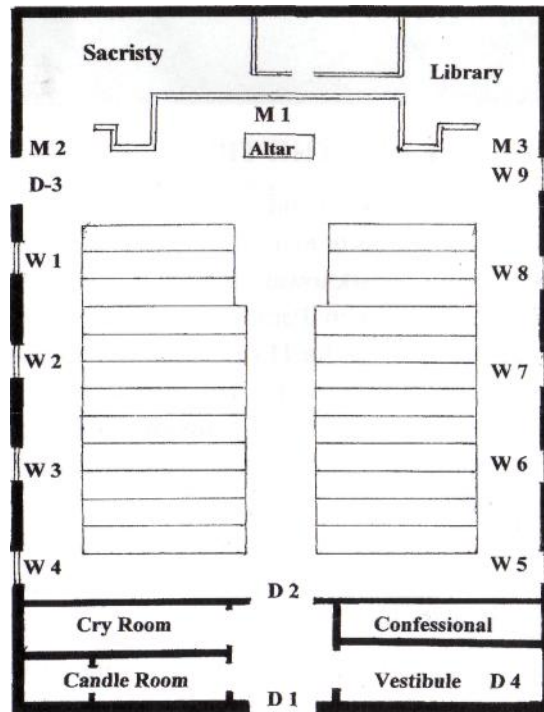
OUR CHURCH DOORS

The doors, paintings and murals are placed to reflect the simple traditions of the Maronite Church. The images are deliberately situated where they guide our minds and hearts to the divine sacrificial banquet which one comes to participate in. These images help us to set our own lives as well, into proper context. Ephrem says, Jesus is the secret bridge that leads across from death to life and whose love becomes a bridge by which his servants can cross over to the Father.

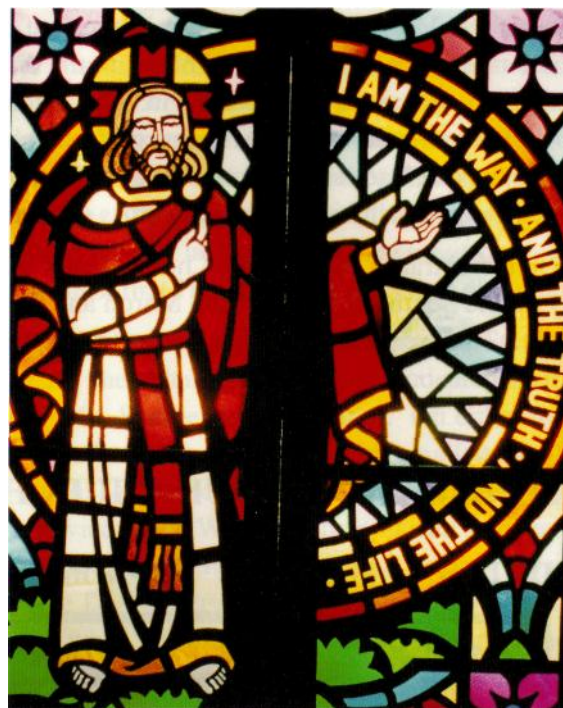
The other entrance doors of the Church depict Saint Rafka and Saint Anthony on the Southeast and Saint John Maron and Saint Ephrem on the NorthweSaint They serve as reminders that we have the entire host of Heaven to help us on our way.

SCHEMATIC OF OUR CHURCH

D - Door M - Mural W - Window



FRONT MAIN DOORS D-1



"I AM THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE"

This door is at the West end of the Church, the West being the traditional place of darkness or evil. As one goes through the door he is turning away from the dark toward the light, from West to East. It was Jesus' mission to reopen Paradise to mankind through Him. When Jesus began to prepare for His passion, His hour as it is called in the Gospel of John, He informed His disciples of His imminent return to the Father. As they became anxious over the loss of His presence, He comforted them by telling them that they would soon follow Him. Saint Thomas says "Lord we do not know where you are going, how can we know the way?" Jesus responds by saying, "I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father but through Me". (John 14:6)

It was Jesus' mission to reopen Paradise after it was closed to Adam and Eve. It is only through Him that mankind can return there.

INNER GLASS DOORS D-2



"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

At the next door we find Christ the Light of the World. Going through this door places the West in the past and Paradise to come. Saint John quotes Jesus saying explicitly, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12). Also Saint John says; "In Him was life and the life was the Light of men." (John 1:4). We live in darkness until we make the turn toward Christ the Light, and proceed to encounter the Altar, or Christ as Lamb.

Jesus is the way we must walk, the Truth in which we must believe and He is the life in and by which we will live if we believe and follow Him. By walking this path guided by this Light, we will regain that ultimate full life with God that was lost to us by the disobedience of Adam and Eve.

THE LAMB OF GOD



"Behold the lamb of God". These words, found on the altar, were spoken by Saint John the Baptist introducing Jesus to the Jewish people. He knew exactly that Jesus was to be the new Lamb, the fulfillment of all previous lambs, to accomplish His mission. Saint Ephrem says "Abraham saw in the symbol of the lamb the salvation of all nations."

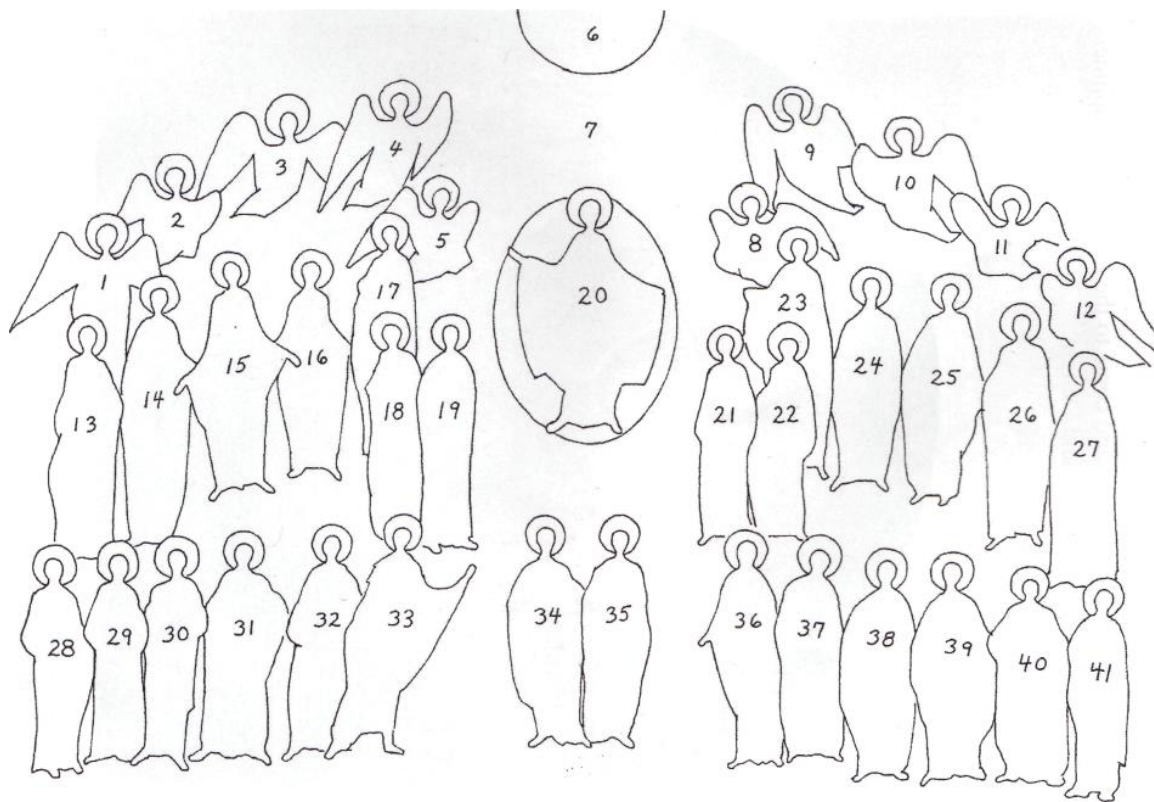
The lamb, from its very first appearance in the Bible, is always associated with both sacrifice and redemption. It was the lamb that God provided which saved Isaac. It was the blood of a perfect lamb that saved the people of Israel from the death of its infants. Jesus is the true Lamb who is sacrificed on every Christian altar so that all who partake of His Blood may be delivered of their sins (Rev 1:5) and have life (John 6:53). Also, "He who eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood has eternal life."

Ephrem, with this in mind states that those who partake of it become light so that they might fly up like eagles to meet the Son in the very clouds and so to make their dwelling in Paradise.

PARADISE

Lord may we return to You and come to the Paradise of Happiness and Delight.





FIGURES IN THE SCHEMATIC OF PARADISE MURAL

Central:

- 6. God the Father (Hand)
- 7. The Holy Spirit (dove)
- 20. Jesus Christ
- 34. Peter (church and key)
- 35. John (scroll)

Top row, Left:

- 1. Angel (crown of thorns)
- 2. Angel (cross)
- 3. Angel
- 4. Archangel Michael (staff)
One of three named Angels
- 5. Angel (crown)

Top Row, Right:

- 8. Angel (cedar of Lebanon)
- 9. Archangel Gabriel (lilies)
- 10. Angel
- 11. Angel (lance)
- 12. Angel (censor)

Middle Row, The Apostles, Left:

- 13. Simon the Zealot
- 14. James the Less (staff)
- 15. Thomas
- 16. Philip (staff)
- 17. James the Great (boat)

Middle Row, The Apostles, Right:

- 23. Andrew (X-cross)
- 24. Bartholomew
- 25. Matthew (scroll)
- 26. Thaddeus
- 27. Matthias

Middle Row Lower surrounding Jesus:

- 18. and 19. Parents of Jesus
Joseph and Mary (doves)
- 21. and 22. Grandparents of Jesus
Ann and Joachim

Lower Row Right, Old Testament:

- 41. Abraham Father of Patriarchs
- 40. Moses the Law Giver (tablets)
- 39. David King and Psalmist (harp)
- 38. Prophet Isaiah
- 37. Prophet Ezekiel
- 36. Anna the Prophetess **

Lower Row Left, New Testament:

- 33. John the Baptist **
- 32. Mary Magdalene
- 31. Luke, Evangelist (scroll)
- 30. Mark, Evangelist (scroll)
- 29. Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles
(Gospel book)
- 28. Maron, Founder of Maronites

**Saint Anna the Prophetess #36 and Saint John the Baptist #33 represent the transition from the Old to the New Testaments.

The central theme of Paradise is represented by the figures in the Central group. Saint Peter is included as the one entrusted with His church, and Saint John as the beloved disciple of Jesus and the one entrusted to care for His Mother. Note the church held by Saint Peter. Saint Maron, in this mural, represents the entire Church. The third named angel is Raphael.

PARADISE M-1

The life of mankind began in Paradise with the creation of Adam and Eve. After their disobedience they, and all mankind were cast out. Mankind, since that time, has had to endure pain and suffering and has been subjected to death. In this Mural the children of light all stand in adoration of the victorious risen Christ

Through Christ's victory over sin and death, which He won through His Passion, Death and Resurrection, the casting out of Paradise was reversed. Heaven is once again opened to mankind. On the cross itself Jesus promised the repentant thief that he would be with Him that very day in Paradise. He has promised the same for those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Paradise is a realm of only good and light. Darkness and evil will not exist there. Those who have entered and will enter Paradise are called children of light. We know with little certainty of what we can expect to find in Paradise, we do know that all will be new, "a new Heaven and a new earth." (Apoc. 21:1).

FIGURES IN MURAL M-1

1., 2., 3. Angels with crown of thorns, and cross.

4. Archangel Michael One of three angels known by name. Best known for casting Satan out of heaven after he set himself up as God. Archangel Michael is known as protector of individual Christians against the devil, especially at the hour of death. He appears as Prince of the chosen people.

5. Angel with crown.

6. God the Father pointing to Christ, represented by the Hand, as in the Old Testament, (Daniel 5) since no one has seen the Father.

7. The Holy Spirit Represented by a dove as in the New Testament.

8. Angel with cedar of Lebanon.

9. Archangel Gabriel Known by name which means 'God is my Hero', foretold the birth of John the Baptist, messenger to Zechariah and Mary.

Known as messenger of Divine comfort. Destroyed Sodom, and the army of Sennacherib.

10., 11., 12. Angels with lance and censor. 13.to 17. are apostles

13. Simon Called by Matthew and Mark as the Canaanite, by Luke as the Zealot both names from the same Aramaic word. He was martyred by being cut in two with a saw. At times he is shown holding a saw, the instrument of his martyrdom.

14. James the Less (Staff). Called the Lesser because of his youth. Brother of the Apostle Matthew. He is always listed ninth in lists of the apostles. In the letter of James he exhorts Christians to receive the word of God in meekness and to control impediments to Christian virtue. He may have been stoned to death.

15. Thomas offered to die with Jesus but best known as 'doubting Thomas'. He was absent when the resurrected Jesus appeared to the apostles and refused to believe their testimony. He was apostle to Parthia and India. He is revered in the Syriac rite.

16. Philip (Staff) From the same city as Saints Peter and Andrew. He was tested by Our Lord when He was about to feed the multitudes with

five loaves and two fish. Saint Philip implored Jesus to show us the Father. He suffered martyrdom by crucifixion.

17. **James the Greater** (Boat) The elder brother of Saint John, they were in a boat when they were called. Saints James, John and Peter were the three who witnessed the transfiguration on Mt. Tabor and the three who accompanied our Lord to Gethsemane before the crucifixion.

18. **Joseph** (Doves) Revered for his humility, sanctity and obedience to all God asks of him. Angels appeared to Joseph, to tell him that the child Mary bore was of the Holy Spirit, again, to flee to Egypt, and again, to return to Bethlehem where Jesus was born. He is commemorated on the fifth Sunday of the Season of Annunciation.

19. **Mary, the Mother of God.** In the Maronite tradition, there are eight feast days of Mary. Ephrem says "Blessed is she who has become for all creation the fountain that pours out all good things. From her has shone light for all creatures." Also, "to call on Mary is the key to the gates of heaven." Maronites know that they can always turn to her and seek intercession with her Son.

20. **Jesus Christ**

21., 22. **Saint Ann and Saint Joachim** parents of the Blessed Virgin. Childless, they wept and prayed for a child. Saint Ann vowed to the Lord that if they were granted a child they would offer it to the service of the Lord in the Temple.

23. to 27. are Apostles

23. **Andrew** (X Cross) Brother of Saint Peter. It was Andrew who brought Peter to hear Jesus preach. He was martyred in Greece possibly by crucifixion. He is a patron Saint of Russia and Scotland.

24. **Bartholomew** Evangelized Ethiopia, India and Persia. He also brought the Gospel to Armenia where he was martyred by being flayed alive.

25. **Matthew** (Scroll) Known as Levi the Tax collector. Brother of James the Less. He wrote the first of the four Gospels primarily for Jews. For that reason it was in five sections to symbolize the Pentateuch or Torah. In iconography, he is always shown writing under the dictation from an angel.

26. **Thaddeus** Known as Jude. Little is known of him, he is mentioned only twice in the New Testament. Saint of lost causes. May be related to James. Preached in Armenia, then went with Simon to Iran. Both were attacked and killed by a mob in the year 66. He was run through with a spear.

27. **Matthias** The replacement for Judas Iscariot. He was a follower of our Lord from the beginning and could give first hand witness to His Resurrection. He was crucified in either Ethiopia or Jerusalem.

28. **Saint Maron** Father of the Maronites, represents all Christian Churches. The first to embrace open air monasticism, Theodoret states that because of his great gifts he attracted many famous disciples and famous hermits. Steadfastly held himself and his many followers to the teachings of the Apostles and to Rome.

29. **Paul** (Gospel Book) Born a Jew named Saul. He studied under a famous rabbi, and was soon inflamed with a great zeal against

- Christians. He supervised the stoning of Saint Stephen. He was confronted by Jesus as a powerful Light and charged with bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles. He became the most powerful personality in the Church. He was martyred in Rome.
30. **Mark** (Scroll) Not an Apostle but followed them extensively. Accompanied Saint Peter to Rome and wrote his Gospel there under the direction of Peter. He was martyred in Egypt.
31. **Luke** (Scroll) Physician and Gentile. Greek speaking convert of pagan origin and well educated. His Gospel stresses the Holy Spirit as well as the teachings of Jesus. He wrote the Acts of the Apostles, often called "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit." He is reported to have painted an Icon of Mary that exists today in Rome.
32. **Mary Magdalene** (Flask of Oil) or (Flask of Myrrh) Once a prostitute from whom Jesus cast out seven demons. She became totally devoted to Jesus, following Him as He preached and every step of His crucifixion. She was present at His burial and later discovered the empty tomb. She is the patron saint of women who repent.
33. **John the Baptist** The last and greatest of the old Testament prophets, celebrated by Maronites with three feasts during the liturgical year. His birth was foretold by an angel. He Baptized our Lord and became a fervent preacher. He is known as an Angel, Apostle and the first hermit. He was beheaded after denouncing King Herod.
34. **Peter** (Church and Key) Prince of the Apostles. Given the name Cephas meaning 'rock'. After his three denials, the resurrected Jesus made Peter swear three times to watch over and feed the flock that He was leaving in his care. He is always named first in lists of the Apostles. Saint Peter was crucified by the Romans, but, considering himself unworthy to die like his Master, he insisted on being crucified upside down.
35. **John** (Scroll) Brother of James, privileged to recline on our Lord's bosom at the Last Supper. Known as the beloved disciple. Jesus last command before He died was for Saint John to take care of our Blessed Mother after the crucifixion. He wrote the fourth Gospel. Depicted as an eagle in iconography.
36. **Anna the Prophetess** After the early death of her husband she lived in the Temple in Jerusalem in silence, prayer and fasting. At age 84 after meeting the Holy Family she publicly praised God. Ephrem compares Anna's silence to the prophet Isaiah.
37. **Ezekiel** Last of the major Old Testament prophets, known for extraordinary visions.
38. **Isaiah** Name means God is salvation. Largest of the prophetic books dealing with two periods in the history of Israel. Isaiah predicted doom for Israel if they did not return to God.
39. **David** (Harp) King of Israel, uniting it with Judea, with Jerusalem as capital of the new Israel. As a boy, slew Goliath to save Israel. God promised that the house of David was to stand forever. Israel expected that the deliverer would come from the descendants of David. Author of 150 canonical psalms used in the Synagogue and Church.
40. **Moses** (Tablets) Greatest of the Old Testament prophets, his story takes up four of the five books of the Pentateuch. Born in Egypt of Hebrew parents he escaped being put to death with all Hebrew children

as decreed by the Pharaoh. Became a servant of God and a leader of the Hebrew people. Received the Ten Commandments from God. Known as the Law-Giver.

41. **Abraham** First and greatest of the patriarchs. God promised him many descendants. At the age of 100, his wife Sarah age 90, gave birth to Isaac. Because of Abraham's unwavering obedience to God, as evidenced by his willingness to sacrifice his only son, Saint Paul held him to be the most righteous person to have ever lived.

APOSTLES AND EVANGELISTS

(Those listed above, that have been martyred.)

Saint Simon the Zealot	Cut in two with a saw.
Saint James the Lesser	Crucified
Saint Phillip	Beheaded
Saint James the Greater	Probable death by crucifixion.
Saint Andrew	Flayed while alive.
Saint Bartholomew	Crucified
Saint Mathias	Martyred in Rome, beheaded
Saint Paul	Martyred in Egypt
	Beheaded
	Crucified upside down

MURAL OF SAINT SHARBEL M-2



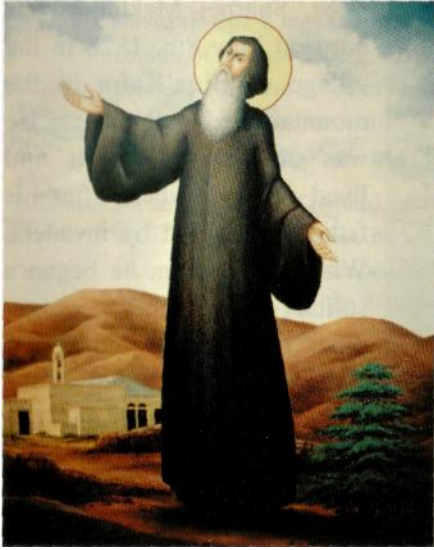
Saint Charbel Makhlouf was born on May 8th, 1828 in the village of Biqa'Kafra in the mountains of Lebanon. He was christened Joseph and lived with his uncle after his father was killed by invaders. While still young, he began a solitary life at the encouragement of an aged monk and soon sought admission to the monastery at Annaya. The workings of grace in him was recognized quickly and he was sent to become a priest After ordination he returned to the monastery and lived a life of simplicity and asceticism. He lived in complete poverty and prayed unceasingly. In 1872 he was sent to a hermitage in the mountains and devoted himself even more rigorously to fasting and continual prayer. Thus he spent the rest of his days until his death December 24, 1898.

After death, Charbel's body defied corruption for a considerable length of time, his body remained as it was at the time of death and he continued to exude sweat and blood. He was examined by doctors, autopsied, left in the sun to dry, all to no avail. Later, his intestines, lungs and liver were removed, nevertheless, his body continued to sweat, exude blood and feel as it did at death. Recently, pictures

taken by then Fr. George Webby showed Charbel in the background of the entire roll of films. This was examined by the Vatican and no physical reason for the image could be found. This image is in popular use today.

After his death God granted many miracles of healing to those who visited his grave for the next several decades. He was declared a saint on October 9, 1977.

MURAL OF SAINT MARON M-3



The earliest source for the (life of Saint Maron is recorded by Theodoret, the Bishop of Cyrrhus in the fifth century. His influence on the Church, in the realm of theology, has been great. Theodoret states that Saint Maron went to the top of a mountain on which there was a pagan temple. He consecrated this temple to God and began his monastic life with only a small tent which he did not always use. He became famous for his great gift of healing, he not only healed bodies but souls as well. He was the first to embrace open air monasticism and gathered about him many disciples, including women, and famous hermits. Theodoret has recorded their lives as well as that of Saint Maron.

Saint Maron's name is connected with the Maronites for his heroic efforts to keep the Syriac speaking peoples in line with the teaching of the Great Church, not with any group that deviated from the teaching of the Ecumenical Councils. Normally when a group of people within the Church are called after the name of a single person, it is expressly in order to label them as heretics. Saint

Maron is the sole exception in the entire history of the Church.

Saint Maron died near Apamea around 410. There was a bitter battle for his body but eventually he was buried in one of the neighboring villages. The villagers then built a great shrine over his body. This shrine quickly became a source of many blessings and healings. Saint Maron's feast day is celebrated on February 9th. Popes have granted indulgences to all those who visit Maronite Churches on that day.

Saint Rafka Saint Anthony the Great D-3



Rafka was born in Himlaya, a small village near Bickfaya, June 29, 1832 the feast of Saint Peter. She was therefore called Petronilla. She displayed an early devotion to the Saints and especially to the Mother of God.

Against the wishes of her father she became a postulant of the Sisters of Our Lady convent in Bickfaya, and took her vows February 10, 1856 as Sister Agnes. She helped to set up a school for girls and quickly became known for her virtues and good-nature. In 1871 the Jesuits merged various congregations into a new Congregation of the Sacred Heart. Sr. Agnes chose to follow a new calling into the cloistered nuns of the Lebanese Order. After her vows she took the name Rafka after her beloved mother who died when Rafka was 7 years old.

Rafka found such peace there that she desired to suffer for her Lord. After praying for this she was struck with great pain in her head and eyes. She endured great suffering, her eyes becoming more and more inflamed. Despite the best medical attention the pain did not subside and she became blind. For the last 17 years of her life she suffered this pain with obedience and heroic endurance.

At the end of her life she had become entirely paralyzed and her body severely distorted. She was in complete peace when she died May 23, 1914. Her burial site has become the site of many miraculous healings.

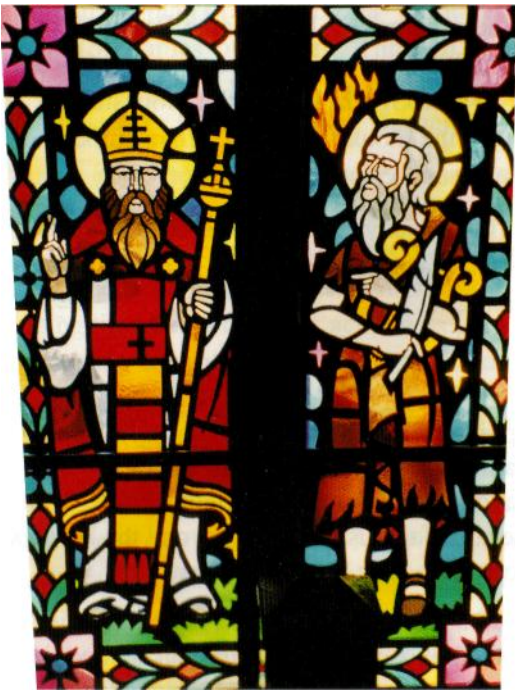
SAINT ANTHONY THE GREAT

Saint Anthony was known as Saint Anthony of the Desert, Saint Anthony the Great and Saint Anthony the Hermit. He was born in Comus, Egypt in the year 251 of fairly well-to-do parents. At the age of 18 Saint Anthony heard the priest proclaim the gospel exhortation, "Go, sell all you possess, give it to the poor and come follow Me." These words went to his innermost soul. He immediately sold all he had and gave his money to the poor. He then went out to a small hut on the edge of the desert and devoted himself completely to a life of prayer and penance.

He quickly became famous for his holiness and many came to him for advice or healing. Saint Anthony, however, preferred to live a quiet life by himself so that he could pray to God unceasingly. He fled farther and farther into the desert to find the solitude he was seeking. Here he remained for 20 years in complete isolation enduring temptations and savage beatings from the devil. He was finally discovered and looked as if he were "reborn as spirit" according to his biographer, the great Saint Athanasius.

Many people flocked to Saint Anthony seeking his advice and prayers, many chose to follow and imitate his lifestyle. They were so numerous that Saint Anthony is also known as the "Father of the Desert Monks." He lived to be 105 years old and continuing his asceticism, healing and providing spiritual advice.

Saint John Maron Saint Ephrem D-4



Saint John Maron lived during the seventh century during one of the most tumultuous periods in the history of the Church. There were divisions due to problems of interpretation within the Christian church and, in addition, this was a period of war between the Muslim invaders and Greeks. The ecclesiastical problems were aggravated by the lack of communication due to wars in the area restricting travel.

Saint John Maron was born of noble parents in Sirmis and educated in Antioch, then at the Monastery of Saint Maron. He later became a monk in that monastery. Because of all the ecclesiastical turmoil and holy wars the monks of Saint Maron were unable to conduct their daily prayer and worship. Saint John Maron led some of the monks away to the mountains and isolated villages in Lebanon to live more peacefully.

While in these villages, Saint John converted many heretics back to the true Christian faith. He was named Bishop of Botrys in Phoenicia in order to keep the Lebanese people from being dissuaded by any of these heresies. He became Patriarch of Antioch from 685-707.

During his tenure there were continuous wars with Greeks and Arabs. In 694 the Greeks sacked the Monastery of Saint Maron and killed over 500 of the monks who had remained behind. Many valuable records and manuscripts were lost

After this tragedy, Saint John Maron rebuilt the monastery in the mountains of Lebanon. He died in 707 and his feast day is celebrated on March 2nd.

Saint Ephrem

Saint Ephrem was the greatest Saint Syria has ever produced. He was the famous Deacon of Edessa, also known as "Harp of the Holy Spirit" and "The Pillar of the Church." He lived in the fourth century and became famous,

even far beyond the borders of Syria, for his ascetic lifestyle and his brilliant poetry.

He lived a life of exemplary holiness, as a tireless worker for his bishops and composed his lyrics to educate people. He was diligent in protecting the flock against the heretical teachings of that time. He wrote commentaries on most books of the Bible on such topics as Faith, Paradise, Virginity, the Nativity, the Church, Fasting and numerous other topics. He wrote hymns on his native city of Nisibis when it was under siege by the Persians. He resisted attacks on belief from non-Christians and some divided Christians as well.

Nisibis was conquered in 363 and Saint Ephrem was exiled along with all Christians and he made his way to Edessa. He saved many lives there during a very severe famine.

His hymns and writings exerted a great influence on the Church then and continues to influence the liturgical life of all Eastern Churches at the present. The Maronite liturgy still preserves many prayers attributed to Saint Ephrem. He died in Edessa June 9, 373. He was declared a Doctor of the Universal Church October 5, 1920.

MARONITES AND MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Mary is justly praised by all true Christians. God has given her a unique role in the plan of salvation for "through her womb God 'put on' flesh". (Saint James of Serug) "Through Mary the path to Paradise, that had been shut, was trod again; the serpent fled, and humanity could pass over to God." (Msgr. Beshara)

As mother and intercessor Maronites have always looked to her for succor and protection. Mary is known by many titles and to Maronites especially as Our Lady of Lebanon and Our Lady of the Seeds. On December 26, the day after Christmas, Maronites join together in singing the praises of Mary, acknowledging her as Mother of God and confessing her role in this great Christmas event.

Her unique relation to her son caused Mary to wonder how she might best address her only son:

*"How shall I call you, O stranger to us,
Who became one of us? Shall I call you 'Son'?"
Shall I call you "Brother"? Shall I call you 'Bridegroom'?"
Shall I call you 'Lord'? Begetter of his mother
By a second birth from out of the waters!"
(Saint Ephrem, Hymn on Nativity #16)*

At Saint Ann the windows portray the events that bear witness to Mary's unique role in the earthly and heavenly ministry of her Son as well as the important intercessory role that she plays on behalf of all Christians.

1. Presentation of Mary in the Temple.
2. Annunciation by Gabriel
3. Mary's visit to Elizabeth
4. Nativity of Jesus Christ
5. Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
6. Finding of young Jesus in the Temple
7. Wedding Feast at Cana
8. Dormition of Mary
9. Mary's coronation as Queen of Heaven

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

W-1 Presentation of Mary in the Temple

A very old feast in the Eastern tradition celebrated November 21 Saint Mary was taken to the Temple in Jerusalem at age three, fulfilling the promise made by her parents. She was to dwell there to pray and worship God continually. She did not hesitate to leave her parents and knew at that age what a great grace it was to pray and serve God. She remained there in the Temple, never leaving for any reason, until she reached the age of twelve at which time she was to be betrothed.



W-2 The Annunciation

This feast day is celebrated March 25th and as the 2nd Sunday of Annunciation.

The Angel Gabriel enters Mary's room in the Temple and greets her with "Hail full of grace." Gabriel announces to her that God has chosen her to be the mother of the Savior. Mary humbly responds, "Let it be done to me according to your word." At once the Holy Spirit overshadowed her and she conceived the son of God in her womb.





W-3 The Visitation

This feast day is celebrated, in the Maronite tradition, on the third Sunday of the Season of Annunciation. It commemorates Mary's visit to her kinswoman Elizabeth who was then six months pregnant with the child who will be John the Baptist. When Mary arrives Elizabeth cries out "What is this that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Elizabeth goes on to praise Mary with "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb."



W-4 The Nativity

Mary gave birth to the son of God in a small out of the way cave in Bethlehem. This feast day celebrates the birth of our Savior on the first Christmas. As Saint Matthew relates, this fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that a virgin will bear a son. God becoming man, the Incarnation, is the central mystery of our Faith. Saint Ephrem was fascinated with the paradoxes, he states; the rich One who becomes poor; the One whom the universe cannot contain lies in a poor straw manger; the light of the world is only just opening His eyes.



W-5 The Presentation of Christ

This feast day is celebrated on February 2nd. In fulfillment of Jewish law Mary was to have Jesus circumcised on the eighth day.

Mary then brought Jesus to the Temple with her offering of two turtle doves as she was too poor to offer a yearling lamb. (Jesus offered as the lamb!) Simeon, who was told by God that he would live to see the Messiah, saw Mary carrying Jesus to the Temple and cried out; "Lord now let Your servant depart in peace for my eyes have seen Your salvation."



W-6 The Finding in the Temple

This is the only event recorded in the scriptures of Jesus childhood and is commemorated the Sunday after Christmas.

After Passover in Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph began to travel back home only to find that Jesus was not among their relatives. They then returned to search for Him. He is found in the Temple discussing The Law with the rabbis who are utterly amazed at His understanding of the Scriptures. Jesus was twelve years old.



W-7 The Wedding at Cana

This feast begins the season of Great Lent in the Maronite calendar. It represents a significant change in Jesus' life and it comes at Mary's instigation. When she tells Jesus there is no more wine, Jesus performs this miracle thus manifesting Himself to Israel for the first time. Mary quickly tells the servants "Do whatever He tells you." This is meant as a directive to us also to change our lives as the Gospel demands. We must follow Jesus with absolute faith and trust.



W-8 The Dormition

This feast is celebrated August 15th. It is known as the Assumption in the West. It celebrates the fact that since Mary had a unique role and because of her completely docile obedience to God's will and absolute trust in His hand, she was raised body and soul directly into heaven at the very moment of her death. The doctrine of Mary's Dormition has only been recently defined (1950), the belief in her Dormition is very ancient. Iconographers always show Mary's tomb full of flowers to indicate that the body of Mary had been taken away to heaven.



W-9 The Coronation

The actual Coronation of Mary is not found explicitly in the Bible, it is a representation of her life and the fulfillment of her role in God's plan of salvation. She has been known, almost from the earliest days of the Church, as Queen of Martyrs, Queen of Apostles and Queen of Heaven. She is the great interceding Queen. Saint Ephrem says "She became the conqueror of errors and heresies, she is the powerful shield of the Church." The prophet Isaiah seems to be speaking of Mary when he says, "You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord."

OTHER WINDOWS

There are Ten other stained glass windows in our Church. Two are in the alcove windows on either side of the mural Paradise as mentioned on page 10, ENTERING SAINT ANN.

There are three in the Candle Room off the vestibule. Saint Theresa holding a crucifix, the Baptism of Jesus by Saint John the Baptist, and one representing the baptism of a child.

Along the steps to the choir loft are three windows. The first is the Resurrection, next is the Ascension and the third is Pentecost with the Holy Spirit appearing to the disciples.

In the choir loft is a circular window of Saint Ann teaching Mary the Mother of God. This beautiful window is shown on the back cover of this pamphlet. In the storage room off the choir is a small tenth window, a gold crown.

GEORGE PINECROSS, MURAL ARTIST and FAMILY

George Pinecross studied at the San Fernando Academy of Fine Arts, Madrid, Spain. He had additional studies in France and Italy. He has had numerous exhibitions and shows in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium, the United States and other countries. He completed many mural and icon commissions and at Saint Ann was assisted by his son Sergio.

George and Aur Pinecross were married in their native Spain. They describe a most unusual but simple ceremony. From that moment on they embarked on a Christian Catholic simple life of dedication. Aur states that they live a Franciscan lifestyle, embracing a life of poverty and service to the poor. Shortly after their marriage they sold their home in Spain giving half of the money to the needy. They promised never to have another house as long as there is poverty in the world. He, an artist, devoted to religious works, fervently prays when doing any icon or painting. Before coming to America he and his wife lived and cared for the poor in Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Italy and Holland.

She, a writer of Christian prose and poetry, lives a life of poverty and preaching. Besides following her husband she devotes a month or two every three or four years to help the poor of third world countries. Her work has taken her to Ecuador, Venezuela, Brazil, Puerto Rico and Spain. She describes her work as follows; "I cook, I preach the gospel, I clean wounds. I do what Jesus has spent his life doing -- curing, satisfying the hungry and consoling those who need comfort."

An afternoon spent at (heir home one will witness a family totally immersed in practicing what they preach. She apologized for the one carpel in the living room. They live with candles and use very few electric lights for company. Their simple furniture cost \$35 and they sleep on wooden palettes as do their children. Meals are simple. Their children

are artists and live the same simple dedicated life as their parents.

A message from John Paul II

"Many Popes have addressed the importance of the Eastern Traditions, with encyclicals and Apostolic Letters, to safeguard their significance for the whole Church. Vatican II has emphasized the necessity for ecumenism. Since, in fact, we believe that the venerable and ancient tradition of the Eastern Churches is an integral part of the heritage of Christ's Church, the first need for Catholics is *to be familiar with that tradition*, so as to be nourished by it and to encourage the process of unity in the best way possible for each. We wish to restore unity of all traditions in the Catholic Church.

Our Eastern Catholic brothers and sisters are conscious of being the living bearers of this tradition, together with our Orthodox brothers and sisters. The members of the Catholic Church of the Latin tradition must also be fully acquainted with this treasure and thus feel; with the Pope, a passionate longing that *the full manifestation of the Church's catholicity* be restored to the Church and to the world, expressed not by a single tradition, and still less by one community in opposition to the other; and that we too may be granted a full taste of the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the universal Church which is preserved and grows in the life of the Churches of the East as in those of the West

From Jerusalem, the mother of all the Churches, the Gospel was preached to all nations, many of which boast of having had one of the Apostles as their first witness to the Lord. In that city the most varied cultures and traditions were welcomed in the name of the one God. This Pope, son of a Slav people, is particularly moved by the call of those peoples to whom the two saintly brothers Cyril and Methodius went. They were a glorious example of apostles of unity. We must say together from East and West; The Cross of Christ Must not be emptied of its power because man would no longer have roots nor prospects; he is destroyed!"

(Apostolic Letter, The Light of the East *Orientalis Lumen*) Vatican translation. Published 1995 by Pauline Books & Media, Boston, MA

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