

Our Parish

Our Lives on Earth are Our Pathway to Heaven

*"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written:
'Be holy, because I am holy.'" (1 Peter 1: 15-16)*

Cana Sunday: Entrance into Lent

Year 2022, Issue #9



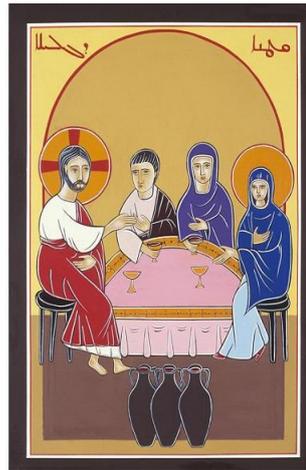
Sunday 27th February 2022

The Gospel

John 2: 1-11

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Season of Lent



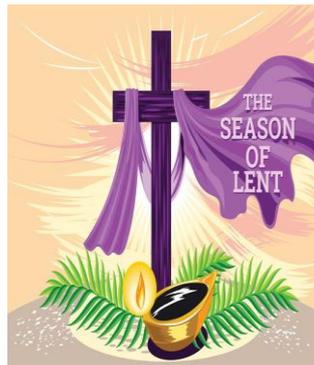
Next Sunday
Sunday of the Leper

Epistle

Rom 6: 12-23

Gospel

Mark 1: 35-45



الإنجيل

لوقا ٢: ١-١١

في اليَوْمِ الثَّالِثِ، كَانَ عُرْسٌ فِي قَانَا الْجَلِيلِ، وَكَانَتْ أُمُّ يَسُوعَ هُنَاكَ. وَدُعِيَ أَيْضًا يَسُوعُ وَتَلَامِيذُهُ إِلَى الْعُرْسِ. وَنَفَدَ الْخَمْرُ، فَقَالَتْ لِيَسُوعَ أُمُّهُ: «لَيْسَ لَدَيْهِمْ خَمْرٌ». فَقَالَ لَهَا يَسُوعُ: «مَا لِي وَلَكَ، يَا أَمْرَأَةٌ؟ لَمْ تَأْتِ سَاعَتِي بَعْدًا!». فَقَالَتْ أُمُّهُ لِلْخَدَمِ: «مَهْمَا يَقُلْ لَكُمْ فَافْعَلُوهُ!». وَكَانَ هُنَاكَ سِتَّةُ أَجْرَانٍ مِنْ حَجَرٍ، مُعَدَّةٌ لِتَطْهِيرِ الْيَهُودِ، يَسَعُ كُلُّ مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَانِينَ إِلَى مِئَةِ وَعِشْرِينَ لِيِتْرًا، فَقَالَ يَسُوعُ لِلْخَدَمِ: «إِمْلَأُوا الْأَجْرَانَ مَاءً». فَامْلَأُوهَا إِلَى فَوْقِ. قَالَ لَهُمْ: «اسْتَقْفُوا الْآنَ، وَقَدِّمُوا لِرَبِّيسِ الْوَلِيمَةِ». فَقَدَّمُوا. وَذَاقَ الرَّبِّيسُ الْمَاءَ، الَّذِي صَارَ خَمْرًا - وَكَانَ لَا يَعْلَمُ مِنْ أَيْنَ هُوَ، وَالْخَدَمُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَقْفُوا يَعْلَمُونَ - فَدَعَا إِلَيْهِ الْعَرِيسَ وَقَالَ لَهُ: «كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ يَقْدِمُ الْخَمْرَ الْجَيِّدَ أَوَّلًا، حَتَّى إِذَا سَكِرَ الْمَدْعُوُونَ، قَدَّمَ الْأَقْلَ جُودَةً، أَمَا أَنْتَ فَقَدْ أَبْقَيْتَ الْخَمْرَ الْجَيِّدَ إِلَى الْآنَ!». تِلْكَ كَانَتْ أُولَى آيَاتِ يَسُوعَ، صَنَعَهَا فِي قَانَا الْجَلِيلِ، فَظَهَرَ مَجْدَهُ، وَآمَنَ بِهِ تَلَامِيذُهُ.

Divine Liturgy and Services

Sundays: 9:00am (Arabic), 11:00am (Arabic/English), 6:00pm (English)

Mondays and Tuesdays: 9:00am

Wednesdays – Fridays: 6:00pm

Saturdays: 9:00am and 6:00pm

Confessions: By Appointment

Sick Visits: Contact Clergy or the Parish Office (contact details below)

Parish and Ministry Team and Contact Details

Parish Priest: Monsignor Shora Maree 0418 969 844

Assistant Parish Priest: Fr Claude Rizk 0422 819 277

Deacons: Nagi Dimian 0403 750 613 and Joseph Maatouk 0413 245501

Parish Secretary: Debrah Habkook 0422 275 199

Office Hours: Tuesdays – Fridays 9:00am - 5:00pm

Parish Safeguarding Officers: Margaret Simpson 0408 895 798, Jessica Georges 0426 114 696, George Takchi 0419 651 229

Parish Address: 2 Yarrara Road (Corner Wells Street), Thornleigh, NSW, 2120

Phone: (02) 9481 7388

Website: www.stgeorgemcc.org.au

Email: info@stgeorgemcc.org.au



Bishop's Corner: Cana Sunday



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this Sunday of the Wedding of Cana, we contemplate the presence of Jesus and His Mother Mary at the centre of our human activities. Jesus and Mary bring with them the presence of God wherever they are, and where God is, there is love, grace and miracles. God is goodness, truth, beauty, and abundance. When we allow God to draw near to us, goodness, peace and happiness grow in our hearts.

The means that God has chosen to be present among men and to enter into a relationship with them is through Jesus Christ. The work of God reaches the heart of the world through the humanity of Jesus and the presence of Mary.

Jesus' presence at the wedding indicates to us that he enjoys sincere human relationships and community life. And through His presence, Jesus made God present in this family celebration. "What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory..." (Jn 2:11). It was at Cana in Galilee that Jesus began his prodigious signs. "When Christ changes water into wine, he opens the hearts of the disciples to faith, thanks to the intervention of Mary, the first among believers." (John Paul II, Rosarium Virginis Mariae, 2002)

Lenten Penitential Practices

At the beginning of Lent every year, we often receive questions about the Lenten penitential practices of the Maronites residing in Australia. Our Patriarch, His Beatitude and Eminence Mar Bechara Boutros Cardinal Rai, has issued his letter for Lent 2022 and in it, he recommends the following practices:

- Fasting from midnight to midday on all weekdays from Ash Monday (28 February) to the Saturday of Light (16 April): no food or drink is to be consumed, with the exception of water;
- Abstaining from meat and dairy throughout the first and last week of Lent (Holy Week);
- Abstaining from consuming meat and dairy on the Fridays of Lent;
- Fasting and Abstinence on Saturdays and Sundays are not an obligation (*according to the Apostolic Constitution of the year 380*), with the exception of the Saturday of Light (Easter Saturday), where fasting and abstinence are to be observed;
- In 2022, the following feast days fall within Lent: St John Maroun (2 March), The Forty Martyrs (9 March), St Joseph (19 March), St Rafqa (23 March), The Annunciation (25 March). We do not fast or abstain on these days or on the feast day of the patron of your Maronite Church.

It is important to note that food and water are always permitted when needed to take medicines or in case of illness, old age or children. A person who cannot fast or abstain is encouraged to choose another form of penance.

The theme for our Maronite Lenten Homilies this year is **"You are Apostles of Hope!"** We are called to be Apostles of Christ, ambassadors of His truth and His goodness. In this time of Great Lent, let us also come closer to the humanity of Christ revealed at the wedding of Cana, let us learn about and love more and more His human journey, listen to His words, grow in faith and trust, and radiate His joy and hope. I wish you a Blessed Lent!

+ Antoine-Charbel Tarabay

رتبة تبريك الرماد

اثنين الرماد اليوم الاول من الصوم الكبير

فى اول ايام الصوم تقام رتبة تبريك الرماد ودهن الجباه بالرماد. علامة اقرار بالخطايا، وفعل تواضع وعلامة ايمان. اقرار بأننا مخلوقات ضعيفة مصنوعة من التراب وتعود الى التراب. وفى نفس الوقت هذه المخلوقات الضعيفة مدعوة لتصير على صورة الله، لتتحول من التراب الى النور. فى هذا الزمن المبارك زمن الصوم كل منا مدعو ليتعرف على ضعفه، ليتوب عن خطيئته. يفرغ ذاته من الخطيئة ويمتلئ من كلمة الله التى تحوّل.

الصوم هو الإنقطاع عن كلمة العالم للإنقطاع إلى كلمة الله. الصوم انقطاع من الخبز البشري للإنقطاع إلى الخبز السماوي. أنا لا أصوم لأغلب التجربة، أنا أصوم حتى أتقوى بكلمة الله، كي تعطيني القوة على الخطيئة وفي التجربة. فكلمة الله تقويني على الخطيئة. **نقلا عن (ayletmarcharbel.org)**

Shepherd Shares: Season of Lent

Dear Parishioners,

As we begin another **Season of Lent** (or the Great Fast as we say in our Maronite Syriac Tradition) I have answer some of the commonly asked questions and to include what the Church guidelines for what we do for Lent, this Sacred Time leading to the Greatest Feast of our Faith, the Resurrection of Jesus.

Why Ash 'Monday', not Wednesday? In the Maronite Church the Season of Great Lent begins on the Miracle of Cana Sunday. The Blessing and distribution of the Ashes on Ash Wednesday is originally a Latin (Western) Rite celebration. The Maronite Church adopted this celebration from the Western Church and placed it on the Monday after Cana Sunday which is why we have Ash Monday.

What do the Ashes mean? To receive the ashes is to say publicly and to yourself that you are grieving your sins, and that with a humble and repentant heart trusting in the Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ being changed, transformed (like the water to the best wine) from within, through God's Grace in Jesus.

Why Lent? Begin with the Gospel for Ash Monday and including all of Matthew 6: 1-18. Nothing offers better guidance than the words Jesus spoke: "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you. (Mt 6:2) Pray to your Father, who sees in secret and will reward you. (Mt 6:6) And whenever you fast, do not look dismal like the hypocrites." (Mt 6:16) **We Give... Pray... & Fast** to be free and open to a deep experience of being transformed by Jesus in this Season of Great Lent.

In reverse **we Fast and Abstain** as a sign of our **NO** to the worldly; **we Pray** to grow more in saying **YES** to the Father like Jesus and **we Give alms** as our sign of our **YES** to living the call to love others.

Why is Lent 40 Days? Lent is 40 Days because of three reasons; firstly, that a child is born after 40 weeks in the womb; secondly that Moses and the Chosen people journeyed 40 Days in the desert to reach the Holy Land; thirdly that Jesus spent 40 Days in the Desert before commencing his public Ministry. Spiritually from these are teaching us what professionals tell us it takes at least 30 Days of focus to break bad habits and to replace them with good habits. So, these 40 Days are a time to grow in saying NO to the habits that are not good for us and YES to those that will open us to the life of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord and to know, experience his healing and love and love and serve him more fully in our lives

What do we do in Lent AS MARONITES together as a CHURCH FAMILY?

- Fast from midnight to midday on all weekdays starting from Ash Monday till and including Holy Saturday; that means consuming no food or drink between these hours on these days, with the exception of water;
- Abstain from consuming meat or dairy products on all the Fridays of Lent;
- Abstain from meat throughout the first and the last week of Lent - Passion (Holy) Week;
- We do not have to fast or abstain on major Feast days that fall in Lent e.g. St Joseph's Feast, the Annunciation and Sundays (always the Day of the Resurrection).

**Note that food and water are always permitted when needed to take medicines or in case of illness or old age. A person who cannot fast or abstain may choose another form of penance.*

What can we do AS MARONITES on a PERSONAL Level?

- choose other deeds of sacrifice, prayer and fasting for yourself personally and quietly do throughout all of Lent to allow you in particular ways to be more open and free to experience God's wonderful healing and forgiving Grace in Jesus in your life and to witness to this Grace to with others, especially the poor.

Suggestions for our Personal/Individual Choices for Our Lent Journey

- You can choose to abstain from other foods as well as meat such as sweets chocolate, soft drinks, alcohol... or abstain from activities, eg: T.V and internet to take up extra prayer time.
- Almsgiving/Charity can include us giving extra time to family and relationships as well as donations to help the poor eg Caritas' Project Compassion, our Parish as well as other charities.
- Additional Prayer and Spiritual Practices: daily or a midweek Mass, Confession, daily Rosary, Daily Scripture Reading, coming to Friday Stations and Ziyeh of the Cross, Thursday Faith and Bible Discussions, Adoration Nights, Charismatic Prayer Night, Spiritual reading and Spiritual walks or visits to Church.

TODAY AND TOMORROW (Ash Monday), hear Mary's direction to the servants at the Wedding in Cana, **"do whatever He tells you"** (Jn2:5) for this Lent. Take time in prayer and ask Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit to guide you on what He wants you to give up and take up for Lent to help you be free from sin and to experience His Grace transforming the ordinary and empty in your life and into the extraordinary new wine of the joy that only HE can give to your life.

Parish News and Upcoming Events

St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

Friday's in Lent Program

9:00am - Mass

4:30pm - Children's Station of the Cross (followed by Fish and Chips)

6:30pm - Stations of the Cross (Arabic) with Homily led by Fr Claude

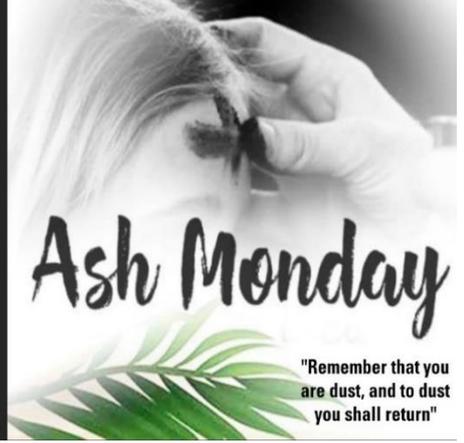
8:30pm - Stations of the Cross (English), followed by Sorrowful Mystery Rosary and serving of hot potatoes



ASH MONDAY
28TH FEBRUARY 2022

MASS TIMES
7:30AM, 5:00PM, 7:00PM

Plan to spend at least 30 mins at church to participate in the full Rite, the Service of the Word, Blessing and Giving of the Ashes.



LENTEN LUNCH

Mass @ 11am

Followed by FREE Luncheon in the Church Hall

All are welcome

Every Thursday in the Season of Lent



Bible Study

IN YOUR HOME

Commencing in the first week of March on any evening from 7:30pm - 8:30pm.

Open your home and invite whomever you would like to attend. The session can be given in Arabic, English or both!

Please contact Fr Claude, Deacon Naji or Michael Azzi if you would like to host a Bible Study.

ST GEORGE MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

FERSEN AL ADRA



REGISTRATION DAY

Saturday 26th February 4 - 5.30 PM

Term 1: Every Saturday, March 5 - April 9

Time: 4.00 - 5.30 PM

Classes: Stage 1 (Yrs 1 & 2), 2 (Yrs 3&4), 3 (Yrs 5&6)



SAINT GEORGE MARONITE TEENS

The Lenten Season



Sessions commencing:

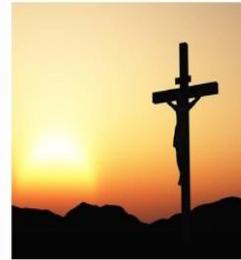
7:00 pm Wednesday, 2nd March



SAINT GEORGE MARONITE TEENS

Stations of the Cross

In English



8:30 pm every Friday
Starting 4th March

"From the Eucharist comes the strength to live the Christian life and zeal to share that life with others."
- St Pope John Paul II

Eucharistic Adoration

Every Thursday 7:30 pm
at St George Maronite Catholic Church

For St George 6 CTR Youth Groups

'Mary, Queen of Interior Peace'

Youth Lent Retreat
Led by Mons Shora & Deacon Joe

Fri 25th - Sun 27th
March 2022

Benedict XVI Retreat Centre

Cost \$230
Students \$210
Includes accommodation & meals

Book via link on socials

Enquiries:
(STG) - Jessica Georges
0426 114 696

First Holy Communion

Please contact the Parish Office to register your child for this year's First Holy Communion.

02 9481 7388
info@stgeorgemcc.org.au

Memorial Masses

نوايا القديسات

Friday 4 th March 2022	6pm	40 th Mass for Late Joseph & Christine Stephan	قداس ٤٠ المرحومين جوزف و كريستين ستيفان	٦:٠٠	الجمعة ٤ اذار ٢٠٢٢
Saturday 5 th March 2022	6pm	Late Jamal Lozom	قداس المرحومة جامال لوزوم	٦:٠٠	السبت ٥ اذار ٢٠٢٢
Sunday 6 th March 2022	11am	40 th Mass for Late Kalim Sarkis Saliba	قداس ٤٠ المرحوم كلیم سرکيس صليبا	١١:٠٠	الاحد ٦ اذار ٢٠٢٢

Congratulations to the Newly Baptised: Joseph Ghosn



United with Lebanon
Caritas Australia – Caritas Lebanon Crisis Appeal

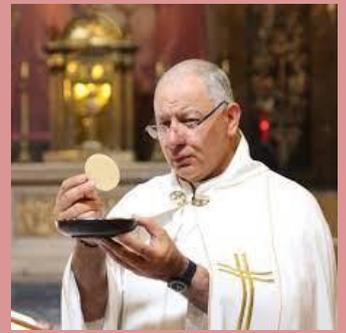
DONATE NOW

www.caritas.org.au/lebanon

Give now to help Lebanese families with healthcare, education support and cash grants for small business owners.
All donations made through Caritas Australia are tax deductible and go to support the efforts of Caritas Lebanon.

Farewell Mons Shora Maree

We farewell this weekend Mons Shora as our Parish Priest. Thank you Mons Shora for all your service to our Parish community over the past two years. We wish you all the very best as you continue your mission to establish the Hills Parish.



Welcome Deacon Robert-Pio Al Bayeh

On Monday 28th February 2022, we welcome Deacon Robert-Pio Al Bayeh who joins our Parish from Our Lady of Lebanon Co-Cathedral to continue his ministry serving in our Parish.

Lenten Lebanon Appeal

Lent is a time of repentance and acts of mercy. Given the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in Lebanon, our Maronite Eparchy continues to collect donations during the Season of Lent to help Lebanese families who are in distress and unable to secure a living. Please take an Appeal box, available at the Church doors, to your homes and workplaces to collect your donations and return it to the parish office on Easter Sunday. We wish you and your families a Blessed Lent.

زمن الصوم هو زمن التوبة وأعمال الرحمة. ونظراً لاستمرار تدهور الوضع الاقتصادي والمعيشي في لبنان، تستمر أبرشية أستراليا بجمع التبرعات في زمن الصوم المبارك من أجل مساعدة العائلات التي تمر بضيق معيشية قاهرة وأصبحت غير قادرة على تأمين لقمة العيش. تجدون على مدخل الكنيسة علب صغيرة مخصصة لجمع التبرعات، نرجو منكم أخذها إلى بيوتكم أو أماكن عملكم لوضع تبرعاتكم فيها وإعادتها إلى مكتب الرعية يوم أحد القيامة. نتمنى لكم ولعائلاتكم صوماً مباركاً.



Lebanese Family APPEAL

YOUR DONATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF A FAMILY IN NEED.

Parish Financial Updates

7th February – 20th February
TBA

Parish Operations Account
\$20,309.50

Parish Loan Balance
\$611,613.11

Donations to support our ongoing Parish mission can be made at the Parish Office or by internet banking or direct debit - (Account Name: St George Maronite Church, BSB #062-784, Account # 16948504)

To receive our eNewsletter please email info@stgeorgemcc.org.au



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Business Community Corner



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