



eMarounia

Monthly Journal of the Maronite Eparchy of Australia

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OUR SHEPHERD'S MESSAGE

RENEWED HOPE IN NEW TIMES

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Dearly beloved,

My participation in the meetings of the new bishops in Rome has been an important stage at the beginning of my journey as Bishop for the Diocese of St. Maroun in Australia. I have felt, dear friends, that you were present with me as I celebrated Mass with my brother bishops in St. Peter's Basilica. You were also the subject of my meeting and conversation with His Holiness Pope Francis, who has asked me to convey to you his Apostolic Blessing and fatherly love.

At the beginning of this Season of the Holy Cross, the season of renewed hope in new times, we reflect together upon the sign of the cross which signifies faith and salvation on the one hand, and the depth of God's love for us in Jesus Christ, on the other.

Our Maronite Church has a unique way of celebrating the Season of the Holy Cross, where our liturgical prayers revolve around the exaltation of that sign, which is the power and glory of God. Therefore, the Holy Cross is the symbol of hope for our families, our elderly and our youth, our children, and particularly for those with special needs.

This sacred symbol inspires us to discover our Christian identity and evangelical mission. It guides us in living them and taking the necessary measures to develop our spiritual life, relying on the power of the cross to face the challenges of today's world.

In this issue of our electronic newsletter, *eMarounia*, I call on everyone in our Maronite parishes, and all people of faith, to consider the Season of the Holy Cross as an opportunity to renew our spirit in this Year of Faith, which we live with the Universal Church. May we return to the source of our faith and to Jesus Christ who accompanies us on our journey, to renew our baptismal vows and our love for him and our witness to his crucifixion. Let us pray together, saying:

Make us worthy, O Lord Jesus, to stand with your mother, the Virgin Mary, in front of your Holy Cross, reflecting on the greatness of your love which alone leads us to the glory of the resurrection and to hope of new life. Amen.

OUR EPARCHY

DIOCESAN APPOINTMENTS

We are pleased to announce the following eparchial appointments:

- **Fr Marcelino Youssef** has been appointed as Vicar General
- **Msgr Shora Maree** has been appointed as Episcopal Vicar for Youth
- **Msgr Emmanuel Sakr** has been appointed as Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Works
- **Fr Elie Nakhoul, CLMM** has been appointed as Episcopal Vicar for Spiritual and Liturgical Matters. He would also be in charge of the Media Committee in the Diocese, continuous formation for clergy and inter-Maronite eparchial matters.



Fr Marcelino Youssef



Msgr Shora Maree



Msgr Emmanuel Sakr



Fr Elie Nakhoul, CLMM

Through the intercession of Mary, St Maroun and the Maronite saints we pray for their success and wish them the very best.

OUR LADY OF LEBANON CHURCH HARRIS PARK

Will be named Co-cathedral

On Wednesday 14 August 2013, His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay announced the start of the process to name the Church of Our Lady of Lebanon a **“Maronite co-cathedral”**

in the Eparchy of St Maroun, Australia, together with St Maroun’s Cathedral, Redfern. Bishop Tarabay said in his homily: “When we contemplate the future together, on this feast of the Holy Assumption, I am reminded of how the Patriarchs of the Maronite Church, wherever they established their Patriarchal See, would dedicate it to Our Lady, the patron of our Church. It is fitting, therefore, to make a concrete statement that this Diocese is under her care, and looks to her... This shall mark my commitment to you, and to this church which has a presence in the community transcending that of the common parish church”.



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OUR EPARCHY

AGED CARE AND DEMENTIA RELIEF

We are delighted to announce the launch of two aged care projects for the Lebanese and Maronite communities in Western Sydney.

We established our first church in the Sydney suburb of Waterloo in 1894. Steady migration to this great land has seen our Maronite community expand significantly, resulting in a large ageing population. There is now a critical shortage of culturally sensitive facilities for our aged, particularly those suffering from dementia. All sectors of our community have been asking us to address these issues.

In response to the needs of our community, we are pleased to announce that we prepared plans to redevelop and complete the Our Lady of Lebanon Aged Care Centre at Harris Park, and to commence the St Charbel Care Centre in Greenacre. These two Maronite Care projects will be the first of several the Eparchy intends to develop in coming years in order to serve not only our local Maronite people, but also the wider and diverse Australian community.

We take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the support of the Federal Government, at the time, in providing a grant of \$10M for these two initiatives. In particular, we acknowledge the role of the Honourable Tony Burke, former Minister for Immigration, Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, and Minister for the Arts, for his diligent and committed assistance to our elderly. We express gratitude to the Honourable Jason Clare, former Minister for Justice and Minister for Home Affairs, and the Honourable Chris Bowen, former Treasurer, for their aged care advocacy. The Eparchy also acknowledges and thanks the Coalition for its bipartisan support in pledging to honour the grant - as announced by the Hon Scott Morrison, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

Whenever we serve the elderly and the frail we are serving the Lord Himself, for He is present in the least of our brothers and sisters. Whatever we do, we do in *faithfulness* to God, and in *openness*, serving His people.



OUR EPARCHY

MARONITE CLERGY MEET WITH THEIR BISHOP FOR THE FIRST TIME



The members of the Maronite Clergy of Australia attended their first clergy meeting with His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay since his installation as Maronite Bishop of Australia. A record number of 30 clergy from NSW, Victoria and Queensland, attended for two days of prayer, and spiritual, pastoral, liturgical and administrative sessions.

The meetings were opened with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. His Excellency facilitated the first session on the vocation to the Priesthood to *teach, sanctify and govern*, which was held over three sessions of the upcoming clergy meetings. His Excellency explained that the priests are the bishop's partners in teaching.



"The basis for this teaching is the "WORD" of God found in the Gospel, we teach the Word taught by the supreme teacher Jesus Christ", said Bishop Tarabay.

His Excellency unfolded the essential elements of teaching.

Delegates of Maronites on Mission made a presentation to the clergy about the objectives of the committee and gave a snap-shot of their past activities and their future plans.

His Excellency communicated his directives to the clergy and shared with them his plans for the Eparchy and its people, among which are that Maronites on Mission is eventually be established in each parish.

The meeting concluded by thanking God for all His blessings bestowed upon us all.



PATRIARCH OF THE ANCIENT CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE EAST VISITS THE MARONITE BISHOP OF AUSTRALIA

On Friday 30 August 2013, His Beatitude Mar Addai II, Catholic Patriarch of the Ancient Church of the East visited the Maronite Chancery, as guest of His Excellency, Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay together with His Grace Mar Yacoub Daniel and selected members of their clergy.

His Beatitude addressed the Maronite Clergy during their meeting. In his words, he gave a testimony on the situation of the Christians in Iraq and asked them to keep the Middle East in their prayers.

VATICAN NEWS

POPE FRANCIS CALLS FOR PRAYER FOR PEACE IN SYRIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Tens of thousands of Catholics joined Pope Francis for a four-hour evening prayer service for Syria and the Middle East in St Peter's Square on Saturday 7 September, while millions of people from around the world joined in a day of prayer and fasting.

The prayer service began with a procession of the icon of Mary, Queen of Peace, followed by prayers and the rosary. Pope Francis called for a "cry for peace" from humanity, firmly opposing all fighting including any military strikes in Syria. "War always marks the failure of peace," said the Holy Father, "it is always a defeat for humanity."

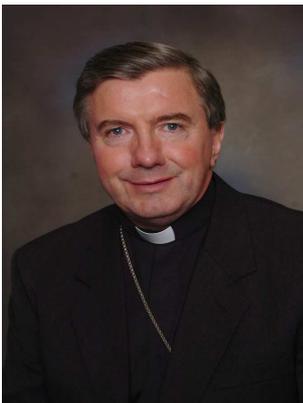
Earlier in the week, Pope Francis wrote to leaders of the G20 top world economies meeting in Saint Petersburg, Russia, urging them to "lay aside the futile pursuit of a military solution".

The Maronite Bishop of Australia echoed this call, together with all Christians from other denominations, faithful from other religions and people with no religious affiliations, who joined in the prayer and fast for peace in the Middle East.



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC NEWS

BISHOP CHRISTOPHER PROWSE *named Archbishop of Canberra Goulburn*



Archbishop Denis Hart, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, has warmly welcomed the appointment by the Holy Father Pope Francis of Bishop Christopher Prowse as the Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn. Bishop Christopher Prowse is currently the Bishop of Sale in Victoria. Archbishop-Elect has a doctorate in moral theology.

Our prayers and wishes accompany him, as he prepares to take up his new appointment.

PARISH NEWS

OUR LADY OF LEBANON PARISH, HARRIS PARK

“Rejoice with Mary, Door to Faith” was our Parish Feast week Theme.

Looking back over our Feast Week that took place from 10 to 18 August 2013, we can remember with joy something special we experienced from God and be able to say we rejoice with Mary our Blessed Mother.



As we reflect over the week I am sure we can all feel thankful because of the joy on the faces of so many who helped and participated in the wonderful faith and community events that were organised and experienced.



We can say therefore that by helping and participating with joy and generosity we have with Mary walked through the Door of Faith to be closer in Trust and Love to her Son sharing in his mission in our Parish.

On Wednesday 14 August 2013, the evening of the Feast Day, His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay our new Maronite Bishop of Australia celebrated a Solemn Mass, concelebrated by many priests from the different Maronite parishes. The Feast day Mass attracted over 3,000 members of the faithful, many of which are religious, civil and community leaders.

PARISH NEWS

CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY



Msgr Shora Maree, the Parish Priest, welcomed all those present and expresses his thanks to all members who worked towards making the feast week celebrations successful.

In his homily, His Excellency thanked the priests who worked in parish, living and dead, both past and present, as well as members of the lay faithful, for working hard towards the advancement of the parish.

At the end of the Mass, the Parish Sodality of the Immaculate Conception presented our beloved Bishop and Msgr Shora Maree each with a gift as a token of love.

Following the Mass, our special guests were escorted to a meal of friendship with the traditional Lebanese drumming and dancing.



I believe we can feel proud that so much of what is happening through God's Grace and what we are doing on a Parish level, Priests, Sisters, staff, volunteers, committee members and parishioners .

Our parishioners gathering for worship in our beautiful Church for our liturgies and all age groups gathering at different times during the week in our Community, Youth & Pastoral Centre for the different faith and community up building events as well as to benefit from the *MaroniteCare* support services to families and individuals. You may visit our website www.olol.org.au to find out more about our upcoming events.

We are preparing to launch a new parish website, a *Facebook* page, and parish application for smart-phones to enable us to reach out and communicate to all our parishioners and the wider community.

PARISH NEWS

OUR LADY OF LEBANON PARISH, MELBOURNE

Melbourne welcomes our new Bishop with open arms

From the moment our beloved Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay's plane touched down at Tullamarine Airport on Saturday 17 August 2013, Melbourne's parishioners' arms were outstretched. When His Excellency came through the gate, he was received with much applause and cheers of welcome. His Excellency reciprocated with smiles, hugs and often great laughter – what a wonderful way to start our journey with our new Maronite Bishop.



His busy agenda had already commenced. From meetings with many groups, one after the other; each eagerly awaiting to meet their new bishop. He, of course, greeted them with much love. What an amazing people's leader he truly is.

Bishop Tarabay has been to Melbourne many times as a priest, but this is the first time as our bishop. This is the first time that as our pastor he has celebrated Mass with us.



And then came the Parish Dinner Dance in his honour and under his patronage we celebrated our parish feast, the Feast of the Assumption. Once all guests were seated, His Excellency made his presence into the reception centre. What an awesome moment; clapping, singing, chanting and of course 'his gentle smile'. It reminded one of Jesus, just as He would greet His people or just walked and met and greeted them. Your Excellency, you are truly commencing your journey like a mirror vision of Jesus. All present welcomed him, including Senators, Ministers with much anticipated admiration.

Msgr Joseph Takchi, OAM, greeted our new bishop on behalf of the priests, monks, and religious sisters in Melbourne.

PARISH NEWS

CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY



“As we welcome Your Excellency to our parish we look forward to your guidance and leadership and pray that you be blessed with good health. We are proud that Our Lady of Lebanon Parish in Melbourne is part of the Eparchy of Saint Maroun”. Said Msgr Takchi.

Bishop Tarabay said in his speech: “As the new bishop of the Maronite Eparchy in Australia I’m very pleased to be here tonight starting my first pastoral visit to this blessed community in Victoria. After 10 years in Australia, living as a monk, serving as a prior of a monastery, school principal, parish priest, and pastoral worker, I am called to love and serve you in a special and more perfect manner. As bishop, it is my sacred duty to teach, sanctify and govern my flock, not in my own name, but in that of Our Lord and His Holy Church.

I must make special mention of Monsignor Joe Takchi, who has worked with you for more than 30 years, building and guiding, together with the Antonine monks, priests, and all the faithful. Neither can I overlook the Antonine sisters, who work with low profiles but with the highest dedication. We will always be grateful to the Melbourne community who have done so much in the different fields of spirituality, politics, education and aged care. We expect this work will continue to progress and prosper for the glory of God and the good of the humanity.”



His Excellency met with parish committee members, Church and civil leaders.

Your Grace, you have showered Melbourne with your love, gentleness, spirituality and above all your heart touching smile.

We wish you every success and under your leadership look forward to working together towards further growth and future developments of our Maronite parish in Melbourne.

*Bernadette Khoury
Public Relations and Media Manager*

BKERKE NEWS

Headed by His Beatitude Mar Becharra Boutros Cardinal Rai, and in the presence of His Eminence Mar Nasrallah Cardinal Sfeir, the Synod of Maronite Bishops held their monthly meeting at Diman, summer Patriarchal See, on Wednesday 7 August 2013.



The meeting focussed on ecclesiastical and pastoral issues, especially the formation of seminarians and the ongoing formation of clergy.

In their report, the Synod:

- Noted that the Holy Father participated in his first World Youth Day in Rio De Janeiro with about 3,000,000 youth, of whom 400 had travelled from Lebanon, as did many other youth of the Eastern Church. Bishops Atallah, Boujaoude and Bakouni were also present, with other members of the clergy and religious. This year's theme was "Go therefore, and teach all nations". His Holiness exhorted the youth to be like the "leaven in the dough" when they returned to their home countries.
- Stated that the Maronite Church will pursue with UNESCO Paris the possibility of including the Valley of the Saints (Wadi Qannoubine) in the international heritage listing.
- Paid tribute to the Lebanese Army, and encouraged all to show them respect, for the Army provides our citizens with security and protection, and defends their rights.
- Warned that the political situation within Lebanon, where the government is unable to fulfil its proper function is aggravating the insecurity, leaving many citizens unprotected. We pray that our political leaders may come to a just resolution as to how best to lead the country.
- Appealed for the formation of a new government which might be committed to effectively discharging its duties.
- Stated that the crisis in Syria and Palestine is flowing into Lebanon, as more Syrians and Palestinians seek refuge. Lebanon should assist these refugees within her borders, as much as is feasible, but Lebanese citizens must not interfere in Syria's internal affairs.
- Expressed their best wishes to the Muslims of Lebanon, the Middle East and the world, upon the occasion of the Feast of Ramadan.
- Wish the Christians of Lebanon, the Middle East and the Expansion a Holy Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, and pray that they will prepare for this feast united, with loyalty and faith.
- Seek the intercession of Our Lady of the Assumption, and pray that our civil leaders in Lebanon and the world will unite to put an end to war and to work towards a better and more peaceful world. Amen.

LITURGICAL SEASON

The Season of the Holy Cross

In the Maronite Church, the feast of the Holy Cross marks the commencement of the final season of the liturgical year. Our yearly calendar is based on how the earth revolves around the sun. Our liturgical calendar revolves around Our Lord. We follow his life through to when He who was God consented to die. Indeed, it is a privilege to follow Him. If we do not willingly follow Him in His death, can we expect to follow Him into his Kingdom?

This is why we read in the Gospel for this feast: "When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself" (Jn 12:32). We seek our joys and satisfactions on the earth, but we have to get used to looking above this level, to never forgetting that we are children of heaven. Our Lord said that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. The grain is inside a hard husk. If the husk is broken, the grain can become a new life, bearing fruit. What is our husk? Surely it is self-love, and the attachment to the world that protects our self-love. To live for God is to live without selfishness. Amen.

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عيد ارتفاع الصليب

"ان كلمة الصليب عند الهالكين حماقة أما عندنا نحن المخلصين فهي قوة الله" (١ قو ١١ / ٨ - ٢٥).

يعتبر زمن الصليب آخر الأزمنة في دورتنا الطقسية المارونية فعلى مدى سبعة اسابيع تتركز القراءات والصلوات حول الازمنة النهيوية والمجيء الثاني والدينونة وماذا ينبغي على المرء أن يفعل ليرث الحياة الأبدية. ومن المتعارف عليه عموماً ان عيد الصليب هو من اهم الاعياد في كنيسة المشرق وله العديد من القصص التاريخية والاصول القديمة نذكر منها على سبيل المثال لا الحصر: المؤرخ أوسابيوس بامفيلوس أسقف قيصرية في فلسطين الذي نقل إلينا رؤيا الامبراطور قسطنطين الكبير الذي انتصر على مكسيميانوس الذي كان ينازعه على الحكم حيث رأى في الحلم علامة الصليب في السماء على مثال نور بهيئة الصليب تحتها عبارة: "بهذه العلامة تنتصر".

ولقد اشار القديس كيرلس الأورشليمي في احدى وعظاته سنة 347م عن وجود ذخائر عود الصليب المقدس. ولقد ذكرت الراهبة ايجريا في كتابها "الاسفار" سنة 381 - 384م بأن مسيحيي كنيسة اورشليم كانوا يحتفلون بتكريم الصليب لمدة سبعة ايام يجري خلالها عرض عود الصليب المقدس لتسجد الناس له اكراماً وتشفعاً.

بحسب التقليد القديم يعود الفضل للقديسة هيلانة والدة الملك قسطنطين الأول الكبير في اكتشاف مكان عود الصليب المقدس.

اما بالنسبة لتاريخ العيد فكان في البداية في 13 ايلول سنة 335 وهو ذكرى تدشين كنيسة القيامة في القدس ووضع عود الصليب فيها.

اما التذكار الثاني فهو اعادة عود الصليب الى القدس، بعد نقله الى عاصمة الفرس، على يد الملك هرقل بعد انتصاره على الفرس في 14 ايلول من سنة 628.

وبحسب التقليد الكنسي عيّن تاريخ هذا العيد في 14 ايلول من كل عام وذلك منذ القرن السادس الميلادي. لم يتبق في يومنا هذا من خشبة عود الصليب الاصلية الا قطعتان، الاولى لا تزال في اورشليم، والثانية في كنيسة الصليب المقدس في روما.

وللصليب مكانة خاصة في ليتورجيتنا المارونية، ففي الجمعة العظيمة نحتفل برتبة سجدة الصليب وفي ليلة عيد القيامة نحتفل برتبة السلام حيث يزيح الكاهن المحتفل صليب القائم من الموت.

ومن العادات الشعبية المحببة بعيد الصليب إشعال النار على قمم الجبال واسطح البيوت وفي الساحات العامة، وترجع هذه العادة إلى النار التي أمرت القديسة هيلانة باشعالها من قمة جبل إلى أخرى لكي توصل خبر عثورها على الصليب لابنها الامبراطور قسطنطين.

اما في لبنان وتحديداً في مدينة صور وبعد الاحتفال الكنسي بالعيد ينزل المسيحيون الى البحر في مكان يدعى بركة الصليب ويسبحون طوال الليل تبركاً بهذا العيد.

تباركت يا عود الصليب المقدس، لأنك تمتت الانبياء برموزهم، وأنرت الرسل في كرازتهم، وكللت الشهداء بإيمانهم ووصلت بين العلويين والارضيين، هلولياً.

مارونيا

المجلة الإلكترونية للموارنة في أستراليا

عدد رقم واحد | ايلول 2013



كلمة الراعي

رجاء متجدد لأزمة جديدة

أبناء أبرشيّتنا الأحباء،

مشاركتي في اجتماعات الأساقفة الجدد في روما تشكل محطة مهمة في بداية مسيرتي كراعٍ لأبرشية مار مارون في أستراليا. وقد كنتم يا أبناء الأبرشية الأحباء، حاضرين معي عند إحتفالي مع اخوتي المطارنة الجدد بالقداس الإلهي في بازيليك القديس بطرس في روما، كما وكنتم أيضاً موضوع لقاءٍ وحديثي مع قداسة الحبر الأعظم البابا فرنسيس الذي يرسل لكم من خلالي بركته الرسولية ومحفته الأبوية.



ومع بداية زمن الصليب المقدس، زمن الرجاء الجديد للأزمة الجديدة، نتأمل معاً بعلامة الصليب التي تحمل معاني الإيمان والخلص من ناحية وعمق محبة الله لنا في يسوع المسيح من ناحية أخرى.

وتعيش كنيستنا المارونية زمن الصليب المقدس بطريقة مميزة إذ تتمحور الصلوات الليتورجية حول علامة الصليب التي هي قوة الله ومجده، وبالتالي انها معين رجاء لعائلاتنا وشيوخنا وشبيبتنا وأطفالنا، وبنوعٍ خاص لذوي الحاجات الخاصة.

هذا الرمز المقدس يلهمنا أن نكتشف هويتنا المسيحية ورسالتنا الإنجيلية ويرشدنا إلى كيفية عيشهما وأخذ التدابير اللازمة لتطوير حياتنا الروحية والإتكال على قوة الصليب في مواجهة تحديات عالم اليوم.

في هذا العدد من نشرتنا الإلكترونية "أي-مارونيا" ادعو أبناء الإيمان ومختلف الرعايا المارونية إلى إعتبار زمن الصليب مناسبة لتجديد الإيمان في سنة الإيمان التي نعيشها مع الكنيسة الجامعة، نعود فيها إلى مصدر إيماننا ورفيق دربنا يسوع المسيح لتجديد مواعيد عمادنا ومحبتنا له وشهادتنا لصلبه. ولنصلي معاً قائلين:

اهلنا أيها الرب يسوع أن نقف مع أمك العذراء مريم أمام صليبك المقدس متأملين عظمة محبتك التي وحدها تقودنا إلى مجد القيامة ورجاء الحياة الجديدة. آمين.