

OUR LADY OF LEBANON

MARONITE CHURCH NEWS

Our Lady Of Lebanon Maronite Church
7164 Alaska Ave N.W.
Washington DC 20012

Chor-Bishop Dominic F. Ashkar, Pastor
202-829-5554 (O) 202-291-5153 (H)

www.ourladyoflebanon-DC.org

"Mary, Shield of our Maronite Faith"

March 2017

Volume XXII, Edition III

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

Not knowing what the future holds, this could be the last Newsletter you will receive from me. As I have been doing every month, I am sending you three stories not to entertain you but rather to help you find a special way to spend a special Holy Season of Lent during this special year during which we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Our Lady of Lebanon Church individually and collectively.

The first story title is "*Christian Math*," by Unknown. A ten-year-old public school boy was finding fifth grade math to be the challenge of his life. Science? A piece of cake! Geography? No big deal. Spelling? Ha! Give me a break...but MATH? It was devastating! To not only him, but his mom and dad, too! And not that they weren't doing everything to help their son...Private tutors, peer assistance, CD-ROMS, Textbooks, even HYPNOSIS! Nothing worked. Finally, at the insistence of a family friend, they decided to enroll their son in a private school. Not just ANY private school, but a Catholic school! Nuns. Daily Mass. The whole shootin' match. Well, the first day of school finally arrived, and dressed in his salt-and-pepper cords and white wool dress shirt and blue cardigan sweater, the youngster ventured out into the great unknown. His mother and father were convinced they were doing the right thing. They were both waiting for their son when he returned home. And when he walked in with a stern, focused and very determined expression on his face, they hoped they had made the right choice.

He walked right past them and went straight to his room – and quietly closed the door. For nearly two hours he toiled away in his room – with math books strewn about his desk and the surrounding floor. He

only emerged long enough to eat, and after quickly cleaning his plate, he went straight back to his room, closed the door, and worked feverishly at his studies until bedtime.

This pattern continued ceaselessly until it was time for the first quarter report card. After school, the boy walked into the home with his report card – unopened – in his hand. Without a word, he dropped the envelope on the family dinner table and went straight to his room. His parents were petrified. What lay inside the envelope? Success? Failure? DOOM?!? Patiently, cautiously the mother opened the letter, and to her amazement, she saw a bright red "A" under the subject, MATH. Overjoyed, she and her husband rushed into their son's room, thrilled at the remarkable progress of their young son! "Was it the nuns that did it?", the father asked. The boy shook his head and said, "NO." "Was it the one-on-one tutoring? The peer-mentoring?", asked the mother. Again, the boy shrugged, "No." "The textbook? The teacher? The curriculum?", asked the father. "Nope," said the son. "It was all very clear to me from the very first day of school, that these folks in Catholic school meant business!" "How so?", asked his mom. "**When I walked into the lobby, and I saw that guy they'd nailed to the plus sign, I knew they meant business!**"

My Friends: How do WE see and interpret the Cross?

The second story I wish to share with you is entitled "*Signs Seen In Front of Churches*," by Unknown.

"Looking for a sign from God? This is it."

"No God – No Peace. Know God – Know Peace."

"Free Trip to heaven. Details Inside!"

"Try our Sundays. They are better than Baskin-Robbins."

"Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here!"

An ad for St. Joseph's Episcopal Church has a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are inscribed and a headline that reads, "For fast, fast, fast relief, take two tablets."

When the restaurant next to the Lutheran Church put out a big sign with red letters that said, "Open Sundays," the church reciprocated with its own message: "We are open on Sundays, too."

"Have trouble sleeping? We have sermons – come hear one!"

A singing group called "The Resurrection" was scheduled to sing at a church. When a big snowstorm postponed the performance, the pastor fixed the outside sign to read, "The Resurrection is postponed."

"People are like tea bags – you have to put them in hot water before you know how strong they are."

"God so loved the world that He did not send a committee."

"Come in and pray today. Beat the Christmas rush!"

"When down in the mouth, remember Jonah. He came out alright."

"Sign broken: Message inside this Sunday."

"Fight truth decay...study the Bible daily."

"Where will you be sitting in eternity? Smoking or non-smoking?"

"Dusty Bibles lead to dirty lives."

"Come work for the Lord. The work is hard, the hours are long and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world."

"I am going to waste, but Jesus recycled me."

"Our arms are the only ones God has to hug His children."

"It is unlikely there'll be a reduction in the wages of sin."

"Do not wait for the hearse to take you to church."

"If you are headed in the wrong direction, God allows U-turns."

"If you don't like the way you were born, try being born again."

"Looking at the way some people live, they ought to obtain eternal fire insurance soon."

"This is a ch__ch. What is missing?"

"Forbidden fruit creates many jams."

"In the Dark? Follow the Son."

"Running low on faith? Stop in for a fill-up."

"If you can't sleep, don't count sheep. Talk to the Shepherd."

"God is on high...get your lift tickets here."

My Friends: Which words do you use to describe our own Church?

The third story I wish to share with you might help every family to dedicate more time with our children. The title of the third story is "**Daddy, How Much Do You Make An Hour?**" by Unknown: With a timid voice and idolizing eyes, the little boy greeted his father as he returned from work, "Daddy, how much do you make an hour?" Greatly surprised, but giving his boy a glaring look, the father said: "look, son, not even your mother knows that. Don't bother me now, I'm tired." "But Daddy, just tell me please! How much do you make an hour," the boy insisted. The father finally giving up replied: "Twenty dollars per hour." "Okay, Daddy? Could you loan me ten dollars?" the boy asked. Showing restlessness and positively disturbed, the father yelled: "So that was the reason you asked how much I earn, right?? Go to sleep and don't bother me anymore!" It was already dark and the father was meditating on what he had said and was feeling guilty. Maybe he thought, his son wanted to buy something. Finally, trying to ease his mind, the father went to his son's room, "Are you asleep son?" asked the father, "No, Daddy. Why?" replied the boy partially asleep! "Here's the money you asked for earlier," the father said. Thanks, Daddy!" rejoiced the son, while putting his hand under the pillow and removing some money. "Now I have enough! Now I have twenty dollars!" the boy said to his father, who was gazing at his son, confused at what his son just said. "Daddy could you sell me one hour of your time?"

My Friends, these three stories seem to be funny but there are an inspiration for all of us to dedicate time during this Season of Lent with our children and give them quality time talking about religion and spirituality. Let them see it in you, let them love it and live it and later on when they grow up be able to give it to others. Have a Blessed Season of Lent.

Your priest,
Dominic Ashkar

Reminder: Your payment of a monthly dues of \$15 would be an expression of your willingness to help the church.
--

Your newsletter editor,

Laurie Smith