

OUR LADY OF LEBANON MARONITE CHURCH NEWS



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"Mary, Shield of our Maronite Faith"

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Dear parishioners and Friends:

I am sure that the following story entitled *"The Ticket,"* by an Unknown Author could have happened to many of us.

Jack took a long look at his speedometer before slowing down: 73 in a 55 zone. Fourth time in as many months. How could a guy get caught so often?

When his car had slowed to 10 miles an hour, Jack pulled over, but only partially. Let the cop worry about the potential traffic hazard. Maybe some other car will tweak his backside with a mirror.

The cop was stepping out of his car, the big pad in hand.

Bob? Bob from church? Jack sunk farther into his trench. This was worse than the coming ticket. A Christian cop catching a guy from his own church. A guy who happened to be a little anxious to get home after a long day at the office. A guy he was about to play golf with tomorrow. Jumping out of the car, he approached a man he saw every Sunday, a man he'd never seen in uniform.

"Hi, Bob. Fancy meeting you like this."

"Hello, Jack." No smile.

"Guess you caught me red-handed in a rush to see my wife and kids."

"Yeah, I guess."

Bob seemed uncertain. Good. "I've seen some long days at the office lately. I'm afraid I bent the rules a bit-just this once." Jack toed at a pebble on the pavement. "Diane said something about roast beef and potatoes tonight. Know what I mean?"

"I know what you mean. I also know that you have a reputation in our precinct."

Ouch! This was not going in the right direction. Time to change tactics.

"What'd you clock me at?"

"Seventy-one. Would you sit back in your car, Please?"

"Now wait a minute here, Bob. I checked as soon as I saw you. I was barely nudging 65." The lie seemed to come easier with every ticket.

"Please, Jack, in the car."

Flustered, Jack hunched himself through the still-open door. Slamming it shut, he stared at the dashboard. He was in no rush to open the window. The minutes ticked by. Bob scribbled away on the pad. Why hadn't he asked for a driver's license? Whatever the reason, it would be a month of Sunday's before Jack ever sat near the cop again. A tap on the door jerked his head to the left. There was Bob, a folded paper in hand. Jack rolled down the window a mere two inches, just enough room for Bob to pass him the slip.

"Thanks." Jack could not quite keep the sneer out of his voice. Bob returned to his car without a word. Jack watched his retreat in the mirror. Jack unfolded the sheet of paper. How much was this one going to cost? Wait a minute. What was this? Some kind of Joke? Certainly not a ticket. Jack began to read.

Dear Jack,

Once upon a time I had a daughter. She was six when killed by a car. You guessed it – a speeding driver. A fine and three months in jail, and the man was free. Free to hug his daughters. All three of them. I only had one, and I'm going to have to wait until heaven before I can ever hug her again. A thousand times I've tried to forgive that man. A thousand times I thought I had. Maybe I did, but I need to do it again.

Even now... Pray for me. And be careful. My son is all I have left. Bob.”

Jack...twisted around in time to see Bob’s car pull away and head down the road. Jack watched until it disappeared. A full 15 minutes later, he too, pulled away and drove slowly home, praying for forgiveness and hugging a surprised wife and kids when he arrived.

Life is precious. Handle with care.

My Fiends, this story is an invitation for all of us to remember those who left us and became members of Eternal Life. This month of November reminds us to remember our faithful departed. And the Cross of Christ renewed the unity between this life and Eternal Life. I hope and pray that our unity to the Holy Cross will remind us of the unity with our faithful departed. I hope and pray that the following story will help us to renew our faith in the Holy Cross of our Lord.

The story entitled **“The Shadow of the Cross,”** tells us about a young man who had been raised as an atheist and was trained to be an Olympic diver. The only religious influence in his life came from his outspoken Christian friend. The young diver really paid such attention to his friend’s sermons, but he heard them often.

One night the diver went to the indoor pool at the college he attended. The lights were all off, but as the pool had big skylights and the moon was bright, there was plenty of light to practice by. The young man climbed up to the highest diving board and as he turned his back to the pool on the edge of the board and extended his arms out, he saw his shadow on the wall. The shadow of his body in the shape of a cross. Instead of diving, he knelt down and asked God to come into his life. As the young man stood, a maintenance man

walked in and turned the lights on. The pool had been drained for repairs.

This brings to all of us the following **“Questions.”**

“I asked God to take away my pain. God said, No. It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole. God said, No. Her spirit was whole, her body was only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience. God said, No. Patience is a byproduct of tribulations. It isn’t granted, it is earned.

I asked God to give me happiness. God said, No. I give you blessings. Happiness is up to you.

I asked God to spare me pain. God said, No. Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow. God said, No. You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life. God said, No. I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things.

I asked God to help me to LOVE others, as much as he loves me. God said...Ahhhh, finally you have the idea.”

My Friends, our demands and wishes are numerous but the Cross brings joy and unity.

Your priest,
Dominic Ashkar



DATES TO REMEMBER:

December 2:	St. Barbara’s Hafli
December 17:	Children Christmas Party
February 11:	St. Maron’s Feast Day Celebration
February 17:	St. Valentine’s Hafli
March 24:	Day of Recollection
March 25:	Hosanna Sunday Bake Sale
May 6:	Feast of our Lady of Lebanon General Parish Meeting
May 20:	First Communion
May 27:	Last Day of Religious Education Classes
June 2: ????	5K Run/Walk and Parish Picnic

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