



# Our Lady of Purgatory

## Maronite Catholic Church



July 6-7, 2024

### EIGHTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST



#### BLESSED AND HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

#### The Massabki Brothers

**Celebrating the Fourth of July as a Christian:** You could pray this simple prayer for our nation written by George Washington, our first President:

**“Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech you that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness and in the day of trouble, do not allow our trust in you to fall; all this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.” AMEN!**

The Massabki brothers, Francis, Abdul-Mooti and Raphael were three Maronite brothers who lived in Damascus in the nineteenth century and were martyred on July 10 in 1860. The brothers came from an extended family that was both successful and pious. The Muslim sheikhs of Damascus referred to the Massabki clan as people who joined in prayer and spiritual reading every night in their homes. The family was descended from a Maronite priest and had lived in Damascus for over 400 years. Of the Massabki brothers, Francis and Abdul-Mooti were each married with children. Raphael, the youngest, who apparently was not well, remained single. They had another brother, the priest Fr Abdallah, who was not with them at the time of their martyrdoms. Of the brothers, Francis was the best known. He was a generous man and a successful silk trader, famous in Lebanon and Syria alike. He represented the Maronite Patriarch when His Beatitude needed to conduct business in Syria. All three were known for time and the fervor which they devoted to prayer. They performed much of their charitable work from the Franciscan

monastery in Damascus.

The martyrdom of the three Massabki brothers came to be by the Ottoman authorities in Damascus on the nights of July 9 and 10, 1860, referred to as "The Two Days of Blood." Due to the increasing unrest in Damascus, and in the wake of the attacks on Christians (Latin, Orthodox, Byzantine and Maronite) by extremists who wanted to kill them, a number of them sought refuge and protection in the Franciscan monastery in the neighborhood of Bab Touma.

At 8 p.m. on the night of Monday, July 9, 1860, Francis and his brothers Raphael and Abdul-Mooti joined the monastery near their home. At 11 p.m., the doors of the monastery were closed, and everyone entered the church. They confessed their sins, received the Holy Eucharist, and recited in their hearts the Psalm "The LORD is my light and my salvation— Whom shall I fear? ..."

At 1:00 a.m. on Tuesday, the heavily armed attackers infiltrated the monastery, broke into the congregation, and killed eight Franciscan monks, together with three laymen who worked at the monastery. Then the armed men began shouting, "Where is Francis Massabki?" while he knelt in prayer before the statue of the Virgin Mary. Francis got up and fearlessly approached them saying, "I am Francis Massabki, what do you seek?" They replied, "The Governor sent us to save you, your brothers, your families, and everyone who joins you, and to give you back your money, provided that you deny your faith and convert to Islam, otherwise you will all perish." This offer came from the Governor because he had borrowed a large sum of money from Francis.

Francis answered them: "The governor can take my money, but my faith nobody

**Fr. Vincent Farhat, Pastor | Rev. Mr. Jean Mattar, Deacon**  
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**Office Email:** [officeolop@gmail.com](mailto:officeolop@gmail.com)

**OFFICE HOURS:** The Church office will be open Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

can take away from me... We are not afraid of those who kill the body... We are Christians and in the religion of Christ we shall die. We Christians do not fear those who kill the body, as the Lord Jesus said. We have but one soul, and we shall not lose it." Then, he turned to his brothers and said to them, "Take courage and stay strong in your faith, for the crown of victory is prepared in heaven for those who persevere to the end."

They immediately professed their faith in the Lord Jesus with these words: "We are Christians, and we want to live and die as Christians." Then, Francis returned to his prayer. The attackers stormed them, striking with their sticks, daggers and axes, at the foot of the altar, and so they surrendered their pure souls into the hand of God, preferring death to disbelief, and thus received the crown of martyrdom. It happened on the dawn of July 10, 1860.

The massacres of 1860 are considered some of the most horrible sectarian massacres in the history of the Ottoman Empire (before the massacres of Armenians and Syrians), and many of the people of the Levant and Mount Lebanon still remember them with pain. One Syrian sociologist reports: "The massacres of 1860 began in Lebanon in April, and within a few weeks, more than 60 Christian villages in the Shouf and Metn areas had been reduced to ashes. In Hasbaya, instructions were given that no Christian male should remain alive between the ages of seven and seventy, and the scope of the disaster reached to Zahle, where almost every house was reduced to ashes. The disaster lasted for three months, 12,000 people were killed, and property losses were estimated at four million pounds..."

"The spark reached Damascus, and there the catastrophe took another turn as the mob seized the city and began to kill and destroy with insatiable pleasure. The people of Damascus burned the Christian quarter and killed more than ten thousand people. The total number of victims in the Syrian capital was 11,000 martyrs." In the midst of the martyrdom of Christians in Damascus, a humanist Islamic story was being unraveled. Many of the dignitaries of Damascus, such as the Algerian prince, Assaad Efendi Hamza, Sheikh Salim al-Attar, Saleh Agha al-Shorbaji, Said Agha al-Nuri, and Omar Agha al-Aabed, tried to protect Christians. Prince Abdelkader of Algeria

protected more than a thousand Christians from death... His mission, and that of the honorable Muslims of Damascus, was limited to extending a helping hand to the Christians, and to saving as many as possible. Among the survivors were those who were then in the protected neighborhoods of the pious Muslims, or hidden by a devout Muslim, or were able to reach the Damascus Citadel, which was under the protection of Askar Hashim Agha who rejected what was taking place. On May 4, 1926, Archbishop Beshara al-Chemali, Archbishop of Damascus at the time, petitioned Pope Pius XI, asking that the Holy See investigate the evidence for the martyrdom of the three Massabki brothers, like their fellow priests and Franciscan monks, and join the canonization cause of the Three Brothers to theirs.

On 7 October 1926, Pope Pius XI promulgated the Beatification Bull of the Three Massabki Brother Martyrs. On Sunday, October 10, 1926, the Beatification ceremony was held. Raised up on the Great Altar of St. Peter's Basilica were the relics of the Franciscan and Massabki martyrs.

The relics of the martyrs are preserved under the great altar in the cathedral of the diocese of Damascus. They include the relics of the three Massabki brothers and the eight Franciscan monks who were martyred together and buried in three places. These remains were exhumed in October 1861. They were placed in two boxes, one of which was handed over to the Archbishop of the Diocese Beshara al-Chemali. He ordered them to be venerated using the prayers and hymns he had published. "His Holiness Pope Francis has kindly accepted the petition to count them among the saints, in his interview with Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, on the morning of Saturday, December 17, 2022."

The date of the canonization ceremony has not yet been set.

by **Saint Charbel Family Org.**

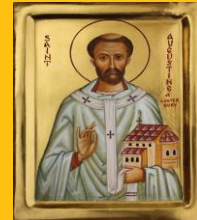
### **NO WEEKDAY LITURGIES AND NO EUCHARISTIC ADORATION**

There will be no weekday Liturgies Monday through Thursday or Eucharistic adoration on Mondays. I appreciate your understanding. I will announce when they will once again resume.

## **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

*"A Christian is: a mind through which Christ thinks, a heart which Christ loves, a voice through which Christ speaks, and a hand through which Christ helps."*

*Saint Augustine*



## **FOR ANY EMERGENCY**

I ask all of you to please direct any calls pertaining to mass intentions, office related needs, etc., to:

**Hiba Chdid at the office, 508-996-8934, by email, [officeolop@gmail.com](mailto:officeolop@gmail.com), or after hours on her cell, 508-617-3888.**

**Any emergencies, concerns or questions liturgically, I ask you to contact:**

**Deacon Jean Mattar at 774-217-9232.**

## **THE SANCTUARY CANDLE BURNS FOR....**

This week the sanctuary candle burns for the living and deceased members of the Rizk family by Charbel and Antoinette Chedid. Anyone who would like to offer the sanctuary candle for a loved one or special intention, this will be offered each week. An offering of a \$10.00 donation is appreciated.

## **ANNUAL LEBANESE FESTIVAL**

### **- SAVE THE DATES-**

September may sound like a long time away but as we prepare for our Annual Lebanese Festival, it is never too early to begin preparations. The festival will be held on Friday, September 13, and Saturday, September 14, 2024.

In the next few weeks, I will be sending out information and asking you to volunteer. For this major fundraiser to be a success, your help is needed. I ask you in advance to think about how you can help make this festival a great success. Younger and older alike, your participation will make a great difference.



## LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Saturday, July 6, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Saint Maria Goretti).** Liturgy is being offered in thanksgiving requested by Mariam David and family. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Radha Peter J. David and her father Peter requested by family (FM). May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of TufEEK and Mary David and Children requested by Family (FM). May their souls rest in peace.

**Sunday, July 7, @ 10:30 AM, (Celebration of Saint Thomas the Hermit).** Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Saba Mike Barckett and Joseph and Mary Coury requested by family (FM). May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Florence Dyer (FM). May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Ruth David requested by Annie Costa (FM). May her soul rest in peace.

**Saturday, July 13, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Joel the Prophet).** Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Anthony Cabral requested by Lou and Smitty Cabral. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of Michael and Ann David requested by family (FM). May their souls rest in peace.

**Sunday, July 14, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Saint Bonaventure, Doctor of the Church, Feast of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha).** Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Deacon Anthony Khoury requested by OLOP. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Charbel Baroody requested by Charles Baroody. May his soul rest in peace.

## WINE AND HOST OFFERING

The altar bread and wine for the month of June is offered for the living and deceased members of the Daher and David families by Mariam David and family.

## FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Jimmy Kalife, Wassim Chedid, Rose Dupre, Rana Choubah, Nigel Hitchings, and Joseph Barckett.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Fadi Bark, Johnny Kalife, Vicki Thomas Marini, Jacques Barbour, and Smitty Cabral.

## IN OUR PRAYERS

Sophie Correa, Stephen Dacosta, Abouna Tanios Abi Ramia, Kenneth Macedo, Muriel Moline, Patricia Farhat, Ghada Karam, Beverly Parlapiano, Michael Bruce, Magda Moosa, Sharon Conti, David Techlin, Debbie Freedenberg, Efrangieh Daou, Reggie Thomas, Peter Helmer, Renee Helmer, Octavia David, Jacob Rego, Amal Assaf, Denise Magaletta, Fernanda Thomas, Angela Scorza-Anderson, Theresa John, Laurette Bou Ramia, Annie Peter, Mariam David, Norma Thomas, Zita Drouin, Lucienne Rodrigues, Ed Da Rocha, and Edmond Salameh. If anyone is missing from this list, please contact the Church office

## LECTORS FOR JULY 2024

**Saturday, July 6,**  
Rachael Higgins

Intercessions: Anna & Helen Higgins

**Sunday, July 7,**

Halim Choubah / Rana Choubah

**Saturday, July 13,**

Annemarie Espindola

Intercessions: Eric Tavares

**Sunday, July 14**

Ann Dupre / Gaby Baroody

**Saturday, July 20,**

Mae Dickinson

Intercessions: Eric Tavares

**Sunday, July 21,**

John Barbour / Jano Baroody

**Saturday, July 27,**

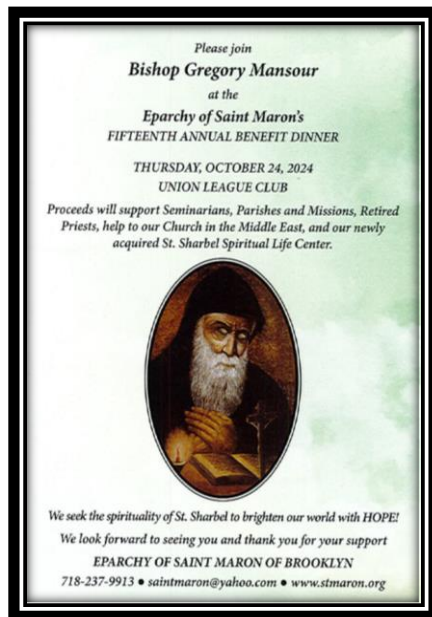
Smitty Cabral

Intercessions: Annemarie Espindola

**Sunday, July 28,**

Mae Dickinson / Hiba Chdid

(If you are not able to read on your given day, please contact Mae Dickinson).



## DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF 07/08-07/13/24

### Monday:

Acts of the Apostles 15: 36-16:1-3,6-10

Luke 11: 1-4

### Tuesday:

Acts of the Apostles 16: 11-23

Luke 11: 5-8

### Wednesday:

Acts of the Apostles 16: 25-34

Luke 11: 9-13

### Thursday:

Acts of the Apostles 17: 1-12

Luke 11: 14-23

### Friday:

Acts of the Apostles 17: 16-20,22-24,30-34

Luke 11: 24-26

### Saturday:

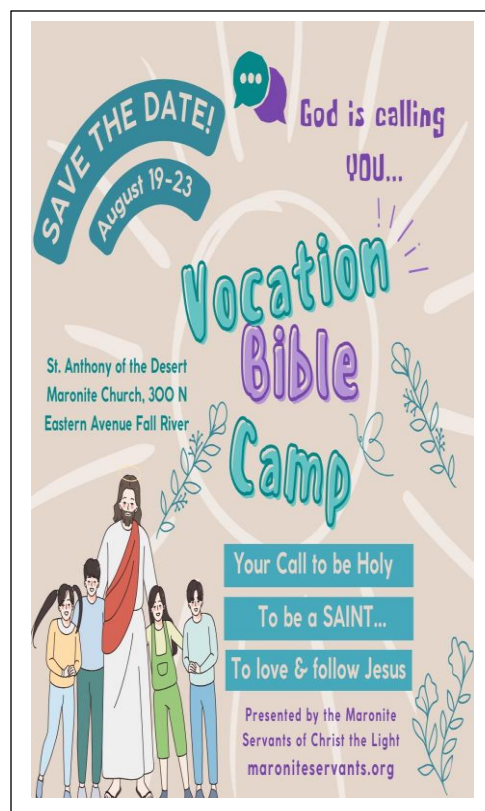
Acts of the Apostles 18: 1-11

Matthew 11: 27-32

## WEEK OF JUNE 29-30, 2024

Sunday Collection	\$ 1,195.00
June Online Giving	\$ 573.20
Donations	\$ 1,600.00
Second Collection	\$ 145.00
Coffee Hour	\$ 87.00
Sanctuary Candle	\$ 45.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,655.20</b>

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY BY SENDING IN YOUR WEEKLY COLLECTIONS VIA MAIL. THIS HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL FOR THE CHURCH. GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.**





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*Eternally in our hearts and in our thoughts. We miss seeing your face, hearing your voice, seeing your smile and hearing your laugh. We cherish the day we will join you in GOD's Heavenly Kingdom. We Love you and miss you even more with each passing day.*

**Joseph & Marie Kenyon**

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