



# Our Lady of Purgatory



## Maronite Catholic Church

March 22-23, 2025

### PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON



#### FEAST OF SAINT RAFQA

Saint Rafqa, also known as Rebecca Ar-Rayes, was born on June 29, 1832, in Himlaya, Lebanon, as the daughter and only child of Mourad Saber Shabaq al-Rayes and Rafqa Gemayel. Unfortunately, her mother passed away when Rafqa was just six years old, and she did not have a harmonious relationship with her stepmother.

At a young age, Rafqa began working as a maid, starting from the age of 11 until she turned 15. It was during this period that she expressed her desire to devote herself to the religious life. However, her father initially opposed this decision. Nevertheless, at the age of 21, she entered the Marian Order of the Immaculate Conception in Bikfaya, taking the religious name Anissa, meaning Agnes. She made her final vows in 1856.

In 1871, the Maronite Order of the Immaculate Conception merged with the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The sisters had the option of joining the newly formed order, seeking admission to other orders, or being released from their vows.

Guided by visions in which Saint Anthony the Great appeared to her, Rafqa joined the Lebanese Order of Saint Anthony of the Maronites (Baladiya Order) as a novice on July 12, 1871, at the age of 39. She adopted the name Rafqa.

On the feast of the Holy Rosary in 1885, Rafqa fervently prayed to share in Christ's sufferings. Shortly afterward, her health began to decline rapidly. She eventually became blind and crippled, yet she remained steadfast in her faith, dedicating as much of her remaining 30 years as possible to prayer. Despite her disabilities, Rafqa insisted on contributing to the convent's activities. She engaged in tasks like spinning wool and knitting.

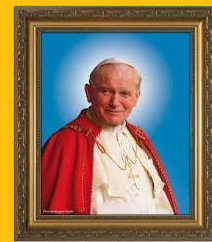
By 1907, Rafqa was entirely blind and paralyzed. A 1981 medical report, based on evidence presented during the canonization process, indicated that her condition was likely caused by tuberculosis with ocular involvement and the development of bone growths. This illness caused her excruciating pain, but Rafqa remained grateful for her unique way of communing with Christ.

Four days after her death on March 23, 1914, at the Convent of Saint Joseph in Grabta, Lebanon, reports of miraculous healings began to surface at Rafqa's grave.

The first recorded miracle involved Mother Doumit, who suffered from a progressively tightening throat that threatened her ability to eat. Elizabeth en-Nakhel from Tourza, a town in northern Lebanon, also experienced a miraculous cure from uterine cancer in 1938 through the intervention of Saint Rafqa. This miracle paved the way for Rafqa's beatification, which took place on November 17, 1985, by Pope John Paul II. She was subsequently canonized on June 10, 2001.

#### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

**" May the sick, the afflicted, the war refugees and all victims of hatred, yesterday and today, find in Saint Rafqa a companion on the road so that, through her intercession, they will continue to search in the night for reasons to hope again and to build peace."**  
From the homily of Saint Pope John Paul II during the Canonization of Saint Rafqa.



Saint Rafqa is venerated as a patron against bodily ailments, sickness, and the loss of parents. She is represented by the lily, symbolizing her purity, and the purple rose, signifying her deep love for God. Her feast day is celebrated on March 23rd each year.

#### YOUR VALUE INFRONT OF GOD

A well-known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?" Hands started going up. He said, "I am going to give this \$20 to one of you but first, let me do this." He proceeded to crumple the dollar bill up. He then asked, "Who still wants it?" Still the hands were up in the air. "Well," he replied, "What if I do this?" And he dropped it on the ground and

**Fr. Vincent Farhat, Pastor | Rev. Mr. Jean Mattar, Deacon**

**Address:** 4254 Acushnet Ave, New Bedford, MA 02745

**Office:** 508-996-8934 | **Fax:** 774-202-0758 | **Evening Emergency Number:** 561-371-5316 | **Website:** [www.ourladyofpurgatory.org](http://www.ourladyofpurgatory.org)

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

started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty. "Now who still wants it?"

"My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. Because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20. Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value in God's eyes. To Him, dirty or clean, crumpled or finely creased, you are still priceless to Him."

<https://stories4homilies.wordpress.com/2015/06/07/your-value-in-front-of-god/>

## OBSERVANCES

The Most Reverend Bishops Gregory Mansour and Elias Zaidan have issued the following Lenten guidelines for the Maronites of the U.S.:

- All Maronites who are physically capable are to abstain from meat on Ash Monday and all Fridays of Lent.

- Ash Monday and Great Friday of the Crucifixion are also days of fasting. Fasting in the Maronite Church involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon. The rest of the day normal meals can be taken, but without meat. All Maronites who are physically capable are to fast on these two days.

## Personal Devotion

Clergy, religious, and laity who wish to observe the more traditional Maronite practice of fasting and abstinence are encouraged to do so. That practice is summarized in the following, taken from the Synod of Mt. Lebanon (1736):

*Every weekday of Lent (Monday through Friday) is a day of fasting and abstinence from meat and dairy products (eggs, butter, milk, etc.) Fasting involves eating and drinking nothing at all (except water and medicine) from midnight until noon.*

*The rest of the day normal meals can be taken, but without meat or dairy products. Dairy products are excluded because they are animal products. Saturdays and Sundays are exempt from fasting and abstaining as are the following feast days: The 40 Martyrs- March 9, St. Joseph- March 19, and the Annunciation- March 25.*

## CLERGY RETREAT

Fr. Vincent will be out of town from Sunday, March 23, until Friday, March 28, for our annual Clergy retreat. Please keep us in your prayers as we will do the same. The office will be open and for any emergencies, please contact Deacon Jean.

## PALM SUNDAY

### BAKE SALE

We will be having our annual Palm Sunday Bakesale on Saturday, April 12, and Sunday, April 13, immediately following Divine Liturgy. Pre-order forms will be available next week.

## FISH FRY FRIDAYS

Fish Fry Fridays are here once again. We will begin Friday Lenten Dinners on **Friday, March 7**, beginning at 5:00 PM and ending at 8:00 PM. Tickets are available for purchase by contacting the office at: **508-996-8934** or by email to: [officeolop@gmail.com](mailto:officeolop@gmail.com)

You may join us before or after Stations/Adoration of the cross.

## HOLY ROSARY SUNDAY

Beginning **March 23**, we will pray the Rosary beginning at **10:00 AM**, before Sunday Divine Liturgy. This will be held on the third Sunday of each month. Please join us as we send our prayers through the intercession of our Blessed Mother to our Lord Jesus.



Remember Me in Your Kingdom  
Would like to invite you to a Day Retreat

On Saturday March 29, 2025

9 AM to 3 PM at

Our Lady of the Annunciation Cathedral  
7 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury, MA, 02132

### The Day Retreat Schedule:

9:00 Mass

9:45 Coffee break

10:15 First talk & discussion

12:15 Lunch

1:00 Second talk & discussion

3:00 Final prayer

For more information and to register contact Zeina at 781-789-0432 or Karen 857-223-9777

## IN OUR PRAYERS

Genevieve Tayeh, Nayeli Nassif, Maria Baptista, Ligia Baptista, Sophie Correa, Stephen DaCosta, Kenneth Macedo, Muriel Moline, Patricia Farhat, Ghada Karam, Beverly Parlapiano, Michael Bruce, Debbie Freedenberg, Efrangieh Daou, Sharon Conti, David Techlin, Peter Helmer, Renee Helmer, Octavia David, Jacob Rego, Amal Assaf, Denise Magaletta, Fernanda Thomas, Theresa John, Angela Scorza-Anderson, 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.

# March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23 Prodigal Son	24 Clergy Retreat Florida	25 Clergy Retreat Florida  Annunciation to the Virgin Mary	26 Clergy Retreat Florida	27 Clergy Retreat Florida	28 Stations/Adoration of the Cross 12 pm English 7 pm English/Arabic  Fish Fry 5-8PM	29 Healing of the Paralytic  MYO Lenten Retreat Danbury CT
30 Healing of the Paralytic	31 X	April 1  Eucharistic Adoration 5-7 pm Divine Liturgy 7 pm	2 Divine Liturgy 12Noon	3 Divine Liturgy 12Noon	4 Stations/Adoration of the Cross 12 pm English 7 pm English/Arabic  Fish Fry 5-8PM	5 Healing of the Blind Man  MYA Retreat Lawrence MA  Saint Antony Church



## LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Saturday, March 22, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Saint Sergius Paulus).** Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Marie Gabriel requested by the Gabriel Family. May her soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Nicholas Nobrega requested by Annemarie Espindola. May his soul rest in peace.

**Sunday, March 23, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of The First Council of Constantinople, Feast of Saint Pappas).** Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Walter Chomak requested by Mary Ann Chomak and Family. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Joann Yozepek requested by the Family. May her soul rest in peace.

**Tuesday, March 25, @ 7:00 PM, (Feast of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary).** **NO ADORATION/NO LITURGY.**

**Wednesday, March 19, @ 12:00 PM, (Feast of Saint Gabriel the Archangel).** Liturgy is being offered for a special intention. **NO LITURGY.**

**Thursday, March 26, @ 12:00 PM, (Feast of Saint Matrona of Thessalonica).** **NO LITURGY.**

**Friday, March 27, @ 12:00 PM and @ 7:00 PM, Station/ Adoration of the Cross. (Feast of Saint Philetus and His Wife Saint Lydia, and Their Children).**

**Saturday, March 28, @ 4:30 PM, (Feast of Saint Cyril of Baalbek).** Liturgy is being offered for the soul of John Hayes requested by Connie Hayes. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Oscar Wakim requested by OLOP Parish. May his soul rest in peace.

**Sunday, March 30, @ 10:30 AM, (Feast of Saint John Climacus). Remember Me In Your Kingdom Liturgy.** Liturgy is being offered for all the souls in Purgatory. May their souls rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Chorbishop Dominic Ashkar requested by OLOP Parish. May his soul rest in peace. Liturgy is being offered for the souls of George and Ann Abraham requested by the Family (FM). May their souls rest in peace.

## THE SANCTUARY CANDLE BURNS FOR....

This week the sanctuary candle burns for Joann Sarkis Yozepek by family. 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.

## LECTORS FOR MARCH/APRIL, 2025

**Saturday, March 22,**  
Eric Tavares

Intercessions: Smitty Cabral  
**Sunday, March 23,**  
Mae Dickinson / Gaby Baroody

**Saturday, March 29,**  
Annemarie Espindola

Intercessions: Smitty Cabral  
**Sunday, March 30,**  
Halim Choubah / Elie Bou Kheir  
**Saturday, April 5,**  
Rachael Higgins

Intercessions: Anna & Helen Higgins  
**Sunday, April 6,**

Cayla Barbour / Jano Baroody  
**Saturday, April 12,**  
Annemarie Espindola

Intercessions: Smitty Cabral  
**Sunday, April 13,**  
Mae Dickinson / Hiba Chdid  
**Saturday, April 19,**

Smitty Cabral  
Intercessions: Eric Tavares

**Sunday, April 20,**  
Ann Dupre / Elie Abou Kheir  
**Saturday, April 26,**  
Eric Tavares

Intercessions: Annemarie Espindola  
**Sunday, April 27,**  
Rana Choubah / Halim Choubah  
(If you are not able to read on your given day, please contact Mae Dickinson)



## WINE AND HOST OFFERING

The altar bread and wine for the month of March is offered in memory of Samir and Georgette Sawaya by Zakhia and Hiba Chdid.

## WEEK OF MARCH 15-16, 2025

<b>Sunday Collection</b>	\$ 1,362.00
<b>Bishop Appeal</b>	\$ 170.00
<b>Advertisement Ads</b>	\$ 300.00
<b>Easter Flowers</b>	\$ 20.00
<b>Candles</b>	\$ 10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,862.00</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.

**MYA**

# BBQ

**GATHERING & MASS**

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**4:30 PM LITURGY**  
**5:30 PM BBQ & SOCIAL**

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**05/03/2025**

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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.*

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