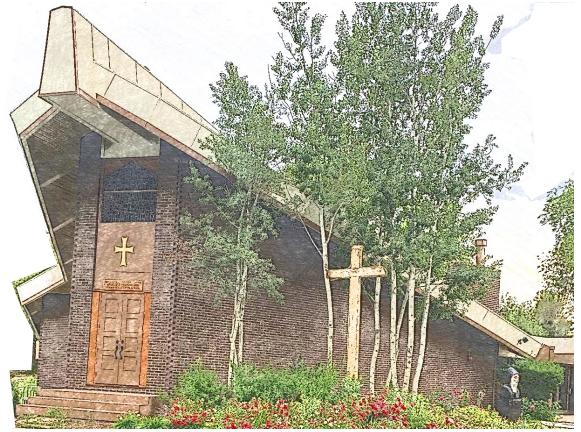


St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,
Lakewood, CO 80214

Website: www.strafkadenver.org

Email: StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com



July 16, 2023

8th Sunday of Pentecost

Schedule of Masses & Services

Sunday Mass 11:00 AM

Tuesday-Thursday Mass 5:00 PM

Friday Mass 6:30 PM

Saturday Mass 11:30 AM

Holy Days on Weekdays 6:30 PM

Confession: Tuesday-Thursday 4:00 – 4:45 PM

Please call the office to alert us to any
Pastoral Care needs

(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

Office Hours

9am-3pm, Wednesday & Friday
720-833-0354

StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com

Rev. El-Badaoui Habib, Parochial Administrator

Linda Craven, Office & Business Manager

*Philip Kyburz, Grand Knight,
St. Rafka Council of the Knights of Columbus*

Linda Craven, Religious Education
lhalpinraven@gmail.com

Contact the office to register in the Parish

Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib

Sharbel Makhoulf, O.L.M. (Arabic: شربل مخلوف, May 8, 1828 – December 24, 1898), born **Youssef Antoun Makhoulf** and venerated as **Saint Sharbel**, was a Maronite monk and priest from Lebanon. During his life, he obtained a wide reputation for holiness, and for his ability to unite Christians and Muslims.

He is known among Lebanese Christians as the "Miracle Monk of Lebanon" because of the favors received through his intercession, especially after prayers are said at his tomb in the Monastery of Saint Maron in Annaya, Lebanon. He was beatified in 1965 and canonized in 1977 by Pope Paul VI. He is venerated as a saint and celebrated on 24 July by the Roman Catholic Church, and on the third Sunday of July by the Maronite Catholic Church.

Early life

Youssef Antoun Makhoulf was born on May 8, 1828, one of five children, in the mountain village of Bekaa Kafra, the highest by elevation in Lebanon. His father, Antoun Zaarour Makhoulf, was a mule driver who died in August 1831 while returning from *corvée* for the Turkish army, leaving his wife Brigitta (*née* Chidiac) a widow to care for their children. She remarried a man who went on to Holy Orders and became the parish priest of Bekaa Kafra.

Makhoulf was raised in this pious home and became drawn to the lives of the saints and the eremitical life practiced by two of his uncles. As a young boy, he was responsible for the family's small herd of cows. He would take the herd to a nearby grotto where he had enshrined an icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He would spend the day in prayer.

DAILY READINGS & MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, July 16

8th Sunday of Pentecost

Feast of St. Sharbel (observed)

Book of Offering Page 713; 618

Is 42:1-9

Rom 8:28-39

Mt 13:36-43

Monday, July 17

St. Marina of Qannoubine

Book of Offering Page 445, 436 or 502

1 Cor 4:1-8; Mt 25:1-13 or

Acts 15:36-16:1-3, 6-10; Lk 11:1-4

Tuesday, July 18

Book of Offering Page 445 or 51

St. Symphorosa & her 7 sons

Acts 16:11-23

Lk 11:5-8

Wednesday, July 19

St. Margaret of Antioch

Book of Offering Page 454 or 521

Acts 16:25-34

Lk 11:9-13

Thursday, July 20

St. Elias the Prophet

Book of Offering Page 445, 463 or 532

Rom 11:1-8; Lk 4:22-30 or

Acts 17:1-12; Lk 11:14-23

Friday, July 21

St. Simeon Salus & his friend St. John

Book of Offering Page 473 or 542

Acts 17:16-20, 22-24, 30-34

Lk 11:24-26

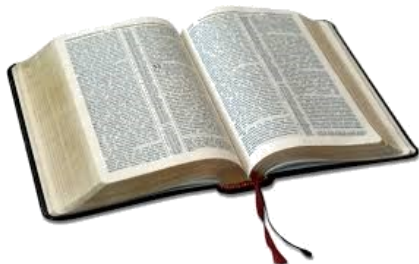
Saturday, July 22

St. Mary Magdalene, St. Nohra

Book of Offering Page 473, 482 or 553

2 Thes 1:1-10; Mt 11:1-6 or

Acts 18:1-11; Lk 11:27-32



Today's Gospel

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds (Mt 13:36-43)

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."³⁷ He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one,³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers,⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Spiritual Message (continued)

Monk

In 1851, Makhlouf left his family to begin training as a monk of the Lebanese Maronite Order at the Monastery of Our Lady in Mayfouq. He later transferred to the Monastery of Saint Maron in Annaya, in the Byblos District near Beirut. Here, he received his habit and took the religious name **Sharbel**, after the 2nd-century Christian martyr of Antioch. He made his final religious profession in the Order on November 1, 1853.

As a young monk, Sharbel began to prepare himself for ordination by studying philosophy and theology at the Monastery of Saints Cyprian and Justina in Kifan, Batroun District. Among his professors at the seminary was Nimatullah Kassab, who was himself later also declared a saint. He was ordained six years later, on July 23, 1859, in Bkerke. He was sent back to the Monastery of Saint Maron, where he lived a life of severe asceticism.

Eremitical life

In 1875, Sharbel was granted by the abbot of the monastery the privilege of living as a hermit at the Hermitage of Saints Peter and Paul, a chapel under the care of the monastery. He spent the next 23 years living alone until his death from a stroke on December 24, 1898.

Death and relics

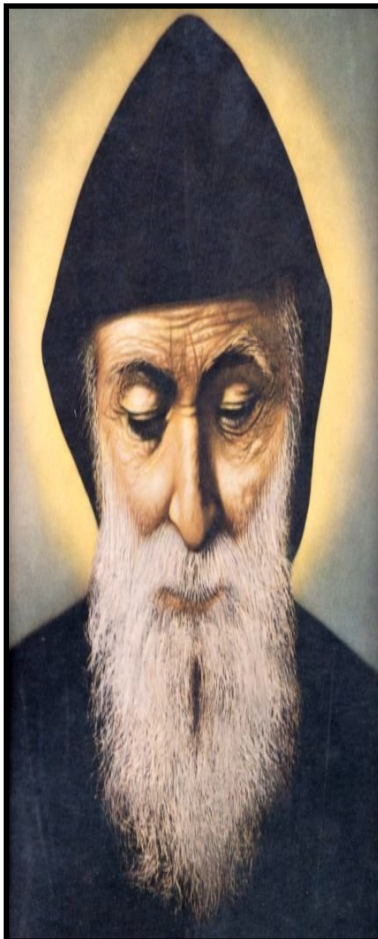
Sharbel was interred at the Monastery of Saint Maron on Christmas Day that year. It was reported that during the transport of his corpse, inclement weather conditions hindered the pallbearers in carrying out their duty.

"Father Sharbel died on the eve of Christmas; the snow was heavy. We transferred him to the monastery on Christmas Day. Before we moved him, the snow was falling rapidly, and the clouds were very dark. When we carried him, the clouds disappeared, and the weather cleared." – George Emmanuel Abi-Saseen, one of the pallbearers

NEWS & EVENTS

This week at St. Rafka Church

Sun 16	Mon 17	Tues 18	Wed 19	Thurs 20	Fri 21	Sat 22	Sun 23
<p>8th Sunday of Pentecost St. Sharbel (observed) 11:00am</p> <p>The Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel</p> <p>90th b-day celebration for Dr. Ashkar</p>	<p><i>St. Marina</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Symphorosa And her Seven Sons</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Margaret of Antioch</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>Elias the Prophet</i></p>	<p><i>Mass 6:30 pm</i></p> <p><i>St. Simeon Salus and his friend St. John</i></p> <p>Mass of Healing, Anointing, & meal to celebrate St. Sharbel</p>	<p><i>Mass 11:30am</i></p> <p><i>St. Mary Magdalene, St. Nohra</i></p>	<p>St. Sharbel</p> <p>11:00am</p>
<p>The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Thursday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com</p>							





St. Rafka Parish Mission Statement

Faith, hope, and love, reinforcing our family values, promoted through heritage and prayer for the glory of God, the edification of the Holy Church and the salvation of the world.

Spiritual Message (continued)

One story claims: "A few months after his death, a bright light was seen surrounding his tomb and the superiors opened it to find his body still intact. After that day, a blood-like liquid flowed from his body. Experts and doctors were unable to give medical explanations for the incorruptibility and flexibility." In 1950 and 1952, his tomb was opened, and his body still had the appearance of a living one. Additionally, the 1950 television tape of his exhumation showed Sharbel's body as still intact, despite the grave having become severely rusty. The official site mentions: In this century his grave has been opened four times, the last time being in 1955, and each time "it has been noticed that his bleeding body still has its flexibility as if it were alive". The Catholic Tradition website says: "Father Joseph Mahfouz, the postulator of the cause, certified that in 1965 the body of Saint Sharbel was still preserved intact with no alteration. In 1976, he again witnessed the opening of the grave; this time the body was completely decomposed. Only the skeleton remained."

On 2 September 2017, Saint Sharbel's relics were translated to Saint Elisabeth Cathedral in Košice, Slovakia, where a monthly pilgrimage is held, called "*Pút' k sv. Šarbelovi*" (Pilgrimage to St. Sharbel). The cathedral is the first in Slovakia to receive his official relics from Lebanon and attracts pilgrims from across the country as well as neighboring states like Poland, Ukraine, and Czech Republic.

Veneration

On December 5, 1965, Pope Paul VI presided over the beatification of St. Sharbel at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. The pope said: "A hermit of Mount Lebanon is enrolled in the number of the blessed... a new eminent member of monastic sanctity has by his example and his intercession enriched the entire Christian people ... may he make us understand, in a world largely fascinated by wealth and comfort, the paramount value of poverty, penance and asceticism, to liberate the soul in its ascent to God."

On October 9, 1977, the pontiff canonized St. Sharbel. At the time, Bishop Francis Zayek, wrote, "St. Sharbel is called the second St. Anthony of the Desert, the Perfume of Lebanon, the first Confessor of the East to be raised to the Altars according to the actual procedure of the Catholic Church, the honor of our Aramaic Antiochian Church, and the model of spiritual values and renewal. Sharbel is like a Cedar of Lebanon standing in eternal prayer, on top of a mountain." Reflecting on the canonization of Sharbel and the causes for canonization of other Maronites active at the time, Zayek further proclaimed "the Aramaic Maronite Antiochian Church is indeed a living branch of the Catholic Church and is intimately connected with the trunk, who is Christ, our Savior, the beginning and the end of all things."

Owing to his role as a Maronite Saint as well as his piety and morals, Sharbel serves as a role model for many Maronite Catholics and is venerated by Catholics from all *sui iuris* churches in communion with Rome.

On October 28, 2017, a shrine dedicated to St. Sharbel was inaugurated at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The Lebanese Maronite Patriarch, Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, attended the inauguration ceremony giving his blessing and a dedication, as well as Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan. The shrine has a mosaic of St. Sharbel along with national emblems of Lebanon such as the cedar and a relic of St. Sharbel. It was donated by SGBL Bank chairman Antoun Sehnaoui in the name of his parents, May and Nabil Sehnaoui.