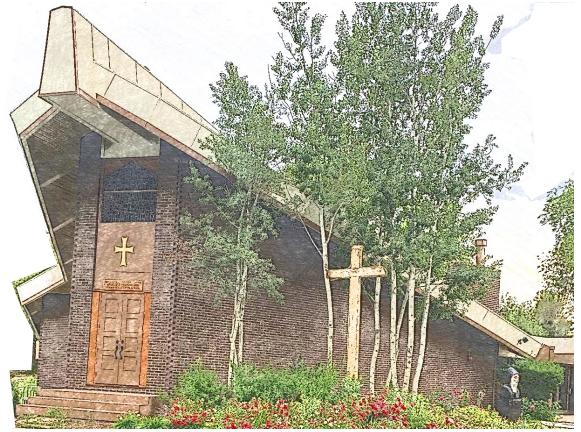


# **St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church**

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,  
Lakewood, CO 80214

Website: [www.strafkadenver.org](http://www.strafkadenver.org)

Email: [StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com](mailto:StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com)



## **March 10, 2024 Healing of the Paralytic**

### **Schedule of Masses & Services**

**Sunday Mass** 11:00 AM

**Tuesday-Thursday Mass** 6:00 PM

**Friday Mass during Lent** 5:50 PM followed by  
Stations of the Cross

**Saturday Mass** 11:30 AM

**Holy Days on Weekdays** 6:30 PM

**Confession:** Tuesday-Thursday 5:00 – 5:45 PM

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

(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

### **Office Hours**

9:30 am-3:30 pm, Wednesday & Friday  
720-833-0354

[StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com](mailto: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*  
[lhalpincraven@gmail.com](mailto:lhalpincraven@gmail.com)

Contact the office to register in the Parish

## **Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib**

**Son, your sins are forgiven. (Mark 2: 1-12)**

Today we are celebrating the fifth Sunday of Lent, and the passage of the gospel is telling us the story of Jesus healing the paralytic which is a rich story in meaning.

In this story, Mark tells us that Jesus had just arrived at home in Capernaum. Mark doesn't tell us whether this is Jesus' actual house or someone else's, but in either case it has obviously become a local church. It is the first Christian church where Jesus used to preach the Good News. While he was preaching, *some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man carried by four of them. When they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay.*

Throughout this story, I want you to meditate with me upon three things- the obstacles that prevent me and you and everyone coming to Jesus and hearing his words, the role of the community in dispelling these obstacles, and the importance of Jesus' forgiveness for the healing of our souls and bodies.

## Today's Gospel

### DAILY READINGS

#### Sunday, March 10

##### *Healing of the Paralytic*

*Book of Offering Page 237*

Is 35:1-10

1 Tm 5:24-6:5

Mk 2:1-12

#### Monday, March 11

##### *St. Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem*

*Book of Offering Page 227*

Eph 5:3-13

Mk 5:1-20

#### Tuesday, March 12

##### *Pope St. Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Church*

*Book of Offering Page 227*

1 Tm 1:1-8

Mk 6:47-56

#### Wednesday, March 13

##### *St. Theophanes the Chronicler*

*Book of Offering Page 227*

Eph 6:1-9

Lk 7:11-17

#### Thursday, March 14

##### *St. Euphrasia*

*Book of Offering Page 227*

2 Tm 1:6-14

Mk 4:33-41

#### Friday, March 15

##### *St. Benedict, Founder of Monastic Life in the West*

*Book of Offering Page 227*

Phil 2:12-19

Lk 4:31-44

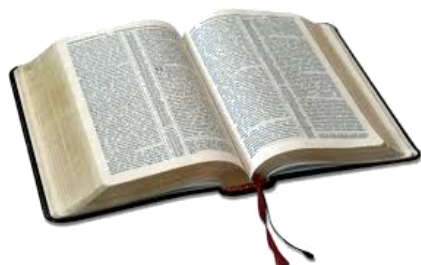
#### Saturday, March 16

##### *The First Council of Constantinople, St. Pappas, M*

*Book of Offering Page 227*

Col 3:23-4:7

Mk 7:31-37



### Jesus Heals a Paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)

<sup>2</sup> When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. <sup>2</sup> So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them:

<sup>3</sup> Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. <sup>4</sup> And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. <sup>5</sup> When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>6</sup> Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, <sup>7</sup> "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

<sup>8</sup> At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk?' <sup>10</sup> But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— <sup>11</sup> "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home."

<sup>12</sup> And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

### Spiritual Message (continued)

The paralytic had two obstacles on the level of body and soul.

First, he was paralyzed. He couldn't move from his bed or wheelchair to come to Jesus. And second, he was a sinful man. The Jews used to think if anyone was defamed, crippled, blind, was a leper, or got any terrible sickness that it was a sign of God's wrath against him because of his sins or the sins of his parents. Second, when those four people (who are representing the church) decided to bring him to Jesus, the obstacle was the people who were blocking every way - the doors, the windows, the passages - until it seemed impossible for them to bring him in front of Jesus. I can only imagine the disappointment these men must have felt after arriving too late to get close enough to hear or see Jesus. The house was packed, and it seemed like their effort was in vain. But the obstacles proved to give way to opportunity.

# NEWS & EVENTS

*This week at St. Rafka Church*

Sun 10	Mon 11	Tues 12	Wed 13	Thurs 14	Fri 15	Sat 16	Sun 17
<b>Healing of the Paralytic</b>  <b>11:00am</b>  <b>Rel. Ed. Classes 10—10:50</b>  <b>2nd Collection for Lenten Appeal</b>	<i>No Mass</i>  <i>St. Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem</i>	<i>Mass 6 pm</i>  <i>Pope St. Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Church</i>	<i>Mass 6 pm</i>  <i>St. Theophanes the Chronicler</i>	<i>Mass 6 pm</i>  <i>St. Euphrasia</i>	<i>Mass 5:50 pm</i> <i>Stations of the Cross 6:30 pm</i>  <i>St. Benedict, Founder of Monastic Life in the West</i>	<i>Mass 11:30 am</i>  <i>The First Council of Constantinople, (381)</i> <i>St. Pappas, M</i>	<b>Healing of the Blind Man</b>  <b>11:00am</b>  <b>Rel. Ed. Classes 10—10:50</b>
<p>The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Wednesday at 12:00 PM            Submit them to the Parish Office at <a href="mailto:StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com">StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com</a></p>							

**The Ladies' Society will begin selling Hosanna Sunday candles starting this weekend after Mass. Cost will be \$10 per candle.**

**Save the Date:**

**\*Annual Hefli, Saturday, April 6—details to follow**

**Bishop Elias will be here the entire Divine Mercy weekend to join us for the Hefli, and to celebrate Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 7, at 11 am.**

**\* Our annual Festival will be Saturday, September 14, 2024.—details to follow.**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Words cannot express how thankful I am for your ongoing support for our beloved Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles, especially amidst the challenges at home and abroad.

Lent is an ideal time to deepen our faith through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time to recall the great blessings God has given us, and to give back to those in need. I return to you this Lent seeking your support for our most critical needs including:

- Seminarians' Education and Formation
- Support to Missions and Parishes in Need
- Growing Ministries with our Children, Youth, and Young Adults.
- Charitable Aid to our Brothers and Sisters at home in the USA, or in Lebanon, Syria, and the Middle East

**Checks may be mailed to:**

Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles  
 19300 Rinaldi Street Box 8509  
 Porter Ranch, CA 91327

Your generous contribution and prayers are greatly appreciated. On behalf of all those who will benefit, I want to personally thank you for your consideration and contribution.

Prayerfully yours in Christ,  
 +A. Elias Zaidan  
 Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles

## Bishop Elias' Lenten Appeal

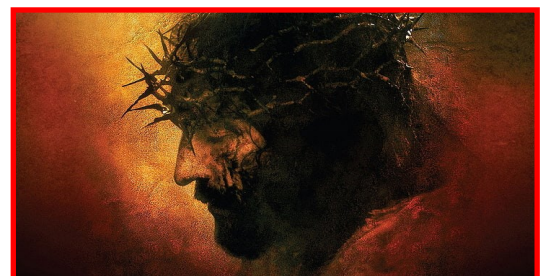
### **The Goal for the 2024 Lenten**

**Appeal is \$4,000.**

**If you want your Sunday donation to be specifically for the Appeal, please designate it as such on your check.**

**We will have a 2nd collection on Sunday, March 10, and Hosanna Sunday, March 24 for the Appeal.**

**On Great Friday of the Crucifixion (March 29) we will have the annual collection for the Holy Land.**





## 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)

These four men who were carrying the paralyzed on a bed-mat were creative enough to find a solution for this obstacle. They climbed the roof and dug a hole big enough to lower that paralytic person through it in front of Jesus. Jesus looked at them and to their faith and said, "Son, your sins are forgiven." As if to say, "Son, no worries about the roof of our house here, I forgive you." By this he created a problem with the Scribes who believe that only God can forgive sins.

The Scribes are right: only God can forgive sins. They knew the laws better than most, and what Jesus was doing really was blasphemous from their perspective. However, they refused to accept or understand that Jesus may have the God-given authority to forgive sins and cancel debts. But Jesus went on and healed the paralyzed saying to them, "Which is easier to say to the paralytic- your sins are forgiven, or to tell him arise, take up your matt and go home. But in order that you may know that the son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, take up your matt and go home." He rose immediately in the sight of all. This is what makes Jesus unique in his ministry and met with so much hostility.

The crowd said that they had never seen anything like that. They recognized that God was up to something new, based on forgiveness and healing. The roof was coming down, and Jesus was ushering in a new vision for the people of God.

Where do we find ourselves in this story? Are we like the paralytic looking for wholeness? Are we his friends who, with a little creative imagination, dig up a roof and find a solution? Or are we the institutionalized Scribes locked into their ways? I imagine we, the church, are a little like all these folks. As children of this church, I think we're to be the diggers in this story who dig up the roof to make an opening for a new encounter with God.

And what are the obstacles that prevent us coming to Jesus? Are they spiritual because I don't have enough faith, hope, and love in God and for God? Or they are physical; I am sick in the ICU- crippled, blind, and old and no one to bring me to the house of God? Are they my sins, my bad habits and behavior that make me think that I am not worthy to come to Jesus? Are they the people whom I come to the church with which I don't like to see, or the parents who don't discipline their children in the church which makes me not happy to come because I am not able to concentrate upon the word of Jesus from the noise of their children? Is it the very hard roof that I have in my personal life which makes me unable to dig a hole and start a new life with Jesus? Is it the priest who makes me bored when he is preaching? Or is it related to my commitment and so on?

Finally, if I want to be whole again and be healed spiritually and physically, I need either to come to Jesus with the gift of faith, or to the community to carry me in front of him. And if my problem is the people, I am called to forgive seventy times seven times a day, and at that time I can see Jesus and feel His presence, grace, forgiveness, and love. **Amen.**