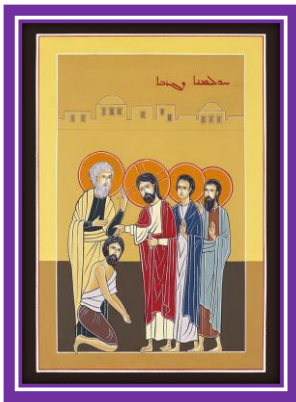
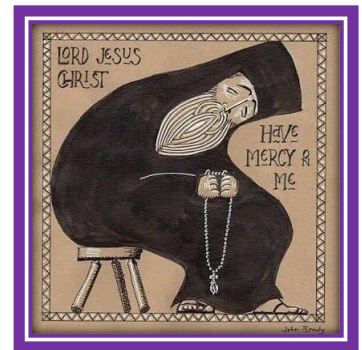


# Saint Joseph Maronite Catholic Church



## The Cleansing of the Leper

March 10, 2019



Welcome all visitors to the beautiful heritage of Antioch

3 Appleton Street  
Waterville, ME 04901  
Office Phone: 207-872-8515

**Pastor:** Rev. Fr. James Doran  
**Subdeacon:** Mr. Stephen Crate  
**website:** <http://www.sjmaronite.org>  
**e-mail:** [stjoesinmaine@yahoo.com](mailto:stjoesinmaine@yahoo.com)

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*"For us, the men and women of the East are a symbol of the Lord Who comes again."* *Oriente Lumen*, John Paul II

- Qoorboneh (Masses):** Saturday 4:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m.; Tues. – Fr. 9:00 a.m. in the St. Jude Chapel  
The Miraculous Medal and the St. Jude Novenas are on Tuesday following the 9 a.m. Liturgy
- Sick Calls:** To receive the Eucharist and/or the Anointing of the Sick, please call the rectory.
- Confessions:** One half-hour before weekend Liturgies and by appointment.
- Baptisms:** *Parents* should refer to the website and then contact the parish through the parish e-mail address.
- Marriage:** Please refer to the parish website and contact the parish a **minimum 6 months before** finalizing the date of your wedding.
- Mass Intentions:** For *specific* dates requested, please submit **three months in advance**. Recommended stipends: weekday intentions \$10; weekend intentions \$15
- Monthly Memorials:** Sanctuary Candles \$20; Altar Bread \$25; Wine \$45

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**Catechists:** Lenore Boles, *Director & K-1<sup>st</sup>*; Shana Page, 3-5<sup>th</sup> **Choir Director:** Dame Fefa Marie Deeb, DSG **Parish Council President:** Lisa Gard **Ex-officio Council Members:** Subdeacon Steve Crate; Lenore Boles, *Religious Education*; Larry Mitchell, *Knights of Columbus*; Shana Page, *Rosary Sodality*

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### TODAY'S EPISTLE Romans 6: 12-23

(11. Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.)  
Therefore, sin must not reign over your mortal bodies so that you obey their desires. And do not present the members of your bodies to sin as weapons for wickedness, but present yourselves to God as raised from the dead to life, and the members of your bodies to God as weapons for righteousness. For sin is not to have any power over you, since you are not under the Law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the Law, but under grace? Of course not!

Do you not know that if you present yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey: either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, although you were once slaves of sin, you have become obedient from the heart to the pattern of teaching to which you have been entrusted. Freed from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your nature. For just as you presented the members of your bodies as slaves to impurity

and to iniquity to iniquity, so now present them as slaves to righteousness for sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. But what profit did you get then from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been freed from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, and its end is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



## **ABOUNA'S REFLECTIONS**

Instead of receiving his rule of action and  
orientation from without,  
the Christian acts spontaneously.  
He is not constrained like a slave,  
under the "yoke" of regulation;  
his principle of life – *motus ab intrinseco* – is  
immanent to him, assuring his self-determination  
in the direction of good.<sup>1</sup>

A few years back, a speaker at an ecumenical gathering stated to the attendees that "we are all the children of God". The listeners were nonplussed as this was to them incomprehensible. Sadly, this is a common *faux pas* for Christians in these types of conversations; they presume that their religious concepts are a "one size fits all". "Of course everyone speaks of *faith*; of course everyone speaks of *God*; of course, everyone speaks of the *love* of God ..... etc." But do they?

The presumption is wrong philosophically, naïve theologically, and simplistic in its world view. On the purely natural level, it is also disrespectful in assuming that the Christian religion somehow has "got it" when it comes to other religions.

Now it is true that all religions and philosophies of the world throughout human history have, and do contain elements of truth and sparks of understanding in regard to the divine realm and human behavior, but it is meaningless to assume, as so many in the modern world do, that "we all worship the same god". It is also disrespectful not to take other religious people at their word.

"Faith", "charity", "love of God", being "children of God", "redemption", "grace", and "conversion", just to mention a few, are all notions in the Christian Gospel. They are not universal religious sentiments. It is just as mistaken to speak about the "love of God" in other religions as it is to state that we are all "the children of God". As the Quran states explicitly that God has no progeny, one can be assured that Muslims do not see themselves as the "children of God". That the Hidden Creator loves the universe (let alone that there is even an act of creation) and wishes a response of love in return from that world is a completely Christian notion.

There are devotional paths in certain Hindu sects, but Hinduism as such does not extoll the "love of God". Kali protects us, they might say, but hers is not a maternal sentiment. Durga is all powerful, but she will not cuddle.

Except, perhaps, in the Hasidic sect, there may be a response of loyalty to the divine within Judaism, in a relation to God that is one of covenant and contract, but it is not one of mutual love responding to the Hidden Abba. The great prophets did develop a later an image of marriage between God and His people, but that was, in truth, the continuing revelation that prepared the path for His people to receive the fullness of revelation at the coming of the Messiah, Our Lord Jesus. It was not meant as a goal in itself.

No Buddhist has ever seen himself as having a familial relation to *buddhadharma*. For them, there is no Creator or creation, apart from, in some myths, a god who is delusional. The gods themselves are in need of "truth" and a path to escape the eternal wheel of "action". The ultimate goal is to be "extinguished", not enter into the brilliance of Divine Light.

<sup>1</sup> From Charity and Liberty by Rev. Fr. Ceslaus Spicq, OP

As philosophical concepts vary among religions, so too does the judgement of “good”. Moral norms and acceptable actions – and *how* to do them – are also different. Thus the speaker mentioned earlier was completely off base, and it is no surprise that his audience was nonplussed at his remarks. The commonality to be found among men must, for the most part, lie in recognition of the natural law, not in their religious customs.

So, let us consider *Christian* morality:

The first thing to note is that while there are many philosophies around, Christianity is not simply a set of moral teachings;<sup>2</sup> it is path established by God Himself that mankind, and individual men, might find *union with the Divine*. This union with God is both the expression of the divine glory and healing to those who embrace this gift. To put it directly, Catholicism’s morality is not a series of precepts, but flows from one’s participation in the Divine Mysteries and subsequently from personal prayer, contemplative and otherwise. This is the true religion of Transcendent and Divine Presence – not just another “opinion” about “supernatural stuff”.

Following the constraint of **law**, a morality based on exterior directives, means that the principle of moral choice is also external. One acts because one must, or punishment ensues; but, for the one into whom the Holy Spirit of God has penetrated, the principle of moral choice and behavior is altogether different.

One who is consciously and vitally a temple of the Holy Spirit finds himself moved by this inner divine Presence to *perceive* and *know* the world in a different manner, and to *love* what is good, honorable, and in accord with the divine will. Grace moves us to correspond to the divine will. This movement of grace is the only rule to which we can adapt ourselves – because it abides within.

Religions of commandments and laws are properly understood as “observances”. They are not personal relationships with Divine Presence. On the contrary, once perfected, Catholic practice transcends mere observance and grace moves the baptized from within. Their will becomes identified with the divine

will because it has been healed, elevated, and moved toward the infinite Good One. This is the fundamental distinction that Saint Paul seeks to clarify throughout most of his letters. In contrast, Judaism and Islam are “observances”. The Gospel, however, frees us to become the “children of God”.

Properly speaking, “faith” as a foundation is a concept and reality proper only to Christianity. In other religious traditions, one may trust teachers or primordial story told of a supposed divine revelation, but this is not the personal engagement that requires total response and complete loyalty: “He who loves father, mother, brother, sister more than Me, is not worthy of Me”.<sup>3</sup> God may be obeyed or sought after in other “observances”; fidelity to “revealed Law” may bind consciences in these observances, but it is only with the divine Messiah that men are touched by grace, healed, elevated, and asked to “be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect”<sup>4</sup>.

A law directs, but a Father *rears, guides* and *raises up* His children, and the definition of a free being is one who is the cause and master of his own actions. The Father must discipline and train in the beginning – not a pleasant thing for anyone – but His goal is to set us free among the mature.

In contrast, having made “submission” in “Islam” one is subject to God – perhaps with noble sentiment – but one is not freed by revealed truth<sup>5</sup>. Sufism arose to try to assuage the human need for love and contemplation, but this tradition did not originate in Quran.

YHWH led His people along the path of the patriarchs and from out of Egypt’s bondage, but as El-Shaddai, the “God All Powerful”. Binding oneself to the prescriptions of Moses from Mount Sinai, may have served a purpose to train up Israel, but with the arrival of the Messiah this mission has been fulfilled and completed.

“**Juridicism**”, properly understood, can only be a means to an end. Laws exist to make actions happen for the sake of the common good of a community (or prohibit certain things from happening). So the question must be asked: what is that goal? For the

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<sup>2</sup> Many deceive themselves thinking this, thus “I’m a good person” means I am a fine Catholic regardless of whether I participate in the Divine Mysteries or not. False.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew 10: 37

<sup>4</sup> St. Matthew 5: 48

<sup>5</sup> St. John 8: 36

Law of Moses this was *to lead to the Messiah*, its purpose and end. For the Quran, this is to achieve the *submission* of all men to God's sovereign will. They are made "subject" or "submitter", that is, "Muslim". For Buddhism, the goal is to exit the wheel of temporal existences and be *nibbanadhatu* – "blown out".

Rules establish paths, and paths lead to goals.

*The Gospel is not a means to an end, but the very goal for which creation itself was brought into being: the revelation of the Kingdom.* This may surprise some, but its first purpose is not even the "salvation of souls", but the revelation of the charity of God. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the revelation of the Word-Incarnate and the subsequent elevation of men to the friendship of God introducing them into the Divine Intimacy of the eternal triune Love.

We are made free by the Word-Incarnate: "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed".<sup>6</sup> With the accomplishment and perfection of the Mosaic Law, the Good Tidings of redemption set us on a path of love, which is as liberating as it is austere. The Gospel requires effort and application on our part.<sup>7</sup> To illustrate, we might consider the examples of employment and citizenship:

Firstly, to work for an employer is straightforward: work and be paid; but to be the child in a household and a member of a family is profoundly more complicated – but exceedingly more satisfying in the long term.

Secondly, in human society, the good citizen does what he needs to do for the good of the community without constant reminder, but the bad citizen is focused primarily on himself and his own self-interest. For the latter, the threat of penalties such as fines needs to be there to motivate his choice to do what is "good". The good citizen, conversely, does what is good because it is honorable, the bad citizen does what is good because he does not wish to be punished. Although the actions may be identical externally – e.g. they both stop at traffic lights – the motivation, and thus the merit, are worlds apart.

So it is with the Gospel: it is a "law" to those who are immature in ways of grace, but to those "animated by the Spirit" – the *mature*, moved by the "instinct of grace" – the Gospel is truly "good tidings" of liberation and freedom. The *immature*, the insufficiently spiritual, those who scarcely know what to do as Christians, are in frequent need of external assistance and reminder to do what they must, and for the *most immature* among them nothing less than the threat of eternal punishment in hell may be required to move them.

Saint Thomas Aquinas pointed out that the beginning of the spiritual life for just about everyone is self-centered (avoidance of eternal hell) but that this motivation should mature later into the internal freedom of the children of God.

The mature children of a household do what they must without reminding. They live motivated by the love of the family. When we arrive at the point that we choose virtue and theologically good actions because they are good and reflections of the Most-High, then we know that we have matured into the freedom of children. Until this happens we live a life of conversion in which we must make progress.

Rules and prescriptions are for the weak; beauty, virtue, honor and holiness are the joy of the strong.

Lent is a serious time for us to "grow up". The Great Fast is the annual moment – *kairos* – in which we seriously examine our "sonship". It is a time which may require us to "unthink our thinking". We are unthinking and complacent in our routines, and only a period of serious consideration can remake the too often self-satisfied state of our minds.

What entices our heart and motivates our choices? In these recesses lie the dark places of sin that without the light of grace will always leave us in delusion.

This is all to say, with reference to today's Gospel, what is the deep source of our leprosy?

## Catechesis

The *Adult Religion Course* will run through to the end of May. **Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.**

<sup>6</sup> St. John 8: 36

<sup>7</sup> St. Matthew 7:24

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS

### THE CLEANSING OF THE LEPER

March 10, 2019

**Rom 6: 12-23      St. Mark 1: 35-45**

### THE HEALING OF THE HEMORRHAGING WOMAN

March 17, 2019

**II Cor 7: 4-11      St. Luke 8: 40-56**

### VOCATION ICON

*“Request therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest.” St. Matthew 9:38*

Sun	Mar 10	Larry and Paula Mitchell
Sun	Mar 17	Lowell & Mary Hawes
Sun	Mar 24	Larry & Lisa Grard
Sat	Mar 30	Jim & Lenore Boles
Sun	Apr 7	Bruce & Doreen White

### LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

**Regular Collection: \$1936.00**

*Blessed be the Merciful One Who gives us the ability to sustain this apostolate.*

### **THE DAILY INTERCESSION FOR THE FIDELITY OF THOSE IN APOSTOLIC OFFICE:**

Remember, O Lord of goodness, Your holy Church, and have mercy on all her faithful. In Your compassion, heal the wounded and injured among Your Flock. Punish injustice, console hearts and strengthen all our brothers and sisters. Bestow the grace of conversion on all.

With Your indestructible power, strengthen the bishops of the true Faith that they may be upright and courageous in their apostolic office. May they show fidelity as they stand ever before Your eternal justice. Unto Your honor and glory, may they prove themselves upright, dauntless and persevering in the task confided to them: to lead all the faithful into the fullness of Your redeeming light and glory. We pray to You, O Lord.

### INTENTIONS FOR THE QURBONEH (MASSES)

Sat	9	†Charles Owen <i>(the Parish)</i>
Sun	10	For the members of the Parish
Mon	11	-----
Tue	12	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Wed	13	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Thu	14	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Fri	15	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Sat	16	†Charles Owen <i>(the Parish)</i>
Sun	17	For the members of the Parish
Mon	18	-----
Tue	19	†Jeanine Morissette <i>(Dan &amp; Pam Casavant)</i> -- Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Wed	20	†Leonette Michaud <i>(Dan &amp; Pam Casavant)</i> -- Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Thu	21	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Fri	22	†Edmond & Lucille Paré <i>(Suzanne Paré)</i>
Sat	23	†Ron Stevens <i>(Herbert Joseph)</i> -- Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Sun	24	†Rev. Fr. Paul Coury <i>(the Parish)</i>
Mon	25	-----
Tue	26	Catholic Extension Society & Donors -- Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Wed	27	†John Nadeau <i>(Dan &amp; Pam Casavant)</i> -- Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Thu	28	Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Fri	29	†Colette O'Malley <i>(Dan &amp; Pam Casavant)</i>
Sat	30	†Charles Owen <i>(the Parish)</i> -- Catholic Extension Society & Donors
Sun	31	†Paul and Charlene LaVerdiere <i>(Audrey Yotides)</i>

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## MARCH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE FOOD BANK

Family sized items: stews, ravioli, jiffy mixes, condiments, toilet paper and personal care items. Please place these items in the box near the church's Appleton Street entrance.

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### *Coffee Schedule*

Mar 10	Mary Bard, Dale Sturtevant
Mar 17	April Mitchell, Shana Page
Mar 24	Elaine Hoag, Rosanna Joseph
Mar 31	Jan Bourque, Shana Page
Apr 7	Dale Sturtevant, Elizabeth Wilson
Apr 14	Hosanna Sunday, Breads & Pastries
Apr 21	Sunday of the Glorious Resurrection
Apr 28	Lauraine Mansur, Ruth Lunn

## MARCH DEVOTIONS

The Sanctuary Lamp (representing all the parish before Our Hidden Lord) will burn for the month of March *in memory of George Deeb*.

Donated in his name by Dame Marie Fefa, DSG

*May he be brought into the fullness of the light and joy of the Kingdom.*

*Grant them health, and raise them up  
from their illness and make them  
to have perfect health of body and soul  
and strengthen them in spirit;  
for Thou art the Savior and Benefactor,  
the Lord of lords and Weaver of crowns,  
Thou art Lord and King of all. Amen*

**Those for whom we pray:** Doreen Nader, Tala Poulin, Louise Saliem, Virginia Poulin, Beverly Rideout, and April Mitchell.

## The Cleansing of the Leper

p 196

**Lighting of the Church:** LB\* p 5  
Jesus Christ, O Source of Light

**Entrance Hymn:** LB *eto* 108

**Glory:** SB *glory*

**Qolo/Hymn:** LB *bo'outho* 109

**Creed** p 748

### PRE-ANAPHORA:

**Transfer of Gifts:** LB *The Lord Reigns*

**Incense Hymn Offertory:** SB *l'maryam yoldat*

### ANAPHORA:

**Saint Peter, Chief of the Apostles:** LB p 774

**Sign of Peace:** SB *tooba*

**Communion:** SB *Your Body is our Food; Psalm 100*

**Recessional:** SB *From the Depths* 89

\*LB=Liturgical Book SB=Song Book

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*Saint Gregory the Great  
Pope of Rome, Confessor  
March 12<sup>th</sup>*