

# Saint Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church Las Vegas

# Sunday of the Finding of Jesus in the Temple



January 2020

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To Keep a Lamp Burning we have to **Keep Putting Oil in it. Mother Theresa** 



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### **Our Services HOLY MASSES**

**DAILY**: Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. English

SATURDAY VIGIL: 4:30 p.m. English

SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. English

& 11:30 AM Arabic/Aramaic/English

**1st Sunday**: **4:30pm** 

Rosario y la Misa en Español

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: 4:30 pm** 

Rosary & Tagalog Mass

**Sunday Catechism** @ 8 am

(Classes are Sept – May)

1st SUNDAY 9:30 a.m. & 11:30am

**Youth Mass** 

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### World Day of Peace

The Church teaches that religious freedom is grounded in the inherent dignity of the human person. The Holy Father's message affirms that all people have a duty and a right to seek religious truth and to practice religion in accordance with their conscience. Religious freedom allows deep and healthy relationships with God, oneself, others, and the world, and helps to form a society where peace can prevail, human development can occur, and the life and dignity of all can be respected.

The world needs God. It needs universal, shared ethical and spiritual values, and religion can offer a precious contribution to their pursuit, for the building of a just and peaceful social order at the national and international levels. *Peace is a gift of God and at the same time a task which is never fully completed.* A society reconciled with God is closer to peace, which is not the mere absence of war or the result of military or economic supremacy, much less deceptive ploys or clever manipulation. Rather, peace is the result of a process of purification and of cultural, moral and spiritual elevation involving each individual and people, a process in which human dignity is fully respected. I invite all those who wish to be peacemakers, especially the young, to heed the voice speaking within their hearts and thus to find in God the stable point of reference for attaining authentic freedom,

### Religious Freedom , the Path to Peace



the inexhaustible force which can give the world a new direction and spirit, and overcome the mistakes of the past. In the words of Pope Paul VI, to whose wisdom and farsightedness we owe the institution of the World Day of Peace: "It is necessary before all else to provide peace with other weapons – different from those destined to kill and exterminate mankind. What are needed above all are moral weapons, those which give strength and prestige to international law – the weapon, in the first place, of the observance of pacts". Religious freedom is an authentic weapon of peace, with an *historical* and *prophetic mission*. Peace brings to full fruition the deepest qualities and potentials of the human person, the qualities which can change the world and make it better. It gives hope for a future of justice and peace, even in the face of grave injustice and material and moral poverty. May all men and women, and societies at every level and in every part of the earth, soon be able to experience *religious freedom*, *the path to peace!* 

Rev. Fr. Nadim Abou Zeid

### FINDING OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE December 30

A strange joy – following a time of deep anxiety probably bordering on panic: Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the Temple. Their reaction of bewilderment is easily understandable – what does he mean about needing to be about his Father's business? Especially when it has caused them so much distress?

As a terminal illness progresses, there can come a time when the person who is dying may begin to focus on their inner world, deepening their relationship with God. For their loved ones, it can feel as if they are already losing them. It is a grace when people can pray together and gently let the person they love go into the hands of the God who is preparing to bring them home.

### Circumcision of Our Lord January 1st

On January 1st, we commemorate an event in the life of Jesus which took place eight days after His Birth: His Naming and Circumcision. According to Hebrew Law, every male child was to be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth (*Genesis 17: 11-12*). Circumcision was the sign God gave to Abraham of His Covenant with His chosen people. Through Circumcision the Hebrew child received the physical sign of his membership in the chosen people of God. At the time of circumcision the child was also given the name by which he was to be known among God's people. It is thus that Jesus is circumcised and given His name which means, "The Lord is Savior". Jesus, as God's True Son had no need of circumcision and yet, in order to show that He was the fulfillment of the Law, He submitted to its prescriptions. Jesus was already a member of God's chosen people; for, in fact, He was God's Chosen One, the Son of the Most High. And yet, Jesus not only observed the prescriptions of the Law, He also surpassed them since after His Death & Resurrection, the New Covenant would be established abolishing the Old Covenant.

# OUR HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS RECEIVES PRIME MINISTER OF MONTENEGRO

On December 14, 2019, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis received in audience His Excellency Mr. Duško Marković, prime minister of Montenegro, who subsequently met with His Eminence Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by His Excellency Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, the parties focused on the existing good bilateral relations, in the hope that they may be consolidated further. In particular, they highlighted the value of the harmonious inter-ethnic and interreligious co-existence which characterizes the millennia-long Montenegrin identity.



Finally, there was an exchange of views on some themes of an international nature, with particular reference to the future of the European project, the current religious challenges and the phenomenon of migration.

### FRESH RISK OF GENOCIDE TO MIDDLE EAST CHRISTIANS

Middle East Christians are at direct risk of a second genocide which threatens them with wipe-out from the lands of the Bible – according to an expert in the region who has co-ordinated emergency relief there for nearly a decade.

Father Andrzej Halemba, head of Middle East projects at Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), said that Christians could face total eradication from countries such as Iraq and Syria, where they have existed since the time of Christ's first apostles.

Father Halemba said: "I cannot imagine the Middle East without Christians. But the threat is real. Daesh (ISIS) wanted to eradicate Christians

"The genocidal mentality is alive with Al-Nusra and other groups.

"If Christians can stay together and help each other, they can stay in the Middle East. If they don't, it can be like Turkey after the terrible genocide in 1915."

Father Halemba said Christianity's eradication would be tragic from a religious plurality point of view and because of Christians' role as bridge builders in conflict zones.

He said: "Christians are the soul of the country and they play a very important role in Middle Eastern societies. They are the peacemakers.

"Christians work for peace and peaceful co-existence and collaboration for the good of the country."

In 2003, there were 1.5 million Christians in Iraq, now there are less than 250,000 – with some reports putting the number as low as 120,000.

Similarly, in Syria in 2011, there were 1.5 million Christians and there are now 500,000.



### Father Andrzej Halemba

Father Halemba said all Christians must work together to ensure their survival in the region.

He said: "Families which pray together stay together. We all need to work for the good of all. ACN helps all Christians – not only the Catholics. Christians should stay together and this is the desire of Jesus Christ. He wanted unity among His supporters."

In Iraq and Syria, ACN has supported hundreds of different projects, helping Christians who want to stay in their homelands with food baskets, clean water, milk for children, education grants and repairs to homes and churches.

This year (2019), the charity has approved 147 projects in Syria. In 2018 ACN supported 40 projects in Iraq.

Father Halemba said: "ACN is always trying to help Christians and others in need with both hands. In one hand, we have bread to feed the people, and on the other hand we have the Bible.

"We provide material help and spiritual help in the form of the Word of God."

### LEBANESE WOMAN JUST **EARNED LEBANON 3 GOLD** CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALS IN **JORDAN**

"I am the first woman to represent Lebanon internationally, I don't want to be the last.

Mahassen Hala Fattouh is a Lebanese expat living in the USA. She is also part of the Lebanese weightlifting team there. She has won many medals, including a big win at the 2018 Among 15 Arab countries participating in the Mediterranean Games.

norms off her shoulders for years. She became a Florida state champion in weightlifting and she then represented the United States at the 2006 Youth Pan Am Games and continued to progress as a multi-time medalist at USAW Junior and to help lift Lebanon," she says. Senior National Championships.

competitions for 5 years. Her latest win was her participation representing Lebanon in the Arab weightlifting championship that took part in Amman, Jordan over the weekend of December 14th-16th.

In an interview with Annahar newspaper, Fattouh explained: "Representing Lebanon has been the greatest honor and joy; it's hard to put that into words. It's exciting and nerve-racking all at once. But, all the hard work and months of training diminish into these few moments when I can make everyone as proud of our country as I am."

"It's important to me to get as far as I can because although I am the first woman to represent Lebanon internationally, I don't want to be the last," Fattouh added in her feature.

"Lebanon was very successful in the men's weightlifting field in the past and I hope to be a part of what brings weightlifting back to the minds of young Lebanese athletes."

### **Good News For** A Change!



championship, including UAE and Saudi Arabia, Fattouh has been lifting the weight of gender Fattouh has earned Lebanon 3 gold meals. One of the reasons why she participated was because, in her own words, she hopes that she will inspire more Lebanese diaspora to contribute to Lebanon in their unique ways. "Everybody has something

Her flight was delayed by the airline and rerouted Fattouh has also taken part in various world team so it took her 36 hours to arrive, yet on time to compete in the championship the very next day, carrying 71 kg in weight classes instead of her usual 64 kg!

> In 2014, Fattouh was placed on the Lebanese National Team by the Lebanese Olympics Committee and participated in the 2014 World Championships as the first woman to represent Lebanon in weightlifting championships.



## Christmas & Baptism Celebrations















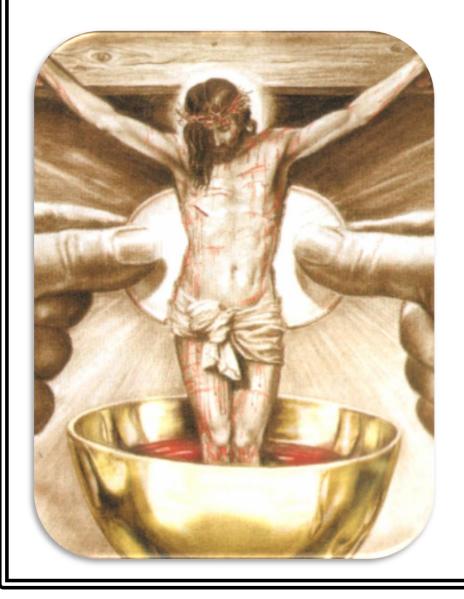


Welcome Fr. Mazen Slíwa Caldían Príest at St. Sharbel performing a Baptism for Sophía Rofael

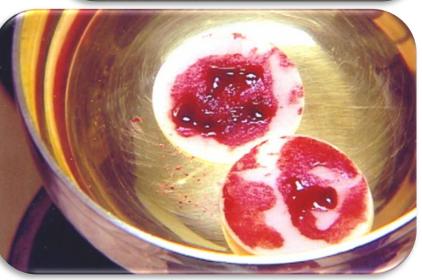
#### BLEEDING HOST IN POLAND CONFIRMED TO BE THE TRUE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

In Poland, a consecrated host fell on the floor and picked up and placed in a container with water, according to the report by Bishop Zbigniew Kiernikowski of Legnica on Sunday. The falling of the host and it's preservation occurred on the Christmas day of 2013, after the host was conserved in a container with water by the Parish Priest, it gradually began to turn to change color, possessing red-bloody stains.

"In February 2014, a tiny red fragment of the Host was separated and put on a corporal. The Commission ordered to take samples in order to conduct the thorough tests by the relevant research institutes," said Bishop Kiernikowski The bleeding host had for sometimes now been attributed to have "the hallmarks of a Eucharistic miracle"







The final medical statement by Department of Forensic Medicine found that "in the histopathological image, the fragments (of the Host) were found containing the fragmented parts of the cross-striated muscle. It is most similar to the heart muscle. Tests also determined the tissue to be of human origin, and found that signs it bore of distress." Bishop Kiernikowski said he believe that the Bleeding host has "a Eucharistic miracle", he told reporters that he took this case to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. And the Vatican in April approved the findings and reports of the case and recommended the parish priest, Fr. Andrzej Ziombrze "to prepare a suitable place" for the Host so that the faithful could venerate it. "I hope that this will serve to deepen the cult of the Eucharist and will have deep impact on the lives of people facing the Host," Bishop Kiernikowski said.

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### PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW SAYS REUNION WITH CATHOLIC CHURCH IS "INEVITABLE"

According to a report by the Union of Orthodox Journalists, Patriarch Bartholomew said full communion with the Catholic Church is "inevitable."

The report by the Union of Orthodox Journalists says Patriarch Bartholomew's comments came during his trip last month to the Pantokrator Monastery on Mount Athos in Greece.

Bartholomew said the division between Orthodoxy and Catholicism is not dogmatic but historical, and that Catholics are "exactly the same Christians as we are." He cited Pope Francis gifting relics of Saint Peter a testimony to the Church's closeness to Orthodoxy.

In a conversation with the Abbots of th Pantokrator, Xenophontos monastery, and Vatopedi monastery along with other brethren and guests, Bartholomew said to them that reunion is "inevitable." The words of the patriarch, whose security did not allow to be recorded, left some perplexed, others in tears, but none protested.

Pope Francis also expressed his desire for ecumenism last Saturday on the Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle. Following a long-standing custom, he sent a delegation to Istanbul led led by Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Koch participated in Mass at the Patriarchal Church of Saint George, afterwards handing Bartholomew a letter from Pope Francis which was read out at the end of Divine Liturgy.

"It is with great spiritual joy and in profound communion of faith and charity that I join the prayer of the Church of Constantinople in celebrating the feast of its holy patron, the Apostle Andrew, the first-called and brother of the Apostle Peter."

In the letter Pope Francis reaffirmed the

In the letter, Pope Francis reaffirmed the desire for a reunion of the East and West, expressing his closeness and friendship with Bartholomew.







### "The Church must breathe with her two lungs!"

"Through the delegation, I convey the assurance of the unwavering intention of the Catholic Church, as well as my own, to continue in our commitment to working towards the reestablishment of full communion among the Christians of the East and the West. Beloved brother in Christ, to whom I am bound by a sincere and fraternal friendship, these are just some of the hopes and sentiments that fill my heart and that I wish to share with you on this joyous occasion."



### 13 REASONS WHY WE PRAISE THE LORD

- 1. Because of God's majesty. Isaiah 24:14
- 2. Because of God's glory.

  Psalms 138:5
- 3. Because of God's excellency.
  Psalms 148:13
- 4. Because of God's greatness.

  Psalms 145:3
- 5. Because of the Lord's holiness.
  Exodus 15:11
- 6. Because of God's wisdom.

  Daniel 2:20
- 7. Because of God's power.
  Psalms 21:13
- 8. Because of God's goodness.
  Psalms 107:8,15,21,31
- 9. Because of God's mercy.
  2 Chronicles 20:21
- 10. Because of God's loving-kindness and truth.

  Psalms 138:2
- 11. Because of God's faithfulness and truth.

   Jsaiah 25:1
- 12. Because He has provided salvation. Luke 1:68,69
- 13. Because of God's wonderful works.

  Psalms 150:2

### **Community Life**

- 1. TUESDAY WITH FR. NADIM: 1/7 @ 6 PM Rosary, Benediction & Blessing with the Healing Oil of St. Sharbel. All Are Welcome.
- **2. GOD OUR FATHER DEVOTIONS**: Sunday 1/5 following 9:30 AM Mass.
- **3. MONTHLY SPANISH MASS**: Sunday 1/5 at 4:30 pm Rosary & 5 pm Mass.
- **4. FEAST OF BLACK NAZARENE**: Saturday 1/11 @ 4:30 pm & Sunday 1/12 @ 9:30 am
- 5. **RAFFLE TICKETS** 1 Ticket for \$3 & amp;

2 Tickets for \$5.

1st Prize – Silver Picture of Guadalupe

2nd Prize – Wall Rosary

3rd Prize – Medjugorje Picture

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### FILIPINO NEWS

### CELEBRATES MASS FOR ROME'S FILIPINO COMMUNITY

Pope Francis on December 15, 2019, celebrated Mass in St. Peter's Basilica for Rome's Filipino Community.

During his homily, Pope Francis began by drawing from Sunday's liturgy, reported Vatican News. He said that "from the words of the Responsorial Psalm we learn that there are those vulnerable people who also deserve a look of special love from God."

The Pope was referring to "the oppressed, the hungry, prisoners, foreigners, orphans and widows. These are the inhabitants of the existential peripheries of yesterday and of today."

The Pope noted that as the world prepares to celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, of Emmanuel, "we must ask the Lord to renew the miracle of Christmas every year, offering ourselves as instruments of his merciful love towards the least and the lowest."

He explained that during the Season of Advent, we are called to "awaken in our hearts a sense of expectation and to intensify our prayer."

Pope Francis said that "in the Philippines, for centuries, there has been a novena in preparation for a blessed Christmas called, Simbang-Gabi (Mass of the night). During nine days, the Filipino faithful gather in their parishes for a special Eucharistic celebration."

Christmas is more than just presents, it's love and harmony.

Julie Hebert



He went on to say that, "in recent decades, thanks to Filipino migrants, this devotion has crossed national borders and has arrived in many other countries," including Italy and the Vatican.

Through this celebration, the Pope continued, "we want to commit ourselves to manifest God's love and tenderness towards everyone, especially the least."

Pope Francis told those present that the people who had left their land in search of a better future, "have a special mission." Your faith, he said, "is "leaven" in the parish communities to which you belong, today. I encourage you to increase opportunities for meeting to share your cultural and spiritual wealth, while at the same time allowing yourselves to be enriched by the experiences of others."

The Pope concluded his homily by saying that, "we are all called to practice charity together with those who live in the existential peripheries, using our different gifts to renew the signs of the presence of the Kingdom. Together, we are all called to proclaim the Gospel, the Good News of salvation, in all languages, so as to reach as many people as possible."

### WHY IS THANOS IN 'AVENGERS: ENDGAME' SO EVIL! ST. AUGUSTINE COULD TELL US

So many superheroes start by wanting something good, and then things get twisted ...

If you're familiar with the Marvel Cinematic Universe at all, you know that Thanos is not a nice guy. The purple-skinned, craggy-chinned titan humiliated the Hulk, skewered Loki, and even killed his own beloved daughter in *Avengers: Infinity War* — all because he wanted to kill half of all living things in the universe. Which he did. Now he's back in *Avengers: Endgame*, perhaps bent on even more destruction.

Let's face it: Thanos is a big ol' jerk.

But don't tell that to Thanos. In his mind, he's the *good* guy. He figures that overpopulation is the universe's *real* villain, and he's the only guy with the stomach to deal with it.

"When I'm done, half of humanity will still exist," he says. "Perfectly balanced, as all things should be."

Thanos is probably too busy destroying planets to ponder Christian theology. But when we watch him in *Avengers: Endgame*, we may see a reflection of what St. Augustine taught about the nature of evil.

Here's the thing about evil, according to Augustine. It's not really a *thing* at all. See, only God can create, and since God's perfectly good, He'd not go about creating purposefully evil things, right? If God could or would create evil, He wouldn't be perfectly good. And it can't come from Satan, because Satan can't create anything on his own.

So if evil's not a thing, what is it? And where does it come from?

It is, Augustine says, a corruption of the virtues and gifts God gave us. And that corruption comes from us. "For evil has no positive nature," he writes in *The City of God*; "but the loss of good has received the name 'evil." Just as darkness is not a type of light but the absence of it, so evil is the absence of good, in part or all. It's not a thing: It's a vacuum in someone's soul.

Superhero movies are not known, perhaps, for their theological heft, but perhaps they should be. After all, practically every single one deals intimately with the problem of evil. And through these movies—especially the supervillains in Marvel's 22-movie Cinematic Universe—we see how problematic, and how complex, evil can be. Most of the evildoers we meet in these movies do evil for (what they see as) good reasons, or they do evil because they're missing something good.

The first two Avengers movies illustrate both of these points as well as any.

In the first Avengers flick, Loki—the sneaky brother of his mighty, heroic brother Thor—is out to conquer Earth. And on the surface, his motivations feel pretty simple: He's in the thrall of the deadly sins of envy (of his handsome blond brother) and pride. He wants people to bow to *him* for a change, and he works out a deal with Thanos (the first time we meet him, actually) to make it happen, with Loki dangling an Infinity Stone (a *very* big deal in Marvel's Cinematic Universe) as payment.

But all that desire for power and praise stems from a sweeter, more pathetic source: his need for love and approval from his rather distant father, Odin.

Sure, Loki was always a bit of a pill. His official title is "god of mischief," after all. But in the movie *Thor*, we learn that he believed—unfairly—that Odin always favored Thor. And when Loki learns that he was not only adopted, but is the progeny of the Frost Giants, Asgard's eternal enemies, Loki feels even more like the family outcast.

If he wasn't one before, he becomes one soon enough—through his own despicable actions. And when Loki feels the full weight of his father's disapproval, he disappears through a wormhole ... where he joins forces with Thanos and sets the events of *Avengers* into motion.

Loki has always been one of Marvel's most popular, enduring villains. But it's not because Loki is so inherently evil: It's because the good in him got



twisted into evil. As portrayed by Tom Hiddleston in the movies, he becomes more than a leering, cackling bad guy. We see the pathos and tragedy behind his story. He feels real to us, because we see that's how evil works in our world, too: Through loss and hurt and circumstances that twist the best in us into their ugliest forms.

We get a very different sort of villain in *Avengers: Age of Ultron*. The titular villain is an outgrowth of Iron Man Tony Stark's very own attempt to give the world eternal peace. Alas, once Ultron discovers that humans are a fractious sort, he determines the only way to give the world eternal peace is through wholesale termination. "I'm sorry, I know you mean well," he tells the Avengers. "You just didn't think it through. You want to protect the world but you don't want it to change. How is humanity saved if it's not allowed to ... evolve?"

Again, we see the impulse to do good. But something's missing from Ultron that twists that would-be good into an evil shape: conscience. And the list goes on. Adrian Toomes from *Spider-Man: Homecoming* turned to crime because he wanted to provide for his family. *Black Panther*'s Erik Killmonger had a legitimate beef with how the Western World has long treated Africa, but he resorted to murder and slaughter to try to balance the books. We learn that Helmut Zero, the nerdy antagonist from *Captain America: Civil War*, lost his whole family during the events of *Age of Ultron*. His love for them contorts into hate for the Avengers.

Sure, sometimes the Marvel Cinematic Universe gives us villains who are bad to the bone: *Doctor Strange*'s god-like Dormammu, for instance. But even he seems to confirm Augustine: He's endlessly hungry—swallowing endless worlds into his unfillable void. Dormammu's not a *thing* as much as a terrible, conscious, nihilistic maw—and one determined to annihilate everything in his wake.

In evil's own anti-math, twisting the good exponentially twists everything. A search for the purest love becomes unseemly lust. A thirst for justice twists into unquenchable rage. Appreciating God's wonderful gifts turns into envy and gluttony. Our broken world breaks ever more.

And, in Thanos' case, his desire to help a hurting universe turns into an impulse to destroy half of it.

We're not so different, really. And neither are Marvel's superheroes. We're all broken, from Captain America on down, and we've seen many a hero in the MCU fall and fail.

But then they get up again. They don't just ignore their flaws and failings but acknowledge them, repent of them, and seek to move in a better direction.

Maybe superheroes are so popular because they remind us of that. We may be wounded by sin. We may be tempted. But we still see—and seek—a better way. Instead of caving to the corruption and emptiness of sin, we try to fill ourselves up with the virtues behind them. And with God's grace, we move forward.

I doubt Thanos will ever have the humility to seek a better way. But who knows? Maybe *Avengers: Endgame* will surprise us.

### HOLY MASS INTENTIONS DAILY 8AM

### WEEKEND

Saturday 4:30pm Jan 4

Unity of Families

**Sunday 9:30am** *Jan 5* 

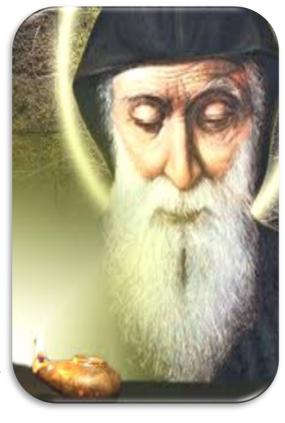
Peace in the World

**Sunday 11:30 am** 

Healing- Lourde Fadel
\*Michel Fadel

Sunday 4:30 pm Spanish

Víctimas de la justicia social



### PRAY FOR THE SICK

### **MONDAY Jan 6**

\*Sarah Penuela +Vic Milewski

### **TUESDAY Jan 7**

+Louis Silva +Vic Milewski

### **WEDNESDAY Jan 8**

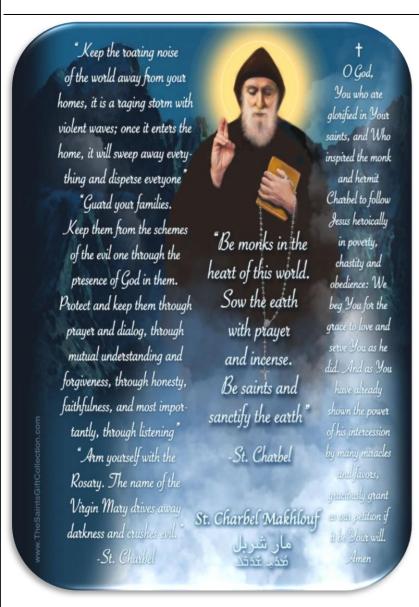
Healing-John McCarthy +Vic Milewski +\*Elvis Presley

#### **THURSDAY Jan 9**

Healing-Leonardo Velasco +Vic Milewski

### FRIDAY Jan 10

Unborn Babies +Vic Milewski



El Grupo Guadalupano de la Iglesia de San Charbel Te invita a que asistas a la Misa y El Rosario que se celebran el primer domingo cada mes comenzado,

DIA: Domingo 5 de Enero del 2020 HORA: Rosario 4:30pm Misa

DONDE: Iglesia Catolica de San Charbel

10325 Rancho Destino Rd,

Las Vegas, NV 89183

Despues de la Misa te invitamos a que nos acompañes a una pequeña recepcion donde compartiremos: café, postres, y bocadillos con todos los asistentes.

Si tienes alguna duda communicate con: Oficina de la Iglesia 702-616-6902