

# Saint Maron



Saint Maron was born in the middle of the 4th century near the city of Cyrrhus in Syria. He was a priest who later became a hermit to a mountain of Taurus in the region of Cyrrhus, near Antioch. His holiness and miracles attracted many followers.

Maron's way was deeply monastic with emphasis on the spiritual and ascetic aspects of living. He embraced the quiet solitude of the mountain life. He lived his life in open air exposed to the forces of nature such as sun, rain, hail and snow. His extraordinary desire to come to know God's presence in all things allowed him to transcend such forces and discover that intimate union with God. He was able to free himself from the physical world by his passion and fervor for prayer and enter into a mystical relationship of love with God.

At the age of seventy, in year 410 AC, and after completing his holy mission, Maron died peacefully while surrounded by his disciples and followers. His disciples built a huge monastery in honor of his name, nearby the Orontes River located at the Lebanese-Syrian borders. The monastery served for hundreds of years as a pillar for Faith, Education, Martyrdom and Holiness.

The Maronites held fast to the beliefs of the Council of Chalcedon in 451. When 350 monks were slain by the Monophysites of Antioch, the Maronites sought refuge in the mountains of Lebanon. The surviving priests moved to the Mountains of Lebanon where with the Lebanese people they were successful in establishing the Maronite Nation. They converted the Lebanese Mountain to a Fort of Faith and a symbol of Martyrdom, Endurance and Perseverance.

## History of our Church

In 1975, the Rev. Joseph F. Kaddo, founder and Administrator of the then Maronite Mission of Miami, FL was transferred to Waterbury to undertake a new mission. For many years Rev. Thomas Dwyer Pastor of Saint Margaret Church in Waterbury, opened his church and rectory to Rev. Kaddo and his parishioners. Also, the Ehden Lebanese American Club generously made their club facility available for Sunday Liturgy and many fund-raising activities. A parcel of land, three acres, located in the East Mountain area of town was bought in 1978, but the closing did not happen until February 1980. In October 1981 the construction began and the church was dedicated and consecrated on October 17, 1982. This was only made possible though the faith, love, concern and support of the people of the Greater Waterbury Area and its pastor. Fourteen years later, a new home located across from the Church was purchased. This home presently serves as the rectory of Our Lady of Lebanon Church. In the next sixteen years, the Church sponsored many events to benefit its parishioners. One of Our Lady of Lebanon's most memorable celebrations was that of Father Kaddo's elevation to Monsignor while he served as our Pastor. Shortly thereafter, Monsignor Joseph F. Kaddo was promoted to Vicar General of the Eparchy of St. Maron Brooklyn, NY. As a result, God blessed us again with our new Pastor, Monsignor David M. George. Monsignor David had worked hard and successfully continued to bring our community together as a family. In July 2006, Monsignor David was transferred from Waterbury and Rev. Charbel Semaan was named the Pastor until September 2007, when Bishop Gregory Mansour named Rev. Naji Kiwan to become our interim Administrator then the Pastor effective June 27, 2008.

## Welcome to Our Lady of Lebanon



### Our Lady of Lebanon Church

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**“A Cultural and  
Religious Display”**

# Churches of Catholic Church

As Jesus commissioned the apostles to make disciples of all nations, the early Church grew out from Jerusalem. It experienced other traditions, cultures, customs, languages, art forms, architecture and music.

Eastern and Western Christians express the same basic truths of the Catholic faith in unique ways, and worship differently. In short, they use what is familiar to express their faith in Jesus the Risen Lord.

All the churches of the Catholic Church are one and the same in their unity of faith, celebration of the 7 mysteries, and communion with the bishop of Rome and the hierarchy.

Catholics share three essential aspects of faith:

- Profession of Faith
- Mysteries/Sacraments
- Unity with Bishop of Rome

There are 22 autonomous churches. Each church celebrates the faith as handed on by one of the six major rites of the Catholic Church:

- Antiochene
- Alexandrian
- Constantinopolitan
- Chaldean
- Armenian
- Roman

Each Church:

- Encompasses a unique liturgy, theology, spirituality, and discipline.
- Is characterized by its own cultural and linguistic traditions.
- Enjoys an autonomy from its sister churches, and is guided by its patriarch and/or bishops in unity with the successor of Peter

# The Maronite Church

The history of the Maronite Church is a story of people who were continually willing to sacrifice their lives and possessions for religious convictions and human liberties. Its origins can be traced to the hermit Maron (350-410 AD), who converted a pagan temple for worship. Over 800 monks later followed in his footsteps, adopted the lifestyle and way of St. Maron, and became known as Maronites. Later with the Arab invasions (7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries) and the continuing faith conflicts, the Maronites migrated to Mount Lebanon, finding natural protection on the mountain havens. By 687 AD, the Maronite community organized and established an autonomous church with St. John Maron as its patriarch of Antioch.

The Syriac Maronite Church was enriched and influenced by **3 centers** of learning and culture:

-Antioch: A center of commerce and education in West Syria, now Turkey, which represented Greek and Syriac influence. This city, where followers of Jesus were first called Christians, gave the Maronite Church its biblical theology and its unique sense of scripture.

-Edessa: A prominent city where St. Ephrem lived, in ancient Mesopotamia, of Semitic culture and Syriac poetry. Both informed and shaped the prayer and hymnody of the Maronite Church.

-Mount Lebanon: A region in present day Lebanon. It provided a haven for the Maronite monastic life, worship and traditions begun by Maron, and nurtured by John Maron, its first Patriarch, and many others.

From these three centers the theology, spiritually, and liturgy developed and reflected concrete scriptural images and symbolic, poetic themes.

Maronite Catholics live in many nations and cultures. Presently, the Mother Church is in Lebanon, and daughter communities exist in different nations.

# The Melkite Church

The word "Melkite" comes from the Syriac and Arabic words for "King," and was originally used to refer to those within the ancient Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem who accepted the Christological Faith professed by the Byzantine Emperor after the Council of Chalcedon (451). Today, however, the term more often refers to Byzantine Catholics associated with those three Patriarchates.

Jesuits, Capuchins and Carmelites began missionary activity in the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in the mid-17th century. While there were some conversions, the missionaries were primarily concerned with forming a pro-Catholic party within the Patriarchate itself. By the early 18th century, the Antiochene church had become polarized, with the pro-Catholic party centered in Damascus and the anti-Catholic party in its rival city, Aleppo.

In the beginning, this Catholic community was limited to what is now Syria and Lebanon. But Melkite Catholics later began to immigrate to Palestine, where Melkite communities had long existed, and especially to Egypt after that country rebelled against Turkish control. In view of the new demographic situation, the Melkite Catholic Patriarch was given the additional titles of Patriarch of Jerusalem and Alexandria in 1838.

After the Maronites, the Melkite Catholic Church is the largest and most prosperous Catholic community in the Middle East. The majority of its faithful live in Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the West Bank, and Jordan.

Significant emigration from the Middle East in recent years has created flourishing Melkite communities in the West.