

They devoted themselves to the teaching  
of the apostles and to the communal life,  
to the breaking of the bread  
and to the prayers.

ACTS 2:42

*Issue 21 | April 2024*

## Peace of Christ



**Family of Saint  
Sharbel USA**

### **May this May bring you light!**

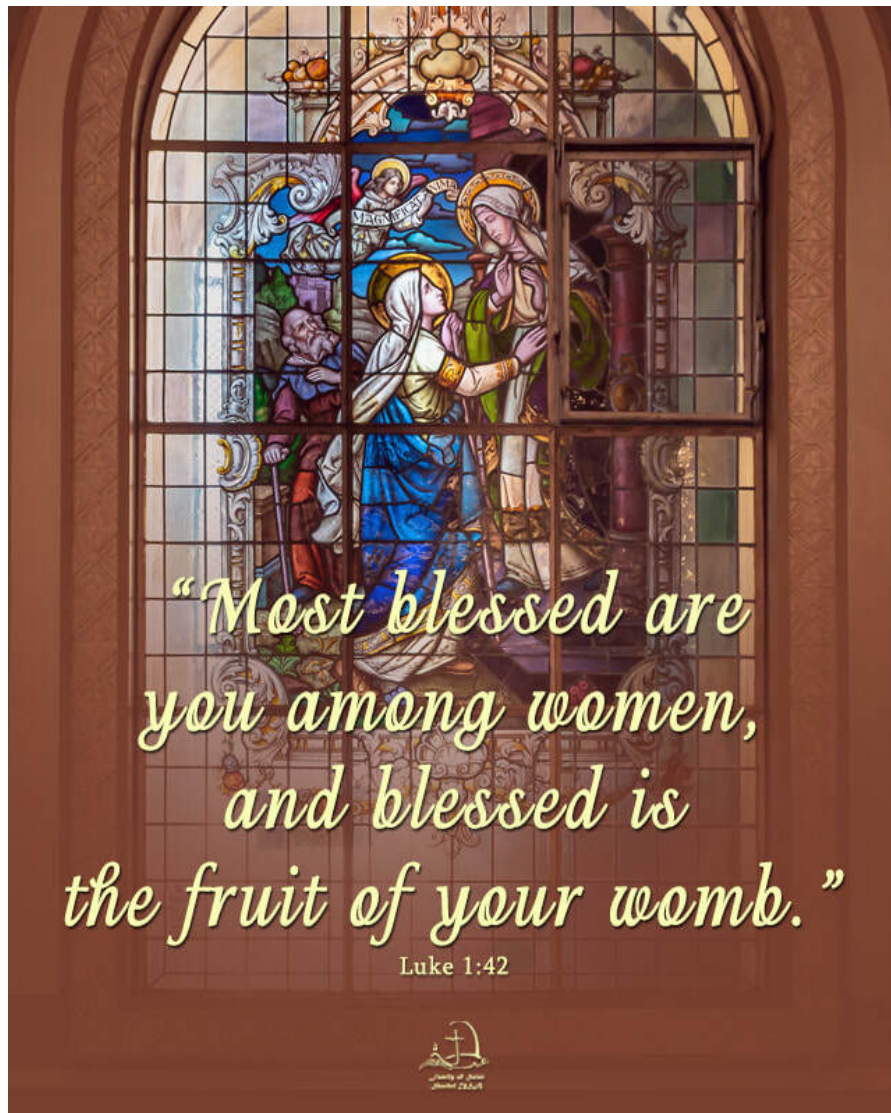
As we begin the month of May, a time devoted to our Blessed Mother, the Family of Saint Sharbel USA happily presents its 21st Newsletter. We are thankful and glad to be walking with you, and we ask for your prayers as our community of faith continues to grow! **Please spread the word; we would love to have you all join us.**

- CLICK HERE TO ACCESS OUR NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE -

View this Letter as a PDF

## Contemplation Corner

A Reflection by Fr. Kamil Al-Chouefati, FSS Board Member



<https://www.familyofsaintsharbel.org/spiritual-designs/most-blessed-are-you-among-women>

**The Virgin Mary Throughout the History of the Church**

As soon as the Christian religion spread, it became, when followers of the Jewish religion and pagan philosophies heard of it, the target of many attacks seeking to eliminate it and its believers. The early Christians faced various persecutions and deadly tortures, but they did not submit to humiliation. They defended their faith with the courage of opinion, the argument of proof, and the confidence of the believer, out of the certainty that the Holy Spirit is the one who teaches them what they use as evidence. This is evidenced by the large number of texts left by believers in defense of their faith in the first generations that we are dealing with, that is, from the Pentecostals until the early fifth century. But these texts, despite their abundance, did not address in detail the subject of the Virgin Mary; she was not then a subject of theological controversy and criticism. However, these historical circumstances do not prevent us from talking about Mary, because the Virgin is for the Christian faith like the heart in man, and because the Virgin is for the Christian faith like the heart in man, and because talking about the son inevitably leads to talking about the mother, especially since the basic logic of faith is the data provided by the Bible.

[Click here](#) to read Father Kamil's full reflection.

[Click here](#) to view more of our spiritual designs.

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## What's Ahead

### **Celebrate Saint Sharbel's Birthday at the National Shrine Grotto!**

Come celebrate with us! The **National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes** (Emmitsburg, MD) and the Family of Saint Sharbel USA plan to commemorate the Birthday of Saint Sharbel (May 6th) with a day of prayer on **Saturday, May 11th, 2024**. All are welcome and invited to join! See the image below for additional details, including our schedule and the Shrine's address.



[Click for Details](#)

## Saint Sharbel Events in the USA

*Explore the links below to find an event near you.*

**Please email or call the parish, mission, or center to verify the times listed below!**

### **Masses in Honor of St. Sharbel:**

**St. Joseph Maronite Catholic Church, Phoenix, Arizona**

**St. Sharbel Maronite Catholic Mission of Stockton, California**

**National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, Emmitsburg, Maryland**

**St. Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church, Clinton Township, Michigan**

**Our Lady Star of the East Maronite Catholic Church, Pleasantville, New Jersey**

**St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church, Astoria, New York**

**St. Sharbel Spiritual Life Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**St. Sharbel Mission in El Paso, Texas**

## St. Sharbel Mission of Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Holy Hour in Honor of St. Sharbel:

Shrine Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Brooklyn, New York

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## In Case You Missed It

### Grand Opening: Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center - Pittsburgh

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, in the presence of Bishop Gregory J. Mansour and other clergy, the new **Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center** was dedicated. Following the dedication, Bishop Mansour led Eucharistic Adoration and presided over the Divine Liturgy at Our Lady of Victory Maronite Church. The event concluded with a dinner and a concert by St. Anthony's Choir (from Fall River, MA) featuring Maronite and St. Sharbel hymns. Please click the link below to read more!



[Read More](#)

The Family of Saint Sharbel at the Vatican Synod - 2023

In October 2023, the Catholic Church held its sixteenth ordinary general assembly. As usual, cardinals and bishops from various places participated. This time, however, the Pope also invited ten representatives from each continent – priests, consecrated persons, and laypeople – to participate in the discussions with the right to vote. Among the representatives from Europe, as one of five laypeople, was Mr. Alexander Banka, the head of the Family of Saint Sharbel in Poland!

[Click here](#) to read more!



FSS at the Vatican Synod

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## Saint Spotlight

**Saint Pamphilus of Caesarea**



Icon of the martyrdom of St. Pamphilus - WikiData

**Feast Day:** June 1st

**St. Pamphilus of Caesarea**, not to be confused with St. Pamphilus of Sulmona, was a Christian scholar and martyr who lived in the 3rd and early 4th century AD. Said to have been born in Beirut (modern-day Lebanon), St. Pamphilus was known for his love of knowledge and devotion to Christian education. He studied in Alexandria, a great center of learning in his time, and used his skills to develop a deep understanding of and appreciation for Sacred Scripture. Finally settling in Caesarea in modern-day Palestine, he taught others about the Bible and the Christian faith and attracted many disciples. He was martyred during the Diocletian persecution in the early 300s AD for his refusal to sacrifice to pagan idols or renounce Christ.

*Saint Pamphilus, Pray for Us!*

## Family of Saint Sharbel Shops

**Saint Sharbel Items**  
Available at **amazon**

Click for the full list of products.

*Click this image to view our Amazon shop!*

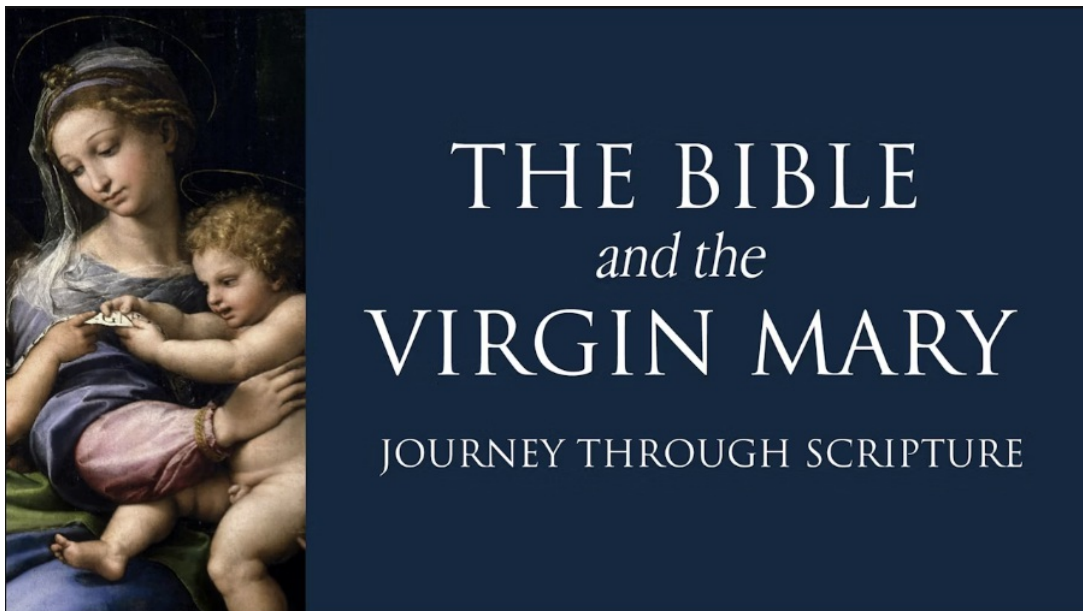
The Family of Saint Sharbel is on **Amazon** and **Shopify**! On these two platforms, books, novenas, prayer cards, and sacramentals related to St. Sharbel and Catholic Spirituality are available for order, including works created by the Family of Saint Sharbel. Click the buttons below to explore!

Amazon

Shopify

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## Editor's Pick: FORMED Resource



*Click the image above (copied from the FORMED online streaming platform) to be directed to a helpful video series that explains key Catholic beliefs about Mary in relation to the Bible.*

**The Family of Saint Sharbel offers all of you a FREE subscription to FORMED, an online Catholic platform that contains thousands of resources for spiritual growth!**

### **This Month's Highlighted FORMED Resource:**

Have you ever wondered what the Church actually teaches about Mary? In the Catholic Church, **the month of May is devoted to our Blessed Mother, Mary**, who is the mother of Jesus and, by extension, mankind. Many of the Church's beliefs about Mary, however, are not things many people think deeply about or



feel confident explaining. Some Catholic beliefs are also called unbiblical by some of our Protestant brothers and sisters; why? What does the Church really have to say, and where is all this in relation to the Bible? Why is God's work in Mary such a big deal? The video series we would like to highlight this month addresses these questions and others in 12 episodes. Each focuses on unique aspects of the theology of Mary based on the work of Dr. Scott Hahn, a well-known, formerly-Protestant Bible scholar and teacher whose studies led him to the Catholic faith.

**Click the button link below to view the episode menu!**

[Watch Here](#)

To view this resource and many others, sign up for FORMED **FOR FREE** by following these simple steps:

- (1) **Go to:** <https://formed.org/signup>
- (2) **Enter:** Family of Saint Sharbel
- (3) **Enter** your name and email address and you're in!

Below are the links to FORMED on social media:

*Instagram:* [formedcatholic](#)

*Facebook:* [FORMEDCatholic](#)

*YouTube:* [Augustine Institute](#)

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## Reading Nook

### **Who is Our Lady of Elige?**

**By the National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM)**



Image saved from:  
<https://www.namnews.org/index.php?page=ELIGE#sthash.rd5ZfbsW.dpuf>

The image above titled "Our Lady of Elige" hangs in many Maronite churches and can even be found in some of the homes of the faithful. Yet where did it come from, and what makes it so popular? Read the article below to learn about the history and meaning of this well-known icon!

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"This beautiful icon, also known as Our Lady of the Maronites, depicts the Virgin Mother supporting on her lap, the Child of her womb, Jesus Christ (a favorite theme of St. Ephrem). It was discovered at the Patriarchal Church of Elige, Lebanon and is dated around the 10th Century. After uncovering several diverse pictorial layers, this icon has been revealed and marks an historic event in the history of Syro-Maronite iconography. This painting continues the tradition initiated by the RABBULA manuscript of the 6th Century."

**Notes for Readers:**

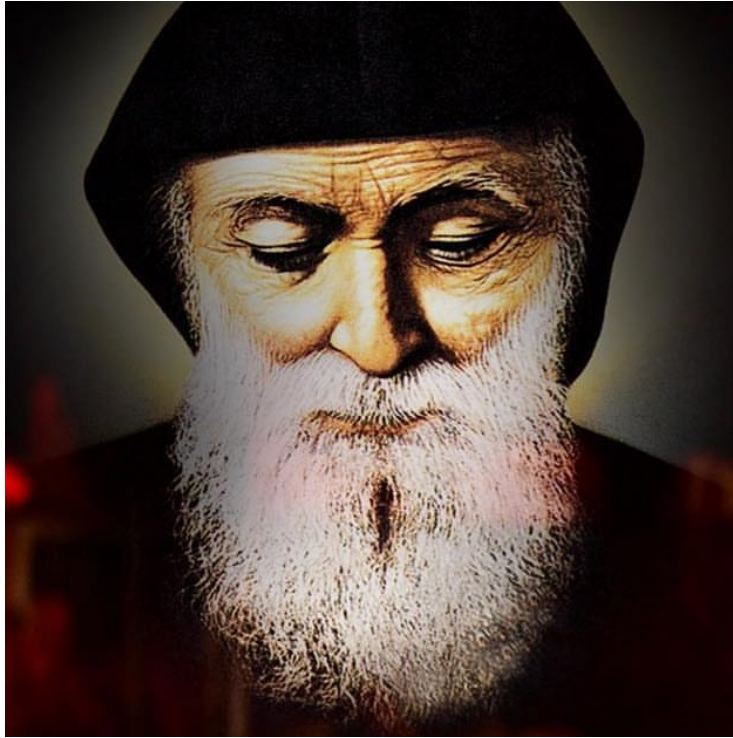
- "Rabbula": read more [here](#) or [here](#)
- "OT" = Old Testament
- "NT" = New Testament

[Read More Here](#)

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## Articles and More

### New Testimonials



<https://www.familyofsaintsharbel.org/testimonials.html>

Periodically, we receive stories from people around the globe who have experienced the work of God through the intercession of St. Sharbel. We would like to share the most recent testimonies with you below! Click on a title to read the full story; all posted testimonies have been shared with the author's permission.

**[Healing testimony of Dariush Lucian Rygotsky](#)**

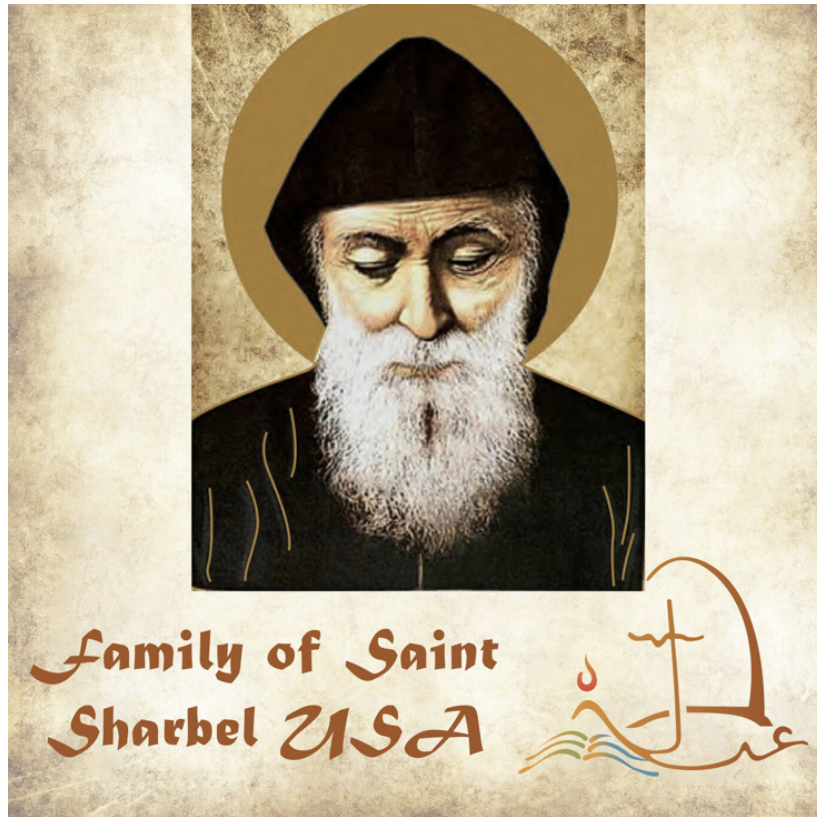
**[Healing testimony of Child Sharbel Hani Qurra](#)**

**[Healing testimony of Child Eli Robert Abdullah](#)**

You can read more personal testimonials on our Testimonials page **[HERE](#)**.

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### Family of Saint Sharbel Podcast



<https://www.familyofsaintsharbel.org/podcast>

The Family of Saint Sharbel (FSS) Podcast is now available in English and Arabic! Episodes currently include talks on the Maronite Divine Liturgy, Syriac Spirituality, the Silence of God, and more. Listen at the link below or through your podcast app of preference, and please feel free to share!

[Listen Now](#)

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**Zoom Prayer Gathering - Arabic**



Every Tuesday at 8:00 PM ET, members of the Family of Saint Sharbel from various locations gather on Zoom to pray Ramsho, the evening prayer from the Maronite Liturgy of the Hours, in Arabic. Each week, a priest leads the celebration, cantors sing hymns, and lectors read Scripture passages. To conclude, the priest reads the day's Gospel and gives a short homily, either sharing a scheduled teaching or leading the group through Lectio Divina before engaging in a Q&A session.

Come experience the serenity that prayer instills in us and the fellowship our meeting creates among all the members of our Family!

Email [communications@familyofsaintsharbel.org](mailto:communications@familyofsaintsharbel.org) for more information and be put on the Prayer Group email list.

## Where to Find Us

- [Website](#)
- [Shrine](#)
- [YouTube.Healings](#)
- [YouTube.Family.Channel](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Online.Shop](#)
- [Amazon.Store](#)
- [Spanish.Website](#)
- [Portuguese.Website](#)
- [Sanctuary.of.Saint.Charbel.in.Lebanon](#)

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**God Bless,**

## The Family of Saint Sharbel USA



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