



## HILARIOUS HUMOR

### CUPCAKES

*Our fourth grader celebrated his birthday on crutches, so he couldn't carry the cupcakes into school without help. I asked our sixth-grader, Noah, to help his brother carry them in. "I could," he said, "but I'd prefer not to." Spotting a teaching moment, my husband asked Noah, "What would Jesus do?" Noah answered, "Jesus would heal him so he could carry his own cupcakes."*

## CROSSWORDS

Find the solution word described by each numbered across or down clue and then write it into the corresponding squares in the grid.

1	2		3			
			4		5	
6						
	7					
			8			

**Across**

- 1. Short version of 'Christmas' (4)
- 4. For example: drawings, paintings, sculptures and music (3)
- 6. Grandhouse (7)
- 7. Wheel with teeth used in mechanisms (3)
- 8. Reflection of sound (4)

**Down**

- 2. Picture made with small coloured tiles (6)
- 3. Long tube of minced meat, often served with mash (7)
- 5. Narrow box for animals to eat from (6)

## SUDOKU

Every SUDOKU has a unique solution that the player have to reach logically.

Enter the numbers into the blank spaces so that each column, row and 3x3 box contains numbers from 1 to 9 without repeats.

		8		6				
	7	6	8	9				
2	9	1		7			3	
			6	3	1	4		
1		3	7		9	6		5
		9	5	4	8			
	3			8		1	5	7
				5	4	2	6	
				1		3		



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LEBANESE AUTHOR

# The Time of the Saints

By Fr Fadi Kmeid

Nostalgia can be defined as that yearning for the good old days of time gone by, where we remember all that was good and tranquil. As individuals or as a collective, we fall victim to that state of yearning whenever our memories recall decisions of the past which though may not have been without their flaws still leave us with the marks of great and joyful experiences. The old man may recall the days of his youth and of his good health; one who lives in a foreign country may feel a longing for those moments of warmth and cordiality which he experienced in his homeland; even groups and societies recall the images of their history and the countless pages of heroism and of grand figures, and as they browse through these pages they remember a history that was brilliant, glorious and grand...in short, they remember a past that was akin to an earthly paradise.

Saint Charbel is one of those brilliant pages in the history of our faith, our Church and our homeland Lebanon. His feast day is our annual pause to stop and stand before God and before our own selves. This year, Saint Charbel's feast day comes at a time of difficulty, with the political, social and health crises. This year, Saint Charbel's feast day comes at a time where we experience suffering and a loss of hope, as we witness a changing world where darkness looms on the horizon, and once more we find ourselves longing for that glorious time that was the time of the Saints.

The current crisis has fittingly driven me to find out more about that time, especially the historical, social and political conditions in which Saint Charbel lived and was sanctified, so that maybe we can benefit from the past in order to understand the present.

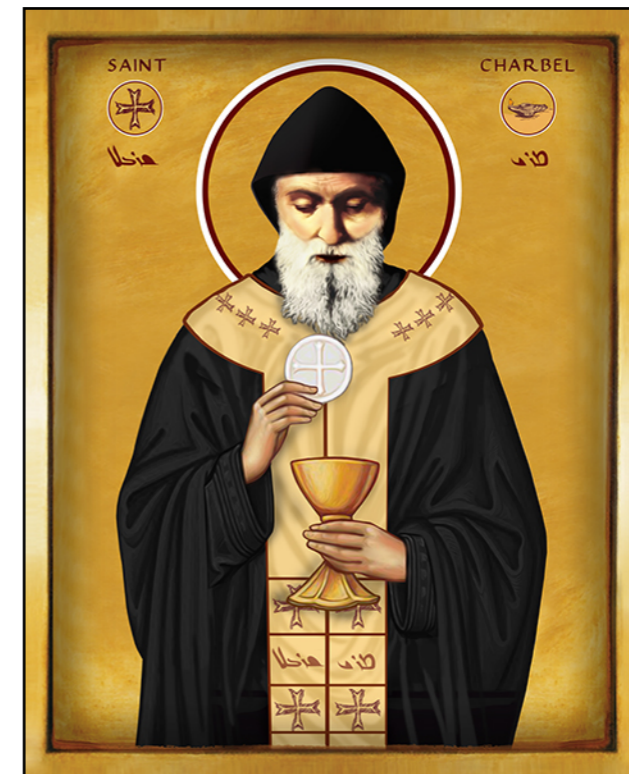
Youssef Makhlouf was born in the year 1828 in the mountainous village of Be'kaffra. Mount Lebanon was an arena of conflict between the Ottomans and the Egyptian army, an ally of Emir Bashir II. The country suffered from these conflicts, as strangers controlled the resources of the lands and took away villagers from their families and homes for forced labour, serving their own interests.

Among these who were taken away was Antoun Makhlouf, Youssef's father, who died while returning from forced labour still far away from his family. There was none to bid him farewell or to bury him. *Youssef therefore experienced the loss of a parent and oppression while still very young.*

In the year 1840, while Youssef was twelve years of age, Mount Lebanon fell victim to local conflicts between Ibrahim Pasha, son of the Egyptian ruler aspiring for independence, and the Ottoman Sultan. Mount Lebanon was the victim of a battle that others fought on its own land. Between the years 1841 and 1845, the people fought and the Lebanese ruler, Prince

Bashir al-Shehabi, was exiled, but the political conflicts that took on religious aims continued between Maronites and Druze. *Youssef therefore experienced war, political conflict and instability in his region.*

In the year 1851, Youssef joined the Lebanese Maronite Order, entering first the monastery of Our Lady of Mayfouq, followed by the monastery of Saint Maroun, Annaya. He took the name Charbel, and after professing his vows, he continued his studies in the monastery of Kifan and was taught by Saint Neemtallah al-Hardini. He was ordained a priest in the year 1859.



Maronite Iconography of St Charbel





In the year 1860, while Father Charbel was a monk in the monastery of Saint Maroun, Annaya, Mount Lebanon was experiencing another bloody war between the Druze and the Maronites. This affair led to the martyrdom of forty monks from the Lebanese Maronite Order. *Father Charbel had experienced the death of his brother monks, yet he remained persistent in his prayers, in his devotion to his vows and in his spiritual growth which led him to enter the hermitage in the year 1875.*

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, while Father Charbel was living in the hermitage, the Lebanese economy was hit with what was known as the 'silk crisis', the worst crisis that Lebanon experienced in the nineteenth century. The Lebanese market was flooded with products of Chinese silk which were of high quality and cheap. The silk industry lost its main market in Europe. Silkworms and the silk industry were the most important industries at that time in Lebanon. Thousands of families lived from this industry, but this crisis led to a large wave of migration to the American continent. Among those who migrated were the brothers of Saint Charbel who travelled to Mexico. *The hermit Father Charbel thus experienced the emigration of his family and loved ones due to the economic crisis and poverty.*

On December 16, 1898, while celebrating Holy Mass, Father Charbel was struck with hemiplegia. He spent the

next eight days in excruciating pain. His only weapon was prayer, and he persisted in his prayers until he died on the night of Christmas Eve of that same year. *Saint Charbel was buried in the monastery's burial ground, but there were few who attended his burial due to the absence of the monks who had gone to the funeral of the Maronite Patriarch Youhanna Al-Hajj.*

Charbel lived seventy years of ongoing problems and struggles on this earth. From what appears on the surface and in its depth, this is very much akin to the time that we are living in now despite the difference in years. Charbel was an example of commitment to and stability in God. He never once went astray from his monastic vows. He did not lose his hope in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and thus he reached in his lifetime the height of Christian life and unity with God.

Charbel's message to us this year is a message of trust in a God who defeated sin, the devil and death.

Charbel's message to us this year is a message of hope in our Lord God Jesus Christ who says: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28).

Charbel's message to us this year is a message of holiness, for no matter how much time has passed and regardless of how much it has changed, the time of the Saints is here today just as it was yesterday.



St Charbel - St Maroun Monastery, Annaya

## Emotional Exhaustion – Fast ways to get back on your feet

By Lynn Bedran

[www.breadonbutter.com](http://www.breadonbutter.com)



Lately, Lebanese people have been feeling exhausted (know more here). Mostly mentally, but also physically because the mind automatically impacts the body. Emotional exhaustion is basically losing sleep, fighting off anxiety, analyzing what to do, coming up with Plan Bs, Cs, Ds and Es, and keeping up with a somewhat normal life (maintaining our jobs and for us parents, keeping up with our kids who have no clue about what is happening). On a personal level, I was recently on the verge of a burn out, which qualifies as the "emotionally exhausted" level. I had to act fast in order to stay strong for my family and not let myself crumble and reach actual burn out.

So, from that experience, here are a few tips on how to quickly get back on your feet when facing emotional exhaustion:

- Stop everything and get back to bed. Turn off your phone (or divert all calls except the school or nursery for parents), turn on the TV for something light and just sit there with a warm cup of tea/coffee for a few hours. Do not consider this a waste of time! If this is what you need to do to self-care, then do it.

- Feeling like leaving the house and seeing people is too much? Just don't. There is nothing wrong with shutting yourself out for as long as you need. Forget about social pressure. Your mind needs it.

- Cooking is therapy. Dive into meal prep, dough-making and baking. You won't regret it.

- Pile up romantic comedies and light reads, and wind down.

- If you're into it, start writing a journal. Pour your thoughts on a piece of paper that no one will ever see. There's something magical about it. If you're not into writing down your feelings, something as small as a food log might make you happy.

- Create new self-care habits, like drinking a camomille/ glass of wine before bed, or a new skincare routine. Whatever small thing that makes you happy!

- Last but not least, talk to someone! It can be a life coach, a psychologist or even chatting away with those few close friends you've made over the years. The ones that understand you and would never ever judge you. Chances are they feel the same.





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## Signs and Symbols of the Mass

By Fr Michael Sandrousi



Every Sunday the Church celebrates together the Holy Mass, with prayers and hymns and the offering of the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. In one hour, many different things take place before our eyes. It all started two thousand years ago in the upper room when Jesus gave his disciples his body and his blood in the first ever Mass. Today we all take part in this same sacrifice, fulfilling Christ's command: "Do this in remembrance of me". But now there is much difference between that upper room and our Mass today, although the essentials remain. With all the differences, it is easy to get lost and maybe even lose interest in the meaning of the Mass in itself and in our lives. The focus of this article is to look at different signs and symbols of the Mass, especially the Maronite Mass, which are made up of gestures and elements which, when looked at closely in a historical and liturgical way, show us the richness of the celebration, and how they reveals and allow us to share in the sacrifice of Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

### The Candles

The first thing that takes place in the Mass is the lighting of the candles, and although we may take it for granted, light is an essential element of the Mass and of life. God created light before all else. The first hymn of the Maronite Mass is chanted while lighting the candles: "Alleluia! Jesus Christ, O Source of Light, in you we see light. Truly Light from Light, you shine on all creation". Light symbolises Jesus himself, the light of the world. The Maronite Patriarch Estephan Doueihi in the 17th century states that the light and the candles "witness that the one who is to come upon the altar is the light of the world". He also notes that they "signify the glory of the faithful at their final resurrection". The candle itself is a powerful symbol for Christ crucified: the candle gives light and yet its wax melts in and of itself, until it is completely melted and spent. This symbolizes Jesus on the cross who out of love for us died on the cross and was completely spent. Psalm 22, which is prophecies Jesus' death states the following: "my heart is like wax, it is melted within my breast" (Psalm 22:14). Moreover, the two candles on each side of the altar, which is itself a symbol of Jesus' tomb, represent the two angels of the resurrection seen by Mary Magdalene: "she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet" (John 20:12).

### The use of Incense

In the Old Testament incense was burned before the Ark of the Covenant which the Israelites constructed in the desert to signify God's presence among them. God instructed them to burn incense so "that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat" upon the Ark (Lev 16:13). The incense symbolized God's presence because the mercy seat was his throne. Incense symbolizes our own prayers seen in the "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev 5:8), and we read also from the psalms: "Let my prayer rise as incense before you" (Psalm 141:2). In pagan empires "the emperor himself was often honoured as a deity by means of incense. During persecutions Christians were frequently required to offer incense before an image of the emperor or a god as a test of their loyalty". Therefore our offering of incense during Mass signifies our worship and belief in the one true God. Moreover, Patriarch Doueihi sees that "the offering of incense symbolizes and signifies the Lord and Saviour as spoken of him by the Apostle: "He gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:2)". Jesus therefore is the incense which is offered to the Father. The offering itself includes coal and incense which symbolize the two natures of Jesus, the human and the divine. The incense burnt on the coal is seen by Doueihi to "signify the sufferings of Christ and the shedding of his blood". This is a powerful symbol of death and resurrection: the burnt coal signifies the death of Christ because coal when completely burnt becomes ash, whereas the incense is the sweet scent of resurrection, which, when added to the coal, becomes a source of life for us, and so the death of Christ becomes a perfect offering to God and a source of life for man when united with his resurrection.

### The Altar, the Shrouds and the Eucharist

The altar has always been a symbol of Christ. Saint Ignatius of Antioch in 110 A.D. says "To Him (Christ) must all go as to the one temple and one altar". Saint Irenaeus of Lyons says that Christ "was the victim...the altar". Saint Ephrem also regards Christ "the true altar, priest, bread and chalice... He is the altar and the lamb, the victim and sanctifier, the priest and the food".

Patriarch Doueihi states that the altar is "a sign of the Saviour Lord, and of every place he dwelt in, such as the manger wherein He was born, or the boat where He slept, or the mountain where he was transfigured, or the cross upon which he poured out all of his Blood and gave up his Spirit, or the tomb where He was buried...".

With this strong symbolism to Christ, we see that the shrouds on the altar "signify the shrouds in which our Lord was wrapped...in the tomb". The altar and the shrouds with the offering of bread and wine signify the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The bread and the wine were living substances, i.e. wheat and grapes. But they underwent a death, in that they were picked, ground and made into bread and wine. This symbolises the death of Christ, for even Christ sees





himself as “a grain of wheat (which) falls into the earth and dies” (John 12:24). These are placed on the altar just like the dead body of Christ was placed on the stone in the tomb. During the Eucharistic prayer, the bread and wine no longer remain lifeless but are “resurrected” and become changed completely into the living Christ, his body and blood. It is as though a resurrection takes place in front of us at every Mass. Every Mass is a real participation in the actual resurrection of Jesus, and our active participation makes us witnesses of Christ’s resurrection along with his disciples who saw him.

#### Why We Open Our Hands

During the Mass, we notice that the celebrant keeps his hands open for most of the celebration. In the Maronite Mass, the congregation also opens its hands during two prayers: the Lord’s Prayer, and that which precedes communion: ‘Make us worthy O Lord’. The opening of hands is in fact one of the oldest gestures of the Mass and of prayer in general. This posture is known as ‘the orans’ position, a term which means to ‘pray’ or to ‘plead’. From the Bible, we find this common among both pagans and Jews (Ex 9.29; Ps 28.2; 63.5; Is 1.15), but also among the early Christians, as Paul writes: “I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling” (1 Tim. 2:8). Tertullian states: “Thither we lift our eyes, with hands outstretched, because free from sin...we have nothing whereof to be ashamed”. Clement of Rome also gives evidence: “Let us then draw near to Him...lifting up pure and undefiled hands unto Him”. This gesture furthermore symbolizes Christ on the cross whose hands were outstretched, as Tertullian states: “We, however, not only raise, but even expand them; and, taking our model from the Lord’s passion even in prayer”. This is why the celebrant opens his hands for most of the time during the Mass, for he is in the person of Christ on the cross. Furthermore, we pray it during the Lord’s Prayer because our open and empty hands express our need for God who gives us our daily bread...we come to God empty handed, so that he may provide for us like a loving Father. Moreover, Patriarch Doueïhi states that “we raise our hands on high, in order to present to God our hearts and our wills”. Therefore, the opening of the hands symbolizes three main sentiments: Christ on the cross, our need for God, and our offering up to God of our hearts and wills.

#### Why We Stand Up in our Mass

We may ask ourselves why Roman Catholics kneel during the Mass but Maronites don’t, especially during the words of consecration. We all have the inclination to kneel because we feel it is more reverent. But it is surprising to know that historically the faithful were required to stand during the Mass and not kneel. The first Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. made standing obligatory on Sundays and feast days: “Forasmuch as there are certain persons who kneel on the Lord’s Day and in the days of Pentecost, therefore, to the intent that all things may be uniformly observed everywhere, it seems good to the holy Synod that prayer be made to God standing”. The church fathers witness to this as well: Justin states that all “rise together and pray”, and Tertullian states with seriousness “We count fasting or kneeling in worship on the Lord’s day to be unlawful”.

Biblical studies show an important link between the

resurrection and standing. When Saint Paul states that Christ “was raised on the third day” (1 Cor. 15:4), the word for ‘raised’ in Greek (egeiro) does not only signify ‘a resurrection’, but literally to be “set upright’...in the sense of being put back on his living feet”. The same word means ‘resurrection’ and ‘standing up’. Standing therefore during the Mass symbolizes the resurrection of Christ, which took place on a Sunday, the very day that we celebrate Mass. Therefore, it is fitting that on the Lord’s Day we reflect the Lord’s resurrection through our standing.

Standing was the sign of a Christian who was in full communion with the Church. Saint Basil describes a tradition in the early church which classified the members of the church based on their level of communion which was variable according to sin and penance. He states that a murderer, for example, “shall not partake of the Blessed Sacrament for twenty years...For four years he ought to weep as a penitent of the first degree...(then) he will be received among the hearers and for five years...for seven years he will go out, praying with those in the rank of the prostrates. For four years he will only stand with the faithful, but will not receive Holy Communion. However, after these have been completed he will partake of the sacraments”. We therefore note that full communion in the church was reflected through standing.

Standing makes us like the angels in heaven who stand before the Lord, as is seen in the Liturgy of Saint James where the celebrant prays to God “before whom stand thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand hosts of angels and archangels”. The idea moreover is that standing was not something done of our own initiative, but it is Christ who raises us up through the sacraments. The Anaphora of Saint Mark says: “May these Mysteries allow us to stand with confidence before your awesome throne”. Here we can say that the Mass is not primarily concerned with what we do for God through our prayer and adoration, but rather what God does for us and how he transforms us. His resurrection is our resurrection, and so, though many would say that kneeling reflects what we should do for God, standing is a reflection of what God does to us.

“The altar has the place of the heart in the body”. The Patriarch Doueïhi says this to signify the centrality of the altar in the church. Here, the church does not only mean the building made of stones, but the people of God, which is us. As the heart pumps blood throughout the body, and then the blood returns to the heart to be renewed, so too the altar distributes the body and blood of Christ to the entire Church, only for the Church to return to the altar once more to be made anew. The Eucharist is new life, and as such, the Mass is our weekly resurrection in Christ. The symbols that we discussed stress this theme of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. We remember the two disciples who walked with the risen Jesus towards Emmaus: they did not know him in the flesh, but he was made “known to them in the breaking of the bread” (Luke 24:35). These two who were saddened by Christ’s death became joyful in the risen Christ after they had broken bread with him. We too, in the Sunday Mass, may approach the altar with our problems and sufferings, but can also find joy in the risen Christ, whose Body and Blood in the Eucharist is the Bread of Life and the food of souls.



# VANGUARDS



The Vanguards are a Christian movement involving youth aged between 13 to 19. Its aim is to help young people to reach a deep Christian faith and establish human maturity reflecting Jesus in their daily lives, as exemplified by the Virgin Mary and the saints, so that they will become wise Christians in their faith and disciples of Jesus in society.

As the Vanguards have marked a certain period as an established movement within the Church, they have received a letter of praise from the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nicols, who celebrates the newly launched initiative and prays that the youth will spread love and compassion just like Our Lady of Lebanon. He also asks that they keep praying in order to achieve the most and keep the important qualities required to sustain this body.

So far, the Vanguards have been incredibly successful in their meetings, gatherings, and spiritual sessions. They include: Bible studies, spiritual meditation sessions, group work, and social gatherings. The time spent together has brought the youth closer than before and has kept them grounded within the Church community. We are proud to hold 38 youth members in the Vanguards initiative.





بإخلاء الذات المتبادل حتى الإمحاء، إنَّه سرُّ الحبِّ الكامل ما بين الله والحبيس، هذا الحبُّ تدفق بشفاعته على لبنان والكنيسة والعالم شفاءً ونعمٍ وبركات سماويَّة، ولا تزال تتدفَّق (من وحي محضر فتح القبر ٢٢ نيسان ١٩٥٠). لهذا الراهب الناسك تواريخ ميلاد ووفاة متعدِّدة، فحياته التي أغنى بها لبنان والعالم مليئة بالولادة والموت، وهل من فرق بينهما؟ ألم يموت يوسف (الأب شربل) زعرور (مخلوف) عن العالم عندما اختار الحياة الرهبانيَّة؟ ألم يولد الأخ شربل في كنف الدير؟ ألم يكن الأب شربل يعيش في قَدَّاسه اليوميِّ موت وقيامة المسيح؟ أليس دخوله المحبسة موتٌ عن الذات والعالم رغبةً بولادةٍ جديدة في قلب الله؟ الأب الحبيس شربل "المغبوط" و"السكران بالله" و"المأخوذ بجماله الإلهي"، أدرك أنَّ ولادته الحقَّة هي في عودته عاريًّا إلى حشا الأرض (راجع أي ٢١/١)، بعد أن أخلَى ذاته واتَّحد بالمسيح. ولادة القديس شربل كانت فعلًا بمماته. إنَّه الظاهرة، والقديس الرمز، والرمز المقدَّس الذي صار ضريحه في عَنَّايا مَحَجًّا للصلاة والصمت، يدخل إليه الانسان فيعرف أنَّه برغم إنسانيَّته الضاربة في جذور هذا العالم، هناك بُعدٌ آخر، لا ندخله إلا بولادةٍ أخرى، وهل لَحَبَّة الحنطة أن تعطي حَبَّاتٍ إن لم تقع في الأرض وتَمُتْ؟ (يو ١٢/٢٤). يبقى القول؛ الموت رهيبٌ يَقْصُ مضجع الانسان ويُقلِّقه، فيأتي مَنْ اختمر واكتمل في الإيمان بقيامة الرب يسوع، نظير القديس شربل، ليبشِّرنا أن الموت ولادة، وحقيقة الولادة موتٌ عن كلِّ شيء، ما خلا الله.

(يُسَبِّه الراهب بالملك، ويدعى الساهر واليقظ في التقليد السرياني) يُدَكِّرنا بما أنشده الملائكة يوم ميلاد المخلص في حقل الرعاة الساهرين على قطعانهم "المجدُّ لله في العلى وعلى الأرض السلام والرجاء الصالح لبني البشر" (لوقا ٢/١٤)، وبموته وولادته في السماء اكتمل في ذاته سرُّ "ملكوت الله"، وبعد أن كان ملكوت الله في داخله (لو ١٧/٢١)، أصبح في ملكوت الله... هذا الملكوت تفجَّر ينبوع شفاء، وطاقه روحيَّة لكلِّ مريض وسقيم بشفاعه الأب شربل. في ذلك العيد المجيد بينما كان رهبان دير مار مارون-عَنَّايا يحتفلون بصلاة مساء عيد الميلاد والطلبة مع أناشيد "شويحو لهو قلو"، و"أرسل الله ابنه الوحيد..." مع رنيم ضرب الصنوج ودقِّ النواقيس، كان ملائكة العلاء يطوفون مهلِّلين مرنمين بولادة قديسٍ قدير، وشفيع للكنيسة يُدعى الأب شربل الحبيس، فخر الرهبانيَّة اللبنيَّة المارونيَّة وإكليل مجدها... ولادة استحقَّها "بطلُّ القداسة" على حدِّ تعبير قداسة البابا فرنسيس، بجهاذه الروحيِّ وتعبه وسهره، في حياةٍ من نسكٍ وزهدٍ وصومٍ وصلوة... ولادة عرفت الموت مرَّات، وكانَّ حياته بجمالها كانت تتَّجه إلى ميناء الموت، عابرًا من رحم نور ذلك القبر إلى ظلال الأبد في مدى أبدية الله، وها هو الآن "يشارك في سعادة القديسين" (من خطاب قداسة البابا بولس السادس، يوم إعلان مار شربل قديسًا في ١٠/٩/١٩٧٧). ميلاد يسوع بالجسد علي الأرض وميلاد شربل في السماء! ما هي إلا قصة حبِّ سُلَمِيَّة تنازل بها الله نحو الانسان، وارتقى بها شربل إلى "قَمَم الروح شبرًا فشبرًا" (الأب روفائيل مطر، زياح مار شربل)... حبٌّ تنازليٌّ- تصاعديٌّ يُختصر



St Peter and St Paul Hermitage, Annaya

## عالمنا يحتاج مخلصاً

By Fr Antoine Achkar

حينَ ينهارُ سلْمُ القِيمِ في مجتمع أباح الخبيثة باسمِ الحرِّية. حينَ تصبحُ الحقيقة رهنَ رأيٍ أكثريةٍ تحيكُ حقائق ووقائع على مقاييس مصالح شخصيَّة تُقسي من يعارضها حتى ولو كان حاملاً لحقيقة لا تشوبها شائبة. حين يضحى الحقُّ باطلاً والباطلُ حقاً، حين تَبَرُّ الغاية الوسيلة، حين تصبحُ الإنسانيَّة خياراً وليس واجباً وضرورة وحين يضحى إجهاضُ الأمِّ لجنينها حقاً. حين تستحيلُ الحرِّية شكلاً آخر من أشكال العبوديَّة والإدمان (كعبوديَّة المال والسلطة واللذة) تطيحُ بكلِّ ما يسمَّى تحرُّرٌ داخليٌّ وترفُّعٌ وسموٌّ. حين يغدو الإيمانُ تخلُّفاً والخلاعة تحرُّراً والإلحادُ تطوُّراً، يضحى هذا المجتمع بأمسِّ الحاجة إلى مخلص، والمخلص أتي.

وسط عالمٍ جرَّد الإنسان من قيمته، صار الله إنساناً ليعيد للإنسان قيمته وأهميته. حين تشوّهت نظرة الإنسان لذاته وللآخر، أتي الله عالمنا ليرمّم صورة الإنسانيَّة التي مرَّقتها الخبيثة. ولد في مغارةٍ حقيرة وهو الله الجبار ليقول لي أن قيمتي ليست في ما أملك ولا في ما أفعل، إنما قيمتي تكمن في أتي على صورة الله ومثاله.

صار الله طفلاً يشعُّ براءةً وحياءً ليقف في مواجهةٍ مع مجتمع أباح قتل الأجنَّة تحت شعار حقِّ الأمِّ في الحرِّية ضارباً عرضَ الحائط حقَّ الطفل في الحياة.

صار الله طفلاً ضعيفاً ليقف بجانب كلِّ ضعيفٍ ومنبوذٍ ومرفوضٍ.

ولد في كنف عائلة ليذكِّرنا بأهميَّة العائلة نواة المجتمع في مجتمع دمر نواته وركيزته وهدم العائلة باسم التطوُّر والانفتاح.

أتي المخلص ليغيِّر وجه الكون ويجدِّد البشريَّة ولكنَّه قوبل بالرفض لأنَّ رأيه لا يمثُل رأيَ الأكثرية، واعتبرت حقيقته الساطعة نسج الخيال.

وسعى الناس جاهدين ليمحو كلَّ ذكر وأثر له، ففي السابق تبع المجوس النجم لكي يصلوا إلى الملك المولود في المغارة ولكنَّ الناس اليوم اكتفوا بالنجم ورفضوا أن يصلوا من خلاله إلى مغارة المخلص فاعتبروا النجم هدفاً في حدِّ ذاته.

في السابق حوَّل أجدادنا عيد الشمس الوثنيِّ إلى عيد ميلاد المخلص شمس الحقِّ في ٢٥ كانون الأول، ليحوَّلوا الأعياد الوثنية إلى أعيادٍ مسيحيَّة، وإذا بأناس اليوم يعيدوننا إلى الوثنيَّة، مفرغين العيد من جوهره، مكتفين بالقشور وبالزينة الخارجيَّة بدل النزوح إلى العمق والتأمُّل بحقيقة إلهِ أحبِّ الإنسان فصار إنساناً ليخلصه، فصنعوا عكس أجدادهم تماماً



Maronite Iconography of Christmas

وحوَّلوا الأعياد المسيحيَّة إلى أعيادٍ وثنيَّة تفتقر إلى الروح والإيمان.

رغم كلِّ هذا، ما زال الله يدعونا لتتبعه فنحصل على الخلاص، يدعونا ألا نخاف من كوننا أقلية، بل أن نثق فيه ونتركه يعمل فينا.

يدعونا ألا نخاف من كوننا في العالم ولسنا من العالم. ميلاده ميلاد «العَمَّانويِّل» أي «الله معنا» وهو وعدنا أن يبقى معنا ولا يتركنا مهما اشتدَّت الصعوبات، قائلاً: «أنا معكم طول الأيّام حتى نهاية العالم».

ولد في «بيت لحم» التي تعني «بيت الخبز»، وبقي حاضراً معنا أبداً في بيت الخبز، بيت القربان. بقي حاضراً في كلِّ كنيسة يريد أن يتَّحد بنا من خلال أعظم سرِّ، سرِّ الإفخارستيَّا، سرِّ الحبِّ.

هيا لنلبي دعوته فنشهد لحقيقته في مجتمع بني حقيقته على الوهم. هيا لنستمد من سناه النور فنكون ملح الأرض ونور العالم نضيء ظلمته الداكنة، ولا نخشى أن نكون أنبياء هذا العصر، شهوداً إله صار إنساناً، معلنين بكلِّ جراءة أنه الطريق والحقُّ



## MICHAEL KARAM

LEBANESE AUTHOR



I was born in London in 1965, I was educated in England and I returned to Lebanon in 1991 just after the end of the war. I was only going for a couple of months to sort out my father's affairs. He died a year before, but I ended up staying for 22 years. I got a job teaching English language at the American University and then a couple years after that I went into journalism when the Daily Star started in 1996, I got a job as a features editor and then I moved to Executive Magazine in 2001 where I was the editor of Executive and I split off onto various jobs. I started working in PR and I had taken an interest in wine while I was working in Executive covering the wine industry in Lebanon. That interest developed into a hobby and I wrote a book about wine which did very well. That suddenly put me on the path to work within the wine industry which I moved to in about 2011-12 and I put everything that I learned in journalism and PR to good use, helping promote Lebanese wine in the UK, and later, around the world. More books followed, I wrote a book about 'Arak, I wrote a book about the history of wine around the world, and most recently, or for the past 7 years in fact, we've been working on this film called 'Wine and War', which was released in October this year. This film is about wine and the people who've made the wine industry in Lebanon what it is and how they were able to keep going during the Civil War

and subsequent conflict. But it's also a tribute to the Lebanese businessman, the Lebanese entrepreneur down the centuries, but we've paid tribute to them through the wine industry, as it were. We've chosen to highlight the industry, but the film is just as much a celebration of the Lebanese entrepreneurial spirit and the resilience of the Lebanese to keep making business and doing business and finding opportunities in times of hardship, political instability and conflict.

In the 22 years you spent in Lebanon, what was it like making such a change, moving from a country you were born and raised in?

It was a complete change, I knew Lebanon. We used to come on holidays before the war, but I was a child, and the war broke out when I was 10 years old. I had an idea, I knew the mountains, I knew the village where I was from. I am from a little village called Zabbougha. So, I knew that. I knew Beirut, but I was to all intents and purposes the little Englishman. When I came in 1991, I was 90% English and 10% Lebanese. I was basically an Englishman with Lebanese parents. The 22 years I spent in Lebanon has kind of redressed that equation and I am probably 50-50% now. And that is better because there's a lot of great things about Lebanese society and being Lebanese that one can embrace. And I think that living in Lebanon, marrying a Lebanese woman, it has all helped. Learning the nuances and subtleties of Lebanese society rounded off some of the sharp corners of my Englishness. And I have to say, it was an amazing time to live, from the early 90s until when I left. It was quite a remarkable period of ups and downs in Lebanon because we had the reconstruction after the war, and the 2000s, there was turbulence, there was upheaval. But we were all moving in the right direction, one would like to think. Later, we had problems with the Syrian civil war and the beginning of the sadness that we seek today. But I was very happy that I lived that because that contributes to your personality, your development as a human being, and it was a lot more intense alike, especially being a journalist, than I think if I stayed in London.

What were the struggles you experienced as either a British man living in Lebanon, or a Lebanese man living in Britain?

The first one was the Lebanese kid growing up in England. I just wanted to be like all my English friends, so I didn't really embrace my Lebanese background. I just thought "I'm here, I'm in England, I know I'm from this crazy little country but I don't really want to dwell on that, I just want to fit in and be English". There is nothing one can do about it, I rejected speaking Arabic, I just rejected everything. And it was only when I got to Lebanon that I began to reflect on that and realised that it was probably the wrong thing to do, I could have had both. I could have embraced both cultures and been equally happy. So instead of dwelling on that and sulking about it, I just made sure that my kids had a solid grounding that I didn't have in my

لا يوصف، جمال مجد نور وجه المسيح ” (من عظات القديس مقاريوس الكبير، ج ١، عصر نيقية وما بعد نيقية- القمص تادرس يعقوب ملطي، العظة الأولى ٢). مات الحبيب الأب شربل ليلة عيد الميلاد، الذي تحتفل فيه الكنيسة بتذكارات تجسد الكلمة الإلهي، الله الذي صار إنساناً في الزمان والمكان، كما يخبرنا لوقا الإنجيلي (٢/١-٢٠)، وفي هذا اليوم عبّر حبيب عتّايا الأب شربل إلى بيت ملكوت الأب السماوي (يو ١٤/٢)، الذي وعد به الذين يحبونه (يع ٥/٢)، فحبيب الله وخليله (صفي الله) الأب شربل انعتق وتحرّر من جسده الترابي، وأضحى في السماء بولادة أبدية. فإن كان ”للولادة وقتٌ وللموت وقتٌ“ (جا ٢/٣)، فموت الأب شربل كان في آن ولادة لحياة لا موت فيها، بل سلام وفرح ”إلى دهر الداهرين“، كما كان يردّد الأب شربل مع ختام كل صلاة بحسب النصوص الليتورجية المارونية. وبذلك ولج الحبيب وانضم إلى جوق الليتورجية السماوية المنشدة تسبحة الظفر والخلاص لإلهنا، الذي له الكرامة والعزة إلى دهر الداهرين، كما يخبرنا سفر الرؤيا... يقف الأب شربل الحبيب منذهلاً أمام تجلي سرّ الله الكامل، رافعاً البرقع عن عينيه متأملاً في بهاء مجده، هذا السرّ الذي أدركه ”في مرآة في لغز“ (١ كو ١٣/١٢) في هنيهات الزمن العابرة طوال مسيرته على الأرض، اكتشفه ”الآن“ بولادة من الموت إلى الحياة (يو ٥/٢٤). هذا ”الآن“- الحاضر- اكتمل بالنسبة للأب شربل في ”الدهر الآتي“، نهائياً- ومدى الأبد في حضرة الله، عابراً بلا خوف من ظلمة الموت إلى نور قيامة المسيح يسوع مردّداً ”إني ولو سلكتُ في وادي ظلال الموت لا أخاف سوءاً لأنك معي“ (مز ٤٣/٤)، ورغبة قلبي أن ”أنطلق وأكون مع المسيح“ (فل ١/٢٣) في المجد الأبدي. في الميلاد أخلّى الله ذاته آخذاً صورة إنسان (فل ٧/٢)، وموت الأب شربل فعلٌ إخلاء الذات بالكامل، حتّى من جسده، كي يكون في أنوار الله ومجده في السماء حيث الأبرار والصدّيقون ”يسطعون كالشمس في ملكوت أبيهم“ (متى ١٣/٤٣)، ”فرفعه الله بالمجد“ (فل ٨/٢-٩)... شربل الحبيب ”نجمة ميلادية“ ساطعة من أرضنا وشرقنا ووطننا لبنان يُبشرنا برحمة الله وغفرانه ومحبّته، إنّه علامة ”الرجاء الذي لا يخيب“ (روم ٥/٥)، لا بل إنّه ”الساھر“

جسد الحبيب على الأرض إنما قلبه وعقله وذهنه وروحه في السماء بحالة من الإندهاش والإنخفاف الروحيين، وبعد اكتمال ”الثمانية أيام“، وإتمام شوطه وقد بسلام رقاد الأبرار والصدّيقين، نحو الساعة الخامسة من مساء يوم السبت في ٢٤ كانون الأوّل، بيرمون عيد الميلاد. وهنا، يستحضرنى قول الأب بولس ضاهر حول موت الحبيب الأب شربل بقاعكفرا: ”مينة رائعة على تواضعها، سماوية على جلجلتها، يغار منها الملائكة لو كانوا يموتون“ (شربل إنسان سكران بالله، ط ٣، ٢٠١٤، ص ١٧٥). وفي التالي منه، يوم الأحد المصادف عيد الميلاد المجيد، وبعد صلاة ”جنّاز الراهب“ في كنيسة الدير حِمْل جثمان الأب شربل الحبيب ممدّداً على لوح خشبي، ووُضع على بساط، وكُنّ بثوبه الرهباني، ووُضعت بين أنامله مسبحة العذراء مريم، ودُفن في مقبرة الدير من الجهة الشرقية لكنيسة مار مارون كما هي عادة الرهبان اللبنانيين الموارنة، وأوصد القبر بالحجر، عائداً التراب إلى التراب، والروح حلّقت في فسيح أزليّة الله... ظلّ رهبان الدير يومها بأنّ دفنه سيكون بسيطاً، يحضره قلّة من الناس لكثرة تراكم الثلوج في ذلك اليوم العاصف، على ما جاء في شهادات بعض معاصريه... وكانّ الملائكة جند العلاء بشروا أهل جوار الدير والمحبة بأنّ الأب شربل الحبيب ”ولد في السماء“، فحضر الناس من كلّ حدب وصوب ليتباركوا من الحبيب ”الكنز المرغوب فيه جدّاً“ (ثيودوريطس القورشي، تاريخ أصفياء الله، الفصل ١٦/٤)، وألقوا النظرة الأخيرة عليه، غير مدركين أنّ القبر سيفجّر نوراً، وسيُدحرج الحجر عن بابه، ولم يعلموا أن ”سباتي يومٌ يتحوّل فيه حرم الدير، إلى ساحة عامة، تجتمع فيها الحشود البشرية، وقد جذبها خارق القداسة“ (الخوري ميشال حايك، طريق الصحراء الأب شربل، مطابع الكريم جونية ٢٠١٣، ص ١٦٤). موت الحبيب هذا، شكّل ”الحدث المؤسّس“ لمزار دير مار مارون- عتّايا ومحبسته، تلك البقعة النائية من العالم أصبحت واحدة روحية، ومحطّ أنظار الكثيرين الذين يتوقون إلى الراحة والسلام والطمأنينة... في ذلك ”السبت“، دخل الحبيب في راحة الأبرار واستراح. كان الله فيه فأضحى في أبدية الله، مع المسيح الذي أحبّه إلى الغاية (يو ١٣/١)، وها هو ينظر إليه وجهاً لوجه (خر ١١/٣٣)، ونفسه ”تتشعب تماماً بالجمال الذي



Statue of St Charbel - St Maroun Monastery , Annaya



## القديس شربل: موتٌ وولادة

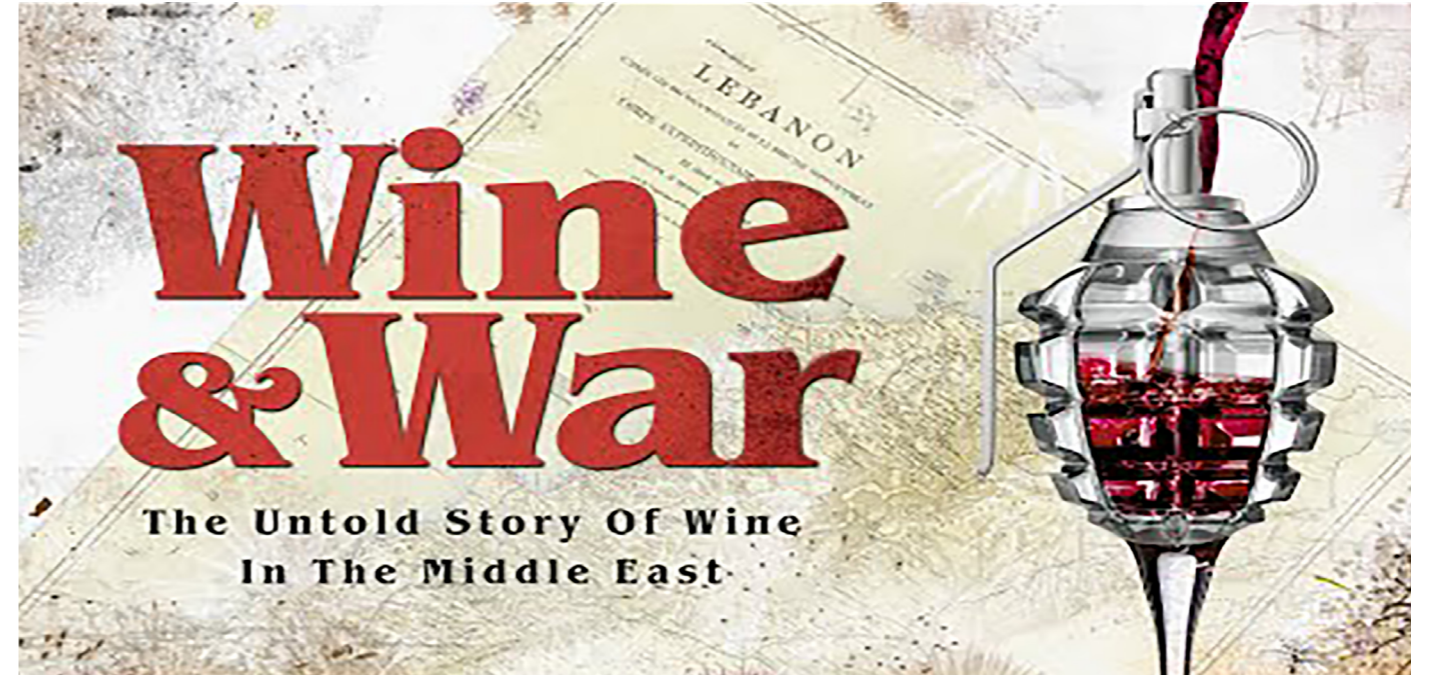
By Fr Charbel Raad



St Charbel Church - Annaya

هذه الممّة سيموت الحبيس الأب شربل فعليًا، وسريًا في المسيح، ويشترك بعمله الخلاصيّ مدى الأبد... إنّه الحضور الإلهيّ، وكثافة اللحظات المليئة من ثقل مجد الله، قد لّف الحبيس بكامل كيانه وذاتيّته، وبلغ ذروة المشاهدة الإلهيّة بعد أن تطهّر واستنار، وأرسى في ميناء الله، من بعد صيرورة شاقّة من الجهاد الروحيّ، مصبوغًا بالصليب على غرار كبار النساك الأقدمين كالقديسين مارون وسمعان العمودي وغيرهم... إنّها حتميّة الموت، وحقيقة الولادة النابعة من قوة عمل (سينرجيّة) الروح القدس، التي تأتي الرجوع إلى كثافة الجسد والمادّة وقوانين الطبيعة... إنّه موتٌ وولادة في الله مطمّح حبيس عنيًا. يوم الجمعة ذاك، من سنة ١٨٩٨، لم يكمل الأب شربل الحبيس احتفاله بقداسه، فسقط كما الربّ تحت صليبه عند "رفعة الكأس" وهو يتلو مصليًا: "أبو دقوشتو هو برّح دبحو..."، وحمل على أنرها إلى غرفة مطبخ المحبسة مصابًا بداء الفالج، بعد أن أخذ منه الأب مكاريوس المشمشاني الحبيس الكأس والصينيّة، ونزع عنه بدلة القُدّاس... ومُدّد الحبيس على الحضيض فوق بساط (بلاس من شعر الماعز) قرب الموقد، علّ الدماء تعود تجري في شرايينه. بقي الحبيس في نزاع مع المرض مدّة ثمانية أيام، يطرق بابه "رسول الموت"، حاملًا منجله مُعلنًا مجيء ساعة الحصاد (رؤ ١٤/١٥). كان

يوم الجمعة ١٦ كانون الأوّل، نحو الساعة الحادية عشرة قبل الظهر، والكنيسة تحتفل بتساعيّة الإستعداد لعيد الميلاد، احتفل الأب شربل بقاعكفرا الحبيس بقداسه الأخير، في كنيسة محبسة الرسولين بطرس وبولس - عنيًا. وكان صقيع كانون وبرده يلقان قِمّة جبل المحبسة، والرياح تعصف، والهواء يقذف الزمهرير فترتجف منه أعضاء الحبيس حتّى العظام. إنّه يوم الجمعة (اليوم السادس تك ٣٢/١) الذي يُدكرنا بخلق الانسان والصلب (مر ١٥/٤٢)، والفداء والظفر. الحبيس خاشعٌ يحتفل بقداسه كما اعتاد، مأخوذًا بجمال عمل الله في الكون والانسان، غائصًا في تأمل عميق، وتتدفق على محبّاه إشراقه نورانيّة منسّحة بالطمأنينة والسكينة والسلام. وكان الخليقة بأسرها بين يديه يقدمها مع الخبز والخمر قربانًا "شهيا" للآب السماويّ، بابنه يسوع ربّ الفداء والخلص، الذي أتّمه لنا على قِمّة الجلجلة في منتصف الأرض. كأنّ الحبيس يرفّع معه في قربانه الخليقة بأسرها كنشيد كونيّ لتولد بعد تمخّضها وتمخّصها في الله، بقوة الروح القدس - ذاك "العصف الإلهيّ"، سرّ التجديد، و"مبدأ كمال وغاية كلّ ما كان ويكون، في السماء وعلى الأرض" (من ليتورجيّة القُدّاس الماروني)، فيتتابع بذلك عمل سرّ الفداء، الذي يحتفل به الحبيس في سرّ الذبيحة الإلهيّة، وقد غمره شعورٌ واحدٌ. شعور الفداء بالصليب.



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background, although it was easier for them because they grew up in Beirut. But they are living here now, and they are both at university. I look at them and I am very proud with the way that their characters and upbringing allowed them to straddle both cultures and it has made them more interesting people. I regret not embracing it more as a kid, but I am glad that I was able to recognise it and ensure that I did not make the same mistake. Now, as an Englishman going to Beirut, I would say it was a learning curve, a quite amusing learning curve because looking back I made so many faux pas. Just cultural and social faux pas' in trying to fit in, none of which spring to mind now, but one I think of which saying "deyme nshalla" for coffee at condolences. I was trying to fit in, and I had just learned this expression the day before, so I was just trying it out, and my wife nudged me and said "No, not here." You could not be the abrasive Englishman that I had become. For example, when you have a conversation with someone in Lebanon, there is always a preamble, "How are you? How are you doing? How's the family?" I's almost as if you are throwing rose petals in front of the conversation to kind of ease the way into it gently whereas in England, they jump straight into it. People found me very abrupt and very rude because I did not go through that preamble before going into the conversation, so that was something that, to be fair, I still have not really adapted to entirely. It is these little things, as I said earlier, trying to smooth over the rough edges of my Englishness to adapt to this very much relationship-driven, consensual Lebanese society.

With everything you have written and the movie that has been released and all your contributions, do you feel like that has strengthened your Lebanese identity?

I am known as a Lebanese author; I think that says it all. I am known as Lebanese, whereas before I would have been English of Lebanese descent. Now I am a Lebanese wine writer,

a Lebanese journalist. The word 'Lebanese' is the adjective. It is definitely where I made my name, not by any design but I have become labelled as Lebanese because of that. I want to stress that I have a lot to thank Lebanon for. It gave me opportunities I would never have had in the UK. People say that I arrived at the right time and I grabbed the opportunity. But I do not see it that way. I went to Lebanon as the war ended and we grew together, Lebanon and I, and I will always be grateful to the country and the people who gave me these opportunities then.

Why is wine so important to you and why is it that you decided to write about it?

I got into wine as a journalist when I became editor of Executive. I decided I was going to set an example and I wrote the first cover story of the first issue. I did a feature of the Lebanese wine industry. I had always drunk wine and liked wine, I discovered that there was this wonderful little industry that was much smaller than it is now, around 2001. I thought this is one of the more interesting sectors of the country, more interesting than banking or construction. The people behind were really colourful characters, but more to the point, this was not just about wine, it was about what wine could do for Lebanon. Lebanon has always had a bit of a sketchy image abroad, and growing up in the west in the 70s, 80s, and 90s in particular, Lebanon didn't have a very good reputation. It was always the guys with the guns and the bombs, it was chaos and there was strife. You felt it, and that was one of the reasons why I turned my back on my Lebanese identity, it was too much hassle. But with wine, and I think this can only be felt by someone who has lived abroad, is that you can show them that there is more to our country than war and conflict. Wine is a symbol of civilisation, a symbol of humanity, and I thought what a great way to show another side of Lebanon to the world by showing that we make



wine and we've been making wine for a very long time. In fact, we were the first wine merchants. We were the first people to sell wine and we introduced wine to the Greeks, the Romans, to the Spanish, and to the Carthaginians. I thought that was a great story to tell and it would be a great ambassador for the country. South Africa, after the apartheid era, has got a whole new identity and much of that has been held by their wine industry. South Africa is a great destination, they go there for great food and great wine. So, wine can help rehabilitate the image of a country, and all that made the subject very compelling. It is not just about wine itself, it's about everything that comes along with it.

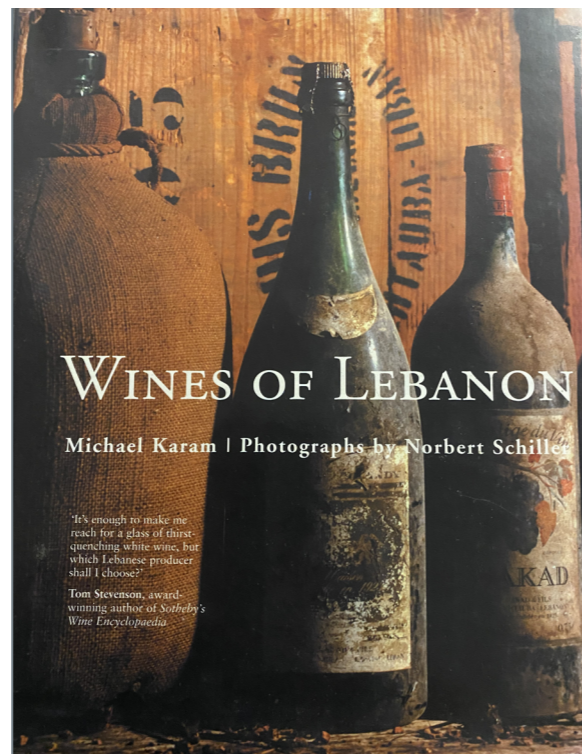
Can you explain to our readers how the Phoenicians contributed to putting wine on the map?

We played the secondary part in a sense that we weren't the first people to make wine. And that is a different understanding from fermenting fruit juice because the earlier man really understands what happens when a fruit falls to the ground and becomes alcohol. The people who made wine were the Georgians, or what is now where Georgia is in the caucuses of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, it was that area. The culture of wine spread down to the Phoenician coast, and it was the Phoenicians who first husbanded the wine because they set up non-mobile communities and static communities so they can have vineyards because they were traders. They then subsequently put the wine they had made into jars, put it on their boats, and along with the olive oil and the glassware and the murex purple dye that was much coveted around the region, they had wine as well. If they had not been this trading empire the wine would have basically stayed on the coast and not really gone out to the world. It made a journey from the caucuses down to the coast and it needed someone to take it out into the world and they did that. They set up trading posts all around the Mediterranean, Crete, Sardinia, Carthage, Rome, Greece, Spain, Egypt. Everyone loved our wine and the wines from Byblos were the Chateau Margaux of the ancient world. The Egyptians loved it so much that when they died, they took Phoenician wine into the pyramids with them to take it into the afterlife. We know this because there was a list of everything they took with them into their pyramids. Phoenician wine was really the most sought-after wine in the ancient world, and we were the first traders. That carried on because the Romans had a presence in that part of the world, the Bekaa became a wine hub, you have the temple of Bacchus in the Bekaa, that's not thereby accident. That is there because there was a massive grape and wine culture. So, our early heritage is really, important and central to the early parts to the history of wine.

In the movie 'Wine and War', you explain that a certain wine had been made and distributed abroad, and people would open a bottle and get a 'smell of conflict'. If you were to open a bottle of wine today, what would you smell?

To go back to your original point, I said that they were getting a smell of conflict because Serge Hochar, the owner of Chateau Musar, who made that wine, told so many people so many stories

about how difficult it was to make wine in war. By the time they got the wine, they were almost smelling the wine by the time it was opened. I think today, we need to move beyond the war and recognise that Lebanon is a recognised and respected wine region in the world of wine. It is not obscure; it is very much recognised. It is up there with all the major wine regions, it is not as big as some of the others but in terms of quality, it is as good. I want the readers to really understand this: Lebanese wine is, in terms of quality, pound for pound as good as any wine anywhere in the world. We are not a second-class wine, the wines we make, the bottle of Lebanese wine that costs £10 is as good as any other bottle of wine anywhere else in the world that costs £10. We should really begin to embrace that. Today in Lebanon, if you're invited to a dinner party there are still some people that say "Oh, I can't take a Lebanese wine, I've got to take something French", and they will go to a supermarket and they'll look at something French, they'll only look at the label and see that it says Bordeaux and they'll go "Ah, Bordeaux!" they'll take the bottle of Bordeaux and they won't understand that Bordeaux is just a region like any other that makes a hundred million bottles a year, most of it very ordinary! But most have got it in their head that if they take something Lebanese, they are taking something local. If they want to take French, that is great. But to feel like you must take something non-Lebanese only to impress your host, I think it is wrong. That is when we need to get in our heads, that our wines are really, really good. Some of the great wine critics in the world will support me on that. When we open a Lebanese wine today, if you are Lebanese, you should open it with pride. And if you are not Lebanese and opening it for the first time, I would hope that you be filled with curiosity and appreciate the great flavours, aromas, and the complexity that you will find.



## HISTORY OF THE ROSARY

By Leila Ammar



Maronite Iconography of Our Lady of Elige

People living near the monks wanted to mimic this devotion, but due to lack of education couldn't memorise all the psalms. So Christians began to pray 150 Our Father each week instead of the psalms. In order to keep count, they often used ropes with knots in it instead of counting on rocks. Later knots gave way to small pieces of wood and eventually to the use of beads.

Even though the origin of the Rosary is unknown, it is undeniable that its popularity grew significantly through the preaching of Saint Dominic, who died in 1221.

From the 16<sup>th</sup> century until the 21<sup>st</sup> century there were three sets of mysteries, the Joyful, the Glorious and the sorrowful. But in 2002 Pope ST. John Paul II added the mystery of Light. The intent was to include meditations on the time in Jesus's life between his incarnation and his passion.

The rosary can be a tremendous aid in drawing us closer to God. The structure and flow of the prayer is meant to aid us in meditation, the rhythm in the prayer can quiet the spirit and help us be more receptive to hearing God, and thus be more formed spiritually.

We Catholics instinctively turn to the Rosary in times of crises and life sorrows, in the midst of personal and even public tragedies.

October has long been the month dedicated to the Rosary. Pope St. Pius V established the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (October 7th) in 1573 to thank God for the victory of Christians over the Turks at Lepanto, a victory attributed to the praying of the rosary. Pope Clement XI expanded the feast to the universal Church in 1716. The dedication of the entire month to this devotion was officially established by Pope Pius XII in 1884.

The name "rosary" comes from the Latin word "rosarium" which means "rose garden." A rosary is widely considered a gift of roses to Our Blessed Mother in heaven.

Where and when the Rosary began is unknown. The use of beads as an aid in prayer has a long history in the Catholic church and in other religions. The chain of beads establishes a framework, a setting, a pace for the prayer and the repetition provides a background for meditation.

Centuries long before Christ, the faithful said prayers in a repetitive manner and found different methods of keeping count, often by using rocks or pebbles. By at least the 9<sup>th</sup> century, monks were reciting all 150 psalm, at first every day, but later every week as part of their prayers and devotions. One way they kept track was to count 150 pebbles and then place one in a container or pouch as they said each