

News Release

## **Unique Spiritual Life Center Dedicated to Saint Sharbel**

### **Opens in Pittsburgh**

***Worship, education, ministry, training, and scripture studies to be offered***

PITTSBURGH, PA – Dec. 27, 2023 – The Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center, dedicated to the Lebanese-born Maronite Catholic saint whose prayerful intercessions to God are credited for thousands of spiritual and physical healings, has been opened in Pittsburgh’s Beechview neighborhood.

The mission of the center is to assist each person to grow in holiness according to the teachings of Christ and the example of the great mystics of the Church and to cultivate a deeper devotion to Christ in the Holy Eucharist through the example and intercession of Saint Sharbel. Visitors will be able to do so through daily participation in the Sacraments as well as Scripture studies, classes, training, personal prayer and reflection, and more.

The center is located in the former Epiphany Center, [820 Crane Ave.](#) It was acquired by and is operated under the direction of the [Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn](#), the episcopal See (headquarters) of the Maronite Catholic Church in the eastern United States. While there are churches and shrines named in honor of Saint Sharbel, this is the only spiritual life center opened with the intent to offer programming to grow deeper in spirituality.

“We are so very blessed to have this opportunity to share with our

sisters and brothers the blessings that have been given to us,” said the [Most Reverend Gregory J. Mansour, S.T.L.](#), bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn. “Saint Sharbel is well known to Maronites and many other Catholics around the world, but now we will be better able to share his devotion to God, and – we pray – extend his simple way of holiness even further. We will focus on single people, couples, young adults, the elderly and on any person of goodwill who wants to grow in spiritual life.”

Dr. Anne Borik serves as the center director. Dr Borik is a Catholic medical physician and is board-certified in Internal Medicine. She is the founder of the worldwide prayer group called the Saint Sharbel Global Prayer Net hosted on the Mighty Networks App.

“The personal testimony of God’s miraculous power through Saint Sharbel’s intercession has reached deep into my heart and soul,” Dr. Borik said. “I was called to this opportunity, and I could not refuse it. I am deeply honored and blessed.”

### **Center schedule**

- The center welcomes visitors from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is staffed during those hours by Subdeacon Vincent Michael and by a priest available to all who seek his ministry.
- Masses are celebrated at 11 a.m. Monday through Friday. As a sign of unity within the Catholic Church, the Masses are celebrated by a rotation of priests from the Maronite, Byzantine, and Latin Catholic traditions. The schedule is available at <https://saintsharbelcenter.org/mass-calendar>. Adoration and confessions will also be available daily.
- A special day in honor of St. Sharbel will be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month unless otherwise specified. On this day, Liturgy, will be offered for the special intentions of all those who attend, with

prayers lifted up to the Lord, through the intercession of Saint Sharbel. Confession will be available all day as well as quiet reading, Eucharistic adoration, and veneration of the first class relic of Saint Sharbel.

- One-day retreats will take place on Saturdays, led by a faculty of presenters. (A schedule will be published soon.)

## **About Saint Sharbel**

Saint Sharbel Makhlouf was a Maronite Catholic priest, monk and hermit who lived from 1828 to 1898. During his life he was revered as a humble and saintly priest, whose prayers brought forth blessings and miracles from God.

Following his death, people reported seeing lights around his tomb. When the tomb was opened, Saint Sharbel's body was found incorrupt and exuding sweat and blood. Soon after, pilgrims began flocking to his tomb to pray for his intercession. God granted many physical healings and spiritual blessings. Saint Sharbel's tomb was changed several times due to the continued exuding of sweat and blood.

In 1954 Pope Pius XII approved the decree recognizing the heroic virtues of the future saint. Pope Saint Paul VI presided over the beatification ceremony of Saint Sharbel at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council in December 1965, and Saint Sharbel was canonized a Saint by Pope Saint Paul VI in 1977.

## **About the Maronite Catholic Church**

The Maronite Catholic Church is one of 22 Catholic Churches that form a communion of Churches with His Holiness Pope Francis as the visible head. Each Catholic Church shares the same faith, but expresses faith in a unique way. All Catholic Churches originate from one of six major traditions. The Maronite Church follows the Antiochene Tradition.

The Maronite Church dates back to the early Christians of Antioch in ancient Syria (now Turkey) where "they were called Christians for the

first time” (Acts 11:26). Maronites incorporate Syriac, a dialect of the Aramaic that Jesus Himself spoke, in their liturgies and take their name from the hermit-priest, Saint Maron, who died in 410 AD.

Today, the Maronite Church is led by Patriarch Bechara Peter Cardinal Rai in Lebanon. The United States is home to two Maronite eparchies (dioceses) with over 90 parishes and missions, along with one seminary, two monasteries, three convents, a Shrine to Our Lady of Lebanon, and now the Saint Sharbel Spiritual Center.

### **About the facility**

The Saint Sharbel Spiritual Center is a quarter mile east of Banksville Road and less than 3 miles south of Downtown Pittsburgh. It is adjacent to Our Lady of Victory Maronite Catholic Church.

The 10,300-square-foot building on more than 3 acres was designed by the late Father Adrian van Kaam and Dr. Susan Muto as a center for spiritual formation.

The facility contains a chapel, a library with more than 10,000 books on spirituality, classrooms, places for quiet reflection and prayer, offices, and kitchens.

### **To donate**

Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible. Donations can be made online at <https://saintsharbelcenter.org/donate> or by mailing a check made out to Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center at 820 Crane Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15216

Contributors become affiliate members, which entitles them to the monthly newsletter, online talks and courses, invitations to upcoming events, and much more.

### **For more information:**

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