

News Release

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Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center Joyfully Dedicated

- ***Maronite Catholic Bishop Gregory J. Mansour dedicates***
- ***Roman Catholic Bishop David Zubik of Pittsburgh participates in sign of Church unity***
- ***Day-long celebration at Center and Our Lady of Victory Maronite Catholic Church***

PITTSBURGH, PA – The Most Reverend Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, Bishop of the Maronite Catholic Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, presided at the joyful dedication of the [Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center](#) on April 13, 2024. He was joined by Bishop David A. Zubik of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh and more than 200 invited guests, including numerous clergy members, religious and lay visitors from near and far.

The Center is the first of its kind, as a Center devoted to developing the Spiritual Life, named after Saint Sharbel Makhlouf, the Lebanese-Maronite Catholic monk-priest whose prayerful intercession is credited for thousands of spiritual and physical healings. The Center is located in the former Epiphany Center within the city's Beechview community, at 820 Crane Avenue.

“Saint Sharbel lived a life intoxicated with God,” Bishop Mansour said at the dedication. “In other words, his main goal in the morning, his main goal at night, his main goal during the day was a union with Him that was sweet and good and lasting because he knew he was created by God for God's glory.

“And so, if there's one thing that we can do today in the spirit of Saint Sharbel, it to seek God. To seek Him with our whole lives, with our personalities, ... with our hopes, our dreams, our intentions.”

Bishop Mansour said the Center was created for that purpose.

“This is not meant to be a shrine to the glory of Saint Shabel, or the glory of the Maronite Church, or the glory of our Middle Eastern culture,” he said. “But rather it is meant to be an opportunity for us, a place for us to grow deeper in our union with God.”

The Bishop also thanked and praised the work of the late Father Adrian van Kaam, Dr. Susan Muto, and the Epiphany Center for the fruits of their labor over the years and for creating the facility where the Center is now located. He also credited Father Samir Chebli, Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Maronite Church, and Chorbishop Michael Kail, Parish Advisor, for their efforts in making this Center a reality.

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Dr. Anne Borik, Director of the Center, said the Center also exemplifies the unity of the Catholic Church's multiple traditions

"Pope John Paul II said, 'The Church must breathe with both of her lungs, meaning the Eastern and Western Church.'" Dr. Borik said. "Saint Sharbel and this Spiritual Center is the perfect place to introduce the Maronite Rite and Saint Sharbel's example to the rest of the Church as we devote ourselves to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and our Blessed Mother Mary, as did Saint Sharbel."

In addition to the Dedication Ceremony in the Center's Chapel, the celebration also included an open house before the Dedication, a Divine Liturgy at Our Lady of Victory Maronite Catholic Church located adjacent to the Center, a dinner reception, and a concert by the choir from Saint Anthony of the Desert Maronite Catholic Church from Fall River, Mass.

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 started flocking to his tomb to pray for his intercessions. God granted many physical healings and spiritual blessings. Saint Sharbel's vestments were changed several times after his burial due to the continued exuding of sweat and blood.

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

About the facility

The Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center is less than 3 miles south of downtown Pittsburgh. The 10,300-square-foot building, which sits 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 a kitchen.

Visitors are welcome Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with Divine Liturgy celebrated at 11 a.m. on those days. As a sign of unity within the Catholic Church, the Liturgies are celebrated by a rotation of priests from the Maronite, Byzantine, and Latin Churches. Adoration and Confession are also available daily. A special program in honor of St. Sharbel is held on the 22nd of each month. Details are available on the Saint Sharbel Center website.

(saintsharbelcenter.org)

To donate

The Saint Sharbel Spiritual Life Center is a 501(c)(3) organization. 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

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