

ST SHARBEL LIGHTS UP HIS OIL LAMP FILLED WITH WATER AT ST MAROUN MONASTERY IN ANNAYA, MOUNT LEBANON.

At the hermitage St Charbel prayed, meditated and attend mass daily, read the bible and scriptures daily, performed manual Labour daily, lived a life in poverty, ate one meal a day which were scraps from the other hermits and monks, carried out penance, practiced corporal punishment, chained himself, mortification of the body, slept on goat's hair and used a timber log as a pillow which laid directly on the ground, slept less than five hours a day and observed strict silence in order to be as close to God as possible.

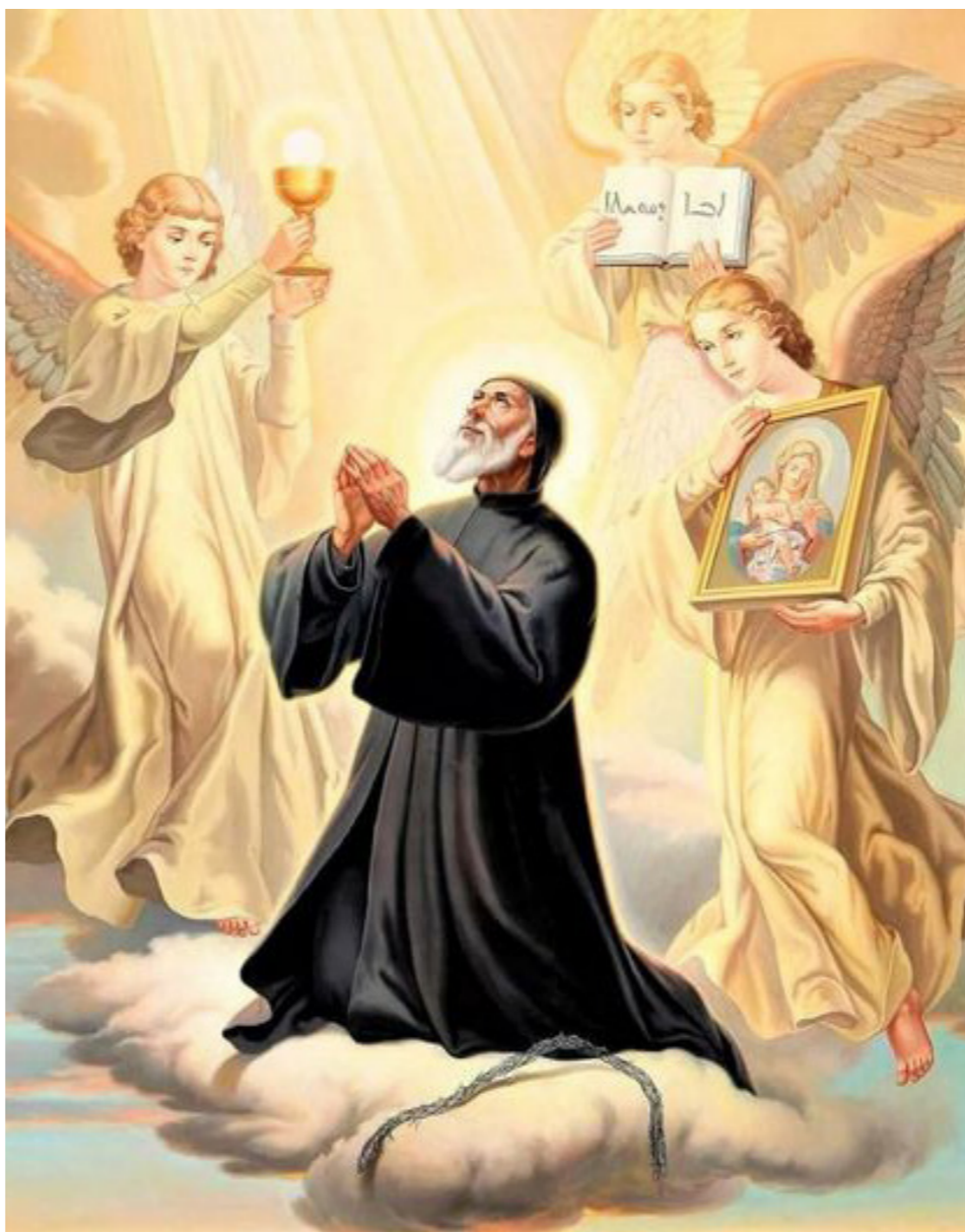
One night in 1875, Father Charbel (St sharbel) asked a Brother studying at St Maroun's Monastery in Annaya, Mount Lebanon to fill his oil lamp with oil because it had run out of oil while he was working in his room. The Brother gladly agreed and went to fill his oil lamp from the oil supply drum.

The Brother wanted to play a joke on Father sharbel (St sharbel) so instead of filling the oil lamp with oil he filled it with water. Once the Brother filled the oil lamp with water he quickly ran to Father sharbel's (St sharbel) room to give him the oil lamp filled with water so he can use it again to work in his room. Once Father sharbel (St sharbel) received the oil lamp from the Brother he kindly thanked the brother for refilling the oil Lamp for him.

The Brother quickly exited the room and hid behind the door so he can observe Father sharbel (St sharbel) try and light the oil lamp filled with water. To the great surprise of the Brother, Father Charbel (St sharbel) lit the oil lamp filled with water on his first attempt and continued to use the lamp to work in his room.

The Brother quickly ran to the Superior Monk to tell him that Father sharbel (St sharbel) lit his oil lamp filled with water which he filled because he wanted to play a joke on him. So the Superior Monk and the Brother ran to Father sharbel's (St sharbel) room to see if the oil lamp filled with water was still lit. To their great surprise they saw Father sharbel (St sharbel) working in his room with the oil lamp filled with water well alight.

The Superior Monk walked in Father sharbel's (St sharbel) room and said to him, "Did you know the Brother filled your oil lamp with water to play a joke on you?". Father sharbel (St sharbel) replied, "No I did not know he filled the oil lamp with water". The Superior Monk grabbed the oil lamp, opened it and put his finger in the lamp to see what was inside. To his amazement when the Superior Monk tasted the liquid on his finger he confirmed it was water. The Superior said to Father sharbel (St sharbel), "God loves you and has filled you with the Holy Spirit, you are perfect example for your fellow monks, brothers and community".



The healing of Nohad El Shami

One of St. sharbel's most well-known miracles is the healing of Nohad El Shami. She was fifty-five years old and healed from her partial paralysis in 1993.

Nohad says that she saw two Maronite monks standing next to her bed in a dream one evening. In her dream, the monks operated on her neck.

When Nohad woke up, she had two wounds in her neck. She was completely healed and began to walk again.

Nohad said that St. sharbel appeared to her the next night in a dream and asked her to visit his hermitage on the 22nd of every month. He also asked her to attend Mass regularly.

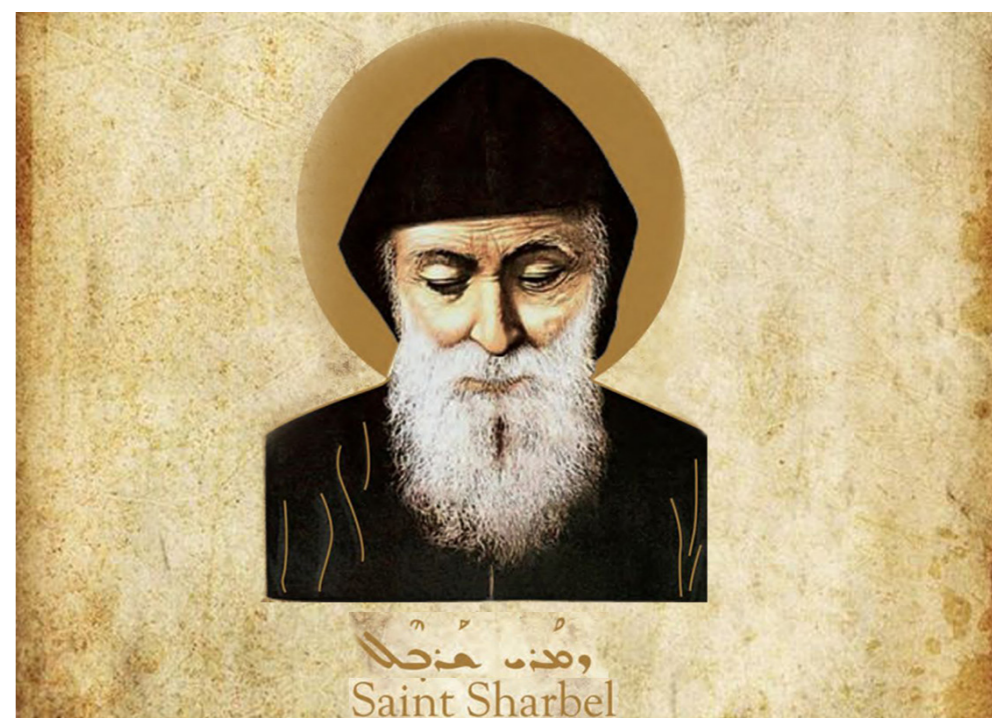
The 22nd of each month has since become a popular day to visit St. sharbel's hermitage to pray and celebrate Mass.

PRAYER TO SAINT SHARBEL

⊕ O Sharbel, saint of great wonders, from whose pure and incorruptible body emanates the fragrance of heaven, come to my assistance and, if it be for the glory of God and the good of my soul, obtain from God for me the grace of which I am in need... (Name the grace). Amen. Saint Sharbel, pray for me.

O Lord, who granted Saint Sharbel the grace of faith, I beseech you through his merits and intercession to grant me that same grace. Then I shall live according to your commandments and Gospel. To you be glory, forever. Amen

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be.



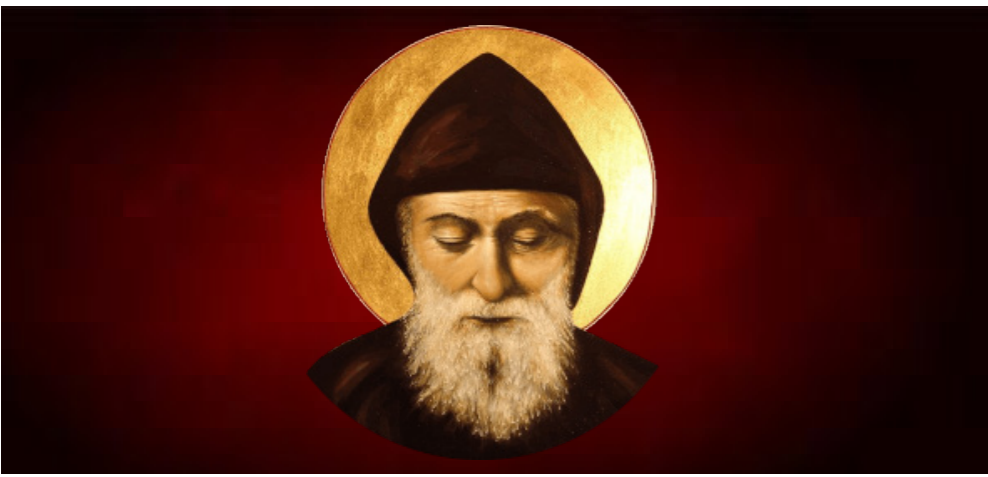
⊕ There are over 26,000 miracles attributed to the intercession of Saint Charbel Makhoul since his death in 1898. You could say he has a bit of a track record—and he's not slowing down anytime soon.

"We're seeing more miracles in these past two years than we have in the past decade," Father Louis Matar, the Maronite priest who keeps a tally of the saint's miracles said in an interview.

⊕ His Quotes: Pray to soften heartened hearts, to open darkened minds. By your prayers you can bring down the rain of mercy.

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His Life On Earth

Saint Sharbel Makhlouf was born in Bekaa Kafra on May 8, 1828. Bekaa Kafra is a small mountain village, the highest in Lebanon and the Middle East, 5118 feet (1560 meters) above sea level, in the region of Bshari (North Lebanon). In its vicinity are the ancient Cedars of Lebanon, called by the Lebanese, “the Cedars of the Lord.

Bekaa Kafra overlooks the valley of Qadeesha, where Sharbel had two uncles living as monks in the monastery of Saint Anthony of Kozhahyah. They were a source of inspiration and models for him. He was baptized on August 16, 1828 with the name of Youssef Antoun Makhlouf. He was the fifth child in a poor, yet respectable and devout family, having two older brothers and two older sisters. His father died on August 8, 1831 as he was returning home after compulsory enlistment in the Turkish Army under the Ottoman rule in Lebanon.

Along with other children, Youssef learned Arabic and Syriac from the priest of the village. Youssef was very pious, so much so that his fellow villagers used to call him “the Saint.” Daily he used to take his small herd to the fields where he would let them graze while he went to a nearby grotto to fall into deep prayer in front of an icon of the Virgin Mary.

This grotto became his altar and his first hermitage. In 1851, at the age of 23, he left his family and village to start his first year of novitiate in the monastery of Mayfouk. He chose the name “Sharbel” in honor of a second century martyr in the Antiochene Church. In 1852, he moved to the monastery of Annaya for his second year of novitiate. There, on November 1, 1853 he professed his monastic vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

He received his formation in theology at the monastery of Saints Cyriac and Justina in Kfifan between the years 1853 and 1859. Father Nemtallah Kassab El-Hardini (canonized on May 17, 2004) was the teacher of Saint Sharbel and his fellow seminarians. On July 23, 1859 Saint Sharbel was ordained priest of the Lebanese Maronite Order. He spent 16 years (1859–1875) in the monastery of Annaya, praying and working in the fields with his brother monks.

He was unhesitatingly obedient to his superiors, faithfully observed



all the rules, and lived a life of sacrifice under austere conditions. Flocked to the monastery of Annaya, asking the intercession of the holy hermit.

He followed the path of the hermit fathers by kneeling austere before Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, praying quietly to Him, and immersing himself in Him throughout the night. He came to be known as “the saint inebriated with God.” During his life, Saint Sharbel not only healed people from physical diseases, but also from spiritual ones, even casting out demons.

While celebrating the Divine Liturgy on December 16, 1898, he suffered a stroke and endured eight days of terrible pain calmly, silently, and prayerfully. Saint Sharbel kept repeating the prayer he could not finish in the Divine Liturgy: “Father of truth, behold Your Son, the sacrifice in whom You are well pleased. Accept Him who died for me...”. He would also repeat the names of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, as well as Saints Peter and Paul, the patron saints of the hermitage. He died on Christmas Eve, 1898, and was buried at the monastery on a very cold and snowy day. Only a few monks were able to attend his burial ceremony.

Beatification of Sharbel

Pope Pius XII approved the decree recognizing the heroic virtues of the future saint on April 2, 1954. His Holiness Saint Paul VI presided on December 5, 1965 over the beatification ceremony of Saint Sharbel in the Vatican at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council.

The decision for the beatification of Saint Sharbel was based on two miracles:

The miraculous healing of Sister Maria Abel Kamari, S.S.C.C, from a gastric ulcer on July 12, 1950. Sister Kamari suffered from a liver, gall bladder, and kidney dysfunction. Her intestines were also stuck together. She would vomit most of her food with blood. Her right hand became paralyzed and she needed help to walk. Three times, she was on the brink of death. The miraculous healing, near the end of 1950, of Mr. Alessandro Obeid, who regained sight in his right eye, which had been blinded in an accident in 1937.



His Life After death

Following his death, people started to report seeing lights around his tomb. When Church authorities opened the tomb, they found Saint Sharbel’s body incorrupt and exuding sweat and blood. On April 15, 1899, the Maronite Patriarch allowed the body to be transferred to a special coffin, which was placed in a new tomb, inside the monastery. Pilgrims began flocking to his tomb and praying for his intercession. God granted many of them physical healings and spiritual blessings.

Saint Sharbel’s cause was officially presented to Pope Pius XI on December 12, 1925. Because of the exuding of sweat and blood, Saint Sharbel’s coffin and tomb had to be changed several times through the years. On July 24, 1927, the body was transferred to a third tomb.

In 1950, Saint Sharbel’s tomb was opened in the presence of certified doctors and members of an official committee from the Church and the Lebanese government, who verified the integrity of the body. They wrote a medical report and put it in a box inside the coffin. Immediately, healings proliferated in an amazing fashion! Tens of thousands of pilgrims of different religions and communities.

Canonization of Sharbel

On October 9, 1977, His Holiness Saint Paul VI presided over the canonization ceremony of Blessed Sharbel in the Vatican basilica. The miraculous healing of Miriam Awad from throat cancer in 1967 was accepted as the official miracle for canonization.

