



***“Here is my servant, whom I have chosen,
my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased...”***

(Mt 12:18)

Divine Liturgy
Sunday at 11:30 pm
Our Lady of Victory
1559 Roxbury Rd.
Columbus, OH



We're excited to join our brothers and sisters in Christ as one family at Our Lady of Victory Church. May this new chapter in our journey help us grow, as we come together to meet Christ and follow him!

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First Reading: Romans 8:1-11

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus
has set you free from the law of sin and of death.
For God has done what the law,
weakened by the flesh, could not do:
by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,
and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,
so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us,
who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
For those who live according to the flesh
set their minds on the things of the flesh,
but those who live according to the Spirit
set their minds on the things of the Spirit.
To set the mind on the flesh is death,
but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.
For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God;
it does not submit to God's law — indeed it cannot,
and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
But you are not in the flesh;
you are in the Spirit,
since the Spirit of God dwells in you.

The Gospel: Matthew 12:14-21

But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Jesus, how to destroy him.
When Jesus became aware of this, he departed.
Many crowds followed him,
and he cured all of them,
and he ordered them not to make him known.
This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah:
“Here is my servant, whom I have chosen,
my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased.
I will put my Spirit upon him,
and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.
He will not wrangle or cry aloud,
nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.
He will not break a bruised reed
or quench a smoldering wick
until he brings justice to victory.
And in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

Saints of the Week: The Blessed Massabki Brothers

Francis, Abdul-Mooti, and Raphael: Three pious Maronite brothers from Damascus who offered their lives for Christ on the night of 9-10 July 1860.

On the morning of Saturday, December 17, 2022 Pope Francis accepted the petition to expedite their canonization process thanks to their exemplary life and martyrdom.

This special issue of our Bulletin is dedicated to honor their memory and make their lives, virtues, and martyrdom well-known among all Christians.

- **Francis** was a successful silk trader and father of 8 children. His honesty in handling business earned him a well-deserved renown all over Syria and Lebanon, even among Muslim rulers. Despite his wealth and prestige, Francis never shied away from his religious duties: He got up early recite the Angelus and pray. He then went to church to participate in the Divine Liturgy. In the evening, with his family and that of his brother, they recited the prayer of thanksgiving and the Rosary, did the Spiritual Exercises in honor of Saint Joseph and the Virgin Mary, and read spiritual books to nourish their souls and strengthen their faith.



- **Abdul-Mooti** was a father of 5 children. He spent most of his life teaching at the Franciscan Monastery School in Damascus. When he retired, his brother Francis opened a shop for him. However, this business kept losing money due to Abdul-Mooti's generosity and tolerance for the sake of his conscience, which led to the closure of the shop. His son reports: My father, after reciting his daily prayers, went to the Franciscan Church every morning, and attended all the Masses on his knees. On Holy Thursday evening,

he would go to the church and remain on his knees until the morning of Good Friday. Afterwards, he would stay in the monastery until Sunday midnight, then go to the Maronite Church for Mass and Easter Communion, and finally return home. He did this throughout his life.

- **Raphael** spent his life as a celibate helping the monastic community of the Franciscan Fathers as well as his family. He persevered in prayer and in the love of the Virgin. He stayed at the church of the Franciscan monastery for many long hours during the day, and participated in the household prayers with the families of Francis and Abdul-Mooti in the evening.

Their Martyrdom...

The massacres of 1860 in Lebanon and Syria are considered some of the most horrible anti-Christian massacres in the history of the Ottoman Empire. They were the reason behind waves of immigration to the Americas, Africa and other parts of the world.

On the night of Monday, July 9, the Christian quarters in Damascus were set on fire. Many sought refuge at the Franciscan monastery in the neighborhood of Bab Touma. At 8 p.m. the Massabkis joined the crowd. At 11 p.m., the doors of the monastery were closed and everyone entered the church. They confessed their sins, received the Holy Eucharist, and recited Psalms.

At 1:00 a.m. on Tuesday, the heavily armed attackers infiltrated the monastery and immediately murdered eight Franciscan monks and three monastery employees.

"Where is Francis Massabki?" they shouted. Kneeling in prayer before the statue of the Virgin Mary, he got up and fearlessly approached them. They continued, "The Governor sent us to save you, your brothers, your families, and everyone who joins you, and to give you back your money, provided that you deny your faith and convert to Islam, otherwise you will all perish." This offer came from the Governor because he had borrowed a large sum of money from Francis.

Francis answered them: **"The governor can take my money, but my faith nobody can take away from me...** We are not afraid of those who kill the body... We Christians do not fear those who kill the body, as the Lord Jesus said. We have but one soul, and we shall not lose it." Then, he turned to his brothers and said to them, **"Take courage and stay strong in your faith, for the crown of victory is prepared in heaven for those who persevere to the end."**

They immediately professed their faith in the Lord Jesus with these words: **"We are Christians and we want to live and die as Christians."**

The attackers stormed them, striking with their sticks, daggers and axes, at the foot of the altar, and so they surrendered their pure souls into the hand of God, preferring death to disbelief, and thus received the glorious crown of martyrdom for the sake of Christ.

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