

**Homily – St. George Maronite Catholic Church**

**February 10, 2019**

**It is great blessing for me to celebrate the sacred liturgy with you on this Feast of St. Maron. Maronite Catholics are known and have been esteemed through the centuries for your hospitality and fidelity to the gospel and Christian teaching and life.**

**Through the centuries you and your ancestors have remained faithful to walking with the risen Lord as missionary disciples after the example of the Good Shepherd and St. Maron. Like St. Timothy, you have followed the gospel and the teachings of St. Paul, his “way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions and suffering.” Many of your families left their homeland to go to such far away places as Mexico and the United States – but keeping intact and alive your culture, your cuisine, and your Christian values and beliefs – passing them on to successive generations of Maronite Catholics. You are truly a treasure to the universal Church, East and West, North and South!**

**Jesus tells his disciples in the gospel that if they wish to serve him, they must follow him – including during the “Hour” of his passion, death, and resurrection. We do this by listening attentively**

to the word of God and responding to it appropriately in thought, attitude, and, especially, action. St. Paul reminds Timothy and all of us that “all Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching ...and for training in righteousness.”

The way of Christ – the way of the gospel – is countercultural to the ways of the world. St. Maron was able to discern God’s presence everywhere without being distracted by such worldly enticements as possessions, power, and pleasure. Hearing the word of God and allowing it to take deep root in our lives enable us to produce good fruit for the building up of the kingdom of God, for contributing to the common good. God needs our ears to listen to the cries of the poor, the marginalized, the forgotten, the outcasts. God needs our voice to proclaim his message of justice that leads to peace, of compassion and mercy, of God’s enduring love for everyone without exception. God needs our hands to reach out to those in need as Catholic Christians, missionary disciples, respecting and defending others’ rights --- and enhancing and nourishing their lives. May Our Lady of Lebanon watch over us and embrace us with her maternal love! May God bless St. George Parish!