



IMMACULATE HEART^{OF} MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

JULY 16, 2017

Dear friends in the Lord,

Earlier this month I enjoyed a few days of family reunion—with cousins on my mother's side in Myrtle Beach, and with cousins on my father's side who gathered in eastern North Carolina.

When my paternal grandparents emigrated from Lebanon in the early 1900s, they first settled in Lawrence, Massachusetts, which was already known then as a city of immigrants. After the 1912 Bread and Roses Strike by textile workers, my grandparents moved to New Bern, NC, where they joined a small colony of Lebanese immigrants, and where my grandfather eventually became fire chief. My father was born there in 1922, and my brother and I in 1957 and 1959.

So a return to New Bern is always a return to my Lebanese roots—although fewer and fewer of that original Lebanese community remain. In fact, these days it's easier to find Lebanese food in Atlanta! (And I hope all lovers of Lebanese food are planning to join us for the annual St. Sharbel Lebanese Potluck Supper next Monday, July 24.)

But the immigrant Jowdys quickly assimilated into the southern culture that surrounded them, and when I was growing up, pulled pork barbeque was a delicacy on a par with Lebanese kibbee! So a reunion in New Bern is also an opportunity to “pig out” on barbeque—with vinegar sauce, of course, which is the only way to eat it!

I hope that this summer provides you, too, an opportunity to reconnect with loved ones and to recall some simple childhood pleasures.

Your brother in Christ's word and work,