



Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
INFORMATION CONTACT:

FOR MORE

Deacon Louis Peters
Chancellor
314-231-1021

Bishop Robert J. Shaheen died in St. Louis, MO on August 9. He was 80 years old. Robert Joseph Shaheen (born June 3, 1937) is an American clergyman of the Maronite Catholic Church. He was the second Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles and former pastor of St. Raymond Maronite Church in St. Louis, MO.

Visitation for Bishop Shaheen will be at St. Raymond Maronite Cathedral, 931 Lebanon Dr., St. Louis, MO 63104, on Wednesday, August 16 from 12 noon until the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at 7:00 p.m.

Bishop Shaheen will be buried from St. Anthony Maronite Church in Danbury, Connecticut (17 Granville Avenue, Danbury, CT 06810) on Monday, August 21 at 10:00 a.m. Visitation will be at the St. Anthony Church from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 20.

Bishop Shaheen who recently celebrated his 80th birthday, was a native of Danbury, CT. He was the first Maronite priest to be ordained in the United States in 1964 and was assigned as pastor of St. Raymond's in 1967. On December 5, 2000 Pope Saint John Paul II named Bishop Shaheen the second Bishop of the Eparchy. He retired in 2013.

Largely credited with leading the renewal of the LaSalle Park neighborhood south of downtown St. Louis, Bishop Shaheen led the parish through a large capital program including the construction of a new church, rectory, hall and Eparchal center over the years of his pastoral ministry.

"We pray for the repose of his soul, and give thanks to God for all of the lives that Bishop Shaheen has touched in his extraordinary life" said Bishop A. Elias Zaidan, current bishop and successor to Bishop Shaheen.

1021 S. 10th St., St. Louis, MO 63104 • Tel: (314) 231-1021 • Fax: (314) 231-1418

Bishop-Emeritus Robert J. Shaheen



Robert Shaheen was born to Albert and Aileen Shaheen in Danbury, Connecticut. He attended St. Peter Grammar School and Danbury High School before entering the Latin Church St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield in 1955. In 1958, he transferred to the Eastern rite St. Basil Seminary in Methuen, Massachusetts, while attending classes at St. Anselm College in Goffstown, New Hampshire.

After being ordained a subdeacon (October 2, 1962) and deacon (June 7, 1963), Shaheen was ordained a priest by Bishop Francis Mansour Zayek on May 2, 1964, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Shortly after his ordination, he became pastor of St. Raymond's Church in St. Louis, Missouri, which had then been without a resident priest for over 20 years. Under his leadership, St. Raymond's went from just a few faithful parishioners using a four-family apartment to a cathedral with hundreds of active families.

From 1965 to 1970, he organized and celebrated Maronite liturgies on a regular basis. He also developed newsletters, bulletins, and fliers; conducted a census to identify Maronites in the greater metropolitan area; and introduced spiritual and cultural programs, including Maronite religious education classes. He hosted National Apostolate of Maronites Convention in 1970. Kicking-off a fund drive for new church in 1971, he later dedicated a new church in November 1975 and a new rectory in February 1977. He was ordained an archpriest in September 1978, and dedicated a new parish center "The Cedars" in November 1979.

On March 31, 1986, Shaheen was ordained a Chorbishop by Archbishop Zayek. He purchased additional property and buildings for future development as a Maronite retirement center and cultural center in 1991, and again hosted the National Apostolate of Maronites Convention in 1995.

On December 5, 2000, Shaheen was appointed Eparch of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon by Pope John Paul II, following the retirement of Our Lady of Lebanon's first bishop, John George Chedid. He was consecrated a bishop on February 15, 2001 by Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East at the Saint Louis Cathedral Basilica.

Bishop Shaheen's retirement became effective on July 10, 2013. Bishop A. Elias Zaidan, M.L.M. succeeded him as the third eparchial bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles.

Shaheen was the first Maronite priest and first Maronite bishop from the United States educated and ordained in the United States. He retired on July 10, 2013. He died in St. Louis, MO on August 9, 2017