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With
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and Student Clubs



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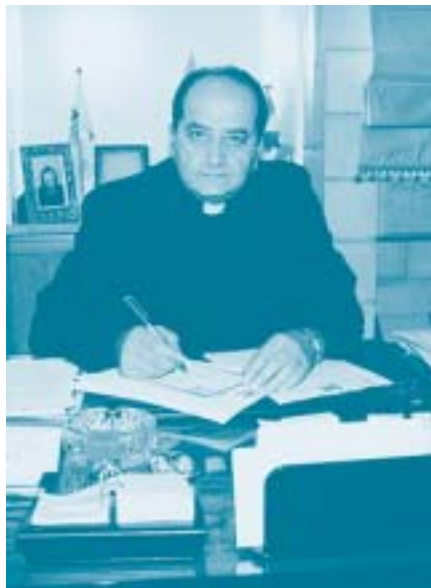
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A WORD FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

This has been a tense summer for the Middle East, with wars and rumours of wars. Unfortunately, on both sides there have been voices talking of a conflict between East and West and between religions. But these have been voices with no authority to speak on behalf of any religion. Every Christian authority has spoken against war, His Holiness the Pope, Their Beatitudes the Patriarchs and even His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of the Church by Law Established of one of the Coalition partners. Further, in the capitals of the countries of Christian tradition there have been enormous popular demonstrations against war in the Middle East, numbering even a million, greater than those in the Arab and Islamic countries themselves. We are glad to say that Muslim leaders in our region have recognised this fact and proclaimed their appreciation of the attitude adopted by the official heads of the Christian Churches of apostolic tradition. May such voices always be heard above the confusion of political and economic interests.

His Holiness Pope John Paul II played a decisive role, recognised by no less a person than former Soviet President Gorbetchov himself, in the overthrow of oppressive atheistic Communism. But since then he has shown equal concern about the injustices caused by global capitalism. Ordinary Africans in particular have suffered from wars provoked by the struggle for Africa's rich mineral resources; while rulers and war-lords salt away in foreign banks the money with which they have been bribed, the people suffer from grinding poverty and are massacred by their tens of thousands.



Human rights are not a false ideal merely invented by certain Western governments that fail lamentably to practice what they preach, as some have been led to believe. But these rights have no reality except when considered in the light of the moral law arrived at by reason and firmly imposed by God's revelation to the children of Abraham. It is too often forgotten that Christianity is itself an Eastern, not a Western, religion. True Christians, Muslims and Jews (in the real sense of the word) are united in their condemnation of the moral abominations now being taken for granted in the secularised world. Herod is rightly considered a monster for having murdered a couple of hundred innocents, but the abortionists are mass murderers who out-Herod Herod – in some places even “partial birth abortion” is allowed, that is to say the murder of a baby while it is actually being born. In parallel articles in a Lebanese weekly, the Melkite Archbishop of Beirut and the greatly respected Sheikh Fadlallah both condemned euthenasia, the actual killing of the

suffering terminally ill (as distinguished from the switching off in certain cases of life-support machines.) In one country after another it is becoming possible for same-sex couples to adopt children, for purposes that can easily be imagined; this has even led to a trade in wretched East European orphans who need special bodily and mental care, and not to be morally twisted by the perverted passions of adults. All these practices start with the thin end of the wedge, the plea of hard cases, to finish with massive abuse. A false appeal is made to supposed rights that simply do not exist, because they are divorced from the sense of duty. Every right supposes a duty and every duty a right. For example, abortion cannot be defended on the grounds that a woman has a right to do what she likes with her body; on the contrary, we all have a duty to keep ourselves in good health and to care for those who are dependent on us.

We have just been celebrating the silver jubilee of the enthronement of Pope John Paul II and the beautification of the universally loved Mother Teresa, in the presence, incidentally, of the Muslim religious authorities of Albania. Both these outstanding personalities of our age have declared themselves strongly for the human rights of the poor and the unprotected, preaching love and not war or materialistic selfishness. They stand for the true jihad in favour of true human rights, one that should unite all believers in God, His revelation and his moral law. Let no one divide us.

Reverend Boutros Tarabay
President

JOHN PAUL'S **JUBILEE**



Pope John XXIII opened wide the Vatican windows for some fresh air to enter the Church, but Pope John Paul II has himself been a tornado that has swept the world. Not many people alive now can recall the time when, following the overthrow of the Papal States, the Pope was called “the prisoner of the Vatican”, when the Catholic Church was overwhelmingly French, Irish and Italian, when no radio or TV carried the Pope’s voice

and image around the world, when 99% of Catholics could not imagine Mass being celebrated in any language other than Latin, when Stalin said scornfully, “The Pope? How many divisions has he?”

The preparation of the young Karol Wojtyla for his sacred calling differed widely from that of his predecessors in the papacy. Not for him the stifling routine of the old-fashioned junior and senior seminaries. In 1938, aged 18, he graduated from

public high school and enrolled in Cracow’s Jagiellonian University and in a school for drama. When the Nazi occupation forces closed the university he worked from 1940 to 1944 in a quarry and then in a chemical factory in order to earn his living and avoid being deported to Germany for forced labour. But in 1942 he managed to begin to prepare for the priesthood in a secret underground seminary and was one of the pioneers of a clandestine theatre that defied the Gestapo.



After the war he was able to continue studies in the major seminary and theology faculty of Cracow and was ordained priest on November 1, 1946. He then obtained his doctorate of theology in Rome under the guidance of the outstanding Dominican Garrigou-Lagrange. After working among Polish refugees in France, Holland and Belgium, in 1948 he returned to Poland, where he did parish work

and continued his studies at Lublin Catholic University. Here he became professor of moral theology and social ethics. He became auxiliary bishop of Cracow in 1958, archbishop in 1964 and a cardinal in 1967. He made an important contribution to the elaboration of the Vatican II Constitution *Gaudium et spes*.

He has proved to be an outstanding intellectual, with a grasp of modern and Far Eastern philosophy outside the ecclesiastical routine of so-called "Thomist" scholastic studies. As archbishop he was deeply concerned with social and economic questions, insisting that the Church had to provide a better answer than Marxist Communism. As Pope, even during recent years when failing health has prevented him from enjoying the sporting activities of his athletic youth, his activity has been astounding and his mind has lost nothing of its vigour. Since the start of his pontificate in 1978, when his election astounded the world expecting yet another Italian, he has completed over one hundred tours outside Italy and over one hundred and forty within Italy. Worthy of mention is the number of Muslim countries that have given him an official invitation and ceremonial reception. The rapturous welcome given him by the Armenian Church and State was one of the most moving events ever televised. He has visited nearly all of the several hundred parishes of Rome. He has produced a stream of official documents on the Church's teaching and published three books of his entirely personal composition. Signed understanding has been reached on Christological formulas with the Churches that did not accept the declarations of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, it being admitted that the differences were ones mainly of expression rather than actual doctrine.

It will not be easy to forget the reception given Pope John Paul by leaders of every religious commu-

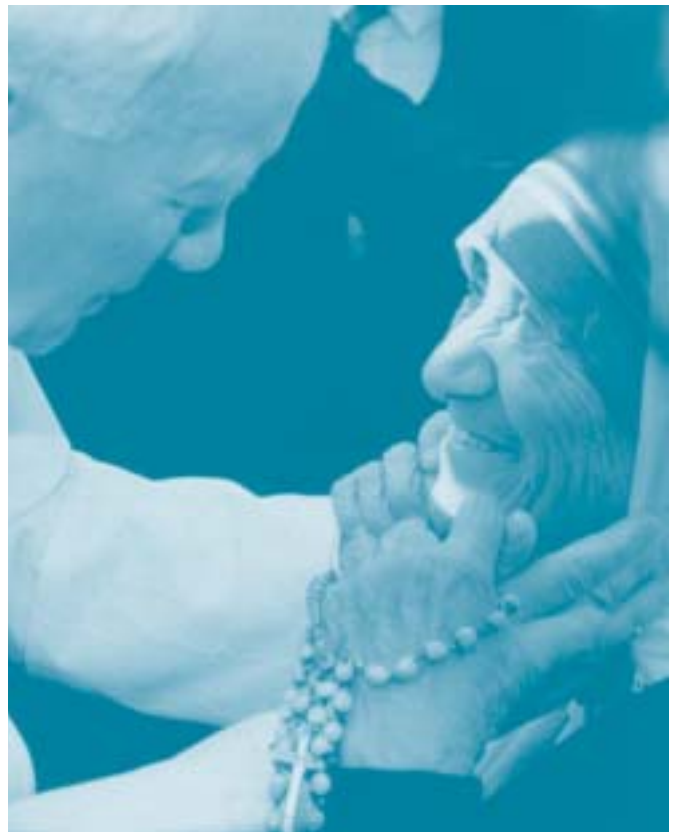
nity and vast crowds in Lebanon, where his Exhortation gave a clear direction and renewed confidence to the faithful. No less touching was the reception given him by the civil and religious authorities in Syria and his visit to the great Ommayad mosque.

There has been some surprise at the number of cardinals Pope John Paul has created and the number of persons he has canonised (476) or beatified (1,315). But this has been because he reaches out to the whole world, to all five continents and their countries, little Lebanon included, and to every social class. Everywhere Christians now have saints and *beati* that they feel belong to them, other than French and Italian clerics and nuns. With the recent consistory of October 12th, there are now 135 cardinals entitled to elect a new pope, of whom no less than thirteen are Africans, two of them Nigerians. Thirteen are Asians and five are from Oceania. In Africa and Asia the Church is flourishing with a dynamic entirely of its own and can no longer be considered a mere colonial project of adventurous foreign missionaries. As for the Eastern Churches, within and without formal Catholic communion, they are no longer museum pieces but proclaim their own apostolic authority and fulfil their mission of orthodox faith and liturgical practice in lands far distant from their patriarchal sees.

Some, even within the Catholic Church in the West, have accused Pope John Paul of being out of touch with modern times. But they have been soundly rebuffed by the youth of the world, who come in their enthusiastic hundreds of thousands to attend the Masses he celebrates precisely because they feel the need for the firm moral and doctrinal direction that this frail old man can give them in a rudderless secular society. "And they were astonished at his teaching, for his word was with authority." (Luke iv, 32) John Paul is truly the Pope of the future.

MOTHER TERESA

If you were making a list of the world's most outstanding personalities in the 20th century, could you forget Mother Teresa? If you wanted to name the one outstanding woman of the 20th century, would you name anybody else? Yet this little woman, who was given a solemn state funeral by the mighty Indian Republic and was venerated the world over by people of every religion or none, never held any official position and never owned great wealth or resources. Simply, the world responded to her love. With her heart overflowing with love like that of Christ her model, she could say like St. Paul, "I live, not I, but Christ in me."



The religious life is essentially an effort to imitate the life Christ, but this unfortunately is not possible in all its aspects. Even his love cannot be imitated in all its aspects. Many religious orders have been inspired by Christ's example or meditated on the words of St. John in his First Epistle, (ch. IV, vs. 20-21):

Anyone who says "I love God," and hates his brother is a liar, since a man who does not love the brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen. So this is the commandment that he has given us, that anyone who loves God must also love his brother.

They have laboured hard and long, with great self-sacrifice, to build fine hospitals where they care for the sick, to make fine homes where they care for orphans, and to make fine schools, some for the rich and some for the poor, where they struggle against mankind's greatest enemy, ignorance. But there is an English saying, "As cold as charity". This means that the poor in

particular do not feel the glow of personal sympathy and affection in the great and busy charitable institutions. Although in most cases it is there, it is often hard to see the face of Christ in the face of the priest, monk or nun harassed by problems of administration and finance, and separated from the people they want to serve by descending layers of paid employees. That is why the Missionaries of Charity of Mother Teresa always share the poverty and harsh conditions of those whom they serve.

So if anybody asks why Mother Teresa did not build great institutions for the corporal works of mercy, one can only answer that they already exist and are being added to. What she and her sisters have done is to share the poverty of the poor and so to show them Christ's love. Many a Hindu or Muslim has died on a mattress on the floor in Calcutta, radiant with joy because of the love and kindness of Mother Teresa's nuns or lay helpers, which they would not

have done had they lived their last hours alone on an electrically tilting hospital bed with a needle of serum stuck in their arm, a feeding tube in their throat and oxygen tubes up their nose. This is not to condemn medical or other forms of charity. They are truly needed and any form of hospital work, from cleaning the floor to performing skilled surgery or administering the services, is most often done with a true sense of care and vocation. But whatever attention people receive, they still need love, and it has been the vocation of Mother Teresa and her followers simply to give love in its purest form, something that cannot be defined but is instinctively recognised.

Nobody can claim Mother Teresa in any exclusive way; she was born in 1910 in Skopje in Macedonia but of Albanian parents and later gave her heart to India, which in turn took her to its heart and gave her citizenship. Her family was very devout and gave the young

Gonxhe Bojaxhiu the example of generosity to the poor and unfortunate. She went to Dublin in Ireland to join the Sisters of Loretto and after a year went to a convent of the congregation in Darjeeling, in North-East India. She spent seventeen years teaching, including some as principal of St. Mary's High School in Calcutta.

On September 10, 1946, she was in a train on the way to Darjeeling, which was a mountain resort, having been suspected of developing tuberculosis. It was then, she said, that she received a call from God "to serve him among the poorest of the poor." Within a year she obtained permission to leave the Sisters of Loretto so she could move into the slums of Calcutta and there set up her first school. She soon had followers inspired by her love of the most abandoned and in 1950 received papal permission to found a new order, the Missionaries of Charity. Their habit was a plain white Indian-style sari with a blue border, now familiar the world over. With the help of officials in Calcutta she converted part of an deserted temple dedicated to Kali, Hindu goddess of death and destruction, into the Kalighat Home for the Dying, where the most outcast could die with dignity. Other homes followed all over India where the most abandoned could at least feel that they were wanted. In 1965 Mother Teresa received papal permission to work in other countries.

She received honours from the Indian government, (1962 and 1972), Pope Paul VI (1971) and the United States (1985 and 1996). When she received the Nobel Peace in 1979, she asked the Committee to cancel the dinner in her honour and to use the money instead to feed



400 poor children in India for a year.

Now the Missionaries of Charity have 570 missions around the world and a membership of 4,000. There is a brotherhood of 300 members and over 100,000 lay helpers.

In 1982 she came to Beirut at the height of the siege to rescue 37 sick children unable to return to their parents. She was able to do this because of one day's cease-fire which she had confidently predicted although all had said it would be impossible.

She died on September 5th, 1997 after several years of acute illness caused largely by her exertions. Sister Nirmala, an Indian, became her successor. She was beatified on Sunday, October 19th, 2003 in front of a vast crowd that St. Peter's Square could not contain. Girls performing Indian ritual dance showed how the Church has become Catholic in deed as well as in name. The Muslim community of Albania was represented by its religious

chiefs. Profoundly moving though the ceremony was, it must be admitted that neither Christians nor followers of other beliefs, nor even those of no belief, had waited for the official declaration of the Church before they considered her a saint.

Some sayings of Mother Teresa:

† There is only one God and he is God to all; therefore it is important that everyone is seen as equal before God. I have always said that we should help a Hindu to become a better Hindu, a Muslim to become a better Muslim, a Catholic to become a better Catholic.

† It is poverty to decide that an unborn child must die so that you may live as you like. (Against abortion, often done for purely selfish reasons)

† The dying, the crippled, the mental, the unwanted, the unloved, they are Jesus in disguise. Little things are indeed little, but to be faithful in little things is a great thing.

† There is a terrible hunger for love. We all experience that in our lives – the pain, the loneliness. We must have the courage to recognise it. The poor you may have right in your own family. Find them. Love them.

† The family that prays together stays together; and if you stay together, you will love one another with the same love with which God loves each one of us. (About divorce)

† Let us pray for all married couples, especially for those experiencing problems in their marriage, that they may become one heart full of love in the heart of God.

UNION OF ARAB UNIVERSITIES

NDU MEMBERSHIP

NDU President Father Boutros Tarabay and the Director of Public Relations Mr. Suheil Matar played an active part in the recent meeting of the Union of Arab Universities, which has a membership of 140 universities in various Arab countries and holds a conference every year in one of the member institutions chosen in advance.

This year's conference lasted from the 2nd to the 3rd of October, 2003 and took place in the University of Qatar at the invitation of its Principal, Doctor Sheikhat Bint Abdallah al-Masnad.

The participants discussed and investigated questions affecting the universities, while Mr. Suheil Matar participated in a



The 23rd Conference of the Council of the Union of Arab Universities in the University of Qatar, held from the October 4th to 7th, 2003.

symposium about the role of the universities in strengthening the Arab identity. At the closure of the conference, Notre Dame University-Louaize was elected member of the Union's Executive Committee and an invitation was extended to the Union to hold its next meeting on the campus of the Arab University of Beirut during the month of April, 2004.



Father Boutros Tarabay with Doctor Marwan Rasim Kamal, Secretary General of the Union of Arab Universities.



NDU President Father Boutros Tarabay with the President of the University of Qatar Sheikhat Bint Abdallah Mussanad.



Mayor Michael A. Guido is introduced.

On Thursday, 2nd October, 2003, it was with very great pleasure that Notre Dame University received the visit of **Mr. Michael A. Guido**, Mayor of Dearborn, Michigan, accompanied by a party composed of businessmen, university professors and public figures from the State of Michigan, most of them of Lebanese origin.

After the party had met NDU President **Father Boutros Tarabay** and made a tour of the University, Mayor Guido met faculty members and students in a friendly gathering and told them about relations between Lebanese in Michigan and their country of origin. He insisted in particular on the project for the twinning of Dearborn with Cana in South Lebanon and the cultural and commercial consequences for the two towns involved.

Finally there was a reception in the Museum Hall, where the visitors were introduced to representatives of the media and various members of the University family.

MICHIGAN MAYOR,

Cooperation and Cana-Dearborn Twinning

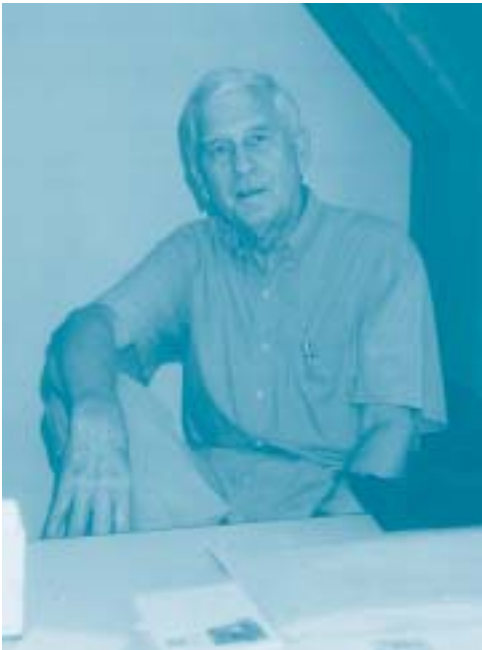


Reception in the NDU President's office.



The Dearborn visitors received at NDU.

MR. DANA PRATT OF THE AFN



Mr. Dana Pratt, welcome visitor to the NDU Spirit editorial offices.

During his short stay in Lebanon, **Mr. Dana Pratt**, President of the American Friends of NDU (AFN), had a series of meetings with Fr. **Boutros Tarabay**, NDU President, **Dr. Ameen Rihani**, Vice President for Sponsored Research and Development, **Dr. Edward Alam**, Director of International Affairs, and **Ms. Guita Hourani**, Researcher of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC). They discussed future projects concerning in particular the relationship between NDU and Lebanese-American communities together with cooperation with universities in the United States.

WEERC INITIATIVE

The Water, Environment and Energy Center (WEERC) of Notre Dame University held a training course for Lebanese and Syrian delegates on negotiations and dispute resolution concerning water resources. This was in collaboration with the Ministry of Electricity and Water and the Economic and Social Commission of West Asia (ESCWA). The first half of the proceedings took place at the ESCWA premises in Beirut on Wednesday 22nd October and Thursday morning 23rd October, and the second half at the NDU campus on Thursday afternoon and during Friday, 24th October.



Dr. John Martin Trondalen, UN expert.

The participants were welcomed by NDU President **Father Boutros Tarabay**, who thanked them for making the seminar possible. He named in particular the guests of the Syrian delegation, namely:

Engineer Kais El-Asad, Director General of Irrigation for the Orontes Basin,

Engineer Tarek Ibrahim, Director General of Irrigation for the Sahel (Naher El-Kabir basin),

Engineer Ibrahim Shhadat, Director General of Irrigation for the Yarmouk Basin.

Engineer Fadia Abdelnour, Director of Water Resources.

Also:

Dr. John Martin Trondalen, Norwegian expert at the UN and Chairman of COMPASS, coming from Switzerland,

Dr. Fadi Comair, Director of the Lebanese Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) and Director of the WEERC,

Mr. Nazir Bandak from Jordan, and the Engineers of MEW, including all the lecturers.

Father Tarabay recalled that the aim of the Center was to investigate water and energy resources and the state of the environment in Lebanon and the MENA region under its multi-facial aspects. Its role was to develop appropriate strategies and to provide training for the proper optimisation and integrated management of water and energy use, for a prosperous environment. He added that all those present had come to learn and take advantage of the different experiences concerning cooperation between countries sharing trans-boundary rivers. The Conference was to be the learning tool for future negotiations and dispute resolutions concerning international water resources.

Recently, said the NDU President, basing themselves on the UN Convention on non-navigational water resources, the MEW and the Ministry of Irrigation in Syria had successfully cooperated on signing a convention on the Orontes and Naher El-Kabir rivers. These conventions should serve as a model for cooperation and understanding between neighbouring countries sharing trans-boundary basins. The subject of the Conference came within the scope of the Center's objectives concerning water and environment, which could be summarised as follows:

Analysis and management of international trans-boundary groundwater policy and regulatory issues.



Dr. Fadi Comair, Director General MEW, with NDU President Father Boutros Tarabay.

Regulatory framework for international water course and conflict resolution along with the UN Convention on Non-Navigational Water Courses.

Methodology analysis and management of international environmental conflict on rivers.

Settlement and resolution of conflicts and implementation of legal and institutional arrangements.

Finally, Father Tarabay said that the use of water should be regarded as a human need and as a tool of peace rather than as a tool for conflicts and war.

The next to speak was the Director General of the Ministry of Water and Energy and Director of WEERC, Dr. Fadi Comair, who explained that the aim of the particular session was to exchange experiences in the negotiations between Lebanon and Syria, which had taken place under United Nations sponsorship, and to use the results to establish international terminologies according to the criteria set by the UN.

Dr. John Trondalen then talked about the experience of the United Nations in the international law covering water and the negotiation criteria.



An international gathering of experts.

Closing the Conference on Friday October 24, Dr. Comair discussed the experience of Lebanon in the framework of the agreement between Lebanon and Syria on the Orontes (Arabic El Aassi) and Kabir rivers.

V D N V R O W E W

MEMORANDA

From the President's Office

6th June, 2003:

Appointment:

Mr. Maroun Mhanna as driver. *With effect from 1st April, 2003.*

Transfers:

Ms. Elsie Khoury from Library Circulation Assistant to Secretary, Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design.

Ms. Gisele Mrad from Library Cataloguing Assistant to Secretary, Division of Computing Services.

Ms. Reine Wehbe from Operator (Main Campus) to Operator, Division of Continuing Education (Old Campus).

With effect from 1st April, 2003.

Mr. Abdo Bejjani from Maintenance Worker to Photographer at the Radio/Television Studio. *With effect from June 1st, 2003.*

Promotion:

Mr. Maroun El Rayess from Security Officer to Library Circulation Assistant. *With effect from 1st April, 2003.*

9th June, 2003:

Appointment:

Mrs. Najat Azar as Assistant Director of Administration for Staff Quality Management (SQM), reporting directly to Fr. Roger Chicri, Director of Administration. *With effect from 1st July, 2003.*

24th July, 2003:

Promotions:

Dr. Walid Assaf to Professor.

Dr. Jean Fares to Professor.

Dr. Najj B. Oueijan to Professor.

Dr. Fouad Chedid to Professor.

Dr. Mansour Eid to Associate Professor.

Dr. Edward Alam to Associate Professor.

Mr. Robert Haddad to Associate Professor.

Miss Amira Van Loan from Instructor to Lecturer

With effect from 1st October, 2003.

7th August, 2003:

Promotion: Mr. George Hajjar from

Lecturer to Senior Lecturer. *With effect from 1st October, 2003.*

22nd September, 2003:

Appointments/Reappointments:

Mr. Suheil Matar as Director General, Public Relations and Information, and Presidential Counselor.

Dr. George M. Eid, VP as Academic Affairs.

Dr. Ameen A. Rihani as VP, Sponsored Research and Development.

Dr. Boulos Sarru' as Dean, FH.

Dr. Shahwan Khoury as Dean, FE and Acting Dean, FAAD.

Dr. Elie Yachouhi, Dean FBAE.

Dr. Assaad Eid, Director, NDU-SC.

Mr. Salim Karam, Director, NDU-NLC.

Dr. Michel Nehmeh and Dr. Jean Fares to continue with their responsibilities as Deans of FPSPAD and FNAS respectively.

29th September, 2003:

Appointment and reappointment of Department Chairpersons for the academic year 2003-2004:

Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design:

Mr. Habib Melki, Chairperson, Department of Design.

Dr. Farid Younes, Chairperson, Department of Architecture.

Faculty of Business Administration and Economics:

Mr. Antoine Khalil, Chairperson, Department of Economics, Accounting and Finance.

Dr. Rashid Saber, Department of Management and Marketing.

Dr. Youssef Zgheib, Department of Hotel Management and Tourism.

Faculty of Engineering:

Dr. Elias Nasser, Chairperson, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer and Communication Engineering.

Dr. Walid Assaf, Chairperson, Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Dr. Jacques Harb, Chairperson, Department of Civil Engineering.

Faculty of Humanities:

Dr. Amal Yazigi, Chairperson, Department of English, Education and Translation.

Dr. Joseph Ajami, Chairperson, Department of Mass Communication.

Dr. Doumit Salameh, Chairperson, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Faculty of Applied and Natural Sciences:

Dr. Amer Jajou, Chairperson, Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

Dr. Doris Jaalouk, Chairperson, Department of Sciences.

Dr. Hoda Maalouf, Chairperson, Department of Computer Science.

Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy:

Dr. Chahine Ghais, Department Chairperson.

NDU-Shouf Campus:

Dr. Fouad Chedid, Chairperson, Science and Engineering Programs.

Appointments/Reappointments at NDU Shouf Campus for the academic year 2003-2004:

Mr. Farid Haykal, Assistant Director of Admissions.

Miss Claudine Chamoun, Library.

Mr. Fadi Khoury, Assistant Registrar and Assistant Director of DCE

2nd October, 2003:

Appointment: Dr. Nabil Haddad as Assistant Director of SAO at NDU Shouf Campus for the academic year 2003-2004.

15th October, 2003:

Reappointment: Mr. Gaby El Hage as Assistant Director of Administration for Physical Plant for the academic year 2003-2004.

Continuation of Mr. Fawzi Baroud as Director of DCE until further notice.

M. MCALISTER ON AMERICAN IMAGES

On 30th September, 2003, Dr. Melanie McAlister gave a talk in Friends Hall, Main Campus, on American Images of the Middle East. This was at the invitation of the Faculties of Humanities and of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy, in cooperation with the United States Embassy in Beirut, the latter represented by H.E. Ambassador Vincent Battle, Cultural Attaché Ms. Elizabeth Wharton, and others. The speaker was welcomed by Dr. Boulos Sarru', Dean of Humanities, and Dr. Ameen Rihani, Vice President for Sponsored Research and Development, in the presence of Dr. Michel Nehme, Dean of PSPAD, faculty members and students, who formed an eager audience despite the short notice.

Doctor Melanie McAlister is at present Assistant Professor of American Studies at the George Washington University. She obtained a B.A., *summa cum laude*, in International Studies (Middle East), and a Ph.D. in American Civilization at Brown University. She has been Visiting Fellow at Princeton University Center for the Study of Religion and Non-Resident Fellow at Harvard's W.E.B. Du Bois Center. She was a finalist for the Cinema Studies Award, 1996. Other distinctions and learned publications are too numerous to mention but the ones given suffice to show the breadth of her research. She has worked on public education and lobbying concerning US policy and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

In his introduction, Dr. Boulos Sarru' remarked that Dr. McAlister was engaged in encountering the challenges of her discipline in teaching, researching or lecturing in the US and abroad. One focal issue in her scholarship was the exploration of the variables of American interest in the Middle East whether they were related to politics, sociology, or religion. Her various publications and presentations in the field reflected a growing involvement in exploring the uneasy interaction between America and the Middle East, particularly in the domains of Islam and feminism.



Dr. Melanie McAlister holds her audience.

Indeed, said Dr. Sarru', the discipline of American Studies inherited from its source name the angular paradoxes of theory and practice, of past and present, of heaven and earth. But in these same paradoxes lay the richness of the discipline. Although most colleges in the United States had simplified the discipline into specialized studies in history, literature, sociology, folklore, and even political science, the fact remained that the gestalt of the discipline remained greater than its parts. Was not the "Americanness" of the United States greater than all its constituent nationalities, including the Middle Eastern ones?

Dr. Sarru' further remarked that the challenges of the interdisciplinary discipline were safe theoretical scholarly conjectures compared to the possible pitfalls of applying it to specific content areas such as the one being address today. Dr. McAlister's lecture, entitled "American Perception of the Middle East 1949-1991", designed from the point of view of an American Studies specialist, brought in at the outset two interrelated areas of the world, ones brought together and drawn apart by mutual and private interests. The title, though accurate and dealing with a decade-old era, was unfortunate as it resonated,

especially these days, with imperial ambitions and evoked memories of a much deeper past that had already elapsed before the discovery of the New Continent. Moreover, the lurking irony was that Middle Eastern threads were woven into the texture of the American fabric, and to a great extent this same fabric was desired by the Middle East. Hopefully, they were not two star-crossed lovers, but stars spangled in the skies of a better world.

Introducing her talk, Dr. McAlister made it clear that she did not come to present or defend United States



H.E. USA Ambassador Vincent Battle, Embassy staff and NDU Faculty listening.



Dr. Ameen Rihani of NDU with H.E. USA Ambassador Vincent Battle.

policies. Her concern was the image Americans had of themselves reflected in their attitude to the Middle East. When she had organised a seminar on such questions, people came knowing that they had stereotyped images that were wrong; they realised that not all Palestinians were “terrorists” or all Arabs rich oil sheiks. But they had no other images or information. Americans needed to educate themselves and it was for **American Studies in the Middle East** to allow people here to better understand the United States and to know how to talk about the Middle East to Americans, many of whom were hungry for information.

Also, Americans had deep emotional investments in their view of the Middle East and the U.S. role. Their films, music and television played a profound role not only in their view of the Middle East but also in their view of themselves. There were “moral geographies” in the world marking not only states but also regions, cultural groupings and ethnic or racial territories. She was describing images not because she agreed with them but on the contrary because she found them dangerous.

There were groups in the United States for debate and cross-cultural understanding and even for arguing for Palestinian rights, but today

Dr. McAlister wanted to focus on types of ignorance produced as knowledge. The history of moral geography about the Middle East had gone through roughly three periods. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries it had been seen as exotic and passionate, a view which was an outlet for feeling suppressed by late Victorian prudery. This was illustrated by showing the audience an extract from the famous silent film *The Sheik*, starring Rudolf Valentino, with its suggestive soft black-and-white lighting. After World War II, the Middle East was seen as familiar and giving a welcome to American interests and here the Protestant Bible tradition played a role. The Americans imagined themselves as anti-imperialists. It was noticeable that in films about Jewish or early Christian history, the Egyptians and Romans were generally portrayed by British actors and the Jews or Christians by American ones. Then, with the 1970s, the Middle East was seen as violent, incomprehensible and dangerous. In the case of Iran after the affair of the American embassy there, American television depoliticised the issues by focusing on personal, human, family drama on the hostages’ side while leaving the Iranians as an unindividualised mass with incomprehensible political demands, the real issues being ignored.

Now the U.S. media were still representing American power as “benevolent” and the Middle East as an incomprehensible region of fear. But the story was not uncomplicated. There was a very progressive movement, involving Arab Christians as well as Muslims, since all could be discriminated against as Arab or Middle Eastern. Dr. McAlister spoke of ladies meeting in a church, not experts on the Middle East, who knew that they had to refuse bigotry and hatred, to choose solidarity, to insist on freedom of religion and to see other people’s lives as valuable like their own. Both sides had to refuse the easy path of moral geographies drawn in black and white. American studies in the United States were not about loving or hating America but about engaging its diversity. Both in the United States and here, said Dr. McAlister, our task was to speak to each other and to our own communities about the challenges that lay ahead.

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After lunch in the University, there was a lengthy meeting between the visitors and faculty members in the offices of the Dean of Humanities, Dr. Boulos Sarru’, and the Dean of PSPAD, Dr. Michel Nehme.

LERC FORUM

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center is an ambitious new institution of Notre Dame University-Louaize which under the active direction of Ms Guita Haurani, emigration specialist, comes to fill a need at a time when there is a realisation that there are more Lebanese outside Lebanon than in their homeland itself.



The opening: left to right, Dr. Boulos Sarru', Mr. Haytham Jum'aa, Bishop Munjid Al-Hashem, NDU President Fr. Boutros Tarabay, Mr. Suheil Matar, Dr. Ameen Rihani, Member of Parliament Nehmetallah Abi Naser.

The LERC first of all intends to document and to contact Lebanese in positions of influence abroad, starting with university scholars and those in positions of Lebanese community leadership, irrespective, needless to say, of religious affiliation. To bring attention to its activities the Center held a forum in Friends Hall, NDU Main Campus, on Friday, June 27th, entitled *Lebanese Emigration: Impact and Capitalization*.

Proceedings opened at 9.15 with an introduction by NDU Director of Public Relations **Mr. Suheil Matar**, who pointed out that emigration was now a prominent issue both at the Maronite Patriarchal Synod and at the upcoming meeting of the Council of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops in Lebanon due to take place in November of the present year 2003.

The Very Reverend **Father Boutros Tarabay**, President of NDU, declared that, with the Lebanese Emigration Research Center, Notre Dame University was addressing the subject on the academic level, as was being done abroad but so far not in Lebanon.

Bishop Munjid Al-Hashem reminded his audience that the subject of the coming regular session of the Council of Patriarchs and Bishops in Lebanon to be held in November 2003 was "Emigration and Expansion". Now non-Christians as well as Christians were emigrating due to the economic and political situation and while Lebanese were relinquishing their citizenship this was being given to others unaccustomed to coexistence between different communities. Therefore the government should encourage the registration of children born outside Lebanon so as to ensure for them and their families the citizenship which was theirs by right.

The Director General of Emigrant Affairs **Haytham Jum'aa** admitted that the links between emigrants and their motherland had not been raised to the level of national interest and did not go much beyond polite formalities. To invigorate these contacts there should be a) world associations of businessmen who would invest in Lebanon and encourage support for projects by foreign companies, b) a "House of the Emigrant" in Beirut for information, for investment consultancy,

and for help with administrative procedure, etc., and c) free zone areas to encourage emigrants to benefit from tax and duty-free incentives.

Taking as his subject *Lebanese Emigration: Native Seeds in Foreign Soil*, **Dr. Boulos Sarru'**, NDU Dean of Humanities, said that NDU intended to launch a programme of Lebanese Emigration Studies covering the historical, social, geographic, demographic, religious, political, linguistic and literary experiences and the expressions of the ingenuity of the Lebanese contribution to the world.

Professor **Ameen A. Rihani**, NDU Vice President for Sponsored Research and Development, said that from the Lebanese perspective it was imperative to build a kind of "Hall of Fame" of university professors, businessmen, engineers, lawyers, doctors, writers and artists. From the emigrants' perspective it was indispensable to go back to the roots for the family tree, personal documents, village contacts and the old customs and traditions. This was where the LERC's objectives had been defined and built on.



1st session, left to right: Dr. Georges Labaki, Dr. Ali Fa'our, H.E. Ambassador Stephanie Shwabsky (Australia), Eng. Chadi Mas'ad, H.E. Ambassador Puente Ortega (Mexico), H.E. Ambassador Fawzi Salloukh.

The LERC aimed at setting a pattern of work with research projects and documentation, to become a reference point for scholars all over the world. Unfortunately, most Lebanese-Americans and Lebanese Brazilians had never once visited Lebanon, so their interest in rebuilding their connection with the home country should be encouraged. Dr. Rihani ended by promising that in the near future the LERC would be presenting clear and specific projects.

* * * * *

The first session began at 10 o'clock. It had *The Geography of Lebanese Emigration* as its theme and was chaired by Engineer **Chadi Mas'ad**, who presented Australian Ambassador **Mrs. Stephanie Shwabsky**. She spoke of a small, mainly Christian, Lebanese emigration to Australia in the 19th century, followed by a sharp rise prior to World War I as young males sought to avoid conscription into the Ottoman army. Following World War II there were increasing numbers coming from North Lebanon. After 1967 there was a 200% increase resulting from regional instability and an active Australian policy of seeking new immigrants. From 1975, with the inflow resulting from the Lebanese War, special consideration was given to Lebanese desiring to immigrate or extend their stay. Muslims began to enter in

large numbers and in 1996 27,000 out of Australia's 200,000 Muslims were Lebanese-born. At present, immigration was mostly in the form of family reunion rather than business-related as unfortunately there was little bilateral trade.

The Ambassador said that her embassy was currently issuing 1,000 immigration visas yearly and thousands of visitor visas for those going to see relatives. Now there were about 300,000 Australian Lebanese, largely concentrated around Sydney, where one could hear Arabic and enjoy access to Arabic papers and magazines, radio stations, television, including LBC Satellite, and videotapes, as well as Lebanese food and music. Life continued to be centred on the mosques and churches. Lebanese-Australians included such prominent individuals as the current Governor of New South Wales, the former Lord Mayor of Sydney and the present premier of Victoria.

Ambassador **Puente Ortega** of Mexico dealt with Lebanese emigration to Mexico. Mexicans of Lebanese origin numbered some 500,000. Immigration on a considerable scale started in 1878 and Lebanese integrated themselves by selling with an instalment sales system that suited the rural poor. A certain Pedro Slim, father of prominent businessman Carlos Slim, founded a kind of savings bank that

made the system easier. The second generation learnt flawless Spanish and studied in universities while the perfectly integrated third generation included men of wealth whose business operations even extended beyond the borders. At the same time these Mexicans of Lebanese origin at times turned their eyes towards their roots and so contemporary Lebanon should perhaps help the emigration to feel also Lebanese.

His Excellency mentioned senators and state governors of Lebanese origin and insisted on the contribution of Lebanese-Mexicans to public medicine. The Lebanese Center of Mexico had organised many professional associations such as *Al-Muhami* for lawyers, *Al-Hakim* for doctors and *Al-Fannan* for artists and intellectuals. The distinguished architect Negib Simón had built the famous Federal District Sports City in 1946 and there were many important Lebanese-Mexicans in the film industry. Now the Mexican Embassy was strengthening relations with Lebanese universities, NDU in particular.

Dealing with Lebanese emigration to Africa, Ambassador **Fawzi Salloukh** explained that this went back to the 1880s, when Lebanese, on being faced with difficulties at Marseille, found the colonial authorities in South and West Africa more receptive. They worked in com-



3rd session, left to right: Dr. Riyad Tabbara, Dr. Latif Abul-Husn, Dr. Farid El-Khazen, H.E. Ambassador Fouad El-Turk, Mr. Dreid Yaghi, Ms. Guita Hourani.

merce and construction so successfully that they soon almost monopolised both sectors. They contributed extensively to the building of hospitals, schools, churches and mosques and helped educate the African children as well as making schools for their own children where Arabic was taught. Ambassador Salloukh urged the Lebanese government to strengthen relationships with Lebanese in Africa particularly with reference to past agreements and to invite heads of diplomatic missions to a conference that would discuss issues facing the Lebanese emigration in Africa.

Speaking on emigration to Europe and Asia, **Doctor Ali Fa'our** pointed out that this was comparatively recent, mainly since 1945, and mostly in the direction of the Gulf countries, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. Emigration to the Gulf was work-related and emigration to Europe work-and-study related. Between 1975 and 1994, 91,845 went to France, 26,244 to Italy and 24,057 to Italy. To stop this hæmorrhage a new social contract was needed, ensuring justice and stability.

Emigration to North America was dealt with by **Doctor Georges Labaki**, NDU Associate Professor. He explained that the Mutassarifate cut Mount Lebanon off from the coastal cities and the richest parts of the country, so the inhabitants of this confined area had to seek prosperity and freedom from oppression overseas. Being peasants without professional skills, the Lebanese travelled as hawkers, visiting remote settlements, before setting up their own retail and wholesale establishments. The Faour brothers from Hadeth el-Jebbe established a bank in Lower Manhattan shortly after the War of Secession. Dr. Labaki then turned to Canada, where Lebanese immigration started in 1882 but was limited until the end of World War II. It boomed in the 1960s and the years following 1975, helped by Canadian immigration policies and special measures favouring Lebanese. An estimated 36,823 Lebanese immigrated

permanently between 1991 and 2000 and 7,330 went as students.

The Lebanese presence in the Arab World was surveyed by **Mr. Samir Kreidiyeh**, who said that this was characterised by the expatriates' continued attachment to Lebanon, their contribution to its recovery and their longing to return home. There were 150,000 in Saudi Arabia, 65,000 in the Emirates, 48,000 in Egypt, 34,000 in Kuwait, 17,000 in other Gulf countries, 21,000 in North Africa, 2,000 in Iraq and 1,800 in Jordan. The oil boom in the Gulf had drawn not only employees from Lebanon but also investors, bankers, financiers and media, construction and advertising companies. These expatriates had invested enormously in the financial life of Lebanon and continued to do so.

Doctor Marco Aurélio Machado de Oliveira, Associate Professor of the History and Humanities Department at Mato Grosso do Sul Federal University in Brazil sent a paper detailing the problems of identity of immigrants in his region coming from Lebanon and Syria, who in the early days were treated as Ottoman Turks.

After coffee break, the second session, starting at 11.30 and chaired by Member of Parliament **Dr. Mosbah al-Ahdab**, dealt with the social and economic impact of emigration. **Mr. Antoine Akl** was due to deliver a paper on **The Legal Dimension of Regaining Lebanese Citizenship** but was unable to come on account of urgent business out of the country.

Doctor Elie Yachouhi considered economic hæmorrhage as a cause of emigration, saying that application of the classical, Keynesian and modern economic theories revealed deficiencies in the economic, financial and monetary policies of the Lebanese government, resulting in unemployment and emigration. Restricted budgetary policy had had a negative impact and a more balanced development policy was needed.

Dr. Boutros Labaki dealt with the whole question of

H.E. Ambassador Puente Ortega with Mexican Embassy 1st Secretary Ramon Tonatiuh Romero.



whether Lebanon lost or gained by emigration

Doctor Amal Saleeby Malek of NDU discussed the problems of families returning to Lebanon. Lebanese had felt that living abroad would be safer than living in war-torn Lebanon, but many were happy to have returned as in Lebanon the children's environment was safer from drugs, alcohol and sexual permissiveness, and parental control was easier.

Despite family ties and the desire to return to one's roots, the return was not easy. Children sometimes felt that they had little in common with what, they were told, was their own homeland and culture and often needed time to reintegrate. There was the question of whether schools were prepared to receive the newcomers and had appropriate programmes and teacher training. Finally, Dr. Malek stressed the contribution of returnees as agents of change and the need to help them re-integrate.

Mr. Elie Saab spoke of the role of emigrants in developing the Lebanese economy overseas, for example enabling *Château Kefraya* to export wine even to France.

At 12.30 the third session, entitled *Capitalising on Emigration*, was opened with **Ambassador Fouad El-Turk** in the chair. **Doctor Riyad Tabbara** was the first speaker in the session, taking as his subject *Optimizing the Role of Lebanese Emigrants in Politics*.

Treating the *Past and Present Defining Features of Lebanese Emigration*, **Doctor Farid El-Khazen** remarked that some considered emigration as a liability for Lebanon as it meant a loss of resources and skills while others saw it as an asset. He pointed out that the influence of expatriates on Lebanese political causes had probably been greater than that of politicians in Lebanon. However, after the 1970s the political influence of the emigrants had been divisive as they had championed the causes of their respective communities and political parties at home.

Emigration had also generated wealth, much of which had been invested in Lebanon. In recent years wealthy businessmen had been more involved in Lebanese politics than previously. But the impact of emigration was most significant and globalised in the fields of culture and learning. While emigration had originally been mostly Christian and Druze, now the "emigration gap" between communities had been largely bridged over. Adding that there was a lack of official interest in the question of emigration, Dr. Khazen insisted that there should be research on incentives for expatriates to make either a permanent or a temporary return home and here the NDU Lebanese Emigration Research Center was a potentially successful and long overdue endeavour.

Doctor Latif Abul-Husn was concerned with "organising the rela-

tionship between emigrants and Lebanon" so as to minimise the bad consequences of emigration and take full advantage of the good side. There were ties of kinship, village affiliation, religion and language to be used.

Mr. Dreid Yaghi insisted on the emigrant's right to retain his Lebanese citizenship, to vote and to take part in political public life and decision-making in Lebanon. There were certain legal ambiguities about the Lebanese citizenship of those born abroad in spite of Lebanese law relying on blood kinship.

Finally, facts and figures were given by LERC researcher **Ms. Guita Hourani**. Of the 900,000 who emigrated 1975-2001, 54.4% left between 1975 and 1990. Of these, 60.4% were between 20 and 34 years of age, but only 16.8% of the 26.6% who left between 1996 and 2001. Over the last few years emigrant remittances home had reached an average of \$1.63 billion annually, making up 14% of the Gross Domestic Product, sometimes revitalising certain sectors where they were used for purchasing equipment and raw materials. Studies were needed on human capital loss, the fiscal impact of highly skilled emigration, taxing human capital flows, and remittances vs. human capital and tax loss.

Proceedings ended at 2 p.m. with lunch at the invitation of the NDU President.

WELCOME TO DR. YACHOUHI



It is a pleasure for NDU Spirit to welcome to its pages the new Dean of Business Administration and Economics, Dr. Elie Yachouhi. For his part, he kindly agreed to answer some questions about himself, his intentions for his Faculty and the prospects for his many students, whose number fully justifies the importance we attach to this interview.

Spirit: First of all, Doctor, do you think that the great popularity of your particular Faculty is fully justified? Where are there sufficient career openings? Will our friends the Arab Gulf States continue to offer a field of employment for graduates? Incidentally, would you agree that work there has the advantage that it does not involve a “brain drain” but is an economic advantage for Lebanon?

Dr. E. Yachouhi: Yes, because we live in a country where trade and business represent its past and also a way of life of its citizens. However, Lebanon is suffering from a high unemployment rate, especially among its youth. Emigration is solving a part of the problem, but let us remind ourselves that emigration represents a vast waste of human resources.

Arab Gulf States continue their development and their huge infrastructure projects. So Lebanese of different levels and different skills continue to contribute to these important tasks and they are always getting through. I think that the Arab Gulf States will continue to demand the Lebanese labor force, with certain ups and downs depending on the varying regional political situations.

Capital transfers toward Lebanon are saving our country from a very deep depression. Working abroad is to be considered a “brain drain” but with the failure of internal economic policies it could be an economic advantage for Lebanon. When the balance of payments in Lebanon registers an excess it is always because of savings transfers from Lebanese workers in the rest of the world.

Spirit: Now please tell us something about your past studies and career.

Dr. E. Yachouhi: I hold an Industrial Engineering diploma from Lille University in France, 1975, and a *Doctorat d’Etat* in Economics from Paris IX Dauphine, 1982. I am an economist who is strongly involved in public life in Lebanon.

Spirit: How did you come into contact with NDU?

Dr. E. Yachouhi: I was first contacted by the Director of Public Relations, after which I met the NDU President and was appointed.

Spirit: What are your intentions as Dean? What future developments in the Faculty do you foresee?

Dr. E. Yachouhi: I have started to move and hope that all will go well. Several *ad hoc* committees have been formed to study the possibility of launching new degrees at both BBA and MBA levels such as new BBA options concentrated on Transportation, Health Economy Management, Economy of Energy, and International Economy and Finance, and new MBA options concentrated on Economics and Hotel Management, as well as a new Executive MBA for experienced professionals in Lebanon. I have met individually with Faculty members, with whom I exchanged points of view while listening carefully to their suggestions. Of course, I respect the anonymity of their opinions.

I intend to devote time and effort to care about the human resources in the Faculty, doing my best to enhance the members’ skills and updating their courses. I mean to distribute handouts to the students to direct their researches. The welfare of the Faculty members is important for reinforcing their motivation, so a lounge will be arranged within the Faculty premises where members can meet, talk, and drink their coffee in peace without being showered with petitions and “students’ incursions”.

Spirit: Have you any final message for the students?

Dr. E. Yachouhi: My message for the students is the following-

You are closely advised and guided by your teachers, you will benefit from more performing teaching services, and so you will acquire all the skills necessary for competing with others on the labor market inside and outside Lebanon. Be always confident and optimistic; life is the greatest gift we have received, so let us make it fruitful and constructive.

FATHER BOULOS WEHBE, DIRECTOR SAO

There is a new face in the Student Affairs Office, one that is welcome and welcoming, the face of Father Boulos Wehbe. One of our first concerns this semester was to introduce him through questions and answers in the pages of *NDU Spirit*. –Ed.



Spirit: Reverend Father, you are a member of the Orthodox community of Beirut. What first brought you into contact with the more – let us say – “mountaineer” Maronite Monks and NDU?

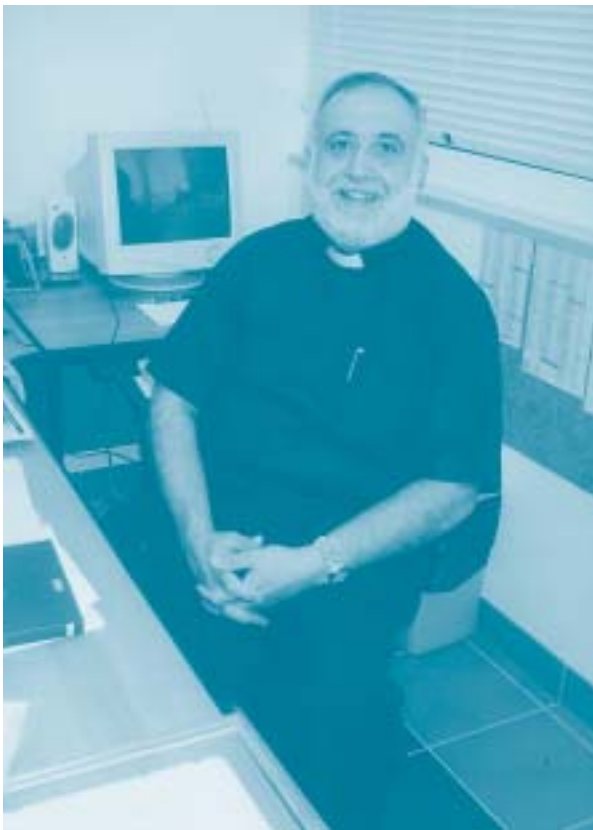
Father Wehbe: I knew, of course, of NDU, but the one who made me more aware of it was the late philanthropist Pierre Abou Khater, who urged me to apply for a teaching position here. That was in the summer of 2001, when I started giving a section of the course Religion 212 and another of Human Thought 306. It was instant love, which continues to grow every day. I felt so much warmth and everyone around became a family to me, a fact which induced me to give to NDU all that I could give and to participate in the different facets of its life. I have never been happier professionally. For me this is a university which has a solid Christian character while yet being open to everyone in love and equality. It enjoys and exhibits a deep sense of mission coupled with an ever-rising academic standard and an orientation of a university which is “community oriented” through the different symposia and endeavours it undertakes. This gives it a unique flavour and the promise of much more to come.

Spirit: Please tell us something about your past life, studies and career.

Father Wehbe: I joined the school International College (IC) when I was 10 years old and graduated from it to join AUB and obtain a B.BA (Bachelor of Business Administration). But I was realising more and more that Business was not my “cup of tea”, which made me choose to enroll in an expanded MA programme at AUB called *Arab and Middle East Studies*, which is a multi-disciplinary one offering courses in various disciplines while focusing on one. I chose Cultural Anthropology and fell in love with it mainly due to the influence of the late Professor Fuad Khuri, who took me in like a son – a relationship that lasted until his departure a few months ago. I later tried myself out as a “social researcher” and “advertising executive”, only to discover that I was gradually being called to much more. I was ordained deacon in 1983, the year when I started university teaching, and priest in 1985. I had previously got married and now live happily with my 20-year-old daughter.

Spirit: It seems that you have a special interest in ecumenical matters. What is your attitude about inter-Church relations and what have your activities in this field included?

Father Wehbe: I do not believe in segregation although I take pride in my ecclesiastical tradition and delight in people who are open to do the same. I very much believe in dialogue and mutual benefit; it is really the same spirit that makes people acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ and it is the spirit of the Lord who makes all produce goodness and beauty. I have been involved with the Middle East Council of Churches ever since I was a university student, at one time spending a whole semester on a lecturing and awareness tour in upstate New York with American families and in Protestant churches – a similar thing to what I did a year ago in several states of the USA.. I am also the coordinator of a pioneering Catechism programme, having been delegated by the Synod of the Patriarchs of the East together with my late soul



brother, the giant Father Jean Corbon, the pioneering apostle of ecumenism in the East. This initiative is in the process of producing a common Christian Education programme that represents the teaching of all the Churches and is oriented to all the pre-university classes. The project is the work of a multi-denominational committee and is supervised by a committee of bishops representing all the Churches.

My attitude about inter-Church relations is a simple one: all those who profess Jesus as Lord are geared by the same Holy Spirit and as such should realise that their “sonship” in Him entails the realisation of their brotherhood towards each other. This can be achieved only if each is rooted in his tradition while embracing the work of the Spirit in the tradition of the other and, for that matter, in other religions and experiences. Much is done in this respect, and I insist, as I have always insisted, that Lebanon is the most ecumenical country on earth, and we have a mode to radiate to others. Our Patriarchs and prelates come together in official and unofficial meetings and our priests come together under the auspices of the Middle East Council of Churches and in other capacities. Many of them cooperate in local parish work and in this context have formed lasting friendships. Many of the Christian marriages are between members of different Churches. Much more can be cited in this respect.

Spirit: You once said that you considered yourself a disciple of Father Corbon. Please tell us something about Father Corbon and your relationship with him.

Father Wehbe: I first met Father Corbon in 1997, when he approached me to be his co-coordinator to form a joint Christian committee representing all the Churches to devise a common ecumenical Christian Catechism programme which he had already worked on and prepared in outline with topics delegated by the Synod of the Patriarchs of the East. With the passing of the years I was pushed into becoming his disciple and a believer in his sainthood – and I am not exaggerating, for he is most certainly interceding for our project. We became soul-brothers and I benefited from him so much, from his smile and from his humility, and from his staunch commitment to love.

Spirit: We understand that your cooperation with the Muslim community has been much appreciated. What form has this taken?

Father Wehbe: I live in a predominantly Muslim area as I have always done and have undertaken parish work in another – both in Beirut. I have woven a nice web of relationships and participated in many conferences, symposia, lectures and TV appearances (especially on the *Al-Manar* channel.) I am aware of the complexities of the Muslim scene with regard to the presence of fundamentalists, but I have often called and try to practice a “dialogue of life” whereby we can all partake of the particular beauty that the other has. This produces a model to be cultivated.

Spirit: What are your intentions in your new post as Director SAO?

Father Wehbe: My intention as the new SAO Director is to try and re-cultivate a spirit of love and mutual respect between the students and to try to motivate them into feeling and practising their spiritual and family values in a spirit of love. I would also like to see many of them turn more towards social and intellectual concerns.

Spirit: May we say that religious fanaticism is generally hypocrisy and that true religion brings people together?

Father Wehbe: True religion should be a catalyst of love and of embracing God’s bounty and love everywhere and in all. If it does not do so, it is bound to be an instrument of reinforcing complexes and false affiliations.

Spirit: Have you a final word for students of NDU and even students in general?

Father Wehbe: Not more than I have outlined in my answer to the last question.

NORTH NEWS

NDU Yearly Fund-Raising Dinner



“Working Together to Better Serve the Educated Youth of Lebanon”

October 24, 2003 was the date for holding NDU-NLC Fund-Raising Dinner, which this year took place at Marina del Sol, Anfeh. This event comes within the framework of NDU’s general education plan and the Financial Aid Program for needy students, for which NDU has provided adequate support ever since its foundation.

Those present were members of the Board of Trustees, heads of Departments, Faculty members, staff and students.

The President of the University, Father Boutros Tarabay, was unable to attend due to his having another event on hand, namely the inauguration of the new sports facilities at the NDU Main Campus, which took place on the same date.

Doctor Salim Karam, Director of NDU-NLC, indicated that the proceeds of this fund-raising activity would go to those students whose financial status had been previously determined as “in need” or who were academically “outstanding”. He added that at least thirty students would benefit from this fund.



COMMUNIO

The first *Communio* meeting of the new academic year 2003-2004 was held on Thursday, 30th October, at 4 p.m.. Those taking part were Dr. Edward J. Alam (Humanities), Mr. Jean-Pierre El-Asmar (Architecture), Ms. Thérèse Chbat (Humanities), Dr. Johan Gärde (ISORCS), Dr. Tony Hage (Science), Dr. George Hassoun (Engineering), Mr.K.J. Mortimer (*NDU Spirit*), Dr. Doumit Salameh (Humanities), Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous (PSPAD) and Mrs. Dina Sensenig-Dabbous. Thus the traditions of the apostolic Churches, the Reformation and Sunnite Islam were all represented. Father Boulos Wehbe, Director SAO, was absent after a small accident, but it is hoped that he will be present at the next meeting, together with Fr. Martin McDermott S.J. and Father Ross Frey B.S., who were also unable to attend because of special circumstances.

The subject was reactions to US General "Jerry" Boykin (named by Donald Rumsfeld as Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence), who has been going around churches in army uniform, presenting himself as a "holy warrior" of Christianity against Islam, which according to him worships an idol. Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous (Mennonite Christian) opened the discussion about "Who are Muslims (and *Jews*) praying to?" It was immediately clear that the official declarations of the Christian Church are diametrically opposed to those of the General. For example, the decree *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican Council II declares, "But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place among whom are the Moslems; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together they adore with us the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day." Texts were quoted from the New Testament and the Noble Koran.

The next meeting has been fixed provisionally for 5 p.m. on Monday, 8th December, 2003. As usual, interested persons of any religious persuasion, from inside or outside the University, will be welcome. Information may be obtained from Dr. Edward Alam's office at NDU, extension 2415 or 2502.

**ADMISSIONS IN
ACTION!
2003-2004**

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Once again we meet at the commencement of a new academic year and the Admissions Office wishes you all very productive and prosperous semesters. After an extremely busy summer, we are delighted to announce that there have been more than 1,500 applicants for Fall 2003. The final statistics are not available yet; however, we anticipate an enrolment on our campuses up 80% over that of 2002. It is worth noting that figures have gone up significantly for North Lebanon Campus, while there is a rapid rise for Shouf Campus. It is such results that give us a feeling of satisfaction despite the hectic period leading up to them.

We have many activities and events coming up. Among them are educational fairs and exhibitions, local, regional and international. Notre Dame University was present at an educational fair in Damascus in June. This Higher Education and Training



Damascus: Dr. Zaarour giving NDU Director of Admissions Elham Hasham the ETEX shield.

Exhibition (ETEX) took place for the first time in Syria. The attendance was superb and the six other universities from Lebanon that participated all confirm that ETEX was one of the best organised events we attended during 2002-2003.

The Hariri Fair will be coming up in December. The Annual Gulf Tour with the Ministry of Education is also very well organised. Various recruitment visits, both in Lebanon and abroad, are being scheduled and visits to schools are being arranged. The cycle is set in motion again. Moreover, Notre Dame's membership of the College Board will be officially announced at the Annual Forum to be held in New York in November.

The Director of Admissions, Miss Elham Hasham, has always been seizing every opportunity to initiate healthy contacts with other institutions in Lebanon. It was her vision that we should all cooperate to maintain quality education in view of the constant emergence of new foundations of higher education. Through regular meetings and full commitment, we have now set up an Association of the Directors of Admissions and Orientation of the Universities of Lebanon. This association has a membership representing twelve prominent universities:



The Directors of Admissions from the Association.



Tala is one of the students who submitted her application in Syria.

- Notre Dame University (NDU)**
- American University of Beirut (AUB)**
- Lebanese American University (LAU)**
- Saint Joseph's University (USJ)**
- Université Saint-Esprit de Kaslik (USEK)**
- University of Balamand (UOB)**
- Anthonine University (UPA)**
- Middle East University (MEU)**
- El-Hikmat University**
- Hagazian University**
- Beirut Arab University (BAU)**
- The Islamic University of Beirut.**

We are all determined to work hand-in-hand to assure an effective and efficient university atmosphere. Further, our main objective is to develop the relationship between the schools and the universities and to prepare for more interaction and coordination for productive events and results.

The Admissions Office always stresses teamwork and this is most definitely the secret of our success. The staff of all three campuses constantly display total loyalty and academic professionalism.

"Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but rather we have these because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit." – Aristotle.

Supplied by Ms. Elham Hasham, Director of Admissions.

SHOUF CAMPUS SHORTS

HONOURING MUSICIAN **JOSEPH AZAR**



On Friday, September 12, 2003, the *Jamaaiyat al Farah* (Glee Club) of Baakleen joined with the Department of Music of NDU Shouf Campus in inviting the musician Joseph Azar, the distinguished son of the town of Jezzeen, who has sung the praises of Lebanon, its countryside and its traditions with love and pride. Among the audience were a number of official personalities, members of the learned professions and Faculties, and artists, all come out of their appreciation of the character and musical gifts of a great performer.

Opening the Academic Year

On October 30th, 2003, NDU President Father Boutros Tarabay was present at the Shouf Campus for the inauguration of the new academic year. A solemn Mass was celebrated in the Mar Abda church of Deir al-Qamar with Father Boutros Tarabay officiating in front of a packed crowd which included the Director of the Shouf Campus, Doctor Assaad Eid, administrators, Faculty members and students of various confessions and districts. Concelebrating with Father Tarabay were the principal of Mar Abda High School, Father Shawqi Raffoul, and the Superior of the Mar Abda monastery, Father Elie Sfeir.

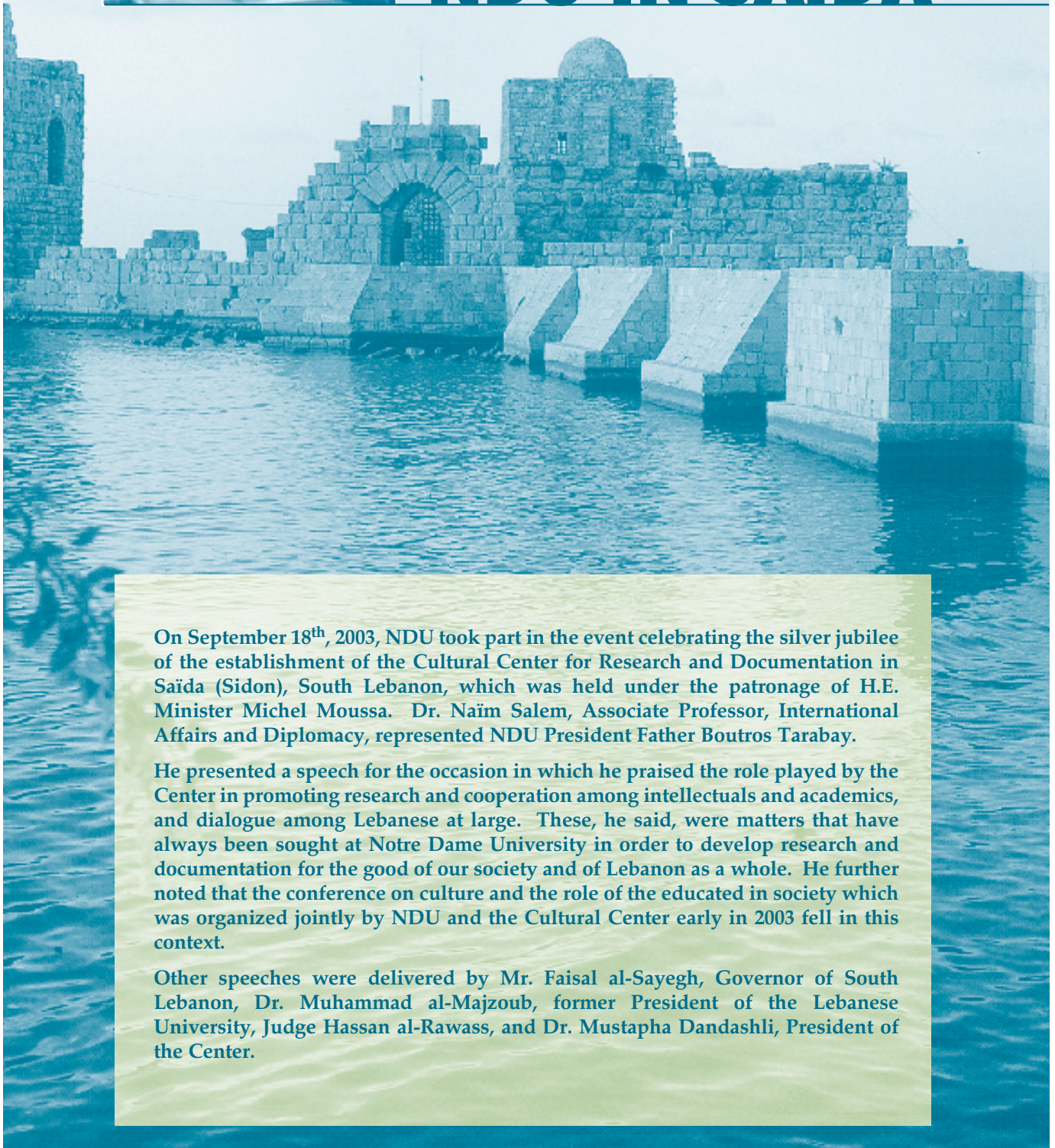
In his sermon, the NDU President stressed the need to rely on love in mutual communication in both private and public affairs. He also called upon believers to exercise patience, for "things are moving from good to better" by the grace of God, especially if we show a spirit of forgiveness in our lives.

As for the expectations and ambitions of the students, Father Tarabay considered these as a blessed call, and soon to be in reach as there was goodwill even if "weeds grew up amongst the wheat." He closed by giving a blessing to the University and to all those present, and calling for united effort for the University's progress.

The authorities of Shouf Campus wish to express their thanks to Father Boutros Tarabay and their hopes that the University will continue to flourish.



NDU IN SAÏDA



On September 18th, 2003, NDU took part in the event celebrating the silver jubilee of the establishment of the Cultural Center for Research and Documentation in Saïda (Sidon), South Lebanon, which was held under the patronage of H.E. Minister Michel Moussa. Dr. Naïm Salem, Associate Professor, International Affairs and Diplomacy, represented NDU President Father Boutros Tarabay.

He presented a speech for the occasion in which he praised the role played by the Center in promoting research and cooperation among intellectuals and academics, and dialogue among Lebanese at large. These, he said, were matters that have always been sought at Notre Dame University in order to develop research and documentation for the good of our society and of Lebanon as a whole. He further noted that the conference on culture and the role of the educated in society which was organized jointly by NDU and the Cultural Center early in 2003 fell in this context.

Other speeches were delivered by Mr. Faisal al-Sayegh, Governor of South Lebanon, Dr. Muhammad al-Majzoub, former President of the Lebanese University, Judge Hassan al-Rawass, and Dr. Mustapha Dandashli, President of the Center.

OIL SPILLS – ISTANBUL

Dr. Walid Assaf and Dr. Ali Hammoud present their findings

Two faculty members from the Department of Mechanical Engineering at NDU were invited to participate in the Third International Conference on oil spills, oil pollution and remediation. It was held between the 16th and 18th of September, 2003, in Istanbul, the great, historic and beautiful city of Turkey.

Dr. Walid C. Assaf and Dr. Ali Hammoud, who were recipients of a grant by the Lebanese Council for Research to study the “Hydrodynamic Performance of Rotating Coarse Brush Skimmer in Oil Spill Recovery” at the NDU Engineering Laboratories, presented part of their findings in a paper by the same title at the conference.

The chosen venue for the three-day activity, the city of Istanbul, is located on one of the busiest waterways in the region with high risk of shipping accidents that can result in serious threats to the environment.

The conference, organized by the Institute of Environmental Sciences of Bogazici University and the School of Engineering of the University of Manchester (UK), addressed issues related to terrestrial and marine oil spills, waste water treatment in refineries, impact contingency planning response and technology for containment and recovery.

Among the conference supporters/sponsors are the Institute of Mechanical Engineers (UK) and the Turkish Undersecretary for Marine Affairs.

Published material on this subject may be referred to under ISBN: 975-518214-4, Publication No. 788, Bogazici University, 34342, Istanbul, Turkey.

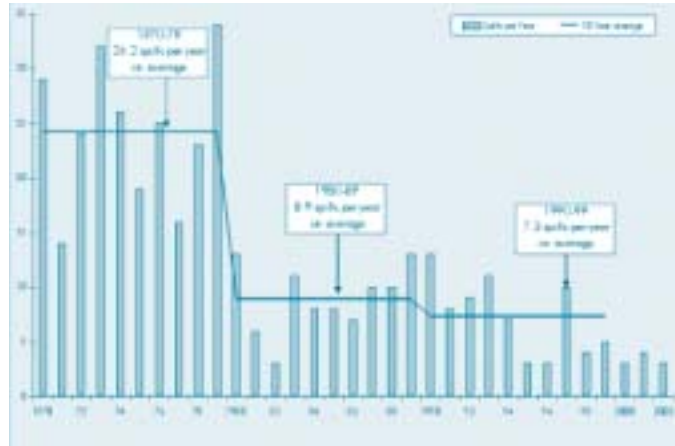


Figure shows decreasing frequency of oil spills (over 700 tons) per year due to focused international efforts on the protection of the environment.
Re: <http://itopf.com/stats03.pdf>



Live demonstration in Istanbul by MEKE Company of the use of a boom surrounding a hypothetical oil spill. The skimmer assembly being hoisted down collects floating oil by action of a rotating brush and oil transfer pump. The ship's split hull construction allows solid waste to be drawn onto a moving metal belt capable of lifting solid material into the ship's waste matter tank.



The participants in Technical Session No.6 above are from left to right: Drs. John T. Turner and William Craig of Manchester University, UK. Dr. Judith Rasson (Central European University, Hungary), Dr. Walid C. Assaf (NDU) and Dr. Emre Otay (Bogazici University).



The participants in Technical Session No.4 above are from left to right: Dr. Ali Hammoud (BAU/NDU), Dr. A.M. Shahlam, (Kuwait Institute for Research), Mr. M. Kemerli (MEKE Company Limited), Dr. Ed Owens (Polaris, USA), and Dr. Aysen Erdinçler, (Bogazici University).

IEEE MEETING AT NDU



Presiding, left to right: Mr. Ahmad Madi, of BAU, Dr. Oussama Faroukh, Dr. Shahwan Khoury, NDU Dean of Engineering, Mr. Suheil Matar, NDU Director of Public Relations, Ms. Zeina Atamian of LAU and Ms. Amjad Zoghbi of AUB.



Faculty and students came from four leading Lebanese universities.



A keen audience of Faculty members and students.

In October, the IEEE-NDU student branch organized a coming-together ceremony for members of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers from various universities. The ceremony, held Friday night on the 24th of October, brought together both Engineering and Sciences students and professors from NDU, LAU, AUB, and BAU. It was a unique night that started with a projected documentary movie and ended with a buffet in honor of the Institute members and sponsors who are active in the Lebanese and international engineering community. The event gave great satisfaction to the guests

present, who felt accounted for in their work and study environment, and to the organizers who succeeded for the first time in gathering so many enthusiastic students and professors prominent in this profession.

Overall, it was a pleasant night during which our guests got to know our University and each other, and were able to compare notes all at the same time.

N.B. The IEEE is the world's largest technical professional society, connecting more than 310,000 members and 72,000 students to the latest information and best technical

resources available. Founded in 1884 by electrical engineering innovators who understood the value of shared information, the IEEE vision is to advance global prosperity by fostering technical innovation, advancing members' careers and promoting community worldwide. Members of the IEEE lead the world to new technical developments, formulate internationally recognized standards, and shape the global community.

Information kindly supplied by Dr. Elias Nasser, Chairman, NDU Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer and Communications Engineering.

A STORY OF WATER

Dr. Layla Khalaf Kairouz, NDU Department of Sciences

Tanios Khattar, Civil Engineering student

How often have you drunk pure water directly from a living stream? In many parts of the world, clean, natural water sources are taken for granted. Until relatively recently in human history, all of us would have relied on such sources for water. Today most of us get our water only from a bottle or tap.

Water is an excellent example of a shared resource. It is cycled and filtered through environmental systems, so our lives depend on maintaining the health of those systems. Everyone needs clean drinkable water, but no one can independently provide or purify enough water for his or her own needs. Instead, each of us must rely on society and the environment to maintain and protect this essence of life. Here is a story of our present water.

The Department of Sciences last Fall organized a visit to the Dbaye Water Refinery. The students majoring in Environmental Science, Biology and Civil Engineering, taking the Geology course, participated in the visit.

Since 1896, the Dbaye Plant has been the only company supplying the city of Beirut with potable water. A historical background reveals that the Water Refinery was founded in the year 1896 by the Ottoman Empire. The French Republic managed it after the year 1920 and then delivered it to the Lebanese government in 1953, under whom it still supplies Beirut with drinkable water.

The water story begins in the Jeita Grotto with a spring at an elevation of 600m. At the plant the water management and distribution follow four steps.

1st step: water arrival.

The water is gathered in a tunnel and directed from Jeita to Dbaye. The flow of Jeita spring is 1,500,000m³ / day. The refinery is using a maximum of 250,000m³/day. The water has a temperature of 15°C all year long. A turbidity test is made while water is infiltrating through a screen filter. The high level of turbidity needs to be treated by adding FeCl₃ to the water (flocculation).



The NDU group arrives.



Dr. Layla Khalaf Keyrouz, NDU instructors and students in front of the plant.

2nd step: decantation.

Water is directed toward a cone-shaped reservoir that contains a fan and a spillway at its bottom.

When flocculation and decantation are done, the soil gathered at the bottom is evacuated into the sea through the spillway and the water is directed to the filters.

3rd step: filtration in sand filters.

Seventy filters of concrete were constructed to filtrate the water. Water infiltrates through the sand, leaving all the tiny aggregates trapped between sand particles. Filters are cleaned by backwashing.

4th step: injection of Cl₂.

When water seeps through the filters, Chlorine Cl₂ must be added to kill all bacteria that might escape the sand filtration. 50 bottles/month of Cl₂, equal to 50 Ton/month are used. Samples of water are taken and tested for water adequacy for use in the company laboratory before the water is pumped toward substations located in the Beirut area.

*After complete rehabilitation, The Dbaye Water Refinery is pumping 250,000m³/day, although the demand for water is greater, taking into consideration the population growth in Lebanon.



From here the process of purifying the water is controlled.



In front of the familiar building.

The visit showed that the water we receive in our homes, although not enough, is quite suitable for use and has been treated with the best modern methods applied internationally, thanks to the water refinery in Dbaye.

Water is the essence of all life. It needs our protection and wise management. We cannot afford to pollute it or waste it. Water's beauty alone makes it one of the world's most precious resources.

We would like to extend our thanks to the administration of the Dbaye plant for making this visit possible and so very informative.

A HISTORIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN NDU AND SORBONNE

1

FIRST DOCTORATE AT NDU!

An exceptional and historic accord between the Sorbonne University of Paris and NDU has led Alia Toumi to pursue her doctoral research at NDU, thanks to the direction and coordination of the Reverend Professor Elias Kesrouani.

NDU student Alia Toumi of Tunisia is interviewed here for *NDU Spirit* by Elias El-Murr.

E.M. Would you be so kind as to present yourself to the readers of *NDU Spirit*?

Alia. My name is Alia Toumi and I am a Tunisian student preparing a thesis for my doctorate to be presented at the Faculty of Music and Musicology at Paris – IV Sorbonne, under the direction of Professor François Picard.

E.M. What is the subject of your thesis?

Alia. I have always enjoyed Lebanese music. Do you think that perhaps there are some echoes of it that reverberate in my heart, since the Phoenician princess Alissar once chose the Tunisian shore to end the most beautiful days of her life? If that may be so, it is there that I have found the reasons for my choosing Lebanese Ethnomusicology.

E.M. May we understand that your research touches on the history and

the origins of Lebanese music?

Alia. My choice was the Lebanese music, dance and customs that figure in the dabkeh. This dance may well reflect and explain the *joie de vivre* of the Lebanese and the subconscious thought which rules their distinctive way of life.

M.E. What have you been able to do in Paris and what do you think of enlarging upon in Lebanon?

Alia. In the framework of my DEA (Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies, Diploma of Advanced Studies) at Paris – IV Sorbonne, I laid down a general approach to the dabkeh from the musical point of view and I have in mind revealing certain characteristics and specific features of this dance.

At NDU at present, I shall be trying through my future research to explore all the musical and historical aspects and the sociological symbols of this musico-choreographic

genre, going from the micro-society to its wider dimensions.

My task is to observe, understand and then interpret from close up the present musical and choreographic landscape of the dabkeh in Lebanon and what it represents of the past. An exhaustive knowledge is absolutely obligatory concerning all the various types of dabkeh with its different musical genres, choreography, rhythms and modalities, as well as the accompanying instruments and the sung poetical text, the contribution revealed by the costume concerning the ethnology of the social families of Lebanon, etc..

Nor must one forget at the present stage to pick out whatever the dabkeh has retained of its original aspect and to determine precisely what are the influences resulting from the other outside cultures to which the country is open.

E.M. Why the debkeh in particular?

Alia. Several reasons have urged me to work on the debkeh. Quite apart from my passion for travel and discovery of the other cultures of the world, I have always had a particular leaning towards the great civilisation, rooted particularly in Lebanon. There is also the stimulus of the common history of Phoenicia and Carthage.

E.M. Why did you choose NDU?

Alia. At the time of my first work on Lebanese soil in 2001, I had contacts with Lebanese musicians and musicologists which related to my researches.

Professor Elias Kesrouani was a revelation for me. After several consultations, I finished by having the profound conviction that in his person he combined musicological learning, Cartesian methodology, and wide musical, poetic and above all philosophical culture. So it was that I hoped for co-direction for my thesis by a Lebanese professor who would be none other than Elias Kesrouani.

E.M. What was the Sorbonne's answer?

Alia. Professor François Picard, Director of the DEA History of Music and Musicology, said to me that unfortunately there was no professor of musicology in Lebanon and much to my surprise he added: "Given the complexity of the past university relations between the Sorbonne and Lebanon, and given the enormous difference between the different approaches, I cannot see how, according to the information now available to me, any co-direction would be possible ... In any co-direction of research work, it is not simply a matter of individual work involving two individuals, for it is two universities that are going to cooperate; this is a great responsibility for me and I have absolutely no wish to tie up the Sorbonne with some irresponsible organism."

Not wanting to give up as soon as I was faced with the first difficulty, I asked him during a conversation for some explanation. He confessed explicitly that Lebanon had a bad name where the Sorbonne was concerned; in this country there are rather too many Doctors, but there is no Professor entitled in musicology, so I do not want to create any problems for the Sorbonne. It is a serious business.

E.M. But this answer from the Sorbonne is rather harsh and might lead one to give up all hope!

Alia. Only too true! But faced with this rather sombre prospect that a famous professor of the Sorbonne put before me, I spent six months getting informed from professors specialised in ethnomusicology, and it was Madame Denise Jourdan Hemmerdinger, Hellenic musicologist, who reassured me that Elias Kesrouani was a qualified professor, having presented a remarkable defence of a *thèse d'Etat* in musicology. She was familiar with his extensive bibliography of scientific articles and the number of years he had spent engaged in university education and direction of theses.

I presented this information to the Research Service at the Sorbonne as well as to those of other universities in France, and all of these confirmed the information provided by Mme Hemmerdinger.

However, despite all these efforts, Professor Picard, acting as a true man of science, did not respond to the result of my enquiries to satisfy himself about Professor Elias Kesrouani by his own investigation.

E.M. But when did you finally obtain a positive answer?

Alia. Professors François Picard and Jean-Claude Chabrier, an orientalist specialising in eastern music, both looked up the State Doctorate and writings of Elias Kesrouani. The commentaries made by each of them confirmed

that he had earned from both the Sorbonne and its teaching staff their great respect for his title as professor, not only according to the French understanding but also according to that of the Sorbonne, that pilot institution vowed to reflection and knowledge ever since the early years of the thirteenth century. Chabrier said that Kesrouani "is a fine analyst and Cartesian methodologist" and Picard that "Professor Kesrouani has an excellent mastery of the French language, a mastery better than that of the French." So here I am in Lebanon to serve the cause of my ethnomusicological research.

E.M. How have you found Professor Kesrouani and NDU?

Alia. Kesrouani presents the scientific data in the simplest way, a fact which helps students to understand and to assimilate. He has a very clear and fluid methodology for work. But the most important thing is that Kesrouani is human, modest and generous with his knowledge and his scientific *secrets*.

The career of such a master as Elias Kesrouani raises the student to the rank of disciple, something that he has always wanted.

So it was that on September 25th, 2003 an agreement was signed between the NDU President, the Very Reverend Doctor Boutros Tarabay and the President of the University of Paris – IV Sorbonne Professor Jean-Robert Pitte, and also between Professor Elias Kesrouani, as founder and Director of the NDU Department of Music and Musicology, and the Director of Doctorate at the Sorbonne, Professor Picard.

The diploma itself will bear the titles of the two Universities and Professor Kesrouani will designate half the jury at the defence, which will take place at the Sorbonne itself.

Finally I must thank Professor Kesrouani for having introduced me to NDU.

IBER Best Paper Award (USA) Won by Dr. Viviane Y. Naïmy of NDU

The International Business & Economics Research Conference, IBER, organised by the accredited academic journal *The International Business & Economics Research Journal*, listed in Cabell's, was held in Nevada, USA, from October 6 to October 10, 2003. Thirty-six countries were represented at this conference. Most of the front-line researchers and academicians were from the USA, Canada, Korea, Germany and the United Kingdom.

NDU was represented by Dr. Viviane Y. Naïmy, from the Faculty of Business Administration & Economics. She won the Best Paper Award in the field of Finance.



Microsoft

PRIZE FOR NDU

This item unfortunately was not available at the time of our last issue, but in view of its importance we can only say "better late than never." The Microsoft office recently opened in Beirut, *Microsoft Eastern Mediterranean*, has a policy of encouraging students in higher education to familiarise themselves with information technologies and with this aim in view launched a contest for Lebanon entitled *XDA Project*.

Fifteen mobile and portable XDAs, operating under *Windows Mobile Edition*, were distributed to seven universities (AUB, Anthonines, LAU, USJ, NDU, Arab University and Haïgazian) in order to encourage students to develop opportunities for research on the *Windows Mobile* platform. Students chosen by their respective faculties were given three months to prepare the best end-of-year project. The independent jury, consisting of representatives of *Netways, Libancell and Microsoft*, proclaimed Hady Salameh and Mario Aoun of NDU the winners of the first prize, an XDA device with a value of US\$ 1,000. Their project, said the jury, had shown creativity and innovation not only in the use of the structures of *Microsoft.Net* and the Web but also in the commercial viability and the quality of presentation. The application created by the two NDU students is a localisation service based on the GSM system allowing the finding of the address of a person in communication according to where they might be. The two winners were interviewed on *Future TV*.

One jury member, Mr. Elias Tabet, spoke of the difficulty of sorting the results in view of the high level of sophistication of all the applications. Mr. Khalil Abdel Messih, Director of Development for *Microsoft Eastern Mediterranean* spoke of the Lebanese students' passion for solving problems with the help of advanced technologies.

RECYCLING AWARENESS



The following is the text of an email which was sent around the Faculties on August 5th by **Dr. Tony G. Hage**, who has kindly authorised its publication in our pages:–

THANK YOU for making the Blue Paper Recycling Campaign a success. Thanks to your efforts, the volume of paper for recycling has grown beyond the capacity of ENS 201 (Introduction to Environmental Science) students and TREE (Together Restore the Endangered Environment) club members to handle.

Seven ton(nes) of paper and cardboard have been recycled so far, thus saving 119 trees, 110,964 liters of water, 29.4 megawatt hours of electricity and 17 cubic meters of landfill space. (It has now become usual to employ *ton* for the American short ton of 2,000lbs and *tonne* for the British-European long ton of 2, 240lbs = 1,016 kilos, metric ton. – Ed.)

Therefore the Administration has graciously given approval for the janitorial staff to take over henceforth the collection of paper products for recycling. This is a step forward toward achieving a comprehensive recycling program at NDU.

We would like to launch an awareness campaign in Fall 2003 and we would like to have representatives from all academic units to participate. Anyone who has innovative ideas, or who would like to participate in this endeavor, please contact Dr. Tony Hage at ext. 2084 or by email: thage@ndu.edu.lb .

If you would like to recycle the paper products you generate, please take them to the bin nearest you. The bins are distributed throughout the University.

Faculty/Unit	Bin Location
Administration	Admissions Office, AD304
Computer Center	Lab314
Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design	HB211, HB303
Faculty of Business Administration & Economics	B2102, B254, B286
Faculty of Engineering,	E215, E303
Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy	HA332, HA250, HA232
Faculty of Natural and Applied Science	S310, S218, S125
Entrance of the Museum Building	

Regards,
Dr. Tony G. Hage
Department of Sciences
Email: thage@ndu.edu.lb

* Our illustration show shows Dr. Tony Hage and a student just visible inside the truck, together with a janitor, putting their hands to the collection of waste paper and giving a good example which we hope others will follow. Congratulations! Incidentally, we can only deplore that some people in the University **still leave their cigarette butts on the ground or on the stairs** rather than dispose of them in the receptacles provided. – Ed.

ROMANTICISM, CULTURE AND TRANSLATION

The invitations extended to NDU Faculty members to travel abroad to take part in international meetings of specialists are evidence of NDU's standing in academic circles worldwide. It is therefore a pleasure to present to our readers information provided by Dr. Naji Oueijan, recently appointed Professor, about his participation in two conferences.



Dr. Oueijan lectures in Prague.

At the 10th International Conference on Translation and Interpreting at the Institute of Translation Studies, Prague University (Czech Republic), held between the 11th and 13th of September, 2003, Dr. Oueijan spoke about the problems of translating the Arabic *qasida* into English in a presentation entitled "Transculturalization: the Case of the *Qasida*". In it he claimed that most translations made by British translators failed to give the *qasida* its appropriate position in the poetry of the world. After discussing the crucial difficulties encountered by such translators, he put forward several practical suggestions which would reduce cultural loss and enhance "transculturalization". The latter he defined as a process of genuine communication and interaction between two different cultures by translations enriching them yet without touching their various particularities. Dr. Oueijan based his suggestions on academic research and investigation and his personal experience when making translations of two anthologies of Arabic poetry into English, one published in Lebanon and the other in the United States.



Dr. Oueijan at Regensburg.

At the 10th International Symposium of the German Studies of English Romanticism held at the Institute of English and American Studies at Regensburg University, Germany, between the 25th and 28th of September, Dr. Oueijan presented a paper under the title "Echoes from the Orient in Romantic Visions", for which the organisers of the conference devoted a special session. In his paper he analysed the prophetic visions of Wordsworth's fifth book of *The Prelude*, Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* and Shelley's *Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude*, all of which reverberate with voices reflecting the awesome depths and heights of the human mind. The speaker claimed that those Oriental voices reflected the distant and mysterious voices of the inner selves of the poets. After discussing the Romantic poets' use of Oriental voices in these sublime visions, he presented convincing evidence that these and certain other Romantic visions reverberated with Oriental voices because the Orient was more than simply the birthplace of prophesies and highly imaginative tales; it was the distant and primordial terrain where self could hear echoes of self and of the otherness traced in the self. It was a world where the mind was given limitless freedom to traverse the unconventional wisdom of the desert.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

1ST DINNER 2003/2004



On Friday, October 17, 2003, the staff of the Research and Development Office met for dinner at the Niyara Restaurant near the Jeita Roundabout, at a table presided by Dr. Ameen Rihani. Fortunately the music was not turned on until the evening was well advanced, and even then without blasting the eardrums, so conversation and laughter flowed easily. The following staff members and guests were present for the occasion:

Mr. and Mrs. George Mghames,
Dr. and Mrs. Edward Alam,
Mr. Kenneth Mortimer, Mr. and Mrs. Walid Mrad,
Ms. Fadia El-Hage, Ms. Valerie Aoun,
Ms. Karla Sfeir, Ms. Guita Hourani,
Mr. and Mrs. Sami Salameh,
Mrs. Najat Azar, Ms. Dominique Abboud and sister.



A READING OF KUNDERA'S NOVEL SLOWNESS

BY YOUSSEF R. YACOUB, PH.D.

In his novel *Slowness*, Milan Kundera asks this question: "Why has the pleasure of slowness disappeared?" Lamenting, he continues, "Ah, where have they gone, the amblers of yesteryears? Where have they gone, those loafing heroes of folk songs, those vagabonds who roam from one mill to another and bed down under the stars? Have they vanished along with footpaths, with grasslands and clearings, with nature? There is a Czech proverb that describes their easy indolence by a metaphor: 'they are gazing at God's windows.' A person gazing at God's windows is not bored; he is happy. In our world indolence has turned into nothing to do, which is a completely different thing; a person with nothing to do is frustrated, bored, is constantly searching for the activity he lacks." (p. 3)

Understanding Kundera is not easy. One must speculate not only on his word, but also on his mindset. Speculation may open the gates through which we can obtain ideas, concepts, conceptions, feelings, etc. ... Whatever the case might be, it does not hurt to try again and again. There is pleasure in unveiling the realm of thoughts and feelings of an author. What is dormant should be more interesting than what is apparent to the waking mind. Let us see how my first attempt about Kundera works!!

So far, I sense in Kundera an exceptional ability not only to communicate knowledge, but to communicate "being to being". I think that by slowness Kundera does not mean laziness. In slowness there is a respect for one's own life as well

as for the life of others. As I understand it, slowness is grasping and living the moments which are the "particles" out of which time is made. Within these moments the kernel of the everlasting present is lived. Through this everlasting present we are capable of "gazing at God's windows." God is omnipresent. How does the author illuminate us on this issue?

Kundera relates slowness with memory and speed with forgetfulness.(p. 39) In moments memory brings back the past to the present. In the present there is a unity of time. Forgetfulness is akin to nonexistence. However, Kundera does not condemn forgetfulness as we usually understand its meaning; for in this sense forgetfulness becomes the catalyst for the desire to remember. The forgetfulness the author is telling us about is the lack of awareness of the moments. Lacking this awareness, the human being is devoured or swept away by time. The moments are the pulse of time. Without this pulse, time becomes like a bare fact devoid of thought; no significance is attached to it. This is to say, time without its moments is boredom. The bored person is frustrated and becomes aware of what he or she lacks. When there is absorption by what the person lacks, in the long run the alchemy of this lack and boredom becomes the person's quicksand. Boredom is akin to despair. In boredom there is uncertainty and this uncertainty is born from speed. "When things happen too fast," Kundera maintains, "nobody can be certain about anything, about anything at all, not even himself."(p. 135) Awareness of the moments

contributes to the certainty of the human existence. On this account, one must ask about the quality of our existence during our contemporary times. As I comprehend Kundera, during our contemporary times human beings have relinquished their memory to impatient anticipations which have become the yardstick of fast pace. In this fast pace the moments are frozen, and when the moments are frozen the feeling of being alive is delegated to the vacuum in time in which human beings become images of themselves rather than themselves. This vacuum has been filled by the simulation of breathless images of the amplified virtual reality of cyber-space.

In addition to the cyberspace, the TV screen as it absorbs our attention takes away from us the sense of the real. For one month, Kundera tells us, we hear about the starving children in Somalia. The next month human attention is diverted to another human crisis. Kundera asks this question, "Have the children of Somalia stopped starving?"(p. 92) Was it a one-month starvation? The TV screen is a seduction. It seduces not only the crew who orchestrate the images, but also a "great throng of invisible people." "Listen, that's another chapter in the dancer theory: the invisibility of the audience! That's what makes for the terrifying modernity of this character! He is showing off not for you or for me but for the whole world. And what is the whole world? An infinity with no faces! An abstraction."(p. 29) There is a distance from the ordinary; the ordinary is structured in a form of abyss of disconnected-



ness. This abyss unleashes a dormant human melancholy which is the expression of a confused being torn between asserting his or her life against adherence to what he or she has invented.

Our intoxication with the orchestrated images has also taken away our ability to converse. The author says, "Conversation is not a pastime; on the contrary, conversation is what organizes time, governs it, and imposes its own laws, which must be respected." (p. 32) In a conversation there is a presence of one being to another being. The eyes in the face become the offices of truth, as Shakespeare calls them in his play *The Tempest*. The unorchestrated voice coming from the presence of a human being emanates a concrete reality of presence. In *The Rules* of St. Benedict the tone of voice is given a special attention.

The orchestrated screen we watch and the speed we impose on the fulfillment of our desires have vexed us with forgetfulness of ourselves. The immediate gratifications and the search for an undue glory and undeserved power have become the delirium of our contemporary times. Kundera describes this state as follows: "All politicians nowadays ... have a bit of dancer in them, and all dancers are involved in politics, which however should not lead us to mistake the one for the other. The dancer differs from the politician in that he seeks not power but glory; his desire is not to impose this or that social scheme on the world ... but to take over the stage so as to beam forth his self. Taking over the stage requires keeping other people off it." (pp. 18-19)

Too bad!! The pleasure of living the moments when we may gaze at "God's windows" has become the property of the few. Let us not despair!! These few people are neither "dancers" nor "politicians"; they will ever remain the "salt of the earth" and the emblem of human magnanimity. In *Æschylus's Agamemnon*, after killing her husband, Clytæmnestra says that she glories in her act. Then, she realizes how the "hoofs" of the spirit struck her heart. In the same manner the "hoofs" of the spirit will strike those who crave for self-glorification. In *War and Peace* Tolstoy rightly says that those who feel themselves the masters of the world are ignorant of the fact that they are the slaves of history. May the Lord have mercy on everyone.

QUE VEULENT LES CHRETIENS DU LIBAN DANS LA NOUVELLE CONFIGURATION REGIONALE?

Durant la plus grande partie des trois dernières décennies qui coïncidaient avec le déroulement de la guerre libanaise qui a débuté le 13 avril 1975, les chrétiens libanais se sont sentis fortement mécompris par l'Occident qu'ils considéraient naguère comme leur allié *naturel*. Cela changera-t-il après les événements du 11 septembre qui ont marqué un tournant stratégique dans la politique américaine au Moyen-Orient dont l'invasion de l'Irak fut l'une des premières manifestations. Il est à prévoir de nombreux bouleversements politiques dans cette partie mouvementée du monde qui n'épargneront aucun pays ou communauté, dont les chrétiens du Liban. Les aspirations politiques du *mainstream* chrétiens peuvent se résumer de la sorte:

I- Un Liban libre, souverain et indépendant

Il existe un grand malaise concernant les accords de Taef de 1989 qui devaient mettre un terme à la guerre du Liban et trouver une solution politique à la crise libanaise. En effet, ces accords n'ont connu qu'une application sélective généralement perçue comme partielle contre les chrétiens. En outre, le principal volet de l'accord stipulait le retrait des troupes syriennes du Liban deux ans après la conclusion de ces accords. Dans la pratique, tout cela est resté lettre morte. Il en résulte une sorte de vassalisation du Liban qui est mal perçue par les chrétiens qui désirent un pays entièrement indépendant et souverain.

II- Le respect des droits fondamentaux de la personne

Aux yeux des chrétiens, cette indépendance libanaise doit aller de pair avec liberté. Un Liban libre où tous les citoyens jouissent des droits fondamentaux de la personne humaine (droit d'expression, liberté religieuse...) est une condition *sine qua non* pour les chrétiens libanais. Toute formule qui remettrait en cause ces notions est rejetée au risque de l'éclatement du pays. En effet, le Liban est le seul pays du Moyen-Orient où les chrétiens jouissent du droit de cité et participent activement à la vie politique et économique. A simple titre d'exemple, c'est le seul pays au Moyen-Orient où les personnes peuvent changer de religion sans risquer la peine de mort ou la persécution (grâce à une décision du Haut Commissaire français en 1920)

III- La réforme des institutions

Les revendications chrétiennes se résument à l'acceptation du pluralisme politique qui tient compte des particularités des diverses communautés libanaises. Au plan institutionnel cela entraînerait l'adoption d'une démocratie consensuelle

plutôt qu'une démocratie basée sur le nombre et qui donnerait automatiquement l'avantage à la communauté la plus nombreuse au détriment de toutes les autres. En outre, il existe un désir d'introduire la décentralisation administrative (d'ailleurs prévue par les accords de Taef, mais qui demeure inappliquée).

La restauration de l'état de droit

Les réformes de Taef ont conduit dans la pratique à l'affaiblissement de l'état de droit dont se targuait naguère le Liban avant la guerre. En outre, le nouveau régime politique a créé un système politique à plusieurs têtes. Cette restauration de l'état de droit implique l'extension de l'autorité de l'état à l'ensemble du territoire libanais, à la protection des citoyens et de leurs biens sans aucune distinction et l'arrêt de toute ingérence étrangère dans les affaires intérieures du pays à tous les niveaux.

V- La solution du conflit palestinien-israélien

Il n'est un secret pour personne que les palestiniens ont été les principaux artisans de la guerre du Liban. En outre, leur continuelle présence massive sur le territoire libanais (plus de 400.000 personnes) reste une source de préoccupation pour les libanais. Du point de vue chrétien, toute résolution du problème palestinien devra prévoir le retour de ces palestiniens dans leur pays conformément aux décisions de l'ONU, car le Liban ne pourrait supporter indéfiniment cette présence qui menace l'équilibre fragile qui existe entre les diverses communautés libanaises.

Un nouveau Moyen-Orient pluriel

Il existe un grand débat au sein de l'élite chrétienne sur les implications de l'invasion américaine de l'Irak pour le Moyen-Orient en général et pour le Liban en particulier. En réal-

ité tout dépendra des solutions politiques adoptées en Irak: Démocratie ou nouvelle dictature? Régime fédéral ou désintégration? Chacune de ses options affectera l'avenir du Moyen-Orient et du Liban. Mais, il reste que le rêve des chrétiens, qui ont été les artisans de la Renaissance arabe à partir du XIX siècle, est de voir un nouveau Moyen-Orient –nonobstant la forme finale des états– érigé sur les trois piliers suivants: démocratie, droits de l'homme et état de droit (*rule of law*). C'est précisément dans un pareil contexte que les chrétiens peuvent remplir leur rôle pionnier au Moyen-Orient. En réalité, un Moyen-Orient instable ne manquerait de déstabiliser automatiquement le Liban et ses chrétiens. En effet, toute la problématique de la présence chrétienne au Moyen-Orient reste ouverte. Ces derniers ne forment plus que près de 9 % de la population du Moyen-Orient. Un véritable drainage se poursuit depuis l'accès des pays arabes à l'indépendance. Il ne resterait plus que 117,000 chrétiens en Terre Sainte et moins de 600.000 en Irak, soit 2,2 pour cent de la population irakienne. Quant à la Jordanie, le nombre de chrétien est tombé de 18 pour cent en 1952 à moins de 3 pour cent de nos jours. Quant à la Syrie, les chrétiens ne formeraient plus que 6.5 pour cent de la population. Ces proportions sont les mêmes qui prévalaient à la fin du règne des Mamelouks au XVIe siècle... La Question de l'Orient reste grande ouverte.

Dr. Georges LABAKI
Université Notre Dame de Louaizé
Un des derniers humanistes



The Stranger

As I grew up and the days passed by,
I grew very lonely, I grew very shy.
Then one day, walking along the street,
I saw someone I didn't expect to meet.
He wasn't afraid, he wasn't shy,
He wasn't scared, not even to say to me Hi!
As I look back over years,
My eyes begin to fill with tears.
He was the only one I was ever close to,
The only one I felt I knew.

Dalia Kharboush

Between the Pages

You left your cup of coffee
By my bed last night before you left.
It was cold by the time I woke up.
The room smelled effervescently of your aftershave
And the curtains were open to let the sun in.
You know how I love to bathe in the rays
And feel them feathering the trail of kisses you left
behind.
Even your eyeglasses on the book
You read me to sleep with were there.
...The Poems of Pablo Neruda...
Sultry echoes of Spanish passion.
"Aqui te amo..."
Were the last words you uttered.
And they still hang in the idleness of the clock
Like the aroma of your old coffee mug,
And your musky scent,
And the yellowish pages of our book...
Just like you whose traces began to fade
With our footsteps on the wooden patio.

Valerie Aoun



Off heros' shore. A Cruise to the Isles of Greece

For my annual vacation, I thought it would be a fine idea to go on a cruise to Cyprus and the isles of Greece. I told my friend about the idea and we reserved berths and prepared our luggage. During the cruise, we visited Limassol in Cyprus and six Greek islands, Kos, Samos, Mykonos, Patmos, Leros and Rhodes. It was a marvelous trip, the weather was fantastic, and, thanks be to God, we didn't have any accidents or problems during our voyage.

We were amazed how blue the sea was and how unencumbered and clean the seashore appeared; one could swim safely and free of charge anywhere along the coast, whether in Cyprus or at any of the Greek islands.

Suddenly I thought to myself, since our country Lebanon is located along the Mediterranean, the same sea as Cyprus and Greece, why are our beaches so dirty and polluted and the color of the sea green and not blue? Why is the sewage system directed onto the seashore? Further, why are the bathing resorts built right down to the water's edge, demanding a fortune for buying or renting one of their chalets or cabins? One cannot go swimming free of charge but has to pay an entrance fee much beyond the reach of most families in order to enjoy the pleasure of bathing surrounded by the beauty of natural scenery.

I wonder if there is any solution for all this so that our marine environment may be maintained clean and wholesome. May God protect our country and keep it safe and beautiful!

Fadia El-Hage, Admin. Asst.
Research & Development Office

MAALLOULA

K.J. MORTIMER

For most Christians and post-Christians there is a long, murky divide between the Gospel stories they have heard (and possibly read!), illustrated in their childhood books, and the public role of the Christian Church when it built European civilisation and passed on ancient learning to the eager Caliphs. The result is that many are inclined to believe that the Gospels are some late concoction of monks and priests who with royal backing wanted to impose a morbid religion that prevented people enjoying themselves. Even such a learned man as Old Bailey Recorder Christian Humphreys, author of the Pelican book *Buddhism*, could say that the Gospel stories were written in the fourth century, when in fact this was when the most ancient existing complete bound copies, the *Codex Sinaiticus* and *C. Vaticanus*, were written, on the vellum which had just begun to replace the more fragile papyrus scrolls. In any case, older fragments exist, including the Rylands Fragment of St. John, impartially dated at about 125 A.D.. So there is far more proof for the authenticity of the Gospels than for the classical authors, whose texts are never called into question although the earliest copies known were written ten to fifteen centuries after their death. The New Testament was quoted and explained by St. Ignatius of Antioch († A.D. 114), St. Polycarp († about 155), who described his personal acquaintance with St. John, and his contemporary St. Justin the Apologist, not to mention a number of second- and third-century authors. Only the existence and general acceptance of the gospels and epistles can explain the spread of Christianity in the Roman and Persian Empires, and even far beyond, during the first, second and third centuries. Only thus can we explain the early existence of the liturgies of Rome, Antioch, Seleucia

Ctesiphon and Alexandria, all fundamentally the same but already differing in their detail.

For us Christians and Muslims living in the Middle East, the evidence of the action of the Divine Word at the stated moments of history lies at first hand, at Maaloula nearby in Syria, for example. Here we have concrete evidence that the sacrifice of the Mass was already an established practice by the time of the Council of Nicæa in 325.

* * * * *

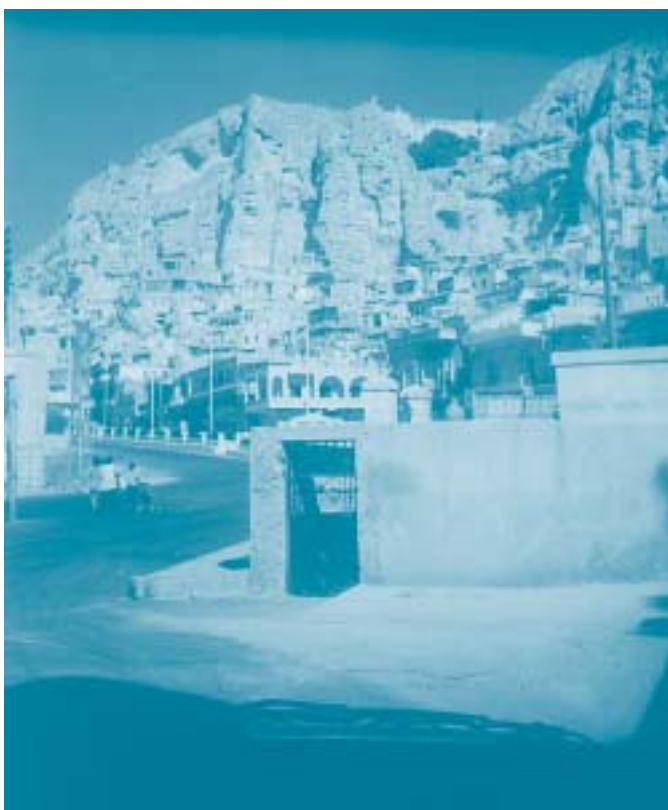
Maaloula is a small town, partly old and partly modern, about 50 kilometres to the north of Damascus, easily accessible by the splendid new highways. A new road is under construction to enable pilgrims and tourists to pass directly from the 6th century Orthodox monastery of Sadnaya to Maaloula without detour. Maaloula stands at an altitude of 1650 metres on the eastern side of the Anti-Lebanon Chain, a fact which ensures a magnificent dry and bracing climate even on the hottest days and one that is at least vigorous and healthy even in the sharp cold of the winter

snows. Its houses rise in tiers up the sides of a deep cleft in the high mountain ridge stretching north of Syria's capital city. The population is mostly Greek-rite Christian, Catholics being in the majority, with a fair number of Sunni Muslims. The mother-tongue of the Christians is Aramaic, older than the classical Syriac, and the language of Our Lord himself. Unfortunately some young people feel embarrassed by this local archaism, but such feelings should be vigorously countered. Apart from its intrinsic value and importance for understanding ancient religious texts, Aramaic was one of those sources that contributed to the Islamic world culture which in turn passed on its learning through Spain and Southern Italy to Europe, heralding the glories of Western Christian culture. There are many hundreds of villages in Syria equal or greater in size, but it is Maaloula that is known worldwide, simply for the fact of having preserved the first language of Christianity.

There is a large new Catholic church, an older one dedicated to Saint Lawondios high among the



New Maaloula seen from the monastery of Sts Sergius and Bacchus.



Old Maaloula with the monastery above.

houses, and an Orthodox convent of nuns dedicated to the first woman martyr, St. Thecla of Maaloula “Equal of the Apostles”, converted by St. Paul. After passing through the town the main road winds up behind the overhanging cliffs, reaching the monastery of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, with its history of seventeen hundred years of Christian worship and its superb view of the surrounding hills and of Maaloula directly below.

The ground floor goes back to antiquity. There are beams of wood embedded in the stonework with a view to strengthening it against earthquakes. When samples of the wood, including that of the church door, were sent to Germany for carbon-dating, they were found to be two thousand years old. The floor above is a later addi-



Father Tewfiq Eid, Basilian Salvatorian, welcomes visitors.

tion, with modern facilities and accommodation installed during the 1980s thanks to the energy of Father Michael Zaaroura. In 1732 this Orthodox monastery joined up with the Basilian Salvatorian Order, founded fifty years earlier by the Orthodox Archbishop Eftemios Saifi, born in Damascus, who had hoped to end the divisions within the Patriarchate of Antioch and the consequent deplorable state of the clergy and laity (caused by the Ottoman system) by a firm union with Rome, which should however respect the apostolic institution of the patriarchate.

Naturally, interest in the monastery of Saints Sergius and Bacchus centres on the church. The back wall was part of a pagan temple. The church itself shows an early attempt to solve the problem of placing a dome on a square structure before the invention of triangular Byzantine pendentives between the arches. Here the corners are covered by unfloored alcoves rising over empty space, which, together with the walls between them, form a high equilateral octangular drum supporting the dome.

Even more significant is the high altar. The lower part was originally pagan, so, as it was used for the sacrifice of animals, it was made hollow with a wide hole in the covering stone so that the blood and intestines could drop into the cave serving as a sewer below. The altar stone, semi-circular at the back, had a raised rim several centimetres high to prevent blood spilling onto the floor. The lower part of the altar remains; there are front and side walls, but the back is open so one can see into the pit below ground. The covering stone must have been placed over the altar by Christians after the accession of Constantine the Great allowed Christians freedom to take over pagan places of worship, for it has no central opening for blood and offal. However, it does have a rim several centimetres high, copying the pagan model. This is of great interest, for such imitation of pagan styles was forbidden by the Council of Nicæa in A.D. 325. Therefore this stone slab (and the one on the northern side altar) must have been carved and placed either before the Council or at least before the effective application of its decisions, which could not have been long delayed locally in view of the fact that the then bishop of Maaloula, Eutyches, was one of the participants. The stone contains a small hollow, triangular to symbolise the Holy Trinity, for the insertion of a holy relic.

Nothing is more moving than to attend the Divine Liturgy or Saturday evening Vespers in the depths of this ancient edifice as worshippers have been doing for the last 1,700 years.

The most prominent icons are by Michael of Crete, executed in 1813 and the few years following. They are more remarkable for their brilliant refined and intricate technique than for formal artistic elements. The painter himself lived in Damascus, where he must have been impressed by the brilliant gold brocade textiles produced

by artisans with a tradition hundreds, if not thousands, of years old, for this art is reflected in the rich and minute detail of the robes of Christ and his Mother. The icons of Michael gleam with a life of their own through the darkness under the ancient stone walls and arches.

But of greater interest still are the 17th-century Arab icons, no doubt of the school of Aleppo, simpler in technique but aesthetically more satisfying. During my recent visit, these icons had been replaced by coloured reproductions,

as they had been taken for a lengthy exhibition of Arab Christian icons in the Arab Institute of Paris (shown on Euronews TV.) In particular one notices an icon with the Crucifixion scene in its upper half and a representation of the Last Supper in the lower one. The table in front of the Apostles has the rounded back and raised rim of the main altar in the church, and therefore was obviously done to specific order. Further, instead of being in the centre, as is usual, Christ is shown to one side. His position, one may suppose near the door, and the sandals still on his feet are meant to show that he had

come to serve, not to be served, as he himself said. This icon was recently stolen and disappeared for a couple of years, but was then returned thanks to the action of the police.

Now for a word about the two patron saints. Sergius (Sarkis) and Bacchus were two friends in the Roman army, the former an officer and the latter in the ranks. They refused to take part in a ceremony of sacrifice to the god Jupiter, for which offence they were stripped of their arms and badges of rank, led through the streets of Arabissus in Cappadocæa dressed in women's clothing, and then sent to Russafa in Syria, where they were tortured. After being severely flogged, Bacchus died on

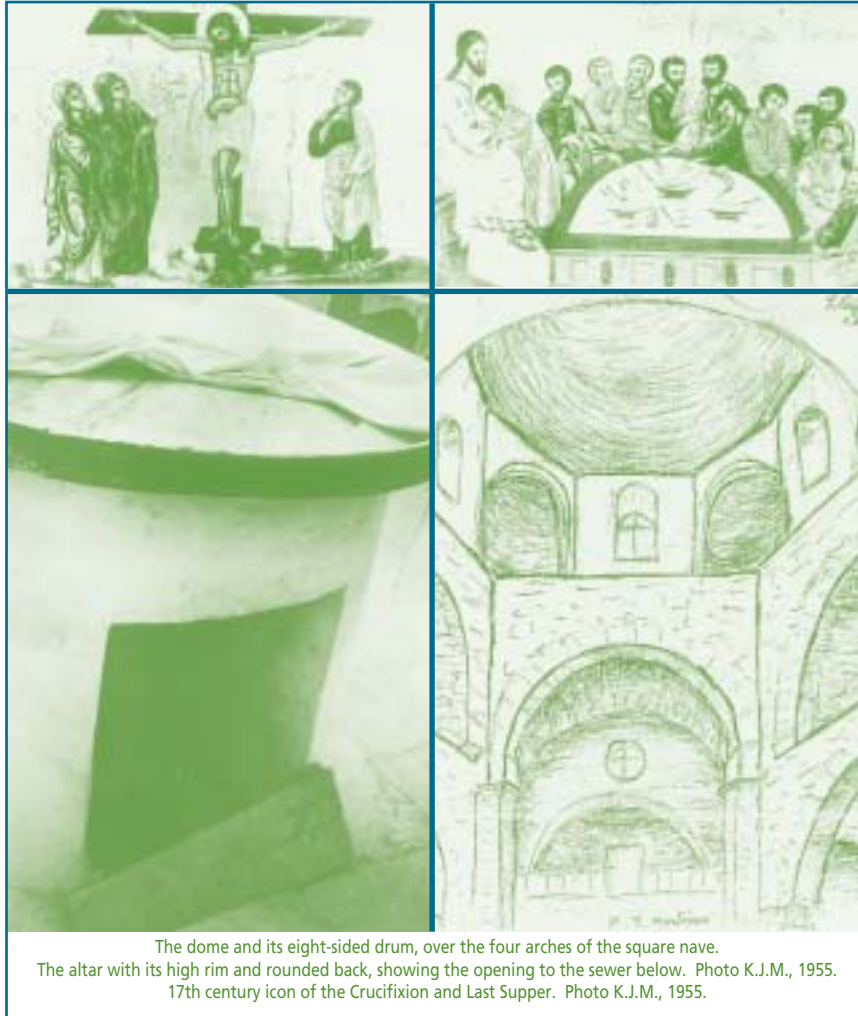
October 1st, 297. The faith of Sergius faltered, but after seeing Bacchus in a vision he went to his death, confessing Christ, on October 7th. With other soldier martyrs they became official protectors of the Byzantine army and also patrons of Christian Bedouin tribes, particularly the Taghleb, on whose banner they figured.

The present superior of the monastery is the young and active Father Tewfiq Eid, Basilian Salvatorian. During the season, he and his assistants are fully occupied with

the visitors, Arab and European, who come in a steady stream – in fact there are nearly always a couple of minibuses in front of the ancient low door. Among them one may see tourists from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries, and for this credit must go to the Syrian Ministry of Tourism, whose many offices distribute free maps and brightly illustrated brochures covering all the sites of Christian, Muslim or classical interest, available in different languages from government offices in the main cities.

There is a souvenir and gift shop in the monastery, where excellent wine is also on sale. A hundred metres away there is a four-star hotel with swimming pool. But here it should be noted that anybody with double nationality should use his Lebanese identity documents and pay in Syrian money; in this way he shares the Syrian's privilege of paying half price for hotels and facilities. Now it only remains to wish my readers a thoroughly enjoyable pilgrimage to Maaloula. It is a unique experience.

To contact the monastery:
Tel.: 0211 – 7770009
E-mail: marsarkis@net.sy
Http://www.marsarkis.com



The dome and its eight-sided drum, over the four arches of the square nave.
 The altar with its high rim and rounded back, showing the opening to the sewer below. Photo K.J.M., 1955.
 17th century icon of the Crucifixion and Last Supper. Photo K.J.M., 1955.

SEEING ORANGE AND RED !

BY JOE CHAMMA, ASTRONOMY CLUB

Everybody was excited when they learnt about the planet Mars' closest approach to the earth for many years to come. So we decided to meet at Crepaway at 16:00 on August 27, 2003. Lift-off was supposed to be at 16:30 but instead we left Jounieh at almost 18:00. Altogether we were 38 representing the NDU Astronomy Club. We were divided between two buses. Our destination was Al-Arz, the Cedars, where we were to meet Dr. Roger Hajjar with Majdi Saad.

We were supposed to be going with a group of students from another university, the AUB, but unfortunately their bus broke down on the way. This was probably due to engine failure but we did have great company, for we were joined by some enthusiasts from the Lebanese University. This small group from the LU made up part of our number of 38 from NDU. Our departure from Crepaway was somewhat delayed as some members were late because they had been held up in the traffic and we also had to wait until another bus arrived. We then set off eagerly for the Cedars.

We arrived there by 20:30 but still had to walk a considerable distance to reach the final location and this took us half an hour or so due to the huge crowd come to witness the event. The gathering had been organised by the publishers of *Science and World Magazine*. The fun part was when we lost each other several times while walking until we finally regrouped and then stuck together for the whole evening. The temperature was bearable, for the air was not so cold as had been predicted by the TV stations.

We did our best to enjoy ourselves but with the great crowd of amateurs present this was by no means easy. Campfires were lighted by each individual group, which was

very disturbing on account of the smoke from the flames making us choke. Another nuisance was the amount of light pollution overhead, making observation even more difficult. In fact the only object visible in the sky was indeed the planet Mars.

What bothered us most was that as mere members of the Astronomy Club we were forbidden to enter the perimeter reserved to professional astronomers such as Dr. Roger Hajjar and Mr. Majdi Saad, the media being the only others permitted in the "Expert Zone". Two large screens were there for the crowd to observe, on both of which Mars was the only celestial body on view. It made one laugh to remember how frightened people had been during the solar eclipse of August 11, 1999 and how this time they were so excited over the approach of Mars. This I guess was due to the lack of interest in our country concerning such an amazing science as astronomy. On any clear night allow yourself to look into the sky for just five minutes and you will begin to wonder at the marvels that this universe can produce. Then think of the distance separating us from any star and then imagine how large it might be compared to our own sun. I could spend the whole day criticising the mentality of the Lebanese, but if that is the way they want it, so be it. Who am I to judge?

Back to Mars! Projected on the double screens available, the Red Planet showed many of its distinctive features. One of the many points of interest was the polar caps on the planet, raising many questions such as the possibility of signs of oxygen on Mars. This could prove very interesting for future generations. Another interesting sight was the Martian weather, the clouds of dust producing a magnificent spectacle for us humans to enjoy. The polar

caps were white, hinting that there was snow on the southern pole of the planet. The Martian dust-storms are due to the violent weather and the gusts of wind on the deserted planet.

We passed the time as best we could until 2 a.m., regardless of the disturbing flames of the campfires, till we returned to our buses. When we took the attendance, we found that there was one person missing, so we had to wait until he showed up. When he finally did so half an hour later, we set off to meet altogether again at the Jounieh Crepaway. It was a long way back and we did not reach the place until around 5.30 a.m., when we found that members of the group had not been so much impressed by the occasion. There had been too much light and too many brainless amateurs polluting the atmosphere.

I must say that the event as a whole was not very well organised. However, the organisers have to be given credit for their hard work, for they had thought to give the public an opportunity to see a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle and we were lucky to belong to a generation that had such opportunities. All in all, I guess the publishers of *Science and World Magazine* were happy to have us present.

The members of the Astronomy Club will be glad to welcome those interested in joining their club, which may be done simply by signing one's name at Dr. Roger Hajjar's office in the Science Department. A warm welcome to you all!

SOMETHING

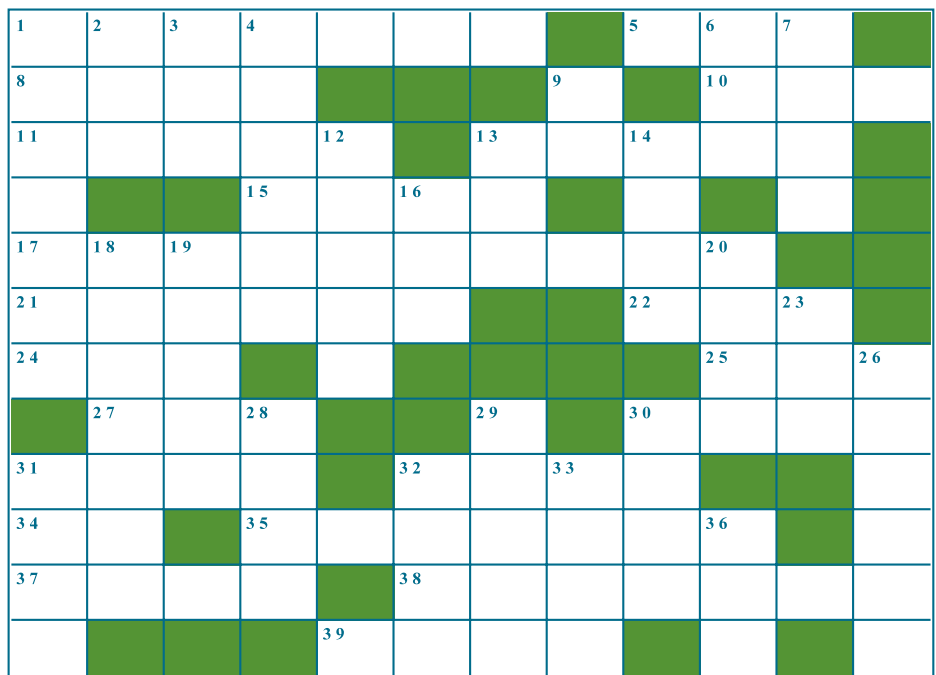
for your GREY matter

CROSSWORD

CLUES

Across:

1. rhythmic group
5. animal foot
10. tap on a dog's head
11. salute
13. filled with food
15. snare
17. wastes
21. appearance, side viewed
22. slippery fish
24. female deer
25. body support
27. faucet
30. humble request
31. pull apart
32. martial arts room
34. in a vertical direction
35. player or craftsman for fun, not money
37. visionary, prophet
38. making a home for baby birds
39. real nuisance



Down:

1. tormented city
2. make a mistake, wander
3. devoured
4. African fly
6. imitate like a monkey
7. walk in water
9. university degree
12. ruse
13. holiday watering place
14. tall woody plant
16. liable, suitable
18. special form of a chemical element
19. pointed weapon
20. put on the market
23. Confederate general
26. car hospital
28. luscious fruit
29. elements of music
30. show bad temper by protruding the lips
31. outsize tooth
32. kind of Viking
33. joke
36. tear quickly

Solution in the next issue

SEEN IN KESROUAN

Advert on roadside hoardings:

“ ***** refrigerators with **bottom freezer**” (We don’t advise you to sit on it! English students: notice how the meaning changes according to which word you stress.)

Name of a beach near Maameltein:

“Slimy Beach” (Sounds ghastly. Salim’s Beach? Slimming Beach? *Slimy* means greasy or oily.)

Trilingual sign over a butcher’s:

“Malhameh – Boucherie – Butchery” (*Butchery* means massacre or slaughter or brutal murder!)

NO SMOKIN

Before leaving us for Australia, **Doctor Violet Torbey**, known for her campaigning against tobacco, left us the following communication, dated 29 July, 2003:

Two students of FAAD designed posters about passive smoking as part of a course with Sherry Blankenship. These posters will be displayed at an International Conference on Tobacco being held in Helsinki (Finland) this week. Dr. George Saade, director of the WHO Anti-Tobacco Programme in Lebanon, is taking the posters to the conference.

The students are Christian Nseir and Arine Atamian.

This is an honour for the students and for NDU

(Passive smoking refers to the harm done to people not smoking themselves who inhale the smoke generated by people puffing away in the same room. -Ed.)

Some hotel notices in foreigner's English kindly supplied by **Dana J. Pratt**, President of American Friends of NDU in the USA.

IN PARIS:

Please leave your values at the front desk.

IN JAPAN:

Is forbidden to steal hotel towels. If you are not a person to do such thing is please not to read notice.

You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid.

NORWAY:

Ladies are requested not to have children in the bar.

SWITZERLAND:

Our wines leave you nothing to hope for.

MEXICO:

Our manager has personally passed all the water served here.

BANGKOK (DRY CLEANER'S SHOP):

Drop your trousers here for best results.

HOTEL HORRORS