



On May 16th 2004, the Maronite Church was again covered in glory as one of her sons, the Blessed Nimatullah Al-Hardini, was raised to the altars at St. Peter's Basilica, in Rome, by His Holiness Pope John Paul II. The Holy Father had previously declared Fr. Nimatullah venerable in 1989, and elevated him to the rank of Blessed in 1998.

St. Nimatullah Al-Hardini (1808-1858), whose baptismal name was Joseph, was a Maronite priest and religious, and lived a life of heroic virtue in Lebanon where he passed most of his years in monastic solitude. Although shouldering heavy duties of administration, teaching and manual labor (St. Nimatullah practiced his craft of bookbinding even while serving as Assistant General of the Lebanese Maronite Order), the saint maintained an intense spiritual and devotional life including heavy bodily mortifications. He taught at various schools of the Lebanese Maronite Order and among his students was Brother Sharbel Makhlouf—the illustrious St. Sharbel. Along with Sts. Rafka and Sharbel, St. Nimatullah was outstandingly devoted to the Blessed Sacrament, kneeling, sometimes for hours-on-end, in adoration. The Maronite Church celebrates his feast day on the 14th of December.