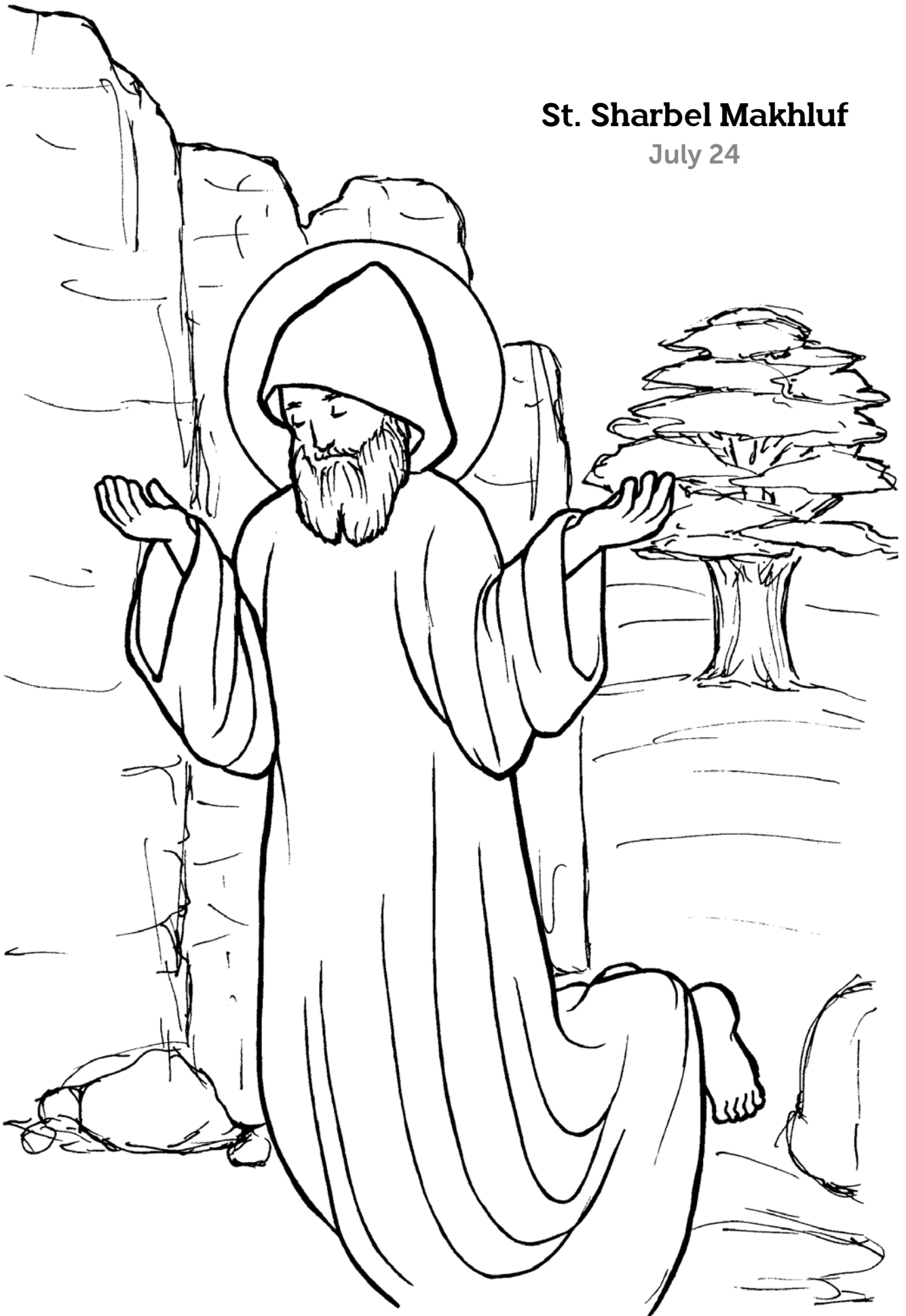


St. Sharbel Makhluf

July 24



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St. Sharbel Makhluf

1828–1898 • Lebanon

Sharbel was born in a village in the Lebanese mountains. His father died when Sharbel was only three years old, so he was raised by his pious uncle. His chore was to take care of the family's animals. While out with their sheep, he would find time to pray quietly to God in a nearby cave. He felt closest to God in the silence.

When Sharbel was twenty-three years old, he left his village to enter the Monastery of St. Maroun. He studied hard to become a priest, and for sixteen years he lived in the monastery.

But Sharbel remembered his time praying by himself in the cave. He knew he felt closest to God alone and in silence. So he asked permission to live in a hermitage dedicated to Sts. Peter and Paul. A hermitage is a place where someone can live all alone to pray.

In the hermitage, Sharbel lived a life of prayer and sacrifice. The hermitage was so high up in the mountains that it was very cold in the winter. He slept on a straw mattress and ate only the leftovers from the monastery.

Sharbel greatly loved the Eucharist and would give the nearby villagers Communion. He continued his life of prayer and sacrifice into his old age and died on Christmas Eve after he became suddenly ill while saying Mass.

After his death, a great miracle happened.

Bright light surrounded his grave. The light shone dazzling white for forty-five days. Today many pilgrims come to visit his shrine and pray in silence on the mountain like St. Sharbel.

St. Sharbel, help me to find God in the silence!