

OUR TRIP TO LEBANON

OCTOBER 6 TO 13, 2026

HIGHLIGHTS & REFLECTIONS

| ORGANIZATION

For a long time, Mylène and I nourished the secret hope of visiting Abouna ZAHLAOUI. At our respective ages, anything can happen—the best as well as the least fortunate. It is true that the situation in Lebanon was hardly favorable for such a journey.

As soon as the situation improved, we purchased tickets—first via Air France, which unfortunately canceled our trip scheduled for September 23 to 30, 2026, as they could not guarantee passenger safety. We were fortunate to look elsewhere and booked with MEA (Middle East Airlines), which ensured our travel under excellent conditions.

We planned to stay at St. Paul Monastery in Harissa, where Abouna has been accommodated for the past 18 months. Authorization was graciously granted by the Superior General, Father Marwan, through his "illustrious guest."

| OUR ARRIVAL IN HARISSA

Upon our arrival, we were welcomed by Father Elias AGHIA, former Superior General of the Paulist Society—a very affable, smiling man full of humor—who led us directly to our Dear ABOUNA. What joy, what emotion to see our Father, our brother again after more than 9 years of separation! Thank you Lord for granting us this grace.

| THE VIEW FROM THE MONASTERY TERRACE (07/10)

Overlooking Jounieh and BEIRUT in the distance with Father Elias AGHIA.

| OUR LADY OF LEBANON IN HARISSA (07/10)

Visiting the majestic Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lebanon, overlooking the bay of Jounieh.

| VISIT TO OUR LADY OF BZOMMAR & WINE CELLAR

A memorable visit to the Armenian Catholic Monastery of Our Lady of Bzommar, exploring its spiritual heritage and historic wine cellar.

"Moments of contemplation and fellowship surrounded by the breathtaking landscapes of Mount Lebanon."

| THE VISIT OF MYRNA (09/10)

While planning our trip to Harissa, we had high hopes of meeting Myrna and her family. By informing Maya Patsalides, we were confident in our plan. The latter did not disappoint us; she exceeded all our expectations!

Indeed, she organized the journey for Myrna, accompanied by her husband Nicolas, their daughter Myriam, and her fiancé Elias, as well as the Icon of Our Lady of Soufanieh "in person." Furthermore, Maya reached out to OTV, the television channel in Lebanon, to produce a special report. A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated by Father Elias AGHIA.

| VISIT TO SAINT CHARBEL (10/10)

We had the joy of meeting Rachel and Mélissa, two recent friends of Father ZAHLAOUI. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their kindness, generosity, and hospitality. They were the ones who drove us to Annaya and guided us throughout our visit.

"A grace-filled encounter at the Shrine of Saint Charbel in Annaya."

| THE EXUDATION OF OIL FROM THE ICON (11/10)

We were invited, along with the Nazzour family, to Riad and Juliette HEJME's home for dinner. After sharing memories of Friday, Oct 9 (the Mass and interview at St. Paul Monastery), just as we were preparing to return home, Riad noticed that the icon had exuded a drop of oil.

It was a deep consolation for all those who have left their country, their homes, and now find themselves in exile in Lebanon. We particularly thank Riad and his mother Juliette for their warm, fraternal, and generous welcome.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We warmly extend our heartfelt thanks to:

- **Father Marwan**, Superior General, and **Father Roger**, Bursar, for kindly hosting us among them.
- **Father Elias AGHIA**, for driving us to idyllic and historic locations around Beirut.
- All the priests and bishops who welcomed us with such warmth and kindness.
- **Maya PATSALIDES**, without whom we could never have reunited with Myrna, her family, and the Icon of Our Lady of SOUFANIEH.
- **Myrna and her family**, who made the journey from Damascus despite all the challenges along their route.

Finally, how could we not thank Father Elias ZAHLAOUI, without whom none of this would have been possible.

WE LOVE YOU ALL
Guy & Mylène FOURMANN
Compiègne, France

