



From the Heart - Volume I - Issue 2 - October 2008

From The Heart

Semi-Annual Newsletter published in memory of Joseph F. Garabet by

Joseph F. Garabet Foundation

A non profitable, charitable foundation dedicated to raise awareness among young adults to avoid bikes and automobile accidents.

During Joseph's short life on this earth, he left an indelible mark on his family, friends and he touched every one in a special way. The foundation, newsletter, and website are our own way to extend Joseph's memory after his departure.

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One Year Has Passed

One year has passed and a few things have not changed. His room, his books, laptop, CD collection, the magazines next to his bed, his clock still ticking, his resting drums forever silent, his car parked in the garage, his mute stereo which will never speak, his phone on the night stand waiting, his blue shirt hanging on the side of the bed.

All these objects have no life. They will not move, they cannot leave, they just wait for Zuzu to wake them up. Like the castle of the sleeping beauty, time has stopped and everyone awaits the prince who will kiss the princess and reverse the spell. How much I wish that an earthly prince will come and awake everyone from this dream, and reverse the ugly spell that we live everyday.



But our story cannot have a happy ending, and no prince will ever come. Time has stopped. Joy, happiness and hope have taken a long vacation.

One year has passed and a few things did change. Around the house, we have more pictures; in his room, we have more pictures, big pictures on the wall, a collage in the living room, some more pictures in this corner, next to the window, across from here, right over there and yes on top of the fire place, on the piano, between the orchids. You can hardly escape seeing one anywhere in the house.

His face, his voice, his laughter are engraved in my eyes, my ears, in my heart; not a second goes by without thinking of him.

One year has passed and, we have changed. We lost many habits and picked-up a few new ones. We lost a son, a brother and a promise of a wonderful future. We are forever marked by sadness and sorrow which will never fade. The memories of that October Monday are lived a thousand times; the agony of his departure is played in an infinite loop.

Zuzu is gone! Zuzu is an angel!

“Unless a grain of wheat”

Dear Friends,

If we stop and look around us we realize that we live in a busy world. We are pressured from every side; we never have enough time to finish our task. Time is of essence today; sometimes we feel that time goes by too fast and sometimes it goes by too slow. Sometimes we are happy; sometimes we are sad; others times we are worried. We are only free of time and space's limitations once we are in the presence of the Lord.

It has been a year since Zouzou has passed on to the next life but the pain over his loss has persisted. We still remember him at every occasion, at various encounters, in everyday life. We miss his presence, his friendly face, his easy approach. We lament his passing and we try to understand the reason.

In response to our suffering and mourning, Christ reassures us in the Gospel of John: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24).

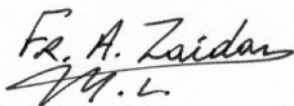
Zouzou is that grain of wheat that fell to the ground and produced the fruit of reconciliation and forgiveness, the fruit of patience and endurance and the of fruit surrender and hope. His passing away moves us to appreciate life as a gift from God.

We cherish it and we try to make it as fruitful as possible. In God's eyes it is not the quantity of years that count but the quality of life. Zouzou has lived his earthly life to the fullest and we pray that he is enjoying now the fullness of life in eternity.

His passing has been hard to cope with. His passing has been a heavy cross to carry. But we realize that we are never separated as we are always united with him in thought and prayer. In that perspective Zouzou is still and will always remain alive in our hearts and minds, in our memories.

By his passing, we have gained an angel in eternity.

Zouzou we love you and pray for you always.



Fr. Abdallah Zaidan, M.L.M.

Rector

Habibi Zuzu

I have watched you grow up in front of my eyes. Since birth I saw this beautiful boy who became a happy, outgoing, helpful, smart and handsome young man. You were different than any other teenager that I have ever known. I always wondered what was your secret... but today I know. You are our angel... and it was your time to head back to where you and all of us belong.

We all knew that you will have a bright future, maybe become a famous doctor, or a brilliant politician, but we were sure your life will touch a lot of people.

But God in His mysterious ways, had a better plan for you, He gave you your wings and set you free in heaven where you will see and protect all of us.. From there you will touch more lives.

Zuzu, Habibi, when I heard of the accident, I cried, I was angry, confused and I thought I had lost my mind. But today my faith in God has gotten bigger and stronger, now that you have showed me, shown us the bigger picture.

You are the child of the Good Lord and you belong to Him as much as you belong to us. Good bye Amto, Good Bye I cannot wait to see your smile and those heavenly blue eyes.

Pray for us Angel.

Amto—Guilda Asmar

Habibi Joe's

Joe was my friend, and my older brother
He was a special angel but like no other.
He had a perfect smile and bright blue eyes
Sadly, we had no chance to say our goodbyes.

Anywhere he was, at school, in his room,
He was like a flower ready to bloom.
There's only love, happiness and no hate,
People are shocked when they hear his fate.

No one knows why Joe had to go
For God's the only One who will ever know.
I will never forget the light of his eyes
His love and protection are my biggest prize.

I see you everyday from high above
Sending me kisses and showing me your Love
I will never forget everything that we share
The echo of your voice will always fill up the air.

Rita - ladybugrita@yahoo.com



Joe had many hobbies, RC Cars, Drums, Guitar and loved music.



Joseph F. Garabet Foundation - JFGF - Update

If Joseph's story can help save one life, our mission will be completed.

Goals

The main goal of the Joseph F. Garabet foundation is to raise awareness especially among young adults to the dangers of borrowing and lending cars, bikes, motorbikes, fire arms. We are hoping that the tragic events that led to Joseph's departure may be used as lessons and help youngsters avoid lending and borrowing items that may lead to accidents and deaths.

In the Works: Video—Don't Lend Don't Borrow

The foundation is in the preliminary stage of producing a 15 minute video documentary that will use Joseph's tragedy to help our young generation be aware of the ramification of lending and borrowing. We are at an early stage and any help is greatly appreciated

Scholarships:

The foundation is in contact with Glendora High School regarding the scholarship to be awarded to a member of the senior class of 2009. The scholarship will be awarded in June 2009 during the Senior Banquets.

The foundation has also provided the Maronite Outreach (a non profit organization based in Lebanon) the sum of \$2,000 to be used for scholarships in Lebanon for 2009 and 2010.

Events

- Wednesday Oct 1st 2008 - 5PM - Prayer and reflection at Forest Lawn in Via Verde. After the prayer we will gather at home in Glendora for a 1st annual remembrance meal.
- Sunday Oct 5th 2008 - 11AM Mass to be celebrated at our Lady of Mount Lebanon . Following Mass the family will be accepting condolences in Church Hall.
- Saturday January 31st 2009—7PM Fund Raising Event at the Hall of our Lady of Mount Lebanon. Proceeds from this event will be used for the video production of "Don't Lend Don't Borrow". The Gala will feature a classical music program and a silent auction.

Please visit www.garabet.com to register as a volunteer in any of the areas that you think you can help the foundation. The foundation is a 501(C) California non profit organization, all donations are tax deductible.



Habibi Joe's Night at Sinbad

Just in time before the summer holidays, a number of Zuzu's friends and cousins met at one of his favorite hangout in Glendora: Sinbad Restaurant on Route 66.

We all had a great time and shared lots of stories about him. Milia had a nice display with things that he loved, his Blue arguile, his drums and the Lebanese flag. We had also a gold fish: Joe wanted to have a small aquarium on each table at his dream restaurant "Habibi Joe's"

Joe's spirit was definitely amongst us that night.

Another evening is in the works—Rita.



The Mountain that took my son



Like a giant the bold mountain stands
Overlooking forest, rivers, and awesome lands
Many times we visited and enjoyed the scene
Of this place beautiful unique and serene

I took my son often on unforgettable trips
Hiking from the bottom to the bold mountain tips
Fishing on a lake surrounded by pine
The mountain was nice and let us play and dine

But the bold mountain had a secret plan
And waited for my son to become a man
Seduced him for a trip where he will be gone
That ugly mountain that took my son

We wished and prayed before he came
Now we wish and pray to meet again
Close to God, he fills heaven with laughter
And with the angels praise Him today and after

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