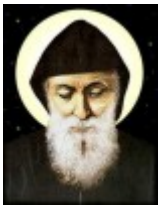
http://www.stsharbelusa.org/#!about-st--sharbel/kv0xd
http://catholicblog.webs.com/

About Saint CHARBEL :
Youssef Antoun MAKHLOUF was born on May 8, 1828 in BKAAKAFRA (North Lebanon) from Maronite parents. They are Antoun Zaarour MAKHLOUF and Brigitta CHIDIAC. He has two brothers: John & Beshara, and two sisters: Kawn & Wardeh. Youssef was grown-up on Christian beliefs which made him infatuated with prayers since his childhood. He was inclined to hermit & monk kind of life, following the path of his hermit uncles who were living in solitary in the hermitage of Saint Antonius of Kozhayah, where they handed him the championship torch of virtues.



His father passed away on August 8, 1831 in Gherfin, it is a village near AMCHIT, on his way back home after he was working in corvée for the Turkish Army, so his mother raised him as an orphan. Then she was married to Lahoud Ibrahim who became the priest of the parish, choosing the name ABDELAHAD.

Youssef studied the principals of Arabic & Syriac in the school of the village. He was very pious, to the extent that his co-villagers used to call him the “Saint”. He used to take his small herd daily to the prairies and then he would go to a grotto where he would kneel in front of the Virgin Mary Icon and pray and so this grotto became his alter and his first hermit which became later a chapel for prayer and pilgrimage for believers.

Anna, OFS, The whole world!
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