



NEWS of March 2013

1. The Holy Lent:

The Holy Lent starts on Monday, March 11, until the Feast of the Resurrection on May 5, 2013.



The Liturgies during the Lent will be as follows:

- + **Monday, Tuesday & Thursday:** from 10:00 am-1:00
- + **Wednesday:** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon.
- + **Friday:** 12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.
- + **Saturday:** 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

May the Lord grant us a deep and acceptable fasting and prayer season for the salvation of the world and Egypt.

2. The Feast of the Cross:

On Tuesday, March 19, the church celebrates the Feast of the Appearance of the Holy Cross. The Liturgy will be in festal tunes of Palm Sunday. The procession of the cross takes place during matins prayers 7:30 a.m. Vespers, Monday, March 18, from 7:00 p.m.

3. March Famous Saints:

- (1) March 5: Departure of the prophet Hosea.
- (2) March 8: Martyrdom of St. Policarp (Rev. 2:8).
- (3) Saturday, March 9: Departure of Pope Kyrellos 6.
 - + Sunday, March 17: Martyrdom of the Apostle Matthias.
 - + Departure of Pope Shenouda III.
- (4) March 21: Departure of Fr. Bishoy Kamel.
- (5) March 26: + Departure of Fr. Mikhail Ibrahim.
 - + Martyrdom of St. Sidhom Bishay of Domiatt.
- (7) March 26: The Apparition of St. Mary at St. Demiana, Shoubra, Egypt.

4. The 32nd. Anniversary of Fr. Gawargious:

St. John's priests, congregation and the Board of Deacons congratulate Rev. Fr. Gawargious Kolta for his ordination in priesthood on March 15, 1981. Also, the church congratulates him for his 81st, birthday. May the Lord support him with health, strength and long life.

5. Tutoring for new students:

The church youth volunteer helping the new-comers'-students every Wednesday evening from 6:00 p.m.

6. H.H. Pope Tawadros:

On Monday, February 18, 2013, Pope Tawadros presided the Egyptian Council of Churches, which is composed of five churches; the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical Church and the Episcopalian Church. Then all the churches signed the constitution of the new council.



7. H.G. Bishop Serapion:

+ On February 10, His Grace bishop Serapion

Joined Metropolitan Hedra of Aswan in ordaining Deacon John Aziz as a General priest to serve at St. George *Mozahem* church in Hemet and St. John Church, Covina.



+ On February ?, Metropolitan Hedra and H.G. Bishop Serapion promoted Deacon Raouf Moussa and Deacon Neder Yoakim to be full deacons by the names of Deacon Thomas and Deacon Antonious to serve at St. John Church, Covina. Thanks to the Metropolitan, the Bishop and congratulations to the new deacons, wishing them every blessing and success in their ministry.

8. The First Annual Commemoration for H.H. Pope Shenouda III:

H.G. Bishop Serapion, the Clergy and the people of the diocese of Los Angeles are holding a special prayer in commemoration of the first year of the departure of our beloved father the Thrice Blessed H. H. Pope Shenouda on Sunday, March 17, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. at St. John Church, Covina. Our beloved brethren from other churches will be joining us in this prayer.

9. Ordination of Fr. George Aziz:



St. John Church, the priests, deacons, board and congregation congratulate Rev. Fr. George Aziz (formerly Fawzy and John) for the grace of priesthood, praying that God may bless and support him in his new ministry.

10. St. John Medical Clinic

St. John's Clinic continues its activity every first and third Sunday of the month at 12 p.m., serving freely new comers and those who have no medical insurance.



Drills During Fasting



By Pope Shenouda III

These drills may include resisting some weak points in the life of a fasting person, certain virtues that such a person lacks, or spiritual longings in his heart. What matters is that the person who fasts may feel that he has before him in his fast a certain target:

1. Drills pertaining to fasting:

Some of these drills pertain to self-control:

They may include the person who fasts stopping himself from eating certain kinds of food that he desires, or to reduce the quantity of the food, or abstain from a certain item of food.

Self-control drills may include the period of abstinence, its limitation, during such a period.

Some people resort to a system of gradation even within one's fast. For example, Lent covers eight weeks during which one who fast may gradually advance as to the degree of his asceticism and abstention from food.

Self-control also includes pre-fast and feast days. Eating in these days should not be gluttonous and uncontrolled. Drills may be for the virtues accompanying fasting: In this way they include the spiritual aspects of fasting such as self-control in general outside the scope of eating, general control of the body, abstention from bodily lusts and all sensuous luxuries.

2. Drills pertaining to repentance:

Since fasting is a period of repentance, the repentance drills are numerous such as:

a) Concentration on a point of weakness or a favorite sin:

Everyone knows well which sin he weakens before, and which sin is repeatedly referred to in most of his confessions. Let one then take such sins as a field of training to overcome them.

b) **One who fasts may train himself to quit a certain habit:** An example of this is a smoker who trains himself while fasting to quit smoking. Likewise is the one who is addicted to some kind of drink and cannot get rid of this dominating habit and the one who is addicted to time –wasting television watching which consumes his time and affects his responsibilities.

c) **Fasting may be a period of drilling in quitting a sin such as anger or judging others:**

This is one of the common and wide-spread sins into which many people slip. Drills may deal with a number of verbal sins that man has become accustomed to. In fasting, he may train himself in their elimination one by one.

d) **Remembering certain verses dealing with sinfulness:**

For instance, if he slips into the sin of nervousness, he reminds himself of the Bible words: *"For the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God"* (James 1:20). He should repeat this verse often every day especially in situations where anger wars upon him. He should rebuke himself saying: What would I benefit by fasting if during it I got angry and did not do God's will? If he slips into any of the verbal sins, he puts the following words of the Bible before his eyes: *"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment"* (Matt. 12:36). He then says to himself in reproach: what would benefit me if I fasted with all self control but did not control my tongue saying to my brother "You fool," thus deserving of hell fire?" (Matt. 5:22).

e) **Whenever you feel hungry and covet food, rebuke yourself:** Say to yourself: When you give up this sin, I shall



allow you to eat, for the Bible says: ***"If any would not work, neither should he eat"*** (2 Thess. 3:10).

f) Take your point of weakness and make it the topic of your prayers and the target of your efforts during your fast: Fully concentrate on it from the point of view of aspiration, accuracy, and resistance. Pour yourself before God, and say to Him: Lord save me, from this sin. I admit that I am weak in this particular case and will not conquer it without Your assistance. Have mercy of Lord, on my weakness and helplessness. Collect Bible verses that deal with this sin. Place them before you to read them continuously.

3. Seclusion and silence drills:

The Bible states: ***"Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly"*** (Joel 1:14). What is meant by seclusion is being in seclusion or privacy with God, not with the TV, computer, or arguments at home. The spiritual seclusion needed is in your closed bedroom with God alone. Seclude yourself with the Bible, with the history of the saints and prayers. If you have a spiritual schedule you will love seclusion and quite time with God. Use the drill of some "closed days"...If you cannot close your doors during a fast, then at least close your mouth against a sinful talk. As one of the Desert Fathers said, "He who talks much is empty from inside." This means that he is void of spiritual work inside the heart, i.e. neither prayer nor contemplation.

4. Resisting lost time drill:

Someone's main problem may be loss of time. To him, or her, time is a trivial thing. He wastes this time without benefiting of it. This is a primary sin. As a result of wasting his time, he neither prays, reads, nor have any spiritual thought or activity. Consequently, spiritual laxity, and perhaps slipping into sin may ensue. Save the time lost in talking with people, in meetings and visits, in useless discussions, and in reading newspapers and commenting on the news. This drill helps us in another one which is:

Fasting of the tongue: St. Isaac said that "a tongue's fast is much better than the fast of the mouth." If you know this, you would train yourself to remain silent as long as you could. If you are unable to do so, then use the following three exercises:

- (1) Do not initiate a conversation except when necessary.
- (2) Give short answers.
- (3) Occupy your mind with some spiritual act that will help you keep silent.

5. Penitence and self-abasement drills:

Train yourself in them until you pull yourself down to the level of the dust and ashes. Use penitent words in your prayers like psalm 6: LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor

chasten me in Your hot displeasure." If you feel hungry or sit down to eat, tell yourself, "I do not deserve this food because of my sins" Fasting days offer a good opportunity for confession and self reproach.

6. Memorization drills:

You may always take the period of fasting to memorize Biblical verses, psalms, hymns and chapters from the Bible.

+ Memorize the Sermon on the Mount, which include 111 verses. If you memorize 3 verses a day, you will finish them in 37 days.

+ Memorize the 36 passages of the Agpeya.

+ Memorize the thanksgiving prayers, Psalm 50, the Trisagion, the hours absolutions, which include 8 of them, and the conclusion of every prayer.

+ Memorize selected Bible verses, preferably with their references. If you memorize 3 verses a day, you will manage to memorize 150 verses every year during Lent alone.

+ Memorize golden chapters like 1 Corinthians 13, the chapter of love; or Romans 12; or 1 Thess. 5, or Ephesus 6:10 (the armor of the spiritual warfare); Phil. 3:7-14, etc.

7. Prayer drills:

(1) Prayer drill on the road:

While on your way, let your heart be occupied with God through a Psalm or short prayers.

(2) Drill yourself also in praying in the midst of people whether you are in a meeting, or in the midst of people anywhere, lift up your heart to God using any statement. In this way you keep silent while your heart is busy with the Holy Spirit.

(3) Drill in praying while working: Manual work helps a lot in getting one involved in prayer. Even if your work is totally mental, lift up your heart to God from time to time with a short prayer.

(4) Drill in continuing to pray:

Train yourself that whenever you find your prayer is about to come to an end; prolong it for some time.

(5) Drill in the spirituality of prayer: This drills included prayers performed with understanding, depth, warmth, humility and without distraction.

(6) Drill in praying for the sake of praying: Saint Isaac was asked, "How do we learn to pray?" He answered: "By praying!"

(7) Drill in praying for others:

Let not your prayer be for yourself alone, but train yourself to pray for others, for any hardship, or sickness and for the departed. Pray for the church, the safety of the country and for the salvation of those who do not know God.



THE JOURNEY OF THE GREAT LENT



By Fr. Gawargious A. Kolta

The great lent lasts for 55 days which is a chance for us to achieve many virtues and get rid of many sins and bad habits, if we fast and follow the correct spiritual path. The following points are very useful landmarks for beneficial fasting:

1-Abstaining from food for certain periods, and minimizing fancy items.

2- Increasing spiritual activities, such as:

+ Regular Bible studies, so that the Word of God abides in us and works in us.

+ Praying the hours with Agpeya, sharing the Heavenly Hosts in praising God with Psalms.

+ Examining ourselves daily, and spending more time in spiritual meditation.

+ Regular repentance and confession, following the guidance of the father of confession to overcome the wicked one.

+ Receiving the Holy Communion, more than once per week.

+ Attending the church meetings regularly in order to nourish our Spirits, so that the Word of God may dwell in us richly.

+ Attending the vespers, and participating in the Tasbeha.

3- Looking after the needy people and visiting the sick and the elderly. The pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (James 1:27). When we visit the sick, we visit the Lord Himself

4- Practicing spiritual exercises, under the direction of the father of confession. This will help to grow spiritually towards the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

In the same time, we have also to flee from the following:

1- Bad habits that overcome us and rule us, such as smoking, addiction to alcohol, gambling, addiction to TV, or bad web sites. Also avoid walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the path of the sinners, and sitting in the seat of the scornful. A Christian must put on the new man who is

renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him (Col. 3:10), remembering that we were created in Christ for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

2- Immoral pleasures of the world that may defile our purity. These pleasures will choke any spiritual virtues that we gain during fasting, and will lead to various lusts.

3- Pride is the mother of all sins. Overcoming it can be achieved by self-control, hiding the virtues, remembering that we are sinners, respecting others, and referring every good deed to the Almighty God, who is the source of all gifts.

In addition, we have to meditate in the scriptures and the gospel readings of the seven weeks of the lent, which are established in the church by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The theme of the readings in each of the lent weeks starts by Monday and ends by Sunday. The goal of these readings is to emphasize the fact that our Lord accepts those who repent and it can be summarized as follows:

The pre-lent Sunday: (Mat. 6:1-18). The theme is to direct the believers to the three bases of acceptable worship; alms giving, prayer, and fasting, in order that the believers can compete properly, according to the rules (2 Tim. 2:5).

1-First Sunday: (Mat. 6:19-33). The theme is “Do not lay treasures on earth”, do not serve two masters, God and the money, do not worry about your future, but seek first the kingdom of God. This can lead us to take care of the needy and be charitable believers. For this reason, the church chants during the lent this hymn: “Blessed are those, who have mercy on the poor, for they shall obtain mercy”. The Pauline epistle (Rom. 13:1-14) tells us about the proper Christian behavior towards the rulers and the laws. The Catholic epistle (James 1:13-21) speaks about the life of meekness (to be swift to hear, slow to speak and slow to wrath), and the Acts (21:40-22:16) tells us to preach the Gospel to all people.

2-Second Sunday: (Mat. 4:1-11), the theme is “Satan’s temptations increase during your fasting”; thus we must be careful of the lust of the body, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 Jn. 2:16). We take our Lord as an example how He



defeated Satan who fled away, and then angels came to serve Him. The Pauline epistle (Rom. 14:19-15:7) tells us to beware of stumbling any one, the Catholic epistle (James 2:1-13) speaks about avoiding partiality that offends others, and the Acts reading (23:1-11) asks us to be cautious of divisions, which take away peace.

3-Third Sunday: (Lk. 15:11-32), the theme is "Repentance (type I)". The sinful desire of the prodigal son, who followed Satan's deceit, ended by a miserable life after leaving his father's house, but by a sincere decision, to repent, and after he had returned to himself, he was saved. The father met the disloyalty of his son by compassion, patience and love. It demonstrates the loving kindness of our Father towards us and warns us of postponing our repentance. The Pauline epistle (2 Cor. 6:2-13) mentions the prophecy of Isaiah "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you. Now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation". The Catholic reading (James 3:1-12) tells us that we must control our tongue, which is the source of many sins. This is an important issue for repentance. The Acts (24:1-23) advises us to cling to the truth and not to fear the other opponents. This is how a true Christian should be.

4-Forth Sunday: (Jn. 4:1-42), the theme is "Repentance (type II)", which appeared in return to Christ's love towards the Samaritan lady. If we can not return to ourselves, the Lord will come and fetch for us, by different means. It shows that the grace of God can visit us in the 12th hour and moves us to call sinners to repentance. It declares that our Lord is thirsty and hungry for our salvation. The repented lady preached in the town and she led her people to the salvation of Christ. The Pauline epistle (Phil. 6:1-24) asks us to be armed with the word of God. The Catholic epistle (James 4:7-17) tells us to submit to God and resist the devil. The Acts (25:13-26:1) encourages us to be like St. Paul who spoke boldly and preached the gospel to the Jews and the Gentiles.

5-Fifth Sunday: (Jn. 5:1-18), the theme is "Repentance (type III)" at Bethesda pool. The Lord comes to the sinners, who lost hope, saying: "Do you want to be well?" If the sins chain us and we become paralyzed and can not move, the merciful Lord can heal us from our sins and iniquities, if we believe in His words and obey Him. He will tell us "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you". There are many believers who suffer from spiritual paralysis due to many sins, and they need a visit from our Lord. The Pauline epistle (2 Thess. 2:1-18) instructs us to have strong faith, endure hardships and hold to the teachings we received. The Catholic epistle (2 Pet. 3:1-18) tells us that the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, and that we ought to live in holy conduct and godliness. The Acts (26:19-27:8) asks us to stand tribulations for the sake of the word of God, and to show our strong faith in Christ's salvation, proclaiming His light to all people.

6-Sixth Sunday: (Jn. 9:1-41), the theme is "I was blind but now I can see". It is called baptism Sunday or the enlightenment Sunday, because the church was accustomed to baptize the catechumens on that day. When anyone lives in sin, he is blind, because he lives in darkness. He is enlightened after repentance. The blind man was enlightened physically by having eyes, and spiritually when he obeyed the Lord, who said to him: "Go to the pool of Siloam and wash". Acceptance of the word of God and washing by baptism, enlighten anyone that he can say: "I was blind but now I can see". The Pauline epistle (Col. 3:5-16) declares to the believers, that they have to put to death the old man with all the bad deeds, and put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge, through baptism. The Catholic epistle (1 Jn. 5:13-21) assures the believers that they have eternal life when they are born of God. The Acts (27:27-37) comforts the believers that God is with them in hardships, because not a hair will fall from our heads without His permission.

The Holy lent ends by Friday, followed by Lazarus Saturday, and Palm Sunday. On Lazarus Saturday, the church commemorates the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. This Saturday has relation with the Passion Week, as the Lord who raised Lazarus is going to be crucified by His own will and power, and raise Himself by His power (Jn. 10:18). Also, this miracle so enraged the Jews, that they became full of envy to the Lord Jesus and hastened to seize Him.

7-Seventh Sunday: (Jn. 12:12-19), "Palm Sunday, Christ is our King". The triumphal entry of the Lord into Jerusalem resembles his entry into our hearts and lives to reign over us, after having repented. The readings also declare that the world has gone after Him. The prophecy of Zech. (9:9) is fulfilled on Palm Sunday. This Sunday is one of the Lord's great feasts, and thus the church reads this event from the four Gospels (Mat. 21:1-17. Mk. 11:1-11, Lk. 19:29-48, Jn. 12:12-19). The Pauline epistle (Heb. 9:11-28) declares that Jesus Christ entered the Most Holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption, offering Himself as a sacrifice. The Catholic epistle (1 Pet. 4:1-11) tells us that Christ suffered for us in the flesh, that we can arm ourselves with the same mind, that we no longer should live for the lust of the body, but for the will of God. The Acts (28:11-31) shows us the great sufferings of St. Paul for Christ's sake so that we can suffer with Him to be glorified with Him. **The Prayer of General Funeral:**

The church performs the prayer of general funeral, where the believers are sprinkled with water, at the end of the liturgy of Palm Sunday. During the Passion Week, there is no funeral prayer for anyone, who may pass away, as this week is dedicated to the Passion of our Lord. The Pauline epistle (1 Cor. 15:1-27) declares that Christ died for our sins, buried and rose again on the third day, and he became the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. The Gospel (Jn. 5:19-29) reminds us of the general resurrection, the general judgment and the eternal life. The Passion Week starts from Sunday evenings, where the church walks with the Lord hour by hour and day by day.



Titles of H.H. Pope Shenouda



By Fr. Augustinos Hanna

The greatest number of titles in church history:

Pope Shenouda III got the greatest number of titles among the Patriarchs in the Coptic Orthodox church history. The people gave His Holiness all these titles as an expression of their great love and admiration.

Our greatest Patriarchs, like St. Athanasius had two or three titles; he was called "The Apostolic"; "The Faith Protector", and the "The Author of the Orthodox Creed."

St. Cyril was called the "Faith Pillar"; and St. John Chrysostom was called, "The Golden mouthed."

But Pope Shenouda III was called and became famous of about twenty titles! I will try to mention some of them with few comments:

1. The Beloved of Millions:

H.H. Pope Shenouda III enjoyed huge and unbelievable popularity, not only in the hearts of his people the Copts, but also in the hearts of Muslim Egyptians and moderate Muslims of the Middle East countries. Therefore, he was given the title of "Beloved of the millions."

This title came as a result of his great love and great sacrifices and service to everyone, regardless of their religion or nationality.

This fervent love from his people appeared through the regular attendance of the thousands to his weekly meeting for fifty years (from 1962 –2012).

Also, this great popularity was clear in his funeral, which was attended by millions and crowds which blocked the streets, that the newspapers called it, the "Funeral of the Century!" It was broadcasted in all TV channels despite of the Islamic fanaticism!

2. The Saint of the Century:

Pope Shenouda III was called "The Saint of the century" due to his saintly life which reflected the Christian values and virtues. He was filled of the Holy Spirit and His nine fruits,

"Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23). He was also known as a man of prayer, of solitude and meditation. Besides he was a living Bible who memorized the Scriptures by heart and applied the word of God in his daily life.

3. Athanasius of the 20th and 21st Centuries:

St. Athanasius was called "The Apostolic" because he defended the Christian faith and the "Divinity of Christ" and completed the work of the Apostles. He stood firm despite the severe and vicious war from the Arians that led to his exile five times; and when they said to him, "The whole world is against you", he said, "And I am against the world." Also, it was said of St. Athanasius, that who speaks about him is in fact speaking about the virtue."

For all these reasons, Pope Shenouda III was called, "the New Athanasius" or Athanasius of the current century", because of his virtues and because he defended the faith against many modern heresies as of "Jehovah Witnesses," Adventists, Mormons...etc. He was a giant theologian who succeeded in the "International Theological Dialogs" and was chosen as the President of the World Council of Churches.

4. The Second Golden Mouthed:

Pope Shenouda was named also "the second golden mouthed." They gave him this title of St. John Chrysostom the Great Patriarch who lived in the 5th century, because he was well known of his eloquence and the beauty of his sermons and writings. Pope Shenouda was excellent and eloquent orator in his speeches and talented in his writings beside his rare gift as a poet, who wrote tens of spiritual poetry, hymns and songs.

5. The Ecumenical Pope:

Pope Shenouda was given this title for two main reasons: 1) because he traveled to the six continents of the world establishing new churches, monasteries and seminaries and ordaining bishops, priests and deacons. 2) He was elected one of the Presidents of the World



Council of Churches (WCC) as well as the President of the Middle East Council of Churches.

6. The Living Encyclopedia:

This title was given to Pope Shenouda due to his great and wide range of knowledge and readings in all branches of religion, Bible, world policy, history, dogma, philosophy, psychology, poetry, literature. Sociology, Islam, and comparative theology...etc. That is why they called him a living or moving encyclopedia.

7. The Preacher of the Six Cotenants:

This title was given to Pope Shenouda III because he was the first in the Coptic Church history who visited and served Christ in North America and South America (Mexico, Brazil and Bolivia), most of the countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. He instituted new churches, theological schools wherever he went all over the world.

8-10. The "Greatest among the Patriarchs", the "Teacher of the Globe" and "The 13th Apostle": All these titles were used to describe the Coptic Patriarchs, but they are applied accurately on Pope Shenouda III.

11. The Lion of St. Mark:

Pope Shenouda III as the 116th successor of St. Mark the Apostle and Evangelist was called, "The Lion of St. Mark." St. Mark was usually referred to by the Lion his icons always depicted with a lion. He was very courageous as a lion in defending the Christian Orthodox faith and protecting his congregation. He bravely opposed the fanatic Muslim President Sadat who wanted to apply the Sharia law over the Christians of Egypt. He was exiled 40 months in a desert monastery for his solid principles.

12. The Genius of Love:

This was a strange title given to Pope Shenouda by one of the Egyptian Muslim leaders called Mr. Ali El-Samman who was the chief of the Committee of the dialogue of religions. He said that the Pope conquered hatred with love, taught his adversaries lessons of love, solved difficult problems with love, and he suggested that the life of Pope Shenouda, his thoughts and teachings must be taught in schools to the students that they should reject all sorts of fanaticism and violence.

13. The Wise Pope:

This title was given to Pope Shenouda III by H.G. Bishop Serapion of Los Angeles, California when the Pope turned 80 years old, and he wrote an article about that was published in St. John Magazine in June 2012. Everyone who was lucky enough to know the Pope personally agrees hundred percent that Pope Shenouda was a treasure of wisdom. He added to the wise men of old, all the knowledge of the generations, all the offers of modern science in the era of the computer. Pope Shenouda was

very smart and intelligent by nature and by his wide intensive readings plus by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

14. Pope of the Arab:

The leaders of the Arab Muslim world for the first time in history called Pope Shenouda, "The Arabian Pope" or the "Pope of the Arabs." They loved him, admired him and appreciated his wisdom, attitude, sacrifice and solidarity, his love for peace and justice regarding the Palestinian plight. They admired his talks and knowledge in Arabian and Islamic Conventions and they were proud to call him the Pope of the Arab World. Every time the Palestinian President, late Yasser Arafat visited Egypt, he put it one of his top priorities to visit Pope Shenouda.

15. The Fiery Pope:

We were used to hear this title about few persons in the Bible like Elijah, John the Baptist and St. Paul the Apostle. They had great zeal, courage, power and influence. In our era we saw the same character clearly in the life, talks, works and ministry of H.H. Pope Shenouda. He was filled with the same Holy Spirit who worked in all those great characters. He was fervent in his love, worship, service, preaching and teaching, mighty in the scriptures and zealous in saving every creature. Pope Shenouda enflamed the life of millions with his sermons which surpassed tens of thousands, and his writings, poems, and his mercy to the poor, the widows and the orphans.

16. The king of speech and silence:

The highly educated people, like Dr. Tarek Heggy and Naguib Mahfouz and others, gave this title to Pope Shenouda, because he was eloquent in speech, talented in writing books, articles, and dialogues on TV channels and he was famous of memorizing hundreds of poems and wise sayings and stories. Also, he had great self-control to keep silent in certain situations where he wanted to show protest and found that any speech will be useless. One of the reporters once asked him saying: We got scared of your silence. And he answered, "In my mind a lot of words and in my heart more, but I preferred to keep silent; because God hears the voice of our silence and understands it."

In the next issue, God willing, I hope to complete the rest of the titles such as:

17. The Laughing and Weeping Pope!

18. The Giant Lawyer

19. The Poor Loving and Giving Pope

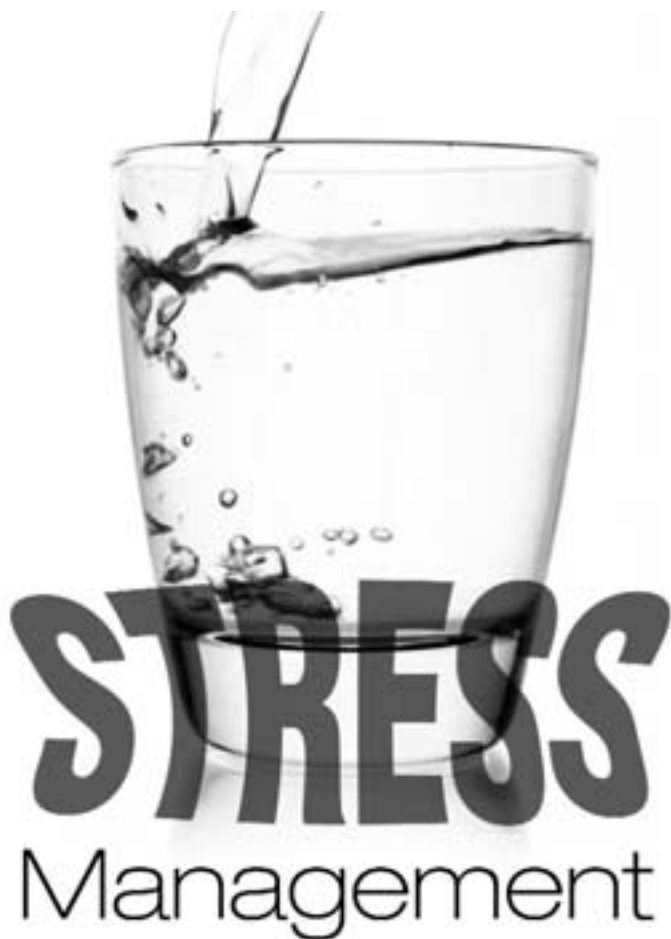
20. The Evangelical Pope

21. The Miraculous Pope

22. Moses and Nehemiah of the Time

[To be continued]





A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they'd be asked the "half... empty or half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: "How heavy is this glass of water?"

Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter.

It depends on how long I hold it.

If I hold it for a minute, it's not a problem.

If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm.

If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed.

In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes." She continued, "The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed – incapable of doing anything."

It's important to remember to let go of your stresses. As early in the evening as you can,

Put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night.

Remember to put the glass down!

"Take My Hand!"

Christ offers to man what other religions cannot.

Let me illustrate by a man who cannot swim being cast into a lake. What is the best word Confucius has for the man who is sinking? "Profit by your experience."

What is the most hopeful message Buddha has for him? "Struggle!"

What is the most encouraging teaching of Hinduism for the sinking man? "You may have another opportunity in the next incarnation."

What does Mohammed say?"

"Whether you sink or whether you survive, it is the will of God."

And what does Jesus Christ say? **"Take My hand"**



With God's Permission

The devils cannot do anything against us without God's permission. But with God's permission they are powerful. All wickedness, all the passions are inspired by them. But listen: God allows them to suggest sin to a person, but they cannot force him to do it. We ourselves are responsible for accepting or rejecting their seductive suggestions.

- John Damascene



Reader's Corner



Frhanna,

As Iran continues to abuse imprisoned American Pastor Saeed Abedini, its goal is now clear — force Pastor Saeed to deny Christ.

We've obtained a new letter from Pastor Saeed detailing his continued mistreatment in the deadly Evin Prison, including Iran's efforts to force him to convert from Christianity back to Islam.

Pastor Saeed writes: "[A]fter all of these pressures, after all of the nails they have pressed against my hands and feet, they are only waiting for one thing...for me to deny Christ."

Yet he is standing strong, declaring "they will never get this from me." Now is the time to redouble our efforts to save this courageous pastor, this U.S. citizen, from the darkness of an Iranian prison.

Help us get to 300,000 signatures before our attorneys meet with U.N. Human Rights officials on March 5. Help us deliver a loud and clear message to the U.N. Save Saeed.

Sign our Petition to Save an American Pastor from an Iranian Prison Sentence.

Jordan Sekulow

ACLJ Executive Director



Memories from 1995

Pope Shenouda Silver Jubilee Song

By Kathy Samy Farag

-On this day we celebrate

The Silver Jubilee of Pope Shenouda the Great.

Good Shepherd blessed from above, full of faith, full of love. (x2)

-We love you with the love of our Lord (x4)

-25 of years of very hard work.
Building churches, spreading God's word Ordaining
bishops and priests, Traveling West, traveling East (x2)

-We love you with the love of our Lord (x4)

-Fasting. praying, and preaching,
Writing, publishing and teaching.

Through you our church has grown,
Now the Copts are well known (x2)

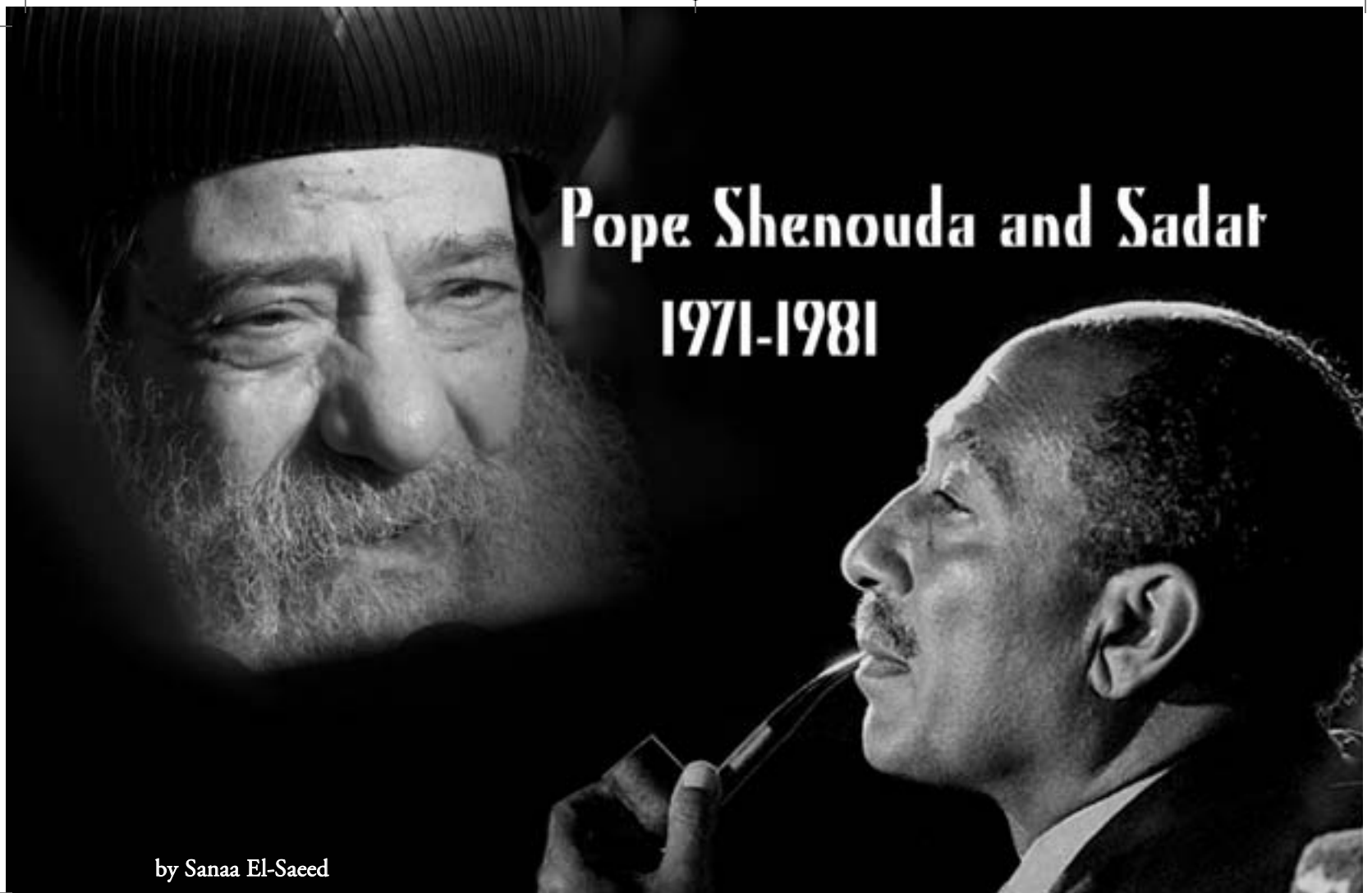
-We love you with the love of our Lord (x4)

-Lord we thank you for His Holiness,
The Giver of Peace and Righteousness

Grant him many years to come,
full of joy and wisdom (x2)

-We love you with the love of our Lord (x4)

OUR LORD (finale)



Pope Shenouda and Sadat

1971-1981

by Sanaa El-Saeed

(Translated to English by Fr. Augustinos Hanna)

In her book, "Pope Shenouda A Man of Religion and State", the author wrote the book in a question and answer form of dialogue with H. H. Pope Shenouda. The book is written in the year 2000 in Arabic language in 390 pages. It has one chapter about Sadat that took 13 pages. She starts with a short introduction saying: The impression which Pope Shenouda seems to everyone who knows him, that he is a quiet man and his relationship with people is a relation of love and friendship, and not of fighting or clash. He solves many problems with his own style which is a combination of gentleness and sense of humor. But, he says, "I may be very frank as I did with President Sadat and with the Jews, whether they are still God's chosen people or not."

Q: The impression that the Pope gave in the time of late President Sadat that he is against the authority and resists it.

A: I am, as a Christian man, respects the authority of the nation and do not resist it. It did not happen any time that I defied the authority of the government.

Q: But you stood against the authority represented in Sadat?

A: I did not stand against the authority; but on the contrary it was the authority that stood against me, and I sent a letter to President Sadat and said to him: "Mr. President, We always consider you a judge and not an adversary." But unfortunately, he preferred to be an adversary and not a fair judge. We were in the situation of the victim and complained to him, but he considered the complaint a sort of rebellion and escalating of the problem! The facts proved later on that we were "a warning bell" saying to the President, "Beware, there is danger, but he did not care and considered the advice an enmity. The incidents proved that what we expected was correct and he became a victim of those whom we complained to him about. Actually, the danger increased until it led to the tragic accident of his assassination on October 6, 1981.

Q: What do you think of what Sadat did when he adopted the Muslim Brotherhood to resist Communism?

A: First of all, Communism did not threaten Egypt. The Egyptians are religious people by nature and Communism is atheist. Secondly, Sadat at the time had no party or popularity, he thought if he released those Muslim Brotherhood from prison, they will be faithful to him and support him strongly and he knew that those groups are strong and well trained.



But they were violent and one of the first things they have done was burning a church in Khanka on October 1972! Of course, the Pope was not happy with that, and from here started the dispute....

Q: What did the investigation committee find at the time?

A: The next month after burning that church, and exactly on November 14, 1972, was the first Anniversary of my Enthronement and the Cathedral was crowded and packed. I got a direct question about burning the church. I talked about my good relations with Muslims and said that the true Muslim according to Islam is the one whom people got safe from his hand and his tongue, and he is the Muslim who argue with the "People of the Book", which are the Christians and Jews, in a peaceful way and said that I will leave the subject in the hands of my brothers the Muslims to react. And I decided that the sun will not see me eating until this problem is solved between Muslims and Christians. I imposed a personal fasting until sunset daily, which continued for long months.

Q: What was the reaction of President Sadat?

A: On the second day after my letter, he selected a committee to investigate the causes of this incident. The chief of the committee was Dr. Gamal El- Otefy (the vice president of the Parliament) and among its members were some Christian leaders like Albert Barsoum Salama and Moheb Estino (Coptic ministers or secretaries). But the atmosphere was disturbed, and President Sadat visited me in my office in the Patriarchate on December, i.e., after these developments by one month. On that day we reached an agreement about the churches. He asked me, "Why do the Copts try to build churches by illegal ways that provoke Muslims? I answered, "Because they do not find a legal way to have a church." He said, "Then we have to agree on an annual plan" and he asked me, "What is the number of churches do you need, and I promise to agree immediately and to add ten more to them? I said, "I do not like to cause you problems with the Muslims. And he said, "No, do not worry; we are controlling the country very good from inside." I said, "Then forty churches distributed on all the counties", and here he said, "And ten more a gift from me that the total number may be 50 fifty churches! Our meeting stayed for one hour and a half, but despite the promise of President Sadat to grant us fifty churches, nothing was fulfilled and the promise was not kept.

Q: President Sadat got angry when you declared a fast?

A: Yes, we talked about that and I said to him: "Mr. President, our fast is worship and not politics, it is a fast directed to God and not to people. But I admit that I declared the fast at the time as a protest for the attacks against

the Copts, burning their churches and the unfair laws which smell blood out of them....

Q: What is the story of the secret flyer? And what about your first visit to President Sadat?

A: After the "Temple Lot" on October 31, 1971, which declared that I am the person who will be enthroned a Patriarch, I visited President Sadat in his house at Giza on the first of November, in that day he kissed me many times, may be they were political kisses! And in that day, he said to me: "I studied the history of my church very good, and I would like that the Coptic Orthodox Church return to her old glory." But when I tried to turn the church to that old glory, the world was stirred against me!

Q: And what is the story of the secret flyer?

A: My main problem was that I wanted to be faithful to my job, I started with an activity, but there was a counter activity from the Sheik of the Al-Azhar (Sheik El-Fahham) who started sears of sermons in "*Ghet El- Enab*", Alexandria every week. Then after that a very bad flyer was issued and fabricated against me claiming that I want to turn Egypt into a Christian Country as it was before. And what happened that President Sadat left that flyer to spread and be published on large scale. It also claimed that I demanded that half of the leaders of the army to be Christians, and that never happened. That flyer moved the mobs and the extremists against me and a new movement of burning the churches started again! After a lot of destruction had happened, the Investigating Committee admitted that it was a clear fabricated flyer!

Q: You prayed together with President Sadat, when did that happen?

A: Yes, it happened twice, the first time we prayed together was on October 10, 1977 when he came to put the foundational stone for St. Mark Hospital on the land of the Patriarchate, and he delivered a speech and I also gave a talk and said, "Egypt is not a country in which we live in, but a country which lives within us" and we prayed together for the second time when we lifted up the Egyptian flag in the city of Arish.

Q: Laws smell Blood?

A: On 1977, suddenly jumped out of the blue, a very strange draft of a law called the "Apostasy Law"! If that law had passed, it would be very harmful to the Christians. So, Pope initiated a memorandum to President Sadat and wrote in it the following:

(1) **Why does the country rush to issue a law for apostasy since there is no apostasy threatens Islam in Egypt.** The first law for apostasy had been applied in the time of



Caliph Abu-Bakr when Islam was a new religion and the apostasy was congregational by groups. But now Islam is confirmed enough and there is no fear from apostasy, so what is the reason for such a law?!

(2) It is clear that this law if passed will be directed to us, because there is no religions in Egypt but only two, and the person who backslides from Islam, either to be a Christian or an atheist; and atheists in Egypt claim that they are Muslims, and therefore, it is directed to Christianity, and we do not preach Muslims that such a law may be issued against us. Also let me mention three points here:

A) Let us assume that a Christian was born and lived as a Christian, then he loved a Muslim woman and wanted to marry her, so he left Christianity to Islam, then his conscience blamed him and he wanted to return to his original religion, would he be considered then an apostate and must be killed? And if he stayed in Islam, would he be faithful? Does Islam want a number or faith?

B) Assume that a Christian for any reason became a Muslim and he had children under age yet, but they are happy with their religion as Christians, so will them be converted by force to Islam and when they say we are Christians, will they be considered backsliders and must got killed? Is that fair?

C) According to that law, one is considered apostate upon the testimony of two or three witnesses, and it is very easy to fabricate or to bear false witness in this regard, if that person died and some false witnesses claim that he had converted to Islam before his death to confiscate his heritage (estate) as what has already happened in a famous case in Alexandria.

(3) The apostasy law is against Islam itself because the Quran says, "No compulsion in religion."

(4) The apostasy law is against equality, because it does not apply of the Christian who backslide from Christianity to Islam...but it is only one way!

(5) This law does not agree with the Constitution, which protects the freedom of religion.

(6) This law contradicts the International Declaration of Human Rights, which Egypt signed to respect and apply it.

(7) This law also condemns to death the person who persuades someone to return to his original religion and orders to be killed with the apostate!

What happened after this memorandum, combined with fasting and prayers, that the "Apostasy Law" got frozen!

Q: What is the Story of the Meeting in Kanater Rest-House?

A: Moussa Sabry, the journalist, thought to arrange a meeting between me and President Sadat. The Christians at the time had imposed a fasting and that spread to America, Asia and Australia. Sadat started to think of meeting me, I went accompanied with 50, fifty Bishops and no one else except Mr. Mamdouh Salem (the Prime Minister) and Moussa Sabry. That meeting took us four hours and a half. Sadat talked about his relationship with Russia; at the end he said, "I cast out the Russian Military Experts, I don't care about anything! Then he talked about "our children abroad" and he complained bitterly saying, is it right that they attack me and make complaints against me to President Carter?" Then he added, "I don't care, this is my internal affairs." Then, Pope Shenouda added, Sadat started to get nervous and puffing the smoke of his pipe, and said, "I blame the Pope and the Holy Synod, how come that our children abroad dare to do that...when the Pope asked me for 40 churches I gave him 50.

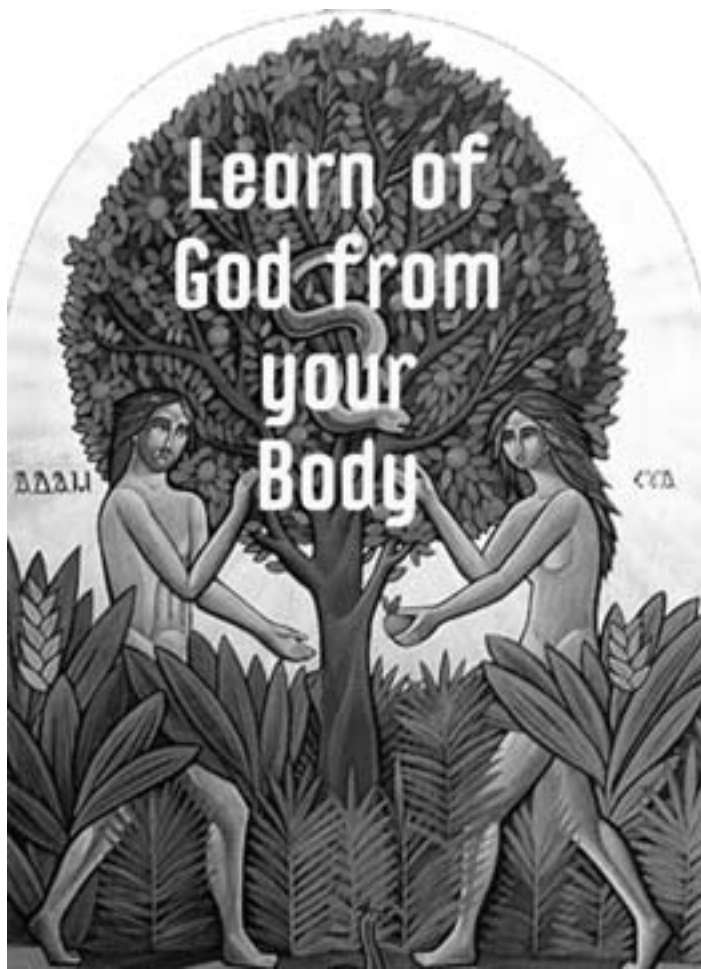
One of the Bishops said to the President, "We feel as if we are foreigners in our country." Sadat said, "No, you don't have the right to say that." And I intervened and said to the President: "Do you allow us to talk to you frankly? The Copts are a big sect and you have to care more about us and I suggested to have a meeting once a year and he agreed, but he traveled to Israel!

Q: But who stirred the dispute between the Pope and Sadat?

A: President Sadat started, in the last two years before his death, to refer to his disputes with me; and once he said on the air in one of TV stations: "I am the strongest of the strong; it never happened that I issued any wrong decision!" He gave himself infallibility by saying something no one can say it except God alone. The exaggerated praise that came to him from outside granted him too much self-confidence to the point that he did not accept any objection.... On April 1977 I met with President Carter, and President Sadat met with him ten days before me; and President Carter told me, "President Sadat spoke very highly about you." After the death of President Sadat, Mr. Osman Ahmed Osman, (one of the ministers in Sadat's Cabinet) visited me and said, "God forgives, those who were the cause of the dispute and the tragic death of Sadat!" My response was, "It is supposed that the Chief leads those who are around him and not to be led by them; he is the leader and he had to listen to us and discuss what he hears and does not believe the rumors... if he had listened to us and took the matter more seriously against who assaulted us, he would not have been killed, because those who assaulted us were the same people who killed him!"

[To be continued]





By St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Look within yourself. From your own nature you can learn something of your Maker.

There is nothing to be ashamed of in your body. If you are in control of its members, they are not in the slightest evil. Adam and Eve in the first Paradise were naked at first and their bodies did not appear shameful or disgusting. Our limbs do not cause sin, but the wrong use of them does. The Creator of our bodies knew what He was doing.

Who makes the secret parts of the mother's womb able to bear children? Who gives life to the lifeless fruit of conception? Who shapes the sinews and bones, who covers all with flesh and skin? When the baby comes to the light, who gives the milk that it can suck? How does the newborn infant grow to become a child, then an adolescent, then an adult, and then in the end an old person?

Who imposes on the heart the regularity of its beat? Who protects so skillfully our eyes with their eyelashes? Who makes our whole bodies able to be kept alive by our breathing?

Look at Your Maker. Admire Your wise Creator. The greatness and the beauty of his creatures will help you to contemplate Him.



There is a beautiful prayer in the baptismal service that asks God to assign a special guardian angel to stay with the newly baptized to protect him/her through the journey of life. "Attach to his or her life, dear Lord, a radiant angel who will protect him from every plot of the adversary." In each liturgy we pray for the protection offered by our guardian angel. "For an angel of peace, faithful guide and guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord."

If there are devils out there attacking us, our heavenly Father has provided guardian angels—far more of them than there are devils—to guard those whom the Son has ransomed and the Holy Spirit has sanctified. Remember Elisha's words: **"Do not be afraid, for there are more on our side than on theirs."**

St. John Chrysostom compares the guardian angels to the troops garrisoned in cities on the frontiers of the empire to defend it from the enemy.

The church fathers teach clearly that each baptized person enjoys the protection and guidance of an individual angel who is assigned for him.

The Lord Jesus Himself mentioned the guardian angel in Matthew 18:10 when He said, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones: for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven."

Two of my favorite verses that speak of guardian angels are Psalm 91:11, "For He (God) will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways." The second one is Psalm 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him and delivers them."



From Pope Shenouda's hand-writings

+
St. Matthew
Gospel

By whom?
When?
For whom?
Characteristics

Contents

- Chap I Genealogy /
- II Birth Magi → Egypt
- III John the Baptist / Baptism
- IV Temptations in the wilderness
beginning of mission
- V - VII Sermon on the mount
- VIII } miracles
- IX }
X }
12 Disciples



The Kingdom of Heaven of God

- 3:2 Preaching of John Baptist
 4:17+23 " " Our Lord
 10:7 " " The Disciples
 5:3, 10, 12, 19, 20 Sermon on the mount
 6:33 Seek first the Kingdom of God ...
 7:21 Not everyone who says Lord Lord
 but he who does the will of Fr in H
 11:12 The K. of Heaven suffers violence
 13:11 ... to know the mysteries of K. of H.
 13:18 (Sower) the word of the Kingdom
 13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52 ... is like ...
 16:19 I'll give you the keys (bind & loose)
 18:1-4 Who is the greatest in (a child)
 19:14 Let the little children come to me ...
 16:28 see ... coming in His Kingdom
 Heaven 5:12 Rejoice - for greater is your reward in ...
 6:20 Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven
 5:34 Swear ... neither by H. for it is God's throne
 See Heavenly Father / Parable





Contest about Pope Shenouda

By Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna

General Knowledge:

2. What are Pope Shenouda's birthday and his departure day?
3. Did Pope Shenouda enjoy his childhood with his two parents like everyone else?
4. What was the church, which the Pope served in his youth?
5. What College and University he was graduated from?
6. What were the talents the Pope was distinguished with, from his youth?
7. Who was the Pope's ideal teacher and leader in his youth?
8. What was the first Psalm the Pope memorized by heart when he was a kid, and received a golden Bible as a reward for it?
9. Mention some famous and unusual characteristics of Pope Shenouda III?
10. Describe some of the famous virtues of H.H. Pope Shenouda.
11. How many years did Pope Shenouda live as a lay-man, and how many as a monk, then how many as a Patriarch?
12. How many Doctorates did Pope Shenouda receive?
13. How many churches did Pope Shenouda establish in North America?
14. How many Bishops did Pope Shenouda ordain?
15. How many cotenants did the Pope visit?
16. How many books did Pope Shenouda write?
17. Who was the President of Egypt who exiled the Pope and what happened to him?
18. How long Pope Shenouda spent under house-arrest in a desert monastery?

19. Mention some of the famous titles that were given to Pope Shenouda.
20. How many times Pope Shenouda consecrated the Myroun oil in the time of his Papacy?
21. What is the Magazine, which Pope Shenouda established and was its chief-editor until the end of his life?
22. How many golden and wise sayings were attributed to Pope Shenouda III?
23. Mention the Pope's three famous sayings he used to repeat in his last years?
24. What are the newspapers, which Pope Shenouda wrote many articles in them?
25. On what day was the Pope's weekly spiritual meeting, and how many people roughly used to attend every week?

II. True or false?

Pope Shenouda was courageous as a lion and meek as a dove. His sermons were stopped on TV.

After his election as a Pope, he stayed teaching in Cairo and Alexandria seminaries.

He was the first Pope in the history of the Coptic Church who spent half of the week in the monastery, and who visited Russia, America, Latin America and South Africa.

He resigned at age 88 for health reasons.

His funeral was called, "the funeral of the century"

III- Complete the following Pope's sentences:

- 1) A church without youth is a church without (...).
- 2) Egypt is not a country in which we live, but a country that (.....).
- 3) Keep the Psalms and the Psalms (.....).
- 4) Carry the Bible, read (.....).
- 5) I believe my eyes more (.....)..



Congratulations



St. John Church congratulates,
Sherif Khalil & Marina (Hanna)

For their marriage wishing them every spiritual and physical blessing, and a happy life filled with joy, peace and the love in Christ.



“ليكون فيهم الحب الذي أحببتني”

كنيسة ماريوننا بكوفينا تهنيء العروسين المباركين

رامي متياس و د. ماري كمال

بالزواج المقدس وتدعو لهما بالخير والبركة والسعادة وتأسيس بيت مسيحي مبني على الصخر، كما تهنيء اسرتي العروسين.



St. John Church congratulates

Fr. George Aziz

For his ordination in priesthood, praying that the Lord Jesus Christ bless his new life and ministry for God's glory, salvation of souls and a blessed, fruitful long life. Congratulations to Tasony Iriny in her new service.

Also, the church thanks

H.E. Metropolitan Hedra &

H.G. Bishop Serapion

for their trust and pastoral care.



المعلم ابراهيم عياد فى كنيسة ماريوننا

- صلى المعلم ابراهيم عياد فى كنيسة ماريوننا بكوفينا يوم الأحد ٣ مارس ٢٠١٣ وقد تمتع الجميع بمرداته وقياداته للألحان الكنسية بالنطق السليم واللحن الجميل الدقيق بصوته الذهبى . وقد حضر له عدد كبير من الشمامسة هواة الالحن القبطية من جميع الكنائس .
- والمعلم ابراهيم عياد يتمتع بشهرة وشعبية ضخمة وهو استاذ الألحان بالأكليزيكية بالقاهرة منذ نحو أربعين عاماً وتلميذ البابا شنوده وقد تتلمذ عشرات الالوف على ألعانه المسجلة .





Pope Shenouda III with Pope Paul VI



I.H. with Prince Charles of England



I.H. with President Mitterrand of France



Dr. Boutros Ghali Secretary of the UN

ST. JOHN

MONTHLY MAGAZINE



With Patriarch Maximus Hakim V



في لقائه مع الرئيس الراحل والرئيس الحالي وشيخ الأزهر
بإستراحة القضاة - فبراير ١٩٧٧



في أول زيارة لأمريكا مع الرئيس كارتر
With President Carter - April 1977



استقبال الكاتب الكبير لحبيب محفوظ ١٩٨٩



Ordination of Fr. Augustinos Hanna
(Nov. 14, 1989)



قذابة البابا بتم حجر أساس دير أنطونيوس
I.H. put the corner stone of St. Antony Monastery CA

Books About Pope Shenouda III

