

# ST. JOHN

MONTHLY MAGAZINE  
Vol. 5, No. 43 July 1993

# JULY 93

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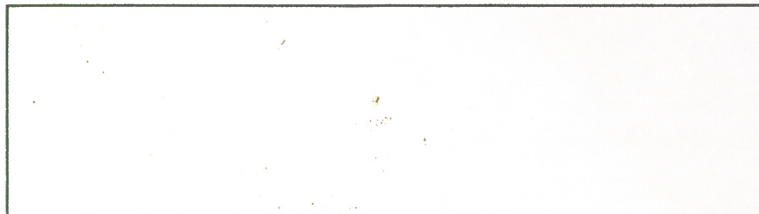


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# The Schedule of Meetings & Occasions

## July 93

### SUNDAYS

English Liturgy ..... 7:30 - 10:30 A.M.  
 Arabic Liturgy ..... 8:00 - 11:30 A.M.

### WEDNESDAYS

Liturgy ..... 8:00 - 10:15 A.M.  
*The Youth leaders and Sunday School Teachers,  
 Service Preparatory Meeting* .. 7:00 - 8:30 P.M.  
 Prayer Meeting ..... 8:30 - 9:30 P.M.

### FRIDAYS

Liturgy ..... 8:00 - 10:15 A.M.  
The Deacons Meeting  
 Instructions & Alhan for deacons 7:00 - 8:30 P.M.  
Friday Youth Meeting  
 Arabic Youth Meeting ..... 7:30 - 9:30 P.M.

### SATURDAYS

1. Vespers & Arabic Bible Study 7 - 9 P.M.  
 \* followed by Confessions, Tasbeha (praises).  
 2. Saturday English Youth Meeting  
 7:30-9:00 PM  
 \* The Midnight Praise.

### FEASTS:

**Feast of the Apostles: Monday July 12**  
 + Vespers (Asheya) of the feast: **Sunday 6 PM**  
 + Liturgy: **Monday, July 12, 8:00-11:00 AM**

### The Martyrdom of 7 Apostles during July!

- July 2: **St. Jude the Apostle**, the author of the letter that bears his name.
- July 4: **St. Ananias** (from the 70 Apostles, who baptized the Apostle Paul, see Acts 9).



- July 12: **St. Peter and St. Paul** (by Nero).
- July 13: **St. Olempas the Apostle** (from the 70)
- July 16: **St. Simon Clopas the Apostle** (from 70)
- July 25: **The Apostle James**, Jude's brother, sons of Alphaeus, the so-called Jesus' brothers while they were His cousins. He is the author of the letter bearing his name (about the good works, good words and good worship).

### MORE SAINTS of the Month of JULY

1. July 1: Martyrdom of **St. Moses the Black**.
2. July 3: Departure of **Joshua the Prophet**.
3. July 7: Birthday of **St. John the Baptist**.
4. July 8: Martyrdom of **St. Aphronia** the Ascetic.
5. July 10: Departure of **Pope Cyril the Great**, Pillar of Faith, 24th Pope of Alexandria.
6. July 14: Departure of **St. Shenouda** the Arch-mandrite.
7. July 15: Departure of **St. Bishoy**.
8. July 19: Commemoration of **Archangel Michael**.
9. July 22: Departure of **St. Ephram the Syrian**.
10. July 24: Martyrdom of **St. Auphemia** the Virgin.
11. July 27: Martyrdom of Prince **Tadrous** the Shabby.
12. July 30: Martyrdom of **St. Longinus** the centurion (who pierced Jesus' side), and **St. Marina**.
13. July 31: Martyrdom of **St. Abanoub El-Nehis**

### Arabic Language Class

Mr. Adly Tawadrous, the Arabic teacher, teaches Arabic language every **Tuesday** and **Thursday** two classes for children from **6-7** and for you from **7-8 P.M.** The fees are **\$10.00 per mon**



# Management Tips

**10.** Use a calendar to keep track of things you need to do.

**9.** Find a support group to help you decide when you're too busy.

**8.** Learn to say no to new activities when you're "booked up."

**7.** Keep track of phone conversations. They can waste time, too.

**6.** Watch TV watching. It can waste a lot of time.



**11.** Let other people help with some of the things you've been trying to do by yourself.

**12.** Make time to "smell the roses"—to relax.

**1.** Remember that time is valuable. You can never make up lost time.

**2.** Admit that whatever takes up your time is your priority. Changing priorities means changing the way you spend your time.

**3.** Know when you work best, and schedule your toughest activities at this prime time.

**4.** Plan for variety in your activities. Lack of variety tends to slow you down.

**5.** Figure out which things can be done while you do other things; for example, plan your day's schedule while you take a morning shower, or study school notes while waiting for your ride.

# The Feast of the Apostles

By  
Fr. Augustine Hanna



On Monday, the 12th of July (the 5 of Abib), we celebrate the Feast of the Apostles, commemorating their great love, sacrifice, ministry and martyrdom. All the apostles were killed, tortured and shed their precious blood for Christ, except the apostle John who was persecuted, tortured and exiled.

In this occasion we remember especially the martyrdom of the two great apostles Peter and Paul at the hands of the Roman Emperor Nero in the end of the year 67 and the beginning of the year 68 A.D.

The Apostles are considered the pillars of the church. St. Paul says, "*Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets and Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone*" (Eph.2:20). They are also described in the Book of Revelation as the foundations of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:14). This explains why the churches were built on 12 pillars as a symbol of the 12 apostles.

Only Matthew and John out of the 12 apostles who wrote gospels. Some of them wrote letters as Peter, James, John and Jude. The others preached verbally and this oral teachings are known as the tradition of the church of which she practiced till today.

The apostles left us 127 canon laws in two books (the first contains 71 and the second 56).

They also left us their teachings in the book of *Didascalia* which contains 38 chapters and an introduction, it is very useful especially in the pastoral work.



## Excerpts on Fasting & Eating Fish

By  
H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Some believers in the past used to eat fish on Wednesdays and Fridays, and this was undoubtedly on account of, either a mistaken understanding on their part of the Church's teaching, or because it was a wrong habit which they had inherited or had passed down to them from others who had been mistaken. Let's have a closer look at this matter together...

Our kind of fasting in the Orthodox Church is eating vegetarian foods. As everyone knows, we abstain from meat and all foodstuff of animal origin during fasting days. Obviously fish are included as flesh foods, so to eat fish is not in accordance with our kind of fasting at all. So you mustn't be surprised at the non-eating of fish on the fasting days of Wednesdays and Fridays. In fact you should really be surprised at the eating of fish during a vegetarian fast!

The general rule is, not to eat fish during the fasts. However, since there are so many fasts in the Coptic Church, around two hundred days in the year, which means more than half a year in fasting, the eating of fish during certain fasts, which are of the minor order, is permitted as a way of reducing the lengthy period of the fast, for the people.

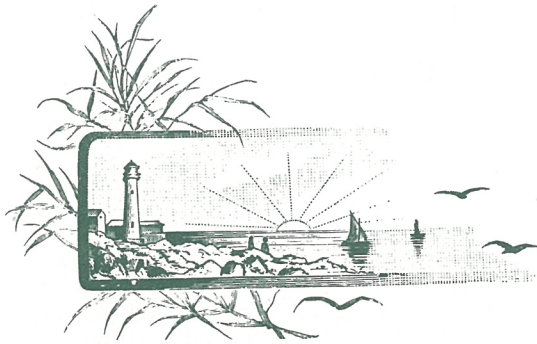
Eating fish is not allowed during the major fasts or on Wednesdays and Fridays because these are counted among the major fasts. The most important of these major fasts is the period of the forty holy days which the Lord Himself fasted, and Pascha Week, the week of His suffering. On Wednesdays



we remember how He was betrayed and plotted against, and on Fridays we recall His crucifixion.

People can eat meat all the days of the week, except Wednesdays and Fridays. So if they were to eat fish on those days, the result would be the consumption of seafood every day of the week, since fish is included in this category! It wouldn't be right to make things this easy

It wouldn't be very logical, either if we were to remember Christ's betrayal and crucifixion by eating fish!! We'd be letting ourselves off rather lightly. This remembrance demands a greater degree of renunciatin and devotion than that.



## The Shipwrecked Sailor (Short Story)

A sailor was shipwrecked on one of the South Sea Islands. He was seized by the natives, hoisted to their shoulders, carried to the village and placed on a crude throne! Little by little he learned that it was their custom once each year to make some man a king for a year. He liked it until he began to wonder what had happened to all the former kings. Soon he discovered that every year when his kingship was ended, the king was banished to a barren island, where he starved to death. The sailor did not quite like that, but he was wise and he was king, at least for a year. So he put his carpenters to work making boats. He engaged gardeners to transplant fruit trees to the island. He got farmers to grow crops, masons to build homes. So when his kingship was over, he was banished not to a barren island, but to an island of abundance.

We are all kings in this world, for a little while, able to do what we wish with the material of life. But inevitably there comes a day when our kingship is over- a day when we return to our maker- there to spend eternity either on the barren island of hell or on the abundant island of heaven.

My beloved brothers and sisters, are you ready when the angel of death would come suddenly one day to take you to the island of eternity? Which island are you going to? Do you get ready for your eternal future? The Lord Jesus said, "*Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven*"



Peter Yacoub and Mark Guirguis airborne during a Volleyball game at the Church Club

# Forgotten Commandments and Sins

By  
Fr. Augustinos Hanna

Sin is breaking the commandments of God and disobeying Him. We may commit sins by forgetting the commandments or neglecting them. Among these are the following:

1. The sin of not paying the tithes, which is considered stealing from God and brings curse (Malachi 3:8-10).
2. The sin of neglecting to raise our children spiritually and not teaching them how to respect the church, nor to misuse and watch their behavior inside her. This is a serious sin of which God said: "This iniquity shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever" (1 Samuel 3:14).
3. The sin of abstaining from doing good whenever we have a chance. "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).



4. The sin of ceasing to pray for others, "As for me, far be it from; me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam.12:23).

5. Statistics proved that your children by age 18, have watched T.V. for 20,000 hours! The lack of supervision and control of them is a sin (1 Sam.3:13).

6. The sin of offending others, "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).

7. The sin of not reconciling with others and forgiving without limits "up to 70 times 7" (Matt.18:15-17 & 22).

8. The sin of complaining and grumbling or lack thanksgiving (Num. 17:10), "Nor complain, as some of them also complained and were destroyed by the destroyer" (1 Corinthians 10:10).

9. The sin of negligence itself, especially when it comes to our salvation, and our duties, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation (Hebrews 2:3).

# WAIT WITH PATIENCE

By Fr. Georgios Atalla

Sometimes one of our relatives or friends does an evil thing against us. We face the problem, how to stop him, but usually we think how to retaliate and take revenge. We never ask the Lord to give us patience to endure this evil. St. Paul was happy and praised God for the Thessalonians who endured persecutions and tribulations (2 Thes. 1:4) The question for us, the children of the Lord Jesus Christ, is how to behave with such people?

- + “Do not return evil for evil” (Rom. 12:17) the evil of your relative is sufficient. If you return evil for evil, you double the amount of evil in the world; but you can lessen the evil in the world by your patience and forgiveness (Thes. 5:15).
- + Wait on the Lord... In due time both you and he, who wishes evil to you, will realize that He sees and remembers. You may wonder what you have accomplished in not returning evil for evil. Christ who is stronger will win the victory for you.
- + If you are engaged in a battle with an evil doer, there is a probability that you may be overcome. Renounce your fight, therefore and hand it over to the One who is victorious and unconquerable and wait with patience. Learn from a little child: When he is attacked by someone in the presence of his parents, he does not return the attack, but runs to his parents and bursts into tears. He knows that his parents will protect him. How do you not know that which a little child knows? Therefore, do not return evil for evil but look to your Father and cry to Him. Only in this way, you will guarantee victory for yourself in the clash with evil men (Rom. 12:10).

When you do not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling, you will inherit a blessing (1 Pet. 3:9). “Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted we endure it” (1 Cor. 3:12). That is why St. Paul said in faith: “I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distress, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak then I am strong” (2 Cor. 12:10).

- + When you do not return evil for evil, self-seeking and envy will not exist. You can ask for the heavenly wisdom that will teach you how to behave with others and behave properly in the meekness of wisdom. This wisdom that is from above, is first pure then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield full of mercy and good fruits (Jam. 3:13-18).
- + If you love the Lord, you have to love His commandments (Jn. 15:10); “that we love one another as He loved us. Love does not harm your neighbor and it is fulfillment of the law” (Rom. 13:10). Finally let us remember the Lord’s commandment in the sermon on the mount: “Don’t resist an evil person” (Matt. 5:39).
- + If you love your brother who has sinned against you, try to find excuses for him. He could be weak in spirit or have problems which you cannot see. He could have been brought up in a family, which has not taught him the way of God. If you are merciful, you will find mercy in the sight of the Lord and of others.



# COMPARISON of CHRISTIANITY With MAJOR CULTS & RELIGIONS (2)

We made a brief comparison in the previous issue between Christianity with Buddhists, Christian Science and Jehovah's Witnesses, and will complete that comparison now with the Jews, Mormons, and Moslems.

## 4. CHRISTIANS

One God is revealed in the Scripture as Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Within the one "essence" of the God-head there are three persons who are co-equally and co-eternally God (Matt. 3:13-17; 28:19; 2 Cor.13:14).

Man fell in Adam and is born in sin (Rom. 5:12; Ps.51:5). All men are condemned before God for their sin: proud, independent rebellion against God in active or passive form (Rom.1:18-23; 3:10, 23).

Man is justified before God and obtains salvation through the atoning death of Christ on the cross. Salvation is a gift of God through faith, baptism, repentance and good works (Rom.3:24; 1 Cor.15:3; Eph.2:8,9).

Christ is the only begotten Son of God, the Messiah predicted in Isaiah 53. He is God as well as man. He was sinless and died to redeem all men from sin (Mark 10:45; John 1:13,14; 8:46; 10:30; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:24).

## 5. CHRISTIANS

God is unipuely eternal and all-powerful, the only God-and He is a Spirit (Ps. 145:13; John 4:24; 1 Tim.1:17).

The Bible, given by God's Spirit is complete in itself and needs no additions. In fact, additions to the Bible are



## JEW (Orthodox)

### God

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one".

### Sin

Man is not born in original sin nor is he born good. Man is born free, with the capacity to choose between good and evil. Each man is accountable for himself.

### Salvation

Anyone, Jew or not, may gain salvation through commitment to the one God and moral living. Judaism looks to an after-life, however, it does not stress preparing man for the next world as much as guiding his ethical and moral behavior in this present life.

### Jesus Christ

While some Jews may accept Jesus as a good teacher of ethics, they do not accept Him as Messiah because: (1) the Jewish idea of Messiah is a man sent from God to deliver Israel from oppression, not to save individuals from personal sin. (2) Jesus was declared to be divine.

## MORMONS

### God

God is a material creature who was once a man as we are now men. They say men can finally achieve godhood and that there are many gods.

### The Bible

They have "new scripture" and the writings of Joseph Smith are divinely inspired revelations - God's nineteenth century addi-



forbidden (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:5, 6; Gal.1:8; Heb.1:1, 2; Rev. 22:18,19).

Man is not Godlike, but sinful and separated from God. Man, can only have a relationship with God through faith in Christ. Man, apart from Christ, is lost (Rom.5:12-19; 6:23; Eph.2:1, 3; Jn 1:29; Gal.3:13).

Salvation is a free gift provided by the grace (unmerited love) of God for all who believe in Him and follow His commandments (Eph.2:8, 9; Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3,5; 1 John 3:1, 2).

## 6. CHRISTIANS

One God is revealed in Scripture as trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In other words; God, His Word and His Spirit = are One God.

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, one with the Father, sinless redeemer of sinful man through His vicarious death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. He is God manifested in the flesh to save humanity (John 1:1-13; 3:16; Heb.4:15; 1 Pet.3:18; 1 Cor.15:3).

Sin is disobedience to God's commandments and will, independent rebellion against God in active or passive form, it separated man from God and its wages is death (Rom.1:18-23; 3:10, 23).

Christ died for our sins according to the word of God to pay off our debts and to reconcile us with God (1 Cor. 15:3,4)

Christianity teaches that prophets are servants of God. They were sent first to prepare the way for the coming Son to save the world (including the prophets) and after the mission of the Son of God there is no need to the prophets (Heb.1:1-4; Matt.21:35-37).

Christ warned, "*False prophets will arise to deceive, if possible, he elect*" (Matthew 24:24; See also Gal.1:8).

### Sin

tions to the Bible (which is called the book of Mormons).

Man is progressively becoming a god. Mormons teach that Adam's sin in Eden was necessary in order to provide parentage for the spirit children of God who were ready and waiting for the experience of earth life.

### Salvation

Salvation comes by works and all men will spend eternity on some level of a multistoried heaven. The level will be determined by the scope of each man's good works.

## MOSLEMS

### God

There is no God but Allah.

### Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ was only a man, a prophet equal to Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses all of whom are below Mohamed in importance. Christ did not die for man's sins, in fact Judas, not Jesus, died on the cross.

### Sin

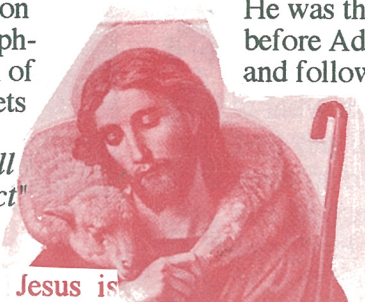
Sin is God's disobedience, failure to do one's religious duties as outlined in the five pillars of Islam.

### Salvation

Man earns his own salvation, pays for his own sins, and the good works wash away the evil works.

### Mohammed

According to the Quran (Moslem's holy book), Mohammed was the best prophet. He was the first man ever created, even before Adam. And Abraham was Moslem and follower to him.



Jesus is  
God manifested in the flesh

# PITY ON THE POOR

By Fr. Georgios Atalla



It is written in the book of Proverbs "He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord" (Prov. 19:17). Both the poor man who asks and the rich man who gives, place the Lord under an obligation; not only when the poor man asks in the name of the Lord and with compassion. That is why the church prays for the uprightness of the rich, in the Divine Liturgy of St. Gregory.

Everyone who receives must realize that he receives that which is God's; and when a man gives, he must realize that he gives that which is God's. The giving as much as the receiving both have a value. We all come to the world naked and naked we will leave it. We are all beggars before God, because we have nothing that we have not received from Him. Therefore, give to the poor your brothers and sisters even as God has given to you.

The poor person is closer to you than your goods. God Himself, the creator of all men, values each man as being far more precious than all his goods. If you have been given wealth, it has been given to you as a test. It is to test your heart; to let God and the hosts of heaven see if you have understood from whom your wealth comes and why it is given to you. Truly blessed are you if you understand that your wealth comes from God and belongs to God. Blessed are you if you count the poor as your own family, as members of your own household and share with them that which God has entrusted to you.

How immeasurable is God's love to mankind! All that you have belongs to God, yet He considers Himself your debtor if you take what is His and give it to the poor, and He will pay you for your good deed. Let us ask our Lord to open our minds that we may know the mystery of His mercy and soften our hearts to reflect His great mercy unto others.

## Catalina Island in Pictures



Some of the first arrivals at Avalon Bay



On the tour bus around the island



Vesper Prayer on the shore of Catalina Island



## The Crying Room

by Mona Tanios

What is the purpose of the crying room? Why do some parents avoid this room? Probably because it is so noisy! Kids are running around, some are eating, some are yelling, some are playing, while some mothers are trying to pray.

We underestimate our children. Babies will learn to pray if they see their parents and the people around them praying. Eventually they will imitate them. Try to whisper to your child, in the church, *"Close your eyes and pray to Jesus...; Mama the Virgin Mary is here beside you...; we are surrounded now by angels and saints...; Jesus loves you, and He loves calm and quiet children in the church...; this is the House of God, we should be quite and if we have to ask for anything, please whisper"*.

Children will understand, that is, if we believe in them and we believe in what we say, they are very smart and able to detect how sincere and serious we are. We also have to give a good example by not talking to others during the prayers as well.

The crying room is only a step towards well behaved children in the church. They should be taught that this room is still the church. They should not feel at ease in playing around and shouting in the crying room. Mothers should be praying as well, they did an effort to go to church with their babies to enjoy the prayers and have peaceful time with God. What is the point of being in this room trying to pray and struggling to listen to the Liturgy or the Biblical readings while other parents allow their children to respect the church if he/she sees other children having a ball around them.

This room is the transitional period for our children to learn pray and shout ! How can a mother teach her kid to attend the Church prayers, so that they can join the elders later when they are ready. But if we let them at that early age get in the habit of having fun during the sevicees of the church, it will be harder to start at an older age.



## To Be a Christian

by Jackie Mikhail

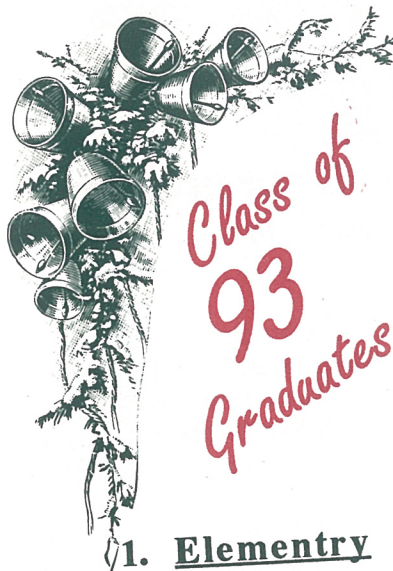
"To be or not to be" is not the only question in Christianity but rather "truly or falsly." Many times we fool ourselves by persuing the Lord in words alone. But in our actions we display much of the devil's work known as "sin". How does one expect to enter the Kingdom of Christ by following the works of Satan? One cannot enjoy the light while walking through darkness, for he will stumble.

The title "Christian" is derived from the name of our Savior, Christ. Therefore, as a "Christian" one preaches and follows the word of Christ. *"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God"* (1 Jn. 5:15).

Let me ask you, does a sinner dwell in God or God in a sinner? If Christians really abide in God, then why is it that so many of us hold hatred and bitterness towards one another? *"If someone says, 'I love God', and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?"* (1Jn.4:20).

In the last day, what will distinguish us from these scribes and Pharisees if we claim to love Christ but cannot bear one another? One cannot bear the Cross while bearing sin. *"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls"* (Luke 11:17). *"Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin"* (Jn.8:34). Sin is the production of the devil and the actions of satan's slaves, not Christ's children and servants.

Let us as Christians, follow Christ's instructions and commandments and serve Him as oppose to satan by offering love and forgiveness to our fellow brothers and sisters. By overcoming satan, and hating sin, we prove that the love of Christ is alive within us.



55 | The graduates for 1993 beginning from Elementry to Medical School are a total of 55 | St. John Church is very proud of every single one of them. They are our treasure, future and extension. We pray for them that they may grow in the grace and every good work to glorify the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, being ambassadors for the Coptic Orthodox Curch in America through their great achievements.

**1. Elementry**

1. Bishoy Saadalla
2. Joe Wanis
3. Diana Wanis
3. Dina Zaklama
4. George Sami
5. Iman Toma
6. Irene Toma
7. Jimmy Iskander
8. Joe Tanious
9. Mirelle Samy
10. Michael Guirguis
11. Miriam Kirolos
12. Nevin Moussa
13. Sarah Soliman
14. Theodora Atiya

**2. Junior High**

1. Dina Hakim
2. Elizabeth Shehata
3. Marian Elias
4. Mikey Guirguis
5. Miriam Henein
6. Nancy Selim
7. Romani Saad
8. Ron Andrawes
9. Tina Sedky

**3. High School**

1. Anthony Selim
2. Basem Barsoum
3. Christine Hanna
4. Christine Mikhail
5. Dina Attalla
6. George Gobran
7. George Istaphanous
8. Irene Mansour
9. Irma Wassif
10. Medhat Yacoub
11. Michael Soliman
12. Nancy Michael
13. Riham Fouad
14. Ron Elias
15. Sam Mikhail
16. Sandy Costandy
17. Sherif Guirguis
18. Vivian Korkar

**4. College**

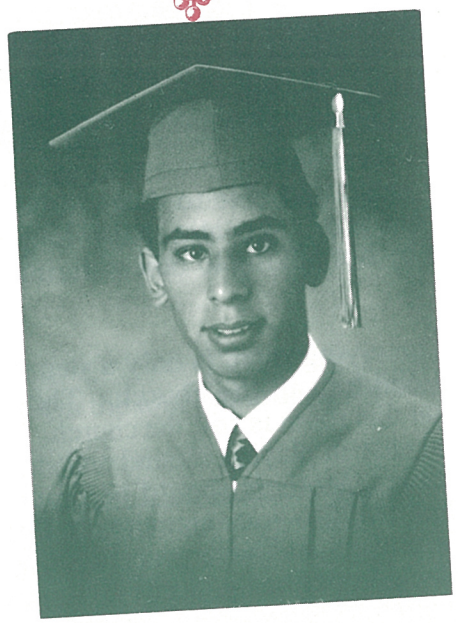
1. Dalia Attalla
2. George Makar
3. Lydia Youssef
4. Mona Soliman
5. Maged Soliman
6. Randa Kamel
7. Sylvia Guirguis
8. Gine Behnam

**5. Masters:**

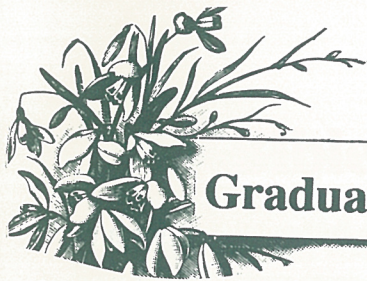
1. Gigi Barsoum

**6. Medical School**

1. Heidi Wassef
2. Mamdouh Nakhla
3. Nelda Daoud (honors)
4. Nabil Michael



A group serving food for the gradu



## Graduates' Words

### A Step of Growth



#### Thanks to God, Church & Parents

By  
*Antony Selim*

I would like, on behalf of all the graduates here, to say **thank you to God, the church, and our parents** for guiding and helping us throughout our many years of schooling.

It is important that we give credit to you, for without your support we know that we would not have made it this far.

Some of us have now completed our education and are about to step into the business world. Others of us still have years of study ahead. In either case we know that God, the church, and our families will be behind us all the way.

As the Bible says in Proverbs 3:5-6:

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths".*

We must recognize that it has been through the will of God, in addition to our own efforts that we have succeeded so far. In return, our goal as Copts is to try to glorify God in every action we take. By advancing in school as top students in our respective fields, we are indeed glorifying God.

And now, with God's grace we move on to the next step in our lives, and with the support of the church and our families we will continue on our path to happiness in life and the kingdom of heaven.

Graduation is a step of growth in our life, which signifies our hard work and effort, as well as, our struggles for achievement. But, after the work and effort, we are greatly rewarded, and I don't mean by the parties or the gifts, but by the maturity, knowledge, and wisdom we obtained during that one step in our lives.

These important building blocks are necessary for our self-development and successful futures. With each step climbed, we are brought closer to a mature, knowledgeable, wise and successful person.

But this should not be the only growth and achievement we pursue. As young Christians we must also pursue spiritual growth and a clean spiritual life. Just as we go through stages and graduations in life, we must also go through spiritual stages of growth. Every spiritual stage of growth also requires hard work, effort, and dedication, but the rewards are endless.

With every stage we are brought closer to a more pure, holy, and spiritual person, but most of all we are brought closer to God and His love.

In life we are faced with many obstacles and situations that we must work through, that give us experience, knowledge and growth, but we must never forget our spiritual growth from which, we also obtain wisdom and knowledge, and as I said, the rewards are endless.

### In The Hands of God

By  
*Raafat Youssef*

Congratulations, dear friends, for the graduates from College, High School, Junior High and elementary as well. I know you have worked hard to earn your degrees. However, that is not the end of your creativeness. It is mark on your road that reminds you of what you did.

The future is in the hands of our God and through Him you can accomplish several things.

Allow me to give you some comments:

1. Remember the hard work that you previously went through.
2. Do not forget the hands of God that helped you during all these years.
3. Keep yourselves from being idle. Keep the good work and the faith in God. St. John said, *"I write to you, young men because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you little children, because you have known the Father"* ( 1 Jn.2:13).

Therefore, the signs of our success are to overcome our sins, the wicked one, and to know our heavenly Father.

Finally, let me repeat some useful advices my father used to write me during my college years: Read a chapter from the Bible, at least, everyday. Attend the church meetings every week.

Exercise daily for 15 minutes. Brush your teeth after every meal.

As to my mother's encouraging words, "The mind is like a piece of jewelry; if you clean it everyday by studying hard you will have the brightest mind. God bless you all.



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**Smile & Laugh**



1. Some families can trace their ancestors back for hundreds of years but can't tell you where their children were last night!

2. **Son:** Dad, will you help me find the least common denominator in this problem?

**Dad:** Good heavens, son don't tell me that hasn't been found. They were looking for it when I was a kid.

3. **Lady:** aren't you ashamed of yourself to stand on this corner and beg for money?

**Beggar:** What do you want me to do? Open an office?

4. A candidate for the police force was being verbally examined. "If you were by yourself in a police car and were pursued by a desperate gang of criminals in another car doing forty miles and hour along a lonely road, what would you do?"

The candidate looked puzzled for a moment. Then he replied, "Fifty."

5. **Mother:** Quick, henry, call the doctor. Johnny just swallowed a coin.

**Father:** I think we ought to send for the minister. He can get money out of any body.

6. Little Timmy began falling out of tree and cried, "Lord, save me, save me!" There was a pause and then he said, "Never mind, Lord, my pants just caught on a branch."!

7. In order to take care of all the excuses for not attending a church, the following information was placed in a local newspaper:

To make it possible for everyone to attend church next Sunday:

1. Beds will be placed in the fellowship hall for those who say, "Sunday is my only day to rest."

2. Eye drops will be available for those with tired eyes from watching T.V. too late on Saturday night.

3. Steel helmets will be provided for those who say, "The roof would cave in if I ever went to church."

4. Blankets will be furnished for those who think that church is too cold and air-conditioning for those who say that it is too hot.

5. We reserve the front pews for those who like the pastor's sermons and the back pews with earplugs for those who dislike his sermons.

6. Score cards will be available for those who list the hypocrites present.

7. T.V. inners will be available for those who can't go to church and cook the noon meal for the family.

8. We will have a selection of trees and shrubs for those who like to see God in nature.





# Bible Quizzes

(Rewards for best answers)

## I. Animals & Birds

Can you identify the animals mentioned in the verses below?

1. "It is easier for a ..... to go through the eye of a needle."
2. "I am ...like an..... of the waste places."
3. "Many.....encompass me, strong.....of Bashan surrounded me"
4. "Behold, I send you out as.....in the midst of..... Therefore, be wise as.....and harmless as....."
5. "He (Samson) turned aside to see the carcase of the ....."
6. "Once every three years the fleet ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory,..... and....."
7. "You know that your father and his men are mighty men, and that they are enraged like a .....robbed of her....."
8. "The young.....roar for their prey, seeking their food from God"
9. "I am like a .....of the wilderness"
10. "Catch us the ....., the little.....that spoil the vines"

## II. Body - Building

God created man and woman. Try your hand at "creating" the human form by supplying the missing words in the verses given below.

1. Jesus said, "And do not swear by your....."
2. Job was asked, "Have you an.....like God"
3. Paul cried out, "I bear on my.....the marks of Jesus"
4. Quoting Isaiah, Paul spoke and said, "How beautiful on the mountain are the..... of those who bring good news"
5. The proverb tells us, "My son, keep your father's command, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your.....; tie them around your....."
6. When Joseph was commissioned by Pharaoh, "they cried before him 'Bow the.....'"
7. "And the.....is a fire, a world of iniquity. The.....is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and it is set on fire by hell"

## III. Do You Know This Church?

There are seven churches mentioned in the early chapters of the Book of Revelation. Can you identify the church being referred to by its special characterization, and by supplying the missing word?

1. Acting on the stage, or the "compromising" church, was led by a woman called....."
2. The "missionary" church bore the name of a .....church."
3. The "passionless" church abandoned it first....."
4. The "persecuted" church will not suffer "the .....death."
5. The "arrogant, lukewarm" church had need of....."
6. The "tolerant" church is in a city that houses..... throne."
7. The "dead" church had "the name of being....." **(Answers in the next issue)**