

Verse of the month:

"No one can say that Jesus is Lord excep by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3)

Saint John

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H.H. Pope Shenouda III,

The 117 Patriarch of Alexandria and 116th successor to the See of St. Mark the Evangelist and the Diocese of Southern California and Hawaii under

H.G. Bishop Serapion.

St. John reflects the Biblical, doctrinal, and spiritual views of the early Church in English and Arabic.

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Fr. Augustinos Hanna

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June, 2012 Schedule:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
English Liturgy	Liturgy 10:00 - 1:00	Liturgy 10:00 - 1:00	Liturgy 8:00 - 10:00	+ Senior	Liturgy 8:00-10:00 AM	Liturgy 8-10 AM Vespers & Bible Study 7:30-9:00 PM
8:0011:00 AM	PM	PM	AM	Citizen Club 11:00 – 4:00 PM		+ Beginners' Deacons- Meeting 6:00 PM
Arabic Liturgy 8:00 - 11:15 AM				+ Family Meet-	Arabic Youth	+ Elementary Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 PM
Servants'				8:00-9:30 PM	Meeting 8:00 – 10:00 PM	College Youth Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 PM
Meeting 12:00-1:00 PM					Followed by refreshments	High School & J. High Meetings 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Email your articles/comments/requests to frhanna@mystjohn.org

Or visit us online @ www.mystjohn.org

Fax (909) 592-5088 / (909) 305-1025 · Church Tel: (909) 592-8847 · Tel: (909) 592-0475

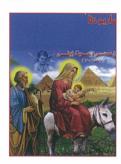
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News of June 2012

1. The Feast of Christ's Entry into Egypt:

On Friday, June 1, the Coptic Church celebrates the Feast of the Lord's entry into Egypt; also known as the "Flight into Egypt" (Matt. 2). Christ's visit to Egypt was a fulfillment to the prophecies in Isaiah 19:1, 19 and 25 and in Hosea 11:1.



2. The Feast of Pentecost:

On Sunday, June 3, the Church celebrates the Feast of Pentecost, in which the Holy Spirit descended upon the holy Apostles in the form of tongues of fire. It is considered the birthday of the Christian Church (Acts 2). The Liturgy is followed by the "Sagda Prayer" from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

3. The Book Fair and Revival Meetings:

In celebrating these two previous feasts, St. John Church used to hold her Annual Book Fair and evening revival meetings for five days from Wednesday, May 30 to Sunday, June 3rd. Dr. Magdy Isaac will give four evening sermons from Wednesday until Saturday evening.



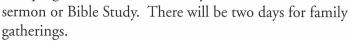
4. The Fast of the Apostles:

On Monday, June 4, the fast of the Apostles starts, for five weeks until the Feast of the Apostles on Thursday, July 12, which is the day of the martyrdom of the two great Saints Peter and Paul.



5. The Youth Summer Club:

The summer club starts on Monday, June 11, from 6:00 until 10:00 p.m. The program will contain a daily short





H.G. Bishop Sarabamon, the head of St. Bishoy Monastery, declared that the Holy Synod has decided to build a bigger and a better place to transfer the body of H.H. Pope Shenouda to it. The design of the new place will be in the



shape of a CROSS to resemble the "Torino Shroud" and to be fitting to accommodate the great numbers of visitors who flood to have the blessing of the Saintly Pope. It will also contain a museum and a great library that have the Pope's books, clothes, com-

positions and souvenirs.

7. H.G. Bishop Serapion:

Bishop Serapion is working now as a member in the nomination committee in Egypt to follow and apply the bylaws' procedures and rules of selecting the new Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church. May the Lord



Jesus grant the committee wisdom and guidance in this critical period.

8. Fr. Shenouda Ghattas' Silver Jubilee:

St. John Church, the priests, board of deacons, servants and the congregation, congratulate Rev. Fr. Shenouda on his 25 th Anniversary of his ordination in priesthood. May God grant him health, strength and a long fruitful ministry.



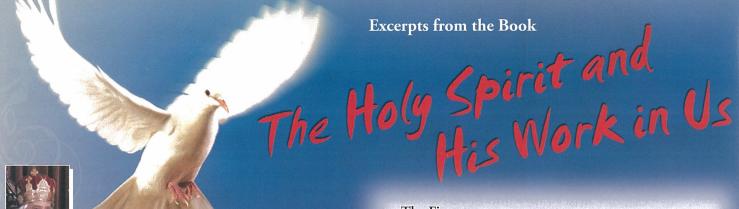
9. Graduation Party:

St. John Church will hold her Annual Graduation-Party on Saturday, June 23. Graduates are required to give their names, pictures and information to Fr.

Augustinos and the servants of their classes ahead of time to publish in St. John Magazine and to prepare their prizes.







Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of God" (Gen. 1:2; Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 12:3; Eph. 4:30). We can say the Holy Spirit is God because "God is Spirit" (Jn. 4:24).

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

The Divinity of the Holy Spirit:

St. Peter tells us that who lies to the Holy Spirit in fact lies to God (Acts 5:3, 4). And since He is the Spirit of God, He is the Spirit of the Lord God (Job 33:4; 2 Cor. 3:3; Isa. 61:1). He is also "The Spirit of the Son" (Gal. 4:6), the Spirit of Christ (1 Pet. 1:11). Elihu, in the book of Job says, "The Spirit of God has made me (Job 33:4). He is also, the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17, 16:13).

The Holy Spirit being in the holy Trinity proves His Divinity:

He is one with the Father and the Son as we notice from the words of Christ, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Note that He says, "in the name" and not in the names." (See also 1 John 5:7).

His Divinity is also proved by the fact that He gives life: He is called "the Spirit of Life" (Rom. 8:2; Ezek. 37:9, 10). Five Symbols of the Holy Spirit:

The Dove:

When the Lord Jesus Christ was baptized, John the Baptist "saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him" (Matt. 3:16, Luke 3:22). Therefore, the church, or the human soul filled with the Holy Spirit is likened to a dove (Song of Solomon 1:15; 5:2; Matt. 10:16 innocent as doves").

The Water:

Water is a symbol of the Spirit in maintaining and keeping life (John 7:37-39).

The Oil:

This symbol is evident in the sacrament of the Holy Unction, the Holy Chrism or Myron (Exod. 30:22-24; 30; James 5: 14; Sam.16:14,23; 1 Kings 19:15).

The Fire:

On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples in the form of tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). This is not strange because the Bible tells us that "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29; 1 Kings 18:18). We notice that the fire never ended from God's house (Lev. 6:12, 13).

The Wind:

The Greek word (Pnevma) means wind and spirit in the same time. So we say, "the wind (for the Spirit) blows where it wishes" (Jn. 3:8).

The Work of the Holy Spirit within Us:

The first relationship we have with the Holy Spirit is our new birth (regeneration) from Him: (Jn. 3:5; Titus 3:5).

In this regeneration, the Holy Spirit give us renewal and forgiveness, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins" Acts 22:16; Rom 6:6).

The Holy Spirit dwells in us in the Holy Chrism (Myron): (1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Jn. 2:20, 27; 1 Cor. 3:16)

The Communion of the Holy Spirit: It is partaking in work not in the Divinity or essence, but in work with Him (2 Cor. 13:14; 2 Pet.1:4), "we are God's fellow workers" (1 Cor. 3:9).

To understand the work of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual life we mention two elements:

The human spirit of a person leads his body.

The human spirit is led by God's Holy Spirit.

This communion with the Holy Spirit brings forth the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

The more the fruit of the Spirit increases, the more the spiritual fervor increases in one's life. We can know the man of God from the fruit of the Spirit apparent in his life, as the Lord says, "Therefore by their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7:20).

The Holy Spirit gives us power (Acts 1:8); and sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23), and wisdom....







H.H. Pope Shenouda & Los Angeles

From our Archives

Excerpts from H.G. Bishop Serapion on the Silver Jubilee of the Pope, Nov. 1996

The diocese of Los Angeles is preparing with great joy to receive its beloved Shepherd, H.H. Pope Shenouda III in his pastoral trip. This visit comes in the great occasion of the festivals of the Silver Jubilee (25 years) since his Enthronement as the 116 successor of St. Mark the Evangelist.

The Diocese has arranged to celebrate a banquet in his honor on Sunday, December 1. He will also pray the Vespers at St. Mary's Church in Pasadena, and consecrate the Altar of St. John's Church in Covina, Sunday morning, Dec. 1.

On his way to St. Anthony's Monastery he will pass by St. Mena's Church in Riverside. The Diocese has the pleasure of hosting our fathers the Bishops and Priests of North America in their meeting with H.H. for a Clergy Conference, Monday, Dec. 2, Wednes-day Dec. 4. H. H. will the Liturgy in Honolulu on Thursday, Dec. 5.

The Diocese of Los Angeles is rejoicing with all the Coptic Orthodox Congregations, remembering with great appreciation and gratitude Pope Shenouda's creative work and labor of love in shepherding them. We remember his great pastoral work, his sacrificing love, patience and all what he offered to this area since 1971 when there was only one Church, St. Mark in Los Angeles.

Now, after 25 years as Pope, working day and night in toil, prayer and tears, this Diocese has become a great tree containing 17 Churches served and 21 priests.(Note from the Editor: Now, in 2012 at the Pope's departure, we have 35 churches and 51 priests after he had appointed H.G. Bishop Serapion as a Bishop for Los Angeles).

Holiness His chose for Los Angeles Diocese a selected

group of distinguished priests filled with love, wisdom and experience. He also started the rank of the Archdeacon and now the synod of the Diocese includes all the three ranks of the priesthood. His intensive care, extended to every individual. He encouraged establishing new churches everywhere. Starting a new church sometimes seems like the suffering and pain of delivering a new baby, but after a while it is soon forgotten because of the joy of a new life. We remember with appreciation the efforts and good spirit which our beloved Fr. Bishoy Kamel planted when he first came to Los Angeles in 1969, then followed by the blessed efforts of Rev. Fr. Tadros Yacoub.

H.H. saw that the foundation and flourishing of the Church is based on her Orthodox teaching, therefore, he established three Theological Institutes and Seminaries, one of them here in Los Angeles honored to bear his name, the other in New Jersey and third in Sydney, Australia.

He cared for the Coptic Youth abroad and therefore, he attended personal one of their conferences in Arrowhead Springs in 1993. He asked the churches to institute Coptic Orthodox Schools.

H.H. also cared for the family as the small unit of the church encouraging Family Conventions. He established a Clerical Council to look after the family disputes, and marriage permits.

One of the Pope's principles is to follow up every pastoral work and this is the basis of its success. This is why did H.H. give Los Angeles a great concern, visiting the area 8 eight times in the years 1977, 89, 93, 95, and twice in 1996 (he visited L.A. about four times after that). In every visit, H.H. followed up what was accomplished and put foundation for future work.



Pentecost Participating in the Lord's Feasts

By Fr. Anthony Coniaris

WHEN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH CELE-BRATES AN event in the life of our Lord, it does not simply commemorate or remember the event. It re-lives it so that we today may experience it for ourselves. It brings the past into the present. In many ways it is like that TV program that was shown a few years ago called "You Are There", which made present again and re-lived before us actual historical events. It made present again and re-lived before us actual historical events. It made us feel as if we were actually there.

In this, the Orthodox Church is very much like the Jewish synagogue. When our Jewish brethren observe the exodus from Egypt (the Passover) they re-live the event in order to experience it personally. The ancient rabbis taught, "In every generation every man should look upon himself as if he personally had experienced the exodus from Egypt." As one rabbi said, "The Passover changes your outlook on life..." Thus the Jews observe the Passover today by eating the same unleavened bread and chewing the same bitter herbs as their fathers in order that they may in some way feel for themselves the bitter plight of their ancestors when they were slaves in Egypt. The past is made to live in the present so that the Jew today may feel as if God brought him himself out of the slavery of Egypt.

We Orthodox Christians do the same. We try to re-live the religious event we observe on a particular day. This is why at Christmas we sing,

"Today Christ is born in Bethlehem of the Virgin..."

During the Holy Week we sing:

"Today there stands before Pilate the Lord of Creation..."

"Today there hangs on the Cross He who has Suspended the earth in the midst of the waters..."

The Holy Week and Easter services in the Orthodox Church, for example, are designed to help us experience the Passion of Christ personally, to make us feel that it was for us Jesus died on the cross, to lead us out of the slavery of sin and death to a new life. Christianity is not only about events in the experience of God; it is also about the way we today can participate in these glorious events.

Let us share a series of examples from Scripture:

St. Paul writes in Colossians 3. "If you then have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where

Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." The amazing aspect of this verse is that St. Paul is telling us that we can be related to Christ in such a way as to have participated with Him in the great victory of His resurrection. He speaks of being raised together with the Lord Jesus Christ. St. Paul expresses it again in Ephesians 2:4-7, "But God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive with Christ...and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

In another New Testament book, Galatians, we are told that we participate also in the crucifixion of Christ: "I have been crucified with Christ: it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who lived me and gave himself for me."

In Colossians 3:3 we read, "For you have died, and your life is hid with God in Christ."

Our involvement in Christ's crucifixion and resurrection is expressed in the Sacrament of Baptism. The baptismal immersion in water symbolizes death, since a person cannot live long under water. We are raised to signify the resurrection. As St. Paul says, "We were buried therefore with him (Christ) by baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." In the Orthodox Church the Sacrament of Baptism is the personal Good Friday and Easter of each believer. Through this Sacrament we die and rise again with Christ.

Thus, through faith, baptism and daily repentance we die to sin and are raised by Christ to a new life where we "seek the





things that are above."

When the Bible speaks of Christ's second coming, it speaks also of our participation in it: "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). In 1 John 3:2 we read, "Beloved, we are God's children now, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is,"

We participate in the Last Supper. As our Lord gathered His disciples together in the Upper Room, so He calls us together in every liturgy and addresses to us the same personal invitation He addressed to them, "Take, eat, this is my Body...Drink ye all of it, this is my blood...He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I in him." Each Holy Communion is a Good Friday, since "every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes" (1Cor. 11:26).

We participate not only in the crucifixion, the resurrection, the Second coming, the Last Supper, but also in the Ascension. Christ our Lord ascends so that we may ascend with Him. What is the liturgy, what is prayer, but the constant ascension of man into the presence of God?

Since today; we celebrate the great feast of Pentecost we must stress also our participation in this great event. As the Holy Spirit came on this day nearly 2,000 years ago to fill the disciples with God's presence and power, so He will come to each one of us today as we kneel shortly in prayer. He will come to fill us with the same Power, the same fruits of His Presence: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22). He will come as refreshing water to man's parched soul: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink," said Jesus. He who believes in me as the scripture has said, "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water,' now this He said about the Spirit, which those who believed in Him were to receive" (John 7:37, 38).



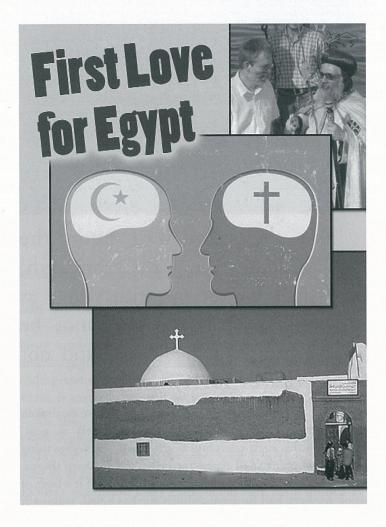
"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

We've all heard the word "nesting" but have we ever taken a close look at true nesting in action? This is neat. When a mother eagle starts building her nest, she begins using items we wouldn't at all expect for such a job — sharp thorns, broken branches, rocks. Later, she places on top of it a layer of wool, feathers, and fur from animals she has killed, making it soft and comfortable for her eggs. Her eggs eventually hatch and her little ones grow to flying age. As with any creature, growing up is never an easy thing. That's precisely when mom begins "stirring up the nest." With her strong talons, she begins pulling up the thick carpet of fur and feathers, bringing the sharp rocks and branches to the surface. As more of the bedding gets plucked up, the nest becomes more uncomfortable for the young eagles. Eventually, this and other urgings prompt the little eagles to leave their once-comfortable abode and move on to bigger and better things like learning to fly and eventually making homes and families for themselves.

I think some of us may have gotten a little too comfortable in our nests. We've had all the warmth, comfort and free meals we could want but all good things come to better things, with the Lord! It's time we learned to fly!

Friend, let's not be bitter at the Lord for plucking up our comfortable nests. He wants us to be all that we can be! He wants us to accomplish all the things He has for us — to reach our fullest potential — to experience the amazing sensation of flying, even soaring, high above our problems and issues and whatever other distractions hold us back from growing up in Him. Let's take the leap of faith today.





By Timothy Morgan

IN THE DAYS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, POLICE WERE ON alert, watching for violence against American Muslims. Tragically, they were not able to prevent all attacks. In the Los Angeles suburb of San Gabriel, an assailant shot and killed a grocer whose shop was next door to a mosque. Despite his Middle Eastern appearance, this storekeeper was no follower of Islam. Adel Karas, an Egyptian immigrant, was Coptic Orthodox Christian. His brother Sami told the Los Angeles Times, "Adel was the light of our family and someone took him away, out of ignorance."

Few Christian groups lay claim to a heritage as old as that of Coptic Orthodoxy. Egypt plays a role in both the Old and New Testaments. According to tradition, the apostle Mark was the first patriarch of Egypt. Their leaders were greatly influential at the Council of Nicea and other councils of the early church. The Coptic Orthodox Church, though small, is a global movement with congregations and monasteries in Europe, Australia, and North America, as well as Egypt. Copts are the largest body of Christians in the Middle East. They have been living alongside Muslims

since the seventh-century Arab conquest of Egypt.

On December cover story of "Christianity Today" started with a friendship between Daan van der Meulen, a Dutch diplomat and explorer, and Cornelis Hulsman, a university student. Ven der Meulen was among the few Westerners of his generation to travel extensively in the Arab peninsula during the 1930s. Hulsman, the author of this issue's cover story, was fascinated by van der Meulen's stories about the Middle East. In the summer of 1976. Hulsman embarked on the first of many trips to Egypt, living in the homes of Egyptians, both Muslim and Coptic. "After Egypt, I visited other countries, he says, "but my first love for Egypt proved permanent." In 1988, Hulsman married an Egyptian Copt. They have four children.

From 1977 to 1984, Hulsman studied sociology at Leiden University. The main focus of my study was the Arab world. Within this, my main interest became Christianity and Islam in the Arab world." Becoming a journalist in 1994, Hulsman reported on the ancient Christian churches in the Middle East, including Armenian, Syrian, and Coptic.

Egypt became in time Hulsman's life mission. "I want to be a bridge, creating understanding for the Coptic Orthodox Church in western churches and creating understanding for Western churches in the Coptic Orthodox Church," he told me. As part of his mission, Hulsman, who is adjunct affiliate assistant professor of journalism and mass communication at the American University in Cairo, founded Religion News Service of the Arab World. This weekly service reports on how the Arabic-speaking press writes about the role of Islam and Christianity in society.

Hulsman believes that study of cultural tradition is one way to promote understanding. He is one of three authors of the book Be Thou There: The Holy Family's Journey In Egypt (AUC Press, 2001). For most of us, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt marks the end of the Christmas story. For the Egyptian church, it is a beginning. Pilgrims who trace the traditional route of the Holy Family's travels along the Nile discover that an ancient faith has not died. Cave churches, monasteries, and village congregations still bear a living witness.

For Huslman, a high point in reporting this story was when Bishop Demetrius of Malawi asked him to accompany the Dayr Abu Hinnis pilgrimage processional. "There I stood between three bishops in their liturgical outfits." West met East on a felucca boat crossing the Nile.

(From Christianity Today – December 3, 2001)





By H. H. Pope Shenouda III

[1] Winning People

Real success is not that you triumph over people. This is neither bravery nor strenght..

But real success is to gain people, to win them, for the "winner of souls is a wise man:. (Prov. 11:30)

Perhaps you triump over people to their disadvantage! but it does not mean that because of their loss you have been successful.

Our Lord Christ was at His strongest on the cross for then He had 'won' everybody.

[2] God and the Problem

Do not look at a problem but look at God to solve it.

Your feeling that God is standing with you in your difficulties will give you hope and strength.

[3] Judas

Judas betrayed his Lord and Master.

But there is a Judas alive in every generation.

He was a particular person whom we read about in the Gospel.

But he is also a symbol...

[4] A Famous Preacher

The famous preacher said to me: "Do you know how many sermons I have preached this year?"

And I replied, "I would rather know how many people have repented this year as a result of being influenced by your sermons, and have turned back to God".

[5] Welding by oxygen

It was about forty years ago, before I went to become a monk, that I was walking in the street and saw a workman carrying out an operation of welding a piece of metal by oxygen and this piece of metal was submitting to his blazing fire until its welding was complete...

So I said to myself, why do we complain and protest and object when God uses with us His process of welding by oxygen?

[6] A Car and a Cart

On another occasion when I was walking in the street I saw a donkey cart and a luxurious Mercedes. The people were wondering how this one could drive alongside that one!

But I said to myself, both of them are necessary: the cart can carry sacks and furniture, but the Mercedes cannot. Society needs both of them. Both are useful and successful within the limits of their capabilities and special areas, just like the different members of a person's body...

[7] A pyramid Shape

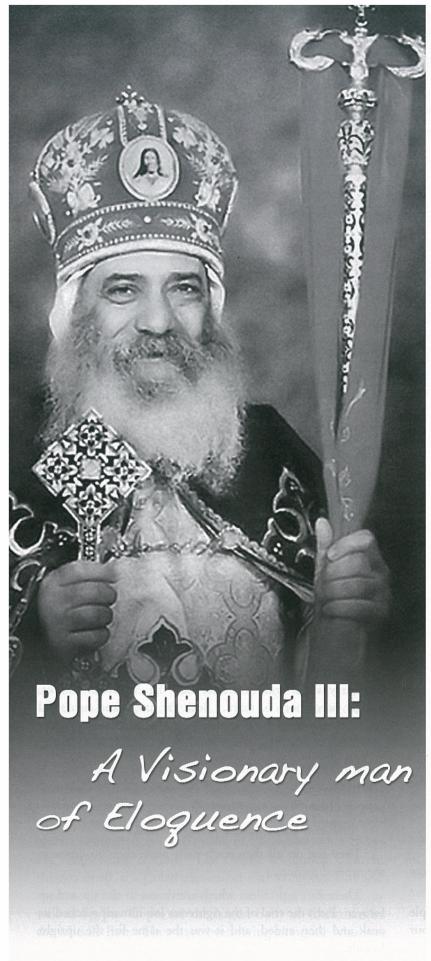
I always offer consolation to those who suffer from wearisome problems by saying to them:

"Problems always have a pyramid shape.

They rise up till they reach their peak, then go down in the other direction.

There isn't a problem which continues to rise up and up forever. Even the trial of the righteous Job himself reached its peak and then ended, and it was the same for the upright Joseph...





By Hany Helmy Hanna
(A Journalist in Paris, France)
Excerpts from his article
in the French Magazine Arabies

Translated from French to English by Samira Nimre

POPE SHENOUDA IS NOT A MAN of dialogue, but also a patriot that refused to let any foreign forces dictate his judgement. Even the Christian forces who proclaimed themselves to be the protectors of Christianity could not dictate to the Pope.

Born in 1923 in Assiut, Upper Egypt, Nazir Gayed took a path less followed. He earned degree" in Humanities, Archeology, History and Theology and taught English History and Literature. He became a journalist and founded a parochial magazine called "Al-Keraza" all without neglecting his religious mission. He published several articles with the majority in Theology.

Ordained a monk in 1954, he spent several years in Wadi-El-Natroun desert before being ordained a Bishop in 1962. He became the secretary of Pope Kyrillos, whom he later succeeded as Pope in 1971.

Pope Shenouda III is the head of the Coptic Orthodox Church as the 117th successor of Saint Mark in the pontifical seat of Alexandria. The congregation totals twenty million in different countries all over the world, twelve million are in Egypt.

As an astute reader of the history of Egypt, H.H. Pope Shenouda was affected by pain caused by foreign interference in the long held and mutual understandings between Christians and Muslims. Several successive crusades were launched by Christian Europe against the Muslim East, officially, "to liberate the tomb of Christ and to emancipate the Eastern Christians". In fact, the crusaders were unfriendly towards the Copts whom they considered Heretics. Once this time passed, the Coptic Church reaffirmed it's national anchorage, relieved from the threat imposed on her by the "fake" Christians. In the effort to show the Muslim leader of the Fatimite Calipha that the Copts have nothing to do with the Crusaders, the Coptic Patriarch Gabriel Ibn Turaik adopted the Arabic language into the Coptic Church in the XII century.

Faithful to their slogan "divide to rule," Great Britain tried without success since the 19th century to play the Copts against the Muslims. Lord Cromer, representative of the British Crown in Egypt in the turn of the century, disappointedly stated that "the only difference between a Copt and a Muslim is that the first is an Egyptian that worships God in a church, and the second is an Egyptian



that worships God in a mosque".

In the 1930's, William Makram Ebeid, agreed with this statement. Then secretary of the Wafd Party that was dominating the Egyptian political life style, Ebeid declared: "We are Copts by religion, but Muslim by nationality!"

Manners change with the time. On the 14th of November 1971, a little more than a year after the death of Nasser, Nazir Gayed became Pope Shenouda III, the 117th Pope of the Coptic Church. In fact, Anwar Sadat in an effort to weaken the left parties and specifically the Nasserists, lead an offensive front toward the Islamists. That tactic was revealed fatal for the President. The relations between the Pope and Sadat started in an ideal manner. In October of 1973, Pope Shenouda came to the front to support the morale of the soldiers. In 1977, he had access to the presidential palace.

Two events would put an end to this understanding: The general rise in power of the Islamists, and the desire of Sadat to apply and force the Islamic Law on Christians and make it the Law of the Land and the main source of all the laws in Egypt! As a result, Pope Shenouda called for three-day-fast to protest these events in a peaceful manner, but it generated difficulty between Muslims and Copts. He also forbade his congregation to make pilgrimages to the occupied Jerusalem. In return, Sadat removed the Pope from office on the 5th of September, 1981 and put him under house arrest in a desert monastery. One month later, the president was slaughtered by an Islamic commander. Not until January of 1985 did President Moubarak reinstate the Pope to his previous functions. Since then, the relations between the State and the Coptic Church have been on good terms. If from time to time, problems arise or attacks happen on the Copts, Pope Shenouda tries to talk quietly in private levels with high officials, but he reprimands the interference of foreign powers. He also disapproved of foreign political exploitation of the riots of August 98, where the Egyptian police was in conflict with the small Coptic population of the Kocheh village in Upper Egypt. The incident gave reason to open an investigation and to give a disciplinary sanction to the superior officers that were responsible for this chaos.

The Egyptian organization of Human Rights strongly protested against the use of collective punishments and torture that was inflicted by the police on the inhabitants of Kocheh village. Civil Rights should apply to all Egyptians whatever their religion, sex, age or their political affiliations.

Certain Western organizations and Copts living in the West pounced on the occasion to protest. They published articles in the major international media about "the persecution of the Eastern Christians" and the "plot of the dark forces". The Egyptian press unanimously denounced the foreign media's stance.

Your Holiness, you always say that the Church has a national role and not a political role, what is the difference?

Our national role is to serve our Country which is different from practicing politics that goes along with the formation of parties, holding election, newspaper publication, etc.

What are the characteristics of the Coptic Church and the difference between the Coptic Church and the Catholic Church?

The word Copt originally means Egyptian, designated to the Christian of Egypt. The Coptic Church existed since its foundation by Saint Mark in the 1st century AD.

The Catholic Church in Egypt is less than 150 years old. In other respects, our Church is the mother of monasticism. The differences between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Church are that we reached an agreement on Christology, but not on the Holy Spirit. According to us, He proceeds from the Father, but for the Catholics, He proceeds from the Father and the Son. Similarly, we do not believe in the Immaculate Conception and the purgatory.

We are also widely different from the Catholics on the question of divorce. We allow it only in case of adultery according to the Gospel.

But we do share with the Catholics many of their beliefs: The Holy Trinity, the Redemption and Resurrection of Christ, His Ascension, His Second Coming in the Last Judgement, Eternal Life and in the Seven Sacraments.

Why are you forbidding the Copts to go to Jerusalem?

We live in the Arab world and we must be aware of the political status of the region. Actually, the Holy Lands are occupied. We will not go without our Arab brothers and our Muslim compatriots. In fact, in Egypt other Holy Places exist, especially the path followed by the Holy Family.

What is the position of the Coptic Church on issues such as the use of contraceptives to protect against Aids?

The Coptic Church has no objections against the use of contraceptives in their family planning. In return, it is against abortion. As for Aids, thank God, the problem is not as bad in Egypt as in other countries. The only protection is through spiritual life and to abstain from sin.

What message would you like to address the citizens of France and of Europe?

I advise them to raise their youngsters with faith and virtue, because they are the future of all nations and of all churches.





ARISE!

A Poem by H.H. Pope Shenouda III Translated from Arabic by Mary Hanna Sarkis

Arise! Destroy Satan! Leave no trace to his kingdom! Arise! Bring good news to the dead and tell them,

"Your sins are forgiven!"

Forgive Peter his weakness and wipe the tears of the Magdalene
And show your wounds, convincing Thomas, for his doubt is overpowering
Send us "Mark" again to build our pure church.

Lift up heads that are downcast; Have compassion on the eyes of the weeping.

The tyrants have gloated over us, so rise, and gloat over the weapons of the tyrants

They thought you a mortal man, who died, with no deliverance, no return, Not knowing that You are the Christ and You are the fountain of life

Arise in majestic glory!
Reveal Yourself in the sovereignty of God!

Arise amidst the hosts of heaven! For You are Lord in Your heaven

Arise! Amaze the guards and fill them with awe at Your bright appearance,

Arise! Strengthen the faith of the shepherds and gather the scattered sheep,

For a long while now, we have been strangers in this existence

Our consciences have become lukewarm here, hardened in resistance

The devil has attached us to dust and we have not been able to rise

For the grave is large, beneath a stone, with guards keeping watch

Oh You who raised the dead and has risen from the tombs...

You who conquered death, the Lord of resurrection and immortality...Arise! Rescue souls from the graves of sin and defeat

Arise! Strengthen the faith of the shepherds and gather the scattered sheep!



Before U were thought of or time had begun, God stuck U in the name of His Son. And each time U pray, you'll see it's true,

And each time U pray, you'll see it's true, You can't spell out JesUs and not include U. You're a pretty big part of His wonderful name, For U, He was born; that's why He came.

And His great love for U is the reason He died. It even takes U to spell crUcified.

Isn't it thrilling and splendidly grand He rose from the dead, with U in His plan?

The stones split away, the gold trUmpet blew, And this word resUrrection is spelled with a U.

When JesUs left earth at His Upward ascension, He felt there was one thing He just had to mention.

> "Go into the world and tell them it's true That I love them all - Just like I love U."

So many great people are spelled with a U, Don't they have a right to know JesUs too?

It all depends now on what U will do, He'd like them to know, but it all starts with U.



The Need for Tears

By Fr. Augustinos Hanna

Following the 2012 earthquake in Haiti, we were all overwhelmed by the images of devastation and hardship endured by the people of that tiny nation. Of the many heartbreaking pictures, one captured my attention. It showed a woman staring at the massive destruction-and weeping. Her mind could not process the suffering of her people, and as her heart was crushed, tears poured from her eyes. Her reaction was understandable.

Sometimes crying is the only appropriate response to the suffering we encounter. When you examine that picture, you will think of the compassion of our Lord Jesus and understand the need for tears, for He too wept. But He wept over a different kind of devastation, the destruction brought on by sin.

As He approached Jerusalem, marked by corruption and injustice and the pain they create, His first response was tears. "Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41).

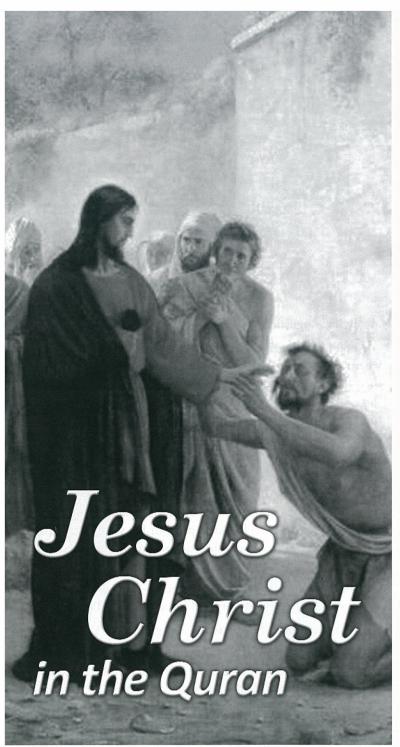
Jesus wept out of compassion and grief.

As we encounter the inhumanity, suffering, and sin that cause chaos and devastation in our country and in our world, how do we respond? If the heart of Christ breaks over the broken condition of our world, shouldn't ours?! And shouldn't we then do everything we can to make a difference for those in need, both spiritually and physically?

The Lord Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because He saw its doomed future as we understand from His statement, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." (Lk.19:42-44).

We need to pray with tears for Egypt, for America and for





By Monzer Abdu-Latif (A Convert from Islam)

AS A MUSLIM, IT IS YOUR DUTY TO READ the QURAN and understand its text. And if you have read the Quran, I would like to ask you a very important question: Who is the greatest man ever lived? You will find the answer in the pages of the Quran. For whosoever reads the Quran discovers that Christ has a special and a sublime position in it, and that the person of Christ in the Quran differs greatly from any other person mentioned in it. The Quran drew a unique picture of Christ as a matchless personality that no

body could equal. I would like to prove this fact backed by the Quran text.

1. His Miraculous Birth:

All men, including all prophets, born into this world have been born of a human father and mother, in a natural way. In the meantime, the Quran tells us that Christ was not born in the natural way, like the rest of humans, because He did not have a human father, for He was born of a virgin, without the sexual, genetical process; for God had breathed His Holy Spirit into the virgin. Therefore, Christ was the only person, according to the Quran, to have been born of the Spirit of God, from a Virgin. "And Mary, the daughter of Imran, who guarded her chastity; and We breathed into (her body) of our Sprit; and she testified to the truth of the words of her lord and of His Revelation, and was of the devout (servants)." (Surah of the Forbidding 12).

2. The Titles of Christ:

(1) The Word of God:

Christ was called "the Word of God" in the Quran, saying, "Behold, the angels said, 'O Mary! Allah gives three glad tidings of a Word from Him: His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter and of those stationed nearest to God." (Surah of House of Imran 45).

The Quran also said, "And Christ Jesus the son of Mary is an apostle of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him." (Surah of Women 17 0).

We see that "the Word" is a title that God gave exclusively to Jesus. Therefore, it is imperative that you learn that Jesus was not called "The Word of God" because He was created by the Word of God; but rather, He was called "God's Word" because He was the very expression of God. All the prophets spoke God's Word, but none of them ever said that he was His Word. Only Christ was the very revelation of God and His very expression. Therefore, without Christ, we cannot know God, as He said in the holy Gospel: "No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:18). In conjunction, the name of Christ as it was repeated in the Quran, carried in it a divine meaning. For "the Word" came as the name of a person not a description of an action, and that person emanated from God. Therefore He is as God, eternal and everlasting.

(2) The Spirit of God:

The Quran says: "Christ Jesus the son of Mary was an



apostle of Allah, and His word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him." (Surah of Women 170).

El-Razi, a great Muslim scholar explained the term, "A Spirit proceeding from Him", saying "He is the Sprit of God because He is the life Giver to the Word according to their religions". The Muslim Scholar El-Baidawi said: "He was called a Spirit because He was able to give life to the dead and to people's hearts."

Here it becomes important for us to know the difference between two verses that came in the Quran: the one about Adam, saying: "But He fashioned him (Adam) in due proportion, and breathed into him something of His spirit." (Surah 32:9); and the other about Christ, saying: "...and His Word which He bestowed to Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him." (Surah of Women 17).

When the Qur'an said He breathed into him something of His spirit' means that the breath that made Adam came from God. But when it said, 'he is a Spirit proceeding from Him' means that He is the very Spirit of God, the Giver of life who emanated from God Himself.

High Honored in this Life and the Hereafter, was another title that Christ carried (Surah of House of Imran 45). The Muslim scholars unanimously agreed that "being High honored in this world means the prophethood, and in the hereafter means intercession." (El-Baidawi, page 99).

Even though the Qur'an limits intercession in God exclusively, where it says, "To Allah exclusively belongs intercession" (Surah 39:44), yet in the meantime, the Qur'an, in the Surah of House of Imran 45, shows that intercession is one of Christ distinctive. Consequently, this title that was given exclusively to Christ indicate that it is a divine title.

3. The Miracles of Christ:

- 1) His Ability to Create: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Recount My favor to thee and to thy mother. Behold! I strengthened three with the Holy Spirit...I taught three the Book and wisdom, and behold! You make out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by my leave, and you breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by my leave." (Surah of the Table 113).
 - 2) His Ability to give Life:

The Qur'an said as though quoting Jesus, saying: "I will also heal the blind and the leper, and bring to life the dead, by the leave of God." (Surah of Imran 49).

3) His Ability to know men's Secrets:

This is a distinctive that belongs to God only, but the

Quran entitled it to Christ when it spoke as though quoting Jesus saying: "I will inform you too of what things you eat, and what you treasure up in your houses. Surely in that is a sign for you if you are believers" (Surah of House of Imran 49).

He also knows the unknown future. The Quran records the great prophecy that was uttered by Christ concerning His death and His resurrection, saying: "So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day I shall be raised from the dead again." (Surah of Mary 33).

4) The Infallibility of Christ:

The Qur'an testifies that every prophet and apostle had his special sins, and it mentioned the particular faults of some of them. But as far as Christ is concerned, He was pure and holy. The Quran described Jesus, saying, "I am only a messenger from thy Lord, (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy son." (Surah of Mary 19). All Muslim scholars, such as Tabari, Razi and others agreed that the word used in Arabic (Zakiyan) meant that the child was pure and without sin.

You will never find one verse in the Quran where Christ asked for forgiveness like all humans, including all the prophets. Consequently, and Quran tells us that Christ was blessed wherever He be (Surah of Mary 31). He is the blessed One forever.

The greatest blessing of Christ is in the fact that He died on our behalf, to pay our debt that we owe to the justice of God. Therefore, my Muslim friend, you have an obligation to surrender your life to the Word of God and His Spirit; namely, Christ Jesus, who shed His precious blood to cleanse you from your sins and iniquities. Come to Him so that you can receive the eternal salvation from your sins.

He says to you now: "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd gives his life from the sheep." (Jn 10:11).

My dear Muslim friend, please pray this simple prayer now: "Dear Lord Jesus, I have discovered that you are the greatest person in this world, you are great in your birth, in your miracles, in your perfect life, and in your love for me. I am a sinner, I cannot save myself, but I give myself to you to save me and to accept me as your child. I receive you as my savior. Please accept me because you paid the price of my sins in order to give me eternal life. Amen." The Holy Bible says, "But as many as received Him, to them gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in His name." (Jn 1:12).





in the Church Saint Sarah the Nun

By Lauren Hanna

Saint Sarah was the only child of two rich, Christian parents from Upper Egypt. Her parents taught her how to read and write; she grew particularly interested in reading the biographies and sayings of the Church Fathers. She was greatly influenced by their stories and desired to pursue the monastic life. As a result, she eventually lived in a convent in Upper Egypt and served the virgins there for many years.

Then she put on the monastic garb and devoted the rest of her life to living the ascetic life; however, such persistence did not come without countless fights from the devil. Satan kept tempting the Saint particularly with lust for thirteen years and finally, being tired of her steadfastness and vow of purity, decided to tempt her with pride—the sin that caused Satan's own fall. He appeared to her while praying and said: "Rejoice for you have overcome Satan." She, being filled with humility, replied: "I am a feeble woman, and I cannot conquer you except by the power of the Lord Christ." This immediately caused Satan to vanish. Thus, she lived a pure and holy life until she was eighty years old. She stayed on the banks of the river in a cave for sixty years fighting a great fight and no one saw her until she departed. The Church commemorates her on the 15 of Baramhat.

There are many virtues that can be learned from Saint Sarah—two of which are purity and humility. When the devil used to tempt her for 13 years with fornication, she would always defeat him by her humility.

The devil finally appeared to her and said, "You have vanquished me Sarah." She replied "It is not I who have vanquished you but Christ the Lord." Speaking of these temptations, she said: "One must not accept the following two thoughts: fornication and judgment of one's neighbor. When the enemy presents one of these we must rise up and pray; and pray again, with tears to God, and God will deliver us" (Paradise of the Fathers).

Also, in this season of fasting, a lesson should be learned concerning that of her fervent asceticism. She said, "Nothing humbles the soul more than the scarcity of bread and water. When the enemy wants to take a city, he first stops the food and water supplies, and they thus give themselves up even against their will. So is it for a monastic—unless he restrains his stomach with hunger and thirst, he cannot rid himself of evil thoughts" (Paradise of the Fathers).

Let us learn from the great Saint Sarah to discipline our bodies and minds, offering them to Christ because He promised us that by prayer, fasting, and humility we have the power to "trample on serpents and scorpions and all the power of the enemy."

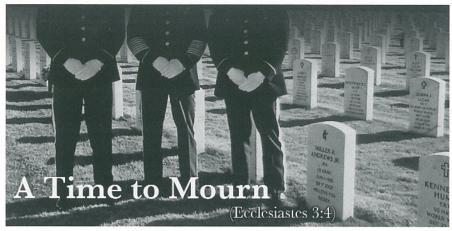
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"Lives of Saints :: Baramhat 15." CopticChurch.Net. Web. 26 Mar. 2012.

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NO YOUNG MAN BELIEVES HE SHALL EVER DIE!

This smart observation is contradicted in times of war. A 22-year-old machine gunner with a French battalion in Korea in the 1950's wrote to his father: "In our time, when you look around for the faces of the dead, they are all 20 years old. Young death is no longer an aristocracy." Nor is it today when more than 1,000 young men and women in the U.S. military forces have already been killed in the Iraq war and when that number grows every week.

Psychologists are fond of a classic simile that compares the course of every life to the trajectory of an arrow shot into the air. Once launched, it mounts ever higher and then levels off, until its arc declines and its flight ends. For those killed in Iraq; however, the flights ended with violent and untimely abruptness.

Fifty-two percent of the first thousand killed were between 18 and 24. Thirteen percent were African-Americans, 12 percent were Latinos and 75 percent were non-Latino whites. Forty-seven percent were married, and many of these had children. None of these men and women had been drafted or pressganged. They had freely enlisted in the military services or had joined the reserves or the National Guard.

It must not be forgotten that other nations in the coalition waging war in Iraq have also been counting their dead, and it is estimated that more than 15,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed so far. Each of those who have died must be mourned and commended to the divine mercy. All the same, it is allowed for Americans to focus particularly on their own dead.

Certain reflections, however, are dimwitted. Some observers, for example, think of themselves as hard-headed realists. They minimize the cost of the war, taking refuge in statistics. They point out that previous wars have been far more deadly: 140,414 battle deaths in the Civil War; 53,402 in World War I; 291,577 in World War II; 33,746 in Korea; and 47,355 in Vietnam. And after all, they add, there are about 42,000 deaths in motor vehicle accidents yearly in the United States. But these figures are irrelevant to the families fractured by death. The military's regular practice had been to sent two military personnel, sometimes accompanied by a chaplain, to bring the immeasurably sorrowful news to families. It cannot be said, however, that the politicians of either party have given the bereaved much comfort.

Christian reflection on the deaths in Iraq must go beyond the disputes about the war to an altogether higher plane. It professes hope in resurrection and life after death, and those whom the certainty of dying saddens may be consoled by the promise of future immortality.



I've got a God who understands; Who holds me daily in His hands. My God controls the sun and rain, Yet He knows my private pain.

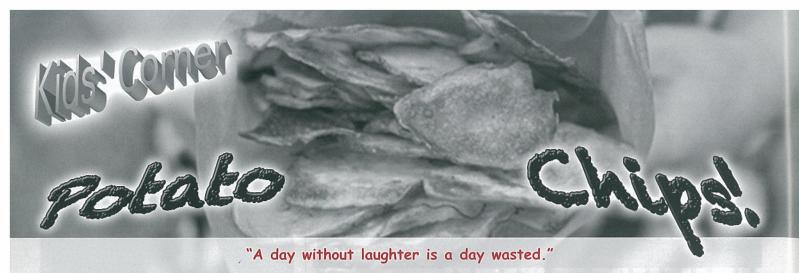
He cares when I ask "why?" He comforts when I cry.

He answers,
"My child, peace, be still.
Learn to rest in My will.
Bring your need to Me in prayer.
I will comfort and heal you there.

Learn to see with eyes like Mine, That look beyond both space and time, Where you will rest on heaven's shore, And live with Me forever more."

-Author Unknown





A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with a bag of potato chips and a six-pack of root beer and started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park, just staring at some pigeons.

The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him some chips. He gratefully accepted it and smiled at him.

His smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer.

Again, he smiled at him. The boy was delighted!

They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As twilight approached, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave; but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug.

The man gave him his biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied "I ate potato chips in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime!

Embrace all equally!

Have lunch with God......bring chips.

Send this to people who have touched your life in a special way.

Let them know how important they are. I did!!!!

God still sits on the throne. You may be going through a tough time right now but God is getting ready to bless you in a way that only He can. Keep the faith!

My instructions were to pick four people that I wanted God to bless, and I picked you.

Congratulations



St. John Church, Covina congratulates Christine & Rami L. Hanna

On their marriage, wishing them a blessed, happy and fruitful life full of success and great deeds.

Congratulations to their families.

عائلة رؤوف صدقى ولطفى حنا يشكرون الله على إتمام عقد الزواج المبارك بين أنجالهم

كريستين صدقى و رامى حنا

ويخصَوُن بالشكر لإتمام الأكليل على يد نيافة الحبر الجليل الأنبا سرابيون والآباء الكهنة القس أغسطينوس حنا والقس جريجورى بشاى والقس دانيال حبيب وكل من تفضل أو هنأ بالاتصال وندعو للعروسين بالخير والبركة والسعادة.



Mark Soliman & Sara

We pray that the Lord Jesus Christ bless their life together and grant them joy, success and a fruitful long life in God's love and service.



St. John Church congratulates Violette & Shady Awad

On their marriage

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless their life together,
filling them with His Holy Spirit, joy, love and peace.



The Church congratulates

Demetri Wyman & Nadine

For their marriage, wishing them a blessed, happy life together in the love of God and the church.





St John's Annual Vacation Bible School 2012

August 6-10

Questions? Contact Rita Gindi at (909) 957-0629

