



**THE COPTIC ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE
ST. GEORGE AND ST. RUEISS CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM**

GRADE SIX

Revised Edition 2021

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Παποστολος

Πιάσιος

Μαρκος





THE THRICE-BLESSED POPE SHENOUDA III
OF BLESSED MEMORY



HIS HOLINESS POPE TAWADROS II

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate

FROM H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III

Deir Anba Rueiss, Ramses Avenue, ABBASSIYA,

CAIRO, EGYPT.

CABLE: ELANBARUEISS, CAIRO.

ΠΡΟΣ ΗΜΕΤΕΡΑΡΧΗ ΜΕΛΙΝΖΑΝΗ
ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΣ

بِسْمِ الْبَيْتَةِ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ

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الى الدينيه المباركيه القوم مرقس الياس عبد المسيح
والذين تادرس يعقوب ملطي

سلام رحمة وبعد ،

نارني ابنا د. محفوظ وسعه المنهج القترح لدارس
التربية الكنسية بالمهجر . وقد درست معه الخطوط الاساسية
للمنهج ، دوره الدخول في التفاصيل . وايديت له بعض ملاحظات
من جهة مناهج هذه العقيدة والحقق : وفي الواقع انه الجهد المبذول
جهد كبير جداً يتحده الشكر . ومع ذلك تحتاج دروس الكتاب
المقدم الى زيادة . وسأرسل لكم ملاحظات اخري بالتفصيل بمشيئة
الرب .

فليبارك الرب كل ما قام به ابنا محفوظ من جهود في اعداد
المنهج ، وفي جميع المادة ، وفي عمل الترجمة . وليبارك الرب
أيضاً كل من اشتركوا في العمل ، وفي المراجعة
وليكنه هدفنا هو ما نستطيع الوصول اليه من كان على قدر
امكاناتنا . ويمكنه تزويد المنهج أيضاً بالصورة المناسبة والتي
تقدمها كنيسة هذه النواحي العقيدية والطقسية والتاريخية
الرب معكم . كوننا بخير

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سيد القديس اغناطيوس

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate

FROM H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III

Deir Anba Ruciss, Ramses Avenue, ABBASSIYA,

CAIRO, EGYPT.

CABLE : ELANBARUEISS, CAIRO.



To my blessed two sons: Hegomain Fr. Marcous Elias Abdel Massih and
Hegomain Fr. Tadros Yacoub Malaty.

Peace and love be with you.

Dr. Mahfouz has visited me and brought with him the suggested Sunday school curriculum for the land of immigration. I have studied with him the basic topics of the curriculum without getting into details. Although I have pointed out some concerns on the doctrine and dogma curriculum, it is clear that the amount of work spent on preparing the curriculum is huge and worth thanking. Nonetheless, the Bible study part of the curriculum needs to be increased. God willing, I will also send you additional details on this curriculum.

May the Lord bless all the effort that our son Mahfouz has done in preparing the Sunday school curriculum, in collecting the relevant topics, and in performing the translation of subjects. May the Lord also bless all those who have joined him in preparing this project and those who revised the topics.

Let our goal be to perform our best in order to try to arrive at perfection given our abilities. Lastly, I would also suggest the addition of different recognized pictures according to our doctrine, dogma and history to the Sunday school curriculum.

May the Lord be with you. Be in peace.

Signed

Pope Shenouda III

22 August 1986

The feast of St. Mary





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IMPORTANT RULES

FOR TEACHING

IMPORTANT RULES FOR TEACHING THE YOUTH IN THE LAND OF IMMIGRATION

Our youth in the land of immigration are influenced by the society and the culture they live in, this is considered perfectly normal and inevitable.

Despite the similarities in the content of the Sunday school curriculum and the youth meeting topics across all the churches in the world, the difference lies in the presentation of the topic and the ability to tailor the content to fit the audience's background, culture and spiritual needs. This would greatly increase the topic's comprehension and its receptiveness.

In Saint Paul's sermon to the Jews (Acts 13: 16-41) he spoke to them regarding Moses the arch-prophet and gave an account of their experiences with our Lord throughout their history. Moreover, in another instance, he spoke to the Greek philosophers (Acts 17: 18-33) in a manner that suits their cultural background. In both cases the content is equivalent, both sermons aim to convey the message of salvation that our Lord Jesus Christ granted us on the cross.

Therefore, whether the Sunday school / youth servants are first generation immigrants or are born in the land of immigration, it is important to observe the following guidelines in conveying the topic:

1. Correctness of the language and its clarity...the servant must prepare the topic in an accurate, clear & coherent language. This language should be the audience's preferred first language
2. Organization...Our children live in a society where organization and punctuality are governing characteristics, hence, it is imperative to adopt those characteristics to portray to our children that our services and our churches are adhering to the norms of the society.
3. Respect...mutual respect is the prevailing trait in the western societies, as a result respect ought to be maintained at all times between the servant and those being served. This is manifested in good communication skills such as listening without interjecting and using appropriate words depicting respect.

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4. Dialogue...constructive discussions and valuing each other's opinions are fundamental in the western societies. Dialogue often leads to persuasion and mutual love as opposed to just giving orders.
5. Give pertinent examples from the children's day to day life...during the topic we must reference examples that are suitable and related for emphasis and clarification.
6. Questioning everything said or heard...Due to all the strong intellectual movements in the society, we as servants must be cognizant of any new infiltrating thoughts, this is achieved through research and analysis to be in a position to answer our youth's questions in a convincing intellectual dialogue.
7. Love between the servant and the children...our children often yearn for compassion and love in our fast pace materialistic society. Thus, it is extremely important that the servant uses expressions of love, affection and harmony.
8. Establish and maintain the bond between the children and the mother church...this is essential to our unity and there ought not to be any division or separation of any sort from the mother church nor its beliefs, holiness, saints, organization or any other matter.
9. We ask all Sunday school / youth servants to abide by the orthodox faith and dogma in all the topics and to use ample biblical examples and references.
10. We ask all Sunday school / youth servants to establish a good spiritual relationship with all those being served.

INTRODUCTION TO

THE Sunday SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Principal Goal of Christian Upbringing

Children had and still have, first as a person and second as a child, a special importance to our Lord Jesus Christ. He called the children and considered them models of perfection, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, 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 18:3-5).

Therefore, children are beloved ones to Christ and are His friends with their simplicity and purity of heart. Christ called them, blessed them and asked His Disciples and Apostles after Him to take care of bringing up children and prepare the suitable environment for their spiritual growth.

St. Paul advises parents saying, "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged", (Colossians 3:21). From a Christian point of view, the general principal goal of religious up - bringing is the formation of the perfect man of God who is following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Also, our Lord said, "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

Hence, a Christian up-bringing is not merely an education to be given or a curriculum to be taught, but it is rather a life that is given through example and behavior through teaching and discipleship. The saintly Fathers of the church have emphasized this fact. St. John said about his practice of life with the Lord "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — that which we have seen and heard, we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:1-3).

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The same fact was emphasized by St. Paul when he was talking to his disciple Timothy "But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium... But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:10-15). Also in the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians 3:17, "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern". Therefore, the principal goal of the Christian up-bringing is to change the life of our children to the life of Christ in them, i.e. to a life based on the work of Christ in them as true Christians and not just religious persons who fear God but deny Him.

The Starting Point in Achieving the Goal of Religious Upbringing

The teacher should not start with the student from power Zero. The student comes equipped with many social and religious experiences. His religious experience, though it is limited, has a strong basis that is ready for spiritual growth. In the Sacrament of Baptism, the child has already obtained the spiritual birth i.e. he became spiritually re-born. After his baptism he was anointed with the Holy Myroun (Chrism) and the Holy Spirit dwelt in him. St. John said "But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you; and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him" (1 John 2:27).

Therefore, by obtaining these two Holy Sacraments and the Sacrament of Eucharist, the student becomes a member in the body of the Lord and a living part of the body of the Holy Church. This means that religious up-bringing is not something foreign with respect to the student. The student is a temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in him. This means that it is not the teacher who makes the student live a life for Christ, but it is the inside work of the Holy Spirit that makes the whole difference. The role of the teacher is to make the student aware of the effect and the work of the Spirit. In this sense, the student becomes aware of the secret grace inside him and as a result the divine word inside him grows as the seed grows inside the earth.

The Difference Between Religious Education and Religious Upbringing

We should not aim at providing lessons in the form of giving information, i.e. a mere religious education. In this case, religious experience will never exceed the

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circle of the mind and will never affect the heart and practice of the student. If we consider religious education to be an element in religious upbringing, we are, in this case, following Christ's plan for the development and building of the Christian personality. Christ with His example and His perfection gave us a model which should be followed and achieved. As for His teachings, they are meant to clear the way for us in order to follow them as examples and models.

The Need of our Church for a Coptic Orthodox Sunday School Program

There is one basic difference between Eastern and Western theology; the latter depends on study, analysis and using scientific means, whereas Eastern theology is based on experience and depth which mainly leads to a true Christian life. The Eastern Church respects the role of the mind but it works under the supervision of faith.

The majority of recent Western Sunday School programs follow a pure analytical way of explaining the Bible. For example, miracles are explained through psychological and scientific factors. The man of God must accept miracles and believe them as they are. St. Athanasius said, "Our knowledge must not control (or have authority over) the word, but the word itself must have the control and authority over the mind".

Another basic difference is that our traditional Church uses the rites in education as a key in the process of living what is being taught.

Over and above what was mentioned before regarding the basic differences in religious education between Eastern and Western churches, there are also basic differences in the various beliefs and the way Christianity is lived by in actual life.

We, as parents, teachers and clergy, are responsible in front of God to bring up our children according to the same spiritual Orthodox principles that we received from our saintly Fathers who shed their blood to perpetuate the perfect Orthodox faith. Therefore, our children must learn from the same source from which we learned before them.

The Sunday School program in your hands is a fruit of love granted by our Lord Jesus Christ to our children and a gift from Him to them. This program is purely Coptic Orthodox. All its references without exception are Coptic Orthodox (please review the reference list at the end of the book). In this manner all the information that is in this book (as well as all the books in this series) can be used with total

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confidence as it is devised according to our glorified church. The spirit of the lessons is indeed the same spirit of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

About the Books in Your Hands

These books in your hands are an integrated series of books which were written for children from age 4 to 18. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, if the child at age 4 follows this series of lessons until age 18, he will obtain an all-rounded spiritual background. The books (covering the teachings from pre-schoolers to grade 12) cover a study of most of the major Biblical subjects of the Old and New Testaments, the celebrations of the church of our Master's feasts, the life of the Saints and their feasts, the divine liturgy with its rites and spirituality, the true Christian life and Christian behavior, church sacraments, fasting, prayers, the creed and its explanation, the Ecumenical Councils, the difference between the various major Christian sects, the Christian family, the history of our church, the major personalities in the Holy Bible, ... etc. The program is indeed comprehensive and it covers all the key areas of our Orthodox church. If these lessons were given in the spiritual way that was emphasized before, great results will be expected with the work of the Holy Spirit.

General Rules and Principles to be Followed by the Sunday School Teachers

- 1) The teacher must know the stage and the characteristics of the growth of the children that he or she is teaching. A child who is 12 years old is different from a child who is 8 years old. The teacher must know the level of his/her students, their abilities to receive information that he/she is giving and the differences between the various abilities in the same class.
- 2) The positive participation of the students is very important during the lesson for the effectiveness of teaching. One of the key incentives for the student is to give importance to the lesson and have an effective communication with the teacher and, above all, to define clearly the purpose behind it and present the lesson in the form of problems that attract their attention.
- 3) The teacher must follow a psychological order of the facts he is presenting. Our Lord Jesus Christ used effectively the psychological method of teaching through His parables. The parables in their simplicity are drawn from the daily life of the people. We must emphasize here that the psychological method is not the only method of spiritual teaching. We should mention this method as one of the methods used. It is quite important to note that spiritual teaching must be imparted with certain goals in mind which are connected

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with the life of the children and related to the problems they face. We should provide guidance that is mostly needed for them.

- 4) The teacher must present the lesson and illustrate it with relevant information and present it as a coherent unity without ambiguity or contradiction. He may use illustrations to help him explain what he means.
- 5) Application of Christian principles to the actual social life must be emphasized in every lesson. The teacher should use stories (from the Old or New Testaments or from church history or church books) to attract the attention of the students and show the Christian principle in an applied manner. The teacher also may divide the subject into stages or small subjects. A good practice is to summarize the lesson or better still, ask the students themselves to summarize it.
- 6) The manner of expressing the lesson to the students is also very important. A teacher who is living by what he/she teaches will definitely be more effective in giving his/her message across. A teacher who is teaching under spiritual influence with compatible emotions to what he/she teaches will be definitely more effective than a teacher who is giving information.

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From someone who is not capable, and does not know anything, was taken and lead by hand, step by step, from the smallest to the largest thing for this work to be done.

“He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength.” Isaiah 40:29

“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” John 1:3

On behalf of the Coptic Orthodox children and youth, who are going to benefit a great deal from this revised Sunday School Program, I would like to express a word of appreciation and gratitude to:

The Thrice-Blessed Pope Shenouda III of Blessed Memory

This program leans quite heavily on the writings of His Holiness the Late Pope Shenouda III. The majority of the contents of the lessons and their attachments are based on His Holiness' writings. This is a very bright and important aspect of this program. In 1986, during the time in which there was no Coptic Orthodox Sunday School program in the land of immigration, His Holiness reviewed the general contents of the program, commented and modified many key subjects, and then authorized the use of this program in all churches outside of Egypt, on a preliminary basis.

I can safely say that, if it was not for His Holiness the Late Pope Shenouda III's support, wisdom, and writings, these series of books would not exist. The whole generation is in debt to His Holiness the Late Pope Shenouda III, not only because of his great teachings and writings, but also because of his love and leadership.

His Holiness Pope Tawadros II

I had the blessing of meeting His Holiness in 2013 in Austria and I suggested to him about updating and revising the previous version of the Sunday School Program. His encouragement, wisdom, and follow up were key to the development and completion of this program.

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His Grace Bishop Reweiss

His Grace Bishop Reweiss has been behind us all the way with his love and guidance. He wrote the forward for our previous version of the program in 1986.

His Grace Bishop Moussa

His Grace Bishop Moussa has provided constant support and encouragement in the completion of the previous program. Of course, His Grace's writings for the youth have been utilized in all the subjects directed towards the youth, in this book.

Fr. Tadros Malaty and Fr. Marcos Marcos

These Beloved Fathers reviewed thoroughly all of the contents of the first six books of the earliest version of the program. Their dedication, experience, and wisdom have been an important factor in the quality of all the material. They contributed greatly towards setting up the lessons, in that sense. Father Tadros Malaty's deep writings, without any doubt, have been a key reference in the majority of the lessons.

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Dr. Fayek Ishak (head of the English Department at Lakehead University) reviewed the first six books of the earliest version of the program. He contributed, immensely, towards the setup of the lessons.

Fr. Makary Silwanis

This beloved father's computer skills were utilized in many functions related to this Sunday School Program. His love and encouragement were key factors to the progress of this program.

Tassoni Ragaa

The continuous support and encouragement of Tassoni Ragaa played an essential role in the write-up of the previous version of the program, as well as in this revision. One of the aspects that kept this program centered and on track was her continuous reminder that this program is for generations to come and every effort is worthwhile for the sake of the upbringing of the children and youth.

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The Youth of St. George and St. Rueiss Coptic Orthodox Church

A main contributor to this project was Monica Gad, who valued and recognized the importance of having a Sunday School program.

Comments and proof-readings of many of the youth are greatly appreciated.

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TEACHER'S GUIDELINES:

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM?

1. The teacher should realize that each lesson has been prepared to cover a specific point; starting from the title of the lesson to the end of it.
2. The teacher should read all the materials referred to in the lesson (i.e. the Holy Bible as well as any articles attached to the lesson), and then proceed by emphasizing all the points.
3. The teacher should enlarge the picture ahead of each lesson and use it as a visual aid as he or she is teaching the lesson.
4. The teacher should discuss the practical applications as he or she proceeds with the lesson.
5. The teacher should summarize the main points of the lesson with the students and give prizes.

Effective teaching in Sunday School:

by Fr Rueiss Awad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbf9zEPULdU>

FEATURES OF THIS

Sunday SCHOOL

FEATURES OF THIS SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

A COMPREHENSIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

1. This Sunday School program was the very first program to be written in the lands of immigration. This work was initiated in 1974, and the first version was published in 1986. We thank our heavenly Father, Who has given us the opportunity to extensively revise and improve it, in 2005.
2. In this version of the program, any repetition that was in the previous program has been removed; all lessons were upgraded in both coverage and depth. Moreover, a whole new book, on contemporary issues, has been added.
3. The contemporary issues book covers subjects that are important for children and youth in today's world. These lessons are optional. For churches with regular youth group meetings, these issues would best be discussed during those meetings. On the other hand, for churches that do not hold regular youth group meetings, those issues can be discussed as part of the Sunday School program.
4. This version of the program also includes lessons, which form a basis for a missionary service, a service that should in the ideal situation be practiced by every member of our congregation. The objective is that each child, every youth, and in the long run each Coptic individual can behave and act in a way, which is an embodiment of the teaching and tradition of the Coptic Orthodox Church. In other words, our congregation would become role models in their communities, who attract people to our Lord Jesus Christ through their good practices: sincerity, commitment, hard work and dedication, tolerance, forgiveness, and all the other good qualities that differentiate a good practicing Christian from those who merely have a Christian education.
5. In this Sunday School Program, we depended heavily on the writings of H.H. Pope Shenouda III as a reference for most of the presented material.
6. The lessons in this version of the program have already been tried in Sunday School classes, reviewed, improved and tried again. This ensures that the lessons are relevant and suit the level of the students.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



7. In this version of the program, efforts were put forth to ensure that every aspect of the Christian life in the Coptic Orthodox Church is covered.
8. This Sunday School Program is not merely about giving specific education on Christianity to our children and youth but it is rather an attempt to deeply affect their feelings and spirituality. It is believed that such an approach will facilitate the practical application of the various aspects involved so that Christianity becomes a way of life for the individual, with deeply rooted Christian values, that are manifested as behaviour and attitude.
9. All copyrights of other Sunday School programs, and other writers, have been fully respected.
10. In this version, each lesson comes complete with pictures and songs that are suitable for the lesson.
11. This Sunday School program comes in various formats, for convenience. In addition to being available on this website for widespread use, it is also available, upon request, in hard copy format or on CD.
12. It is our strong belief that this Sunday School program will play a vital role in the spiritual upbringing of our children. May the Lord bless this Sunday School program and all other programs, for the growth of His Kingdom in us.

THE PREPARATION OF

Sunday SCHOOL

THE PREPARATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

A. What is a Sunday School Lesson?

1. It is not a record of events that we convey to the students with the hopes of appearing to satisfy the required preparation process in front of other people. Neither is it a lecture that we deliver to our audience or student regardless of their interest in the matter.

2. However, it is, on one hand, a fruit of the live reaction between the servant and the lesson and, on the other hand, between the servant and the students. The Holy Spirit matures this fruit and directs this service towards the salvation of the students and towards the glory of God.

For if the servant who teaches the people does not teach himself, the voice of the Lord will rebuke him saying, " You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself ? " (Romans 2:21), and again in James 3: 1: "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."

Therefore, the servant should engage himself in the lesson through prayers, relevant spiritual readings, and practical application, so that when the servant speaks with his students from experience and true knowledge, he says, with St. John the Beloved, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-" (1 John 1:1)

If a servant is not aware of the spiritual level of his students, he may burden them with instructions and lessons which they cannot handle nor apply and this, in turn, may cause the students to go astray and lose their eternal life. Therefore, it is crucial for the servant to establish a healthy, trustworthy, and fruitful relationship with his students, as well as to share in their joys and cheers, and their sadness and fears, all towards Jesus Christ. This is what St. Paul refers to in his epistle to the Galatians when he says, "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you..." (Galatians 4:19). This close relationship with the students allows the servant to choose the most appropriate lesson that caters to their needs.

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Hence a Sunday School lesson is:

A live mixture between the personal lives of the servants and the students through the lesson; the Holy Spirit creates this mixture and allows it to result in the bearing of fruit.

B. The Requirements for Sunday School Lessons

1. Humility in prayer before God.

God said, "...for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

My beloved brethren, sit down in peace and tranquility with the Lord and talk to Him about your personal need for Him in your service. Ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and pray saying, "Guide me dear God. What would you like my students and I to learn this week?" Be obedient to His voice. It would be suitable to maintain a prayer time which equals that of the lesson.

2. Accurate knowledge of the meanings contained within the lesson.

This is achieved through:

- a. Occupying yourself throughout the week with understanding the new lesson, starting from the end of the previous lesson until the beginning of the new one. It is wise to use your free time, time before sleep, and time with fellow servants to increase and enhance your understanding of the lesson.
 - b. Resorting to spiritual and religious references and literature to help you develop the right understanding and concepts behind the lines.
 - c. Resorting to general educational references and literature to embody this understanding and these concepts, making them clear in the minds of your students.
3. Aids of presentation.

It is important that you transform your understanding of the lesson into a simple and clear presentation. It has been stated and proved that 85% of knowledge acquired is acquired through the sense of sight and visual

THE PREPARATION OF

Sunday SCHOOL

learning as opposed to the 10% that is acquired through the sense of hearing. The rest of the knowledge acquired is done so through the other three senses.

In reality, the least effective way of transmitting knowledge to others is by merely talking; this has the weakest influence on the students. In contrast, the most effective way to teach is to use the "Learning by Doing" method, which requires enough time as well as sound experience.

What differentiates between the effectiveness of the two means of presentation, are the tools used in the presentation. These tools aid the students in effectively understanding and retaining the purpose of the lesson by engaging both senses of sight and sound. These tools may include audio-visual devices such as pictures and movies, spiritual trips and outings, role playing during class, intellectually stimulating games, etc.

C. Recording the lesson.

It is recommended that the servant records the following during the preparation of the lesson:

- Date of the preparation of the lesson.
- Date of the delivery of the lesson.
- Title of the lesson.
- Purpose of the lesson.
- References.
- Preface.
- Lesson.
- Inference.
- Bible verse.
- Homework.
- Aids of presentation.
- Other points for memory.
- Songs.
- Personal reflections of the servant.

Purpose of the lesson:

It is necessary for the servant to clearly understand the purpose of the lesson at the beginning of his preparation. It is also necessary that the purpose of the lesson agrees with the maturity level of the students. For example, it is more appropriate for children to learn about God's love. On the other hand, learning about the power

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of God in their lives and in the lives of the saints is more appropriate subject matter for youth. As for young adults, learning about Christian virtues and spiritual practices is most appropriate.

Most importantly, the purpose of the lessons should agree with Coptic Orthodox Christian teachings, whether in specific occasions or in general.

References:

References could include:

- a. Stories, examples, verses, etc. from the Holy Bible.
- b. Spiritual books and literature.
- c. General educational books and literature.

Recording the references is very useful for the servant because it helps the servant to refer back to them, if forgotten.

Preface:

The preface is the background of the lesson. It cultivates the thoughts of the students and directs their thoughts towards the lesson. This allows the lesson to be implanted in their minds and to, eventually, bear fruit.

It is important that the preface remain simple, short, and concise. The introduction could be in the form of focused questions, but should not be in the form of stories. Several stories in one lesson may deteriorate its effectiveness.

The Lesson:

The lesson could be divided into the following sections:

1. Introduction - it should be quick and concise and related to the preface. It should introduce the lesson smoothly without interrupting the chain of thoughts.
2. Body of the lesson - it contains the principle subject of the lesson, and follows these guidelines:
 - a. You must be accurate and careful when explaining theological concepts.

THE PREPARATION OF

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- b. You must be careful when relating events and examples to elucidate the subject of the lesson, in order to properly guide the students' imagination without restricting it.
- c. You must diligently expose the Coptic Orthodox doctrine in the lesson.
- d. You should not use more than one story during the lesson and the story used should be relevant to the subject matter.

3. Focal Point - the point during the lesson at which the purpose of the lesson is clearly defined. (Examples: The Lord responds to the prayers of a needy person, or the angels come to give the saints their heavenly crowns and take them to heaven after many trials and persecutions.)

4. Conclusion - it should be, like the introduction, short and concise. It can summarize the purpose of the lesson, without introducing any new concepts.

Inferences:

Inference is a method used to determine how much the students have absorbed and retained from the lesson. It should be in the form of questions with the following guidelines:

- a. They should clearly show the purpose of the lesson.
- b. They should suit the maturity of the students.
- c. They should be simple and direct.
- d. They should relate to each other.
- e. They should not be 'Yes' or 'No' questions.
- f. They should each have one correct answer.

Bible Verse:

The memorization of a Bible verse is an excellent way to help the students remember the purpose of the lesson. The chosen Bible verse should meet the following guidelines:

- a. It should show the purpose of the lesson clearly.
- b. It should be short which allows it to be easily memorized.
- c. Children can easily memorize, as well as understand it.

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Homework:

The height of your diligence in preparing the lesson is in choosing the proper and effective homework or application. The homework should have the following characteristics:

- a. It should contain practical applications that apply to everyday life.
- b. It should suit the maturity level of the students.
- c. It should help in mastering the comprehension and retention of the lesson.
- d. It should not include more than one instruction, in order to simplify the application of the lesson.

INTRODUCTION

AGE 11 TO 12 YEARS

INTRODUCTION

TEACHING GRADE 6 (AGE 11 TO 12)

- 1) Children at this age have molded into a certain shape, into certain patterns of behavior that were superimposed on their natural character. They have been exposed for years to the influence of their family background, their parents, brothers and sisters and relatives. The cultural and ethical standards of the family have influenced their attitudes, made them different from each other. Whatever their special situation within the family did to affect their personality — jealousy, rejection, possessiveness, competitiveness, etc. — these have left deep traces. They are less spontaneous and more self-conscious than at an earlier age.

Sunday school teachers will find children less open at this age than at earlier ages.

- 2) Sunday School teachers have another difficulty in trying to relate to the students' homes. As Sunday School instruction progresses, it often happens that the religious ideas conveyed there are not in agreement with the concepts of the parents. Thus the teacher has to show great understanding and tact when dealing in class with a child's statement, "Yes, but Daddy says that..." or "Mother says that the Church teaches...." The teacher must always try to see the element of truth in whatever beliefs are held at home: "Yes, this is very interesting. I think the reason for this is that..." He or she can then add and expand the ideas he or she wants to convey.
- 3) Relations between boys and girls are very self-conscious. They are definitely two different groups — usually critical of each other and slightly inimical toward each other.
- 4) The search for meaning is now at the start of a new intensive phase, for the onset of clearer thought creates problems in the child's religious ideas. Childish concepts are clung to, but the doubts and confusions are already appearing. At previous stages the child happily kept together unrelated and often contradictory ideas, but now he or she is becoming aware of the need to

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relate and reconcile these apparent contradictions.

We require an intensive effort in teaching religion at this stage to help him or her grow into a “one-world” view of life, rather than a dualistic system, which separates religion from the rest of life.

- 5) The teacher has to have a real theological maturity to be able to put down things clearly, simply and briefly.
- 6) Another type of thinking that one frequently meets at this age is a conscious separation of knowledge into two different parts - one that I learn at school, read about in books, or hear about on TV, and the other that is taught in Church and in Sunday School. The task of the Sunday School teacher in this period is to help them in this process. It has to be relevant to their experience of life, to their interests of curiosity, to the secular knowledge they are acquiring at school, to the human relations they are developing. In other words, the Christian doctrine taught must become part of their own thinking and their knowledge of life as a total experience.
- 7) The children’s knowledge of the Bible, especially of the New Testament, is very uneven. There are a few stories that they have heard over and over again, and this gives them a false sense of “knowing” the Bible. On the other hand, their very limited knowledge of the scriptures, both in facts and in meaning, is quite clear. Not even the Sermon on the Mount has reached their attention in full, and they have no idea of the meaning of the Old Testament, except for few stories. This age is a good time to train the children on the use of the Bible and especially the New Testament as a resource book. Learning to know which parts of the Bible are used during the church services they attend, and how to find the appropriate readings, increases their familiarity with the scriptures.

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For the success
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the teacher should
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HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
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in the class



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**SEPTEMBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

**CHRISTIAN CHARACTERS (I)
“HELPING THE NEEDY”**

Please read Matthew 25:31 – 46, the attached material entitled “Christian Behavior”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF LESSON:

This is Lesson I in a series of two lessons about Christian characters. It is a golden opportunity for us to be able to help the needy.

MEMORY VERSE:

“For I was hungry and you gave Me food.” (Matthew 25:35)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ When we read Matthew Chapter 5, we find that the sermon on the mountain indicates that in order to gain eternal life, one has to be humble. “***Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven***”. This sometimes appears to be difficult. In the lesson at hand, which is taken from Matthew Chapter 25, we learn that there is something that maybe relatively easy that will help us gain eternal life. If we help the needy, it is as if we help Jesus himself. And He is able to pay us back as He said in Matthew 5:7 “***Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy***”. He will give us a share in eternal life. “***Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom... in as much as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to Me***” Matthew 25:34-40.

SEPTEMBER

FIRST Sunday

✦ What kind of help would the needy require?

- ✦ The needy may require materialistic things, clothes, food... etc, to meet the necessities of life.
- ✦ The needy may require spiritual guidance to cope with the temptation of this world.
- ✦ We do not have to wait until a person in need asks us for help. We must take the initiative to help.
- ✦ We must give to the needy with complete happiness because the Bible says, "For God loves a cheerful giver". Remember that the money that we have is granted to us from God, therefore we must give part of it back to our poor brothers and sisters in Christ.

✦ Is there anyone in need outside our homeland Egypt?

- ✦ Yes there is. We must help them. Also we can help the needy in Egypt and there are so many of them.
- ✦ In return for helping the needy the Lord will give us joy here on earth and build for us a treasure in heaven.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

1. Remember Saint Anba Abraam the Bishop of Fayoum and Giza who loved the poor people. He used to sit with them, teach them, and eat with them. Please tell his story in more detail.
2. We have to regularly practice giving money to the needy from now. Even from the small allowance that our parents give us.
3. Helping the needy is an expression of love. When we love we give.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

ST. ABRAAM

Please stay next to me O St Abraam

*You bring me close to my Lord all the time,
And to Jesus I will give
All my love, all my heart
You are in my heart St Abraam*

From your childhood you always liked to pray,
And from the Lord you asked night and day,
“A clean heart in me create”
And “have mercy” you would say,
You’re always in my heart St Abraam.

You loved God’s word and read it all the time,
You knew that the Bible guides to heaven
Read it all in forty days
And kept reading it again
You are always in my heart St Abraam.

A saint of the twentieth century
Loving the poor, the orphans and the hungry,
When they came to you in need
They left you feeling happy

SEPTEMBER

FIRST Sunday

Some think that life with God means just faith or love or spirit without caring much about virtues or behaviour.

But the Bible is concerned with the Christian behaviour, especially about condemnation, as it says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit."* (Rom 8:1). Then one's behaviour in the spirit is what protects one from condemnation.

This spiritual behaviour is considered as an evidence of being firm in God. The Apostle, expects a very high level by saying, *"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."* (1 Jn 2:6)

Therefore, we are also expected to act according to the spirit, by taking the behaviour of the Lord Jesus as an example to follow...

The importance of Christian behaviour is shown in God's saying, *"You will know them by their fruits."* (Mt 7:16)

This behaviour has two sides: positive and negative. Each side has its own danger. Therefore, St. John, the Apostle says, *"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin."* (1 Jn 1:7). This shows the positive side.

As for the negative side, the Apostle says, *"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practise the truth."* (1 Jn 1:6)

Therefore, our Christian behaviour is an evidence of our fellowship with God. It is also an evidence of our fellowship with the Church...

Accordingly, the Church sets apart anyone who does not behave properly, as in St Paul's letter to the Corinthians, *"Put away from yourselves that wicked person."* (1 Cor 5:13)

St John also says, *"But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who leads a disorderly life and not according to the tradition which he received from us."* (2 Thess 3:6)

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If behaviour is considered of no significance and only faith is important, why then did the Apostle consider it the top of joy, when he said, *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."* (3 Jn 4)

We are believers, but we have to, *"... lead a life worthy of the calling with which you were called.."* (Eph 4:1). We also have to bear fruit, *"Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire..."* (Mt 3:10)

SEPTEMBER

FIRST Sunday



For the success
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SEPTEMBER

SECOND Sunday



**SEPTEMBER
SECOND SUNDAY
CHRISTIAN CHARACTERS
“FORGIVENESS”**

Please read: Matthew 5:23, 24, Mark 11:25, 26, Ephesians 4:31, 32, Colossians 3:12, 13, the attached material entitled “Christian Behavior”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is Lesson II in a series of two lessons about Christian characters. We must be in peace with people even if they try to hurt us. If we forgive people who do bad things to us, God will forgive us as well.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Leave your gift there before the altar and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother.” (Matthew 5:24)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† As Christians we must love everyone. GOD IS LOVE. So, as sons and daughters of God, we must also love.

† Forgiveness is not easy, especially when other people have tried to hurt us. It is difficult only if we depend on ourselves. We must pray to God to help us love other people and let us forget about how they hurt us. The Holy Spirit inside us will help us to achieve this level of love, i.e. forgiveness of people who hurt us.

† If we are attending the service in the church, we must not take communion if we are not at peace with others. We must forgive and forget.

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✝ There are several examples in the Holy Bible of forgiveness. The most important example is of Jesus Himself when he forgave those who crucified him by saying, “***My Father, forgive them.***” Please mention this in details.

✝ David also had a forgiving heart towards king Saul. He used to play music for him when he had an evil spirit. Saul wanted to kill David. David had many chances to kill Saul but he did not. David had a heart full of love. Please mention this in details.

✝ St. Stephen prayed for the forgiveness of the people who were stoning him saying “***Lord, do not charge them with this sin***” Acts 7:60. Please mention this in more details.

✝ When we pray the Lord’s prayer, we say,” Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.” Do we do this? We can only love our enemies by the help of God. We must pray to God and ask Him to bless us with enough strength to love and forgive all people. For, God forgave us our sins, only when we forgive the sins of others. Please read Luke 7:40-48.

✝ Can we forgive friends at school when they say bad things about us? Yes we can with the help of God. The least we must do is not answer the bad words with bad words, because we are sons and daughters of God.

✝ Sometimes, we think that other people are hurting us and the truth is they are not. So, before we say that we should forgive them we have to reconsider the matter. Maybe, we are the ones doing wrong.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Let us pray for other people when they do something to hurt us. Pray to God to help us forgive them and also try to deal with them in a Christian manner that is filled with love.
- (2) We must behave in a spiritual way. We have to be Christ-like. The Lord Christ forgave the people who tried to hurt Him. We must treat people gently, trust that nobody can actually hurt us and forgive those who actually try to hurt us.

SEPTEMBER

SECOND Sunday

SONGS 🎵

SONS OF GOD

REFRAIN

Sons of God hear His holy word
Eat His body, drink His blood
Alleluia , Alleluia

Brothers, sisters, we are one
In the spirit we are young

Shout together to the Lord
Happiness a hundred fold

Jesus gave a new command
Till we reach the promised land

If we want to live with Him
Die to selfishness and sin

Make the world a unity
Till we meet the trinity

With the church we celebrate
So we'll make a holiday

gather around the table of the Lord
and we'll sing a song of love
Alleluia , Alleluia

and our life has just begun
we can live forever

who has promised our reward
and we'll live forever

that we love our fellow man
where we'll live forever

we must also die with Him
and we'll live forever

make all men one family
and we'll live forever

Jesus coming we await
so we'll live forever

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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Coptic Orthodox Church

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOUR

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Some think that life with God means just faith or love or spirit without caring much about virtues or behaviour.

But the Bible is concerned with the Christian behaviour, especially about condemnation, as it says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit."* (Rom 8:1). Then one's behaviour in the spirit is what protects one from condemnation.

This spiritual behaviour is considered an evidence of being firm in God. The Apostle, expects a very high level by saying, *"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."* (1 Jn 2:6)

Therefore, we are also expected to act according to the spirit, by taking the behaviour of the Lord Jesus as an example to follow...

The importance of Christian behaviour is shown in God's saying, *"You will know them by their fruits."* (Mt 7:16)

This behaviour has two sides: positive and negative. Each side has its own danger. Therefore, St. John, the Apostle says, *"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin."* (1 Jn 1:7). This shows the positive side.

As for the negative side, the Apostle says, *"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practise the truth."* (1 Jn 1:6)

Therefore, our Christian behaviour is an evidence of our fellowship with God. It is also an evidence of our fellowship with the Church...

Accordingly, the Church sets apart anyone who does not behave properly, as in St Paul's letter to the Corinthians, *"Put away from yourselves that wicked person."* (1 Cor 5:13)

St John also says, *"But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who leads a disorderly life and not according to the tradition which he received from us."* (2 Thess 3:6)

If behaviour is considered of no significance and only faith is important, why then did the Apostle consider it the top of joy, when he said, *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."* (3 Jn 4)

We are believers, but we have to, *"... lead a life worthy of the calling with which you were called."* (Eph 4:1). We also have to bear fruit, *"Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire..."* (Mt 3:10)



SEPTEMBER

SECOND Sunday



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SEPTEMBER

THIRD Sunday

SEPTEMBER THIRD SUNDAY

EL-NAYROUZ FEAST

“ST. MERCURIUS ‘ABU SEFAIN’ CAN WE ADHERE TO OUR FAITH?”

Please read Revelation 7:9-17, the attached material taken from the Coptic Synaxarium entitled “The martyrdom of St. Mercurious”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that the martyrs are the people who wanted to maintain their life with Christ regardless of the price. We should also stick to the Lord Christ no matter what happens.

MEMORY VERSE:

“... if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” (Romans 8:17)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ The Egyptian Calendar is a very old calendar. The Egyptian Pharaohs made their calculations more than 5,000 years before Christ. They called its months with the names of their ancient Pharaohs.

✝ The Egyptian Calendar was called “martyrs’ Calendar” and the counting of it started during the reign of king Deklidianos who killed thousands and thousands of Christians. These people wanted to maintain their life with Christ even if it meant to shed their blood. The difference between the Julian Calendar and the Coptic Calendar is 283 years (the year in which the reign of Deklidianos started).

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Coptic Orthodox Church



- ✝ **Martyrdom in Christianity goes back to the first century:**
- ✝ Please mention briefly the martyrdom of the Archdeacon St. Stephen the first martyr as mentioned in Act 6: 9-15 and Acts 7: 54-60. He adhered to his faith and accepted to be stoned for the sake of Christ.
- ✝ Describe the story of St. Mercurious (Abu Sefain) as mentioned in the attached material. He is very well known in Egypt and there are many churches bearing his name.
- ✝ He was called Abu Sefain (which means the man with the two swords) because the Angel gave him a sword and he had another sword given to him in the army.
- ✝ His parents were Christians and he wanted to maintain the faith that he received from God through his parents and the church.
- ✝ **Why do we eat red dates around the Nayrouz feast?**
- ✝ Our beloved church likes to teach us using different methods. The church teaches us through the Holy Bible, the icons, the hymns, the incense, the candles, etc. The church teaches us through the food that we eat in certain occasions.
- ✝ In the Nayrouz feast our church teaches us to eat red dates. The colour red represents the blood of the martyrs and the white colour for the purity of the hearts of the martyrs; the solid pit inside to show that the martyrs had no fear in their hearts and the sweet taste of the dates for the beautiful life that they had, filled with joy and peace with Christ.

Discuss the memory verse and ask students to give their explanations.

Our God is a loving God and He is also fair. People who denied themselves to maintain their Christianity will be rewarded with a great joy in heaven. This is fair. Please read Revelation 7:13-14.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- ✝ Our Ancestors have shed their blood to maintain the faith for us. We must hold on strong to the Christian faith that we received from God in the Bible, and from the lives of the Saints and the Martyrs of our church. To what extent should we stick to our faith, values and principles?

SEPTEMBER

THIRD Sunday

[SONGS](#) 🎵

Hiten for Philopateer Mercurius

Hitenievkiente
piathloforosem-marteerus
FilopateerMercurius
Epchoiceariehmot
nanempi-koevol
entenenouvi

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The Martyrdom of St. Mercurious Known as the Saint with the Two Swords

St. Mercurious, known as the Saint with the two swords (Abu-Saifain), was born in the city of Rome. His parents were Christians and they called him Philopateer (which means “Lover of the Father”). They reared him in a Christian manner. When he grew, he enlisted in the army during the days of Emperor Decius, the pagan. The Lord gave Philopateer the strength and the courage, for which he earned the satisfaction of his superiors. They called him Mercurious and he grew very close to the Emperor.

When the Berbers rose up against Rome, Decius went out to fight them, but when he saw how many they were, he became terrified. St. Mercurious assured him saying, “Do not be afraid, because God will destroy our enemies and will bring us victory.” When he left the Emperor, an angel appeared to him in the shape of a human being, dressed in white apparel. The angel gave him a sword saying, “When you overcome your enemies, remember the Lord your God” (That is why he is called “of the two swords”, “Abu-Saifain”, one is the military sword and the other is the sword of the divine power.)

When Emperor Decius conquered his enemies and Mercurious came back victorious, the angel appeared to him and reminded him of what he told him previously, that is to remember the Lord his God.

Decius, and his soldiers with him, wanted to offer up incense to his idols and St. Mercurious tarried behind. When they informed the Emperor of what had happened, he called St. Mercurious and expressed his amazement at his abandoning of his loyalty to him. The Emperor reprimanded him for refusing to come and offer incense to the idols. The Saint cast his girdle and his military attire down before the Emperor and said to him, “I do not worship anyone except my Lord and my God Jesus Christ.” The Emperor became angry and ordered him to be beaten with whips and stalks.

When the Emperor saw how the people of the city and the soldiers were attached to St. Mercurious, he feared that they might rebel. So instead, he bound him in iron fetters and sent him to Caesarea where they cut off his head. He thus completed his holy fight and received the crown of life in the kingdom of heaven.

His intercession be for us and Glory be to our God forever. Amen.

SEPTEMBER

THIRD Sunday



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**SEPTEMBER
FOURTH SUNDAY**

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
“DO WE HAVE A MESSAGE FOR PEOPLE ABOUT
THE LORD JESUS?”**

Please read John 1: 19-24, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To study St. John the Baptist's message about Jesus. Also, we would like to discuss in more detail our missionary duties in the society where we live.

MEMORY VERSE:

***“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said,
behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”
(John 1: 29)***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- ✝ On Tout 2, our church celebrates the Feast of St. John the Baptist's martyrdom.
- ✝ Our church considers St. John to be the greatest among all born from women (except for the Lord Jesus Christ).
- ✝ The main job that St. John the Baptist had was to declare that Jesus is the Messiah whom the whole world had been waiting for and the prophets talked about.
- ✝ St. John looked at the Lord Jesus and said, **“Behold the Lamb of God”**. This is a prophecy from St. John the Baptist that salvation will happen through the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus for us. The Lord Jesus is the Lamb of the New

SEPTEMBER

FOURTH Sunday

Testament. All the prophecies and all the offerings in the Old Testament had one main purpose, which was to introduce the people to the true offering of Jesus on the Cross.

✝ St. John the Baptist's personality stands out between two covenants. He can be considered as the last prophet of the old covenant and can also be considered the first prophet of the new covenant.

✝ It is written in the Bible about St. John the Baptist "*I send my angel in front of you*". St. John was sent in front of Jesus as a messenger to prepare the hearts of the people to receive Him as the only Savior.

✝ St. John the Baptist completed his job perfectly in a very short time (about 6 months). He told the world about Jesus "*He (i.e. Jesus) must increase and I must decrease.*"

✝ Do we have a message for the people about the Lord Jesus?

✝ As Christians we have a duty to tell people about our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore we must not leave Christianity at home. How and what can we tell the people about the Lord Jesus? Please discuss this in the classroom with the students.

✧ Some of the points to remember:

✝ We have to act as good Christians in love, and in righteous deeds according to the Holy Bible.

✝ We should not have to compete with what others do in the world, because we have our own principles to adhere to.

✝ When we are asked about our faith, we must declare it clearly. We believe in one, triune God. i.e. the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Three persons are in one. Just as we are made up of Soul, Mind, and Body and the three are in one.

✝ The Lord Jesus is God Incarnate who came and saved us from the slavery of Satan.

✝ We must try to convince our friends that true peace here on earth can be achieved through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, our place in Heaven can

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only be achieved through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must have goals to achieve in our lives. As Christians we are supposed to be successful in our schools, in the society in which we live, and most importantly we must not leave Christianity at home, but declare it through our behavior and our actions.
- (2) We must also answer anyone asking about our religion. We are Christians (which means we believe in the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ). We are Orthodox (which means we have the right worship or straight worship). We are Coptic (which means our church goes back to Egypt where St. Mark the Apostle preached Christianity).

SEPTEMBER

FOURTH Sunday

[SONGS](#) 🎵

Hiten for St. John the Baptist

Hiten ni epresvia ente
pisengenees en Emmanueel
Youanniseshiri en Zakharias
Epchoiceariehmot
nanempi-koevol
entenenouvi

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St. George and St. Rueiss

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SEPTEMBER

Fifth Sunday

SEPTEMBER FIFTH SUNDAY

THE CROSS-DAY FEAST “NO CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT A CROSS”

Please read the attached material entitled ‘The Configuration of the Cross’; and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To understand the great importance of the Holy Cross in our lives and to become familiar with the various configurations of the Cross and their meanings.

MEMORY VERSE:

“But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God”(1 Corinthians 1:23-24)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ We cross ourselves:

✝ In our prayers the priest makes the sign of the Cross many times in the prayers of the Divine Liturgy as well as in the prayers of other Holy Sacraments.

✝ The Lord Christ emphasized the importance of the Cross:

✝ Since the beginning of His service and in His teachings.

✝ Before He was crucified.

✝ Matthew 10: 38 *“And he who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.”*

✝ Matthew 16:24 *“If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and*

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take up his cross and follow Me.”

✝ The Lord Jesus stressed on mentioning the Cross because the Lord Jesus' crucifixion was the source of salvation. Everything that Christians are enjoying in the New Testament: salvation and forgiveness, has been completed on the Cross. On the Cross, the Lord Jesus paid the price of our salvation and died for us so that we may live.

✝ **The Cross is the subject of Glory:**

✝ Galatians 6:14 *“But far be it from me to glory, except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”*

✝ **The Cross is the subject of preaching of the Apostles:**

† 1Corinthians 1:23 "But we preach Christ crucified a stumbling block to Jews and folly to gentiles."

† St. Peter said to the Jews *“let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”*

✝ **The Cross is the subject of strength:**

✝ 1Corinthians 1:18 "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God".

✝ St. Paul mentioned here that “The word of the Cross” is the “Power of God”. Therefore, when we mention the word of the Cross or when we cross ourselves, we are filled with strength.

✝ **The devil is fearful of the sign of the Cross:**

✝ Every time we cross ourselves the devil becomes very afraid because he remembers that at the Cross, Jesus defeated him and gave salvation to His people.

✝ The devil then escapes from the sign of the cross.

✝ **The Cross-Day Feast in the Coptic Church:**

The Coptic Church celebrates two feasts in honor of the Holy Cross of Christ:

✝ The first: on the 17th of Tout (around 28th Sept.) in commemoration of the consecration of the Church of the Holy Cross, which is built by empress Helena the mother of King Constantine.

SEPTEMBER

Fifth Sunday

✝ The second: on 10th of Baramhaat (about 19th of March) in commemoration of the discovery of the Holy Cross by the same empress.

✝ Let us discuss the various configurations of the Cross using the attached material.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We have to utilize the power of the Cross in our Spiritual Life by crossing ourselves many times during the day. We also have to bear any burden of sickness or persecutions or troubles in our lives patiently and without complaining.
- (2) We can help someone to carry his or her own Cross. If someone, for example, is so sick or so sad or in trouble we can help provide a lot of help and carry the Cross with him or her.

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SONGS 🎵

SHERE PI ESTAVROS

“But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Gal 6:14)

Christ has come to us	from heaven to save us
With His blood He redeemed us	Shere pi estavros
Because Jesus loves us	He came and lived with us
He died for us	Shere pi estavros
He was crucified	and obtained victory
With wondrous authority	Shere pi estavros
The cross is my life	my strength and my hope
The starting of my prayer	Shere pi estavros
A lot of the saints	with the sign of the cross
Conquered the devils	Shere pi estavros
They moved many mountains	and the dead arose
Exactly as He said	Shere pi estavros
And I am their son	proud of the cross
I will follow them	Shere pi estavros

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SEPTEMBER

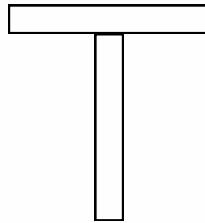
Fifth Sunday

THE CONFIGURATION OF THE CROSS

There are more than 400 configurations for the cross. We shall mention here some of the well-known configurations.

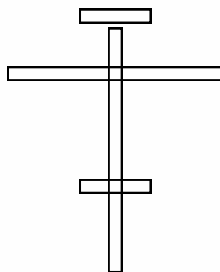
✚ **Cross as letter T:**

- ✚ This is the first letter of the Greek word Theos, which means God. When Moses raised the bronze serpent for the Jews to win the war it was like a letter T. It is also called the cross of St. Anthony because the monks use it as a head to their sticks that they lean against it in their long prayers.



✚ **The Russian Cross**

- ✚ It has 3 horizontal arms.
- ✚ The upper one for the statement that was written above the Lord Jesus' head when He was crucified.
- ✚ The middle one for His hands.
- ✚ The lowest one is because the Russians believe that the two feet of the Lord Jesus were nailed apart and not together at the top of each other.



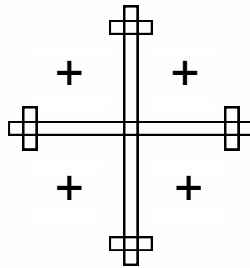
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Coptic Orthodox Church



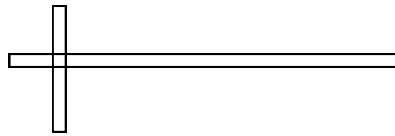
✝ **The Jerusalem Cross:**

- ✝ It contains 4 crosses between the 4 arms of the Cross.
- ✝ It signifies the four corners of the whole world where Christianity is preached.



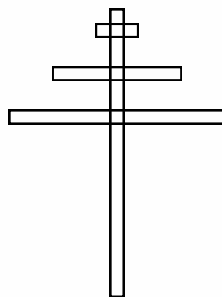
✝ **St. Philips' Cross**

- ✝ St. Philip was crucified on the Cross horizontally.



✝ **The Roman Cross:**

- ✝ It has 3 horizontal arms.
- ✝ The upper arms are for the two thieves who were crucified beside the Lord Jesus.

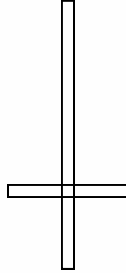


SEPTEMBER

Fifth Sunday

† St. Peter's Cross

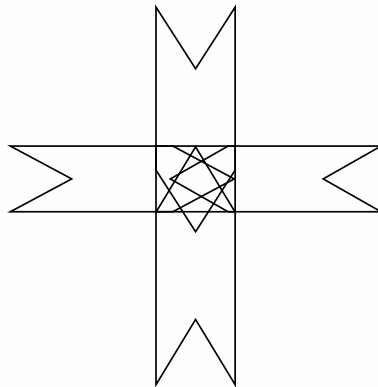
† St. Peter refused to be crucified as his savior. He was crucified upside down.



† The Malties' Cross:

† It is called the cross of the 8 pointed angles or 8 heads.

† These 8 heads refer to the 8 beatitudes mentioned in the Gospel of St. Matthew 5:3-10.



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October

First Sunday

**OCTOBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

**ESTHER (I)
FROM THE AHASUERUS' ROYAL FEAST TO
ESTHER'S BANQUET
"THE PARTIES OF THE WORLD LEAD TO SADNESS"**

Please read Esther Chapter 1 to the end of Chapter 4, (summarize the main events in story fashion to the students), the attached material entitled, "Joy ...and ... Joy", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://v637g.app.goo.gl/eACGtXxzKVcqqHPi7>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson #1 in a series of two lessons about the book of Esther. In this lesson, we learn about the rigidity of some of the kings of this world compared to the flexibility and purity of the people of God.

MEMORY VERSE:

"When the heart of the king was merry with wine ...he asked to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty" (Esther 1:10-11)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✠ Please ask the students to read the four chapters at home and prepare their questions.

✠ The book of Esther was written by Ezra in the year 465 BC. This book is known as the book of feasts. In this book there are three feasts: one by King Ahasuerus which represents the feast of the world which ends with sadness, the

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feast of Esther which ends in peace, and declares the victory of God's people, and the feast of Purim which represents the joy of the resurrection.

✝ We should read the book of Esther from the point of view of what we can learn in our life through the events of the 3 feasts.

✝ **Ahasuerus' royal feasts:**

✝ He became drunk after 7 days of feasting. He then requested a strange demand, which was to have, the Queen show her beauty to the public. This led Queen Vashti to lose her position and Esther took over as queen.

✝ We must not accept the parties given by the world. Why? These parties provide us with temporary happiness that always end in sadness. Remember what had happened to king Herod in the days of our Lord Jesus Christ when he killed St. John the Baptist after his birthday party. Please read Matthew 14:3-11.

✝ The behaviour of King Ahasuerus shows the rigidity of the world which leads to death and destruction.

✝ **Esther the orphan:**

✝ This poor girl attracted the attention of the King and he chose her as the Queen. As we will see later, this was part of God's plan to save his people.

✝ **Comparison between Haman and Mordecai:**

✝ Haman represents the devil. The devil wants to destroy God's people. Mordecai is a man of God. He only worships God and fears him. He refused to kneel down to Haman.

✝ **Mordecai and the Jews:**

✝ It appeared as if Haman was successful in his plan to destroy God's people and they mourned. However this could not have happened. God has a plan. In the next lesson we will see the plan of salvation.



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First Sunday

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

1. True Christians do not attend the parties of the world, which contain evil actions. These parties always end in sinful actions which have long-term negative consequences.
2. We must be flexible. We must not stick to a certain opinion and be rigid about it. We must listen, pray, think and then act.
3. As Mordecai did not yield under the pressure of Haman, we must not yield under peer pressure. It is much better for us to adhere to worshipping God as our church is teaching us.

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SONGS 🎵

HOW NICE TO GATHER

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.” (Mat 18:20)

How nice it is to gather today
When two of you gather in My name

in love as our God did say
know I am there just the same

REFRAIN

Oh Lord come now and hear us
Give us the peace that comes from

we call on You to be with us
and keep us from the harm of sin within

The Lord is the One that makes us sure
And a friend when no one is there

in all the ways that we endure
who keeps our hearts with loving care

The Lord is always by our side
He hears us when we call His name

and in His care we're satisfied
and by our side He will remain

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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First Sunday

JOY... AND JOY

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

There is a trivial joy for perishable, worldly affairs and pleasures...

Like Solomon's joy with what he toiled under the sun (Eccles 1:3) and Jonah's joy with the plant more than with the Salvation of Nineveh. The same kind of joy is that of the elder son, when he said to his father, "You never gave me a young goat that I might make merry with my friends. " (Lk. 15:29)

One type of the false joy is the joy of some people over their talents as the disciples were joyful in casting evil spirits, so the Lord said to them, "Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice rather because your names are written in heaven." -(Lk. 10:20)

The worst type of joy is being joyful over other's suffering. About this the Apostle said, "Love does not rejoice in iniquity, " (1 Cor. 13:6) as those who rejoice in people's loss. Solomon says, "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls. " (Prov. 24:17) This wicked joy is called gloating. As for the holy joy, it is from the fruits of the spirit. (Gal. 5:23)

The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord, and the Magi when they saw the star and the righteous rejoiced over the fruits of their holy toil, "Those who sow in tears, reap in joy." (Ps. 126:5). The Bible has explained to us the joy of your salvation and the joy of the shepherds when the Angel said to them, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy... for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour... ". The Psalmist says about the joy of salvation, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation. " (P s. 51:12). And the Father said, "It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again. (Lk. 15:32).

The joy of the repentance of a sinner is in heaven and earth! When the Good Shepherd found the lost sheep, "He lays it on his shoulders rejoicing, " (Lk. 15:5). He also says, "...there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.. " (Lk. 15:7). The widow also rejoiced when she found her lost coin and called all her neighbours to rejoice with her. We also rejoice over all means of grace...

"I rejoiced over your testimonies"... "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' " (Ps. 122:1), "There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God.' (Ps. 46:4)

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The righteous rejoice over temptations and reproach: (James 1)

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials" so I rejoice over tribulations. The greatest joy is that of the Kingdom:

"Enter into the joy of your Lord. " (Mt 25:21). This is the real joy, where we rejoice in the Lord, and in his company. Although we have not reached His Kingdom yet, we rejoice while waiting in hope. As the Apostle says, "Rejoice in hope. " (Rom. 12:12)



October

First Sunday





**OCTOBER
SECOND SUNDAY**

**ESTHER (II)
FROM ESTHER'S BANQUET TO THE FEAST OF
PURIM**

Please read the attached article entitled, "Methods of Solving Problems". Esther Chapter 5 to the end of Chapter 10 (and summarize the main events in story fashion to the students), and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://v637g.app.goo.gl/GhwCeA3W6jfJ6zcK7>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is Lesson 2 in a series of 2 lessons to study the book of Esther. In this lesson we will learn about the defeat of Satan before God and His people. We also learn how to handle problems and arrive at good solutions like Esther did.

MEMORY VERSE:

"A new covenant, He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away."

Hebrews 8:13

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- ✠ **Esther invites the king and Haman to a modest banquet:**
- ✠ Esther fasted with her people. Esther's banquet represents the feast of the Cross, through which God's people gained salvation and the devil was defeated.
- ✠ Esther prepared herself for the meeting with the king not by decorating herself but by fasting and prayers. As we mention in the Divine Liturgy, fasting and

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Second Sunday

prayers defeat the devil.

✠ **Haman prepared the cross:**

✠ Haman prepared the cross (as the evil people did with regards to the Lord Jesus). Haman was happy because he thought he was going to kill Mordecai. He ended up being defeated. This is exactly what happened when the devil thought he would achieve everything by killing the Lord Jesus on the Cross.

✠ **God glorified Mordecai:**

✠ The king was reminded at the right time of what Mordecai did to save his life. The king rewarded Mordecai greatly.

✠ **The defeat of Haman (the Devil):**

✠ Haman was killed instead of Mordecai and God's people.

✠ **The Feast of Purim can be summarized as follows:**

✠ The Jews fast on the 13th day of the month of Azar. If it was a Sabbath, they fast on the 11th.

✠ In the evening, as the new day starts according to the Jewish customs, the Jews get together and read the book of Esther.

✠ As they mention the name of Haman, they shout and say let his name be destroyed.

✠ In the next day, they adjourn happily and they give alms to the poor.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

1. God works in our lives in mysterious ways to protect us from the devil as He did with Esther and the Jews. Our role is to walk in God's path and His Commandments. He will do everything for our benefit, He is our Father and we are His children. We must be committed to Him.

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2. Haman wanted to kill Mordecai. Haman got killed himself. This happens in life. If we have bad intentions towards others and want to hurt them, we end up getting hurt some way or another.

3. It is amazing how Esther, guided by God, was able to solve this huge problem caused by Haman. Problems can be solved not by confrontation or giving orders to people or fleeing from the problem. Problems can be solved by praying, thinking calmly, and through fasting and prayers.

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Second Sunday

[SONGS](#) 🎵

SHEPHERD OF MY SOUL

O thou Whose presence delighteth my soul, and Whom in my distress I call
My comfort by day, and by night my refuge my stronghold, whenever I fall
Shepherd of my soul, I beg Thee to tell where Thou makest Thy sheep to rest
For why should I roam in the valley of tears and wander as one who is lost?
I charge you to tell me, daughters of Zion have ye seen the One I adore?
I seek Him in vain in the night of my soul but, lo, I can find Him no more.
Shepherd of my soul, I shall follow Thee Oh how sweet Thy voice is to me!
So guide me and lead me and show me the way my only desire is Thee.
I am my Beloved's, and He is mine too He calleth me sister and spouse
Oh how do I long for the day we shall wed In heaven, in his Father's house.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**



WAYS OF SOLVING PROBLEMS

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Everyone is liable to face problems, but the important thing is how to deal with them and reach a solution.

Some try to tackle a problem by violence and, confrontation... whether a materialistic violence or violence of action and words.

A person talks angrily to whoever caused the problem, using force and a loud voice; clashing with people might result in losing their friendship and love...

Another person may solve a problem by using his authority, giving orders and prohibitions. That happens between a father and his children, or a husband and his wife, or a boss to his subordinates. It is easy to use authority, it does not cost anything. But authority has many reactions which could also have the same violence. It could lead to revolting against authority... or at least, if the problem is solved on the surface, it will remain inside the heart, and in the feelings and relationships.

Some tend to escape from a problem, thinking this is the solution...

They do not face the problem but try to defer it or keep away and escape from it. This is not a solution... as the problem will return after some time, troubling them and remain there unsolved.

Others try to solve a problem by ignoring it...

One may try to convince oneself that there is no problem. One thinks that by closing one's eyes, one would not see it and it would not trouble one. The problem will remain there but one will not talk about it or think of it or study it...

But for each problem there are several solutions... by proper and quiet thinking and by wisdom, as King Solomon used to solve the problems presented to him or facing him.

A problem could be solved through prayer, by laying it before God and sometimes by fasting and attending the Liturgy, as the Saints used to do...

Although some problems need a fast decision, others could be solved through patience and endurance...

It is not appropriate to solve a problem by creating another problem.

It is not proper either to solve a problem by doing something wrong and through non-spiritual means, like those who tackle their problems with lies or in a cunning and round about way, or by wordly tricks and deceit! !

October

Second Sunday



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HOLY BIBLE

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October

Third Sunday



**OCTOBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

**PROPHECIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
ABOUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (I)**

Please read the attached table entitled “Prophecies of the Old Testament about the Lord Jesus Christ”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

A key proof to the truthfulness of our Christianity is that the personality of our Lord Jesus and all that was done to Him was prophesied by prophets of the Old Testament, many generations before His coming to our world in the Flesh.

MEMORY VERSE:

*“Jesus said to the two disciples of Emmaus ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken’ ”
(Luke 24:25)*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ It is suggested to take the first part of the table up to the Lord Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem and make copies for the students and discuss it with them.

✝ **Jesus’ birth from the Virgin:**

✝ He took His Body from her. She stayed a Virgin after she gave birth to Jesus.

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✝ The personality of the Lord Jesus:

- ✝ He is **God-Man**. He is called the **Son of Man** because He was the beginning of the new creation of the new covenant.
- ✝ He was also called **Son of God** because He is God Incarnate.

✝ The Lord Jesus blessed our homeland “Egypt” in His early childhood:

- ✝ He went with the Holy Family to Egypt “*Blessed be Egypt*”. There they blessed many locations with their visit.

✝ He entered Jerusalem as a heavenly king:

- ✝ Hosanna means “save us”. He is the Saviour. The children of Israel greeted Him at His entry to Jerusalem with “*Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel*” (John 12:13). Thus His personality was declared by heaven on the lips of those young children of Israel.

✝ Overall observations:

- ✝ Everything in full detail about His birth, place of birth, escape to Egypt, return from Egypt and his victorious entry to Jerusalem occurred exactly as they were prophesied many generations before His coming to our world in the flesh.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

1. Through reading the Old Testament we will be able to learn daily many things that we can apply in our lives. Reading the Prophecies concerning our Lord Jesus Christ will also be beneficial in that it will enhance our faith.
2. The Lord Jesus Christ is God Incarnate who came to our world to save us. Our Christianity is true.



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3. We have to be familiar with both the Old Testament and the New Testament to be able to convince others that our Christianity is the right path, practical and worth it.
4. We must be thankful that we are Christians and belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church.

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SONGS 🎵

YOU MAY WONDER

*“Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh”
(1 Tim: 3:16)*

You may wonder	how the creator
Came down to earth	Alleluia
Born in a manger	was God our Maker
As a stranger	Alleluia
He is the eternal	he is paternal
God is immortal	Alleluia
He is the Christ	who grants us sight
We praise His light	Alleluia
He is wonderful	He is beautiful
Of glory He is full	Alleluia
They raised Jesus	high on the cross
A mystery to us	Alleluia
He was crucified	and for us He died
Wounded in His side	Alleluia
He died and was risen	in three days as spoken
Our sins were forgiven	Alleluia
At His Father's right	He sits up high
Hearing our sigh	Alleluia
He is the Saviour	who will sits up high
He will come in splendor	Alleluia
Our Lord dear	we await You here
Until You appear	Alleluia

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
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October

Third Sunday

PROPHECIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

about the Lord Jesus Christ

<i>Prophet's Name</i>	<i>Year of Writing</i>	<i>Intention of Prophecy</i>	<i>The Prophecy</i>
Isaiah	742 BC	Birth of Jesus from a Virgin	"Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Emanuel" Isaiah 7:14
Micah	710 BC	Place of Birth of Jesus	"But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, for you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from old, from ancient days" Micah 5:2
David	1047 BC	He is the Son of God	He said to me "You are my son, today I have begotten you" Psalms 2:7
Isaiah	740 BC	He is the Son of God	"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder and his name will be called wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting father, Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6
Isaiah	714 BC	His escape to Egypt	"The Lord is riding on a cloud and coming to Egypt" Isaiah 19:1
<i>Prophet's Name</i>	<i>Year of Writing</i>	<i>Intention of Prophecy</i>	<i>The Prophecy</i>
Zachariah	487 BC	His entry to Jerusalem	"your king comes to you, triumphant and victorious is he,

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Coptic Orthodox Church



			humble and riding on an Ass, on a colt the foal of an Ass” Zechariah 9:9
Isaiah	712 BC	Suffering of the Cross	“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that is before its shearers that is before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth” Isaiah 53:7
Isaiah	712 BC	Suffering of the Cross	"He was despised and rejected, by men, a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed him not” Isaiah 53:3
David	1035 BC	Jesus’ thirst on the cross	“My strength is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue clings to My jaws...” Psalms 22:15
David	1035 BC	Sharing of His clothes	“They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.” Psalms 22:18
Prophet’s Name	Year of Writing	Intention of Prophecy	The Prophecy
Zechariah	487 BC	They pierced Jesus	“Then they will look on Him whom they pierced, they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child”

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			Zechariah 12:10
Moses	1491 BC	No broken bones	"...nor shall you break one of its bones" Exodus 12:46
Isaiah	712 BC	Jesus' crucifixion between two thieves	"He was numbered with the transgressors" Isaiah 53:2
Isaiah	712 BC	His salvation for sinners	"When He makes Himself an offering for sin" Isaiah 53:10
Isaiah	712 BC	Jesus' Death	"He poured out His soul to death" Isaiah 53:12
Isaiah	712 BC	His burial in a rich Man's tomb	"And they made His grave with the wicked-But with the rich at His death" Isaiah 53:9
David	1040 BC	His Body was not rotten	"For You will not leave My soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption" Psalms 16:10
David	1040 BC	His resurrection from the dead	"I lay down and slept; I awoke for the Lord sustained me" Psalms 3:5
<i>Prophet's Name</i>	<i>Year of Writing</i>	<i>Intention of Prophecy</i>	<i>The Prophecy</i>
Hosea	870 BC	His resurrection on the third day	On the third day he will raise us up" Hosea 6:2
David	1040 BC	His Ascension to Heaven	"And He rode upon a cherub and flew. He flew upon the wings of the wind. He made

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			darkness His secret place;” Psalm 18: 10- 11
Joel	800 BC	The coming of the Holy Spirit	And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, your sons and daughters shall prophesy” Joel 2:28-29

October

Third Sunday



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October

Fourth Sunday

**OCTOBER
FOURTH SUNDAY**

**PROPHECIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
ABOUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (II)**

Please read the attached table entitled “Prophecies in the Old Testament about the Lord Jesus Christ”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To confirm our faith in the Lord Jesus our Savior and our God. In Him all the prophecies were fulfilled.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him” (Luke 24:31)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- ✚ It is suggested to take the second part of the table starting from Jesus’ crucifixion to the Pentecost and make copies for the students and discuss it with them.
- ✚ **The Lord Jesus suffered on the Cross by His own free will:**
- ✚ The Lord Jesus was crucified for us by his own free will to show His love and His power of conquering death by Resurrection. He also did this in order to go and free the spirits in prison (i.e. Hades) that were taken by Satan before his salvation.
- ✚ **All the events of His crucifixion were prophesied:**
- ✚ He didn’t open His mouth, Jesus’ thirst on the Cross, sharing His clothes, no broken bones, His crucifixion between two thieves and His burial in a rich man’s tomb.

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- ✝ This is a very important part in our Christianity, without which there is no meaning for our faith.
- ✝ **His ascension to Heaven:**
- ✝ He took the Body from St. Mary (this Body represents the church) and placed it at the right hand of the Father.
- ✝ The coming down of the Third Person of the Trinity “the Holy Spirit” to stay with us; to teach us, guide us, remind us of all the teachings that the Lord Jesus gave us while He was on Earth.
- ✝ A question is asked many times: what is the difference between the explanation of the Jews and the Christians of the Old Testament? The key difference is that in Christianity the Lord Jesus Christ opened the eyes of the believers to know that these prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. Whereas in Judaism their eyes are closed to see that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah whom the prophets spoke about and who is “the desire of all nations”.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) *“But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8).
- (2) *“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty”* (1Cor 15:14.).
- (3) Once again, our Christianity is right.

October

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

YOU MAY WONDER

*“Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh”
(1 Tim: 3:16)*

You may wonder
Came down to earth

how the creator
Alleluia

Born in a manger
As a stranger

was God our Maker
Alleluia

He is the eternal
God is immortal

he is paternal
Alleluia

He is the Christ
We praise His light

who grants us sight
Alleluia

He is wonderful
Of glory He is full

He is beautiful
Alleluia

They raised Jesus
A mystery to us

high on the cross
Alleluia

He was crucified
Wounded in His side

and for us He died
Alleluia

He died and was risen
Our sins were forgiven

in three days as spoken
Alleluia

At His Father’s right
Hearing our sigh

He sits up high
Alleluia

He is the Saviour
He will come in splendor

who will sits up high
Alleluia

Our Lord dear
Until You appear

we await You here
Alleluia

(b)

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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Prophecies in the Old Testament about the Lord Jesus Christ

<i>Prophet's Name</i>	<i>Year of Writing</i>	<i>Intention of Prophecy</i>	<i>The Prophecy</i>
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<i>Prophet's Name</i>	<i>Year of Writing</i>	<i>Intention of Prophecy</i>	<i>The Prophecy</i>
Zechariah	487 BC	His entry to Jerusalem	"your king comes to you, triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an Ass,

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Fourth Sunday

			on a colt the foal of an Ass” Zechariah 9:9
Isaiah	712 BC	Suffering of the Cross	“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that is before its shearers that is before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth” Isaiah 53:7
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Moses	1491 BC	No broken bones	"...nor shall you break one of its bones" Exodus 12:46
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Isaiah	712 BC	His burial in a rich Man's tomb	"And they made His grave with the wicked-But with the rich at His death" Isaiah 53:9
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David	1040 BC	His Ascension to Heaven	"And He rode upon a cherub and flew. He flew upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness His secret place;"

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			Psalm 18: 10- 11
Joel	800 BC	The coming of the Holy Spirit	And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, your sons and daughters shall prophesy” Joel 2:28-29

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November

First Sunday

**NOVEMBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

PRACTICAL WAYS THAT LEAD TO LOVING GOD

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To present some practical ways, that can help develop and increase our love towards God.

MEMORY VERSE:

***"Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His
holy name!"
(Psalm 103:1)***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✚ Our love towards God is important in order to have both a happy life on earth and eternally. In this lesson we will focus on the methods that can lead us to love God more.

✚ Ways that can help us love God more:

(1) Always remember His blessings and all that He is giving to you:

✚ Remember that God helps you in everything you do. He also helps you to arrive where you are now and has blessed you with what you already have.

✚ Remember that He welcomes you to His house and to receive the Holy Communion and all other blessings.

✚ Read the memory verse. God gave us everything, health, family, the Holy Spirit to guide us and to comfort us ... etc.

(2) When you pray, pray with all of your heart and use loving words and expressions:

✚ In your prayers, think about what you are saying and do not think of anything else.

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✝ Pray from your heart. Use for example expressions: “I love you Jesus, Jesus please live in my heart, fill me with your Holy Spirit, please let me love you more... my Lord Jesus Christ my Saviour...”

(3) Let us start our love to God with obedience:

✝ When we obey God, we do what He is telling us to do, then we find enjoyment and meaning in our life and hence we love God more.

(4) If you want to love God read about Him and make yourself busy with Him. In order to think about Him more, read about Him more... As you read and think about God, your mind and your heart will gradually be with God and love God. ***“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success.”*** Joshua 1:8

(5) If you want to love God more get rid of things that oppose God: Stop your attachment to materialistic things as much as you can. ***“Do not love the world or the things in the world; if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”*** John 2:15

(6) Do not refer to your problems as if He is the source of your problems:

✝ Please read James 1:13 ***“Let none say when he is tempted ‘I am tempted by God’ for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”***

✝ God never gives us anything bad. Anything bad that happens to us must not be referred to as coming from God. God is good and only gives good things. When there is something bad happening, do not blame God for it. It is either a result of our sins and mistakes or the result of other people’s sins and mistakes that led us to problems.

(7) Look at the Cross frequently and think of the unlimited love that God has for everyone. ***“We love Him because He loved us”*** 1 John 4:19

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

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(1) Christianity is based on love. *“God is love; he who abides in love abides in God and God in him”* 1 John 4:16.

(2) We have to do these things listed above in order to form a true relationship with God

(3) The ultimate goal of God with us is to enter a loving relationship with us. We have to understand that God does not want to dictate us orders or to make it difficult for us to go to heaven.

(4) We must practice being kind and loving to the people around us. This will be a step in the right direction to love God.

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SONGS 🎵

A GOD LIKE YOU

I have never seen a God like you, my Lord
Who opens the gates, and unlocks the chains (2)
And created roads in the middle of the sea
Never prevented by mountains nor barriers.

REFRAIN:

I have never seen a God like you my God (2)

No one else but you appears in the den
And rescues the souls from the lion's hem (2)
Who can lighten the darkness but you O King
And fill my heart with joy that I may sing?

You have suffered lots on the wooden cross
To give me back my life and restore my loss (2)
You have promised me You are coming back
To grant me the eternal life I lack

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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November

First Sunday



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November

Second Sunday

NOVEMBER SECOND SUNDAY

ST. GEORGE THE PRINCE OF MARTYRS

Please read the attached article entitled “St George - the Prince of Martyrs”, the attached article entitled “Sincerity”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To focus on the love that St. George had towards God and the many miracles that occurred because of his prayers.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Everyone who loves is born of God; For God is love” (1 John 4:8)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ There are three Saints having the name “St. George” that we celebrate feasts for:

- ✝ St. George of Rome
- ✝ St. George of Alexandria
- ✝ St. George El-Mezaehem

✝ The most famous of them is St. George of Rome, the prince of martyrs. Our Church has celebrations for him twice a year: On the 23 of Baramooda (1st of May) for his martyrdom and on the 7th day of Hatour (Nov. 16) for the consecration of the first Church in his name.

✝ St. George used to put the sign of the Cross on anything that might hurt him or anything that he wanted God to bless. God helped him overcome any difficulty with the power of the Cross. Please talk about the Cross in our lives in more detail.

✝ ***Please show a picture of St. George and explain why it looks the way it does.***

✝ The dragon refers to the devil and he is drawn very small in the picture to show that he has no power.

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✝ There are more than 200 Churches around the world named after St. George”

✝ The dedication and faith of St. George helped him to gain eternal life, and become an example of suffering for the sake of God. He became a symbol for victory over the pain of the devil.

✝ **Describe his life in more details as shown in the attached material.**

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM HIS LIFE?

(1) St George is a good example of an individual utilizing the power of the Cross. He is also a good example for us in his love to God

(2) St. George is an excellent Patron Saint to intercede on our behalf. Whenever we have problems he is known to be quick in answering those who seek his intercession.

(3) Enduring suffering and pain for the sake of Christ is an excellent evidence of the love of God in the heart of the individual. Remember, for example, the suffering of St. Paul the Apostle. Are we dedicated to Christ?

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Second Sunday

SONGS 🎵

ON YOUR FEAST

*“Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”
(Phill 1:23)*

On your feast, O St. George
Intercede with our Christ Lord

A great soldier in defense
And the cross was in distress

You worshiped one Holy God
Became known to everyone

You were tortured nights and days
The martyrdom crown you gained

all your courage we recall
to save all your children's souls

known for your faith and strength
your greatest weapon and lance

and refused all the pagans
your name was on every tongue

and pains suffered all the way
and now in heaven you praise.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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ST. GEORGE **“The Prince Of Martyrs”**

- ✝ St. George was born in Capodocia, a city of the Eastern Roman Empire, around 280 A.D. to a Christian family that was of noble origin.
- ✝ He followed the usual career of young noblemen and joined the Roman army, where his ability and charm brought him a quick promotion. The Emperor noticed him and made him a tribute officer in the imperial guard.
- ✝ One story says that he was a friend of Constantine, another officer, who later became the first Christian Emperor. The legend says that St. George went with Constantine to Britain and visited some holy places at Glastonbury and Caerleon. On his return to Nicomedia, the capital of the Eastern Empire, where Diocletian settled, he met the fiery storm of persecution.
- ✝ Diocletian gave orders for the issue of a formal edict against Christians on February 23; being the feast of Terminalia, in 303. The provisions of this edict, which were published on the next day in the market place, were as follows:

All Churches should be leveled to the ground,

All sacred books are to be burned,

All Christians who hold any honorable rank should not only to be degraded, but also deprived of civil rights ,

All Christians who are not officials are to be reduced to slavery.

✝ In great courage, the young man St. George pushed his way through the market place to read the proclamation, and then in front of the awe-stricken crowd he deliberately tore down the imperial edict and threw it away. Consequently he was arrested and brought to the presence of Diocletian.

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- ✚ Some historians believe that St. George was not the young man who tore the proclamation, but as the edict was proclaimed and the great church in Nicomedia was ransacked and destroyed by the Pretorian guard, he liberated his slaves, distributed all his wealth to the poor and prepared himself for martyrdom.
- ✚ He entered Diocletian's palace and rebuked him for his behaviour against Christians.
- ✚ The Emperor tried to seduce him by promises that he would be granted a higher position in the Empire. But as promises failed to attract his heart; he began to threaten him with unbearable torture. Lastly he kept him in prison.

St. George's Chastity:

Diocletian knew that nothing, except sin, could destroy the strength, and demolish the integrity of this Saint. Thus he arranged for a very beautiful woman to spend all night with him in prison to try to corrupt him. St. George who could only look forward to the heavenly enjoyment, so he began to pray and within a short while he managed to sway her heart to the Christian faith. Soon she seriously began to inquire about her salvation, and by the morning she declared that she had found her true bridegroom Jesus Christ. With great courage she announced her Christianity to the Emperor and his men, and joined the other saintly martyrs.

St. George's Sufferings:

It is not the purpose of this lesson to go through the tortures that were applied to St. George in depth, but nevertheless I wish to bring to light his utmost love for Christ, by listing some of them:

1. His body was put in a special instrument that has metal wheels with sharp blades. Our Lord Jesus raised him from the dead and many pagans became Christian.
2. He was immersed in lime, and then drenched with water. Again the Lord Jesus brought him back to life.
3. The emperor Diocletian was very agitated, imagining that the Saint is

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- performing magic. He called his best magician.
4. The magician prepared a lethal poison to kill St. George. But St. George signed the cup with the sign of the Cross before drinking. Of course no harm came to him.
 5. The Emperor was advised that St. George's magic is actually in the sign of the Cross itself. Another cup was given to the Saint, but this time with his hands tied behind his back. The Saint signed it with his head by saying: "Shall I drink it from here, or here, or here, or here!!! "

During all the persecution, although the Saint had enough pain and suffering of his own, he nevertheless kept on talking to Diocletian about the powers of the Christian faith. At the end, the emperor asked him if he could raise the dead man he knew. St. George prayed to our Lord and the dead man came back to life. The result was the conversion of both the dead man and the magician and many others. They were all martyred.

In The Emperor's Palace:

When all temptations failed to incite St. George, the Emperor invited him to his palace to entertain him. He offered him an appointment as a prince if he only sacrificed once to the idols. The Saint replied "You will see the powers of your gods."

At the palace, St. George met Empress Alexandra, who had a fair idea about the Saint's God. She spoke with him, but the conversation quickly changed its course and the Saint began to preach her about Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

On the following day many people went to the temple to witness St. George's sacrifice to the idol gods. The saint stretched his hands, raised his eyes to heaven... and in a moment, the idols collapsed and fell to the ground. The crowds shouted "We believe in George's God." At this, the emperor and his men put an end to the lives of the new Christians, St. George, and Empress Alexandra on 23 Baramouda, 303.

St. George was buried in his mother's home that was situated on the seashore al Lydda, in Palestine. Not long before his fame spread all over the world. King

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Constantine, who took over after Diocletian considered that St. George is the true model of the young Christian man and ordered a Church to be erected over his grave. In Egypt, the Copts call him, “The Prince Of Martyrs”, and built over 200 Churches named after him. Moreover he is a personal friend of the majority of the Copts, who believe in the power of prayer for them. The Greeks call him “The Great Martyr”.

His Fight with the Dragon:

Legends are told about this Saint, but the most famous one is his fight with the dragon, which was documented in a book called “The Golden Legend” by James de Voragine, a bishop of Genoa. It happened when St. George was stationed with the Roman army near Salone in Libya, North Africa. In that area, a dragon which was described as a huge crocodile with scaled wings, had eaten so many of the country folks around Salone that the remaining lot fled to the town and took shelter behind its walls. The dragon was positioned outside the city gates, and nobody could get in or out. Moreover, its poisonous breath was so lethal that as it snored over the city walls, people dropped dead in the nearby area.

In order to keep the beast away from the walls, two sheep were tethered every day, some distance away. The system worked well until they ran out of sheep and the miserable people could not think of any other alternative but to sacrifice one child every day.

One day the lot fell on the King’s daughter, Sabra, a girl of fourteen, sometimes also known as Cleodolinda. Dressed in her most splendid clothes, as for her wedding, the poor girl was taken outside the city walls. While she was waiting for the dragon, weeping, George the tribune came up mounting his white horse. On hearing the story, he decided to put an end to that tragedy, and kill the dragon.

“Fair girl” he said, “do not be afraid for I will save your life with the aid of my Lord Jesus Christ” when the dragon appeared to George the hero, he became engaged with the wild beast in a great combat. Finally, he managed to wound it by his lance so badly that it could fight anymore. Then the two of them tied a rope around its neck, and dragged it to the town. There in the market place, George cut off its head in front of all the cheerful inhabitants, and the whole town was

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baptized and became Christian.

The above story seems to be exaggerated, which is perhaps true, and it could have started with a fight between St. George and an ordinary crocodile. However, it became very popular all over the world.

ST. GEORGE'S ICON:

In the Icon of St. George, the dragon was the nickname of Diocletian, and it refers to the devil that incited Diocletian to persecute the Christians. The two brides, one symbolizes the church that is strengthened by its martyrs, and the other refers to Alexandra the Empress.

The lance refers to the Cross, by which Christians can conquer the devil.

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SINCERITY

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Sincerity is purity of love, truth of emotion and feelings of loyalty presented by someone you trust in a friendship.

Sincerity shows during tribulations and its metal is tested at a time of distress.

In such sincerity St Peter said to the Lord Jesus, *"If I have to die with you, I will not deny you!"* (Mk 14:31) And the Lord Jesus said to His Disciples, *"But you are those who have continued with me in my trial"* (Lk 22:28)

With this sincerity, the Marys and John, the beloved, stood around Jesus during the crucifixion. And with the same sincerity Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate that he might take the body of Jesus to be shrouded with the help of Nicodemus.

Through their sincerity, none of these people gave a thought to what might be said about them or what might happen.

Sincerity is characterised by sacrifice. One might forget himself and remember nothing, except his love and the one who he loves.

The Bible tells us about Ruth's sincerity towards her mother-in-law, Naomi, and how she said to her, *"wherever you go, I will go, where you die, I will die."* (Ruth 1:16)

Jonathan lived with David in sincerity, even enduring his father's reproach and anger, because of his love for David.

And with the same sincerity, David was good to all the members of Jonathan's family after his death.

With sincerity, the martyrs offered themselves for the love of Christ. And the Confessors endured all types of torment for the Lord's sake...

There are those who were sincere with their families, their teachers, their spiritual and worldly fathers, their nations or to specific principles they lived with... It was sincerity till death.

There are other types of sincerity, such as the doctor to his patient, the lawyer to his client, the teacher to his students, the writer to his readers and the guard to those whom he is protecting.

Some are sincere because of their duty and conscience, others because of love and loyalty and some because sincerity is part of their nature. They treat everyone with the same sincerity, especially those they love.

How beautiful is sincerity. It is nobility, love and a golden crown...

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ΑΒΒΑ ΨΕΝΟΥΤ ΠΙΛΑΓΟΥ ΜΤ

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**NOVEMBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

**POPE SHENOUDA III AND THE RANKS OF OUR
CHURCH**

Please read 1 Tim. 3:1-14, the attached article entitled “Biographic Note on His Holiness Pope Shenouda III”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To know more about His Holiness Pope Shenouda III and the work of God with him. We would also like to learn about the various ranks in our Church.

MEMORY VERSE:

“....If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.” (1 Tim. 3:1)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† Bishops:

A bishop looks after a number of churches. A Bishop ordains Priests and deacons; he leads the prayers and the teaching and sets up a good example. He can perform all the seven Sacraments of the Church.

† Priests:

A priest looks after a church, reaches out, and leads prayers and teaching. He sets a good example for the congregation. He can perform only six Sacraments of the Church, all except the Sacrament of the Holy Orders.

† Deacons:

A deacon leads the prayers, reaches out, teaches, and serves in the altar. He also

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must set a good example before the congregation. A deacon cannot perform the Sacraments by himself. He can only help in administrating the Sacraments.

❖ Let us encourage the male students to become deacons. Let us tell them all to regularly attend and serve in the Church.

✝ **His Holiness Pope Shenouda III:**

✝ He is a strong spiritual leader, a very humble and loving person to everyone. He is very well respected by all.

✝ Please review his major contribution to the following areas (as mentioned in the attached article):

- (1) Pastoral care in Egypt and abroad.
- (2) Monastic contributions.
- (3) Ecumenical contribution.
- (4) Literary accomplishments.

✝ Please give more details about the life of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III as mentioned in the attached article. One can clearly see that God worked with him and he benefited a lot from that. This can happen to us too.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We learn from Pope Shenouda III to love God and the Church. We must do our best to respect our church, serve and keep our church tidy and well organized.
- (2) We must also adhere to our faith, which has been delivered to us through the Apostles and the Saints of the Church.
- (3) As God helped Pope Shenouda III, He can help us too. But we must be willing to receive the help and gifts from God. This can happen if we pray regularly and lead a good life away from sin.

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SONGS 🎵

THEY WILL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS

“If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.” (1 Jn 4:12)

We are one in the spirit
And we pray that our unity

we are one in the Lord
will one day be restored.

REFRAIN

And they'll know we are Christians
Yes they'll know we are Christians

by our love, by our love
by our love.

We will walk with each other
And together we'll spread the news

we will walk hand in hand
that God is in our land

We will work with each other
And we'll guard each man's dignity

we will work side by side
and save each man's pride

Our praise to the Father
And our praise to Christ Jesus
And our praise to the Spirit

from whom all things come
His only Son
who makes us one

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III **POPE OF ALEXANDRIA AND** **PATRIARCH OF THE SEE OF ST. MARK**

- ✝ His Holiness Pope Shenouda III is the 117th successor of Saint Mark the Apostle who wrote the oldest canonical Gospel and founded the Coptic Orthodox Church. Pope Shenouda was elected in October 1971, and was ordained in November 1971.
- ✝ He was born in 1923 and studied at the Coptic Theological Seminary in Cairo. Because of his academic achievements, he was appointed a member of the Seminary Faculty in 1949, and while teaching there, he attended graduate courses in archaeology and classics at Cairo University.
- ✝ In 1954, he experienced a deep urge to go to monastic life, and entered Al-Serian Monastery in the Western Desert. Between 1956 and 1962 he led a completely solitary life and dedicated his time to prayers, meditation and fasting. He was then ordained Arch-Priest with the ecclesiastical name of Father Antonius Al-Seriany.
- ✝ In 1962, Pope Shenouda's predecessor, the late Pope Kyrillos VI, consecrated him Bishop and assigned him to the Presidential Chair of the Coptic Theological Seminary. Among his responsibilities were the spiritual leadership of young men and women, and the direction of Christian education in the dioceses of Egypt. Thanks to his efforts, the number of students in the Theological Seminary increased three-fold.
- ✝ In 1973, Pope Shenouda established the institute for African Studies to prepare African students for missionary work in their own countries. Another school for Coptic Music and Hymnology was set up under the name Dydemus Institute. Three graduate institutes for Biblical Studies, Pastoral Care and Coptic Language followed in 1975 and 1976.



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- ✝ In addition, His Holiness established the General Commission of Sunday Schools to provide the right guidance needed by Sunday School teachers in Egypt.
- ✝ As an insatiable reader and lover of the humanities, Pope Shenouda is a man of great ecumenical insight. His humility and asceticism have made him a charismatic personality with strong spiritual influence and an inspired ability to lead his people.

PASTORAL CARE

- ✝ Since his consecration in 1971, Pope Shenouda III has strongly supported the extension of pastoral care to every individual in his Church. The number of bishops has risen dramatically.
- ✝ In Cairo and Alexandria, he ordained many priests. Many new churches were added to the existing number of Coptic churches in Egypt. His Holiness has also devoted more attention to the Coptic Churches outside Egypt; As the Supreme Pontiff of the oldest Church in Africa, he has responded to the repeated requests of various African countries, and entrusted two bishops with the task of conducting religious affairs in North and East Africa. In addition, there are Coptic churches in Libya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, and Abu Dhabi.
- ✝ The number of Coptic Churches in the United States has now reached 120 and there are 25 in Canada; in Australia there are 20 and in Europe there are 25. These numbers are as of 2004 and going up.



MONASTIC CONTRIBUTIONS

- † As a former monk, Pope Shenouda III has devoted great efforts to rebuilding the old monasteries of St. Pishoi and of the Paramos. Not only has he ordered the building of new Coptic-styled cells for the increasing number of monks, but he also added large retreat houses where visitors can spend some time in the monasteries and enjoy the spiritual life with the monks. He also led the educational revival among the monks. His care for the nunneries has bolstered the existing movement for social and cultural services among Coptic nuns.

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

- † His Holiness is known for his devotion to the unity of the Church. In 1971, he attended the first informal meeting with the Roman Catholic theologians, held in Vienna. He is the first Alexandrian Pontiff to visit the Vatican since the great schism of AD 451. In May 1973, together with Pope Paul VI, he signed a common declaration in which they expressed their mutual concern about church unity. A joint committee drawn from both the Coptic and Roman Catholic theologians was formed to follow up these efforts under his auspices. Other visits were exchanged between His Holiness and the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, the Orthodox Patriarchs of Moscow, Romania, Bulgaria and Antioch, and with the Catholic Patriarchs in the Middle Eastern countries.

† The Coptic Church has also become a member of the Middle East Council of Churches, and has had a stimulating role in the area. Further steps have been taken towards bringing about reconciliation with the Protestant Churches in Egypt; the first meeting of the Churches took place at the Patriarchate in December, 1976. A Higher Council for all Christian Churches in Egypt has also been set up.

- † Under His Holiness's leadership, the Coptic Church's active membership in the World Council of Churches has been greatly fostered.

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LITERARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✙ As a writer, poet and journalist, Pope Shenouda III is recognized for his great skills in style and simplicity, as well as for his attention to profound detail and his purist interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. An excellent critic and spokesman on religious subjects, His Holiness expresses his ideas with such clarity that his audience understand his exposition, are spiritually uplifted and have an increased knowledge of Christ's doctrine.
- ✙ Pope Shenouda III is the chief editor of the official weekly magazine of the Coptic Church, "Al Kirazah". He has also written numerous books on religious subjects; his publications include:
 - ❖ An introduction to the New Testament
 - ❖ A commentary on the Book of Revelations
 - ❖ A commentary on the Book of Psalms
 - ❖ The Book of the Song of Songs
 - ❖ Meditations on the Ten Commandments
 - ❖ Meditations on the Sermon on the Mount
 - ❖ Salvation: an Orthodox Perspective
 - ❖ The Law of Monogamy
 - ❖ St. Mark, Apostle and Martyr
 - ❖ Repentance
 - ❖ Silence and Solitude, According to St. Isaac the Syrian
 - ❖ The Upsurge of the Soul - a Poem

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**NOVEMBER
FOURTH SUNDAY**

**ST. MENA
THE WONDER WORKER**

Please read the attached articles entitled, “St. Mena the Wonder Worker”, “The Egyptian Martyr”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that St. Mena performed so many miracles. Let us learn something about his life and ask him to pray on our behalf. We would also like to talk about the heavenly crowns that he gained.

MEMORY VERSE:

"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matt. 11:30)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✙ St. Mena is one of our most celebrated martyrs, who for centuries enjoyed an immeasurable popularity. Please describe his life to the students as mentioned in the two attached articles.

✙ He went to the desert at an early age as a hermit to dedicate all his life to Jesus.

✙ After his martyrdom, the remains of the saintly martyr were loaded on a camel. At the extremity of Lake Mareot (near Alexandria, Egypt) the camel stopped and would not move any further. This was taken as a sign to the wish of the Saint to be allowed to rest at that spot, near a running spring of which the water immediately gained a miraculous healing virtue.

✙ Pope Cyril the 6th was elected to the Seat of St. Mark in 1959 and was a very spiritual person. He had a special love and friendship with St. Mena. He built a church in his name that is visited by thousands of people.

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✝ Please describe the picture of St. Mena.

Why is he called the wonder worker?

✝ He performed so many wonders after his martyrdom.

✝ There are many churches in the world built upon his name.

✝ He gained three crowns: one for his purity and virginity, the second for his ascetic life and the third for his martyrdom.

Many lessons can be benefited from the life of St. Mena:

✝ The application of the commandment of God in our lives is quite possible. St. Mena adhered to all the commandments of God.

✝ God is marvelous in His work with us. He works with us in a mysterious way, helps us and enables us to achieve greater things than we can imagine. St. Mena enjoyed the work of God with him before and after his martyrdom.

✝ God honors the saints by allowing the churches to take their names, by attributing miracles to their names and by listening to their prayers on our behalf.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) The commandment of God can be applied to our lives. Follow the footsteps of St. Mena in applying the commandments of God.
- (2) Ask St. Mena to pray on your behalf whenever you have a problem or a request for God.
- (3) St. Mena gained three heavenly crowns. We can also have heavenly crowns if we proceed in our life according to the Holy Bible.

November

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

SAINT MENA

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul." (Mat 10:28)

St. Mena the martyr
Always among us

beloved of Jesus
we truly love you

Oh hero you were not afraid
You called with courage

in front of the crowds
"Oh my Lord Jesus"

Through the sufferings
You stood unyielding

you kept our strong faith
Jesus gave you strength

Your happiness was great
Angels carried you

when they killed you
to the eternal joy

The martyrdom's crown
Intercede for us

you received from God
before our Lord

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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THE EGYPTIAN MARTYR

ST. MENA

- ✝ In an Ethiopian manuscript from the collection of Antoine Abbadie, in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, published in Paris in 1852, one finds a full description of the martyrdom of St. Mena.
- ✝ In 1910, a Coptic manuscript dated from the tenth century, containing the history of St. Mena was found among the remains of an ancient monastery near El-Hanoul, Fayoum. It was purchased by Pierpont Morgan, who presented it to the Metropolitan Museum of New York. This museum sent a photocopy of the manuscript to the Coptic Museum in Cairo.
- ✝ St. Mena is one of our most celebrated martyrs, who for centuries enjoyed an immeasurable popularity. Since the day that the remains of this saint of Egypt were brought back to his motherland, his presence assumed extraordinary proportions.
- ✝ The memory of his name has been kept alive in the country, which has witnessed his favors, and by the huge numbers of pilgrims who flocked from different parts of the world.
- ✝ Mena was born in Mikiou (now Monouf in Lower Egypt), to Christian parents in the latter half of the third century. He volunteered at an early age in the Roman army, and was enrolled in the Rutilian legion. Mena stuck to his appended principles of faith and virtue among his comrades-at-arms. After serving for some years in Egypt, he followed his detachment to Cotye, a little town in Phrygia. He kept to his pious daily practices, until the day when an edict by the new masters of the Roman world, Diocletian and Maximian, was made public in the town square.
- ✝ Mena then took the opportunity of putting into execution a project he had nurtured for a long time. He retired to the desert as a hermit. This was inspired by the Egyptian principles of life of that period that had accompanied and encouraged him in his new place of abode. By austerity and deprivation he was preparing himself for the terrible struggle, which was, sooner or later, to put a premature end to his life.

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- ✝ After five years of absence, Mena, through the inspiration of the Grace of God, decided to strike a stunning blow. He left his place of retreat and reentered Cotye during the day of the great festival, when all the inhabitants were assembled in the amphitheater. Mena then went to the arena, in the interval between two tournaments, and shouted reciting these two verses: “I have been discovered by those who did seek me, and I have been manifested to those who did not seek me, and I have been manifested to those who never claimed me.” The governor, Pirrus, ordered that the unknown person should be brought before him. After a long cross-examination, the courageous believer was tortured, and beheaded. His body was brought back to Egypt when his contingent from Cotye was ordered to move to Cyrenaica where they had been transferred.
- ✝ The remains of the saintly martyr were loaded on a camel. At the extremity of Lake Mareot, near Taposiris Magna (now Borg-el-Arab) the camel stopped and would not move any further. This was taken as a sign of the wish of the saint to be allowed to rest at that spot, near a running spring of which the water immediately gained a miraculous healing virtue.
- ✝ The news of St. Mena spread throughout Egypt, and before long it had passed overseas. Under the auspices of Pope Pelagius II, a church was built in Rome in 589AD in the name of the Saint, not far from the gate of Ostia.
- ✝ The considerable number of jars with the effigy of the saint found in Egypt, Dalmatia, and in Rome itself, is an undeniable testimony of the faith the pilgrims placed in the Saint.

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- ✝ When Pope Cyril (Kyrillos) VI was elected to the Seat of St. Mark in 1959, he lost no time in realizing a cherished wish which had been lingering in his heart for a long time. His wish was to draw the attention of archaeologists to this wonderful city long lying in forgetfulness under the desert sands. He succeeded in fulfilling one of his greatest ambitions: A monastery had been erected near the old site, and a church had been constructed to receive the thousands of pilgrims. This had proved too small for the ever-increasing numbers of visitors and a far bigger one was built. Pope Shenouda III (who was ordained on Nov. 14, 1971) celebrated the first liturgy at that Cathedral on the blessed Friday, the 26th November, 1976, 17th Hatour 1693 A.M.

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ST. MENA
THE WONDER WORKER

- ✝ St. Mena is considered to be the most well-known saint in the East and West, due to the many miracles that are performed by his prayers for us. That is evident from the numerous little clay bottles that got his picture and name engraved on them, which were found by the archeologists in diverse countries around the world; for example, Heidelberg in Germany, Milan in Italy, Dalmata in Yugoslavia, Marseille in France, Dongola in Sudan, and Jerusalem. Visitors from these cities and others would buy these bottles which usually contained oil or water for blessing, and take them back to their relatives.
- ✝ The Saint was born in the year 285, in the city of Niceous, which follows the provision of Memphis. His parents were ascetic Christians; the father Audexios, and the mother Aufimia. On the feast of St. Mary, the mother who did not have any children prayed in front of the Icon of the Virgin with tears, that God might give her a blessed son. A sound came to her ears saying; “Amen”, and thus she called her son Mena.
- ✝ His father, a ruler of one of the provisions of Egypt died when Mena was fourteen years old. At fifteen he joined the army, and was given a high rank. He was appointed to Algeria because of his father’s reputation. Three years later, he left the army longing to devote his whole life to Christ. He headed towards the desert to live a different kind of life.
- ✝ After he spent five years as a hermit, he saw the angels crowning the martyrs with glamorous crowns in a revelation and longed to join them. While he was thinking about it, he heard a voice saying: “Blessed are you Abba Mena because you have been called for the pious life since your childhood. You shall be given three immortal crowns; one because of your virginity, the second because you are a hermit, and the third because of your martyrdom.

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✝ Immediately, he felt as if the earth under him was vanishing and was overwhelmed with great eagerness to be carried away to heaven. He courageously hurried to the ruler, declaring his Christian faith. His endless sufferings of the tortures he endured attracted many of the pagans not only to Christianity, but also to martyrdom.

November

Fourth Sunday

THE SAINT'S BODY

- ✝ The saint's assassins tried to burn his relics but failed, so the believers loaded his body on a camel and headed towards the western desert. At a certain spot, the camel stopped and people could not get it to continue by any means. Right there, they buried him near a water well (that place is his present monastery, at the end of Marriut lake).

The Discovery of His Body:

- ✝ A shepherd was feeding his sheep in that area when a sick lamb fell on the ground. As it struggled to get on its feet again, it was cured. The story quickly spread that the sick would recover from any illness they had just by laying on the ground in that place.
- ✝ During that time, the daughter of king Zinon, who was a Christ-lover caught a deadly itch. His advisors suggested that she should try that place, and she did. At night the saint appeared to the girl and acknowledged to her that his body is buried beside the well and he healed her. She relayed her vision about Saint Mena to her servants indicating that he cured her.

St. Mena in Marriut:

- ✝ Immediately, King Zinon ordered the Saint's body to be dug out, and a church to be established at that site. Not only that, but he also ordered a large city to be built and named after the Saint.
- ✝ Sick people from all over the world used to visit that city and are healed by the intercession of St. Mena, the miracle-maker.
- ✝ Mrs. Bucher recorded that destruction started to take place in that city, and its inhabitants were degraded after the Arab Conquest. During the period after Haroun El-Rasheed, the Barbarians attacked it and burned a large portion of it. At the time of El-Mamoun, he ordered the entire city destroyed and used

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thousands of its marble pillars to build his palace and mosques. Only until the twentieth century that international missions began to search for the city and the church. The remainders of it, no doubt, demonstrate a great glory to the Copts.

The New Church of St. Mina:

- ✝ As soon as Pope Cyril the Sixth was ordained on St. Mark's Throne, he put forth the foundations for a great Monastery close to the remains of the old city. Thus in his blessed days, God's will had permitted the old monastery of St. Mena to be resurrected again, and for the Copts who visit it to be blessed by the Saint. What is even more interesting is that the Pope has stated in his will that his body not to be buried in the new famous Cathedral at Cairo, but in the monastery of his personal friend and intercessor St. Mena the wonder worker!!!

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For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

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December

First Sunday

**DECEMBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

**HOW DOES OUR CHURCH PREPARE FOR
CHRISTMAS? KIAHK PRAISES**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Vigils”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To emphasize the Christian way of preparing for Christmas in our Coptic Orthodox Church.

MEMORY VERSE:

“As the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy” (Luke 1: 44)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ The birth of the Lord Jesus is the happiest occasion in our life. In order to celebrate this occasion, one has to do what our Lord Jesus would like to see done. *“Whoever loves me keeps my commandments”*. So, the commercial way or the earthly type of celebration is definitely not suitable for this occasion in which we prepare to celebrate the birth of the heavenly King in our world.

✝ **How Does Our Church Help Prepare Us To Celebrate Christmas?**

✝ **The Lent before Christmas (Advent fasting):**

In general, lent is a method that helps the spiritual growth of the believers through paying less attention to food and materialistic things. The lent before Christmas is called in our church, “the lent of rejoicing” to express the happy feeling of the people during this lent while waiting for the Christmas celebration.

✝ **The Month of Keiahek:**

✝ In this month (i.e. the 4 Sundays before Christmas Eve), the church continues to pray and sing all night long with rejoicing and gladness. Remember that praising

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the Lord with hymns is the action of the heavenly powers. So, if we want to be with them, after we depart from this world, we have to get used to these beautiful hymns. The hymns in the Month of Kiahk (which is the Coptic name of the month before Christmas) are very special hymns for this month only.

✝ **The First Week:**

The preaching of the Angel to Zechariah concerning the birth of John the Baptist. From the praise of Kiahk “A great name is your name, your relative of Emanuel, you are the great among the Saints; John” Luke 1:5

✝ **The Second Week:**

The church continues the praise and the preaching of the Angel to St. Mary for the birth of the Son of God. The praise of Kiahk “You are indeed great; O Archangel Gabriel because you preached to the Virgin Mary” Luke 1: 26-38

✝ **The Third Week:**

The church continues to praise the Lord for the acceptance by the Virgin Mary of the message from the Angel and the declaration made by Elizabeth when St. Mary visited her. Luke 1: 41- 45.

✝ **The Fourth Week:**

The church continues the praise of the Lord for the birth of John the Baptist and the opening of the mouth of Zechariah with divine words. Please read this part in the class, Luke 1:67-80.

✝ After the 4th week of the month of Kiahk, the church is ready to receive the birth of the Lord Jesus with great joy and gladness that are supported with lent and prayers.

✝ In our church, every Saturday evening, for four Saturdays before Christmas, we celebrate the special hymns and prayers of Kiahk, This is called 7 and 4. The seven stands for the 7 “Theotokia” (i.e. praise) for the Virgin Mary, each Theotokia is taken from a day of the week and the 4 “HOOSSES” (i.e. the word Hoos is a Coptic word that means a hymn) are taken from the Psalms of David and put into beautiful musical chants.

✝ **How can we get ready for God to be born in our hearts?**

December

First Sunday

✝ By exercising all these spiritual preparations and doing them
In a complete way from the heart, we can truly enjoy the happiness of our
fellowship with God.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) The world's way of celebrating is basically materialistic. These celebrations are not suitable preparations for the birth of the Saviour and will definitely not benefit the individual. We as Coptic Orthodox Christians must benefit from, and participate in the Spiritual celebrations prepared by our beloved church.
- (2) We must train ourselves to spend nights in prayer, instead of the TV or the internet... etc. The Lord Jesus taught us the importance of spending the nights in prayers by doing this Himself, though He did not need to do this.
- (3) Hymns and praises are a delightful means for worship. So, come and attend the midnight praises in the church.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

Hiten for Archangel Gabriel

Hiten ni epresveya
ente pi Arshi – angelos ethwab Gabri-eel
piFay shennofi:
Epchoiceariehmohtnanempi-koevolentenenouvi

Through the intercessions
of the holy Archangel Gabriel,
the announcer:
O Lord grant us the forgiveness of our sins

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

December

First Sunday

VIGILS

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Among the beautiful things in our Church is the Vigil..

It started as a thought among the ministers and quickly spread among the people. No church neglects it especially in the nights of Kiahk. Also, it became an established custom at the New Year's Eve.

Every church does its utmost to prepare an interesting spiritual program for the night of prayer, to help the believers to be vigilant and keep their thoughts, feelings and hearts within the spiritual act.

The program includes prayers from The Agpeya, other prayers, hymns, chants, spiritual readings, sermons, questions and answers.

And some churches present some hymns, sung by their choirs.

The night ends with Raising of Incense, celebrating the Holy Liturgy and partaking of the Holy Communion. Then the people leave feeling that they had spent a spiritual night with God, which encourages them to request its repetition.

The idea of the nights of prayer is very old. The Lord Jesus Himself used to spend the whole night praying. It also has roots in the Old Testament, as David the Prophet says, *"Behold bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord who by night stand in the house of the Lord... Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and bless the Lord. "* (Ps. 134:1-2).

The church divided the midnight prayer into three divisions or watches. The monks are used to perform the midnight prayer in the rites of Praising hymns, but, for the people to spend the night in prayers is a great evidence which shows the spirituality of the church.

While the world spends its nights in fun and pleasure, the church stays up to pray....

Wakeful with God, lifting the hearts of its children to Him....

Participating with the angels and the spirits of the Saints in praising.

The martyrs and confessors - even when in prison - spent the whole night in prayer. Also, Paul the Apostle used to do so.

The prayers of all these people were a kind of preaching too; which gives an idea of the God-loving and prayer-loving heart...

It is nice to train our children to keep awake during the nights of prayer. They will take an example from their parents as well as from the church and the picture will be engraved in their minds and hearts.

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December

Second Sunday

**DECEMBER
SECOND SUNDAY**

MEANINGS OF AARON'S ROD

Please read Numbers 16, 17, and give the lessons with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn two meanings of Aaron's rod:

- (a) It represents priesthood,
- (b) It is a symbol of St. Mary, the Virgin.

MEMORY VERSE:

"He who receives you receives Me..."
(Matt. 10:40)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) The problem of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram:

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against Moses and Aaron. They thought that priesthood was for everyone and that there was no reason for Aaron to make himself different from anyone else. They did not realize that the choice of a priest or any servant in any capacity should be from God himself. So, they rebelled against Moses and Aaron and they were severely punished. When Moses heard this, he prayed to God and then he said, ***"tomorrow morning the Lord will show us who belongs to Him...Take fire pans put live coals and incense on them and take them to the altar. Then we will see which of us the Lord has chosen."*** The next morning, the rebels came carrying censers. All the people assembled to see what would happen. Moses and Aaron prayed to God to solve this problem. Every man took his fire pan, put live coals and incense on it... The ground shook under them...they all cried in fear...the earth split

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under them and swallowed them. Others ran away in great fear. So, the Lord honored Moses and Aaron. The Lord wanted to show people that He had chosen Moses and Aaron.

(B) Aaron's Rod a symbol of Priesthood

Moses ordered the leaders of the community to give him twelve sticks, one from the leader of each tribe and to write each man's name on his stick. Aaron also did so. The Lord said to Moses: The stick of the man whom I have chosen will sprout. Then Moses took all the sticks and placed them in the tent in front of the Lord's covenant box. The next day when Moses went into the tent he saw that Aaron's stick had sprouted. It had budded, blossomed, and produced ripe almonds. How did this happen? And in no time? And without water or soil? It was a miraculous deed from God. From that moment on, they all showed respect for Aaron and knew that God chose him. They asked him to forgive them and pray for them.

(C) Aaron's rod a symbol of St. Mary

Aaron's rod was a symbol of St. Mary the Virgin. She conceived the Lord Jesus without human seed. She was the only person in the human race to give birth to a child without human seed. She was very unique in this. God chose her (As God chose Aaron). He chose her because she was humble, kind and pure.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must respect the priests of our church. We kiss the hand of the priest because he touches Christ's body with his hands. Also, the priest teaches us the word of God, receives our confessions, and prays for us.
- (2) Our life will be very fruitful if God bestows upon us his blessings as He did to St. Mary the Virgin. God is willing to make our heart a place for His dwelling if we ask Him to come in and reign over our hearts.

December

Second Sunday

SONGS 🎵

We Greet You

We greet you with Gabriel
“Hail to you full of grace

Therefore we glorify you
Pray to the Lord on our behalf

You are worthy to be honored
Blessed are you among women

Therefore we glorify you
Pray to the Lord on our behalf

Blessed be the Father and the Son
The perfect Trinity

The angel saying
the Lord be with you”

O Mother of God the Theotokos
that He may forgive us our sins

with your cousin Elizabeth
and blessed is the fruit of your womb

O mother of God the Theotokos
that He may forgive us our sins

and the Holy Spirit
we worship Him glorify Him

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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December

Third Sunday

**DECEMBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

**“FOR WITH GOD NOTHING WOULD BE
IMPOSSIBLE”
LET US NEVER LOSE HOPE**

Please read Luke 1:5-38, the attached article entitled, “Hope”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/Qq7NFizL6ak> and <https://youtu.be/Nlmyh5Rx6Dw>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that when it comes to God, one must not ask “How?” because nothing is impossible for God. So, we must never lose hope.

MEMORY VERSE:

“For with God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† **Introduction:**

Start with the birth of the Virgin Mary from Anne and Joachim. Test the memory Verse to the students. Anne and Joachim were very old.

† Then describe the need for St. John the Baptist to come before our Lord Jesus, to prepare the people.

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✝ Describe the conditions in which St. John the Baptist was born.

✝ Compare the conversation of the Angel with Zachariah and that with the Virgin Mary.

✝ Zachariah did not believe the message from the Angel and said, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.” The Virgin, on the other hand, believed and obeyed. She said, “I am the handmaid of God”.

✝ There is nothing impossible for God. He can do everything, so one should not say “How?” like Zachariah.

Examples:

✝ Elizabeth, who was barren, gave birth to John the Baptist who was a great prophet.

✝ The Virgin Mary, who had no husband in order to conceive, gave birth to the Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

✝ The Lord Jesus performed a lot of miracles with His power. He raised Lazarus from the dead after four days, He changed the water into wine at the Wedding of Cana of Galilee, he fed the multitudes from five loaves and two fish, etc.... These were not the only miracles, as the Bible said *“And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written”* John 21: 25.

✝ As the Lord Jesus did when He was on earth in the flesh, He is still working with us because *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever”*.

December

Third Sunday

- † When we say that nothing is impossible for God to do, this does not mean a student for example should not study and say God can make me succeed. One of the Saints said that “Without God man cannot do anything and without man God does not want to do anything.”

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) May the Lord increase our faith to submit ourselves to God because everything is possible for Him to do; whereas the world is very weak.
- (2) We must do our share in every aspect of life according to our ability. Then leave the things that we cannot do to God.

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SONGS 🎵

GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN

God rest ye merry, gentlemen
Remember Christ our Savior
To save us all from Satan's power

let nothing you dismay
was born on Christmas day
when we were gone astray

REFRAIN

*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy*

In Bethlehem of Judea
And laid within a manger
The which His Mother, Mary

this blessed Babe was born
Upon this blessed morn
did nothing take in scorn

From God our heavenly Father
And unto certain shepherds
How that in Bethlehem was born

a blessed angel came
brought tidings of the same
the Son of God by name

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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December

Third Sunday

Hope

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Since the first sin and before our fore parents were driven out from Paradise, God granted them the hope of salvation and told them that the woman's offspring would strike the serpent's head... This was the beginning of hope...

The story of Mary Magdalene gives us an example of hope. This woman, out of whom the Lord cast seven demons, became a great saint and He entrusted her with the announcement of His Resurrection to His disciples. She was also with the Virgin Mary at the cross...

Also the example of Jonah the Prophet gives us the same hope...

Who ever thought that a person who was swallowed by a great fish kneels to God in the belly of the fish and says, *"I will look again towards Your holy temple."* (Jon. 2:4)..

The above two examples remind us of the three men who were cast in the burning fiery furnace, and Daniel in the lion's den; all are examples of hope.

There is nothing impossible in the life with God. There is hope whatever the sin and the troubles may be and however difficult the case is.

In the spiritual life, how nice are the sayings about hope in the Bible: *"... all things are possible to him who believes."* (Mark 9:23). *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* (Phil. 4.13).

If you are fought with hopelessness about your personal abilities, you should not be fought about God's power...

If you do not have the ability, God certainly does:

Even if you are not seeking Him, He seeks you as He sought the prodigal son and the lost coin. He stands and knocks at your door to open for Him. How great is this hope that God is seeking you and He does not wish the sinner to perish but to repent and live.

Satan, in keen insistence, does not lose hope to destroy the most saintly and continues fighting him. How much more should our hope in God's salvation of sinners be?

God gave us hope through examples mentioned in the Bible, such as the numerous miracles among which was the resurrection of the dead, even the one who has been dead for four days.

The greater war by which Satan fights us is hopelessness.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
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HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

December

Third Sunday



St. George and St. Rueiss

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DECEMBER FOURTH SUNDAY

ST. MARY'S SONG OF PRAISE

Please read Luke 1:39-80, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/PSy8AUCi2qQ>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To review some of the meanings of St. Mary's song of praise for the growth of our spiritual life.

MEMORY VERSE:

"My soul magnifies the Lord" (Luke 1:46)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† INTRODUCTION:

† Describe the three parts: St. Mary visits Elizabeth, St. Mary's song of praise and the birth of St. John the Baptist.

† St. Mary visited Elizabeth to help her, celebrate the expectation of baby John and to congratulate her on the work of God with her.

† As soon as St. Mary arrived: St. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, the babe in her womb leaped with joy, and St. Elizabeth prophesied and knew of the good news that St. Mary was about to deliver. St. Elizabeth said "*Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told to her from the Lord*" Luke 1: 45.

December

Fourth Sunday

† St. Mary was affected by St. Elizabeth's greetings to her and said her song of praise to God as mentioned in Luke 1: 46-53. Some of the meanings of St. Mary's Song of praise are as follows:

† Luke 1: 46-47 "***My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour***". This verse reminds us to give glory to God. Saint Mary is a great Saint but she is still in need of the Savior.

† Luke 1: 48-49 "***For He has regarded the lowly state of His maid servant: For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me and Holy is His name***". Observe the humility of St. Mary. Observe also that she is attributing everything good in her life to God "who is mighty".

† Luke 1: 50 "***and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation***." Everyone would like to enjoy the mercy of God in his or her life. St. Mary is telling us how. The individual must be honest with God, respect Him and follow His commandments. That is what was meant by the "fear" of God.

† Luke 1: 51-55 "***He has shown strength with His arm, He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. He has filled the Hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever***." In these statements our Holy Mother is directing our attention to the fact that the Lord helps those who are humble and they refer the success they achieve to His support and love.

† STORY:

There was a turtle who had two duck friends. They wanted to fly but the turtle did not have wings. So, the turtle proposed an idea. To get a stick and to have the turtle hold on it by its mouth in the middle while the two ducks hold on the stick from the two ends. The two ducks started to fly while they were carrying the turtle with them and they were all very happy. As they were flying, a farmer on the ground shouted and said "What a smart idea! Whose idea was this?" The turtle opened its mouth and said "of course mine, who else?" Instantly she fell and died. What do we learn? A good Christian is a happy and successful one. But he or she must not be filled with pride (in which case the devil will make him or her miserable).

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WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Give glory to God whenever someone praises you. St. Mary gave glory to God when St. Elizabeth praised her. Attribute all glory to God.
- (2) A key element in our prayers is to seek the mercy of God several times and from our hearts. For the same reason, our Church teaches us to pray, “Lord have mercy” several times in all Liturgies.

December

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

O, Come all ye faithful
O come ye, O Come ye
Come and behold him

joyful and triumphant
to Bethlehem
Born the King of angels

O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him

Sing choirs of angels
Sing all ye citizens
Glory to God

sing in exaltation
of heaven above
in the highest

Yea, Lord we greet Thee
Jesus to Thee
Word of the Father

born this happy morning
Be glory given
now in flesh appearing

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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Coptic Orthodox Church



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December

Fourth Sunday

NOTES

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**JANUARY
FIRST SUNDAY**

“THOU BLESSED MY NATURE IN THEE”

Please read John 1:14-17, the attached article, “Thou blessed my nature in Thee”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

A true Christian is a new creation: in his or her thinking, behavior and inner peace.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ When the Lord Jesus was born from St. Mary taking flesh from her body, similar to our human body, He blessed our human nature. St. Paul calls the Christians when they believe in Jesus Christ “New Creation.” The old sinful nature that was inherited from Adam is gone and a new nature in Jesus began. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; Old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new” 2 Cor. 5:17.

In the feast of Nativity we remember that God was incarnate and became Man to live with us and be like us in everything except sin. But Nativity is not just memories. Our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary so that He may be spiritually born in every human soul that opens his or her heart to Him and receives Him.

✝ **The Grace of Nativity:**

Our Lord Christ was born of human flesh and we are spiritually born in Him. ***“That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith”*** Eph. 3:17. So, the grace of

January

First Sunday

Nativity comes to us when Jesus comes and dwells in us. Do we have a role to play in order to receive the Lord Jesus in our hearts? **Yes**, indeed.

1. Repentance

We attained the new birth through Baptism. So, in Baptism we put off the desires of the world and Satan has no authority over us. But we still need to maintain our purity through repentance. St. Peter said, ***“So, put away all malice and insincerity and envy and all slander. Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation”*** (1 Peter 2:1-2). Only through this new birth can we meet our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Humility:

Greatness lies in humility. The Nativity of our Lord Jesus in a manger and the birth of our Lord from St. Mary who was very humble show clearly that the Lord will dwell only in humble hearts. So, it is necessary for us to deny ourselves. Our intelligence, abilities and position are all from God and they must not be a source of pride for us.

3. Maintain love in our hearts

At the time of Nativity, only the hearts which were filled with love deserved to see the baby Jesus: St. Mary the virgin, St. Joseph, the wise men, the shepherds, Simon the elder etc. The scribes, King Herod and many of the Jews could not enjoy seeing the baby Jesus because their hearts lacked love. “God is love”. So, when our hearts are filled with love, we then become ready and tuned to receive the Lord Jesus in our hearts. Remember if you tune a radio to the proper frequency of a certain station, you can hear it well. Otherwise, if you are not tuned, you will not be able to hear anything.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We have to review our actions and see if we are true Christians enjoying the new nature. Then the door of repentance is open for us all.
- (2) You can put on the best clothes and eat the best food in Christmas celebrations, but it will mean nothing. But when you repent, worship God, be humble and ask the Lord Christ to come to your heart, then you will benefit from Christmas and you truly become a new creation.

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SONGS 🎵

THE GOSPEL HYMN IN CHRISTMAS

A star appeared in the east the
Wiseman followed it until it
Brought them to Bethlehem and
Bowed to the King of all ages.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Jesus Christ the
Son of God was born in
Bethlehem.

This is He to whom the glory
Is due, with His Good Father,
And the Holy Spirit, now and
Forever.

Oo-seioafshaikhennimanshai:
Animaghosmoshiensof: shaenetef
Enooevethle-em: avoo-ostemep
Ooroeni- e- oon.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Issospiekhrastos
Epshiriemefnooty: fi –etafmasf
KhenVethle-em.

Fai ere pio-ooereepinaf:
Nempefyotenaghathos; nem
Pieonevmaethoo-wab: yesgen
Tinonemsha-eneh.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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January

First Sunday

THOU BLESSED MY NATURE IN THEE

- ✠ In the Christmas fasting we remember that when Jesus Christ took our flesh, He blessed our nature and strengthened it in many ways.
- ✠ He granted our nature a victory over Satan. Jesus Christ- the son of man- conquered Satan and said: “***I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.***” (Luke 10:18). It was the first time that Satan finds himself confronted with a victorious mankind.
- ✠ The victory of Jesus Christ over Satan revived the hope of mankind to follow Jesus Christ in the procession of victory. The human nature, sanctified in Jesus Christ, is no longer weak; as St. Paul said: “***I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.***” (Philip 4:13)
- ✠ Jesus Christ set, in front of the Father - on behalf of mankind - a perfect example to an obedient man that pleased God the Father.
- ✠ When Jesus Christ blessed our nature, he blessed our flesh by taking it, thus the flesh became blessed as St. Paul said: “***for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.***” (1 Cor. 6:20)
- ✠ Jesus Christ sanctified our bodies to become temples and dwellings for the Holy Spirit.
- ✠ He gave us the new life and crucified the old man in us. In baptism we are buried with Jesus Christ and the Old man in us is crucified.
- ✠ Through Jesus’ resurrection we are given new life; “***Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.***” (Romans 6:6)
- ✠ Therefore Jesus Christ saved us from the sinful nature and delivered us; not only by His death but also by His blessing to our nature. “***We were reconciled to God by the death of His son, much more, being reconciled; we shall be saved by His life.***” (Romans 5:10)
- ✠ Jesus Christ granted us the original godly nature that we had before sin.

NOTES

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January

Second Sunday

**JANUARY
SECOND SUNDAY**

**SIMON THE TANNER AND THE
MOVING OF THE MOUNTAIN OF AL- MOOKATAM**

Please read Matthew 17:14-21, the attached article, “Seek Faith”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: https://youtu.be/uY4_3aWrupw

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that solution for problems comes from the power of prayer in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE:

***“If you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to the mountain move from here to there, and it will move.”
(Matthew 17:20).***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A)Introduction:

Can a mountain just move? No. Can five loaves and two fish feed 5,000 people? No....To the ordinary person these things are impossible, but to a true Christian who has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, those things can happen because through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ heaven is open for us and the heavenly powers are working with us and they can do it.

(B)Historical Events:

✝ At the time of the 62nd Patriarch St. Abraam of our church, there was an Islamic governor of Egypt named Al-Muizz.

✝ St. Abraam was Syrian by birth. He visited Egypt several

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Coptic Orthodox Church



times and finally stayed there. He was known for his love for the poor, goodness and kindness.

✝ Al- Muizz the Islamic governor of Egypt was known for his interest in debates on religious matters. He had a Jewish minister who wanted to cause a problem for the Coptic Church. He told Al-Muizz the governor that it is written in the Bible of the Christians that ***“if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to the mountain move from here to there, and it will move”*** (Matt 17:20.) The governor brought the Pope and challenged him or else he will kill all the Christians. The Pope asked for three days and was granted his wish.

(C)The Miracle:

✝ The Pope went directly to the church of St. Mary in Cairo, called the bishops and the priests to pray and fast with him for 3 days.

✝ St. Mary the Virgin came to him on the third day. She comforted him and said, “go through the iron gate leading to the market and you will meet a one-eyed man carrying a sack of water and he would move the mountain.”

✝ The Pope hurried out and met **Simon the Tanner** and asked him what he was doing at this early hour? He said that he was carrying water to the sick people before he was going to work at a tannery. This was his practice every day. The Pope explained to him his purpose. Simon was very reluctant at the beginning, but when he told him of his vision of St. Mary and what she said, he went with him.

✝ The two led a large gathering of the believers and marched to the Mookatam Mountain. Beside them were the Muslim governor, the Jewish minister and many others. The people chanted kyrie-Eleison (Lord have mercy) several times. The mountain shook violently as if a strong earthquake had hit the land. Then it began moving upwards. Every time the worshippers rose from their prayers, the mountain lifted itself upwards. When they knelt down, it also came down with a big bang. This happened three times and every time the mountain moved upwards, the rays of the sun, which was behind it, swept through the space separating the earth from the mountain and became clearly visible to the assembled crowd.

(D) The Reaction to the Miracle:

✝ At this sight, Al-Muizz proclaimed “God is great” and he said to St. Abraam, “Your faith is right.”

✝ Where is Simon the Tanner? He was just behind the Pope throughout the prayers. Where is he now? He totally disappeared in order to protect himself from fame and the glory of people.

January

Second Sunday

(E) The Church Reaction to the Miracle:

✝ The Pope decreed that the church must commemorate this miracle by adding three days to the 40-days of fasting before Christmas. Thus the advent fasting became forty-three days starting on November 25.

✝ Shortly after the miracle took place, Al-Muizz decided to convert to Christianity. A baptismal fountain for adults was built for him at Abou-Seifein church. This baptismal fountain still exists until today and is known as “Maamoudiat Al-Sultan” i.e. the baptistery of the governor.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Fasting and prayers are the best methods to solve problems.
- (2) Holiness is possible for all people, not only bishops or priests. Simon the tanner is a perfect example.
- (3) When you visit Egypt, make a point to visit Al-Mookatam area and also the baptistery of “El-Sultan” at Abou-Seifein church in old Cairo.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

THE GOSPEL HYMN IN CHRISTMAS

A star appeared in the east the
Wise men followed it until it
Brought them to Bethlehem and
Bowed to the King of all ages.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Jesus Christ the
Son of God was born in
Bethlehem.

This is He to whom the glory
Is due, with His Good Father,
And the Holy Spirit, now and
Forever.

Oo-seioafshaikhennimanshai:
Animaghosmoshiensof: shaenetef
Enooevethle-em: avoo-ostemep
Ooroeni- e- oon.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Issospiekhrastos
Epshiriemefnooty: fi –etafmasf
KhenVethle-em.

Fai ere pio-ooereepinaf:
Nempefyotenaghathos; nem
Pieonevmaethoo-wab: yesgen
Tinonemsha-eneh.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

January

Second Sunday

Seek Faith

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

St. Paul the Apostle says, *"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Prove yourselves. "* (2 Cor. 13:5).

The faith here is not that of the mind or just the name. It is the real faith, a lifestyle that one lives in God and shows in all his deeds and all his feelings.

The life of faith means complete submission to God and extreme trust in His work within you and within the Church.

Faith cuts a road in the sea and lets water flow from the rock. It is enough to see that the Bible says, *"With God all things are possible. "* (Matt. 19:26). Do you have the practical faith by which you can do everything in Christ? Or is your faith weak and cannot stand tribulations?

If it is so, what should you do? The Lord says, *"According to your faith, let it be to you. "* (Matt. 9:29). The only solution is to pour yourself before God and openly say to Him: Lord I believe, but my faith has not reached the practical level yet. My faith is like the bruised reed that You, due to Your love, wouldn't break; and like the smoking flax that due to Your compassion, You would not quench. Accept me, O Lord, with my weaknesses.

Grant me this faith, a gift from You. Do not say, "I'll give you according to your faith" and do not make faith a condition for the gift. Let faith be the gift itself.

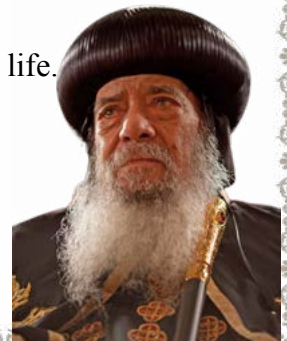
Grant me to believe in You, submit my life to You and trust in Your dispensation. It is sufficient for me to believe that you will grant me faith. Isn't it also "a gift from above" from You, and nobody can believe without Your grace?

You say, "Only believe". Even this faith I want from You so I would not think that my humanity has done anything without You...

I am still waiting for this faith by which I could do everything through Your grace.

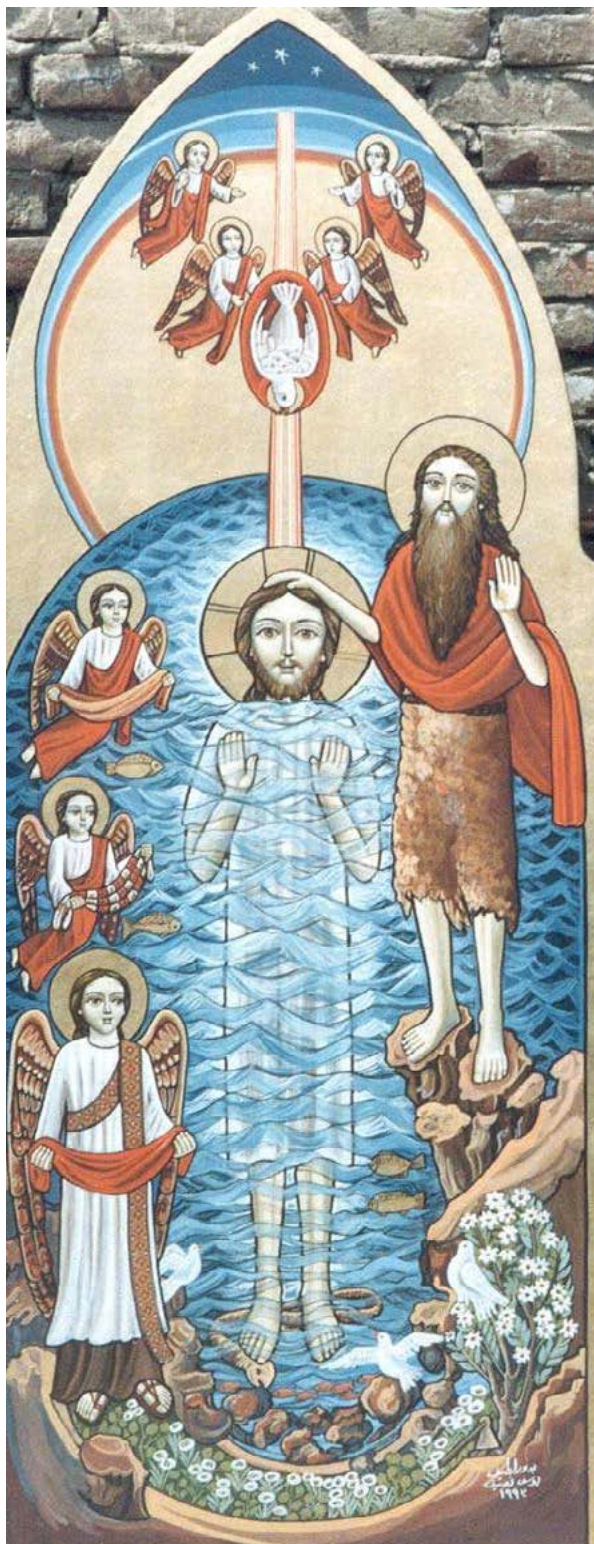
I believe that You'll give me, and I wish, after being in Your presence, to say, I believe that You have given me'.

My faith then changes from a desire and a request to a reality and a life.



St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



January

Third Sunday

**JANUARY
THIRD SUNDAY**

**LESSONS BENEFITED FROM EPIPHANY
“HEAVEN WAS OPENED”**

Please read Matthew 3:13-17, John 1:18-34, John 3:1-13, the two attached articles, “What is Epiphany”, and “Prayers”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/KLjkqnaYNoM>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Jesus opened the heavens for us. We have a place there. In the name of our Lord Jesus we can now have an effective prayer as children of God in humility.

MEMORY VERSE:

“The heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him.” (Luke 3:21-22)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- ✠ Please describe to the students what happened in Jesus’ baptism.
- ✠ True prayers are the keys to heaven because while Jesus was praying, heavens opened (Luke 3: 21). This shows us that true prayers are very powerful. What is a true prayer? It is a prayer from the heart with humility and submission to God. It is a prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus.
- ✠ The paradise was closed because of Adam’s sin. But now the heavens open its gates again in front of the Lord Jesus declaring the start of opening heavens for us also. Jesus said, ***“I am the way, the truth and the life.”*** With him we can enter heaven.

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✝ Please tell them the story of St. Stephen when he saw the heavens open and the Son of Man at the right hand of God. (Acts 7:56)

✝ St. John said: *“I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven”* (Revelation 4:1)

✝ The Lord Jesus said: *“knock, and it will be opened to you.”* (Luke 11:9). So, the only thing that is required from us is to knock i.e. take our question to God and knock. God is always opening his arms for us, if you want anything seek from Him and He will give you but remember you must ask.

✝ Jesus’ prayers opened heaven. Can we have the effective prayers? How? Let the students mention.

✝ Please read also Jesus’ prayers in Luke 6:12-13 and Luke 9:16

✝ **Story:**

A twelve-year-old girl’s mother had a major operation in the hospital. After the operation, she had to stay without food for a few days. The Priest of the church was going to visit this lady and on his way, he picked up her daughter from the house to visit her mom. When they were very close to reaching the hospital, the daughter, told the priest that they have to go all the way back to pick up a chocolate bar that she bought for her mom. The priest said “your mom can not eat, keep the chocolate bar for another time,” But the girl with tears in her eyes said “I asked God to heal my mom and I asked St. Mary to help her as well. So the priest and the girl went back, picked up the chocolate bar and came to the hospital. Upon entering the room, they found the mom with the intravenous in her arm because she could not be permitted to eat anything. The priest told the girl “I told you.” But as soon as he finished his sentence, the nurse came and said with a big surprise on her face “all the tests are now surprisingly clear and you can eat now.” The girl said “I asked God and He answered, thanks is due to Him.”

✝ We must never lose hope as long as heaven is open for us and the heavenly powers work with us.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) As Christians we have a place in heaven. The Lord Jesus prepared it for us. If we do our best here with the help of God we can take the place reserved for us in heaven.

January

Third Sunday

- (2) We have to practice good prayers from the heart so that when we knock Jesus will open for us.
- (3) As the Lord Jesus opened heaven for us, when we pray in His Name, heaven will open for us and we will have an effective prayer.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

HYMN FOR EPIPHANY

John the voice crying in the wilderness
Baptizing them as they came to confess

preaching to the Jews God's forgiveness
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand
The wrath of God you couldn't withstand

He gave the Pharisees a strong reprimand
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

John's humility thought it was only right
He was only forerunner of Jesus Christ

to witness that Jesus was the true light
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

He told them as he saw Jesus passing by
For He is the Son of the Most High

His shoes I am not worthy to untie
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

I baptize you with water from the river
For Jesus is the true –life giver

He will do so with the Holy Spirit and fire
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

Jesus came to John from the land of Galilee
That a law abiding Jewish man was He

to be baptized that the Jews may see
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

But John said I do not deserve to be the man
I need Your baptism, not You by me

to baptize the One who's full of glory
Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River

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PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

January

Third Sunday

WHAT IS EPIPHANY?

✝ Epiphany is when our Lord Jesus was baptized.

✝ Why was Jesus baptized?

✝ *He did not need to be baptized because He did not have any sins. He was baptized to teach us to follow His example. Imagine, Jesus bowing His head under the hand of John the Baptist, although He is the creator. Doesn't this teach us a lesson in humility?*

✝ At first, John refused to baptize Jesus telling him, ***"I need to be baptized of You and You come to me."*** Then Jesus told him, ***"If you please."*** Jesus was so courteous and polite in dealing with others. Do we always say "please" and "thank you?"

✝ When Jesus was baptized the Holy Trinity was manifested. The Father appeared in a form of a voice from heaven saying, ***"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."*** The son was in the Jordan River and the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove.

✝ Jesus was baptized to teach us that we should be baptized; but why should we be baptized?

✝ I am sure you don't remember the day when you were baptized because you were a tiny baby. But probably you've seen one of your brothers, sisters, or relatives being baptized. Do you know what happened that day, the day of your baptism? The priest had immersed you three times in the water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This had a great meaning.

✝ This was the most important day of your life. On that day, all your sins, inherited from Adam, were washed away, and you became a child of God. What a great honor and privilege.

✝ **Do you know what it means to become God's child?**

✝ Your Heavenly Father is God Himself, the King of Kings. If you were the son or daughter of an earthly king, I am sure you will feel secure because many guards will protect you. When you become the son or daughter of the Heavenly King, you will feel secure because He will protect you with His angels. He will take care of

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you wherever you go because you are His child. Whenever you are in trouble, whenever you are sick or have a hard test, He will surely help you. A Father wants always to please His children. Your Heavenly Father always wants to please you. He wants you to be happy in life. ***“I had come that they might have life, and they might have it more abundantly.”*** (John 10:10) He will take care of you. He watches over you even when you are sleeping.

✝ When you become God’s child on your baptism, you do not only have rights as God’s child, but also you have responsibilities. Any king’s child has to appear in a respectable manner. It will be a shame if a king’s child behaves sinfully. If you are the child of the King of Kings, you have to behave in a Christian way and reflect your Father’s image. You have to behave differently in school, even if they make fun of you, because you are a special person, the child of the great King, God.

✝ Never forget the most important day of your life, the day of your baptism, the day of becoming God’s child.

January

Third Sunday

PRAYER

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Prayer is to open the heart to God, so that the faithful talks to Him, lovingly and openly. It is laying the individual before God.

Prayer is a tie, a relationship between Man and God. Therefore, it is not just talk, it is a heart connected to a heart.

Prayer is a feeling of being in the presence of God. It is a partnership with the Holy Spirit and unity with God...

Prayer is the food of the angels and the spirituals by which they are nourished and taste the Lord, *"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. " (Ps 34:8)*

Prayer quenches a soul's thirst for God, *"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul to you, O God" (Ps 42:1), "I will lift up my hands in your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness. " (Ps 63:5)*

Prayer is the submission of life to God to conduct it Himself, *"Your will be done. "*

Prayer is an admission of our lack of strength, and insufficiency of our intelligence. Therefore, we resort to a greater power where we find our care...

Prayer is to abolish our independence from God...

It is meeting with God: either we lift ourselves up to Him or He comes down to us...

It is turning oneself to Heaven and to the throne of God...

Prayer is not an obligation or an order. It is not just a commandment or piety and devotion... It is a desire and longing... otherwise, it would be a burden which we, unwillingly practise, just for obedience sake!!

Prayer is not just a request. One might pray without asking for anything... but contemplate on the beauty of God and His life giving qualities... Therefore, a prayer of praise and glorification... is more sublime than that of a request...

Whoever seeks something else besides God alone, will never be able to enjoy prayer as he ought to. Prayer means dying completely to all the world, an utter forgetfulness to pleasures, where God alone remains in one's thought...

Prayer is the ladder which connects Heaven and Earth. It is a bridge that we cross to reach the heavenly places where there is no world...

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It is a key to Heaven..... It is a combination of feelings that are expressed in words...

Prayer can be without words or utterance... The heart's beat is a prayer... the eye's tear is prayer... the feeling of God's presence is a prayer..

In all these shades of meaning, do you really pray?...



January

Third Sunday



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
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in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

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January

Fourth Sunday

**JANUARY
FOURTH SUNDAY**

MYSTERY OF THE HOUSE OF GOD

Please read Genesis 28:10-21, the attached article entitled “Mystery of the House of God”, the attached article entitled “Everything is for your spirituality”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that the church is a house of prayers and miracles. Yes we meet our friends in the church, but the main purpose of us going to church is our spiritual life.

MEMORY VERSE:

“How awesome is this place. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” (Genesis 28:17)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✠ Start by reading from Genesis 28:10-21 and discuss the description of the House of God.

✠ A place full of peace. Jacob found peace in it while he was escaping from his brother Esau. So it is a place of Peace.

✠ It is a place where Angels are coming up and down. They come down with the blessing and gifts from God and they go up with our requests and prayers. So, the House of God is a house of Angels and a house of blessings.

✠ “Surely the Lord is in this place.” Genesis 28:16. So it is a place where surely the Lord is in it. (I.e. The place is full of the Glory of the Lord)

✠ Jacob set-up a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. The oil here represents the Holy Spirit who is the secret behind the glory of the House of God. So, the House of God is a place where the Holy Spirit has a vital role on the believers of the sacraments.

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✝ Please read Psalm 84 about the blessedness of dwelling in the house of God, and explain as you go along in details.

- ✝ Your House is lovely O' Lord of hosts.
- ✝ I am so anxious to go to Your house.
- ✝ My heart and my spirit are with You when I come to Your house.
- ✝ Your Father is my shelter for peace.
- ✝ Blessed is the man who lives in Your house.
- ✝ Worshiping in the House of God is not a duty or routine work. It is a place in which we take heavenly gifts in our lives.
- ✝ Baptism, Chrismation, Repentance and confession, Holy Orders, Unction of the sick, Holy Matrimony, and Holy Communion. (i.e. Seven Sacraments).
- ✝ In the House of God we share with the Angels and the Saints in praising the Lord.
- ✝ In the House of God new believers come and their life changes from darkness to light, and from misery to happiness.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

1. We must give full respect to the House of God. It is a very unique place.
2. When we come to the House of God we must be happy, ready to pray and receive precious gifts in our life.
3. Everything we do must aim at helping us in our spiritual life and our share in heaven. Going to church, Sunday school classes, church trips, hymns in the church and all the events around us must all deepen our spiritual life, our peace and our share in heaven.

January

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

JUST LIKE THE BIRD

REFRAIN

Just like the bird when it found its home
Your House O Lord, I love

just like the happy dove
Your House O Lord, I love with honesty

Your House is prayer, praise and candles
Just as I love Your House O Lord

Your House is love, light and peace
I will love You unto the end of days

Your House is full of blessings
We celebrate there the liturgies

protected against all demons
they're prayed for the saints

Your House we read there the Bible And hear
there the blessed hymns

we learn the nicest songs
and praise You all our lives

Blessed are they who are blameless
Confirm me in Your luminous way

O Lord in Your House living
Forever and ever Amen

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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EVERYTHING FOR YOUR SPIRITUALITY

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

God created everything for your spirituality...

Heaven and earth are not for your materialistic benefit. They are also for your spiritual benefit, if you are able to extract the spiritual lessons they offer you. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork." (Ps 19:1)

The Bible is not only for religious knowledge. It is also for your spiritual growth, "... The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." (Jn 6:63). There is a big difference in reading the Bible for study and reading it for a spiritual benefit.

Service, also, is not just education. Education is merely a means to lead to spirituality. Therefore there is a difference between one type of education and another.

There is an education that addresses your mind and another education that fills your heart. One education turns you into a learned man and the other turns you into a worshipper...

The education that you undertake is not only for the spirituality of others but also for your own spirituality.

You benefit as much as your listeners benefit. If you do not benefit with them, they surely would not benefit from what you said since the talk would have lost its spiritual effect.

Hymns and chants at church are not just music and tunes. They are prayers directed to God. They have their depth and effect on your heart and your spirituality...

Therefore, there is a difference between the one who just sings and the one who chants hymns.

The same applies to all the spiritual means...

Even all the incidents you experience are permitted by God so you can gain a spiritual benefit from them...

There are those who become nervously, psychologically or mentally affected by incidents. Other are affected spiritually by whatever events they experience; everything that happens to them makes them closer to God...

Also, people that you meet, are sent by God. Passing your way, they are for your own spiritual benefit, if you know how to benefit from them.

The righteous present you with an example and a blessing, while you benefit endurance, patience and forgiveness for others from evil.

January

Fourth Sunday

Mystery of the House of God*

“How lovely are Thy dwellings O Lord of Hosts! My soul longs, yea, even faints for the courts of the Lord. My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. Yea, the sparrow has found a home and the swallow a rest for herself where she may lay her young. At the altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house. For better is a day in Thy courts than a thousand elsewhere.....” (Psalm 84.)

✠ In the middle of the shuddering storms of the world, and under the pressure of ceaseless temptations, the Psalmist paused to think. The sparrow has found a home to settle and the swallow a rest, to protect its young... but where would he find a place to dwell, and a shelter to inhabit!

✠ No other place could compete with the altars of God, Lord of Hosts, to place his heart and comfort his body. There, the ground beneath his feet escapes, the total of materialistic world disappears from his sight, and his soul is emerged to heaven, her abiding place. As if by wings of Spirit he is lifted up to Divine Throne to expose his King, God and intimate personal beloved. Embracing him and leaning across His chest, he casts his burdens and pours all his secrets. Communes with Him, kindly reproach Him, hears His voice, and participate in His glories.

✠ Tertullian expresses such a magnificent dare, which is utilized by the assembled church, by saying “we assemble in a meeting... so that we might surround God with our prayers, as if by force of arms. Such violence is pleasing to God.”

✠ Indeed, worship in the House of God is far from being a duty nor a routine work exercised by a group of believers. It is in fact an urge to practice their own right, accepting the free gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their worship is an entrance to the Lord’s green pastures, they are immersed into the spring of the life giving water, eat the fatness of the heavenly banquet, drink from the chalice of salvation and enjoy the mysteries of God’s everlasting love. The spring gratifies them so that they desire nothing but to be in God’s presence. In their state of content they no longer ask for themselves as much as for the others.

✠ They ask for the presidents, ministers, councilors, bishops, presbyters, deacons, monks, and all ministers of the church. For the sick, travelers, prisoners, distressed, and the dead. They even pray for the animals, plants, rivers, and winds! How remarkable; there in the house of God, all hearts are drawn up to heaven, but

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instead of becoming isolated to cope with one's personal needs, it is, on the contrary, broadened with love, requesting salvation, peace and renewal of every existing creature.

✝ In the church, believers also join the angels in their "House of Angels," partaking in their heavenly liturgies, prayers and hymns. They remain permanently in their company rehearsing the praise of the 'New Hymns in an angelic word age! In his book "The Shepherd" Herman writes that angels rejoice at the sight of the heavenly tower of God being completed in us, offering praise to God for the consistency of establishing the spiritual church body.

✝ No doubt that the secret behind the glory of the house of God lies in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is active in people's life. St. Augustine calls Him "The Spirit of the church who overflows with every gift upon her members". Also expressed by the words of St. Irenaeus, "Where the church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there the church and every grace."

✝ The prime function of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church is to form her to resemble, and be an image of Christ, her Creator, so that ultimately she becomes an exact copy of Him. Hence preparing her for the eternal marriage and qualifying her for the eternal glories. In other words, the Risen Christ is transfigured in her life and His qualities are revealed in her. Along these lines we print some sayings of the holy fathers:

✝ "It is solely through the Holy Spirit that Christ is formed in us and imprints on us His own features and so makes the beauty of Godhead come alive again in the nature of man."

St. Cyril of Alexandria

✝ "The Holy Spirit is the Life-giver odor of Christ, a living and effective odor, attracts all creations to Him in order to take part of God's super nature."

St. Cyril of Alexandria

✝ "When we drink of the Spirit, we are substantially drinking Christ."

St. Athanasius

✝ In effect, when Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shines on us with Spirit we no longer live in the shadow of darkness, but copy His illumination. As productive stars we overflow love to others, serve them in humbleness and yearn for their salvation! By the Spirit, we are brought to the circle of the Cross so that everybody

January

Fourth Sunday

longs to die with Christ on behalf of all mankind.

✠ Lastly, in the House of God, we do not just get in touch with God, the heavenly and earthly creatures, but it is extended beyond that. We are granted additional insight even towards nonliving materials, and as a result recognizing all surroundings as holy and blessed. The wheat is no longer bread but it is converted to the Lord's Body through the Holy Spirit, and likewise the wine is converted to the Lord's Blood. The rising incense represents pure prayers taken up to the divine throne by angels, and the Spirit sanctifies the oil. I can further say that the gold, silver, precious stones, wood, paper, textiles, and even bricks and sand become holy when they are used to construct and furnish the Holy House of God. Thus rigid materials are also utilized to be in the service of the heavenly things.

✠ So far we have introduced the mystery of the House of God which we aim to get across through our study of the church building. The emphasis, however, being not to stress abstract righteous concepts or architecture developments as much as to cover the true spiritual aspects of the House of God, to be able to practice it on our daily life.

*** Note:** This article is taken from the writings of Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty.

1. Tertullian: 39:3
2. Hermas: Shepherd verse 2:4:2
3. Adv.Haer 3:24:1
4. St. Cyril of Alexandria: Thesaurus 34 PG. 75:609
5. St. Cyril of Alexandria: In Joan 11:2 PG. 74:452, 3
6. St. Athanasius: Ep. Ad Serapion 19. PG. 26:576.

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For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
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HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
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January

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FEBRUARY FIRST SUNDAY

FORMALITIES IN THE SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Please read Luke 11: 37-50, Matthew 6: 1-18, the attached article entitled “Formalities” and give the lesson with emphasis about the points below

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that we must take all our spiritual practices seriously, and avoid formalities.

MEMORY VERSE:

“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father” (Matthew 6:6)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Please read the Bible in the classroom (at least one of the references mentioned above).

✝ Many people in their worship of God and in their relationship with God take care of the formalities or the outside appearance and neglect the essence of things. This leads to hypocrisy and no benefit.

✝ In prayers for example, some people stand in front of God to speak to Him and they take care only of the amount of time they spend in prayers. However, what is the essence of praying to God? The essence is to form a true fellowship with God full of true love. The person while he/she is praying must feel the presence of God.

✝ In fasting as well, lots of people concentrate on only changing their food. Fasting is not a form of a different diet. Fasting is a method to get closer to God by giving the spirit of the person additional spiritual care. This happens when we do not consider materialistic things including food.

February

First Sunday

✝ In preparing for the Holy Communion, lots of people take care of how to clean the body and how to appear good. However, the essence of preparation for the Holy Communion is to prepare our spirit and our feelings through prayers, repentance, confession, and attending the church early.

✝ In reading the Holy Bible, lots of people take care of the amount of readings in a rigid way. What is the essence in reading the Holy Bible? Hearing the voice of God to me personally and applying it in my life.

In the memory verse the Lord Jesus is clarifying that the relationship with God is a personal relationship. He is my creator and I am His creation. He is my father and I am His Child. Hence in everything we do we must ask about the essence of things. Remember the statement mentioned by our beloved Lord Jesus to St. Peter “*Enter into the depth.*” This is the essence of our spiritual life.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Formalities in the spiritual practices must be avoided. Rather all attention must be paid to worship God in Spirit and truth.
- (2) We have to give utmost priority to the essence of things: the purity of heart, getting busy with building our heavenly share and the building of the Kingdom of God.

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SONGS 🎵

O SEEKER TO MEET JESUS

O seeker to meet Jesus
Your food is the Bread of life

You traveler, forget the past
If you suffer on the road

The trumpet will be heard soon
A great feast above the clouds

He'll prepare a place for you
His heart is longing for you

You are a part in Jesus Christ
Have no fear from all dangers

forget your hunger and thirst
and you'll drink from His wounded
side

and go steadfast in the path
remember for you He died

with happiness and sound of joy
and a crown for the watchful

he is always waiting for you
blessed are you if you are prepared

you who lives among the rocks
you're protected by the Lord

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PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

February

First Sunday

FORMALITIES

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

My people, in their worship and relationship with God, pay more attention to the formalities and forget the essence.

For example, in prayer, they stand in front of God and talk to Him, paying more attention to the words and their length. This is a formality because the essence of prayer is the relationship that links Man to God. It is the feeling that one is in the presence of the Divinity...

In fasting, some concentrate on the period of abstaining from eating and the type of food they eat. This is also a formality. The essence of fasting is mainly the principle of prevention and overruling oneself, controlling the body, and rising above the level of materialism and food. That is what escapes many.

In preparation to receive the Holy Communion, many are more concerned with the cleanliness of the body in a very formal way, with no attention to the essence of purity, physically and spiritually!...

In reading the Holy Bible, the main concern of some is the amount they read and the regularity to do so. This is formality... but the essence is reading with understanding and contemplation. It is a matter of going beyond the meaning and bringing the action of reading into spirit and life...

When people enter the monastic life and give more care to the outside appearance such as prostration and its number, fasting and abstaining from eating for long periods, locking oneself in the cell, remaining silent and neglecting one's clothes... for purity of the heart deep from inside real death to the world, and the object of monasticism in being occupied with God and His love, it is forgotten amidst the concern with formalities!...

The service is very often lost because of the formalities. We might become completely involved in what we are going to say... But the effect of what we say in reaching people's hearts and leading them to the love of God, is forgotten by many... The service might have several activities, organisations and prominent ones. These are all types of formalities. The depth in the service is known, it is the aim of serving, that is the salvation of souls... But where is it?!

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



Formalities never build the Kingdom. It reminds as of what the Lord said about the Pharisees and Scribes, "... *who cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish..* " They have been compared to tombs that are white from the outside and the inside is exactly the opposite...

God does not take notice of formalities, therefore He said, "*My son, give me your heart.* " (Prov 23:26) For this reason the commandment is not taken literally but God is mainly concerned about the love that is in it. As for love, God said, "*On love hangs all the Law and the Prophets.* " (Mt. 22:40)



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First Sunday

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**FEBRUARY
SECOND SUNDAY**

**PERSONALITIES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT:
DANIEL, PROPHET SEER**

Please read the attached article entitled “Daniel Prophet-Seer”, Daniel Chapter 7 and Chapter 9:20-27, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/YH02OlqEJSY>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Daniel’s vision tells about the Son of Man “Jesus” and the kingdom of the saints. Our Christianity is right. We have a missionary duty to do.

MEMORY VERSE:

“I was watching in the night visions and behold, One like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of Heaven.” (Daniel 7:13)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ **Make a general review about Daniel:**

✝ Daniel was from the Kingdom of Judah, came as a captive to Babylon by king Nebuchadnezzar. He came with other captives among them were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

✝ Daniel rejected to eat from the luxury food of the king. Afterwards, he was given high positions in the government. Then Daniel refused to worship idols and was thrown away to the lions to eat him up. God shut the mouths of lions and they did not even touch Daniel.

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✝ Daniel loved God and God in turn protected him.

✝ **Daniel's vision about the coming of Jesus Christ:**

✝ After the devil had defeated all people and the wicked actions became all around, the Son of Man came to save the people who would believe in Him. **"To Him was given dominion and glory and kingdom that all peoples, nations and languages should serve Him."**

✝ **The Holy Trinity as symbolized in the vision:**

✝ The Father was called "The ancient of days" Daniel 7:9

✝ The Holy Spirit was called "A fiery stream" Daniel 7:10

✝ The Son was called the "Son of Man" Daniel 7:13

✝ The Saints of God in Daniel's vision: Daniel 7:18- 22

✝ Those are the Christians. They believe in the Son of God and they have become the Children of God and the children of his Kingdom. Daniel saw in his vision that the war is going on between the world and the children of God. The kingdom of the world may reign for some time, but the kingdom of God will overcome all the powers of evil.

✝ The seventy Weeks: the angel Gabriel is explaining to Daniel that Christ will come again (i.e. the Second Coming of Christ) and this will be the end of the World. The vision of Daniel does not mean that Christ will come at a certain date that can be predicted. For Christ will come in a day that we do not know.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Heavenly visions are given to God's people to declare great mysteries. The greatest of them is related to the mystery concerning the Son of Man and his coming as prophesied by Daniel many years before Christ.
- (2) The victory of the Christians over Satan and the temptation of the World is guaranteed. **"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is the World".** (John 4:4)
- (3) The roots of our Christianity is clearly manifested in all the books of the Old Testament. Therefore we say the Old Testament is the shadow of the New Testament.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



Daniel Prophet- Seer

- ✝ King David has prophesied of a greater King- the Messiah, who reigns over all creation without end.
- ✝ At a later date, Isaiah had prophesied of the person of the Messiah the suffering servant and His kingdom, of peace and joy.
- ✝ Here, we see Daniel for whom the heavens were opened and he saw many mysteries and events concerning the Son of Man, and prophesied of His coming and the Kingdom of the saints which he saw.

Things Seen by Daniel	Their Meaning
✝ The Son of Man whom Daniel saw.	✝ The incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
✝ The Saints of the most high for whom the kingdom is given.	✝ The Christians who are the believers in the Messiah the Christ.
✝ The beast which fights the Son of God	✝ The Roman Empire which persecuted the Christians.
✝ The four beasts.	✝ The Four Kings over the world.
✝ The horn that talks against God.	✝ The governors who made false accusations against Christians.

✝ The Son of Man in Daniel's Vision:

✝ Daniel had a dream and vision which he told to us (Daniel Chapter 7).

✝ I saw... four great beasts came up out of the sea,... The first was like a

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lion and had eagles wing... a second one, like a bear... it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back...

- ✚ A fourth beast, terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong... and it had ten horns... and behold there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by roots, and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things... this horn made war with the saints, and prevailed over them. With the clouds of heaven, then came one like the Son of Man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

✚ The Saints and the Kingdom:

- ✚ What is the meaning of the vision? One of the angels standing by, said to him: "The four beasts are four kings who will reign over the world. The fourth king will conquer them all. Then he will make war with the saints of the Most High. The kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to them, and the Son of Man shall reign over them... "To him was given dominion and glory and kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom not be destroyed."
- ✚ Daniel's vision was a prophecy for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, "the Son of Man."
- ✚ Daniel has showed us the symbol of the Trinity:

- ✚ The Father was called "The Ancient of days" Daniel 7:9
- ✚ The Son was called the "The Son of Man" Daniel 7:13
- ✚ The Holy Spirit was called "A Fiery steam" Daniel 7:10

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✝ The saints of God whom Daniel saw in his vision are the Christians. They believe in the Son of God and the sons of the Kingdom. The Christians are the Kingdom of God on earth. They live as saints. Christ reigns over their lives and their hearts. They obey the commandments of the Lord and Glorify God in their hearts all the time.

✝ Daniel has shown us that the war is going on between the world and the sons of God. The kingdom of the world may reign for some time, but the Kingdom of God will overcome all the powers of evil, and the sons of God will say: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." (Romans 8:37).

✝ **The seventy weeks:**

✝ The Angel Gabriel appeared again to Daniel and said to him: 'I have now come out to give wisdom and understanding, for you are greatly beloved.'

✝ After seventy weeks the Christ, the anointed one, will come. He is the most Holy one. He shall make a new covenant with many. Read Daniel 9:20-27.

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[SONGS](#) 🎵

A GOD LIKE YOU

I have never seen a God like you, my Lord
Who opens the gates, and unlocks the chains (2)
And created roads in the middle of the sea
Never prevented by mountains nor barriers.

REFRAIN:

I have never seen a God like you my God (2)

No one else but you appears in the den
And rescues the souls from the lion's hem (2)
Who can lighten the darkness but you O King
And fill my heart with joy that I may sing?

You have suffered lots on the wooden cross
To give me back my life and restore my loss (2)
You have promised me You are coming back
To grant me the eternal life I lack

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

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**FEBRUARY
THIRD SUNDAY**

**PERSONALITIES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT:
GIDEON WAS GIVEN ASSURANCE**

Please read Judges 6-7, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/T1j9TDvoOIs>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that the Lord is ready to give us all assurances to enhance our faith. Are we sure that we have a good relationship with God?

MEMORY VERSE:

Gideon said to Him "O my Lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us?" (Judges 6:13)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- ✙ Please tell the story of what had happened between God and Gideon.
- ✙ **Why were the people of Israel in Median?**
 - ✙ They did evil things and God wanted to deal with them so that they would come back to Him, and realize that evil things bring misery, and stop doing evil things.
 - ✙ When the people of Israel cried for the Lord to help them admitting that they were wrong, the Lord sent them Gideon to lead them to victory.
- ✙ **When Gideon came he wanted to have enough assurance for the following:**

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† He wanted to make sure that God was with them and accepted their repentance and was not against them anymore.

† He wanted to be assured of victory over the Medians. The only guarantee for him was that God with His Strong Hand would come to their side. Hence Gideon was not trying to tempt God.

† **Gideon had 3 assurances from God to emphasize that God is with him:**

† Acceptance of his offering to assure his call (Judges 6:17-23) “***If I have found favor with Thee***” (Judges 6:17) The fire came out from the rock as a symbol of accepting the offering and ate the offering.

† The Dew on the fleece of wool: to assure his call (Judges 6:36-40) “***If Thou wilt deliver Israel by my hand as Thou hast said***” (Judges 6:36)

† The Median dream: to eliminate all fear (Judges 7:9-15) God told Gideon “***If you are still afraid to go down, go down with Purah your servant and you shall hear what they say and afterward your hands will be strengthened.***” Judges 7:10-11

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Gideon was so keen to be assured that God was with him because, “If God is with us who can be against us.” We have to always seek this kind of assurance that we are at peace with God and He is on our side against the devil. If we follow God’s Commandments, then we are assured that God is on our side.
- (2) We have a good relationship with many people around us. But the most important personality we must make sure we have a good relationship with is God. He wants to be our friend. Let us try to enter in a friendly relationship with God and assure ourselves of this as Gideon became so sure of that.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

A GOD LIKE YOU

I have never seen a God like you, my Lord
Who opens the gates, and unlocks the chains (2)
And created roads in the middle of the sea
Never prevented by mountains nor barriers.

REFRAIN:

I have never seen a God like you my God (2)

No one else but you appears in the den
And rescues the souls from the lion's hem (2)
Who can lighten the darkness but you O King
And fill my heart with joy that I may sing?

You have suffered lots on the wooden cross
To give me back my life and restore my loss (2)
You have promised me You are coming back
To grant me the eternal life I lack

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



FEBRUARY FOURTH SUNDAY

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

Please read the attached articles “St. Anthony the Great” and “Why do we pray?” and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn the life of prayer from St. Anthony. The most enjoyable and beneficial spiritual practice is prayer.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Let God arise; Let His enemies be scattered" (Psalm 68:1)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ St. Anthony was born in Egypt in the year 251 from very rich parents. His parents brought him up in the love of God. The whole family loved the poor people. His father used to spend lots of money on the churches and the poor.

✝ When his father passed away, he left for him a huge sum of money. “What shall I do with all this wealth?” asked Anthony who was 20 years old at that time. He went to church, as he used to do regularly, and the Gospel reading gave him the answer, ***“If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor; and come, follow me and thou shalt have treasure in heaven”*** (Matthew 19:21). St. Anthony did just that. Was this easy to do? Did it all come all of a sudden to St. Anthony to be able to do that? He loved God all his life and his parents brought him up in this way. Hence, with the help of God he was able to reach this level of love and self-denial.

✝ Please mention the following miracles done by St. Anthony:

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One time the devil attacked him because he found him in continuous prayer. The saint overcame the devil and was continuously singing the Psalm mentioned in the memory verse. So, the devils gave up, spared him because of his humility and prayers.

- ✝ He crossed the river air-borne (see the attached article)
- ✝ He healed many people with his prayers.
- ✝ He met St. Paul the hermit and God sent 1 full loaf to St. Paul the hermit in that day (1/2 loaf for each) (see the attached article).
- ✝ At the beginning of his monastic life, he did not know what to do to spend his time. God sent him an angel wearing similar clothes to monks and the angel showed him what to do, “read a little, work a little, and pray a lot”
- ✝ He knew the exact time of his departure from this world. At the right time he called his disciples and told them that he is departing soon. He told them to give his stick to St. Makarious, his cover to St. Athanasius and his clothes to St. Sarabion his disciple.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Let us pay attention to prayers in our lives and make it the most important part of our lives. Before giving his money to God, St. Anthony gave his heart. Let us make sure that we worship God from our hearts.
- (2) Prayer in Christianity is not a duty. We pray because we love God and enjoy talking to Him. We love to lift up our hearts, leave the busy life of the world and enjoy talking to God. This was the main thing in St. Anthony’s life.
- (3) God takes care of the people who entirely depend on Him. He gave one full loaf of bread when St. Anthony visited St. Paul the Hermit.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

In the church of the virgins
Living in piety

You are in a glorious state
In the rite of the Seraphim

With spiritual prayers
You consecrated the desert

With struggles in prayers
And tears in the metanias

In ascetic fasts
With an unfailing spirit

With scantiness in pleasures
And spiritual meditations

You were given the spirit of Elijah
And Jon the son of Zachariah

in the pure assembly
our father Abba Anthony

in the habit of the schema
our father Abba Anthony

living a godly life
our father Abba Anthony

for many decades
our father Abba Anthony

for days at a time
our father Abba Anthony

concerned in godly matters
our father Abba Anthony

and Hanna the prophetess
our father Abba Anthony

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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St. Anthony The Great

- ✝ As mentioned in the Gospel: unless we become like children, we shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. The essence of childhood is the simplicity of heart and thought and the possibility of having visionary perception. The child is more prone to have visions than an adult. Visions actually open the threshold leading to the kingdom of heaven. Unfortunately these visions are lost as we grow up. The problem then arises how and in what way can we regain our lost visions?
- ✝ The Church Fathers see the possibility of regaining our lost vision through prayer and fasting and spiritual exercises and personal self-discipline which are all practiced in monasteries and nunneries most particularly in the desert monasteries of Egypt.
- ✝ In this respect one of the best examples ever known in the history of Christianity is the laborious life of St. Anthony the Great who is known as the Star of the Desert. Since his childhood this great saint led a "simple" life at his home in Cama. Once he heard in the church the Gospel reading: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor; and come, follow me and thou shalt have a treasure in heaven" (Matthew 19:21). St. Anthony was about twenty. Immediately he left the church and gave his 300 acres to the poor.
- ✝ St. Anthony left everything and went to the desert where he enjoyed the life of self-denial and love, love towards his fellow man. The people living in the surrounding areas of Cama called him "God's friend." He used to spend all night in prayer and reading the scriptures. His food was bread and salad and his drink was water.
- ✝ One night he saw a beam of light above his cell joining heaven and earth and a heavenly vision enlightened the whole cell. Since then he enjoyed the life of visionary perception and he used to predict the occurrence of certain events before they took place. But he cautioned us that we should not pray in order to know the future, nor should we ask for this as a reward for our prayers, but that the Lord may be our fellow worker in achieving victory over the devil.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



- ✝ St. Anthony was blessed with the ability to perform miracles. Once St. Anthony wanted to cross a certain river with one of his disciples named Theodore. This man swam to the other bank, but the great Saint was reluctant to take off his clothes. All of a sudden he was airborne and crossed the river to the opposite bank. Theodore was very confused, as the body of St. Anthony and his clothes were not wet. Although the Saint was unwilling to tell his disciple what happened, though the latter insistence, he explained to him that he was airborne and actually flew to the other bank of the river. He actually begged the multitudes that came to visit him not to admire these miraculous powers the Lord has invested in him. He entreated them to admire the Lord and to marvel at the possibility of curing the sick and soothing those who are afflicted and those who are suffering from incurable diseases and mental ailments of any people. This is the manifestation of the deep faith in action and the recognition that Jesus Christ is our God and Savior.
- ✝ Actually the visions and the predictions and the ability to cure diseases are granted by our Lord as a compensation for the hardships of the monk's life in the desert with its prayers and light vigils and long periods of fasting. The contention behind all this is to silence the calls of the body and give chance to the soul to develop spiritually.
- ✝ This development is always associated with spiritual maturity and wisdom. Henceforward, it is possible to regain our lost vision and to mature in our perceptions of heavenly wisdom. St. Anthony's continuous and unabated advice to those who came to visit him was not to grow lax or put off for tomorrow what could be done today.
- ✝ Hearing of another monk in the desert, he went to visit him. That was St. Paul, Father of the wandering Hermits. While the two saints were talking together a raven dropped a full loaf of bread in front of St. Paul's cave. He said to St. Anthony, "this raven used to get me half a loaf for the last sixty years; but today because you are with me we have a full loaf. Grace be to the Lord, who cares for those who depend entirely on Him".
- ✝ May the blessings of St. Anthony and St. Paul be with us and with our families in our Motherland.

February

Third Sunday

Why Do We Pray?

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Do we pray in compliance with an order or to carry out a duty? **NO... because prayer is an expression of the love in one's heart towards God.** The righteous person loves God. Through this love, he enjoys talking with Him... the same as in case of having a friendly relation with a dear friend, you talk together, any talk, in any subject... just to enjoy talking with him.

David the Prophet the man of prayer is a practical example of the prayer of love. The Lord says: *"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God. When shall I come and appear before God. "* (Ps. 42:1-3).... He loves God and pants for Him... so he prays.

Therefore if we pray, it is because we feel love towards God, we may spend hours talking with our friends without boredom.... because there is love between us. Why then a prayer seems a burden to us?

Prayer is in fact love, it is a relation with God and attachment to Him, it is lifting up of the heart and mind to God.

There are persons who only pray to seek something from God. If there is nothing to ask for, they do not pray as if the personal benefit is the motive for such relation with God! Those are rebuked by St. Basil in his saying [If you stand to pray, do not begin your prayer with a demand lest it is thought that but for your demand you would not pray]. Be sure that all your needs will come to you without seeking them... and let your prayer be for love and not a petitionary one...

When the Lord Christ prayed, what did He ask for? He used to spend the whole night in prayer. He was not in need for anything as He had everything in His hands. Isn't it He who said, "All things that the Father has are Mine. " (John 16.15)... His prayer then, was an expression of the love between Him and the Father.

When a person loves God, he loves His kingdom *"But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. " (Matt. 6:33).* With these supplications the Lord's Prayer begins: *"Hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done. Give us day by day our daily bread"*. The heavenly bread which is for our eternal life, the spiritual bread - Your Body and Blood - give us today. It is a supplication based on love. O Lord, give us Yourself so we can be nourished. Give us Your sweet words because we live by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Now brother, if you have not yet reached the level of the prayer which is full of love, seek from God what you need. Be frank with God, open your heart to Him... And if you do not have such love, pray that God may give it to you. Say to Him continually "Grant me that I love You Lord".



St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

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Fourth Sunday



St. George and St. Rueiss

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MARCH FIRST SUNDAY

THE JOY AND BLESSING OF JESUS IN THE WEDDING AT CANA OF GALILEE

Please read John 2:1-11, the attached article entitled, “Joy ... and Joy”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: https://youtu.be/7plJa_qnVug

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that a True Christian is a happy person. The Lord Jesus is the source of true happiness. The world cannot give true happiness.

MEMORY VERSE:

***“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”
Philippians 4:4***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Please tell in a story fashion what happened in the wedding of Cana of Galilee. Emphasize the feelings of the bride and bridegroom when they had no more wine for the visitors. They were ashamed and sad.

But our Beloved Lord Jesus changes sadness into happiness. Jesus said “*I come that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*” John 10:10. Hence, Jesus came to make us happy, content and convinced about our life. This is why St. Paul is saying in the memory verse “*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say rejoice*”.

✝ It is interesting and surprising that the Lord started his miracles in a wedding. However, we are not surprised when we realize that Jesus came for salvation that actually results in happiness. Also He stated His miracles in a wedding in order to

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bless the unity of Man and Woman. This does not mean that He does not bless celibacy or virginity. He blesses both of them.

✚ What is the meaning of “rejoice in the Lord?” It means as long as the Lord is in my life I must rejoice. There are no circumstances that can make me sad because the Lord is with me. If I am sick, I know he can heal me. If I did not get good grades this time, I know that the Lord can strengthen me and help me do better. If I lost something very expensive or dear to me, it is okay, because Jesus will be enough in my life.

✚ The world with all its temptations cannot give me true happiness or inner peace. Why? Because true happiness or inner peace can only come as gifts of the Holy Spirit.

✚ Examples of people who rejoiced in the Lord:

- ✚ St. Peter was in prison and he was in peace.
- ✚ St. Paul was praising the Lord and was very happy while he was in jail
- ✚ St. Mary was very happy when the Angel Gabriel came to her with the good news.
- ✚ The people in the wedding of Cana of Galilee.
- ✚ Abraham was very happy to receive the Lord and the two Angels while he was sitting under the tree. Abraham was running to serve them. Then the Lord rewarded him with a promise to give him a son from his wife Sara even though they were childless for a very long time and were very old.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Everyone wants to be happy. The world is searching for peace and happiness. There is only one way. Let Jesus be in your life in everything you do, whether it be at school, home, or church.
- (2) There is true happiness and false happiness. The true happiness is from God. Going to church, repentance, bringing people to Christ and living in hope brings joy to the heart of the true Christian.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

REJOICE O MY SOUL AND SING

Rejoice o my soul and sing
Who has given you all freedom Rejoice o my
soul and sing
You have gained eternal life

Rejoice o my soul and sing
Watch and struggle always
Rise and call with a loud voice
Show them Christ is your Redeemer

Rejoice o my soul and sing
Display your salt and light
Dedicate your whole life
Let your faith remain in

Rejoice o my soul and sing
For the name of the Good Lord
Sing to him glory and praise
Rejoice o my soul and sing

Rejoice o my soul and sing
Where the Lord of glory sits
His second coming approaches Rejoice o my
soul and sing

to your groom the beloved
on the cross has shed His Blood
the name of Christ glorify
remember His wounded side

glorify the name of God
let prayer be your rod
calling sinners to repent
Savior and enlightenment

and wipe away every tear
saying salvation is here
to the service of the Lord
the salvation of your soul

a song of joy implement
who made a new covenant
sounding the hymns of the humble
carry in your heart His Gospel

and look towards the heavens
your senses to Him summon
He has said it before
Christ is knocking at your door

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

March

First Sunday

JOY... AND JOY

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

There is a trivial joy for perishable, worldly affairs and pleasures...

Like Solomon's joy with what he toiled under the sun (Eccles 1:3) and Jonah's joy with the plant more than with the Salvation of Nineveh. The same kind of joy is that of the elder son, when he said to his father, "You never gave me a young goat that I might make merry with my friends. " (Lk. 15:29)

One type of the false joy is the joy of some people over their talents as the disciples were joyful in casting evil spirits, so the Lord said to them, "Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice rather because your names are written in heaven." -(Lk. 10:20)

The worst type of joy is being joyful over other's suffering. About this the Apostle said, "Love does not rejoice in iniquity," (1 Cor. 13:6) as those who rejoice in people's loss. Solomon says, "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls " (Prov. 24:17). This wicked joy is called gloating. As for the holy joy, it is from the fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5:23).

The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord, and the Magi when they saw the star and the righteous rejoiced over the fruits of their holy toil, "Those who sow in tears, reap in joy." (Ps. 126:5). The Bible has explained to us the joy of your salvation and the joy of the shepherds when the Angel said to them, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy... for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour... ". The Psalmist says about the joy of salvation, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation. " (P s. 51:12). And the Father said, "It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again. (Lk. 15:32).

The joy of the repentance of a sinner is in heaven and earth! When the Good Shepherd found the lost sheep, "He lays it on his shoulders rejoicing, " (Lk. 15:5). He also says, "...there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.. " (Lk. 15:7). The widow also rejoiced when she found her lost coin and called all her neighbours to rejoice with her. We also rejoice over all means of grace... "I rejoiced over your testimonies".. "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' " (Ps. 122:1), "There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God." (Ps. 46:4)

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The righteous rejoice over temptations and reproach: (James 1)

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials" so I rejoice over tribulations. The greatest joy is that of the Kingdom:

"Enter into the joy of your Lord." (Mt 25:21). This is the real joy, where we rejoice in the Lord, and in his company. Although we have not reached His Kingdom yet, we rejoice while waiting in hope. As the Apostle says, "Rejoice in hope" (Rom. 12:12).



March

First Sunday





**MARCH
SECOND SUNDAY**

**THE HOLY BIBLE (I)
WHY DO WE READ THE HOLY BIBLE?**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Your relationship with the Holy Bible”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is a series of 3 lessons about the Holy Bible. In this lesson, we shall focus on the reasons that make the Holy Bible the most important book to read.

MEMORY VERSE:

*“Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.”
(1 Samuel 3:9)*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✦ **Introduction:**

✦ The Holy Bible is the Book of God. When we read the Bible, we read it to hear God speaking to us. So, it is not just a duty or a fulfillment of God’s commandment.

✦ **Reasons for reading the Holy Bible:**

(a) We read it and study it for the importance of its Author:

✦ The writer of the Holy Bible is God the Creator. True the pens used in writing it are used by human beings, but God directed them in writing it.

✦ *“Speak Lord for your servant hears”* (1 Samuel 3:9)

✦ *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”* (2 Tim. 3:16)

(b) The Holy Bible reveals our duties towards God:

March

Second Sunday

✝ Please read Deuteronomy 27:10. *“Therefore you shall obey the voice of the Lord your God, and observe His commandments and His statutes which I command you today”.*

(c) In the Holy Bible, God announces to us our fellowship with people:

✝ When we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we speak to God as a plural not as single person: Matthew 6:9 *“Our Father Who art in heaven...”*

✝ Please also read Matthew 22:39 *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

(d) In the Holy Bible, we find the proper way to deal with other people. For example:

✝ We must respect our parents. Exodus 20:12 *“Honour your father and your mother,...”*

✝ We must respect and do good to all people. The Ten Commandments mentioned in Exodus 20:2-17

(e) In the Holy Bible, we find how to deal with our family members:

✝ Please read Ephesians 5:22-33. *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loves the church...”* (Eph. 5:25).

✝ And Ephesians 6:1-4. *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, and you fathers, do not provoke your children”*(Eph. 6:1-4).

(f) In the Holy Bible, we find answers on how to deal with the authorities.

✝ Please read 1 Timothy 2:1-3. *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers... for all men, for kings and all who are in authority...”*

(g) In the Holy Bible, we learn how to deal with our enemies:

✝ Please read Matthew 5:44. *“But I say to you, love your enemies...”*

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(h) We read the Holy Bible because it reveals to us the cause of sins and the solution given by God. This is the most important reason for reading the Holy Bible. It is the book of eternal life.

✝ Please read John 3:16. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) The Holy Bible provides solutions for all the problems of our lives. It also tells us, more importantly, about our eternal life and the salvation made by the Lord Jesus.
- (2) Our relationship with the Holy Bible focuses on: having it, reading it, understanding it, and using it in applying it in our daily lives.

March

Second Sunday

SONGS 🎵

AS IT WAS

As it was, and shall be
From generation to generation
And unto all ages of ages,
Amen

Osper-eankeesteestin
Apo gene-as ees gene-an
Kepantastoos e-onas ton
Emon, Amen.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY BIBLE

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

+ Your relationship with the Holy Bible is concentrated on acquiring the Bible, adhering to it, reading, understanding, contemplating, studying and learning it by heart. And, above all, you should behave according to it and train yourself to follow its commandments.

+ To acquire the Bible does not mean to keep it as a rarity on your desk but to have it for your continual use. You take it with you wherever you go, in your pocket or in your hand bag. That makes it easy for you to read it at all times.

+ It is better to read the Bible on regular basis, this must be daily. It is better to read extracts every morning so that they might be the subject of your thoughts and meditations during the day and fill your mind as your getting in and out.

+ Let your reading in the Bible be with understanding, depth and contemplation. It would be better if accompanied by prayer, so you would say with David, "Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things from Your Law."

+ Let your reading be with a solemn spirit so you may benefit from it. Remember how we stand at Church in great reverence to listen to the Holy Bible. Never slacken in reading or be negligent or thoughtless.

+ What is important is not the amount you read but the depth in reading. That comes when the Lord's words penetrate deep into your heart touching your feelings...

+ Try to learn some verses that give certain principles or impressions or some of God's promises and answers to matters that bother you.

+ Repeating these verses in your heart many times with enjoyment makes them stick to your spirit and depths.

+ Deal with these verses practically. Make them the subject of your spiritual exercises. Thus you turn the Bible into life and it becomes part of you.

+ In your reading do not focus on the letter but the spirit. And if you need help, do not hesitate to ask...

The important thing is to receive a spiritual benefit from reading.



March

Second Sunday





**MARCH
THIRD SUNDAY
THE HOLY BIBLE (II)
HOW DO WE READ THE HOLY BIBLE?**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Your relationship with the Holy Bible”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the second lesson of a series of 3 lessons about the Holy Bible. In this lesson, we will focus on the proper method of reading the Holy Bible to benefit from it.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts”(Heb. 3:7-8)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Start by reviewing the previous lesson:

✝ Why do we read the Holy Bible?

We read the Holy Bible because of:

- ✝ The importance of the writer. (God is the writer).
 - ✝ It reveals what we should do towards our Creator.
 - ✝ It reveals how we should deal with people in our society, and our families.
- It also shows us to obey the laws and love our enemies.

✝ More importantly, the Holy Bible tells us how to gain a place in heaven through the Salvation offered by the Lord Jesus.

(B) How do we read the Holy Bible? What are the proper ways to read the Holy Bible?

March

Third Sunday

✝ Since the Holy Bible is not an ordinary book, we must then give great importance to the method of reading it.

✝ We must read the Holy Bible with full respect.

✝ When the Bible is read in the church, all people must be standing. A good practice, actually, is to stand during all the readings of the Bible (not only the Gospel) if possible. When we read the Holy Bible at home, we must read it with full respect while we are completely alert, hopefully standing as well, if possible.

✝ We must read the Holy Bible with the intention of understanding and benefiting.

✝ If we do not understand any portion of it, we must ask. The mere reading of the Bible, without understanding, is not very beneficial.

✝ We must read the Holy Bible with great joy.

✝ The Holy Bible is a message from our Heavenly Father, who loves us, therefore, we must read it with great joy, Ps 1:2 *“But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.”*

✝ We must read the Holy Bible day and night:

✝ Let the voice of the Lord be in our ears as long as possible, at least twice a day in the morning and at night. *“And in His law he meditates day and night”* (Ps. 1:2).

(C) In the Holy Bible, we should search for answers to our everyday problems:

✝ If we need help in our duties, we read that God can open our eyes to understand more. When we are sick, we read that God is the true doctor. When we are sad, we read that we can have the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

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(D) We must read the Holy Bible mixed with prayers:

✝ When we read the Bible, we must ask God to open our hearts to accept the word of God. As He speaks to us when we read, we also speak back to Him.

Example: Suppose I am reading about the paralyzed man carried by the four men, and then I turn this into prayers saying “I am also like this paralyzed man because of my sins. Please heal me dear Lord.” Or better still, I remember my sick friends and pray for them.

(E) We must read it with full intention to turn it into action:

✝ Please read Matthew 7:24. *“Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock.”*

✝ Please read Hebrew 3:7-8. *“.... Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”*

(F) We must read the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit inside us:

✝ This is the most important factor. The Holy Spirit inside us guides us to understand and apply the Holy Bible.

✝ The Lord Jesus said, *“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come He will guide you into all the truth.”* (John 16:13).

✝ And St. Paul said, *“These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual”* (1 Corinthians 2:13).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) When we read the Holy Bible, we are reading and listening to the King of Kings. We must have full respect and attention.
- (2) When any one of us is reading the Holy Bible, he or she is listening to a message from God to him or her personally. The Bible is the clearest source to hear the voice of God.
- (3) In every reading of the Holy Bible, one must get spiritual benefit.

March

Third Sunday

SONGS 🎵

AS IT WAS

As it was, and shall be
From generation to generation
And unto all ages of ages,
Amen

Osper-eankeesteestin
Apo gene-as ees gene-an
Kepantastoos e-onas ton
Emon, Amen.

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YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY BIBLE

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

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- ✝ To acquire the Bible does not mean to keep it as a rarity on your desk but to have it for your continual use. You take it with you wherever you go, in your pocket or in your hand bag. That makes it easy for you to read it at all times.
- ✝ It is better to read the Bible on regular basis, this must be daily. It is better to read extracts every morning so that they might be the subject of your thoughts and meditations during the day and fill your mind in your getting in and out.
- ✝ Let your reading in the Bible be with understanding, depth and contemplation. It would be better if accompanied by prayer, so you would say with David, "Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things from Your Law."
- ✝ Let your reading be with a solemn spirit so you may benefit from it. Remember how we stand at Church in great reverence to listen to the Holy Bible. Never slacken in reading or be negligent or thoughtless.
- ✝ What is important is not the amount you read but the depth in reading. That comes when the Lord's words penetrate deep into your heart touching your feelings...
- ✝ Try to learn some verses that give certain principles or impressions or some of God's promises and answers to matters that bother you.
- ✝ Repeating these verses in your heart many times with enjoyment makes them stick to your spirit and depths.
- ✝ Deal with these verses practically. Make them the subject of your spiritual exercises. Thus you turn the Bible into life and it becomes part of you.
- ✝ In your reading do not focus on the letter but the spirit. And if you need help, do not hesitate to ask...

The important thing is to receive a spiritual benefit from reading.



March

Fourth Sunday

MARCH FOURTH SUNDAY THE HOLY BIBLE (III) THE BIBLE IS “ONE UNIT”

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that the Holy Bible is “one unit” although it was written as several books in different places by different people at different times. (This is the third lesson of a series of three lessons on the Holy Bible.)

MEMORY VERSE:

“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Please review the two previous lessons.

(B) The Holy Bible is One Unit:

† The Holy Bible is one unit although it has 73 books, 46 in the Old Testament, and 27 in the New Testament.

† The author is God, the writers are 40 people.

† The writers wrote the Holy Bible in different cities of the world: Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, Rome, etc. The writers were of different nationalities as well: Jews, Greeks, etc...

† Some of the writers were very well educated, some had medium education, and some had no education at all.

† These books were written over a period of about 1600 years. Now the

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important fact is that when you read the Holy Bible, you feel you are reading ONE BOOK and this is something unparalleled in any other book, You feel that you are reading one book with one theme and under the influence of one pen. This is because the actual author and writer is One “GOD.” God inspired His people to write what He told them to write and hence the Holy Bible came without any discrepancies, errors or conflicts.

(C) The One Message and the One Personality in the Holy Bible

✝ In the Holy Bible, there are several writings: Events, history, teachings, praising of the Lord, proverbs and prophecies. However, when we look carefully at all these writings, we find that they have one message: Salvation of the fallen man as it has been accomplished by the Holy Trinity.

✝ In Genesis, we find the first picture of the fall of Man and we follow this picture to see the Lamb prepared by God instead of Isaac, then we continue to see in the book of Leviticus and Numbers the offerings in the Altar until the fullness of time has arrived. At fullness of time, St. John the Baptist came and prepared the way for the Lord Jesus saying, “*Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” (John 1:29).

✝ In many parts of the Old Testament, we read about the symbols of the process of Salvation. In the New Testament, all the books focus on the completion of Salvation as accomplished by the love of God the Father, the grace of His only begotten Son and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must fully trust the Holy Bible as it is the Book of Life which is written by God, It was produced without any errors or discrepancies.
- (2) As we grow up and read the Holy Bible more and more, the Lord will open our eyes to understand more and more. Our faith will also grow as we read more.

March

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

THE BORN BLIND MAN SUNDAY

REFRAIN

Blessed are those who have mercy
The Holy Spirit will fit their hearts

who give to the poor, fast and pray
and obtain mercy on Judgment day

A man who was blind since his birth
They asked Jesus was it this man's sin

was seen by the passing disciples
or his parents' that he had no eyes

Jesus answered neither is the case
A miracle will be witnessed by all

but that God would be glorified
that His holy name be magnified

Jesus said to the man come forward
He touched the man's eyes and said

and made of the dust some clay
Go to Siloam and wash it away

The man did so and came back seeing
The crowd was astonished to see him

his eyes were created in him new
was it really the man they knew

The Pharisees told him is it true
And that Jesus opened your eyes

you were blind since your birth
using clay from the dust of the earth

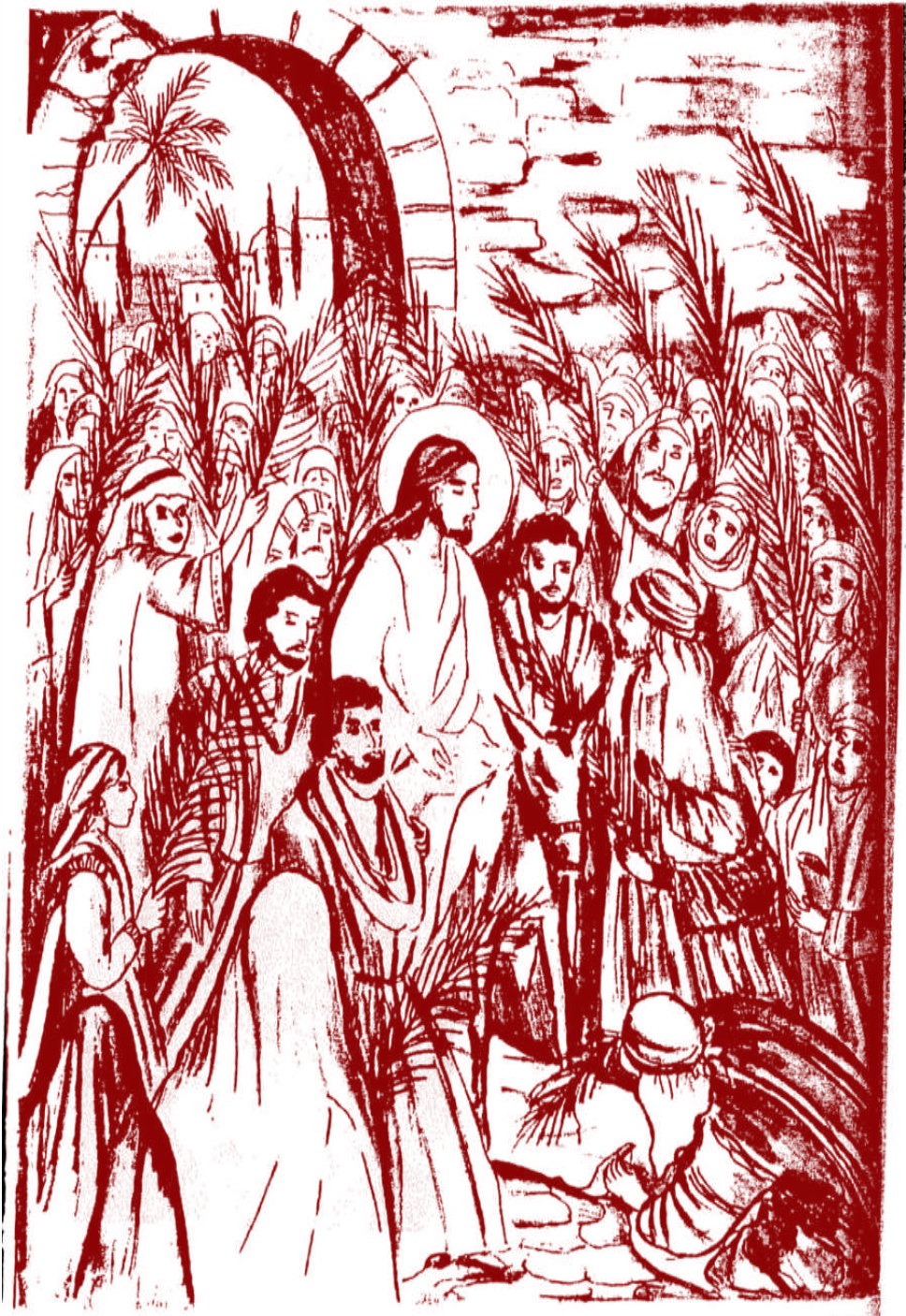
He told them yes I am the one
A man called Jesus opened my eyes

who was born blind but now sees
I do confess that he did heal me

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March

Fifth Sunday

**MARCH
FIFTH SUNDAY**

LAZARUS SATURDAY AND PALM SUNDAY

Please read John 11:1-57, Luke 19:29-44, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/Dca8SSxXCmM> or <https://youtu.be/sfvzTm1mOCQ>
and <https://youtu.be/z-39h0xYqdE> or <https://youtu.be/Om5IK0DiA90>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that the ego and the hardness of heart caused the Jews not to accept Christ and they lost everything. For us, we would like to welcome the Lord in full humility and ask Him to come and reign over our hearts and our life.

MEMORY VERSE:

***"Neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."
(Luke 16:31)***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A)The ego and the hardness of heart make the individual an unbeliever of God:

† The great miracle that the Lord Christ performed in raising Lazarus from the dead made so many people believe that He is the Son of God. Except it did not have any effect on the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews and on the applied verse ***"Neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead"*** (Luke 16:31). It was not enough for them not to believe in Him but they also made a plan to kill Him. How did they lose out like this? Was it their ego or hardness of heart or pride or love of praise?

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✝ The two great miracles that were performed before the Passion Week, were both done on Saturdays: the opening of the eyes of the man born blind and the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Maybe the Lord chose Saturday to show the Jews and everyone else to do good at all times.

(B) Palm Sunday

✝ It is one of the Master's feasts in which we pray in the church with the joyful tune before we start the Passion Week with its sad tune.

✝ On this day the Jews received Christ to become king over Jerusalem and save them from the Romans. But He refused this earthly kingdom because His kingdom is spiritual.

✝ Christ refused to reign over Jerusalem but He welcomes the opportunity to reign over your heart. Your heart in God's eyes is greater than Jerusalem. Does God reign over your heart? How frequent do you pray and praise the Name of the Lord? Do not be too busy on Palm Sunday with the palms, but be busy seeking that the Lord Jesus may reign over your heart and your life.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must be flexible, not to be rigid with certain ideas and become blind to the truth of the faith as the Jews did.
- (2) Self-denial, humility and avoiding the praise from people will help us accept Christ to reign over our life. Thus we win here on earth and in heaven.

March

Fifth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

THE LORD ABOVE THE CHERUBIM

The Lord above the Cherubim
Taking the human flesh to redeem

today enters Jerusalem
Hosanna in the highest

Jesus to Jerusalem, planned to go
A big crowd followed Him saying

for Passover according to the law
Hosanna in the highest

Our Saviour and our God
Coming along Jerusalem road

humbly on a donkey He rode
Hosanna in the highest

Passing through the Mount of Olive
To Your kingdom as long as we live

the crowd cried our hearts we give
Hosanna in the highest

Olive branches raised up high
With thundering voice of shout and cry

people joined in as He passed by
Hosanna in the highest

They put their garments in the street
The future King they wished to meet

and put their shirts under His feet
Hosanna in the highest

The multitude entered the town
With mighty voice seeking Him to crown

it's walls seemed to tumble down
Hosanna in the highest

King of Zion on a colt will lead
Hosanna to the Son of David

Zachariah prophesied indeed
Hosanna in the highest

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April

First Sunday

**APRIL
FIRST SUNDAY**

**THE RITES OF THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN THE PASSION WEEK**

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To understand the rites of our church during the Passion Week so that we can enjoy it and gain spiritually from it.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) The Prayers are centered around the Passion of Christ

The holy church concentrates all her worship during the Passion Week around the Passions of the Christ only, no other subjects. The church then cancels the prayers using Psalms all through the Paschal days because the Psalms contain many other subjects and its reference to the Lord Christ includes His birth, His service, His resurrection, His ascension, His sitting at the right hand of the Father and His second coming in glory. We want only to focus all our prayers and meditations around one subject, which is His passions. Therefore, instead of using the Agpeya in our prayers, we pray the Paschal praises in which we say to the Lord through His suffering, "Thine is the power and the glory and the blessing and the strength forever Amen, Emmanuel our God and our King", "Thine is the power and the glory and the blessing and the strength forever Amen O' my Lord Jesus Christ", "Thine is the power and the glory and the blessing and the strength forever Amen." Then we add "My good Savior" to the second part from the Evening of Wednesday because the plan to deliver the Lord Jesus, glory be to Him, was the practical plan that led to the fulfillment of the act of Salvation.

We pray this Paschal praise ten times: five in the morning and five in the evening. We mean the first, third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hour of prayer. In every part of

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this prayer we look at our Lord and we look at our Good Savior in His suffering and say: We know who you are. With these praises we follow all the steps of the Lord Christ in all the events of the previous year to the crucifixion.

(B) The Starting Event

On Palm Sunday, our Lord Jesus went to Jerusalem. The people received Him in a marvelous way as a king, greeting Him with palms, praises, spreading their garments for Him on the ground and the whole city was shaken (Matt. 21:10). The result was that the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews got very angry, envied Him and decided to kill Him. They became exceedingly angry when they saw Him entering the temple and cleaning it from all those who were buying and selling. They said to Him, “*with what authority do you do this?*” (Matt. 21:23). From this moment on, they became determined to kill Him saying to each other, “*The world is behind Him*” (John 12:19).

Therefore following the Divine Liturgy of Palm Sunday the church puts on the black cloth around all the icons, the columns and at several other locations. An individual entering the church would share in the sadness and suffering with the Lord Jesus, as St. Paul said, “*That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering..*”(Phil. 3:10).

April

First Sunday

(C)The General Funeral Service:

As mentioned above, during the Passion Week the church focuses only on the sufferings of Christ and does not raise incense. Therefore, if someone passes away in the Passion Week, there is no raising of incense as in other funeral services and only the body would enter the church and attend the Paschal service. Therefore, the church does a general funeral service after Palm Sunday for the repose of the souls of the people who may depart from this world during the Paschal week. The priest prays on water for the sake of the general funeral service and not to bless the palms. During the general funeral service we must stand admitting our sins and repenting.

(D) Outside the Camp

In the Old Testament they used to burn the sacrifices of sin outside the camp (Lev. 4:12, 21). It bears the sins so it is not supposed to defile the camp but it must be burnt outside.

Similarly, the Lord Jesus who carried the sin of the world suffered outside the Holy City. They thought of Him to be a sinner and got Him outside the camp and crucified Him. St. Paul said, “*Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach*” (Heb. 13:13).

The holy church, which follows the Lord Jesus in all His steps in the Paschal week, walks away from the altar (i.e. outside the camp). We sing for Him in that area the Paschal Praises “Thine is the power, and the glory and the blessing and the strength”.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Let us praise the Lord Jesus in the midst of all His sufferings because He has done us a great mercy.
- (2) We realize that only through His sufferings on our behalf can we live and have a share in heaven.

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SONGS 🎵

O KING OF PEACE

O King of peace give us
Thy peace, accord to us
Thy peace and forgive us our sins.

Disperse the enemies of
The church, fortify her
And establish her forever.

Emmanuel our God is now
In our midst, in the glory of
His Father and the Holy Spirit

May He bless us all, purify our
Hearts and heal the sickness
Of our souls and bodies.

We worship Thee O Christ
With Thy Good Father and the
Holy Spirit, for Thou hast come
And saved us.

Epouroo ente tihirini moi
Nan entek- hirinisemni nan
Entek-hirinkanennovinanevol

Gorevolennigagienteti-
Ekekliciaaricofterosenneskim
Shaeneh

Emmano-eel pennootikhen ten
Mititinookhenepo-ooentepefiot
Nempiepnemaethoo-wab

Entefesmoerontirenentefoto
Ennenhit, entefalshoennyshony
Entenenepsishinemnsoma

Tenooshtemok O pekhristosnem
Pekiotenaghathosnempiepnema
Ethoo-wab, je ak-iaksotiemmon.

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April

First Sunday



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

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April

Second Sunday

APRIL SECOND SUNDAY THE PASSIONS OF CHRIST

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To understand that the sufferings of our Lord Jesus on our behalf were real and huge. He faced it all alone. He paid the price for the sin of the whole world so that we can be saved.

MEMORY VERSE:

"I have trodden the winepress alone..."
(Isa. 63:3)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Introduction:

The Lord whose divinity does not go with sufferings took for Himself a human nature like us and suffered on our behalf. Because of His humility, He delivered Himself up to those very bad people, ***"I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting"*** (Isaiah 50:6).

(B) He did not defend Himself:

They accused Him of many false things but He did not defend Himself. If He attempted to defend Himself we would be the ones to be judged. He preferred to carry our sins and be in the position of a sinful person so that we can be freed from our sins. Our sin did not need to be defended by someone but it needed someone to pay its price through His sufferings. It needed a sacrifice to die on its behalf; it needed a fully righteous person to die on its behalf.

(C) Christ in Gethsemane

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In the garden of Gethsemane the Lord Christ had before Him all the sins of the human race in all generations with all its filth. It was a very sour cup. The Lord said about it, “***My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death***” (Matt. 26:38). He was sad for the human race, which reached this very low status and deeply immersed in sins. The Lord is the source of all joy, but He was filled with sadness as a result of the sin of the entire world.

(D) His sufferings were not only in the flesh but also in the soul

In addition to the Lord’s sufferings of the flesh because of hitting, slapping, carrying the Cross, thirst and whipping, He also suffered another type of suffering, in His soul to the extent that He said, “***My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death***” (Matt. 26:38). His sufferings in the soul were because of the falling of the human race, the betrayal and aggressiveness of the people around Him, His disciples who left Him alone and were filled with fear and doubts. In the garden of Gethsemane the Lord “***knew that His hour had come.....***” (John 13:1) and “***knowing all things that would come upon Him.....***” (John 18:4). His sweat was like drops of blood and as Isaiah said, “***I have trodden the winepress alone***” (Isaiah 63:3). His disciples could not stay with Him. Peter denied Him. He then advised His disciples and all of us to watch and pray. We must not be filled with pride and think that even if everyone denied the Lord, we are stronger and will never fall and deny Him.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) The Lord’s sufferings on our behalf were real and huge.
- (2) The Lord loves us. This is why He shed His blood to pay the price of our sins. “The righteous instead of the sinners.”
- (3) Now, let us make the Lord rejoice because of our salvation instead of suffering because of our sins.

April

Second Sunday

SONGS 🎵

THE PASCHA HYMN

Thine is the power, the glory, the blessings
And the majesty forever. Amen. O
Emmanuel our God and our King.

Thine is the power, the glory, the blessings
And the majesty forever. Amen. O my
Lord Jesus Christ My good Saviour.*

Thine is the power, the glory, the blessings
And the majesty forever. Amen.

* The Lord is My strength, My praise, and
has become my salvation.

Thok te ti goun, nem pi oou,
nem pi Ezmou, nem pi amahishaeneh Amen.
Emmanuel pennoti pen oro.

Thoktetigoun, nem pi oou,
nem pi Ezmou, nem pi amahishaeneh Amen.
PachoisIsosPekhrestos. Pa Soteer en
Aghathos.*

Thoktetigoun, nem pi oou,
nem pi Ezmou, nem pi amahishaeneh Amen.

*Tagomnem pa esmoupe –
epchoisafShopineyasotiriyaethowab.

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April

Third Sunday

**APRIL
THIRD SUNDAY**

**RESURRECTION OF CHRIST
“THE END OF THE POWER OF KINGDOM OF DEATH”**

Please read Luke 24 and Matthew 28, the attached material entitled “Resurrection is a Spring of Hope”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that through the Resurrection of Christ, the Kingdom of the devil is defeated. We can live a victorious life here on earth and enjoy our share in eternal life.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life.’” (John 11:25)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Describe the events of the resurrection of Jesus very early on Sunday. This is why on our Easter Evening, in our Church, the Divine Liturgy finishes after Midnight.

✝ The Lord Jesus arose from the dead while the large stone was still at the gate of the tomb.

✝ As our beloved Lord Jesus has risen from the dead, He can help us to overcome our sins and live a life of resurrection. He said, “***I am the resurrection and the life.***” In our life here on earth, as we follow the footsteps of the Lord Jesus, we can overcome the devil and all his temptations.

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✝ After we die, Jesus will accept us in paradise. In the second coming of Jesus, we will arise and take enlightened bodies and be with Jesus in the Kingdom of Heaven. So, death is only a departure from this life on earth, to a better life in Paradise.

✝ When the Lord arose from the dead, He took out of Hades, the saints of the Old Testament, like Abraham, David... and transferred them to Paradise. Before that, all those souls were kept by the devil in Hades until Jesus came and led those souls to freedom in Paradise.

✝ Easter is the largest celebration in our church.

✝ Tell the story of the egg and the chick as Mary Magdalene used to preach about resurrection.

What is Resurrection?

✝ Resurrection is a new life given to us by the resurrection of Christ. It is our freedom from sin. Our Lord faced the devil and defeated him and resurrected us with Him. ***“Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.”*** (Ephesians 2:5).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must abide with Jesus and we must stay away from a sinful life, so that we can enjoy a very happy life here on earth, and in Paradise.
- (2) Unity with Christ in thought, deeds and spirit would give us the power over Satan and his Kingdom of death.

April

Third Sunday

[SONGS](#) 🎵

JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN TODAY

“He is not here, but is risen.” (Lk 24:6)

Alleluia , Alleluia
All you Christians sing and say

See the holy women come
Go and tell His brethren dear

Hear the heavenly angel’s voice
Seek Him not among the dead

His death upon the cross
Jesus, glory be to Thee

Christ who once for sinners bled
On His throne in glory

Christians on this happy day
Christ the Lord reigns on high

Alleluia , Alleluia
Jesus Christ is risen today

bringing spices to the tomb
He is risen, He is not here

bidding all to rejoice
He is risen as He said

saved all men from endless loss
Your own might has set us free

now is risen from the dead
He reigns through all eternity

raise your hearts with joy and say
He conquered and gave us life

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RESURRECTION IS A SPRING OF HOPE

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Man triumphed in hundreds of fields except death. Before death, man stood helpless and hopeless...

Then came the Resurrection to give the first victory over death:

The Apostle says in a challenge, *"O Death, where is your sting?"*

Then, hope in the eternal life entered man's heart and filled it with joy, that he would not perish or come to an end.

Also, the church receives those who pass away with the beautiful chant *"it is not death to your servants but it is a transition "*.

The chanter also says in the psalm, *"The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. " (Ps. 118:16,17).*

Victory over death gave hope to triumph over all other things, because who overcomes the stronger certainly can overcome the weaker and a whole army of the enemy.

Thus, through victory over death, the morale of the children of God was elevated and so St. Paul said, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

Also, there became nothing difficult, nothing impossible for people... but *"all things are possible to him who believes"*.

The spirit of the Resurrection spread out its hope on everything.

The image of the Lord who rose from the dead stands in case of any difficulty or problem to give hope that after death there is life, and after darkness there is light, and that there is a solution to every problem...

That is how, the children of God lived *"Rejoicing in Hope."* (Rom 12:12). They see that everything and everyone around them *"Even though he dies, he shall live"...* that is why they *"should not sorrow as others who have no hope"*.

Here ends the grieves of Gethsemane and the passion of Golgotha, the suspicion and fear of the upper room but remains the image of the bright angel before the empty tomb to announce the Resurrection....



April

Third Sunday



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April

Fourth Sunday

APRIL FOURTH SUNDAY DO NOT CLING TO ME

Please read John 20:1-18, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: https://youtu.be/xe50_LaJgWE

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To answer a frequently asked question: Why did the Lord say to Mary Magdalene “Do not cling to Me” while He allowed St. Thomas to touch Him ?

MEMORY VERSE:

“Do not cling to Me” (John 20:17)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Introduction:

- ✚ In the midst of all the joyful events of the resurrection of the Lord we find few questions. Some of these questions are:
- ✚ Why did the Lord appear to Mary Magdalene after the resurrection?
- ✚ Why did He say to her “Do not cling to Me.” (John 20:17) while He allowed St. Thomas to touch Him (John 20:27)
- ✚ He, also, allowed the rest of the Disciples to touch Him (Luke 24:39).
- ✚ Did He prevent her from touching Him because she is a woman?
- ✚ Did He allow them to touch Him because they are men?

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Answer:

- ✝ The Lord Christ allowed Mary Magdalene to touch Him before anyone of the Disciples, as it was mentioned in their first meeting after the resurrection in Matt. 28.

Mary Magdalene, with the other Mary went to look at the tomb. The tomb was empty. The entrance stone was rolled off. The angel told them the good news of the resurrection of the Lord. Upon leaving the tomb, the Lord met them and said to them ***“Rejoice.”***

Here St. Matthew the evangelist says ***“They came and held Him by the feet and worshipped Him”*** (Matthew 28:9).

So, Mary Magdalene touched Christ after the resurrection.

The Lord did not prevent her from touching Him because she was a woman but on the contrary, He charged her with going to His Disciples and telling them about the good news of the resurrection and her meeting with Him in Galilee.

It was a great honour that the Lord charged a woman with carrying the good news to the Disciples.

But it happened afterwards that Mary Magdalene yielded to the doubts spread by the chief priests about the resurrection.

They filled the world with rumor announcing that the body was stolen from the tomb while the guards were sleeping.

It was possible for these rumors to leave no effect on Mary had she not seen that the Disciples themselves did not believe in the resurrection.

As for the doubts of the Disciples, they were very clear, as they did not believe the story of the resurrection.

Mary has gone to them and told them the good news of Christ’s resurrection. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen Him they did not believe it (Mark 16:9-11).

When Mary Magdalene saw that Jesus’ Disciples did not believe her and trusted neither the other women nor the two from Emmaus, she began to doubt herself.

April

Fourth Sunday

She was still a young lady and perhaps what she had seen at the tomb was a dream or imagination.

Was her faith stronger than that of the Disciples? It is something absurd. She thought to herself: Perhaps some men might have stolen the body and carried it from its place.

They might not be the Disciples but other men; perhaps the gardener, for example, might have taken it for some reason!

Of course, all these were doubts against faith because she herself saw the empty tomb. She also saw Christ, touched Him, and heard His voice.

Moreover, she heard the good news from the angel, then from the two angels.

As Peter had denied Christ three times during the judgment, so did Mary Magdalene. She denied the resurrection of the Lord three times. These denials are written in one chapter (John 20:12,13,15).

(1) **The first denial** took place when she went to the saints Peter and John and said to them “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have put Him!” (John 20:2).

These words mean that God has not yet risen from the dead as they have taken His body and put it in another place.

(2) **The second denial** took place when she was weeping outside the tomb and the two angels asked her “Woman, why are you crying?” She answered with the same words “They have taken my Lord and I don’t know where they have put Him.” (John 20:13).

(3) **The third denial** took place when the Lord Christ appeared to her. Because of her weeping, she did not see Him well and thought Him to be the gardener. Perhaps He concealed Himself from her.... She said to Him “*Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.*” (John 20:15).

When He showed Himself to her and she knew Him, she cried out “Rabboni!” (which means: teacher)

The Lord prevented her from touching Him to rebuke her for denying His resurrection three times.

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Also, it was not permissible for her to touch Him with her precarious faith as if he was a common person carried by someone to any place.

She said to Peter and John ***“They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don’t know where they have put Him.”***

She said to the two angels ***“They have taken my Lord and I don’t know where they have put Him.”***

She said to the Lord, thinking He was the gardener ***“Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put Him.”***

All her words were repetition to the soldiers’ pretense and showed her precarious faith. The Lord said to her ***“Do not cling to Me”*** which means do not approach Me with your shaken faith and your doubts. After you have seen Me, held My feet and heard My voice.

“Do not approach Me after I have charged you with a message to my Disciples.”

“Don’t approach Me after you have seen the tomb and heard the angels’ testimony.”

“Don’t hold onto Me with your denial for I have not yet returned to the Father.”

As for the phrase ***“I have not yet returned to the Father”***. Saint Sevarus, from Antioch as well as St. Augustine did not take it literally but symbolically because she had held Him before.

The two saints added that the Lord wished to say to her “Do not cling to Me with your precarious faith because I have not reached in your mind the standard of my Father’s Divinity. “You think My body is still dead and the people can carry it wherever they wish !!!”

However, He consoled Her at the same time; He charged her with a, message to the Disciples.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) In the eyes of God men and women are equal. God is fair and He has the same amount of love and respect to both men and women.
- (2) If we have shaken faith we will be confused about everything in our spiritual life and we might not be able to get truly in touch with God.

***Note:** This lesson is based on the writings of H.H. Pope Shenouda III.

April

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

ALLELUIA RISEN IS THE KING

Alleluia risen is the king of peace.....
Alleluia, truly He is risen indeed
Alleluia Jesus is risen today.....
Alleluia the great stone is rolled away

Mary Magdalene went so early to the tomb
for the body she brought spices and perfumes

Mary stood outside with her eyes full of tears
looking at the empty tomb she did fear

She asked the gardener, “where did they put my Lord?”
She did not know that He is the risen Lord

Jesus told her; “O Mary rejoice”
She cried “O Master as she recognized His voice”

He told her “go to My brothers and preach the news
Tell them I will come and see them very soon”

Mary went to the disciples right away
With the joy she preached “Jesus is risen today”

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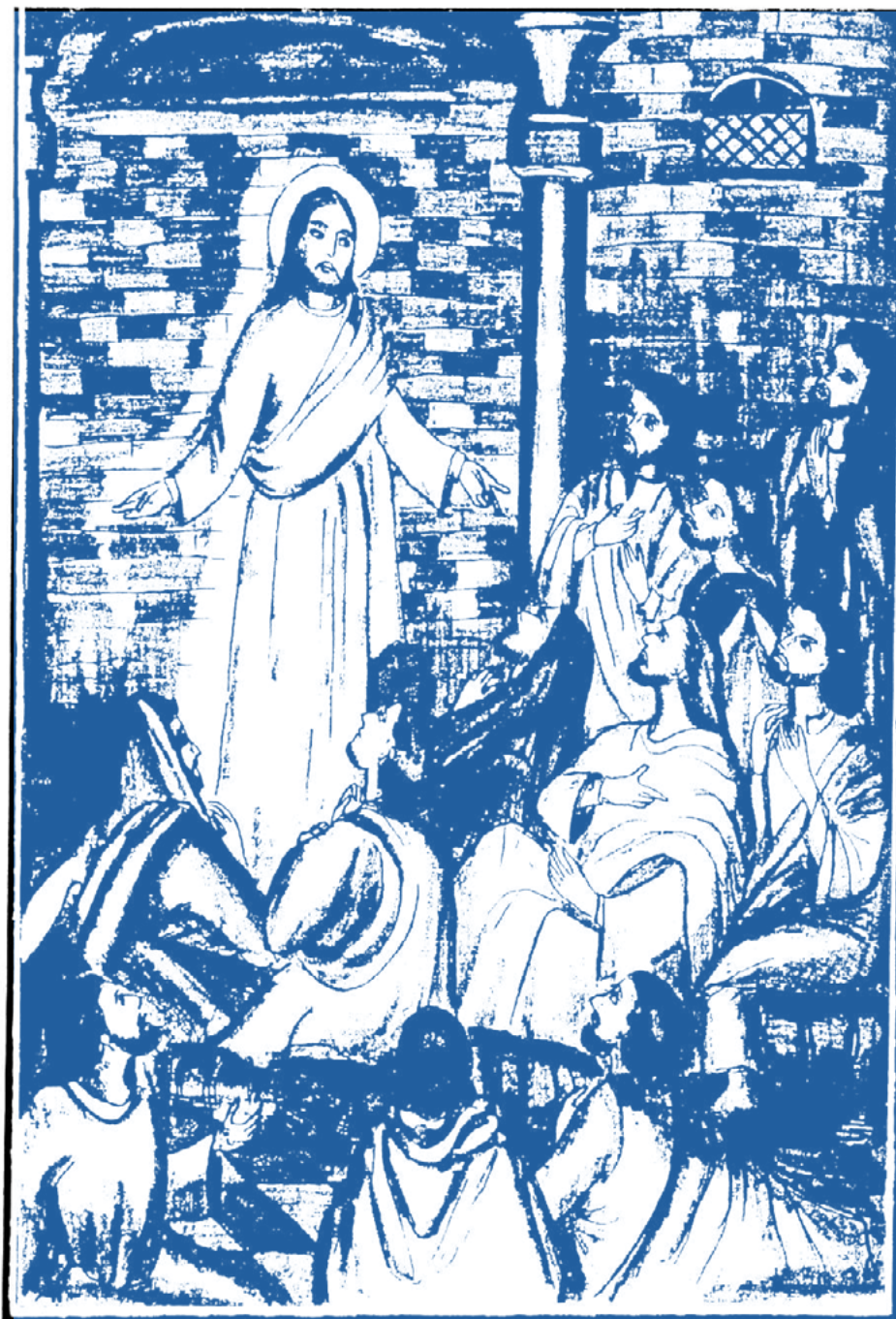
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**MAY
FIRST SUNDAY**

**SAINT PETER IN THE EVENTS OF THE LORD'S
RESURRECTION**

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that the verses that were mentioned in the events of the resurrection did not mean that St. Peter was preferred to the other Disciples or that he was the leader.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But go, tell His Disciples - and - Peter..." (Mark 16:7)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Introduction

Some people misinterpret events and verses in the Holy Bible and give a preferable position for St. Peter over the rest of the Disciples. We will answer two questions through which we will show that there is no supremacy of St. Peter over the other Disciples.

(B) Question 1

After Christ's resurrection, the angel said to the Marys "Go tell His Disciples and Peter". Does mentioning Peter by name mean that he was preferable to the other Disciples?

May

First Sunday

Answer:

The Lord wished to give Peter special care because he was perturbed about himself and about his destiny after his denial, blasphemy, retribution and saying “I don’t know the man.”

He mentioned Peter by name as a kind of sympathy and consolation because of denial and sin. Perhaps he was too ashamed of the Lord to be able to meet Him without a special cause.

Don’t you see that Adam, after he had sinned, hid from the face of God and was afraid of Him? When the Lord God called to him “Where are you?” he answered “I heard You in the garden and was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.” Peter was in the same situation. He was in need of a special call by name.

If the Lord applied to Peter the text “He who disowns Me before men will be disowned before the angels of God.....he would perish”.

Thus, the matter is not a subject of headship or preference but consoling a poor person.

(B) Question 2

Why do we deny Peter’s headship while the Lord said to him after the resurrection; “Feed my lambs; take care of my sheep?”

Answer:

The Lord Christ did not say these phrases to him in order to appoint him Pastor of the universal church but to bring him back to the apostolic rank which he was about to lose because of his denial.

With this phrase, the Lord made him equal to the other apostles. It is clear that the Lord Jesus said to him “***Take care of My sheep***” in a reprimand situation as He asked him three times saying “***Simon son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?***”(John 21:15-17).

By these words, the Lord wished to remind him of his denials. Moreover His question carried a light reprimand with which the Lord reminded Peter of his words “***Even if all fall away on account of You, I never will***”.

In that situation we notice that the Lord Christ called him by his old name before he was given the name “Peter”. The most conspicuous proof that the Lord meant by His words some reprimand was the shame and the sorrow that appeared on

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Peter's face after the Lord had said to him "*Take care of My sheep*" because he understood the Lord's aim.

If the phrase had been said in a good circumstance of magnifying, it could have caused Peter joy and pleasure.

Patronage is a job God has invested with rank to many as it appeared in many texts of the Holy Bible. All the Apostles are patrons. The Lord Christ is the chief patron.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

1. The Lord's position with respect to St. Peter during the events of the resurrection was a position to help someone who was in poor status because of his denials.
2. The claim of the Roman Catholic Church of the supremacy of St. Peter over all the other Disciples and the supremacy of the Pope of Rome over all other popes in the world is unsupported by the Holy Bible or the history and tradition.

***Note:** This lesson is based on the writings of H.H. Pope Shenouda III.

May

First Sunday

SONGS 🎵

PSALM RESPONSE FOR EASTER

Alleluia, Alleluia ..Isospekrestoseporo
Enteepo-u aftomnfevolkhenniethmo-out
Khen pi- ehouemmahshompt ..
Alleluia, Alleluia

Alleluia, Alleluia
Jesus Christ the King of Glory
Has risen from the dead
on the third day
Alleluia, Alleluia

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**MAY
SECOND SUNDAY**

**CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR (I)
BAD FRIENDSHIP SPOILS GOOD CHARACTERS**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Friendship”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To choose friends from among the good Christians who have true love for God, appreciate family values and adhere to good manners.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil.” (Proverbs 4:14)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Any individual gets affected by the people living with him/her. The child gets affected by his parents, his relatives and his friends. The Bible teaches us to be very careful in choosing our friends. (See memory verse above).

(A) Examples from the Holy Bible:

✙ Daniel and the three young men:

When they were taken away from their homeland, they kept in mind one basic principle. “Do not mix with the non-believers.” They were only friends to each other. If they mixed with the non-believers:

First: they would not have enough time to dedicate to prayers.

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Second: every person would be affected by the people around him and they wanted to make sure they would keep their hearts pure for God.

✠ In the Parable of the Prodigal son:

The prodigal son preferred to be with his bad friends rather than with his father. When he mixed with the bad friends, he wasted his money, his health, and was anxious to eat from the food of the pigs. He Then went back and examined: “How did I reach this bad situation?” he found the answer to be “Bad Company”. This is why the first psalm of David says: “*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly*” ... (Ps. 1:1)

(B) How can we choose our friends?

✠ Please discuss this with the students. As soon as we feel that the person does not love God, then we decide: he/she will not be my friend. It does not mean I do not love him/her, but it means that he/she is not a close friend of mine. Similarly, people who do not respect their parents and do not adhere to good manners must not be close friends of mine.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) How do we choose our friends very carefully?
- (2) A true friend is the one who loves you. He is the one who would fully support you whenever you pass through a problem. He will tolerate your anger and be patient with you.

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SONGS 🎵

VERY EARLY SUNDAY MORNING

“Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb.” (Mk 16:2)

Very early Sunday morning
Our Lord arose declaring

while the guards were still asleep
His promise He did keep

REFRAIN

Resurrection is my song
Resurrection made me strong

resurrection gave me life
Jesus my Lord is alive

Jesus is risen in glory
And the angel told the story

heaven and earth sang and praised
He is risen as He said

Mary Magdalene was looking
Jesus Himself was telling

in the garden for her Lord
her to go and spread the word

All the disciples were praying
When Mary came to them saying

they were truly in great fear
He is risen, He is not here

While they were in the room
My peace I give to you

Jesus Christ Himself appeared
and My peace with you I leave

But Thomas did not believe
So Jesus again appeared

what the disciples had seen
showed him the place of the spear

Tell the Marys to cease mourning
For Jesus our Lord is living

among the dead do not seek
giving power to the weak

Jesus my victorious Lord
And the thorn of death he broke

conquered the powers of Hades
my salvation He proclaimed

The heavenly hosts were singing
Heavens joy was overwhelming

welcoming our glorious Lord
Jesus opened its doors.

Alleluia , Alleluia
Alleluia , Alleluia

risen is the King of peace
truly He is risen indeed

RECITATION CURRICULUM:



May

Second Sunday

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FRIENDSHIP

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Your true friend should be one who is sincere in his love.

The one whose love has no hypocrisy, pretence, feigning or doubt. All his feelings are completely true and real.

✝ **A friend should also be a righteous person.**

A true friend is one who helps you to attain purity of heart, to love God and to strive for your eternity.

As for the one who joins with you in committing sin, he is not a true friend; he is a partner in a life that is far from God.

Therefore, there is a difference between a friend and a companion.

The two qualities might be found sometimes in one person. But sometimes, a person might go along with you without becoming your friend. He remains just a companion.

✝ **A true friend is one whom you can trust your secrets.**

As St. John Chrysostom says, *"Let your friends be a thousand, and he who keeps your secret, one of a thousand."*

✝ **Your friend is your second heart who feels what you feel.**

He deeply suffers for your suffering and deeply rejoices for your happiness...

He is a stock of love and support especially at the time of trouble; he never deserts you...

What a beautiful saying it is of Wise Solomon in Ecclesiastes, *"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up."* (Eccl. 4:9-10).

The one who does not lift you up cannot be your friend.

✝ **Your friend is not the one who is courteous to you but the one who loves you.**

He is not the one who wins your content by agreeing with whatever you do, no matter how wrong it might be... But your friend is the one who truly loves you, wishes you good and saves you from yourself and, if necessary, saves you from your wrong thoughts.

Therefore, the Bible says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." (Prov. 27:6).

✝ Your friend does not treat you in a similar way, tit for tat. He tolerates you in your anger and shows long suffering when you err.

His love does not change no matter how your or his circumstances change.

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Second Sunday



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NOTES

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May

Third Sunday

MAY THIRD SUNDAY

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR (II) BE POSITIVE AND RESPONSIBLE

Please read Luke 9:59-62, the attached article entitled, “Forget What Is Behind”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To develop a positive attitude and a responsible approach in life. After achieving something good, one has to give glory to God and move forward.

MEMORY VERSE:

“No one, having put his hands to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† Be Positive:

† Please read Luke 9:59-62

† Do not have negative thoughts. Reject negative thoughts or fears. Negative thoughts drag feelings down and ultimately leave the person in a hopeless situation.

† Negativity is against the teachings of the Lord Jesus. (See the above verse).

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be bad will turn out ultimately to be good. Hence, they are always positive. Say “I can do” or better. Say “I can do everything in Jesus Christ who strengthens me.”

✝ **Be Responsible:**

First: towards God and yourself:

✝ Joseph in the Old Testament was faithful and determined not to commit a sin. Please read Genesis 39:1-15. Search yourself and have a moment to review your life. Is your life with God? How much is Jesus worth in your life? Try to truly answer this question.

✝ Remember that Adam was responsible for his mistake...as is everyone.

Second: towards our family:

✝ Form a relationship with every member of your family based on love. Remember that Jesus, Son of God, was obedient to his parents and he taught us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Third: towards the Church:

✝ Do something for the Church. You get a lot from the church and you should think of doing something in return. If people do nothing for the church, no one can get anything from the church in return. How can you help? Tidy things up in the church, help the younger ones, participate in activities and be there in the service.

Fourth: towards the society:

✝ Study well and when you are asked to do something for the society, no matter how small it is, do it very well, to your best ability. But keep in mind not to get too busy to the extent that you cannot live with God.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?



May

Third Sunday

Christianity teaches positive and responsible attitudes in life. A good Christian is a good student. A good Christian is a good citizen.

We must look ahead. Let us forget the past with all its problems, sicknesses and even good achievements. Let us move forward and ask God to take our hands and lead our life.

Everyone is responsible for his or her actions. As we grow we have to take on more responsibilities.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

O SONS AND DAUGHTERS

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.” (Jn 11:25)

O sons and daughters let us sing
Over death has risen triumphing.

On Easter morn, at break of day
To seek the tomb where Jesus lay.

An angel clad in white they see
Your Lord doth go to Galilee

That night the Apostles met in fear
And said, My peace be on all here.

When Thomas first the tidings heard
Until he came and speak the word.

My pierced side, O Thomas see
Not faithless, but believing be.

How blessed are they who have not seen
For the eternal life shall win.

On this most holy day of days
In laud and jubilee and praise.

the King of heaven the glorious King
Christ is risen from the dead.

the faithless women went their way
Christ is risen from the dead.

who sat and spoke unto the three
Christ is risen from the dead.

amidst them came their Lord dear
Christ is risen from the dead.

He doubted if it was their Lord
Christ is risen from the dead.

behold My hands, My feet, said He
Christ is risen from the dead.

and yet whose faith has constant been
Christ is risen from the dead.

to God your hearts and voices raise
Christ is risen from the dead.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

May

Third Sunday

FORGET WHAT IS BEHIND

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

St. Paul the Apostle said, "... *forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press towards the goal.* " (Phil. 3:13) By referring to what is behind St. Paul did not mean sins but righteousness; that he put his virtues behind and was pressing forward.

Therefore, it justifies the saying, 'A good man forgets all the good deeds that he has done as he is too busy in the good deeds that he is still doing...

'The saints never put their good deeds in front of them, but behind. They forget such deeds and never talk about them. And if it happened that somebody mentioned it in their presence, they change the subject so that this person would forget this too...

If they remember their good deeds, they might feel selfsatisfaction about their present state and forget about the work of grace in them. But if they forget these deeds and remember nothing but God's grace that works in them, then they will reach forward, feeling that there are wide spheres ahead of them, leading to the desired perfection...

I wish you would forget the past completely, not only the righteousness you did in it but also all hardships and troubles you faced therein. Forget also the evil which spoils the purity of the heart when you remember... Instead of that, reach forward in positive steps towards the love of God... and towards eternity...

Poor are those who limit their thoughts to the past with all its troubles, mistakes or its sweet dreams. There would not be any time or strength left for them to do something for the future.

They talk about the beauty of the past, the greatness of the past, either boasting in it or grieving over it. As for the present, there is nothing about it, it does not exist, the same goes with the future... etc.

The beautiful past cannot satisfy you if the present is troublesome. Therefore, do not live on sweet memories but reach forward. Let your present always be better than your past...

Do not remember from the past except what could make your present better and gives you a push forward in repentance or in growth...



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Coptic Orthodox Church



May

Fourth Sunday

MAY FOURTH SUNDAY

ASCENSION: THE ONE WHO ASCENDED IS THE ONE WHO DESCENDED

Please read Luke 24:44-53, Acts 1:1-11, and give the lessons with emphasis on the points below.

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/RD0LNtc1UE4>

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show the glory of our Lord Christ in His ascension. He came to our world to save the world. Then He ascended to heaven to put the Church (all the believers) in their proper place in heaven.

MEMORY VERSE:

***"..... No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down
from heaven..." (John 3:13).***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) The One who ascended is the One who descended

The reader of the Holy Bible will find various themes for our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. On His birth He chose to be born in a manger and He was born from the pure St. Mary the Virgin who was very poor. As he grew up he did not have a house of his own but many of the women who followed him used to spend on him. In the meantime we find his power and glory were manifested clearly in all the mercies and miracles that he had done. He came to our world because he found us in a losing battle with Satan. He found that Satan reigned over the hearts of many people and they became in a very miserable situation under the authority and power of Satan, so He came to our world, he fought Satan, defeated him on the

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Coptic Orthodox Church



temptation mountain and ultimately defeated him when he was crucified on the Cross. He tied up Satan in Hades, so He entered the battle with us against Satan and defeated him. Then He rose from the dead after three days and defeated death as well. He defeated Satan and defeated death for us so that we can also do the same.

After showing His disciples and His followers that He is alive for forty days He ascended to heaven in great glory and sat at the right hand of His Father. ***“No man has ascended into heaven but He that descended from heaven.”*** (John 3:13.). ***“He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.”***(Eph. 4:10).

(B) THE CLOUDS

“A cloud took Him out of their sight.” (Acts 1:9). Since ancient times clouds have been connected with the eternal glory and the Divine Presence. On Mount Sinai the glory of God appeared in the form of clouds. Now we see our Lord Jesus ascending to heaven amid the cloud of glory. On His second coming the righteous will meet the Lord Christ on the cloud with the hosts of angels and heavenly powers.

(C) AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER

St. Stephen saw a vision when he was filled with the Holy Spirit and was ready to give up his soul and said ***“Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”*** (Acts 7:56). So St. Stephen saw the Lord Jesus at the right hand of the Father. St. Paul, the Apostle also said about the Lord Jesus, ***“who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”***(Hebrews 1:3). Sitting here does not mean that the Son of God was ever separated from the Father at any moment or that He was separated from heaven at any moment. It does not mean the bodily seating since the Father has neither left nor right and heaven is limitless. What is meant by the Right Hand of the Father is His Greatness, ability and power. The Lord Jesus Christ ascended in the flesh (our flesh), which he took from St. Mary the Virgin and ascended with it and put it in its proper place in heaven. So all the righteous believers in the Lord Christ as they are united with him will also have a place with Him in heaven. The devil is then fully defeated ***“the Lord says to my Lord: sit at my right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”*** (Psalm 110:1). This prophecy has come true.

May

Fourth Sunday

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) In great humility God came to our world, took our nature, united with us, defeated Satan on our behalf and completed our salvation on the cross.
- (2) Then He defeated death so that when we are united with Him we can defeat death as well. And as He ascended in His glorious ascension He raised our nature with Him and took us to His glory. He then put the church at her proper place in heaven.
- (3) We then have to live as children of God. Let us not defile ourselves with the lusts of the mortal world.

NOTES

[illegible]

May

Fourth Sunday

[SONGS](#) 🎵

ASCENSION

The Lord ascended up on high!
The Lord has triumphed gloriously!
The grave and Hell are captive led,

Christ ascended to heaven!

The heavens, with joy, receive their Lord –
By saints, by angel hosts adored,
O earth, adore your Glorious king,
Christ ascended to heaven!

You have gone before us, Lord
To prepare for us our heavenly abode,
That we may be where You are now,
Christ ascended to heaven!

For You sat at the Father's right hand,
Our hope, our love may always be.
Dwell in us that we may, too
Dwell forever more in You.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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Coptic Orthodox Church



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
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HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

May

Fourth Sunday



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**MAY
FIFTH SUNDAY
PENTECOST
FIVE SYMBOLS FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE
BIBLE (I)**

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 1 in a series of two lessons about the symbols of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in the Holy Bible. As we study these symbols we can learn about the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of God, and His action in the formation of our personalities and our daily lives.

MEMORY VERSE:

"...The heavens were opened to Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him"(Matt 3:16)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ **Introduction**

First, please review with the students all the events that happened on Pentecost (Acts 2). Then proceed to explain saying that the reader of the Holy Bible will find various symbols for the Holy Spirit. Each symbol will give us some insight into the actions of the Holy Spirit in forming the Christian personality as well as His action in the daily life. We will discuss five symbols.

May

Fifth Sunday

(A) THE WIND:

In reality the word “Epnevma” in Greek means wind and it means spirit as well. So we say “*the wind blows where it wishes....*” (John 3:8). Or we can say the same verse as “the spirit blows where it wishes.” The descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was described as “*and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting*” (Acts 2:2). Also in the book of Ezekiel the resurrection of the bones was described by saying “*Also he said to me, ‘prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, thus says the Lord God: ‘come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain that they may live’*”.

“*So I prophesied as he commanded me and breath came into them and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army*” (Ezekiel 37:9-10). We also observe that the Lord Christ granted the Holy Spirit to His disciples in the authority of the priesthood through blowing in their faces and saying, “*receive the Holy Spirit*” (John 20:22). This blow of air is wind. This is what is being done now during the ordination of a priest. The bishop blows wind in his mouth and says to him receive the Holy Spirit and the priest replies by saying “*I open my mouth and received the spirit for me*” (Psalm 119).

(B) THE FIRE:

It is clear from the events of the Pentecost that the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples as tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). Then “*and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*” (Acts 2:4). And this is not strange as the Holy Bible says, “*for our God is a consuming fire*” (Heb. 12:29) and “*God is spirit*” (John 4:24).

The descent of the fire on the offering in the Old Testament was to signify that God accepted the offering as it happened when Elijah the prophet presented his offering in front of the false prophets, the Bible said, “*then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burned sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust....*” (1 Kings 18:38). We observe here that the fire never departed from the house of God entirely. The fire was always on the altar of offering to signify the acceptance of God to these offerings “*and the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the fat of the piece offerings, a fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.*” (Leviticus 6:12-13). In the censer the fire represents the Divinity and the charcoal represents the humanity.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



(C) THE DOVE:

The dove as a symbol of the Holy Spirit came in the event of baptizing the Lord Jesus Christ, glory be to Him. St. John the Baptist ***“and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon him”*** (Matt 3:16). Similarly it was mentioned in (Mark 1:10) and (Luke 3:22). Therefore the church gives the human soul, which is filled with the Holy Spirit the title of a dove. This is clear from the book of the Song of Solomon in which the Lord says to the church ***“open for me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one...”*** (Songs 5:2). The dove also reminds us of the calm and meek spirit (1 Peter 3:4). The Lord Jesus said about the spiritual people to be like doves when he said ***“be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”*** (Matt 10:16). There is also another symbol for the action of the Holy Spirit in Noah’s dove, which came to him with the peaceful news carrying the olive leaf.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

The Holy Spirit working in the individual would formulate his or her personality. The Holy Spirit would make the person peaceful as a dove, powerful as fire and effective as wind. The Holy Spirit works only on a person who is obedient and humble to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

***Note:** This lesson is based on the writings of H.H. Pope Shenouda III.

May

Fifth Sunday

[SONGS](#) 🎵

ASCENSION

The Lord ascended up on high!
The Lord has triumphed gloriously!
The grave and Hell are captive led,

Christ ascended to heaven!

The heavens, with joy, receive their Lord –
By saints, by angel hosts adored,
O earth, adore your Glorious king,
Christ ascended to heaven!

You have gone before us, Lord
To prepare for us our heavenly abode,
That we may be where You are now,
Christ ascended to heaven!

For You sat at the Father's right hand,
Our hope, our love may always be.
Dwell in us that we may, too
Dwell forever more in You.

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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**JUNE
FIRST SUNDAY**

**PENTECOST –
FIVE SYMBOLS FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE
BIBLE (II)**

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the second lesson in a series of two lessons about the symbols of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in the Holy Bible. As we study these symbols we can learn about the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of God and His actions in the formation of our personalities and our daily lives.

MEMORY VERSE:

"He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water, but this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:38-39)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† **Introduction**

Please start this lesson by reviewing the previous one. Then continue with the rest of the symbols of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in the Holy Bible. The emphasis here is on the effect of the Holy Spirit in forming the Christian personality as well as His action in our daily lives.

June

First Sunday

(A) THE WATER

The water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit from the point of view that it brings life or that it is an important nutrition that is necessary for life. The first psalm mentions about the righteous individual saying, ***“he shall be like a tree planted by the river of water...”*** (Psalm 1:3). This water gives life. This is why the psalm continued saying ***“that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper”*** (Psalm 1:3). God likened Himself to the source of the living water. He said in the book of Jeremiah ***“...They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living water and hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns that can hold no water.”***(Jeremiah 2:13). God is truly the source of the living water because from him the Holy Spirit proceeds (John 15:26). The Lord Christ in his talk mentioned this living water with the Samaritan woman when he said, ***“if you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you ‘give me a drink’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”*** (John 4:10). Then He said, ***“whomever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life”*** (John 4:13-14).

The symbol is very clear also in the saying of the Lord ***“He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water, but this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified”*** (John 7:38-39). Therefore our fathers the Apostles were likened to the rivers because they carried the living water to the people. They gave them the Holy Spirit who gave them the spiritual nutrition that leads to eternal life.

Also the water as a symbol for the Holy Spirit appears clearly in baptism when we are born from the water and the Spirit (John 3:5). The Holy Spirit descends on the water and it does not continue to be regular water but it becomes living water that enables the person to be born again (Titus 3:5). From baptism the person gets purification and sanctification as St. Paul the Apostle said ***“...but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”***(1 Corinthians 6:11).

(B) THE OIL

The oil is clearly a symbol of the Holy Spirit from the Sacrament of the Holy Chrismation (the Sacrament of Mayroun). The prophets in the Old Testament used

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Coptic Orthodox Church



to anoint with the holy ointment three categories of people: priests, kings and, prophets so that the Holy Spirit would give them His gifts and talents. The Lord asked Moses the prophet to make the oil of the ointment from the pure olive oil with a collection of ointments (Exodus 30:22-24). And He said to Him ***“and you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil. With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense; the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them must be holy.”***(Exodus 30:25-29). As this ointment is used to sanctify the house of God with all its altars and vessels, it is also used to sanctify the priests as well and in this the Lord said to Moses ***“and you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and consecrate them, that they may minister to me as priests”***(Exodus 30:30). God repeated the same thing again in the book of Exodus 40:9-13. Then Moses did as the Lord ordered him (Lev. 8:4) and he anointed Aaron (Lev. 8:12) and he had also anointed the house of God and all its altars. Which oil was this? Which ointment was this? So that whoever anointed with it becomes sanctified and becomes a priest. In the anointment of Saul it was said ***“Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: “Is it not because the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance?””*** (1 Samuel 10:1). God gave Saul a new heart and the Spirit of God came on him and he prophesied. And it was said ***“is Saul also one of the prophets?”***(1 Samuel 10:9-11). About the anointment of David the Holy Bible mentions ***“then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward...”***(1 Samuel 16:13).

We also read about Elijah the prophet when he anointed two kings and one prophet who was Elisha (1 Kings 19:15-16). Those who were anointed were called ***“the anointed of the Lord”***. When David refused to kill Saul the King he said ***“the Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master the Lord’s anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.”***(1 Samuel 24:6).

The olive symbolizes the church since it is filled with oil. St. Paul the Apostle talks about the church of the Old Testament and says that it is ***“the original olive”*** and he says the church of the New Testament is a new olive cultivated on the old olive. (Romans 11:17,24). Zechariah the prophet prophesied and said ***“what are these two olive trees at the right of the lamp stand and at its left?”***(Zechariah 4:11).

June

First Sunday

We find both symbols the oil and the fire of the Holy Spirit together in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. *“And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually.”* (Exodus 27:20). These lamps were prepared by Aaron and his sons from evening until morning before the Lord (Exodus 27:21). So we find here both symbols of the Holy Spirit (oil and fire) together.

In our church today we see candles. In these candles we see oil and fire. Also in the so-called kandel we find oil and fire. We do the same thing in the apocalyptic night in which we have seven candles oil and fire. When we sing about this rubric we can understand the wisdom in it. The same kandel i.e. oil and fire is found in the Sacrament of the Unction of the Sick in which the Holy Spirit works.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

There are deep spiritual lessons that we can learn from the oil and the fire together as we look at candles in the church or in the kandel in the rubric of our holy church. We see in those things the action of the Holy Spirit on the personality of the believers i.e. purity, light, sanctification, and warmth (Romans 12:11), (Psalm 9:1).

***Note:** This lesson is based on the writings of H.H. Pope Shenouda III.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

WHEN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal 5:25)

REFRAIN

When the Spirit of the Lord	moves in my heart
I will love	as Jesus loves
I will pray	as David prayed
I will preach	as Peter preached
I will serve	as St. Paul served

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

June

First Sunday



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**JUNE
SECOND SUNDAY**

**MY COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH HAS TAUGHT ME
(I)
WHY DO WE RESPECT AND KISS THE ICONS?**

Please read the attached article entitled, “He Who Likes to Benefit”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 1 in a series of two lessons on specific questions related to our Coptic Orthodox Church’s way of doing things and her faith. Everything is for our spiritual benefit.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified.” (Gal 3:1)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Icons in the church are not placed to decorate the church but they have a theological and spiritual meaning attached to them. They are not pieces of artwork to reflect certain cultures or to express the spiritual feeling of an artist.

✝ When we look at the icons we remember, otherwise man always forgets. We remember the Saint in the picture, what he or she has done in his or her life and how he or she gained victory over the devil and gained eternal life (Hebrew 13). So, icons give a biblical message for educational and spiritual purposes.

✝ The icon transfers us from the materialistic world into the spiritual world.

✝ **We love, respect and kiss the icons for the following reasons:**

June

Second Sunday

- 1) According to the Coptic rites, veneration may only be given to consecrated church icons. These icons receive consecration by a Bishop and are anointed with the same Chrisma oil that is used in Baptism. Thus, upon accepting some power of the Holy Spirit, they are qualified to receive incense, be kissed, or receive other form of veneration. They are no longer memorial frames, but - as consecrated icons - have become God's possession and bear effective spiritual power that is capable of attracting the hearts to heaven and have a positive contribution to the Church's life.
- 2) Our love to the Saints leads us to kiss the icon. For example, if your father went away for a long time and he sent you a picture, you would kiss it because you love him.
- 3) Our respect and kiss of the icons do not mean that we worship the icons. We only worship God. However, respecting and kissing icons is an open declaration of God's glory in the life of the Saints.
- 4) Icons were found in the very early churches and in the writings of the early fathers of the church. Icons are mentioned in the New Testament as well. (Gal 3:1)
- 5) Last but not least, when we look at the Saints' picture in the icon, we seek their prayers on our behalf. Please take a picture of St. Mary or St. George, etc., and discuss with the students. They are closer to God than us and as a result God loves them and does what they ask of Him to do. The Saints pray on our behalf. We have seen many miracles happen as soon as a person comes to take the blessings of a Saint by kissing his or her icon. The icon in this case has the power of God through the prayer of the Saint in the icon and through the power of the Holy Oil "El--Mayroun."
- 6) A wise individual will always search for spiritual benefits. Even looking at the birds of heaven can be beneficial. The Lord Jesus said, "***consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?***"

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WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Icons are not pieces of artwork. We respect, love and get blessings from the consecrated icons.
- (2) We must look at the icons to remember the Lord Christ, the Saints and follow their footsteps. Everyone must have pictures of the Saints in his or her room.
- (3) Whoever wants to benefit, searches for it. The church offers to us through the grace of God various sources of spiritual benefits: prayers, hymns, sermons, sacraments, spiritual books, the Cross and icons.

June

Second Sunday

SONGS 🎵

MY COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

My Coptic Orthodox Church
In Nubia and Ethiopia
Also in African nations
In the European countries

you have spread Christianity
and in Western cities
as well as in Sudan
you witnessed through the land

REFRAIN

O my church the strong
We defend you with our blood

O great place of prayer
we defend you with our life.

At the Nicean Council
Your deacon Athanasius
With Clement and Origen
And Cyril and Discoros

you stood firm and remained
is the hero of faith
with Anthony and Paul
all of your saints stood tall.

My beloved Coptic Church
You are so sweet and radiant
Our eyes do look toward you
O great place of prayer

a house of beauty bright
we defend you with our love.
and our hearts adore you
we always come to you

Jesus came and visited you
And the blood of St. Mark
St. George and St. Demiana
The blood of Abba Peter

with His Mother He blessed you
established your faith true.
were martyred for the faith
ended the pagan ways.

Mother of seven sacraments
The wicked persecuted you
The oldest of all churches
The love of all our martyrs

as well as of our saints
but God kept strong your gates
in the world a bright light
you are the way of paradise

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**



HE WHO LIKES TO BENEFIT

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

The one who likes to benefit always searches for profitability. Too much talk does not profit him, but a word could change his whole life... He even benefits from silence, as St. Paphnoti said about one of his guests, he does not profit from my silence, then he would profit from my talk either"

St. Anthony heard one phrase, and it was the cause of his monasticism and the foundation of this angelic rite. Another phrase made him go to the inner wilderness and the life of solitude.

God does not stipulate to teach you by many words, one phrase will suffice. The Ten Commandments are all short sentences, but carry all the teachings.

The Lord's prayer has short phrases that carry depth of supplications.

The one who likes to benefit seeks the profitability any price.

The spirit-borne used to endure the hardships of travels to hear one word from one of the Fathers. And the Fathers themselves used to benefit from any or even from their children.

The one who asks for good always finds it...

Even in a passing word, from anyone, in a casual incident that accidentally happened to him or others. He profits from his own and other people's mistakes.

One of the Saints once said, *"I don't remember the devil tempting me to the same sin twice"*, because he benefited from his fall and was careful in the second...

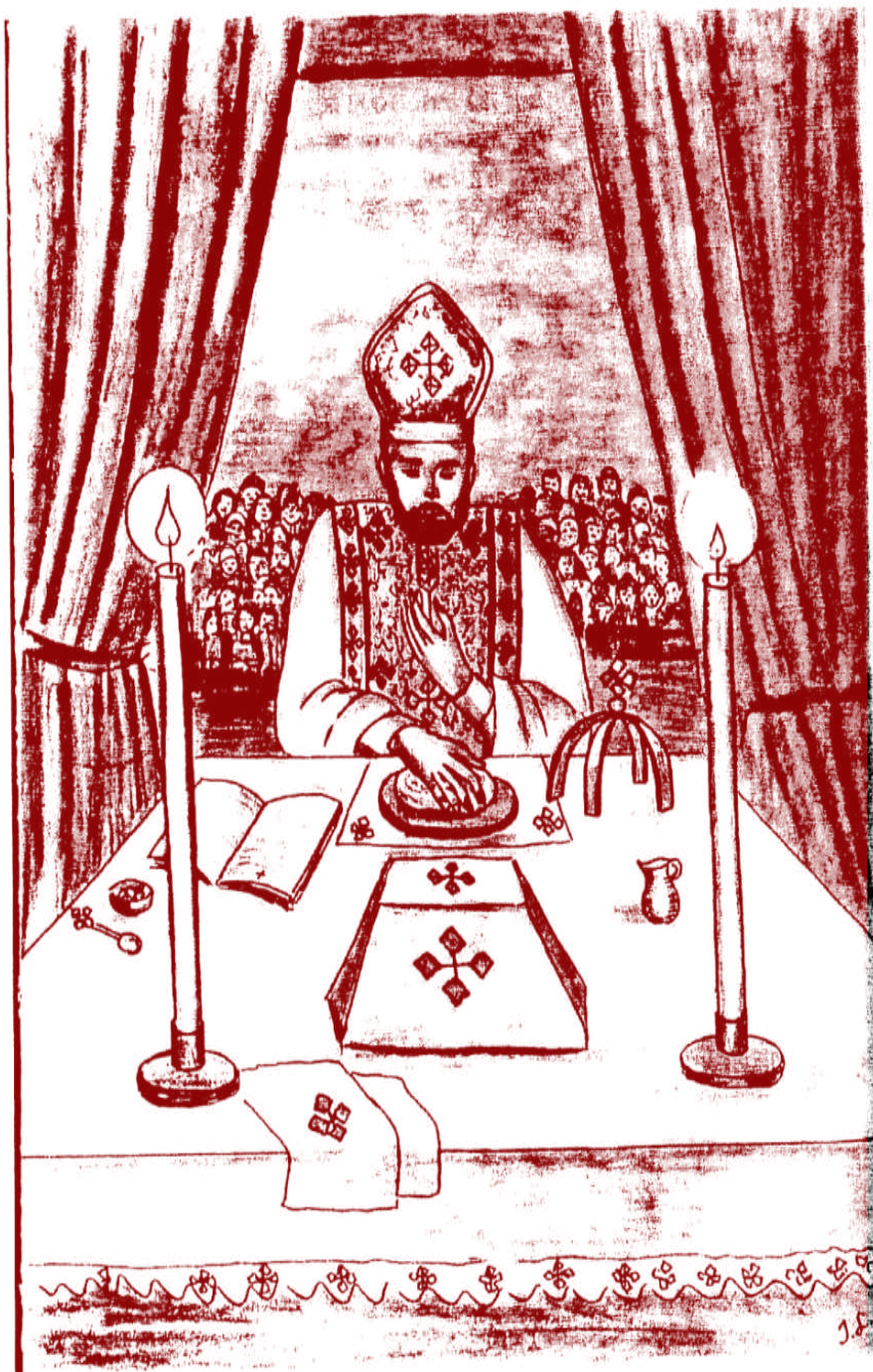
The Lord Jesus asked us to learn from the lillies of the fields, and the birds of the sky, and learn a lesson in faith and in God's care.

Sources of profit are available: not only in the words of apacher, or in spiritual books, but they are also everywhere and at anytime. The main point is: do you want to profit or not.

God's voice reaches everyone, in different ways. But, *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."* (Matt 11:15)

June

Second Sunday





**JUNE
THIRD SUNDAY**

**MY COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH HAS TAUGHT ME
(II)
WHY ARE THE CHURCHES LIGHTED DURING
THE DIVINE LITURGY?**

Please read the attached article entitled “He Who Likes to benefit”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 2 in a series of two lessons on specific questions related to our Coptic Orthodox Church’s way of doing things and her faith. Everything is for our spiritual benefit.

MEMORY VERSE:

"In Your light we see light" (Ps.36:9)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

1. Lighting is an order from God:

“You shall make seven lamps for it, and they shall arrange its lamps so that they give light in front of it” Exodus 25:37. So in the Ark of Testimony, God ordered lights to be in front of the table of incense and table of showbread. The lights are on day and night. Please read: Exodus 27:20 “*And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light to cause the lamp to burn continually.*”

2. Our Lord Jesus also made His last supper while lights and candles were on.

3. In the book of Acts we read that the Disciples were meeting at the beginning of the week and they had many lamps and candles on. Acts 20:7-11 “*There were*

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many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together.”

4. Lighting also is a sign of God’s glory. Rev 4:5 “***And from the throne proceeded lightings.***”

5. Lighting is also suitable for the Word of God. Lights are put on around the Bible when the Bible is read in the church as a sign of joy. Remember the word “gospel” means good or joyful news. Ps. 119:105 “***Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.***” So we have to behave according to the Word of God.

6. Lighting reminds us of the promise of God and the Saints who are called as “lights” in their Father’s Kingdom. Matthew 13:43 “***Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,***”

7. The light reminds us of the Lord Jesus who said, “***I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life,***” Sin and sinful life are darkness. A true Christian will lead a righteous life away from the darkness of Satan.

8. The church is an icon of the heavenly Jerusalem. The church in heaven is lit up with the glory of God. “***The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.***” (Rev. 21:23.)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Everything done in the church is for a reason. When we look at a candle which is being burnt for light to us, we remember to sacrifice our efforts and our time for people.
- (2) Also we have to review our actions. And make sure that they are righteous before God. We must avoid sinful actions.
- (3) When we look at the lights in the church, we remember the beautiful light which will light the heavenly city.

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

MY COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

My Coptic Orthodox Church
In Nubia and Ethiopia
Also in African nations
In the European countries

you have spread Christianity
and in Western cities
as well as in Sudan
you witnessed through the land

REFRAIN

O my church the strong
We defend you with our blood

O great place of prayer
we defend you with our life.

At the Nicean Council
Your deacon Athanasius
With Clement and Origen
And Cyril and Discoros

you stood firm and remained
is the hero of faith
with Anthony and Paul
all of your saints stood tall.

My beloved Coptic Church
You are so sweet and radiant
Our eyes do look toward you
O great place of prayer

a house of beauty bright
we defend you with our love.
and our hearts adore you
we always come to you

Jesus came and visited you
And the blood of St. Mark
St. George and St. Demiana
The blood of Abba Peter

with His Mother He blessed you
established your faith true.
were martyred for the faith
ended the pagan ways.

Mother of seven sacraments
The wicked persecuted you
The oldest of all churches
The love of all our martyrs

as well as of our saints
but God kept strong your gates
in the world a bright light
you are the way of paradise

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
PLEASE LOOK AT THE RECITATION CURRICULUM
AT THE END OF THIS BOOK.**

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HE WHO LIKES TO BENEFIT

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

The one who likes to benefit always searches profitability. Too much talk does not profit him, but a word could change his whole life... He even benefits from silence, as St. Paphnoti said about one of his guests, he does not profit from my silence, then he would profit from my talk either"

St. Anthony heard one phrase, and it was the cause of his monasticism and the foundation of this angelic rite. Another phrase made him go to the inner wilderness and the life of solitude.

God does not stipulate to teach you by many words, one phrase will suffice. The Ten Commandments are all short sentences, but carry all the teachings.

The Lord's prayer has short phrases that carry depth of supplications.

The one who likes to benefit seeks the profitability any price.

The spirit-borne used to endure the hardships of travels to hear one word from one of the Fathers. And the Fathers themselves used to benefit from any or even from their children.

The one who asks for good always finds it...

Even in a passing word, from anyone, in a casual incident that accidentally happened to him or others. He profits from his own and other people's mistakes.

One of the Saints once said, *"I don't remember the devil tempting me to the same sin twice"*, because he benefited from his fall and was careful in the second...

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June

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**JUNE
FOURTH SUNDAY**

KNOW THE MONASTERIES OF YOUR CHURCH (I)

Please read the attached article entitled, “Calmness” and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 1 in a series of two lessons about monasticism and the monasteries of our church. We would like to enjoy calmness as our monks do.

MEMORY VERSE:

“For I wish that all men were even as I myself (i.e. a virgin.) But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.” (1 Cor. 7:7)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Introduction about monastic life:

Monastic life is different from marriage life. Each one of them is a gift from God. See the memory verse. *“He who is unmarried cares for the things that belong to the Lord - how he may please the Lord, but he who is married cares about the things of the world - how he may please his wife,” (1 Cor. 7:32-33)*

✙ The Monastic life is very respectable in our Church.

✙ Monasticism began first in Egypt. The first Monk in the world was St. Anthony. (Please review what the students know about St. Anthony.) St. Anthony was a Copt born in Upper Egypt.

✙ The first rules of the monastic life were composed by St. Pachomius, another Copt from Upper Egypt.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



✝ At first, monks lived in caves in the hills and mountains of Egypt, in complete solitude. Then, the monasteries were established. St. Pachomius was the first Abbot in the world who established monasteries.

✝ In the 4th and 5th centuries, the Coptic monasteries increased. They became hundreds.

✝ Many great writers came to Egypt from various countries in the East and West to see the blessed monks, and they recorded their words and their Holy deeds in books. Among those we can mention Palladius, and Jerome.

✝ Some monasteries were ruined. Others were covered with sand underground. Others are used as rural churches. Nine great monasteries still exist. Our church is trying to restore and reconstruct some of our ancient monasteries.

(B)How does a Monk spend his day?

✝ His day starts from very early morning. He sings hymns from the Psalmody, prays the first hour prayers and attends a divine liturgy.

✝ After that, he starts to carry out his duties in the monastery. It may be cleaning, cooking, planting, repairs, writing books, translating, recording hymns, teaching new priests or young deacons, meditation and prayers, serving the church outside the monastery for a while, reading the Bible... etc. So a monk has a busy day, but he is busy doing God's work. A monk is very intimate with God at all times; even when he works in the monastery, he mixes his work with prayer.

✝ In the evening, he holds evening prayers either with the rest of the monks or alone by himself. Then he spends the night in prayers and hymns. What a lovely life!

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must learn from the Monks to dedicate as much of our time and life as possible and to live with God.
- (2) The commandments of God are very practical, balanced, and give joy to the person who is following them. We can see this clearly in the life of the Monks and the Nuns.
- (3) We must try to gain inner calmness and peace. Taking time out to pray and be alone away from any distractions or noise will help us to be calm. Let us gain from the experience of our fathers the monks.



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- (4) Let us get used to visit our monasteries as much as we can. It would be lovely to spend a few days in a monastery.

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Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

MY FATHERS THE MONKS

My fathers, the monks of the desert	I want to live a life like yours (2)
Life of prayer, vigils and tears you offer unto our Savior	Life of prayer, vigils and tears My fathers, my fathers
The father of the monks Abba Antonius	and his disciple Abba Macarius (2)
left everything of worth and value to serve their faithful Savior	left everything of worth and value My fathers, my fathers
When they were attacked by the Barbarians	no one was afraid or denied their faith (2)
They said our Lord, is Jesus Christ For whom our lives, we sacrifice	They said our Lord, is Jesus Christ My fathers, my fathers

**RECITATION CURRICULUM:
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CALMNESS

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Calmness is one of the beautiful qualities of the spiritual person; it includes calmness of the heart, nerves, thought, senses, behaviour and body. A quiet person's heart never gets troubled for any reason. He does not lose his calm no matter how the problems are caused. As the Prophet David says *"Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though men should rise against me, in this I will be confident"* (Ps. 27:3). It is the type of calm that comes from faith.

If one loses one's inner peace, everything will look disturbed in one's eyes, and what is simple will seem complicated. This complication is not from the outside but from the inside. When the heart is calm the nerves will also be calm. In this case one would not lose temper but, instead, quietly solve the problem.

If the mind fails to solve a problem, the nerves interfere to help. The agitated nerves might announce the lack of a solution, and the more the nerves get troubled, the more they get agitated..

A person with a calm heart and nerves would be able to obtain quietness in thought and action. His thoughts will be balanced, void of any disturbances. Therefore, he will act in a quiet and sound way, far from anger or anxiety.

What helps a person to gain inner peace is outer peace, a peaceful environment that has no agitating effects. For this reason, monks live in the peace of the wilderness, far from noise, people's clamour, and any agitating news or incidents. They usually get used to this calmness..

The life of loneliness and isolation generally brings calmness, because all the senses are calm. As our saints say, the senses are the **access** to thoughts. What you see, hear and touch gives you thoughts. If your senses are at rest from gathering news, you will be relieved from thoughts.

A quiet place helps the senses to be calm, and consequently leads to the calmness of the thoughts, heart and nerves. That is why many people avoid noisy places, seeking peace of mind.

Those who love calm search for it with all their strength, but others, alas, love clamour and could not live without it. Calmness makes them bored!



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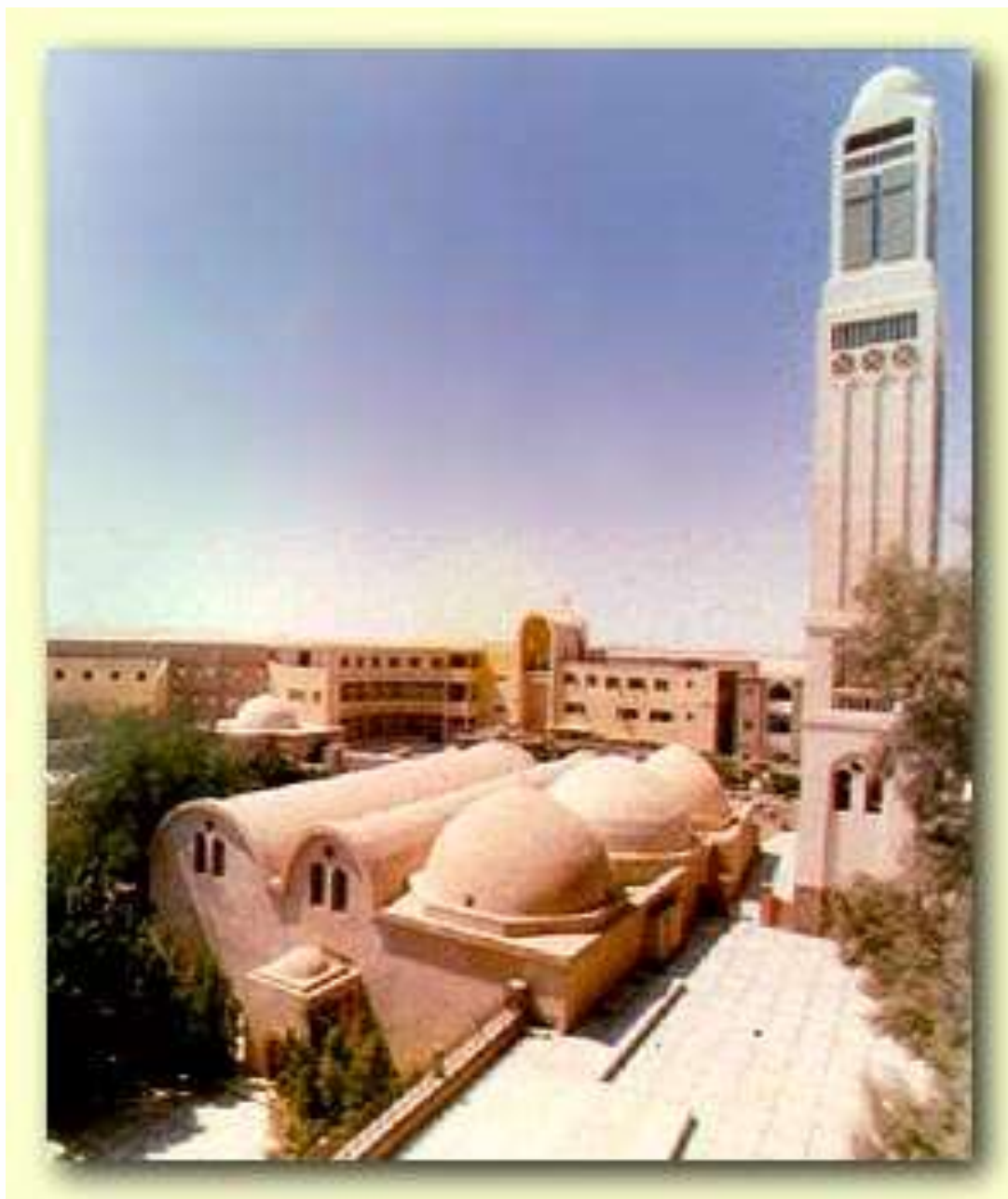
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JULY FIRST SUNDAY

KNOW THE MONASTERIES OF YOUR CHURCH (II)

Please read the attached article entitled, “In the Wilderness and Quietness”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 2 in a series of two lessons about monastic life and the monasteries of our Church.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching.” (Luke 12:37)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Review the previous lesson briefly.

(B) Use a slide show presentation of monasteries as you explain the following:

✙ According to Coptic tradition, Wadi El-Natroun, the desert of Scete has a Christian history that goes back as far as the visit of the Holy Family to Egypt. The Holy Virgin Mary blessed the mountains of El-Natroun predicting the angelic services that would be rendered there.

✙ The second settlement, frequently referred to by the ancient authorities, was called Cellia, situated northeast of Scete, the present Wadi El-Natroun. According to Palladius, this was the habitation of St. Macarius of Alexandria.

✙ Dair Al-Baramous or the Monastery of the Romans: This monastery is the northern most of the four remaining monasteries of Wadi El-Natroun. Dair Al-Baramous is the earliest settlement in Wadi El-Natroun.

The History of its foundation is ultimately related to the lives of the two Romans, St. Maximus and Domadius. According to tradition, these two young Roman

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princes, sons of the Roman Emperor Valentine, arrived in Wadi El-Natroun, after having visited the Christian holy places of Nicea and Palestine. There, they met St. Macarius, who served as the priest of the desert.

At first, St. Macarius tried to dissuade them; but after a while, the “two little strangers” as they were called, had established themselves in their cells. The older brother had attained perfection before he died. Three days later, the younger brother also died. A year after their departure, St. Macarius consecrated the cell of those two Roman princes and said, “Call this place the cell of the Romans.” Dair Al Baramous has lately restored its previous importance by His Holiness Pope Shenouda III.

✝ Of the monasteries, which are at present inhabited by Monks, there are four in the Wadi El-Natroun which lies to the west of the Delta. They are Dair (i.e. monastery) Abu Maquar (St. Macarius), Dair Anba Bishoy (St. Bishoy), Dair Al-Baramous (i.e. the Romans) and Dair Al-Syrians (of the Syrians).

✝ In the Menyaarea there is one monastery, namely that of Anba Samuel (St. Samuel) and on the West bank of the Nile, to the North of Asyout, there is Dair- of Al-Mahark.

✝ In the eastern desert, boarding the red sea, there are two monasteries, namely DairAnba Antonius (St. Anthony) and Dair of AnbaBaula (St. Paul).

✝ In the recent times, the monastery of Abba Mina (i.e. St. Menas) at Mareotis (Maryut) has been re-established close to the ancient shrine of St. Mena by Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria H.H. Pope Cyril VI.

✝ There are also many convents, in our homeland Egypt, for the nuns. These convents also have many nuns who live a righteous life filled with joy in Christ. Details of these convents deserve another lesson.

✝ Please review all the examples (from the attached material) of people who benefited from the life of solitude.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We learn something about our monasteries in Egypt. When we visit our homeland Egypt, it is very important to visit these monasteries and convents. We will then see an excellent example for people who live with God in a pure life, filled with joy.
- (2) As all the examples of people in the Holy Bible who benefited from the calm environment, we also must avoid noisy things like TV, music of the world and

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Coptic Orthodox Church



large crowds. We must learn to shut our door and pray.

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SONGS 🎵

MY FATHERS THE MONKS

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Life of prayer, vigils and tears you offer unto our Savior	Life of prayer, vigils and tears My fathers, my fathers
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IN THE WILDERNESS AND QUIETNESS

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Amidst the hustle and bustle of life, with its many worries, how beautiful it is for one to devote even a little time, to sit with God, in an atmosphere of contemplation, prayer and open his heart to the Lord.

Here one resorts to calmness and quietness...

It is appropriate, when talking to God, to be alone with Him...

For this reason, God moved Abraham from his own country and people, to the mountain where he became alone with God... There, he had to build the Altars...

In the seclusion of the Holy Mountain, Moses spent forty days alone with God, till he took the Law and the Commandments and the instructions on how to build the tabernacle.

Also in the seclusion of the mountain, the Lord Jesus met with His Disciples and sometimes He took them to an isolated place...

The prophet Elijah, was trained in the quietness of Mount Carmel.

John, the Baptist, was brought up in the wilderness for thirty years.

The Prophets were also trained in quietness a calmness.

Moses, before he became a prophet and was chosen by God for leadership, spent forty years in quietness. He stayed far from Pharaoh's palace, with all its clamour and politics...

The Lord Jesus, Himself, inspite of the unlimited tranquillity deep within Him, and the eternal relationsh with the Father, He set the example for us by staying alone on the mountain for forty days in a state of quietness with the Father, before He started His public ministry.

The mountain had its place and position in the life the Lord, as goes the beautiful saying of the Bible, *"And everyone went to his own house. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives" (Jn 8:1)*

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The garden of Gethsemane was a place of quietness and calmness for Christ, where He spent periods of decontemplation.

Mary, the sister of Martha, was an example of the life of quietness, sitting calmly at the Lord's feet. As for her busy and worried sister, who was far from the life of quietness, the Lord rebuked her by saying, "Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed." (Lk 10:40-41)

Then, will you search for the centre of quietness in your life?

Are you worried and troubled about many things... And when will you calm down to yourself? When?



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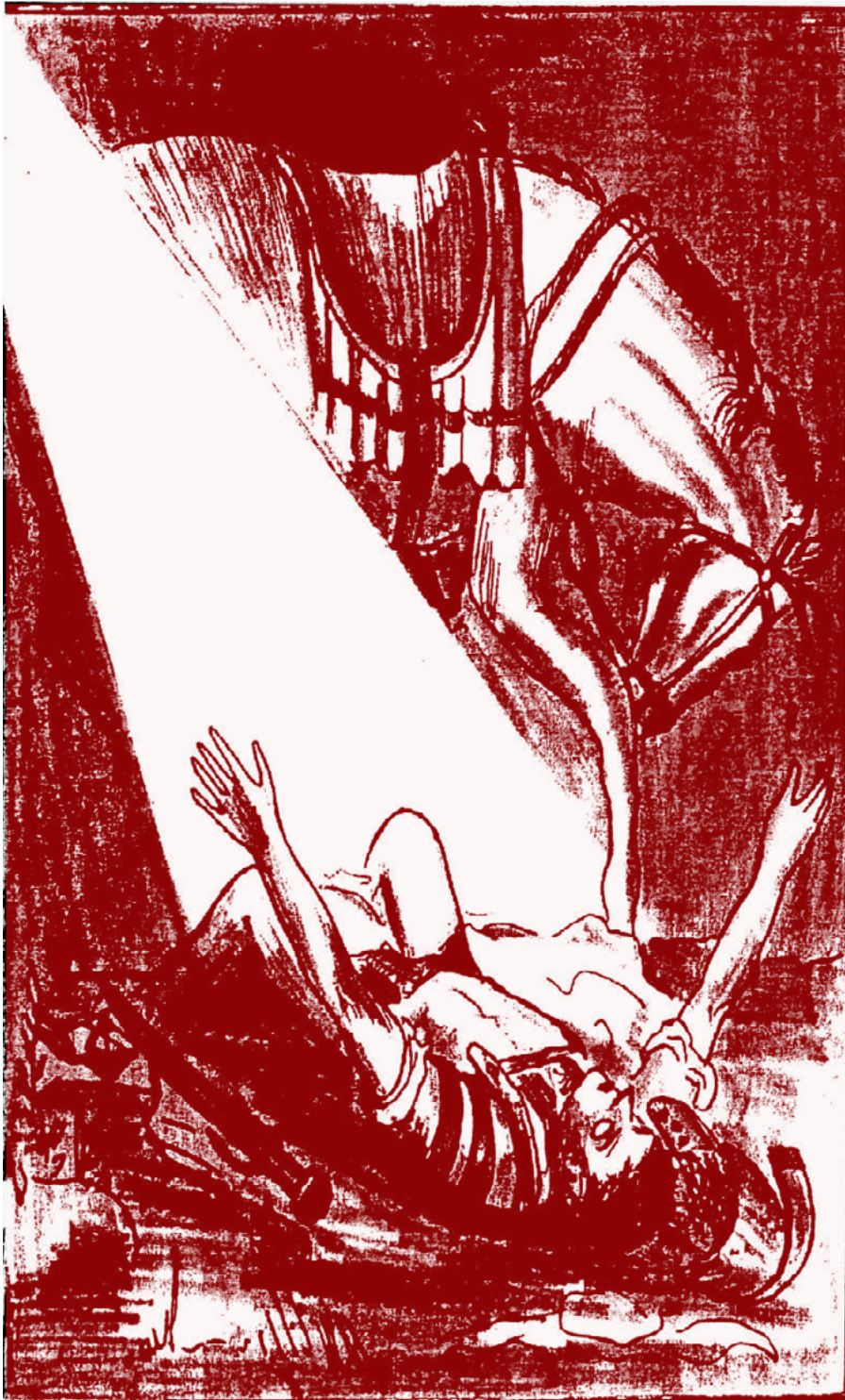
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First Sunday





**JULY
SECOND SUNDAY**

**IN MEMORY OF THE APOSTLES (I)
HOW CAN WE PREACH CHRISTIANITY?**

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 1 in a series of four lessons about the Apostles of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In this lesson we learn about the ministry of St. Paul and his preaching of Christianity. How can we preach Christianity in the society in which we live?

MEMORY VERSE:

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Introduction: You are my witnesses:

✝ The Lord Jesus chose his Disciples to become witnesses for His death and resurrection and to proclaim the gospel of the world. He said to them; ***"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*** (Acts 1:8). So, an Apostle is a witness for Christ.

✝ St. Paul preached Christianity in Greece, Jerusalem, Syria, Philippi in Macedonia. He is the Apostle for the gentiles.

(B) St. Paul was a servant filled with the Holy Spirit:

✝ From the fullness of the Holy Spirit he spoke in tongues.

✝ 1Cor. 14:18-19

✝ His service was supported by powers and miracles

✝ 1Cor. 2:4

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✝ Acts 14:8-11 Please Read In Class

✝ Acts 20:7-12

✝ He was given wisdom and intelligence to judge in spiritual and administrative matters

✝ 1Cor. 5:3-5

✝ He was given confidence in the midst of troubles

✝ 2Cor. 6:4

✝ Romans 15:3-6

✝ He lived in an internal peace of mind despite all the external troubles that were around him.

✝ Romans 8:35-39 Please read in class

✝ St. Paul was a servant who was trying to only please God.

✝ 2Cor, 11:2-4

✝ He was trying his best to win people to Christ. 1Cor. 9:19- 23

✝ Hence his ministry was not partial to any specific nation or people.

✝ Suffering was a daily norm for St. Paul:

✝ 2 Cor.2: 1 and 5:4

✝ Romans 8:35

✝ He was beheaded for the sake of Jesus and he was very happy to gain the crown of martyrdom.

✝ He was only proud of being a servant of God.

✝ 1Cor. 3:18 and 2 Cor. 1:12-14

✝ He considered his life before becoming a Christian as inconsequential.

✝ Galatians 2: 15-21

✝ He was so humble he considered himself as the least among the Apostles. 1 Cor.15: 18-10

(C)How can we serve Christianity in the society we live in?

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SONGS 🎵

O APOSTLES OF CHRIST

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."(Mk 16:15)

With happiness and joy
Now many crowns enjoy

in heaven with our Lord
O Apostles of Christ

Through sufferings and tears
You taught for many years

and yet without any fears
O Apostles of Christ

In pain you never complained
The paradise obtained

even when you were jailed
O Apostles of Christ

Remember to ask for us
Blessings may He grant us

before our Lord Jesus
O Apostles of Christ

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Coptic Orthodox Church



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JULY THIRD SUNDAY

IN MEMORY OF THE APOSTLES (II) WHY SHOULD EVERY CHRISTIAN SERVE GOD?

Please read the attached article entitled, “Love sacrifices”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 2 in series of four lessons about the Apostles of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In this lesson we learn why every Christian should serve God.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”(John 21:15-17)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A)Introduction:

✙ Every Christian must serve the church and people in the society. The Lord Jesus Himself said, “***Son of man did not come to be served but to serve.***” We can start now to think of ways and means to serve God.

- ✙ We can organize the books of the church.
- ✙ We can collect money for the poor.
- ✙ We can visit the sick.
- ✙ We can help the needy in the society.
- ✙ We can help in the cleaning of the church.
- ✙ We can help our parents do housework.
- ✙ We can serve as deacons.
- ✙ We can give booklets or flyers about our Coptic Orthodox Church to our friends at school.

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✝ We must learn from now to give some of our time to God. As we love God more, we shall be able to give more of our time to serve him.

(B) Incentives of serving God and giving part of our time:

✝ Our love of God:

See the memory verse. Our beloved Jesus showed St. Peter that as evidence of his love to Jesus he should lead the sheep, i.e., to preach the word of God, see also Romans 8:35-36. Hence we must pray that God fills our hearts with love so that this becomes the incentive for us to offer our service to God.

✝ Our love for others:

✝ We must love to benefit others and hence offer our aid. *“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.”* (1 John 4:20). The miracle of feeding the multitude that Jesus did was done when He saw the people as sheep without a shepherd. Mathew 9:36 and Mark 6:34.

✝ In the miracle of bringing back Lazarus to life, Jesus showed how He loved Mary and Martha, Please see John 11:33.

✝ To love to sacrifice what we have to others:

✝ The rich man came to Jesus asking to follow Him. Then Jesus asked him to go back and sell what he has and give to the poor. The rich man went away sad because he could not sacrifice anything for God. Jesus said *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep.”* (John 10:11). St. Anthony was very rich but he had the desire to sacrifice for the sake of God. All the Apostles gave up all their conveniences for the sake of God.

July

Third Sunday

† The reward of God to us. *“Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.”* (Mark 10:29-30).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must start now to serve God. A good Christian is a good servant of God at school, at home, in the church and with his or her friends.
- (2) A good evidence that we have true love for God is to sacrifice; similar to the Apostles, the Martyrs, the Confessors and the rest of the Saints. What have we sacrificed for Jesus?

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Coptic Orthodox Church



SONGS 🎵

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Second Sunday

LOVE SACRIFICES

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Love is tested through suffering, tribulation and sacrifice.

The one who is not able to sacrifice is the one who does not love.. Once he loves, he will sacrifice everything.

Abraham, the father of fathers, because of his love for God, left his people and the house of his father, and lived a stranger in a tent...

But Abraham's love for God reached its peak when he laid his only son on the altar. He placed wood and fire around him and raised his hand with the knife, to sacrifice him.

When Daniel loved the Lord, he sacrificed himself and accepted being thrown into the lions' den. The same with the three youths who proved their love through self-sacrifice, to be cast into the burning furnace...

St. Paul, the Apostle, said about his love for the Lord Jesus, *"I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him."* (Phil 3:8-9)

Our fathers the martyrs and the confessors, because of their love for God, sacrificed their blood, their lives and comfort. They experienced torment and never feared, because of their great love...

There are obstacles that hinder Man from sacrifice: his love of comfort, love of dignity and the love of self... But real love does not care for comfort, pride or self...

One sacrifices everything for the sake of the one he loves...

Jacob, the father of fathers, when he fell in love with Rachel, sacrificed much for her sake. He toiled for twenty years, with the sun burning him during the day and the cold at night... He considered all these years as a few days because of his love for her.

And what have you sacrificed for Jesus, who sacrificed Himself on the Cross for your sake?...

The one who loves, sacrifices himself for God and for people.

He has to practise first to sacrifice what is outside himself, such as wealth, time and possessions. But the one who is unable to sacrifice what is outside himself, how would he sacrifice himself?!

If you are unable to sacrifice, then you do not love others; you only love yourself...

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July

Fourth Sunday

**JULY
FOURTH SUNDAY**

**IN MEMORY OF THE APOSTLES (III)
THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY FROM THE EPISTLES OF
ST. PAUL**

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 3 in a series of four lessons about the Apostles of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In this lesson we learn about the Christian family and the function of every member in the family.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Children, obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:20)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) St. Paul in his letters talked about the Christian family as a “church at home” “...To Philemon our beloved brother...and to the church in your house” Philemon 1:1-2. This means that all the members of the Christian family pray together, love one another, cooperate and live together in peace.

(B) St. Paul in his letters talked about every member of a Christian family:

- ✚ He asked husbands to love their wives.
- ✚ Colossians 3:19
- ✚ Ephesians 5:25

- ✚ He asked the elders to be wise with faith and love
- ✚ Timothy 2:3

- ✚ He asked the women to obey (in love) their husbands
- ✚ 1 Cor.11
- ✚ 2 Timothy 2:11-12

- ✚ He asked the youth to be good

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✝ Timothy 2:6

(C) St. Paul talked about the work and the behavior of every member in the family:

✝ He asked the parents to bring up their children in the faith of God.

✝ Colossians 3:21

✝ Ephesians 5:4

✝ He asked the children to obey their parents

✝ Colossians 3:20

✝ Ephesians 5:1-3

✝ He asked the masters to be just in their treatment of their servants

✝ Ephesians 6:9

✝ Colossians 4:1

✝ He asked the servants to obey their masters

✝ 1 Timothy 6:1-2

✝ Romans 3:1-7

(D) St. Paul talked about the formation of the family:

✝ He said that marriage is a great Sacrament.

✝ Ephesians 5:31-32

✝ He asked the family to welcome visitors with love

✝ 1 Timothy 5:10

✝ He asked the family not to fall in love with money.

✝ 1 Timothy 6:17-19

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) As children of Christ, St. Paul asks us to obey our parents, even if we are not convinced with what they tell us to do. We will be rewarded handsomely from God for our obedience.

(2) As a Christian family, we must pray and read the Holy Bible together.

July

Fourth Sunday

SONGS 🎵

O APOSTLES OF CHRIST

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk 16:15)

With happiness and joy
Now many crowns enjoy

in heaven with our Lord
O Apostles of Christ

Through sufferings and tears
You taught for many years

and yet without any fears
O Apostles of Christ

In pain you never complained
The paradise obtained

even when you were jailed
O Apostles of Christ

Remember to ask for us
Blessings may He grant us

before our Lord Jesus
O Apostles of Christ

With happiness and joy
Now many crowns enjoy

in Heaven with our Lord
O Apostles of Christ

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August

First Sunday

**AUGUST
FIRST SUNDAY**

**IN MEMORY OF THE APOSTLES (IV)
THE PARABLES IN THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Your Eternity”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 4 in a series of four lessons about the Apostles of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In this lesson we discuss some of the parables mentioned in the letters of St. Paul which explain things related to our eternal life.

MEMORY VERSE:

***“But this I say; he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly;
and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully” (2Cor.
9:6)***

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) St. Paul used several parables to illustrate and simplify some ideas related to our life as Christians and our share in eternal life. Our Lord Jesus also did that. In this lesson please ask the students after reading the parable from the Bible in the class to discuss what they think of its meaning.

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(B)The parable of the plants and harvest:

✝ The body which the grain has after its death is different. Similarly, we take a different body (illuminated body) after our death and resurrection to meet our Lord in His second coming. *1Cor. 15:35-44*

✝ Whoever plants and prepares for the worldly things gains only worldly things. But whoever plants for the heavenly things also gains heavenly things. *Galatians 6:7-9*

(C)The parable of the fruits:

✝ St. Paul used the word “fruit” to show the effects of the Holy Spirit on the believers.

✝ Fruit of the Holy Spirit. *Galatians 5:22*

(D) The parable of the house and the temple:

✝ St. Paul considered himself and all the preachers as builders who are building on the foundation of Jesus Christ. *1Cor. 3:10-15*

✝ Our Master and Lord Jesus is the cornerstone in our lives. *Ephesians 2:20*

(E)The parable of the heavenly house:

✝ St. Paul considered the body as tent (i.e. temporary) that is dismantled with death. But the believers have a house (i.e. permanent) in heaven. *2Cor.5: 1-4*

(F)The parable of the salt:

✝ St. Paul mentioned this parable when he spoke about the good way to speak for a useful purpose. *Colossians 4:6*

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) When we read a parable we must try to learn the meaning behind it for the benefit of our Spiritual life.



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First Sunday

eternal life.

- (3) The individual who is keen about his or her share in heaven must do everything towards building the heavenly treasure.

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SONGS 🎵

WHEN THE SPIRIT

When the Spirit of the Lord moves in my heart
I will love as Jesus loves

When the Spirit of the Lord moves in my heart
I will pray as David Prayed

When the Spirit of the Lord moves in my heart
I will preach as Peter preached

When the Spirit of the Lord moves in my heart
I will serve as St. Paul served

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August

First Sunday

YOUR ETERNITY

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Most people think only of their lives on earth, all their wishes are concentrated on this earthly life. All their efforts and struggle are for its sake, but as for their eternity, perhaps they never think of it...

Your whole life on earth is not worth a twinkle of an eye, if compared with the endless eternity...

Your life on earth is just the preparation for such an eternity, the immortal life...

Maybe sticking to a worldly honour makes you lose all the respect that the saints receive in the everlasting glory...

Nevertheless, you still stick to this worldly honour and sacrifice your eternity, as if you do not care!!

Perhaps your sticking to some of the temporary or passing worldly pleasures deprives you of eternal happiness...

Therefore, you have to be convinced of the importance of eternity, put it always in front of your eyes. Everything becomes of small value compared to it.

How good is the saying of the Apostle, St Paul, to the Corinthians, *"while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."* (2 Cor 4:18)

Truly, in this view, the main difference between a wise person and an ignorant person is quite clear.

The ignorant is short sighted, his look does not proceed beyond the visible things. But the wise person looks too far, to even after death... and keeps thinking: What will become of me after I take off this body? Where shall I go? What shall I be?

And you, brother, with what are you busy...?

Where did you leave your heart? Here or there?...

For where your heart is, there your treasures will be also...

The wise feel they are strangers on earth and do not concentrate their hopes on earth, but *"... he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."* (Heb 11:10)

He who gives importance to his eternity is raised above the earth and all earthly things. Nothing in this world attracts him.

The whole world is behind him and not in front of him...



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For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

August

First Sunday

NOTES

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**AUGUST
SECOND SUNDAY**

**LOVE IN THE LIFE OF THE SAINTS (I)
LOVE SUFFERS LONG AND IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT
ENVY
LOVE DOES NOT PARADE ITSELF, IS NOT PUFFED
UP**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Three virtues”, 1Cor. 13:1-13, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 1 in a series of 2 lessons. The series has stories from the life of the saints as applications of love.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Love suffers long and is kind, love does not envy: love does not parade itself, is not puffed up.” (1Cor. 13: 4)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ ***“Little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but indeed and in truth.” (1 John 3:18).***

✝ Love is the most important evidence of a true Christian life. But love is not just words. Love must be translated into applications. St. Paul in 1 Cor. 13:4-8 describes the various applications of love in the life of a Christian. We will talk about these applications in this series with a true story from the lives of the saints.

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(A) **“Love suffers long”** means being patient with other people’s actions, “suffers long” and “kind” are two corresponding expressions.

✠ **Story: A friend sleeping in the church**

A group of monks went to St. Biman who was known to be very kind. They went complaining that one of the monks sleeps on the bench during the service. They indicated that they were very angry and felt that this monk should be punished. St. Biman answered them saying “If I were you, I would put his head on my knees so that he can sleep more comfortably”. They got angrier and asked “why?” he said to them “Jesus taught me that before I pick out the ash from my friend’s eye, I must take the stick from my own eye first. Then they left after learning that lesson.

(B) **“Love does not Envy”**

✠ Envy is a sin that destroys the spiritual life. Remember Joseph when his brothers had envied him. They did not end up putting him in trouble. The person who envies ends up destroying himself not others.

✠ **Story: St. Pafnoda the disciple of St. Makarius:**

Pafnoda was a young man. He loved God to the extent that he gave up all his money and became a monk and a disciple of St. Macarius. When he joined the monastery he performed miracles and the people from the neighboring cities started to come to the monastery to get healed or get the blessings of this monk. One of the old monks envied him. The old monk wanted to get rid of St. Pafnoda. The old monk had an expensive Bible; he took it secretly and put it in St. Pafnoda’s room and pretended that he is very sad because he couldn’t find the Bible, “someone stole my Bible, he said. They went to search for the Bible until they found it under the bed in St. Pafnoda’s room. St. Pafnoda did not defend himself and left the matter to God. The head of the monastery then ordered St. Pafnoda not to enter the church for a while (as a punishment). A few days later, the old monk had a bad spirit in him and he was suffering a lot. They prayed for the evil spirit to depart, but it wouldn’t leave. The old monk then confessed what he did to the young monk Pafnoda. St. Pafnoda then prayed for him and the evil spirit departed from him.

✠ Remember envy hurts only the person who possesses It.

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(C) **“Love does not parade itself; is not putted up”:**

† ***“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, on honor giving preference to one another”.*** (Romans 12:10)

† **Story: ABC for St. Arsanius:**

St. Arsanius was a teacher for the children of kings and emperors. He was highly educated, but there was a change in his life. He now loved Jesus more than anything else. He left his job and went and became a monk. St. Arsanius became a disciple to a very old monk who did not know how to read and write. St. Arsanius sat at his feet listening and learning. One day a monk in the monastery said to St. Arsanius, “how can you do that and you are the highest teacher?” St. Arsanius answered him saying, “I am still learning the A.B.Cs from the true teacher, this monk.”

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Love is behavior, and we should pray that God gives us love and shows us how we can use this love in our behavior.
- (2) Love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. So, only Christians have true love; or they have the type of love that should be translated in good deeds.
- (3) If we cannot love our brothers and sisters whom we see, we cannot love God whom we do not see.

August

Second Sunday

SONGS 🎵

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbor as yourself

Pantocrator
You created heaven and earth

Jesus Christ
You are our Sacrifice

Holy Spirit
You sanctify our souls

Coptic Church
Through Your Sacraments we are saved

Agios O Theo-os
Agios Athanatos
Eleison ymas

The Gospel in a word is love
Love, love, love

You are my Creator
I adore You.

You are our Redeemer
I love You

You are our Comforter
I need You

You are our blessing and pride
I serve you

AgiosEes- shiros
Eleison ymas

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THREE VIRTUES

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Three virtues should be in each moral goodness to make it a real virtue: love, humility and wisdom.

Any valuable quality void of love is not considered a virtue. The same applies to any virtue void of humility and wisdom.

Any action far from love is far from God.

God takes from each virtue the amount of love that is in it. If He finds no love, He casts it away completely.

Also any virtue that has no humility, is rejected by God and considered food for self righteousness and vain glory. Pride is most hated by God. The Bible said, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (1 Pet 5:5)

Therefore, each virtue should be practised in wisdom, understanding and discretion... Without wisdom and understanding, virtue is not considered a virtue...

For this reason, the Saints used to practise the virtues under the supervision of wise, knowledgeable fathers, to teach them how to be discrete and explain to them how a virtue should be...

History tells us about those who acted in virtue without knowledge and how they fell and perished...

Many dealt with fasting without wisdom and were exhausted both physically and spiritually. Many adopted silence without wisdom and fell in many problems and faults. To them, silence was not a virtue.

Others dealt with offering without knowledge. They gave God's money to swindlers, instead of giving it to the needy...

Therefore, St Anthony said that being discrete is one of the greatest virtues, as it controls and considers all of them...

Pastoral care and service without discretion could complicate matters instead of settling them. Accordingly, our fathers, the Apostles made it conditional that deacons must be, "... full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom..." (Act 6:3)

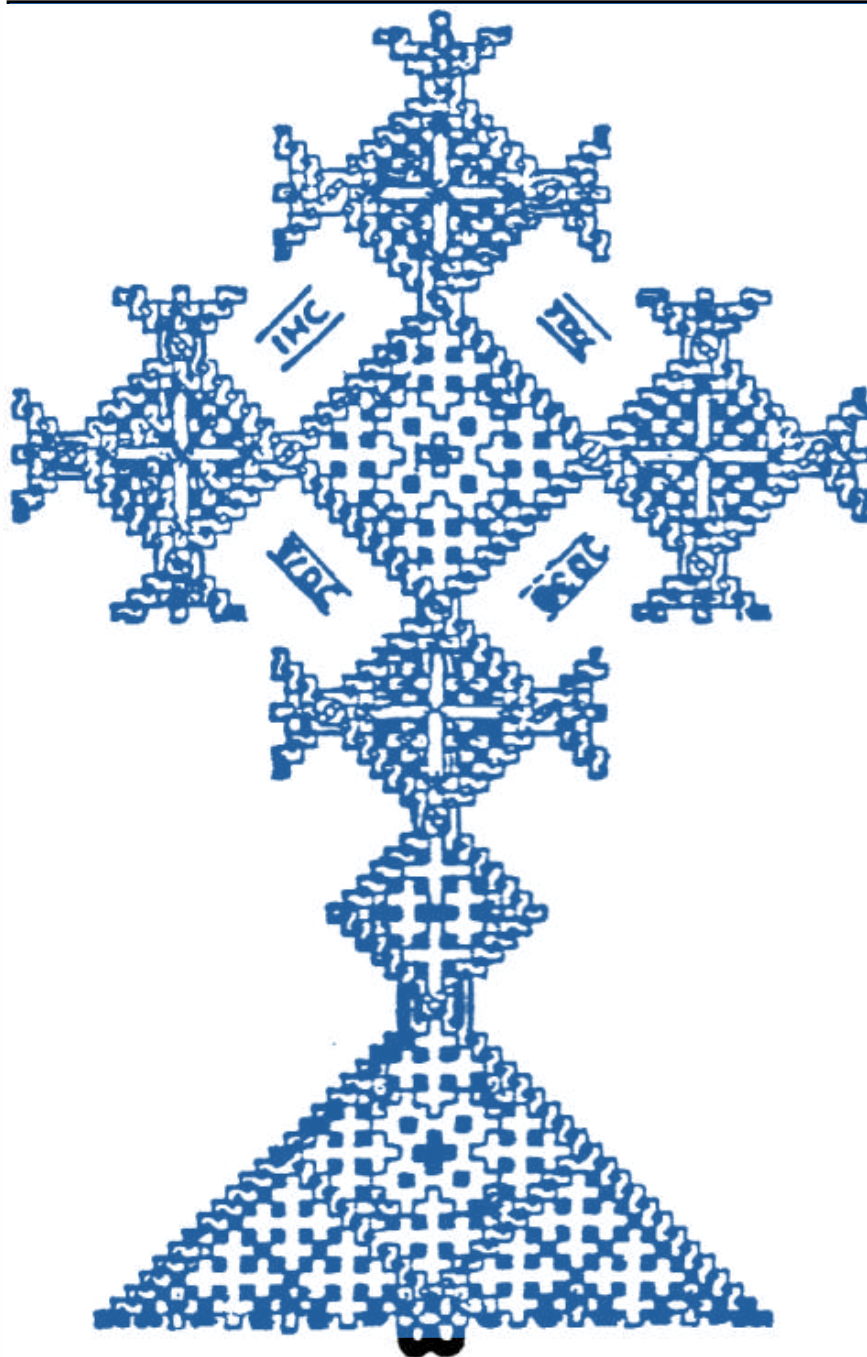
Wisdom gives a virtue depth and truthfulness... And love gives a virtue depth, sentiment and, feeling...

As for humility, it hides virtue from the devil's envy, and by this, gives its possessor modesty as well as affection in the hearts of people...

Let us examine ourselves: are what we have deep inside us virtues?

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**AUGUST
THIRD SUNDAY**

**LOVE IN THE LIFE OF THE SAINTS(II)
LOVE DOES NOT BEHAVE RUDELY,
DOES NOT SEEK ITS OWN, IS NOT PROVOKED**

Please read the attached article entitled, “Gentle Words”, 1Cor. 13: 1-13, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson 2 in a series of 2 lessons. The series has stories from the life of the saints as applications of love.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Love does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked” 1Cor. 13:5)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Start by reviewing the last lesson and then continue.

(B) *“Love does not behave rudely”:*

†Story:

There was an old monk who loved all people. He was a father to a multitude of monks. When he used to visit his disciples, if he found the cell of one of them very tidy and clean, he would say to himself, “how beautiful is this monk’s life, he is quiet and organized.” When he enters another monk’s cell that is unorganized, he would say to himself, “This monk is so busy with his spirituality to the extent that he does not have the chance to tidy his room”. Therefore, the old monk has a “SIMPLE” eye in looking at things. Love does not behave rudely.

(C) *“Love does not seek its own”:*

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Third Sunday

✙ Love means giving continuously, until it becomes complete love and in this case one can give himself up. *“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?”* (1 John 4: 20-21)

✙ **Story: The grapes that entered history:**

It was not time of grapes, and a farmer found on his farm some grapes. The farmer took them to the nearby monastery and gave it to St. Macarius, the head of the monastery. St. Macarius thanked him for his love, but St. Macarius looked at the grapes and thought, “there is someone who deserves these grapes more than me,” and he gave them to an old monk who was sick. Then, the sick monk took the grapes and thought, “There is someone who deserves these grapes more than me,” and gave them to a new monk who just recently joined the monastery. This young monk thought the same thing and gave them to another monk. So, these grapes went around and around until they came back to St. Macarius and when he saw them he was very pleased and ordered that the bell of the monastery be rung as all the monks gathered. He said to them, “Now, I know God because we have seen a practical example of love which does not seek its own”.

(D) *“Love is not provoked”:*

✙ If someone saddened his brother, he cannot sleep at night before he comforts his brother and makes peace with him. We must be sensitive of other peoples’ feelings.

✙ **Story: Forgive me Father:**

St. John the dwarf was the saint of the monastery. One time, a monk went to him complaining about another monk. Then St. John the dwarf called the monk who did something wrong and talked to him softly telling him what the other monk complained about. While he was talking nicely to him, the young monk became mad and was angry with St. John. St. John could have kicked him out of the monastery. Instead, St. John said, “Forgive me father,” and the young monk said no and continued to be mad at St. John and his anger grew even more. Then, St. John told him again and again, “forgive me father,” but there was no way the monk was going to forgive him. Then St. John went to his cell and he fasted for 3 days continuously praying, “God forgive me because I saddened one of your sons”. He stayed praying with this expression for a year, “God forgive me because I angered one of your sons”.

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WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Be extra nice to people.
- (2) We must use tender expressions in talking to people. Any rude expressions or selfish expressions or offensive expressions must be avoided.

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Third Sunday

SONGS 🎵

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbor as yourself

The Gospel in a word is love
Love, love, love

Pantocrator
You created heaven and earth

You are my Creator
I adore You.

Jesus Christ
You are our Sacrifice

You are our Redeemer
I love You

Holy Spirit
You sanctify our souls

You are our Comforter
I need You

Coptic Church
Through Your Sacraments we are saved

You are our blessing and pride.
I serve you

Agios O Theo-os
Agios Athanatos
Eleison ymas

AgiosEes- shiros
Eleison ymas

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GENTLE WORDS

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

+ The spiritual person never uses harsh words, but gentle ones, because gentleness is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Are you known by the gentleness of your words and dealings?

+ Look at the Lord Jesus when He was talking to the Samaritan woman. Although she was very sinful, Jesus said to her, *"You have well said, 'I have no husband', for you have had five husbands and the one whom you now have is not your husband. "* (Jn 4:17,18) The word "husbands" is very gentle, as they were not husbands but the Lord did not use the other harsh word. His saying, "The one whom you now have is not yours" is the most gentle expression that does not include any word that could hurt her feelings...

+ Instead of hurting people, try to win them...St. Paul, the Apostle, when he entered Athens, became angry as he found the city full of idols. Still he addressed them gently, *"Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious... "*

+ When God talked about Job, he praised him by gentle words, saying to the Devil, *"...that man was blame less and upright and one who feared God and shunned evil. "* As a matter of fact, nobody is blameless except God alone...

+ How gentle was God's talk about Nineveh, the sinful city of the Gentiles, whose people did not know their right from left. God said, *"And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city. "* Was Nineveh really great or is it God's gentleness?...

+ The names God gave to people are another example of His gentleness. He called Simon (Peter) which means Rock and called Abram (Abraham) which means the father of multitudes... They are all names that carry praise...

Among the Saints who were famous for their gentle words is St. Didymus the Blind, Head of the Theological School in the 4th century.

He never aimed at overcoming people but winning them. He never tried to destroy them but convince them.

+ God condemned harsh words by. saying, *"... whoever says to his brother, 'Raca' shall be in danger of the Council. But whoever says, 'You fool'. shall be in danger of hell fire. "* (Mt 5:22)

God does not accept harsh words as He is gentle and loving, His mouth is full of sweetness and his lips drop honey.



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**AUGUST
FOURTH SUNDAY**

THE VIRGIN MARY AND THE LIFE OF QUIETNESS

Please read the attached article entitled, “Calmness”, Luke 2:8-19, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn the importance of meditation and how to achieve it from the life of the Virgin Mary.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart"(Luke 2: 19)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

(A) Introduction:

✠ The pure Virgin Mary had seen several great things: she saw the angel announcing great tidings to her; she saw Elizabeth blessing and praising her; she saw the shepherds coming to tell what they saw; she saw the Wiseman coming from the East, guided by the star, to worship Jesus and present their gifts to Him and she saw Simon the elder rejoicing because he was waiting to see Jesus and the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. Despite all what she had seen, St. Luke writes, ***"But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart"***. (Luke 2:19). This verse indicates a very deep spiritual life. It is a life of quietness and meditation. The Virgin Mary was silent. In her silence she was thinking about God's wondrous acts and meditating.

✠ St. Arsanius used to put a small piece of stone in his mouth to prevent him from talking. When the people asked him for the reason, he said "Many a time did I talk and regretted, but for being silent I never did regret."

✠ David said in the Psalms ***"Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep***

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watch over the door of my lips” (Psalm 141:3)

(B) How can we achieve quietness?

Quietness could be achieved by taking some time off every day and:

1. Think of God’s wonders in the universe, in the life of the saints, in your own life ... etc. Just think how great God is, how loving and how tender and caring God is, how merciful and forgiving God is, how powerful God is ... etc.
2. Then, praise God and thank Him for what He did and what He does. An excellent example is that of the Virgin Mary when, in her meditation, she said: *“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant ... For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; ... He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy...”* etc. (Luke 1:46-55)
3. Think about your own life ... How pleasing to God are you? How are you responding to His love and His mercy? Think of the good things which God has helped you to achieve and thank Him for them. Think also of your mistakes, your sins and your shortcomings and, ask Him sincerely to forgive you. Then, in your own heart, commit yourself to struggle with all you might against these temptations and ask for God’s help without which you cannot win the battle.
4. In your quietness you should read your Bible and meditate on what you read, you should recite or read some of the Psalms or pray the Agpeya... You can sing some of the church songs or hymns or some of the praises from the Psalmody ... You can read the life of a saint or a book that helps you in your meditation, You can even watch a video about the life of Christ or the life of one of the saints or Old Testament prophets. You may stop the video in the middle of the showing and meditate on what you have seen ... etc.
5. The more time you spend in quietness and meditation, the more enjoyment you get out of it, and the deeper you get in your spiritual life. This goes on until you reach a point when your satisfaction and your utmost enjoyment would be reached, not in parties and social gathering and activities, but in meditation.
6. Quietness could be best achieved also in the quietness of the night or when you enter your room and close your door away from the noise of the world or the loudness of the worldly music and such. That is why Christ our Lord taught us

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saying, “*But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*” Matthew 6:6

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Sometimes we feel that our prayers have become repetitive and are said almost without thinking or understanding. The main reason for this is that we do not spend time and really enjoy our fellowship with God. We are busy with many things of the world.
- (2) We gain inner strength not by talking too much but by being quiet, praying, thinking and talking a little.

August

First Sunday

SONGS 🎵

SEVEN TIMES EVERY DAY

Seven times every day
With all my heart

I remembered Thy Name
O King of the ages

Jesus Christ our Lord
Who was incarnate

He was incarnate
And of the Virgin Mary

And changed our sorrow
To joy for our hearts

Let us worship Him
The Virgin Mary

Let us all proclaim
Saying, Hail to you, O Mary

Shere ne Maria: the salvation of Adam
Shere ne Maria: the rejoicing of Eve

Shere ne Maria: the Joy of Abel
Shere ne Maria: the salvation of Noah

Shere ne Maria: the grace of Abraham
Shere ne Maria: the redemption of Isaac

Shere ne Maria: the rejoicing of Jacob
Shere ne Maria: the glory of Judah

Shere ne Maria: the preaching of Moses
Shere ne Maria: the pride of Samuel

Shere ne Maria: the steadfastness of Jacob
Shere ne Maria: the Mother of the Beloved

I praise Thine Holy Name
O God of every one

and I was comforted
and God of all gods

The True God
for our salvation

of the Holy Spirit
the holy pride

and all our afflictions
and rejoicing for all

and sing about His Mother
the fair dove

with the voice of joy
the Mother of Emmanuel"

Shere ne Maria: the Mother of the Refuge
Shere ne Maria: the joy of all nations

Shere ne Maria: the true Virgin
Shere ne Maria: the meek and undefiled

Shere ne Maria: the unfading crown
Shere ne Maria: the Mother of the Holy

Shere ne Maria: myriads of myriads
Shere ne Maria: The Mother of the Master

Shere ne Maria: the Mother of the Lord
Shere ne Maria: the glory of Israel

Shere ne Maria: the precious stone
Shere ne Maria: the daughter of King David

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CALMNESS

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Calmness is one of the beautiful qualities of the spiritual person; it includes calmness of the heart, nerves, thought, senses, behaviour and body. A quiet person's heart never gets troubled for any reason. He does not lose his calm no matter how the problems are caused. As the Prophet David says *"Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though men should rise against me, in this I will be confident"* (Ps. 27:3). It is the type of calm that comes from faith.

If one loses ones inner peace, everything will look disturbed in ones eyes, and what is simple will seem complicated. This complication is not from the outside but from the inside. When the heart is calm the nerves will also be calm. In this case one would not lose temper but, instead, quietly solve the problem.

If the mind fails to solve a problem, the nerves interfere to help. The agitated nerves might announce the lack of a solution, and the more the nerves get troubled, the more they get agitated..

A person with a calm heart and nerves would be able to obtain quietness in thought and action. His thoughts will be balanced, void of any disturbances. Therefore, he will act in a quiet and sound way, far from anger or anxiety.

What helps a person to gain inner peace is outer peace, a peaceful environment that has no agitating effects. For this reason, monks live in the peace of the wilderness, far from noise, people's clamour, and any agitating news or incidents. They would have usually got used to this calmness..

The life of loneliness and isolation generally brings calmness, because all the senses are calm. As our saints say, the senses are the access to thoughts. What you see, hear and touch gives you thoughts. If your senses are at rest from gathering news, you will be relieved from thoughts.

A quiet place helps the senses to be calm, and consequently leads to the calmness of the thoughts, heart and nerves. That is why many people avoid noisy places, seeking peace of mind.

Those who love calm search of it with all their strength, but others, alas, love clamour and could not live without it. Calmness makes them bored!





August

First Sunday

St. George and St. Rueiss

Coptic Orthodox Church



RECITATION CURRICULUM



Recitation

In addition to all the memory verses and songs in the lessons, please teach the following recitation items throughout the year:

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Recitation 1

Make haste, O God, to deliver me!
Make haste to help me, O LORD!
Let them be ashamed and confounded
Who seek my life;
Let them be turned back and confused
Who desire my hurt.
Let them be turned back because of their shame,
Who say, "Aha, aha!"
Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
And let those who love Your salvation say continually,
"Let God be magnified!"
But I am poor and needy;
Make haste to me, O God!
You are my help and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not delay.

Recitation

Recitation 2

The Litanies of the Prime Hour

Ye the True Light that enlightens every man that comes into the world, Thou has come into the world through Thy love toward man. All the creation rejoiced at Thy coming. Thou saved Adam from the beguiling, and made Eve free of the pangs of death. Thou gave unto us the spirit of worship; we praise Thee, we bless Thee with your angels saying “Zoksapatrikeiyou-keagi-you epnevmaty” (Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.)

With the outbreak of the morning, O Christ, our God, the True Light, let the senses of the light shine unto us, that the darkness of passion may not cover us, that we may praise Thee with understanding with David crying unto Thee and saying: "My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate upon all Thy words." Hear our voices according to Thy great mercy, deliver us O Lord our God according to Thy compassion. “Keninkeaa-eeke-ic-touce e-on-ace ton e-onon Amen.” (Now and unto the ages of ages, Amen)

Thou, Mother of the Light, who is honored from the rising of the sun to its setting, they offer unto thee glorification, Ye Theotokos, the Second Heaven, because thou art the bright and unchangeable blossom

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and the Mother, who is Ever-Virgin, as the Father chose thee, and the Holy Spirit overshadowed thee, and the Son deigned to be incarnate from thee. Ask Him to grant salvation to the world, which He created, and deliver it from tribulation. Let us praise Him with a new song and bless Him now and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Recitation

Recitation 3

The Litanies of the Third Hour

Thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, which Thou sent forth upon Thy holy disciples, and the honourable Apostles at the third hour, take not this from us, O Thou Good, but renew Him within us. Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. *"Zoksapatrikelyou-keagi-you epnevmaty" (Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.)*

O Lord, Who at the third hour send forth Thy Holy Spirit upon Thy Holy disciples and the honourable Apostles, take not This from us, O Thou Good, but renew Him within us, we beseech Thee, O our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Word; a right and life-giving Spirit, a Spirit of Sonship and purity, a Spirit of sanctification, righteousness and authority, O Thou Almighty. For Thou art the Light of our souls, O Thou who enlightens every man that comes into the world. Have mercy on us. *"Keninkeaa-eeke-ic-touce e-on-ace ton e-onon Amen." (Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages, Amen.)*

O Mother of God, Thou art the stock of the True Vine, having borne the cluster of life. Thou art she; we ask

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Thee, O Thou who art full of grace, together with the apostles, concerning the salvation of our souls.

Blessed be the Lord our God. Blessed be the Lord day by day. The God of our salvation shall make our way prosperous. *"Keninkeaa-eeke-ic-touce e-on-ace ton e-onon Amen."*(Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages, Amen.)

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who is in every place and fills all, Treasury of the good and Giver of life, graciously come and be in us; purge away all stain O Thou Good One and save our souls. *"Zoksapatrikelyou-keagi-you epnevmaty"* (Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.)

Even as Thou was with Thy disciples, O Saviour, and gave them peace, Come also and be with us, and save us, and deliver our souls. *Keninkeaa-eeke-ic-touce e-on-ace ton e-onon Amen."*(Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages, Amen.)

Whenever we stand in Thy Holy temple, we consider ourselves as those standing in heaven. Thou art the gate of heaven, O Birth giver of God, open unto us the door of mercy.

Recitation

*Note: It will be beneficial if the teacher can include the recitation items of the previous years as well.

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For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the students
in the class

Major References

MAJOR REFERENCES (with permission)

- (1) Books by the Thrice-Blessed Pope Shenouda III of blessed memory up to March 2011.
- (2) El-Keraza Magazine, head publisher: the Thrice-Blessed Pope Shenouda III of blessed memory, all issues up to March 2011.
- (3) Books by His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, up to the present time.
- (4) El-Keraza Magazine, head publisher: His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, up to the present time.
- (5) Recorded Sermons by His Grace Bishop Rowiss up to March 2011.
- (6) Books by His Grace Bishop Moussa up to the present time.
- (7) All books by Mr. Kamal Habib (Late Bishop Biman Bishop of Mallawi)
- (8) Books by His Grace the Late Bishop Youanis, Bishop of El-Gharbia.
- (9) Books by Late Father Bishop Kamel of St. George Coptic Church, Alexandria, Egypt.
- (10) All issues of “Sout El-Rabi” magazine, St. George Church, Alexandria, Egypt.
- (11) Books by Father Tadros Y. Malaty, St. George Coptic Church, Alexandria, Egypt, up to the present time.
- (12) “Bahgat El-Aiad” by Yassa Mansour, 1970.
- (13) “The Seven Church Sacraments” by St. Habib Girgis the Archdeacon, 1968.
- (14) All colouring books, Father Tadros Y. Malaty, St. George Coptic Church, Alexandria, Egypt.

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THE FOLLOWING TABLES
OF CONTENTS REFLECT
THE CHANGES IN THE
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