



**His Holiness Pope Shenouda III
Pope of Alexandria**

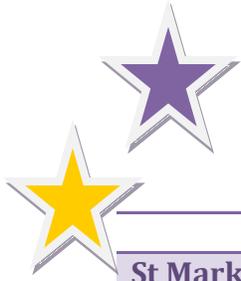


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Christ Is Our Life

St. Mark's Festival 2011 Anthem

Our Christ You're our life
Our existence's meaning
In You we live and move
You are our hearts' beating
Your Holy Spirit fills us
With joy, comfort and praising

Our Church is full of incense
Like heaven gives us protection
The Gospel's leading teachings
To heaven give us direction
Our God leads on the journey
All the way in perfection

CHRIST IS OUR LIFE

There is no doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ, to Him be glory, is the essence of our life. Therefore we call Him in the litany of the Gospel saying: **“You are our hope, our healing, our life and our resurrection.”**

That is why our teacher St Paul the Apostle also says, **“For to me, to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21)**, because the Lord Jesus Christ is the essence of:

1. Our Physical Life: As we say, **“For in Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28)** He is the One who said about Himself, **“I, wisdom... I have been established from everlasting... I was beside Him (the Father) as a master craftsman” (Proverbs 8:12, 23, 30)**

The Lord Jesus gives us every morning with a new day. We have to maintain a strong link with Him during the whole day by attending Holy Mass, prayers from Agpeya and arrow like prayers such as, “My Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me”, and free, informal prayers. We talk to the Lord about all our daily experiences whether success or failure.

2. Our Spiritual Life: The Lord Jesus Christ is the One who reconciled us with Heaven by His glorious redemption. He responded to the cries of Isaiah: **“Oh, that you would rend the heavens! That you would come down!” (Isaiah 64:1)**. He also responded to the cries of the Righteous Job, **“Nor is there any mediator between us Who may lay His head on us both” (Job 9:33)**. The Son, the Logos incarnated and redeemed us on the cross. And by His redemption, the reconciliation between God and people was done and it became, **“Good will toward men” (Luke 2:14)**. It means that God became pleased with people as their lives became renewed through the blood of Christ the Redeemer... It became possible to the sons of God so that they form a fellowship with Him through prayer, the Gospel and Holy Communion.

3. Our Moral Life: When man fell, nature turned against him and some animals became wild. And here is the AIDS virus which is destroying humanity. Man became prey and victim of the devil, diseases and disasters. But when Christ redeemed us through His pure blood, He returned us to the fatherly bosom so we became God’s children, **“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1)**. The honour extended from earth to heaven when He gave us inheritance of His Kingdom, to live with Him in His glory forever.

4. Our Eternal Life: **“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3)**. The Lord Jesus opened the doors of paradise by His glorious redemption. He also gave us to be raised up with luminous bodies, spiritual, heavenly and glorified, till the Apostles said that the Lord Jesus, **“Raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 2:6)**... **“Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matt. 25:23)**... **“He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25)**... **“Because I live, you will live also” (John 14:19)**... **“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them... there shall be no more death” (Revelation 21:3-4)**.



OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS HE?

1. One of the three Holy Hypostasis – One God.

- We believe in One God, as said in the Christian Creed.
- He is one because He has no end. If there are two or three Gods, each of them will be limited but the unlimited is only one. Our God is unlimited as He has no end.
- We take the sun as an example of the Holy Trinity.

The sun = fire + light + heat, therefore the fire, the light and the heat = one sun.

2. He is God the Creator.

- God the Father created the universe by His only Son in the Holy Spirit.. Man and his mind and his spirit is one person... and God and His word and His spirit is One God... the three hypostases are different from each other, without being separated from one another... which means that the Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit. But the three share one essence. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ said: ***"I and My Father are one" (John 10:30)***, exactly as I and my mind are one.
- He called Himself the "Logos" (the word), in the Book of Proverbs. ***"I, wisdom...I have been established from everlasting, then I was beside Him*** (which means the Father) ***as a master craftsman (Prov. 8:12, 23, and 30)***... Then the hypostasis of wisdom is everlasting and creator... God created the world with His wisdom and His word, as the Holy Bible says: ***"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "let there be light"; and there was light" (Genesis 1:1-3)***. We see here the Holy Trinity: God the Father, The Logos (the word) and the Spirit of God. So God, with His three hypostases, created the world and the creatures. Then the three hypostases are in One God, work together, as what happened in the incarnation, the redemption, salvation, etc.

3. He is God the incarnated.

- When Isaiah prophesied about the birth of the Lord Christ, he said: ***"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14)***. And he cried in amazement: ***"For unto us a Child is born, unto 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, and Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end upon the throne of David" (Isaiah 9:6-7)***... then He is a Son or a child who will become a man and – at the same time – the Mighty God, the everlasting... He resembled us in everything except in sin alone.

- The Lord Christ has two types of birth:

Everlasting birth: because He was born of the Father before all ages. The birth of light from fire or the word from the mind... The word goes out of the mind and travels to the end of the world, but it remains also in the mind.

Temporal birth: from the Virgin Mary, in the glorious mystery of incarnation. God has prepared for the incarnation in many ways all through the Old Testament. He appeared in the form of man many times as it happened with Abraham (Genesis 18) and Jacob (Genesis 32) and Joshua (Joshua 5) and Gideon (Judges 6) and Daniel (Daniel 10)... etc and many other apparitions preparing the way for the incarnation.

- Finally, the divinity was united with humanity which He took from the Virgin Mary. And so He became similar to us in everything except sin, as the Holy Spirit sterilized what God took from the Virgin Mary and prepared for Himself a body from her.
- 800 years before the birth of the Lord, Balaam prophesied the appearance of a star from Jacob, leading the Magi to the Divine child. Also a multitude of angels announced the birth of the Holy Savior, the Son of God: ***"The Holy one who is to be born will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).***

4. He is the Good Teacher.

- It never happened in the history of humanity that one was born holy and without sin except the Lord Jesus Christ, to Him be glory. He is a man according to His humanity and holy according to His Divine nature. The two natures were united and became one nature. Exactly like the spirit when it becomes united with the human body. They are two different natures but they are united and become one nature which is that of a human being.
- When the Lord Jesus began to teach, all people were amazed because of His sublime teachings. It even made Gandhi, the Indian leader, say: "If the Gospel was a crown, then the Sermon on the Mount is the jewel of this crown". And so Gandhi chose peace in resisting the English colonialism till the end when the English left India.
- Do we talk about the teachings that are in the Sermon on the Mount, as they are full of love and holiness? Or do we talk about the glorious teachings of the Lord Christ in all the Gospels? Till now humanity never seen a teacher who offered such holy sublimation like the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Holy ***"Who knew no sin" (2 Corin. 5:21).***

5. He is the Good Shepherd.

- The Lord Jesus guided His children with all love and tenderness as He saw them lost like sheep without a shepherd. He bandaged their wounds and healed their diseases. He had mercy on them, like what He did to the youth who was mute, as the Holy Bible says: ***"He sighed and said to him, Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened" (Mark 7:34).*** And so the tongue of the youth became loose. Also when He wept of the tomb of Lazarus and about Jerusalem and when He said to Judas: ***"Friend, why have you come?" (Matt. 26:50).***
- He is the good shepherd with His teachings, His love and His compassion. He looks after us from sun-rise till the following sun-rise. He also gives light to the evil and the righteous, with His overflowing love that forgives, who does not wish death for the sinner but repentance and life.

6. The Loving Redeemer.

- ***“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13).*** The Lord Jesus redeemed us on the cross, and so He solved man’s two problems, which are;
Death sentence: which was on us, due to our sins ***“For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).***
Corruption of nature: because our human nature was defiled by the virus of sin which was carried from one generation to the other. It was exactly like the syphilis virus or the AIDS virus that is carried to the fetus within the mother’s womb.
- On the cross, He died for us, so:
 - a) He carried the death sentence instead of us and saved us from death. ***As St Peter said: “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24).*** Also St Paul the apostle said: ***“Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man’s righteous act the free gift came to all man, resulting in justification of life” (Romans 5:18).*** And St Athanasius the Apostolic said that: “He died for our sake or in our place”.
 - b) He purified us by His honored blood and His Holy Spirit. As the Holy Bible says: ***“And the blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).*** And so we look at the cross as they looked at the copper serpent and were healed from the serpent’s poison. And so the Lord’s saying was fulfilled in us when He said: ***“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up” (John 3:14-15).***
- It was beautiful for St Paul the Apostle to consider the cross for him personally, as he says: ***“The Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).*** The Lord Jesus loves each of us and cares for everyone personally, one by one. So that we benefit from the blood of Christ that was shed for us and to develop a personal fellowship with Him through prayer – the Gospel – Holy Communion and service.

7. He who arose from the Dead for our sake

- Death could not hold back the Lord Jesus because He was without sin. But His humanity that was united with His Divinity went down to Hades where the righteous and the evil were being held by Satan. But when the devil tried to take hold on Christ’s human self (which was united with His Divinity), as He did with the righteous souls, the Lord’s Divinity struck the devil forever. Paradise was opened and the souls of the righteous went in.
- And so the Lord Christ arose from the dead because His dead body was united with the living Divinity, the unlimited. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was different from all those who arose from the dead before Him and after Him, even before the day of the resurrection, because the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - a) Rose by His own power while others arose by a word from the Lord Christ or by the prayers of the saints.
 - b) He rose by a luminous body while Lazarus, for example, arose by an ordinary body then died once more.
 - c) He rose but did not die and would not die forever. All those who were risen from the dead like Tabitha and the daughter of Jairus, died once more. As for the Lord Jesus Christ, He is alive forever.

- This glorious resurrection was for our sake because when we rise from the dead, we will rise by a luminous, spiritual, heavenly and glorified body, similar to the body of the Lord in His resurrection. Then we will go with Him up to heaven where we will live forever (Refer to 1 Corinthians 15:42, 1 Thessalonians 4:13). The Lord Jesus Christ: ***“will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Philippians 3:21).***

8. He ascended into heaven for our sake, preceding us.

- He ascended into Heaven with His “body” which means that His Divinity never left His humanity on earth, as the two natures were united in one nature without separation forever. This ascension was done for us, preceding us. It means that on the last day, when the Lord comes on the clouds, we will have luminous bodies and those who departed will rise from the dead with luminous bodies and the Lord Jesus Christ will meet them on the clouds. As for the faithful who are on earth on that day, they will experience a quick death (which means separation of the soul from the body then its quick return). Then they will rise with luminous bodies also. After that, the Lord will take us with Him on the clouds and ascend with us to Heaven.
- The ascension of the Lord Christ has many blessings:
 - a) It confirms the ascension of our luminous bodies on the last day.
 - b) It is sanctification for the body. In which the body is sanctified, ascends to heaven and enters the Kingdom.
 - c) Atoning intercession because the Lord Jesus Christ intercedes for us before the Divine justice now, for the forgiveness of our sins by His blood.
 - d) Preparing to be filled by the Holy Spirit as it happened to the disciples on the Pentecost in the form of wind, tongues of fire and new languages.
 - e) A promise of the second coming to take us with Him to live with Him in His kingdom.

9. He is the Groom and the Head of the Church

- The Lord Jesus Christ calls Himself the Groom of the Church, as John the Baptist said: ***“He who has the bride is the bride groom” (John 3:29).***
“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her... This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5: 25, 32). There are many verses in the Song of Solomon that express this joyful fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Church’s Groom. He is also the “head of the body”. The head of the church and the church is His body. Each member in the body is connected to the head, exactly like the connection between the smallest toes in the foot to the brain, through a net of nerves. Therefore the Holy Book says, ***“In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his Presence saved them” (Isaiah 63:9).*** And He said to Saul of Tarsus: ***“Why are you persecuting me?” (Acts 9: 4).*** That is because Saul was persecuting His children but he did not persecute the Lord Jesus personally during His incarnation on earth.

- Then the church is not a group of individuals but a group of members united with each other, each one needs the other. And although they differ from each other, yet they blend together in a holy unity to build the whole body.
- In the church, the Lord has established for us the following:

A) Holy sacraments to build us:

Baptism: To renew us and give us the second birth.

The Myron (Holy Chrism): To anoint us with the Holy Spirit and make us a temple for Him.

Holy Communion: To make us firm in Christ and give us eternal life.

Repentance: To renew the work of baptism in us through honest confession.

Anointing the sick: To heal the sick person spiritually and physically according to the will of God.

Marriage: Uniting the husband and wife through the Holy Spirit.

Priesthood: Serving all the sacraments and having the authority to bind and to loose for the edification.

B) Communion of the Saints: For their life, their example, their strength and their intercession. Therefore they became a support for the faithful who are struggling on earth, like a cloud of witnesses that watch our struggle, support our weakness and intercede for us.

C) Sayings of the Fathers: Explaining the books of the Bible, showing the spiritual path, so they become for us a role model. They enlighten our minds and show the way to the kingdom, lest we lose our way or deviate.

D) A comprehensive liturgy: As in the Holy Mass, prayers for the sick, the travelers, those who departed, the strangers and the orphans. Adding to that the daily praising, glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and praising the Virgin St Mary... etc.

10. He Will Come in the Second Coming to Save Us

- He said to us: ***"I go to prepare a place for you. And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2-3).*** Therefore when we pray the Creed, we say: "And we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come..." And our teacher St. John concluded in Revelations by saying: ***"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).***
- There are many signs for the second coming such as the coming of Elijah and Enoch and the "Anti- Christ", and the "falling away" and many of the Jews will believe in Christ, and the great tribulation, etc. But nobody knows the time of His coming, as the Lord Himself said: ***"It is not for you to know times or reasons which the Father has put in His own authority" (Act 1:7).***
- What is important is always being ready, by repentance, by confession, honesty in the struggle, good deeds and spiritual wakefulness, so, ***"That no one may take your crown" (Revelation 3:11).*** Let us conclude by repeating the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ: ***"Watch!" (Mark 13:37).***

KNOW YOUR BIBLE

If we want to know a book's subject, is the title enough to indicate its content?

Or is there more we need know to reveal its theme? We should read the index, the introduction to the book, the editor's contribution or the book's introduction. All of these give us an idea of the book's subject and its purpose.

The same applies to the Bible. Many of us read the Bible daily, either through the guidance of our spiritual father or by following a daily program. However, sometimes it is difficult to understand the sequence of events or how they are linked together. In order to fully benefit from our daily readings, we offer a simple introduction to the Holy Bible. First, let us read the evidence of the divine prophecies:

“For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”. (2 Peter 1:21).

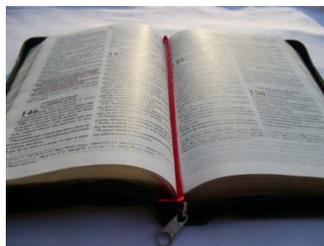
“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”. (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Bible is a collection of Holy Books which have been written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and benefits all people, at all times and in all circumstances. The Bible speaks of God's interaction with His people throughout the history of mankind. This is the Book that asks for our Salvation and prepares us for eternal glory. The Holy Bible is divided into two sections: The Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament:

1. **The Five books of Moses**- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. They are called the Torah, The Law of Moses or the Pentateuch. They are the works and teachings of the Old Testament, containing the History of mankind since the fall until the entry into the Promised Land.
2. **The Historical Books**- Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. Record the history of our Lord's dealings with His people in the Promised Land
3. **The Book of Wisdom and Poetry**- Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations. Provide the concepts of faith and how to live by it.
4. **The Book of Prophecy:** Prophecies of the coming of Christ before the incarnation
 - i. **The Major Prophets** (larger in size) - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
 - ii. **The Minor Prophets** (smaller in size) - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Michal, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

In addition to these books are the Second Canonical books which the Protestants removed from the Bible.



The New Testament:

1. **The Four Gospels-** Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It is the laws and the works and teachings of the New Testament. They take us to the new life (the heavenly Jerusalem and the real Promised Land).
2. **The Praxis-** The Book of Acts of the Apostles. It is the history of God's work in the church through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
3. **The Pauline Epistles-** The letters of our teacher, St Paul the Apostle, which total 14 and are addresses to both individual and the churches. They are Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews.
4. **The Catholic Epistles-** The letters which are not written by St. Paul the Apostle: James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, and Jude. Explains the divinity Jesus Christ and our faith in Him and supports our life with Him.
5. **The Prophetic Book of Revelations.** Prophecies about the Second Coming of Christ and the end of days.

Similarities between the Old Testament and New Testament:

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone that links the Old and New Testament together.

1. **The Old Testament:** Contains many of prophecies, all speak about our Lord Jesus Christ. It contains many symbols and personalities, all of which symbolize our Lord Jesus Christ, to Him be the Glory. Therefore, in our studies of the Old Testament, we clearly see these prophecies fulfilled in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ mysteriously. We have seen Him, with the Spirit of Prophecy, from afar and they referred to Him, spoke to mankind about Him and announced His arrival in a mysterious way. The importance of the Old Testament is as follows:

- i. The series of events which the Israelites experienced reflects our Lord's dealings with us.
- ii. The Old Testament contains prophecies about our Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World.
- iii. We benefit when we study the Old Testament as it speaks in detail of our Lord Jesus Christ's life thousands of years before His coming.

2. The New Testament:

- i. It was not until 20 years after the foundation of the Church that the events of the Resurrection of Christ were recorded. The early Church depended on the spoken Gospel not the written. The preaching of our Fathers the Apostles was the Bible itself, as they were witnesses to the life, Crucifixion, Resurrection from the dead and Ascension to heaven of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ii. The four Evangelists wrote their Gospels on the life of our Lord Jesus Christ by the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- iii. The Epistles were written in response to the questions of the believers and to protect them from false teachers, wrong conduct and heresies.

EYE WITNESS

SAINT MARK



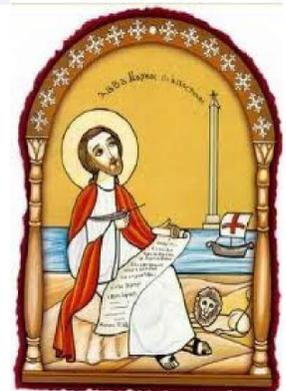
1. St. Mark was born in the city of Cyrene in the county of Libya, North Africa; from Jewish parents from the tribe of Levite. His father was Aristopolos and his mother, Mary who was a devout woman. St. Mark was a nephew of the Apostle Barnabas.
2. St. Mark had two names, John in Hebrew which means “The Lord’s Mercy” and Mark, a Roman name which means “hammer” or “warlike”.
3. St. Mark spoke three languages, Greek, Latin and Hebrew.
4. St. Mark and his parents left Cyrene and migrated to Palestine; over there he enjoyed the company of Jesus. His mother was deeply devoted to the service of Jesus, in her house they ate the Passover, and the Lord washed the disciples’ feet. In his house the very first Eucharist was held and so St. Mark’s house is actually considered to be the very first Church! It was in St. Mark’s house also where the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost.
5. St. Mark was one of the 70 disciples chosen by our Lord to be His very own Apostle.
6. St. Mark is referred to as the Lion, as it happened that one day he and his father were on their way to Jordan, a lion and a lioness appeared suddenly before them. So, St. Mark prayed to the Lord Jesus and immediately the two lions fell dead. His father then believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. We can see that St. Mark begins his Gospel in saying **“The voice of one crying in the wilderness” (Mark1:3)**. He declared the authority of the Lord Jesus in saying: **“the Lion of the tribe of Judah” (Rev. 5:5)**
7. He worked with St. Peter in Jerusalem and Judea, also with St. Paul and St. Barnabas the Apostles in Antioch and with St Barnabas in Cyprus.
8. St. Mark established the Church of Alexandria in Egypt in 61 AD. Ananias, the shoe maker was the first to believe in Jesus because of St. Mark. When Christianity spread in Alexandria, St. Mark ordained Ananias as first Bishop together with three priests and seven deacons.
9. He was martyred in Alexandria in 68 AD. We celebrate his martyrdom on the 8th May, 30th Baramouda.
10. Venice took him as their intercessor and his relics are present in his church over there. The Coptic Church in Milano celebrated his memory every year and the Mass is attended by a lot of Coptic Egyptians.

THE GOSPEL OF SAINT MARK

Written in 65-70 AD, St. Mark was the first to write the word 'Gospel' which means 'Good News'. This phrase was used many times because he preached the word to the Gentiles and the Philosophers in Alexandria. He wrote his Gospel to the Romans and he translated its contents from Aramaic for the Romans to comprehend. He also explained the Jewish culture. The Romans liked power and dominance therefore; St. Mark spoke in his Gospel about Jesus Christ's power over the devil and his supremacy over disease and people's thoughts and knowledge of the future. Jesus' power wasn't through pride or force but through His modesty and love to serve others.

WORDS AND MEANINGS IN THE GOSPEL

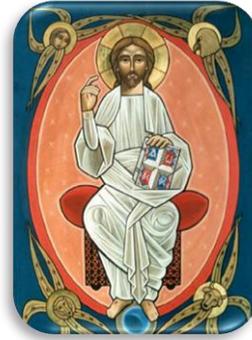
WORD/Verse	MEANING	WORD	MEANING
Dried up (1:3)	Paralyzed	Vinedressers (12:2)	Planter
Methods (3:1)	Ways	Wonder (12:8)	Miracle
Custom (8:7)	Tradition	Knock down (13:2)	Demolish
Be wary (8:15)	Be careful	Depressed (14:33)	Saddened
Yeast (8:15)	Evil	Crazy (21:3)	Mad
Be bashful (8:38)	Be shy	Lantern (21:4)	Lamp
Tint (9:3)	Clothe dye	Startled (22:1)	Astonished
Writhe (9:20)	Twist on the floor	Canteen (22:2)	Water jug
to stumble (9:42)	to sin	Gentile (26:7)	Non-Jewish
In need (10:21)	Lacking	Feverish (30:1)	High temperature
Awkward (10:23)	Difficult	Silent (32:7)	Mute
Dehydrated (11:20)	Dried out	Ran (33:6)	Hasten
Vine (12:1)	Vineyard	Judged you (34:5)	sinned
Enclosure (12:1)	Fence	Purchase (37:6)	Buy



GOD REVEALED TO US HIS MYSTERY

There are seven facts that distinguish the Christian faith.
Without these, the living faith would be incomplete.

1. **The truth about the one God.**
2. **The truth about the Trinity.**
3. **The truth about Jesus' Divinity.**
4. **The truth about the Divine Incarnation.**
5. **The truth about the Glorious Redemption.**
6. **The truth about the authenticity of the Bible.**
7. **The truth about the Holy Church.**



If one day you decided to tell someone about yourself: e.g. main features of your personality, your private thoughts, your desires and way in life, your likes and dislikes, all that is related to yourself, to whom would you talk? Could it be anyone you meet? Or to someone you care about privately and you need to let this person know everything in details? Normally, the answer would be that you will disclose your personal secrets to someone you love very much and who means a lot to you.

*They say: Do you know him? You say: Yes.
They say: Are you close to him? You say: No.
They say: Then you don't know him.*

This is the same with God, because He loves us so much, He wants us to truly know Him. That is why He revealed Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ "Son of God" who was incarnated to show us the true God and put right all the false beliefs about the God we imagine.

"No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is Himself God." (John 1:18)

Jesus Himself, made us know the true God. He also taught us the secret of the Holy Trinity. The principle of the Holy Trinity made us feel that God is near us and not far away in heaven separated from us, which is what the nonbelievers think.

St. Gregory, one of the fathers of the Church, says: "Trinity, my joy". Believing in the Trinity is delightful, because it uncovered God's Fatherhood to us, His love, care, kindness and concern for us daily. We study about the unity of the Holy Trinity "the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"

It is important to know that faith is not a theory but the personal relations in our everyday life. The feeling of God's presence through our prayers and our daily bond with Him.

God is not just a thought in our minds but the true God who cares for His creation, He is our good Shepherd. (John 10:11) who wants all people to be saved (1Tim 2:4).

The mystery of the Holy Trinity gave us the grace of knowing the Son and His incarnation; it also revealed to us the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in us.



The truth about the Holy Trinity

Our one God is three Hypostases. How?

It is the same as when we say the human being is one but in him there is a soul, mind and conscience. Another example is the sun, it is one but in it there is; the rays, the light and the heat. Three things in one and cannot be separated. It is one sun.

What does the essence mean? What does the Hypostasis mean?

Why do we call the three Hypostases: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?

We believe in one God, this is the true essence and whoever believes in more than one God, does not believe in the true God.

We are gradually trying to understand the one God, and then find that He is “three Hypostases” but the Divine Essence is one. The three Hypostases are: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore, this is believing in the one Great God.

What are the Hypostases?

In the **Old Testament**, God spoke in two ways: Singular (when talking as one essence) and Plural (when talking as Hypostases).

There is no exaltation in the Hebrew language, as is in the Arabic language. The king used to say: “we the king of Egypt”. The plural in the Hebrew language is exact and accurate, so God speaks about the Three Hypostases in the one Divine Essence.

For Example:

- * **In the beginning God, (Elohim) (Plural), created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)**
- * **God said, (Elohim) (Plural), “Let Us make mankind in Our image, in Our likeness” (Genesis 1:26)**
- * **“The man has now become like one of Us” (Genesis 3:22)**

The speaker in the above is our One Great God, and He is the Holy Trinity.

Examples for: Three x One

- ❖ God, the Wise, Wisdom is within Him and from Him emerges the Spirit of Wisdom.
The Wise + Wisdom + Spirit of Wisdom = One God.
- ❖ God the Omnipotent, from Him comes Omnipotence and from Him emerges the Spirit of Omnipotence.
The Omnipotent + Omnipotence + Spirit of Omnipotence = One God.
- ❖ God the Loving, from His love is born, from Him emerges the Spirit of Love.
He who loves + love + Spirit of Love = One God.

The three Hypostases are one, the Father in the Son in the Holy Spirit, three essences in One God.

In the **New Testament:**

- ❖ **“baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19)**
- ❖ **“I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me” (John 14:10)**
- ❖ **“I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30)**
- ❖ **“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” (1 John 5:7)**

AN INVITATION TO THE WEDDING

“The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.”’ But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, and another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’
“For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matt. 22:2-14)

The Kingdom of Heaven is:

- ❖ in the heart of everyone who allows Jesus to come in and stay
- ❖ it is also the Church, God’s house. God is present in the Church;
- ❖ it is also the heaven where God’s Throne resides.
- ❖ the angels and the righteous have the honor of surrounding Christ.



The King is God the Father and His Son is Jesus Christ, the second hypostasis, who was incarnated to save us.

The bride is every human soul that loves God.

The oxen and fatlings are the Great Sacrifice, the Body of Jesus Christ which was taken from the Holy Virgin St. Mary.

Those who refused to come to the wedding are the Jews they did not believe in Him and distracted by worldly cares.

The new guests who were gathered from various passages (that is, from all parts of the world), are us the gentiles (anyone who is not a Jew), who believed in the Incarnated Christ and were invited to the Wedding feast. The Wedding Feast being the Body and Blood of Christ.

This Wedding can only be attended by those who wear gowns fit for such a feast that is, the faithful who are repentant and are prepared. It is a daily celebration, offered by the Lord Jesus through the Holy Liturgy, His Holy Body and Holy Blood.

Preparation for the Wedding

THE FIRST STOP (Preparation for the wedding)

The night before the Liturgy, the Church offers its prayers and praises to prepare us for the Holy Liturgy the next day. At sunset the day before the Liturgy, the church offers Evening Vespers and Offering of Incense. The Prayers take place at sunset, symbolizing the sunset of our life, and so the Litany of the departed is said, and then the midnight praises.

THE SECOND STOP

The morning incense is offered the next day (we pray the Litany of the sick and of the travelers). All this prepares our hearts for the most precious and deep moments of the Holy Liturgy.

THE THIRD STOP (the Essence of the wedding) during the offertory, the priest chooses the best Eucharistic Bread. The deacon who prays the psalms whilst preparing the ‘Korban’ has to be very careful and very particular. The Bread is a symbol of the church, it consists of many grains and every grain symbolizes a Christian person. The grain is ground, and this action symbolizes suffering which occurs in any person’s spiritual life. This suffering can occur when we try and depart from a sin or in the act of standing up before God in prayer.

We must struggle, although happily, in carrying our crosses for the sake of Jesus, who died and arose from dead.

THE SIXTH STOP (THE CREED)

This is recited at the end of the Liturgy of the Catechumens. In the past, the nonbelievers used to leave Church and the door was closed at this point in the liturgy. Because at this point we recite the Creed we announce our Orthodox faith. The priest washes his hands to absolve himself from the guilt of those who will take Communion unworthily.

THE SEVENTH STOP (PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION)

Sin has separated us from God. The priest then starts praying the Prayer of Reconciliation to reconcile the heavenly with the earthly. In this prayer the church recalls our fall since the beginning;

“God, the Great and the Eternal, who formed man in incorruption; and death which entered into the world by the envy of the devil; You have destroyed, by the life-giving. No one can come to Holy Communion without exchanging the Holy Kiss, to show peace and purity of heart. The deacons inside the altar do not exchange the Holy Kiss because they symbolize the angels around the throne of God. However, the deacons and the congregation standing outside all exchange a Holy Kiss, so we do not “fall into condemnation”.

THE EIGHTH STOP (THE CONSECRATION)



The priest prays for the transformation of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The priest dips his finger in the Honored Blood and makes the sign of the cross inside the Cup and then on the Holy Bread. He places the ‘Spadikon’ (the central portion of the bread) inside the chalice, dips it into the Wine and makes the sign of the cross over the Bread and the deacon says:

“Worship God in fear and trembling”. Our Lord Jesus Christ is now physically present on the altar. It is at this point that any requests from God should be made known when the Lord Himself is present on the altar. By the power of the Holy Spirit the Body and Blood are transformed.

THE NINTH STOP (THE SHORT LITANIES)

As the Lord Himself is at this moment on the altar, the congregation beseeches God through the following litanies:

1. The Litany of Peace
2. The Litany of the Fathers
3. The Litany of the Clergy (Priests and Deacons)
4. The Litany of Place
5. The Litany of the Waters of the Rivers
6. The Plants of the Fields
7. The Air of Heaven (we pray one of the three according to the season, or we pray one combined)

THE TENTH STOP (THE COMMEMORATION OF THE SAINTS)

The Commemoration reflects the unity between the struggling Church on earth and the victorious Church in heaven. We pray for them and ask them to intercede for us. It is a holy unity between the celestial and ecclesial.

THE ELEVENTH STOP (THE FRACTION)

The priest breaks the Bread (Body of Jesus) as a sign of Jesus suffering on the Cross. The priest says, “The Holies for the holy”, but we are the weak whom the Lord has purified with His Blood. The congregation then confesses that this is the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ on the altar. Amen

Now, at this moment, the whole Church is prepared for Holy Communion, all are wearing their wedding gowns. At the conclusion, the priest hands out the blessed bread and dismisses the congregation.

OVERWHELMING LOVE

Because of God's immense love, He wanted to provide Adam with all the different facets of creation so that he may feel complete and satisfied. God created a variety of different types of creatures so that Adam wouldn't feel bored or deprived. Look at the countless types of plants with all their colors; red, yellow, orange, white and green and with their different levels of intricacy. Look at the myriad of different fish, birds and animals. God created all of this for Adam, Eve and their children.

It is extraordinary that when God created us He created us in His image and likeness, ***"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*** (Genesis 1-27) We are created in His image in love, wisdom, joy and peace. And as our bodies are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit they have become holy and are the temple of the Holy Spirit and therefore we are able to reach a high level of divine love.

When our first father, Adam, fell into disobedience and gave in to the temptations of the devil, corruption entered mankind. This led to murder, lies and injustice among the human race. Therefore, Adam, Eve and their children became eligible for the punishment of sin, which is death. Out of His deep love the Father sent His Son, who was incarnated and became man to save us. By dying on the Cross He took our punishment and opened the doors of paradise once more. Not only did our Lord die in our place but He allowed us to be buried with Him in baptism, renewed with Him through repentance and confession, united with Him through Holy Communion and therefore victorious with Him. So we praise Him saying, "He took what is ours and gave us what is His. We praise and glorify Him and exalt Him highly." Friday Psalie.



WE ARE PARTNERS WITH GOD

God, in His great love for us, does not work alone but allows us to share in the service with Him. Therefore He gives us gifts and talents to serve His children. There are the rich who, through their work give to the needy. There are those who have the gift of teaching and guiding others in love and humility. There are those who understand others and draw them to Church. And still others who are skilled in organizing outings and events. Don't you think that God is able to do all this alone? Which is more difficult, the growth of the plants or the planting of the seeds? The farmer sows, plants and waters the seed. This is easy, but God does the hard work, which is creating the seed. When you invite someone you love over to your house, you tidy your room and plan activities that you can do together. You feel happy because you love that person.

Likewise God is preparing a place for us in heaven and is eagerly waiting to take those who lived faithfully and honestly with Him on earth, ***"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."*** (John 14:3).

Then we shall see the splendor of His glory in heaven and see the Saints. When Saint Mary appeared on the Church domes people rushed to see her and stayed awake all night to get a glimpse of her. In heaven we will see her sitting on the right hand of her beloved Son in His glory. What a marvelous place is waiting for you and I when the Lord calls us to stay with Him in His heavenly glory.



JOSHUA

Name and its Meaning	Joshua son of Nun – Joshua is a Hebrew word and it means “the Lord is salvation”. It is the name of “Jesus” in the Hebrew language.
The Real Name	Hosea (Num. 13:8). Moses changed his name.
Tribe	Tribe of Ephraim
Date & Place of Birth	Born in Egypt, accompanied Moses, the great prophet in the desert and became his disciple.
Brief History of his Life	Moses, the prophet, appointed him leader to the people during the first battle after exodus from Egypt. It was against Amalek. (Exodus 17:8-13) this is the first time we meet Joshua. Joshua was one of the spies sent by Moses to Canaan, was privileged to enter the Land because he did not bring back an unfavorable report (Num. 14:7-9).
His Accomplishments	He led his people when crossing the River Jordan and entered the Promised Land. He distributed its lands to the 12 tribes. As Joshua crossed over in the Old Testament, so did Jesus who opened the gates of heaven for us.
His Death	Joshua, son of Nun, died at the age of 110 years old.

Keys to Joshua

Key Word: Conquest: The entire Book of Joshua describes the entering, conquering, and occupying of the land of Canaan. The book begins with a statement of the promise of conquest, “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan... Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you” (1:2, 3) and ends with the completion of conquest “that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you: not one word of them has failed” (23:14)

Key Verses: Joshua 1:8; 11:23: **“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” (1:8)**

“So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.” (11:23)

Key Chapter: Joshua 24: Some of the most critical periods in Israel’s history are the transitions of leadership: Moses to Joshua: Joshua to the judges: judges to the kings, and so on. Before his death and in preparation for a major transition of leadership by one man (Joshua) to many (judges), Joshua reviews for the people God fulfillment or His promises and then challenges them to review their commitment to the covenant (24:24,25), which is the foundation for all successful national life.



Survey of Joshua:

Joshua resumes the narrative where Deuteronomy left off, and takes Israel from the wilderness to the Promised Land. Israel has now reached its climactic point of fulfilling the centuries-old promise in Genesis of a homeland. The first half of Joshua (1:1 -13:7) describes the seven year old conquest of the land, and the second half (13:8-24:33) gives the details of the division and settlement of the land.

Conquest (1:1 -13:7): The first five chapters record the spiritual, moral, physical and military preparation of Joshua and the people for the impending conquest of Canaan, Joshua is given a charge by God to complete the task begun by Moses (1:2) After being encouraged by God, Joshua sends out two spies who come back with a favorable report (in contrast to the spies of the previous generation) Obedience and faith united in the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River (3:1 -4:24)

Joshua's campaign in central Canaan (6:1-8:35) places a strategic wedge between the northern and southern cities preventing a massive Canaanite alliance against Israel. This divide and conquer strategy proves effective, but God's directions for taking that city (Jericho) sounds like foolishness from a military point of view. The Lord uses this to test the people and to teach them that Israel's success in battle will always be by His power and not their own might or cleverness, Sin must be dealt with at once because it brings severe consequences and defeat as Ai (7:1-28)

The southern and northern campaigns (9:1-13:7) are also successful, but an unwise oath made to the deceptive Gideonites forces Israel to protect them and to disobey God's command to eliminate the Canaanites.

Settlement (13:8-24:33): Joshua is growing old, and God tells him to divide the land among the twelve tribes. Much remains to be won, and the tribes are to continue the conquest by faith after Joshua's death. Joshua 13:8 -21:45 describes the allocation of the land to the various tribes as well as the inheritances of Caleb (14 and 15) and Levites (21).

The last chapters (22:1 -24:33) record the conditions for continues successful settlement in Canaan. Access to God, as well as His forgiveness, comes only through the divinely established sacrificial system: and civil war almost breaks out when the eastern tribes build an altar that is misinterpreted by the western tribes.

Realizing that blessing comes from God only as Israel obeys His covenant. Joshua preaches a moving sermon, climaxed by Israel's renewal of her allegiance in the covenant.

Joshua	Jesus Christ
He led his people to the Promised Land to possess.	He will lead us into the Heavenly Jerusalem to inherit the Kingdom He prepared for us before the world began
He was born in Egypt, the land of slavery, same as all his brothers	Born in the world like us, to resemble us in everything and to lead us in the path of the Heavenly Jerusalem.
The journey ended when Joshua died after giving them the land to possess (crossing the Jordan).	Jesus died so that we could inherit the Kingdom of heaven (refers to the death we go through to enter the Heavenly Jerusalem).
He led them to victory.	Jesus guided us towards victory over sin and death.
Joshua was the servant of the Lord (Joshua 24:29).	Jesus emptied Himself and took the form of a bondservant.
Joshua sent two spies who made Rahab, the gentile, believe and escape death.	Jesus sent His disciples two by two.
God supported Joshua with strong miracles, e.g. the stillness of the sun and the moon during war with Gibeon.	Jesus performed many miracles and when He died on the Cross, the sun and the moon were darkened.

COMMUNICATING WITH GOD

What do we know about God? And how do we talk to him?

The only way is to have a dialogue with him through prayer. How do we pray?

Is there a certain way in which we should talk to God, and know Him during this conversation?

What are the different “kinds” of prayers? Yes, there are different ways that we can pray. For example:

The prayer of the Divine Liturgy, where all believers are in full union with the Holy Spirit.

The Jesus Prayer, also known as the Arrow Prayer. In this prayer we repeat the name of our Lord Jesus: “O my Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, help me”.

The Chamber Prayer, in which you talk to God, and have your very own personal conversation which is just between Him and you. You glorify His Holy Name, and thank Him for his gifts and ask Him to accept your repentance you’re your personal sins, and pray for your brothers and sisters and for the whole world.

Because of the importance of prayer, the church has arranged the Prayer books to assist us in focusing on our prayers and to teach us how to talk to God in a way that is worthy of His Holy Name. One of these books is the Agpeya.

What is the Agpeya?

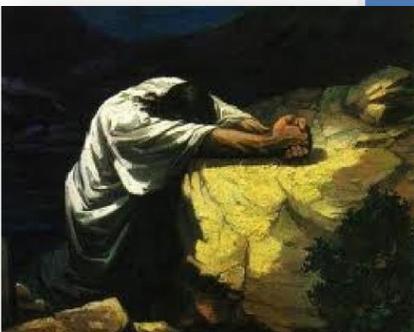
The Agpeya is the prayer book which contains prayers for the seven daily hours of the day and night. The word Agpeya is based on the Coptic root words, “ti” and “agp” which means “hour. Hence the word Agpeya means the Prayer of the Hours.

The Fathers arranged these prayers according to the hours of the day and night in seven prayers. As David, the prophet and King taught us in the Psalms, “Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments” psalm 119:164

Each of the seven hours of the Agpeya contains: The Lord’s Prayer, the Prayer of Thanksgiving, Psalm 51, The Psalms, the Gospel Reading, the Litanies and the Concluding Prayer.

**The prayers of the Agpeya are
from three sources:**

- The Psalms**
- The Gospels**
- The Prayers of the Holy Church Fathers**



Prayer	Time of day	Relation to the Life of our Lord	Relation to our lives
PRIME or Morning Prayer The First Hour Prayer (Once you wake up, before any work at the beginning of the day.)	6 am	Commemorates the hour at which our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead.	We thank the Lord that we passed the night safely and give thanks for the beginning of a new day and we ask that the day pass in peace.
TERCE The Third Hour Prayer	9 am	Commemorates three significant events: Christ's trial by Pilate, His Ascension to Heaven and the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples.	We ask God to send the grace of His Holy Spirit upon us and cleanse our hearts and renew our lives.
SEXT The Sixth Hour Prayer	12 noon	Commemorates the Crucifixion and Passion of Christ.	We pray that through His life saving passion He may deliver our minds from lusts and turn our thoughts to the remembrance of His Commandments, and make us the light of the world and the salt of the earth.
NONE The Ninth Hour Prayer	3 pm	Commemorates the redemptive death of Christ in the flesh on the Cross, and His acceptance of the repentance of the right Thief.	We pray that the Savior may mortify our lusts, make us partakers of His grace, and accept our repentance when we cry out with the Thief, "Remember us, O Lord, when you come into Your Kingdom" (Luke 23:42).
SUNSET PRAYER The Eleventh Hour Prayer	5 pm	Commemorates the time when the body of Christ was taken down from the Cross, anointed with spices and wrapped in linen.	We thank our Lord Jesus that we passed the day and brought us to the Evening, and ask Him to give us repentance that we may be prepared always.
COMPLINE or Prayer before Sleeping The Twelfth Hour Prayer	6 pm	Commemorates the burial of Christ in the tomb.	We thank our Lord Jesus for taking care of us throughout the day, and ask him to forgive all the sins which we have committed throughout the day, and to protect us in this night without sin.
THE MIDNIGHT PRAYER consists of 3 Watches	9 pm 12 am 3 am	Commemorates the Second Coming of Our Lord. It consists of the three watches corresponding to the three times our Lord Jesus Christ prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt 25:1-13)	We ask our Lord Jesus to lead us to a life of repentance, and prepare us for the Second Coming.

Why do we pray from the Agpeya? By praying from the Agpeya we follow the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ step by step. His Incarnation at the time of the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, His Crucifixion and death on the Cross for us, then taking His body off the Cross and the burial of His body, and finally, through spiritual vigilance, waiting for the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Agpeya contains different types of prayers such as praises, thanksgiving, repentance, and seeking forgiveness. It also contains prayers for others including enemies and comfort at times of sorrow and grief.

Why does the Agpeya contain specific hours?

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself prayed at specific times, such as:
 - I. In the early morning (Mark 1:35).
 - II. In the evening (Matthew 14:23).
 - III. At midnight during the three watches (Matthew 26:36-45).
2. The disciples also received this tradition and practiced it:
 - I. ***“Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.” (Acts 3:1).***
 - II. ***“Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.” (Act 10:9).***
 - III. Cornelius was praying in his house at the ninth hour (Acts 10:30).

Why do we pray from the Psalms?

1. The Church uses the Psalms because they are Words of God Himself, who spoke through the mouth of David the Prophet and King. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself referred to the Palms when He said, ***“How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord’? (Matthew 22:43).*** There are no better words we can use to speak to our Lord than those which He Himself taught us.
2. This was recommended by our teacher St Paul the Apostle in his letter to the Church of Ephesus, ***“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” Ephesians 5:19***
3. Our Holy Fathers determines a certain number of Psalms to recite in every prayer.
4. Saint John Cassian said, they spent a full day debating an issue, until a monk stood up and prayed twelve Psalms and then disappeared. They realized it was an Angel and this was the will of God. The order of the prayers was different in the past. They prayed short prayers of every Psalm and pieces to pray after the Gospel. Then they stood to read a chapter from the New Testament and another from the Old Testament.

What are the benefits of praying from the Agpeya?

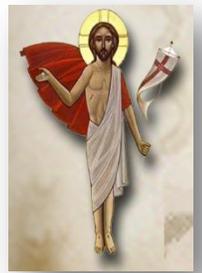
1. Extending our time in the presence of God.
2. The prayers revolve around a variety of thanksgiving, repentance and asking for mercy.
3. Praying from the Agpeya regularly teaches us how to pray and learn appropriate way to pray.
4. God rejoices with spiritual prayers and dwells, in His glory, in the place where you pray. He resides in the person who prays in the Spirit, and fills that person with blessings and gifts, and hears that persons prayers and responds to their requests.
5. Collective prayers – we can pray either collectively or individually but at the same time and the same prayer but in a different place.

Practical Exercises when Praying from the Agpeya

1. Prepare your mind with a spiritual hymn or praises or a chapter from the Bible.
2. Gradually increase the amount of prayers. This can be arranged with the guidance of your father of confession.
3. Remember the event of every hour
4. Contemplate on the words of the Psalms. “For example Psalm 23:1, “The Lord is my shepherd” do you really feel you are under the wings of the Lord? Psalm 20:1 “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble” do you really believe that God hears your prayers, and responds to all your requests?
5. Close your eyes and lift up your hands, kneel down several times (metania) during your prayers and pray with a loud voice so that you do not get distracted with other thoughts.
6. Pray in tune, when you pray in tune you will be uplifted spiritually and you will pray with your spirit as well as your mind.



Hour by Hour



Activity: connect the prayer with the right commemoration.



Symbolizing the second coming and Judgment Day, it consists of three services and that is to symbolize the Lord's prayer in the garden three times before his passion.



Was arranged to commemorate our Lord being hung on the cross.



Was arranged to remember the death of our Lord on the cross for our salvation



Was arranged to commemorate our Lord's Resurrection.



The Church arranged this prayer to remember the time when the body our Lord was taken down from the cross, anointed and wrapped with linen.



To remember when Jesus was arrested, also when the disciples received the Holy Spirit.



This prayer is to commemorate the laying down of the body of our Lord in the tomb, also because it is the last hour of man's life in his day, since sleep is considered as a little death



THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL OF ALEXANDRIA

Why did St. Mark establish the School of Alexandria?

Alexandria was the greatest cultural city in the world during the time of St. Mark the Apostle. Many pagans and Jews lived in Alexandria at the time. Alexandria was famous for the various Philosophies, and many came to it from all over the world seeking knowledge.

In this difficult environment came St. Mark to spread the name of the Lord God, Jesus Christ among people including pagans and Jews to enjoy His salvation. It was only natural for him to face a great resistance from philosophers, and convincing them was not an easy task.

But the Holy Spirit who filled St. Mark worked in the hearts of many people and they converted to Christianity. Since the church did not accept new believers until they know the true faith, the school was established to teach the true faith to those who believed in the Lord Jesus. These people were called catechumens during the period of their education.

The school also opened its doors to Christians to strengthen their faith in the Lord Jesus and accepted all people from different religions, cultures, and social levels, and men and women with no distinction.

Gnostic philosophy was also widespread and the church had to face this wrong philosophy. That's why St. Mark found it necessary to establish a Christian Theological school to explain the faith and defend it and to teach those interested in learning; and he appointed St Justus to be its first director.

The school became a competitor to the pagan school and surpassed it to the point that many of the pagan philosophers became Christians. Some of them even became directors to the School of Alexandria like Athenagoras the scholar.

Characteristics of the professors

They were not only scholars but also spiritual ascetic people. They dressed in humbleness and ate one meal a day at sunset, which usually consisted of bread and water, and slept on the floor.

They combined knowledge with asceticism and spirituality that stemmed from their love to the Lord Jesus. They did not only learn and teach Christianity but lived it and applied in their lives the teachings of the Holy Bible.

Areas of study

Holy Bible, Christian Dogma, Philosophy, Logic, Medicine, Engineering, and Music.

As for the method of teaching, it was that of dialogue and debate through question and answer.

The school also established a library that included tens of thousands of books and manuscripts and was one of the most famous libraries in the world.

School directors and students become patriarchs of the Church of Alexandria

The Copts chose many of the directors and students to become patriarchs. It was a right choice since these individuals were knowledgeable in science and religion and were also spiritual.

Here are the names of some of the directors and students of the school of Alexandria that became popes of the Coptic Church and led it at different times.

Directors:

- Pope Justus, the 6th Patriarch
- Pope Markianos, the 8th Patriarch
- Pope Heraclas, the 13th Patriarch
- Pope Dionysius, the 14th Patriarch

Students:

- Pope Peter the seal of martyrs, the 17th Patriarch
- Pope Athanasius, the 20th Patriarch
- Pope Cyril the Great, the 24th Patriarch
- Pope Dioscorus, the 25th Patriarch

Pope Cyril VI (Pope Kyrillos) appointed a bishop for education in the Church; that was Bishop Shenouda, the director of the Theological Seminary who later became Pope Shenouda, the 117th Patriarch.

Famous Directors of the School of Alexandria

St. Pantinus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Preached in India •Brought back from India the manuscript of the Gospel of St. Matthew •Wrote Hieroglyphics with Greek letters (Coptic Language) •Translated the Holy Bible to the Coptic Language
St. Clement of Alexandria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •His writings included: “Instructor” “Exhortation to the Greeks” “Miscellanies” and “Who is the Rich Man that Shall Be Saved?”
St. Didymus the Enlightened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lost his sight at age 4 and did not learn to read. •However, because of his love of learning, he invented a wood-carving technique to read 15 centuries before Braille. •He memorized the entire Bible and Church teachings by heart. •He excelled in grammar, speech, philosophy, logic, mathematics and music
Athenagoras the Scholar	<p>He was a famous pagan philosopher Studied the Holy Bible to criticize its teaching, especially the Resurrection in the epistles of St. Paul, but was convinced by them instead He wrote books defending the Christian beliefs and another about the Resurrection. He became one of the famous directors of the School of Alexandria</p>

What was the reason for the fame of the School of Alexandria in the Ancient World?

The school was a source of a great renaissance because of the competition with the Pagan Philosophical School in Alexandria. After a while, the Catechetical School of Alexandria surpassed the other and became the only source of knowledge.

What gave the school its strength was the Library of Alexandria. It contained tens of thousands of books and manuscripts.

It prospered because of its excellent leadership to the extent that all the Churches, east and west, owed her: spiritually, intellectually, and scientifically.

It started breaking apart when it was moved from Egypt to Sidon with the great schism in 451 A.D. after the Council of Caledonia.

The School in the Modern World

Between the years 1853 – 1861 A.D. during the papacy of St. Cyril IV; he thought to establish a school of Theology similar to the old School of Alexandria. Unfortunately, he departed before realizing his dream of establishing the school.

Pope Cyril V, the 112th Patriarch, was able to realize the dream and re-established the school on November 29, 1893. One of its famous directors was Archdeacon Habib Guirguis.

Pope Cyril VI, the 116th Patriarch was interested in the school and built a new building (the Theological Seminary of Pope Cyril VI)

In 1961, on the 100th commemoration of the departure of Pope Cyril IV, Pope Kyrillos VI ordained HG Bishop Shenouda a bishop for education on September 30, 1962. He was appointed in charge of Church education including the Theological Seminary and Sunday School. Pope Kyrillos also ordained HG Bishop Gregorios in 1967, a bishop of research and Coptic Culture.

When Pope Shenouda became patriarch on November 14, 1971, he established many branches for the Theological Seminary in Egypt, The United States, Australia, and Canada.

Not only did his Holiness Pope Shenouda establish the schools, but he also established specialized institutes such as the Institute of the Holy Bible, Institute of Care and Service, in addition to the Institute of Coptic Studies.



FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Whenever we interact with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit dwells within us. There is no doubt that we will enjoy the fruits that are planted by the Paraclete, the Comforter, within our hearts. What are the fruits that the seed of the Holy Spirit plants in us?

LOVE, the first fruit

Love is the greatest virtue in Christianity and the first fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Does God love us? When did He love us? Did He set conditions on His love for us? To what extent does He love us?

What does our Lord Jesus command us in regards to love?

AND YOU MY FRIEND ... what do you think are the answers to these questions?

God loved us before He created us. He loved us so much that He created the whole universe for us and continued to love us even though we disobeyed Him. He loved us even though we were not worthy of His love. His love for us was unconditional and eternal. He loved us under all circumstances. He loved us before we fell into sin and loved us after we fell. He did not want us to die because of our sins, so He sent His only begotten Son, who is consubstantial with the Father, to incarnate, suffer and die on the Cross for us.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8).

And you my friend, did you come to these conclusions?

Do you love only those who deserve your love? If the Lord had loved us only if we deserved to be loved, we would all have perished. Since the Lord loved me and I am not worthy of His love shouldn't I also love everyone, even if they are not worthy of my love? ***“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you.” (John 13:34).***

“Love is a nice, fresh word and it is nicer to work with.” St. Augustine

One of the Saints, who believed he had a very high level of spirituality, asked the Lord to reveal to him anyone else who had the same level of spirituality. He heard a voice from heaven saying, “Go to the city. There you will find two women who are equal to you in their spiritual life. After hearing this he went to the city to find these women and to discover what made them so spiritual. He found their home and knocked on the door. One of the ladies opened the door. When she saw the Father standing there she knelt down before him although she did not know who he was. The other lady placed her son on the bed and came and knelt down also. She then gave him water to wash his feet and food to eat. The Father said, “I will not let you wash my feet and I will not eat until you tell me about your spiritual life, for I have been sent by God.

They asked, “Who are you Father?” He told them, “I am Macari. I live in the wilderness of Shehet.” When they heard this they were filled with fear and knelt down in front of him and started crying. They said to him, “How can we, who are sinners, be of benefit to you?” He insisted, “I came all this way, please do not withhold from me that which will benefit my salvation.” So they began to tell their story: “We are not related to each other but are married to two brothers. We asked them to let us go and live in the house of nuns and serve God in prayer and fasting. They did not allow us to go so we agreed to live our lives in perfect love and serve one another.

And here we are. We fast up until evening and we pray continuously. Each of us has a son and when the other finds her nephew crying she takes him and nurses him as though it were her own child. This is how we live our lives. Our husbands are shepherds and return home in the evening. They love to give money to the poor and to welcome strangers. In our home we never allow ourselves to utter offensive words or insults. When the father heard their story he left their home beating on his chest saying, “Woe to me, woe to me. I do not love my neighbor as these two women do.” And he greatly benefited from their example.

First: Our Love for God can be translated into:

1. Attending Church regularly to pray the Holy Mass and participate in Sunday school.
2. Reading the Holy Bible and living according to its commandments.
3. Repenting and have confession regularly.
4. Partaking of the Holy Communion often.



Secondly: Our Love for others is evident when we:

1. Serve others.
2. Endure the weaknesses and mistakes of others.
3. Join others in their times of joy and times of sorrow.
4. Do not intentionally harm others.
5. Do not envy others.
6. Genuinely feel happy when we see others succeed.

JOY, the second fruit

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

“I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.” (Psalm 104:33).

Whoever loves everyone is loved by everyone and this leads to joy. And our joy is spiritual joy, ***“Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.” (James 5:13).*** Spiritual hymns and praises lift up our spirit towards heaven but worldly songs do not satisfy our thirsts. Their joy is temporary and do not give comfort to our souls.

First: Joy in the Lord : As St. Paul said, ***“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4).*** We become joyful when we are close to the Lord and have a strong relationship with Him. This joy is of indescribable glory.

Second: Joy for our Salvation: As St. Mary said, ***“For He who is mighty has done great things for me.” (Luke 1:49).***

Third: Joy for God’s Precious Gifts: We are joyful when God grants us good health, a stable life, a happy family, our Church the house of God and the Gate of Heaven.

Fourth: Joy When We Give: As our Lord Jesus said, ***“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Act 20:35).***

Whoever gives feels everlasting spiritual joy because they have made another person happy, have given comfort or helped to solve a problem. As St. Paul said, ***“God Loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7).***

St. Paul always lived in peace and joy despite his many sufferings and pains. When he and those with him were placed in jail in Philippi they praised God and prayed joyfully. Because of them the jail keeper believed.



PEACE, the third fruit

First: Peace with Our Lord Jesus Christ: The peace of Christ paves the way to our eternal life. When we love others our hearts are filled with spiritual joy and we are granted internal peace which no one can take from us.

As St. Paul the Apostle said,

“Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1).

“Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee.” - St. Augustine



Second: Peace with Others

1. I love others and cooperate with them.
2. I have a meek and embracing heart.
3. I forgive others.
4. I accept others as they are and not as I want them to be.

As the Holy Bible says, ***“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24).***

Third: Peace with Myself

I practice the means of grace faithfully and thereby please the Lord in my life and sing with David the Prophet and King saying, ***“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me.” (Psalm 23:4).***

LONG SUFFERING (PATIENCE), the fourth fruit

When I am patient, my character is like the character of God. I am compassionate, kind and merciful, ***“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).***

Many of the Saints have perfected this great virtue of long suffering. St Isezerous, who was a great influence on violent and aggressive people, was once asked, “Father, why are demons afraid of you?” He replied, ***“Since becoming a monk over 50 years ago, I never allowed anger to dominate me.”***

My beloved, we make mistakes every day. What would we do if God was not patient with us?

If God was not slow to anger, how many times a day would we be punished?

We thank Him because He has long-suffering with us and He waits for us to return and repent. If God is patient with us, we should be patient with others.

St. Monica was a righteous person who was married, against her will, to an evil, pagan man. This man’s mother was an envious, wicked woman, but St. Monica endured it all. She did not complain and won her mother-in-law over with her patience and kindness. St. Monica was also kind and patient with her husband. When her son Augustine grew older he became influenced by bad friends and drifted away. St. Monica was determined to win her husband and her son, through prayer and patience, to God. She prayed for many years and the first fruits of her prayer and patience was her husband’s repentance and return to God. As for her son, St. Monica searched for him from city to city and from country to country. She prayed with tears for his return. Finally, Augustine repented and turned from his sinful ways. His repentance and return to God are the fruits of his mother’s tears, prayers and patience. He became known as the ‘son of tears’.

KINDNESS, the fifth fruit

Kindness flows from meekness and decency.

1. I do not contend, do not shout, as has been said about the Lord Jesus, ***“He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.” (Matthew 12: 19).***
2. I should look for the good qualities in others and encourage others to walk in the path of goodness, as the Lord did with the Samaritan women, ***“And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God Christ forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32).***
3. I do not look down on the vulnerable but support them. When we are harsh we lose loved ones, but with kindness we win our enemies. ***“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.” (Colossians 3:12).***
4. When I experience conflict with others I should allow them a chance to express their opinion. I should address the concerns of others with patience, calmness and wisdom.

There was a huge, heavy door which a group of people wanted to enter from; however, they were having some difficulty opening it. After several attempts of pushing the heavy door open they failed as it was very solid. Finally, a wise old man came and poured a little oil on the hinges and the door opened with ease. My Friend, many people react to problems in a stressful manner and try to solve them using violence or cruelty. However, in most cases all that is needed is a little bit of kindness.

Goodness is a great and tasty fruit of the Holy Spirit. Goodness is integrity and righteousness. The righteous person is committed and performs his duties well.

There are two types Goodness – Negative and Positive.

Negative goodness is keeping away from sin, while positive goodness is partaking in virtues of all kinds. The good person can balance both the negative and positive types of goodness.

There was once a man called Ibrahim El Gohary. This man held a very high position in the State in which he lived. One day his brother George came to him complaining that a group of young people had insulted him on his way home. When Ibrahim El Gohary heard this he said to his brother, "Do not worry I will deal with them." The next day George was walking down the street as usual. He found the same group of young people greeting him and treating him with respect. When he asked his brother what he had done with them, he said, "I sent them some gifts and blessings which stopped them from being malicious to you." This man lived a truly Biblical life, *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* (Romans 12:21).

FAITHFULNESS, the seventh fruit

Faith is the foundation on which we build our spiritual life and our relationship with God.

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6). *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* (Hebrews 11:1).

Faith is one of the three great virtues of Christianity.

"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Faith is a practical life lived by the believers, as the Apostle St. Paul said,

"The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1: 17).



A man, a hiking amateur, dreamt of climbing the highest mountains of the world. After many long years of preparation and training and, with a hunger for fame and success, he set off to complete his adventure alone. The journey started as planned and with all that was necessary to achieve his dream. He did not feel the hours pass, but he was surprised by the dark night that started to draw near. He considered returning but that may have been more difficult and dangerous than completing the journey. He had no choice but to continue his journey. He thought of what surprises the darkness would bring. After several hours he had used up all his energy and suddenly fell. However, he was able to clutch the rope which was tied to his waist, being held in place by a hook from the other side of the rocky mountain. As he fell, the mountaineer found himself swinging in the air with nothing but endless space beneath him. Blood trickled down his hands as he gripped the rope with all his might. The man took a deep breath and searched for any hope of survival. In desperation and hopelessness, the man shouted; "My God, my God, help me!" He heard a soothing voice answer, "What do you want Me to do?" "Save me Lord!" He said. The Voice replied; "Do you believe that I am capable of saving you?" "Yes, I believe my God, who else could save me?!" "Then cut the rope which you are holding." The man hesitated for a moment but then held on to the rope tighter, not letting it go. The next day, the rescue team found the man's body still holding the rope, dangling only two meters above the surface of the ground. He had been unable to withstand the freezing temperatures and died, still holding on to the rope. What about you? Did you cut the rope? Do you still think your ropes will save you? If, in the midst of your troubles, you depend on your own wisdom and intelligence, then you are depriving yourself of experiencing the meaning of faith.

Pope Dioscorus was sentenced to solitary confinement and was slowly tortured by having the strands of his beard plucked out one by one. His mouth was hit so many times that his teeth were eventually shattered into pieces. He gathered the teeth and hair that had been pulled out and sent them to Alexandria in a letter stating; "Look, these are the fruits of my faith."



GENTLENESS, the eighth fruit

Gentleness is quietness and peacefulness. It is non-violence and refraining from anger. When we are gentle we imitate Jesus who was always gentle. The good person is the person who is meek and gentle. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in His Sermon on the Mountain, blessed the gentle saying; **"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."** (Matthew 5:5).

In this verse "inherit the earth" means, earning the love and respect of everyone. When we are gentle and meek we live in peace and harmony with others, as the Psalm says; **"But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."** (Psalm 37:11). The gentle person has many excellent characteristics; meekness, peacefulness, cheerfulness and quietness. They speak in a quiet voice, are easy to deal with and do not complain. The meek person does not get angry or tense but always responds in a gentle and kind manner; **"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."** (Proverbs 15:1). The gentle person is like a pleasant breeze which does not cause tension and conflict but rather calms the storms.

Before St. Moses the black came to know Christ he dealt harshly with three monks in the monastery. However, because of their love for Christ our Lord they responded in a gentle and kind manner. Their behavior influenced St. Moses the black greatly. So much so that after he became a monk and three robbers entered the monastery to attack it, he dealt with them in the same gentle and kind way.

SELF-CONTROL, the ninth fruit

Self control is the purity of tongue, body, senses, organs, thoughts, heart and hands.

1. I do not say inappropriate words.
2. I think about the words that I say before I say them.
3. I stay away from lusts such as: over eating and drinking, excessive comforts and indulging in worldly entertainment.
4. I remain chaste in my senses of hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste because they are the doorway to the heart and thoughts; **"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."** (Proverbs 4:23).
5. Be honest, do not steal and do not accept deceit.

St. Perpetua was martyred in the city of Cartagena. She was thrown to a raging, hungry bull. It started to attack her with his horns and she fell to the ground half dead. In spite of her very bad condition, she did not forget to cover her body with her torn dress. This shows how much the first Christians loved purity and chastity. After doing some research, John decided to write the stories of the Saints in order of the fruit of the Spirit:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control." (Galatians 5:22-23).

1. Do you feel that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit? And the Holy Spirit dwells in you and works in you?
2. Have you encountered the Holy Spirit, **"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."** (2 Corinthians 13:14)? This is the blessing which the Priest prays at the end of the Liturgy.
3. Do you involve the Holy Spirit in all that you do? Or do you work alone always depending on your own views and will?
4. Are you able to put into practice the commandment? **"Be filled with the Spirit."** (Ephesians 18:5)
5. When are you filled with fruit of the spirit which St. Paul the Apostle spoke of in Galatians 5:22-23?

WORDS FROM HIS HOLINESS POPE SHENOUDA

The Lord Christ is “Holy” (which means that His holiness is unlimited).
But He gave us, through the Holy Spirit, nice fruits (**Galatians 5:22**) which are:

**Love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

There is no book more beautiful than the book of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III
“Fruit of the Spirit”, in which he presents a detailed spiritual study of these fruit.

The following are some of the sayings of His Holiness:



1. Love:

- ❖ “Many people lived a life of repentance on the outside but did not live in love that is from within. So they formed a relationship with God that is based on formalities and rituals. But there was no love between them and Him and so they failed”.
- ❖ “Enter to the depth of love and love never fails”.
- ❖ “With love man lives in joy always, rejoicing in the Lord who leads him to victory”.

2. Joy:

- ❖ “We have to observe here that there is a difference between pleasure and joy”.
- ❖ “Pleasure relates to the body and its senses. But true joy is for the spirit”.
- ❖ “True joy is rejoicing in the Lord. The joy of being in the presence of the Lord and in His fellowship”.
- ❖ ***“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).***

3. Peace

- ❖ “Peace with God and peace from God”.
- ❖ “Peace with people”.
- ❖ “Inner peace in the heart between man and himself”.
- ❖ “Do not let dispute come because of you”.
- ❖ “Be patient with long suffering”.



4. Long suffering:

- ❖ “God Himself has long suffering and is patient”.
- ❖ “He is very patient when dealing with sinners”.
- ❖ “People have certain manners that they need to change to long suffering”.
- ❖ “With long suffering, we would not become angry with sinners”.
- ❖ “Contemplate the tree and how it does not give fruits except after years”.

5. Kindness:

- ❖ “If you are not kind in your dealings, then you are not religious at all”.
- ❖ “The heart that is full of kindness does not rebuke much”.
- ❖ “He wins people by his kindness”.

6. Goodness

- ❖ “Negative goodness is staying away from sins”.
- ❖ “As for positive goodness, it is represented in the beatitudes in the New Testament”.
- ❖ “Man is required to deal with the two types together” keeping far from sins on the negative side and acting in all virtues on the positive”.

7. Faithfulness:

- ❖ “There is faithfulness in dogma and faithfulness in practical life”.
- ❖ “True faithfulness shows clearly in our practical life, in our dealings and in our relationship with God and with people”.
- ❖ “That is the practical faith”.

8. Gentleness:

- ❖ “The gentle person is usually loved by all people on this earth so he gains this earth here and the land of the living there.”
- ❖ “Gentleness has been the mark of Christians since the beginning”.
- ❖ “The gentle person is the kind and peaceful one”.
- ❖ “He is the quiet person in everything”.

9. Self Control:

- ❖ “A chaste tongue is gentle and well-mannered”.
- ❖ “Chastity of the body is keeping it from all bad carnal lust”.



Memorization

MATTHEW 5:1-12

5:1 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. **2** Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: **3** Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **4** Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted. **5** Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. **6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. **7** Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. **8** Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God. **9** Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God. **10** Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **11** Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. **12** Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Bible verses proving the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ

(Memorize 15 of the following verses)

1. The Eternal Christ

"Then they said to him: "Who are you?" And Jesus said to them; Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning". John 8:25

"Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM" John 8:58

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," Rev 1:11

"I, Jesus ... I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning star." Revelation 22:16

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last" Revelation 22:13

2. The Omnipresent Christ *(who is everywhere at all times)*

"No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven" John 3:13

"For where two or three are gathered in My name, I am in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20

"I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20

3. The All Knowing Christ

"... Lord, You know all things;" John 21:17

"... Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who would betray Him" John 6:64

"Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward," John 18:4

4. Christ the Judge

"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each one according to his works" Matthew 16:27

"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son" Revelation 2:23 "I will give to each of you according to your works." John 5:22

5. The Infallible Christ

"Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why you do not believe Me" John 8:46

"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me?" John 14:30

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" 2 Cor 5:21

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" Hebrews 4:15

"Who committed no sin, nor deceit found in His mouth" 1 Peter 2:22

6. Christ the Creator

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

"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him and the world did not know him" John 1:10

"He is the image of the invisible God, the origin of all creation" Colossians 1:15

"but we have one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we live." Colossians 1:16 "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." 1 Corinthians 8:6

The Agpeya- Prayer of the Third Hour

1. Psalm 19 'May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble'.

1 May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the God of Jacob defend you; 2 May He send you help from the sanctuary, And strengthen you out of Zion; 3 May He remember all your offerings, And accept your burnt sacrifice. **Selah**

4 May He grant you according to your heart's desire, And fulfill all your purpose. 5 We will rejoice in your salvation, And in the name of our God we will set up our banners! May the Lord fulfill all your petitions. 6 Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand. 7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God. 8 They have bowed down and fallen; But we have risen and stand upright. 9 Save, Lord! May the King answer us when we call. Alleluia.

2. Psalm 22 'The Lord is my shepherd'.

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever. Alleluia.

3. The Gospel of the Third hour.

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. 30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here. 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you.

4. The Third Hour Responses (6 parts)

1. Your Holy Spirit, O Lord Whom You sent forth upon Your holy disciples and honored apostles in the third hour, do not take away from us, O Good One, but renew Him within us. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence. And do not take Your Holy Spirit away from me.
2. O Lord who sent down Your Holy Spirit upon Your holy disciples and Your honored apostles in the third hour, do not take Him away from us, O Good One, but we ask You to renew Him within us, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Word; a steadfast and life giving spirit, a spirit of prophecy and chastity, a spirit of holiness, justice and authority, O the Almighty One, for You are the light of our souls. O Who shines upon every man that comes into the world, have mercy on me.
3. O *Theotokos*, you are the true vine who bore the Cluster of Life, we ask you, O full of grace, with the apostles, for the salvation of our souls. Blessed is the Lord our God. Blessed is the Lord day by day. He prepares our way, for He is God of our salvation.
4. O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who is present in all places and fills all, the treasury of good things and the Life-Giver, graciously come, and dwell in us and purify us from all defilement, O Good One, and save our souls.
5. Just as You were with Your disciples, O Savior, and gave them peace, graciously come also and be with us, and grant us Your peace, and save us, and deliver our souls.
6. Whenever we stand in Your holy sanctuary, we are considered standing in heaven. O *Theotokos*, you are the gate of heaven, open for us the gate of mercy.

Sayings of the Holy Fathers

- 1 - "Strive in your youth that you may rejoice in your old age." (St Pakhomious)
- 2 - "If a person has many good deeds and in his heart he envies his brother He is a stranger to God." (St. Pakhomious, father of communion)
- 3 - "Woe to us because the corruptable does not inherit the uncorruptable. And we by despising uncorruption are lead unwisely to corruption." (St. Isaiah the Ascetic).
- 4 - "You have been with me but because of my evilness I was not with you, O God" (St. Augustine)
- 5 - "Protecting the senses, removes sins and protecting the heart, cuts off the pain that gives birth to sin" (St Isaac the Syrian)
- 6 - "Make this day a day of repentance, lest death comes in the night" (St Ephraim)
- 7 - "The soul that lives in love is wider than the heavens" (St Augustine)
- 8 - "Repentance is the mother of life. Blessed is he who is born of it, for he shall not die." (The Spiritual Elder)
- 9 - "Anoint yourselves and your homes with the sign of the cross, and pray you will find that the evil has ceased" (St Anthony the Great)
- 10 - "Go and be reconciled with him who has offended you before he comes and apologizes, as he may steal your heavenly crown" (H.H. Pope Cyril VI)
- 11 - "For what benefits a man if he knows about the virtue, without practicing it?" (Pope Shenouda III).
- 12 - "If in this time the evil forces are working, then it is the time in which virtue is present" (St Shenouda the Archimandrite)

Coptic

Coptic Alphabet

Notes:

- The Coptic Language consists of 32 letter: 24 consonants, 7 vowels (a o w i u e h), and 1 letter only used as a number (,)
- The mark written (`) is called a jenkem. If used with a consonant, it is pronounced like a short e, and if used with a vowel, the vowel is pronounced separately.

Vowels for (e) sound	Vowels for (o) sound	Vowels for (a) sound
e- –h- i- u	o -w	a



Letter	Name	Pronunciation	Word	Meaning
A a	Alpha	Short a, as in the word “and”	Aloli	Grapes (vine)
B b	Veta	v, if followed by a vowel	Baki	City
		b, if not followed by a vowel	Tebt	fish
G g	Ghamma	g, as in God, if followed by (e-h-i-u)	` Agioc	holy
		n, if followed by (g-k-x-[])	Euaggelion	gospel
		gh, otherwise	Gravh	book
D d	Delta	d, if used in a proper name	Danihl	Daniel
		th, as in the word “this”, otherwise	Dipnon	Supper (dinner)
E e	Ei	Short e, as in the word “get”	Eqbeou	why
< ,	Soo	Only used for the number 6	<?? `njwm	6 books
Z z	Zita	z	Zarxh	sugar
H h	Ita	Long e, as in the word “need”	Hrp	wine
Q q	Theta	t, if it follows c or]	}qhn	shirt
		th, as in the word “thank”, otherwise	Qwn	where
I i	Iota	Short e, as in the word “kid”	` Ini	attend
K k	Kappa	k	Kocmoc	world
L l	Lavla	l	Lwiji	Cause (reason)
M m	Mi	m	Meqre	witness
N n	Ni	n	Nou;	God
{ [Ksi	ks (k+s)	Car[body
O o	O	Short o	Mo]i	walk

Letter	Name	Pronunciation	Word	Meaning
R r	Ro	r	Rwmi	man
C c	Cima	s	Caji	speak
T t	Tav	t	Mwit	road
U u	Epsilon	v, if it follows a or e	Nau	see
		oo, as in the word “food” if it follows o	Outa\	fruit
		i, otherwise	Kurioc	Lord
V v	Phei	f	` Vmhi	truly
X x	Kei	k, in Coptic words	Xaki	darkness
		sh, in Greek words, if followed by e-h-i-u	Xeroubim	Cherubim
		kh, otherwise	Xoroc	chorus
Y y	Psi	ps (p+s)	` Ariyalin	Sing (an order to sing)
W w	Oo	Long O, as in the word “oil”	Wni	stone
}]	Shai	sh	}hri	son
F f	Fai	f	Fwi	Hair
'''	Khai	kh	" hbc	lamp
\	Hori	h	wb	work
J j	Ganga	j, if followed by e-h-i-u	Cojen	perfume
		g, as in the word “God”, otherwise	` Ejwr\	night
S s	Tchima	ch, as in the word “check”	So	To plant
::	Ti	ti (t+i)	:mi	country

How to differentiate between Coptic & Greek letters?

-Letters usually come in Greek words: (g d z [y) but could come in Coptic words

Example: **Yuxh** = soul (Greek) **li[** = veil (Coptic)

-Letters that come in Coptic words only: (] f ´ \ j s)

Example: **Sì** (take) **]ourh** (censer)

-The letter \ comes only in Coptic words, but sometimes it can be used before a Greek word to express the H.

Example: **\irhnh** = peace

The Past Tense

Use		Indicates an event that happened and completed in the past			
Letter (the symbol)	The subject is a name	In affirmative: a		In negative: `mpe	
The letter is attached to the word indicating the person	Affirmative	I	Ai	We	An
		You (singular masculine)	Ak	You (plural)	Areten
		You (singular feminine)	Are		
	Negative	He	Af	They	Au
		She	Ac		
		I	`mpi	We	
	Affirmative	You (singular masculine)	`mpek	You (plural)	`mpeten
		You (singular feminine)	`mpe		
		He	`mpef	They	
She	`mpec				

The affirmative sentence could be formed according to 1- the subject if it is a clear name in the sentence or it is an article (absent) or 2- both together:

- 1- The subject is a clear name: the Word incarnated = ` A picaji sicar[
- 2- The subject is absent: (He) incarnated = Afsicar[
- 3- A name & an article together: the Word (He) incarnated = Picaji afsicar[
- 4- An article & a name: Incarnated (I mean) Incarnation of the Word = Afsicar[`nje picaji
- 5- The negative sentence: He did not know the word = ` Mpefcwoun `mpicaji

The Gospel according to St. John (1:1-5 & 1: 10-14)

'en `tarxh ne picaji pe ouo\ picaji nafxh 'aten V: ouo\ ne ounou; pe picaji	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God
Vai `enafxh icjen \h 'aten V:	He was in the beginning with God.
\wb niben au]wpi `ebol \itotf ouo\ atsnouf `mpe `li]wpi 'en vh etaf]wpi	All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
Ne `pwn' peten`n'htf ouo\ `pwn' ne `vouwini `nnirwmi pe	In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
ouo\ piouwini aferouwini 'en pixaki ouo\ `mpe pixaki ta\of	And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
nafxh 'en pikocmoc pe ouo\ pikocmoc af]wpi `ebol \itotf ouo\ `mpe pikocmoc couwnf	He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
af`i \a nh etenouf ouo\ netenouf `mpou]opf `erwou	He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
Nh de etau]orp `erwou af;er]iji nwou `eer]hri `nnou; nheqna\; `epefran	But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.
nh de `ebol 'en `cnof an ne oude `ebol 'en `vouw] `ncar[an ne oude `ebol 'en `vouw] `nrwmi an ne alla etaumacou ebol 'en V:	Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
ouo\ picaji aferoucar[ouo\ af]wpi `n'rhi `n'hten ouo\ annau `epewou `m`vrh; `m`p`wou `nou]hri `mmauatf `ntotf `mpewiwt efme\ `n\mot nem meqmhi	And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Conversation:

Mhna	Nane toou`i a] pe pekrh;?	Mina	Good morning, how are you?
Danihl	;ouoj % ak]enak `eqwn `ncaf	Daniel	I am fine, where did you go yesterday?
Mhna	Ai]enhi `e;ek`klhci`a	Mina	I went to church.
Danihl	Ak`iri `nou 'en ;ek`klhci`a	Daniel	What did you do in the church?
Mhna	;si`cbw ouo\ ;jerjer nem na`]vhr	Mina	I learn and play with my friends
Danihl	Aksi`cbw `nou 'en ;ek`klhci`a	Daniel	What did you learn in the church?
Mhna	Aisi`cbw `nouw] 'en ;acpi `nrem`nxhmi	Mina	I learned to read the Coptic language.

The Future Tense

Use		Indicates an event that will happen in the near future			
The letter (the symbol)		The subject is a name: Na			
With the articles	Affirmative	I	;na	we	tenna
		You (singular, masculine) You (singular, feminine)	`xna tera	You (plural)	tetenna
		He She	`fna `cna	they	cena
	Negative	Regular is formed by the use of an after the verb Absolute is formed by the use of `n – an (`n before the verb, & an after the verb) `n is switched to `m before (b m p v y)			

Examples:

;na`cmou	`epekran	I will bless Your name
fnaenkot	an `n]orp	He will not sleep early

The 8th part of the Sunday Theotokia:

Z? `ncop `mmhni > `ebol 'en pa\ht thrf > ;na`cmou `epekran > P_ `mpi`e`pthrf.	Seven times every day, I will praise Your name, with all my heart, O God of everyone
Aier`vmeu`i `mpekran > ouo\ aijemnom;> `` Pouro `nni`ewn > V: `nte ninou;.	I remembered Your name, and I was comforted, O King of the ages, and God of all gods
Ihc ? Pxc? Pennou; > pi`alhqinoc> vhetaf`i eqbe pencw; afercwmaticoc.	Jesus Christ our true God, who has come, for our salvation, was incarnate
Afsicar[`ebol >'en Pipn?a? eq?u? >	He was incarnate, of the Holy Spirit, and of Mary, the pure bride
Nem `ebol 'en Mari`a > ;]elet eq?u?.	

Conversation:

Pi]oi	Xere ne	Pishoy	Peace to you (singular feminine)
Covia	Xere nak	Sophia	Peace to you (singular masculine)
Pi]oi	A] pe perh; ?	Pishoy	How are you (singular feminine)?
Covia	:`oci ema]w	Sophia	I am very tired
Pi]oi	`Tera]ene `epichni ?	Pishoy	Will you go to the physician?
Covia	Ce ;na]enhi \arof `mvoou	Sophia	Yes, I will go to him today
Pi]oi	Mare V: talso	Pishoy	May God heal you

Covia	:]ep`mot`ntok	Sophia	Thank you (singular masculine)
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Hymns and Praises



The annual hymn Piwik during the distribution of the holy mysteries (Coptic)

PiwiK `nte `pwn' `etafi `epecht nan `ebol'en
`tve af; `m`pwn' `mpikocmoc.

The Bread of life, which came down for us from
heaven, has given life to the world.

Nqo \wi Maria `arefai 'en teneji `mpimanna
`nno `hton `etafi `ebol'en Viwt.

And you, too, O Mary, have borne in your womb
the rational Manna, which came from the Father.

Aremacf asne qwleb af; nan `mpefcwma nem
pef`cnof ettaihout anwn' ja `ene\.

You have brought Him forth without blemish; He
gave us His Body and His precious Blood, and we
live forever.

Cetwounou \arok `nje nixeroubim nem
niceravim ce`]nau `erok an.

Around You stand the Cherubim, and the
Seraphim, and they cannot look at You.

Tennau `erok `mmhni \ijen pima`ner]wou]i
tensi `ebol'en pekcwma nem pek `cnof ettaihout.

We behold You daily upon the altar and we
partake of Your Body and Your precious Blood.

Eqbe vai tensici `mmo a[iwc 'en \anumologia
`m`provhtikon.

Therefore, we exalt you befittingly with prophetic
hymnology.

Je aucaji eqbh; `n\an `bhou`i eutaihout ;baki
eqouab `nte pini]; `nouro.

For they spoke honorable things of you, O Holy
City of the great King.

Ten;o tentwb\ eqren]a]ni eunai \iten ne`precbia
`ntotf `mpimairwmi.

We entreat and pray that we may win mercy
through your intercessions with the Lover of
Mankind.

]iten ni`precbia `nte ;qe`otokoc eqouab Maria
Psoic ari`\mot nan `mpixw `ebol `nte nennobi.

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos Saint
Mary, O Lord, grant us the forgiveness of our
sins.

]iten ni`precbi`a `nte niarxiaggeloc eqouab
Mixahl nem Gabrihl Psoic ari`\mot nan
`mpixw `ebol `nte nennobi.

Through the intercessions of the holy archangels
Michael and Gabriel, O Lord, grant us the
forgiveness of our sins.

The Acts response on Weekdays of Great lent (Coptic)

}are Vnou; `wli `mmau `nninobi `nte pilaoc
`ebol \iten pi`slil nem pi`cqoi `nte pi`cqoinoufi.

Wherein God takes away, the sins of the people,
through the burnt offerings, and the aroma of
incense.

`K`cmarwout `alhqcw nem Pekiwt `n`agaqoc
nem Pi`pneuma eqouab je ak`i akcw; `mmon.
Nai nan.

Blessed are You indeed, with Your good Father,
and the Holy Spirit, for You have come and saved
us. Have mercy upon us.

The Hymn APensoic before Agioc on Saturday and Sunday liturgies of Great Lent (Coptic)

A Pensoic Ihcouc Pi`xrioc erhcteuin
 `e`rhi`ejwn `n`me `n`e\ouu nem `me
 `n`ejwr\ Ja `ntef cotton `en nennobi.

Our Lord Jesus Christ fasted on our behalf forty days and forty nights until He saved us from our sins.

Anon \wn maren erhcteuin `en outoubo
 nem oumeqmhi ouo\ `nten`er `proceuxecqe
 enw] `ebol enjw `mmoc.

And we, too, let us fast with purity and righteousness, and let us pray, proclaiming and saying:

Aiernobi aiernobi Pasoic Ihcouc xw nhi
 `ebol je `mmon bwk `naternobi oude
 `mmon soic `natxw `ebol.

"I have sinned, I have sinned. O my Lord Jesus, forgive me; for there is no slave without sin, nor master without forgiveness."

Je Peniwt et`en nivhoui mareftoubo `nje
 pekran marec`i `nje tekmetouro je vwk pe
 pi`wou ja ni`ene\.

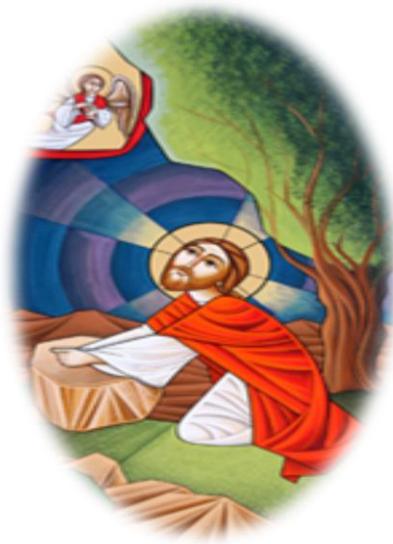
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, for Yours is the glory forever.

Ou`cqoinoufi pe Maria `ou`cqoinoufi et`en
 tecneji `ou`cqoinoufi ecmici `mmof]afxa
 nennobi nan `ebol.

The incense is Mary, the incense is in her womb, which she will borne, to forgive us our sins.

Maren\oc nem `ni`aggeloc en`w] `ebol
 enjw `mmoc je a[ia a[ia a[ia Maria
 ;parqenoc.

Let us praise with the angels, proclaiming and saying, "Worthy worthy, worthy O Mary the Virgin."



Xere Maria After the hymn of the blessing (Coptic)

Xere Maria ;ourw ;bw `n`aloli `nater`ellw

Hail to Mary the queen, the vine that does not grow

qh`ete `mpe ouwi erouwi `eroc aujem pi`cma\ `nte `pwn' `n'htc.	old that no vinedresser pruned. In her is found the Cluster Of Life.
P]hri `mVnou; 'en oumeqmhi afsicar['en ;parqenoc acmici `mmof afcw; `mmon afxa nennobi nan `ebol.	The Son of God was truly incarnate of the Virgin. She bore Him; He saved us and forgave us our sins.
Arejem ou`\mot `w tai]elet \anmh] aucaji `epetai`o je apiLogoc `nte Viwt `i afsicar[`ebol `n'h;	You found grace, O Bride. Many spoke of your honor, for the Logos of the Father came and was incarnate of you.
Nim `n`c\imi et \ijen pika\i acermau `mVnou; `ebhl `ero je `nqo ou`c\imi `nrem`nka\i `areermau `mpirefcwnt.	What woman on earth became mother of God but you? For while you are a woman of the earth, you became the mother of the Creator.
A oumh] `n`c\imi sitai`o au]a]ni `e;metouro alla `mpou`]vo\ `epetai`o qheqneqcw 'en ni\i`omi. `	Many women received honor and gained the Kingdom, but they did not reach your honor, O you, the beautiful among women.
Nqo gar pe pipurgoc etsoci `etaujem pi`anamhi `n'htf `ete vai pe Emmanouhl `etaf i af]wpi 'en teneji.	You are the high tower in which the treasure was found, which is Immanuel, who came and dwelt in your womb.
Marentaio `n`tparqenia `n;]elet `natkacia ;kaqaroc `mpan`agi`a ;qe`otokoc Mari`a.	Let us honor the Virginitly of the bride without vice, pure, all-holy the Theotokos, Mary.
Aresici `e\ote `tve tetaihut `e\ote `pka\i nem cwnt niben `ete `n'htf je areermau `mpirefcwnt.	You are exalted more than heaven; you are honored more than earth and all creation therein, for you became the Mother of the Creator.
Nqo gar `alhqwc pima `n]elet `nkaqaroc `nte Pixrioc pinumvioc kata ni`cmh `m`provhtikon.	For you are truly the pure bridal chamber of Christ, the Bridegroom, according to the prophetic voices.
Ari`precbeuin `e`\rhi `ejwn `w tensoic `nnhb thren ;qe`otokoc Mari`a `qmau `nIhcouc Pixrioc `ntefxa nennobi nan `ebol.	Intercede on our behalf, O our Lady, the Lady of us all, the Theotokos, Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, that He may forgive us our sins.



Doxology for Saturday

Your mercies, O my Lord, will I praise, fore
Your truth with my mouth.

Prayer of Great Lent (English)

From generation to generation, I will declare

My lawless deeds have covered my head, and have weighed me down, O God hear my sighs, and cast them away from me.

Make me like the publican, who had sinned against You; You had compassion upon him, and forgave him his sins.

Make me like the harlot, whom You had redeemed, You saved and rescued her, for she was pleasing to You.

Make me like the thief, who was crucified at Your right hand, he confessed to You, likewise saying.

"Remember me, O my Lord, remember me O my God, remember me O my King, when You come into Your kingdom."

For You, O my Savior accepted his confession. You were compassionate upon him, and sent him to Paradise.

Likewise, I am a sinner, O Jesus, my true King and God, have compassion upon me, and make me as one of them.

I know that You are good, compassionate and merciful; remember me in Your mercy, unto the ages of the ages.

I ask You O my Lord Jesus, rebuke me not in Your anger; and likewise in Your wrath, chasten me not for my ignorance.

For You desire not the death of a sinner, but rather he return and live; have pity upon my weakness, and look not upon me in anger.

I have sinned, O Jesus my Lord, I have sinned, O Jesus my God, O my King count not the sins, that I have committed.

I entreat You O my Savior, let Your mercies come upon me, and save me from the distresses that come upon my soul.

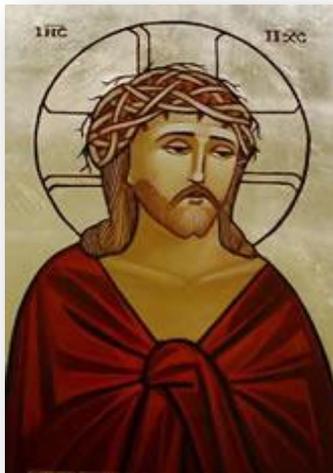
Send me not to the fire for my ignorance, as was done to Sodom; and likewise, destroy me not, as was done to Gomorrah.

But deal with me, O my Lord, as You dealt with the Ninevites, for they repented, and You forgave them their sins.

But may Your mercies, O my Lord, come upon me speedily, that I may proclaim with those people, with an unceasing voice.

Therefore I entreat You, O Lord God my Savior, judge me not, I, the weak and sinful.

But rather absolve and remit, my many trespasses, as the Good One and Lover of Mankind, have mercy upon us according to Your great mercy.



Rituals

1. The Annual Hymn Piwik During the distribution of the Holy Mysteries (Coptic)

This part of the annual liturgy refers to the distribution of the sacrament of communion. This hymn speaks of the “bread of life that came down from heaven” which in the Old Testament was the manna, the type of the communion in the New Testament. It is said after Psalm 150 in the communion.

2. Praxis Response during the weekdays Liturgy of Great Lent }are `V; (Coptic)

This hymn reminds the church attendees of God’s remission of our sins. It is said during the Lent liturgies, before the reading of the Acts of the Apostles. We are reminded by its lyrics that God forgives our sins through the sacrifices offered to Him. Christ is the true sacrifice, and thus the forgiveness of our sins.

3. The Hymn Apensoic before Agioc on Saturdays and Sundays liturgies of Great Lent (Coptic)

This hymn reiterates the story of the Great lent. We recount the Lord Christ’s fast on our behalf, and that we should imitate Him and fast as well. Then we revisit the repentance and a prayer to God pleading for His mercy, followed by a conclusion. Then we move into the continuation of Agioc before the litany of the gospel.

4. Xere Maria After the hymn of the blessing (Coptic)

This hymn is said at the start of the annual liturgy, after the hymn of the blessing Ten ouw]t. The hymn of blessing addresses the Trinity, and then this hymn focuses on exaltation of Saint Mary and asking for her intercession.

5. Doxology for Saturday and Sunday Liturgy of Great Lent (English)

The doxology for Lenten weekends recounts our repentance once again. There are also short stories within the verses of repentance that remind us of what examples to take during the Great fast. It is said after the introduction to the doxologies.

6. Aikw;(Coptic / English alternating)

This hymn is said during the midnight praises. It is the Sunday Psalie, the repeated portion in each of the verses asks for the help of Jesus Christ in our lives. We also acknowledge His Lordship over us while requesting short prayers for His involvement in our everyday life.

7. Annual Introduction to the doxologies – ending with Saturdays and Sundays of Great Lent tune (Coptic/ English Alternating)

This is an annual hymn that we sing before the doxologies asking for the intercession of Saint Mary. The tune of last 2 verses change according to the season