

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE  
CHAPTER 1



COPTIC ORTHODOX  
DIOCESE OF  
LONDON

*Koinonia*  
*“Small Bible Study”*

Jan-Feb 2023

Volume 1, Issue 1

*Nicodemus Group*  
*Productions*

A Diocese Wide Initiative  
The Coptic Orthodox  
Diocese of London  
Under the Auspices of  
H.E. Archbishop Angaelos

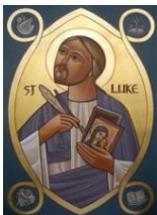
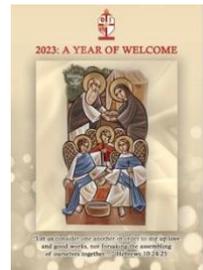


## *His Eminence Archbishop Angelos*



From its very inception, the Church has been built on the oneness of heart and life, going as far as being described in the Book of Acts Chapter 2 verse 44 as being a place in which “all who believed were together, and had all things in common”. While this still remains true today, it is often far too easy in our ever-accelerating lives, and with greater dependence on remote communication, that this oneness is overtaken by isolation, which presents itself gradually, and then becomes the norm, separating us from one another.

This is why our focus as a Diocese this year will be on ‘A Year of Welcome’, during which we welcome our Lord into our hearts, one another into our lives, and those seeking, into His Church. This can in itself be a wonderful sentiment, but without practical steps, it remains as just that; and so at the beginning of this year we are embarking together on a series of small Bible studies across the Diocese that will enable us to share the word of God and reflect on His love for us and for His world.



At the beginning of the Gospel of Saint Luke, we see an account of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world to visit us, His sheep, as our Good Shepherd. The Incarnate Word took flesh and resembled us “in every way but sin alone” (Liturgy of Saint Gregory) that we may resemble Him, as Saint Athanasius reminds us, by having our humanity transformed to a greater Godliness.

I pray that this resource enables us to reflect on God’s great promise and God’s faithfulness in our lives, that we too may be faithful in our journey, following Him together towards His Kingdom.

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## A YEAR OF WELCOME

“Let us consider one another...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” Hebrews 10:24-25

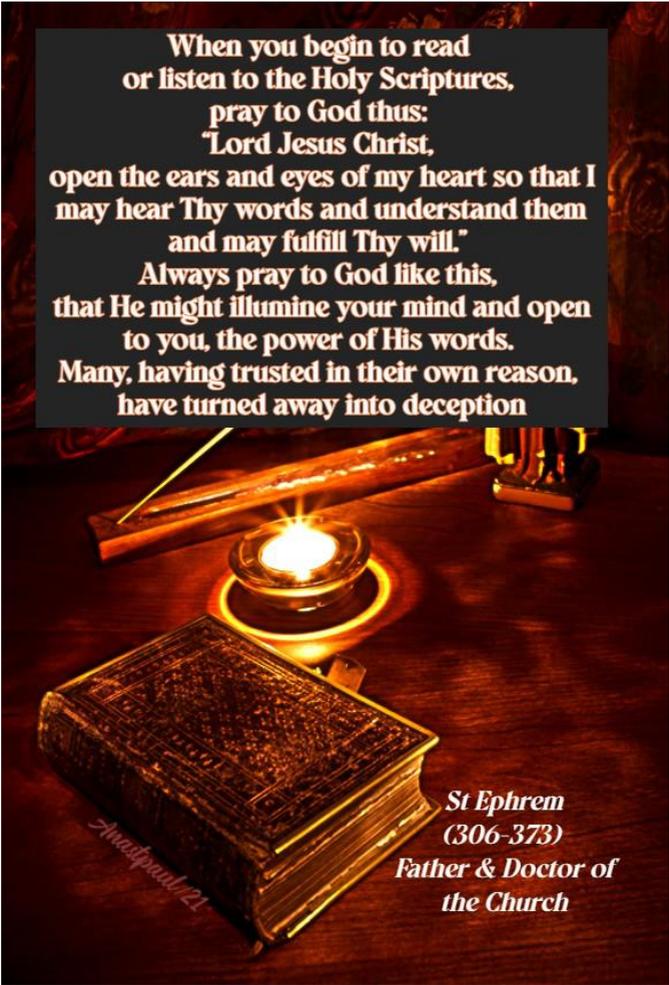


The Coptic Orthodox Diocese of London  
2023: A Year of Welcome

*“<sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

**Hebrews 10:24-25**

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**When you begin to read  
or listen to the Holy Scriptures,  
pray to God thus:  
“Lord Jesus Christ,  
open the ears and eyes of my heart so that I  
may hear Thy words and understand them  
and may fulfill Thy will.”  
Always pray to God like this,  
that He might illumine your mind and open  
to you, the power of His words.  
Many, having trusted in their own reason,  
have turned away into deception**

*St Ephrem  
(306-373)  
Father & Doctor of  
the Church*

# [How to use the pdf file for daily contemplation](#)

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> of Tobe- Jan 14 –

The Holy Spirit

Luke 1:15b & 16

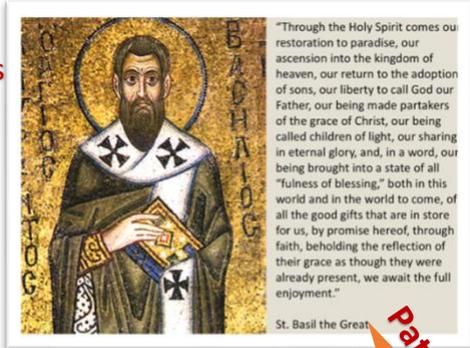
**The daily verses  
to contemplate**

He will also **be filled with the Holy Spirit**, even from his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup>And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

**Click here to read**

[John 14:16-17, 26; 16:5-15](#)

**the verses**



**Patristic quote**

Q. What reasons did Lord Jesus give for saying it would be better to send the Holy Spirit in His Place?

Q. How do you think the Holy Spirit guides us? Can you think of a time in your life where you felt the guiding of the Holy Spirit?

Q. What do you think the Holy Spirit of God declares to you about the things of God?

Q. In John 14:16-17 & 26 The Holy Spirit is called the Helper – where do you think you need help from Him? Ask Him.

Q. In John 14:16-17 He is called the Spirit of Truth

Circumcision of the lord Jesus Christ

**Click here**



Being Filled with the Holy Spirit

**The daily sermon**



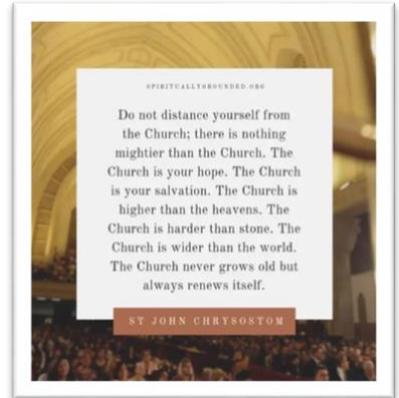
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 16<sup>th</sup>

## Faithfulness?

Luke 1:1-4

1 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup>just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, <sup>3</sup>it seemed good to me also, having **had perfect understanding of all things** from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup>that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

### Patristic quote



Q. What is the meaning of Faithfulness?

Q. Why are there many broken relationships and marriages?

Q. How can we be more faithful in our relationships and service?

Q. How faithful are you to the teachings and dogma of the Church?

Think - on the faithfulness of St. Luke in writing this Gospel

**Click here**



" Faithfulness and Treason " - H.H. Pope Shenouda 27-7-2011

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 17<sup>th</sup>

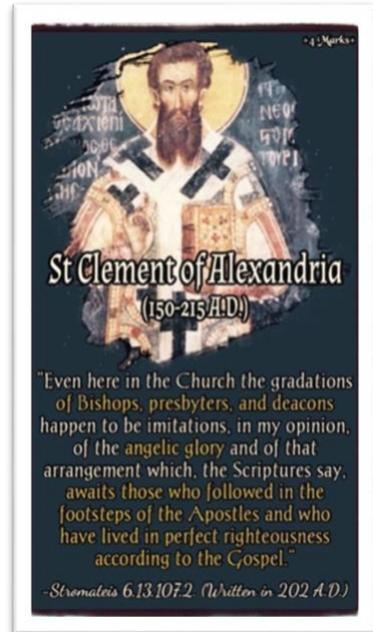
Patristic quote

## Be Righteous

Luke 1:5-7

<sup>5</sup> There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. <sup>7</sup> But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

[Proverb 3:21](#), [1John 2:29](#), [2Timothy 2:22](#), [Romans 6:13](#), [Romans 6:18](#), [Mathew 5:6](#), [Proverb 10:6-7, 11, 25](#), [Isaiah 32:7](#).



Q. What do you think being righteous means?

Q. What makes us righteous before God?

Q. Is there a difference between being righteous in front of God compared to being righteous in front of Man?

Q. How can we improve our walk in the path of righteousness?

Q. What is the work of righteousness?

**Click here**



How to live righteously? Coptic Orthodox Answers



"Righteous Before God" Sermon – Fr Matthias Shehad

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 18<sup>th</sup>

## The Priesthood

Luke 1:8-10

<sup>8</sup> So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the **priesthood**, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

### Patristic quote

Priests have received a power which God has given neither to angels nor to archangels. It was said to them: "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose, shall be loosed." Temporal rulers have indeed the power of binding; but they can only bind the body. Priests, in contrast, can bind with a bond which pertains to the soul itself and transcends the very heavens. Did [God] not give them all the powers of heaven? "Whose sins you shall forgive," he says, "they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." The Father has given all judgment to the Son. And now I see the Son placing all this power in the hands of men. They are raised to this dignity as if they were already gathered up to heaven.  
-Saint John Chrysostom (A.D. 387).

Q. Zechariah being a faithful priest – what did he feel like and what could he have prayed for in his time of burning incense?

Q. Why did our Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit appoint some to be apostles, some priests and some teachers ([Eph 4:11](#))?

Q. Who gave priests the right to raise incense and sacrifice? [Numbers 16](#): 40

Q. Why are only priests allowed to forgive sins?

Q. Aren't we all kings and priests? [Revelation 1:6](#) – Please read this for clarification [John 20:23](#), [Numbers 16:40](#), [Eph 4:11](#)

Think – On God's purpose for the priesthood

**Click here**



Should you address a priest as Father? Coptic Orthodox Answers



On the Sacrament of priesthood- Fr Daoud Lamai

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 19<sup>th</sup>

## Incense

Luke 1:11-12

Special feast: Theophany

**11** Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

**12** And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

## Patristic quote



[Psalm 141:2](#), [Revelation 5:8](#), [Luke 1:10-11](#), [Leviticus 16:12-13](#), [Exodus 30:7&8](#)

Q. In Psalm 141:2 above, why is our prayer and the lifting of our hands likened to incense?

Q. In Revelation 5:8 above, why is it that only the prayers of the saints are in the incense bowls of the 24 elders?

Q. As in the main verse above from Luke 1:10-11 and Leviticus 16:12-13, the whole multitude were praying then Zechariah went in to burn incense – how should we approach our prayer during the Liturgy?

Q. Where does the Church get the rites for Matins and Vespers? – Exodus 30:7&8

**Click here**



Why we use incense – Fr. -Michael Sorial



The Use of Incense- Fr Kyrillos

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 20<sup>th</sup>

## Our prayers are heard

Luke 1:13-15

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for **your prayer is heard**; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup> For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.

[1 Thessalonians 5:17](#), [Psalm 40:1](#), [Isaiah 40:31](#)

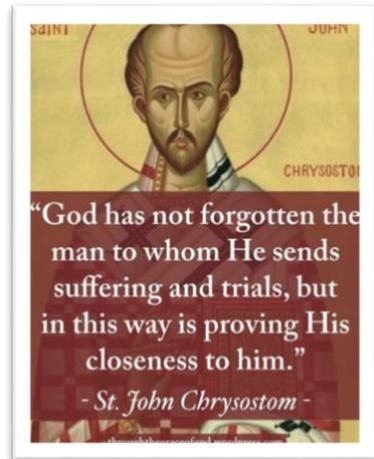
Q. Yesterday we said that the prayers of the righteous ascend to Heaven – what does this mean that Zacharias’ and Elizabeth’s prayers are heard?

Q. Why does the Lord want us to be Holy?

Q. How long must Elizabeth and Zechariah have been praying for a child? How long should we pray for something before giving up? 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Psalm 40:1

Q. What could be the reason(s) that our prayers are not answered early? Isaiah 40:31

## Patristic quote



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God, where are you? I don't feel you! Should I always feel God in prayer? by Fr. Gabriel Wissa

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 21<sup>st</sup>

Patristic quote

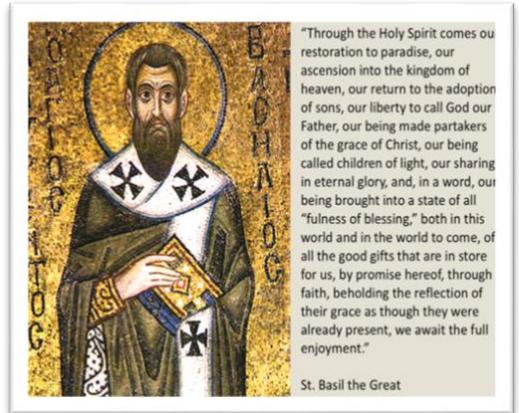
## Being filled with The Holy Spirit

Luke 1:15 & 16

Special feast: Wedding of Cana

He will also **be filled with the Holy Spirit**, even from his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup>And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord our God.

[John 14:16-17, 26; 16:5-15](#)



Q. What reasons did our Lord Jesus give for saying it would be better to send the Holy Spirit in His Place?

Q. How do you think the Holy Spirit guides us? Can you think of a time in your life where you felt the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

Q. What do you think the Holy Spirit of God declares to you about the things of God?

Q. In John 14:16-17 & 26, the Holy Spirit is called the Helper – where do you think you need help from Him? Ask Him.

Q. In John 16:5-15 – what does the Holy Spirit give us?

**Click here**



The Spirit-filled life (John 14:1-11) H. G. Bishop Kyrillos



Being Filled with the Holy Spirit- Fr Moussa

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>

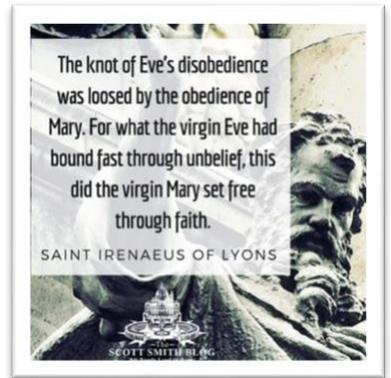
## Wisdom

Luke 1:17

<sup>17</sup> He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to **the wisdom** of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

[1 Corinthians 3:19 & 20](#), [Psalm 119: 98-100](#) & [169](#), [1 Corinthians 12:8](#)

## Patristic quote



Q. After reading the above verses – How is the wisdom of this world different from Godly wisdom?

Q. Can you think of an experience in your life where you learnt this the hard way?

Q. In Psalm 119:169, from where is Wisdom obtained? Is there a decision you can make in your life today based on His Word?

Q. In Psalm 119:98-100, think on one example from each of the three points given from your life?

Consider and ask the Holy Spirit – for the gift of wisdom - 1 Corinthians 12:8

Q. How did the Virgin St Mary show this gift in comparison to our mother Eve?

**Click here**



Types of Wisdom - Father Mark Hanna



Wisdom and a journey through Lent – H.E. Archbishop Angaelos

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>

## Knowing God's will

Luke 1:18

<sup>18</sup> And Zacharias said to the angel, “**How shall I know this?** For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

[John 6:40](#), [1 John 2:17](#)

[1 Peter 3:14](#) & [16](#)

Q. What is the will of God? John 6:40

Q. How can I know the will of God in my life?

Q. Do I need to have a relationship with God to see His will? And what should my relationship be like? 1 John 2:17

Q. Where is God's will in my suffering? 1 Peter 3:14 & 16

## Patristic quote



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How do I know God's will? H.E. Archbishop Angaelos



The Will of God- Fr. Cyril

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 24<sup>th</sup>

Patristic quote

## Standing in the presence of God

Luke 1:19

<sup>19</sup> And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who **stands in the presence of God**, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

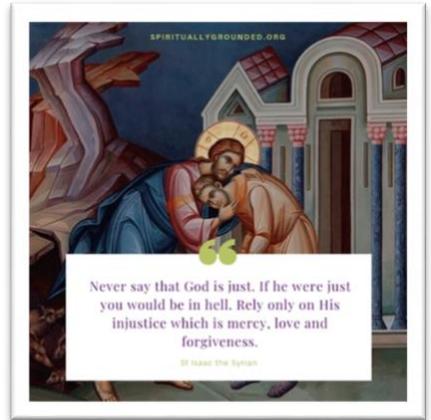
[1 Peter 5:7](#)

Q. Imagine how Zechariah felt when an angel, who stands in the very presence of God, stood before him? – write your thoughts.

Q. The people stood outside praying while Zechariah went in to burn incense. With our Lord Jesus we can now stand before his Throne and say like Gabriel that we stand in the presence of God. Is there anything stopping you from coming to stand before the Lord? Think on the Divine Liturgy – is there more focus we should be giving here.

Q. Zechariah was troubled and fearful at seeing Gabriel and was filled with disbelief – are we filled with troubles, fears and disbelief that are stopping us from enjoying being in God’s presence now and when we stand in the Divine Liturgy? 1 Peter 5:7

As you present your troubles, fears and disbelief to God – try saying “I am \_(your name)\_\_\_\_\_ who is standing in the presence of God.” And say this with feeling especially in the Divine Liturgy



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Virgin Mary teaches us: The meaning of the Divine presence- Frý Mark Aziz

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 25<sup>th</sup>

## There is time for Silence

Luke 1:20

<sup>20</sup> But behold, you will be **mute** and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

[Psalm 62:1-2](#), [1 Kings 19:11-13](#), [Mark 1:32-37](#),  
[Matthew 14:23](#)

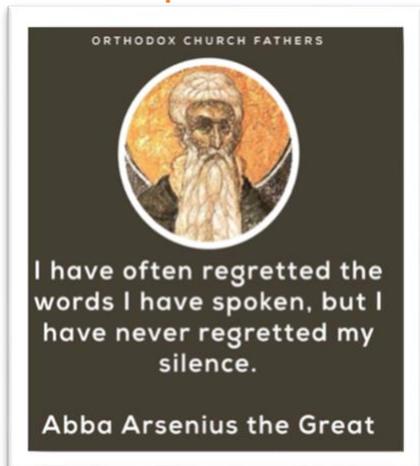
Q. In Psalm 62 and 1 Kings passages above – why is the Lord’s voice low and still?

Q. How can we hear His voice amidst the noise of this world and its distractions?

Q. From the verses in Mark and Matthew what can we learn from the Lord taking time alone?

Q. In our time of prayer and silence are we merely seeking solitude or are we seeking to be with God and hear Him? Do we wait to hear His voice, as in 1 Kings?

### Patristic quote



### Click here



St Basil letter 223



Fr. Lazarus teaches an American pilgrim about silence and the Jesus Prayer



Time for 'Silence' – H.E. Archbishop Angaelos

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 26<sup>th</sup>

Patristic quote

## Visions

Luke 1:21-22

[Matthew 3:13-17](#)

<sup>21</sup> And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he lingered so long in the temple. <sup>22</sup> But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a **vision** in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

In the Old Testament the Lord communicates to His people through visions however in the New Testament the Lord appeared in flesh.

Q. Why did The Triune God reveal Himself in the feast of the Epiphany (theophany – meaning manifestation of God)?

Q. What happened in the heavens immediately after the baptism of the Lord and why? (The Heavens opening, the Dove descending and the Voice)

Q. What are the major events for the Israelites in the Old Testament that point to Baptism?

Q. There were many Theophanies – Manifestations of God in the Old Testament – why does God show Himself to His people? What does that reveal to us about our God?



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St John Chrysostom “Discourse on the-day of the baptism of christ”



Theophany - Fr. Daoud Lamei

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan 27<sup>th</sup>

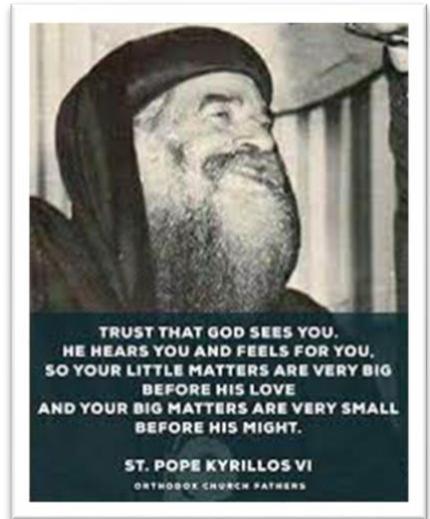
Patristic quote

## How God sees us

Luke 1:23-25

<sup>23</sup> So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. <sup>24</sup> Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, <sup>25</sup> “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when **He looked on me**, to take away my reproach among people.”

[Isaiah 43:4](#), [Psalm 139:13-14](#), [Zephaniah 3:17](#),  
[Ephesians 2:4-5](#), [Proverbs 8:31](#)



Q. From Elizabeth’s words above, how does she think God views her? What intentions does He have for her?

Q. In the verse from Isaiah, how valuable are you in God’s eyes? What would it take for you to truly believe this?

Q. From the verse from the Psalms, how does God see you? Do you know in your innermost being that you were created wonderfully by Him?

Q. In the verses from Zephaniah and Proverbs, how does it say that God views you? Is that how you think God views you or do you think He is vengeful?

Q. From the verse in Ephesians, what did we do for God to save us?

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How does God see you? How do you see yourself? Coptic Orthodox Answers

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Jan28<sup>th</sup>

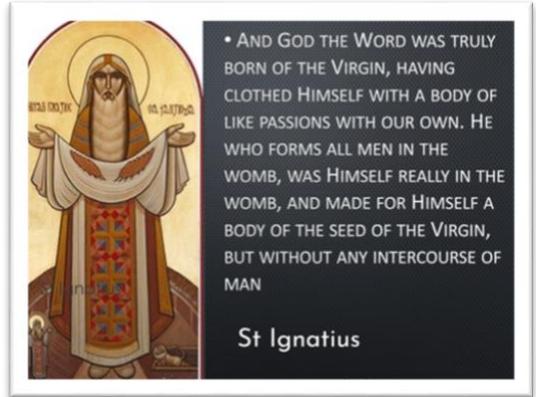
## The Holy Virgin

Luke 1:26-27

<sup>26</sup> Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a **virgin** betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name *was* Mary.

[Luke 1:28,30, 48](#)

## Patristic quote



Q. Why was Gabriel sent to this particular virgin girl?

Q. Was St. Mary free to accept or refuse the Angel's request?

Q. What is the relationship between Eve and St. Mary – why is she sometimes referred to as the second Eve?

Q. How did Mary become highly favoured and full of Grace? What fruits and characteristics can you see in her already?

Q. Why in the Coptic Church is one of her titles – Ever Virgin – AiParthenos

## Click here



Orthodoxy Back to Basics: The Ever-Virginity of St. Mary



Why was Christ born of a Virgin? By Fr. Gabriel Wissa

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> of Tobe; Jan 29<sup>th</sup>

## Rejoicing

Luke 1:28

28 And having come in, the angel said to her, “**Rejoice**, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!”

[Philippians 4:4-7](#)

Q. In verse 6 from Philippians above we are commanded not to worry or be anxious about anything - What worries and anxieties do you have? Present them now before the Lord

Q. In that same verse what are we asked to do with our worries? Can you do that?

Q. In verse 7 from Philippians above – what is the promised outcome of placing my concerns before God? Can I sit with Him now and receive that peace?

Q. Can that lead us to Philippians verse 4:4 – Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice – what does always mean here?

## Patristic quote



*Happiness can only be achieved by looking inward and learning to enjoy whatever life has and this requires transforming greed into gratitude.”*

+ St. John Chrysostom

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Rejoicing in the Incarnation – H.E. Archbishop Angaelos



Philippians 4:1-9 Rejoice in the Lord – Fr. Daoud Lamei

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of Tobe; Jan 30<sup>th</sup>

## Favour with God

Luke 1:29-30

<sup>29</sup> But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. <sup>30</sup> Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found **favour with God**.

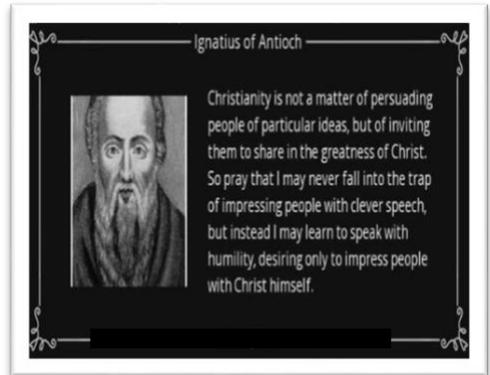
[Genesis 39:2-3](#)

Q. Has God shown favour to you in your life? Take some time to write down some of those now?

Q. Patriarch Joseph was imprisoned in Egypt for several years and yet throughout that time the Bible said that Joseph was favoured by God. Can God be favouring us during difficult times?

Q. Why did God bestow such blessings upon Joseph? Similarly, is there anything I can improve on in my life?

## Patristic quote



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Favour with God- HE Archbishop Angaelos

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> of Tobe; Jan 31<sup>st</sup>

Patristic quote

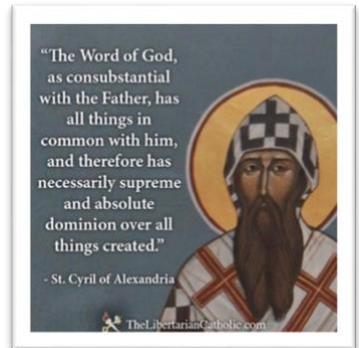
## His name Jesus

Luke 1:31-33

<sup>1</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His **name Jesus**. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

[John 14:13 & 14](#), [John 18:6](#), [Philippians 2:10](#)

*"He is called Son because He is identical to the Father in essence; and not only this, but also because He is of Him. He is called only-begotten not because He is a unique Son . . . but because He is Son in a unique fashion and not in a corporeal way. He is called Word because he is to the Father what a word is to the mind" (St Gregory of Nazianzus Orations 30:20).*



Q. Read the verses from the Gospel of John above – Have you ever wondered why in the Lord’s prayer in our Church we say at the end “Through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen” – Do we remember to pray to Him personally and use His name?

Q. Why does our Lord Jesus want us to ask in His name?

Q. The Orthodox Church encourages and teaches the Jesus Prayer to be said over and over till our heart and spirit is close to Him – “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, my Saviour, have mercy upon me a sinner” – do you practice this habit enough and can you practice it more?

Q. In John 18, when the soldiers came to arrest Lord Jesus, as soon as He declared “I am He” they fell to the ground. In mentioning the name of the Lord during hardship could our problems also fall to the ground – what are your thoughts? Philippians 2:10

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Christ, the head of the church: H.H. Pope Shenouda



Who is Jesus? H.H. Pope Shenouda - November 1988

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

## Son of God

Luke 1:34-35

<sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?”

<sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, “*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One Who is to be born will be called the **Son of God.***”

[Luke 10:22](#), [John 5:18](#), [John 10:33](#), [John 3:16](#)

Q. In the verses above from Luke 10, John 5 and John 10, what was the reaction of those listening and how did that cause them to act?

Q. What is meant by John 3:16 “Only begotten Son” (Monogenes – GK, “Only Begotten”) Refer to [John 1: 14](#), [John 1: 18](#), [John 14: 8-11](#), [John 3:16](#), [1 John 4: 9](#)

Q. Taking the above into consideration and the verses to follow, did our Lord Jesus say He is God in the Bible? [Matthew 26:64-65](#), [Daniel 7:13-14](#)

Ask Lord Jesus to reveal more of Himself to you and to teach you more of the Father and His Holy Spirit.

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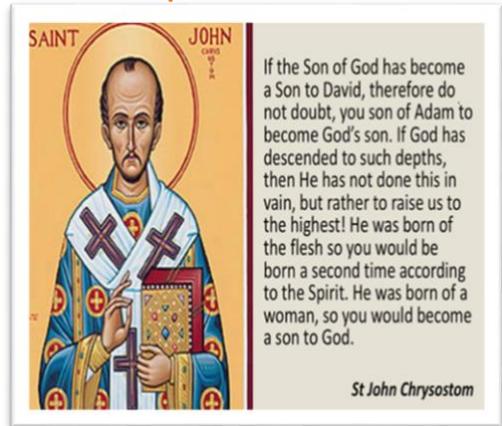


How is the Son of God both God and man? What is the Coptic Orthodox Church’s Christological belief? Coptic Orthodox Answer.



Where did Jesus say “I am God”? by Fr. Anthony Mourad

## Patristic quote



Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>

The barren became fruitful:  
Nothing is impossible with  
God

Luke 1:36-38

<sup>36</sup> Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For with **God nothing will be**

**impossible.** <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

[Genesis 18:14](#), [Luke 18:27](#), [1 John 5:14-15](#), [Jeremiah 32:27](#)

Q. Is there something you have been praying for for a while and yet it seems that God is not listening? Refer to Genesis and Luke verses above.

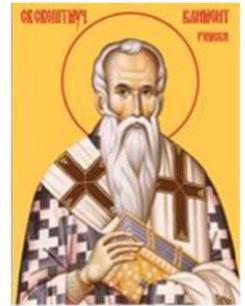
Q. Do you believe that if it is for your good that God will choose the right time for Him to respond?

Q. Read 1 John 5 above. Are there any conditions for our confidence that God will listen?

We all forget that we worship the God of the Impossible – Ask the Lord to increase your faith in His Might to do all things for your good - Jeremiah 32:27

### Patristic quote

Having then this hope, let our souls be bound to Him who is faithful in His promises, and just in His judgments. He who has commanded us not to lie, shall much more Himself not lie; for nothing is impossible with God, except to lie.



*St Clement of Rome*

**Click here**



Behold with God nothing is impossible - Fr. Cyril Gorgy

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>

## Burden in Service

Luke 1:39

<sup>39</sup> Now Mary arose in those days and **went into the hill country** with haste, to a city of Judah,

[2 Corinthians 11:29](#), [Nehemiah 1:1-6](#), [2 Timothy 1:8-9](#), [2 Timothy 1:3-4](#)

Q. What drove Nehemiah to talk to the King in the above passage?

Q. Is there a burden or concern that God is putting on your heart for others? Pray and petition God for that concern. In verse 2 of Nehemiah above, Nehemiah was concerned for the condition of the people.

Q. Nehemiah was burdened, he saw a need and fasted, presenting this need to God. What can you do about the burden he has given you for others? 2 Timothy 1:8-9

Q. Taking St. Paul as an example here in 2 Timothy 1:3-4 what can we learn in our service?

Before Nehemiah turned to the king of Persia, he turned to the God who rules above earthly powers – when we are burdened let's turn to God first.

## Patristic quote

Now the true soldiers of Christ must always be prepared to do battle for the truth, and must never, so far as lies with them, allow false convictions to creep in

Origen

## Click here



3rd-Sunday of Kiahk-Fr Suriel Costandi



Burdens in Service – Fr. Mark Aziz

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 4<sup>th</sup>

## The Holy Spirit works through us

Luke 1:40-41

<sup>40</sup> and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with **the Holy Spirit**.

[John 14:13-17](#) & [26 John 16:12-15](#)

Q. In our Chrismation we each were “sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit” where we began our relationship with the Holy Spirit, which our Church teaches that He works with us in the midst of the Church, the Body of Christ. How have you felt the Holy Spirit guiding you in your life?

Q. What caused Elizabeth to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Q. How did Saint Mary’s greeting cause Elizabeth to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Q. In [Acts 4:31](#), what caused the apostles to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Q. In [1 Corinthians 3:16](#), St Paul reminded us that we are the temple of God; how do you think we are the temple of God?

Q. What are we required to be and do as a temple of God? Refer to [Exodus 30:7-8](#) and [Revelation 8:4](#).

Q. How can I know if the Holy Spirit is working inside me? Refer to [Galatians 5:22-26](#)

## Patristic quote



*“O Lord and Master of my life,  
take from me the spirit of  
sloth, faintheartedness,  
lust of power and idle talk,  
But give rather the spirit of  
chastity, humility, patience  
and love to Thy servant.  
Yea, O Lord and King,  
grant me to see my own errors  
and not to judge my brother,  
for Thou art blessed from all  
ages to all ages.  
Amen.  
-Mar Ephrem the Syrian*

**Click here**



How does The Holy Spirit work through us? H.E. Archbishop Angaelos

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

## Theotokos- the Mother of God

Luke 1:42-43

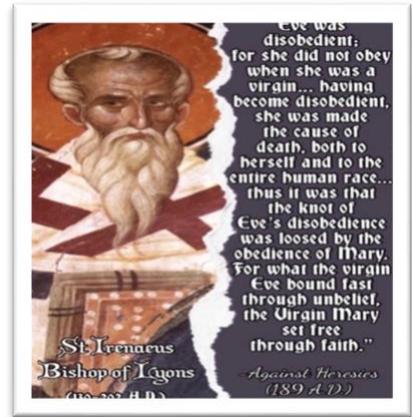
<sup>42</sup> Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! <sup>43</sup> But why *is* this *granted* to me, that the **Mother of my Lord** should come to me?"

Q. Why did our Church fathers insist on calling St Mary the Mother of God rather than the Mother of Jesus? Refer to the third ecumenical council link below.

Q. Why do we differ with other Churches in our veneration of St Mary even though we all accept Christ is God? Surely, they can believe what they want! Please think about the answer to the first question.

Q. Was St Mary mentioned in the Old Testament? What titles does the Bible give to St Mary?

## Patristic quote



## Click here



The Third Ecumenical Council was held in Ephesus, Asia Minor, in 431



The titles of the Theotokos



Why is St Mary such an important figure in Christianity? Coptic orthodox

Answers

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 6<sup>th</sup>

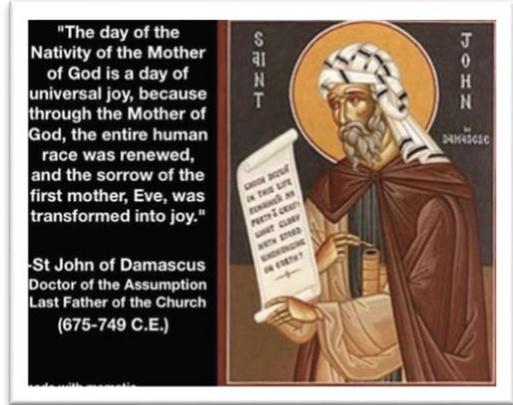
## Leap for Joy

Luke 1:44-45

Special Fast: Jonah's Fast

<sup>44</sup> For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe **leaped in my womb for joy.** <sup>45</sup> Blessed *is* she who believed, for there will be a fulfilment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

## Patristic quote



Q. Why did the babe leap for joy?

Q. Have you heard the about prosperity gospel, which means I will be prosperous because I am following Christ? Contemplate on Elizabeth and Zacharias's life and please notice the suffering they endured.

Q. What can make us leap for joy? [Luke 6:20-22](#); [Ecclesiastic 2:26](#)

Q. What does God desire for us in order to leap for joy? Refer to [Psalm 51:16-19](#)

**Click here**



Joy comes in the morning – H.E. Archbishop Angaelos

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> of Tobe; Feb 7<sup>th</sup> **Patristic quote**

## My soul magnifies the Lord

Luke 1:46-47

Special Fast: Jonah's Fast

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said: "**My soul magnifies** the Lord, <sup>47</sup> And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.

The body and the soul join in doing the work of the soul, i.e. praying , meditating, praising and coming in communion with God.

*HH Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria*



Q. How can my soul magnify the Lord?

Q. Is our life full of joy? Why is there suffering in our life?

Q. What stops me from being joyous?

Q. How can I be joyful, and my soul glorify God even during my suffering?  
Contemplate on St Mary's life, the suffering she endured, and how she remained joyful.

**Click here**



"My Soul Magnifies the Lord Fr. Matthias Shehad

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of Meshir; Feb 8<sup>th</sup>

## Humility

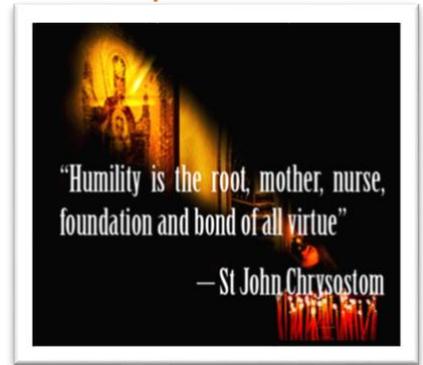
Luke 1:48-49

Special Fast: Jonah's Fast

<sup>48</sup> For He has regarded the **lowly state** of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

[Philippians 2:1-11](#)

## Patristic quote



Q. What good characteristics can you see in the response of our Lady St. Mary in Luke 1?

Q. Are there other examples of the humility of the Virgin St. Mary?

Q. From Philippians above, meditate on what it means to have the same attitude as Christ Jesus?

Q. Lord Jesus has dominion and power over all and yet stooped to wash His disciples' feet, what opportunities can you think of for you to practice such humility?

**Click here**



Humility the definition-of- H. G. Bishop Gregory



If my people will humble themselves- Fr Daoud Lamai

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> of Meshir; Feb 9<sup>th</sup>

## God's Mercy

Luke 1:49-50

Special Feast: Jonah's Feast

<sup>49</sup>For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.<sup>50</sup>And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation.

[Psalm 51](#), [Psalm 86:5](#), [Ephesians 2:4 &5](#),  
[James 2:13](#), [Hebrews 4:16](#)

Q. If God were only just and not merciful, what could each of us reasonably expect from Him? Mercy has been defined as "kindness in excess of what may be expected by fairness." If God had been only fair and just with each of us, where would we be?

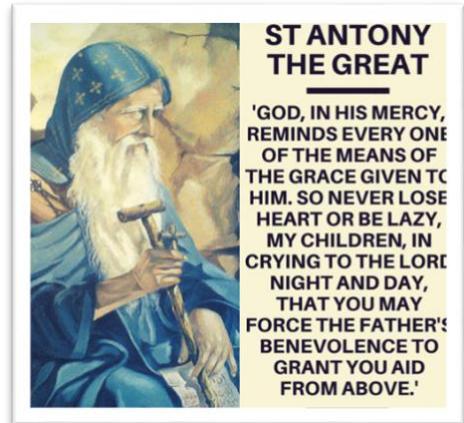
Q. Read the Psalms above and the verses from Ephesians. What did we deserve and what did we receive?

Q. Read the verse from James, was what we received fair, was it just or was it merciful?

Q. Read the verse from Hebrews above, how does that change the way we approach the One Who is Merciful?

Q. Why might someone reject the excessive kindness of his mercy? Think on Jonah's reason for not wanting to go to the Ninevites.

## Patristic quote



**Click here**



Have Mercy on Me, O LORD, for I am Weak -Fr. Daoud Lamei

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> of Meshir; Feb 10<sup>th</sup>

## Pride

Luke 1:51-52

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered **the proud** in the imagination of their hearts. <sup>52</sup> He has put down the mighty from *their* thrones, And exalted *the* lowly.

[Sirach 10:14-22](#)

Q. Read [Proverbs 13:10](#) Do we readily accept advice from others who are younger or perceived to be “less knowledgeable” than us?

Q. Read [Proverbs 16:19](#) Do we have a heart for those less privileged or in need?

Q. Do you brag about your accomplishments? Read [Luke 17:10](#), what can I learn to apply from this verse?

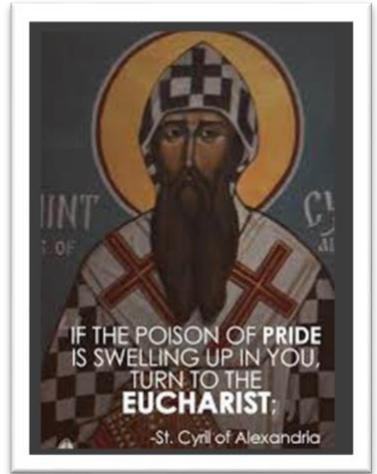
Q. Do we smugly think of ourselves as spiritually superior to our loved ones and others in our Church ([1 Cor. 10:12](#); [3 John 1:9](#))?

Q. Do we have a sharp, critical tongue and are quick to point out the faults of others ([Matt. 7:1-5](#); [Gal. 6:1](#))?

Q. Do we neglect to express gratitude for “little things” to God or others? Are we reading the prayer of thanksgiving from the Agpeya daily ([Col. 3:15](#))?

Q. Do we have a hard time admitting that we’re wrong, confessing our sin to God, through our priest in the Sacrament of Repentance and Confession and putting right our wrongs to others, and asking their forgiveness ([James 5:16](#); [1 John 1:9](#))?

## Patristic quote



## Click here



The sin of pride H.E. Metropolitan Youssef



Pride by Fr. Anthony Mourad

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> of Meshir; Feb 11<sup>th</sup>

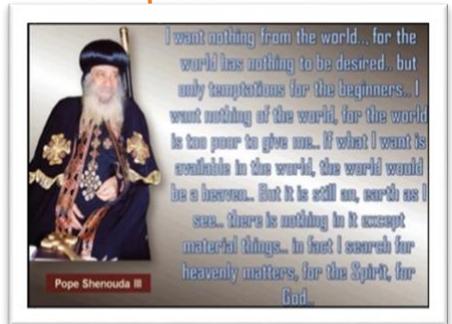
## Fill my hunger

Luke 1:53-54

<sup>53</sup> He has **filled *the* hungry** with good things, And *the* rich He has sent away empty. <sup>54</sup> He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of *His* mercy,

[Psalms 27](#), [Psalms 42](#), [Psalms 43](#) and [Psalms 63](#), [Luke 14:18-20](#)

## Patristic quote



Q. Read Psalm 27 out loud if possible. How does David describe God in verse 1?

Q. Because of verse Psalm 27:1, how does he face verses 2 & 3 when things are against him?

Q. How does David the psalmist then describe his longing for God's dwelling place in Psalm 27:4-6 (also in [Psalms 65:4](#), [Psalms 84:1-2](#), [Psalms 84:10](#) and [Psalms 122:1](#))? How can we have that same longing for God and His Church?

Q. Then the psalmist after God's own heart continues in verses Psalm 27:7-12 to seek the face of Love? How do these verses stir you with a love for God Himself?

Note: If you can, read Psalms 42, 43 and 63 which show us the thirst our dear psalmist David has for God.

Q. Now read the verses from Luke 14 above, what excuses do people give for not joining Him in the heavenly banquet? Are they big excuses?

Q. Is the normal busyness of this world and its simple gifts from God to us, causing us to lose our hunger, yearning and love for Him? Read the quote on this page from H.H. the thrice blessed Pope Shenouda III – can we ask the Lord to give us that same perspective?

## Click here



Hunger for Him- Fr Daniel Fanous



Spiritual Hunger- Fr David Milad

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> of Meshir; Feb 12<sup>th</sup>

## The Servant Queen The Mother of God

Luke 1:55-56

<sup>55</sup> As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever." <sup>56</sup> And **Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her house.**

Q. What made St Mary a great servant?

Q. What are obstacles that stop me from serving the Lord like her?

Q. What are the characteristics of the servant of God in your view?

Q. What's stopping you from serving the Lord? How do you think you can overcome these obstacles?

Q. Is everyone called to serve the Lord? Do you need to be perfect to serve?

Reference David the Prophet and King, St. Peter and St. Thomas. Write down your perspective.

## Patristic quote

"Not in a servant did He dwell, but in His holy tabernacle not made with hands, which is Mary the Mother of God."

- Saint Dionysius (Died 264)  
Early Church Father



## Click here



The Chosen Servant: H.E. Metropolitan Youssef



The Servant Queen: Fr Benjamin Abouelkheir

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> of Meshir; Feb 13<sup>th</sup>

## God have great mercy on us

Luke 1:57-58

<sup>57</sup> Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. <sup>58</sup> When her neighbours and relatives heard how the **Lord had shown great mercy** to her, they rejoiced with her.

[Titus 3:3-8](#), [Galatians 4:6-7](#)

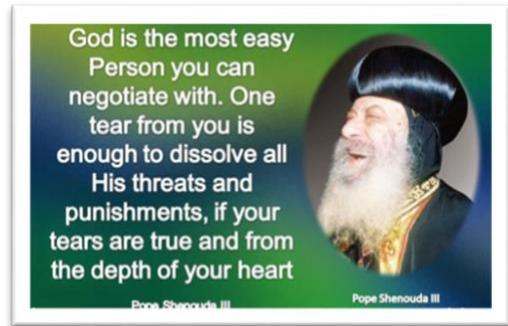
Q. A few days back we looked at mercy being sometimes described as "kindness in excess of what may be expected by fairness". Here again with Elizabeth how must she have felt about God's mercy now with the baby in her arms daily.

Q. What personal experience of God's mercy to you stands out in your life?

Q. Read the verse from Titus above. What does verse 5 tell us about the conditions for salvation? Who saved us? Ourselves?? Why? How? To what degree are we saved? And how do we address Him from now on – refer to Galatians 4

Q. What was the result of this salvation? Heirs of what?

## Patristic quote



## Click here



God's Mercy – Fr Andrew Iskander



God's Love For Humanity

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> of Meshir; Feb 14<sup>th</sup>

## Circumcision and Baptism

Luke 1:59

<sup>59</sup> So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to **circumcise** the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

Q. Can you see the parallel meaning of baptism in each of these verses ([Genesis 1:1-2](#)), ([Genesis 6:9-18](#)), ([2 Kings 5:1-19](#)), ([Exodus 30:17-21](#)), ([Numbers 19:11-13](#)), ([Exodus 14](#)), ([Joshua 3](#)).

Q. From the verses below can you describe what baptism mean for us as believers. ([Colossians 2:11-12](#)), ([1 Peter 3:18-21](#)), ([Titus 3:4-8](#)), ([Acts 2:38-39](#)), ([Romans 6](#)), ([Galatians 3:26-29](#)), ([1 Corinthians 12:12-14](#)), ([1 Corinthians 6:15](#)), ([Acts 2:38-39](#)), ([1 Peter 3:18-21](#)), ([1 Corinthians 1:16](#)), ([Acts 11:13-14](#)), ([Acts 2:38-39](#)), ([Matthew 28:19](#)), ([1 Corinthians 10:1-2](#))

Q. Why is the Sacrament of Baptism called the gate of Sacraments?

Q. What was missing in the baptism of the Samaritans according to [Acts 8:14-17](#)? Do you think baptism can be done by any layman? Refer to the links below.

**Click here**



The Sacrament of Baptism in the Coptic church



What makes Baptism so essential for my salvation? by Fr. Gabriel Wissa



Why did Christ Get baptised and receive the Holy Spirit? Fr. Gabriel Wissa

## Patristic quote

