



— THE —
LORD
— IS MY —
LIGHT



— AND MY —
SALVATION
WHOM SHALL I FEAR?
PSALM 27:1

Grade 7-8

HIS HOLINESS POPE TAWADROS II



**118TH POPE OF ALEXANDRIA AND
PATRIARCH OF THE SEE OF SAINT MARK**



The Lord is My Light and My Salvation

Table of Contents	Page
St. Mark Festival Anthem- The Lord is My Light and My Salvation	2
The Lord is My Salvation	3
Light of Light	8
The Epistle to Philemon	12
Night of the Apocalypse	17
A Light Shines	20
Walk in Light	24
Memorization	28
Coptic	30
Hymns & Rituals	36

Visit the St. Mark Festival's website at www.smfsus.org
to find the material for the festival and
for guidelines and information on the tests



The Lord is My Light and My Salvation

St. Mark Festival 2024 Anthem

Our God is eternal
Pantocrator, The Logos

All generations witness for Him
Tells of His might and His wonders

We're peaceful in His promises
We live by His commandments

Our Church fathers and martyrs
A life of Sacraments

My faith and my doctrine are glory
The Lord is my light and my salvation

Our God is One in Three
Redeemer and Holy x2

His creation gives Him praise
How this world His hands have made

Guided by His teachings
We seek Him and His blessings

Kept Tradition to this day
My Church unique and firm in faith

Unchanging the teachings and Holy
The Lord is my light and my salvation



The Lord is My Salvation

“The Lord is my light and my salvation” is this year’s theme of St. Mark Festival 2024. It is the first verse in Psalm 27, which was written by David, the prophet, while he was fleeing from King Saul.

His life was filled with the presence of the Lord and so his life was filled with light and hope. The Lord saved David many times, so he felt that the Lord was **his light and salvation**.

This Psalm is a declaration that the Lord is our light and our salvation. He guards the life of each one of us. He saves his children from enemies and enlightens them to attain eternal life with Him. Let us look at this year’s theme more closely:

The Lord:

Who is the Lord?

We believe in One God. God is a Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; three in One.

The Lord revealed to us that He is a Trinity in both the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 6:4) and the New Testament (1 John 5:7), which means that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one in essence. However, each hypostasis (the three persons of the Trinity) is distinct from the others:

- The **Father** is unbegotten
- The **Son** is begotten from the Father
- The **Holy Spirit** proceeds from the Father



We learn these dogmatic facts about the Holy Trinity from our beloved Orthodox Church.

The Lord is My Light

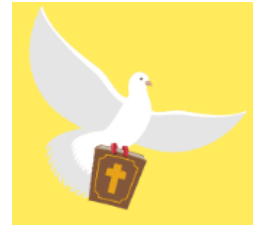
The Lord is the True Light

- Our Lord God is light. He said: **“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”** (John 8:12)
- And in the first epistle of St. John, we read **“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.”** (1 John 1:5)
- In the Book of Revelation, we read that St. John saw the Lord as **“His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.”** (Revelation 1:16)
- In the Litanies of Matins prayers we say, **“O the true Light who gives light to every man coming into the world...”** and **“As the day light shines upon us, O Christ our God, the true Light, let the luminous senses and the bright thoughts shine within us...”**
- God is referred to as **“Father of lights”** (James 1:17) **“who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see”** (1 Timothy 6:16)
- The Lord is also the creator of light, He said **“Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.”** (Genesis 1:3-4)
It was His first creation for mankind, to be able to see and enjoy what God offers for him out of His love.

The Church teaches us to walk in the light of the Lord through...:

1. The Teachings of the Holy Bible:

- The Holy Bible is the word of God; His commandments, His promises. It was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When we follow the commandments of the Holy Bible we fulfill the commandments of the Lord: **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)**



“Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you” (John 12:35)

2. The Liturgical Life of the Church

- The church is a spiritual lampstand; through her rites, we always see the church decorated with many lights and candles, which symbolize the Lord’s presence.
- We see more candles lit especially during the readings.
- In the Sacrament of Baptism (the mystery of enlightenment), we are enlightened as becoming children of God.
- The father the priest says, **“Open the eyes of their heart, that they may be enlightened with the light of the Gospel of Your kingdom”** and **“make them ... purified vessels, sons of light, and heirs of Your kingdom.”**
- And In the Agpeya prayers we pray, **“enlighten our minds, our hearts, and our understanding”** and in the Midnight Prayer we say: **“enlighten our minds to understand Your life-giving words. Raise us from darkness of sin which ruins the soul.”**



3. The Life of the Saints is Light

- The Lord Jesus Christ incarnated and came to give light to the world. He then let His disciples reflect this light just like the moon reflects the light of the sun.
- He commanded us to live a life of holiness, **“Be holy, for I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:16)** the Church became filled with many faithful people whose biographies enlighten us as we read them in the Synaxarion every day.



The Lord is My Salvation

What is salvation? The origin of the word “salvation” comes from “to save.”

- When Adam sinned and transgressed the Lord’s commandment, the result of his sin was death. Therefore, he carried the sentence of death within him and all his descendants. Mankind became in dire need of a savior to save them from that sentence and restore them back to paradise.
- The process of salvation is an ongoing process that continues throughout the life of the believer.



1. Baptism



2. Confirmation



3. Repentance and Confession



4. Eucharist



Therefore, we do not agree with the notion of “I was saved on that day” or “salvation in a moment” which is adapted by non-Orthodox denominations, not for theological debate but from a true understanding of the process of salvation.

- HH Pope Shenouda III explained that as Adam’s descendants, we were in Adam when he sinned, and when he was punished and death entered his life, we were also in him. Therefore, we were born with his sin, and we carried his nature that was corrupted by sin. We received the same sentence as Adam, and we lost the divine image that man was created with. Therefore, we became in need of salvation from Adam’s sin, its consequences, and its punishment. St. Paul described this by saying: **“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 men, resulting in justification of life.” (Romans 5:18)**



We need the Lord Jesus Christ Who:

- Saves us from Adam's sin, which we were born with.
- Saves from the corrupt nature, which is inclined to sin.
- Saves us from death:
 - **Physical death:** through the resurrection of the dead.
 - **Spiritual death:** when we have a living relationship with Him.
 - **Moral death:** when we become His children.
 - **Eternal death:** By entering the kingdom of heaven.

- Saves us from habitual sins, which can overtake our lives (thoughts, senses, relationships, etc.)
- Saves us from all sadness and worries through the work of His Holy Spirit in us according to His promise **"Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy."** (John 16:33)
- Saves us from the attacks of the devil who wants our corruption, but we are confident that **"the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."** (Romans 16:20)



How are we saved?

- By the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation became possible. The Lord Jesus Christ is our savior and ransom. Therefore, there is no salvation without incarnation, and there is no incarnation without birth.
- The Lord Jesus Christ offered salvation for all sinners, all over the world, throughout all history. However, not everyone will be saved; only those who believe in Him and accept His gift of salvation.



How do we accept this gift of salvation?

1. **Faith:** Believing that salvation is only through the Lord Jesus Christ, our only savior.

"Nor is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12)

"that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Believing that our great God was incarnated through his birth from St. Mary, was crucified on the Cross, died, and rose from the dead for our salvation. He also ascended to the heavens, sent to us the Paraclete, established the Church for us, and embedded the sacraments that are essential for our salvation.

2. **Participating in the Sacraments:**

(The first 4 sacraments are essential for salvation.)

- **Baptism:** "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5) "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16)
- **Confirmation (Myron):** "But you have an anointing from the Holy One" (1 John 2:20) to make us a temple for the Holy Spirit.
- **Repentance and Confession:** "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)
- **Eucharist:** "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." (John 6:56)

- **Unction of the Sick:** “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” (James 5:14-15)
- **Matrimony:** The Holy Matrimony between one man and one woman as the Lord intended with holiness and purity to establish a family is a Holy Sacrament where the Holy Spirit comes upon the bride and groom to make the two of them one flesh “This is a great mystery” (Ephesians 5:32) therefore we do not accept any other form of relationship as “marriage.”
- **Priesthood:** The fathers, the bishops, and the priests are the ministers of the mysteries of salvation. The Church chooses them to pastor the people, teach them, and administer the Holy Sacraments.
 “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”
 (1 Corinthians 4:1)



3. **Good works:** Good works are essential for our salvation; they show the truthfulness of our faith and its fruit. “faith without works is dead” (James 2:20)

“Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”
 (James 2:18)

We thank our Lord Jesus Christ, our God and the savior of our souls for making salvation possible and giving us power, hope, peace, and comfort.

May the Lord bless this year’s St. Mark Festival to be fruitful, fulfilling, and help us to grow in faith to become fruitful vines in the Lord’s vineyard.

May He fill our lives with goodness to dedicate our lives to Him and witness to His holy name.

Light of Light

In the Orthodox Creed/Creed of Faith we proclaim our faith saying:

“We believe in one God...Light of Light....” What are the doctrines of the Christian faith?

In our Coptic Orthodox Church, we believe in:

1. One God
2. God is a Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
3. The Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ
4. The Divine Incarnation
5. Our Lord Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Redeemer
6. One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church
7. The authority and infallibility of the Holy Bible

These are 7 fundamental beliefs that distinguish the Christian faith. The sound faith would not be complete without it.

Let us study these doctrines closely:

1. Truly, we believe in One God:

- We say in our Orthodox Creed: **“Truly, we believe in One God...”** and when we do the sign of the cross, we say **“The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God.”**
- The Holy Bible is full of verses that confirm the belief of the Oneness of God

2. We believe in the Trinity:

- Our God is One God with three Hypostases.
- Fire can be used as an analogy for the Holy Trinity because fire generates light and heat. Nevertheless, the flame, its light, and its heat are one entity. From the moment the flame begins, light and heat also begin.
- Therefore, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist together and never separate.

3. We believe in the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- The Lord Jesus Christ proved to us His divinity during the time of His incarnation on Earth.
- The Lord Jesus Christ came from a virginal birth, living with absolute holiness, with absolute authority over nature, plants, animals, evil spirits, sins, thoughts, life and death.
- He healed the sick, raised the dead, created eyes from mud, resurrected Himself by His own power, and rose in a glorified body. He has truly risen and is eternally alive.

4. We believe in the Divine Incarnation:

- St. Paul said **“Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16)**
- The Divine incarnation was crucial for the redemption and salvation of Mankind.
- For this reason, with His humanity and divinity that did not part, our Lord Jesus died to renew our fallen nature.
- Therefore, Christ saved us from the sentence of death and the corruption of our nature, which were the result of Adam’s sin.

5. We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only Savior and Redeemer:

- **“And without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22)**
- For this reason, Christ shed His precious blood on the holy cross for the remission of our sins lifting the curse from the world **“Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” (Galatians 3:13)**
- Therefore, this Holy Divine Blood has a great effect on our lives; forgives our sins, sanctifies us, blesses us, confirms us in Christ, and grants us eternal life.



6. We believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church:

- The Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Church when He redeemed us with His blood and sent us The Comforter, the Holy Spirit. He made us **“members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.” (Ephesians 5:30)**
- **“For we, though many, are one bread and one body” (1 Corinthians 10:17)** The head of this body is our Lord Jesus Christ; the members of the body are the saints in heaven and the believers on earth.

7. We believe in the authority and infallibility of the Holy Bible:

- The Holy Bible (New and Old Testaments) is the divine revelation.
- **“But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21)**
- **“All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16)**
- Therefore, the believer must study the word of God, to be enlightened with His light and commandments.
- There is ample proof of the authority of the Holy Scriptures.

Some Questions About the Incarnation:

The Mystery of the Incarnation is the foundation of the Christian faith. It is the revelation of God in the human body. Here we may encounter some questions:

1. **Can God be incarnated?**
2. **Does the incarnation contradict God's Holiness and dignity?**
3. **Is the incarnation of God necessary for salvation?**
4. **How did this incarnation happen?**

1. **Can God be incarnated?**

It is true that God can be incarnated in any image, because surely God is capable of anything.

- He found it fitting to reveal Himself Who is unseen, to be seen.
- The incarnation meant that God became man, without parting with his divine essence as we say in the Gospel response, **"The One without flesh became flesh, and the Logos became incarnate."**
- The Old Testament is filled with "pre-incarnation" apparitions of the Lord, in many forms, all as preparation for the Divine Incarnation:
 - He appeared to Adam and Eve in paradise, walking in the garden.
 - He appeared to Abraham with two angels as a man telling Him about the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah and the birth of Isaac.
 - He appeared to Jacob as a man with whom he wrestled till the break of the day. He blessed him and named him Israel which means **"The one who wrestled with God."**
 - He appeared to Moses as fire in a burning bush.
 - He appeared to Joshua, son of Nun, as a commander of the army.
 - He appeared to Manoah and his wife (Samson's parents) as a man.
 - He appeared to Gideon as an angel of the Lord.
 - He appeared to Daniel as the Ancient of Days.

2. **Does the incarnation contradict God's holiness and dignity?**

- No! Man is one of God's creations. He is the crown of creation; made in the image and the likeness of God. There is no conflict with God's holiness when He takes the image of man if he is God's noblest creation.
- The Incarnation does not contradict God's holiness. Just like the sun purifies (kills bacteria and germs) through its heat and light, likewise when God incarnated, He sanctified our corrupted nature without defiling His everlasting and absolute holiness.
- We can understand that God can become man (for He is capable of all); however, a man cannot become God. A master can take the form of a servant, but a servant cannot take the place of a master.
- Simply, the Lord Jesus Christ humbled Himself by coming down and taking the form of a servant.

3. Is the incarnation of God necessary for salvation?

- Man sinned, therefore he **“shall surely die...” (Genesis 2:17) “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord...” (Romans 6:23)**
- Sin is the separation from God and the corruption of God’s image in Man; because of Adam’s sin, we were born with the original sin and the corruption of our nature.
- God loved Man and did not want him to perish. The Lord Jesus Christ incarnated **to restore the image of man and renew his nature**, which was corrupted by sin and the fall of Adam and Eve; to become once more in His image and likeness. We receive this through the **Sacrament of Baptism**.
- The Lord Jesus Christ died on our behalf to remove our sentence of death.
- He wanted to **redeem us**, He became a Man like us, but without sin, to fulfill the **sentence of death that was issued against us** because of our sins.



4. How did this incarnation happen?

- St. Mary asked the same question to Archangel Gabriel during the annunciation, **“How can this be, since I do not know a man?” 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 1:34-35)**
- It is a mystery (we call it the Mystery of Incarnation) as St. Paul explained, **“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh,” 1Timothy 3:16.**
- Thus, His divine nature united with the human nature to become the incarnate nature of God the Logos. He possessed all human attributes and all the divine attributes.
- He became like us in every way except sin alone.
- His incarnation was part of His ultimate plan for our salvation.



The Epistle to Philemon

This epistle was written by St. Paul to a man named Philemon regarding Onesimus, who used to be Philemon's servant.

The people mentioned in the epistle to Philemon:

Philemon:

- Philemon is a Greek name that means "beloved", and he resides in Colossi.
- He accepted the faith from St. Paul (verse 19).
- His house became a church.
- St. Paul referred to him as "fellow worker."
- Referring to his holy Christian zeal, generosity, and true love towards the brethren (verses 5-7)



Archippus:

- He was a Christian from Colossi - some believe that he is the son of Philemon.
- He was a servant in the same city.
- St. Paul sent him greetings in his Epistle to the Colossians as well as this epistle (Colossians 4:17 & Philemon 1:2).

Apphia:

- Apphia is a Christian woman in Colossi who is also a servant.
- Some believe that she is the wife of Philemon.

Onesimus:

- Onesimus is a Greek name means "useful"
- He used to be the slave of Philemon.
- He stole from his master and escaped to Rome, where he met St. Paul who evangelized and baptized him. He was then sent again to Colossi by St. Paul, carrying a letter to Philemon asking him to accept Onesimus not as a slave but as a brother.
- He was accompanied by Tychicus on his trip from Rome to Colossi (Colossians 4:9).
- We learn from Holy Tradition that Onesimus later became the bishop of Beroea (in Macedonia) and he was martyred.



Epaphras:

- Greek name means "very lovely."
- He is a zealous servant in the churches of Colossi, Laodicea, and Hierapolis.
- He delivered pleasing news to St. Paul regarding the church of Colossi (Colossians 1:7-8, 4:12-13) and later he became a companion to St. Paul in prison (Philemon 1:23).
- We learn more about him from the titles that St. Paul uses to refer to him, such as "fellow servant," "faithful minister," and "servant of Christ Jesus."

Aristarchus:

- Aristarchus is a Greek name that means “best ruler.”
- He was a Macedonian man from Thessalonica and one of St. Paul’s fellow workers.
- He was described as one of **"Paul's travel companions,"** who were Macedonians (Acts 19:29). He traveled to Rome with St. Paul (Acts 27:2) and was imprisoned with him.
- St. Paul mentions him in Colossians 4:10 and in Philemon 1:24.

Demas:

- He accompanied St. Paul in his ministry.
- He left his service and parted from St. Paul in his last imprisonment in Rome and went to Thessalonica **"having loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4:10).**

St. Mark:

- St. Mark is the author of the Gospel according to St. Mark.
- The Church gives him the title of **The Beholder of God.**
- He is one of the Apostles chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.
- He wrote the oldest gospel.
- He was the first to preach Christianity in Egypt.

St. Luke:

- St. Luke is the author of the Gospel according to St. Luke and the book of Acts.
- He was a physician.
- He is the only one from the New Testament authors who was previously a Gentile.

General overview on the epistle

This epistle is one of the “prison epistles” (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon) these are the epistles that St. Paul wrote during his first imprisonment in Rome around the Year 63.

He sent this epistle to Philemon by the hand of Onesimus the slave who escaped. Onesimus is the one who carried this epistle to Philemon from Rome to Colossi.

This epistle is full of love and practical application of Christian principles like:

- **Spiritual fatherhood and pastoral care** - Represented by St. Paul who interceded for Onesimus to his master Philemon in order to forgive him and take him back.
- **Choosing forgiveness and willingly forgiving others** - St. Paul gave Philemon the opportunity to practically show his faith by willingly forgiving Onesimus.
- **Delicate and diplomatic speech** - We see St. Paul asking Philemon without compulsion, but rather through the authority of love and kindness.



The Epistle Opener (verses 1-3)



- St. Paul introduces himself as the **“prisoner of Christ Jesus”** to show that he is in solidarity with Onesimus who deserves to be in prison.
- He doesn’t mention that he is an apostle because he wants to approach Philemon with the authority of love rather than the authority of his apostleship.
- **“And Timothy”**, St. Timothy also share the request with St. Paul from Philemon to forgive and accept Onesimus.
- St. Paul considers Philemon as a **“fellow laborer”** therefore he ought to have an apostolic spirit seeking the salvation of every soul, including Onesimus.
- St. Paul teaches us how to greet one another in our communication.

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Overflowing Love (verses 4-7)

- Before asking Philemon for anything, St. Paul talks about his love for Philemon, how he is always praying for him, and how he doesn’t forget him even when he is imprisoned. He admires his faith and thanks God for his growth in the Christian faith.
- **“hearing of your love and faith”** Philemon’s faith in the Lord Jesus is the reason behind his love for everyone.
- **“the sharing of your faith may become effective”** St. Paul is praying for Philemon’s faith to be an effective and working force delivered to others through his love towards them.

Asking Wisely (verses 8-12)

- St. Paul commands Philemon through the love of Christ. It is an order, by love, for love and forgiveness.
- **“Paul, the aged”** St. Paul here is not referring to his age but rather by being **“an elder”** referring to his priesthood and his love towards Philemon is a form of fatherly love. He refers to Philemon as **“my son” not** because of his age, but out of spiritual fatherhood and sonship.
- St. Paul also refers to Onesimus as **“his son”**, giving him honor because of his faith.
- St. Paul describe how Onesimus changed because of his repentance **“who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.”**
- It is interesting how St. Paul uses the term **“profitable”** to describe Onesimus which is also the meaning of his name.
- St. Paul shows how much he loves Onesimus when he says, **“my own heart.”**



Not be by Compulsion, but by Choice (verses 13-16)

- St. Paul wants Philemon to receive Onesimus and forgive him by his own will since he cannot force anyone to do good work.
- All things work together for good; Onesimus's escape from his master led him to meet St. Paul and to accept the Christian faith.
- Even though this escape was not the best course of action for Onesimus, it changed him from being a slave to being a brother to Philemon.
- We see in these verses St. Paul's delicate speech and use of soft language such as **"perhaps"** to reduce the intensity of the situation. He also uses the word **"departed"** instead of escape to avoid hurting Onesimus' feelings.

Complete Confidence (verses 17-21)

- St. Paul introduces himself as a partner to Onesimus, asking Philemon to receive him as if he was receiving St. Paul himself. He also asks that if Onesimus owes him anything, he should consider it as if St. Paul is the one who owes him.
- St. Paul reminds Philemon that he owes him a lot for teaching him the Christian faith and showing him the way of life.
- St. Paul will rejoice to see Philemon's active faith which is manifested in the fruit of forgiveness towards Onesimus.
- This is how Christianity ended slavery, not through revolutions, but through true Christian love.

Greeting and Conclusion (verses 22-25)

- St. Paul was looking forward to being freed from his imprisonment.
- At the end of the epistle, St. Paul does not wait to hear back from Philemon regarding Onesimus as he is confident in Philemon's obedience.
- He offers peace and greetings from all his fellow workers as if they are all asking Philemon along with St. Paul to receive Onesimus.



From this epistle, we learn some important facts:

- Our faith in Christ is the entrance to our life with Him. All other virtues spring from our true and working faith.
- St. Paul mentioned Philemon's faith as an introduction to all the virtues that he has, the first one being love.
- Onesimus felt that he sinned towards Philemon, so he asked St. Paul to intercede for him in order for Philemon to accept him back. This is a great example of practically fulfilling the commandment **"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."** (Matthew 6:14) showing how our forgiveness helps us receive forgiveness for our own shortcomings leading us to God's kingdom **(The Lord is My Salvation)**.
- In this epistle, St. Paul ends the concept of slavery by asking Philemon to receive Onesimus as a brother since the master and the slave were both saved by the blood of Christ and freed by Him. They both became God's children; equal in God's eyes.
- St. Paul did not end the concept of slavery by overturning civil laws, but rather through Christian love where Philemon forgives Onesimus by giving him freedom.
- The true knowledge of Christ enlightens our minds to see all people as brethren and members of the Body of Christ **(The Lord is My Light)**.
- Do not look down on anyone thinking that they are not good enough or useful for **"who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me."** (verse 11) the Lord works and will continue to work in the life of everyone.



Night of the Apocalypse

We conclude the Holy Week with a very unique and special night. This night falls between Good Friday, which is the pinnacle of mourning, and the feast of the Resurrection, which is the pinnacle of joy. On this night we change the black curtains to bright white curtains suitable for the resurrection of the Lord. We chant almost all the hymns with the Paschal tune for the first half (as we remember our Lord Jesus Christ in the tomb) and the annual tune for the second half (as we celebrate the work of salvation done by our Lord).

This night prepares us for the resurrection and eternal life with the Lord Jesus Christ in His kingdom. It is the night of the Apocalypse - "Apocalypse" or "Apocalypses" means "revelation" which is also the first word in the Book of Revelation because on this night we read the entire Book of Revelation.

The night of the Apocalypse is one of the most beautiful nights of our Coptic Orthodox Church, we also call it Joyous Saturday or Bright Saturday because our Lord Jesus Christ descended into Hades to take the souls of all the saints to Paradise. Before the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the souls of the saints were waiting in Hades (the place where the spirits of both the good and the bad people waited after their death).

When Adam and Eve obeyed the serpent and ate from the tree, they sinned, and all humans carried this sin as well. The consequence of this sin is death, and we were all born with this sentence of death and the corruption of our nature. The only way we can regain life is Jesus dying and carrying our sins.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnated, crucified, and resurrected, hence removing the sentence of death. He saved us and renewed our corrupted nature. However, only those who are baptized, confess their sins, and partake of the Holy Communion deserve this salvation. After the Lord Jesus Christ saved us, Paradise became the waiting area for the righteous until His second coming, and Hades became the waiting area for the evildoers.



On this night, the Church gathers around the tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ to celebrate our salvation with joy and to offer God praise for opening paradise. The tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ is represented by an icon of the Lord Jesus Christ's burial. On Good Friday, during the 12th Hour, we place the icon inside the altar and cover it with spices and a white cloth.

Then the congregation prays the Psalms starting from Psalm 1 until Psalm 3 stopping at the words '**I lay down and slept**'. The other Psalms are prayed inaudibly until we start the Night of the Apocalypse.



On this night, all the Church readings and hymns focus on 3 aspects:

1. **The Lord:** Our immortal God, Who even when He died on the Cross and was buried in the tomb, was alive by His divinity, which did not part from His humanity for a single moment or a twinkle of an eye, and He resurrected on the third day.
2. **Is My Light:** Living in the light and joy of the resurrection. Those who were in the darkness of Hades, waiting for the savior's light to shine upon them with the light of His heavenly kingdom.
3. **And My Salvation:** With His resurrection, the Lord completed the work of salvation and humanity rejoiced with His victory over death.



The Night of Apocalypse begins with:

❖ **First: Praises and Prayers of the prophets: Psalm 151 (“I am the youngest of my brethren”):**

This beautiful Psalm is chanted (only on that night) with its beautiful tune. This psalm is part of the deuterocanonical writings and books. It tells the story of David's victory over Goliath. This reminds us of how our Lord Jesus Christ was victorious over the devil and saved His children.

-The priest stands before the sanctuary holding the Book of Psalms, wrapped in a white linen. We begin with the Book of Psalms as it is the Book of praises as this is a special night of praises for our salvation.



-**The 1st Procession:** The priest and the deacons proceed around the Church with candles and crosses. They chant “**Let us give thanks to the Lord**” in order to thank the Lord for our salvation.

-Then the deacons read several praises and prayers of the prophets:

1. **The Praise of Moses and the sons of Israel** (the First Cantic and Lobsh) telling us how God saved His people from Pharaoh.
2. **The Prayer of Hannah** who was barren and ashamed of not being able to have children, and the Lord gave her Samuel the great prophet and anointer of kings.
3. **The Prayer of Jonah** is full of repentance, hope, and joy. Jonah is a symbol of our Lord Jesus who died on the Cross and rose after 3 days.
4. **The Prayer of Manasseh** who was one of the kings of Judah. He was very evil during his reign. The Lord punished him and allowed him to be put in prison, where he offered true and sincere repentance, which the Lord accepted. This beautiful prayer also belongs to the deuterocanonical writings and books.



5. **The Praise of the Three Sainly Children.** God saved them from the burning furnace.
6. **The Story of Susanna.** God saved her from conspiracy and death to show her purity and chastity.
7. **The Praise of St. Mary.** Praising the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and fulfilling His promises.
8. **The Praise of Zacharias.** Praise for the fulfillment of God's promises when St. John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. **The Praise of Simeon.** Praise for when he saw God's salvation and carried baby Jesus when He was 40 days old.



-**The 2nd Procession:** The priest and deacons light their candles and chant the Hymn of **Ἰενοῦεε ἠΰωκ** (We follow you) while they proceed around the Church.

❖ **Second: Matins Prayers:** We pray the regular Matins Raising of Incense.

-**The 3rd Procession:** After saying the Creed, the deacons chant the long **Κυριε ἔλεησον'** while proceeding around the altar then the Church 3 times.



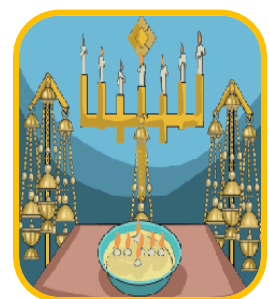
❖ **Third: the 3rd and the 6th Hours:** We pray the regular hours from the Agpeya but without praying the Gospel or the litanies. Instead, we pray the prophecies and Gospel from the Pascha book.

❖ **Fourth: The Book of Revelation:** We read the entire Book of Revelation. The Book tells us about the journey of our Church from earth to heaven, and how God will fulfill His promises to us by transferring us from death to life through His resurrection.



It tells us about the beauty of the Heavenly Jerusalem where the righteous will live with our Lord Jesus Christ after His second coming. **“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” (Revelation 21:7)**

-Before reading the Book of Revelation, the priest lights 7 wicks placed in oil, seven censers, and seven candles in front of the altar. When the entire Book is read, the priest anoints the congregation with this oil.



❖ **Fifth: The 9th Hour:** We pray the Psalms without the Gospel or the litanies just like the 3rd and the 6th hours.

❖ **Sixth: The Holy Liturgy:** We conclude Bright Saturday with the Holy Liturgy. All the readings are about the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessings we receive by repenting our sins.

A Light Shines

St. Athanasius the Apostolic Shines Light on Arianism

Synaxarion – the 7th day of the Coptic Month of Pashons (May 15)

“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.” (2 Timothy 3:14)

Our Coptic Church is a strong church with a glorious luminous history. Despite facing many hardships and tribulations over the centuries; persecution, heresies, and more, nothing could prevail against her. Her holy saints were strong and faithful; they opposed the false teachings with all their might and endured pain and persecution to protect the Christian faith and deliver it to us.

Let's look at the 4th century and learn about its famous heroes and the problems they faced.



- **Some prominent patriarchs:**

- Pope Peter I (The Seal of the Martyrs) the 17th pope
- Pope Archelaus the 18th pope
- Pope Alexander the 19th pope
- Pope Athanasius the 20th pope
- Pope Timothy the 22nd pope
- Pope Theophilus the 23rd Pope

- **The 4th century was an eventful century in the history of the church:**

- The establishment of the church in Ethiopia.
- The monastic movement in Egypt was gaining a lot of momentum.
- Many pilgrims went to Egypt to learn about monasticism.
- Our beloved Coptic Church has always been a pioneer in Christian teaching.



- **Arianism:**

- The heresy of Arius began during the papacy of Pope Peter I. Arius was a priest in Alexandria who deviated from the true Orthodox Faith.
- Arius began teaching these false teachings in secret first, then he began to teach these teachings publicly.

- 1. Arius claimed (false teachings):**

- That our Lord Jesus Christ (the Son) is of less divinity than the Father, which makes Him not One in essence with the Father.
- St. Athanasius defended the true Orthodox faith and proved Arius wrong by using verses from the Holy Bible: **“I and My Father are one.” (John 10:30) “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9) “All things that the Father has are Mine” (John 16:15)**

- 2. Arius claimed (false teachings):**

- That the Lord Jesus Christ is only fulfilling what the Father tells Him.
“I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” (John 5:30)
- St. Athanasius explained that our Lord Jesus Christ spoke as the incarnate God; sometimes He spoke from the perspective of His humanity (being a man on earth).
“Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” (Luke 22:42) and “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:42)
- At other times the Lord Jesus Christ spoke about being equal to the Father and being of the same essence as the Father. **“I am in the Father, and the Father in Me” (John 14:10)**

- 3. Arius claimed (false teachings):**

- Arius also claimed that the Lord Jesus Christ received His authority from the Father.
“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” (Matthew 28:18)
- St. Athanasius explained that the Lord Jesus Christ, being one essence with the Father. He has all the authority that the Father has. **“For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.” (John 5:21)**

- We believe that our Lord Jesus is the incarnate Word of God (Logos). He existed from the beginning. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1)**
- Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared His divinity when He was asked by the Jewish priests and scribes; **“Then they all said, “Are You then the Son of God?” So He said to them, “You rightly say that I am.” (Luke 22:70)**

Pope Athanasius is known as **“the Defender of the Faith”**.

The Ecclesiastical Upbringing of St. Athanasius:

- He was born to Pagan parents around the year 296.
- He befriended and played with Christian children his age.
- Pope Alexandros, his predecessor, watched them play one day and St. Athanasius was the bishop baptizing others.
- Pope Alexandros took him as a youth, baptized him, and ordained him a deacon; later he made him his secretary. He sent him to the theological school of Alexandria; the school which shaped his personality ecclesiastically, theologically, and culturally. It filled his mind with biblical, theological, and philosophical studies that he became the great theologian of our Church.
- He wrote many writings explaining the Orthodox faith like ‘On the Incarnation of the Word’.
- He spent his life teaching the Orthodox Christian faith and refuting the Arian heresy.
- He spent 3 years in the desert with St. Anthony who taught him **spirituality, asceticism, and living the faith.**



St. Athanasius at the Council of Nicaea:

- The council was convened in the year 325 A.D. to discuss the heresy of Arius and it was attended by 318 bishops along with Emperor Constantine.
- As a deacon, St. Athanasius accompanied Pope Alexandros to the meetings. He contended earnestly for the apostolic doctrines against the arguments of Arius.
- He had a prominent role in the formulation of the Creed, which was approved by the council and is known as the Nicene Creed.



St. Athanasius Faces the Arians:

- St. Athanasius was chosen as a successor to Pope Alexandros in the year 328 A.D. and in the same year, Emperor Constantine ordered the Arian bishops to return from their exile.
- Arius himself still lived, and his friend Eusebius of Nicomedia rapidly regained influence over the Emperor Constantine.
- The result was many plots rose against St. Athanasius and the Nicene fathers.
- St. Athanasius was accused of helping the rebels against the emperor along with other accusations.



The Council of Tyre and the First Exile of Pope Athanasius:

- In the year 335 A.D. Emperor Constantine ordered Pope Athanasius to appear at a council in Tyre to judge his conduct.
- False accusations were presented against him, and the attendees took that opportunity to agree on his exile to Treves, and the emperor approved it.

Continued Arian Plots:

- The Arians continued to convene councils to approve the return of Arius to the Church and tried to spread this news all over the world, but the Copts refused to accept him in their churches.
- Even after the death of Emperor Constantine and the return of St. Athanasius to his seat, the Arians continued their war against the Nicene fathers and St. Athanasius.

The End of Arianism:

- After 5 different periods of exile, Pope Athanasius returned to his seat in the year 366 A.D.
- He contacted the bishops of the world and emphasized the need to keep and defend the Nicene faith and the need to refute the Arian heresy.
- The Arians retreated, and the Christian world returned once again to the sound faith of the Council of Nicaea.

His Departure:

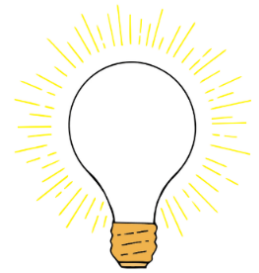
Pope Athanasius departed to the Lord in the year 373 A.D. after spending 45 years on the See of St. Mark. During this time, he defended the faith and was named the "**Apostolic**" and the "**Defender of the Faith**". We commemorate his departure on the 7th day of the Coptic Month of Pashons (May 15).



Walk in the Light

Introduction:

The electric lamp was invented by Thomas Edison using a wire, a lamp, and a small electrical socket to illuminate this lamp. Before the lamp, the world relied on the sun as the primary natural source for light to illuminate the day.



**"The sun for daylight, and the night as rest for all mankind."
(Absolution of Matins Prayer)**

But with humans needing longer work hours, they began to use fire to provide warmth and light. With development and civilization, we reached the electric lamp and electrical appliances. The invention of the electric lamp made a significant difference in our lives.

Have you ever felt that your presence made a significant difference in the lives of those around you?

In the first verses of the Holy Bible in the Book of Genesis: **"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)



Think about it ...

- How does your presence represent light: at home, at school, in your neighborhood, and at church?
- The Holy Bible ends with the Book of Revelation, where it speaks about the heavenly Jerusalem: **"There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever."** (Revelation 22:5) This means that the Holy Bible starts with light and ends with light.
- Darkness was the first thing God decided to erase. And light was the first thing God decided to create.
- Imagine with me... when God wanted to prepare a wonderful life for humans, He began by creating light!
- The first gift to you from God is that He illuminated the path before you, so you know how to navigate through life and how to enjoy the beauty of His creation.

Write down 3 beautiful things you enjoy seeing around you.

- **"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all."** (1 John 1:5) God is the true source of light that enlightens every person who comes into the world... He is the way to light, and He is the true light...

What should I do to be enlightened?

Enlightenment, in the Gospel and Patristic context, means that the light of God shines in the mind of the believers, enabling them to possess the gift of discernment and distinction. It also means having a wise mind guided by the Holy Spirit, so that their decisions and choices are sound.



Enlightenment is drawing near to the source of light and preserving it, as God's command to us is to walk in the light and not in darkness:

"Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you" (John 12:35).

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life" (John 8:12)

Sources of Enlightenment:

1. Practicing the Sacraments:

Baptism: A person is enlightened through the renewal of the Holy Spirit in their life when they are born of water and Spirit. It opens our inner sight, enabling us to see what others cannot:

- We see ourselves truthfully!
- We see God as a loving Savior!
- We see the path and walk in it with assurance!
- We see the truth and are not deceived by the falsehood of this world!
- Here, we can say, **"One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25)**

The Sacrament of Confirmation: We are then anointed with holy Myron as a "seal" that we have been liberated from the bonds of the enemy of good, becoming temples of the Holy Spirit.

The Sacrament of Repentance and Confession: This Sacrament is also given to us, so that we may remain pure and blameless, and our conduct remains white while our light shines in the whole world.

The Sacrament of Eucharist: Then, we partake in the Holy Communion, living and abiding in the Lord and He in us.



2. Prayer and the Holy Bible:

Prayer is the audible, visible, and tangible language between us and God. He hears our prayers and listens to our requests. The words of the Holy Bible are the best light for our path and a lamp for our lives:

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)

"For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light." (Proverbs 6:23)

God sends us messages and responses through His word, the Holy Bible. Therefore, true Christians never cease to read the Holy Bible, embracing it with love in their heart, principles in their mind, and as a guide in their conduct.

Through **reading the Holy Bible**, the mind is enlightened, and a person knows where to place their steps. However, if you understand the entire Holy Bible but do not obey its commandments accurately, you will not see the light.



3. Holy Surroundings:

The more we immerse ourselves in God's Word, live a life of continuous prayer, remain steadfast by partaking in the Holy Communion **"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him" (John 6:56)**, guard ourselves with pure and clean hearts that glorify and praise God, and choose friends who are similar to us, with pure and clean hearts, minds enlightened by God, disciplined souls full of God... we can live in more blessings, righteousness, and peace.



What should we do to always illuminate Christ's light?

Plugging in a lamp is not enough to light a lamp. Over time, the bulb may get covered in dust, making it unable to shine its light for others as it did before. Therefore, it's necessary to clean it constantly to remove any obstacles...

For us to shine the light for others, we must continuously clean ourselves by:

- Following the commandments and living by them in our personal lives and among others.
- Repenting and confessing continually.
- Praying for others.
- Acting with gentleness and simplicity in our behavior.
- Walking in honesty and in the fear of God in our actions and words.
- Spreading the spirit of hope, joy, peace, and love to everyone.



Is there such a thing as "false light"?

Often, we see different forms of radiant people around us. You might come across a celebrity or a social media influencer, enjoying a great deal of fame due to videos or content they share on platforms like TikTok or Instagram, without any real purpose or meaning. Yet you see people recognizing them everywhere they go, receiving numerous gifts, accumulating a lot of wealth... etc.

Is this the light you're searching for? Or the one God created you to reach? In reality, fame, wealth, and gifts aren't a problem in themselves, but when the goal is to obtain such things without a higher purpose or message, they mean nothing nor do they have real value.

Instead, you might personally use these means to make people glorify God or seek Him.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

We can use any means or position - or our mere presence anywhere with the aim of radiating light, love, and peace.

What do you think are the things that could extinguish this light?

- **Friends:** When they are different from us: in actions and behaviors (they lack the fear of God - they lie - they lack honesty... etc.). You must know that at this stage in life, you're greatly influenced by your friends, and they can extinguish the light within you if you follow them and are influenced by their words far from the spirit of wisdom and fear of God.



- **Ego:** When we imagine ourselves as more important, or above everyone around you, the light goes out. Simply because the moment you give ego and pride the lead in your life, you distance yourself from the source of wisdom and light, **"Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall."** (Proverbs 16:18)

Imagine with me if someone claims to be higher than everyone around them, knows everything, and never makes mistakes... How will people see them? And how will there be room for God or the work of the Holy Spirit in them? If they know everything and don't need anyone to teach/correct them!



- **Moving away from the source of light:** Often, you feel discomfort or lack peace when you distance yourself from sources of enlightenment. Life with God is light, and moving away from the source of light leads us into darkness, and darkness represents a life of evil and sin.

- **Negative emotions:** Like anger, which is like a fire that, if allowed to control your life, makes you unable to see or live in the light, **"An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression."** (Proverbs 29:22)



- **Lack of gratitude** or satisfaction and viewing things pessimistically or negatively all the time hinders the light from filling your life... and so on.

(At the end of each day, write down 3 positive things to thank God for every day.)

- **Negative thoughts:** Negative and unhelpful thoughts cloud the mind, making it unable to see things clearly and thus not giving you a chance to enlighten or illuminate.



Memorization

1. "The Lord is my light and my salvation" (Psalm 27:1)

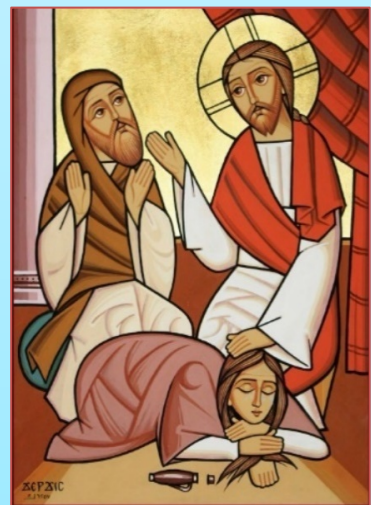
II. Second Watch of the Midnight Hour of the Agpeya The Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 7:36-50)

Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went unto the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And, behold, a woman in the city, who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat to eat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke within himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is who touched Him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he said, "Master, say it."

"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose- that he, to whom he forgave more." And He said unto him, "You have rightly judged." And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered into your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. You gave Me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in has not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil you did not anoint, but this woman has anointed My feet with ointment.

Therefore I say unto you, `Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much, but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." And He said unto her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat to eat with Him began to say within themselves, "Who is this who forgives sins also?" And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Glory be to God forever. Amen.



III. Litanies of the Second Watch of the Midnight Hour of the Agpeya

1. Give me, O Lord, many fountains of tears, as You gave, in the past, the sinful woman. Make me worthy to wash Your feet which liberated me from the path of straying, and to offer you a precious fragrant oil, and gain, through repentance, a pure life, so that I may hear that voice full of joy: "Your faith has saved you."
2. When I realize my many wicked deeds, and the thought of that awesome judgment comes to my heart, a tremble takes hold of me, and I take refuge in You, O God, the Lover of Mankind. So do not turn away Your face from me, I entreat You, who alone are without sin. Grant humbleness to my poor soul before the end comes, and save me.
3. The Heavens bless you, O full of grace, the Bride who was never married. And we, too, glorify your incomprehensible giving birth. O Theotokos, the mother of mercy and salvation, intercede for the salvation of our souls.
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.

IV. Sayings of the Church Fathers

1. "Just as those who are deprived of light cannot walk straight, so also those who do not behold the ray of the Holy Scriptures must necessarily sin, since they walk in the deepest darkness."
(**St. John Chrysostom**)
2. "The first word of God created the nature of light; it made darkness vanish, dispelled gloom, illuminated the world, and gave to all beings at the same time a sweet and gracious aspect."
(**St. Basil the Great**)
3. "He who sees himself to be darkened by sins, and desires to be enlightened by the Lord, draws near to Him." (**St. Augustine**)

Coptic



Our Lord spent about 4 years in Egypt as a baby. He spoke to the people in Egypt in their language, which was the Coptic language at that time.

THE COPTIC ALPHABET

	 Alpha A	 Veeta B, V	 Gamma G, N, Gh	 Delta D, Th (the)	
 Eyy E	 Number 6 So-oo The number 6 <small>Not a true letter</small>	 Zeeta Z	 Eeta EE	 Theeta TH (think), T	 Yota I, Y
 Kappa K	 Lavla L	 Mey M	 Ney N	 Eksee KS	 O O
 Pee P	 ro R	 seema S-Z	 tav T	 Epsilon V, I, (oo)	 Fey F
 Key K, Kh, Sh	 Epsee PS	 Oo Oo	 Shai SH	 Fai F	 Khai KH
	 Hori H	 Ganga G, J	 Cheema CH	 Tee Tee	

The Coptic Alphabet has 32 letters

- 24 consonants
- 7 vowels (Α Ε Η Ι Ο Υ Ω)
- 1 letter used only as a number (Ϝ)



First 25 letters from Hieroglyphic through Proto-Sinaitic, Phoenician and Greek Alphabets

Last 7 letters from Hieroglyphic through Hieratic and Demotic

Pronunciation

Pronunciation of the (**Ι**) next to another vowel

The (**Ι**) is pronounced “Y”
when it is either before or after
any other vowel

ΙΑ ya **ΑΙ** ay **ΙΕ** ye **ΕΙ** ey

ΙΟ yo **ΟΙ** oy **ΙΩ** yo- **ΩΙ** o-y

ΙΑΛ Mirror

ΑΙΑΙ Grow, Increase

ΙΕ Or

ΙΩ Wash

ΙΟΥ Sea

(**ΦΙΟΥ** The Sea)

ΙΩΤ Father

(**ΦΙΩΤ** The Father)

ΩΙΚ Bread

(**ΠΩΙΚ** The Bread)

Pronunciation when the (**ΟΥ**)
is followed by another vowel

ΟΥΙ (owwi) such as in **ΝΙΦΗΟΥΙ**

ΟΥΑ (owwa) such as in **ΕΘΟΥΑΒ**

ΟΥΗ (owwee) such as in **ΟΥΗΒ**

ночри

hi

ночри пенлиВ

Hi Sayedna

ночри пеніωт

Hi Abouna

оуχαι



Bye

оуχαι
δεν ἰβοις

Bye
(in the Lord)

The possessive Pronouns (1)

	For s.m. nouns e.g. Father (ዐጥ)	For s.f. nouns e.g. Mother (ዘእሃ)	For plural nouns e.g. Books (ጸዐዐ)
	በ	ጥ	ዘ
My	በእዐጥ My father	ጥእዘእሃ My mother	ዘእጸዐዐ My books
Our	በዜዐጥ Our father	ጥዜዘእሃ Our mother	ዘዜጸዐዐ Our books

Practice with some words **MY OUR**

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
ዐጥ God	ዐዘዘ Sister	ዘእሃ Mothers
ወዘ Bread	ጸዐዐ Power	ዐጥ Fathers
ፊዐር Lord	ዐዩዩ Daughter	ጸዘዐጥ Brothers
ጸዐዐ Book	ፈልዘ City	ዐዘዘ Sisters
ዐዘ Brother		

The possessive Pronouns (2)

	For s.m. nouns e.g. Father (ዐጥ)	For s.f. nouns e.g. Mother (ዘእሃ)	For plural nouns e.g. Books (ጸዐዐ)
	በ	ጥ	ዘ
Your (s.m.)	በዜዐጥ Your father	ጥዜዘእሃ Your mother	ዘዜጸዐዐ Your books
Your (s.f.)	በዜዐጥ Your father	ጥዜዘእሃ Your mother	ዘዜጸዐዐ Your books
Your (pl.)	በጥዜዐጥ Your father	ጥጥዜዘእሃ Your mother	ዘጥዜጸዐዐ Your books

Practice with some words **Your (m) (f) (pl)**

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
ዐጥ God	ዐዘዘ Sister	ዘእሃ Mothers
ወዘ Bread	ጸዐዐ Power	ዐጥ Fathers
ፊዐር Lord	ዐዩዩ Daughter	ጸዘዐጥ Brothers
ጸዐዐ Book	ፈልዘ City	ዐዘዘ Sisters
ዐዘ Brother		

The possessive Pronouns (3)

	For s.m. nouns e.g. Father (ዐጥ)	For s.f. nouns e.g. Mother (ዘእሃ)	For plural nouns e.g. Books (ጸዐዐ)
	በ	ጥ	ዘ
His	በዩዐጥ His father	ጥዩዘእሃ His mother	ዘዩጸዐዐ His books
Her	በዩዐጥ Her father	ጥዩዘእሃ Her mother	ዘዩጸዐዐ Her books
Their	በዐሃዐጥ Their father	ጥዐሃዘእሃ Their mother	ዘዐሃጸዐዐ Their books

Practice with some words **His Her Their**

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
ዐጥ God	ዐዘዘ Sister	ዘእሃ Mothers
ወዘ Bread	ጸዐዐ Power	ዐጥ Fathers
ፊዐር Lord	ዐዩዩ Daughter	ጸዘዐጥ Brothers
ጸዐዐ Book	ፈልዘ City	ዐዘዘ Sisters
ዐዘ Brother		

Present Tense

	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
(s.m.)	†	κ̂(χ̂) you	ϥ̂ he
(s.f.)		τε you	ς̂ she
(pl)	τεν we	τετεν you	צע they

Negative of Present Tense

αν̂ or ἠ̂...αν̂

The Verb ὑ̂λη̂λ (to pray) in the Present Tense

	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
(s.m.)	†ὑ̂λη̂λ I pray	κ̂ὑ̂λη̂λ You pray	ϥ̂ὑ̂λη̂λ He prays
(s.f.)		τεὑ̂λη̂λ You pray	ς̂ὑ̂λη̂λ She prays
(pl)	τενὑ̂λη̂λ We pray	τετενὑ̂λη̂λ You pray	צעὑ̂λη̂λ They pray

Present Tense	Negative of the present Tense	
†ὑ̂λη̂λ I pray	†ὑ̂λη̂λ αν̂ I do not pray	ἠ̂†ὑ̂λη̂λ αν̂ I do not pray
צעὑ̂λη̂λ They pray	צעὑ̂λη̂λ αν̂ They do not pray	ἠ̂צעὑ̂λη̂λ αν̂ They do not pray

Practice the **present tense** and the **negative of the present tense** with these verbs

κωορν	to know	ζεασι	to sit down
ωϣ	to read	δερδερ	to snore
ς̂δα	to write	ορωϣτ	to worship
†ωορ	to glorify	ναρ	to look at

ἸΝ ΤΩ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΤΕΡΟΣ

In the Name of the Father

ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΥΙΟΥ

and the Son

ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ

and the Holy Spirit

ΟΝΟΜΑΤΟΣ ΜΟΝΟΤΕΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟΥ

One God Amen



Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΗΜΩΝ ΟΥΣΙΩΣ ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΙΣ
Our Father who art in Heaven

ἵνα ἁξιωθῶμεν εὐχαριστῆσαι
Make us worthy to say thankfully

Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΗΜΩΝ ΟΥΣΙΩΣ ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΙΣ

Our father who art in heaven

ἁγιασθῆτω τὸ ὄνομα σου

Hallowed be Thy name

ἁγιασθῆτω τὸ κράτος σου

Thy kingdom come

ἵνα γένηται ἡ βουλή σου

Thy will be done

ὡς ἐστὶν ἐν οὐρανόθεν ὡς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

On earth as it is in heaven

ὅπως ἡμεῖς σήμερον ἴδωμεν τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν

Give us this day our daily bread

καὶ ἄφες ἡμῶν τὰ ἑσθλά

And forgive us our trespasses

ὡς ἡμεῖς ἀφίμεθα τοῖς ἑσθλοῖς

As we forgive

τοῖς ἁμαρτανεύουσιν ἡμῶν

those who trespass against us

καὶ μὴ ἰσχυθῆσαι ἡμᾶς ἐν πειρασμῷ

And lead us not into temptation

ἀλλὰ ῥυθίθητε ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπιεισομένου

But deliver us from the evil one

ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἐσμὲν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν

In Christ Jesus our Lord

ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἐσμὲν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν

For Thine is

τὸ κράτος καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα

the kingdom, the power and the glory,

εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἁμήν

forever, Amen

Hymns & Rituals



Adam Aspasmos for the Feast of Nayrouz

The Feast of Nayrouz is the celebration of the Coptic New Year and the beginning of a new Year of the Martyrs. This year is the year 1740 AM. The Feast of Nayrouz is celebrated for 16 days from Thoout 1 until Thoout 16 in the Joyful tune and is followed by the Feast of the Cross.

This hymn is the Adam Aspasmos for the Divine Liturgy during the period of Nayrouz.

The word “Aspasmos” means “Greeting” and it is chanted after the Reconciliation Prayer in the Liturgy of the Faithful.

All evil excuses,
let us place behind us,
let us purify our hearts,
in the name of the Lord.

ΛΩΙΧΙ ΝΙΒΕΝ ΕΤΖΩΟΥ:
ΜΑΡΕΝΧΑΥ ΝΩΝ:
ΜΑΡΕΝΤΟΥΒΟ ΝΝΕΝΖΗΤ:
ΕΣΟΥΝ ΕΦΡΑΝ ὸΠΒ ΟΙC.

May the name of the Lord
be within us,
to enlighten us
in our inner luminosity.

ΜΑΡΕ ΦΡΑΝ ὸΠΒ ΟΙC:
ΩΠΙ ΝΣΡΗΙ ΝΣΗΤΕΝ:
ΝΤΕΦΕΡΟΥΩΙΝΙ ΕΡΟΝ:
ΣΕΝ ΠΕΝΡΩΜΙ ΕΤCΑΣΟΥΝ.





Visit the St. Mark Festival's website at

www.smfsus.org

to find the material for the festival and for guidelines
and information on the tests

Copyright © 2024 by St. Mark Festival of the Southern United States. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, printing, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher "help.smfsus@gmail.com"



SMF 7-8 Book 2024