

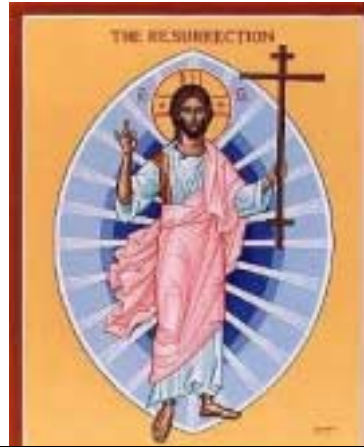
# ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate  
Archangel Michael Church  
P.O. BOX 256 Howell, NJ 07731

ADDRESS CORRECTION  
REQUESTED



May 2001



Volume 2

Issue 17

Baramoda 1717

MONTHLY  
NEWSLETTER





“... NOW UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING, THEY CAME UNTO THE SEPULCHER, BRINGING THE SPICES WHICH THEY HAD PREPARED, AND CERTAIN OTHERS WITH THEM. **2** AND THEY FOUND THE STONE ROLLED AWAY FROM THE SEPULCHER. **3** AND THEY ENTERED IN, AND FOUND NOT THE BODY OF THE LORD JESUS. **4** AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS THEY WERE MUCH PERPLEXED THEREABOUT, BEHOLD, TWO MEN STOOD BY THEM IN SHINING GARMENTS: **5** AND AS THEY WERE AFRAID, AND BOWED DOWN THEIR FACES TO THE EARTH, THEY SAID UNTO THEM, WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD? **6** HE IS NOT HERE, BUT IS RISEN: REMEMBER HOW HE SPOKE UNTO YOU WHEN HE WAS YET IN GALILEE, **7** SAYING, THE SON OF MAN MUST BE DELIVERED INTO THE HANDS OF SINFUL MEN, AND BE CRUCIFIED, AND THE THIRD DAY RISE AGAIN. **8** AND THEY REMEMBERED HIS WORDS,

.”

(luk. 24: 1:8)

**This Newsletter is a free monthly publication of the Archangel Michael Coptic Orthodox Church, PO Box 256 Howell, NJ 07731, under the supervision of Fr. Antonious Tanious.**

**The committee welcomes your participation in the form of articles, reviews, news, or comments. Please mail your articles, comments, ...etc. to the church or e-mail them to [archangelletter@netscape.net](mailto:archangelletter@netscape.net)**

**If you would like this newsletter mailed to a friend or would like your name to be deleted from our mailing list, please fax your request to (732) 821-1512.**

# Joy of the Resurrection

By: His Holiness Pope Shenouda III



The angels proclaimed the news of Christ's resurrection to the women saying, "*Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but He is risen*" (Luke 24: 5-6) The news of the risen Christ brought tremendous joy to the disciples, but terrified the Jewish leaders.

As much as the day of the crucifixion was painful emotionally, it was a day of salvation. However, people did not see Christ opening the doors of paradise, they only saw the suffering, insults and nails. As much as the disciples were disturbed and sad on Friday, they were very joyful on Sunday. The promise of the Lord to them was fulfilled when He said, "*But I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you*" (John 16:22).

Through His resurrection, they rejoiced that the resurrection is possible and realistic. He was the evidence. That is why St. John describes Him, "*whom we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands*" (1Jn 1: 1). St. Peter also bears witness that "*we have eaten and drank with Him after His resurrection from the dead.*" (Acts 10: 41). Through the resurrection, the fear of the disciples was turned into courage and indifference to all the powers that were fighting them. All their enemies could do is threaten to kill them, but what can the threat of death do to one who believes in the resurrection and has seen it!

In the resurrection, the disciples felt that they were under the wings of a powerful God. The One in whom they believe holds the keys to life and

death. He is the resurrection and the life. He is the source of life, not only on earth. but eternal life also.

The disciples rejoiced because God fulfilled His promise to them, when they saw the promise of His resurrection fulfilled, they were reassured of the outcome of all the other promises, like *"I go to prepare a place for you... and I will come again and take you, so that where I am, there you will be also"* Jn. 14: 2-3). They believed His promise that He is with us until the end of days (Matt. 28:20). Thus, all His promises gave them power, comfort and joy

Through the resurrection, the cross became a glorious crown, instead of a symbol of suffering. That is why St. Paul says, *"I rejoice 'in weaknesses and insults and persecutions for Christ's sake"* (2 Cor. 12: 10). He also says, *"we suffer with Him, so we can be glorified with Him also"* (Rom. 8:17).

The resurrection of Christ gave believers hope for an afterlife and for an eternal fellowship with Christ. This hope enabled them to put all their treasures in heaven and live as strangers in this world. St. Paul described life in heaven as *"what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor entered the mind of man, what God has prepared for those who love Him"* (I Cor. 2:9). The resurrection, then, is not an end in itself, but a means to the end which is everlasting life with God.

The disciples rejoiced for the heavenly body that comes with the resurrection. Christ will raise our bodies also as He Himself rose. Human nature will be glorified in the resurrection from death. St. Paul says that *"the body which is sown in corruption will rise in incorruption,..... and that which is sown in weakness will be raised in power"* (I Cor. 15:42-44). He also said that the Lord will change the body of humility into the image of His glorious body (Philippians 3 :21).

The disciples rejoiced because, in the resurrection, Christ revisited them. Christ spent a period of forty days with them, healing their wounds and doubts and forgiving their weaknesses. It was a period to prepare them for the upcoming mission

The resurrection gave the Christian mission faith and confidence. Confidence in the risen Christ whose disciples lived with Him for forty days after the resurrection, showing Himself to them with many proofs and talking to them about matters of the kingdom of God. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord and their joy became a way of life for them and Christians after them.



## St. George The Roman

St. George was born about 280 A.D. of a Christian family that was wealthy and of noble origin, in the city of Capadocia, a city of the Eastern Empire, in Asia Minor. He followed the career of a young nobleman and joined the Roman army, where his ability and charm brought him quick promotion. The Emperor heard about him and made him a tribune or an officer

in the Imperial Guard.

One story says that he was a friend of Constantine another officer, who later became the first Christian emperor.

On February 23, in the year 303 A.D. Diocletian issued a formal edict against the Christians. The provisions of this edict were as follows: "All churches should be leveled to the ground. All sacred books to be burned. All Christians who hold any honorable rank are not only to be degraded, but to be deprived of civil rights. Also, all Christians who are not officials are to be reduced to slavery."

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

The Emperor tried to seduce him by promises that he would be granted a higher position in the Empire. But as these promises failed to attract him, the Emperor began to threaten him with unbearable tortures that he will inflict on him. Lastly, he put him in prison.

Diocletian knew that nothing, except sin, could destroy the strength and demolish the integrity of this Saint. Thus he arranged for a very beautiful woman to spend the night with him in prison and try to debauch him. St. George, who could only look forward to heavenly joy, began to pray and within a short while he managed to swing her heart to the Christian faith. Soon she seriously began to inquire about salvation, and by the morning she declared that she found her true Bridegroom

Jesus Christ. With great courage she announced her Christianity to the emperor and joined the other saintly martyrs.

We will not go through the tortures that were inflicted on St. George, in depth, but nevertheless We wish to bring to light his utmost love for Christ, by listing some of them. His body was torn by a special instrument that had metallic teeth, and our Lord Jesus raised him, after he died and as a result, many pagans were converted. He was put in a active lime, and then water was poured on it. Again the Lord returned him back to life. The emperor became very agitated, imagining that the Saint was using magic. He called his top magician, and requested him, to prepare a lethal poison to kill St. George. The Saint made the sign of the cross over the Cup before drinking it and of course, no harm came to him. The Emperor's councilors informed him that St. George's magic was in fact contained in the sign of the Cross itself. Another cup was also given to the Saint, but this time with his hands tied behind his back. The Saint made the signe by his head saying: "shall I drink it from here or here or here or here!!!"

At the end the Emperor asked him if he could raise a dead

man he knew of. St. George prayed to our Lord and the dead man came back to life. The result of that was the conversion of both the dead man and the magician as well as many others. They all were martyred.

When all methods failed to incite St. George, the Emperor invited him in his palace to entertain him. He offered him an appointment as a prince if he only sacrificed once to the idols. The Saint replied "Tomorrow you will see the powers of your gods." On the following day many people went to the temple to witness St. George's sacrifice to the idols. The Saint stretched his hands, raised his eyes to Heaven and in a moment, the idols collapsed and fell to the ground. The crowds shouted "we believe in George's God." At this, the Emperor and his men put an end to his life, on 23 Baramouda 23, 303 A.D.

The legend of St. George, which is an allegory illustrating the triumph of good over evil, tells how he rode into the city of Silene in what is now Libya, to find the people terrorized by a dragon which was fed daily with one of the citizens. The next victim was to be Cleolinda, daughter of the King, but St. George rode out, slew the dragon and freed the people from their oppressor.



# BIBLE STUDY

## THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

**BY: DAVID GIRGIS**

St. Paul wrote this letter to deal with a doctrinal heresy that was creeping into the Colossian church. The error was probably a mixture of Judaism and an early form of Gnosticism. The Colossian church was experiencing the same problems other early churches had encountered. Certain members were teaching the observance of Jewish rules about food, the Sabbath, and special festivals that would help their believers earn their salvation. At Colossi however, some of the Gentile members were apparently also promoting a form of mysticism that claimed that Jesus was a higher being, but not God. Paul refutes these false doctrines by pointing to Christ. Jesus had been the focus of Paul's preaching from the beginning. In Colossians, Paul reiterates the supremacy of Christ.

**Author, Date and Setting:** Pauline authorship of this letter has been universally recognized throughout church history. Paul identifies himself as the author, three different times. Furthermore, Paul closes the epistle with a hand written greeting, a characteristic of several of his letters. Paul probably wrote Colossians while imprisoned in Rome around 60 A.D.

The city of Colosse was about a hundred miles east of Ephesus, in the valley Lycus River.

**Relationship of Colossians to Philemon:** The circumstances of Colossians and Philemon are the same. Paul is imprisoned, along with others, for preaching the gospel. Thus the two letters are companion epistles: one for the Colossian church as a whole and one addressed to a member of that church, Philemon.

**Relationship of Colossians and Ephesians:** The many parallels between Colossians and Ephesians indicate that the two letters were written about the same time. Both letters reveal the centrality of Christ and his relationship to the church. Ephesians show Christ as the head of the church, while Colossians extends His authority over all creation.

The differences in the epistles are significant as well. Colossians stresses the completeness of the believer in Christ; Ephesians points to Christian unity which is found in Christ. Colossians speaks of Jesus as lord over all creation, while Ephesians concerns itself with Christ's authority over the church.

“From The Nelson study Bible: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville”

## Short Story

### I Took Your Place

One day, a man went to visit a church. He arrived early, parked his car, and got out. Another car pulled up near him and the driver told him, "I always park there. You took my place!" The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing. After Sunday School, the visitor went into the church sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit. You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing. Later, as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?" The visitor replied, "**I took your place.**"

## FUN TIME

### word search

By Mary Sharobeem and Christine Michaels

D P R E S U R R E C T I O N C M F  
B A Z T A L E N T U L O V E K E F  
C S B J K F C L C H I C K E A S N  
I C U E B E A S T E R I R S M S G  
Y H F S I S B I J K L T T L L G J  
H A G U V T Q H I X Z Y A F E P L  
R Y U S G Y L S Z T C P J K L A F  
N A I U L E L L A R C H G F D S G  
Q W E R T J H R E P P U S T S A L  
P E N T E C O S T Y U T R P I N M  
U H A B I B L A B I B Z A B I B C

**WORDS:** Easter -Resurrection-Pascha-Lent Jesus- Palms-Last Supper-Crucifixion- Pentecost -Feast- Love- Alleluia

—





# The Coptic Hymns

By: Joseph Michail

The Hymns of the Coptic Orthodox Church are not just sung words, nor is it simply music, it is an ancient cultural identity. These are not mere tunes passed down through the generations but are the ancient pharaonic melodies passed down, which have incorporated the hristian belief. Therefore, it is not just songs we are emitting but an expression of our origins as Egyptians, an expression of our ancient culture. We, by our holy hymns, have the most preserved

form of art in the word, over thousands of years old and never changed.



Although we never change our hymns, the Coptic Church has always added to its beauty, acquiring hymns from various other Orthodox churches, frequently from the Greek Orthodox church which easily shares most of our alphabet. A few hymns of the Resurrection were added to our rich Church just recently in late 1800's, early 1900's by Moallem Takla. With permission of Pope Kyrollos IV, Moallem Takla added such treasured hymns as 'Ton sina' and 'Too lithoo.' 'Ton sina' speaks of praise due to the Word, the Logos, who is of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who was born of the Virgin and died for us only to resurrect on the third day to raise those who died by His glory. 'Too lithoo' speaks of our Lord Jesus tomb which was sealed by the Jews, rose on the third day to give life to the world, and so the heavenly hosts worship You saying, "Glory to Your Resurrection, Glory to Your Kingdom, Glory to Your Great Plan O' Lover of Mankind." Both are said, respectively, after Khristos Anestee (another Greek Hymn) during the procession around the Church during the liturgy. Glory be to our Lord Jesus Christ the Salvation of all. Khristos Anestee; Alithos Anestee (Greek), Pi ekhristos aftonf; khen o methmee aftonf (Coptic), Christ is risen; Truly He is risen .

## References:

Ragheb Mofteh Habashy, The history of recording coptic hymns, El-Keraza 1975.

Coptic Music Web Site by: Shenouda Mamdouh, Watany Newspaper (aug.8th, 1993)

" Why do you seek the living  
among the dead"

( Luk:4:5)

## Easter Party



## **CHURCH SERVICES, MAY, 2001**

**There will be no services on Friday and Saturday 11 and 12<sup>th</sup> of May.**

### **Fridays, May 4, 18 and 25**

-7:30 PM-8:30 PM      Hymns Lesson  
-8:30PM-8:45PM      Prayer Meeting  
-8:45PM-9:30PM      Bible Study  
-9:30PM-11:30PM      Midnight Praises

### **Saturday, May 5, 19 and 26**

-8:30AM-11:30AM Divine Liturgy  
-11:30AM-1:00PM Sunday School & Youth group meeting

### **COPTIC FEASTS**

May 1      ——— Martyrdom of St. George (the Roman)  
May 8      ——— Martyrdom of St. Mark the Evangelist  
May 9      ——— Birthday of St. St. Mary the Theotokos  
May 24     ——— The Feast of Ascension