

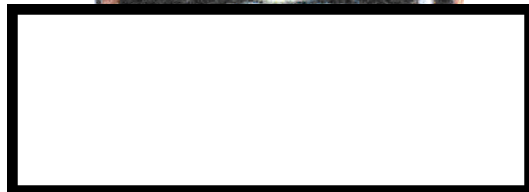
ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate
Archangel Michael Church
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MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER



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“And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. **2** And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. **4** I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. **5** So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? **6** And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. **7** Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. **8** And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. **9** And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. **10** He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? **12** And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? **13** No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. **14** And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. **15** And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. **16** The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. **17** And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. **18** Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. ...” (Luke 16: 1-18)

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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

newsletter@archangelmichaelchurch.net

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Our Fathers the Twelve Apostles

By His Grace Bishop Serapion

On the 5th of Abib (July 12th), the Church celebrates the Feast of the Apostles, which follows the holy fast bearing the name of our fathers the Apostles. This fast begins on the day following the Feast of Pentecost, the day on which the Church was established. The 5th of Abib was specifically chosen to be the Feast of the Apostles since it is the day commemorating the martyrdom of Sts. Peter and Paul in Rome in 67 A.D. However, our Church celebrates the commemoration of the martyrdom of the rest of the apostles as well. We celebrate the martyrdom of St. Andrew the Apostle on the 4th of Kiahk (Dec. 13th), the martyrdom of St. James the Elder, the son of Zebedee, on the 17th of Baramouda (April 25th), and the martyrdom of St. Bartholomew, a.k.a. Nathanael, on the first of Tout (Sept. 11th). Also the martyrdom of St. Philip is commemorated on Hatour 18th (Nov. 17th), the martyrdom of St. Matthew on Babah 14th (Oct. 24th), and St. James the son of Alphaes, the brother of our Lord, on Abib 18th. Also the Church celebrates the departure of St. John the Beloved on Toubah 4th (Jan. 12th).

The Selection of the Twelve Apostles: The Holy Bible mentions that our Lord Jesus Christ chose the Twelve Apostles from amongst His disciples as mentioned in the Gospel of St. Luke, "Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles." (Luke 6: 12-13) In the Gospel of St. Mark, it is written, "And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons." (Mark 3: 13-15) The Gospel of St. Matthew also mentions how the twelve were chosen, "And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them the power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease." (Matt. 10:1)

Prior to choosing the twelve apostles, our Lord Jesus Christ chose some of

them individually. At the beginning of His ministry in Galilee, while our Lord Jesus Christ was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Peter and Andrew casting their net into the sea, for they were fishermen. Then He told them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.' They immediately left their nets and followed Him." (Matt. 4:19-20) Then He saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother and, "He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him." (Matt. 4: 21-22) (Also review Matt. 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20 and Luke 5:1-11)

In his Gospel, St. John recounts how he and St. Andrew encountered Christ. (John 1: 35-42) He narrates the story of how John the Baptist witnessed that Christ is the Lamb of God in front of two of his disciples. After which, the two disciples followed Christ and stayed with the Lord Jesus that day. One of the two disciples whose name is mentioned was St. Andrew, who found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, 'You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas (which is translated, A Stone)." (John 1: 41-42) The other disciple whose name is not mentioned, is most likely St. John the Evangelist himself, since he recalls precisely the details of this meeting, such as the hour they met, the 10th hour (John 1:39); this was not mentioned in the other three Gospels.

The Gospel of St. John also tells of how Christ called St. Philip, then Philip found Nathaniel (Bartholomew), who after encountering Christ confessed that Christ is the Son of God and the King of Israel (John 1:43-51). In Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14, and Luke 5: 27-28, the Holy Bible tells us how Christ invited Matthew the tax collector (Levi).

By these accounts, we can see that our Lord Jesus Christ called His disciples individually at various occasions. Although the calling may have been similar with some, yet it differed from one to the other. Then at a certain time, He chose them as a group of twelve, called them Apostles and gave them power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons (Mark 3:15). He sent them on their mission to preach about the Kingdom of Heaven. He gave them advice and instructions, explaining to them the difficulties they would encounter (Matt. 10: 5-42). St. Luke the Evangelist narrated how Christ appointed seventy others and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go (Luke 10: 1-12). When St. Luke wrote, "After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also..."(Luke 10:1) he is distinguishing this mission from that of the Twelve Apostles, and also is showing that it came after the calling and mission of the Twelve.

Why did the Lord Choose Twelve Apostles? Was it just a coincidence

or does the number twelve denote a special significance?

H.G. Bishop Gregorios, the General Bishop for Scientific Studies, mentions in his book titled "The Twelve Apostles" that the great Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ, had a certain reason for choosing twelve apostles. The number twelve is one of the numbers symbolizing perfection in the Holy Bible. Therefore, the tribes of Israel were twelve and there were the twelve patriarchs (Acts 7:8, Acts 26:8, James 1:1). The Twelve Apostles of Christ will sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28 and Luke 22: 28-30).

In the Book of Revelation, there is a symbol of the Twelve Apostles. It is written, "Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars." (Rev. 12:1) The woman symbolizes the Church or the Holy Virgin Mary, the sun is our Lord Jesus Christ, the moon is John the Baptist, and the twelve stars are the Twelve Apostles. In talking about the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Book of Revelation mentions that "the wall of the city had twelve foundations and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21: 14)

The number twelve has many meanings and is important in the economy of our salvation. Therefore, when they became one less after the betrayal of Judas and his perdition, it was necessary to choose someone to replace him to fulfill the prophecy of Psalm 109:8, which St. Peter mentioned. At that time, the disciples were 120 and St. Peter stood in their midst and asked for a replacement of Judas from amongst those who accompanied the Lord and witnessed His acts and Resurrection. They chose St. Matthias the Apostle (Acts 1:15-26).

The Names of the Twelve: The Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke, as well as the Book of Acts mention the names of the Twelve Apostles. St. Luke mentioned them as follows: "Simon, whom He named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called The Zealot; Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor." (Luke 6:14-16) The names are mentioned exactly the same by St. Luke in the Book of Acts, except he did not mention Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:13). St Mark lists the names as follows: "Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is 'Sons of Thunder'; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, the son of Alphaes, Thaddeus, Simon the Cananite and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him." (Mark 3: 16-19) Here, St. Mark mentions Judas, the brother of James by his other name, which is Thaddeus, and mentions Simon the Cananite in reference to his town, Cana.

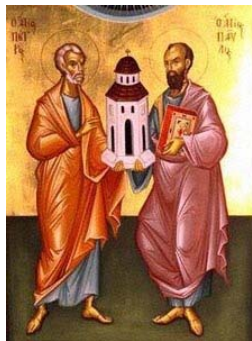
In the list mentioned by St. Matthew (Matt. 10: 2-4), he refers to St. Judas, the brother of James the son of Alphaeus, by his name Lebbaeus,

whose surname was also Thaddeus; he is the one who wrote the Epistle of Jude, which is one of the catholic epistles in the New Testament. As for Simon, he is mentioned as Simon the Cananite, a.k.a. Simon the Zealot.

St. John the Evangelist does not list the names of the Twelve Apostles, but mentions some of their names at different occasions. The new name, which is mentioned in his Gospel and not in the other three Gospels is Nathaniel. He is mentioned twice. Once when Philip called him to meet Christ and was hesitant at first, then he met Christ and believed in Him (John 1: 45-51). The other time, he is mentioned when St. John re-counted how the Lord appeared to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias and he called him Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee (John 21: 2). As revealed in the Gospel of St. John, we notice that St. Philip played a role in the calling of Nathaniel to meet Christ; he then followed Christ. We also notice that the other three Gospels mention the name of Bartholomew after Philip and don't mention the name Nathaniel. Therefore, it is believed that Bartholomew is Nathaniel, as confirmed by many of the scholars of the Holy Bible.

Honoring our Fathers the Apostles: Our Church honors our Fathers the Apostles by preserving their teachings. One of the main characteristics of a Church is that She must be an Apostolic Church, i.e. one whose doctrines are based on the teachings of the Apostles, who witnessed to the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, His death and His glorious Resurrection. We place their icons on the iconostasis to remind us that our Church is an Apostolic Church. We celebrate their feasts to commemorate their martyrdom, so we may follow in their footsteps in preserving the true faith and so that we may be ready to deny ourselves and like the Fathers the Apostles follow Christ and carry the cross.

May our Lord protect our Church and help us, until the last breath, to be faithful in preserving the teachings of our Fathers the Apostles.



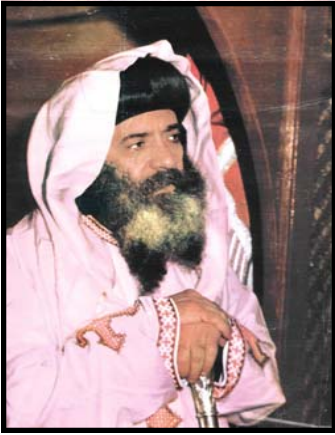
The Martyrdom of St. Marina of Antioch



The 23rd day of the blessed month of Abib is the commemoration of the martyrdom of the blessed St. Marina who overcame the devil. She was one of the daughters of the nobles of Antioch. Her parents were pagan. When her mother died, her father sent her to a nanny, who was a Christian, to raise her.. She taught Marina the Faith of Christ. When Marina reached the age of fifteen, her father died. One day she heard her nurse talking about the biography of the martyrs and what glory they receive in the Kingdom of Heaven. She longed to become a martyr in the Name of the Lord Christ. One day St. Marina went out of her

house with her maiden servants and on her way she passed by Lopharius Ebrotus, the governor, who admired her much when he saw her. He ordered her brought to him. When the soldiers came to her, she told them that she was Christian. In turn, when they told the governor this, he was distressed for he liked her and he had her brought to him by force. He offered her the worship of the idols and asked her to forsake God, but she refused. Then he asked her, 'What is your name and from where are you?' She told him, 'I am Christian. I believe in the Lord Christ and my name is Marina.' He tried to persuade her by many promises and promised to marry her, but she did not heed him. When she cursed and insulted him, he ordered her body scraped with iron combs, then rubbed with vinegar, salt and lime, which they did. Nevertheless, she endured with patience. They cast her in prison, thinking that she was about to die. Immediately the angel of the Lord came and healed all her wounds. While she was standing up praying, and her hands were extended in the form of a cross, a huge and terrifying serpent came forth. When she saw it she was frightened and her whole body trembled. The serpent swallowed her up, and her soul almost departed from her. She made the sign of the cross and prayed while she was in the belly of the serpent. It split open and fell on the ground dead. St. Marina came out unharmed. The next morning, the governor ordered her brought to him. When he saw that she was well, he marveled much and told her, 'Marina, your sorcery has become evident today, so listen to me. Worship the gods and much good would be for you, and I will give you all that I have promised you.' She looked to him and to the dumb idols with contempt and said, 'I worship the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, the God of heavens

and earth, and whatever you wish to do with me, do, for I will not heed you.' The governor ordered her hanged on the wheel--the squeezing wheel--and squeezed very tightly. They did so, and then cast her in prison. The angel of the Lord came to her and healed her. Then the devil appeared to her and said, 'O Marina, if you obey the governor that would be for your good for he is merciless, and he wishes to erase your name from the face of the earth.' She realized that he was the devil. Straightway she caught the hair of his head, and she took an iron rod and started to beat him, saying, 'Stop it O Satan.' Then she bound him with the sign of the cross, not to depart from before her until he told her all about what he does to the human race. When she pressed him, he told her, 'I am the one who makes adultery, stealing, blasphemy, and earthly desires, good and desirable to the human. And if I do not overcome him, I steer sleep and laziness against him, so he will not pray and ask for the forgiveness of his sins.' The Saint straightway expelled him. When the governor saw her he marveled much, then he ordered to uncover her body, and to fill a large cauldron with melted lead, and to immerse her in it. When they did so, she asked the Lord to make this a baptism for her. The Lord sent his angel in the form of a dove. She was immersed while saying, 'In the Name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God. Amen.' A voice from heaven called her and said, 'O Marina you have been baptized in the baptismal water.' She rejoiced exceedingly, and those who were present heard what had happened to the Saint. Many of them believed, and the governor ordered to cut off their necks, and afterwards ordered to cut off St. Marina's holy head. The executioner took her and went outside the city, then told her, 'My lady Marina, I see the angel of the Lord and with him a crown of bright light.' She said, 'I ask you to tarry on me until I have prayed.' She extended her arms and prayed fervently, then told the executioner, 'Do what you have been ordered to do.' She bowed her neck to the executioner who told her, 'I could not do so.' The saint told him, 'If you do not do so, you would not have a share in the Kingdom of God.' When he heard what she said, he took the sword and cut her neck off then he cut his neck also while he was saying, 'I believe in the God of St. Marina.' He fell down beside her and he received the crown of martyrdom in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Lord had manifested from her body many signs and healing miracles. Her body is presently located in the Church of the Lady the Virgin Mary in Haret El-Roum. May her prayers and intercession be with us and glory be to God forever. Amen.



Coptic People ask His Holiness Pope Shenouda III

Question:

Isn't God the absolute goodness? How then is it said about Him that He is the maker of peace and creator of evil (Is. 45:7) while evil doesn't agree with God's nature.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III answers:

We should know first the meaning of the word "good" and the word "evil" in the biblical terminology for they have more than one meaning. The word "evil" could mean sin which is not the case in the verse "*creator of evil*" in (Is. 45:7).

"Evil" meaning sin doesn't agree with the goodness of the Lord for He is the absolute goodness. But it comes also in the Bible to mean tribulations and hardships. The word "good" has also two contradicting meanings: it could mean righteousness - opposite of sin, and it could mean opposite of tribulations - richness, blessing, abundance and various kinds gifts.

* This is very clear in the story of Job the Righteous, when the tribulations befell him and his wife grumbled, he rebuked her saying "*You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?*" (Job. 2:10). **Job did not mean by the word "evil" here "sin"; for no sin befell him from the Lord but he meant by evil the tribulations he underwent.**

As for the death of his children, the destruction of his house and the plundering of his oxen, donkeys, sheep and camels, all these tribulations and calamities commonly known as evil, the Bible says "*when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place; to mourn with him and to comfort him.*" (Job.2:11)

With the same concept the Lord had spoken about His punishment for the people of Israel saying "*Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book*" (2 Chr. 34:24). Surely the Lord here did not mean by evil

the sin.

What He meant by evil was the captivity of the children of Israel, their defeat before their enemies and the other afflictions that He brought upon them to punish them.

* Another example is the saying of the Lord about Jerusalem *"Behold, I will bring such a catastrophe on this place, that whoever hears of it, his ears will tingle"* (Jer. 19:3) The Lord mentioned the details of that evil saying *"I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies... their corpses I will give as meat for the birds of the heavens and for the beasts of the earth. I will make this city desolate and a hissing... even so I will break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, which can not be made whole again"* (Jer. 19:7-11).

* The same meaning is given in the Book of Amos. (Amos 9:4). * In the promises of the Lord to rescue the people of Israel from captivity, difficulties and defeat "For thus says the LORD: *'Just as I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them.'*" (Jer. 32:42) the word evil meant captivity and the promise was to return them from captivity. The word "good" here does not mean righteousness or godliness as it is also clear that the word "evil" here did not mean sin. **The word good means also blessings, wealth and prosperity.** The Psalm says *"Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's"* (Ps. 103:5) and the Lord says in (Jer. 5:25) *"Your iniquities have turned these things away, And your sins have withheld good from you."* In the same meaning also it is said about the Lord that He is *"the maker of good and creator of evil"* which means He gives the blessings and prosperity and also He allows afflictions and adversities. **If the word evil means afflictions, then it can be from God. He wants or allows it as a discipline for people or to urge them to repent or for any spiritual benefit that might be gained from these afflictions (James 1:2-4).** The phrase "creator of evil" or "maker of evil" means whatever the people regard as evil or trouble or tribulation which also might be for good.

Examples for good in the sense of righteousness, and for evil in the sense of sin:

+ *"for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good."* (1 Pet. 2:14).

+ Also *"Depart from evil, and do good."* (Ps. 34:14).

+ And the saying of the Lord *"your little ones and your children, who you say will be victims, who today have no knowledge of good and evil"* (Deut. 1:39) and also the verse *"the tree of knowledge of good and evil"* (Gen. 2:9).

Accordingly the verse *"He treated him well"* means helped him, aided, rescued, had mercy and gave him good gifts and presents. On the other hand the verse *"you meant evil against me"* means to harm him.

When the Lord brings evil on a nation, it means put them under the rod of correction by tribulations and plagues which are considered evil.

SHORT STORY

“ You'll find Jesus there”



“Tomorrow morning,” the surgeon began, “I’ll open up your heart...” “You’ll find Jesus there,” the boy interrupted. The surgeon looked up, annoyed. “I’ll cut your heart open,” he continued, “to see how much damage has been done...”. “But when you open up my heart, you’ll find Jesus in there.”

The surgeon looked to the parents, who sat quietly.

“When I see how much damage has been done, I’ll sew your heart and chest back up and I’ll plan what to do next.” “But you’ll find Jesus in my heart. The Bible says He lives there. The hymns all say He lives there. You’ll find Him in my heart.”

The surgeon had had enough. “I’ll tell you what I’ll find in your heart. I’ll find damaged muscle, low blood supply and weakened vessels. And I’ll find out if I can make you well.” “You’ll find Jesus there too. He lives there.”

The surgeon left. The surgeon sat in his office, recording his notes from the surgery, “...damaged aorta, damaged pulmonary vein, widespread muscle degeneration. No hope for transplant, no hope for cure. Therapy: painkillers and bed rest. Prognosis: here he paused, “death within one year.” He stopped the recorder, but there was more to be said. “Why?” he asked aloud. “Why did You do this? You’ve put him here; You’ve put him in this pain; and You’ve cursed him to an early death. Why?”

The Lord answered and said, “The boy, My lamb, was not meant for your flock for long, for he is a part of My flock, and will forever be. Here, in My flock, he will feel no pain and will be comforted as you cannot imagine. His parents will one day join him here and they will know peace. My flock will continue to grow.”

The surgeon’s tears were hot, but his anger was hotter. “You created that boy and You created that heart. He’ll be dead in months. Why?”

The Lord answered, “The boy, My lamb, shall return to My flock for he has done his duty. I did not put My lamb with your flock to lose him, but to retrieve another lost lamb.” The surgeon wept. The surgeon sat beside the boy’s bed; the boy’s parents sat across from him. The boy awoke and whispered, “Did you cut open my heart?” “Yes,” said the surgeon. “What did you find?” asked the boy. “I found Jesus there,” said the surgeon.

He that is faithful in that which is least
is faithful also in much:

(Luke 16:10)

تقدم الكنيسة خالص التعازي للأخ الشماس ابراهيم
ابراهيم لوفاة السيدة الفاضلة والدته بالأسكندييه

COPTIC FEASTS

- July 1** **Martyrdom of St. Mousa the strong**
July 12 **Apostoles' Feast**
July 14 **Departure of St. Shenouda the Archmandrite**
July 15 **Departure of St. Pishoy**

CHURCH SERVICES

FRIDAYS

-7:30 PM-8:00 PM

English Prayer Meeting

-8:00PM-9:30PM

Arabic Bible Study Arabic Prayer Meeting

-8:00PM-9:30PM

Midnight Praises /Midnight Prayers // Hymns

SATURDAYS

-8:00AM-11:30AM:

Divine Liturgy

-12 Noon-1:00PM:

Sunday School & Youth group meeting