



# Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria

St. Mary and St. Moses Coptic Orthodox Church

## Diocese of Mississauga and West of Canada

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**Baounah/Abib**

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*Under the auspices and guidance of H.G. Bishop Mina bishop of Mississauga, Vancouver and west of Canada*

## THE APOSTLES FEAST

**H.H. Pope Shenouda III**

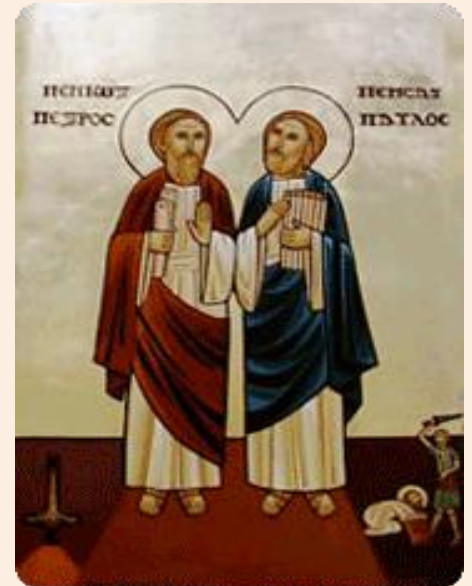
**But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;  
and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,  
and to the end of the earth.**

**Acts 1:8**

The Church celebrates the memory of the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul on the 5th of Abib, which is the 12th of July. This feast is called in our Church by the name of "the Feast of the Apostles." Its date is unchanged in every year.

The Church venerates these two apostles very profoundly; and raises them and honors them exceedingly; especially in the prayer of the partition" or "the division" which pertains to the fast of the apostles and to the feast of the apostles, which we pray during the holy mass.

These two saints represent two distinguished kinds as regards the personality, the mission, and the style. Each one of them has distinct characteristics.



### **THE POINTS OF DIFFERENCE**

Peter was among the first whom the Lord had chosen to work with Him. (Matthew 10)

And Paul was not among the twelve, and not even among the seventy apostles, but the Lord chose him lastly, after the resurrection and years after the choice of Matthias.....

He did not follow Christ during His predication on earth. He rather said about that: "Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." (1 Cor. 15: 8 -9)

And although he was the last in his call, yet he "labored more abundantly than they all." (1 Cor. 15:10) That shows that it is not a matter of precedence, but according to the amount of weariness from exertion for God.

A person may not be the most ancient among the workers in ministry, and nevertheless he may be the strongest of all the workers.

John the Baptist was not the first prophet in the Old Testament, but he was the last of them in their chronological order. Nevertheless it was said that "among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist." (Matt. 11:11)

The apostle Peter was a married man. It was mentioned in the Gospel that Christ healed his step-mother from fever. (Matt. 8: 14-15) In his journeys for the predication, he wandered accompanied by his wife as a sister. (1 Cor. 9:5)

But the apostle Paul was a virgin. (1 Cor. 7:7). He called for the preference of virginity. "But each one has his own gift from God", "as the Lord has called each one..... Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called" (1 Cor. 7: 7,17,20). That proves that the Lord calls everybody to His service, whether they are married like Peter, or virgins like Paul.

Peter began his life with the Lord Christ with love, confidence, and faith. But on the contrary: Paul began by enmity, as a persecutor of the Church and of everyone who followed Christ, so that the Lord, when He met him on the road to Damascus, began his conversation with him by reprimanding him saying: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4) Saint Peter was a simple man, a fisherman (Matt. 4:18). He was ignorant and was not instructed into culture or science. He is one of whom "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise" (1 Cor. 27). It was said of him, of him and saint John, "that they were uneducated and untrained men." (Acts 4:13) But saint Paul was one of the learned of his age, who was educated at the University of Tarsus, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. (Acts 22:3) He was well-known for his culture and for reading many books. (Acts 26:24)

That shows us that the Lord equally employs everybody for His kingdom, the learned and the simple. The important thing for them is to be useful utensils for the work of His grace

The Church Rite: The Lakan

Lakan is a Syrian word means basin, and it is the pot of marble or stone placed in the third Khurs of the church where the priests pray on the water to make it a force for healing and Beatification .

The Mass of Lakan has been Instituted to remember the baptism of Jesus and to exercise of the virtue of humility as bending to wash the feet of His disciples in the holy Thursday as well as to practice the meaning of service.

The mass of the Lakan is prayed three times per year: Epiphany – The Holy Thursday – The Feast of Apostles

## **THE GARDEN OF EDEN IS NOT WHAT YOU THINK IT IS?**

**Fr. Gabriel Wissa**

The Garden of Eden is really not what you think it is! The meaning of this garden is packed with rich symbolism that is mind blowing. The garden is not only a place that is meticulously designed and designated for Adam and Eve’s dwelling or just adorned with trees both “pleasant to the sight and good for food” symbolizing divine blessing and provision. It is much more than that. The Hebrew word for garden, “Gan,” unveils its rich connotation of a secluded, protected, and fruitful space symbolizing divine favor, blessing, and well-being. The Greek term “παράδεισος” in the Septuagint similarly underscores the garden’s association with blissful communion with God who is present in the garden. In that sense, the garden is a temple-like sanctuary where there is interaction and communion with the Being who is our Creator. It’s a place of wholeness and peace because God, Himself, is there. Only there one can live life as it is meant to be lived while having perfect harmony with the entirety of creation. It is home in the ultimate sense. That is why it is located in the “East”, which, in biblical terminology, is symbolic of life—it is where the sun rises from. Also, the garden is on top of a mount where a river flows down. This description mirrors themes found in Old Testament imagery, such as the significance of elevated locations like mounts or hills for divine worship, providing physical proximity, if you will, to where God is. Therefore, this celestial garden embodies the ultimate temple, a place where one meets God, and it echoes the Jewish Temple, the Christian Church and, ultimately, Heaven itself.



From the top of that mountain, where God is with His creation in the garden, water flows down like I said. Flowing waters symbolize spiritual renewal and life-giving abundance that emanates from God’s presence. This river is divided into four rivers flowing to the four corners of the world. But why? To give life to all! The following connections will clarify it all. God was present in the garden. He is also present in the Temple. In Ezekiel 47, there is water that flows from the right

side of the temple and formed a river which brought life to whatever it touched. The fish who were brought to life, in Ezekiel 47, represent humanity who are healed by the water coming out of the temple. But this Old Testament Temple is only temporary. The real temple is Christ's Body. Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days, Christ said. As His Body is being destroyed, so-to-speak, the living water gushes out from Him, which is the baptismal water through which we receive the Holy Spirit that keeps us spiritually hydrated. This is also the same water Christ was promising the Samaritan woman when He said to her "whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst... it will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." This the river from the garden of Eden that is flowing through the four corners of the world bringing life to all. And it is our duty as Christians to provide this water to others.

But it doesn't end there! In the book of revelations, St. John speaks about Heaven and says "But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." Then it goes on to say how he saw a pure river of water of life proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb. This river provides water for the tree of life which heals the nations. This depiction of the New Jerusalem further reinforces the garden's symbolism, portraying it as a place of divine illumination, nourishment, and restoration. In Heaven, Christians are brought back in the presence of their Creator. They are restored through this life-giving water.

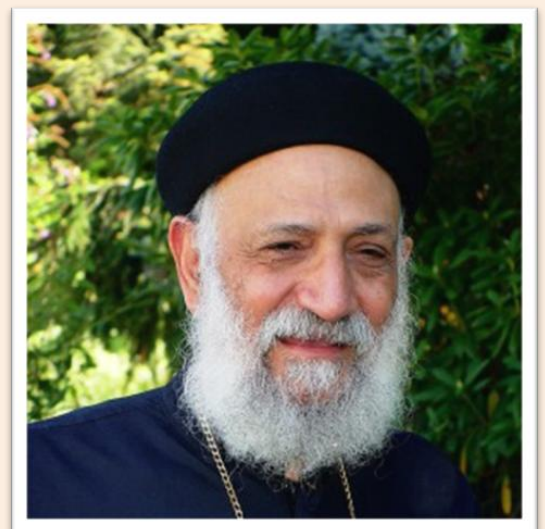
## WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE UNABLE TO ENJOY PURITY?

*By: Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty*

*From the book of Purity*

### 1. Inner Worry:

- a) A young man once told me that he didn't undertake any wrongful physical actions till he was 17 years old. But once there started to be some problems and arguments between his parents, he left his father's house till he rushed to these undertakings to compensate him for the great worry that lingers inside him.
- b) I was surprised to meet a young boy –ten years old-, who is addicted to these wrongful physical actions; and the main reason behind that was familial decomposition and lack of peace and mutual respect not just among the parents, but also between the parents and their children!
- c) No wonder that many teenagers fall under the pressure of



evil thoughts and actions during exams' periods, even if they feel that they need every possible minute and energy to get ready for these

- d) exams; but their suffering from worry pushes them unconsciously to fall under these wrongful actions!
- e) When a young man or woman falls into the lusts of thoughts or the doings after a long period of victory, his/her energies get imbalanced due to feeling of despair. This causes him/her to fall under an endless series of physical faults. Despair, and the exaggerated feeling of guilt, adds fuel to the fire of physical lusts.

## **2. Being ashamed to Meet the Holy God:**

We should realize that Jesus is the only Son of God, who –alone- is without sin; and that no one of us deserves to be called son of God, but the Divine Love calls unto us to enjoy being children of God. God

has prepared His heavenly Kingdom for us; and He does not intimidate us with Hell or with the eternal punishment unless we insisted on refusing His divine grace.

## **3. Feeling of isolation:**

Every man needs to belong to a group that works together, supports one another, and lifts the feeling of isolation.

4. Leniency with the Sources of Lust, like the exciting magazines, the pornographic TV shows, videos and internet, and any other unbalanced media:

It is proper for a serious believer to make use of all the new technologies in order to develop himself culturally, socially and spiritually!

## **5. Family Decomposition and Breakdown:**

The young man or woman looks for the lost love in the family in whomever he/she meets and with any possible means, even if that will cost him his eternity! Familial love and awareness build sound

family relations with the children; and thus enables them to find joy in making an open discussion with their parents –or at least one of them-, to grow properly into adolescence, and to become deeper with time.

## **6. The Wrong Understanding of Entertainment and participation:**

This is especially during the holidays, the birthday parties, and engagements, weddings and prom celebrations!

# **Rites:**

## **THE INCENSE CIRCUIT OUTSIDE THE ALTAR**

our Lord Jesus Christ", for the resurrection icon, "Hail to the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ", for the ascension icon, and so on.

## **THE FIVE INSPIRING CONTEMPLATORY VERSES**

Before he reaches the place of the Passover (Holy Week) Prayers, the priest recites the first verse

of the Five Contemplatory Verses, saying, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever. He, being one Hypostasis, we worship and glorify Him." This prayer glorifies the Lord Jesus, Who was crucified for us and saved us through His honored Blood, being taken from the Book of Hebrews

(13:8), where St. Paul says, " Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever".

When the priest reaches the place where the crucifixion icon is usually placed on Good Friday, he stops and completes the other four verses. Incensing towards the East, he says the second verse, "This is He Who raised Himself as an acceptable sacrifice on the cross for our salvation", referring to Christ, Who sacrificed Himself so that no one who believed in His Name might perish, but would live forever.

The Righteous died for us to save us from the yoke of sin, and to transfer us to the glorious freedom that belongs to God's children, and to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Apostle Paul says, "As Christ also has loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph.5:2).

Jesus Christ is the Perfect Priest and, at the same time, is also the Perfect Sacrifice.

The priest then raises incense towards the North saying the third verse, "So His Good Father smelled it on Golgotha in the afternoon." This refers to God the Father smelling the sweet aroma when He saw the Son on the cross; through His Crucifixion, the Son gave the Godly righteous His right. He

Who is without sin, became a sacrifice of sin, so we become righteous through Him. The Father accepted the sacrifice of Golgotha for the sins of the whole world as "a fragrant offering" (Eph.5:2), the fragrance of satisfaction.

The priest then raises incense towards the West while facing the main Western door of the church (a symbol for the door of Paradise) and says the fourth verse, "He opened to us the gates of Paradise and returned Adam to his rightful place."

He then he raises incense toward the South while saying the fifth verse, "Because of His cross and Holy Resurrection, He returned man once more to Paradise". All five of these verses are a glorification for Christ, who was crucified for our sake, and gave us salvation. All mention the

crucifixion, which is why they are said in the crucifixion icon place of Good Friday.

The priest then continues walking Eastward down the center aisle, all the time offering incense to the congregation and blessing them, until he reaches the sanctuary door. Standing at the altar, he puts one spoonful of incense into the censer, saying, "Glory and honour, honour and glory to the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

With the penitent prayers and collective repentance that is offered by the congregation during the incense tour, the priest goes back to the altar and prays The Mystery of Confession.

## **AUDIO SERMONS**

### ***WHY DO I BELIEVE THAT CHRISTIANITY IS TRUE?***

*DR. GEORGE BASILLIOS*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_5A5458J3w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_5A5458J3w)



## **SAINT OF THE MONTH:**

***"Whose faiths follow, considering the outcome of their conversation?" Heb 13:7***

### **ST. GEORGE EL-MEZAHEM**

St. George, the new martyr, known as El-Mezahem. His father was a Moslem bedouin. He married a Christian woman from the city of Demerah El-kibliah. He had from her three sons, one of them was this Saint, and they called him El-Mezahem. He used to go with his mother to the church at a young age. He also used to see the children of the Christians dress in white on the days that they partook of the Holy Mysteries. He longed that his mother would dress him like them, and allow him to eat from whatever they ate at the altar. His mother told him that could not be, unless he was baptized. She gave him a portion of the blessed Eulogia bread, that they distributed to the people, and it tasted in his mouth like that of honey. He meditated in his heart and said, "If the taste of this bread that was not consecrated by prayers tastes like this, what



will be the taste of the Offering?" His longing for the faith in Christ increased from that time. When he grew up, he married a Christian woman, and he told her that he wished to become a Christian. She told him that he had to be baptized. He went to Birma, was baptized there and was called George (Girgis). When this matter became known, he went to Domiat. The Moslems there recognized him, seized him and tortured him. Then he escaped and fled to the city of Saft Abu-Trab, where he stayed for three years. When his matter became known again he went to the city of Katurah, and remained there serving the church of St. George, then went back to Demerah.

When the Moslems of the city of Demerah knew his history, they seized him, and delivered him to the governor who put him in prison. The Moslems assembled and broke the door of the prison. They beat the Saint severely, split open his head, and left him between life and death. When some of the believers came on the morrow to bury him, for they thought that he was dead, they found him alive. The Moslems convened a council, and threatened him, but he did not change his conviction. They hung him up on the mast of a ship, but the governor ordered that he be taken down and cast him up in prison. His wife strengthened him, and comforted him. She taught him to believe that the punishment which had come upon him was because of his sins; lest Satan lead him astray and he might boast that he became like the martyrs. The angel of the Lord appeared to him, comforted him, strengthened him, and informed him that he would receive the crown of martyrdom on the next day. On the next morning, the Moslems gathered with the governor and demanded from him that the head of El-Mozahem be cut off. He handed him over to them. They took him, and cut off his head near the church of the angel Michael in the city of Demerah. They cast his body in hot fire for a day and a night. But his body did not burn, so they put him in a barrel and threw him into the river. By the Will of God the barrel landed on the shore of an island, which was inhabited by a believing woman. She took his body, shrouded him, hid him in her house until they built a church for him, in which they laid his body.

*May the blessings of his prayers be with us all, and Glory be to God forever Amen.*

### **Sayings of the Fathers:**

- ❖ Prayer is a great weapon, an unfailing treasure, an everlasting wealth, a calm harbor, and a stillness without turmoil

St. John Chrysostom

- ❖ The great work is for a person to confess his sin before God and to expect the trial until his last breath. St. Anthony the Great
- ❖ Never despair.. Rather say: Help me, O Lord. I am the wretched one, for I am not able to stand before them, and God helps you. St. Isaac The Syrian

## Question and Answer:

*By: H. E. Metropolitan Youssef*

**Question**

*Why do we kiss a priest's hand?*

**Answer**

We kiss the hands of bishops and priests because in the context of the Divine Liturgy, the hands hold and distribute the holy Body and Blood of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ! This is an enduring and centuries old tradition in the Eastern Christendom that has a purely metaphorical connotation; of course, this is not to leave out an underpinning element of paternal (fatherly) respect and affection as well. Kissing of the hands is also done amongst clergy. The blessing of the priest has a marvelous efficacy as being an exercise of the mysterious power with which he is entrusted. Through the prayers offered by the priest, the Holy spirit changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. The priest bestows special sanctity upon Christians and upon the objects. The hand of a priest is, therefore, an instrument for receiving Divine Grace. For this reason, Orthodox Christians throughout the centuries customarily kiss the hand of their priest.

**Question**

*Why must we use the Agpeya in prayer? Can a person just use their own words if they feel that it helps them get closer to God, or would this be disobeying the Church? Also, as time goes by, are we supposed to be growing in how many psalms we recite from*

**Answer**

First, I would like to refer you to a well-written article on the Agpeya in the first issue of the Mighty Arrows (vol 1, no 1).

After reading the article, let's examine the work of prayer. A well-practiced prayer pleases God a lot. St John Chrysostom says, "Prayer was described as incense because of its good smell and because it purifies the soul from the rot of sin."

"Prayer avails much" (Jam 5:16). The work of prayer is superior and distinguished over any other work. Because of the superiority of prayer, the Lord appointed the angels to present it to Him.

Did you know that the canon of the seven prayers, "Prayers of the Agpeya", was mentioned among the canons of the Ecumenical Council of Nicea in the year 325 AD? Yet these same laws go back to the time of the disciples and were reported among their canons. They were also among the laws of Hipoletus in the beginning of the third century. One can say the Agpeya dates back to the days of the chosen disciples.

With all of the above supporting evidence, I think we should definitely use the Agpeya to pray and be thankful that we are blessed with it.

The late Bishop Youanis of Gharbia said, "The value of prayer is not measured by the degree of comfort one receives from it, but by the amount of toil." Continuing steadfastly in spiritual practices such as reciting the psalms takes us away from lukewarmness in prayer.

Please keep in mind that when we suffer from "spiritual dryness" in our prayers, it does not mean that God will reject them. On the contrary, God may value them more than the prayers in which we feel comforted. The reason is that toil, labor, and difficulty in prayers help us get closer to God. To receive comfort is not the goal.

Using the Agpeya does not eliminate the need to use your own personal words to address God. Usually we conclude the Agpeya with a personal prayer in which we give our personal thanksgiving to God and also we put forward all our needs.

It is expected that a praying person grow in the knowledge of the Holy Psalms and the quality of his prayers improve over time.

### **A whisper in your ear**

*Fr. Ephraim Anba Bishoy*

- ❖ Optimism gives you strength in the hardest of times.
- ❖ Do not be saddened by failure as long as you are trying to stand on your feet again.
- ❖ Happiness will never come to those who do not appreciate what they already have.
- ❖ Do not aspire to be better than others, but rather aspire to be better than your past self.
- ❖ The beauty of the soul is in your smile, and the beauty of character is in making others smile.
- ❖ Time and attention are the most beautiful gifts you can give to someone.
- ❖ Everyone wants to receive forgiveness, but only those who give it will truly receive it.
- ❖ If wolves devour your enemy, that doesn't mean they've become your friends.
- ❖ He who shares joy with others feels the true value of humanity.
- ❖ Do not seek happiness far from God, for true happiness is found only in Him.

## **VERSE OF THE MONTH**

**The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?  
Hebrews 13:6**

## **THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES THIS MONTH “SYNAXARIUM**

- ❖ Martyrdom of the Great Saint Anba Moses the black (24 Baounah) .....1 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Jude one of the Seventy Disciples (25 Baounah) .....2 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Ananias, the Apostle (27 Baounah) .....4 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of Saints Abba Hour and his Mother Theodora (29 Baounah) ..... 6 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of Saint Febronia the Ascetic (1 Abib) ..... 8 July
- ❖ Departure of St. Celestine, Pope of Rome (3 Abib) ..... 10 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul, the Apostles and feast of the Apostles  
(5 Abib)..... 12 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Theodosia and her Companions (6 Abib) ..... 13 July
- ❖ Departure of St. Shenouda (Shenoute), the Archimandrite (7 Abib) .....14 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Piroou and St. Athom (8 Abib) .....15 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Simon Cleophas, the Apostle (9 Abib) ..... 16 July
- ❖ Commemoration of the honorable Archangel Michael (12 Abib) .....19 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Apamon of Toukh (13 Abib) ..... 20 July
- ❖ Departure of Martyrdom of St. Kyriacus and St. Julietta, his mother  
(15 Abib) .....22 July
- ❖ Commemoration of the Virgin St. Mary (21 Abib) ..... 28 July
- ❖ Commemoration of the Martyrdom of St. Leontius of Tripoli (Lawendius)  
(22 Abib) ..... 29 July
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Marina, of Antioch (23 Baounah) ..... 30 July

### **CHURCH SERVICES SCHEDULE:**

Please check church website in the first page

### **YOUTUBE SERVICE STREAMING ADDRESS:**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_MI2B3NKLi1Y8P3nQR5Amw/video](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_MI2B3NKLi1Y8P3nQR5Amw/video)