

“Blessed be Egypt My people” (Isaiah 19:25).. and Egypt became a blessed land after the entry of the Lord Jesus into it in the 1st century.

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THE HOLY FAMILY IN EGYPT

Egypt received great and very special blessings by the visit of Christ, the Child, with His mother, the Virgin Mary, and Joseph. The Holy Family traveled through Egypt, blessing every site where they resided. Every place the Holy Family visited became a sacred landmark.

As Jesus entered Egyptian towns, idols crumbled and monuments fell down to fulfill Isaiah’s prophecy.



The infuriated residents of these towns forced the Holy Family to leave town. Soldiers also pursued the Holy Family, to capture and deliver them to King Herod, who wanted to kill the Divine Child.

In many areas of Egypt, the Holy Family was courteously received and treated kindly. Coptic tradition holds that the Divine Child performed many miracles in those places, such as healing the sick. Over the years, numerous churches and monasteries were established on sites visited by the Holy Family. Upper and Lower Egypt became a safe haven for the Divine Child and His family for several years until the death of King Herod, fulfilling the prophecy: “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” (Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15).

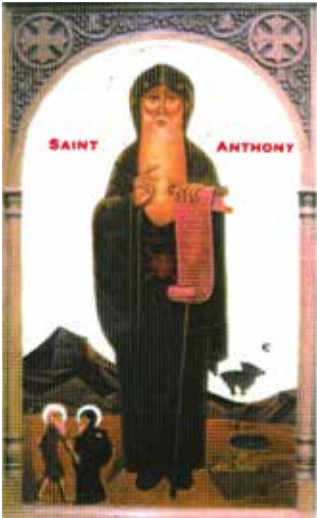
In commemoration of the blessed visit of the Holy Family, on June 1st the Coptic Church annually celebrates the flight of the Holy Family to the land of Egypt, which is the only country that Jesus Christ visited outside His own birthplace in Palestine.

Some early church fathers considered Jesus Himself, through this unique visit, to be the real founder of the Coptic Church. Saint Matthew recorded the Lord’s visit in his Gospel (Matthew 2:13-15).

THE MONASTIC MOVEMENT

The Coptic Church is also Famous for its asceticism* and monasticism*, a long-standing tradition founded by St. Anthony the Great, the “Father of Monasticism” (251 – 356 AD). St. Pachomius, St. Macarius & St. Shenouda the Archimandrite. This monastic order (*based on principles of poverty, obedience and chastity*) became the foundation from which many of the western orders developed from.

- * **asceticism:** practice of strict self-denial through personal and personal discipline.
- * **monasticism:** monks living in monasteries, a life of solitude.



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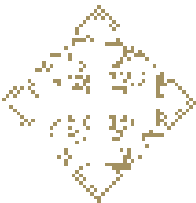
MORE REFERENCES ON THE COPTIC CHURCH

COME & SEE ! an Orthodox Church first hand... speak to a priest... receive literature about the Orthodox Church or check one of many websites. Following is a list:

www.lacopts.org/Churches/index.php
www.ArchangelMichaelSV.org
www.coptic.net/EncyclopediaCoptica
www.mystjohn.org/magazine.htm
www.coptic.org

Our Saviour Jesus Christ

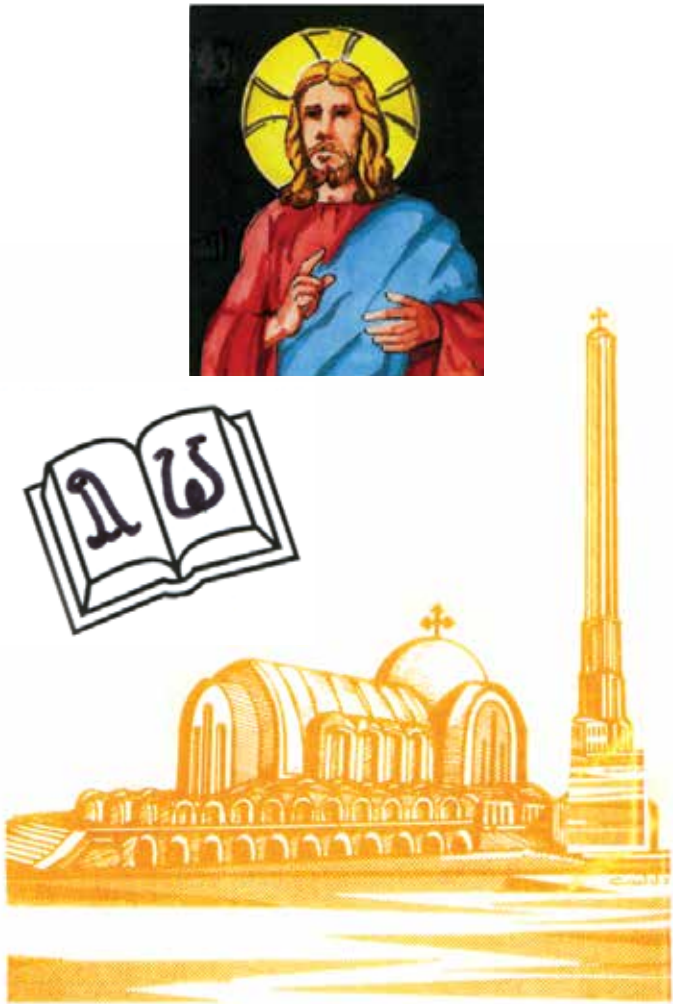




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What is the Coptic Orthodox Church?

- * **What is Coptic?**
- * **Is It Traditional Christianity?**
- * **What Is Its Historic Roots?**



WHAT DOES COPTIC MEAN?

- The term “COPT” means EGYPTIAN. In Greek, Egypt is “*Ai-Gypt-os*”, dropping the prefix and the suffix, we are left with the stem “GYPT”, later distorted to “COPT”.
- Copts are the native Christians of Egypt and the direct descendants of the ancient Egyptians-The Pharaohs, who were converted to Christianity by the preaching of St. Mark, one of the seventy chosen by the Lord Jesus (Luke 10), and the author of the Gospel which carries his name.

HOW LONG HAS THIS CHURCH BEEN IN EXISTENCE?

The COPTIC Orthodox Church was founded by St. Mark, in 54 AD.

It is one of the oldest churches in the world, after the Jerusalem church (34AD), and Antioch church (35AD).



St. Mark the Apostle

DO YOU HAVE TO BE EGYPTIAN, GREEK OR RUSSIAN, TO JOIN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH?

The Kingdom of God is an ‘equal opportunity’! Although the Coptic Orthodox Church was founded in Egypt, today there are hundreds of Orthodox Churches all over the world, with millions of members from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

WHAT IS ORTHODOX?

“*Ortho*”, means straight, unaltered, “*dox*”, means teaching, therefore **ORTHODOX** means unaltered teaching.

- + It means that its founded on the Holy Bible, established on holy traditions (*doctrines based on the early centuries and beliefs, and the creeds of the Ecumenical Councils*).
- + The Orthodox Church is One, Holy, Catholic-Universal, and Apostolic.
- + The Orthodox Christian Church is the first Church in history, founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, and can be traced in unbroken continuity all the way back to Christ and His Twelve Apostles.

WHAT DOES THE COPTIC CHURCH BELIEVE IN ?

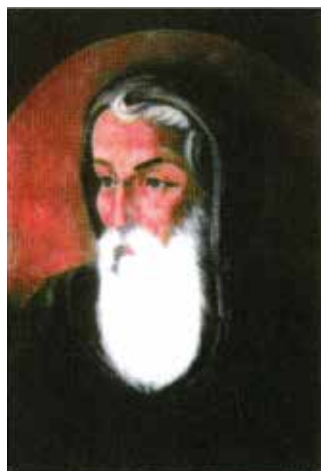
1-The BIBLE; is the inspired Word of God (1Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter5:7) .. to be followed according to the interpretations of the early church fathers.



2-The Christian CREED of Nicea 325AD; One God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – Jesus Christ The Word of God, who took human flesh, to redeem us, died and rose from the dead to save us from sin and death, and He is coming again to judge the world, and His Kingdom will be forever. We also believe in one, holy, universal and apostolic Church, and in baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.

Saint Athanasius who composed the words of The Christian Creed in the council of Nicea.

He was the 20th Pope of Alexandria, Egypt.



3-The Seven SACRAMENTS; the Orthodox Church believes in seven Sacraments, which are divine mysteries through which the Holy Spirit dispense/imparts grace to the believers:

- **BAPTISM** [Matthew 28:19; John 3:5; Mark 16:16] if you are not baptized, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God .. baptism is by immersion in water.



- **CHRISMATION** [1 John 2:20,27] Anointing of oil, with the Holy Myron.



- **REPENTANCE & CONFESSION** [1 John 1:9; James 5:16; John 20:23] If we confess our sins, He will forgive us.



- **EUCCHARIST – Holy Communion** [John 6:51-58; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29] Eat His Body and drink His Blood to abide in Him and He in us.



- **MATRIMONY – Marriage** [Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:31-33] Created them male & female .. Holy Spirit descend on both, they are no more two, but one .. for God joined them.



- **UNCTION of the SICK** [Mark 6:13; James 5:14,15] Apostles anointed with oil many that were sick.



- **PRIESTHOOD** [John 20:23; Romans 15:16; 2 Timothy 1:6] A priest is appointed by the Pope or the Bishop to conduct divine liturgies, take confessions, Bible study, give counseling, etc.



DOES THE COPTIC CHURCH CELEBRATE A DIVINE LITURGY?

- + The main worship service in the Coptic Orthodox Church is the Divine Liturgy, celebrating the Holy Eucharist.
- + ‘Leit=people; erg=work; so, Liturgy means public work/praying/gathering.
- + The Divine Liturgy is basically the story of humanity’s redemption and salvation.



- + It is told regularly to remind believers of Christ’s work to reconcile the world to God, so that all may be led to repentance as they partake of His Body and Blood.
- + The Coptic Church has three -3- main liturgies; the most common used one is the liturgy of St. Basil the Great, from the fourth century. The second one is that of St. Mark the Apostle, which was documented by Pope Cyril I (24th Patriarch of Alexandria-Egypt, 1st & 4th century). The third liturgy is that of St. Gregory the Theologian, also in the fourth century.
- + The divine liturgy is always celebrated on Sunday –the Lord’s Day-, but may also be prayed on any day of the week.
- + The church also holds Bible Study meetings, in English and Arabic, to teach its believers the Word of God, and urge them to apply it in their daily life.
- + There are also youth meetings, pre-marital counseling, married couples meetings, and Sunday School classes for all to learn and grow in Christ’s love.

PROPHECIES REGARDING THE COPTIC CHURCH IN THE HOLY BIBLE

“Behold, the Lord rides upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt”(Isaiah 19:1).. this was fulfilled when the Holy Family fled into Egypt from Herod’s anger to kill the Child.

“In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border” (Isaiah 19:19).. this was fulfilled when a church was established exactly in the midst of the land of Egypt in a place called El-Moharaq Monastery, in Upper Egypt.