



# An Overview of the Coptic Church

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*St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church of Calgary*



June 20, 2007

# Outline:

- 1. The Term Copt**
- 2. History of the Coptic Church**
- 3. Characteristics of the Coptic Church**
- 4. Distinctions Between the Coptic Church and the Catholic or the Protestant Churches**
- 5. Contribution of the Coptic Church to Ecumenical Christianity**
- 6. Hierarchy of Coptic Church**
- 7. Socio-Economic Account of the Coptic Church**
- 8. Closing Remarks**

# The Term Copt

*Pharaonic Name:*

Hak-ka-Ptah

*which means the house of god Ptah*



*Greek Name:*

Agyptos



gypt

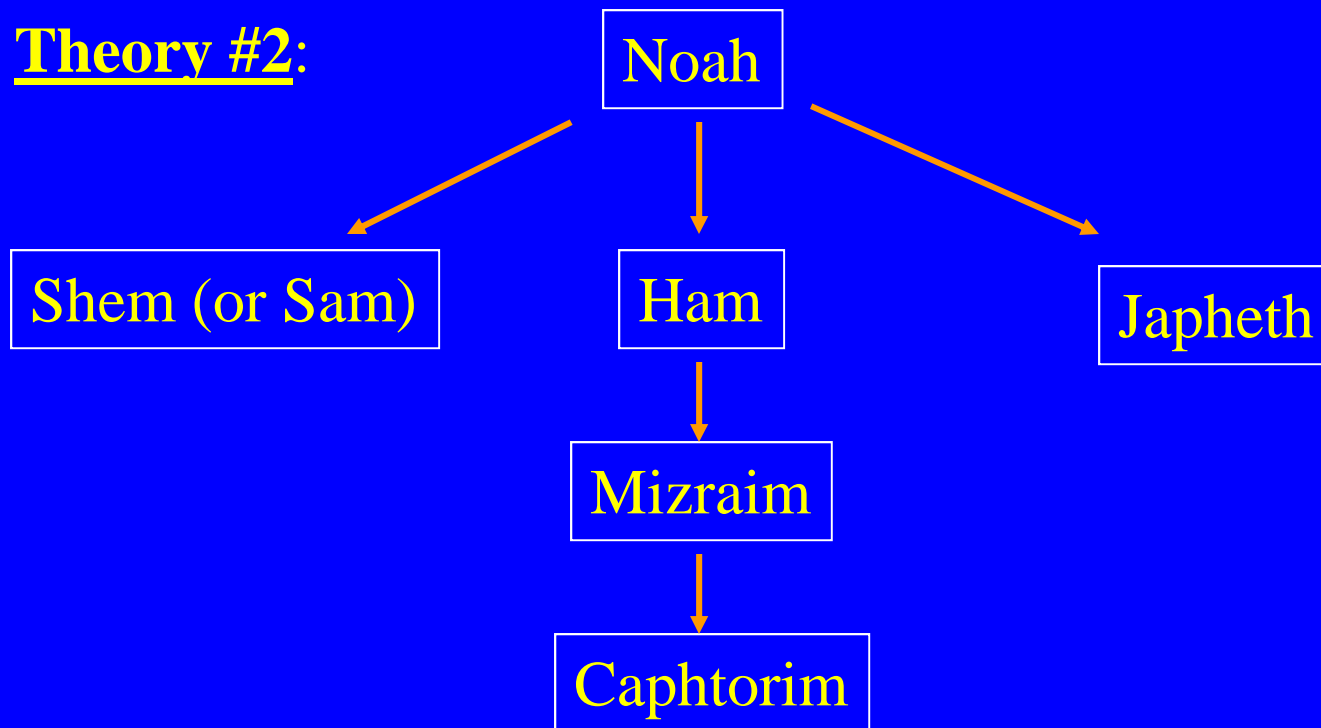
Egypt

gibt or qibt or **copt**

# Who Are the Copts?

Theory #1: Direct descendants of the Pharaohs.

Theory #2:



*Who dwelled in **Quft** (near Memphis in Nile Valley [Gen 10])*

# History of the Coptic Church

1. The Coptic Church is a direct establishment as an Apostolic church, whose founder is St. Mark, one of the 70 Apostles of Christ.
2. St. Mark came to Alexandria in 48 AD, and was martyred in 68 AD.
3. During this time he established the church of Alexandria, ordained the first Bishop (Anianus), who later became the second Patriarch of the Coptic church.
4. Pope Shenouda III, the 117<sup>th</sup> Patriarch succeeding St. Mark, is the present Pope of the Coptic Church.



# History of the Coptic Church

Egyptians before St. Mark were religious-minded people, who helped in spreading out Christianity quickly across the land of Egypt.



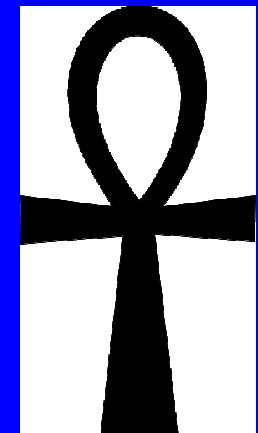
Osiris (represents god of Justice, combined divinity and humanity nature, believed to have been resurrected)



Isis  
(example of St. Mary)



Isis, Osiris and Horus  
(symbol of trinity)



Ankh: Symbol of life



Horus battle with Seth  
(Angels vs. Satan)



Embalming and Building Pyramids in belief of eternal life



# History of the Coptic Church

## ONE CHURCH

325 Nicaea  
381 Constantinople  
431 Ephesus



# History of the Coptic Church

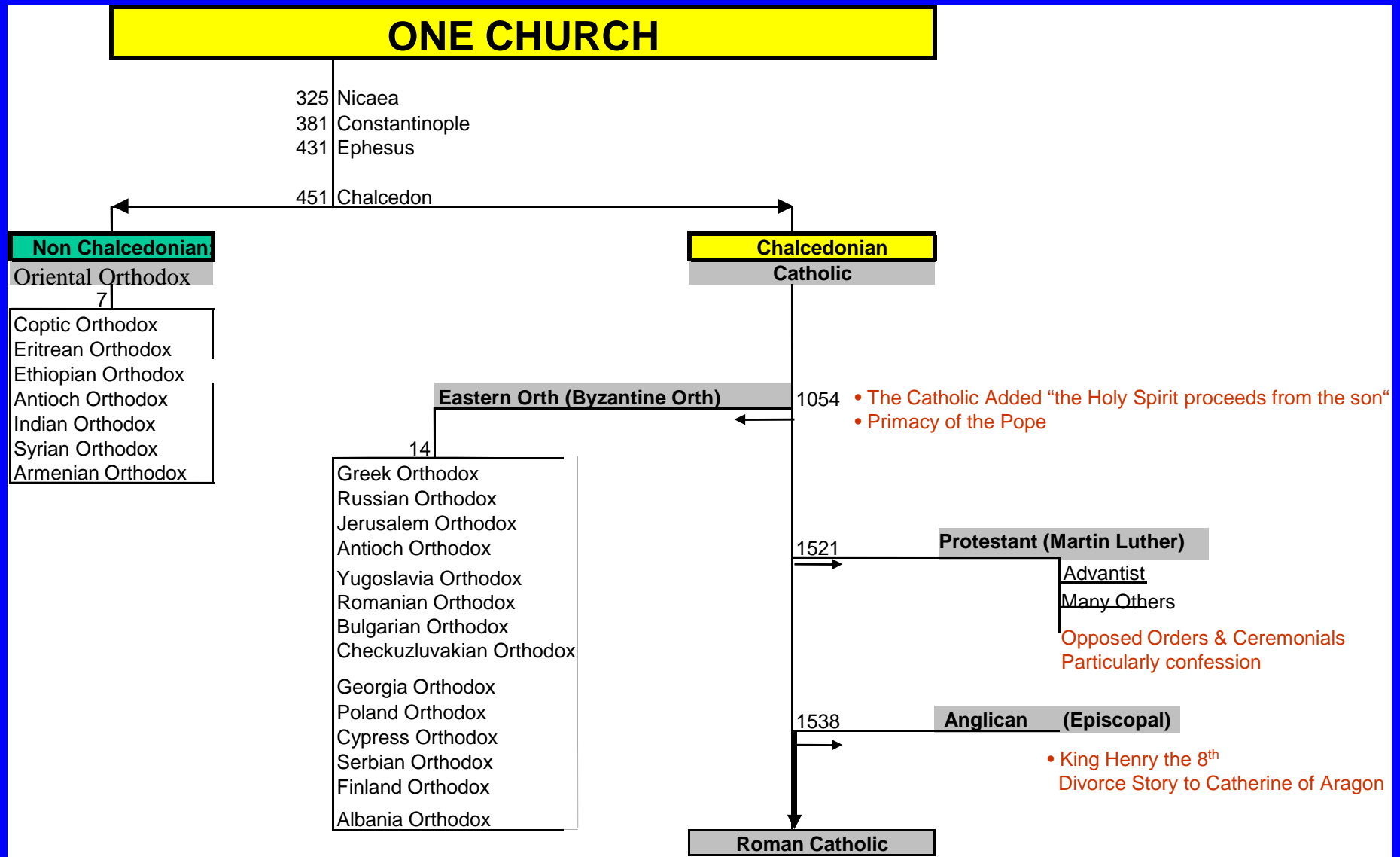
**Council of Nicaea**, (325 AD); repudiated Arianism, which taught that Jesus was not one with the Father.

**Council of Constantinople**, (381 AD); repudiated the heresy of Macedonius which denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

**Council of Ephesus**, (431 AD); repudiated Nestorianism, which rejected that Virgin Mary is the Theotokos (mother of god).



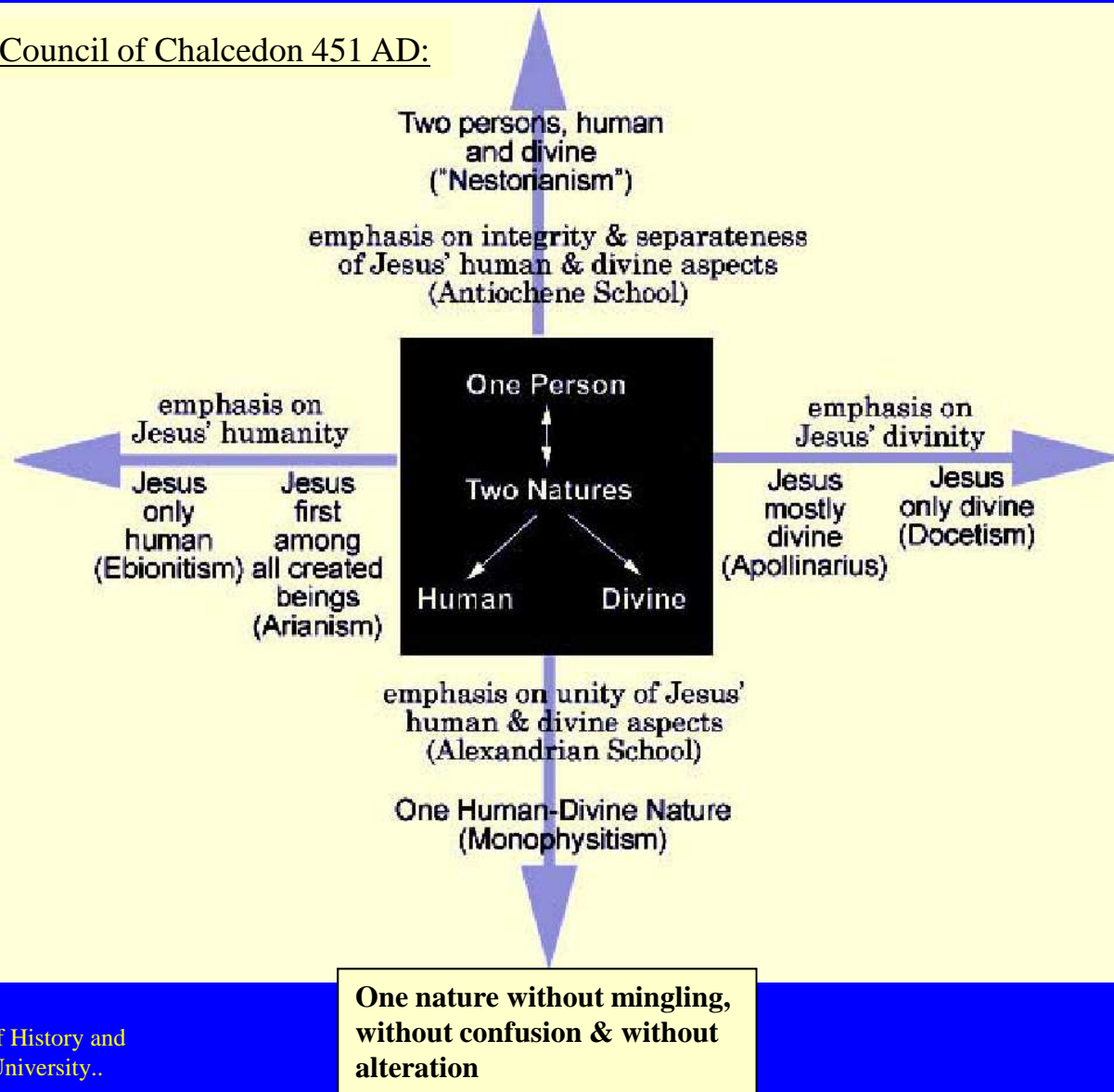
# History of the Coptic Church



Courtesy of Mr. Ashraf Gabour of Boston, MA.

# History of the Coptic Church

Council of Chalcedon 451 AD:



Ref: **Philip Jenkins**, Professor of History and Religious Studies at Penn State University..

# History of the Coptic Church

## Note on Monophysite:

1. This term resulted in part from the Oriental Orthodox churches' refusal to accept the Christological dogmas promulgated by the Council of Chalcedon, which held that Jesus Christ has two natures — one divine and one human.
2. They considered this as tantamount to accepting Nestorianism (which teaches that the human and divine essences of Christ are separate and that there are two persons, the man Jesus Christ and the divine Logos).
3. In response, they advocated a formula that stressed the two natures, although these were inseparable and only act as one hypostasis.

# History of the Coptic Church

## Note on Monophysite:

4. The Oriental Orthodox churches were therefore falsely referred to as "Monophysite" churches, although they reject this label, which is associated with Eutychian Monophysitism (that teaches that Christ has only one nature (divine)).
5. The Oriental Orthodox prefer the term non-Chalcedonian or *Miaphysite* churches.
6. In the 20th century, a number of dialogues have occurred between the Oriental Orthodox and the Chalcedonian Orthodox which suggest that both communions now share a common Christology with differing terminology. As yet, full communion has not been restored.

# History of the Coptic Church

## Quick Rundown of Historic Periods in Egypt:

1. Pharaonic Era dates back to 3000 years B.C.
2. The Greek (Alexander the Great) conquered Egypt in 323 B.C., and a new capital of Egypt was named after him as “Alexandria”.
3. After Alexander's death, Egypt was ruled by his general, Ptolemy who founded the Ptolemaic Dynasty that reigned from 323 B.C. to 30 B.C.
4. Rome then ended the Ptolemaic rule and the reign of Cleopatra in 30 B.C.
5. The Ptolemies established a large library in Alexandria, which was considered the greatest in the world at that time.
6. In 640 A.D., the Arabs (Amr Ibn Al-As) conquered Egypt and besieged the Fortress of Babylon until the surrender of the Byzantine forces in 641 A.D.



# History of the Coptic Church

## Quick Rundown of Historic Periods in Egypt:

### 7. Islamic Ruling:

- Rule of the Ummayyads about 655 A.D.
- Rule of the Abbassys about 750 A.D.
- Rule of the Tullunids 870 A.D. to 910 A.D.
- Rule of the Ikhshids 935 A.D. to 970 A.D.
- Rule of the Fatimids 970 A.D. to 1170 A.D.
- Rule of the Ayubids 1170 A.D. to 1250 A.D.
- Rule of the Mamluks 1250 A.D. to 1510 A.D.
- Rule of the Ottomans 1510 A.D. to 1806 A.D.

# History of the Coptic Church



## Quick Rundown of Historic Periods in Egypt:

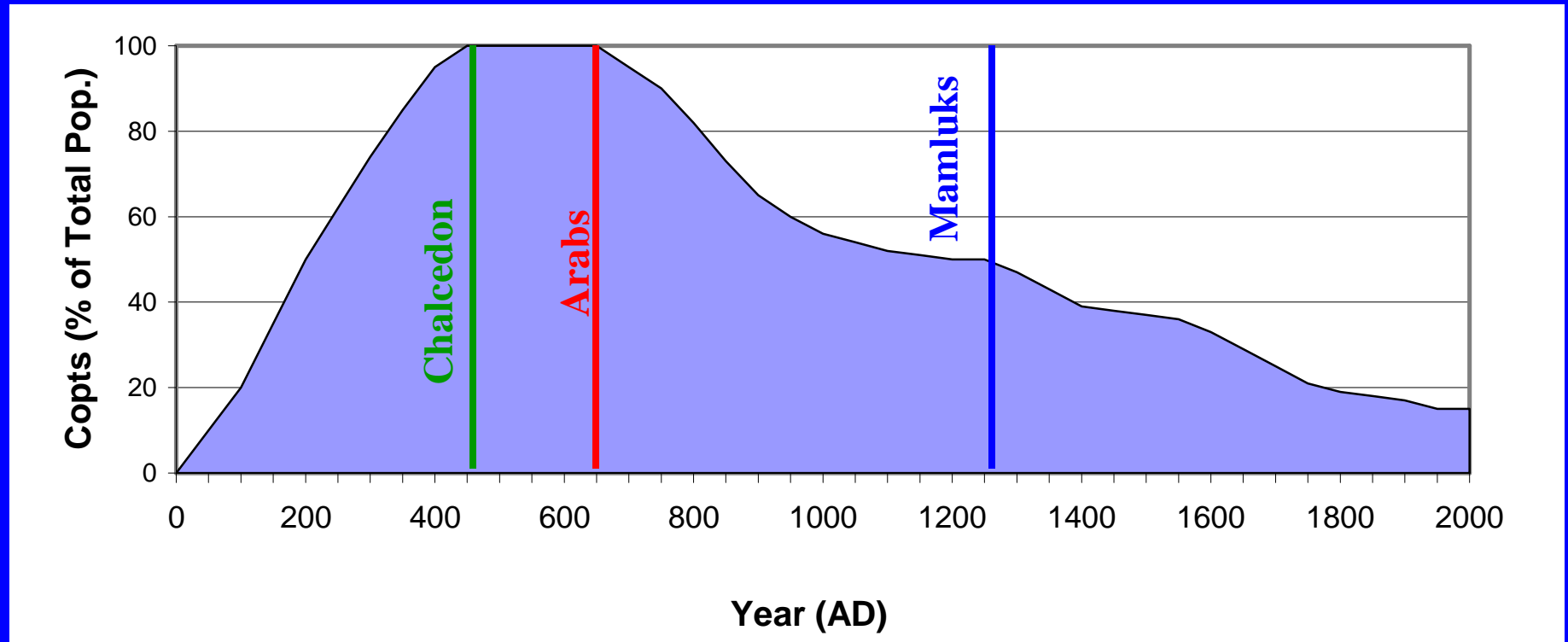
### 8. Modern Egypt:

- Muhammad Ali (Albanian) is truly considered the founder of Modern Egypt, and his family ruled Egypt from 1806 A.D.
- In 1882 Egypt was under the protection of the British Empire (a protectorate), and in March 1922 Sultan Fouad 1<sup>st</sup> declared Egypt a Kingdom, a sovereign state and became the first king of Egypt.
- Egypt became Republic in 1952 to present: Gamal Abdel Nasser (1952-1970), Anwar Sadat (1970-1981), and Hosny Mubarak (1981-present).





# History of the Coptic Church



# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- **Coptic Language/Alphabets**
- **Church Orders and Sacraments**
- **Liturgies**
- **Rituals and Ceremonials**
- **Coptic Calendar**
- **Coptic Music**
- **Coptic Art**
- **Coptic Museum**

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Language/Alphabets

Pictographic:

1. Hieroglyphic (sacred)
2. Hieratic (strictly for liturgies – priests & scribes)
3. Demotic (spoken)

Alphabetic: Greek (in 150 BC) transliterated the demotic using their 24 Greek alphabets plus 8 other letters derived from demotic sound

# 24 Greek Alphabets

Capital	Low-case	Greek Name	English
A	$\alpha$	Alpha	a
B	$\beta$	Beta	b
Γ	$\gamma$	Gamma	g
Δ	$\delta$	Delta	d
E	$\epsilon$	Epsilon	e
Z	$\zeta$	Zeta	z
H	$\eta$	Eta	h
Θ	$\theta$	Theta	th
I	$\iota$	Iota	i
K	$\kappa$	Kappa	k
Λ	$\lambda$	Lambda	l
M	$\mu$	Mu	m
N	$\nu$	Nu	n
Ξ	$\xi$	Xi	x
O	$\omicron$	Omicron	o
Π	$\pi$	Pi	p
P	$\rho$	Rho	r
Σ	$\sigma$	Sigma	s
T	$\tau$	Tau	t
Υ	$\upsilon$	Upsilon	u
Φ	$\phi$	Phi	ph
X	$\chi$	Chi	ch
Ψ	$\psi$	Psi	ps
Ω	$\omega$	Omega	o

# Coptic Alphabet (Capital)

Ⲁ	Ⲃ	Ⲅ	Ⲇ	Ⲉ	Ⲋ	Ⲍ	Ⲏ
Ⲑ	Ⲓ	Ⲕ	Ⲗ	Ⲙ	Ⲛ	Ⲝ	Ⲟ
Ⲡ	Ⲣ	Ⲥ	ⲧ	ⲩ	ⲭ	ⲯ	ⲱ
ⲳ	ⲵ	ⲷ	ⲹ	ⲻ	ⲽ	ⲿ	ⲻ

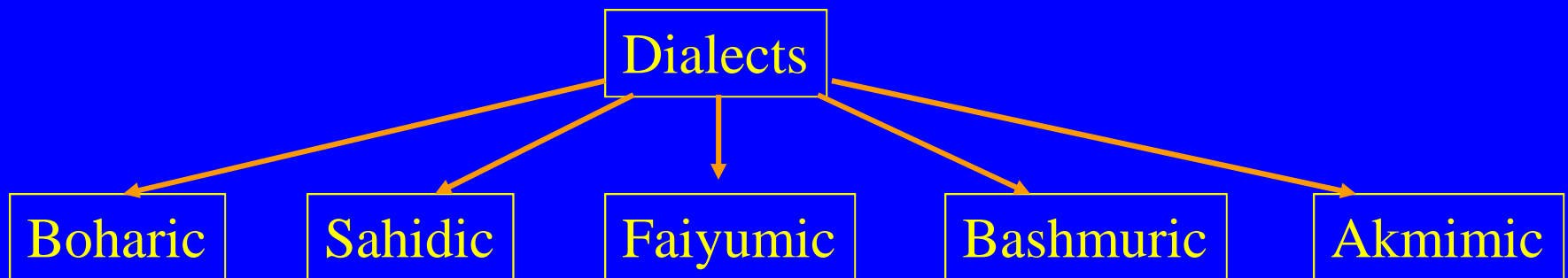
# Coptic Alphabet (lower case)

<u>ⲁ</u>	<u>Ⲃ</u>	<u>Ⲅ</u>	<u>Ⲍ</u>	<u>Ⲏ</u>	<u>Ⲑ</u>	<u>Ⲓ</u>	<u>Ⲕ</u>
<u>Ⲇ</u>	<u>ⲇ</u>	<u>Ⲉ</u>	<u>ⲉ</u>	<u>Ⲋ</u>	<u>ⲋ</u>	<u>Ⲍ</u>	<u>ⲍ</u>
<u>ⲏ</u>	<u>Ⲑ</u>	<u>ⲑ</u>	<u>Ⲓ</u>	<u>ⲓ</u>	<u>Ⲕ</u>	<u>ⲕ</u>	<u>Ⲍ</u>
<u>ⲗ</u>	<u>Ⲙ</u>	<u>ⲙ</u>	<u>Ⲏ</u>	<u>ⲏ</u>	<u>Ⲑ</u>	<u>ⲑ</u>	<u>Ⲓ</u>

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Language/Alphabets

- ❑ 2<sup>nd</sup> Century: All religious documents written in Coptic.
- ❑ 706 AD: Arabic language became the official language.
- ❑ 17<sup>th</sup> Century: Pure Coptic language was pushed southward.
- ❑ Now: Coptic language is mostly practiced in Church Liturgies.





# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Church Orders and Sacraments

- Seven Sacraments:
1. Baptism (infants & grownups)
  2. Confirmation (Myroon)
  3. Penance and Confession
  4. Holy Communion
  5. Unction of the sick
  6. Holy Matrimony
  7. Priesthood

*Each sacrament has a special and organized prayer in a book called the  
“Services Prayers”*

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Liturgies

- Three Liturgies:
1. St. Basil Liturgy (Bishop of Caesarea); most commonly used
  2. St. Gregory Liturgy (Bishop of Constantinople)
  3. St. Cyril I (24<sup>th</sup> Patriarch of the Coptic Church)

*Characteristics:*

- a) *The same prayer and same readings across all dioceses*
- b) *Biblical readings follow a yearly calendar – written in a reading book called the “Katamaros”.*

Prayers of the Hours: Seven Organized prayers during the day.

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Rituals and Ceremonials

Major Feasts: 1. The Annunciation

2. The Nativity of Christ

3. The Epiphany or the Baptism of Christ

4. Palm Sunday

5. Easter

6. The Ascension

7. Pentecost

*Two Major fastings precede: the Nativity feast (Advent: 43 days), and  
the Easter (Lent: 55 days)*

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

## Why the Coptic Church celebrates Christmas on January 7<sup>th</sup>:

1. The first Church did not celebrate the birth of Christ, and the actual date of his birth was unknown.
2. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, it was agreed by the Church all over the world to celebrate the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ on 25 December (29 Kiahk in the Coptic calendar), most probably to take the place of a pagan feast that even Christians continued to celebrate until then.
3. At that time, and until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the civil calendar in use the world was the Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar in the year 46 B.C. This calendar considered the year to be 365.25 days and thus had a leap year every four years, just like the Coptic calendar. Therefore, until the sixteenth century, 25 December coincided with 29 Kiahk, as the date of the celebration of the Lord's nativity.

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

## Why the Coptic Church celebrates Christmas on January 7<sup>th</sup>:

4. In 1582 A.D., Pope Gregory XIII of Rome noticed that the vernal equinox (the point at which the sun crosses the equator, making day and night of equal length, starting the spring), used to fall on 21 March (25 Baramhat) around the time of the council of Nicea (A.D. 325) which set the times for the ecclesiastical feasts. The vernal equinox at his time however fell on 11 March.
5. After consultation with scientists, he learned that the solar year, which is the time the earth takes to revolve around the sun from equinox to equinox, was slightly shorter than the Julian year. It was **365.2422** solar days (approximately 11 minutes and 14 seconds shorter). This makes a difference of a full day every 128.2 years, hence the difference of 10 days in the beginning of spring between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries ( $1300 \text{ years} / 128.2 = 10 \text{ days}$ )

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

## Why the Coptic Church celebrates Christmas on January 7<sup>th</sup>:

6. Pope Gregory XIII decreed the following:
  - a) In A.D. 1582, October 5<sup>th</sup> will be called October 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - b) The Julian calendar should be shortened by 3 days every 400 years: this can be done by making the centenary year a normal 365-day year, not a leap year, except if its number is divisible by 400.
  - c) Thus the year 1600 remained a leap year as usual, while 1700, 1800 and 1900 had only 365 days each and the year 2000 was a leap year of 366 days.
  - d) This new calendar came to be known as the **Gregorian calendar**, and is the common civil calendar in use in our world today.

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

## Why the Coptic Church celebrates Christmas on January 7<sup>th</sup>:

7. Following these decrees, as the Church of Rome celebrated Christmas 25 December 1582 A.D., the Eastern Churches still fasted as they showed 15 December or 19 Kiahk on their Julian and Coptic calendars. As the Church of the East celebrated the feast of Nativity, it was already 4 January 1583 A.D. on Pope Gregory's new calendar.
8. That gap widened by 3 more days over the next 4 centuries.
9. This is why the Churches who still celebrate on 25 December according to the ancient Julian calendar find themselves, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, celebrating the Nativity on 7 January of the civil Gregorian new calendar.
10. Will this become 8 January after the year 2100? – remained to be seen by our grandchildren !



# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- **Rituals and Ceremonials**

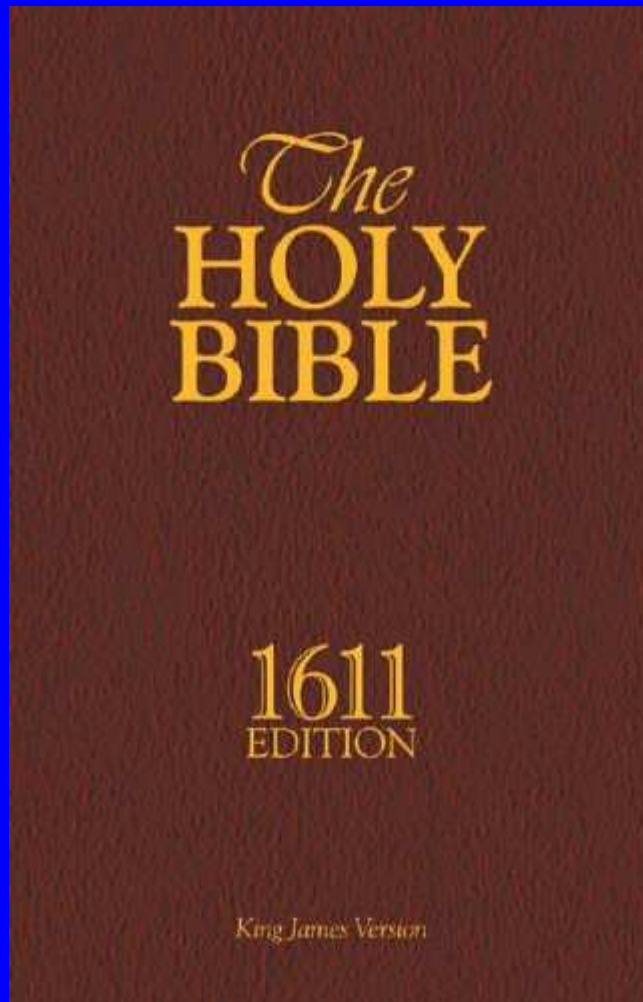
- Minor Feasts:**
- 1. The Circumcision of our Lord**
  - 2. The Entrance of our Lord into the Temple**
  - 3. The Escape of the Holy family to Egypt**
  - 4. The First Miracle of our Lord Jesus at Cana**
  - 5. The Transfiguration of Christ**
  - 6. Maundy Thursday**
  - 7. Thomas's Sunday**

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Rituals and Ceremonials

- Feasts of the Saints:
1. The Feasts of St. Mary
  2. The Apostles' Feast
  3. The Nayrouz Feast
  4. The Two Feasts of the Cross

# Bible



# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- **Coptic Calendar:**

1. The Coptic calendar is based on the ancient Egyptian bright star named 'Sirius'.
2. The heliacal rising of this star every year came at the time of flooding and marked the Egyptian New Year.
3. This was the start of the world's first calendar, invented over 5000 years ago.



# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Calendar:

1. Based still on the Sirius calendar, but *re-initialized* as year 1 to coincide with year 284 AD, the year Diocletian became Roman Emperor, whose reign was marked by tortures and mass executions of Christians, especially in Egypt. Hence, the Coptic year is identified by the abbreviation A.M. (for Anno Martyrum or "Year of the Martyrs").
2. This calendar is still in use all over Egypt by farmers to keep track of the various agricultural seasons and climatic changes.
3. The Coptic calendar has 13 months, (12 x 30 days each) and an intercalary month at the end with 5 or 6 days, depending on whether the year is a leap or not.
4. Day 1 of the Coptic year coincides with September 11 every year.

- Coptic Calendar:

No.	Seasonal Names	Middle Kingdom	New Kingdom	Greek	Coptic	Egyptian Arabic
I	First of <i>Akhet</i>	Tekh	Dhwt	Thoth	Thout	Tout
II	Second of <i>Akhet</i>	Menhet	Pa-n-ip.t	Phaophi	Paopi	Baba
III	Third of <i>Akhet</i>	Hwt-hwr	Hwt-hwr	Athyr	Hathor	Hatour
IV	Fourth of <i>Akhet</i>	Ka-hr-ka	Ka-hr-ka	Choiak	Koiak	Kiahk
V	First of <i>Proyet</i>	Sf-bdt	Ta-'b	Tybi	Tobi	Touba
VI	Second of <i>Proyet</i>	Rekh wer	Mhyr	Mechir	Meshir	Amshir
VII	Third of <i>Proyet</i>	Rekh neds	Pa-n-amn-htp.w	Phamenoth	Paremhat	Baramhat
VIII	Fourth of <i>Proyet</i>	Renwet	Pa-n-rnn.t	Pharmouthi	Paremoude	Baramouda
IX	First of <i>Shomu</i>	Hnsw	Pa-n-hns.w	Pachon	Pashons	Bashans
X	Second of <i>Shomu</i>	Hnt-htj	Pa-n-in.t	Payni	Paoni	Ba'ouna
XI	Third of <i>Shomu</i>	Ipt-hmt	Ipip	Epiphi	Epip	Abib
XII	Fourth of <i>Shomu</i>	Wep-renpet	Msw-r'	Mesore	Mesori	Mesra

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Music:

1. Mainly chanting, i.e. no musical instrument is permitted, except one cymbal, and one triangle.
2. Either vocal (the priest or deacon) or choral (the whole church in reply).
3. Mainly derived from ancient Egyptian (like the hymn of Eboroo), or Byzantine (like Ekhrestos Anistee).

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Arts:

**Derived from: Ancient Egyptians, Hellenistic, Byzantine and Nubian.**

**Icons**

**Wood**

**Stone**

**Manuscripts**

**Metals**

**Textiles**

**Ivory & Bone**

**Ostraca**

**Fresco**

**Pottery & Glaze**

**Glass**

**Leather & Reeds**



# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Museum:

- Icons
- Wood
- Stone
- Manuscripts
- Metals
- Textiles
- Ivory & Bone
- Ostraca
- Fresco
- Pottery & Glaze
- Glass
- Leather & Reeds



Icons



Wood



Stone



Manuscripts



Metals



Textiles



Ivory & Bone



Ostraca



Fresco



Pottery & Glaze



Glass



Leather&Reeds

# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- **Coptic Icons:**

The art of making Coptic Icons is not just painting. There are several points that must be followed:

1. **Eyes:** Must be large and wide, to symbolize the spiritual eyes that look beyond the material world.
2. **Ears:** Must be large, to hear God's word.
3. **Mouth:** Usually small, because it is a source of harmful words.
4. **Nose:** Usually small, because it is seen as a sensual facial feature.
5. **Head:** Is large to mean that you are devoted to prayer.
6. **They reflect and reinforce religious beliefs.**

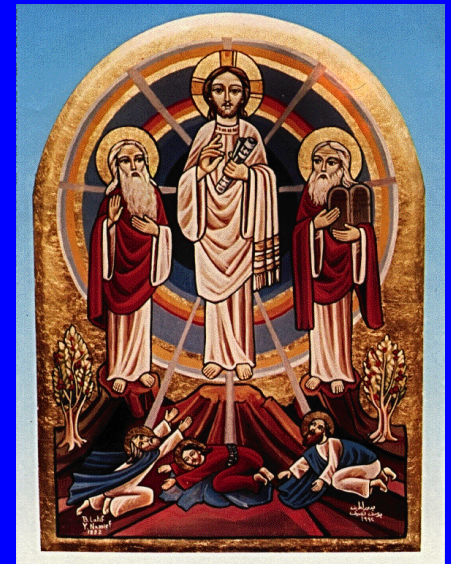
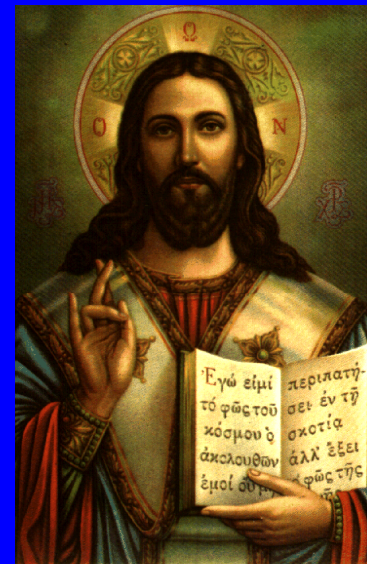
# Characteristics of the Coptic Church

- Coptic Icons:



## Coptic (non-Chalcedonian):

Monophysite sign (see note earlier)\*



## (Chalcedonian):

Diophysite sign

# Distinction Between the Coptic and the Catholic Churches

1. Salvation of nonbelievers
2. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son
3. Purgatory
4. Pardons (Indulgence) Certificates
5. Saint Mary Immaculate Conception
6. Infallibility of the Pope
7. The Pope is the Head of all churches
8. St. Peter is the founder of the Church and has a higher authority
9. Priests are celibates
10. No fasting before communion

# Distinction Between the Coptic and the Protestant Churches

1. No structured church rituals
2. No seven sacraments
3. Absolute Grace Concerning Salvation
4. No confession
5. No Monasticism
6. No approval of praying on the dead
7. No Intercession
8. Perpetual virginity of Saint Mary
9. Variety and Freedom of Dogma
10. The Gift of the Holy Spirit

# Contribution of the Coptic Church To Ecumenical Christianity

- **Monasticism**
- **Three Ecumenical Councils**
- **The Refuge of the Holy Family in Egypt.**

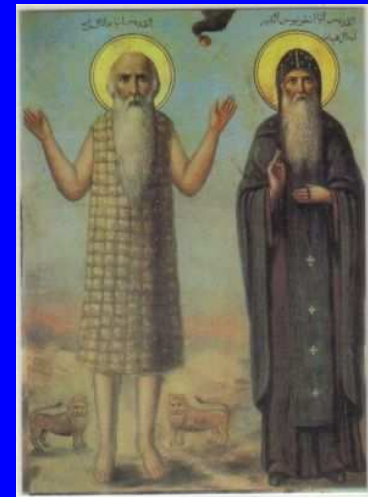
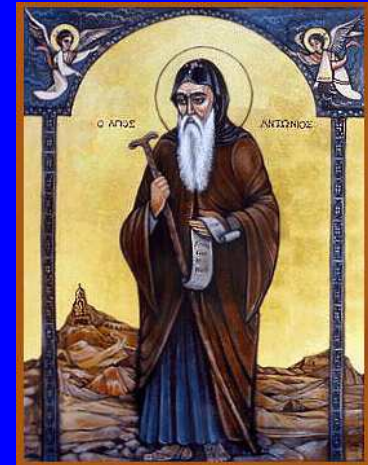


# Contribution of the Coptic Church To Ecumenical Christianity

- **Monasticism**

The Coptic Church takes pride in the introduction and establishment of monasticism, which is considered the most profound spiritual revival ever happened in all the history of Christianity.

St. Antony (251-356 AD ) is the founder of Monasticism in early Christianity, while St. Paula (229-342 AD) is considered to be the first hermit & anchorite.



## Coptic Monasticism has undergone three phases:

**Hermitic**: The anchorites or hermits lived in complete isolation. Each hermit organized his own prayer, clothing, food and work. Some hermits entered into the inner deserts and settled there for tens of years, not seeing any human beings.

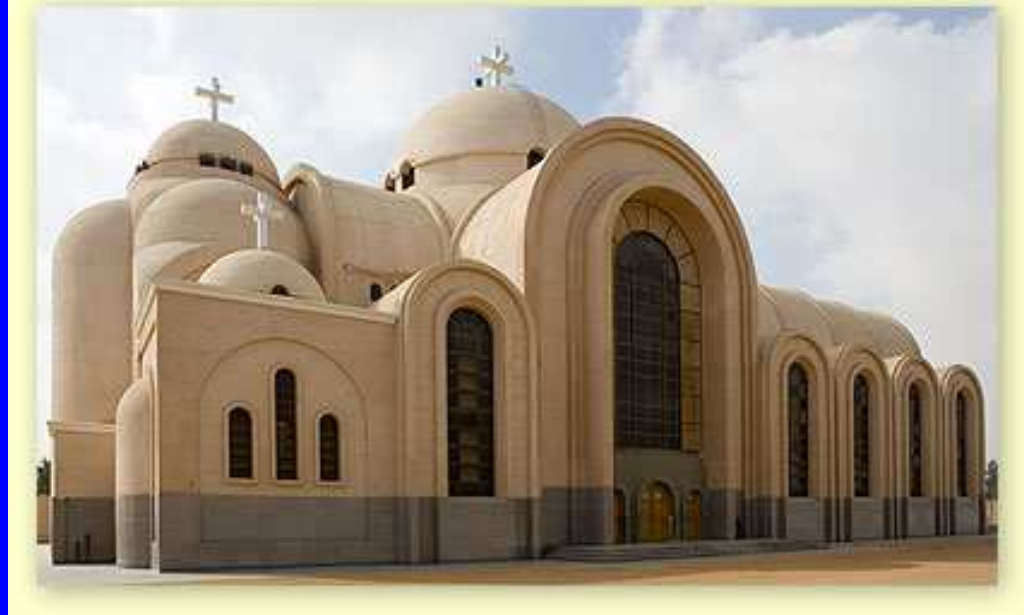
**Communal or Semi-Hermitic**: It is the half-way between Hermitic and Cenobitic systems. Established by St. Antony himself. The monks lived in separate caves or cells and assembled occasionally for divine service or spiritual conferences.

**Cenobitic (Sharing)**: Founded by St. Pachomius in Upper Egypt. The monks lived in a community inside the walls of the monastery, in association with each other, and governed by an abbot and by set of rules.





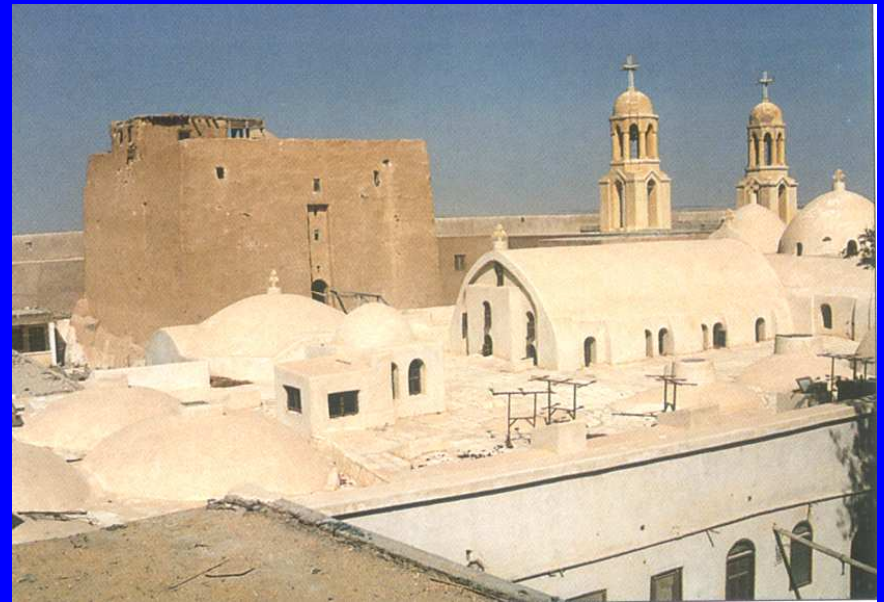
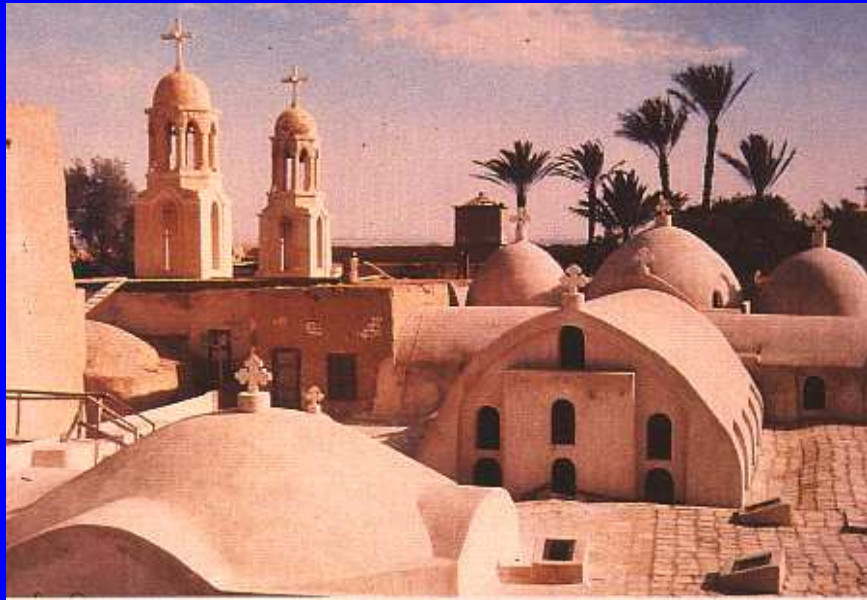
## **St. Anthony Monastery**



## St. Bishoy Monastery

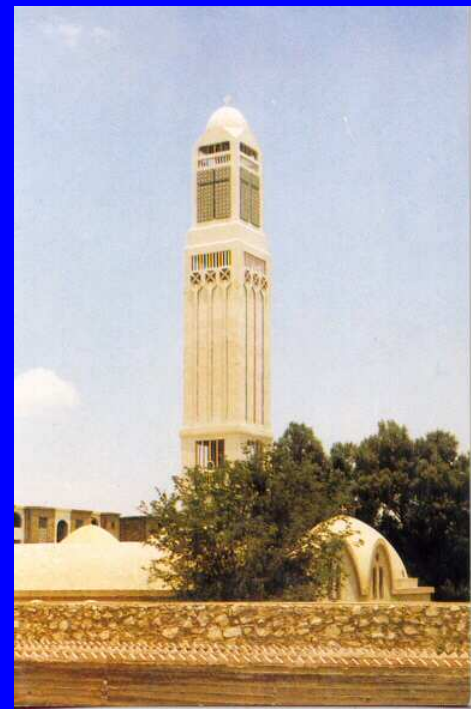


## **The Syrian Monastery**



## El Paramos Monastery





## Abu Makar Monastery



## **St. Mina Monastery at Mariot**



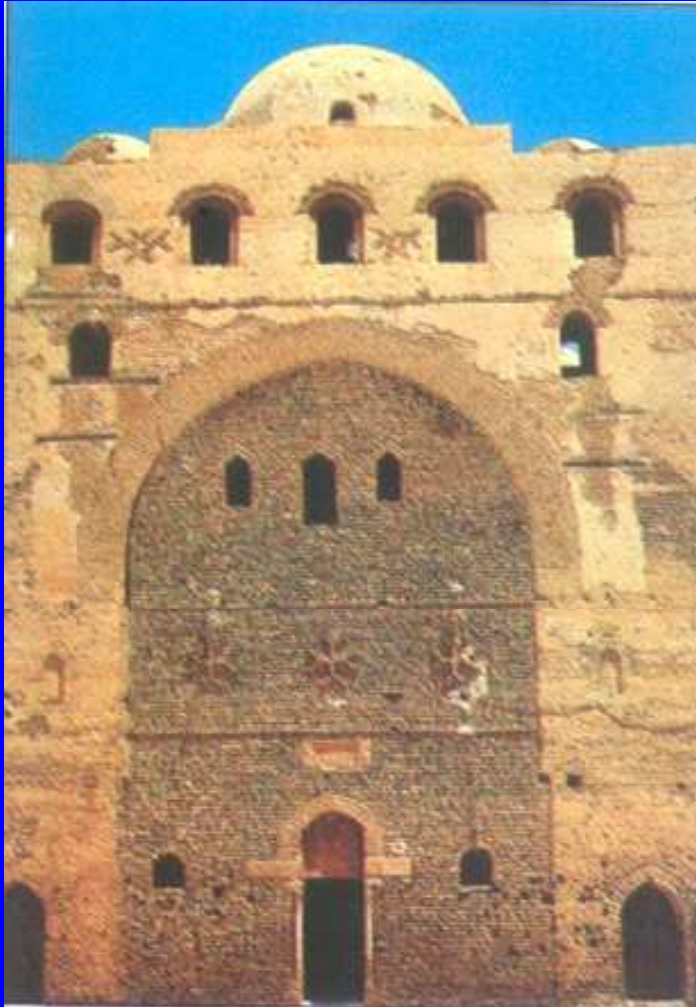
## **Monastery of Anba Barsoom El Eryan – Masara (Helwan)**





## **El Azab Monastery - Fayoom**

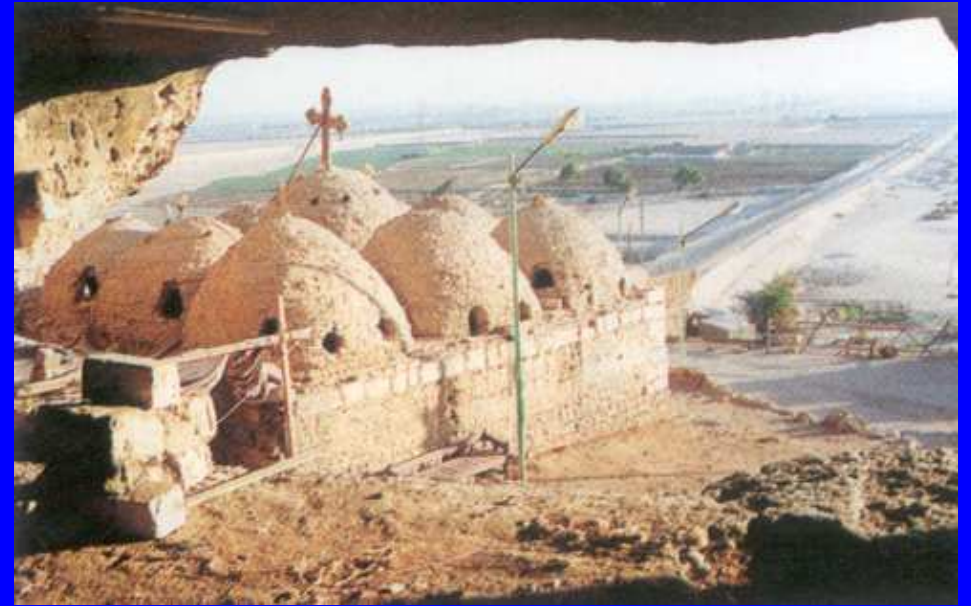




## White Monastery-Sohag

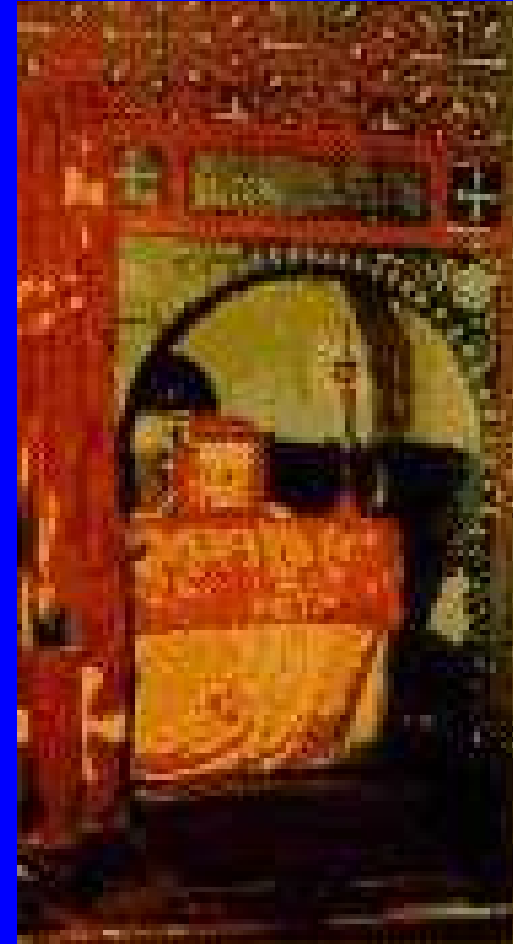


## **St. Samuel Monastery - Maghagha**



## El Ganadla Monastery – Abi Teeg





## El Moharaq Monastery - Assiut

# Contribution of the Coptic Church To Ecumenical Christianity

- **Three Ecumenical Councils**

Council of Nicaea, (325 AD); repudiated Arianism, adopted the Nicene Creed. Chaired by St. Athanasius, the 20<sup>th</sup> Patriarch of Alexandria.

Council of Constantinople, (381 AD); repudiated the heresy of Macedonius and revised the Nicene Creed into present form used in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches. Chaired by Pope Timothy, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Patriarch of Alexandria.

Council of Ephesus, (431 AD); repudiated Nestorianism, and proclaimed the Virgin Mary as the Theotokos ("Mother of God"). Chaired by St. Cyril the Great, the 24<sup>th</sup> Patriarch of Alexandria.







## St. Athanasius and Emperor Constantine at Nicaea

# Contribution of the Coptic Church To Ecumenical Christianity

- **The Refuge of the Holy Family in Egypt**





# The Refuge of the Holy Family in Egypt



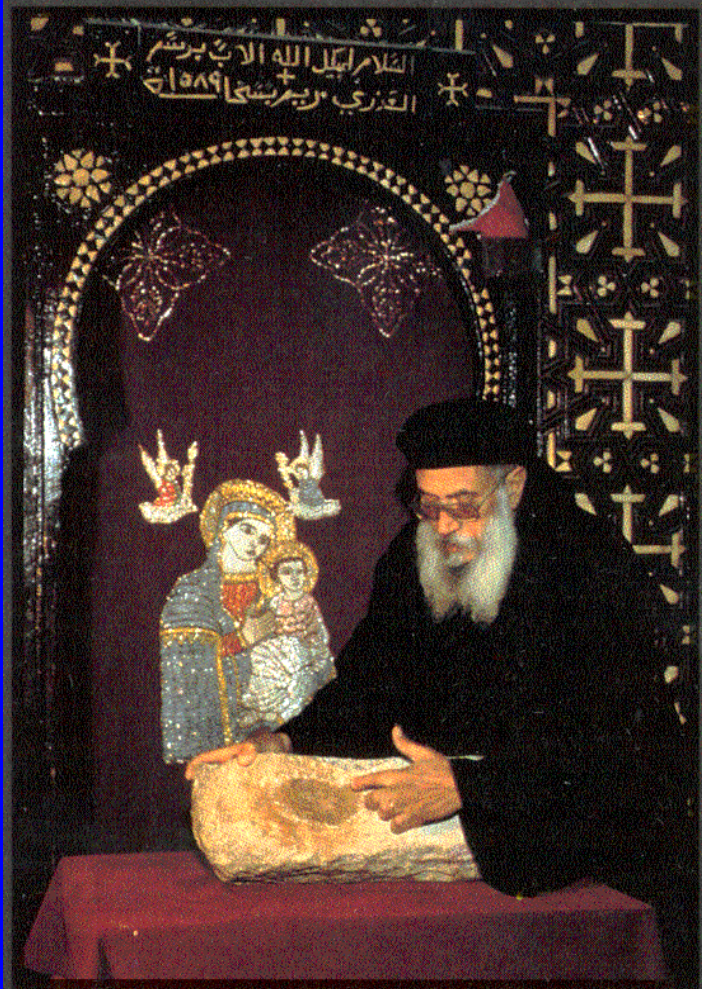


## Mostorod



## Belbais





## Sakha



## **Samanoud**



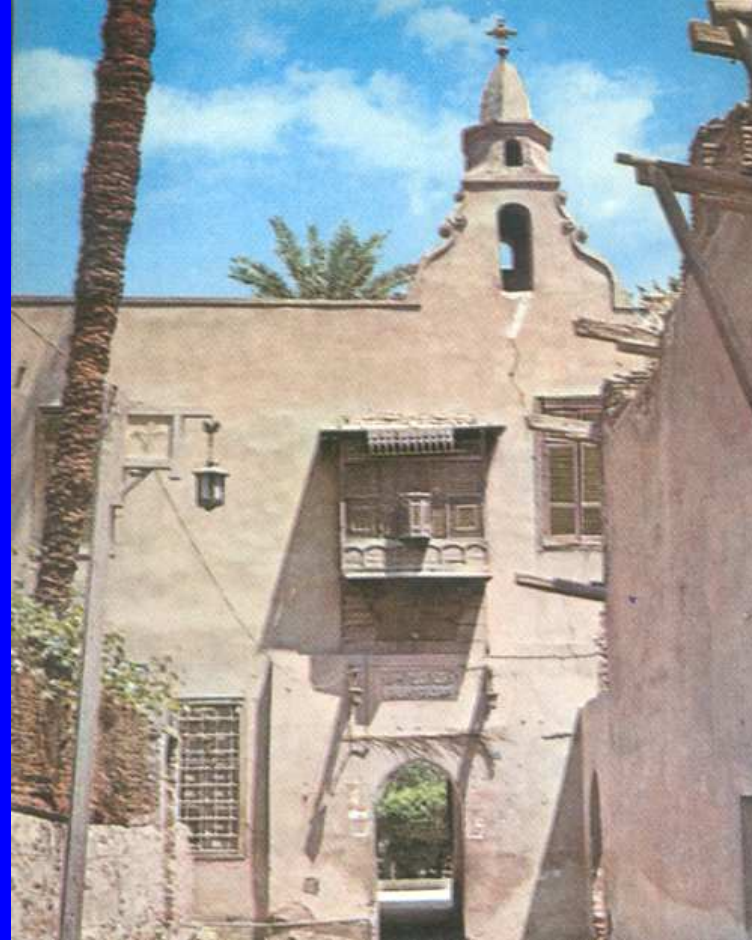
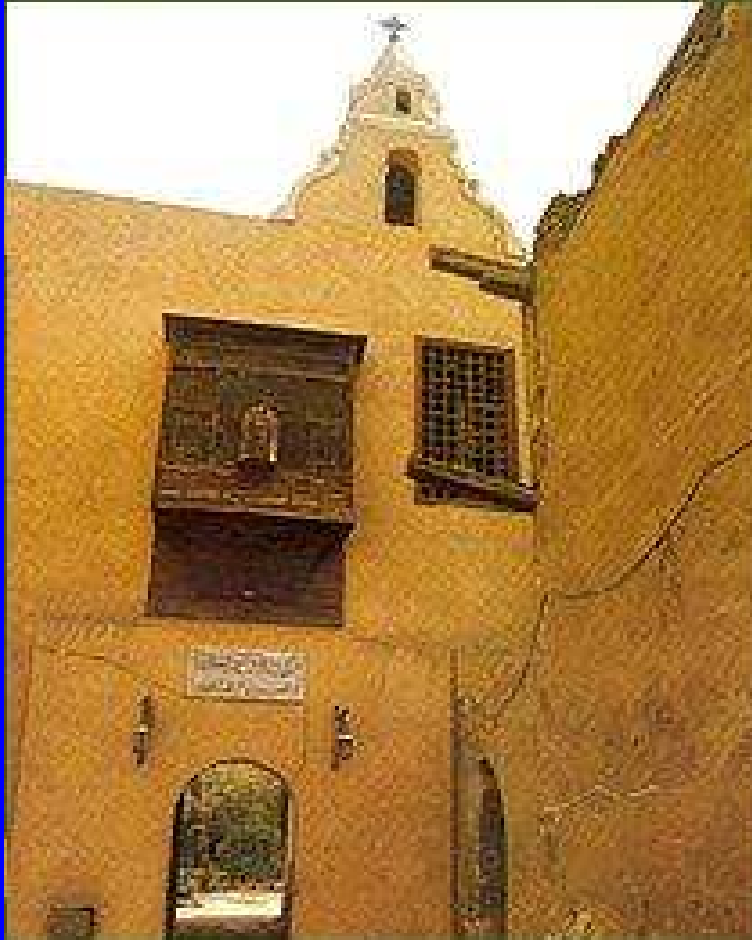


## Well and Tree at Matareya





## St. Mary Church at Zuweila Alley



## St. Mary Church (Qasriet Al Rihan)



كنيسة العزباوية بالنور الارضى



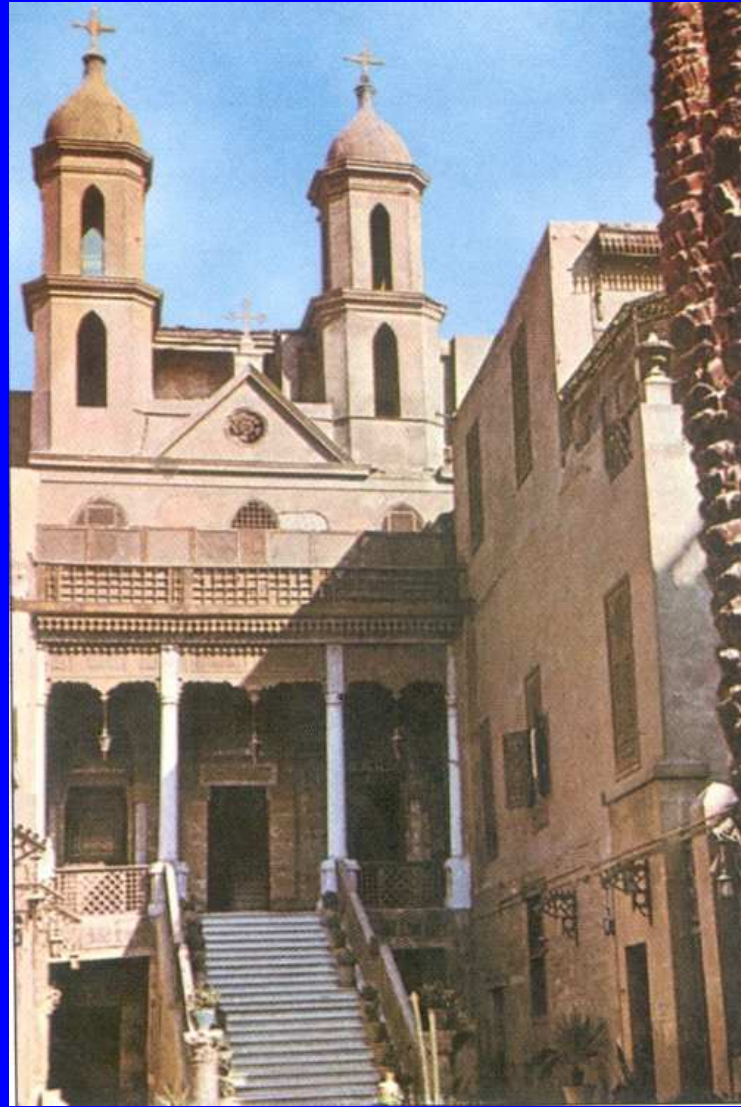
مقصورة العزباوية بالنور العلوى

## St. Mary Church - Ezbaweya





## St. Mary's Cave (Abu Serga Church)



**St. Mary Church - Moalaka**





## **Babylon Fortress and Coptic Museum**



سفينة المعادي الروحية  
كنيسة ودير  
السيدة العذراء بالمعادي



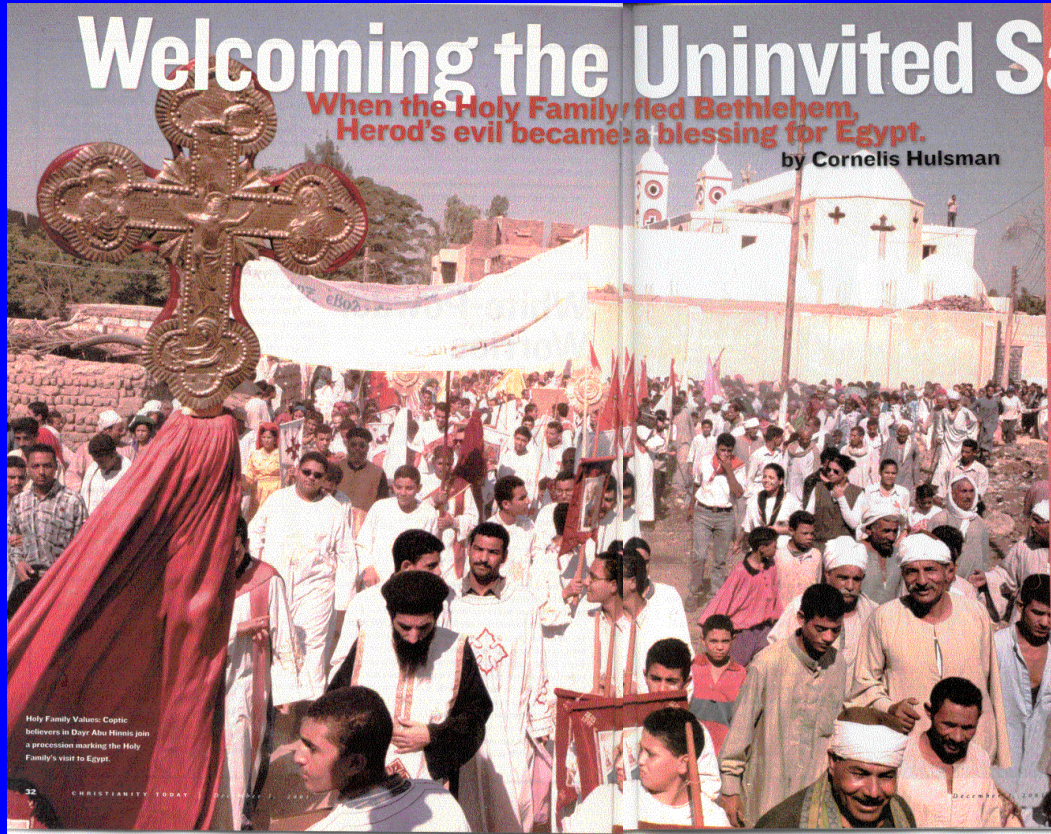
## St. Mary Church - Maadi



# Welcoming the Uninvited Savior

When the Holy Family fled Bethlehem, Herod's evil became a blessing for Egypt.

by Cornelis Hulsman



Holy Family Values: Coptic believers in Dayr Abu Hinnis join a procession marking the Holy Family's visit to Egypt.

EVERY YEAR on January 11 or 12, Dayr Abu Hinnis, a small, isolated Christian village 186 miles south of Cairo, commemorates the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. The celebrations at Dayr Abu Hinnis begin in the early morning hours as Coptic pilgrims ferry across the Nile, singing and clapping joyfully, ahead of the official procession.

Along the East Bank's shoreline, believers position themselves to watch Coptic Orthodox Bishop Demetrios from the nearby town of Malawi cross the Nile in a splendidly decorated feluca, an ancient sailing boat.

A procession with crosses and icons moves through the village proper, past the fifth-century church, ending at Koom Maria, a desolate sand hill just outside the village. At the hill, the faithful pitch a festival tent. According to Coptic tradition, the Holy Family rested on that hill during their flight from Herod's soldiers, who were in hot pursuit.

For the Copts, a group of mostly Orthodox Christians in Egypt, the arrival of Joseph, Mary, and the newborn Jesus is Egypt's great moment in the gospel story. What Herod intended for evil in slaughtering Bethlehem's children, which Jesus narrowly escaped, God turned into a blessing for all Egypt.

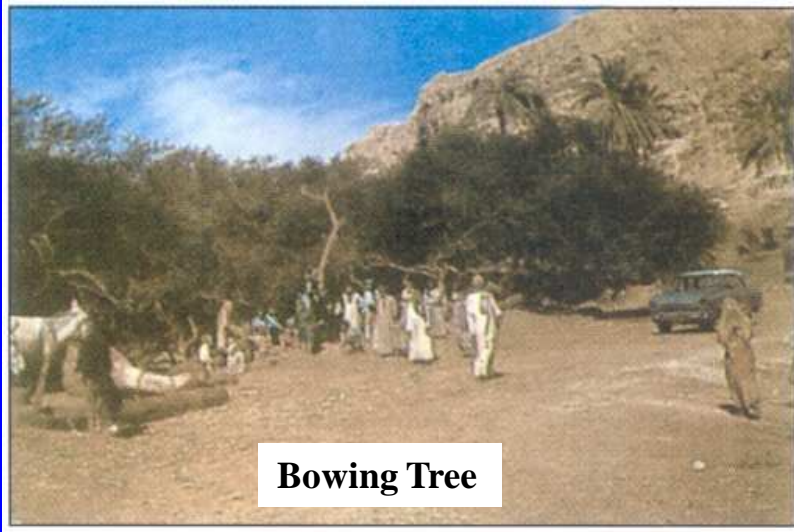
**BE THOU THERE!** In the cave church of Dayr Abu Hinnis, sixth-century paintings tell the story of the flight into Egypt from the narrative in Matthew 2: The Magi ask King Herod, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"

Herod, fearful of a potential rival, urges the Magi to inform him where to find the young king, "so that I too may go and worship him." But God espoures

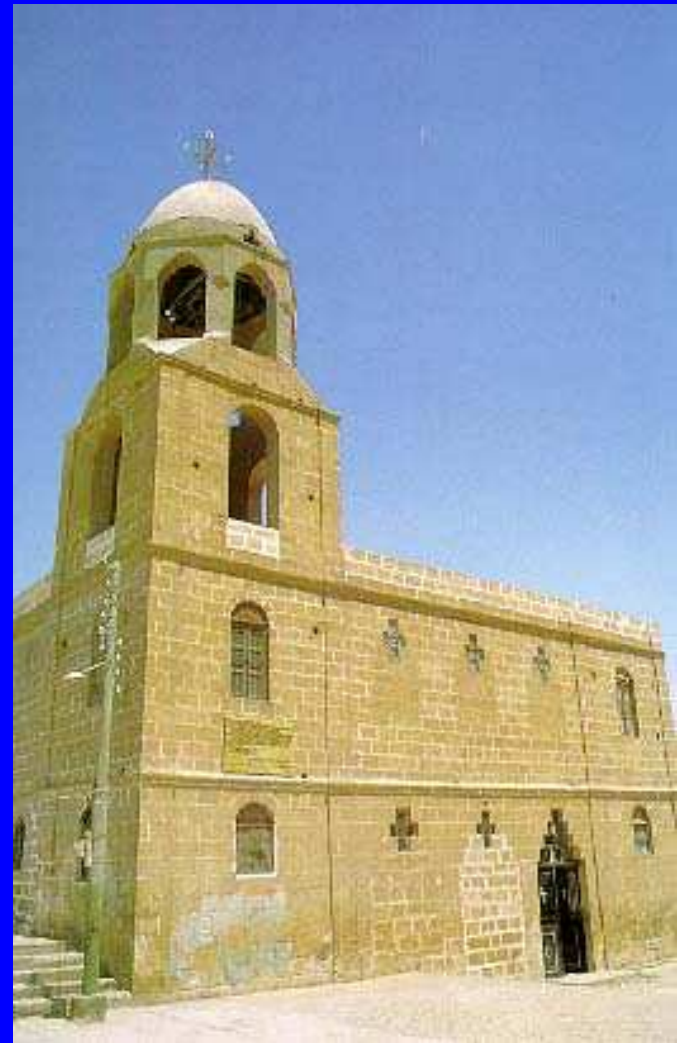


## Abu Yehniss Monastery-Malawy





**Bowing Tree**



## **Gabal El Tair - Bahnasa/Samaloat**



## **Ashmouneen – Malawy**





## **Doronka-Assiut**

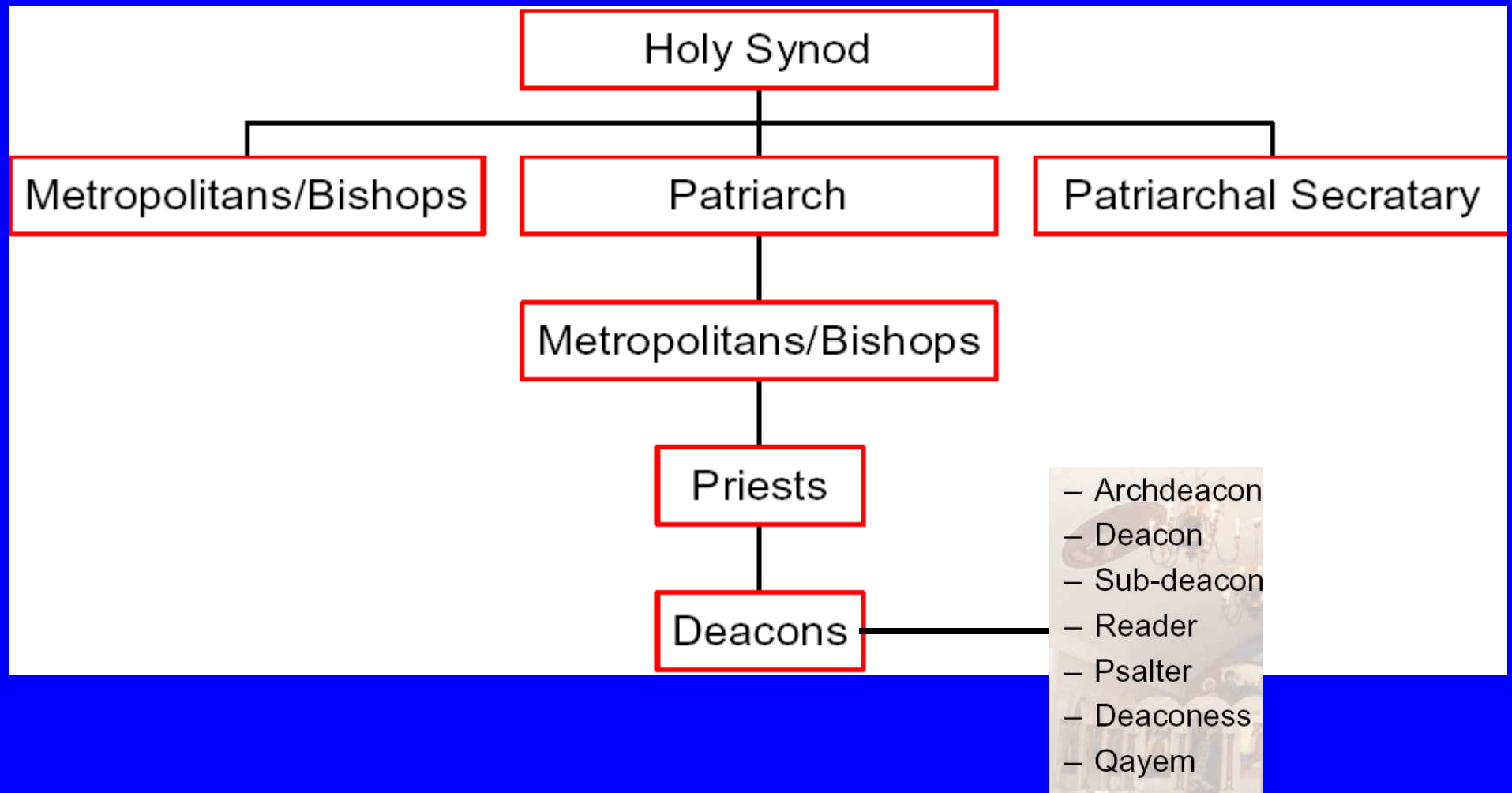
## Isaiah 19:19 -

“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. And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt”.



## El Moharaq Monastery

# Hierarchy of the Coptic Church



# Hierarchy of the Coptic Church



# Socio-Economic Account of the Copts

		%
<b>Egyptians</b>	<i>Muslims</i>	74
	<i>Copts</i>	15
<b>Nubian</b>		4
<b>Non-Egyptian Arabs</b>		5
<b>Foreigners</b>		2
		100

Total number of Copts around the world ~ 18 millions



# Socio-Economic Account of the Copts

1. Since Arab's invasion in 640 AD, the Copts have migrated mostly to upper Egypt.
2. They were entrusted mainly in the following areas:
  - Tax collections
  - Ministry of Finance
  - Transportation system
  - Medical profession
3. Due to Nasser's nationalization movement, many Copts suffered loss of lands and properties.
4. At present, Copts are integrated in the Egyptian society, however, they are restricted from critical ranks and positions within the Egyptian government.

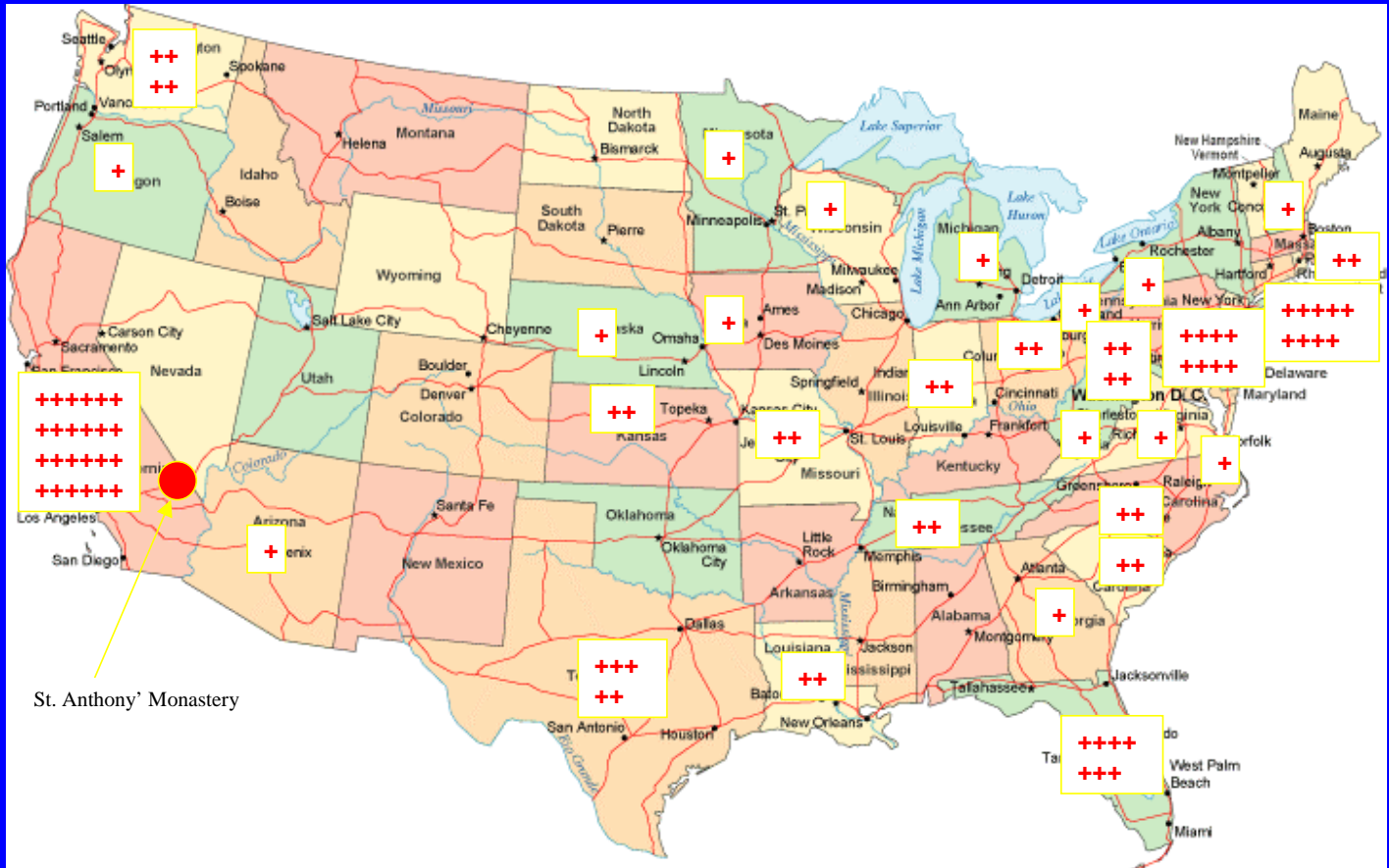
# Socio-Economic Account of the Copts

Canada	Number of Churches
Nova Scotia	1
Ontario	13
Quebec	3
Manitoba	1
Alberta	2
British Columbia	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>



# Socio-Economic Account of the Copts

United States	Number of Churches
Arizona	1
California	24
Connecticut	1
Florida	7
Georgia	1
Illinois	2
Indiana	1
Iowa	2
Kansas	2
Louisiana	1
Maryland	1
Massachusetts	2
Michigan	1
Minnesota	1
Mississippi	2
Nebraska	1
New Jersey	9
New York	8
North Carolina	2
Ohio	2
Oregon	1
Pennsylvania	4
South Carolina	2
Tennessee	2
Texas	5
Vermont	1
Virginia	2
Wash D.C.	1
Washington	4
Wisconsin	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>



# Concluding Remarks

1. The Coptic Church prides itself of being one of the oldest churches to preserve its unblemished culture, traditions, rituals and theological beliefs since its inception at the birth of Christianity.
2. The Coptic Church is recognized for its significant contribution to the ecumenical Christianity in the areas of:
  - Monasticism
  - The first three Ecumenical Councils
  - Preserving sacred sites and commemorating the refuge of the Holy Family across the land of Egypt

## Concluding Remarks

3. The Coptic Church has passed the test of time, persevering through political and theological turmoil, as well as martyrdom, persecution, and discrimination.
4. Today, the Copts are very proud of being the indigenous Egyptians with genealogical traces to the Pharaohs, and of their long and rich heritage throughout the centuries. They remain faithful to their beliefs in a genuine and loving manner, and not with a fanatical disposition.



# Contact

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