



## El-Keraza Magazine

Editor-in-chief: His Holiness  
Pope Shenouda III

Thirty Second Year

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### The Pope in a Series of Meetings

On Wed. 8/12 the Pope went to the Monastery, whereas the problem was not yet resolved. And there, a delegate of Assiout Priests and Lay members met with the Pope, they presented Him a report, and then they met HH the next week where they presented Him another detailed report signed by the Clergy of Assiout, Deyrout, Manful, Quesada and other regions. Then the Bishop of Manfalot arrived there to meet with HH and presented Him a report, he then arrived later after some days and presented to HH another report...

**Then meetings continued since Sat 11/12; over 300 of Cairo Priests arrived**, then those of Alexandria accompanied by their Lay Council, the Priests of Behera, Shobra Al Kheima, Fayoum, Almenya then the Priests of Helwan, Ismaelia, Qena, Luxor and Sharqeya... the Pope received hundreds everyday with their problems and reports...

**It was not just the problem of the priest's wife. The pains of everyone poured into the Pope's heart and mind.**

That incidence which was not put under control, caused other relative incidences to explode; those which were oppressed times ago, in addition to the raging news published by the press which totally stirred up things...in addition to the youth who were taken from the street and were put into custody and who had absolutely nothing to do with the gathering of people, among whom are some

underage youth and some students who should been having their exams, and they are all innocent...

**The Pope received the General Lay Council members, Professors of the High Institute of Coptic Studies and representatives of Convents.**

Visits by the Rev Priests then continued:

From Bani Swaif, Abanoub, Port Said, Abu Teeg, Mansoura, Akhmim, Tahta, Assiout, Deyrout, Manfalot and Quoseya.

Then the Priests of Niqada, Deshna, Giza, Mallawi, Nag Hammady, Aswan, Sohag, Gerga, Mettay, Beba, Bani Mazar and Maghagha.

Also the Priests from Domiatt, Kafr Al Sheikh, Barary, Mahalla

Kobra, Baleina, Tanta, Mit Ghamr, Tama...

**The number of Priests whom the Pope had met at the Monastery was 1808, increased to 2063 at the Pope's meeting in the Cathedral.**

**The Pope also received 63 of the Rev Metropolitans and Bishops.**

Everyone comes to their father with all their emotions, and presented Him reports and information about their status. And at the same time visiting Him presenting their love and deep affections...

The Pope wanted to find tranquility at the Monastery where the delegations of His sons were seeking Him.



The Pope's meeting with some of the Rev Bishops and Priests of Giza and some dioceses of the East Coast

## Illustrated Church News

### The Pope with the General Lay Council

HH the Pope received at the Monastery His sons the Deputy President, Secretariat, and the members of the General Lay Council, HH met some of them individually on other days.

He discussed the present situation in an atmosphere of love and honesty.



### With the Institute of Coptic Studies

HH the Pope received at the Monastery His sons the Dean, Professors and teachers of the Institute of Coptic Studies.

HH is seen in the photo with Pr Rasmy Abd El Malek next to Him the Institute's Dean, Pr. Isaac Fanous the Head of Art Section at the Institute is seen behind HH.

The Pope is the Supreme President of the Institute, the Head of Theology Section and a Comparative Theology Professor.

### The Pope with His Daughters the Nuns

HH received the Nuns at the Monastery; Mother Adrosis the Abbess of St. Tadros is seen next to the Pope, Mother Kereya and Mother Takla from St. George Convent-Old Cairo- are seen on the other side next to the Pope, with some Nuns of St. George Convent, Haret Zewela.

Tamav Ireny the Abbess of Abu Seifein Convent, Old Cairo, called HH over the phone.



## Church's News



### Wed Meeting 22/12/2004 at St. Mark's Cathedral, Cairo

The Great Cathedral was packed with thousands of the congregation of Cairo and other Governorates, 45 Rev Metropolitan and Bishop attended the Sermon with over 240 of the Rev Priests. It is the meeting which the pope held after being absent for a successive 2 weeks. The meeting was attended by groups of the Arabian and Egyptian Satellite TV Channels. The Pope entered among the extreme emotions of His sons and the Church Hymns of the Deacons.

After an emotional introduction which was a natural reaction to the congregations' emotions, the Pope delivered His Sermon titled (God is present) which is published in the magazine (in P. 10), and was broadcasted via the internet to various countries.

### With his Sons the Attorneys

The Pope had received at the Monastery-prior to his return to Cairo-some of His sons the Attorneys who defended the detained Youth:

Mr. Maged Hanna Wilson.

Mr. Ramsis Al Naggar.

Mr. Magdy Abd El Malak Shenouda.

And also received Attorney Mamdouh Ramzy.

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### The Pope with the Committee of Religious Guidance Affiliated to the Patriarchate

HH the Pope received at the Monastery the committee of religious guidance. →

Some of the Rev Bishops who are seen in the photo:

Hegomen Anestasi Al Samouely, Hegomen Botros Botros Gayed, Fr. Habib Girguis and some of the devoted brothers.

## Lawyers with the Attorney General

A delegate of 20 Lawyers headed to meet the Attorney General on Thu morning 23/12 to present a protest concerning detaining some of the youth, lieutenant Sameh Ashour preceded them.

Among the lawyers there were the four Christian Attorneys whom met with the Pope, there were a number of Muslim colleagues:

❖ Mr. Mohamed Abd El Ghaffar Abu Taleb.

❖ Mr. Saber Ammar the Deputy Assistant of the Lawyers Union.

❖ Mr. Sa'ed Abd El Khaleq a member of the Bar association board.

❖ Mr. Ihab Al Kholy.

❖ Mr. Abu Al Ela Mekky the member of freedom Committee at the Bar association.

❖ Mr. Mohsen Mohamed Lotfy.

❖ Mr. Helmy Afif.

❖ Also Mr. Ashraf Samy, Mr. Sameh Atteya, Mr. Emad Mourad Ghaly, Mr. Ekramy Magdy, Mr. Safwat Zaky, Mr. Ebeid Abed and Mr. Emad Hanna...

## The Legitimacy!

Some said that legitimacy should be adhered to in freeing the Coptic youth out of jail.

We answered: did they stick to legitimacy when they were took of the streets and put into custody when they were innocent and had nothing to with the incidences?! Was the legitimacy applied on the attacking Policemen?

## HG Bishop Pachumious in Libya

HG Bishop Pachumious traveled to Libya on Mon 22 Nov. upon invitation of the Gadhafi International Committee of Human Rights where he participated in presenting the Award of year 2004 to the President of Venezuela on Wed 24 Nov.

It is to be noted that this prize was awarded to HH Pope Shenouda III for year 2003.

### Mesratah Church

HG received the new Church in Mesratah City where he celebrated the first Divine Liturgy on the morning of 26/11. the Priests of Libya Fr. Paula (Benghazi), Fr. Timothawous (Tripoli) and Fr. Marcos (Mesratah) Participated with HG. It was such a joyous day for everyone where loads of the congregation came from all over Libya to participate in that event.

It is noteworthy to mention that the Libyan Authorities had promised, during HH the Pope's visit on 2003, to hand over the Church to HH, it is a Church which is surrounded by a large piece of land. HG presented his thanks to the Libyan authorities for their co operation with the Church.

### At the Islamic Mission Assembly

HG attended also the 7th meeting of the Islamic mission Assembly and gave a word about the Coptic Orthodox Church. 136 countries participated in that meeting.

### Returning Back

HG returned on Sat. 27/11 to prepare for the seminar of Faith ascertaining and prison service which was held in St Mina's Monastery starting Mon 29/11.



# Theological Dialogue with the Russian Church

## Meeting with HH the Pope

Due to the presence of HH the Pope at the Monastery; the Orthodox Russian Delegate headed there on Thu evening 16/12 to meet HH at His papal Residence at the Monastery. HH the Pope received them and discussed matters concerning the Theological dialogue between the two Orthodox families and the Orthodox co operation at the Ecumenical Councils especially at the World Council of Churches, also the Orthodox Joint responsibilities in confronting the liberty trends of some Modern Christian groups in order to preserve the Apostolic heritage and Christian ethics during today's world.

The issue of HH visit to the Russian Church, invited by HH Patriarch Alexy, was discussed this visit which was postponed since September 2001 due to the world circumstances at that time, HH the Pope agreed on implementing this visit whenever possible, God's willing.

Photos were taken and they all had HH the Pope's blessing. On the next day the Russian delegate visited the Monasteries of St. Pishoi, Surian and Baramous accompanied by HE Metropolitan Mar Istasious Matta and Dr. Josef Maurice Faltas who also accompanied them on their way back to Cairo and throughout the whole visit.



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## Miscellaneous News... Miscellaneous News... Miscellaneous News...

### The Pope in Alexandria

The Pope is expected to travel to Alexandria next week to supervise the charity committee there and to deliver his lecture at the Theological Seminary and at St. Mark's Great Church.

### HG Bishop Rowais Returns from his Trip to Australia

HG returned to Egypt after a trip to Sydney-Australia where he prayed and delivered sermons in 11 of Sydney Churches.

HH the Pope received him at the Monastery.

### HG Bishop Abakeer

HH the Pope delegated HG Bishop Abakeer to pray in San Francisco on Christmas and Epiphany in addition to pastoral visits to the Churches of North California.

### HG Bishop Daniel Servicing Barby Island, Australia

HG went there on Fri 17/12/2004 to pastor the Church which is at the house of Psaltos Eskaly (whom HG promoted to a Deacon and gave him the name of Athanasius).

He named the new Church after the four un-incarnated beasts.

HG baptized four children at the Island; he visited some families and ordained some children as Psaltos.

### With the Evangelical Church

On Mon 27/12, HH the Pope received Rev Safwat El Baiady the Head of the Evangelical Church in Egypt with some of the Synod members. It was a loving meeting which included discussion over the present incidences.

### With the Rev. Bishops

- ❖ HH the Pope received at the Monastery HG Bishop Mousa, HG Bishop Rafael and HG Bishop Ermia.
- ❖ HH also received HG Bishop Arsanious concerning some matters in Almenya Diocese.
- ❖ And received HG Bishop Martyrus of Eastern Sekka Hadeed.
- ❖ And HG Bishop Abakeer.

### HG Bishop Missael

HG Bishop Missael of Birmingham arrived to Cairo where HH the Pope received him at His Papal Residence, Cairo.

### With some of Alexandria Priests

HH the Pope received at the Monastery the Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria Hegomen Cherubim Al Bakhomy with the Rev Priests of St. Mary's Church, Janakhlis.

# God is Present

The sermon given in the Cathedral on the evening of Wednesday 22-12-1004

I would like to thank you all brothers and beloved. I am not only present with you now but you are always in my heart. I lived all my days in your hearts and I am still living there... And when I went to the monastery I took you all with me in my heart and mind. For you I am here, and for you I go there... I took you in my heart and my mind, you and your pains and problems to put them all before God and before those who are in charge... And I thank God a lot because some of these problems have been solved and some are still remaining and needs solution...

And the students or the youths who are in jail, without any fault committed from their side, I will continue to be sad for them and I will keep praying for them until they are all released from jail... And whatever people can not solve, God will solve. And God accustomed us to the fact that He is always with us and we trust Him and believe in His work and wait for the Lord...

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You know that in every hardship I say three statements: God is present, Everything works for the good, and it is destined to end.

And tonight I would like to talk to you about the statement [God is present].

From the theological and dogmatic point of view, all believers around the world believe that God exists... But I would like to address this subject from the point of God's presence in our life and from the point of our feeling of His presence and work in us.

**(God is present) means God sees, God hears, and God knows what is going on. God will handle it and act and will never leave matters the way they are...**

God is present everywhere, with everyone, and in every occasion. And we are used to see God's hand clearly in our life and all what we face. We saw God in every time stepping-in in our life matters and this is our belief.

We do not deal with people a lot but we deal more with God himself.

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**God is present as the Pantocrator. And we mention this characteristic a lot in our prayers.**

The Pantocrator, meaning that all is under His hand, all is under His control... All people are in God's hands. Believe me, even the devil himself and all the evil powers are controlled by God himself, who draws limits for them. Otherwise, if the strong ate the weak, people would have never lived on Earth, unless if God was interfering and interfering strongly too.

God created the universe and did not leave it but He manages all its matters...

## Pope Shenouda III



And I constantly say to everyone: You are not alone. You are living life and God is with you. He never leaves you for a single moment nor for a twinkling of an eye.

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**(God is present) for He is the Shepherd of us all...**

And so the chanter say in the psalm: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." "He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters." And says "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me;" (Ps 23).

And the Lord says in the book of Ezekiel: "I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down... I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick... and feed them in judgment" (Ez 34:15, 16). And we trust in God's care to us. We trust Him in everything. Even from the side of His rod and staff we say "they comfort me"...

We trust in the Glorious Lord's saying about His flock: "neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand... and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." (Jn 10:28, 29).

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**And when we say (God is present) we mean that he is the preserver and the supporter.**

And we always chant a phrase from the psalm "The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore." (Ps 121). It is a phrase that the guardian angel says to every human while he prays. Or the praying person says to himself to comfort himself, calm down and assure himself.

Because the Lord said to our father Jacob: "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land" (Gn 28:15). He also is the one who preserved prophet Jonah in the fish's belly and saved the three young men in the burning fiery furnace so that the hair of their head was not singed (Dn 3). And saved Daniel in the den of lions so that he chanted his loving song "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths" (Dn 6:22).

God is the one who saved the righteous Joseph from his brothers when they threw him in the well, saved him when he was sold as a slave and served in Potiphar's house, saved him when he was thrown in jail and gave him back his honor multiplied so that he finally said to his brothers: "you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Gn 50:20).

We believe that God saves us from the devil, from sins and from tribulations. He saved St Athanasius when he was exiled four times, saved St John in his exile in Patmos Island and appeared to him and showed him many visions. Even the children, He says about them in the psalm: "The LORD preserves the simple" (Ps 116:6).

We get too troubled if we forget that God is present and he preserves us.

**And God's history in keeping us is a long history that we will not forget.**

I wish that every one of us sits with himself and remember how many times God preserved him. And praise the Lord saying: "Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:" (Ps 103:1, 2).

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**In the phrase (God is present) we remember that God is the one taking care of all.**

He said: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Mt 11:28). Thus, the bible says: "Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you" (Ps 55:22) and the psalm says: "May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble" (Ps 20:1).

Yes, God, in whom we believe, has a great characteristic which is **(the comforter of the troubled)** so "Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!" (Ps 27:14) for God is the one caring for all.

**He even takes care of animals and birds, even the worm that moves beneath a stone...**

"He gives to the beast its food, And to the young ravens that cry" (Ps 147:9). Even the birds of the air who neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns "your heavenly Father feeds them" (Mt 6:26). And He says about sparrows: "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will." (Mt 10:29). And after this He says: "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered".

God took care of animals and birds in Noah's Ark and took care of Noah along with animals and beasts. He also took care of butterflies and gave them beautiful colors. "Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Mt 6:29). And He took care of singing birds and gave them beautiful voices without them asking Him for it. He took care of the bee and gave it the art of making honey and organizing its work. He cared for the peacock and gave it beauty in its feathers.

If it was so with animals and birds, then He cared for the human much more!

**God cares for us more than we do for ourselves!**

And we live this faith. He says: "I will not leave you nor forsake you" (Js 1:5). Therefore, we rely on Him and His promise that states: "If a woman forgets her nursing child I will not forget you".

**And He cares for us through His angels and their protection to us.**

The psalm says about that: "For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone." (Ps 91:11, 12). And in our

daily prayers we say: "Surround us by Your holy angels, that, by their camp, we may be guarded and guided". And we believe in the guardian angel who guards every human. And we have a constant relationship with angels. And the day before yesterday we were celebrating the feast of Archangel Michael.

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**And in saying that (God is present), we remember God's tenderness and kindness.**

If God was tender with birds and insects, then how much He is with the human. It is of God's kindness to the human that He gave him mind, soul and will. And gave him conscience, gave him the divine response and promised him the eternal life. He gave him the blessing, the authority, the perseverance and gave him what he did not ask for and more than he asks for. And that is, if he cries, God will wipe away every tear from his eyes...

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**If God is so in His kindness, then why does He allow trials to come?**

God allows trials to come because of their benefits. St James says about that: "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials" (Jas 1:2). And we should know the reasons behind every trial coming on us and how to deal with it.

❖ **Among the benefits of trials is that they gather us in one heart compassioning with one another.**

And I, in the last ten days, in the monastery, met with more than 1800 reverend priests from all dioceses, and with 63 of the reverend bishops and metropolitans other than those who called me on the telephone. And this is how the trial gathers us all together. We think with one mind. And see what our problems are and work on solving them in one spirit. And in today's meeting 45 reverend metropolitans and bishops and 240 reverend priests are attending with us.

❖ **Also among the benefits of trials is that when a trial come upon us we start checking ourselves from inside for each to settle an account with oneself, and reconcile with God if we were far from Him.** And in trials, we see that people in their fasts, prayers and taking communion were reconciling with God so that they ask Him without shame. This is according to the Lord's saying: "Return to Me, and I will return to you" (Mt 3:7).

❖ Among the benefits of trials is that they reveal things to us and give us a clearer vision. As the poet says:

**May God bless tribulations**

**By them I distinguished my enemy from my friend**

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❖ **Also among the benefits of trials is that through them we see God's hand working with us and with others.** In trials we gain a spiritual experience by which we see that God is present.

We, brothers, practically recognize God and His work, not through theology books or doctrine books but in our whole life path.

We do not only believe in God about whom the books talk, but we believe more in God who we see in our life exactly if He is present in front of us. And we see how He works and we admire His power and wisdom. God is blessed in all His work with us...

❖ **Through trials we then gain spiritual experience with God and the events.** It is a school that we call the school of trials. A spiritual school. And every person going through trials grows in knowledge, wisdom and experience. And goes into a training on how to deal with matters and see how they are solved in front of him.

❖ And in trials we see the verse saying: "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible" (Mk 10:27).

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❖ **And when we meditate in trials. We see that they are all for the good. As the bible says: "all things work together for good to those who love God" (Ro 8:28).**

**And trials, my brothers, are not a type of abandonment because they come with help.** The trial is always in the bounds of our capabilities to bear

it. It also comes with an outcome as the bible says: "but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Co 10:13).

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**And we always face the trial with a peace of heart... The matter, of course, needs wisdom in acting, with the peace of heart.**

We are trying to find a solution. And when it is hard to find one, we put the trail in God's hands. Or we put God between us and the trial so that we see God and do not see the trial. And we feel that God is present with us. We leave our problems between His hands and we believe in His loving kind hand...

❖ Therefore, we ask God to handle the remaining matters. And we hope that He solves them... Let's pray.

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## Councils of Churches in USA and Canada

### The Council of St Pishoi Church, Thorne Hill, York, Canada

The papal decree no. 4/34 has been issued to form the council of this church from:

1. Eng. Hani Rougei.
2. Mr. Mark Nakhla (representing youths).
3. Dr. Alfonse Faltas.
4. Mr. Hani Masoud.
5. Eng. Nahed Helmy (representing women).
6. Dr. Edward Rasmy.
7. Eng. Sameh Shaker.

**We would like to extend our deepest congratulations to these councils wishing them all success in their church service**

### The Council of St George Church, Astoria, USA

The papal decree no. 5/34 has been issued to form the council of this church from:

1. Dr. Adel Awad Allah Girguis.
2. Dr. Georgette Latif Ibrahim (representing women).
3. Dr. George Mansour Ibrahim.
4. Eng. Saad Baqi Seddiq.
5. Eng. Samy William Fahmi.
6. Eng. Amgad Farak Sadek (representing youths).

### The Council of St George Church, Maryland, USA

The papal decree no. 6/34 has been issued to form the council of this church from:

1. Dr. Norma El Shammaa (representing women).
2. Accountant Essam Shanoudi (Treasurer).
3. Eng. Sa'ed Kamal.
4. Accountant Ezzat Milad (Secretary).
5. Mr. Salama Mikhail.
6. Miss Sandra Rizk Allah (representing youths).

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### With our children in Chicago

HG Bishop Makarios the Eritrean in front of St George Church, Chicago surrounded by some of our children in this church and some deacons.



## Ordinations of New Priests at the Dioceses

### Ordination of 4 New Priests for the Diocese of Behera

On Fri morning 19/11/2004, HG Bishop Pachumious of Behera and its affiliated regions ordained 3 Priests: Fr. Lucas, Fr. Metaous and Fr. Yassa for the villages of Kom Hamada, Hosh Eissa and Abu Al Mattamir.

HG Bishop Tawadros the General Bishop in Behera participated with HG in the Ordination Prayers.

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And on Sun, HG Bishop Pachumious and HG Bishop Tawadros ordained Deacon Tamer Zachariah as a Priest for the Matrouh Churches giving him the name of Fr. Matta.

The four Rev Priests went to spend the forty days at St. Bishoy Monastery, Sheheit Wilderness.

We extend our felicitations to everyone wishing them a successful service.



### Ordination of a Priest for the Wasta Church

On Sat 4/12/2004, HG Bishop Ghabriel of Bani Swaif ordained Deacon Samuel Hegomen Makkar as a priest for St. George Church, Wasta giving him the name of Fr. Angaelos.

Our felicitations, wishing him success in his service.

## Pope's Meetings at the Monastery

### With Some of Port Said Priests

The Pope in front of His Residence with HG Bishop Tadros of Port Said and some of the Priests in his Diocese.



### With Some of Tahta Priests

The Pope in front of His Residence at the Monastery with HG Bishop Eshaiah of Tahta and some Priests of the Diocese.

### With Some of Ismaelia Priests

The Pope is seen in front of His Residence with HG Bishop Seraphim of Ismaelia and some of his Priests.

