



## El-Keraza Magazine

**Editor-in-chief: His Holiness  
Pope Shenouda III**

Thirty-first Year      Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2003 – 25<sup>th</sup> Hatour 1720      Price 50 pt.      Issues 39, 40

### **The church extended congratulations to Islamic Leaderships on the occasion of Al-Fitr Feast**

Holidays are very good chances for meetings. And on the occasion of Al-Fitr holiday, it has been agreed upon that the church will dedicate Thursday to extend their congratulations to our Muslim brothers represented in their religious leaderships along with congratulating Statesmen in the person of President Hosni Mubarak.

#### **The Pope and a church delegate while congratulating His Excellency the Sheikh of Al-Azhar**

The picture was taken in Al-Azhar Sheikhdom and it features: His Excellency the Sheikh of Al-Azhar and some of his men, His Holiness the Pope and their grace: Bishop Morcos, Bishop Mousa, Bishop Youanes, Hegumen Ermia Ava Mina, Dr. Tharwat Basili, Counselor Malek Mina and Counselor Edward Ghaleb.

After that the same delegate went to:

#### **Congratulate Dr. Hamdi Zaqzouq, the Minister of Religious Endowments**

And after that HH went back to the Cathedral to attend the Charity Committee meeting.

And the same delegate consisting of Fathers, the three Bishops and laymen of the Lay Council headed to Al-Azhar University:

#### **To congratulate Dr. Ahmed El Tayeb, Al-Azhar University President**

(See the picture on page 10)

And due to the absence of His Excellency Dr. Ali Gomaa, the Mufti, on that day, the delegate paid him a visit to congratulate him on another day afterwards.



**At Al Azhar Sheikhdom: With His Excellency the Great Imam, the Sheikh of Al Azhar and his men**



**At the Ministry of Religious Endowments: With His Excellency the Minister of Religious Endowments Dr. Hamdi Zaqzouq**

**Illustrated Church News**



**The Ordination of three priests to serve in the Lands of Immigration**

On Friday 28-11-2003, HH the Pope ordained 3 priests; they are:

- ❖ Fr. Anastasy St. Anthony to serve in Hawaii, Honolulu.
- ❖ Fr. Morcos Shawky to serve in St Mark Church, Winnipeg, Canada.
- ❖ Fr. Youhanna Ghali to serve in St John the Baptist and St Elizabeth Church, Barry City, Canada.

Their grace Bishop Sarabamoon and Bishop Youanes participated in the ordination prayers with HH.

**The Pope receives the President of Ain Shams University and Some of its Professors**

On the evening of Sunday 30-11 HH the Pope received Prof. Dr. Saleh Hashem Mustafa, the President of Ain Shams University and a delegate of professors and Department Chairmen among whom were:

Prof. Dr. Murad Abd El Qader, the Vice President.

Prof. Dr. Fathi Mohammed Tash, the Chairman of Medical School.

Prof. Dr. Mahmoud El Tayeb Nasser, Professor of Rheumatoid, and Secretary-General of the National Party (El Hezb El Watani), Waili.

Prof. Dr. Sameh Dawoud



Armanious, the Chairman of Civil and Irrigation Engineering Department and the Councilor of the Irrigation Minister.

Prof. Dr. Mgeda Ikram Ebeid, the Chairman of Ecological

Engineering Department at the Ecological Research Institution.

Dr. Ghada Farag El Dary, Assistant Professor at the Childhood Institution.

Dr. Amany Fouad Hanna,

French Language Professor at the Linguistics (Alson) College.

The University President presented HH the University Plate and HH gave presents to all the attendees.

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**The Ordination of New Priests at Shobra El Kheima Diocese**



His Grace Bishop Morcos of Shobra El Kheima and its territories ordained 10 priests on two rounds. On Friday 21/11 on which HG Bishop Bernaba participated with HG and on Sunday 23/11 on which HG had the company of Their Grace Bishop Asheya, Bishop Lukas and Bishop Maximous of Banha and Qesna.

**On Friday 21/11:** Fr. Toma Kamal, Fr. Abram Magdi, Fr. Karas Noshey, Fr. Bakhom Dawoud and Fr. Bernaba Gabra.

**On Sunday 23/11:** Fr. Youanes Aziz, Fr. Hanania Zaki, Fr. Aghustinus Helmi, Fr. Misail Yaaqoub and Fr. Menassa Nasry.

## Church's News



### His Holiness the Pope in Cyprus

His Holiness traveled to Cyprus on Monday 1/12 at noon, to attend the General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches as he is one of heads of the Council.

His Holiness is expected to be back to Cairo on the evening of Friday 5-12.

### His Grace Bishop Mousa

His Holiness apologized for not being able to go to Cyprus to attend the General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches and that is because of his illness, may God get him well soon. His Holiness the Pope, therefore, delegated His Grace Bishop Youanes to complete the number of members of the Coptic Church Delegate.

### With His Grace Bishop Youhanna

His Holiness received him before His Grace's return to the USA. His Holiness also approved the request submitted by the Church in Las Vegas to have His Grace serving them during Christmas and Epiphany feasts and whenever they ask for him.

### His Grace Bishop Suriel

His Grace returned to Melbourne accompanied by Bishop Bishoy Saint Anthony to serve as a General Priest in the diocese.

### His Grace Bishop Anthony

His Holiness received His Grace on Thursday 27-11 before he returns to his diocese.

### Our churches in New Castle and Ireland

- ❖ His Holiness the Pope received Fr. Samaan El Anba Paula, the priest of our church in New Castle, England before he goes back to his service.
- ❖ His Holiness also received Fr. Befnotious Ava Mina who left to serve in Ireland passing by Canada to visit his relatives.

## With Some of the Priests serving at the Lands of Immigration

During the past two weeks, HH the Pope received a number of priests.

Fr. Antoniuos Sobhy (from Jordan).

Fr. Mousa El Anba Pishoi (from Paris).

Fr. Rowais Awad (from Toronto).

Fr. Moisis before his return to his service in the USA.

HH also received Fr. Mikhail Edward's family, our priest in Cleveland, during their visit to Cairo.

### The Request to Ordain Priests for some of Alexandria Churches

On the afternoon of Friday 28-11-2003, HH the Pope received: Fr. Sharoubeem El-Bachomy, the Patriarchal Steward in Alexandria accompanied by some priests from the churches of Sporting, St Takla Himanout, the Saints, Al Agami and Gheit El Inab. The visit was to nominate some persons to be ordained as priests to satisfy the needs of churches there.

### The General Clerical Council Meeting to discuss Al Ragaa Center (Markaz El Ragaa) in Menia

Delegated from HH the Pope, the General Clerical Council met under the leadership of HG Metropolitan Bishoy, the Secretary of the Holy Synod.

The discussed some matters concerning Al Ragaa Medical Center in Menia. After holding many sessions, the Clerical Council decided to end the service of Mr. Salah Soliman completely from Al Ragaa Center and forbid him from taking communion for six months.



### The Book named (Comparative Theology) by HH the Pope has been translated to Italian

HG Bishop Bernaba of Rome submitted to HH the Pope this translation under the name:

#### Theologia Comparativa

It is a 188-page book of the medium page size. The book was translated from Arabic to English in Australia by:

Mary & Amani Basili

## Counselor Wasfi Nashed Reposed in the Lord



The departure of this virtuous layman, who was one of the great Lawmen in Egypt, is hard for us. He was the Head of the Criminal Court and the National Security Supreme Court, a member of the Lay Council and the Reporter of the Family Committee of the Lay Council. He also had great activity in Maadi Churches and was a member of the Supreme Committee for its Churches. He was one of the trustworthy servants who had zeal for the right and had strong personality.

He reposed in the Lord on Sunday Morning, 30-11 after a long struggle with his disease.

The funeral prayer was held at St Mark Grand Cathedral, Cairo at 12:00PM on Tuesday 2-12.

A large number of bishops and fathers participated in the funeral prayers among who was HG Bishop Daniel, the General Bishop of Maadi. Many of his colleagues from lawmen and members of the Lay Council and many of those who loved him and knew his virtues and favors over them attended the funeral.

We would like to extend our deepest condolences to his family and may his soul rest in Heaven.

### Moving the remains of the deceased HG Bishop Karas to his Monastery

It has been reported to HH the Pope by Hegumen Binyamin El Baramousy, the Steward of St Anthony Monastery in California, that he received the City Council approval to move the remains of the deceased HG Bishop Karas to be buried in a cemetery at the monastery sometime before his departure anniversary on 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2004.

## Papal Decrees Concerning some Church Councils

### Papal Decree No. 3/33 Concerning St Catherine Church, Canada

It has been decided that the Church Council of St George and the Saint with the two Swords (Abu Sefein) with its Head the church priest and the members:

- 1- Eng Hosni Ghobrial – Member.
- 2- Eng Magdi Melika – Representing Youths.
- 3- Eng Nasser Saad – Treasurer.
- 4- Dr. Nagwa Takla – Member.
- 5- Eng Mounir Malak Ibrahim – Secretary.
- 6- Dr. Mofid Khalil – Member.

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### Youths Bishopric:

#### The Immigrant Students Meeting

The bishopric held a meeting for immigrants in St Mark Hall at St Rowais Residence. Their Grace Bishop Mousa and Bishop Rafael attended that meeting. The number of people attended this meeting were 600 students from the University Assemblies, University Dorms for Immigrants, Houses for students following churches and some Sudanese.

#### The subjects discussed were around:

- A- The relation with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B- The relation with the Holy Church.

The meeting program included presentations to activities by those immigrants, distributing gifts to those with outstanding academic achievements or ideal character, Dorms' Supervisors and the Assembly of Preparing Immigrant Students Servants.

#### The e-Magazine for Youth

The bishopric has issued the "Angaelos" e-Magazine for Youths. And the CD contains video clips of sermons for HH the Pope and Their Grace Bishops, Youth conversations, a photo album and a number of riddles and competitions.

The eighth issue of this new magazine has been issued.

The bishopric website is:

[www.youthbishopric.com](http://www.youthbishopric.com)

And the magazine email is:

[www.fr\\_luka@hotmail.com](mailto:www.fr_luka@hotmail.com)

Tel.: +202 4858011 - +202 4855092

### Papal Decree No. 4/33 Concerning the Council of St George and St Rowais Church, Toronto, Canada

It has been decided that the church council will consist of:

- 1- Hegumen Rowais Awad – Head.
- 2- Servant Dr. Tabaseem Guendy – Secretary.
- 3- Deacon Ragaey Youssef – Treasurer.
- 4- Deacon George Ghali.
- 5- Deacon Lamey Sedrah.
- 6- Deacon Hani Masoud.
- 7- Deacon Essam Deif.
- 8- Deacon Michael Macarious.
- 9- Deacon Abram Roufael.
- 10- Servant Georgina Rizk – Representing Youths.

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### The Convention with Al Ragaa Centers for Patients Service Assembly

The convention for servants of Al Ragaa Centers for Serving Patients was held in the Archangel Monastery, Ezbet Henein, Monofeia. This Assembly has emerged from the Synod Committee for Care; Bishop Bachomious is the Reporter of this committee. This convention was held on 26, 27-11-2003. 35 priests, 104 servant and 48 servant

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HG Bishop Daniel with the Recognition Document of the Sydney Diocese Constitution

### Papal Decree No. 5/33 Concerning the church at Baltimore, USA

It has been decided that this Church's Council will be headed by its priest and will have the members:

- 1- Mr. Nasr Fahmy – Secretary.
- 2- Dr. Raafat Fahmy – Treasurer.
- 3- Dr. Salwa Habib – Member.
- 4- Dr. Daaa Mikhail – Member.
- 5- Dr. Naguib Rizk Allah – Member.
- 6- Ms. Julie Me'awad – Representing Youths.
- 7- Mr. Magdi Keriakos – Member.
- 8- Mrs. Amal Gharabawy – Member.

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ladies and ordained servant ladies attended that event.

During that convention lecturers were: Their Grace Bishop Binyamin and Bishop Abram; both are responsible for this Assembly. Also spoke HG Bishop Daniel, Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Dr. Makram Mounir, Dr. Nagy Soliman, Mr. Samir Khufu and Mr. Adel Kamel. They all spoke about various matters concerning patients. There was also an exchange of experience among centers spread through different dioceses from which 50 representatives attended.

## His Grace Bishop Anthony's Pastoral trip to the Scandinavian Countries and Paris

HH the Pope designated HG Bishop Anthony of Ireland, Scotland and North Eastern UK, for a Pastoral visit to the Scandinavian Countries located in the North western parts of Europe, to organize some Pastoral issues there.

### **The Scandinavian Countries are Denmark, Sweden and Finland.**

In Denmark: we have Virgin Mary and St. Mark's Church in Copenhagen.

In Sweden: we have Virgin Mary and St. Paul's Church in Stockholm, Archangel Michael and St. George's Church in Gutenberg.

### **The church in Denmark**

Dedicated to St. Mark in Copenhagen. This church is being served by Hegumen Antoniuos Thabet of London. And during feasts, Hegumen Hedra Ekdawy, from the Bishopric of social and ecumenical services in Cairo, serves in the same church.

HH Pope Shenouda III consecrated the church in the year 1992; the church awaits the Pope to consecrate the Baptism basin, Icons and Icon Stasis. The church needs a permanent Priest.

### **The Church in Stockholm**

Dedicated to Virgin Mary and St. Paul, and served by Rev Father Bachomious Ragheb Demetry. HH the Pope consecrated the church on 18/09/1993. The church awaits the Pope to consecrate the Baptism Basin, Icons and Icon Stasis.

And due to the massive increase in number of the Coptic Orthodox in Stockholm, it has been agreed upon searching to buy a second church, God willing.

### **The Church in Gutenberg**

Dedicated to Archangel Michael and St. George, it is about 400 km from Stockholm, has been served by Hegumen Antoniuos El-Baramousy, then he went back to his Monastery. The church needs a permanent Priest. The church has been fully paid for, and has no mortgage. The church needs to be consecrated.

### **HG Bishop Anthony's trip**

HG Bishop Anthony traveled to Copenhagen on Saturday 18/10/03.

He then traveled to Sweden on 25/10/03.

HG has held the General assembly meeting for our church in Denmark and also for the church in Sweden, HG presented to the members the law of the Coptic Orthodox church which HH the Pope had set for our churches in America before. HG fully explained the law of the church to them point by point and they all agreed upon it.

This law of church, includes how every Coptic Orthodox church in North Eastern of Europe is related to the Mother Church, and explains the relation between the Dioceses in the Scandinavian Countries with its affiliated regions. It also explains the rights and the duties of the church council members...

This law of the Coptic Orthodox Church has been issued in Stockholm on 11/10/03.

The procedures of electing the Church Council members in Gutenberg will take place in about three months.

And the same goes for the church in Denmark.

Concerning Stockholm, elections took place already on Saturday 25/10/03, and the church council members have already been elected then.

### **The Church Council in Stockholm**

Papal Decree No. 1/33 has been issued, the church council members are:

- 1- Rev Father Bachomious Ragheb-President.
- 2- Eng. Edward Caesar - Vice President.
- 3- Dr. Ihab Saad - Secretary.
- 4- Eng. Gamal Saad Nessim - Treasurer.
- 5- Eng. Albert Shoukry Khalil - member, responsible for cultural activities.
- 6- Eng. Essam Rateb Masoud - member.
- 7- Mr. Pierre Yuhansen - member.

### **In France**

According to what HG Bishop Anthony suggested regarding organizing the service:

### **Papal Decree No. 2/32 has been issued concerning the service in Paris and the Northern Regions in it**

- 1- Rev Father Mousa Wahib is to serve St. Moses the Black and St. Samuel the confessor Church in Deuil La Barre in Northern Paris- alone.
- 2- Rev Fathers Elisha El-Baramousy and Luke El-Baramousy are to serve St. Mina and the saint with the two swords Church in Colombes at the Northern West of Paris at the moment.
- 3- Hegumen Mousa Abba Pishoi and Rev Father Avraam El-Baramousy are to serve the Archangel Michael and St. George church in Paris.
- 4- Hegumen Girguis Luka is to serve Virgin Mary and St. Mark Church in Paris, and he is in need of another Priest to help him.

HG Bishop Anthony presented a report to HH the Pope concerning the service in Colombes, and the issue of Paris 20 Church is still under study.

### **Dr. Kamal Rizk Soliman, the German Language Professor, reposed in the Lord.**

He reposed in the Lord on 25/11/03 in Germany, he was born in Shobra District-Cairo on 1932, and he was one of the Pope's students in St. Anthony's Church.

He traveled to Germany on 1955, designated by the Egyptian government to specialize in German Language. Then he taught in Ain-Shams University, he was the first Egyptian who studied in Gate Institute.

He reposed in the Lord in Zurich; his remains will be carried to the Coptic Orthodox Cemetery in Krivellbach.

May his soul rest in peace, and we offer our condolences to his family and his lovers.

## The Approval of the Church Constitution of Sydney Diocese

❖ HH the Pope has set a Law (Constitution) for our churches in Australia that was officially registered by the State on 1989.

Then, when two dioceses were established, HH made some changes on that law to allow the Bishop of each Diocese to perform its role in managing it, while keeping each as non-separable part from the mother church that they must be following its general leadership and Holy Synod.

And that was done in its time for Melbourne Diocese.

- ❖ As for the Sydney Diocese, HH and HE Bishop Bishoy have made some changes on the Church Constitution on 8-10-2002 and certified the Church Structure on 19-12-2002.
- ❖ What has remained was the legal step that should be taken with the State. HG Bishop Daniel of Sydney and its territories appointed for this matter the lawyer Mr. Tem Eaken to submit this statement to New South Wales Parliament; New South Wales is the state that Sydney follows. Mr. Tem Eaken has made an effort that we thank him for.
- ❖ The lawyer contacted the District Attorney of Australia and the Justice Minister and explained to them the history of the Coptic Church since St Mark's days, its heroes and Saints, its work during the First Holy Synods... Also explained its current growth and spread in USA, Canada, Europe and Australia. And talked about the Sydney Diocese activities from the point of its many churches, schools and priests and its service in Singapore and Bangkok...

Although all this was very impressive, it has been decided that this issue will be forwarded to the Parliament.

- ❖ Then finally the lawyer told HG the bishop that a date has been set to discuss the constitution in the State Parliament House on Tuesday 11-11-2003, on which HG the bishop and those concerned should attend.

HG Bishop Daniel attended accompanied with a delegate consisting of:

Hegumen Tadros Samaan, the Diocese Steward.

Hegumen Antonios Ouldas, the Schools' Official.

Fr. Ghobrial Yassa, the Media Official.

Dr. Medhat Girguis, Secretary of the Consultative Council, and his wife Dr. Sara.

Mr. Fayez Hanania, member of the Financial Committee, and his wife Mrs. Mona.

Mr. Maged, the lawyer, the Diocese Counselor.

Mr. Tem Eaken, the lawyer.

All are seen in the picture with HG.

Members of the specialized Parliament Committee spoke well about the Coptic Church. The Media Committee of the church has recorded their words of appreciation for the church.

- ❖ **All members unanimously approved to recognize the Constitution of Sydney Diocese and its territories.**

❖ The Upper House of the State session was held on 12-11.

❖ The Specialized Committee of the Upper House met. And after some words of appreciation said by its members about the Coptic Church, its ancientness and Secrets, and what they said about the fact that the census of the Coptic Church followers in the Middle East shows larger numbers than that of all other churches. They also mentioned the importance of St Mark See and Alexandria School that was established by St Mark...

**After deliberations, members of the Upper House agreed unanimously on the subject of the Sydney Diocese Constitution and it was certified as law that the church must follow.**

With this legal recognition of the church, it became worthy of all the facilities and funds given by the Australian Government to all churches legally recognized by the Country.

We would like to express our deepest congratulations to HG Bishop Daniel and to Copts of the Sydney Diocese and its territories for the Certification of their Church Constitution by the Country.



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## The Summer Activities for Mansoura Diocese and its territories

This festival took place on August 2003 and it had the participation of 337 students in Church Choirs of Primary and Kindergarten Stages from 10 Churches, 300 girls and boys in Church Choirs of Preparatory Stage from 13 churches and 196 in Church Choirs of Secondary for young ladies and gentlemen.

The convention program included a hymns competition, a memorize materials competition, a number of plays in which 7 churches participated and other various activities. We congratulate Mansoura Diocese and its gentle bishop HG Bishop Dawoud for this Summer Activity that is obvious for the first time.

# Out of Poverty

## (Lk 21:2-4)

The principal of how important it is to put in offerings for God out of the livelihood is clearly exemplified in the story of the widow, who had put her two mites into the treasury (about two pennies), so God praised her and said: "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." (Lk 21:2-4).

**God is teaching us that giving in offerings for Him is greater when it is out of poverty (necessities).**

If anyone is giving out of his necessities, this proves that he is giving as well lots of love and sacrifice, this person is actually favoring others more than himself...in contrast to the person who, out of abundance, gives out whatever was left with him and didn't feel in the first place that he is in need.

Concerning this subject, I would like to contemplate with you into the act of whoever gives out of his poverty (necessity): whether of his money, time, of his rest hours or out of his health...

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**There are those who give out of their necessities their own children or their relatives.**

❖ **The first example is our Father Abraham when he offered his son Isaac.**

Our father Abraham had a son after waiting for so many years for this to happen, he was given divine promises, his wife was barren, and he had already aged. He was joyous with having this son when God's command came unto him "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love...and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains..."(Gn: 22:2).

Abraham went up there to offer God, out of his necessities, his own son.

This offering was very dear in God's eyes, so when Abraham prepared the altar, wood, and knife for the burnt offering, God just stopped him, and said: "because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son-- blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore"(Gn 22: 16, 17).

❖ **Another example is Hannah, Samuel's mother.**

Hannah was barren, and her rival provoked her severely that she wept. So she fastened, prayed in the House of the Lord, wept a lot and made a vow that if God will give her a male child, then she will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, (1Sm1). And it happened...when God gave her Samuel, as soon as he grown to be just a little child; she took him up with her and offered him to serve the house of the LORD in Shiloh.

She gave, out of her necessities, her own son. So God blessed him, and made him His prophet, Samuel was given to anoint Saul as a King (1Sm10), and anoint David as a king (1Sm16). And the LORD also gave Hannah, Samuel's mother, another three sons and two daughters.

She gave, out of her poverty, a son to the LORD. And the LORD never made her in need for children anymore.

## Pope Shenouda III



❖ **Unfortunately some wives do not give out their husbands to be ordained as Priests! And also they don't give out their sons and daughters for Monasticism.**

This has happened with us several times: the congregation approved upon the election of one of the servants to be ordained as a priest, but the wife refused, so he was not ordained!! As the bible says: "Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom!" (2 Ch 9:7)

Giving out a husband for priesthood, could be giving out of the necessities, the wife could be considering that her husband will be turned to (public sector) after he had been only for herself...!

❖ **Another example of those who had put in offerings to the Lord out of their own necessity: is the person who offers himself to God.**

I mean the person who dedicates himself to God, and offer the LORD this self which he possesses nothing else except it, desert everything for God's sake: whom he knows, and what he owns.

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**Let's move to another point which is putting out money out of the livelihood.**

There is a person who owns lot of money out of which he puts in offerings for the LORD. But this kind of giving is not as meaningful as when a person puts in offerings out of what he is in need of.

❖ As when a person says: my whole salary is not even enough for me, so how can I pay its tithes? Indeed, you will give out of your necessity. That's why God will bless the rest which will be more than the whole amount.

❖ **Another example, God's saying "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb" (Ex13:2).**

And that is the commandment of the firstborn, in the old times it was out of the vegetable or animal production. For example a person might plant a tree, and waits about three or four years till it bears fruit, he then takes all the fruits (the first production) and put it in as offering for the LORD. This is giving out of necessity; he was waiting for it and didn't take it for himself.

The same goes for an animal. The owner waits till it delivers, then takes its firstborn and put it in as offering for the LORD...so what about nowadays.

Most of the graduates complains of unemployment, so if it happens and someone got a job that he has been waiting for, he takes his first salary and puts it in as offering for God, as it is the firstborn of his income. This is also giving out of the necessity.

Likewise the first medical surgery operated by a surgeon, or his first medical examination for a patient or his first prescription, he dedicates it also to God.

Also every engineer or teacher does the same, an accountant, an attorney, or any professional does so, puts in his first income to the LORD.

**So do you judge yourself for the old firstborns which you didn't put in as offerings for the LORD?**

I don't mean its old value which it was worth ten years ago or may be more, but I mean its equivalent value which is worth now...because if you give out today the same value which was worth in the old days, then you are not giving out of your necessity...!

**Shortly, it all matters about to what extent man loves money, or is he over and above that level...**

For that reason, the money of a poor person who puts it in as offering for God, is more precious than the money of a rich man who gives out of abundance, it represents a kind of hard currency.

It reminds me of the story of Olugious the stone breaker, who earned only one dirham everyday, then, sits by the entrance of his village at sunset to see any stranger who is coming. He then hosts this stranger out of his only dirham. Hegumen Daniel the saint, of Shehid has told the story of this man...

This also reminds me of the story of Hegumen Youssef Metallic, who was of Alexandria's Forefathers: a poor met him on the street and asked him for charity, he had no money in his pockets, so he borrowed from the grocery which was near the Patriarchate, and gave the poor man...by this he obeyed the commandment which says: " Give to him who asks you "(Mt 5:42), even if you don't have anything.

**There are other examples**, a poor father who pays for his children's education out of his necessities. Or a sick father who prefers not to buy his own medicine for the sake of using this money to cover up for his children's needs...

Do children ever remember how much their parents gave them -out of their poverty-till they were able to raise them up?

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At that point I remember churches that do not fulfill all the Poor's needs as they want the money for construction projects or other activities...!!

These churches should have given the poor out of their necessities to obey God's commandment, so that the care for the poor would be put into real action however the need for the money is...give the poor even from the finances of the superb projects.

We tried this kind of giving in some of Heliopolis' churches, and as a result the income of these churches has highly increased than before, the church has projects which need the money, though it was directed to helping the poor.

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**I move to another point now, which is putting in offerings for God out of our time.**

And this includes work time or break time which actually is needed for our good health.

You return home when you are so tired saying to yourself "The heaviness of the day and its heat I endured not by reason of my weak nature", you want to rest and get some sleep, but what about praying?! You say: I don't have the time now, honestly I am so tired, and so sleepy...

So, you don't want to put in offerings for God out of your necessities!

But if you resist fatigue, give out of your need to rest, and prayed, hence your prayer avails much, and God will give you the grace to continue...

❖ Or sometimes you proceed to start your prayer,

and in your mind there are so many issues that keep you busy and you want to think of them. This means that you should keep all those issues out of your mind first, so that you can pray...if you do so, then you are putting in offerings for God out of your necessities.

Don't say to yourself: I will first finish thinking about this issue then I will pray...or I will just finish talking to this guest then I will start my prayers...or I will first have my dinner then I will pray...by this you are scheduling God at the bottom of your list...then you finally start your prayers when you became too tired to do so... so you just say I will sleep now and in the morning I will pray!!

It is as if you are telling God, as was said to St. Paul the Apostle, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you." (Acts 24:25)... things shouldn't go this way.

So, you should put in offerings for God out of necessities of your time: whether for prayer, contemplation, or spiritual reading. Do this with your heart, and God will not forget your weariness and that you gave out of your effort...

The same goes for the time that you spend in church service, this time that you dedicate to God in spite of your work and the burden of other responsibilities... Don't ever try to apologize for not doing your service, justifying by not having the time. Put in offering for God out of your necessity, out of your time.

I direct my speech to youth meetings' servants, university assemblies' servants, and to servants who give out lectures.

I direct my speech also to priests, they should dedicate more of their time to visiting their congregation, confessions, visiting patients and solving family problems.

Do not apologize for not doing those things using the justification of not having time; remember this phrase: "the path to hell is paved with apologies and justifications"

Try to overcome anything which keeps you busy, and give the Lord time out of your necessity.

When you give God out of your time in weariness, he will make it up for you and take away the fatigue, as said " He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength" (1s 40:29).

**You should know that the phrase "I don't have time" could mean "I'm not interested". If an issue raises your interest, you will find time for it.**

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**I am speaking as well about raising kids.**

The parents are responsible for raising their child spiritually, and not only just caring for his health, nutrition, clothing and education.

Does any party of the parents justifies himself for not sitting with his children in a spiritual meeting, by not having the time to do this?

Here is God who says: "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup>You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house" (Dt 6:6).

When I attended the millennium of Russia's baptism, I thanked the church for preserving the faith during seventy years of communism. I also thanked mothers and grandmothers who cared for their children and were teaching them Christian faith and prepared them for baptism.

So, give time-even out of your necessity-to teach your children their religion.

## Pictures from Some Ramadan Banquets

### His Excellency the Sheikh of Al Azhar in Sohag Diocese

Deep are the relations between His Excellency Dr. Tantawy the Sheikh of Al Azhar and His Grace Bishop Bakhom of Sohag. Every time the Great Imam goes to Sohag or Tama (his city) he visits HG Bishop Bakhom, not only in Ramadan.

The picture here features both surrounded by Sohag Governor, the Head of Security, and the National Security Inspector.



### A Ramadan Banquet held by the Diocese of South Sinai

HG Bishop Apollo held this banquet in Al Phara'ena Hotel, Sharm El Sheikh.

The banquet was attended by General Mustafa Afifi the Governor, Security, Public and Local Leaders, representatives from Al Azhar and the Ministry of Religious Endowments and 150 investors and managers.

### A Ramadan Banquet at Shobra El Kheima Diocese

HG Bishop Morcos of the Diocese held this banquet. It was attended by Counselor Adly Hussein who is El Qaliubeya Governor, the Security Head, the National Security Head, the Head of the Public Council at the Diocese, and so many of the leaderships...



## Illustrated Church News

### HH the Pope in St Mina Monastery

On the Pope's way to Alexandria on Friday 21-11-2003, he passed by St Mina (the Wonders Maker) Monastery at Marriott Desert. With HH was HG Bishop Kirolos Ava Mina, the Head of the Monastery.

HH congratulated the fathers on the occasion of St Mina's Feast. He made the Holy Spices and scented the tube containing the saint's remains. He had a spiritual meeting with fathers. And he gave his blessings to one by one of the hundreds who were present at the Monastery on that day.



### At Al Azhar University to congratulate them on the occasion of Al-Fitr Feast

Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Tayeb, the President of the University is in the middle of the picture surrounded by their grace Bishop Youanes and Bishop Mousa. The picture was taken in his office.

The picture also has HG Bishop Morcos and Hegumen Ermia Ava Mina on one side.

And on the other side there is Dr. Tharwat Basili, Counselor Mina Malek and Counselor Edward Ghaleb. It also has some of the Vice Presidents of the University.

### A historical picture in Thailand

It shows HG Bishop Daniel of Sydney and its territories praying his first Liturgy in Thailand and in front of him one of his priests.

It is good to visit the church children in such far places.

