



Mahragan
Alkeraza
2019

ARISE & BUILD

Nehemiah 2:20



“Therefore we His servants will arise and build.”
Nehemiah 2:20

Gr. 1-2
English Edition



ARISE & BUILD



H.H. Pope Tawadros II

Pope of Alexandria &
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark



H.G. Bishop Mina

Bishop of Mississauga,
Vancouver and Western Canada



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	4
God Is Essential For Our Life	6
The Secret Of Our Success	14
We Are His Children	21
Arise To Your Joy	26
Let's Build Our Life	30
Memorization	35



INTRODUCTION

Mahragan Alkeraza 2019

As we celebrated the conclusion of last year's Mahragan with the distribution of the trophies for the first, second and third place winners, we were grateful for God's blessings for a successful 2018 Mahragan. His Holiness Pope Tawadros II said during the Awards Ceremony in Egypt, "I am happy to see the activities of the Youth Bishopric, I am glad that our beautiful Church that is 2000 years old is full of young youth and I am proud to see the creative work and achievements of the youth."

Last year, in addition to the usual participation from Egypt and Sudan, we had a great worldwide participation from 192 Churches representing more than 20 countries and 8 languages.

The theme for Mahragan 2019 is "Therefore we His servants will arise and build." (Nehemiah 2:20). This year, God is asking each one of us to grow in Christ. To do this we will learn about the following topics:

1. God Is Essential For Our Life
2. The Secret Of Our Success
3. We Are His Children
4. Arise To Your Joy
5. Let's Build Our Life



We hope that all of you will participate in the Mahragan activities this year, and encourage everyone you know to join us in one of the greatest annual events, presented by our mother, the Coptic Orthodox Church.

May God bless Mahragan Alkeraza this year and the efforts of all the participants and coordinators, through the prayers of our beloved father Pope Tawadros II.

✠
My best wishes for a happy
Festival
✠
Bishop Mousa



God Is Essential For Our Life

God the Creator

God is the only Creator. In fact, this characteristic is unique to God alone.

God created everything in the whole universe. God separated light and darkness. He created heaven. He created the trees and the plants. He created the sun, the moon and the stars. He created the birds of the air and the fish of the sea. He created the animals and finally, He created us.

After creating everything in its most beautiful form, God created man in a completely different way. He used the dust of the earth and breathed in him the breath of life. He then proceeded to create Eve from Adam's rib.

In fact, man was the only creature that was created in the image and likeness of God.

God alone is the Creator as the verse says:



MEMORY VERSE:

“Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it.” Isaiah 45:18

When man invents something, he can only do it with existing means and materials. For example, when a carpenter makes a chair, he uses wood taken from the trees which God created. Also, he designs the chair and makes it look beautiful using the mind that God gave him.

Since God is the Creator, He is the only one who can give life. This is why we call Him the Life-giver. He also created everything in a beautiful order and with great stability.



For example, nights are followed by days. The year is arranged in seasons. The human body has organs which all have specific functions and come together accurately to perform their purpose.

Finally, because He is the Creator, He is the only one who can protect His creation, which is why we call Him the Omnipotent which means “all powerful and able to do anything”. He is the only one who can fix problems that happen to His creation.

1- Joshua And The Miracle Of Stopping The Sun Joshua 10 (verse 1-15)

A long time ago, in order to enter the Promised Land, Canaan, the people of God had to fight and defeat the countries who stood in their way. God helped them defeat their enemies so that they were victorious.

One day Joshua, the commander of God’s people, led the Israelites into war with their enemies. Since God was always with His children, He helped Joshua and his army in this war by casting down large hailstones from heaven on their enemies.



But as the sun was going down, Joshua asked God for a miracle. He asked for the sun to stay still in its place so that he and his men can continue fighting and win the battle. God, the Creator of everything, accepted Joshua's request. The sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not go down for about a whole day until Joshua defeated his enemies.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand.”

Joshua 10:8



2- The Born Blind - John 9

As Jesus was walking with His disciples, He saw a man who had been born blind. He was sitting in the street begging for money. When Jesus saw him, He spat on the ground and made mud with His saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. He told him to go and wash himself in the pool of Siloam which was nearby. The man obeyed Jesus and went and washed and came back seeing.





The only One who could have created eyes for this man was our Lord Jesus. He created eyes for him in the same way man was created.

God, our Creator, is the one who is able to protect and care for His creation because He is Omnipotent, all powerful and the only Life-giver.



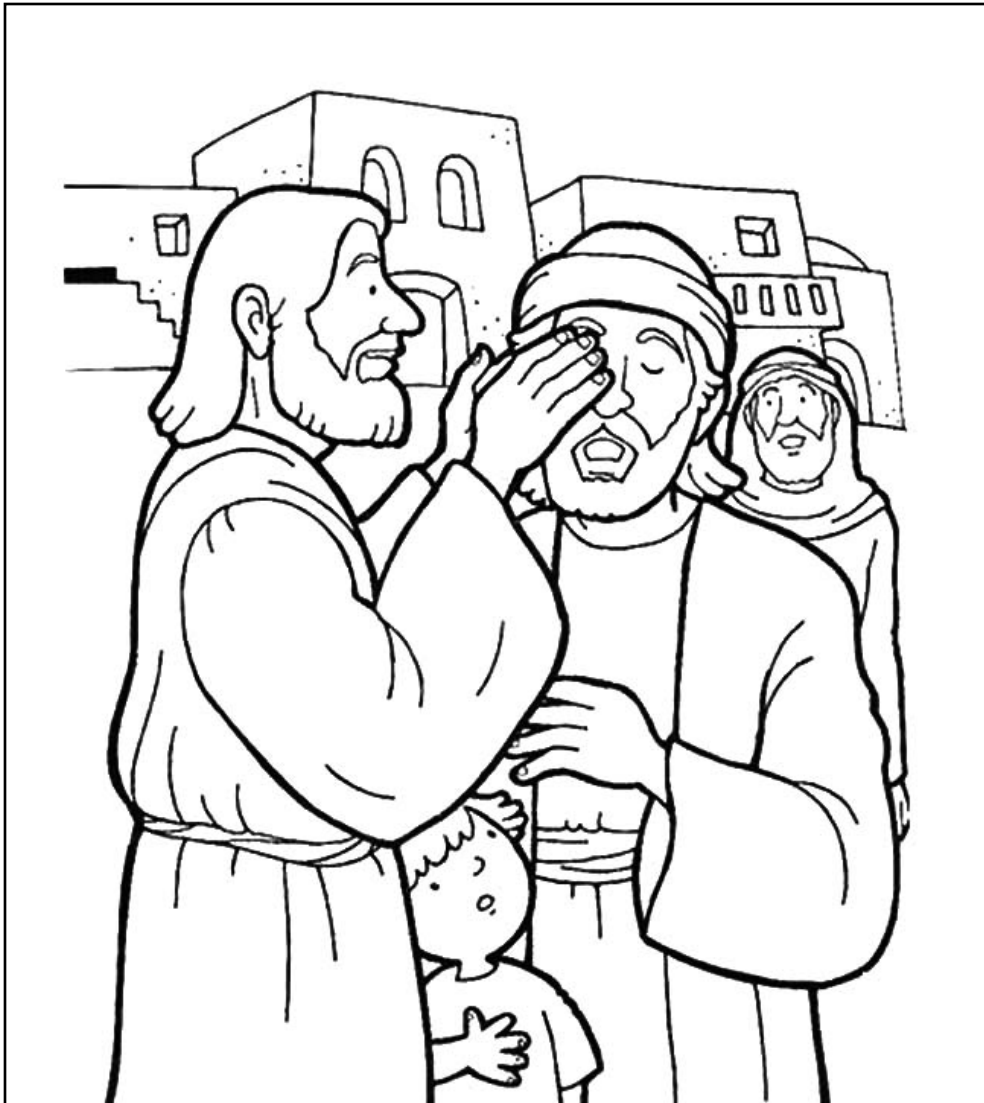
Joshua And The Sun





Jesus Heals The Blind Man

ACTIVITY





The Secret Of Our Success

Esther The Queen Saves Her People The Book Of Esther

A long time ago in Persia, there was a beautiful Jewish girl from God's people named Esther.

Her father and her mother had died, so her cousin, Mordecai took care of her.

Mordecai loved God very much and taught Esther the love of God and the obedience of His commandments.



When the king of Persia was looking for a wife to become his queen, God gave grace to Esther among seven other girls and the king chose her to be the queen. The king did not





know that she was from God's people.

One day, there was an evil plot against the people of God made by a man named Haman. Haman was very close to the king and was chosen to be the chief of all the ministers in the kingdom. He ordered that everyone bow down to him. Everyone obeyed this order except for one, Mordecai, Esther's cousin, because he followed God's commandment to worship God alone.



Since Haman was a wicked man, he was very angry with Mordecai and conspired to get rid of him and all his people, the Jews.

Haman went to the king and told him that there are people who violate the laws of the kingdom, and that he should get rid of them. The king gave him his request, so Haman wrote a decree





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announcing the date of the execution of the order. He sealed it with the king's seal and distributed it to the whole country.



When Mordecai found out, he wept and fasted with all the Jews. When Esther became aware of her people's weeping and fasting, she sent a messenger to find out why. Mordecai told the messenger all that had happened to them and gave him a copy of the decree written for their destruction.



Mordecai also told him to tell Esther to go to the king to plead before him for her people. This was a very hard request because the law dictated that anyone who goes into the inner court of the king, without being called, must be put to death except the one for whom the king holds out the golden scepter. Though Esther was



afraid, she loved Mordecai and her people and his words made her change her mind.



Esther told the messenger to go back to Mordecai to gather all the Jews and fast and pray for her for three days. She and her maids fasted likewise. She trusted that God will hear them and accept their fasting and prayers. Mordecai did all that Esther commanded him.

Since they did not despair and had faith in God, God accepted their prayers and fasting. Esther went into the inner court of the king's palace, and the king was very happy with Esther's presence and asked for her request.

Before asking for anything, Esther invited the king and Haman to





two banquets. After the second banquet, she asked the king to save her life and the life of her people, because their lives were in danger because they have been threatened by Haman. The king became very angry and he ordered the death of Haman.

Because the laws of the kingdom prevent the king to cancel a previous decree that was issued, the king issued a new decree to give the Jews the right to defend themselves against the people who wanted to hurt them. They won and they rejoiced their victory because God answered their prayers and fasting.

They celebrated this victory every year on the feast of the Purim. If we have hope and trust in the Lord, we too will rejoice as the verse says:



MEMORY VERSE:

“And you would be secure, because there is hope.” Job 11:18



Esther Crowned As Queen

ACTIVITY





Mordecai





We Are His Children

St. Barnabas And His Encouragement Of St. Paul Synexarium 21 Kiahk

St. Barnabas was a Jew from the tribe of Levi. He was born from a rich family in Cyprus. His name was Joses but our Lord gave him the name “Barnabas”, which means “son of encouragement”. St. Barnabas had many good qualities.



a. He loved giving

In the early days of the church, everything was shared between the believers. They brought their offerings with all joy to the apostles so that they would distribute it to those in need. For this reason, St. Barnabas sold his field and gave its price to the apostles.

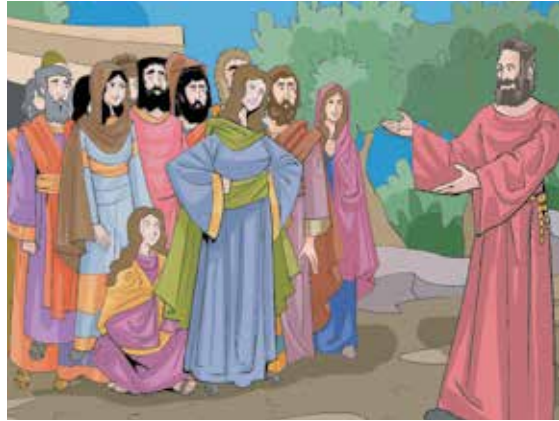
b. He encouraged everyone

He saw the good in everyone he dealt with and encouraged



them. He did this with St. Paul the Apostle.

In the beginning of his life, St. Paul persecuted the Christians. But after God appeared to him on his way to Damascus, he believed in the Lord Jesus and



began preaching the good news of our Lord Jesus. However, the believers in Jerusalem did not believe that he became a Christian and were afraid of him.

St. Barnabas brought St. Paul to them and reassured them confirming that St. Paul saw the Lord Jesus and believed in Him.

Because of what St. Barnabas did, people believed St. Paul and accepted him among them.

When St. Barnabas was in Antioch preaching, the number of believers increased so much that he needed help. He brought St. Paul from Tarsus to help him. As a result, they both ministered



in Antioch for two years, preaching about the Lord Jesus and converting many.

St. Barnabas fulfilled the verse that says:

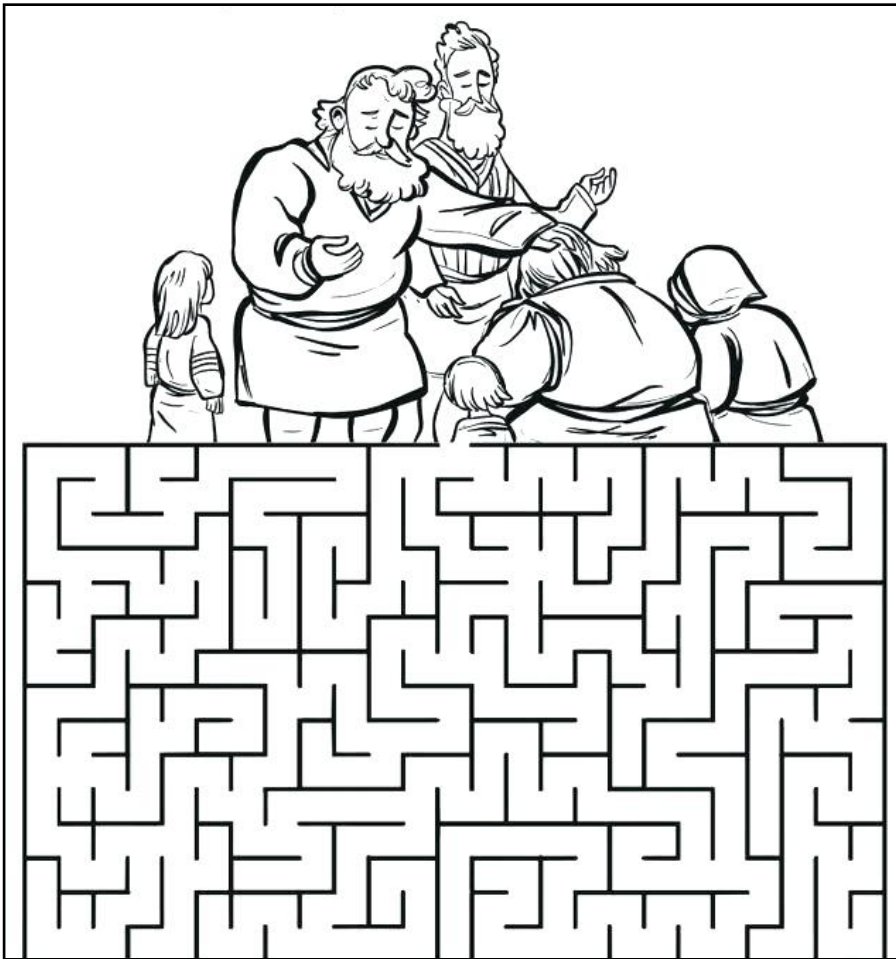
MEMORY VERSE:

“Uphold the weak, be patient with all.” 1 Thessalonians 5:14

St. Barnabas served in many places including Cyprus with St. Mark, and this is where he was martyred. The church celebrates his martyrdom on the 21st day of the Coptic month of Kiahk.



St. Paul and St. Barnabas Preach To The Gentiles

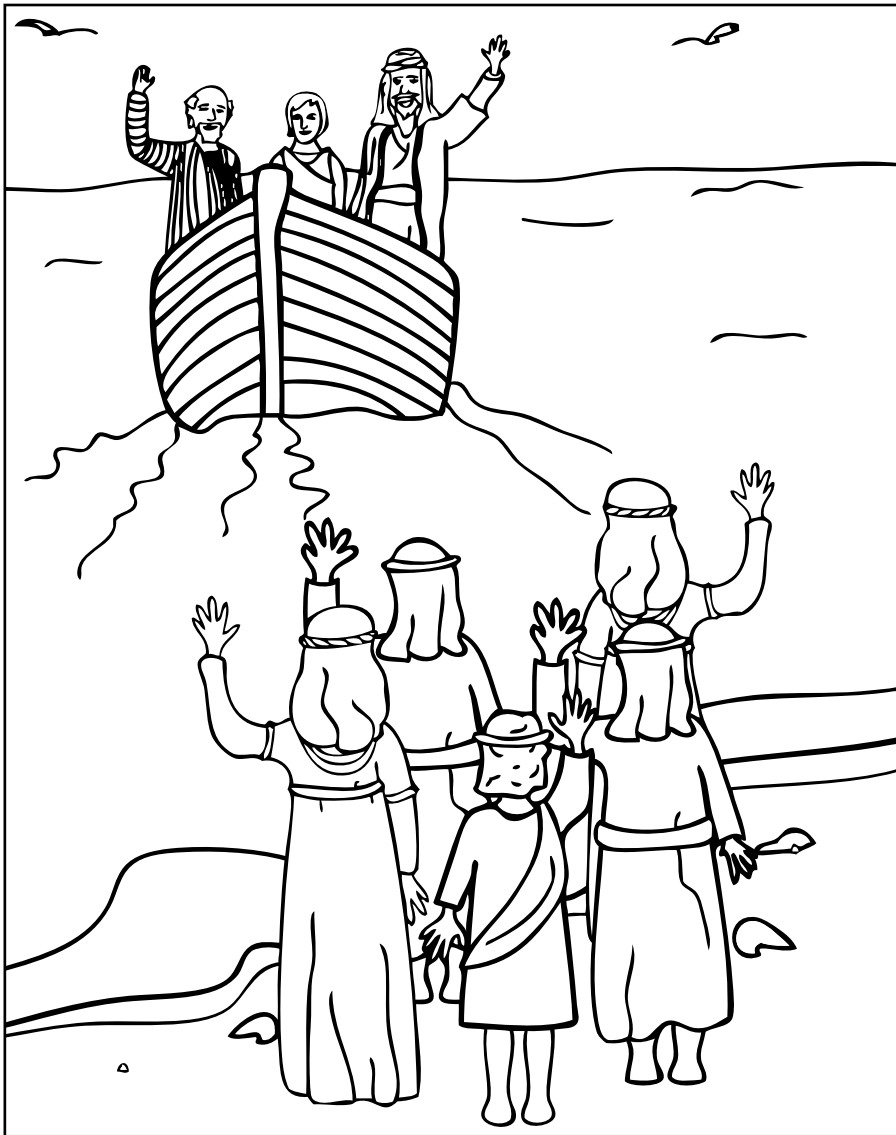


Help St. Paul spread the word about Jesus



Paul and Barnabas Sail To Cyprus

ACTIVITY





Arise To Your Joy

St. Abakragoun El-Batanoony
Synexarium- 25 Abib

St. Abakragoun was born in the province of Menoufia in a village called Batanoon from a father and mother who worshiped idols. His friends were wicked and he did many wrong things.



One day, he plotted with two of his friends to go rob the cell of an old monk. When they arrived there, the old monk was praying. They waited for him to finish his prayer and go to sleep so that they would go in and rob him, but to their surprise, he continued to pray throughout the night.

His friends grew impatient and told him to either attack the monk or leave because they were tired of waiting. But Abakragoun refused to harm the monk because his prayers



touched him greatly so they waited until he finished his prayers.

In the morning, the old monk came to them. Abakragoun asked him to forgive them. He forgave them and welcomed them into his cell. He offered them food and drink. He



explained to them that what they were doing is wrong and talked to them about God, He told them that God is always waiting for sinners to repent and turn from their evil way. As the verse says,

MEMORY VERSE:

“There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.”

Luke 15:7

This is why when we sin or do anything wrong, we go back to God right away and tell Him that we are sorry and ask Him to help us repent and not repeat the evil again. We do this through the Sacrament of Confession.



After they heard this, Abakragoun and his friends realized that they need to change their evil ways. They repented from their sins, confessed and were baptized. They became monks because they wanted to live in solitude and spend more time with God. They lived the life of prayer and fasting, reading the Bible and following God's commandments.

One day, the old monk came to St. Abakragoun and told him that he will be martyred. Six years later, there was a lot of persecution against the church and St. Abakragoun bid the old monk farewell and went to confess the name of Christ in front of the governor who sent him to be tortured in Alexandria. He endured sufferings in many places. In every place he went, he witnessed for our Lord Jesus Christ and God gave him the gift of performing miracles.

When he arrived to Samanoud, the minister's





soldiers arrested him. Through his prayers, God raised the daughter of the minister from the dead. The minister, his wife, and his soldiers, believed.

After this, he was taken to Alexandria where he again endured many sufferings. God told him about the time of his martyrdom and promised him that his body will be returned to his city El-Batanoon as he requested.

After his martyrdom, the angel of the Lord appeared to a priest and told him about the place of the body of the saint. The priest went and took it. After the time of persecution, they built a church in his name in the city of El-Batanoon and placed his body in it. The church celebrates his martyrdom on the 25th day of the Coptic month of Abib.





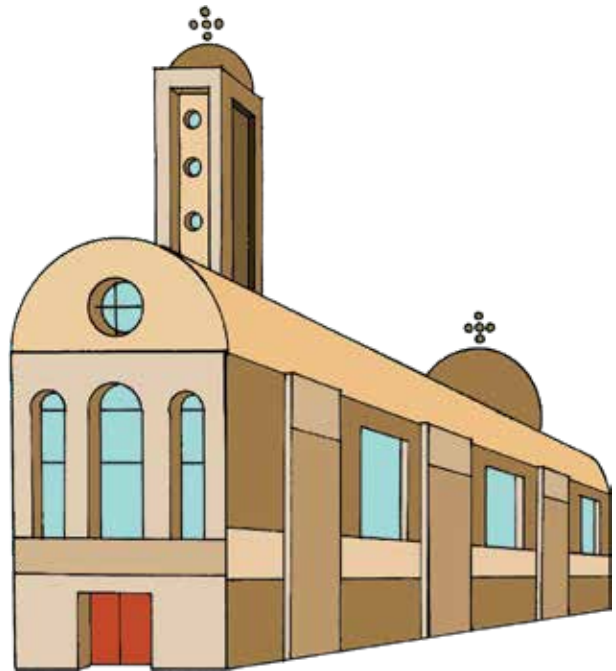
Let's Build Our Life

The Church

Our beautiful Church is not a building like all others, but its structure has both a meaning and a purpose. Everything in it is built in a way to teach us more about God.

1- The Church Is Built In Three Forms

- **The Form Of A Boat**
The boat reminds us of Noah's ark when Noah and his family entered at the time of the flood and were saved from drowning. This symbolizes that the Church protects us from the danger and evil of this world and it is in the church where we can find salvation.





- **The Form Of The Cross**

It was on the Cross where our Lord redeemed us and the door of heaven was opened for us. The church teaches her children the way to heaven.

- **The Form Of A Circle**

The circle has no beginning and no end just like our God has no beginning and no end.

2- The Iconostasis

This is what separates between the altar and the church nave. It is made of wood, marble or stone. It has three doors. Each door has a curtain decorated with crosses or the picture of the patron saint of the church or the saint after which the altar is named.



The iconostasis holds the icons of saints who lived on earth and are now in heaven.



The church puts the iconostasis in front of us when we enter the church so we can feel as if we are in heaven. When we see it, we are reminded of all the saints who are in heaven but also are close to us at all times. We learn from their lives and we ask for their prayers and intercessions.

3- The Bosom of the Father

The Bosom of the Father is the curved wall inside the altar towards the East. It symbolizes the bosom of our Lord, which is open to each one of us. It holds the icon of our Lord Jesus Christ sitting on His throne and holding the globe in His hand as He is the Pantocrator and the Creator of everything. He is all powerful and protects us with His power. In His other hand, He holds the staff of the shepherd, because He is the





Good Shepherd, who takes care of everyone, and takes us in His bosom.

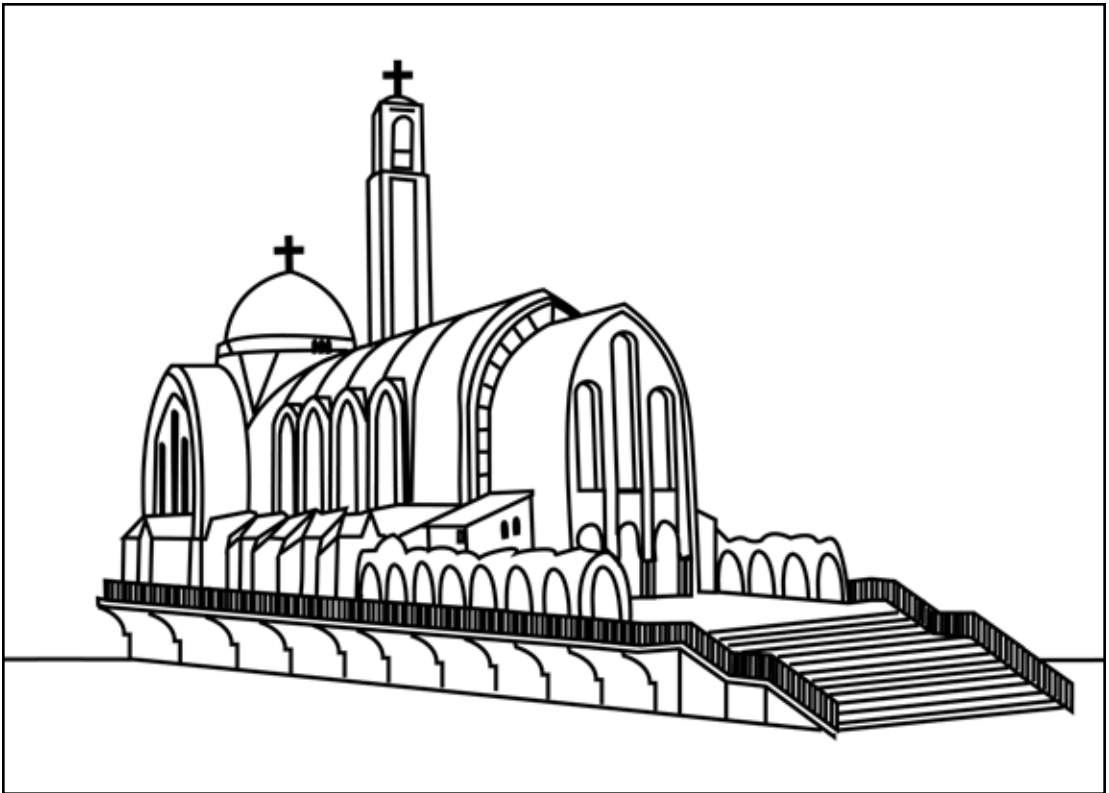
In front of the Bosom of the Father, there is a lamp lit with oil. It is always lit, reminding us that the eyes of our Lord are always watching over us. It also reminds us of the star that appeared to the Magi, and led them to the manger where Jesus was born.

MEMORY VERSE:

“How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts!” Psalm 84:1



St. Mark's Cathedral In Cairo





Memorization

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John
5. Acts
6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1 Thessalonians
14. 2 Thessalonians
15. 1 Timothy
16. 2 Timothy
17. Titus
18. Philemon
19. Hebrews
20. James
21. 1 Peter
22. 2 Peter
23. 1 John
24. 2 John
25. 3 John
26. Jude
27. Revelation



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