



MAHRAGAN ALKERAZA | 2020

# “MY CHURCH IS SPIRIT AND LIFE”

GR. 5-6 | ENGLISH EDITION

# “MY CHURCH IS



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

# SPIRIT AND LIFE”

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## INTRODUCTION

### Mahragan Alkeraza 2020

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 2019 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 2020 is “My Church Is Spirit & Life”. This year, God is asking each one of us to grow in Christ. To do this we will learn about the following topics:

1. My Church Is A Beautiful Vine
2. Our Good Shepherd Protects The Church
3. Well Established With Strong Roots
4. We Are Its Watered Branches
5. It Makes Me Experience The Taste Of Eternal Life

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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

## My Church Is A Beautiful Vine

The Church, the House of God

The church is not a new concept invented in the recent centuries. The dwelling of God with humanity in a designated place existed since the beginning of creation and has evolved through time.



### 1. The First Paradise (Garden of Eden)

This was the first dwelling of God with man. Everything in it declared how much God loves and cares for man. God spoke to Adam every day. After the fall, Adam, representing all humanity was kicked out of paradise as sin separated him from God. God had to interfere for man to come back and live with Him.



### 2. Altar

When Adam and Eve realized

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that they were naked, they covered themselves with fig leaves, but God made for them tunics made from animal skin and clothed them. Thus God showed them the importance of offering a sacrifice to cover their mistakes. God taught Adam how to offer an acceptable sacrifice and Adam passed it on to his children. From there, man started to have a relationship with God through prayers and offering of sacrifices, just like Abel, Noah and Abraham did as well.



### 3. Bethel (Genesis 28:10-22, 35:1-7)

This was the first place that was called “House of God” in the Holy Bible. Jacob went from Beersheba to go to his uncle Laban in Haran to flee from his brother Esau who wanted to kill him. When the sun had set, he came to a place and stayed all night. He took a stone from this place and put it at his head and he laid down to sleep. He had a dream, and saw a ladder that was set up on the earth and its top reached to heaven and the angels of God were ascending



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and descending on it. The Lord stood above it and said to him “I am with you”. When Jacob woke up, he said:

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

***“Surely the Lord is in this place...“How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” Genesis 28:16-17***

Early in the morning, Jacob took the stone that he put at his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. He called the name of that place “Bethel” (the house of God). This story explains that the house of God is where the earthly connect with the heavenly as He told Jacob, “I am with you”. The house of God is where heaven opens up to earth.



## **4. The Tabernacle of meeting (Tent)**

The tabernacle was built according to the design that God showed Moses on the mountain to be the dwelling place where He would be present



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with His people. God wanted to confirm His desire to be in the midst of His people and so the people of Israel took the tabernacle everywhere they went.

## 5. The Temple of Solomon

When the people settled in Jerusalem, Solomon built the temple according to the design that God showed David. The temple was considered a continuation of the tabernacle as it had a similar design.



## 6. The Church of the New Testament

In the fullness of time appointed by God, our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnate and redeemed us and gave us His Holy Body and Blood. God was not only present in the midst



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of His people but also united them with Himself. The church is the Body of Christ, as St. Paul said

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

**“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”**

**1 Corinthians 12:27**

The Greek word “Ecclesia” is used to refer to the collective congregation or assembly of church members. The church is the congregation of the believers gathered in the consecrated house of God, under the clergy leadership, in the presence of the angels and the saints around the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord.



## **1. Congregation of the believers**

The believers are those who believed in our Lord Jesus Christ and are baptized and



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anointed with the Holy Oil of Myron. They practice the church’s sacraments (Repentance and Confession, Communion...) and do good deeds (helping the sick and the poor).



## 2. Consecrated House of God

The word “Consecrated” means dedicated. It becomes dedicated to lift up prayers for God when the pope or the bishop anoints it with the Holy Oil of Myron (anoints the altar, the vessels, the icons, the Baptism room).



## 3. Clergy leadership

The word clergy is a Latin word that means share or inheritance, indicating that the clergy chose God to be their share. They serve



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the congregation, starting with the pope, the bishops, the priests and deacons.

#### 4. The presence of the angels and the saints

Our church believes that the angels and the saints are present with us in the liturgical prayers, praying with us and for us.



## **5. Around the Holy Body and Blood**

Our church believes that the Holy Spirit descends on the bread and wine during the liturgy prayers and transforms them into the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the church we find:

### **1. Pillars**

There are 12 pillars representing the 12 disciples

### **2. Church Tower**

There are one or two in each church- to guide the people to the place of the church

### **3. The Altar**

It is the church's Holy of Holies

### **4. The Bosom of the Father**

A concave wall in front of the altar toward the east, representing the bosom of the Father open for the whole world. It has the icon of our Lord Jesus sitting on His throne.

## **5. The Iconostasis**

Between the altar and the church nave carrying icons of our Lord Jesus and the saints.

## **6. Mangalia**

A stand on which we put the reading books during the prayers.

## **7. Patron Saint**

On the right side of the Royal door there is the icon of our Lord Jesus Christ, next to it the icon of St. John the Baptist then the icon of the patron saint of the church.

## **8. The Chorus of the deacons**

Elevated by 2 or 3 steps from the church nave. It is the place for the deacons to stand during the liturgical prayers and also has the bishop's seat.

## **9. The Church's Bell**

To announce the beginning of the prayers

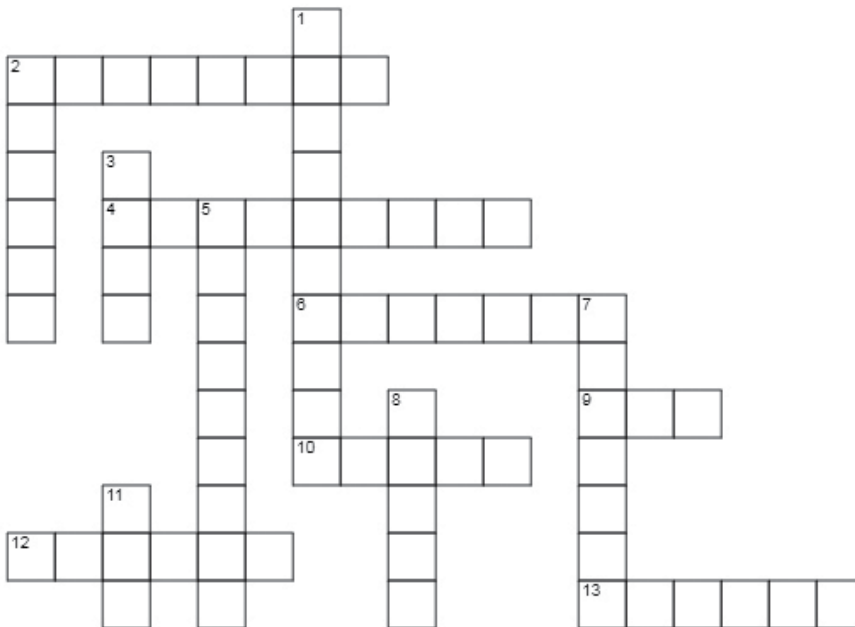
## **10. East**

We pray facing the east, as we are waiting for the second coming of Christ.

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## Adam and Eve Crossword

ACTIVITY



### ACROSS

- placed at the east side of the garden to keep man out
- Adam and Eve were not to eat from the tree of the \_\_\_ of good and evil
- Adam named all the \_\_\_
- the bone Eve was created from
- what the angel at the entrance to the garden was holding
- Eve was the mother of all the \_\_\_
- after Adam ate the forbidden fruit, the land produced \_\_\_

### DOWN

- Adam and Eve made clothes from these
- the ground was \_\_\_ because Adam ate the forbidden fruit
- God made clothes from \_\_\_ for Adam and Eve
- God said there would be enmity between Eve and serpent's \_\_\_
- the animal which deceived Eve
- Adam called Eve: Bone of my \_\_\_
- who Adam blamed after he ate the forbidden fruit

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## ACTIVITY

### *The Priests and The Tabernacle*

p	o	m	e	g	r	a	n	a	t	e	s
m	s	o	s	e	v	e	n	p	l	x	f
b	t	c	b	r	o	n	z	e	k	l	p
w	k	m	a	t	y	j	q	j	c	q	u
t	a	b	e	r	n	a	c	l	e	b	r
b	g	t	w	e	l	v	e	p	h	f	p
o	h	l	a	j	w	e	j	p	o	m	l
v	t	f	o	r	q	c	t	y	l	w	e
c	k	s	d	r	k	w	b	n	y	k	z
a	q	a	d	h	y	c	s	w	w	w	y

1. tabernacle  
2. purple  
3. ark

4. seven  
5. bronze  
6. scarlet

7. twelve  
8. pomegranates  
9. holy

10. glory



## Our Good Shepherd Protects The Church The Doctrine of Redemption

Because of His great love for man, God prepared everything for him before his creation. Man was the only creation who took the breath of life from God. God created man in His own image and likeness.



“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them” Genesis 1:27

God gave man freewill and told him, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2:16-17

God was capable of preventing Adam from eating of the tree, but since God created him with freewill He left him with a choice.

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Unfortunately Adam and Eve made the wrong choice and broke God’s commandment. They listened to the serpent and ate from the tree. They fell in sin and all their descendants, the rest of humanity, fell with them, just as St. Paul said:



## **MEMORY VERSE:**

***“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” Romans 5:12***

What is the punishment of sin?

1. Judgment of death as God told them. St. Paul said “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23. The death penalty here means separation from God, just as a light bulb is separated (unplugged ) from the source of electricity.

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2. Corruption of human nature, just as someone who eats something poisonous and needs to be treated otherwise he dies.
3. Expelled from the Garden of Eden  
In order for us to return to the life that we lost because of sin, the judgment of death must be taken away and our nature must be renewed.

Why did God not let man die and create another one in his place?

God is merciful and loves man so much which is why He could not just let him die.

Why did God not just forgive man?

Because our Lord is holy and just, and there is no union between light & darkness as St Paul says “For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?” 2 Corinthians 6:14

Death is a natural consequence of sin , since sin separates us from God , the source of life. Also, the nature of man was

corrupted by sin and needed renewal.

The only solution was the coming of a redeemer to die on our behalf, so that divine justice will be fulfilled in Him. Therefore, God was incarnated because He is the only One who fulfills the conditions of a redeemer. A redeemer must have been:

## 1. A Human Without Sin

Since it was a human who sinned, God came down from heaven to earth and was born from St. Mary. He took our human body, to be like us in everything except the sin.

## 2. Mortal (Able To Die)

He was crucified by His own will, and died instead of us to redeem us and take away from us the judgment of death.



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### 3. Stronger Than Death

He was buried, but because He is God, He conquered death and resurrected after three days.



### 4. A Creator

With His resurrection, He gave us eternal life and renewed our nature. Only a creator can renew the nature of what He had created.

Because God is not limited, He can redeem the entire humanity.

That is why St. Peter said “ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold..... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1Peter 1:18-19

The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ who was shed on the cross is sufficient to carry the sins of the whole world, but for every person to benefit from this precious salvation he must

- Believe in the Lord Jesus

- Be baptized in the name of the Trinity
- Partake of the Holy Communion
- Repent and confess his sins

The cross is the story of God’s love to mankind. The Cross was in God’s plan from the beginning. In the Old Testament there are many symbols for the cross.

### **The Passover Lamb Exodus 12**

The Israelites spent about 430 years of slavery in Egypt. They cried out to God to save them from the bondage of slavery. God heard their cry and sent them Moses to save them.



God said to Moses to go to pharaoh and tell him to “let the people go”, but pharaoh refused. God sent plagues upon pharaoh and his people. After each plague, pharaoh would ask Moses and Aaron to pray for him so that God would take it away and that he would let the people go. But, after each time,

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pharaoh would change his mind and refuse to let the people go until the tenth plague.

Because of the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart and his refusal to let the people go, God said to Moses that He would kill all the firstborn in the land of Egypt from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the slaves and even the animals.

God said to Moses to ask every family from the children of Israel to bring a male one-year old lamb without blemish. The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel would kill it at twilight and take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of their houses where they would eat the Passover lamb , so their firstborn would not die.

“Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt” Exodus 12:13

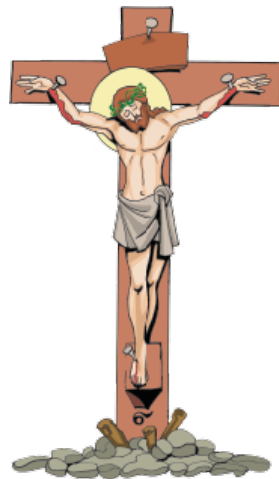
God also said that they should eat it on that night, roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. They should not

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break any of its bones. Everyone in the house should eat from it and they should not let any of it remain until morning, and what remains of it should be burned with fire.

And God said to Moses: “So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.” Exodus 12:14. They called it the Feast of the Passover (crossing) because the people of Israel went from slavery to freedom, heading to the Promised Land.

The Lamb of the Passover is a Symbol of the Sacrifice of the cross.





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<b>Passover Lamb</b>	Our Lord Jesus Christ
<b>A lamb going to the slaughter</b>	Our Lord Jesus is the Lamb of God. “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7)
<b>Without blemish</b>	Our Lord Jesus was without sin, without blemish (1 Peter 1:19)
<b>Was slaughtered as a ransom on behalf of the sins</b>	It was said about our Lord Jesus that He was “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)
<b>His blood was put on the doorposts and the lintel of the doors so that the life of the firstborn would be spared</b>	The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins and saves us from the eternal death. “without shedding of blood there is no remission.” (Hebrews 9:22)
<b>Roasted with fire (put on two sticks), eaten over bitter herbs</b>	Our Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross, He bore our sins and suffered for our sake (bitterness is a symbol of the sufferings of Christ)

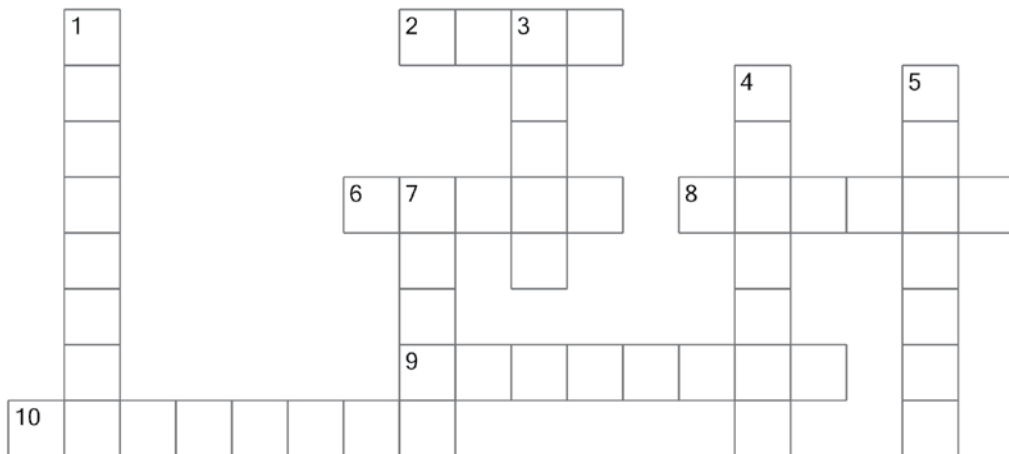


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## **None of his bones was broken**

Same with our Lord, they did not break any of His bones. “Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.” John 19:32-33

## Passover Crossword



### ACROSS

2. Sacrificed, blood smeared on the doorpost of every Jewish house
6. The festive meal held on the first nights of Passover
8. Unleavened bread
9. Jewish holiday celebrating the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt
10. Apple, nut, spice and wine mixture

### DOWN

1. Book with the story of the Exodus and the ritual of the Seder
3. Led the Israelites out of Egypt
4. Ten afflictions on Egypt
5. Ancient Egyptian king
7. Ancient empire on the Nile River and ruled by a Pharaoh

- |             |            |             |             |
|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Passover | 4. Moses   | 7. Haggadah | 9. Charoset |
| 2. Egypt    | 5. Plagues | 8. Seder    | 10. Lamb    |
| 3. Matzah   | 6. Pharaoh |             |             |

## Well Established With Strong Roots

### The Doctrine of the Trinity

What is the Holy Trinity? “The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet they are not three Gods but one God.”

#### **MEMORY VERSE:**

**“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!”**

**Deuteronomy 6:4**

“For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” 1John 5:7

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity holds that God is one God, but three coeternal consubstantial persons or hypostases — the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit — as “one God in three Divine Person.

#### **There are many analogies to explain the Trinity.**

##### **1. The Sun**

One of the analogies used to explain the Trinity is the sun.

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The sun itself, its rays and its heat all originate from it. The three are different yet the sun is one. There is no separation between the three and there was no time when the sun existed without its rays and heat.

## 2. The Equilateral Golden Triangle

The triangle has three independent sides connected to form one shape. It has three independent angles. All angles are equal but they are different. They are all connected.

So the Father is equal to the Son which is equal to the Holy Spirit. They are all of the same essence but three hypostases. Each hypostasis has a special characteristic that distinguishes it from the other hypostasis. The Father is the origin or the source, the Son is begotten from the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. But they were all present eternally (from the beginning of times). There was never a time when the Father was present without the Son and the Holy Spirit.

As we say it in the Creed “We believe in one God. God the Father.... We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God.... We believe in the Holy Spirit the Lord, the Giver of life who proceeds from the Father.

## **The Macedonian Heresy**

Macedonius was calling for strange teachings other than what our church believed. He stated that the Holy Spirit is not God and He is less than the Son, thus denying the divinity of the Holy Spirit.



Macedonius interpreted Bible verses in the wrong way and began to teach these false teachings. This is why the church teaches us the importance of relying on the proper interpretation which the church delivered to us from our Holy Fathers.

The church held a council in the city of Constantinople (the second ecumenical council) in the year 381 AD in the presence of 150 bishops from different countries led by Pope Timothy the 22nd Pope of Alexandria.

They explained to Macedonius the divinity of the Holy Spirit, as

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it is evident in many Bible verses:

“The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.” Job 33:4



And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever” John 14:16

From the verses it is clear that the Holy Spirit has the attribute of creation. He is the One who gave life; He is eternal; He is God.

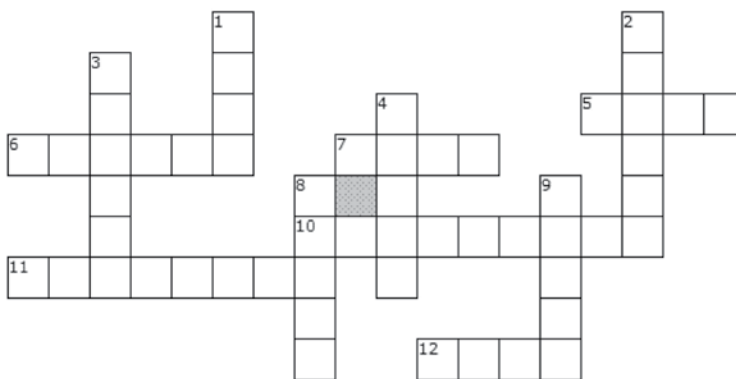
## **The decisions of the Council were:**

1. The Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in essence
2. They added the continuation of the Creed “Yes, we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-Giver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.”
3. Macedonius was excommunicated since he insisted on his wrong teachings and did not repent.

## *Filled With The Holy Spirit*

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:4 (NIV)

Based on Acts 2:1-21 (NIV)



### ACROSS

5. Make something to be full
6. To be totally surprised
7. Something that is pure and good, such as God's Word
10. The day the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles
11. Means of communication used by the people of a particular country
12. A destructive burning

### DOWN

1. Blowing air, especially that which would move the leaves on a tree
2. A being that cannot be seen, like a ghost
3. The place where God lives
4. Something that can be heard
8. To say words, to use the voice
9. A building which people live in

HEAVEN	SPIRIT	FIRE	HOLY
WIND	PENTECOST	LANGUAGE	SPEAK
SOUND	FILL	HOUSE	AMAZED



## We Are Its Watered Branches

Saint Mark the Apostle  
(Synexarium 30 Barmouda)

Saint Mark the Apostle was born in the city of Cyrene in Pentapolis, the western part of Lybia, from a wealthy Jewish family. His father Aristopolos and his mother Mary raised him in the fear of God. They took care of his education.



He studied the Torah and the Jewish Law and mastered many languages (Greek, Latin and Hebrew). St. Mark had two names: a Jewish name “John” meaning “God is Gracious” and a Roman name “Mark” meaning “Hammer”.

A group of tribes attacked their properties, so his family left the place and went to Jerusalem, which was at the same time that Christ began His ministry.

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St. Mark met with Jesus and was one of the seventy disciples whom the Lord chose (Luke 10). St Mark was mentioned in the book of Acts on several occasions. Also Mary, St. Mark’s mother, was one of the women who served the Lord Jesus and hosted Him in her house. Therefore St. Mark’s house was one of the famous houses in the history of Christianity because in it:

- Our Lord Jesus ate the Last Supper with His disciples in the Upper Room
- Our Lord Jesus washed the feet of His disciples on the Holy Thursday
- Our Lord Jesus instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist
- The disciples gathered to pray after the resurrection, and there our Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples more than once.
- The Holy Spirit descended on the



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disciples on the day of the Pentecost.

In essence, St. Mark’s house became the first church in Christianity.



During this time, St. Mark was learning from the Lord Jesus Himself. That is why the coptic church calls St. Mark “The beholder of God”, “The Pure Apostle”, “and The Evangelist”.

St. Mark preached in many places.

His first miracle: One day a lion and a lioness attacked him and his father. He prayed and by the power of the Lord Jesus, both the lion and the lioness died. Because of this miracle, his father entered in the Christian faith.

After the descent of the Holy Spirit, St. Mark began his ministry with St. Peter in Jerusalem and Judea.

He went with St. Paul and St Barnabas on the first missionary trip.

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He served with St. Barnabas in Cyprus

He went to St. Paul to help him in his ministry as per St. Paul's request.

He ministered in Cyrene for several years and God performed many miracles by his hands there and many entered in the Christian faith.



He then went to Egypt. He first went to the city of Alexandria, which was full of many pagan worshippers at the time. When he arrived there, his sandals were torn so he went to a cobbler named Anianus to fix it.

While fixing it, the needle injured Anianus' finger so he shouted "Eis Theos" meaning "O, One God". St. Mark was surprised but seized this

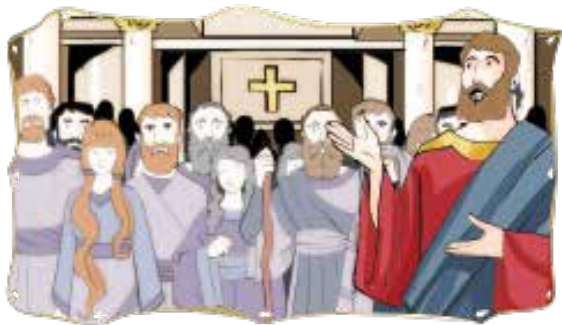


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opportunity to speak to him about the one God. He prayed and healed Anianus' finger and started to talk to him about our Lord Jesus Christ. Anianus took St. Mark to his house where he continued preaching. All those present believed and St. Mark baptized them.

Christianity started to spread in Alexandria and all of Egypt. St. Mark established the church in Egypt, he ordained Anianus to be the first bishop of Alexandria, and he also ordained three priests and seven deacons.

St. Mark then traveled to the five western cities in Pentapolis. Afterwards, he went to Rome and served with St. Paul until St. Paul's martyrdom (2Timothy 4:11),



After the martyrdom of St. Paul, St. Mark returned to Alexandria. He found that the number of the believers had increased. He built a church in the eastern region of Alexandria, which was known as "Bokalia" (now the place of St. Mark Church). He kept preaching and teaching everyone about the Christian faith and

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many pagans were converted to Christianity. The church calls him “the disperser of idols”.

On the night of the Resurrection, the pagans attacked the church. They tied St. Mark and began to drag him on the ground in the streets of Alexandria. His pure blood covered the streets of Alexandria. They put him in prison. In the middle of the night, our Lord Jesus appeared to him and strengthened him and promised him the crown of martyrdom.



On the next day they repeated the same thing again until he delivered his pure soul and was martyred on 30 Barmouda on the year 68 AD.



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The pagans lit a great fire to burn his body, but heavy rains came down and extinguished the fire. The believers took his body and shrouded him in honour.

May his prayers be with us Amen. Truly St. Mark fulfilled the verse that says

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

***“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” 2Timothy 2:2***

St. Mark’s achievements

1. He instituted the Theological School of Alexandria to explain the Christian faith and stand before the pagan philosophers and their culture. This school offered great services to Christianity. Many Christian scholars and philosophers graduated from it.



2. The Divine Liturgy (The Liturgy of St. Cyril) - He put together the prayers of the liturgy that he prayed and delivered it to St. Anianus. It is considered the oldest liturgy in the church. They continued praying with it. During his papacy, Pope Cyril I took the liturgy of St Mark and organized it & that is why we call it the liturgy of St. Cyril.



3. The Gospel of St. Mark- He is the writer of the Gospel of St. Mark that is considered the first of the written gospels.

### **St. Mark's Titles**

- The beholder of God- He saw the Lord Jesus and witnessed many events that Christ had done in his house. He was also one of the seventy apostles.
- The Evangelist- He wrote the gospel of St. Mark





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- The Minister of the Land of Egypt- He was the first to preach Christianity in Egypt
- The Martyr- He shed his blood for the sake of Christ.

## **His Feasts**

- His martyrdom: 30 Barmouda
- The appearance of his head and the consecration of his church: 30 Babah
- The return of his relics from Rome during the Papacy of Pope Kyrillos VI: 17 Baouna



## It Makes Me Experience The Taste Of Eternal Life

### The Church Vessels

#### **The Censor**

It is used to burn incense. In our church, the censor symbolizes St. Mary who bore the “True coal burning with Fire”, that is the incarnate Son of God.

#### **The Candleholder**

There are two candleholders on the altar to symbolize the two angels who appeared to Mary Magdalene in Jesus’ tomb after the resurrection.

#### **The Wine Cruet**

The small flask made of glass used for the wine during the liturgy before it is poured in the chalice.

#### **The Paten**

A small round tray, without a stand. It is usually made of silver or gold. It holds the bread that will become the Holy Body of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Divine Liturgy. It symbolizes the Lord’s manger and tomb.

## **The Holy Tablet**

The Holy Tablet is a tablet usually made of wood. It is consecrated with Holy Myron Oil. It must be on the altar during the prayers of the Divine Liturgy. It is engraved with a cross and the Greek letters Alpha and Omega meaning the beginning and the end.

## **The Chalice**

The Communion Cup, which holds the wine that will become the Holy Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Divine Liturgy. The Chalice is made from precious metals such as gold and silver.

## **The Spoon**

The Spoon in Coptic is called “Mysteer”. It is used to give the Blood of Christ during Communion.

## **The Incense Box**

A box for the incense made out of silver or carved wood. It is placed at the right hand of the priest. A small spoon is usually placed in the incense box and used for putting the incense in the censer

## **The Book of the Gospel**

A box covered with silver or gold in which there is a copy of the New Testament. It is decorated with icons. One side has the icon of the Resurrection or Crucifixion and the other side has the icon of the Patron Saint or St. Mary and the Child Jesus.

## **The Throne (The Seat)**

In the middle of the Altar, there is a wooden box, called in Coptic ‘Pi Totc’ which means ‘a seat’ or ‘a throne’, and is used as a holder for the Chalice. It is decorated with four small icons or more.

## **The Eprospherin**

A Latin word meaning “come forward”. It is a big cloth to cover the chalice and the paten on the altar during the liturgy. It is a symbol of the stone that was put on Christ’s tomb. It is taken away after the prayer of reconciliation.

## **The Star**

In Greek “Astir” or (Asterisk), it consists of two silver arched bands, crossed over each other into the shape of a cross, usually surmounted by a small cross. It represents the shape of the tomb and also reminds us of the star that appeared to the Wise Men.

## The Lafaef

Small handkerchiefs used to cover the altar. They symbolize the saddling cloth that St. Mary used to wrap baby Jesus. They also symbolize the shroud used for Jesus’ burial.

## The Sacrament of the Eucharist

The sacrament of the Eucharist is also called the Mystery of Mysteries, the Crown of Sacraments, the Sacrament of Thanksgiving and the Lord’s Table.

## MEMORY VERSE:

***“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life”***

***John 6:54***

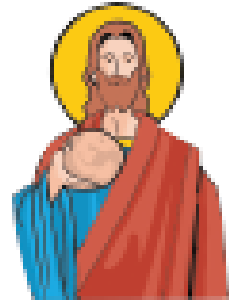
## The Institution of the Sacrament

Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament in the Upper Room at St. Mark’s house. He began by washing His disciples’ feet in order to teach them that before practicing this sacrament they must repent and be ready.

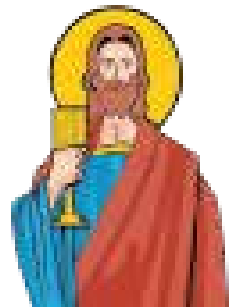


# SPIRIT AND LIFE”

He then took the leavened bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to His disciples and said “take eat; this is My body” Matthew 26:26



Afterwards, He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Matthew 26:27-28



Why did He use leavened bread and not unleavened bread?

Our Lord Jesus used leavened bread (made with yeast) because yeast symbolizes sin. He wanted to explain to them that He would carry our sins on the cross. Just as the fire nullifies the yeast’s action, so Christ abolished sin by His redemption on the cross and paying the debt on our behalf. He said to His disciples “do this in remembrance of Me” Luke 22:19

We keep repeating this sacrament to remember what our Lord Jesus did for us. participating in the Eucharist provides us with

healing and salvation for our souls , bodies and spirits

## **Are we repeating the sacrifice of the cross during the Eucharist?**

Absolutely not. The sacrifice of the cross cannot be repeated, “Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many” (Heb 9:28).

Therefore, we said that in the Eucharist there is no death and hence it is called “bloodless sacrifice”. We do not repeat the sacrifice of the cross but we recall it. The Eucharist takes us through the time to Calvary where we actually come in contact with the true body that was offered and precious blood that was shed on our



behalf, it is the same sacrifice not a repetition. In fact this is the meaning of the Lord’s words, “Do this in remembrance of Me”. For example, the children of Israel celebrated the Passover every year but the exodus from Egypt took place once; they did not repeat the exodus but rather recalled it.



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The memory here is a living memory, meaning that our Lord Jesus is present in His Body and His Blood every time the sacrament is performed.

In order to receive Communion we must be baptized and believe that it is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus.

## **How to prepare for Communion?**

- Faith
- Spiritual readiness
- Reconciliation with others
- Repentance and confession
- Bodily readiness (Purity of the body and Fasting before communion)

## **Through Communion:**

### **1. We receive remission of Sin**

“For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:28

### **2. We are united with all believers**

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion

of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.”  
1Corinthians 10:16-17

### **3. We abide in Christ**

“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.” John 6:56

### **4. We obtain eternal life**

“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:54

### **5. We grow in grace**

“This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.” John 6:58

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## 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

## Memorization

## PSALM 26 (AGPEYA)

The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident. One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.

For in the day of trouble He will keep me safe in His dwelling; He will hide me in the shelter of His tabernacle and set me high upon a rock. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at His tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord. Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of You, “Seek His face!” Your face, Lord, I will

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seek. Do not hide Your face from me, do not turn Your servant away in anger.

You have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Saviour. Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Teach me Your way, O Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, breathing out violence. I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. Alleluia.



# “MY CHURCH IS

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# SPIRIT AND LIFE”

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