

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate

St. Mary Coptic
Church
ⲄⲁⲥⲒⲁ Ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ
كنيسة السيدة العذراء مريم

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كنيسة السيدة العذراء القبطية الأرثوذكسية بشيكاغو

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✠ تدعوكم الكنيسة لحضور صلوات القداس الالهي
يوم الأحد من كل اسبوع
وذلك في المقر المؤقت الجديد
من الساعة صباحاً

بركة السيدة العذراء مريم . وصلوات ودعوات قداسة البابا المعظم الأنبا شنودة الثالث تكون معكم جميعاً ، آمين .

أخبار الكنيسة

✠ بدأ الصوم الكبير ، (بدون سمك) من ٦ مارس وينتهي يوم الأحد ٢٠ أبريل .

وسوف تقام صلوات البسحة المقدسة طوال الأسبوع المقدس .

صلاة عيد القيامة المجيد يوم السبت الموافق ٢٩ أبريل من الساعة ٧ مساءً حتى منتصف الليل .

والله اعلم

✠ جاري الآن التفاوض على شراء قطعة أرض لأقامة كنيسة السيدة العذراء ،
ونأمل ان تذكرونا في صلواتكم .

✠ الكنيسة تهني السيد رافت زكي وحرمة أنجيل بمولودهما وليم .

كذلك تهني الكنيسة الدكتور هاني صليب وحرمة سونيا بمولودهما مينا .

✠ تتقدم الكنيسة بواقر العزاء للسيدة صوفى زوجة الدكتور نصر شنودة لوفاة المرحومة
السيدة أختها بمصر - والكنيسة تسأل الرب ان ينيحها في أحضان أبائنا القديسين ابراهيم وأسحق ويعقوب .

LIVING AS A COPTIC ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN

"FASTING"



An American writer once compared our souls to wax in the sense that whatever we press on wax, a clear image, exactly similar to the original object pressed on, appears.

† God attempts to make an impression upon us. He desires to have each one of us be like his Son, Jesus Christ. His desire is to press the image of His Son into our lives. All we have to do is to be soft and obedient. If we are hard and disobedient, we'll crack when God begins pressing with the seal of His spirit.

† For centuries the Church has suggested many ways that might "soften up" you so that we might live in the image of Christ. Of these ways are : **FASTING**, **ALMSGIVING** and **PRAYING** . Let us consider first **FASTING**.

† Countless people go on diet and fast in order to lose weight and become slender and fashionable. True Christians fast because they wish to resemble Jesus Christ in purity and spiritual strength. To heighten their hunger for God they enter into bodily hunger. For them, fasting is an important item in their spiritual life so important that every thing else becomes secondary- even three meals a day.

† There are some who cannot fast due to health problems, and of course they should not. But many more christians could experience its spiritual and physical benefits if they would give fasting a try, especially during the weekly and yearly fasts recommended by the church.

† Fasting from food and drink is only one

form of abstinence. How about fasting from television, gossip, lying, cheating and those countless things which tend to control and slave us? In the present society, many habits control us and not only eating and drinking. Our souls and bodies need to regain the quiet and peace by regaining our control on our behavior.

† God says, " I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly " (Isaiah 1:13) That is, Fasting should be accompanied by repentance and stopping doing evil.

† Our Lord Jesus Christ advises us " when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say into you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18).



A STORY OF FOUR YOUNG MEN

"Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth" (Eccl 12:1)

† In the third year that Jehoiakim was king of Judea, king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia attacked Jerusalem and surrounded the city. The Lord let him capture king Jehoiakim and seize some of the temple treasures. He took some prisoners as exiles, back with him to the temple of his gods in Babylon.

† The king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief official to select from among the Israelites exiles, some young men of the royal family. They had to be handsome, intelligent, well trained, quick to learn, and free from physical defects, so they would be qualified to serve in the royal court. Ashpenaz was to teach them to read and write the Babylonian language. The king also gave orders that they were to be fed from the royal food and drink from the royal wine. After three years of training they were to appear before the king.

† Among those chosen were Daniel, Hannaniah, Mishael and Azariah, all from the tribe of Judah. Daniel made up his mind not to let himself become ritually unclean by eating the food and drinking the wine of the royal court, so he asked Ashpenaz to help him, and God made Ashpenaz sympathetic to Daniel. Ashpenaz, however, was afraid of the king, so he said to Daniel, " the king has decided for you what to eat and what to drink, and if you don't look as fit as the other young men,

he may kill me ".

† Daniel went to the guard whom Ashpenaz had placed in charge of him and his three young friends and said, " test us for ten days. Give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare us with the young men who are eating the royal food and base your decision on how we look ".

† The guard agreed. After ten days, they looked healthier and stronger than all those who had been eating the royal food. So from then on, the guard let them continue to eat vegetables instead of what the king provided.

† God gave the four young men knowledge and skill in literature and philosophy. In addition, he gave Daniel the power of interpreting visions and dreams.

† At the end of the three years set by the king, Ashpenaz took all the young men to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them all. Daniel, Hannaniah, Mishael and Azariah impressed him more than any of the others. They became members of the king court. No matter what question the king asked, or what problem he raised, these four young men knew ten times more than any fortune-teller or magician in the whole kingdom.

† العطاء هو فضيلة محبة، تأتي من القلب عن سرور وإبتهاج، ولا منفعة تأتي من العطاء إذا جاء بالألحاح أو الضغط، أذ يقول الإنجيل " المعطى فبسرور " و " المعطى المسرور يحب الرب ".
الرب يضاعف بركاته لكم، ويشبعكم من خيراته كل الأيام، ويقبل عطاياكم رائحة بخور على مذبحه الطاهر، بشفاعه أمنا القديسة والدة الإله العذراء مريم، شفيعة هذه الكنيسة.
لا تنسوا كنيسة العذراء مريم في تبرعاتكم، حتى يتيسر شراء كنيسة قريباً.

Our values and Beliefs as Orthodox Christians

Fastings Kept By the Church



ur Church teaches us to fast in obedience to God and his commandments. The Lord Jesus Christ fasted in the desert of Jericho for forty days and defeated the temptation of Satan. He instructs us about Satan saying, " This kind does not go out except by praying and fasting. (Mat 17-21).

† The fathers of the Church practiced the discipline of fasting and advised us to keep the following **FASTS**:

1- The fast of Nativity: It begins in the last week of November and lasts for 43 days. It ends on the feast of Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2- The fast of the Great Lent: It lasts for 55 days. Its date varies from year to year, so we must check our Church calendar as regards when it begins. The Great Lent, together with the week of Pascha, end on the feast of the Holy Pascha (Feast of Resurrection).

3- The feast of Nineveh: It reminds us God's mercy and forgiveness to the people of Nineveh after repenting and fasting for 3 days. It starts 15 days before the Great Lent.

4- The fast of the Apostle: It begins the day following the feast of the Pentecost. This fast always ends on the 12th of July.

5- The fast of Dormition: It begins on the 7th and ends on the 22nd of August. This day is feast of the Dormition of our Lady, the Birthgiver of God, the pure St. Mary.

† Apart from the above fasts, we fast, as well, every Wednesday and Friday all the year except during the 50 days following the feast of Resurrection, the Pentecost.

† تعلمنا الكنيسة أن نصوم طاعة للرب وحفظاً لوصاياه. فقد صام السيد المسيح في صحراء اريحا مدة أربعين يوماً حيث هزم الشيطان عندما جاء اليه ليجربه وذلك لكي يعلمنا أن " هذا الجنس لا يفرج الا بالصلاة والصوم " (مت ١٧ - ٢١).

† لقد مارس أباء الكنيسة الصوم وعرفوا فوائده لذلك رتبت الكنيسة لنا الاصوام التالية:
١- صوم الميلاد ويبدأ في الاسبوع الأخير من شهر نوفمبر ويستمر لمدة ثلاثة وأربعين يوماً. وبعد إنتهائه مباشرة نحتفل بعيد ميلاد الرب يسوع له المجد.

٢- الصوم الكبير؛ ومدته خمسة وخمسون يوماً وتختلف بدايته من عام لآخر، لذلك يلزم الرجوع الى التقويم الكنسي الذي يحدد بدايته. وينتهي الصوم الكبير بأسبوع البصخة وبعده مباشرة نحتفل بعيد النصح، وهو عيد قيامة الرب يسوع من بين الاموات.

٣- صوم نينوى؛ وهو يذكرنا بمراحم الرب وغفرانه لاهل نينوى، وذلك بعد ان تابوا وصاموا ثلاثة أيام. وهو يبدأ قبل الصوم الكبير بمدة ١٥ يوماً.

٤- صوم الرسل؛ ويبدأ في اليوم التالي لعيد العنصرة وينتهي في ١٢ يوليو.

٥- صوم السيدة العذراء؛ ويبدأ في السابع من أغسطس وينتهي في اليوم الثاني والعشرين منه، وبنهايتها نحتفل بعيد نياحة و صعود جسد والدة الاله القديسة الطاهرة مريم.

وبخلاف الاصوام السابقة، فإننا نصوم أيضاً يومى الاربعاء والجمعة من كل أسبوع على مدار السنة، باستثناء فترة الضمسين المقدسة (خمسين يوماً) التي تبدأ بعيد القيامة المجيد وتنتهى بعيد العنصرة.