

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate Church  
 Mary Coptic Orthodox Church  
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 كنيسة السيدة العذراء مريم  
 القبطية الأرثوذكسية بشيكاغو

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**"FOR BEHOLD,  
 HENCEFORTH ALL  
 GENERATIONS  
 WILL CALL ME  
 BLESSED."**

(Luke 1:48)



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This Icon miraculously seeped Holy Oil recently while hanging in St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church Cleveland, Ohio.

**OUR VALUES AND BELIEFS AS ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS**

**WE MAGNIFY THEE  
 O MOTHER  
 OF THE TRUE LIGHT**



**A Biblical Doctrine**

**N**ot just any woman could have been Christ's mother, the Lord prepared only one woman for this ... The most pure St. Mary. As Orthodox Christians we do believe that St. Mary is the "Mother of God", however some non-Orthodox Christians deny St. Mary this title .. Are we, or are they, at fault? To properly answer this question, let us refer to the Holy Scriptures.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT.**



† In a profound sense, St. Mary is the final flowering and perfection of the Old Testament. The main goal of the Old Testament was to make it possible for the Savior to appear. There are many symbols and signs referring to St. Mary as the "Mother of God". To list a few of these: The burning bush seen by Moses in the wilderness, the pure golden censor with which Aaron, the priest, censored the altar and the tabernacle in which God has dwelled. Also, Isaiah, the prophet said, "The virgin shall conceive and bear a child and shall call his name Emmanuel which means God with us." (Isaiah 7:14) In St. Mary we see all these fulfilled.

**THE NEW TESTAMENT**



† St Luke testifies that when St. Mary visited Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, St. Mary greeted her, and as soon as Elizabeth heard the greeting, she was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry: " ... Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why is this granted to me, that the, 'Mother of my Lord' come to me..." (Luke 1:39-43). From this testimony, it is quite obvious that the title "Mother of God" has

**The Third Ecumenical Council**



In the fourth century, there was a group of people who opposed this doctrine and started to teach otherwise.

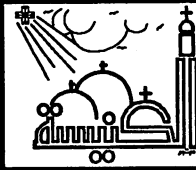
† Nestor, the Patriarch of Constantinople, claimed: "Jesus Christ was a human flesh and therefore the Virgin should not be called the Mother of God, but only the mother of Jesus." For this, the third Ecumenical Council convened in Ephesus in 431 A.D. It was made up of 200 bishops, and presided by St. Cyril, the 24th Pope of Alexandria, to look into this heresy.

† St. Cyril answered Nestor by saying, "When we give St. Mary the title "Mother of God", we do not imply that the nature of the Word, or the Divinity, took His origin from that Saint, but what we mean is that through her He took flesh, which remained in unity with the Word. The word became flesh, and this is the law of nature. Mothers do not contribute in any way in the act of creating of a person's soul, and in spite of that, they are still called the mothers of the whole being and not just the flesh."

† The council ended its meeting and proclaimed its resolution that the Virgin Mary is the Mother Of God. They put this in writing by composing the following introduction to the Creed:

*"We magnify, thee O Mother of the True Light, and we glorify thee, O Virgin Saint, Mother of God, for thee has born unto us the Savior of all the world. He came and saved our souls..."*

been given to St. Mary by the Holy Spirit Himself. This proves the falsehood of those who deny St. Mary of the title "Mother of God".



It is easy to see why the Virgin Mary is thought of as "More honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim."

## FASTING and FEAST

On Misrah 1st (August 7th) starts the fasting of the Virgin, its duration is fifteen days, after which we celebrate the feast of her assumption. We should all keep this holy fasting to express our love and veneration of St. Mary as the one chosen by the Most High to be the Mother of the True Light, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This fasting was set by the apostles just after the Virgin's departure. Its setting has a wonderful story behind it:

After the Virgin's death and burial by the apostles, Thomas, who was at that time preaching in India, was carried back to Jerusalem by a cloud. During that journey back he saw the body of the Virgin borne by four Angels to heaven. When he arrived to Jerusalem, the disciples informed him about her death and the burial of her body, he said to them: "I have seen her body ascending with the Angels to heaven."

✦ The disciples rushed with Thomas to the sepulchre and, to their surprise, they did not find the body. While they were wondering about that they heard a voice from heaven saying: "It was the Lord's will that her body be lifted to heaven." The disciples wished to see the Virgin like Thomas. They fasted for fifteen days, after which she appeared to them and then ascended to heaven to her beloved Son and Savior Jesus Christ.



## ASSUMPTION

God did not wish to leave the Virgin's body in this world, because it is unreasonable that the body which was purified by the Holy Spirit and made worthy to carry the Word incarnate remain buried in the land of sin. Her body is not less than the bodies of Elijah or Enoch which were lifted up to heaven. The God of glory would not accept for the vessel that carried the holiest of holies, anything less glorious than ... the assumption.

✦ St. Mary is the perfect example of the redeemed humanity. She was brought to heaven in the glorified body as a sign to the faithful, of what awaits all who live and die in the Lord. Our church celebrates the feast of her glorious assumption to heaven on Misrah 16th (August 22nd).



Thomas saw St. Mary's body ascending to heaven.

## GLORIFICATION

St. Mary deserves all glorification and veneration. But our veneration of St. Mary does not mean that we worship her. We do not worship St. Mary, being a member of the fallen human race, she stood in the need of salvation as we all do. However, we venerate her because of her important role in God's plan for our salvation, and because she was filled with all purity and righteousness. She willingly chose never to sin, and placed God's will above her own.

✦ Her veneration and glorification does not lessen God's glory. God is pleased when the beauty of His hand work is recognized and praised.



### اجتماعيات

#### تهنئ الكنييسة:



✦ الآب الموقر القمص صموئيل ثابت  
بمرور ستة عشر عاماً على رسامته، الرب نسال  
ان يحفظ كهنوته وان يبارك خدمته.  
✦ الاستاذ ياسر زكي وزوجته السيدة أنيسة بعماد مولودتهما سارة.  
✦ الدكتور مايكل مالك وزوجته الدكتورة جيرمين بعماد مولودهما مارك.

#### Aboutna Said To Me:

Son, do your best to be like St. Mary in her purity, her meekness, her humility, her virtuous life and her submission to God's will. In doing so you truly offer her the best glorification and the greatest veneration.

