

" BLESSED IS SHE, WHO HAS BELIEVED WHAT THE LORD HAS SAID.... "

(Luke 1: 45)



St. Mary faithfully accepted the Angel's message....

OUR VALUES AND BELIEVES AS ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

**O MOTHER OF GOD
 NOW GREAT YOUR
 FAITH IS !!!**

Scriptures tell us about people whose faith in God made them do truly great and outstanding deeds. Virgin St. Mary is a perfect example of those people. Her faith, love and purity gave her the honor to be chosen to give birth to the Son of God. Now let's see how her faith and love to God worked in her life for His glory.

A Heavenly Message

The angel Gabriel appeared to St. Mary and announced to her that she would bear a child, and the child would be the Son of the Most High.....It is hard to imagine Mary's astonishment when she heard this announcement. How could a virgin conceive and give birth? What about the gossip and accusations that would result from being pregnant before marriage? No doubt there were ample reasons for a young virgin to hesitate about getting involved in something like this.

A Great Faith

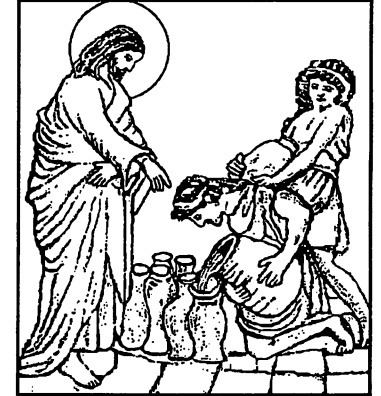
In spite of how unlikely the announcement seemed, yet when the angel assured St. Mary that this was God's will and that "Nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37) St. Mary, knowing that God is trustworthy and can never fail, she submitted herself to His will, and she faithfully accepted the angel's message, and answered him saying, "I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me as you have said." (Luke 1:38)

A Working Faith

St. Mary's faith was apparent in the account of the wedding at Cana of Galilee. (John 2: 1-11). When the

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

supply of wine ran out, Mary was quite sure that Jesus could do something about it, otherwise she would have not mentioned it to Him. Though it was not time for Jesus to perform public miracles, the fact that He performed a miracle as a result of His mother's request was a sound proof of His respect to her and her faith.



A Steadfast Faith

St. Mary didn't understand every thing Jesus said or did, but observing that God was always manifested in them assured her that God was in charge, "She kept all these things pondering them in her heart." (Luke 2:19).

Her faith remained unshaken even though she witnessed her son being ridiculed, persecuted and finally crucified. St. Mary's faith remained steadfast till the end. The Bible testifies that in the depth of Jesus' agony "close to the cross", whereon hung the torn and bleeding body of her firstborn, "stood His mother. Mary ..." (John 19:25).

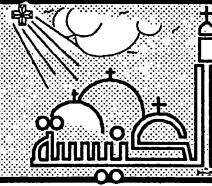
Her faith was praised in these words, "Blessed is she, who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished." (Luke 1:45) May the Lord help us to consider the outcome of her life and imitate her faith.



تذكروا يا اخوتي مشروع بناء الكنيسة



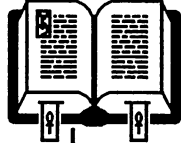
"ومن يزرع بالبركات فبالبركات ايضاً يحصد. كل واحد كما ينوي بقلبه ليس عن حزن او اضرار. لان المعطي المسرور يجبه الله والله قادر ان يزيدكم كل نعمة لكي تكونوا ولكم اكتفاء كل حين في كل شئ تزدادون في كل عمل صالح." (٢كو ٩: ٦-٨)



The purpose of this series is to familiarize the readers with the Divine Liturgy that they can participate more in it, enjoy it, and spiritually benefit of it.

The Liturgy of the Word

First: The Educational Aspect



and important events celebrated in our church all year round. Although this book is not part of the Bible yet it is very important because it also includes the chronicles of the martyrs and Saints, so that we can follow their example as the Lord says: "... consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith." (Heb. 13:7). Finally we listen to the fifth reading from:

5-The Holy Gospel: This is the most important reading. A part from one of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) is read while the people are standing. Some verses of the Book of Psalms precede the reading of the Holy Gospel.

It is worth mentioning, that prayers by abouna and hymns sung by the people intermit the above mentioned readings. These will be explained in more detail when we talk about the Ritual of this Holy service in our next issue if God Wills.

The last thing we talked about was the "Minister's Absolution". This is followed by the second part of the service which is called "The Liturgy of the Word". It is so called because it includes several readings from the word of God:

The Holy Bible: It is the book inspired by God "For whatever things were written aforetime were written for our learning ----" (Rome 15:4).

The first reading is from:

1- The Pauline Epistles: They are 14 epistles, written by St. Paul each for one of his disciples or to one of the churches in the cities where he preached in the name of Christ. These excerpts from the epistles are called; "The Pauline" in reference to St. Paul who wrote them. This is followed by the second readings from:

2- The Catholic Epistles: These are seven epistles, one was written by St. Jacob, two by St. Peter, three by St. John and one by St. Judas. The excerpts are called "Catholic" a Greek word which means "Universal" because they were written to the whole world and not to a particular church or disciple. The third reading is from:

3- The Acts of the Apostles: This is one of the New Testament's books, which tells us about the acts of the Apostles after Christ's ascension to heaven. These readings are called the "Praxis" which is a Coptic word that means "Acts". This is followed by the fourth reading from:

4-The Synxarium: This is a Greek word that means "News". This name was given to the book which includes feasts



بمناسبة صوم الميلاد المجيد

ليس الصوم مجرد وصية أعطيت كي نحفظها بل هو أيضاً نعمة وبركة وهبها الرب لنا لأجل نمو أرواحنا وسلامة أجسادنا. قداسة البابا شنودة الثالث

اجتماعيات

تهنئى الكنيسة:

الدكتور نبيل جرجس وعروسه السيدة ايفا بالزفاف المبارك. الرب يشرق عليهما بنور سماوى يضى لهما طريق السعادة والهناء.

تتقدم الكنيسة بخالص العزاء:

الدكتور أنور جرجس وأخويه الاستاذين ميلاد ومجدى وشقيقته سعاد وسولى - والسيدة والدتهم - لوفاة أخيه المرحوم الاستاذ وليم. الرب ينيح نفسه فى احضان القديسين.

كان "تحليل الخدام" آخر ماتحدثنا عنه فى المرة السابقة، وبعده يبدأ القسم الثانى من هذه الخدمة وهو مانسميه بـ "قداس الكلمة". وقد سمي هكذا لانه يتضمن قراءات كثيرة من كلمة الله فيه نسمع فضلاً من:

الكتاب المقدس

وهو الكتاب الموحى به من الله وكل ما كتب فيه «انما كتب لاجل تعليمنا...» (رو ١٥: ٤) وأول مانسمعه منه قراءة من:

١- رسائل بولس الرسول: وهى ١٤ رسالة كتبها القديس بولس موجها كل رسالة منها الى احد تلاميذه او الى احدى الكنائس التى بشر فيها بإسم المسيح له المجد. ويطلق على القراءات المختارة من هذه الرسائل اسم «البولس» نسبة الى كاتبها القديس بولس. يلى ذلك قراءة ثانية من:

٢- الرسائل الجامعة: وعددها ٧ رسائل منها رسالة واحدة ليعقوب الرسول، ورسالتين لبطرس الرسول، وثلاث رسائل ليوحنا الرسول ورسالة واحدة ليهوذا الرسول. ويطلق على القراءات المختارة من هذه الرسائل اسم «الكاثوليكون»، وهى كلمة يونانية معناها «الجامعة» ذلك لان الآباء الرسل كتبوها لجميع الامم وليس الى كنيسة معينة، او تلميذ بذاته. ويلى ذلك قراءة ثالثة من:

٣- سفر اعمال الرسل: وهو واحد اسفار العهد الجديد وهو يروى لنا ما قام به الرسل من اعمال مجيدة بعد صعود رب المجد الى السماء. ويطلق على القراءات المختارة من هذا السفر اسم «الابركسيس» وهى كلمة قبطية معناها «اعمال». يلى ذلك قراءة رابعة من كتاب:

٤- السنكسار: كلمة يونانية معناها «اخبار» وهى تطلق على الكتاب الذى يتضمن الاعياد والمناسبات الهامة التى تحتفل بها الكنيسة على مدار السنة. ومع ان هذا الكتاب ليس من بين اسفار الكتاب المقدس الا انه فى غاية الاهمية لانه يتضمن ايضا سير الشهداء والقديسين كى نتقدي بهم عملاً بقول الرب «انظروا الى نهاية سيرتهم فتمثلوا بايمانهم» (عب ١٢: ٧). وأخيراً نسمع قراءة خامسة من:

٥- الانجيل المقدس: وهى اهم القراءات، حيث نسمع - ونحن وقوف - فضلاً من احدى البشائر الاربعة (متى - مرقس - لوقا - يوحنا) ويسبق قراءة الانجيل ثلاثة بعض آيات من سفر المزامير.

وجدير بالذكر انه يتخلل هذه القراءات بعض صلوات يتلوها الكاهن، وايضا بعض الحان ينشدها الشعب. وهذه سوف نتكلم عنها عند الحديث عن الجانب الطقسى لهذه الخدمة المقدسة فى المرة القادمة بمشيئة الرب.