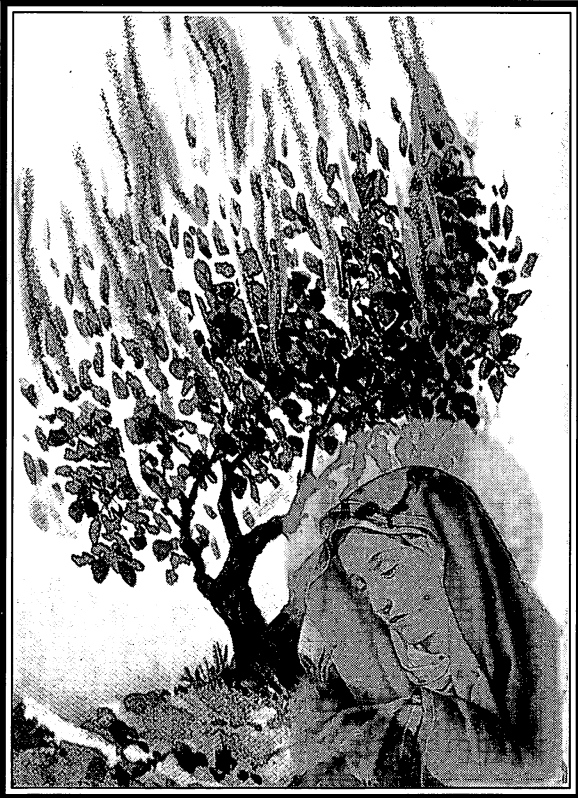




2100 W. Frontage Rd. • Palatine, IL. 60067

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*Burning bush seen by Moses
the prophet in the wilderness
Fire inside it was a flame
but never consumed or injured it
Same with Theotokos Mary'
carried the fire of Divinity
Nine months in her holy body
withoi remishing her virginity.*

The Burning Bush ... Why Didn't It Burn Down?

† The flock was herding near the mountain, some were grazing and some were lying down to rest. The shepherd was close by, keeping a watchful eye on them.

† Nothing seemed unusual or out of the ordinary, yet suddenly something caught the shepherd's attention; he saw flames of fire coming out of one particular bush, yet the bush was not consumed. From that bush the shepherd heard a roaring voice calling his name: "Moses, Moses!" It was the voice of God. (Exodus 3: 1-6)

† The incident of the burning bush makes us ponder, what protected it from being destroyed by the raging fire which was burning in its midst?

† It is beyond the human reasoning to interpret what happened. However those who contemplate on God's love and wisdom, can easily see that God has

looked upon our weakness and wanted us to understand the incarnation of His Son through the example of the burning bush.



† The burning bush was a symbol of the blessed Virgin Mary. When the Holy Spirit came upon Virgin Mary, she conceived and bore the Son of God for nine months and the power of the Most High overshadowed her, so she was not harmed by the Divine burning fire, exactly like the burning bush. As St. Luke the Evangelist puts it: "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the most high will overshadow you, therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.*" (Luke 1: 35)

† In commemoration of this event, the church sings the hymn of the burning bush during the month of Kiahk which precedes Christmas.

The Christmas Fast



As you might know, Christmas fast started on November 25th (Hatur 16th.). God invites everyone of us to fast with faith and righteousness. Fast without true repentance or charity is of no avail. God Says: "*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to*

break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say Here I am." (Isaiah 58:6-9)

Church News

On November 10th., the church held a banquet to celebrate two occasions that are dear to our hearts;

† *The Silver Jubilee of H.H. Pope Shenouda III's enthronement on the See of St. Mark.*

† *Holding the first Divine Liturgy service on the main altar of our new church.*

We would like to thank all those who honored us by their presence to celebrate those two blessed events. Their presence was an intricate part in the success of the banquet and we really appreciate this labor of love. We also would like to thank: Reverend Fr. Tadros Malaty and his wife Tasoni Mary; also Reverend Fr. Roways Awadallah, for taking the time to come and bless our gathering.

We were hoping to have Reverend Fr. Samuel Thabet and his wife Tasoni Ibtisam, with us but for health reasons they could not attend, we ask the Lord to grant him a speedy recovery.

Also special thanks to the sisters of "The Holy Spirit Convent" who were kind and hospitable enough to host our congregation for more than eight years and they always made us feel welcomed. We were blessed and honored by their presence.

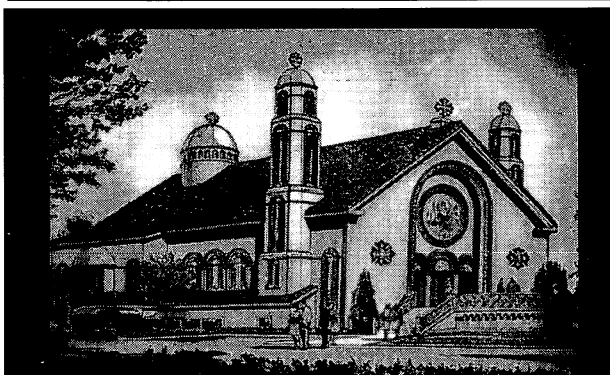
Thanks again, may the Lord reward all those who participated, with the heavenly recompense.

Calendar

The Christmas Liturgy
Monday, January 6th
7:00 P.M. - Midnight

The Epiphany Liturgy
Saturday, January 18th.
7:00 P.M. - Midnight

A THANKSGIVING PRAYER



"For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my Name may be there for ever, my eyes and my heart will be there for all time." (2 Chron. 7:16)

When all the work which King Solomon had done for the House of the Lord was finished, Solomon and all the congregation of Israel sacrificed so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted. Joined by the trumpeters and singers, they praised and thanked God saying "For he is good, for his mercy endures for ever".

A Diligent Prayer

Solomon stood before the alter of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, lifted his hands up, and said: "O Lord of Israel, there is no God like you in the heaven, nor in the earth - you who keeps your covenant and show mercy unto your servants that walk before you with all their hearts. O Lord, the heavens even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this house I have built, yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy May your eyes be open toward this house day and night, this place of which you said you would put your Name there. May you hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place."

When Solomon ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

An Answered Prayer

Then the Lord appeared to Solomon at night and said unto him: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself Now my eyes will be open, and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my Name may be there for ever, my eyes and my heart will be there for all time." (2 Chron. 7:16)

This was the thanksgiving prayer which king Solomon raised before God after building the House of the Lord. It is a good example for us to follow. Let us lift our heart before God and thank Him because He supported us, and crowned our efforts by enabling us to build our new church and to hold our services in it. We can all rejoice with David the prophet: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.." (Psalms 103: 1-2)

Congratulations

To:

❖ *Samir Yassab and Nardin Amir*
❖ *Michael Boctor and Fawzia Fawzy*
❖ *Medhat Sedrak and Giban Botrus*
For becoming one in Christ, May the Lord bless their life and make their marriage honorable and blameless.

To:

❖ *Safwat and Dalia Riskalla*, for the baptism of their son *Luke*
❖ *Samy and Suzan Solomon* for the baptism of their son *John*.
❖ *Atef and Sonya Maquar* for the baptism of their son *Antonios*

May the Lord bless the new born children to grow in grace and stature before God and men.