

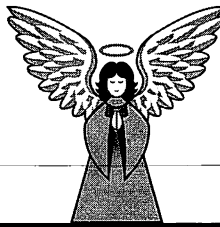
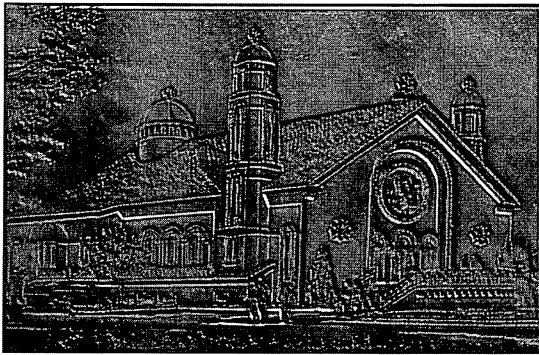
Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Chicago
 St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church
 Chicago



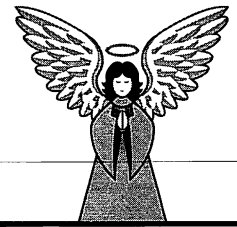
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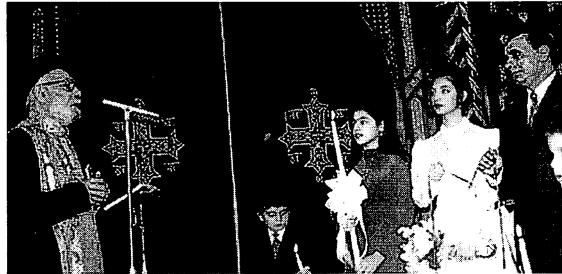


**"Thus far the Lord
 has helped us".** (1 Sam 7:12)



November 3rd. marks the first Anniversary of St. Mary Coptic Church in Chicago. On Sunday November 2nd 1997, one year has passed since the service started in the new St. Mary Church.. During that year the church has offered its members all the necessary services.

The following are just a few examples of: The firstfruits



On January 19th., 1997, Murad Rufael and Basma Jagoub were the first couple to get engaged in the church. They were married in Egypt on February 8th., 1997.



On January 26th., 1997, Alfred Hanna and Deborah Winstead were the first couple to get married in the church. The bride and groom are active members in the church and they both serve as Sunday School teachers.

On February 5th., 1997, The church hosted the first group of neighbors, who came to be acquainted with us. They were accompanied to a guided tour through the church and were given a brief account of the Coptic church's glorious history.

On February 8th., 1997, The church held the first Bible Study meeting, which we now have regularly on Saturdays after Vespers from 7:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

On March 18th., 1997, Allison Baines was the first American young lady to be baptized in the church. On May 3rd., 1997, she got married to Karim Boutros.



On March 29th., 1997, The first meeting of Sunday School teachers was held. Servants from St. Mark, Burr Ridge, IL, St. Mary and Ava Antonios, Waterford, Wisconsin, and St. Mary, Palatine, IL, participated. Among the issues they discussed was how to improve the quality of the service. Rev. Fr. Samuel T. Samuel's gave a spiritual word on: "The Sunday School teacher as an ambassador to the Lord".

CHURCH NEWS

The firstfruits



Annual Bazaar
On December 6th., & 7th., 1997 the church held its seventh annual Bazaar. Those who visited were impressed by the quality of the numerous items on display. Our thanks and appreciation for those who visited the Bazaar, and for those who spared no time, or effort to put it together.

A Spiritual Day

On December 20th., 1997, the servants of the church spent a very serene and spiritual day. The day started with the Divine Liturgy service at 10:00 a.m. followed by spiritual songs, hymns and words of guidance. The day ended at 5:00 p.m by a prayer.



A Skiing Trip
On December 26th., the church youths went to Wisconsin on a fun filled skiing trip. They left after an early morning Divine Liturgy service and came back on Sunday afternoon December 28th.

On June 10th., 1997 the first summer club started for the church members. It lasted till the end of August. The members enjoyed the family oriented activities.

On July 20th., 1997, the church library was opened. The library contains many valuable books and references in both Arabic and English. There is a large number of religious audio cassettes, CDs. containing sermons, hymns and songs. There is also a number of video cassettes documenting the lives of our Saints, martyrs and showing the old monasteries and churches in Egypt.

• The library is open Saturday nights after Vespers and Sundays after the Divine Liturgy service.



"Thou Crownest the Year with Thy Goodness and Thy paths drip fatness."

(Psalm 65:11)



CHURCH NEWS



New Year's Celebration

On Wednesday December 31st. we celebrated the New Year's eve. The church youths put together a nice program enjoyed by everyone. The celebration started at 7:00 p.m. and continued till late at night. It ended in the early hours of Thursday morning January 1st., 1998 by the Divine Liturgy service.

Congratulations to H.H. Pope Shenouda 111



As we celebrate the two blessed feasts of:
• Christmas • Epiphany
we would like to wish our beloved leader, shepherd and teacher H.H. Pope Shenouda III, our best wishes. May the Lord keep him for many years to come.

A Pastoral Visit

On January 31st. 1998, H.H. Pope Shenouda III will arrive to the USA on a visit that will last till February 15th., 1998. During this time H.H. will visit several Coptic churches in New York, Boston, Washington D.C. and Cleveland. May the Lord grant him a safe and fruitful trip.

Congratulations To:

- ❖ **Fady and Duaa Elmalb** for the baptism of their daughter **Eva**.
 - ❖ **Murad and Basma Rufael** for the baptism of their son **Daniel**.
 - ❖ **Atif and Sonya Maquar** for the birth of their daughter **Mariam**.
 - ❖ **Yasser and Anita Zaki** for the birth of their daughter **Anna**.
- May the Lord bless the newborn children to grow in grace and stature before God and men.

CONDOLENCES TO

- ❖ **Rev. Fr. Isaac S. Soliman** for the passing away of his wife the late **tasoni Victoria Zaki**
 - ❖ **Dr. Fared Soliman**, for the passing away of his brother the late **Zaki Soliman**.
 - ❖ **Dr. Gamil Khair** for the passing away of his brother the late **Selim Khair**.
 - ❖ **Mrs. Amal Agaiby** for the passing away of her mother the late **Hekmat Tawfik**.
- May the Lord repose the souls of the deceased and console their grieving families.

Church Calendar

Fast of the Ninevites
February 9th - 11th.

Great Lent
February 23rd - April 18th.