

Thursday, August 31, 2017 | Mesore 25, 1733

The Twenty Fifth Day of the Blessed Month of Mesore

Annual Tune | Waters of the river Season

Vespers

Vespers Gospel

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint Matthew the Evangelist. May His Blessings be with us all. From the Psalms of our teacher David the prophet. May his blessings be with us all.

Psalms 41:1

As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Lord God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Living Son of God to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 25:14-23

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lords money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them. His lord said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord. He also who had received two talents came and said, Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them. His lord said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.

And Glory be to God forever

Matins

Matins Gospel

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint Luke the Evangelist. May His Blessings be with us all. From the Psalms of our teacher David the prophet. May his blessings be with us all.

Psalms 33:5,7

They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed. The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Lord God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Living Son of God to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Luke 19:11-19

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants,

delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, Do business till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Master, your mina has earned ten minas. And he said to him, Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Master, your mina has earned five minas. Likewise he said to him, You also be over five cities.

And Glory be to God forever

Divine Liturgy

Pauline Epistle

Paul, the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, appointed to the Gospel of God. A reading from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Philippians. May his blessings be upon us. Amen
Philippians 3:20-4:9

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

Catholic Epistle

A Reading from the Epistle of St. James. May his blessing be upon us. Amen
James 5:9-12

Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. The world passes away, and its desires; but he who does the will of God abides forever. Amen.

Acts of the Apostles

The Acts of our fathers the apostles, may their blessings be with us.
Acts of the Apostles 18:24-19:6

Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed

through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

The word of the Lord shall grow, multiply, be mighty, and be confirmed, in the holy Church of God. Amen.

Synaxarium

The Twenty Fifth Day of the Blessed Coptic Month of Mesore, may God make it always received, year after year, with reassurance and tranquility, while our sins are forgiven by the tender mercies of our God my fathers and brothers, Amen.

Departure of Pope Macarius III (1942-1945) the 114th Patriarch of Alexandria and the See of Saint Mark On this day also, of the year 1661 A.M. (August 31st, 1945 A.D.), Pope Macarius III, 114th Patriarch of Alexandria, departed. He was born in the city of El-Mahalla El-Koubra, on February 18th, 1872 A.D., to an old, respectable family. His family was known by El-Kasees family (The family of the priest), which was virtuous and godly. He grew up from a young age in a religious and pious atmosphere. He received his primary and secondary education in El-Mahalla El-Koubra and Tanta. Even as a young man, he was ascetic, longed

for solitary life, and enthusiastic about memorizing the church hymns. When he was sixteen years old, he deserted the world and went to the monastery of Anba Bishoy in Wadi El-Natroun, in the year 1888 A.D., to fulfill his desire for asceticism and worship. His name was Monk Abdel-Mesieh. He devoted himself to worship and to the study of the Holy Bible, ecclesiastical books, and Coptic rituals. In a short time his virtues and righteousness were evident, and his pure life became known to the monks. He was distinguished for transcribing books, and his Coptic and Arabic penmanship was exquisite. He perfected the religious Coptic artistic decorations. After he was ordained a priest he spent about six years in the pure ascetic life.

In the year 1895 A.D., Macarius went to the Baramous monastery, where he was ordained Archpriest (hegumen) by Pope Kyrillos V, and became his private secretary. The Pope delegated him to teach the Coptic and French languages in the theological school for monks. He intended to ordain him a bishop for Misr (Cairo), but two years after the arrival of Fr. Abdel-Meseih to Cairo, Anba Michael, bishop of Assiut, departed. A delegation from Assiut came to Cairo, they chose this honorable hegumen and nominated him to be a metropolitan for Assiut.

In the beginning, the Pope did not accept their petition, for he kept Macarius in order to ordain him a bishop for Cairo and as an assistant to His Holiness, in managing the affairs of the See of St. Mark. But when the delegation persisted in their demand, the Pope accepted their petition, and ordained Macarius a metropolitan for Assiut on July 11th, 1897 A.D. (Abib 5th, 1613 A.M.). He called him Macarius, and he was twenty-four years old. He went to his parish as a young man, with no armors but his piety, asceticism, and knowledge. He embarked, with the wisdom of the elders in spite of his young age, with his strong will, and with the help of the Lord, on bringing together the factions of his congregation, and establishing the Faith. So, he maintained the unity of his people, and the position and reverence of the church, and he was quite successful in it. He was not content with the program that he placed for the church reform, but he also held an immense Coptic conference in the city of Assiut in year 1910 A.D., in spite of all the objections that rose against it. He also submitted along with Anba Theophilus, then bishop of Manfalot and Abnoup, in early 1920 A.D., a petition to Pope Kyrillos V. This petition contained the required administrative and financial reforms, which indicated his great competence. When Pope Kyrillos V, departed in 1928 A.D., the people nominated Abba Macarius for the Patriarchal chair to achieve the required reforms, but the circumstances then prevented that. When Pope Yoannis IXX, departed, the Divine grace permitted that Anba Macarius be enthroned on the throne of St. Mark. He

was ordained Patriarch for the See of St. Mark on Sunday, February 19th, 1944 A.D.

After his enthronement to the Patriarchal chair, Anba Macarius issued on February 22nd, 1944 A.D., a historical document. Its main objective was to reform the monasteries, and promote their monks spiritually, and scientifically. He also ordered that the heads and the administrators of the monasteries be accountable. This led to a major contention between the Holy Synod and the General Coptic Community Council (Maglis El-Milli).

On June 7th, 1944 A.D., the Holy Synod submitted a memorandum to the Pope and to the minister of Justice. They objected to the draft of the Marital and Personal Law for the non-Muslim denominations, for it subverted a canon of the Coptic Orthodox Church, as it affected two of the Holy Sacraments of the church which are the sacrament of Priesthood and Matrimony. These sacraments are cornerstone of the Christian religion and worship.

The dispute between the Synod and the Council continued, and all the attempts of reconciliation failed. The efforts of the Pope to eliminate the misunderstanding failed also. The council insisted on interfering in what was not its jurisdiction, and in what was the core jurisdiction of the Holy Synod. As a result, the Pope was compelled to leave the Capital, and the Papal residence, for seclusion in Helwan, then went to the Eastern monasteries accompanied by the metropolitans. He remained for a while in St. Antony's monastery then went to the monastery of Anba Paul. All these painful events had strong impact in all the circles and distressed every devout in the church. When the Prime Minister knew about the departure of the Pope to the monastery, he worked on the return of the Pope in honor to his Chair, and his efforts were successful. Meanwhile, the Coptic Community Council (Maglis El-Milli) sent a letter to the Pope asking for his return, to be able to manage the affairs of the church, and promised the cooperation in the needed reforms. Later, the Pope returned from the monastery, and the people received him with joy and reverence. The Holy Synod convened, with Anba Macarius presiding, on January 1st, 1945, and issued many resolutions, which follow:

- + The representation of The Ethiopian church in the Alexandrian Synod.*
- + The exchange of delegations between Egypt and Ethiopia, and the establishment of a seminary in Ethiopia.*
- + Restriction of divorce on the grounds of adultery only.*
- + Legislation of the Family and Marital Law.*
- + Rules for nominating and electing the Patriarch that coincide with the canons of the church and its tradition.*
- + Establishment of a Theological seminary for the monks.*
- + Formation of a permanent committee to review all the ecclesiastical books.*
- + The safeguarding of the endowment funds, and improvement of the office procedures at the administrative offices of the patriarchate.*
- + Strict enforcement of the Monastic Law that was issued on June 3rd, 1937 A.D., and the return of all the monks that were living outside their monasteries.*
- + Establishment of a record in each church to register the members of each Coptic family, and another to register the baptized, the departed, and the deacons.*

On June 6th, 1945 A.D., the Russian Patriarch visited Cairo. Pope Macarius sent a delegation of metropolitans and bishops to be in his reception. Then they exchanged the cordial visits. Once again a dispute between H.H. the Pope and the General Coptic Community Council (Maglis El-Milli) took place. This time the dispute was not resolved before the Pope took the initiative to defend the position and dignity of his nation, the canons of the churches, and the Family Marital Law for non-Muslims in particular. On May 30th, 1945 A.D. all the leaders of the non-Muslim denominations in Egypt, headed by the Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church, presented a memorandum to the minister of Justice objecting to the special law that regulated the denominational family affairs courts. Also copies were sent to the senate and the house of representatives. The memorandum focused on the objections, to better suit the Christian rites and traditions.

The Pope suffered from a severe weakness two weeks before his departure that forced him to rest in his residence. On Thursday evening, the 24th of Misra, 1661 A.M. (August 30th, 1945 A.D.), he felt fatigued

and he suffered from heart failure. The doctors rushed to his bedside trying to save him till dawn. At 9:15 Friday morning, 31st of August, 1945 A.D., his pure soul departed to its creator. On Sunday, the second of September, his pure body was taken to its final resting place in the church with the signs of grief and sorrow. His coffin was placed beside the bodies of the patriarchs, his predecessors. He remained on the Patriarchal throne for one year, six months, and nineteen days. May God accept him in the habitations of the righteous.

Coincidentally, an earthquake was felt in Cairo at 2:45pm at the time of his burial. Everyone felt it, and the believers were touched, for nature shared their sorrow for the departure of this pure saint.

May his prayers be with us and Glory be to God forever. Amen.

Departure of Saint Bessarion the Great

On this day, the great ascetic father, St. Bessarion, departed. He was born in Misr (Egypt) to Christian parents. When he grew up, he longed for the monastic life, so he went to Anba Anthony (Antonius), under whose direction he remained for a while. Then he went to Anba Macarius, and stayed under his guidance for a while. Later on, he wandered about in the desert, never lodging in a place with a roof. He possessed absolutely nothing of this world, and he had only one coarse hairy sack-cloth. He used to carry the Gospel, and went round the cells of the monks crying. If they asked him the reason for his weeping, he would reply, 'My riches have all been stolen, and I have escaped from death. My family have fallen from honor into disgrace.' His words referred to the great loss that befell the human race by the fall of the first father Adam by breaking the first commandment. Those who did not understand what his words meant would console him saying, 'God shall restore what has been stolen from you.' The fathers had recorded for him many signs:

+ Once he was walking with his two disciples, John and Dulas, by the shore of the Red Sea (salty water). When they became thirsty, St. Bessarion took some of its water and prayed over it. The water became sweet and they all drank of it.

+ Another time, they brought to the wilderness of Scetis a mad man, who was possessed by demons, for the elders to pray over. Because the elders knew that St. Bessarion despised the glory of men, they did not want to ask him to pray over the sick man, but rather they put the man in the church where the saint usually stood. When St. Bessarion came into the church and found the man there asleep, he woke him up, and the man rose up healed and with a sound mind. God wrought many signs on his hands. He pleased God and then departed in peace.

May his prayers be with us. Amen.

Divine Liturgy Gospel

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint Luke the Evangelist. May His Blessings be with us all. From the Psalms of our teacher David the prophet. May his blessings be with us all.

Psalms 103:1,2,5

Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain. You who laid the foundations of the earth, So that it should not be moved forever,

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Lord God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Living Son of God to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Luke 12:32-44

"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if

he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?" And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

And Glory be to God forever