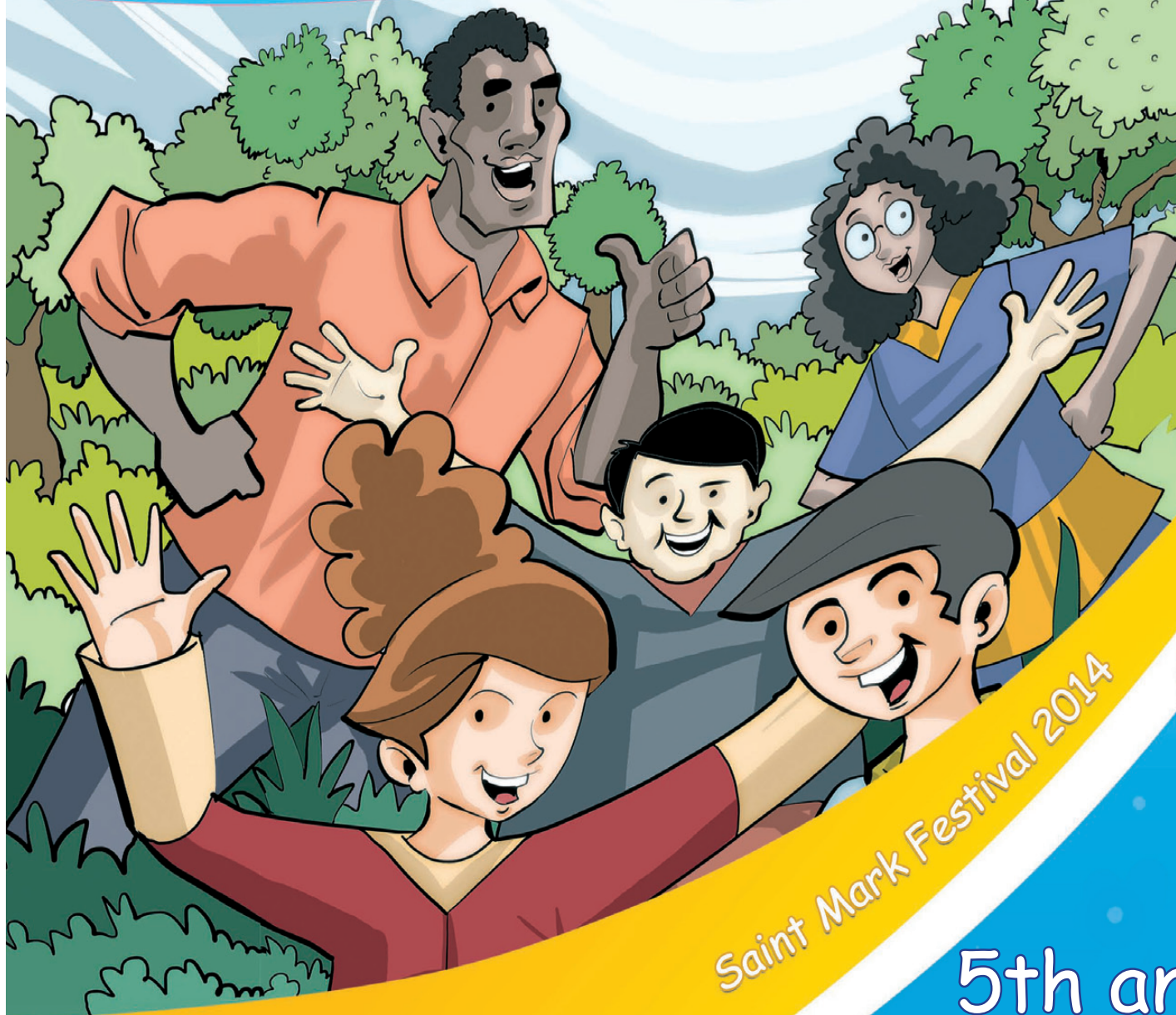


Adventure in Central Africa



Saint Mark Festival 2014



5th and 6th Grade

Under the guidance of
His Holines
Pope Tawadrous II



WELCOME TO COOL

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Group: _____

Phone : _____



Rules

1. In order to identify participants of the program, each child will be given a wrist band that they will be required to wear every day they are attending the program.
2. It is required that every child in the program bring their Activity Books every day they attend the program. Everyone is responsible for the care of their book and must have it completed at the end of the summer for handing in.
3. At the end of the summer, each child will be rewarded for the care and responsibility of their books. They will be graded on completion of the activities, on the condition of the book (not ripped or scribbled on), etc.
4. Books and wristbands are mandatory—as such, the children that bring in their wrist bands and Activity Books each day they attend will be rewarded at the end of the summer.
5. Encourage your children to open the Bible and look up the references used in the activities.
6. Also try to encourage your children to only do the assignment for that day and not go ahead in the book.
7. If you are traveling out of the state, let us know so that we can give you the assignment for the time you will be away so your children can continue to work on the program while not here.
8. It is best for the benefit of the children if they come on time so they can take advantage of all the activities.
9. Please be respectful of the servants sacrificing their time for the program and be very strict in picking up your children on time at night.
10. Children are not allowed to leave the church grounds and must be obedient and respectful of the rules of the church and her servants. In order for the program to be successful, discipline and respect will be taken very seriously.
11. The essence of the Olympics League is Christian respect and behavior, therefore children who do not consistently practice this Christian behavior will not be allowed to continue with the program to the Olympics competition day. If any child cannot follow the rules, does not respect his/her brothers and sisters in Christ, does not obey the rules of the program and the servants responsible for them, or causes disruption in the program, they will not be allowed to continue.

- ✠ للتعرف على المشتركين في البرنامج كل طفل سيعطى له Wristband لا بد من ارتدائها كل يوم للسماح له بالإشتراك في البرنامج.
- ✠ كل طفل مشترك في البرنامج مطالب بإحضار كتب النشاط كل يوم يشترك فيه. وكل طفل مسئول عن العناية بالكتاب وحل جميع النشاطات وتسليم الكتاب فى نهاية الصيف.
- ✠ فى نهاية الصيف كل طفل سيمنح هدية مناسبة حسب عنايته ومسئوليته بالكتاب. وسيتم تقييم الأطفال حسب الإجابات وحسب حالة الكتاب (ليس مقطوع أو مشخبط) الخ.
- ✠ إحضار الكتب و Wristband إجبارى كل يوم. والطفل الذى سيلتزم سيمنح جائزة فى نهاية الصيف.
- ✠ شجعوا أطفالكم على فتح الكتاب المقدس والإستشهاد به فى حل النشاطات.
- ✠ وأيضاً شجعوا أطفالكم على الإلتزام بحل المطلوب يوم بيوم فقط وليس أكثر من المطلوب فى اليوم.
- ✠ برجاء إخبارنا فى حالة السفر والغياب عن البرنامج، لنعطى الطفل النشاطات المطلوبة منه فى فترة غيابه حتى يستطيع المواصلة والإستفادة.
- ✠ برجاء الحضور فى الميعاد لضمان الإستفادة الكاملة.
- ✠ برجاء احترام الخدام اللذين يمنحون وقتهم من أجل إنجاح هذا البرنامج والإلتزام بميعاد الإنصراف وعدم التأخير فى استلام الأطفال مساءً.
- ✠ لمساعدتنا لإنجاح البرنامج غير مسموح للأطفال أن يتركوا الكنيسة نهائياً فى أثناء اليوم والإحترام الكامل للخدام ولقوانين الكنيسة وأخذها بجدية تامة.
- ✠ الغرض من هذا البرنامج هو احترام السلوك المسيحى، ولذلك أى طفل لا يتبع السلوك المسيحى لن يسمح له بالإستمرار فى البرنامج لنهايته (Day Competition). والطفل الذى لا يحترم القوانين ولا يحترم أخوته وأخواته فى الرب ويسبب أى إخلال بالبرنامج لن يسمح له بالإستمرار.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE TAWADROUS II



In this book, Bishoy, Mariam, Sarah and Basem tell their friends from Fifth & Sixth grade about their adventures in a small town in Central Africa. All this is presented through beautiful and colourful pictures which describe their adventures through the following five topics:

- 1- **I am a shining star (A personal witness of our Lord).** This topic discusses how every one of us can personally be a witness for the Lord. This will be through a lesson about St John the Baptist (the forerunner and martyr).
- 2- **In my family, I am always useful (A witness for my Lord within my family).** This topic explains how to witness to the Lord within our families. This will be presented in a lesson about St Macrina, the virgin.
- 3- **Knowing the faith of my church (A witness to our Lord within my church).** This topic explains how to be witnesses to the Lord within our church. This will be explained in a lesson called "A Panorama of the Seven Sacraments of Our Church"
- 4- **In my society, I am active (A witness of my God within my society).** This topic explains how to be honest witnesses to our God within our society. This will be presented in a lesson about "The Daughters of Zelophehad Fight for Their Right of Inheritance"
- 5- **I care about my own country, (A witness of my Lord in my country).** This topic explains how to be witnesses for our Lord in our country This will be shown in a lesson about "Nehemiah".

We sincerely thank the parents and servants for their great role with their children.

1

I am a
shining
star

In one of the small towns in Central Africa, a neighboring village was suffering from many environmental, health, food and housing problems.

After identifying the problems in this village (through the aid program implemented by one of the concerned international aid organizations), the committee of all international aid organizations decided to raise the issues in this village on the internet web-pages. They asked for help from those who are willing to assist, provided that they pass some personal abilities tests to determine their suitability for the mission. After evaluating the results of these tests, the organization selected a group of participants whom they divided into smaller groups according to their age. The group whom we will be talking about is a group of boys and girls who are in the end of elementary school. They are:

Bishoy: An Australian boy from an Egyptian origin who is very clever with computers and Technology

Mariam: An Australian girl who is from an Egyptian background as well. She is known for her leadership qualities, love for adventures and exploring the unknown.

Sarah: A highly educated girl from South Africa who has a great deal of knowledge as a result of her strong love for reading in many fields. She especially loves to read about life in the wilderness and how to cope with it

Basem: A boy from the United Arab Emirates who is capable of finding the simplest solutions to any problem. He loves eating a lot and prefers laughing all the time.



After the arrival of the group at the nearest airport to the required village, they caught a bus specially booked for them by the trip organizing committee in order to transport them to the organization office. Shortly after the bus began moving, it started to rain heavily and the road signs became difficult to see. The bus driver began to lose control of the bus.

They found out that one of the wheels was submerged in the mud and another had flattened after hitting a sharp object. They started to feel anxious especially when they noticed signs of fear on the driver's face. **They immediately gathered and started to discuss the problem and how to solve it.**

Mariam: Don't worry. It is a small problem and we will work together to solve it.

The bus driver: The problem is that it is not good to stop in this specific area because the locals.... *(The sound of hurrying incoming feet has interrupted the driver's talk)*

This made everyone stop and listen anxiously. Then, a loud scream came out of Sarah's mouth followed by silence and darkness.



3

After a period full of darkness and silence, which was only interrupted by the sound of feet, the members of the team were blindfolded and carried off somewhere. When the blindfolds were removed, they found themselves tied up and standing before some black men who were talking a language they could not understand. Among those who were tied up was their bus driver. After a while, during which the team tried to understand the strange language they were speaking to one another, one of them went towards Basem and started to talk to him in an ambiguous language. When the bus driver listened to this conversation, he realised what they wanted and started explaining to the group what these strange man wanted from them. He was after the food they had with them. They were after the food the group had with them. The bus driver went on explaining the condition of this tribe and how they suffer from a severe food shortage to the extent that they search for it by any means, even kidnapping).

The bus driver: The tribe leader wants to take the food we have.

Mariam: But we don't have any food. **The bus driver:** I will let him know. I hope this saves us from their hands. The bus driver explained to the tribe leader that they don't have any food. He did not believe them and ordered his followers to search their bags for food, but they didn't find any food with the group. The tribe leader then ordered his people to start moving and leave the members of the team bound as they were.

Bishoy: Where are they going? Will they leave us like this? **The bus driver:** Yes, they will because they found no food with us.

Sarah: Please tell them if they set us free, we will try to solve the food problem they face.

The tribe chief: Do you know how to solve the food problem?

Basem: You speak English!

The chief: Yes, I can speak different languages. What is your solution to the food problem?

Sarah: First, promise to set us free if we solve your problem.

The chief: I give you my word.

Sarah began to consult with the rest of the team in order to solve the problem and make food available to these men in this area. The period of thinking didn't last long. Sarah had an idea.

Sarah: We are here in the wilderness where there is a kind of food called wild honey. We can help you find it.

The chief: Okay, You alone can be set free until you come with me and look for this food. If we find it, the rest of the team can be set free.

Sarah: It's a deal.



Although Sarah was known for her bravery, she was worried about what could happen. While they were searching, a conversation has begun between them.

The chief: What is that wild honey we're looking for?

Sarah: It is a kind of food that exists in various environments such as the desert and areas like the one we are in now. The wild bees make this type of honey and leave it on the rocks or in the stems of the trees.

The chief: How did you get to know all this when you do not live in this area?

Sarah: I like to learn about the different environments. All what I know, I gained through reading a lot of books. This piece of knowledge about the wild honey I learned from studying the Holy Bible and specifically from the story of saint John the Baptist. **The Chief:** What is the Holy Bible and who is John the Baptist?



Sarah: The Holy Bible is

A divine book that is the foundation of our Christian religion. It narrates the story of the salvation of the human race along with the life story of our Lord Jesus who is the word of God declared as a message of God's love and an evidence of His care to man. This book is inspired by God Himself.

It contains a group of divine books written by a number of saints inspired (guided) by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)

The Holy Bible consists of 73 books as follows: 39 Old Testament books + 7 Deuterocanonical books + 27 New Testament books. We can also divide them as follows:

The Old Testament Books

The five books of Moses "law"

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

The History Books

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

The Wisdom "Poetry" Books

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Songs

"Major" Prophets Books

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel

"Minor" Prophets Books

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habbakuk
Haggai
Zephaniah
Zechariah
Malachi

The Deuterocanonical books

The Deuterocanonical books

Tobit
Judith
The wisdom of Solomon
The wisdom of Joshua son of Sirach
1 Maccabees
2 Maccabees
The Completion of Esther
The Completion of Daniel

The Bible books

The New Testament Books

The four Gospels

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

The book of Acts

The Acts Of the Apostles

The Epistles

14 Pauline Epistles + (7) Catholic Epistles

Prophecy

The Revelation

Here is my personal Holy Bible, which I carry with me wherever I go because it is the most beautiful book for me. I don't sleep unless I have read from it. In this book, you find the story of John the Baptist. **The Chief:** What's John the Baptist got to do with the wild honey? Can you tell me his story while we look for the wild honey?

John

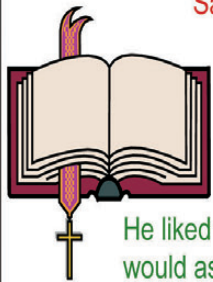
the
Baptist

and the
Martyr

Sarah: With all pleasure.....in order for you to enjoy the story and memorize it, let's sit down for a while and find some verses from the Holy Bible which will explain everything about our saint, John the Baptist.

The Chief: With Pleasure. **Sarah:** Our Holy Bible mentioned John the Baptist in both the Old and New Testament. Let me show you how to search for a verse in the Holy Bible so you can read it and understand the information!

Sarah started to train the tribe chief on how to find a verse in the Holy Bible. She showed him where to find the Old and New Testament. She also explained to him how to find a verse in the Holy Bible using its reference.



The reference is the name of the Bible book and next to it is the chapter and the verse number).

He liked that method very much because he knew English, whenever she explained a part of the story, he would ask her to give him the Bible reference to write it in a diary he had.

(Can you help the Chief fill in the following table?)

References

Isaiah 40:3

Malachi 3:1

VERSES

Sarah: As I mentioned to you, our Holy Bible speaks about John the Baptist in both the Old and New Testaments. Those two bible references above contain what has been written about our saint in the Old Testament.

The Chief: I found the first reference in the book of Isaiah the prophet.

Sarah: Great! You have learned how to find a Bible reference very quickly. In this reference, Isaiah describes John the Baptist as the voice of one crying in the wilderness because this was the saint's job. **The Chief:** I found chapter three verse one in the book of Malachi.

Sarah: The person spoken about in this verse is John the Baptist- we refer to him as a messenger because he was a prophet sent from God. The great position of this saint in our church is evident in many ways in the New Testament. Look at these following points:

He was sent to prepare the way before the coming of the Master, Jesus Christ, we also call him the Forerunner

To prepare the way before the coming of our Lord Jesus by making the hearts ready through repentance





First: He was born by a divine miracle:

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth and him were both righteous before God but they had no child because Elizabeth was barren and they were both well advanced in years. So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, Gabriel, the angel of the Lord, appeared to him and told him that his prayer was heard by God; and his wife Elizabeth will bear him a son, and he shall call his name John.

FOR THE SERVANT:

The division of Abijah is the eighth division among the twenty four divisions to which the priests were allocated since the time of David. Every division serves for one week every six month according to its turn. They cast a lot to decide whom will God choose to raise the incense from among the same division. The incense was raised in the morning and in the evening only. (The church follows the same tradition as we pray the raising of incense "Vespers" and "Matins")

The chief: Is this possible? Elizabeth gives birth in her old age and barren state?

Truly this is unbelievable and beyond all reason.

Sarah: It is definitely a divine miracle. God is alone capable of performing miracles. This is why I told you that Saint John was miraculously born. There is more proof in the Bible as to why St. John held an important position.

Secondly: Archangel Gabriel testimony for him before his birth: When Archangel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias in the altar, he told him that many people will be pleased by his birth. He also informed him with other things we shall find in the gospel of our teacher St Luke chapter one verses 14 to 17. You may want to find these verses. The Gospel of St Luke is the third gospel among the gospels of the New Testament. **The Chief:** Just wait for a few minutes and I will find them. (Can you help the chief find these verses and fill in the missing words of Sarah's reply.)



References

Luke 1:14-17

VERSES

.....

.....

.....

Sarah: From the verses you will see that the angel testified for him and mentioned that he is.....) (Fill in the missing words)

1- Many

.....

2- even from his mother's womb

.....

3- And he will

.....

4- He will also go before

.....



The Chief: He is truly a great saint. His father was certainly very glad to receive this good news.

Sarah: When Zacharias heard this prophecy, he could not believe it and asked for a sign from the angel to prove it. As a result of him doubting the promise of God, the angel told him that he shall remain silent until the day this matter has been fulfilled. When Zacharias came out of the altar, he could not utter a word. Then, everyone realised that he must have seen a vision inside the altar. After Zacharias had completed the days of his service. His wife, Elizabeth, later conceived.

The Chief: What happened after that?

Sarah: Third: Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit:

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, Virgin Mary went to visit Elizabeth, her cousin. Virgin Mary knew of Elizabeth's pregnancy from Archangel Gabriel who had brought her the good news (of becoming pregnant with our Lord, Jesus).



She entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greetings, the baby leaped (moved quickly in reaction) in her womb. Elizabeth and her fetus were both filled with the Holy Spirit and that caused her to say a beautiful verse found in Luke 1: 42-45. Can you search the Bible for it and read it out to us? **The Chief:** Of course. **(Help the chief find the reference and write the verses)**

References

Luke 1: 42-45

VERSES

Sarah: Our mother, the virgin, spent three months with Elizabeth and then departed to her house. During the birth of Saint John, a wonderful thing that shows his great position has happened and that was..... **Fourth: Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit:**



When Elizabeth gave birth to a child as promised by God, all relatives and neighbours rejoiced (similarly the church rejoices and celebrates the birthday of St John the Baptist on the 30th day of Baounah of every Coptic year.)

On the eighth day of his birth, they came to circumcise the child; they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias.) His mother, Elizabeth said, "No; he shall be called John." So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called? Zacharias asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." So they all marvelled because of Elizabeth and Zacharias's agreement. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosened, and he spoke, praising God and prophesying about our Lord Jesus Christ and his own son, John.

The Chief: Can you show me what he said about them?



Sarah: Open the Holy Bible (Luke 1: 67-73) to read what Zacharias had foretold about the Lord Christ and also (Luke 1:76-79) to read about what he prophesied concerning his son, John. **(Help the Chief find the references, write the verses and fill the spaces)**

References	Luke 1:67-73	VERSES	

References	Luke 1:76-79	VERSES	

1-And has raised up	2- salvation for us	3- And you, child	4-For you will
---------------------	---------------------	-------------------	----------------

The Chief: Surely John the Baptist was a great saint but I have a question that makes me wonder. You said that you knew about the wild honey from the story of John the Baptist. Has he lived in the wilderness?

Sarah: I will give you the answer within the next point, which is among those things that made our saint hold a prominent position in our church. It is..... **Fifth: John the Baptist was faithful in preparing the way before our Lord Jesus:**

Sarah: Saint John lived his early childhood in the wilderness and started his mission preaching in the wilderness of Judea (this is not a desert but land that cannot be cultivated like the land you live on). In the Gospel of St Matthew, (the first gospel in the New Testament) you will find the proof to my words. TRY TO FIND.....



References	Matthew 3:1-4	VERSES	

The Chief: You're right Sarah. In these verses, it is written that John was clothed in camel's hair and his food was locusts and wild honey, the honey we're looking for.

Sarah: Actually, he wore rough and simple clothes which were typically the clothes worn by the prophets. The locusts were also the food of the poor. He was an ascetic. If you study the previous verses, you will see that he's got more than one characteristic. He was called a **(voice of one crying in the wilderness and the Baptist.)**

Sarah: John the Baptist commenced his ministry few months before Jesus Christ started His in order to prepare the way before him. That was the reason he was called the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He called on people to repent to prepare the way before the Lord Jesus. He commanded them to do a lot of things, which you will find written in the following reference (Luke 3:8-14). Can you read them and tell me what the teachings that John the Baptist was asking the people to follow were?

(Help the Chief find the verses and fill in the missing words)

References

Luke 3:8-14

VERSES

.....

.....

.....

1-Therefore
bear

.....

2- Therefore
every tree which

.....

3- He who has
two tunics

.....

4- Do not
intimidate

.....

Sarah: For that reason, many among the congregation believed that he was the Messiah they have been waiting for. He explained to them that he wasn't when he testified for the Lord Jesus.

Sixth: John the Baptist was faithful in his testimony about our Lord Jesus:

He has testified to our Lord Jesus and said a very beautiful verse about Him.
You can find it in Luke 3:16.



Memory verse:- "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

And in (John 1:29), he also said," **"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**

The Chief: But why did they call him St John the Baptist? **Sarah:** He was called the Baptist because he baptised (immersed) the people in the Jordan River. The aim behind baptism, which was by water only, was to offer repentance and remission of sins for the people at the time. His baptism was a symbol of our Christian baptism but there is still a difference between them. While John's baptism was with water only and its aim was repentance and forgiveness of sins, our Christian baptism is by the water and the Spirit through which we become the children of God.

10



The Chief: I can sum up what you said as follows:-

	St John's Baptism	Our Lord Jesus' Baptism
Aim	Repentance and remission of sins.	Become the children of God
Method	Water only	Water and spirit

Sarah: This is a perfect comparison but St John's ministry was not only to baptize people. He also had a very great honor because he: **Seventh: Baptised our Lord Jesus:**

Before Lord Jesus commenced His ministry, He came to John and asked to be baptized by him. However, John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You". Jesus answered and said to him: "Permit it to be so now" and then he baptized Him.



Memory verse:- "When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17)



Sarah: You're right. This is exactly what the Lord Jesus Himself said about him.

EIGHTH: The Lord Jesus' testimony about John the Baptist:

He was the greatest among those born of women. "Among those born of women, there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11) and "more than a prophet" (Matthew 11:9).

Also, because of his standing for the truth, he attained a great honour which was.....

Ninth: The testimony to the truth and St John's martyrdom:-

As for his martyrdom, I will end my conversation with you by telling you about it.

(King Herod Antipas had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Herodias left her husband Philip who was still alive in order to marry his brother, King Herod. St John objected to it and told the king that: "**It is not lawful for you to have her.**" Although Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, for they counted John as a prophet. Herod himself feared him, for he knew that he was a righteous saint.)

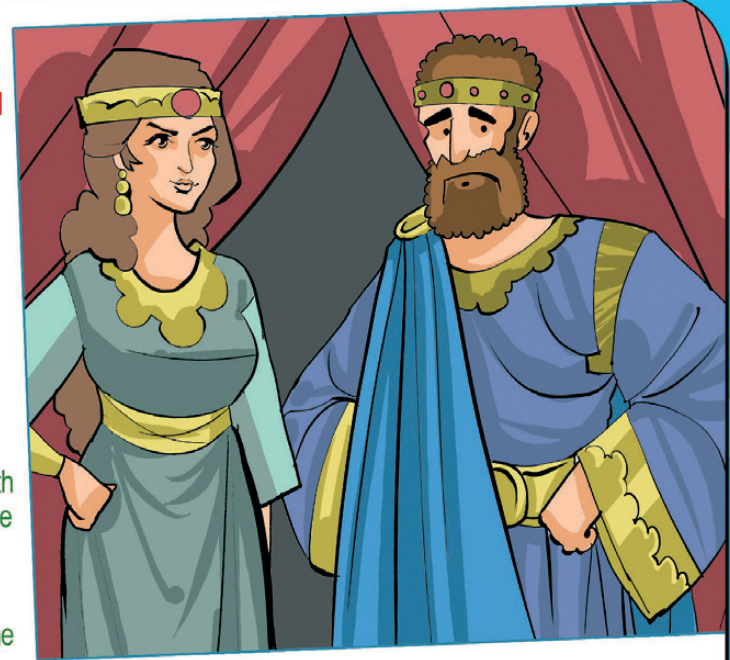


The Chief: Was St John in prison for a long time?

Sarah: No, for when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased him. Therefore, he promised with an oath saying, "I will give you whatever you might ask up to the half of my kingdom." So she asked her mother, "What should I ask for?" Her mother prompted her saying, "John the Baptist's head." The daughter went to Herod and asked, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter." And the king was sorry because of the oaths and the promise he made with her. So he commanded St. John to be beheaded his head given to her.

(Nonetheless, St. John was beheaded in prison and it was commanded to be given to her.)

The soldiers did as they were ordered and the king brought St John's head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it.



The church celebrates his martyrdom on the second of Tout every Coptic year.

The Chief: What a great saint! He was a faithful witness of the truth, a voice crying out in the wilderness and more than a powerful prophet. There was no one among those born to women a greater person than him. It is enough that he was a forerunner of the Lord Jesus and prepared the way for Him... calling upon all people to repent.

Sarah: Fantastic! You have summed up all his characteristics! He is also considered the last among the Old Testament prophets and the first of the New Testament's saints. May his prayers be with us all, Amen. I hope that I didn't take much of your time.

The Chief: I have enjoyed your conversation very much. Let's continue with our search for the honey. Not very long after they have started walking, Sarah saw some of the overlapping trees. She decided to look for the honey within the gaps of these trees. Soon after they searched the place, they found wild honey in big quantities in the same area. The Chief and Sarah began to collect the wild honey and then went back to where the tribe was and all the group members were set free. (The tribe chief and his people thanked the members of the team for their help to solve one of the biggest problems they suffered from. They also apologized to them about the way they treated them at the very beginning.

2

In my
Family,
I am always
useful

During the distribution of the honey among the people of the tribe, the members of the group gathered to discuss how they would go back to their organization headquarters. But because the darkness of night came, they could not decide which direction they should go. The tribe chief offered them to stay the night with his family until the morning and they all accepted his offer. The members of the team were very pleased by the way the chief's family welcomed them especially after the family was told of what the group has done for them. After they all ate dinner, everyone went to sleep except Mariam who took out a piece of paper and a pen and started to write some things down. The chief approached her and wondered why she had not fallen asleep.



The Chief: Why didn't you go to sleep like the rest of your friends? Is there anything bothering you (you're not comfortable with)?

Mariam: No, absolutely not. Your house has a great family atmosphere that I've never expected to find here. That is the reason I'm trying to note down what I have seen here for it is a great and rare example of a correct family life. This will also help me in my research for an international competition I am taking part in.

The Chief: Perhaps I can help by explaining any issue concerning our family if you wish but firstly, I'd like to know the topic of your research.

Mariam: Ok! I'll let you know the topic of my research and you can help me with some information about your tribe.

The Chief: Deal! I also think that such information will be of a very good benefit to our tribe.

Mariam: The topic of my research has two parts:

First: The family and what it is made up of.

The family is formed as a holy unity between a man and a woman in the church by performing one of our seven church sacraments, "**The sacrament of Matrimony**". In this sacrament, the priest announces the beginning of the formation of a new family. All the prayers performed in the sacrament of matrimony declare this newly Christian family as a small church.

1. The family and what it is made up of.

2. The effects of the good (right) upbringing on every member of the family and the surrounding society (community) that makes any family a witness to the Lord in all aspects of life.



Second: The effects of the right upbringing on every member of the family and the surrounding community

In regards to this point, I looked for examples of families from different time periods to study their lives in detail. I found many, but there is one that I admire and chose to write about, as the first story in my research. It is the story of St. Macrina the Virgin and the positive effect she had on her sisters.

The Chief: Can you tell me her story so we all can learn from what she has done? **Mariam:** Definitely.



Saint

Macrina

the Virgin

St Macrina was born in Caesarea, Cappadocia in Palestine to rich Christian parents. She was the eldest child among nine siblings (brothers and sisters).

(Her parents raised her up in a true pious Christian manner and taught her how to read, write and take care of the household. She was consistently reading the Holy Bible especially the two books of Wisdom and Psalms. It was known about her that she read the psalms at the beginning and the end of any job she does. She knew how to live the true meaning of prayer in her life when she continuously recited the psalms.

The Chief: What is the true meaning of prayer?

Mariam: The true meaning of prayer is

The relationship that keeps a person in a state of a continuous dialogue with God

The Chief: How can a person reach that state of a continuous relationship with God? **Mariam:** This can be reached by.....

1. Dedicating a regular time to stand before God and talk with Him

2. Trying to understand every word we utter by our minds and feel it by our hearts.

3. Trusting that God listens to us at all times

If we live a life of prayer like this, those who are around us shall see the image of God clearly in whatever we do. Consequently, we will be witnesses of our Lord in the like manner St Macrina used to do.





In regards to her siblings:

He was the eldest among five brothers who became a shining star in the church and a defender of the true faith. This saint had been greatly affected by his father and what his sister had taught him. After receiving his education in many different schools, he became very well-known for being an outstanding and successful achiever all over the place. Thanks to his sister, Macrina, who taught him humility, he managed to avoid falling in the traps of fame and praises that could have affected him. Through her encouragement, he longed for the life of solitude.

The Chief: You made me eager to know the rest of her story. Can you tell me the rest of her story?

Mariam: Since her early childhood and for the rest of her life, St Macrina was known for having a heart full of love towards everyone around her. After her father Basil's death (at an early age), Macrina helped her mother, Emmelia and grandmother, Macrina in taking care of her siblings. The mother had brought up her children in a very pious Christian way. Macrina was called the family's angel because she has been helping in raising and educating her siblings. And to prove to you the great effect of proper Christian upbringing of the children, three famous and great bishops of our church fathers came out of this family. They are...

1

**St Basil the Great
Bishop of Caesarea**

2

**St Gregory, Bishop
of Nyssa**

3

**St Peter, Bishop
of Sebaste**

St Macrina had an effective role in the lives of her siblings as she taught them the love of prayer and reading of the Holy Bible.

The Chief: Three bishops come from the one house! Certainly it is a house that deserves you to do your research on.

Mariam: Let me continue and you will find out more about the reason behind my great admiration towards this family and especially St. Macrina.

1

First: St Basil





2

Second: St Peter

He is the youngest brother. St. Macrina was like a father, mother, teacher and guide to him. He took her as the ideal guide for every good deed since his father passed away after his birth. She has taken care of his education and spiritual life. He excelled in all manual arts at an early age of his childhood without a teacher or a tutor. He was also known for his wisdom and as a result his brother, St Basil, chose him to help in serving the group of monks he established. As a result of him defending the faith of our church, he was ordained a bishop of Sebaste.



3

Third: St Gregory

At the same time many were honouring and praising St Gregory for his philosophical knowledge and wisdom. St Gregory was very close to his sister and called her, "my teacher". As a result, St. Macrina approached him and managed to convince him to choose the monastic life.

The Chief: St Macrina's great care of her siblings has resulted in the greatest fruits in their lives. She was definitely a witness for the Lord among her siblings. **Mariam:** She did not only influence the life of her siblings, but the life of her mother as well. St Macrina practiced asceticism in her house and consequently became a living example of goodness to her mother. Both she and her mother lived lives of prayer and praising in their home every day and night. Later on, they moved to another house where they were joined by a group of women and they all lived a life of communion and asceticism. St. Macrina, together with her mother, established a convent for these women. After her mother's death, she gave it away to the poor and lived on whatever money she gained from selling her hand-made goods). She continued to live a holy life until her departure to the heavens. **The Chief:** She is a truly great saint who had an effective role in her family's life. From her story, I learned how important a Christian upbringing is to all the members of the family and to the surrounding community as well.

Mariam: For all these reasons, I chose to write down the story of St. Macrina as my first family sample in my research.

The Chief: Do you mean that your research includes examples of other families?

Mariam: Yes, I wrote about many of the personalities of the Holy Bible who witnessed to God within their families.

The Chief: Can you tell me about them? **Mariam:** I can also help you find these personalities in the Holy Bible.

The Chief: Wow! We'll get to search the Holy Bible again. I'm very excited and ready to find any reference.

16

Mariam: Ok, find these Bible references for me.



Genesis 14:8-16

State
how:



Tell:

The story about how
Abram defended
Lot against king
Chedorlaomer

Apply:
(in your
own life)

Genesis 37:12-18

State
how:



Tell:

He went to see if it was
well with his brothers

Apply:
(in your
own life)

1 Cor 16:19

State
how:



Tell:

How can I make my own
house a church for God in which
we all pray as a family every day and
night (the family altar), read and study the
Holy Bible, sing a hymn or and pray from the Agpeya?).

Apply:
(in your
own life)

Help the chief find these Bible references and fill in the blanks under each picture to learn about examples of some the personalities of the Holy Bible who witnessed for God within their families.



- 1 Reveal (Tell): (The personality in the picture)
- 2 State how (the person in the picture was a witness to God in his or her family)
- 3 Apply in your own life (How can you imitate this character in your life so you can be a witness to God in your family?)

3

Knowing the faith of my church

After the chief and Mariam had finished their conversation about the family, the night was coming to an end, the sun was about to rise and everyone started to wake up.

The Chief: Your Holy Bible contains fantastic values and principles which are very beneficial to family life.

Mariam: Besides the values it has for the family life, the Holy Bible also contains many teachings about our Christian faith and the rites of our Orthodox church.

Mariam: Every Christian is a member of the living body of Christ, which is His glorious church. The head of this body is our Lord Jesus Christ to whom all glory is due. In order to build this body on a proper foundation, our Lord Jesus Christ established for us seven sacraments that we have to practice and act according to in our daily lives. In this way, we are witnesses to Christ before those who are around us through our good deeds, Orthodox practices, Christian actions and words.



The conversation between Mariam and the chief was interrupted by the voices of the members of the team calling her. She went and invited them to take part in the dialogue with the chief about the Christian teachings and rites. **Mariam:** I was talking to the chief about our Christian faith and the church sacraments. You may join us as well. When we finish, we will look for our way back. **The Chief:** What do you mean by "church sacraments"? **Basem:** Exactly, Sarah. The sacraments of our church are seven and they are.....

The Church Sacrament is:

Sarah: Mariam, would you allow me to join your conversation and answer the chief's question?

A church sacrament is a mysterious and unseen grace or gift from God. We obtain this gift when we participate in some rites and prayers performed by the priest using the sacramental materials. Upon the completion of the sacrament, the spirit of God comes upon us and sanctifies us.

1. Baptism

2. Chrismation (Holy Myron)

3. Repentance & Confession

4. The Eucharist (Holy Communion)

5. The Unction of the Sick

6. Matrimony (Marriage)

7. Priesthood

The Chief: Can you tell me what each sacrament is?

Basem: Certainly, the first of our church sacraments is

1- The Sacrament of Baptism

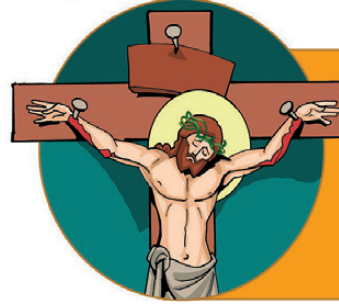
It is a Holy sacrament through which we are born again by immersion in the baptismal bowl three times in the name of the Holy Trinity. The sacrament of Baptism is like the door through which the believer enters the church and without it he or she cannot take part in the rest of the sacraments.



Sarah: When we get baptized, the Holy Spirit gives us many blessings.

1. Cures our corrupt nature:

We are born with a corrupt nature because of the sin of Adam and Eve. We then regained our original pure image by the crucifixion of the Lord and His redemption (Anyone who gets baptized regains his or her pure original image that God has created him or her with.)



Through our Lord Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, He renewed our nature and gave us a new life. Consequently, the newly baptised person declares that he or she is worthy of our God's redemption; meaning they deserve this renewal of their nature.

2. Creates a new nature inside us:

3. Gives us the blessing of being the children of God the father:

When we are baptised, we become the children of God Himself. When a child is born, he or she is the child of Adam. It is only after baptism that they become the son or daughter of God.



Those who get baptised are eligible to partake in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist of the Body and Blood of our Lord.

4. Makes me a member (organ) in the body of Christ:

The Chief: Baptism is actually a great sacrament. Who instituted this sacrament? **Mariam:** Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself instituted it when He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove as I mentioned to you in the story of John the Baptist. He also stressed its importance after His resurrection when He sent His disciples saying to them, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19) **Bishoy:** Mariam, don't forget that our Lord Jesus Christ also explained the work of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Baptism! He stressed that it is essential for our salvation and entering the kingdom of heaven when He said...



Memory Verse

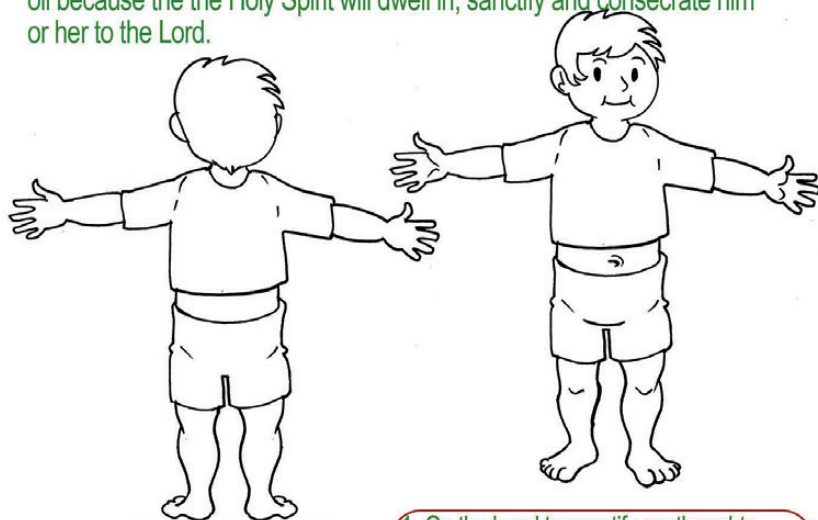
"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5)

2- The Sacrament of Chrismation

It is also called the sacrament of Confirmation or the holy anointment. The word "Myroun" is a Greek word, which means "holy oil or ointment". In this sacrament, the baptized gets anointed with the Myroun as soon as he gets out of the baptism. The priest anoints the baptized thirty six times all over his or her body (anointing the senses, the heart, the back, the two wrists and both legs).



The Chief: Why is it important to anoint all these parts of the body? **Sarah:** It is important for the baptized to be anointed with the Myroun oil because the the Holy Spirit will dwell in, sanctify and consecrate him or her to the Lord.



A second group of 12 anointments on the joints of the two arms to purify my deeds and the third group of 12 anointments on the joints of the two legs to sanctify my movements and behaviour

1- On the head to sanctify my thoughts and also my senses.
 2-3 On the nostrils 4- on the mouth
 5-6 On both ears 7-8 on the two eyes
 9-10 on the heart and the belly button to sanctify my feelings 11-12 on the back and the back bone to consecrate my well

The dwelling of the Holy Spirit inside the human being gives him or her enlightenment. So, the Myroun gives us the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit as the Holy Bible says,"



But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you" (1John 2:27)

When Abouna, the priest, anoints the baptized on all the parts of his or her body, he sanctifies those parts (our senses, feelings, inner souls, wills, deeds and movements)

That means it makes us children of God alone. Just like the altar vessels which are anointed with the Mayroun oil to be consecrated to the altar and would not be allowed to be used for anything else. (Baptism makes us like the altar vessels: anointed with the Myroun oil and are not to be used for anything else.) Nothing other than the Body and the Blood of our Lord Jesus should be put in them. After we get anointed with the Mayroun, we become God's own. Every part of us becomes His and thus it is not right for us to sin.

For these reasons, this sacrament is essential for our salvation. **The Chief:** But what will happen to those who sin after being baptised and anointed with the Myroun?

Basem: Our wonderful church has given us a solution for the sins we commit after we get baptised and anointed with the Myroun. It has arranged for us the third sacrament in our church which is.....

1- The Sacrament of Repentance and Confession.

Through this sacrament, the sinner returns to God and reconciles with Him by confessing all his sins in the presence of the priest. The sinner must admit his sins without any shyness to receive an absolution from the priest (through the authority given to him by Lord Jesus) and gain forgiveness. The Lord had established this sacrament straight after His resurrection and when He appeared to His disciples and said to them, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20:21-23)



Mariam: In regards to how the Holy Spirit works in the sacrament of repentance and confession, it:

1. Rebukes us as soon as we commit a sin. When any one of us sins, he or she finds themselves without peace. (Not feeling happy at all or a feeling of guilt.)



2. Directs us to confession as it is the only way that would lead us to feel relieved. It drives us to confess our sins to God so that we can find peace in Him.



3-Gives us the courage to mention all our sins during our confession. It also gives father the priest the spirit of wisdom and guidance. The Holy Spirit is leading the whole confession session.



4.After the priest prays the absolution on us, the Holy Spirit carries all our sins and puts them on our Lord Jesus Christ (for he is the lamb of God who carries the sins of the world). By His Blood that was shed on the cross we gain the forgiveness of our sins.)



Memory Verse

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

In this manner, our clothes (souls) become white and beautiful once more after they have been defiled by sin. The sacrament of repentance and confession is considered one of the sacraments necessary for salvation.

Bishoy: The fourth sacrament is.....

4.The Sacrament of the Eucharist (Holy Communion)

It is also called the thanksgiving or communion sacrament. It is a holy sacrament in which the believer eats the most holy body of Christ and drinks His precious blood. The Lord Jesus established the Eucharist for us on Covenant Thursday in the upper room of Zion (St Mark's house) when He met with His disciples.

Our teacher Matthew says to us in his gospel.....



"Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28)

Memory Verse



Eating the body and drinking the blood of our Lord gives us many benefits such as...

1- Abiding in Christ

2- Eternal life

3- Spiritual Growth

4- The healing of our souls, bodies and spirit

5- Salvation and the forgiveness of our sins



Sarah: In the Holy Liturgy in this sacrament, the Holy Spirit descends upon...

1

the bread and wine, "the vine Juice", and transforms them into the body and the blood of the Lord.

2

...the believers who are present in the church and works to purify and cleanse them to prepare them to receive the Holy Communion

For these reasons, the Eucharist is considered one of the sacraments **that is necessary for salvation**. **The Chief:** That means the sacraments, which are essential for salvation, are four: Baptism, Myroun, Repentance and Confession and finally the Holy Communion. What about the rest of the sacraments? **Basem:** The fifth of the seven sacraments of our church is

5-The Sacrament of the Unction of the Sick

In the early days of Christianity, this sacrament was performed as follows: They would pour oil in a lamp, immerse seven cotton wicks in this oil, and then the priest lights them at the beginning of each prayer of the seven prayers. We still follow the same custom but we use a plate instead of the lamp and the priest will light the wicks in the shape of a cross.

(At the completion of the seven prayers, the Holy Spirit descends on the oil and sanctifies it to cure us from our sicknesses whether they are in our spirits, bodies or souls.) In order to benefit from this sacrament, the sick person should be repentant and confess before receiving the oil of the sacrament and follow it by having the Holy Communion.



The Chief: By taking part in this sacrament, you would not need physicians, would you?

Mariam: The sacrament of the unction of the sick should not stop us from seeing doctors as they prescribe us important medication. But it is important to remember that it is God who cures us and that the Holy Spirit gives us the gift of healing.

Bishoy: Our Lord Jesus established this sacrament in the New Testament when He instructed His disciples to "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers" (Matthew 10:8)

Mariam: Our teacher St Mark has also proved that the disciples had practiced this sacrament when he said, "and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them." (Mark 6:13)

Sarah: Our teacher St James has also commanded us to call the priests upon the sickness of any person saying,

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." (James 5:14-15)

Memory Verse



Basem: The sixth sacrament of our church sacraments is.....

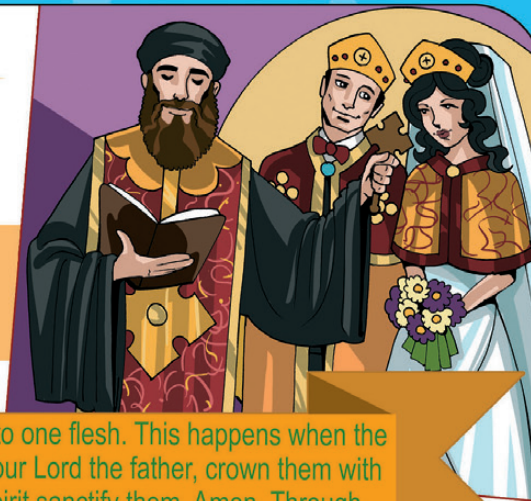
6-The Sacrament of the Holy Matrimony

This is a holy sacrament that unites a man and a woman in a sacred manner by the grace and the works of the Holy Spirit through the hands of a priest. About Marriage, Our Lord Jesus Christ says.....



Memory Verse

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matthew 19:5-6)



In this sacrament, the Holy Spirit descends upon the bride and the bride-groom and make the two into one flesh. This happens when the priest places the crowns on their heads and anoints them three times with the cross saying: "1- Oh, our Lord the father, crown them with glory and honour Amen; 2- Oh, our Lord the only begotten son, bless them Amen; 3- Oh, the Holy Spirit sanctify them, Amen. Through these three sanctifications, the Holy Spirit comes upon the bride and the groom and unites them into one flesh and one heart and makes their house a holy church for God.



Mariam: The Christian marriage is a holy mystery because it happens through the work of the Holy Spirit. It was established and honoured by Our Lord Jesus Himself when He attended the wedding of Cana of Galilee.

The Chief: And now, we have only one sacrament left.

Basem: Correct. The seventh sacrament is.....

7-The Sacrament of Priesthood

In The sacrament of Priesthood, the Holy Spirit comes down upon the elect for priesthood on the day of the ordination liturgy. The bishop then places his hand upon his head to give him the grace of priesthood and the associated gifts such as the authority to loose and bind teachings, fatherhood and so on.

Our Lord Jesus Christ gave specified two gifts of priesthood to his disciples, which are.....

1- Teaching:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20)



2-Authority of loosing and binding :

Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosened in heaven." (Matthew 18:18)



Mariam: Our Lord Jesus had established this sacrament when He chose twelve disciples and consecrated them to the service. (He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles) (Luke 6:12). The priest is God's steward who is entrusted to administer His sacraments to the congregation. We have now concluded our talk about the seven sacraments of our church.

The Chief: The church's seven sacraments are fantastic!

Mariam: True! Every Christian among us is required to reflect the light of the Holy Spirit, which they have received from taking part in the seven sacraments of our church. We should be like a mirror; constantly reflecting the Holy Spirit within us to everyone in our home, church and community. The way we treat each other and the way we witness to Him in whatever we do in our lives are some of the ways to display t Holy Spirit within us.

The Chief: I like your steadfastness and your great knowledge of your Orthodox faith very much. I also admire your ability to persuade those who question your faith, which makes me want to learn more about it. From all what you said, I have learned

(Help the chief to fill in the missing parts in the following table)



	The name of the sacrament	A verse about the sacrament	The blessings we gain from taking part in this sacrament
The Sacraments necessary for salvation	Baptism		1-Heals our corrupt nature which we inherited because of the sin of Adam and Eve. 2- 3- 4-
	Confirmation		The Holy Spirit 1- dwells in us 2- 3-
	Repentance & Confession		1- Rebukes us 2- Leads us to confess 3- Gives us 4- After father prays the absolution on us,
	The Eucharist	Take and eat.....He took the chalice, gave thanks and gave them.....	1- Be confirmed in Christ 2- Gain eternal life 3- Grow in grace 4- The healing of the soul, body and spirit 5- Salvation and remission of sins
	The unction of the sick		The Holy Spirit descends on the oil and sanctifies it for.....
	The Holy Matrimony		The Holy Spirit comes down upon the bride and groom and makes them
	Priesthood		The Holy Spirit comes down upon the nominee for priesthood and gives him

4-

In my society, I am useful:-

After the conversation between the members of the team and the chief came to an end, the group and their driver started to get ready to move to where the bus was. The tribe's chief walked with them to guide them to the bus but as soon as they reached the place where the bus broke down....

The driver: Look! These are parts of the torn bus tires that caused us to stop but where is the bus?

Mariam: You're right. Where is the bus? It has disappeared!

Basem: Let's follow the traces of the tires on the road so that we may locate the bus.

The Chief: Let's follow the tire tracks.

The team began to follow the tires' prints on the road until they reached a certain spot when suddenly they heard the chief yelling:

The Chief: Stop! We can't proceed. We should not move beyond this point.

Bishoy: Why?

The Chief: This area belongs to another tribe which we have had problems with for many years. They do not allow any stranger to be on their land. I suggest we should leave the bus to them. I will try to help you get to any place you need to be without causing trouble with the other tribes.

The bus driver: We should try to retrieve it at any cost.

Sarah: It is ours and we should get it back. Why should we leave it to them?

Bishoy: We can find a way to properly ask for what belongs to us from the chief of that tribe without risking our safety.

The Chief: What is a proper way to claim your rights?

Bishoy: I don't know a certain way but I know many characters who managed to restore their rights by properly claiming them. We may select one of them and learn how to correctly ask for what is ours.

Basem: You're right, Bishoy. I believe the daughters of Zelophehad and what they did to get what



belongs to them relates to our situation.

The Chief: Who are the daughters of Zelophehad?

Basem: You'll find their story in our Holy Bible in the book of Numbers of the Old Testament. Let's commence the story from the beginning.

The
Daughters

of
Zelophehad

Claim

their Rights

Numbers

(27, 36)

After the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt, they were lost in the wilderness for forty years before entering the Promised Land (Canaan) which God had vowed to give them. The Lord asked Moses to divide the Promised Land among the twelve tribes of Israel, every tribe according to the number of its individuals (Exodus 26:53). This Promised Land was where every member of the people of Israel wanted to be. Our story occurred during that time.

There was a man called **Zelophehad** from the tribe of Manasseh (Joseph's second son) who had passed away leaving behind five daughters and no sons.

To the
servant:

Their names were Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah)



The law of those times did not allow the girls to get a share in the land unless she was married or through her father who had a share already. Therefore, the daughters of Zelophehad were not numbered among the people of Israel and consequently did not receive a share in the Promised Land.

The Chief: This is really very sad. As girls at the time, they did not have any power to change their situation. They could only feel upset and cry over it.

Basem: Surprisingly the daughters of Zelophehad didn't do that! On the contrary, they were very brave and full of faith. They had hope that they would get a share of the Promised Land alongside the rest of the people of Israel. They knew how to properly defend their right to get their shares.

The Chief: So, what did they do?

Basem: They took their case before Moses, the leader of the people, Eleazar the priest, the leaders, and the whole congregation by the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting. They were very strong and courageous but wise and humble at the same time.

Their case was as follows:

Their father died and left them no brothers (Numbers 26, 37). Why doesn't he get a possession of inheritance like the rest of the men of his tribe? They defended their father saying, "He was not in the company of the men who followed Korah and his group who displeased God by practicing priesthood without a right to do so. Our father was a normal member of the congregation who died naturally. Why would you take away his right to inherit a share of the Promised Land?"

The driver: What they have asked for shows their strong faith and trust in the Lord's promises to them.

Basem: You're right. This also reveals that they were daring and brave enough to claim their shares although that contradicted all the traditions and laws that prevailed at that time.

Sarah: So, what was Moses' reaction to what the daughters of Zelophehad had said?





Basem: Moses never had to solve a case like this and so he didn't make a decision by himself. He went back and prayed to God and asked Him what he should do. Later, Moses and the congregation were surprised by what God said;

The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them." (Numbers 27:7)

Memory Verse



Also, God commanded all the people of Israel to apply "the inheritance law" by which the son inherits his father's possessions and if the deceased had no son, the daughter shall inherit her father's possessions. If the deceased had no children at all, his siblings, uncles or the closest among his relatives may take the inheritance.

The Chief: This means that the daughters of Zelophehad caused the laws to be changed and the customs and tradition to be amended. All of that was the outcome of their courage, faith and correctly seeking their rights.

Basem: Correct.

Bishoy: Let's figure out together how the daughters of Zelophehad knew the right way to put their case forward and get what they asked for.

1-Identifying the problem, thinking about its solution and who is responsible for solving it.

2- Facing it with boldness and courage: The daughters of Zelophehad put their claim of rights forward before the person in charge to solve it.

3-Being firm and insisting on the claims as the daughters of Zelophehad did when they stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders and the whole congregation by the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting. We should insist on our claims when we believe they are right and fair.

4-The art of speech: Take note that they put their claim forward correctly when they spoke a- very briefly b- wisely c- logically d- and persuasively at the same time. Their words deserved the Lord's valuable testimony of: "The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right"

5-The way of asking: a- Inquiry: when they asked, "Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son?" When inquiring, we should seek to speak about what is right to do and what is wrong to avoid.) b- What to claim: They said, "Give us a possession among our father's brothers. We should be specific when we ask for something. We must also be courteous so that our requests may be attended to."

The Chief: That's right. Defending our own rights is an important matter for every one of us.

Basem: I should stress an important point here. When we claim our rights, there are responsibilities we have to perform. This is what happened in our story.

To the servant:

They were the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph

A group of men came before Moses and the leaders of the Israelites and said, "If God has given the daughters of Zelophehad their father's inheritance in the Promised Land, then every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe must marry one of the members of her father's tribe. This is to ensure that no inheritance changes hands from one tribe to another.

Moses answered according to god's commandment establishing two principles saying:

1-Marriage is not compulsory; it is every girl's right to marry whom she chooses.)

1-If any daughter wanted to keep the inheritance of her father in the land, she must marry a man from the family of her father's tribe. If she marries from outside her tribe, she shall surely lose her inheritance.



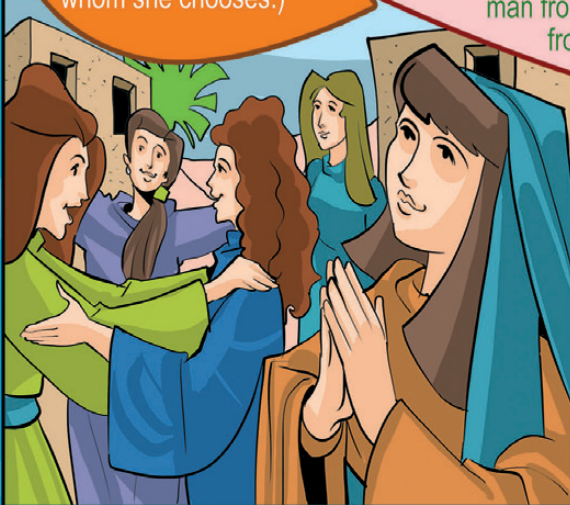
The Chief: What did the daughters of Zelophehad do afterwards?

Basem: Every one of them did what they ought to do in order to deserve inheriting their father's land. They obeyed the law and kept their duty towards their family and tribe and consequently married from among their cousins in order to keep the land in their tribe. That was the end of the story.

The driver: The story of the daughters of Zelophehad taught me if I have a right in something, I need to learn how to claim it in a proper way, from the right person, at the right time.

The Chief It also taught me to take care of others' rights in the same way I care about my own rights.

Basem: Great. This is always how life is; you have rights as well as duties. Our role as Christians is to become faithful witnesses for our God by seeking our rights as well as the rights of others around us.



After learning how to claim their rights properly, the members of the team along with the chief boldly approached that tribe's leader and asked him about the bus. They explained to him what had happened to them and that they are the rightful owners of that bus. The tribe's leader admired their courage and skills and agreed to give them back their bus. The driver then started to check the spare tire, which is normally kept inside the bus, and used it to replace the torn tire. After the tire was fixed, they all boarded the bus, including the chief who offered to guide them to their destination so that they don't lose their way again.



5-

I care
about and
defend my
country

While the bus was travelling, Bishoy started to repair and modify the bus radio until it began to work again. He then tried to adjust the radio channels to listen to an American news channel.

Basem: Why would you like to listen to news from America? We are thousands of miles away from there.

Bishoy: It's our country We should not forget it regardless of how far we are from it.) We should care about it like Nehemiah who cared about his own city Jerusalem while he was captive in Babylon).

Mariam: I would like to listen to Nehemiah's story.

Sarah: Yes, could you please tell us how he cared for and defended his country?



Tersath is a Persian word that also means honorable or respectful. It was the title of the governor of Judah at the time of the Persian invasion.

To the
servant:

Bishoy: Nehemiah was one of the inhabitants of the Southern Kingdom. During the captivity, he was a cup-bearer to the king of Persia which means he was the person who offers the special drink to the king. This job was considered very important because it meant that the king completely trusted the doer of this job. The meaning of the name Nehemiah is 'God is kind' while the word Tersath is a Persian word meaning governor or ruler.

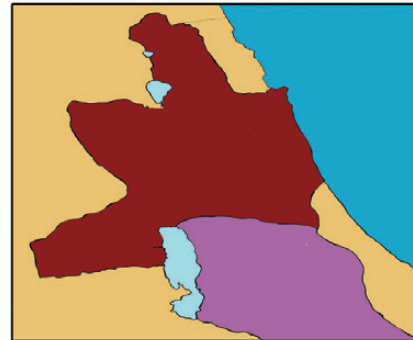
Basem: Did you mean that Nehemiah was not living in his own country? Where did he live then?

Bishoy: Let's start the story from the very beginning. The Israelites used to live together and were ruled by one king. But later on the kingdom of Israel was divided into two kingdoms; one in the north and another in the south.

Captivity means that a king with his army invades a country and takes all their belongings including the men and children and the most skilled craftsmen from whom he could benefit, and move them all to his country. This is how the two kingdoms were taken captives.

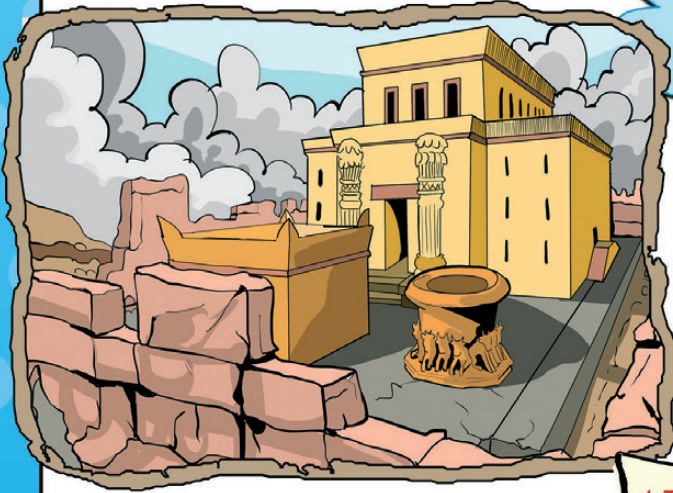


The Northern
Kingdom (The
Kingdom of Israel)
Capital City - Samaria
This kingdom was
taken into
captivity by the
Assyrians.



The Southern
Kingdom (The
Kingdom of Judah)
(Capital City -
Jerusalem)This kingdom
was taken into
captivity by the
Babylonians.

The first capture of the Northern Kingdom was by the Assyrians. Soon after the captivity, a stronger kingdom than that of the Babylonians came to power. That was the kingdom of Persia whose king, Cyrus, gave permission to the Israelites to go back to their own country, Jerusalem. After 70 years in captivity, all the Israelites went back to Jerusalem in three journeys.)



The First Journey: Two groups went back; one group under the leadership of someone called Sheshbazzar and the second group was led by Zerubbabel. Building the temple was the most important thing they did after their return.

The Second Journey: That was led by Ezra who was a priest. He has made a lot of religious reforms.

The Third Journey: That was led by Nehemiah who we are talking about.

Bishoy: Do you know what made Nehemiah lead the third group in their journey back from captivity?
Mariam: I can answer your question, Bishoy. A man named Hanani who came from Judah went and told Nehemiah that the people in Jerusalem have turned away from the commandments of the Lord. He also told him that the wall of the city was destroyed and its gates were burnt down. Nehemiah was full of grief upon hearing this sad news. He had to think of way to change things in Jerusalem. But he knew change would need two important things....)

1-The will to change (from me) which means I want to change.

2-The ability to change by the will of God; otherwise I will not be able to change without God's help and His grace in my life.

Sarah: So, in order to change myself I need to have the right intentions so that God can help me in my struggles. Ok then, what did Nehemiah do in order to change?

Bishoy: Before Nehemiah did anything, he prayed and fasted. This is what we call "struggle". Then, he asked for God to help him in the change he wanted to achieve. God listened to his pleas and put mercy in the king's heart to agree to Nehemiah's request. For this reason he prayed and said,

"O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

(Nehemiah 1: 11) **Memory Verse**

After a lot of prayers and fasting, Nehemiah went to see the king... Nehemiah was clearly upset although it was not right to be unhappy in the presence of the king at the time. The king then said to him, "You look sad and I know that you're not tired. That means you're not happy. So, tell me what's wrong with you."



Nehemiah answered in a very sorrowful voice and said, "The city of my parents and grandparents has been destroyed, its gates have been burnt and its wall has been knocked down. (In those old days, every city had a huge wall and gates to protect it during the wars and against invaders). When the king knew the reason behind his sadness, he said, "What can I do to help you? Tell me what you need."

Before Nehemiah asked for what he needed, he prayed again to the Lord to give him grace in the eyes of the king so that he may approve his requests. Then, he asked for the following:



- 1- Let me go back to my country and people in order to rebuild what has been destroyed.
- 2- Give me letters from your majesty ordering the governors of the regions beyond here and to Jerusalem to permit us to pass through their lands.
- 3- Also a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest (This was a place full of trees and surrounded with walls used as a storeroom for a lot of timber), that he must give me timber to rebuild the city and its walls again.

Three days after Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem: He took a small number of men and wandered around the city at night. He did not tell any of the men of Israel his intention to rebuild and safeguard the city. He started to examine all the burnt doors and the destroyed walls in order to arrange a work plan to repair the damage. After Nehemiah saw all the destruction in the city, he said to the priests, nobles and officials: "Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem that we may no longer be a reproach" (Nehemiah 2:17).

The people were motivated by Nehemiah's words and said, "let us rise and build".



The king in fact agreed after asking Nehemiah for how long he will be away.

Basem: What you've said is proof of how highly the king held Nehemiah.

Bishoy: True. The Lord has given Nehemiah acceptance in the eyes of the king to the extent that he gave him all what he asked for and also sent army officers and horsemen to help him.



Sarah: Wow, Nehemiah had a very strong will to change the state of his city and for that, he managed to influence those people around him.

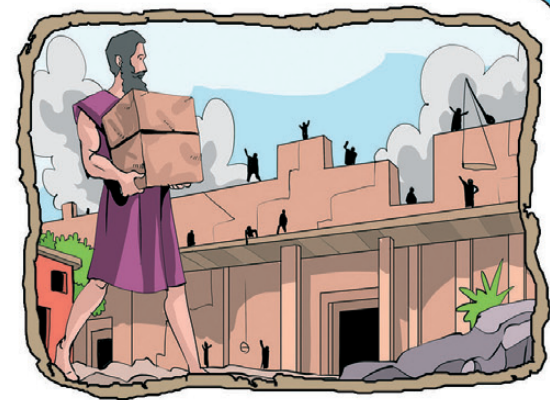
Mariam: Nehemiah started working straight away. He did this by:
Dividing the duties and work among the workers by assigning each one a role to perform in the process of rebuilding the city. He made every man build the part of the wall that's in front of his house. We call dividing the duties and work "team work" where everyone shares in a small part of the whole project. Team effort leads to better and faster results.

Basem: You mean the characteristics that helped Nehemiah fulfill these changes were -

1- He had a strong will

2- His will was an effective one

3- He believed in the importance of team work.



Bishoy: Well done, you got it. By his strong will, Nehemiah always managed to overcome the obstacles and difficulties in his way.

OBSTACLES BEFORE BUILDING:

1) When Nehemiah gathered the people to him and told them they are going to rebuild the city, some rejoiced while others were not so pleased. They were the leaders of neighboring cities:

They were Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab.

They accused them of rebelling against the king for wanting to rebuild their city (as they are still subjects of the Persian king). (Nehemiah 2:19).



HOW NEHEMIAH OVERCAME THEM

Nehemiah said to them:
Here we notice Nehemiah's dependence on the grace and support of God not the king, even though it was the king who permitted them to return and rebuild the city, Nehemiah dependence was still on the grace and support of God not the king's.

"The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build" (Nehemiah 2:20)



Among these difficulties:
AFTER STARTING TO REBUILD:

Despising the work, Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite mocked the rebuilding and said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall." (Nehemiah 4:3)



THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL WAR:

External:

When the people of Israel progressed in the work, the people among them (the Sanballats, Horonites, Tobiahs, Ammonites and Geshem the Arab started to become angry. They wanted to infiltrate their city and conspire to wage a war against them in order to stop the work).



Internal: Low self-esteem and despair. Those who were working felt that they were weak and will not be able to finish the work. (Nehemiah 4:10)

At that time, Nehemiah prayed to God and asked Him to be with them against their enemies. He was confident that the Lord would be with them as long as they are doing something for the good of the city and the people. By working together, they managed to connect the parts of the wall to each other (Nehemiah 4:4-5).

In spite of the humiliation, the people of Israel were working really hard.

Prayer: Nehemiah prayed to the Lord to be with them and help them.

Encouragement: Nehemiah encouraged his people and said to them, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome" (Nehemiah 4:14).

Organizing the work: After that, Nehemiah set armed guards with swords and spears to safeguard the wall while the rest were rebuilding the wall. So, some would work and some guard all day and night (Nehemiah 4:16-18) until the wall was rebuilt in 53 days. (Nehemiah 6:15).





1- He rebuked the nobles and rich among the people for their cruelty to their brethren the poor. He asked them to help the poor and give them back their possessions which they sold or mortgaged for money. (Nehemiah 5:1-13)

Sarah: What do you mean by 'he rebuilt the spiritual walls of the people'?

Bishoy: I mean he made their relationship with God strong once again. He achieved that by doing these four things:

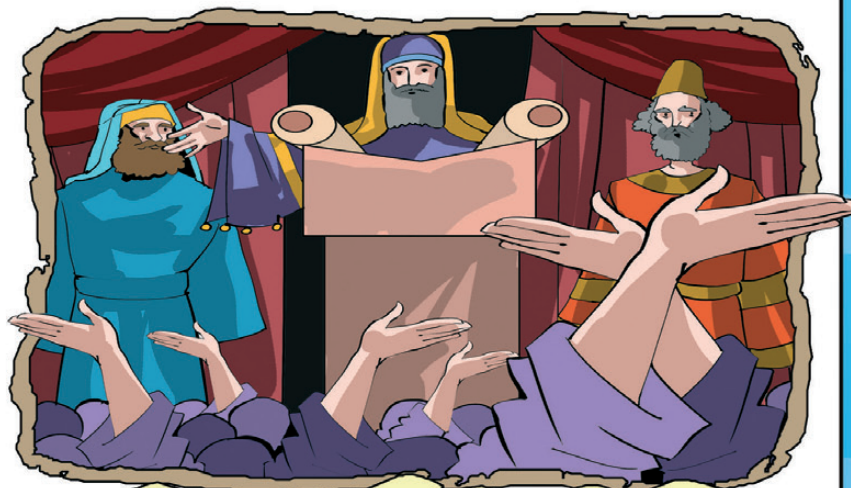
3- Nehemiah encouraged the congregation to confess their sins and repent. (Nehemiah 9:1-3)



4- Nehemiah encouraged the congregation to give their tithes. (Nehemiah 13:12-13)

Mariam: In this way, Nehemiah, by his strong will, fulfilled his goal and changed the city for the better by restoring it to its glory.

Bishoy: In the same way Nehemiah built the stony wall around the city, he rebuilt the spiritual walls of the people.



2- Ezra read them the Book of the Law while some of those who understood the Law were explaining the words they were listening to others, (Ezra read to them the Book of the Law. Some of those who understood the Law helped explain it to those who didn't understand.)



Memorization

The Absolution of the Twelfth Hour

O Lord, all things which we have sinned against You this day, whether in deed, or in word, or in thought, or through all senses, please remit and forgive us, for the sake of Your holy name, as a Good One and Lover of mankind. Lord, grant us a peaceful night and a sleep free from all anxiety. Send us the angel of peace to guard us from all evil, all plague and all temptations of the enemy. Through the grace, and mercies, and love of man of Your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord, and God and Savior Jesus Christ, through Whom is due all honor and glory, together with You and the Holy Spirit, the Life-giver, who is of one essence with You, both now and ever and unto the ages of all ages, Amen.

Psalm 1

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.



This book has been translated by

- + The Sydney Diocese,
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For more information please visit www.saint-mary.net/cool