



ST. GEORGE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

كنيسة الشهيد المخلص مار جرجس
الروماني ملبورن



February 2022



فبراير 2022



Ιωνα
ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ



كذا يكون ابن الإنسان
في قلب الأرض
تلاته أيام وتلاته ليالٍ
(مت 12: 40)

لأنه كما كان يونان
في بطن الحوت
تلاته أيام وتلاته ليالٍ

Jonah's Fast and Feast

14-16 Feb 2022

Holy Lent

28 Feb 2022



St George Coptic Orthodox Church – February 2022



Please always check St. George's Community viber group
for important announcements and any updates for the church timetable

CHURCH TIMETABLE

Monday	Liturgy 6:00 - 8:00 am
Tuesday	Liturgy 9:00-11:00 am Tasbeha 6:30 - 8:00 pm
Wednesday	Liturgy 9:00-11:00 am
Thursday	Liturgy 5:00 - 7:00 am
Friday	Liturgy 9:00 - 11:00 am Young Married Couples 7:00 - 9:00 pm (fortnightly) Youth Meeting 8:00 - 9:30 pm
Saturday	Liturgy - 9:00-11:00 am Sunday School (Prep - Yr 6) - 3:30-5:00 pm Vespers & Bible Study 6:00 - 7:30 Sunday School (Yr 7 - Yr 12) - 6:00 - 7:30 25+ Youth Meeting- 7:45 - 9 pm
Sunday	7-9 am St George Church (English & Arabic) 8-10 am Church Hall (English) 9:30-11:30 am St George Church (Arabic)



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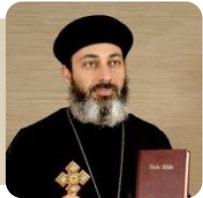
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Church Donations

Building Fund Account

Name: St George Church Building Fund

BSB: 063168

Account #: 10569320

General Account

Name: St George Church General Account

BSB: 063168

Account #: 10128875



Jonah - Does your will conform to God's Will?



H.H. Pope Tawadros II

Prepared by Germaine Gambian

The fasting of Nineveh is the fasting which prepares us for the most important event in the Coptic calendar – The Great Lent. The period of spiritual rebirth in man's life. As we embark on this great journey to Holy Week, we should reflect on the important topic of **God's will**. To give us a better understanding of the true meaning of **God's will**, we will take a closer look at the story of Jonah. Before we dive into the story of Jonah, let's look at prayer. We all pray the Lord's Prayer saying, "Your **will** be done", but do you mean

these words or are these just words you have memorised and repeat out of habit? When you pray these words do you mean, "your will be done in my life O Lord"? Or are you really living your life through your own will. You can be a good person, with good intentions, but your way of thinking could be wrong. Especially when it is not God's will.

Taking a closer look at Jonah's story it explains the meaning of God's will, through three main characters - **God**, Who thinks about how to save the people of Nineveh. **The captain** of the ship Jonah escaped on, Who thinks about how he can save the ship with its passengers. **Jonah**, Although a prophet, thought How to save myself? How to save my soul?

In Jonah's story, God's will transpired in three steps. The first step was selecting and sending. The second step was patience. The third step is God's mercy and the success of the mission of preaching.

1.God always had a plan to save the people of Nineveh. The first step in his plan, He chose the prophet Jonah to help these people. God assigned him to a very important responsibility and if Jonah succeeded he would go on to become the greatest preacher. But Jonah did not complete this task. So then what did the Lord do? Even though Jonah ran away and escaped, God would show great patience with Jonah. But can anyone really escape from God? No we cannot escape God. Yet this small truth escaped Jonah in his moment of weakness.

2.The second step of God's will, is that He is very patient with us. God with his patience gives multiple chances to everyone even to the worst of sinners. He prolongs His patience for years and years with man, waiting for man's repentance. Waiting for man to perhaps become able to pay attention to God. God with his patience is trying to awaken man.

God may awaken him with small subtle signs. God is present in the quiet and peace not the noise and loud of the world. His message and guidance is sometimes through attending a sermon, hearing a good speech, a reading in the Holy Bible, serving the less fortunate of society. Sometimes man pays attention to these small messages, but other times God uses much more deliberate and obvious signs like what happened with Jonah, all the while God is patient.



Jonah was about to die but God prepared the whale for him, thus placing Jonah in an obvious situation that would force him to pay attention to **God's will**. For Jonah to stay in the belly of the whale for three days, this in its self has its prophetic symbolism. Prophecy of the cross, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. With God's patience, He put His hope in Jonah. Although Jonah escaped from God, God still waited for him to return.

3. The third step is God with His mercy. He gave a harsh lesson to these people who did not know right from wrong. With the end result, the people repented a great repentance to God thus fulfilling His will. God succeeded in His plan to '*save the people*'.

Jonah escaped, but God still said I will still use him. The sea was getting rougher and rougher, He said I will also use the rough sea. A huge whale has swallowed this Prophet, God still said I will also use this situation. As if God wants to give a hint that "*all things God works for the good of those who love him*". In the end God succeeded in his plan to save the people.

The second the character, the captain of the ship and his sailors are familiar with travelling the rough sea. Even they felt and knew the storm was different, that something was wrong. The captains initial action was to save the ship and it's people, by throwing overboard goods to lighten the load. He then asked his crew to pray to their Gods, a spiritual cry to God.

Thus when we set a plan we should pray to God. Often when a problem or situation arises it can not be solved using only human intellect alone. As the Bible says "*the prayer of the righteous person is powerful and effective*". It is the righteous person who is filled with God's spirit, the fathers and prophets who raised up their hearts with many prayers. It is God's spirit which motivated them.

When the captain of the ship asked them all to pray, he noticed one man who was asleep. As if. He was oblivious to what was going on around them. When the captain asked Jonah who was his God, He replied my God is the God of heaven and who made the sea. Imagine those sailors who worshiped idols hearing for the first time the Lord of this man is the God who made this rough sea. They would have became more terrified from inside, so they threw Jonah overboard.

The third person who is Jonah, the most substantial person of the story, what concerned him from the beginning till the end, was how to save his own soul. With this thought he fell into a great sin of selfishness. He could not see the ship, or the people, he even was not able to see God who had sent him. His only thought was 'how do I save myself'? Jonah, the people might perish, He said 'it doesn't concern me'. Jonah this is an assignment from the Lord, he replied: 'it doesn't concern me'.

The heart that escapes from responsibility or the man who doesn't take the entire responsibility, he deserves the curse. As the Bible says "*A curse on anyone who is lax in doing the Lord's work!*" If man's work is imperfect so it is not accepted before God. When you are in



the position of responsibility such as a father or mother in your home, or a servant in the church, you should take on the whole responsibility, and fulfill it at the best standard of your capabilities.

But Jonah did not take the responsibility God had bestowed upon him. His first sin was one of stubbornness when he did not follow God's instructions. Jonah then prayed, when he was in the belly of the whale, "*In my distress I called to the Lord and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry, You hurled me into the depths...*"

We can learn so much from Jonah. When dealing with an issue, you should think correctly as it enables you to carry out or apply your thoughts correctly. "His will", shall lead you to the correct result and onto the right path. You can take the long, hard, difficult path, choosing to follow your own thoughts; or you can open your heart and accept God's plan for you. Either way, **God's will**, will be done.





Why you MUST fast and pray

Fr Samuel Elias



Despite the church's teaching and constant reminder of the importance of fasting, many seem to still be unconvinced or not taking this very important spiritual weapon to be a serious part of their spiritual lives. Do they not realise the gravity of the consequences of their decision? Do they simply think it is just a 'suggestion' by the church?

DO they not realise the implication of failing to fast on their spiritual and eternal lives? God has revealed to us that we need to fast; not simply for fasting's sake, but as a deep spiritual need for a healthy spiritual life and to overcome the temptation to sin.

We are at war!

No; We are not advocating terrorism here. But we are at a spiritual war against...sin...earthly and bodily lusts...against the 'powers of darkness' as St Paul puts it: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,[a] against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph 6: 12). Fasting is a weapon God has taught us to use to fight with, (along with prayer) against these spiritual vices, because sin starts in the heart (i.e. the spirit), and therefore it requires a spiritual weapon to destroy it. So the lusts of the body and the Spirit are in constant struggle. Again, St. Paul says: "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish" (Gal 5: 17). Since satan uses the body and its desires to fight against our spirit, it is then logical to subdue the source of physical strength (food and earthly desires) to allow our spirit to take control and overpower the desire for sin. In doing so, fasting then becomes not a deprivation, but a means of progress towards spiritual strength that is superior to the more inferior need to eat and find pleasure in what most people consider their earthly sources of strength (food, pride, self-confidence and physical strength).

Why else do we need to fast?

It's a foundation for humility. God calls those who exalt themselves in a life of shameless sin to be humbled through the act of fasting: "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God" (Joel 2: 12).

A submission to the Holy Spirit. If our bodies are dwellings for the Holy Spirit and, as mentioned before, our bodies lust against the spirit, then by weakening the will and desire of the body, we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us more effectively, accepting His 'voice' with submission and cooperation. On the other hand, those who fulfil the body's desires reject and indeed become



angry against His voice and begin to rebel in pride; thus ‘grieving’ the Holy Spirit, preventing Him from working within them.

To have an effective life of prayer. For similar reasons to the last paragraph, fasting gives strength to our prayers. Because the Holy Spirit is the voice of God communicating with us, and as we submit to hear Him, He also hears us and makes our prayers become very effective, experiencing God very presence, no longer feeling that He is absent or we only communicate with our walls.

Why many reject fasting?

No doubt fasting today for many seems to have become an ‘inconvenience’, perhaps even considered as an unnecessary, outdated practise. Hopefully God’s inspired words allows us to realize the indispensable importance of the practise of fasting. Perhaps the practise of expecting ‘good customer service’ or being in a society that encourages the gratifying of our desires has made us demand self-satisfaction and carry unhelpful, incessant desires. This mindset may cause many to view fasting as an ‘inconvenience’ and an outdated, unnecessary practise. But if we take a few moments to deeply reflect on God’s expectation of a Spirit-led life of holiness, we are forced to reject these earthly principles.

My friend, please take a few moments to reflect on yourself, not as an earthly person who cannot get enough of fleshly desires, but a person re-born to be a spiritual son of God, who is constantly led by the Spirit of God. Without a doubt, by retraining ourselves to fast, we will realise the enormous benefit we will experience. We will feel that our prayer will be much deeper; our connection with God more intimate and fulfilling, and we will truly feel that we reflect the humble and true son that God expects of His children. Ultimately, we will also feel empowered over any temptation which satan throws at us, becoming an empowered, yet humble and well controlled son of God.





Cana of Galilee Meeting

Connect To Correct!

- When You Don't Have All the Answers!

No marriage is perfect, and no one will have the solution for every problem or argument. When couples do enter these seasons of conflict, they should approach God with confidence that He will give them the answers they seek. Calling out to God is always the best choice when our own knowledge and experience could lead us astray. *James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all liberally without reproach, and it will be given him."*

- We Are Meant to Enjoy Our Marriages

Marriage is given to us as a blessing from God, and so we should be grateful for His provision and enjoy it. This can bring us an additional measure of joy beyond our relationship to God because our marriage relationship should be the closest human relationship we have – and therefore greatest source of earthly joy *Ecclesiastes 9:9 says, "Live joyfully with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity for that is your portion in life and in the labor which you perform under the sun."*

- Spouses Should Not Withhold Themselves from One Another

There may be reasons to hold back from intimacy with each other – Paul gives times of dedicated prayer as a specific example – but we should be open and always loving with each other. Extending the concept of mutual submission, we should also submit to a mutual giving of our entire selves to the other person. *1 Corinthians 7:3-4 says, "Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does."*

- Remember That God Is Clearing the Way for Your Marriage

God went before the nation of Israel to prepare the Promised Land for them. He went before the apostles to prepare their mission fields as they went. He will prepare your lives and your path for marriage if you remain faithful and unafraid in the face of adversity. When you remember that God is for you, you know that the hardest battle against sin has already been won. *Deuteronomy 31:8 says, "And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."*



Nineveh's Model of Genuine Repentance

Nabil S. Mesika

Nineveh was a great city and was known for its wealth and beauty; but it was however a wicked city worthy of destruction. God sent Jonah to preach to the Ninevites of their coming destruction.

The repentance of Nineveh is one of the most remarkable events in history. When Jonah entered the city, he preached that in forty days Nineveh shall be overthrown. *"So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth; from the greatest to the least of them"* (Jonah 3:10). The Ninevites humiliated themselves before the Lord. The whole city became in dust and ashes and wore sackcloth from the king to the infant, as a sign of affliction, abstinence and rejection of worldly pleasures. They cried mightily to God to turn His wrath away. Nineveh became a living and beautiful model of genuine repentance.



How Did the Ninevites Repent?

1. **The Grace of God**: The Grace of God was so marvelous in the repentance of Nineveh. What an incredible turnaround! This entire violent and proud city was suddenly humbled to believe the message of God. The hand of God, His power and gracious influence on the Ninevites' hearts must have resulted in their repentance.
2. **The Fear of God and Hope**: The hope in God's mercy encourages us to repent. The Ninevites' faith was wrought by fear and hope combined. Nineveh's repentance was accompanied by joyful hope. Jonah's words were few and stern but Nineveh's people did not lose their hope in the merciful God. *"Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger?"* (Jonah 3:9).
3. **Nineveh's Faith**: Nineveh's faith was accompanied by action. They showed a practical repentance in which they fasted and turned away from their evil ways.

The Repentance of the king of Nineveh

When the king of Nineveh, heard of the word of God sent to him, he rose from his royal throne, and laid aside his royal robe, the badge of his imperial dignity. He covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes, in token of his humiliation for his sin. The king also encouraged citywide contrition. He proclaimed that no one in the city would be allowed to taste or drink anything. The king also proclaimed that every one of them would forsake the violence that was in their hands.



Inner Change

Repentance begins with inner change in a person's will, which is in effect my inner king or ruler. The king changed his royal garb for sackcloth and sat in ashes. My human will should likewise shed the self-made clothes and confess its nakedness and egotistical poverty, so that God would clothe it with His royal heavenly will.

What is Meant by "God Relented" *"Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it."* (Jonah 3:10) God does not relent, or change His mind; it is humanity, which changes its position towards God and then the sentence changes accordingly. When people cease to do evil and return to God they find Him there with His arms spread open to welcome them.





St. George's City Run

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done."

Proverbs 19:17

Once a month and under the guidance of Abouna Peter, donations of food, blankets, beanies & toiletries are collected. Care packages are then put together and distribute to the homeless around the city. A need which is fast growing in our community. Such a wonderful service to be a part of. Everyone especially our youth are welcome to join us, as we do God's good work.



Those who would like to donate or volunteer please contact Abouna Peter.



نينوى "مدرسة التوبه"

نبيل مسيحة

كانت نينوى عاصمة الإمبراطورية الآشورية مدينة عظيمة ، معروفة بقهاها وجمالها. وقد كانت نينوى ممثلة بالشرور مستحقة للدمار. فأرسل الرب يونان ليذهب إلى نينوى لينبأ أهلها بما سيحدث لهم. وتعبر توبه نينوى من أروع أمثلة التوبة في التاريخ ، فكيف تُخضع فجأة مثل هذه المدينة العظيمة المتشامخة ذاتها لأقصى درجة من الإذلال والإتضاع ، بكل من فيها ، من أعظمهم إلى أدنىهم ، ومن الملك الجالس على العرش إلى أحقر سكانها. لقد صارت نينوى حقاً مثلاً رائعاً للتوبة الحقيقية.

كيف تحول أهل نينوى إلى التوبة؟

1. يصل النعمة: كيف تتضاعف فجأة مثل هذه المدينة العظيمة المتكبرة والممثلة بالعنف وعمل الشر ، وكيف تؤمن وتصدق الرسالة التي حملها يونان النبي من الله؟ إنها بلا شك بـد الله ، فقوته ونعمته كانتا هما المؤثرتان لتحريك قلوب أهل نينوى بالتوبة.



2. الإيمان المصحوب بالعمل: عندما دخل يونان المدينة ، كان كل ما قاله هو أنه بعد أربعين يوماً تنقلب نينوى (أي يتم تدميرها). «**قَامَ أَهْلُ نِينَوَى بِإِيمَانٍ كَبِيرٍ هُمْ إِلَى صَفَرِهِمْ**» (يونان 3 : 5) وبذا كان إيمان نينوى مصحوباً بالعمل ، فإنضموا جميعاً وأذلوا أنفسهم أمام الرب وأظهروا توبه عملية ، كان من مظاهرها الصوم والتضرع وليس المسوح ، وتحول أهل نينوى أيضاً عن طرقهم الرديئة وتنازلوا عن غطرستهم وكبرياتهم وتخلوا عن ترفهم وعنفهم واتهمهم. فصارت توبتهم مثلاً حياً للتوبة الحقيقة.

3. مخافة الله والرجاء: إن الرجاء والأمل في رحمة الله ، يشجعان بلا شك على التوبة ، وقد كان إيمان أهل نينوى مصحوباً بصورة مفرحة للرجاء ومخافة الله. فقد استمعوا إلى يونان واستجابوا بسرعة لتحذيره ، فرغم أن كلمات يونان كانت قصيرة وصارمة ، إلا أن ذلك لم يفقد أهل نينوى الرجاء في رحمة الله ، فقالوا: «**أَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ تَعَوَّذُ وَيَنْتَمُ وَيَزْجُعُ عَنْ حُمُّرٍ خَضِبَهُ فَلَا تَهَابُكَ**» (يونان 3 : 9).

توبه ملك نينوى:

لما بلغ كلام الله ملك نينوى قام من على عرشه وخلع ثوبه الملكي ، رمز جلالته ، وتفطى بالمسوح ، كرم للتلذل بسبب ذنبه وخطايا شعبه. ولم يقم الملك بالتوبة بمفرده ، بل شجع المدينة كلها على التندم والتوبة ، فأمر بالصوم وليس المسوح ، وبيان يتضرع كل الناس ويصرخوا بشدة إلى الله وبيان يرجعوا كل واحد عن طريقه الرديئة وعن الشر الذي في أيديهم.



يرمز الملك في سفر يونان إلى الإرادة التي تحكم سلوكي. وكما غير الملك ملابسه الملوكية بالمسوح وجلس في الرماد ، هكذا أيضاً يجب على إرادتي انتظار عنها ملابسها التي عملتها لنفسها وأن تعرف بغيرها وفقرها حتى يغطيها الله برداء الإرادة السمعاني.

حنون الله وشفقته:

رأى الله صدق توبه أهل نينوى. فحركت مظاهر توبتهم قلب الله لكنه ما يتراجع عن الحكم الذي قرر ان يصنعه بهم إذا ما استمروا في طرقهم الشريرة. ومن المذهل حقاً أن نرى كيف جعل الله المدينة بأكملها تؤمن وأن تتب! إن رجوع الله وتدمه على الشر الذي تكلم أن يصنعه بهم هو بسبب حنوه وشفقته ، وهو ما أتكل عليه أهل نينوى في توبتهم.

ماذا يعني "ندم الله":

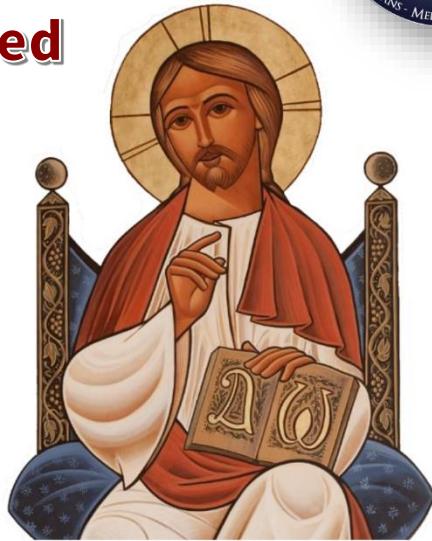
«**لَمَّا رَأَى اللَّهُ أَعْقَالَهُمْ أَثْمَمْ رَجَعُوا عَنْ طَرِيقِهِمُ الرَّذِيلَةِ، نَدِمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الشَّرِّ الَّذِي تَكَلَّمَ أَنْ يَصْنَعَهُ بِهِمْ، فَلَمْ يَصْنَعْهُ.**» (يونان 3 : 10) إن الله لا يندم أو يغير رأيه بالمعنى البشري ، فالله ثابت لا يتغير، أما الإنسان فهو الذي يغير موقفه. فعندما يتوقف عن فعل الشر ويرجع إلى الله ، يجد أنه باسطا ذراعيه. «**أَهْلُ مَسْرَةِ أَسْرِ بَعْوَتِ الشَّرِيرِ - يَقُولُ الْمَسِيدُ الرَّبُّ؟ إِلَّا بِرْجُوعِهِ عَنْ طَرِيقِهِ فَيَحِيَا**» (حز 23:18)



Our Coptic language simplified

Ep ooro :: 'Πορρο :: (continue)

لحن السلام (ابؤرء انتى تي هيريني)



Disperse the enemies, of the Church, and fortify her, that she may never weaken.	Χωρ εβολ `NNΙΖΔΖΙ: NTε ΤΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ: αριс οВТ ερос: NNЕCKI Ա ալ ԵՆԵԾ.	Gor evol en ni gaji: ente ti ek ekleesia: ari sobt eros: en neskim sha eneh.	جور إيفول إن ني حاجي إنتي تي إكليسيا أري سوفت إبروس إنسكيم نا إبنيه	فرق أعداء الكنيسة وحصتها فلا تتزعزع إلى الأبد.
Emmanuel our God, is now in our midst, with the glory of His Father, and the Holy Spirit.	Էմմանուիլ πΕΝΝΟՈՒ : ՖԵՆ ՏԵՆՍԻՒ ՒՆՈՒ : ՖԵՆ ՊՎՈՒ ՆԵ ՊԵՎԻՉՈՒ : ՆԵ Ա ՊԻՊՆԱ ԵԹՈՐՃԱԲ.	Emmanoeel Pennooti: khen ten meeti ti noo: khen ep oo oo ente Pefyot: nem Pi epnevma ethowab.	إممانوئيل بين نوتي خين تين ميتي تينو خين إي أو أو إنتي بيف يوت نيم بي إبنيفما إثؤواب	عmanuel إلهنا في وسطنا الآن بمجد أبيه الصالح والروح القدس.

Some important words

Χωρ εβολ : Disperse : فرق (Gor evol / جور إيفول)

ՀՃԱՅ : enemy : عدو (gaji / حاجي)

ԵԿԿԼΗՍԻԱ : Church : كنيسة (ekleesia / إكليسيا)

Էմմանուիլ : Emmanuel : عمانوئيل (Emmanoeel / إممانوئيل)

ՊԵՆՆՈՒ : our God: إلهنا (Pennooti / بين نوتي)

ՆԵԱ ՊԻՊՆԱ ԵԹՈՐՃԱԲ : the Holy Spirit : الروح القدس (nem Pi epnevma ethowab / نيم بي إبنيفما إثؤواب)



A GRACIOUS GOD AND MERCIFUL

By Abraam Mikhail

The fast of Nineveh is upon us – Yes, another three-day strict fast. Why this one? To pray like Jonah did for three days, and to mimic the Ninevites – fast, repent and pray for three days, right?

Not so fast. Jonah wasn't exactly keen on going, went reluctantly, and sat under a tree feeling sorry for himself after a day's travel. He simply wasn't co-operating. And when the people repented, he had the audacity to complain that 'a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love' (Jon 4:2) had forgiven those pagans. Not a good look – Jonah the prophet 'flee[s] from the presence of the Lord' (1:3). What a mess!

Let's back up a minute. The book of Jonah isn't about Jonah or those people at all – it's a reminder of God's steadfast love for human beings. Who, exactly, you might ask? First, for His chosen people, and his prophet, Jonah. The Word of the Lord 'came' to Jonah with instructions, and then the Lord appoints a great fish to keep him from drowning and a tree to shield him from the blazing sun, and finally delivers him a gentle lesson on love of neighbour. God is gracious to those who know Him but flee from His presence.

Why the great wind upon the sea, and the mighty tempest, then? Well, the sailors did not know Him, but they certainly understood the dangers at sea. They rowed hard to bring the boat to land, and to spare Jonah, yet to no avail, and at last cried out to God as they threw him overboard. Seeing that the sea had ceased its raging, they feared the Lord exceedingly, offered a sacrifice and made vows. God thus saved them from death, and brought them to His bosom.

Asleep in the inner part of the ship, but now, in the depths of the sea, in the belly of the fish, Jonah awakes to pray. He is that person who longs for his Lord – broken but hopeful, and trusting in the gracious God, the One who is merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. His prayer is powerful, but yet strange – "I called to the Lord, out of my distress and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried and thou didst hear my voice" (2:2). Wait a second, Jonah! He hasn't answered you yet, and how do you know he heard you? "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came to thee, into thy holy temple" (2:7). Now that's more like it, Jonah.

Then there's that type of person who does not know Him, but is ready to receive his admonition. Hearing the warning of destruction, the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth and ashes. Why the threats, God? To reach their hearts in a manner they could understand. His message was loud and clear – I am a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

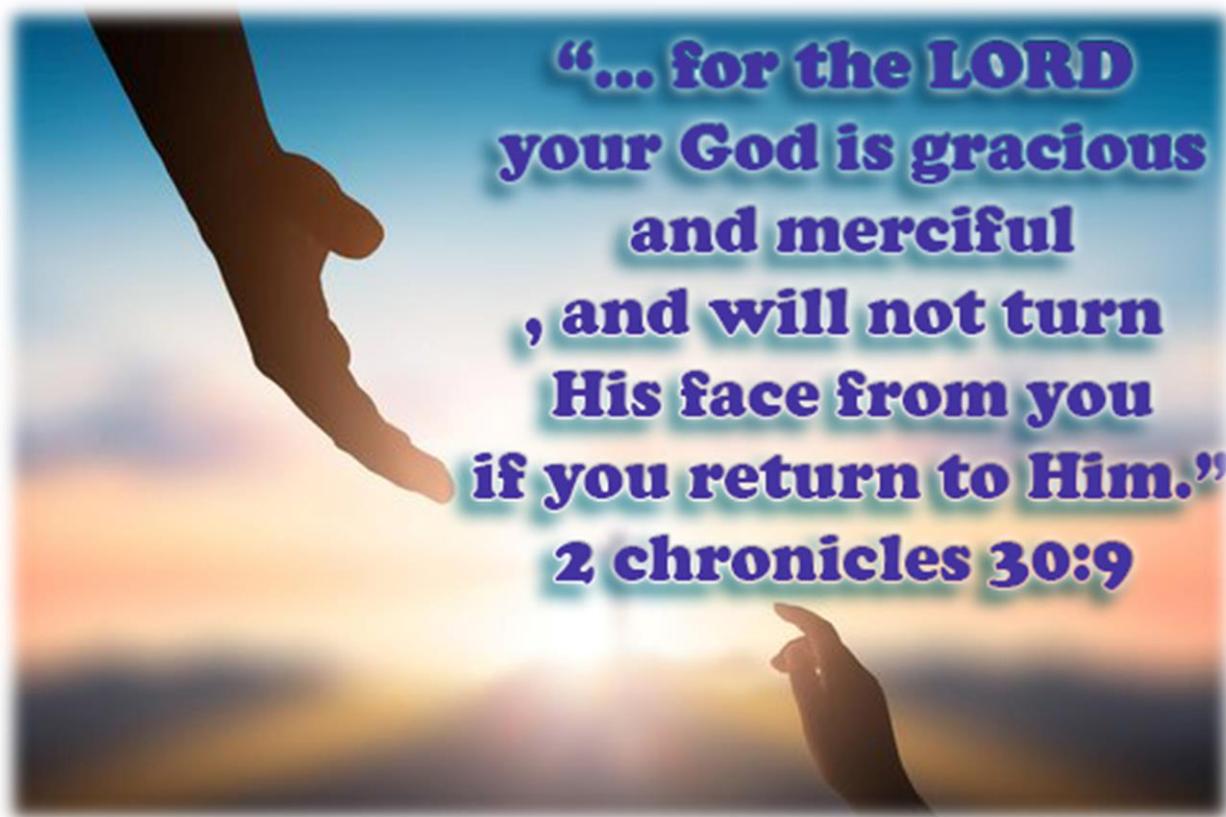


The final scene is comical, and somewhat puzzling. Jonah, who is near to God, still does not understand the how He works. He still despises the pagans (who, it seems he has forgotten, wanted to spare his life). Hot and bothered that the tree had died – a tree, we are reminded, he did not plant nor make grow – he wishes death upon himself. At this point, God reprimands him. Maybe some love of neighbour is warranted, Jonah. You're angry you had to sit in the sun? "And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left" (4:11).

Here we see the workings of a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

God wants to save you, wherever you may be. Perhaps you're in His church, and fleeing from his presence, or maybe you're not sure He's your Lord. Hopefully you're now on your knees, sure He has heard your prayer, or else far away but ready to accept his invitation to change dramatically. Wherever you may be – He is a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Abraam Mikhail is a lecturer in **Systematic Theology and Church History at St Athanasius College**. If you're interested to learn more, visit www.sac.edu.au





الصوم الكبير

قداسة البابا شنودة الثالث

إعداد السيد اميل سيدهم



الصوم الكبير هو أقدس أصومات السنة ، وأيامه هي أقدس أيام السنة ، ويمكن أن نقول عنه أنه صوم سيدى ، لأن سيدنا يسوع المسيح قد صامه ، وهو صوم من الدرجة الاولى ، أن قسمت أصومات الكنيسة إلى درجات ، فترة الصوم الكبير هو فترة تخزين روحي للعام كله ، فالذى لا يستفيد من الصوم الكبير ، من الصعب أن يستفيد من أيام أخرى أقل روحانية ، ولااهتمام الكنيسة بالصوم الكبير جعلت له طقسا خاصا ، فله الحان خاصة ، وله قراءات خاصة ، ومردات خاصة ، وطقس خاص في رفع بخور باكر ، وطمانيات خاصة في القداس قبل تحليل الخدام ، نقول فيها : (أكلينيو مين تاغوناتا) ، ولهذا يوجد للصوم الكبير قطمارس خاص ، كما أنه تقرأ فيه قراءات من العهد القديم ، وهكذا يكون له جو روحي خاص ، وقد عينت الكنيسة له أسبوعا تمهيديا يسبقها ، حتى لا يدخل الناس إلى الأربعين المقدسة مباشرة بدون استعداد ، وأنما هذا الأسبوع السابق ، يمهد الناس للدخول في هذا الصوم المقدس ، وفي نفس الوقت يعوض عن

أفطارنا في السبوع التي لا يجوز الانقطاع فيها ، بل الكنيسة مهدت له أيضا بصوم يونان ، فصوم يونان يسبق الصوم الكبير بأسبوعين ، ويكون بنفس الطقس تقريراً وبنفس الألحان ، حتى يتتبه الناس لصومات الكنيسة قبل صومات الكنيسة بأعداد أولادها للصوم الكبير ، هكذا ينبغي علينا نحن أيضاً نلاقيه بنفس الاهتمام ، وأن كان السيد المسيح قد صام هذا الصوم علينا ، وهو في غير حاجة إلى الصوم ، فكم ينبغي أن نصوم نحن في مسيس الحاجة إلى الصوم لكي نكمل كل بر ، كما فعل السيد المسيح ، ومن أهمية الكنيسة بهذا الصوم أنها أسمته الصوم الكبير ، فهو صوم الكبير في مدته ، والكبير في قدسيته ، أنه أكبر الصومات في مدته التي هي خمسة وخمسون يوماً ، وهو أكبر في قدسيته ، لأنه صوم السيد المسيح له المجد مع تذكاراً للألام المقدسة ، لذلك فالخطية في الصوم الكبير أكثر بشاعة ، حقاً أن الخطية هي الخطية ، ولكنها أكثر بشاعة في الصوم الكبير مما في باقي الأيام العادية ، لأن الذي يخطئ في الصوم عموماً ، وفي الصوم الكبير خصوصاً ، هو في الواقع يرتكب خطية مزدوجة ، بشاعة الخطية ذاتها ، يضاف إليها الاستهانة بقدسيّة هذه الأيام ، أذن مما خطيتان وليس واحدة ، والاستهانة بقدسيّة الأيام ، دليل على قساوة القلب ، فالقلب الذي لا يتأثر بروحانية هذه الأيام المقدسة ، لا شك أنه من الناحية الروحية قلب قاسٍ يخطئ في الصوم ، ينطبق عليه قول السيد المسيح "أن كان النور الذي فيك ظلاماً فالظلمام كم يكون" (مت 6:23) أن كنا لا نستطيع أن نطوي الأيام كما كان يفعل السيد المسيح له المجد ، فعلى الأقل فلنسلك بالزهد الممكن ، وبالنسك الذي نستطيع أن نتحمّله ، وأن كنا لا نستطيع أن ننتهر الشيطان ونهزمه بقوّة كما فعل ربنا ، فعلى الأقل فلنستعد لمقاومته ، ولذكر ما قاله القديس بولس الرسول في رسالته إلى العبرانيين معاقباً "لم تقرواوا بعد حتى الدم في مقاومة الخطية" (عب 12:4) مفروض أذن أن يجاهد الإنسان حتى الدم في مقاومة الخطية – أن كان ثلاثة أيام صامتها أستير وشعبها ، وكان لها مفعولها القوى ، فكم بالأولى خمسة وخمسون يوماً؟ هنا وأقول لنفسنا عتاب: كم صوم كبير مر علينا في حياتنا ، بكل ما في الصوم الكبير من روحيات؟ لو كنا نجنيفائدة روحية في كل صوم ، فما حصاد هذه السنين كلها في أصوماتها الكبيرة التي صمناها ، وبباقي الصومات الأخرى أيضاً؟ أن المسألة تحتاج إلى جدية في الصوم ، وإلى روحانية في الصوم ، ولا نأخذ الأمر في روتينية وبلا مبالاه + + +



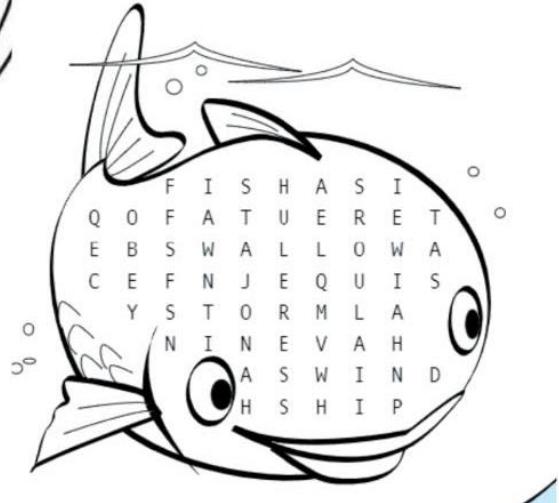


Prep Sunday school

JONAH



God loves each one of us and wants us to repent & know how great His love for us is.

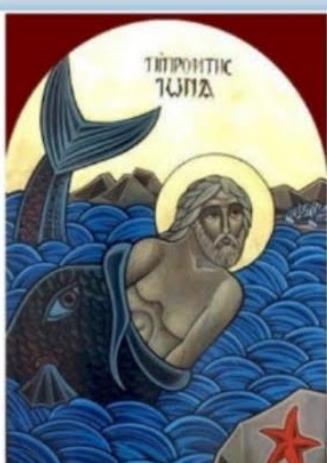


FISH
JONAH
NINEVAH

OBEY
SEA
SHIP

STORM
SWALLOW
WIND

Jonah and the whale



Κητος
(Keetos
/whale)

Ιων
(yom/sea)

Ιωνα
(yoona
/Jonah)

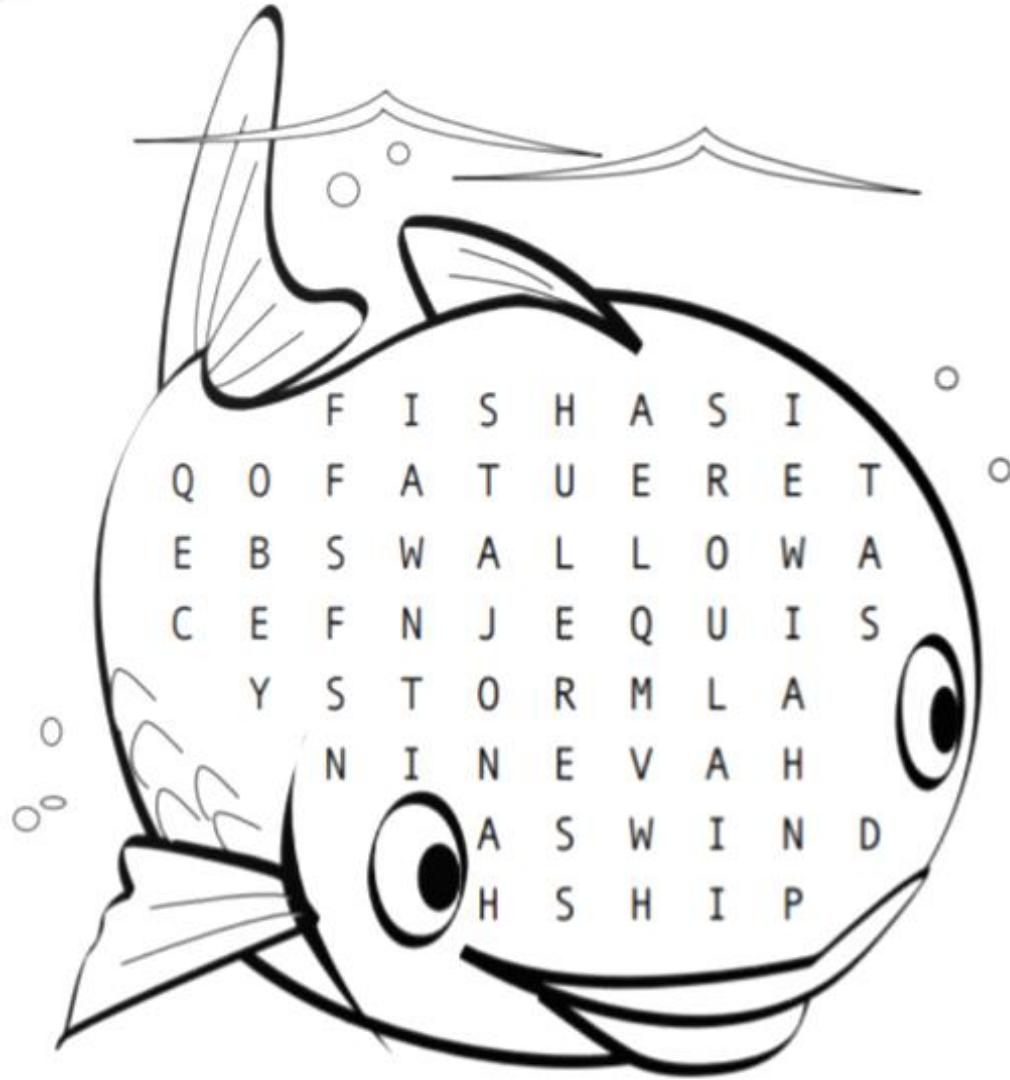
"The Lord is merciful and righteous"
-Psalm 116:5



Year 1 to 3 Sunday school

In February, our church celebrates Jonah's fast. We learn about God's love and compassion and of Jonah's obedience. We learn how all men, women and children are precious in the eyes of God.

Can you find all the words in this whale word search?



FISH
JONAH
NINEVAH

OBEY
SEA
SHIP

STORM
SWALLOW
WIND



Year 4 to 6 Sunday school

5 Ways to Improve Young Children's Decision-Making

1. Encourage young people to use decision-making steps

What decision needs to be made

What are the options

Evaluate the options and pick the best one

Act on your choice and see how it works.



2. Involve them in everyday decisions

Include children in your own decisions and ask them for advice. You could say:

"I'm trying to decide whether to take up rowing or do yoga classes, to increase my level of fitness activity. Which one do you think I should do?"

3. Give children the chance to practise making choices

Giving young people the opportunity to make their own decisions helps build a sense of independence and empowers them to make choices with integrity.

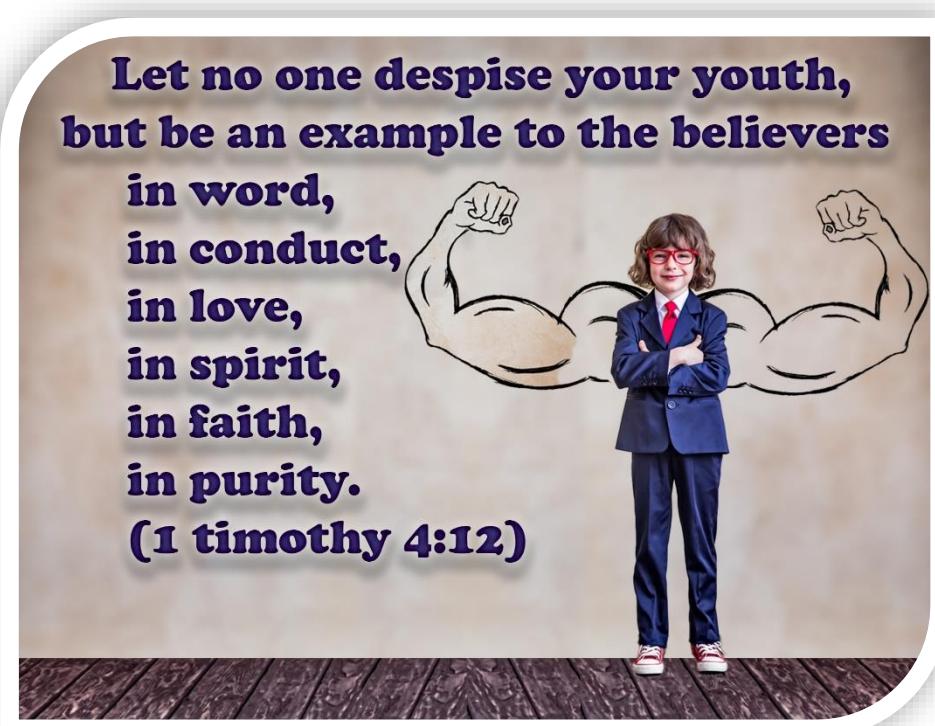
4. Encourage children to set goals

One vital skill, that is oftentimes forgotten among children but also adults, is goal setting. Being able to set SMART goals and achieve them is a life skill which when taught at an early age,

5. Ask questions which promote astute decisions

"What do you like about that?", "What makes this the best option?", "How would this work?"

These are all examples of good questions you could be asking your children to spark thought-provoking conversations.





Church news

Jonah's Fast and Feast (14-16 February 2022)

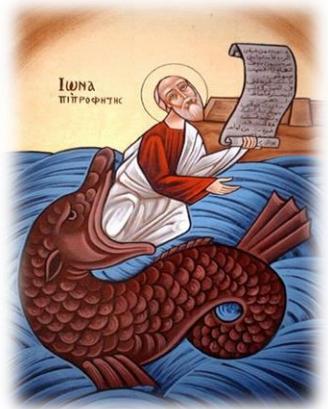
Please note that liturgies for this holy period will be as follows:

Monday: 12-3pm

Tuesday: 9-11am

Wednesday: 9-11 am

Thursday: 5-7 am



Holy Lent

Please look out for liturgical program for the period of Holy Lent in St George's Community Viber group, or in church announcements. We hope to have one morning and one afternoon liturgy for this period.

Fr Anthony's Reception at St George's

St George's church warmly welcomed Fr Anthony Mikhail from his 40 days' retreat after ordination on Wednesday 5th January 2022. He was welcomed in the Vesper's raising of incense, followed by a representation speech by Fr Thomas as clergy representative, Mr Nabil Messiha as Deacons' representative, Mr Michael Hanania (youth leader) and the young St George deacons. Amongst the St George fathers, we were also blessed with the presence of:

+V Rev Fr Abanoub Attalla +Rev Fr Shenouda Botros +Rev Fr Michael Salib +Rev Fr Isaac Wiesa

Congratulations to our beloved FR ANTHONY Mikhail

Departed in the Lord

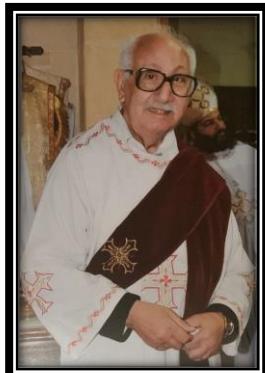
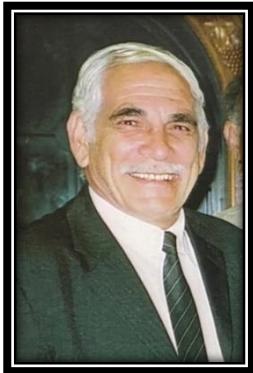
May the Lord give peace and comfort to the families who have had a family member depart to the Lord:

+ **Fayek Zakaria Hanania**, brother of Mr Ibrahim, Mr Joseph, Mr Mr Mourad Hanania and Tasoni Josephine. **The 40th day commemoration** will be in the liturgy on **Sunday 6 Feb at 9:30-11:30am** at ST George's church

+ **Deacon George Ibrahim Guirguis**, father of Tasoni Mary Elias (wife of Fr Samuel). **The 40th day commemoration** will be at the liturgy on **Saturday 19th February, 2022**.



+ Mrs Nagat Tawadros, wife of Rafat Tawadros and mother of Mina and Youstina (wife of Ramez Wassef) and sister of Mrs Nahed Tawadros, Magdy Sowiha and Mariam Gayed. The 40th Day commemoration will be in the Arabic Liturgy Sunday 13th March (9:30-11:30)



St George's Annual Festival ('Taste of Egypt Festival')

Finally, we will have our festival on the Weekend of **February 12/13, 2022**.

Let's all get behind this annual event to help the church catch up with some much-needed funds. Come and buy for yourselves, your families...even friends. Cash donations are also welcome on the festival days, especially from business owners. Please see attached festival page on this issue of the monthly magazine.

From the Church Committee

Currently organising the following items in church:

- † New project of extending Bethlehem room (Korban making), kitchen, and grocery shop;
- † Adding a hand dryer in disabled toilets
- † Church donations: Very small amounts collected in donation boxes. Please contribute to church's on-going expense needs.

Discipleship Class Graduations

St George's church congratulates the following graduates from the discipleship class this years:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------|
| 1. David Azer | 2. Fathy Abdelshahid | 3. Jacob Hanna | 4. Lora Guirguis | |
| 5. Luke Tadros | 6. Maria Girgis | 7. Sophia Mikhail | 8. Monique | Morcos |
| 9. Rama Esihaky | 10. Semhal Kidanemariam | | 11. Birzaf | |

We pray the Lord leads each one of them to serve Him, bearing much fruit and reaping the heavenly reward for their service of love.



الكنيسة القبطية الارتدودكسي

بأيبارشية فكتوريا وتوابعها

مشروع تغطية نفقات الجنازه للمشترين ومن يرغب في الاشتراك

اعلان

1- جميع المشتركين حاليا ينطبق عليهم شروط العضويه حينما تقدموا بطلباتهم للاشتراك في المشروع .

2- نظرا لزيادة الأعباء الماليه علي المشروع وتمكينا له من الاستمرار في تقديم خدماته كما هو موضح من قبل لذا قررت لجنة المشروع عدم قبول أي مشترك جديد أو أي راغب في الاشتراك يزيد عمر(سن) رب الأسره عن 65 عام .
والمشروع يعتذر عن قبول أي رب أسره أو أي فرد يزيد عمره عن 65 عام ولو بيوم واحد .

الأعضاء

أعضاء الجنة

عنهم نشأت قرمان

سكرتير المشروع

Baptism

"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (Jn 3: 3)

ST George's congratulates those who have recently received God's gift of spiritual birth:



Luca (baptised 'Michael')

son of Christian and
Madonna Di Fabio



Celine (baptised 'Mary')

daughter of Mina Boutros and

Dalia Ibrahim



Nikoli (baptised 'Michael')

son of George and
Stevie Moghraby



St George Coptic Orthodox Church - February 2022



Engagements

St George's congratulates our blessed youth on their blessed engagements:



Paula Morcous and Maria

Michael Tawadrous and Renee

**MAY THE LORD LEAD THEM TO UNDERSTANDING AND HARMONY IN HIS
GUIDANCE.**

Weddings

"AND WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN SEPARATE" (MAT 19)

St George's congratulates the couples on their holy matrimony

Abanob Saeed
&
Marina Abdelmalek



**MAY THEY ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF LOVE, UNITY AND HARMONY THROUGH THE
HAND OF THE LORD**



Taste of EGYPT COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Hosted by St. George Coptic Orthodox Church

12th - 13th February 2022 9AM - 6PM 77-79 Henry St. St. Albans



Authentic Egyptian Cuisine

- Kofta
- Kebab
- Shawarma
- Kebda
- BBQ Chicken
- Quails
- Falafel
- Koshari
- Fava Beans
- BBQ Fish

- ## Kids Rides and Activities
- Jumping Castle
 - Animal Farm
 - Face Painting
 - Arts & Crafts
 - Kid's Movie Station
 - Child Minding Service

Exotic Egyptian Sweets

- Basboosa
- Baclava
- Konafa
- Zalabia
- Rice Pudding
- Crepes & Churros
- Waffles & Pancakes
- Sugar Cane Juice
- Fruit Smoothies & Shakes
- Tiramisu

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