



## **Entrance of the Lord Christ into the Land of Egypt**

**(Pashons 24 – June 1)**

Rejoice and be glad, O Egypt: and all her borders: for unto you came the Lover of Mankind: who was before all ages

The Verses of Cymbals for the feast  
of the Entrance of the Lord Christ into the Land of Egypt

Sermon for the Feast

Feast Prayers





## **The Escape to Egypt**

"The burden against Egypt. Behold, the Lord rides on a swift cloud, and will come into Egypt; the idols of Egypt will totter at His presence, and the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst." (Is 19:1).

Isaiah the prophet exclaimed this joyful prophecy, which was fulfilled by the escape of the holy family to the land of Egypt. The Gospel of St. Matthew (Mat 2: 13-18) narrates the escape of Joseph the righteous, the virgin Saint Mary and our Lord Jesus, the newborn child, as refugees to Egypt. This escape was to avoid Herod the King from killing the child Jesus. This escape and return were what Matthew the evangelist mentions as a fulfilment of Hosea's prophecy: "And out of Egypt I called My son" (Hos 11:1 & Mat 2:15). This verse originally referred to the children of Israel, when God called them through Moses the Prophet to go out of the land of Egypt. However, St. Matthew saw that it also referred to the return of our Lord Jesus from Egypt, so He can start His messianic mission. The Coptic liturgy explains the meaning of the Isaiah's prophecy; St. Mary is the cloud that Christ rode on, who offered Him up for humanity.

## **A Jewish family lives in a Coptic land**

The Coptic Church is the only Church among the Churches of the world that celebrates this occasion. It is a minor feast of the Lord, and is considered a national feast. As they walked through the land, the Holy Family blessed Egypt from north to south and from east to west. Drawing the sign of a cross through their steps, while carrying their sufferings. They travelled quickly throughout Egypt because of their cross of suffering, constantly being expelled and left destitute as they travelled from city to city in Egypt.

It is as though Christ founded the Coptic Church before the start of His service in Judea. This is to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah: "In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border." (Is 19:19). The first Christian family in Egypt (if we may say so) was the holy family (Joseph the carpenter, Mary the Virgin and Christ Himself, and perhaps Salome with them). This family was the seed of the Coptic Church!





It is common that one quickly learns the language of his family, community, or nation for the first 5 years of his life. Thus, perhaps, in addition to His native language, the second language that Christ may have spoken during His childhood was the Ancient Egyptian Language (Coptic).

## **The character of the Coptic Church**

Our Coptic Orthodox Church has its own character and unique taste in her spirituality which combines depth, simplicity and authenticity. Since the time of the great evangelist saint Mark, God has granted her to lead the Christian world in faith, education, monasticism and liturgy. We find her traces and fingerprints imprinted in most Christian Churches in the world. Indeed, it is a beautiful Church. We love her, honor her, we wish to serve her in our lives. Her simple and silent love makes her a beautiful mother. Her personality is similar to that of St. Mary and St. Joseph. The Church is spiritual, choral, quiet, and made rich by Christ in meekness and chastity, similar to His mother. She is an ancient Church that has dignity, a spirit of pure sacrificial service, and wise counsel like Joseph the carpenter.



## **The Church Assembly**

She is a warm Church, with her people gathered around Christ in true reverence. The warmth of the infinite and mutual love that was between Christ's family was poured into the Church, that she may love the same way. She is one of the greatest liturgical Churches in the world, whose theology, praise, and teaching does not observe isolationist, competitive, or solitary thought. Her essence is rather one resembling a mature collective entity. Every one of her members humbly seeks to disappear in





Christ, so He can appear clearly in her. Her theology is established on the self-sacrifice founded on Christ's mind, "made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:5,7)

We are proud that we belong to this Church who is loyal to her nation, despite the oppression and innumerable persecutions she has suffered over the course of history. She always lived with the spirit of sacrificial love and loyalty to her country, bowing in love and pride in the midst of pain. Thus, she resembles her Master, taking on Christ's role in washing the feet of humanity, so they can be saved through the mighty power of her love and self-emptying humility. The Church has never been hostile to any person, but instead has served everyone, whoever they are. Her arms are open, hoping for salvation of everyone, never afraid to venture with love and acceptance, as long as her faith is clear, truly lived out, and never compromised.

Early  
Fathers

**Now I leave you beloved reader to enjoy what St. John Chrysostom wrote about the Church of Egypt:**

Come to the land of Egypt to see that it is better than paradise!

Principalities of angelic hosts are in human form,

Nations of martyrs and multitudes of consecrated virgins...

The tyranny of Satan has been destroyed and the kingdom of Christ shines in His splendor!

Egypt, the mother of poets, wise men and magicians, has fortified herself with the Cross!

She has not exclusively done these things (living in Christ) in cities, but in the wilderness, she has manifested them more than cities.

Wherever you go in this country, you will witness the camp of Christ, the royal herd and the state of the highest forces!

We do not find this among men only, but also among women...

They [women] practiced the seeking of wisdom, no less than men.





Unlike the Greeks and their philosophers, who arm themselves with shields and horses, they fight more fierce wars.

The sky with all its planets is not comparable to the splendor of Egypt's wilderness, that is full of the cells inhabited by the ascetics.

## **How do we pray the Feast of “Our Lord’s Entry into Egypt” at home?**

On this day, let us stand together to glorify the Holy Trinity, glorify the Mother of God and St. Joseph the carpenter. We Pray for Egypt. We Pray for the Coptic Orthodox Church. Let’s gather together as a family, just like the holy family who lived together in Egypt, and surely prayed and read from the Old Testament, prophecies and psalms. They were the fulfilment of these prophecies themselves.

**The order of our prayer today will be as follows:**

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| 1- We pray any hourly prayer from the Agpeya (depending on the time of the gathering)  |
| 2- We read the Bible readings of this feast  |
| 3- We pray the doxology of the feast <a href="#">click to listen</a>  |
| 4- We venerate the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph the Carpenter (singing Hail to you O Mary)   |

**Download the PDF of the prayers**



It is, also, well-known that the diocese of Maady (under the auspices of its bishop, His Grace Bishop Daniel) has annually conducted many celebrations on the banks of the Nile river on this day. These celebrations include prayers, praises and edifying talks such as the “The Second Millennium Celebration,” which the whole world applauded and was a great model to the importance of the national and religious celebration of this feast.





The Church, in cooperation with the Egyptian government, is paying much care to the pathway that the Holy Family took during their flee to Egypt. The importance of this is to stay connected to our spiritual heritage and that these holy places may be spiritually edifying to the whole world.

**Here is a talk for His Grace Bishop Daniel of Maadi (During one of the celebrations emphasizing the importance of this project)**

