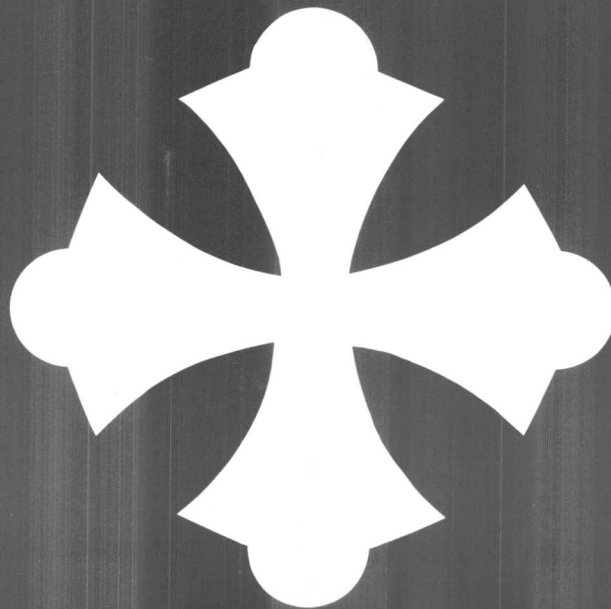


# COPTIC CHURCH REVIEW

Volume 6, Number 2 . . . . . Summer 1985

- *SAINT THEODORE OF SHUTP*
- *MONASTIC SETTLEMENTS IN  
FOURTH-CENTURY EGYPT*
- *MONOGAMY IN CHRISTIANITY*



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Volume 6, Number 2 . . . . . Summer 1985

34 *About This Issue*

36 *Saint Theodore of Shutp*  
Stephen W. Austin

39 *Monastic Settlements in Fourth-  
Century Egypt*  
Rodolph Yanney

45 *Currents in Coptic Church Studies*  
• *Monogamy in Christianity*

49 *Tertullian on Christian Marriage*

50 *Letters to the Editor*  
• *Coptic Language Pamphlets*

52 *Book Reviews*  
• *Creative Suffering*  
• *Architecture of the Tigre,  
Ethiopia*  
• *The Rise of Christianity*  
• *Martyrs and Martyrdom in the  
Coptic Church*  
• *Augustine: His Life and Thought*  
• *Grace Grows Best in Winter*

## ***ABOUT THIS ISSUE***

### ***Saint Theodore: An Enigma in Hagiography***

The Coptic Synaxarion mentions three martyrs by the name of Saint Theodore.

(1) *Saint Theodore the Oriental*: who was born in Tyre, fought in Persia as a general and suffered martyrdom under Diocletian in AD 306 by being nailed and tortured on a tree. His feast day is Tubah 12 (January 20).

(2) *Saint Theodore the Roman*: who also under Diocletian suffered the scourging, burning and dismembering of his body; he was finally beheaded and his body was carried to Amasea. His feast day is Amshir 28 (March 7).

(3) *Saint Theodore of Shutp*; who was born in Antioch of an Egyptian father, John of Shutp, and of a pagan mother, became Christian and a great general under Licinius, killed a dragon at Euchaita in Pontus in order to save the two sons of a Christian widow, and was sentenced to be burned alive in c. 320. His feast day is Abib 20 (July 27).

Historians have tried to identify the first of these martyrs with *Saint Theodore of Heraclea (or Theodore the General)* who was beheaded under Licinius and has his commemoration on February 7 in the Roman Church. The third is identified with *Saint Theodore Tiro of Amasea (or Theodore the Recruit)*, who was a general under Diocletian, confessed his faith and set the temple of the Mother Goddess Cybele on fire, an act for which he was thrown into a furnace in c. 306; a pious woman carried his relics to Euchaita in Amasea. His feast day is November 9 in the Roman Church.

Although it may appear to add to the confusion, the Sahidic manuscript which, to our knowledge, has never been published before and is translated in this issue of the Journal by Rev. Stephen W. Austin, may offer a clue to this puzzle. Many Western hagiographers have reached a conclusion that both Saint Theodore the General and Saint Theodore Tiro are one and the same martyr. The Coptic manuscript shares with Saint Theodore the Oriental of the Synaxarion his army career and date of martyrdom; while it shares with the story of Saint Theodore the Roman the relation to Amasea and the date of martyrdom; and with Saint Theodore of Shutp his country of origin, the incident of the dragon, the mode of death and the feast day. The three martyrs may be in reality one and the same. The Synaxarion may even aid us in reaching this conclusion. For every important martyr in the Coptic Church, there are usually two feast days, one commemorates his martyrdom, and the other the

dedication of his church. In this case we have only one date, Hatur 20 (November 29), for the dedication of the churches of both, Sts. Theodore or Shutp and Theodore the Oriental.

Saint Theodore was mentioned by the Church Fathers as early as St. Gregory of Nyssa who delivered a panegyric of him on his festival. In the Coptic Church four monasteries and twenty-two churches were dedicated to Saint Theodore.

Rev. Stephen Austin, a United Methodist minister, has a Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC, and is currently a Kearne Fellow in the Graduate School of Religion at Duke. His area of emphasis is in the New Testament.

### ***1985 North American Patristic Society Conference***

*Monastic Settlements in Fourth-Century Egypt* is the title of one of the papers delivered at the *Third Independent North American Patristic Society Conference* held on May 16-18, 1985 at the Lakeshore Campus of Loyola University in Chicago. The conference, which was attended by patristic scholars from the US, Canada and Europe, included eighteen sessions and two lectures. There were special sessions on Christology, Origen, Gregory the Great, Latin Christianity, Syriac Christianity, Asceticism, History of Exegesis and Women in Early Christian Literature. Beside the special session on Origen, five other papers dealt with this great Alexandrian scholar. In the session on Asceticism two papers discussed Early Coptic Monasticism.

### ***Christian Marriage***

The 130-page Arabic book, *Monogamy in Christianity*, by His Holiness Pope Shenouda III is condensed in our section *Currents in Coptic Church Studies*. The book discusses the indissolubility of Christian marriage from a biblical and traditional perspective. The last chapter (which we have completely omitted) gives the witness of several Moslem law Professors to the Christian doctrine on marriage, a witness necessary in Egypt where the threat of forcing the Islamic Sharia on Coptic citizens has been a recurring problem in recent years.

In *Currents of Coptic Church Studies*, Coptic Church Review has condensed three other books by Pope Shenouda: *Mark the Apostle* (Volume 2, Number 1), *Salvation in the Orthodox Concept* (Volume 2, Number 4), and *Life of Silence in St. Isaac of Nineveh* (Volume 3, Number 3).

*Editor*

### ***Acknowledgment***

*Life of Saint Theodore the General* is translated from the Sahidic manuscript "Passions Theodori Stratelatis", from *Codices Coptici* (v. 51, Codex M. 586, pp. 5-16), and published with kind permission of the Pierpont Morgan Library, 29 East Thirty-sixth Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

# ***LIFE OF SAINT THEODORE THE GENERAL***

*Translated from the Sahidic Coptic by Stephen W. Austin*

## ***Introduction***

Theodore of Shutp, “the General,” whose day is the twentieth of Abib on the Coptic calendar, has been well-revered both East and West. The rich tradition surrounding him includes Armenian, Ethiopic, and Egyptian versions. In the Coptic tradition, St. Theodore was of the people of Shutp in Upper Egypt. Raised in the Christian faith, Theodore became a soldier at an early age and soon achieved a high rank. During fighting in the East, the tradition tells of his meeting and slaying a dragon at Euchaites in Persia. His military career, however, came to an abrupt halt when the Roman emperors Diocletian and Maximian received word that Theodore was a Christian. When Theodore refused to renounce his childhood faith and worship the gods of the state, he was sentenced to death. Repeated tortures and attempts to take his life were thwarted by heavenly intervention, but eventually, Theodore, calm and confident in his faith, passed on to the roll of martyrs.

The Bohairic version of St. Theodore’s martyrdom (Vat. Copt. 66) may be found along with a Latin translation in *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalum: Scriptores Coptici*, v. 3-4. The Sahidic version which is treated in this article was uncovered in 1910 among the ruins of the Monestary of the Archangel Michael near the present-day village of al-Hamuli, a monastery that was part of the important Fayyum complex. The Hamuli manuscripts now belong to the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York (*Codices Coptici*, v. 51, Codex M586, pp. 5-16), and it is through their gracious permission that this translation is presented here. The text is relatively clear but unfortunately broken at the end. It opens with Diocletian and Maximian issuing the famous edict against the Christians. Theodore, not yet exposed as a Christian, is in charge of a legion in Anatolia. In the course of his duties, he comes to Euchaites and through special powers given by God kills the dragon which plagues that city. As a result, all of the citizens turn away from their idol-worship and are baptized. The idol-priests, upset by this turn of events, complain to the emperor Diocletian who takes up their cause. The following excerpt opens with the idol-priests making merry in the temple and with St. Theodore deciding what his next step will be. It runs to the broken end of this text.

I would express my appreciation to Professors Orval S. Wintermute and Melvin K. H. Peters, both of Duke University, for their assistance in preparing this translation.

### ***Translation***

The holy one (St. Theodore) went into his house. He entered one of his bed-chambers and shut his door. He stretched forth his hands, (and) he prayed, saying:

Oh Lord God Almighty, the one who has spread out all of the worlds—he brought them to completion through the hand of his only begotten Son, according to his command—my Lord, Jesus Christ, I pray to you, only begotten Son of the Father, the one begotten from the holy virgin Mary, the one (proceeding) out of the Holy Trinity, the one whom (God) considered worthy of the glory of his divinity. You left home (to come) to this world that is filled with difficulty because you love us. Now then, Lord God, the helper of all my fathers who set their confidence in you, surely you shall hear my prayer today and send upon (these idol-worshippers) a fire from heaven. Let it indeed consume that abominable and defiled temple together with everyone who gathers in it to do abominable service and others who have (merely) visited it. For you are the one who exercises authority. All things are before you. Glory be to you forever and ever. Amen.

When St. Theodore had spoken these things, behold, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him, saying: “Strengthen yourself, Oh my chosen bold one. Remember that my elected apostle Paul said: ‘The athlete ordinarily does not receive the crown unless he fights well.’ Now then, behold the day of your contest has drawn near to you. But do not be afraid (for) I am with you. I have appointed for you Michael, the great archangel, so that he might be diligent in aiding your situation. And behold, I answered your prayer which you addressed to me that I burn the abominable temple. Look, I did burn it (and) I leveled it with the earth. Now then, be strong and fortify yourself.” When the Savior had spoken these things, he went up to the heavens in glory.

After these things, behold, the devil set the whole city in an uproar, it crying out thus: “The temple of the gods has been burned. All of the priests have died. And it is because of the magical power of the one called Theodore, because he hated the Euchaitean priests since they slandered him in the presence of the king that these things have happened.” When it was morning, everyone came to the spectacle of the temple so that they might see that which had taken place. When the king heard the things which the crowds were saying among themselves concerning St. Theodore, the devil filled his heart with wrathful anger. He ordered them to bring to him St. Theodore quickly. When he came into his presence, the king said to him: “Hail, Theodore. What are these disruptions which you have brought into the world? Moreover, (what is) this great magic which you have done in the capital city, having

burned the temple of the gods and even the priests through the magic of the one called Jesus?" The general, St. Theodore answered: "Shut your mouth, Oh Dragon who is in the abyss of hell and stop blaspheming my God. My Lord Jesus Christ is not a magician. Rather, he hates everyone who follows in the works of the devil and his demons." Diocletian answered: "By the great gods, I will teach you wickedly." Immediately, he commanded that the torture chamber be made ready so that he might be put to the test before them and afterwards he might give them reason to strip from him the rank of general and bring him into the presence of the king.

When the king Diocletian saw him, he said to him: "Theodore, these emblems (of rank) which you have worn are (still) good (even) now. Are you (yet) unmoved?" St. Theodore answered and said in the presence of the king and the entire council: "This world and its glory are for a time. But the glory of my Lord Jesus is life forever." Diocletian answered: "By the help of the living gods, Apollo and Zeus, I will consume your body in fire." He commanded (them) to raise him up on the flogging-stake, and they flayed him until his blood flowed down on the ground and congealed beneath him. He, St. Theodore, remained silent and said nothing. But the eyes of his heart looked to God, praying to him so that he might give him power, until (finally) he put to shame Diocletian and his handmade objects. The king said to him, "Oh Theodore, have you rested a little from the beginning of the tortures? Let the one you have trusted come now and save you." When Diocletian had said these things, behold, Michael came out of heaven and saved him (St. Theodore) from the hands of those who tortured him. He let him down (to rest) upon the earth little by little. Nothing evil touched him. Then, the whole group together with the council cried out, saying: "The God of the Christians is One. Christ Jesus is God, Oh St. Theodore the General, because he saves everyone who hopes in him."

When the king heard the shouts of the crowd as it cried out, he was afraid. He ordered them to carry the blessed one to the prison and to make fast his whole body with iron (fetters). It happened at midnight that as St. Theodore was standing and praying, behold, Michael the archangel appeared to him (and) healed his body from the tortures. The holy one, Theodore, opened his mouth and blessed God, saying: "I bless you my Lord Jesus Christ, the one who distributes every blessing, the one who saves everyone who calls to him. The glory to him forever and ever. Amen." The king ordered that they bring (Theodore) to him. He said to him: "Theodore, sacrifice now quickly, and let me establish for you your rank in the manner as at first." The holy Theodore answered: "I have finished speaking with you. Again, the glory of this world is nothing, but the glory of my Lord Jesus Christ is revealed forever." When the king heard these things, he was filled with anger. He ordered them to raise him up on a bed of iron and to kindle (a fire) under him until the fire should consume his body and he should die. The holy Theodore prayed, saying: "My Lord Jesus Christ, help me with these things—this unlawful (one) boasts that you have not been able to help me." When (St. Theodore) had said this, the Lord commanded a brilliant cloud to take the form of a turning water-wheel. (The cloud) poured water down upon the couch, quenched (the fire), and gave power to the holy one. Michael the archangel unfastened the straps which bound him . . .

# **MONASTIC SETTLEMENTS IN FOURTH-CENTURY EGYPT**

***Rodolph Yanney, M.D.***

Egyptian monasticism is the root and foundation on which many Eastern and Western monastic orders have been built.

Saint Antony the Great (AD 251-356) is usually considered the founder of monasticism in Egypt. But before him, as far back as the second century, ascetics lived in the desert as hermits, or in groups. The *Acta Sanctorum* mentions that a certain Frontinus led seventy monks who lived in Nitria, in the Western desert of Egypt during the reign of Emperor Antonious Pius (AD 138-161).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the different modes of life and spirituality in the early monastic settlements prove that they were of multicentric origin. St. Antony attracted his first disciples about AD 305. In AD 323 the first Pachomian monastery was established following an angelic vision<sup>2</sup>, with no prior contact between Pachomius and Antony. Toward the end of his life, when St. Antony was visited by brothers from Tabennisi, he admitted that a community of monks was something he had never imagined earlier in his life.<sup>3</sup>

Generally there were two main types of early monastic settlements in Egypt: *Collective Eremiticism* (or monastic groups) and *Cenobitism*.

## ***Collective Eremiticism***

In the fourth century monastic groups erupted, nearly simultaneously, in many areas of the Egyptian deserts. I will limit myself here to a few groups of which I could find more than fragmentary information.

### ***(1) Antontian Monasticism.***

St. Antony established his monasteries in Middle Egypt, starting at *the Outer Mountain* called *Pispir*, near the Nile, and later at *Arsinoe* (Fayum) and then in *Mount Colzim* toward the Red Sea (*the Inner Mountain*). The way of life of St. Antony remained that of the hermit or anchorite, based on solitude, asceticism, fasting and constant prayer. He ate once a day, at sunset; his meal consisted of dry bread, salt and water. He spent his night vigils in prayer and when he slept he lay on a palm mat placed on the ground. His dress was a sheepskin.<sup>4</sup> There was no mention in the *Vita Antonii* of formal rules or vows, or even of common worship.<sup>5</sup>



**(2) *Nitria, Cellia and Scete***

These three great centers of monasticism in the Western desert of Egypt were immortalized through the writings of Palladius who stayed there ten years before he wrote his *Lausiac History*, John Cassian who lived there for seven years where he had the material for his *Conferences* and *Institutes*, and the Nestorian monk Anan Isho who visited the area in the sixth century and collected the *Apophthegmata*, popularly known as the *Paradise or Garden of the Holy Fathers*. Monasticism was started in *Nitria* by St. Amoun, in c. AD 315. *Nitria* occupied the area south of Lake Mareotis, thirty five miles to the west of the Nile Delta, and about forty miles from Alexandria. Ten miles away, in a south-western direction was *Cellia* (the Cells), founded by both Antony and Amoun. *Scete*, about forty miles more to the south, was founded by St. Macarius of Egypt in c. 340.

***Nitria***

Before the end of the fourth century, the number of the monks in Nitria reached five thousand according to Palladius and Rufinus. They lived in some fifty cells which were set close together around a big church. Some of these were large enough to accommodate many monks who shared the same dwelling, others contained only a few. Some monks preferred to live alone. All were under the direction of one father. There was no written rule for the brethren. However, it was understood that all had to work with their hands, even the guest who happened to stay beyond one week. They worked at making linen. But there were other crafts as the area was self-sufficient; there were seven bakeries, several doctors, gardeners and cooks.<sup>6</sup> Even a merchant called Apollonius continued his trade after he renounced the world and lived in Nitria and for twenty years he could be seen making his rounds from door to door among the cells from the early morning till the ninth hour. He sold all kinds of medicines, groceries, fruits, eggs and cakes which served the need of the sick monks.<sup>7</sup> The monks of Nitria had no common worship except on Saturdays and Sundays when all went to church; the liturgy was served by one senior priest, assisted by seven others. In other days the monks worshiped in their cells at fixed hours. Palladius mentioned how one could stand at the ninth hour and hear the divine psalmody issuing forth from each cell and imagine one was in paradise.<sup>8</sup> Rufinus, who visited Nitria in c. AD 373, was astonished at their great love to strangers as well as their knowledge of Scripture. He described how they ran out of their cells to meet his group and led them with psalms to the church where they washed their feet one by one, and he concluded,

“Nowhere have I seen love flourish so greatly, nowhere such quick compassion, such eager hospitality. And nowhere have I seen such meditation upon Holy Scripture, or a better understanding of it, or such discipline of sacred learning. You might well think that each of them was an expert in the wisdom of God.”<sup>9</sup>

### *Cellia*

After finishing their training in Nitria, the monks who sought quietude and could lead a solitary life went to Cellia where the cells were scattered three to four miles apart. The new center had its own church and was probably under the direction of St. Pambo and, after his death, St. Macarius of Alexandria. The monks only met in the church on Saturdays and Sundays. Intervisitation between those hermits was absolutely forbidden except in rare cases like sickness.<sup>10, 11</sup>

### *Scete*

Saint Macarius the Great came to Scete about AD 340, and before his death in 390 there were four congregations of monks there, each having its own church. All four congregations had one common father; after Macarius came Paphnutius and then John the Short. The father, who was given the title 'priest of Scete' had great authority; he accepted new monks, judged irresponsible monks, put rules and regulations, ordered private fasts, and gave the teaching in the church. Monks in Scete lived in solitary cells, and shared with Nitria and Cellia the tradition of celebrating the liturgy on Saturdays and Sundays. Although there was no rigid *Rule* to follow, yet a new monk had to undergo strict training under one of the elders, whom he owed absolute obedience. For the new monk, monastic life meant a life of penance in which all worldly hope, all desire and all pleasure, however innocent and harmless, had to be sacrificed. He had to cut all his family ties, and lead a life of poverty.

Cells in Scete were either dug inside the rock, or partially built by stone or clay and covered with palm branches. Each had a door, a small window and several shelves. It contained only a mat, used for both sleeping and sitting, and a coarse pillow made of lotus, plaiting instruments and palm leaves, few earthen vessels, wooden spoons, a small table, a fire place and an oil lamp.<sup>12, 13</sup>

Monks in Scete had a fixed daily schedule which started shortly after midnight. During the weekdays the monk was not advised to leave his cell except to see his spiritual director. After praying the office of *matins* by himself, he worked in his cell till noon, usually plaiting mats or baskets. During work he meditated on the Scripture. There was a rest period between the sixth and the ninth hours after which the monk had his single daily meal that consisted of two loaves of bread, moistened with water and a little salt. Oil was rarely used and fruits and vegetables were luxuries which the monks only had when they were donated to the monastery. Gardening was not encouraged in Scete and was considered a hindrance to meditation. The monk ended his day after singing *verses* before his sleep, then he slept till midnight.<sup>12, 13</sup>

The monks of each congregation met in church on Saturdays and Sundays, where they participated in the daily office, heard the teaching of the father, and shared in the Eucharist on both days. On Sunday this was followed by an agape meal which was the only cooked meal allowed for the whole week, and the only meal they had together. The regular daily and weekly schedules were interrupted during Pentecost

which is the harvest season in Egypt and the monks were allowed to leave the monastery and hire themselves for work in the fields.<sup>12, 13</sup>

### (3) *Monasticism in Sinai*

In the Sinai desert there were several monastic groups including the one visited by Etheria on Mount Sinai, and the group to which was attached Saint Nilus and the group of Saint Silvanos that came from Scete about AD 380.<sup>14</sup> Monks led an anchoritic life, living in scattered places around a central church. They dwelt in tents or mountain caverns and were governed by the fierce nature rather by any rule. Most of them ate once a day; their meal consisted of dried vegetables or beans, few ate bread since they could not plant wheat among the rocks. They had no use for money because nobody had anything to sell. At dawn on Sundays, they met in the church to celebrate the Eucharist.<sup>15</sup>

### (4) *Saint Apollo's Monastery at Bawit*

When we come to the region of *Eshmunen* (now Minya), on the west bank of the Nile between Middle and Upper Egypt, we find a monastic settlement of a totally different nature. There, Saint Apollo led a group of five hundred monks who had their cells in the neighboring mountain but met in the church for a daily Eucharist at the ninth hour, followed by an agape where they ate at one table. They led a life of love and of service to the nearby villages and to the visitors whom they welcomed at any time. One could see in their radiant smiling faces and even in their white robes, something alien to the Coptic monastic tradition, the joy of the Resurrection. The writer of the *Historia Monachorum* who visited the area in c. 394 stated that he saw nobody among them who was gloomy or downcast and that their father urged them to rejoice always. Most of the brethren remained in the church after the agape to listen to the father's teaching till sunset at which time they left to their cells where they spent most of the night meditating on the Scriptures. Some of them spent a night vigil in the church singing the psalmody till morning. The monks were totally free; some hermits left for the mountain right away after taking part in the Eucharist.<sup>16</sup>

### *The Pachomian Koinonia*

Between AD 323 and 345 Saint Pachomius built nine monasteries for men and two for women in Upper Egypt, in what is now the modern province of Kena. During his life they were inhabited by three thousand monks, and when Palladius wrote the *Lausiac History* (AD 420), the number reached seven thousand. The Pachomian monastery was surrounded by a thick wall about one hundred feet high. It had a small door made of heavy wood enforced by iron sheets. Cells were constructed in rows along the wall. The monastery had its own church, a meeting hall, a library, a dining hall, a kitchen and several storage rooms. It also had a garden and a shed for the animals used for farming.

Although each monastery in the *koinonia* had its own father and its local administration, all monasteries had a central administration in the monastery of Phbow where the father of the whole *koinonia* lived. The *Rule of Pachomius* dealt with most of the details of the daily life of the monks, their clothes, food, work, worship, care of the sick, receiving of visitors and disciplinary regulations. It was this Rule, translated into Latin by St. Jerome in AD 404, that was quoted at large in St. Benedict's Rule and had a great effect on later monastic orders.

Pachomian monks lived three or four in each cell where they slept on reclining seats built of clay. They ate together, in the dining hall two meals a day. Beside the liturgies of Saturdays and Sundays, the monks met three times daily in the church for common prayer. Manual labor was compulsory to all. Plaiting baskets and mats was the most common activity, but the monastery had its own bakers, cooks, weavers, tailors, farmers, masons, carpenters, smiths, mechanics and even scholars and scribes.<sup>17-20</sup> St. Pachomius was the first monastic founder to transform the invisible wall between the ascetic tradition and the world into visible entity. We owe to him the change of the meaning in the word 'monk', literally a solitary, to one associated with a community and not a hermit living in seclusion. The Pachomian wall facilitated the control of the monks within, while it limited access to outsiders including family members, neighboring farmers and invading barbarians. Pachomius has succeeded in creating a *koinonia* of the Spirit sharing the common prayers, meals and labor, while its members were bound together by an obedience to one father, which was understood as a way of obeying the heavenly Father. A significant number of his rules and customs remain in use in religious communities now both in the East and in the West.<sup>21</sup>

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## ***CURRENTS IN COPTIC CHURCH STUDIES***

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# ***MONOGAMY IN CHRISTIANITY***

*By His Holiness Pope Shenouda III*  
*Cairo, Egypt: Coptic Orthodox Theological College. 1978*

In this book we read about monogamy as it appears in the Bible, in the teaching of the holy Fathers, and in the Church canons, with a detailed discussion of the purity of Christian marriage.

### ***General Accord***

Monogamy has been the teaching of the Church in all ages and in every part of the world. Although separated and differed in many theological and exegetical matters, all Christian churches share the doctrine of monogamy.

### ***From the Beginning***

The words of Christ to the Pharisees are the basis for Christian marriage, “. . . he who made them from the beginning made them male and female . . . 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 they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder . . . For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives but from the beginning it was not so.” (Matt. 19:4-6, 8; Cp. Gen. 2:18-24) Thus Christian marriage is a compact between two only, male and female, joined by God, in a mysterious unity in which the two become one, and which no man can dissolve.

Commenting on this teaching, Tertullian (c. 160 - c. 225) says, “For Adam was the one husband of Eve, and Eve his one wife.” (*To his Wife* 1:2). He also says, “For the laying down of the law of monogamy, the very origin of the human race is our authority . . . God constituted in the beginning a type to be examined with care by posterity . . . For He borrowed from the ribs of man one, and fashioned for him one woman. Neither the Artificer nor the material would have been insufficient for the creation of more. Finally, He said, ‘The two shall become one flesh,’ not three nor four . . . Plurality of marriage began with an accursed man. Lamech was the first who, by marrying himself to two women, caused three to be joined into one flesh. (Gen. 4:18, 19)” (*Exhortation to Chastity* 5). Tertullian adds also, “Truly in Christ

are all things recalled to *the beginning*, that even faith returns from circumcision to the integrity of the original flesh; and freedom of meats; and the individuality of marriage; and the restriction of divorce; and lastly, the whole man into Paradise where he was from the beginning.” (*On Monogamy* 5)

Saint Jerome (c. 342-420) says, “The creation of the first man should teach us to reject more marriages than one. There was but one Adam and one Eve . . . So too in the case of the ark which the Apostle Peter interprets as a type of the Church (1 Pet. 3:20, 21), Noah brings in for his three sons one wife each and not two. Likewise of the unclean animals pairs only are taken, male and female (Gen. 7:13-16), to show that bigamy has no place even among brutes, creeping things, crocodiles and lizards.” (*Letters* 123:12)

The original law of monogamy was partially disregarded in Old Testament times; polygamy and divorce were tolerated though hated by the Lord (Mal 2:15, 16). They were the exception rather than the rule (Prov. 12:4 & 19:14); and after the exile monogamy became almost universal among the Jews. Many prophets, like Elijah, Elisha, Daniel and John the Baptist, were even celibate. When Christ came, there was not a single reason to continue polygamy, which is considered a breach of the system ordained by God from the beginning. St. Augustine says, “Husbands were permitted (in the OT) to have several wives, not to satisfy a carnal desire, but in order to propagate children. But now the propagation of offspring is no more a duty as it was before . . . Now he who refrains from marriage will do better, unless he cannot exercise self-control (1 Cor. 7:38, 9)” (*The Advantage of Marriage, The Good of Widowhood*)

### ***New Testament Teaching***

Polygamy is implied from the NT teaching concerning divorce, the idea of the ‘one body’, and the relation between Christ and the Church and from other biblical references.

The law of divorce in Christianity is very clear, “But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the grounds of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” “And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity and marries another commits adultery.” (Matt. 5:32 & 19:9. Cp. Mark 10:11 & Luke 16:18). “Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive.” (Rom. 7:2, 3) “A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.” (1 Cor. 7:39)

The idea of one body formed in marriage (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:7; Eph. 5:3; 1 Cor. 6:16) is emphasized by various Church Fathers. Addressing the married couple, St. John Chrysostom says, “You have become one single living

organism.” (*Comm. on Ephes.*) St. Jerome says, “For where there are more husbands than one the proper idea of a husband, who is a single person, is destroyed. At the beginning one rib was turned into one wife. ‘And the two shall be one flesh’; not three or four; otherwise, how can they be any longer two, if they are several? Lamech, a man of blood and a murderer, was the first who divided one flesh between two wives.” (*Against Jovinianus 1:14*)

The relation between husband and wife is built upon the union of Christ and His Church (see the whole *Song of Solomon*; Is. 54:4; I Cor. 6:17; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22-33); “for the husband is the head of the church, his body.” (Ephes. 5:23) Tertullian says, “When the Apostle interprets, ‘the two shall become one flesh,’ of the Church and Christ, according to the spiritual nuptials of the Church and Christ (for Christ is one, and one is His Church), the law of unity of marriage is enforced. From one marriage we derive our origin in each case; carnally in Adam, spiritually in Christ.” (*Exhortation to Chastity 5*) St. Gregory the Theologian (329-389) says, “For if there were two Christs, there may be two husbands or two wives; but if Christ is One, one Head of the Church, let there be also one flesh, and let a second be rejected.” (*Oration 37:8*). St. Jerome says, “There was only one Adam and one Eve . . . As there is one Eve who is ‘the mother of all living,’ (Gen. 3:20) so is there one Church which is the parent of all Christians” (*Letters 123:12*). St. Ambrose (c. 339-397) says, “Eve had no second husband, likewise the Church knows no other bridegroom” (*Concerning Widows 89*).

Actually there is not a single NT reference that uses the word ‘wife’ in plural for the one man. Also Christianity gave woman the same authority as man in the one body of marriage, “For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does.” (I Cor. 7:4) Neither man nor woman has the authority to give one’s body to another partner. Church canons prohibit either spouse from leading a life of celibacy or asceticism without the consent of the other.

### ***Church Canons***

Among the many Church canons that prohibit polygamy and marriage after divorce, we mention just a few:

- If any layman put away his wife and marry another, or one who has been divorced by another man, let him be excommunicated. (*The Apostolic Canons 48*)
- To us it appears that polygamy is a greater sin than fornication. Let therefore such as guilty of it be liable to the canons. (*Canons of St. Basil 80*)
- Living with a concubine is a sin, and outside the law of marriage. . . It is an obvious and continuing adultery. (*Laws of Ibn-Al-Assal 25:1*)

### ***Purity of Christian Marriage***

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 315-386) says, “Let those be of good cheer who being married use marriage lawfully, who make a marriage according to God’s ordinance,



and not of wantonness for the sake of unbound license, who recognize seasons of abstinence *that they may devote themselves to prayer* (1 Cor. 7:5), who in our assemblies bring clean bodies as well as clean garments into the church, who have entered upon matrimony for the procreation of children, but not for indulgence.” (*Catechetical Lectures* 4:25). St. Jerome says, “If Christ loves the Church holily, chastely and without spot, let husbands also love their wives in chastity. And let each one know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like heathens who do not know God. (1 Thes. 4:4, 5)” (*Against Jovinianus* 1:16)

The Scriptures teach that marriage is not only intended for the procreation of children, but also for social companionship (Gen. 2:18) and for moderating passion (1 Cor. 7:9).

But however honorable marriage life is, celibacy has a superior honor. (1 Cor. 7:1, 7, 8, 29, 32, 38) St. Athanasius the Great says, “For there are two ways in life, as touching these matters. The one the more moderate and ordinary, I mean marriage; the other angelic and unsurpassed, namely virginity.” (*Letter to Amoun*) This was also the teaching of all other Church Fathers.

Although a second marriage after the death of one's spouse is approved, many Fathers have written to advise against it (*Tertullian: To his Wife, On Chastity, On Monogamy; St. Basil: Letter 160; St. Jerome: Against Jovinianus, Letters 54, 79, 108, 123; St. Augustine: The Good Widowhood; St. Ambrose: Concerning Widows*) The ancient canons had ordinances of penitence for such marriages, (*Canons of Neocaesarea: 3; St. Basil: 4*). Those contracting second marriages should not obtain the priestly blessing, nor the rite of crowning but have a prayer for penance. The priest was not allowed to attend the marriage feasts of persons contracting a second marriage. (*Neocaesarea: 7*). They have not been allowed to enter any rank of the clergy. (1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Tit. 2:6) or other Church services (1 Tim 5:9) St. Gregory the Theologian says concerning polygamy, “The first (marriage) is law, the second is indulgence, the third is transgression, and anything beyond this is swinish.” (*Oration 37:8*) Among the rules of the *Didascalia* concerning widows, “The first marriage is lawful and ordained by God; the second is outside the law . . . ; the third is a sign of passion and lack of self-control. Anything after the third is a sign of frank adultery and corruption.” (*12:7-9*)

## ***TERTULLIAN ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE***

*Tertullian was one of the Christian apologists and was probably the first Christian author to write in Latin. The following is taken from his treatise on marriage, **To My Wife (2:8)**. The translation is adapted from the Ante-Nicene Fathers.*

Where are we to find words enough fully to tell the happiness of that marriage which the Church cements, and the oblation confirms, and the benediction signs and seals; which angels carry back the news of to heaven, which the Father holds for ratified? . . . What kind of yoke is that of two believers, partakers of one hope, one desire, one discipline, one and the same service? Both are brethren, both fellow servants, no difference of spirit or of flesh; nay, they are truly two in one flesh. (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:8; Eph. 5:31) Where the flesh is one, one is the spirit too. Together they pray, together prostrate themselves, together perform their fasts; mutually teaching, mutually admonishing, (Col. 3:16) mutually sustaining. Equally are they both in the Church of God; equally at the banquet of God; equally in straits, in persecutions, in refreshments. Neither hides ought from the other; neither shuns the other; neither is troublesome to the other. The sick is visited, the indigent relieved, with freedom. Alms are given without danger of ensuing torment; sacrifices attended without scruple; daily diligence discharged without impediment. Between the two echo psalms and hymns; (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16) and they mutually challenge each other who will better chant to their Lord. Such things when Christ sees and hears, He joys. To these He gives His own peace. (John 14:27) Where two are, there is He in the midst of them. (Matt. 18:20) Where He is, there the Evil One is not.

## ***LETTERS TO THE EDITOR***

**We thank all readers who send their comments. Letters selected in this section are based on the general interest of their topic, and are subject to editing or shortening, if necessary.**

### ***Egyptian Coptic Language Pamphlets***

#### **To the Editor**

Thank you for publishing my little article and for the blurb. May I say, however, that the latter part of the blurb was somewhat mistaken. I did not say anywhere that the efforts of Copts were 'sincere and hard working' and that the problem had been lack of 'modern tools' and 'financial support'. 'Sincerity' and 'hard work' are **not** qualifications for scholarship. And of course Copts have always given their money for physical survival, not for learning. Those Copts who might have had the background, who were totally at home in French/English and trained at proper universities, have gone in for statecraft and financial success, since they are more concerned with their social status than with learning. They pay only lip service to the humanities.

I base my remarks on those of Roy Andrew Miller (about a different situation, but applicable). Copts have had, in over 140 years, no tradition of academic freedom. They have had to work either under externally imposed Moslem restraint or under self-imposed 'nationalist' ideology—a corollary of which is the totally unhistorical 'neo-Bohairicism' that stifles learning today. Copts are completely unfamiliar with the results and methods of linguistic scholarship, as exemplified by the work of, e.g., Polotsky and Diakonoff and their schools. A neglect of method leads to the superficial approach so characteristic of those whose criterion is still the parrot-memorization.

Being Arabophone is a double handicap: first, it leads to a tendency to pronounce and use neo-Bohairic as though it were Arabic, resulting in total unintelligibility; and second, all linguistic scholarship is of course carried on in German, French, English, Russian, Italian, and Hebrew. Culture-bound Copts are unwilling to learn languages and to use and cite the results of real work in the real world. And, as I have said, those who are cosmopolitan are time-serving politicians, not scholars.

The level of mediocrity leads to the amateurish mental habit of citing data at second hand. Errors and tired old historical canards are repeated and perpetuated. This elementary-school mentality means that scholarly positions are not understood in their content and import.

As Sir Ernest Gombrich has written, 'There are, alas, a good many countries in the world where the universities have been more or less reduced to vocational schools and where neither the libraries nor the teaching staff are any longer able to serve the interpretation and continuation of cultural traditions.' It is up to us, the professional scholars, to save the Coptic language. Only if and when Copts develop a positive attitude toward learning, instead of money-making, will there be a possibility of ethnic studies worthy to put beside, e.g., the Armenians' work on their own language.

*L.S.B. MacCoull*

### **To the Editor**

It seems that Prof. L. MacCoull's love and dedication to the Coptic Language made her very angry about the way the Copts treat their language. However, I can apply the same about her; to be angry and emotional are not qualifications for scholarship.

I have a proposal to her: Instead of throwing stones at each other, how about if we work together objectively to save the language from being lost. The Muslim yoke was too hard, too fierce, and is not over, yet, I would like to remind Prof. MacCoull and the readers of the Coptic Review, that the prosecutor general of Egypt, accused His Holiness Pope Shenouda III of propagating revival of the Coptic Language, and for this and other causes His Holiness was banished to the desert for four years and he is still prevented from functioning his authority and performing his ministry.

*Raef Marcus, D.M.D.*

*Levitown, Pennsylvania*

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Creative Suffering*

By Iulia de Beausobre. Oxford: SLG Press, 1984. 21+viii pp. (75 p. from *The Convent of the Incarnation*, Oxford, England OX4 1TB)

In 1984 the present reviewer read over two hundred books ranging from Lambdin's significant *Introduction to Sahidic*, which will stand for generations, and the difficult but deeply rewarding Philosophy of George Steiner, to light novels from the Prize lists and travel journals. Most of my reading matter lies hidden between those extremes and is theological and spiritual. I would have no hesitation whatever in dismissing the majority of published work in the religious field as unadulterated rubbish. The major publishing houses of Germany, England and the USA who specialize in religious publications have descended to depths that would have seemed impossible in 1960. The Sixties started the period of producing theological trash, pulp theology, from *Honest to God* onwards. Apart from major works of reference, the tide of pollution rolls in and shows no sign of turning.

It was with amazement and pleasure, in the general theological slough of 1984, that I discovered a tiny book, in fact a reissue of a 1940's book, which is a gem of spirituality in authentic lineage from the fathers. It is a book for orthodox Christians in all the churches of God. I would compare the little *Creative Suffering* in 1984 with the 1983 opus *Discerning the Mystery* by Father Andrew Louth, the only serious piece of Theology produced in Anglicanism for three decades and a work of genius.

*Creative Suffering* is not by an Anglican. In the Second World War a Russian Orthodox exile called Iulia de Beausobre was asked to talk to Anglican ordination candidates. This little book is the text of her talk. It seems ridiculous, but also wonderful, that this gem can be purchased from England for \$1.25 including postage and packing! It is worth more than silver or gold.

We are fortunate that Sister Rosemary SLG, a contemplative nun, has written a beautifully clear introduction with some biographical background. Iulia was a witness, 'martyria'; she had been imprisoned in the Lubyanka Prison in 1932 and in a concentration camp. In the depths of forest imprisonment and the terror of Moscow's jail she had prayed and observed how Peace of heart can be lost and how it is found in awful tribulation. Sister Rosemary draws our attention to the teaching of Iulia about collective martyrdom or witness: "Her approach is a reminder to

western Christians that suffering has a corporate as well as a personal aspect, and that this becomes redemptive within the mystical body of Christ". This is especially relevant to the Coptic Orthodox Christian whether in Egypt or the diaspora; to refuse to share in the sufferings of the Church in Egypt is to refuse Coptic Orthodoxy completely.

The subject of this modest volume is a central problem for any believer. "Suffering runs through the whole texture of human life; it is a thing that most of us are confronted with, in one way or another, it is a thing all of us wonder about."

There is no attempt here to reduce suffering to physical pain and I do not think that such reductionism would do any justice to spiritual experience and the fullness of human living. The reviewer must ask for your indulgence by observing that he has experienced much pain but the physical pain of seven years has been nothing compared with the spiritual pain and anger, leaving aside all psychological considerations, though *Creative Suffering* has some brief, pertinent observations on this dimension of suffering. Mental suffering is surely the greatest and most widespread form of suffering in the world today. Although its thought is tightly packed this book is far reaching; a manual of spiritual warfare without the excruciating verbiage we associate with books which claim to be expert in spiritual healing.

There is no masochism in this book. There is no sadism. What we read about and what touches us very deeply is the creative power of orthodox Christian mystical asceticism. But the author rebels against asceticism alone as yet another form of reductionism. Asceticism is not *Creative Suffering* unless it is infused with the mystical temper of historic orthodoxy. The most stringent attacks of Iulia de Beausobre are reserved for anti-Christian ascetics like the Bolsheviks in her homeland or the tyrant Cromwell in England. We are introduced to a popular Russian phrase which reminds us of the 'kenosis' of the Epistle to the Phillipians where Christ for Love's sake became a 'slave'. The Russian phrase is, 'to scour the drinking houses in search of God' or in elaboration the writer says; "evil must not be shunned, but first participated in and understood through participation, and then through understanding transfigured". *Creative Suffering*, and the context is the most bestial form of torture, becomes an act of redemption through the mystical asceticism of a completely selfless offering; "the evil possibilities of asceticism have been Christianised, that is illumined by mysticism, or, as Jung might put it, the lust for power has been shorn of its evil possibilities through the grace of love". Here the Coptic Christian will be reminded of the angelic state of the Desert Fathers, simple men of true humility who always believed the angelic state to be beyond them and by their lowliness and simplicity, we may say in nakedness of body and soul, found Wholeness, Holiness.

This invaluable book negates the false "asceticism-as-exhibitionism" which we see today in some monasteries of the Coptic Church. We can hardly believe our ears when a monk encourages people to describe him as the true heir of Abba Anthony the Great; this is the self-congratulating asceticism of Cromwell and the Bolsheviks,

rooted deeply in this world. Iulia de Beausobre saw that the roots of evil have been decisively defeated by Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the divine mystery of suffering on the Cross and in the Harrowing of Hell, when he accepted suffering in the creative acts of Love.

In spite of the author's vigorous flight from one dimension of asceticism, there are few more eloquent passages defining authentic asceticism, and the mystical love of our neighbour as Christ, than this:

"I have often been told that it should be enough for a man to have firm faith in God, deep consciousness of God's love of him, and of his own love of God. No doubt there are many circumstances in life when this is quite sufficient. But when you are being slowly, systematically and cleverly tortured by men who base their actions on the authority of dead men (their teachers Marx, Engels, Lenin) and justify their actions by proclaiming unflinching devotion to the man of the future, it is difficult if you love God at all, not to love him to the exclusion of man, difficult not to fly to him as a refuge from detestable mankind . . . the tone of the fortitude shown by the tortured is very different . . . when they think of themselves as members of the mystical body of Christ." It was with that thought that Iulia de Baeusobre created out of the Calvary of the Lubyanka the glorious resurrection morning of *Creative Suffering*. Iulia came to believe that it was only those who knew the communion of saints in the Church who could recreate suffering without succumbing to hatred: "They alone can raise their harrowing experience from the level of a personal evil, or even of a personal matter at all, and make of it an impersonal enrichment, a universal good, a part of the redemptive work of Christ in his mystical body - the Church."

This book is almost being given away at this price and it should be at every Orthodox Christian bedside. Its flimsy texture outweighs many tomes of so-called modern Theology.

John Watson

Upper Walmer, Kent, England

### ***Architecture of the Tigre, Ethiopia***

By Ruth Plant. Ravens Educational, Saint Cloud, Old Hills, Worcester WR2 4TQ England. Hardcover, £ 24:00 Sterling - offered at a special price to readers of CCR (who should indicate that they heard from CCR about the book) £ 18:00 only.

At first glance the title is not an invitation to the reader whose main interest in Coptic Studies may be the teaching of the Fathers. But this book is far from being a book for architects and archaeologists alone. It is a book to delight the specialist and the general reader. Many subscribers to the Coptic Church Review may shed a tear, like the present reviewer, when reflecting on the cultural genocide of the Ancient Oriental Churches but this book is a cause for profound joy that such a delightful record exists in the English language and that we can all enjoy this excellent piece of cultural conservation. The publishers are to be congratulated on this venture. It may be a happy omen of things to come.

The bibliophile will enjoy handling this handsome volume. There are over 150 illustrations by the author; these vary from some fine technical drawing of church plans and features, which the general reader can easily understand, to exquisite free hand vignettes of icons and wall paintings. In addition the reader can take pleasure in more than 50 photographs. The accompanying text is the work of one of the English-speaking world's leading specialists on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church: Mrs. Plant has been an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects since 1938. Her research on the Tigre after the Second World War was accepted for her M. Litt., and she has been awarded a Fellowship of the American Association of University Women, Washington D.C. From 1967 to 1971 she made annual visits to the churches of Tigre and in 1973-4 she was the architect of the British Institute in Aksum. Coptic Orthodox tradition associates Aksum with Saint Athanasius the Apostolic who consecrated the Syrian, Frumentius, as Abba Salama (the "Father of Peace") to be the first of Ethiopia's Coptic bishops. It is well known that the Ethiopian episcopate was appointed from Egyptian monks for many centuries; the Ethiopian Church received its first full Patriarch, Abuna Basilius, after his consecration in Cairo in 1959. In 1971 the Ethiopian Church became an autocephalous body in doctrinal, canonical and liturgical communion with Alexandria. Since the Marxist Revolution of 1974, the first native Ethiopian Patriarch Theophilus has vanished and the Church has passed through many trials. It is natural that little of "the Coptic connection" comes through in this book because it is not its proper subject but if there is one small criticism to be made of the text it is of the overemphasis of the Syrian 'Christian' origin of Frumentius and Aedipius and a parallel lack of emphasis on the long relationship with the See of St. Mark. But this is a carping criticism compared with the immense pleasure gained from this fine book.

In the West, church buildings are being sold for conversion to workshops, theatres and mosques. This book has an overwhelming message of the Beauty of Holiness expressed in a unique architecture and many overpowering art forms. It deserves a place on the shelves of all of us who are fighting to preserve a sacred memory and to live it in the West.

John Watson

Upper Walmer, England

### ***The Rise of Christianity***

By W. H. C. Frend. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984. Pp. 1042. Hardcover, \$49.95.

W. H. C. Frend, recently elected as a fellow of the British Academy, is an archaeologist, historian and professor of Church History at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. In this massive undertaking, Dr. Frend follows the origins and development of the early Church till the end of the sixth century.



Part 1, *Jews and Christians*, describes the emergence of a triumphant Christianity against a Jewish background, opposition to cults and gnosticism. Part 2 deals with *Christianity and the Roman Empire*, starting with a persecuted Church and ending with the Constantinian revolution. Part 3, *From Constantine to Chalcedon*, and Part 4, *The Parting of the Ways*, focus upon the growth of Christianity in different centers, among various cultures, and with increasingly incompatible theologies resulting in heresies and schisms.

By including material from recent discoveries as well as ancient literary sources, the book complements previous manuals of Church history and proves indispensable to any Christian library. It gives a full account of the institutional life, society, worship and doctrinal history of early Christianity. The bibliography is current and extensive providing invaluable resource material to teachers and scholars. However, this monumental and highly informative work has few deficiencies. While some sections, like the chapters on the gnostic movement, are outstanding contributions, other areas are less emphasizing. Perhaps the weakest part of the book is that dealing with early monasticism. Also one feels that the author is not impartial in his statements about the fifth century Christological controversies.

On the whole, Dr. Frend should be congratulated on his success in charting, according to the modern data, a clearer picture of the complex world of early Christianity.

### ***Martyrs and Martyrdom in the Coptic Church.***

*Bulletin of Saint Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society* (1800, S. Robertson Blvd., Bldg. #6, Suite #222, Los Angeles, CA 90035), 1983-1984. Pp. 231.

The Coptic Church is the church of the martyrs. This volume gives a synopsis of the persecutions which she suffered during her long history, under the Romans, the Byzantines, and the various Arab and Islamic Dynasties. This is followed by separate chapters on *The Coptic Calendar*, which commemorates the era of the martyrs; *The Tradition of the Martyrs in the Coptic Church*, dealing with their place in the liturgy, the veneration of their relics and their intercession; *The Coptic Synaxarion* with the names of the martyrs throughout the year; *The Antiphonary (Difnar)* which is a collection of narrative hymns appropriate to the saints and festivals of the calendar; and a final chapter on *The Silent Martyr - The Coptic Language*, dealing with its development, different dialects and value.

The book has an extensive bibliography of Coptic Martyrs in 86 pages. Beside the modern historical, biographical, chronological, geographical, artistic, architectural and Church services studies, the bibliography gives lists of the hagiographical texts in Coptic, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic and Syriac.

The subject of Martyrdom in the Coptic Church requires several volumes if it is to be examined in a satisfactory manner. However, because of the paucity of such material in English, this book is a welcome addition to the bookshelf of anyone interested in Coptic Church history and Tradition.

***Augustine: His Life and Thought***

*By Warren Thomas Smith. Atlanta; John Knox Press, 1980. Pp. 190. Paper, \$9.95.*

Warren Thomas Smith, a United Methodist and an Associate Professor of Church History at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, writes in the conclusion of his book, "Usually referred to as a great Doctor of the Latin Church, Augustine holds one of the highest positions, not only in the Roman Catholic tradition, but in the entire Christian fellowship. He was a foremost theologian, a writer of tremendous depth. His place in Western history is secure . . .

"We have attempted to see Augustine as a person, an African, a man of flesh and blood . . . As a youth he sinned with abandon; he likewise wept with equal freedom as he prayed to be forgiven . . . He knew laughter and tears; joy and sorrow; health and illness; pleasure and pain."

Although there have been many studies and works on Augustine, the present author intended to give a lively portrait of him in simple terms. Yet the book does not lack in scholarship, with notes to each chapter and a bibliography of the works of Augustine, and their English translations and the secondary sources in English.

Following the various stages of Augustine's life, the author has greatly succeeded in drawing a picture of his world including the different places he lived in and the people with whom he worked and struggled. Born at Tagaste in AD 354, Augustine spent all his life in North Africa, except for five years (383-388) during which he stayed in Italy. In Tagaste we see Augustine's early life with his parents, and his stormy adolescence. Then we follow him during his university years and then as a teacher of rhetoric in Carthage, Rome and finally Milan. During these years Augustine lived with a mistress who gave him his son Adeodatus. However, deeply inside Augustine was always searching for truth. His thoughts were greatly influenced by Cicero, by Platonism, and by Manichaeism till he was drawn to Christianity through the teaching of St. Ambrose of Milan. Converted and baptized in 387, Augustine returned to Africa, hoping to pursue the life of a monk. But in 391 he was ordained a priest in Hippo, and within a few years he became its bishop. (400-430) We have the details of his life in Hippo, divided between his pastoral and administrative duties, his theological activities against heretics, and his writings.

Throughout the book there are brief, but frequent and expressive quotations from Augustine, not only from his major works, but also from his small treatises, sermons and letters. "After years of writing," says Warren Smith in the Preface, "I feel that I have come to know him personally. He is, after all, very real—an authentic individual—an African who was flesh, blood, tears, laughter. My aim has been to make him come alive to the reader;" And in this we think he has reached his goal.

***Grace Grows Best in Winter***

*By Margaret Clarkson. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. W. Eerdmans, 1985. Pp. 207. Cloth, \$10.95.*

The problem of human suffering has always baffled the philosophers and theologians. Countless people, of all ages, have to endure physical or mental pain for variable lengths of time, even for their whole life. Many are hedged in by a crippling illness or have their lives shattered by a sorrowful disaster. For such people Margaret Clarkson writes this book out of her own lifelong experience with suffering, combined with long years of searching the Scriptures. She does not try to enter into futile arguments about the mystery of suffering and pain, nor does she attempt to offer shallow solutions based on a merely intellectual study of the Word of God. She rather realizes in the experience of suffering the hand of a loving God and finds His peace only in its acceptance through the secrets of faith (1 Cor. 10:13 & Heb. 11:1, 6). Faith is found in the Word of God. However, while close study of the Word of God can turn the bed of sorrow into heaven, right now on earth, there are sufferers who find it difficult or impossible to read the Bible or even to pray. In chapter after chapter the author confidently shows how the Almighty God is always there to help those whom He has chosen for the life of pain (Acts 9:15, 16; Isa. 48:10; Phil. 1:29). He is there with those who pass through the darkest night, those who suffer from sleeplessness, those who are struck by the evil of a sudden catastrophic calamity and those who experience no deliverance in their evil hour, but are permitted to suffer horribly, even unto death (Heb. 11:33-38). Although they may be hindered from sharing in the work of God, yet God always works in them and through them. Often it has been to His suffering saints that God has most clearly revealed the vision of His heavenly glory. (Job 19:25-27; Rev. 1:9)

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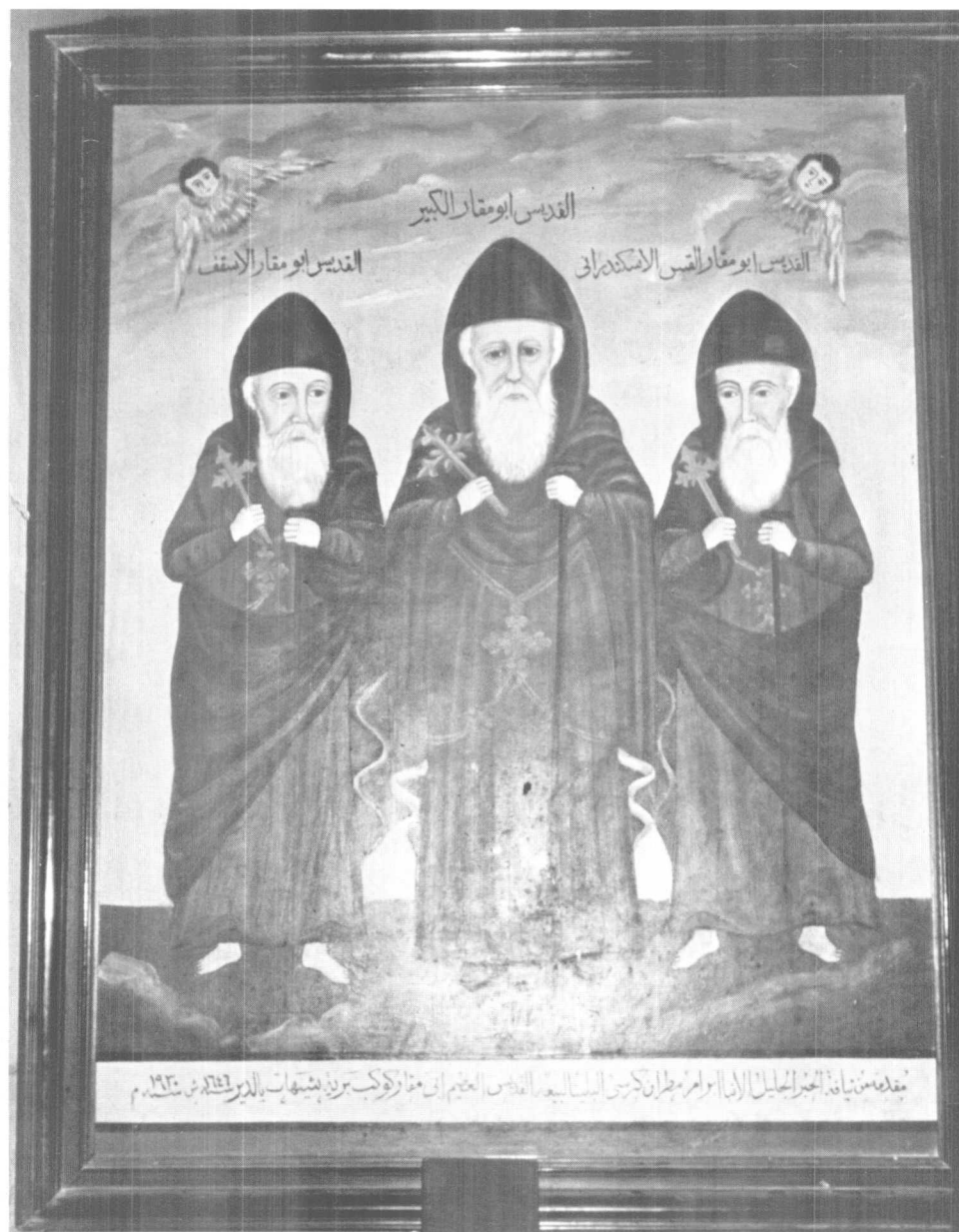
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