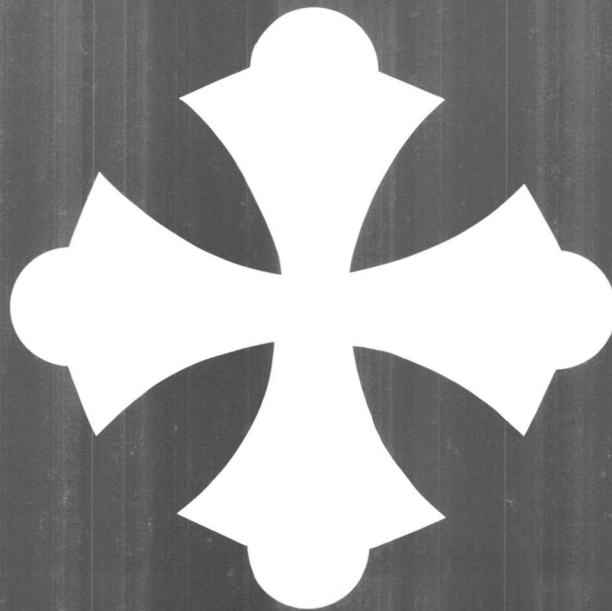


# COPTIC CHURCH REVIEW

*Volume 7, Number 1 . . . . . Spring 1986*

- *CHRISTOLOGY IN THE COPTIC CHURCH*
- *THE CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS*
- *DAYS IN THE LIFE OF A CONTEMPORARY SAINT*



*Society of Coptic Church Studies*

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Bishop Wissa  
(Al-Balyana, Egypt)

Bishop Antonious Markos  
(Coptic Church, African Affairs)

Bishop Isaac  
(Quesna, Egypt)

Bishop Dioscorus  
(Coptic Church, Egypt)

Fr. Tadros Malaty  
(Alexandria, Egypt)

Professor Fayek Ishak  
(Ontario, Canada)

Professor Shaker Basilus  
(Cairo, Egypt)

William El-Meiry, Ph.D.  
(N.J., U.S.A.)

Girgis A. Ibrahim, Ph.D.  
(Minnesota, U.S.A.)

Esmat Gabriel, Ed.D.  
(PA., U.S.A.)

## EDITOR

Rodolph Yanney, M.D.

© Copyright 1986  
by Coptic Church Review  
Lebanon, PA

**Subscription and Business Address:**  
**Post Office Box 714**  
**E. Brunswick, NJ 08816**

**Editorial Address:**  
**Post Office Box III3**  
**Lebanon, PA 17042**

**Subscription Price (1 year)**  
**U.S.A. \$7.00**  
**Canada \$10.00 (Canadian)**

**Overseas \$10.00**

Coptic Church Review is indexed  
with abstracts in *Religion Index One:*  
*Periodicals*, American Theological  
Library Association, Chicago,  
available through BRS (Bibliographic  
Retrieval Services), Latham, New  
York and DIALOG, Palo Alto,  
California.

## COPTIC CHURCH REVIEW

*A Quarterly of Contemporary Patristic Studies*

ISSN 0273-3269

Volume 7, Number 1 . . . . . Spring 1986

2     *About This Issue*

4     *Christology in the Coptic Church*  
Father Tadros Malaty

15    *The First of the Cappadocian Fathers*  
James Furman

22    *Days in the Life of a Contemporary*  
      *Saint*  
Father Raphael Ava Mina

29    *Letters to the Editor*

30    *Book Reviews*  
• *Palladius: Cialogue on the Life of St.*  
      *John Chrysostom*  
• *Pope Kyrillos VI and the Spiritual*  
      *Leadership*  
• *The Difficult Years of Survival*

## ***ABOUT THIS ISSUE***

### ***Christology in the Non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches***

We are happy to introduce this issue by a very important and timely paper by *Father Tadros Malaty, The Nature of God the Word Incarnate*. It is regrettable that the subject of Christology in the Non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches has been misunderstood by many ecclesiastic theologians and modern patristic scholars. Father Malaty, the member of our editorial board, is Professor of Patristics at the Coptic Seminary in Alexandria (Egypt). He is a prolific writer who has published hundreds of books and articles both in Arabic and in English and he has represented the Coptic Church in various ecumenical meetings. His article, with its extensive references to the Church Fathers and the scholars from various denominations, meets an urgent demand and we pray that it may reach every place where a witness to the true teaching of the Church is needed.

One of the books reviewed in this issue, *The Difficult Years of Survival*, deals with the christological controversy in its historical perspective.

### ***The Cappadocian Fathers***

The *Rev. James E. Furman* starts in this issue a new series of articles on *the Cappadocian Fathers*, Saint Gregory the Theologian and the two brothers Saint Basil and Saint Gregory of Nyssa. Rev. Furman is known to our readers from his previous articles on Gnosticism (Vol. 6, No. 1 & 4). He is interested in the history of the Early Church and the reader will soon see for himself how he masterly approaches the Saints, their environment and their teaching. For him they are not figures of past generations or heroes of legendary spirituality but real human beings like us, who were receptive to the work of God's grace within them. *The First of the Cappadocian Fathers, St. Gregory of Nazianzus* is one of the Fathers whose names are recited in the diptychs of the Divine Liturgy of the Coptic Church. In fact one of her three liturgies carries his name, The Coptic Church cannot forget St. Gregory, or the other Cappadocians, who shared with her great Fathers the witness to the orthodox faith, through their suffering and their teaching. They carried the torch from St. Athanasius in the fierce struggle against the Arian heresy. Their writings, which Rev. Furman introduces briefly in this series, goes in harmony with the teaching of the School of Alexandria and the Coptic Fathers.

***Pope Kyrillos VI***

In *Days in the Life of a Contemporary Saint*, Father Raphael Ava Mina gives some personal insights into several eventful days of the former Patriarch of the Coptic Church. This article is taken from his book, *Pope Kyrillos VI and the Spiritual Leadership* which was recently translated into English on the fifteenth anniversary of the departure of the blessed Pope to heaven. We thank the *Sons of Pope Kyrillos* and *Pope Kyrillos Publications* for allowing us to reproduce this article.

***Cover Picture***

The picture on the backcover, *the Flight into Egypt*, is taken from a color icon drawn by the Coptic iconographer Stephen Rene, the deacon at St. Mark Coptic Church in London. He is a disciple of Dr. Isaac Fanous of the Coptic Institute at Cairo. Mr. Rene may be addressed at 205e Ladbroke Grove, London W10 6HG, U.K.

The Coptic Church celebrates the feast of the Entrance of Our Lord into Egypt on June 1.

*Editor*

***Acknowledgement***

Scripture quotations in this volume, unless otherwise noted, are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible copyrighted 1946, 1952, © 1971, 1973 and used by permission of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches.

**CHRISTOLOGY IN THE COPTIC CHURCH**  
**THE NATURE OF GOD THE WORD**  
**INCARNATE**

*Mia physis tou Theou Logou Sesarkomene*

*Father Tadros Y. Malaty*

In the last decades, after 14 centuries of the council of Chalcedon (held in 451 A.D.), many Pan-Orthodox meetings were held, in which the representatives of the non-Chalcedonian and the Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches declared their deep feeling of unity, especially when every party declared its faith concerning “the nature of Christ”, which was misunderstood by the other. No doubt, today, the historical circumstances differ from those of the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, when the Byzantine emperors interfered in theological and ecclesiastical affairs. Nowadays, I think, through sincere love and mutual respect, theologians can meet to declare the oneness of the Orthodox Church.

***1. The Circumstances of the Council of Chalcedon***

In this paper, I do not aim to discuss the details of the Council of Chalcedon, but to refer to the main points of the historical and theological circumstances of the fifth century, in order to underline the deep roots of this bitter and long period of separation between the two Orthodox families, which I can call one family in Christ.

*Historical Circumstances*

Prof. Meyendorff started his paper on the Pan-Orthodox Unofficial Consultation in August, 1964, by declaring the role of the historical circumstances in the East from the date of the Chalcedon council until the Arab conquest in Egypt and Syria. He said, “Emperors tried to solve the dispute by force. For us, today, there is no doubt about the fact that the military repressions of monophysitism<sup>1</sup> in Egypt, and in other places, the imposition of the Chalcedonian hierarchy in Byzantine politics, the frequent exile of the real, popular leaders of the Church of Egypt, all played a decisive role in giving to the schism the character of a national resistance to Byzantine ecclesiastical and political control of Egypt, Syria and Armenia. For centuries, the Orthodox Chalcedonians were considered as Melchites - the people of the Emperor (King) - by the non-Greek Christians of the Middle East”.

But we have to indicate that despite these circumstances, even though they created national attitudes in Egypt, Syria and Armenia, yet the true battle in the minds of our church leaders was truly on the grounds of theology and faith. According to our Coptic point of view, the bishops of Rome envied the Coptic popes as heroes of faith. While the former had the civil authorities and honor and riches, for they lived in Rome, the capital of the Empire, the Alexandrian bishops (Popes) like SS. Athanasius and Cyril were the true leaders and had theological and spiritual priority. All the ancient Christendom looked to the Egyptian Fathers as the defenders of the Orthodox faith, as leaders in theology and ascetic life, and had their effective role in the ecumenical councils. Leo, the Pope of Rome, prepared his tome before the council and the emperor Marcian and the empress Pulchra had been gathering signatures since 450 A.D. The idea was to draft a basic paper against the Alexandrian theologians under the pretence of defending the faith against the heresy of Eutyches who, during the struggle against the Nestorians, wanted to affirm the unity of Christ, but in a wrong way, believing that the divinity of Christ absorbed His humanity. This heresy was not accepted at all in our Church. Leo tried to distort the faith of the Egyptian Church by attributing the Eutychian heresy to her fathers, who struggled against it although Eutyches himself was hesitating or acting deceptively. In fact, there was no need for this council, but politics played the principal role. Aloys Grillmeier, the German theologian says, "It was only under constant pressure from the emperor Marcian that the Fathers of Chalcedon agreed to draw up a new formula of belief"<sup>3</sup>

Nobody can ignore the disadvantages of the marriage that occurs between politics and religion. For example, when the righteous emperor Constantine, the first Roman Emperor converted to Christianity, summoned the first ecumenical council he refused to interfere into the theological disputes, leaving this task to the bishops. However, when he himself interfered in the Church affairs and supported the Arians he exiled the hero of faith, St. Athanasius of Alexandria.

I think the decisions of the Chalcedon Council and the events that followed it would surely be totally different if the rulers Marcian and Pulchra had not interfered in theological Church affairs.

#### *Theological Circumstances*

Besides the historical circumstances, the theological circumstances also played a principal role in creating a huge gap among the churches. While the Alexandrian, Syrian and Armenian churches were struggling against Nestorianism, which was widely spread, especially in Constantinople, Leo of Rome did his best to gain semi-Nestorians to his side against the Alexandrian Church. He pretended to purify the faith from Eutychianism, while the other party considered his tome as semi-Nestorian. It is necessary to form an idea of these theological struggles that surrounded this council, especially concerning the "Nature of Christ".

#### *Nestorianism<sup>4</sup>*

The Nestorian School adopted the phrase: "*in two natures*" to assert a doctrine of two persons: Jesus was a mere man who was born of St. Mary. Nestorius condemned the wisemen who worshipped Jesus and offered gifts, for He was merely a

man; he also called St. Mary *Christokos* and not *Theotokos*, for she did not bring the Incarnate Word of God. The divinity was united to humanity for a time, and on the cross the divinity departed while Jesus, the man, was crucified.

St. Cyril of Alexandria was the defender of the Orthodox faith against Nestorius and Nestorianism. He used the expression "*Mia-physis tou Theou Logou Sesarkomene*" (One Nature of God the Logos Incarnate), to assert that our Lord Jesus Christ has a united nature, two in one, as one person:

"Christ is indeed *"of two natures"*, the properties and operations of each are there in Him in a state of indivisible and insoluble union. In Christ hunger and all other human and physical disabilities were united and made His own by God the Son in His incarnate state. In the same way, the super-human words and deeds were expressions of the Godhead of the Son in Union with manhood. In other words, it was the one incarnate Person who was the subject of all words and deeds of Christ"<sup>5</sup>

It is noteworthy that human languages are incapable of describing the unity of divinity and humanity, and can easily be misunderstood. When St. Cyril noticed the Nestorian heresy and semi-Nestorian ideas were spread he insisted on the expression "*Mia-physis tou Theou Logou Sesarkomene*", to assert the hypostatic unity between the divinity and humanity without any mixing or changing, explaining this sole unity through many examples like the unity of soul with body in one human nature and the unity of fire with coal etc. . .

### *Eutychianism*

Eutyches (c. 378-454) was archimandrite of a large monastery at Constantinople. His eager opposition to Nestorianism led him to another heresy, as he denied that the manhood of Christ was consubstantial with ours. He said that there were two natures before the union but only one after it, for the divine nature absorbed the human one, and manhood was totally lost.

Sometime he used an orthodox statement<sup>6</sup>:

"Concerning His coming in the flesh, I confess that it happened from the flesh of the Virgin, and that He became man perfectly for our salvation".

"For He Himself, who is the Word of God, descended from heaven without flesh, was made flesh of the very flesh of the Virgin unchangeable and inconvertibly in a way, which He Himself knew and willed. And He, who is perfect God before the ages, the Same also was made perfect man for us and for our salvation".

Dioscorus of Alexandria did himself express the rejection of the ideas read into Eutyches at Chalcedon. Through all ages the non-Chalcedonian Church has declared its refusal of any Eutychian attitude.

Now, through these theological circumstances, we can understand the accurate difference between the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Churches. The Chalcedonian Churches looked to the Council of Chalcedon as a defender of the or-

thodox faith against Eutychianism. They accepted the two natures of Christ to assert that His manhood had not been lost. The non-Chalcedonian Churches also rejected this heresy, but they accepted the Cyrillian expression “one nature of God the Logos Incarnate” to defend the orthodox faith from Nestorianism, especially that this council did not use the twelve chapters of St. Cyril, which he set against this heresy. They considered the Tome of Leo as a Nestorian or Semi-Nestorian letter.

Fr. S. Romanides (Greek Orthodox) said, “Each side believed that its terminology alone could protect the Church from heresy.”<sup>7</sup>

## ***2. Mia-Physis and Monophysitism***

The Chalcedonian Churches have recently called us “Monophysites”, an inaccurate term, for it draws us very close to the Eutychian heresy, which we deny.

There is a slight difference between “mono” and “mia” in regard to the “two natures - one nature” dispute. Monophysitism suggests the exclusion of all natures in one. Mia refers to “one united nature” or as St. Cyril says: “One nature of God the Logos Incarnate”. In the term “monophysite”, “mono” refers to simple one, while in the Cyrillian term “Mia-physis” refers to a composite nature, and not a numerous one.

Bishop Sarkissian says, “When we speak of one will and one energy we always speak of a united one not a simple numerical one.”<sup>8</sup>

This term “monophysite” was not used during the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, but was introduced later in a specific way and in a polemic spirit on behalf of the Chalcedonian Churches.

Here we display our concept of “Mia-physis”:

I. We affirm that Jesus Christ has one nature not in the sense that He is God and not a man but in that He is truly the “Incarnated Son of God.”

“All the non-Chalcedonian leaders have affirmed that in His incarnation God the Son united to Himself manhood animated with a rational soul and of the same substance as us, that He endured in reality blameless passions of the body and the soul, and that there was no confusion or mixture of different natures in Him.”<sup>9</sup>

II. He assumed a flesh united to a real and perfect manhood, and not a supernatural one. He is without sin, but when He bore our sins in His body, He truly died for our sake.

III. Godhead and manhood are united in such a way that properties of divinity and humanity are not lost, nor confused nor mixed.

We do not interpret the Cyrillian phrase: “one nature of God the Word incarnate” to mean absorption of the manhood or the human property, as the Eutychian heresy declares.

## ***3. Dyophysis or Two Natures***

The Chalcedonians call us “monophysites”, accusing us of adopting a Eutychian attitude. We also, from our part, look to the Dyophysites’ faith as a way to the



Nestorian heresy. We reject the Council of Chalcedone because it accepted the Tome of Leo (two natures after the union) instead of the Cyrillian expression: "One nature of God the Logos Incarnate". It did not use the Cyril's Twelve Chapters against Nestorius, and failed to condemn the theology of Theodore<sup>10</sup>, on the contrary accepted Theodoret<sup>11</sup> and Ibas<sup>12</sup>.

For this reason the Armenians, in their struggle against this council, were struggling against Nestorianism "The association between the Nestorian way of thinking and early Chalcedonian understanding of Christology was a very close one. Those who followed Theodore of Mopsuestia in East Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia were very happy with the Council of Chalcedon. But this does not mean that the Armenian Church Fathers confounded Chalcedon and the dualistic Christology of Theodore".<sup>13</sup>

In Egypt, thousands of believers were martyred by the hands of their brothers in Christ, the Byzantines, for their refusal to sign on the copies of the Tome of Leo, considering it Nestorian.

The treatise of St. Timothy, the Pope of Alexandria, written during the sixties of the fifth century, when he was in exile in Cherson<sup>14</sup>, reveals that St. Dioscorus - his predecessor - was fighting against Nestorianism:

"Dioscorus says: 'I know full well, having been brought up in the faith, that the Lord has been begotten of the Father as God and that He has been begotten of Mary as man; see Him walking on the earth as man and creator of the heavenly hosts as God; see Him sleeping in the boat as a man and walking on the seas as God; see Him hungry as man and giving food as God; see Him thirsty as man and giving drink as God; see him tempted as man and driving demons away as God and similarly of many other instances' ". He says also, "God the Logos consubstantial with the Father eternally, become consubstantial with man in the flesh for our redemption, remaining what He was before".

Fr. Florovsky separates the Nestorian and the Chalcedonian dyophysis by distinguishing between:

I. Symmetrical dyophysis, as a Nestorian duality of propors, a complete parallelism of two natures, which leads into duality of propors or subjects, which may be united only in the unity of function.

II. Asymmetrical dyophysis: There is but one hypostasis as the object of all attributions, although the distinction of divine and human natures is carefully safeguarded. Humanity is included in the divine hypostasis and exists, as it were within this one hypostasis. There is no symmetry: two natures but one hypostasis.

#### ***4. Chalcedon and St. Cyril***

St. Cyril used the term: "*one nature of God the Logos Incarnate*" as a tool to conserve the Church faith in the Person of Jesus Christ, especially against Nestorianism. The Council of Chalcedon failed to use it setting another formula "in

two natures”, believing that this new one, which had no traditional basis, could be a tool against Eutychianism.

In fact the Cyrillian term is in harmony with the Severus’ term “Hypostatic union”, which means that the Incarnate Logos is known as the indivisible one Emmanuel.

I. It was God the Logos Himself, who became Incarnate.

II. In becoming incarnate, He embodied manhood in union with Himself and made it His very own.

III. The Incarnate Logos is one Person, and has one will. St. Cyril explained this unity through two examples:

i. The Unity of soul and body in one human nature. He says: “Let us take an example from our own nature. Because we are created of soul and body, and these are not separate natures before their union, and with their union become a man with one nature, the soul is not changed in its nature because of its union with the flesh. The soul has not become flesh, and the flesh has not become soul; but the soul and the flesh together have become one nature and one man”.<sup>15</sup>

According to the Chalcedonian logic we can say, that after the union Jesus Christ has three natures, one of the soul, the other of the flesh and the third His divine nature.<sup>16</sup>

ii. St. Cyril also says: “Let us take the union of fire with iron. Although their natures are different, through their union they become one nature, not because the nature of fire is changed and it became iron, nor because the nature of the iron is changed and it became fire, but fire is united with iron. It is fire and it is iron . . . if the iron is struck then the fire is struck also. The iron suffers, but the fire does not suffer.”

*We include here more quotations from St. Cyril’s Writings where he explains the belief in the one nature of Christ:*

\*The Word was made man, but did not descend upon a man.<sup>17</sup>

\*But neither again do we say that the Word which is of God dwelt in Him who was born of the Holy Virgin as in an ordinary man, lest Christ should be understood to be a man who carries God (within Him), for though the Word “dwelt in us” (John 1:14) and “all the fullness of the Godhead” as it said (Co. 2:9) “dwelt in Christ bodily”, yet we understand that when He became flesh, the indwelling was not such as when He is said to dwell in the saints, but having been united by a union of natures and not converted into flesh, he brought to pass such an indwelling as the soul of man may be said to have its own body.

St. Cyril, in the same epistle, rejects the terminology of the Nestorians who called the union of the two natures an indwelling or a connection or close participation.<sup>18</sup>

\*We believe, therefore, in *one* nature of the Son because He is one, though become man and flesh.

\*For the one and sole Christ is not twofold, although we conceive of Him as consisting of two distinct substances inseparably united, even as a man is conceived of as consisting of soul and body, and yet is not twofold but one of both.

\*If we reject this hypostatic union either as impossible or unmeet, we fall into the error of making two sons.

### **5. Chalcedon and St. Dioscorus**

We have said that the political circumstances played the principal role in the Council of Chalcedon. St. Dioscorus, who rejected Eutychianism as well as Nestorianism, was condemned in this council as a Eutychian. He was present in the first meeting and when the Roman representatives noticed his orthodox faith, and that he attracted many bishops to his side, he was prevented from attending and was condemned as a Eutychian.

The Greek Professor Romanides says: "Dioscorus was considered quite orthodox in his faith by such leading Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon as those represented by Anatolius of Constantinople."<sup>19</sup>

### **6. Chalcedon and Saint Severus of Antioch<sup>20</sup>**

Following St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Severus accepts four phrases with reference to the Incarnation:

- Of (*Ex*) two natures.
- Hypostatic union.
- One incarnate nature of God the Word.
- One composite nature.

St. Severus spoke of Jesus Christ as "*(ek)* of two natures". By this phrase he does not sanction the expression "two natures before the union", because there were no two natures then that were united. We cannot accept this idea even in fancy. St. Severus affirms that "the flesh possessing a rational soul did not exist before the union with Him". We can summarize St. Severus' Christology in the following points:<sup>21</sup>

I. Christ's manhood was an embodiment of manhood, fully like and continuous with our manhood, with the single exception that it was sinless.

II. It was individuated only in a hypostatic union with God the Son, and it continued to exist in perfection and reality in this union, but not independent of its union with the Logos.

III. The union did not lead to confusion of the manhood element with, or a loss in, the Godhead. Therefore in Christ there were Godhead and manhood with their respective properties hypostatically united with each other.

IV. The union brought into being one Person, the Son of God in His incarnate state.

V. The manhood of Christ was real, perfect and dynamic in the union.

### ***7. Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo***

We have said that this tome was prepared carefully by the Roman Pope and signatures were gathered by the Emperor Marcian and his wife Pulcharia, to introduce it as a basic paper at Chalcedon against the Alexandrian theologians. As a matter of fact while the non-Chalcedonians from the early ages in their refutation of the council attack the tome more than the council's definition, the Byzantine Chalcedonians do not comment on the tome as much as on the Chalcedonian definition, by explaining the latter along the lines of Cyrillian Christology, which brought their interpretation of Chalcedon near to our Christological position.<sup>22</sup>

The Russian Professor Florovsky says: "The tome of Leo, if taken alone by itself, could have created the impression of an excessive opposition of two natures especially by its persistent attribution of particular acts of Christ to different natures, without any adequate emphasis on the unity of Christ's Person, although the intention of the Pope himself was sound and orthodox. However the interpretation of the tome by the Roman Catholic historians and theologians in modern times quite often transfers a certain quasi-Nestorian bias, to which attention has been called recently by some Roman Catholic writers."<sup>23</sup>

Leo wrote in his tome, "Christ really has two natures, He is both God and man, the one performs the miracles and the other accepts sufferings."

This teaching does not affirm Christ's personal unity, but regards the natures as two persons. For this reason our church prefers the expression "Incarnate God" rather than the expression "He is a God and a man", to assert the hypostatic unity.

The tome uses the term "en dus physeis" (in two natures), which has no Greek tradition at all. The traditional term before Chalcedon was "ek duo physeon" (of two natures)"

### ***8. Mia-physis in the New Testament***

H.H. Pope Shenouda III, in his paper on "The Nature of Christ" explains the "One Nature" of Christ in the New Testament in detail. Herein I try to give a brief account of this point.

#### *Mia-physis and the Birth of Christ:*

Let us ask ourselves: Who was born of Virgin Mary? Was He mere God? mere man? God and man or Incarnate God?

It is impossible to say that He was mere God, for she brought forth a child, who was witnessed by all attendants. He was not mere man, otherwise we fall in the Nestorian heresy. Why is it mentioned in the Scriptures: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, *the Son of God* (Luke 1:35). What is the meaning of calling her son "Emmanuel", which means "*God with us*" (Matt. 1:23)? What is the meaning of the prophet Isaiah's words, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is

given, and the government will be upon his shoulder; and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6)? Therefore, He was not just a man but He was the son of god, Emmanuel and the Mighty God!

The Virgin did not bring a man and a God, otherwise she would have two sons, but one-the Incarnate God.

We worship Him, as the Incarnate God, without separating His divinity from His humanity. When St. Mary visited Elizabeth, this elderly saint said, “And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?!” (Luke 1:43) Even before bringing forth the Child, while she was pregnant, she was called “mother of the Lord”.

#### *Other Verses*

Jesus Christ who spoke with the Jews said: “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58). He did not say: “My Godhead existed even before Abraham”, but said “I am”, as an argument of the unity of His nature.

Finally the famous teaching of John the Evangelist that “the word became flesh” (John 1:4) signifies the divine mystery of the unity of Christ’s Person and nature.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Titles of Christ*

By using the term “*Son of Man*” which expresses His manhood while He was speaking about properties of His divinity, although neither of the two natures was changed, Christ asserts His unity.

“No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, *the Son of Man*, who is in heaven” (John 3:13). Who is the Son of Man who descended from heaven?! Surely the Godhead, Who attributes this to Himself as the Son of man as a sign of the unity of His nature.

In the same way He said that the Son of man is the Lord of the sabbath (Matt 12:8), the Forgiver of sins (Matt 9:6), the Judge (Matt 16:27; Matt 25:31-34; John 5:22) etc . . .

Some properties of His manhood are attributed to Him as *Lord* without saying “the manhood of Christ”. St. Paul says, “For if they had, they would not have crucified *the Lord of glory*” (1 Cor 2:8). He did not say “the body was crucified” but “the Lord of glory”.

### **9. *Mia-physis and Our Salvation***

The “*mia-physis*” or the one-united-nature of Christ is very necessary and essential for our salvation. Some modern theologians ask, “How can the limited body of Christ forgive unlimited sins committed against God? Is the body of Christ unlimited? or was the Godhead of Christ crucified? We find the answer in our belief of the “*Mia-physis*”, for the Lord was crucified (1 Cor 2:8) even if His divinity did

not suffer, but His manhood, and the sacrifice of the Cross is attributed to the Incarnate Son of God, and thus has the power to forgive the unlimited sins committed against God.

Although the divinity of Jesus Christ could not be made to suffer, yet all the events of our salvation through Christ were attributed to the Son of God Himself, and not to His body as if it was separated from His Godhead, as shown in the following verses.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son . . .” (John 3:16)

“ . . . to care for the church of God which He obtained with the blood of His own Son.” (Acts 20:28)

“He who did not spare His own Son but gave him up for us all . . .” (Rom. 8:32).

“He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

(See also Acts 3:14, 15; Heb. 2:10; Rev. 1:17, 18 etc.)

### ***The Conclusion***

Now as we discover our belief in the “Nature of Christ” as not Eutychian and has no trace or trends of Eutychianism, it is very important to our orthodox faith and on account of our salvation to assert the hypostate unity of the Godhead and manhood of Christ as one united nature without any mixture or alteration.

### ***Notes***

1. See *Mia-physis and Monophysitism*, in the following section.
2. The Greek Orthodox Theological Review, vol. 10, no. 2, p. 16.
3. Christ in the Christian Tradition, London 1975, vol. 1, p. 543.
4. Nestorius (died about 451), from whom the heresy takes its name was a priest of Antioch and disciple of Theodore. He was consecrated Bishop of Constantinople on April 10, AD 428.
5. Greek Oorth. Theol. Review, vol. 10, no. 2, p. 50 (Rev. Fr. Samuel).
6. Ibid, 40.
7. Ibid, 120.
8. Ibid, 31.
9. Ibid, 46.
10. Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350-428). Antiochene theologian and Biblical exegete. He studied rhetoric at Antioch under Libanius, but in 369, with his friend St. John Chrysostom, he entered the School of Diodore in a monastery at Antioch, where he remained for nearly ten years. In 392 he became Bishop of Mopsuestia. His doctrine concerning the Incarnation was condemned at the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Constantinople (553). He was accused of being semi-Nestorian.
11. Theodoret (c. 393-c. 466) A native of Antioch. After distributing his property among the poor, he entered the monastery of Nicerte about 416. In 423, he was consecrated as Bishop of Cyrrhus in Syria against his will. He was friend and

admirer of Nestorius opposing St. Cyril. He was condemned by the council of Ephesus (AD 449) and Constantinople (AD 553).

12. Ibas, Bishop of Edessa from 435 to 449 and from 451 to 457, was closely associated in doctrine and policy with Theodoret. Though he was vindicated at the Council of Chalcedon (451), his famous letter (to Bishop Mari of Hardascir in Persia) was condemned by Justinian and anathematized by the Fifth General Council at Constantinople in 553 (the Oriental Churches did not accept this council).
13. Greek Orth. Thes. Review, vol. 10, no. 2, p. 120.
14. Ibid, 125.
15. cf. Epistle 17:8
16. Pope Shenouda III: Comparative Theology, vol. II, 1984 (in Arabic).
17. Dialogue I (See Athanasius; Contra Arian. 3:30).
18. J. Quasten: Patrology, vol. 3, p. 139.
19. Greek Orth. Review, p. 77.
20. Ibid, 47.
21. Ibid, 49.
22. Ibid, 32.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.

# ***THE FIRST OF THE CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS***

***The Rev. James E. Furman***

## ***Cappadocia***

Silence is a characteristic of Asia Minor, that giant land bridge between East and West where so many civilizations have risen, expanded, clashed, and died. Asia Minor has the stone sleep of Hittite lion sculptures guarding abandoned gates, the brooding watchfulness of shattered temples crowning precipice-heights, the murky quiet of silt-filled harbors mirroring empty basilicas, the hushed brokenness of Armenian churches hallowing remote lake islands. Nonetheless, in this silent world, there are lively Christian voices that offer invitations to dialogue, offer opportunities for vigorous conversation.

One of the regions where the Christian presence is most definite is southcentral Asia Minor. Southcentral Asia Minor is Cappadocia, a sprawling inland region bounded by snow-capped mountains, its central area varying from grassy plateau to twisting river valleys to sun-parched salt marsh.

Cappadocia in the centuries immediately before Christ was known as a rural backwater. Even though some of its cities were very ancient (e.g. Tyana, Comana), Cappadocia's urban areas were little more than small military outposts, cross road settlements where taxes were gathered and tribal issues resolved. Neighboring districts regarded Cappadocians as rough and crude: a Greek epigram suggests the general attitude when it states that "a viper bit a Cappadocian — and the viper died". Although part of the Hellenistic cultural world since its conquest by Alexander the Great, Cappadocia remained an area where Greek was distinctly the second language, barely uniting the province to its imperial setting. In both Roman and Byzantine times, Cappadocia's primary secular value was that of a dependable source of horses and soldiers.

It is in the Fourth Century of the Christian era that Cappadocia suddenly emerges from its immemorial obscurity. Suddenly and unexpectedly, Cappadocia became a major center for creative and influential orthodox Christian teaching. This glory reflects the lives and achievements of three men, the "Cappadocian Fathers," two brothers and a close family friend.



### ***Gregory's Family***

The first of the Cappadocian Fathers is Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389). He is named for his birthplace, a small village in what is today a barren district of stone quarries.

Gregory's father, Gregory the Elder, came to Christianity by pilgrimage. That is, he was for years a Hypsistarian, a believer in "God the Highest". Hypsistarians borrowed from Christian, Persian, and Jewish teaching — rejecting images, reverencing fire, observing kosher regulations. Gregory the Elder was led to Christianity by Nonna, his devout and patient wife. Soon afterward, at about the age of fifty, he was ordained and became bishop of Nazianzus. This added spiritual jurisdiction to his role as the major landholder in the district.

Gregory the Theologian was born five years after his father's baptism. The bonds uniting Gregory, his older sister Gorgonia, and younger brother Caesarius were strong and positive. It is tragic that we see this closeness primarily through funeral orations preached by Gregory in memory of his relatives. Nonetheless, it is this detailed and episodic material that gives the reader an emotional and personal access to the author that is unmatched apart from *The Confessions* of St. Augustine.

Perhaps Gregory's deep appreciation of both Nonna and Gorgonia is the source of an attitude toward women that is, in part, quite contemporary. "What was the reason why they restrained the woman but indulged the man and that a woman who practices evil against her husband's bed is an adulteress and the penalties of the law for this are very severe: but if the husband commits fornication against his wife, he has no account to give? I do not accept this legislation: I do not approve of this custom. They who made the law were men, and therefore, their legislation is hard on women . . . God doth not so; but said 'Honour thy father and thy mother' . . . see the equality of the legislation. There is one Maker of man and woman; one debt is owed by children to both their parents."

### ***Years of Education***

The young Gregory proved to have special talent in one of the education emphases of his time, the fine speaking and writing termed "rhetoric." His schooling took him to Palestinian Caesarea, then to Alexandria and Athens.

Gleaming in marble, golden with memories, Athens was the university city of Europe. It was to be Gregory's home for fifteen years, his inspiration for life. Athens was never forgotten, never under-estimated by this graduate: ". . . there is nothing so painful to anyone, as is separation from Athens and one another, to those who have been comrades there."

Two of Gregory's fellow students are particularly important. One was another young Cappadocian, Basil of Caesarea. The other was Constantine's nephew, Julian ("the Apostate"), who was to urge a pagan alternative to Christianity throughout his brief reign (361-363).

### ***Between the Throne and the Mountain***

Gregory rejoined his family about 358 but only for a brief time. The Iris River Valley in the mountains paralleling the Black Sea attracted Basil, eager to re-create the monastic world he had recently explored in Egypt and Syria. Gregory joined his friend and lived a secluded life for two years. Out of this fellowship came the shared editorship of the *Philokalia* (*Love of the Beautiful*), a collection of excerpts from the writings of Origen. The *Philokalia* was translated into English in 1911 (George Lewis). It presents Origen as a reverent Bible student, not as a speculative thinker.

In 360 Gregory was persuaded to return to Nazianzus. The following Christmas brought a crisis. During the Divine Liturgy, he was seized by the congregation, pushed forward and ordained priest by his father. He fled to his monastery but returned to Nazianzus in 362.

In the course of explaining his flight from Nazianzus, Gregory produced an important statement about the duties of the Christian pastor. His teaching shaped the later writings of St. Gregory the Great and St. John Chrysostom on the same subject.

Gregory urges that the priest must be a good painter “of the charms of virtue.” He adds that “the whole of our treatment and exertion is concerned with the hidden man of the heart, . . . the scope of our art is to provide the soul with wings, to rescue it from the world and give it to God, and to watch over that which is in His image, if it abides; to take it by the hand, if it is in danger; or restore it, if ruined; to make Christ to dwell in the heart by the Spirit; and, in short, to deify, and bestow heavenly bliss upon, one who belongs to the heavenly host.”

Gregory’s earliest surviving sermon is an eloquent example of what he considered valuable preaching. As is typical of his later sermons, moral behaviour and doctrinal understanding are linked together in the strongest possible way.

“Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become God’s for His sake, since He for ours became Man. He assumed the worse so that He might give us the better; He became poor so that through His poverty we might be rich; He took upon Himself the form of a servant so that we might receive back our liberty; He came down so that we might be exalted; He was tempted so that we might conquer; He was dishonoured so that He might glorify us; He died so that He might save us; He ascended so that He might draw to Himself those who were lying low in the Fall of Sin. Let us give all, offer all, to Him Who gave Himself a Ransom and a Reconciliation for us.”

An oration on St. Athanasius provides further insight into what Gregory considered pastoral and sound. He notes that Athanasius “brought all minds under his influence, by letters to some, by invitations to others, instructing some, who visited him uninvited, and proposing as the single law to all — Good Will. For this alone was able to conduct them to the true issue. In brief, he exemplified the virtues of two celebrated stones — for to those who assailed him he was adamant, and to those at

variance a magnet, which by secret natural power draws iron to itself, and influences the hardest of substances.”

Gregory must have spent some time in Nazianzus. However, his relationship with Basil was to keep him from being “coadjutor” to his aged father. In 370 Basil became Bishop of Caesarea. At once, diocesan politics flared into ugly life. Basil needed allies, faithful supporters throughout the countryside that provided the metropolis with its revenues. Accordingly, he made Gregory one of the new “rural bishops,” assigning him to the particularly wretched hamlet of Sasima.

Gregory leaves little doubt as to what he thought of his appointment. “There is a little station on a high road in Cappadocia situated where the road is divided into three: without water, without grass, with nothing of freedom about it: a frightfully horrible and narrow little village: everywhere dust and noise and carts, weeping and shouting, lictors and chains. The people are all foreigners and vagabonds. Such is my church of Sasima.”

The friendship between Gregory and Basil was severely strained. After the “Sasima incident” the letters between the two men are studies in coolness and caution. Gregory began the tradition of titling Basil “the Great” in his *Panegyric on Basil* but even this otherwise glowing eulogy protests “the change and faithlessness of his treatment of myself, a cause of pain which even time has not obliterated.” In the end, Gregory refused to live at Sasima “and be choked with mud”.

### ***Dark Clouds***

Illness and depression marked the years after the deaths of Gregory’s parents in 374. As his brother and sister had died earlier, he was now without any close family relationships. He withdrew from Cappadocia and lived an ascetic life at Seleucia near the Mediterranean coast. St. Basil died in 379 and the shadows around Gregory darkened further.

The difficulties of this period are suggested in Gregory’s *Letter to Eudoxius* (Epistle 80). “You ask how I am. Well, I am very bad. Basil I have no longer. Caesarius I have no longer. The intellectual and the physical brother are both dead. ‘My father and mother have left me,’ I can say with David. Physically, I am ill. Age is descending on my head. Cares are choking me; affairs oppress me; there is no reliance on friends and the Church is without shepherds. The good is vanishing; evil shows itself in all its nakedness. We are travelling in the dark; there is no lighthouse and Christ is asleep. What can one do? I know only one salvation from these troubles and it is death. But even the world to come seems terrible to judge by the present world.”

Like one of our Lord’s sayings on the Cross, this letter has a mood of authentic pain and crisis. However, just as “Eli, eli, lama sabachthani” connects to the affirmative close of Psalm 22, so this material evokes a positive Gospel theme: the sleeping Christ will awake to rebuke the storms of grief that assault his servant as in St. Mark

4:35-41. However, if this seems to be undue interpretation, the record of Gregory's anguish can be valued precisely because it gauges his capacity to endure, his actual refreshment and renewal by grace. At the very least, the fact that Gregory preserved this letter indicates his desire to provide accurate and historical elements for understanding his inner spiritual life.

### ***At Constantinople***

Debate and conflict suddenly brought Gregory to center-stage. In the very year of Basil's death, Gregory was invited to Constantinople to be "bishop in residence" for the tiny congregation still loyal to the Nicene Creed. Graying, bent, showing the marks of severe ill health, Gregory was now a missionary in a city where the cathedral and the parish churches alike were controlled by Arians.

Gregory's headquarters and chapel were in a private home. He writes of this place as "the new Shiloh where the ark was fixed after its forty years of wandering in the desert." He called the chapel "Aanastasia," praying that a "resurrection of the faith" would be associated with its life. Gregory's "Resurrection Chapel" was soon unable to hold the crowds drawn by his preaching and a church was built on its site.

During his years in Constantinople, Gregory produced the sermon series that earned him the title "The Theologian," an honour given by St. John Chrysostom himself and shared with only the author of the Fourth Gospel. The five addresses of the series are known collectively as "*The Catechetical Orations*." Each remains extremely important for the technical student of early Christian thought but other readers may find "*The Catechetical Orations*" difficult because many elements of Greek philosophy are assumed to be part of the audience's intellectual training.

"*The Catechetical Orations*" has a brilliant resume in another of Gregory's famous sermons, "*On the Arrival of the Egyptians*." Preached in 380, this is a welcome to sailors from the imperial grain fleet, the men responsible for transporting a major part of Constantinople's vital food supply. Rather than attending one of the numerous Arian-controlled churches, the sailors had gone to considerable inconvenience to search out Gregory's "Anastasia." This effort announced both their loyalty to the Nicene faith and the fact that the Alexandrian Patriarch accepted Gregory as the actual and legitimate Bishop of Constantinople.

"*On the Arrival of the Egyptians*" begins with a long, brilliantly modulated flourish of rhetorical trumpets, then presents its theme most forcefully. Gregory's summation is as direct as his prologue is diffuse.

"Glorify Him with the Cherubim, who unite the Three Holies into One Lord, and so far indicate the Primal Substance . . . With David be enlightened, who said to the Light 'In thy Light shall we see Light.' That is, 'In the Spirit shall we see the Son:' and what can be for further searching ray? With John thunder, sounding forth nothing that is low or earthly concerning God, but what is high and heavenly, Who is in the beginning, and is with God, and is God the Word, and true God of the true

Father, and not a good fellow-servant honoured only with the title of Son . . . And when you read 'I and the Father are One,' keep before your eyes the Unity of Substance; but when you see, 'We will come to him, and make our abode with him,' remember the distinction of Persons; and when you see the Names, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, think of the Three Personalities."

Technical precision is not purchased at the price of "heart religion." Gregory always has a feeling about God even when he writes in the most intellectual way. Indeed, it is important to remember that Gregory always expresses the awe evoked by God in prose that has the mood of poetry.

"God always was and always is, and always will be. Or rather, God always Is. For "was" and "will be" are fragments of our time, and of changeable nature, but He is Eternal Being . . . In Himself He sums up and contains all being, having neither beginning in the past nor end in the future; like some great Sea of Being, limitless and unbounding, transcending all conception of time and nature, only outlined by the mind, and that very dimly and scantily . . ."

Gregory's life at Constantinople was influenced by the soldier emperor Theodosius (reigned 379-395). In 380 this strict advocate of the Nicene Creed insisted that Gregory should be recognized as both Patriarch and chaplain to the court. Gregory hesitated but accepted both dignities.

### ***To The Mountain At Last***

Theodosius gathered 150 bishops together in May of 381 with Meletius of Antioch as presiding officer. Soon after the opening of the council, which was known later as the Second Ecumenical Council, Meletius died and Gregory was given the seat of honour. Sickness denied him an active role and there was considerable objection to his "translation" from Sasima to the capital.

Gregory resigned his presidency and went into retirement. He took with him a glittering reputation and a profound dislike of ecclesiastical meetings. Living on his ancestral lands in Cappadocia, Gregory centered his last years on the calm pleasures of a tree-shaded, flower-bordered garden. Letters to friends, hymns, and long doctrinal poems—even an autobiographical epic—flowed from his pen. Near the end of 389, he died. His property was willed to the Church of Nazianzus for the relief of the poor.

"The Theologian" produced neither a series of Biblical commentaries nor a full-length discussion of the range of doctrines. To find the "creed" that unites his teaching, one must search his sermons. His address "On Holy Baptism" (381) is especially illuminating.

"Believe that all that is in the world, both all that is seen and all that is unseen, was made out of nothing by God and is governed by the Providence of its Creator, and will receive a change to a better state. Believe that evil has no substance or

kingdom, either unoriginate or self-existent or created by God; but that it is our work, and the evil one's, and came upon us through our heedlessness, but not from our Creator. Believe that the Son of God, the Eternal Word, Who was begotten of the Father before all time and without body, was in these latter days for your sake made also Son of Man, born of the Virgin Mary, ineffably and stainlessly (for nothing can be stained where God is and by which salvation comes), in His own Person at once entire man and perfect God, for the sake of the entire sufferer that He may bestow salvation on your whole being, having destroyed the whole condemnation of your sins . . .”

Earlier times showed their admiration for St. Gregory by reproducing his manuscripts more often than those of any other Greek Church Father. Modern secular scholarship has complained of his human weaknesses, describing him as timid and irritable. This negative reaction has justification but overlooks the attractive and genuine fruit of Gregory's persevering faith. St. Gregory of Nazianzus embodies the fact that we can, indeed, have “truth”—but always in the “earthen vessels” that God has chosen in His wisdom.

**Note:** The translation of the “Letter to Eudoxius” is taken from Hans von Campenhausen's *Fathers of the Greek Church* (p. 101). All other material is based on the translations in Vol. VIII, *Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Church*, second series.

# ***DAYS IN THE LIFE OF A CONTEMPORARY SAINT***

***Father Raphael Ava Mina***

Pope Kyrillos VI was born in August 1902 and was called Azer. He entered the Monastery of El-Baramus on July the 27th, 1927 and was ordained a monk on February 25th, 1928 and given the new name Mina. He was ordained as a priest on July 31st, 1931.

He pursued a life of solitude at El Natron Valley<sup>1</sup>, then in a windmill in El-Mokattam mountain<sup>2</sup>. He built a church at ancient Cairo under the name of St. Mina. He lived in this church till his ordination as a Patriarch in 1959. Before his ordination, he headed the Monastery of Anba Samuel<sup>3</sup>, the Saint and Confessor, at Zola<sup>4</sup>.

He was ordained as a Patriarch on Sunday May 10th, 1959.

## ***The Day He Went to the Monastery***

When Azer wished to go to the desert and become a monk he encountered many obstacles as that of the opposition of his parents and friends. After surpassing them, he was surprised by the objection of Anba Youannis, the Patriarchal Assistant. These objections were due to the fact that monasticism at that time was not approached except by the poor and those who had limited education. That was not the case of Azer. His family was rich and he had a good education in comparison to his peers, in addition to his knowledge of the English language. Moreover, he lived in the city and it was unusual for an urban to choose the life of monasticism. Anba Youannis said to him: "My son, the people who get used to urban life are incapable of pursuing the severe route of monasticism. Very few individuals attain this goal."

All these obstacles, as well as others, did not discourage him. He succeeded in going out to the desert where he was ordained as a monk at the Monastery of El-Baramus. At this time, he was twenty five years old.

He took the train in his way to the monastery, feeling great enthusiasm for this new life in which he would get rid of all the desires of the flesh and abandon the worldly appearances.



*THE BLESSED POPE KYRILLOS VI*



In his approach to this new life of austerity, Azer wanted to get rid of all the appearances of the world, starting this new world with his new conception of austerity. This was manifested when he got off the train at Hokaria station and he asked the conductor for the reason for which he did not wear a fez<sup>5</sup>. When Azer learned that this was due to the conductor's poverty, he took off his fez and gave it to the man who expressed his thanks for that. When Azer also asked the train driver about his conditions, he complained of poverty. Therefore, Azer took off his jacket and gave it to him and promised to send his shirt and pants at his arrival to the monastery. Azer actually sent them to the said driver with a person who was visiting the monastery.

### ***The Day He Chose Solitude***

Monasticism did not satisfy his thirst; but his love for the Lord was growing by time, the fact which urged him to think of solitude. That is the path which all the great saints chose to fill themselves of God's benedictions and penetrate into God's immense glory as well as be in close contact with Jesus Christ. Father Mina was thirty years old at that time, young before such a great experience but strong. The assembly of monks refused his request, for fear that Satan might crush him with pride and vainglory. The assembly also opposed his director, El Komos Abdel Messih El Massoudi who supported Azer's opinion. One of the elder monks blamed El Komos Abdel Messih saying: "Our father, have you not lived forty years in the monastery? Have you ever thought of solitude? Is there anyone amongst us who thought of living in the desert? I beg you, convince this young monk to drop this idea."

Another aged monk addressed Father Mina saying: "You are only thirty years old and your monastic life is only five years. Do you want to pursue the life of solitude in the desert, whereas many others before you have struggled for the same goal for thirty or forty years but failed?"

The aged monks could not make Father Mina change his decision. He attained his goal of living alone in the desert in spite of these strong waves of oppositions because he loved the Lord from all his heart and mind and he wanted to think of Him day and night. It was a hidden internal power which urged him to go to the desert where he could satisfy his love for God.

Father Mina left the monastery to the desert after he promised to obey the old monks and to visit the monastery regularly every Saturday and Sunday in order to be instructed by his director, El Komos Abdel Messih El Massoudi, and to assist in the Saturday evening prayers and the Sunday Liturgy.

He left the monastery and stayed in a deserted cave where a solitary monk called Anba Sarabamon had lived.

Because of his love to God, there was nothing difficult or impossible and he chose the route of solitude so as to be close to God. After he left El Natron Valley, he lived

on El-Mokattam mountain in a deserted windmill. He lived in it in the same condition as he found it, without a door or a bed. Why? Because he found real comfort in his God the Saviour. He lived in such a deserted place, without fear, with the reptiles and wild animals which did not harm him as he was supported by God.

### ***Day of Ordination***

Our day started approximately at 2:30 a.m., when the guard of the papal residence was surprised by a person walking in the yard. He shouted at him and then approached him to recognize his identity, but he realized it was the elected Pope. Father Mina asked him to open the church so as to raise the blessing “Tasbeha”. The guard informed him that the deacons would arrive at 4:00 a.m. for this purpose. But Father Mina expressed his desire to start at that hour; so the guard obeyed. Father Mina entered the church, prostrated himself before God’s sacred altar; lighted some candles and raised the blessing. When the deacons arrived at the patriarchate, they were totally amazed because of this unprecedented example of a pope who prayed the blessing like that. Following that, Father Mina raised the Morning Incense amidst the astonishment of all assistants. Then in the small church annexed to the cathedral, he sat waiting for the priest who would pray the first liturgy. Many beseeched him to rest a little till the arrival of the bishops who would ordain him. But he insisted on assisting in the liturgy as he regarded it as his source of consolations. He stood in the corner of the altar, weeping and imploring God’s support in his new mission. After assisting in the liturgy, he retreated in his cell. Then he was accompanied to the church with a great multitude of metropolitans, bishops and deacons where he was given the keys to the cathedral. He opened the door saying: “Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter through it. I thank thee that thou hast answered me and hast become my salvation.” (Psalm 118:19-21)

Then he entered the church and humbly prostrated himself in front of the altar and remained in this position for a long time. Then the late Anba Athanasius, the Acting Patriarch said to him: “Rise up, Father Mina and let us start.” Father Mina rose up, with tears filling his illuminated face. Anba Athanasius said: “The Lord who chose you, will assist you. Do not be troubled.” Then the ordination rites started and all the metropolitans laid their hands on his head. Anba Athanasius anointed his forehead three times saying: “We ordain you Pope Kyrillos the sixth, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark.” And each time the people unanimously answered: “Amen Kyrie Eleison”<sup>6</sup> Pope Kyrillos advanced to kiss the altar and took the pastoral rod. Then, he went out of the altar holding the cross in his right hand and the pastoral rod in the left hand; and he was seated on the Throne of St. Mark.

He stood to read the gospel and instead of reading: “I am the good shepherd”, he said: “Jesus Christ said: I am the good shepherd.” The people unanimously

answered in one voice: "Axious." (i.e. you deserve that) three times. The Pope's eyes were filled with tears.

Following that, the first papal message was read and that was written by the Pope himself; in which he repeated the saying of St. Paul: "But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:24) "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?" (1 Thess. 2:19)

After the enthronement ceremonies, the Pope declared that by becoming the pastor, he was also the loving and vigilant father of all. At the end of the liturgy, all people gathered around him and he began blessing them individually, standing for long hours without tediousness or fatigue but with meekness and patience. The metropolitans felt pity for him after noticing the sweat pouring over his face and beseeched him to take a little rest. But the Pope refused to send any one away and insisted on filling every heart with happiness whether young or old. Every one returned home, glorifying God for what he saw or heard.

On the day of his ordination, the Pope wept a lot, admitting his weakness in front of this colossal burden of responsibility. Many have warmly kept the picture of the Pope with tears in his eyes. The German historian, Otto Meinardus issued his book, **"Monks and monasticism of the Egyptian deserts"** with a unique picture of the sad Pope. This is an evidence of the impact which the true tears have left.

Dr. Ibrahim Said (Chief of the Evangelical Community) was really impressed by these tears. He said: "The greatest thing that impressed me . . . was these rich tears shed by the Pope in front of the door of the altar before his ordination. In my opinion, they were more precious than the jewels which decorated his crown."<sup>7</sup>

Since that time, he was closely attached to the Pope and visited him regularly.

### *Ascetic Weapons*

Pope Kyrillos was a great spiritual leader as heaven testified. Prayers, fasting and humility were his weapons and the characteristic style of his life. He was committed to the life of asceticism and austerity. As in the days of his solitude, his food continued to be simple. He did not abandon his coarse simple clothes. Whoever saw his bed could not imagine it belonged to the highest leader in the church.

On the door of the reception of the Papal residence, Pope Kyrillos hanged this sign, the motto of his life: "Forsake worldly pleasures, God will love you. Renounce what people possess in their hands, people will love you. Whoever seeks personal dignity, it will flee from him, while whoever flees from it, it will pursue him and show him to the people."

Pope Kyrillos the Sixth preferred to follow the difficult path, as we were taught by our glorified Saviour. He stopped talking and replaced words by good example through action. Consequently, he believed that the heart which did not bend before

the image of sanctity and did not change in front of the good example, would not be influenced by preachers or words. We would like to refer to the fact that the Pope, who chose silence for his life and style, did not do that as a result of inaptitude or deficiency. Pope Kyrillos had been instructed at the hands of the great instructors: the talented and inspired preacher, the late Eskandar Hanna, and the great scholar and spiritual guide, Father Abdel Messih El Massoudi. Pope Kyrillos was also a student of the great spiritual Fathers by devoting himself to the study of their writings and by penetrating into their immortal spiritual heritage. The Patriarch Anba Youannis was pleased to listen to a sermon delivered by the monk Mina in an evening prayer when he was studying at the Theological College at Helwan. Anba Youannis thought of ordaining him as a priest after this sermon, but Father Mina fled from the Theological College at that time.

The Pope himself told me that what he gained from silence greatly exceeded what he would have achieved by any other means.

### ***Day of Departure***

At the end, God wanted to rest the Pope's soul from the worries of the mortal world, after he accomplished his strife in the best form. Through his conversations, the Pope alluded many times to the fact that the hour of his departure approached. However, the world was shocked by the departure of this saint the morning of Tuesday, March 9, 1971 (Amshir 30, 1687 according to the Calendar of the Martyrs.)<sup>8</sup> Before the Pope retreated to his room to rest forever in the bosom of the saints, he inquired about the news of all the attendants and bid farewell to his visitors saying to them, "May God take care of you."

The day of his departure, was a memorable day and this was expressed by the Reverend Anba Gregorios, Bishop of Scientific Research, saying: "God has honored you in your death with this unique magnificent farewell which disclosed all your love, all your fidelity and all your splendors, because of your righteous route and your holy life."

The body of the holy man was buried close to the body of St. Mark the Apostle, in the great cathedral at Anba Rouis till he was transported to his monastery at Mariout according to his will.

### ***The Day His Relics Were Transferred***

The day of the transportation of his coffin to St. Mina's Monastery at Mariout Desert was a great day of grandeur. The sacred body was placed in front of the altar of St. Mark's Cathedral at Anba Rouis and prayers were held. Pope Shenouda delivered a great speech, in which he enumerated a number of the virtues of Pope Kyrillos and he also read the text of the Pope's written will. After the end of the prayers, lightening and thunder occurred and it rained. The next day, at 8:00 a.m. the body was carried to the car which would transport it to Saint Mina's Monastery. At this moment, there were unprecedented lightening and heavy rains.<sup>9</sup> This was con-

sidered as a participation of nature to declare its sorrow for the Pope's departure away from Cairo. Whereas in Alexandria the rains were lighter than those in Cairo, in contradiction to what usually happens. Consequently the meteorologists affirmed that this was an unexpected event. The newspapers commented on this event.

Great crowds and priests were waiting for the arrival of the holy body to the monastery. When it arrived, the bells rang and it was carried by the people and taken into the church amidst hymns and religious chants. Then Pope Shenouda III accompanied by the bishops raised the evening incense while offering the evening prayers. Following that, the body was carried to the place arranged for it under the main altar of the great cathedral at the monastery. The Arabs were the first who hastened to carry the body on their shoulders amidst great happiness, as it would repose in the desert where they live. Thus, they would be blessed by its benedictions. All the attendants at the church spent the night praising the Lord and singing hymns till the morning. Then the Divine Liturgy was held and the grave was closed. In fact, this was a terrifying moment. The next morning, it rained heavily and the Arabs crowded at the monastery seeking the benedictions of the saint of the desert whose presence was accompanied by the flooding of rain, the vital element of their lives.<sup>10</sup>

His tomb became a sacred place for visitors of many nationalities. Many individuals of various religious sects and countries implore his blessing and seek his effective intercession to the divine throne.

May his benedictions be with us.

*Amen*

### *Notes*

1. This valley is situated between Cairo and Alexandria.
2. This mountain is situated at the outskirts of Cairo.
3. Anba is a word originating from the word Abba i.e. Father.
4. Zola is a city in upper Egypt.
5. Head cover comparable to men's hat.
6. A Greek word which means "have mercy on us."
7. Massr Newspaper, May 10, 1960.
8. The Egyptian Christians have their own calendar according to the era of persecutions.
9. Thunder showers are an extreme rarity in Cairo.
10. This heavy rain is unusual for the desert.

## ***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.**

### ***The Ecumenical Vocation of the Coptic Orthodox Church***

#### **To the Editor**

Some reflections on C.C.R., Vol. 6, #4, winter 1985.

Where would the Christian Church be today if St. Athanasius had acted like the Anglican priests described by Father Watson? St. Athanasius understood the words of Jesus “take up your cross” when he fought for the faith of Christ. How many times did the situation look lost and the Saint found himself expelled? By faith and perseverance the orthodox faith won the day. The lesson in this is that “orthodox” priests do not flee when things get bad. They look to Christ and the holy martyrs, and then pay whatever price is necessary. We fight not for ourselves, but for the Church Catholic.

There are many of us who are troubled by some of the problems within the Anglican Communion. But to leave the Church is out of the question. The orthodox faith will survive within the Anglican/Episcopal Church of that I am sure. I am also sure it will be very costly, but that is the way of Christian love.

I do agree with Father Watson on a few points. I think the Orthodox witness and spirituality are needed in the west as we struggle with the changes in Western culture. The most dramatic issue for the Church is the role of women, and whether we have acted rightly or not is yet to be seen (Acts 5:38-39). Someday, even the Orthodox must face this and other issues. I am troubled, but we must remember that the future of the Church will not be determined by one generation. Hopefully, the Coptic spiritual tradition will become more available to Anglicans as we struggle to deepen our own spiritual life. What I have found in the C.C.R. has been refreshing. . .

*The Rev. Robert D. Keirsev*  
*Rector, Saint Andrew's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church*  
*San Diego, California*

## ***BOOK REVIEWS***

### ***Palladius: Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom.***

*Translated and Edited by Robert T. Meyer. New York, NY/Mahwah, NJ: Newman Press, 1985. Pp. 249. Cloth, \$16.95.*

On the Holy Cross day, September 14, 407 AD, Saint John Chrysostom died in exile, four years after he had been deposed from the See of Constantinople by a Christian Synod, and banished by the order of a Christian emperor. Forty bishops who had been in communion with Chrysostom suffered torture, death in prison or exile, banishment or transfer to other churches.

One of those banished was Palladius of Helenopolis. One year after the death of Chrysostom, he sat in his exile at Syene (the modern Aswan) in Egypt to write this book. Palladius, who is famous for his other work, *The Lausiaca History*, or Paradise of the Holy Fathers, was born in Galatia about AD 363. He started his monastic life in Palestine when he was twenty three years old. About 388 he went to Egypt where he stayed for three years in the monasteries near Alexandria, then passing through Nitria, he went to Cellia where he stayed for nine years and became the disciple of Evagrius of Pontus. When his health broke down, he left Egypt and in the year 400 he was ordained bishop of Helenopolis, probably by St. John Chrysostom. He was close to Chrysostom during his last years in Constantinople. After his exile, Palladius was arrested and eventually exiled to Egypt between C. 406 and 412.

The present book is the principal historical source for the life of Chrysostom as the archbishop of Constantinople, where he tried to recall a corrupt and officially Christian society to the standards preached in the gospels<sup>1</sup>, and for the detailed information about the tragic events that led to and that followed his deposition. But how much reliable is Palladius? In answer to this question Professor Meyer says in the Introduction,

“Palladius was in close contact with Chrysostom for a great part of his public life in Constantinople. He was ordained by him as priest and probably also as bishop. He made a journey to Rome to clear St. John of certain charges made by Theophilus. He was associated with him at Constantinople and also in his travels to Ephesus. He had seen him in all his activities: preaching, administering the sacraments, caring for the poor, managing church funds and properties, and in looking after the diocese generally . . . Palladius also suffered persecution for this close connection to John. Another thing most noteworthy . . . is the complete absence of

the miraculous and marvellous, which was the stock-in-trade of later hagiographers. Furthermore there are many passages where he quotes, accurately and reliably, from Chrysostom's works and homilies. When he quotes the canons of Church Councils, he is accurate."

*Palladius' Dialogue* is the latest book to appear in the series *Ancient Christian Writers* (No. 45). This series is characterised by including, beside the accurate modern translation, extensive notes to each chapter which comment on historical, philological or other problems. Readers interested in early Church history will find in the notes of this volume cross references to other ancient historians for many of the events as well as the hundreds of personalities mentioned by Palladius.

### *Notes*

(1) Young FM: *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983:158.

### ***Pope Kyrillos VI and the Spiritual Leadership.***

*By Father Raphael Ava Mina. Published by Pope Kyrillos VI Publications (P.O. Box 15380, Fox Chase Station, PA 19111), Pp. 31. No price.*

Fifteen years have passed since the death of Pope Kyrillos VI, the 116th Patriarch of Alexandria, on March 9, 1971. Since then more than ten books have appeared in Arabic, describing various aspects of his life, spirituality and service, and written mostly by the spiritual sons of the late Pope. At least one book appeared in English and was reviewed previously in the Journal (Vol. 4, No. 1).

The author of the present book shared in editing and writing some of the previous books about Pope Kyrillos. He was in a position to know more than anyone else the details of his life. For years he served the Pope as his special deacon. He followed him as a monk and as a Patriarch, and now he is a monk at St. Mena, where the body of Pope Kyrillos lies.

Father Raphael writes here a few of his memories of Pope Kyrillos. "It is difficult," he says, "to include in one book all my memories of this great Pope who lived twelve years amidst us. In fact, the events of each day can fill a book." However, Pope Kyrillos was a saint. This is not a secret, it was a fact well-known long before he was chosen to the See of St. Mark. When you are writing about a saint, it is not how much you write, because in every action he does, every word he speaks and even without action or word a saint reflects the face of God. This may be a comfort for those who read this small book and have no access to the much bigger volumes which have not been translated. But those who have seen Pope Kyrillos and have been touched by his spirituality know how short did all those books fall in describing the man of God or in delivering the message he had carried to the Church.



***The Difficult Years of Survival: A Short Account of the History of the Coptic Church.***

*By Fouad Guriguis. New York: Vantage Press, 1985. Pp. 89. Hardcover, \$7.95.*

This book is a short account of the theological controversies concerning the nature of Christ which occurred between AD 449 and AD 451, resulting in the first major schism in the Christian Church, and which were decisive years for the Coptic Church. After starting with a glimpse of the sufferings and persecutions which the Copts in Egypt have been facing during the last two decades, the author goes abruptly to the fifth century to deal with his main subject. He analytically reexamines the historical circumstances and the proceedings of two controversial councils - the Second Council of Ephesus (AD 449), totally unknown in the West and just dismissed as the *Robber Council*, and the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), which the Coptic Church rejects. While Dioscorus, the Archbishop of Alexandria, presided over Ephesus II, he was condemned (not on theological grounds) and exiled by Chalcedon. This discussion is supplemented by fourteen historical documents, including letters of the Emperors and letters of the main bishops and archbishops of that period—Leo of Rome, Cyril and Dioscorus of Alexandria, Domnus of Antioch, Flavian of Constantinople and Theodoret of Cyrrhus.

The book fills a gap in the studies of Church history and of ecumenism and the information it gives is not easily available to the general reader elsewhere. However, it has two serious drawbacks. First, the style of the book is polemic and, instead of letting the facts and historical statements speak for themselves, the author, who is a Copt, gets too emotionally involved in the discussion. He is defensive in most cases, but offensive at times. This could have been acceptable thirty years ago, not now when the theological issue involved has been settled in meetings between the theologians and even between the heads of different churches. Second, the author supposes that all his readers have a good knowledge of the subject beforehand. From the first page of the introduction, the reader will be struck by different names of bishops, councils and historical cities, and he will find himself entangled in a theological dispute which has, for fifteen centuries, baffled the experts.



*THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT*