

**St. Mary and St. Abraam
Coptic Orthodox Church
Presents:**



Anba Abraam, The Bishop of Fayoum
“Friend of The Poor”

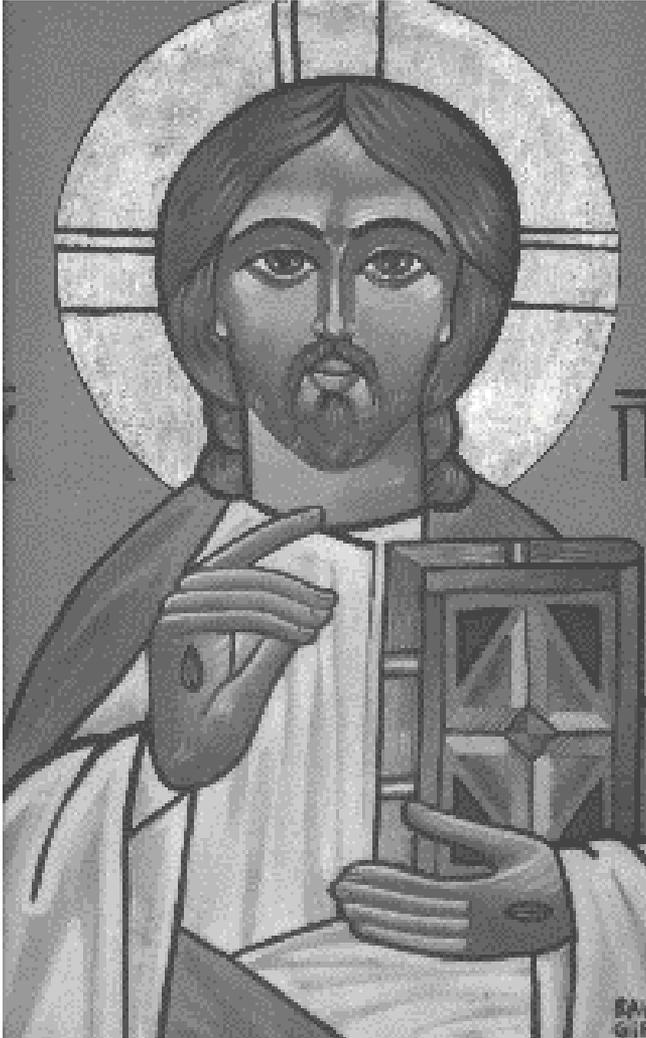
Part I: His Life

Part II: Wonders and Miracles

(1829-1914 AD; Departed June 9, 1914)

Deacon: William A. Hanna; Ph.D.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum



**Our Lord, God and Savior
Jesus Christ
(A Coptic Icon)**



The Blessed Virgin Mary, and The Holy Infant Jesus (A Coptic Icon)



**His Holiness Pope Shenouda III
117th Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch
of the See Of St. Mark
1971-**

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum (The Friend of The Poor)

Introduction:

It is with much blessings and great honor, that we present to the friends of St. Mary & St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church, the story of St. Abraam, the patron saint of our church. The people who moved to St. Louis, Missouri from Egypt in the early 1970's as they were trying to name their church in St. Louis, could not agree. Some wanted to name it St. Mary to honor the mother of God, the other group wanted to name the church after St. Abraam to honor our contemporary saint who was called the friend of the poor. The two sides agreed on one thing, naming the church after both saints, and a church was born which has two strong intercessors, patron saints: St. Mary & St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church of St. Louis, officially registered in 1974 in the state of Missouri, USA. We continue to enjoy the blessings of St. Mary & St. Abraam the Friend of the Poor as we will show you, our dear reader later.

A Brief Biography of St. Abraam:

- ✠ Was born Boulos (Paul) Ghobrial in 1829 AD, 1545 Martyrs in a small village called Delga, 16 Miles (27 Km.) south west of Malawi in the episcopate of Dyrout. His parents were righteous and loved the Lord.
- ✠ Sent to the village school ('Kouttab') and learned under teacher 'Mualeem' Roufail reading, writing, arithmetic, and the Holy Bible. He also learned hymnals, psalms, and praises under mualeem Roufail. He showed excellent desire to learn with meekness, politeness and humility.
- ✠ At age 8, his mother had a serious illness which led to her departure. His father cared for him and he found in his love for the Lord Jesus Christ what filled his heart and comforted his soul.
- ✠ At age 15, he distinguished himself in his knowledge of the Holy Books and Church Hymnals, so the village priest recommended him to the then

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

bishop of Dyrout, Anba Youssab (Joseph). Anba Youssab ordained him Deacon.

- ✠ Boulous loved solitude, so he entered the Monastery of St. Mary Known as "Al-Meharaq" in mount qusqam, El-Quosseiah, south of Assiut. This was when Arch-Priest Abd El-Malek was the head of Al-Meharaq monastery. At the monastery, he worked hard while being quiet and for this reason, he was loved by his fellow monks. They nominated him to be elevated from novas (beginner under test) to be a monk. He was only 19 years of age. He became monk in 1848 AD and kept his name, Monk Boulous El-Maharaquey.

Monk Boulous had two distinct qualities:

- ✠ Kindness with Self Control, and
- ✠ Amazing Love of Giving (Charity).

- ✠ He was selected by Anba Yakovos (Jacob), the then bishop of Menya to be his assistant. He was extremely generous with the poor. After four years, he wanted to go back to the monastery. In another story, some complained about his generosity with the poor calling it waste. The bishop ordained him priest before letting him go back to his monastery, this was in 1863 AD..

- ✠ At the monastery there was disagreement between some monks and their leader Arch-Priest Abd El-Malek. Fr. Boulous chose not to interfere, he kept quiet. The monks selected Fr. Boulous to become their leader in place of Fr. Abd El-Malek. He did two major things:
 - He opened the doors of the monastery to the poor and needy, and
 - He attracted the youth of the region to the monastery, and in a short period he had more than 40 new monks join the monastery.

- ✠ We mention here some of his disciples who became priests/bishops of good stature

- ✠ Anba Markos (Bishop Mark), who became bishop of Essna and Luxor, was born in the village of tasa, governorate of Assiut in 1848 AD. Became monk on the hands of Fr. Boulous in 1586 AD. and ordained bishop in 1895 on the hands of then Pope Cyril V.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

- † Arch-Priest Michael Al-Behairy, was a disciple of Fr. Boulos, and reached a high degree of righteousness and monastic life. The departed bishop Lucas, great bishop of Manflout wrote the story of Arch-Priest Michael Al-Behairy under the title: "Reaching the Goal, One of the Ultimate Achievements of Anba Abraam: Fr. Michael Al-Behairy"
- † Anba bouttros (Bishop Peter), Metropolitan of All Ethiopia,
- † Anba Mattaous (Bishop Matthew), bishop of Addis-Ababba,
- † Anba Lucas (Bishop Luke), Bishop of Akssoum,
- † Anba Markos (Bishop Mark), Bishop of Quodgom
- † As in Menya, the devil caused some to disapprove of Fr. Boulos' love for the poor, calling it waste. Also they disapproved of the great number of youth that were constantly coming to the monastery. Our saint did not argue, when he was removed from the position of head of the monastery after 5 blessed years of service. He left for Cairo with four of his disciples, the four who later became bishops on Ethiopia.
- † They met with the then acting in place of patriarch ('Qaem-Maqaam'), Anba Markos, bishop of Behira. He understood the situation and sent them in peace to the monastery of St. Bishoy in Wady El-Natroun. They stayed in this monastery for a short period and moved to the monastery of El-Baramous (named after the Roman Princes, turned monks St. Maximus and Domaduou, 7 mile away) in 1861 AD.
- † At El-Baramous monastery they met Fr. Youhanna El-Nassekh (Fr. John the Scribe). Fr. Youhanna was known in his time for scribing (writing by hand) church books which were used to furnish church books. He later became Pope Cyril V. Fr. Youhanna received them with extreme affection, and gave them 'Kallaly' places for the residence of monk.
- † Fr. Boulos and his 4 companions spent most of their time in worship and studying the Holy Books. However, Fr. Boulos did not stop his love for the poor, He shared his food and cloths with the Bedouins ('Al-Erban') who lived in the desert surrounding the monastery.
- † In 1881 AD, when John Kama, then Emperor of Ethiopia asked Pope Cyril V to ordain a Metropolitan and 3 Bishops for his country, the

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Pope asked the advise of Fr. Boulos. Fr. Boulos nominated his 4 companions, and they were ordained as explained above. As for himself, he refused to accept any high positions.

- ✠ At the same time, Anba Isaac the then bishop of Fayoum and Guiza departed. The four disciples of Fr. Boulos begged their spiritual father and asked the pope to ordain him bishop of Fayoum and Guiza. The people of this episcopate were delighted to nominate him and have him as their bishop which also took place in 1881 A.D.
- ✠ During his time as bishop of Fayoum and Guiza, 1881 - 1914 A.D., the episcopate became a place of rest and comfort for the poor and rich alike.
- ✠ When Khdev (king) of Egypt, Tawfik, visited Fayoum, the administrator of Fayoum made a big dinner reception for the Khdev of Egypt. Anba Abraam walked over to the place, and did not ride as was the custom. He sat at the table near the Khdev, and ate only salad. When the Khdev noticed that he ate only salad, he asked him the reason. Anba Abraam replied that it was Friday, a day of fasting for Copts. The Khdev asked that they bring some fruits for Anba Abraam. At the railway station, Anba Abraam was there to pay farewell to the Khdev. Khdev Tawfik shook his hand warmly and commented: 'Enta Ragel Mabrook' (You are a Holy Man!)
- ✠ The rulers, the heads of departments, and even the workers in many government offices, enjoyed visiting. The episcopate, simple and modest as it was, became their place of rest!
- ✠ The nice Aroma of Christ in him, reached even the diplomatic corp. When the British Viceroy (Special Representative of England to Egypt) wanted to see him, the head of the region and the leaders of the Copts of Fayoum were embarrassed because the building of the residence of the bishop was old and the furniture was very modest and in bad shape. But when they saw how the Viceroy respected him and kissed the cross in his hand and his hands, they were all impressed.
- ✠ In 1898, when the administrator of Fayoum, Mr. Mohammed Noohy was transferred from Fayoum to Quina, and in the first reception to welcome him to Quina, most of the talk in the reception was about Anba Abraam, His wonders, and His many Virtues. This is according to Mr.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Wassef Boctor Beshara, one of the famous residents of Quina at the time. The reason this story is so amazing is because Mr. Noohy was a Moslem Egyptian.

- ✠ In 1902, Anba Abraam made a journey to southern Egypt (Saeed) with his disciple Anba Mattaus, the bishop of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. They visited most of the major cities of Saeed from Fayoum to Luxor. On their return, the administrator of the region of Fayoum and other government representatives joined the Coptic congregation in receiving them at the railway stations, which was very unusual for government representatives to welcome returning home clergy, but this was Anba Abraam.
- ✠ In 1893, Anba Abraam had bad sores in one of his legs. The doctors who examined him recommended amputation. He smiled and said: "It is not God's will for this leg which serves him to be cut. God will make their effort fail (referring to the doctors), I put my trust in him!" After two months, his leg was completely healed, and he offered a special prayer of thanksgiving. The Church was full beyond capacity with parishioners carrying branches of palm trees and olive branches, waving and singing with great joy and happiness for the safety of their father.
- ✠ Once, some rich people of Fayoum bought furniture for his reception room, bed room, and kitchen and brought it over. He ordered his deputy to put it in storage. When a woman approached him about her inability to buy the furniture needed for the wedding of her daughter, he gave her everything. The people complained to the pope, pope Cyril V..
- ✠ The people of Fayoum also, collected funds to build a new Church for the episcopate and a new residence for the bishop. They gave him the money. He gave it to the needy each according to his need. Some of the people of Fayoum complained to the pope once more.
- ✠ Pope Cyril V sent for him. Anba Abraam went to see the pope without delay. It was in the afternoon, he walked in, the shutters were closed. There was a beam of light that went through a pinhole in the shutter. Anba Abraam was then very old, he mistook the light beam for a laundry rope, it was a common practice to have a laundry rope for hanging cloths. He threw his 'Faragia' Overcoat on the beam. The Faragia stayed there. The pope was dumbfounded, he greeted him, inquired about his health, asked his blessings and prayers and did not

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

even discuss the reason for the meeting. Later on, pope Cyril V gave Anba Abraam money from the patriarchate to pay for the projects at his episcopate. When the people of Fayoum went to see the pope complaining that nothing changed, the pope told them that he could not argue with the power of God in Anba Abraam and told them all that happened in front of his own eyes.

- ✠ He spent 33 years as bishop. He was visited by people from all over Egypt and abroad who came to see a saint on earth in those days. He had a life of intimate communion with our Lord Jesus Christ and his saints. He knew the Holy Books and enjoyed the liturgy with all the hymnals and praises very intimately, and he lived a life of extreme monasticism even when he was close to death, at age 85. He chose poverty, and was extremely generous, loving, and kind to the poor, ‘the Lord's Brethren’. He healed the sick and raised the dead as we detail in Part II, wonders and miracles. He was bed ridden for one month, and a multitude of people went to see him and inquire about his health, and receive his blessings in his illness especially when they learned that he refused to be seen by any physician. He informed those who were close to him that he was going away to be with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ✠ On June 9, 1914 A.D., Baouna 3, 1630 Martyrs and after sunset, Anba Abraam the Bishop of Fayoum, the Friend of the Poor departed to heavenly Jerusalem. More than 10,000 people came to say their final good bye. According to another estimate more than 25,000 people Christians and Moslems alike came to say good bye. He is buried in the Church of the Monastery of Azaab in Fayoum to this day.
- ✠ In 1964, 50 years after his departure according to Church tradition of waiting 50 years before canonizing a saint (declaring a departed person a saint), the Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church declared unanimously the Sainthood of Anba Abraam the Departed Bishop of Fayoum based on first hand stories proven by many witnesses: Stories of his piety, wonders, and miracles. This happened when pope Kyrillos (Cyril) VI was pope and patriarch. The name of Anba Abraam is mentioned in the congregation of the saints which is recited before the profession in the liturgy. Part II is a compilation of some of the wonders and miracles of Anba Abraam. More will be published in the future. May the Lord grant us the benefits of his prayers and intercessions. Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. One God. Amen.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Closing:

The construction of the new Church building of St. Mary & St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church of St. Louis is in itself a miracle, through the intercessions of St. Mary & St. Abraam. For 15 years, the small congregation (30 families) held church meetings in a converted garage. We were split three ways. One group wanted to stay in the converted garage forever, one group wanted to build a new church, and one group wanted to buy some existing church building to avoid the many hassles of going through a major project.

In mid 1993, we were approached by a general contractor who was willing to negotiate a much more reasonable price, and two banks that were willing to lend the church money for construction. One of the two banks told the church council six years earlier that they could not approve a construction loan to a church.

By October 1994, the building was completed, and was consecrated by no less than His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark. The 117 Pope and Patriot of our Coptic Church. Many of us see the completion of this project as a miracle in itself.

For the miracle to be completed, we need to pay \$500,000 mortgage loan, which is the balance of the \$750,000 cost of the building project. We need your prayers, and generous contributions. Please send your tax deductible contribution to:

Church Building Payment Fund
St. Mary & St. Abraam
Coptic Orthodox Church
1843 Ross Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63146
(314) 434-0531

The Church Needs Your Help in Paying the Bank Loan.
Please send your tax deductible contributions. This will
please God and his saint Anba Abraam, the Friend of the
Poor.

Anba Abraam Bishop of Fayoum: Part II; Wonders and Miracles

We presented to our dear readers the Life of Anba Abraam, Bishop of Fayoum in Part I of this book. Part II is dedicated to wonders and miracles of Anba Abraam. We start with Miracles during his blessed life, 1829-1914, we then will try to document miracles that happened after his departure on June 9, 1914 which continues as an honor to God through his saints as people ask for his prayers and intercession.

Anba Abraam became monk and then priest and bishop at a time when the Church was in a time of rediscovering itself, many of the priests and bishops of the time cared for the appearance and neglected the essence of the priesthood, as it is supposed to be, dedication and service to our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. Anba Abraam changed all that. Some of the reasons he became so great, and so loved are:

1. Poverty by Free Choice:

He chose poverty, which is the calling of all monks in the Orthodox faith. Anba Abraam exceeded many of his contemporaries however in his practices of extreme poverty by choice. He received many gifts of cloth and always gave the cloth to the poor. He received many gifts of furniture for the Episcopate, he stored the furniture until it was time to give it to a poor family, a widow, a family preparing for the wedding of a daughter, .. etc. He rejected this world of falsehood and all its material things, and he did it happily.

2. Extreme Ascetic (Monastic) Life:

Anba Abraam desired monastic life, and lived as a real ascetic all his life. His cloths were those of a poor monk, not of a bishop, even when he became a highly regarded bishop. His food was mostly dried beans and bread. One time he desired to eat pigeons, a very liked Egyptian delicacy. He asked the cook to prepare two pigeons for him which was a surprise for the cook. He prepared it at once and brought it over. Anba Abraam asked him to keep it for the next meal. The cook kept bringing the pigeons and Anba Abraam kept ordering him to return it back until it spoiled and the

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

smell of spoilage was unbearable. He looked at it one more time and spoke to himself audibly: "Eat my Soul what you desired." He then ordered the cook to throw it away and that was the end of that!

Anba Abraam had a wooden hand cross given to him when he became priest. He kept this cross and used it in the service, and in blessing the people all his life.

He refused to sit on an elevated chair as the custom is saying how can I sit on an elevated chair when the Lord of Lords and King of Kings is present in front of me.

In 1896, Pope Kyrillos V, visited Fayoum on a pastoral visit, so arakhenat (prominent people) of Fayoum ordered an elevated chair be built for the occasion of the Pope's visit. The cost was 40 Egyptian Pounds which was a large sum of money, 100 years ago. After the visit, the chair was kept in the Church of the Episcopate, but Anba Abraam refused to use it.

This is a good formula for a blessed holy man of God. This is Anba Abraam.

3. Love for the Poor:

He cared most for the poor, the Lord's Brethren: "Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke 14:12 -14). He was rejected and lost his position because he gave generously many times: When he was the assistant to the Bishop of Menia, when he was the Abbot of the Monastery of St. Mary in Quosia, known as "Deir Al-Maharaque" and also many complaints were made against him to Pope Kyrillos V when he was Bishop of Fayoum. In all these situations he choose silence as St. Arsanious, the teacher of the children of the kings of Constantinepole said: "Many times I spoke and regretted what I said, but about silence I will never have any regret." His generosity included not only feeding the poor, but eating with them, not only giving them cloths, but giving them his own cloths. Several workers were dismissed by Anba Abraam because they served the poor food of lesser quality.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

4. Love for the Holy Books:

We are talking about a simple man, but a learned simple man. He studied and memorized the Holy Bible, and many Church books like the saying of the father, the paradise of the Monks, the History of the Church, the Stories of the Martyrs, and Saints (Synxarium), .. etc. We understand that he did not give the sermons, but he always was near the podium (Mangalia) helping the speakers and the congregation with his deeply spiritual explanations. And some speakers would pause and ask his grace to explain the meaning of certain verses.

5. Love for the Hymns and Praises:

Those who knew him, remember his pleasant spiritually filled singing of the hymns and praises. He enjoyed singing and praising God in every service. Even when he was sick, he always desired to sing and praise God. He advised the congregation to learn the hossaat (hymnals), doxologies (glorification/praises), and theotokiaat (glories/praises to St. Mary, theotokos (mother of God)).

6. Self Denial:

When he was asked to become a bishop, he refused initially and recommended five of his disciples. His disciples became bishops before he was elevated to the position of bishop. And he was extremely happy to see them appointed. This made him even more respected among his brothers the monks and the bishops of his time. Finally, when he was elevated he became an example to follow, he showed the whole world the importance of sincere unselfish service to all the people of his flock. This included the non-Christians as well.

7. Youth Service:

Anba Abraam paid attention to the spiritual needs of the youth before we had an episcopate for Youth Service. He invited them to the monastery, and counseled them. At the time it was unusual, and this was one of the accusations used against him “bringing youth to the monastery!” To this accusation he had no reply.

8. Complete Respect for All Authority:

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Anba Abraam taught us the respect for all authority as it should be. When he was accused of wasting the episcopate funds, Pope Kyrillos V summoned him in. He was extremely old, but he went at once to see his patriarch in full respect and cooperation as it should be. He also walked to the house of the manager (modeer) of the then region (moderiat) of Fayoum to greet the Khediv (King) Said Pasha. The Khediv admired his piety and respect for authority. He also made sure to meet and know government appointees to Fayoum and invited them to the house of episcopate. The episcopate became a place of meeting for government officials in his time.

When some youth came to him complaining about the compulsory military service and trying to get him to approve of skipping military service, he did not consent telling them: "If you do not serve in the army, who is going to protect our country!"

9. His Life Conclusion:

In Part I, we described the final days in the life of Anba Abraam, and how his fellow citizen Moslems and Christians alike were saddened by the news of his departure. Estimates ranged from 10,000 to 25,000 who attended his funeral. Before his departure he gave away everything left.

When he departed, representatives of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate were charged with counting his earthly possessions. They found out that he gave everything away before his death. They could only find his wooden hand cross which he used all his life as priest, and the staff of episcopate given to him when he was ordained bishop.

"Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever. Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid,

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

until he see his desire upon his enemies. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.” (Psalms 112)

Any other conclusion would not fir the life of our saint Anba Abraam, Bishop of Fayoum, Friend of the Poor.

Famous Sayings About Anba Abraam:

“A Marvelous Portrait of What a Man of God Should be Like” (Pope Shenouda III)

“He was Trustworthy unto the Lord, So he received all the promises of the Lord”
(Anba Abraam, present bishop of Fayoum”

“We were in the presence of Christ and were filled with the Spirit of God”
(Mr. Leeder of England after Meeting Anba Abraam)

“No doubt, the most famous contemporary saint is Anba Abraam the Bishop of Fayoum”
(Mr. Otto Meinardus, a Dutch visitor)

“At the top of all hermits, I see Anba Abraam because he gave away everything he had to the poor. This he was able to do because he first gave himself to God. The appearance of Anba Abraam in the middle of the 19th Century and to the first part of the 20th Century was a continuation of the Cloud of Saints (Witnesses mentioned in he New Testament) and will continue in the Church over the years. The saint Anba Abraam was an honest man of God. He emptied (rid) himself of every material thing, and filled himself with every good gift and perfect talent from God Many who hear the commandments of God claim that they are hard to adhere to, Anba Abraam proves the opposite”
(Arch-priest Mikhail Saad of Alexandria, saw Anba Abraam and wrote most detailed book about his life).

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

“Anba Abraam was known for the virtue of giving, and one can not mention giving without thinking about Anba Abraam”

(Father Boulos Abd-El-Messih, Zefta, Egypt)

“Anba Abraam blessed the 20th Century by living in this Century. The first 14 years of this Century Enjoyed having Anba Abraam”

(Arch-priest Sidarous Abd-El-Messih)

“If the people of Fayoum Realize how much honor Anba Abraam brought to their city, they should always attach his name to their city’s name. The people of Fayoum are indebted forever to Anba Abraam”

(Mr. Leeder of England. The Book: Modern Sons of the Pharos: S.H. Leeder, London, 1918)

“Precious Ointment Poured Out, Is the Life of Anba Abraam. Incense with Good Aroma God Smelled and Was Pleased. If his soul did not unite with a body, One would say he is an apparition of the Angels to the People” (His Holiness Pope Shenouda III)

The following are some of the miracles of Anba Abraam as reported by those who witnessed and/or experienced them. We are indebted to the departed Fr. Mikhail Saad, Fr. Tadros Yacoub Malaty, Daar Al-Mahaba, and Deacon Malak Luka who wrote about Anba Abraam. We used some information from each publication, and other miracles we learned growing up in our beloved mother land, the blessed Egypt:

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

1. Cholera Epidemic, 1896 AD.”

In 1896, Egypt suffered an epidemic of the Cholera, people were dying. They went to Anba Abraam one evening and told him about the horror that filled the city because of the large number of people dying everyday. Anba Abraam Replied: “Why are you afraid of death. If we do not die today, we will die tomorrow (meaning sooner or later we all will die, no one can escape death). He asked them to bring Father Mikhail (his half brother)” When aboutna Mikhail came, he told him to bring 200 sheets of paper and write on every sheet: “We are the Servants of Jesus of Nazareth, who was Crucified.” and he took the papers and blessed them with the sign of the Cross and prayed over it. He then gave it to aboutna Mikhail instructing him to give a piece of paper to every family that asks for it and to instruct them to hang it outside the door of their house (following the example of Moses instructing the Israelites to sprinkle the blood on the sides and overhang of the door so the angel of death will pass over in the final plague” Every family that hanged this paper, on their door, was saved from the Cholera plague.

2. Healing From Rheumatic Arthritis:

The Departed Monk/Arch-priest Benjamin El-Syriani (From The Monastery of St. Mary Known as El-Syrian) told this story: In 1912, my Aunt Mrs. Feniara Abd-El-Malak El-Khangry from Meer, Assiut suffered from severe Rheumatic Arthritis in her legs. She could not walk. She and my father who suffered from severe bouts of headache traveled from Assiut to Fayoum by train. They went to see Anba Abraam. He prayed for both of them and they were both instantly healed. My aunt went back home walking on her feet.

3. The Son of the Director of the Region of Fayoum:

The director of the Region (Hekmdar El-Fayoum) at that time in 1912 had a son who was crazed (had an unclean spirit). The director went to see Anba Abraam, told him about his son’s condition concluding that the young man is crazed and could not keep his cloths on. He asked Anba

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Abraam to visit the family. Anba Abraam promised that he will visit. Anba Abraam prayed for the situation, and a few days later he took his disciple and some holy oil and went on foot to see this Moslem family. The boy saw him approaching, and ran to the house and told his mother that Abu Al-Nassara (the father of the Nazarene) is coming to see us. How could I meet him like that. The boy ran to the bathroom, and took a bath and put on some new cloths. He then came out and greeted Anba Abraam and kissed his hand and sat down. Anba Abraam blessed the boy and anointed him with the holy oil. The woman called her husband at work and told him all what had happened. As soon as the husband heard his wife's story, he hurried home and greeted Anba Abraam kissing his hands and asking for more of his blessings. For a longtime, people in Fayoum talked about this incident always offering the praise to God who works through his saints, the likes of Anba Abraam.

4. The Servant of a Family Is Healed:

M.Y. from Fayoum told this story from his father the son of the late priest Youhana (John) Demitry who was a contemporary of Anba Abraam. Fr. Demitry from the family of Sharkawy, well to do, had a servant named Abd-El-Hady Goudah. The family used to spend the entire lent season in the monastery of the Arch-angel Gabriel near Fayoum. Anba Abraam used to visit the monastery and out of extreme delight with his coming, they would serve him tea in a silver cup. The servant saw Anba Abraam coming and started to mock and joke saying here comes sayeedhom (their master), .. etc. Moments later his stomach stretched and he began to cry from severe pain. They took him to Anba Abraam. Anba Abraam shook him and asked him why he mocked him, afterwards he prayed for him and advised him not to mock again. The man threw up and was relieved of his pain. Years later, this same man was getting old and was unable to walk. He asked his son to take him to Abu Al-Nassarah (Father of the Nazarene). Anba Abraam prayed for him and he was able to walk again.

5. Power Over The Evil Spirits (Performing Exorcism):

This was recorded by the prominent English writer Leeder in his book: (The Copts) Modern Sons of the Pharos." Leeder wrote: "The bishop's power in exorcism of Evil Spirits has perhaps brought him more visitors from distant parts than any other gift he was famous for." Leeder

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

wrote based on a story by the son of a blind teacher of hymnals (Muallem) of the great cathedral in Cairo at the time who was very intelligent and fluent in English and French, and had a responsible job in the government of Egypt. The man told Leeder that Anba Abraam exorcised evil spirits from many people, Moslems and Christians alike. One time a man named Guirguis was brought in with an evil spirit and Anba Abraam could not get the evil spirit to depart from him. Anba Abraam was irritated, he told the parents to bring him to the Church during liturgy, they did. The man started to scream loudly which disturbed the people in the Church and made the officiating priest to pause. This brought Anba Abraam out to the sanctuary. Anba Abraam commanded the evil spirit to stop and not move saying: "In the Name of Jesus Christ the Crucified Nazarene stop and not move." The evil spirit stopped and after the service they took the man into the residence. Anba Abraam asked the man why he made so much noise during the service. "The evil spirit in him replied" "Did You put me in fire and ask me not to cry? A fire from the heaven was sent down to the table (altar) and approached to burn me!" Then as the bishop rebuked him, the evil spirit went out, and the man was healed.

6. The Devil Screamed:

This was told by Monk/Arch-priest Philopos El-Makkary (Philip from the Monastery of Anba Makkar). In 1906, while Anba Abraam was performing the prayers to exorcise the evil spirit from a devil possessed person, the devil wept and spoke to Anba Abraam trying to deceive him saying leave me alone, I am a Christian and my name is George, baptized, and only 7 days old. When Anba Abraam ignored him completely and continued to pray the devil said: "If it was not for the Cross in your hand, we would have destroyed you as you destroyed us." Immediately, the man screamed loudly and was rid of the evil spirit.

7. A Difficult Exorcism:

Mr. Mansour Girgis said that when they were praying Kereya-Laison (Lord Have Mercy) and Anba Abraam was putting his hand on the head of an ill-man named Masoud from Ekhmeem, the ill-man trembled in the beginning of the prayer and said; "Not you or ten like you can move me out!" What follows is the conversation between Anba Abraam and the Evil Spirit:

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Anba Abraam: God persecute you. Go out!

Evil Spirit: I do not know why you are living until this moment!

Anba Abraam: I live to fight you. What is your name?

Evil Spirit: My name is Abraam, the Bishop.

Anba Abraam: God rebukes you. Do you have bishops?

Then Anba Abraam put the cross on the head of the ill-man and the evil spirit cried: “The fire! The fire! I will go out,” and he went out.

[Author’s Comments: When I was in my teens in Egypt, Early 60’s many exorcisms took place especially in Churches named after some of the Martyrs like St. George, St. Demiana, St. Markorios, .. etc. I witnessed many. A sign of the evil spirit leaving is blood coming out from the finger or one of the toes. We wrote about evil spirits in the book Essays for Orthodox Youth. We believe that evil spirits are still around and bothersome to people, but with all the material things around us they don’t need to manifest themselves the old way. They now just come and rule our lives. We need the power of prayer to stay free from evil. The devil flees from prayer, from the sign of the cross, and when commanded: In the Name of Jesus Christ the Crucified Nazarene.” This name is a great power given to us, the believers. We should use it always.]

8. Serve’s in the Episcopate:

H.Y.A from Alexandria told this story: In 1910. I was visiting my family in Fayoum, and as we were at the episcopate (residence of the bishop, Anba Abraam). I saw a sheik (old man) from Tanta named Moorsi, he was brought in by four strong men who struggled to control him because he did not want to go in. Anba Abraam, new about the struggle outside, so he took water, prayed on it and gave it to Rizk his disciple ordering him to sprinkle the water on the struggling man. This calmed the man down and he came in. Anba Abraam prayed on him and the evil spirit departed him immediately. The man stayed for several months in the house of the episcopate serving there to show his appreciation for the healing and as a way of thanking God for the gift (of healing).

9. The Price of Greed:

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

A prominent Moslem who was a friend of Anba Abraam, sent him a full fold of cloth material. It was given to a disciple named Mikhail Eed. Mikhail took half of the material and brought a half fold to Anba Abraam saying that this is what he received. Anba Abraam new, but did not say anything.

Months later the man came to visit and inquired about the full fold. Anba Abraam thanked him and assured him that it was received complete. After the man left, Anba Abraam asked Mikhail did you receive half or full fold. Mikhail denied that he kept anything. Anba Abraam said: "What are you going to do with the other half. It will become your burial cloth!"

Few days later Mikhail died and was buried in the cloth he denied he kept!

{Author's Comments: The parallel here is what Gehazi did with the gifts from Namaan the Assyrian to Elisha. Gehazi also suffered a terrible fate, he inherited the Leprosy of Namaan for lying and greed.

10. Fight Over A Gun:

A wealthy man from Fayoum lived a long life and had many possessions among them a prized gun. He had three sons and after his death one of the sons took the gun and hid it to keep it from his brothers. They went to Anba Abraam and they all swore they did not take the gun, especially the one that hid the gun swore most. Anba Abraam told them, the one that took the gun will be killed by the gun. Each went to his home. An argument developed between the one that took the gun and his wife, he went out and brought the gun to shoot her, the gun backfired and he was shot dead!

11. A Girl Who Desired to Depart the Faith:

A young Christian woman fell in love with a non-Christian and decided to depart the Christian faith and to marry this man. According to civil laws in Egypt, they had to inform the episcopate of the religion change request. Anba Abraam met with the young woman advised her not to change her faith and to forget about the man, but she wouldn't listen. Anba Abraam

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

was irritated by her stubbornness and told her: “You do not desire the other religion, you desire the man. God will do to you as you deserve” As soon as she left, she fainted. The police came, they thought that there was a criminal act!

Anba Abraam heard that the young woman fainted on the street, he hurried to her, took water and prayed and sprinkled the water on her. She regained consciousness, and began to speak praising God and saying: “I saw with my own eyes.....” After that she dropped the request, and changed her mind about this marriage, and lived a righteous life without marriage (to the end).

12. In the Absence of Her Husband:

A man went away for a full year, when he came back his wife was pregnant. He asked her, she insisted that he was the father. They went to Anba Abraam and told him their story. The woman insisted in the presence of the man of God that her husband was the father. Anba Abraam, consoled the husband and concluded in front of both of them: “ That which is of God remains, and that which is of the Devil shall fall.” After a week the woman had a miscarriage, and died. And the sad truth became known and the word of the man of God was confirmed.

13. One Guest Kills His Companion:

Two men arrived at the house of the episcopate and asked to spend the night. They were allowed in, because Anba Abraam received any guest who came in, and offered food and shelter to any one that asked. One of the two knew that the other had a large sum of money in his bag, so because he had a wicked heart, he killed him and took his head and the money and ran. In the morning, the servants went, with a breakfast tray, to the room to check on the guests and found the decapitated body of one in a pool of blood and the other was gone. The servant informed Anba Abraam, who summoned the police and instructed them. Take my staff, and go to the railway station, and the one the staff points you to is the killer/thief. They did as he advised them and the staff of Anba Abraam led them to the killer. He was arrested and on searching his belongings they found the head of the victim and the money. He was convicted for his crimes, and received the punishment he deserved.

[Author’s Comments: The Church opens its doors to everyone, good and bad alike. It is sad when people choose to do evil, but even God Al-Mighty will

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

not change a person, if the person does not want to be changed, because God created us on his image, he gave us a mind and a free will. The more we observe the more we learn that it is up to us: "I knock on the door, if anyone opens to me, I come in and sup (have supper) with him." If we don't open, he does not force his way. This evil man did not benefit from the example of Anba Abraam, and he reaped the rewards for his evil deeds.]

14. The Healing of Mr. and Mrs. Leeder:

Mr. Leeder was a prominent English writer, he and his wife heard, in England, about Anba Abraam and wanted to meet him. Anba Abraam was told about these foreign guests, but he did not particularly care for social calls. Then the messenger thought of a clever way to get them to meet Anba Abraam, so he went back and told Anba Abraam that Mr. Leeder suffered from some ailment, so he told him to bring the poor man in if he is sick. Mr. and Mrs. Leeder were told of the way the messenger arranged their visit which made them more anxious to meet Anba Abraam. At the appointed time, Anba Abraam received them, put the wooden cross on their heads, prayed for them, and blessed them. And as it was his custom with first time guests, he gave them red and white oversized handkerchiefs, as a gift. This type is used by villagers to this day as a head cover and a nice, country, gift. They were thrilled with their healing, their visit and what they saw and also how Anba Abraam loved giving. Mr. Leeder commented, "We felt the presence of Christ in our Visit to Anba Abraam, and were filled with the Spirit of God through this visit"

15. Bringing Peace Between Two Feuding Bishops:

Anba Abraam was asked to a meeting in the house of the Patriarchate in Cairo to resolve a dispute between two feuding bishops. He went in, and saw endless arguing between the two, and no one in attendance was able to bring any to yield. Anba Abraam asked that all in attendance stand up to recite the Lord's Prayer together. He led the prayer audibly, and when he came to the verse: "forgives us our sins .." he instead said: "don't forgive us our sins, ..." so, some inquired how come Anba Abraam, he responded: "because we are not willing to forgive each other." This got the attention of the feuding bishops and they realized the need to forgive each other and the dispute was resolved that instant.

16. A Poor Priest Restored to The Priesthood:

Anba Abraam was called to the house of the Patriarchate to attend a meeting regarding the defrocking of a disobedient priest. The poor priest allowed an excommunicated bishop to conduct services in his Church. The bishops and prominent laymen decided that the priest is guilty and was to be defrocked. Anba Abraam saw it different, he felt that a parish priest could not stand up to a bishop. He disagreed with all in attendance. Next to him was a prominent Copt, named Quallini Pasha. Quallini Pasha signed the decree. When it came to Anba Abraam, he refused to sign, and talked to Quallini Pasha scolding him for being harsh on a poor priest. One in attendance said: “Anba Abraam! Do You Know Who You Are Talking To. It Is Quallini Pasha” Anba Abraam Replied: “The Lord Lives Forever. Moses talked to God Al-Mighty!” Anba Abraam left the meeting and walked down the stairs to the sitting room on the first floor. As he was leaving he said: “The Lord Lives Forever. I will not enter this house again, if any evil befalls this poor priest.” Some in attendance hurried after him begging him not to follow on with what he said. Anba Abraam answered them: If you bring this decree to me to tear it to pieces, I will forget everything I said. They went back and after discussion, they did as he said. They took the decree to him. He tore it to pieces, and went back to the meeting as if nothing happened. The priest was saved a great harm.

17. Hangs His Farageia (Coat) on A Ray of the Sun:

Anba Abraam received furniture for the episcopate. He refused to use it, and asked the servant to put it in storage. When a woman came to him complaining that her daughter’s engagement is not going to result in a wedding, because they don’t have money to buy furniture for her and her future husband. Anba Abraam told the servant to show her the new furniture, and let her take what she needed. Some of the people complained to Pope Kyrillos V about giving away the furniture. Afterwards, there was a collection to build a new house of the episcopate. Anba Abraam gave that money also to the poor and needy. There goes another complaint. The Pope summoned him. He went without delay and he was an old man, with poor eyesight. On his arrival, he was rushed in to see the Pope in his suite. It was a Summer afternoon, a ray of the sun through a hole in the shade of the window was mistaken by Anba Abraam as a rope (for hanging cloths which was a habit in those days to install ropes for hanging cloth). Anba Abraam

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

threw his Farageia (Coat) on it and it stayed there. The Pope saw how the Lord works wonders to not embarrass this saint on earth. The Pope changed the purpose of the call and instead inquired about his health and gave him 15,000 Egyptian Pounds to build a new house for the episcopate. When the people came back to see the Pope, he scolded them for their lack of faith, concluding: "How can I argue with a man of God who was able to hang his coat on a ray of the Sun" The new house of the episcopate was not built in Anba Abraam's life. The money was used to help the poor.

18. The Story of the Ameer-allay (Police Commander):

(Anba Abraam Receives and Gives to the Poor After His Departure)

A new police commander came to Fayoum. After a while he had a problem related to work. He was extremely upset over it. He went to see Anba Abraam whom he did not know, but heard about. As he wanted to talk, he could not speak his thoughts. Anba Abraam knew by the gift of knowledge in him the problem and the solution. He told him not to worry, this affair will end in a transfer to another region, nothing more. It happened as Anba Abraam told him. This man made it a habit to give Anba Abraam 5 Egyptian Pounds every year as a symbol of eternal appreciation. More than a year after Anba Abraam departed, he went to the monastery of Azab as he used to. He asked the guard where is Anba Abraam, the guard answered inside, meaning his remains are inside the Church. The man went in, and saw Anba Abraam standing as if he was waiting for him, he gave him 10 Egyptian Pounds because he was not able to visit the year before. The man handed him the money, and as he was leaving he ran to the guard again and inquired about Anba Abraam and why he was inside alone. The guard explained that Anba Abraam departed more than a year earlier. The man could not believe it and told that he saw him standing inside and that he handed him the donation. They all marveled about how God is glorified in his saints.

It is also told that a poor man walked into the Church that same day and Anba Abraam handed him the money he received from the police officer.

[There is a beautiful picture of Anba Abraam. The artist envisioned him standing and with the left hand receiving alms (giving) and the right hand is giving it almost instantaneously.]

19. The Healing of Anba Abraam's Leg:

We mentioned this story in Part I. Towards the end of his life, he had a soar wound in his left leg that would not heal. They summoned medical doctors who recommended amputation to prevent Ghangarin from spreading to the rest of his body. Anba Abraam replied: "This leg that served God does not deserve to be cut off" He prayed, asked the priests to anoint him with oil. The whole congregation wept and prayed for Anba Abraam. Two months later, his leg was completely healed, and it was a great celebration in Fayoum and around the country when Anba Abraam walked into the Church after being ill for many months.

[Author's Comment: We believe in divine healing through repentance, prayer, unction (annointing) of the sick, and intercession. We also believe in the use of modern medicine, and this is a good example. Anba Abraam summoned the physicians and asked for their professional help. There should be no conflict between the two. Contrasting this incident with the ailment of St. Paul: In St. Paul's case the Lord's will was for him to have the thorn in the body and he heard it on the mouth of the Lord: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ' (II CORINTH 12:9). In either case, we accept the will of God in our lives.]

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Miracles After His Departure

20. Light Over The Tomb:

A construction worker was working on building a tomb for the body of Anba Abraam. It got dark and he did not finish his work so he asked Anba Abraam to give him light, and he saw like a bright dove which gave him light until he finished his work.

21. Popular Portrait of Anba Abraam:

We all are familiar with the traditional portrait of Anba Abraam. There is a story behind it. Because in his time photography was fairly new, very few original portraits of Anba Abraam exist. People from all walks of life loved the story of Anba Abraam and wanted to have copies of his portrait to keep in their homes, so in 1954, forty years after his departure many wanted copies of the portrait. The Book store Al-Mahba (LOVE/AGAPE) wanted to make duplicates, but were not able to. They wanted to send it to Europe to be printed but could not because of the war of 1956. Fortunately, they were able to make a reprint in Egypt which was enlarged and was put on their annual calendar 11”x17” and they distributed many copies all over the See of St. Mark. In Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, and the Arab World. The Late Mr. Younan Nakhla the founder of Mahaba Bookstore and father of late blessed father Roufail Younan who served in North America, tells these stories.

22. Could Not Find Another Portrait:

S.R from Cairo, Egypt was attending a meeting which included some VIPs. One in attendance looked up and saw the Calendar with the portrait, and using unkind words said to the host: “Couldn’t you find a better picture than this (to hang on your wall). I know Al-Mahba Bookstore, they are a quality store, they could have done better.” S.R. protested to the man telling him that he should not belittle Anba Abraam because he is a saintly man and every Christian and non-Christian alike knows about his piety, good example, wonders, and miracles. And he continued to tell about the good example and the virtues of Anba Abraam. Afterwards, he left the meeting protesting that such comments were made.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

S.R. continues, I had ailment in my legs and could not climb stairs or walk long distances. In the night I saw Anba Abraam. He came to thank me for my courage and my defense of him and moreover he healed me. In the morning I felt much better than before, and was able to work with more vigor. I became able to climb the stairs and take long walks. S.R. went to Daar Al-Mahba (Mahaba House) in Geziraat Badraan, Shoubra, Cairo, Egypt to tell this story. Shortly thereafter an altar honoring Anba Abraam was added to the small Chapel inside Daar Al-Mahba.

23. The Visiting Nurse and The Portrait of Anba Abraam:

A male nurse visited many homes in Cairo to check on patients and give them injections. One time he complained about this portrait which he saw in many Christian homes saying: “Who is this priest with tense features I see every where I go? Couldn’t they hang another picture in these homes?” The same day after he went to sleep, he heard a voice calling him and saying: “Don’t you like my picture?” this was repeated three times, and he could see the person. He looked like the one in the portraits hanging in those homes he visits everyday. He walk up scared and started to feel that one of his legs is heavy and he could not move it. He felt deep sorrow and stayed home that night and the following day weeping and asking forgiveness. The following night Anba Abraam appeared to him and spoke to him saying: “The Lord accepted your repentance and forgave you your sin.” and disappeared. Immediately his leg felt better and was able to move normal. In the morning, he went out and bought a number of those portraits and started to distribute them himself.

[Author’s Comments: God does not take by appearance. We know what happened to the children of Israel when they mocked Elisha the prophet and man of God. He cursed them, and a bear came and devoured them. There is a true story about a man who spoke evil of Pope Kyrillos VI. Anba Kyrillos by the gift of knowledge knew it, and told the man: “Why don’t you like us. I love you very much. Please come to see me anytime. The man was dumbfounded. He became a disciple of Pope Kyrillos. Through the prayers of Pope Kyrillos his son was healed from heart ailment and many good things happened to this family. He recorded a cassette tape about many wonderful things that he witnessed through the prayers of St. Mena and Pope Kyrillos. The man lives to this day, he is a highly regarded doctor educated in England. Through the love shown him by the departed Pope Kyrillos, he was changed from a non believer in all religions to a strong

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

believer in God, the Christian faith, and the power of prayers and intercessions.]

24. His Arm Could Not Move:

This happened to a man in a village in the region of Dairut. He did not like the portrait of Anba Abraam and started to speak evil about the picture and the person saying that it is depressing to look at the picture. Then he threatened to bring a gun and shoot the picture off the wall. His friends and family tried to convince him not to do that, but he insisted. He brought the gun and aimed at the picture, but his arm froze and could not shoot. Afterwards, he became mentally disturbed and ended up in the public mental institution (Saraya Al-Safra) in Cairo.

[Author Comment: Sad as it is, we reported it to show that we are free to do what we desire. But, when we do evil or mean spirited things, there is punishment from God awaiting for those who deserve punishment. The difference between this person and the one mentioned above is simple. One repented and was forgiven and healed, the other did not! We firmly believe that: have Judas Iscariot repented, and asked forgiveness, he would have been forgiven.]

25. Anba Abraam Cloths and the Healing of A Sick Person:

Mrs. D.A.W told about her infant son who became ill with high fever. She took him to the doctor and was given potent medications in excess to bring the fever down. But there was no improvement whatsoever. Her neighbor, Al-Aam (Uncle) Girgis Mankarios came to visit and when he heard about the condition of the baby, ran to his house and brought taquia (soft hat) that he inherited from his father who kept this and other pieces of cloth used to be worn by Anba Abraam. Uncle Girgis put the soft hat on the infant's head and he left. In the early morning of the following day, we started to notice improvements and the temperature started to go down. We knew that our son was healed through the prayers and intercessions of Anba Abraam. When the Doctor saw my son, he was amazed for the sudden drop in temperature (sudden healing).

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

26. The Healing of a Child from Sudan:

In February 1963, a man who owns an export company arrived in Fayoum for the baptism of his son. He told the reason that he came all the way from Sudan. This boy was ill when he was an infant, the father was used to seeing the portrait of Anba Abraam in Christian homes all over Sudan, so he asked the intercession of Anba Abraam for his son. When he got home from work he found the infant was healed. When he inquired, he was told that a man in white priestly cloth came in that day and prayed for the infant and anointed him with oil for the healing of the sick (Unction, Healing of the Sick mystery). He knew it was Anba Abraam. And that was the reason they traveled to Fayoum for the child's baptism.

27. The healing of an Arch-priest:

Y.G. told: in 1962, our arch-priest Fr. Bishoy Abd El-Messih, the deputy to the bishop of Demiaat at the time became extremely ill. He had internal bleeding inside the chest cavity. We all prayed with warmth of the heart, asking the intercession and blessings of Anba Abraam for Fr. Bishoy. Immediately the pain ceased and the bleeding stopped and our Arch-priest was healed completely.

[Author's Comments: I remember a similar incident which happened to a reverend father in Los Angeles California in the early 70's when there was one Church in the whole area of Los Angeles. The congregation prayed for their priest every day for a week at an agreed evening hour, because he was sick, and they needed his services really urgently. The Reverend father was healed through the prayers and intercessions of many loving believers. That is why it is important to pray for each other in belief.]

28. Protected Him Even When He Doubted:

Engineer M.Z.A from Hadeqaa Gadida, Fayoum told this story. In the 60's I went with my uncle to visit the tomb of Anba Abraam in Deir Al-Azab (St. Markorios, the two swords, Monastery, Fayoum). At the time there was some remodeling work inside the Church and they had many wooden beams tied with ropes all over the ceiling. My uncle knelt down and started to pray and implore Anba Abraam. I started to joke telling my uncle: "stop this act, the man died and longed in death (shebe moot)." I was leaning

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

with my hand on a wall, and as soon as I finished saying these foolishness, I moved my arm away and a wooden beam fell exactly where I was standing a minute earlier. At this moment, my uncle was finished with his prayers and turned to me and said: "This is because of your foolish words." I shivered, and felt extreme fear inside me. I fainted and fell on the floor and then felt a hand lifted me on my feet. From that day I regularly visit Deir Al Azab, the tomb of Anba Abraam, and other monasteries as well.

29. A Soldier Saved from Imminent Death in The Battle of 1000 Tanks, 1973:

S.H.G from Fayoum told this story. I was a member of the 52 Battalion (Army), 18 Division, 21st Armored Vehicle. This battalion fought the 1000 tanks battle in central Sinai on Oct. 18, 1973. I prayed and asked the intercession of Anba Abraam saying: "God, save me from shrapnels in my arms or my feet and do not let me die." At that moment I had a shrapnel in my left leg, and fell down unconscious. I was taken to field hospital and consequently transferred to Cairo University Medical Center (Kasr El-Einy). Later on, I learned that the entire division died in the battle, except me. I still have the shrapnel in my left leg. I believe that my life was saved through the prayers and intercessions of Anba Abraam.

[Author's Comments: A dear friend of mine was saved death in the war of 1967 through prayers and intercessions he was carried from the battle field by his division commander because he was injured. He was taken to the back of the battle field and later transferred to Cairo. We can not say why some die and some are saved, but for me, I will always ask the prayers and intercession of the saints when I am in any danger!"]

30. Let My Children Come To Me:

B..W from Alexandria wrote: I was enlisted in the army and was assigned to a unit in Fayoum. My unit commander prohibited leaves on Sundays, so we could not go to Church. Suddenly, our unit commander gave all the Christians in my unit orders to go to Deir Al-Azab in Fayoum, we were extremely surprised. So, one asked him why the sudden change, he said "Sheik Al-Nassara (the elder of the Christians) came to me in the night and called me by name saying: Ismael: let my children come to me." We asked him who is Sheik Al-Nassara, he pointed to the portrait of Anba Abraam and said he looked like the man in this picture. Commander Ismael was surprised

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

to learn that Anba Abraam departed (died) many tens of years earlier. In appreciation and respect, he took an offering and went to Deir Al-Azab and asked for the blessings of Anba Abraam.

31. Walked without Crutches:

M.T from Muharaam Bey, Alexandria told: In 1981, my grandmother died. I loved her so much, I carried her (body) all by myself which caused me to injure my back. I had symptoms of a slipped disk. For a longtime, I had to use crutches to move around. One day we went to visit Deir Al-Azab, tomb of Anba Abraam. I the monastery's Church, St. Markorios, I was told that there is a chair that Anba Abraam sat on. I sat on this chair and asked the prayers and intercession of Anba Abraam saying: "I will not get off this chair until my back is healed!" I sat there for about half an hour (praying), and then I started to feel the healing of my back. I got up from the chair and walked without crutches. I did not need them anymore.

32. Greeting Card Do Not Burn:

Mrs. A.Y.H from Alexandria told: My father was an irrigation engineer during the time of Anba Abraam> As a matter of fact, Anba Abraam performed the ceremony for my parents wedding. My father had a greeting card from Anba Abraam, written with his own hand. He kept it over the years. One day, we were burning some old papers and this card was included, by mistake, in the pile. It is amazing all the papers burned, except for this card which did not burn!

33. A Miracle in New South Wales, Australia:

On 6/10/1985, the Church here was celebrating the departure of Anba Abraam. Fr. Moussa Soliman was the officiating priest, the service was scheduled for very early morning, 4:30 A.M. The priest and deacons were in the Church. An elderly lady who attended the services regularly was there also, at that early hour. As she looked toward the altar room, she saw a beautiful portrait of Anba Abraam hanging in the air above the altar with no support. She screamed asking the help of the priest saying: "How could you hang such expensive and beautiful picture in the altar room with no support?" The priest went to investigate, and did not find such thing. They all new that

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Anba Abraam is present with them, even in Australia, thousands of miles away from Egypt.

This blessed old lady is still with us. The blessings of Anba Abraam be with us always.

34. My Son the Arch-priest Ibrahim Fahmy from Alexandria Was Healed:

The father of Arch-priest Ibrahim Fahmy Nawar from Alexandria told this story. My son, Arch-priest Ibrahim was diagnosed with blockage of arteries of his heart and a weak heart valve. He was sent to London, England for surgery by the famous Coptic (Egyptian Christian) heart surgeon, Dr. Magdy Yacoub. He was accompanied by his brother who is a medical doctor. They stayed in the home of Fr. Antonious Thabet, a prominent coptic priest.

At the home, my son noticed the portrait of Anba Abraam. He commented to Abouna Antonious:” This is a beautiful picture.” Abouna Antonious commented: “Anba Abraam Is the Guardian of this House “

During catheterization, without full anathesia, my son was awake. He saw Anba Abraam standing there all the time. The result was very amazing. The heart valve was OK! The Blockage was no longer evident. And with simple medication, Fr. Ibrahim Fahmy Nawar, was back to normal. He told us in our home in Meet Ghamr about this miracle. He continues to remember Anba Abraam fil-magmaa (in the congregation of the saints part of the liturgy).

[Author’s Comments: We translated the story from Arabic as told. The father of Fr. Ibrahim meant that Fr. Ibrahim mentions Anba Abraam and gives him glory more than ever before, since Anba Abraam name is mentioned in the congregation of the saints by Church Law as one of the saints. Also, as we delight with Abouna Ibrahim, we know that some people with blockage are healed medically through Cathetarization. But, we still praise God for Abouna’s healing. It is much easier to have a Catheter than to have an open heart surgery. Glory be to God in his Saints.]

35. The Miracle of A Church In St. Louis:

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

The people who came to St. Louis from Egypt in the early 1970's, around 1972 did want to settle as immigrants, have respected jobs, sometimes any job at first, and worship God the way we did in Egypt. When the Church was incorporated in 1974, they had disagreement. Some wanted to call the Church St. Mary's, others wanted to call it St. Abraam's. The two groups reached agreement calling our beloved Church St. Mary & St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church of St. Louis.

We were blessed with visiting priests, one after another: From Canada, the late Fr. Roufail Younan, and from New York, Fr. Youhana Tadros, of St. MayChurch in Queens New York. Also the late Fr. Antonious Baky, Fr. Zakaria, Late Fr. Ghobrial Abd El-Sayed (His grandfather, was Fr. Abd Al-Sayed who served as deputy to Anba Abraam). We also were served by Fr. Ibrahim Aziz, St. George Church, Bellflower, LA, California, the Late Fr. Marco Daowd (A know author, and translator of great works who used to come from Egypt to visit his grandson in St. Louis), Fr. Mankarios Awadalla, former professor of rituals at the college of divinity who serves in St. Demiana in Ontario, Canada.

Fr. Wessa Bessada is the first priest to serve as resident priest in St. Louis: 1979-1981.

Fr. Ekladius Hanna Khalil served as resident priest: 1981-1987. He commissioned the architectural drawings and was instrumental in purchasing the 3 acres behind the house and converted garage.

Monk/Fr. Reuis Anba Paula served our community 1987-1988. He tried to purchase a building on Manchester Road to solve the problem of not wanting to go through a major construction project. The purchase was not completed, because the seller, a Church, asked for an unreasonable price for a 25 years old building facing North. It would have been difficult to convert it to a traditional Eastern Orthodox Church. Fr. Reuis started many youth activities, and weekly bible studies at different homes, combining social and spiritual service.

Fr. Bassellious Sedrak is our blessed priest since 1988. Fr. Bassellious preferred to take his time in getting the people to reach consensus which was a very successful approach in getting the people to join together, Through patience and many visits by his Grace Bishop Tadros of

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Port Said, we were able to get majority agreement to build in our location at 1843 Ross Ave.

Each priest who served the congregation in St. Louis brought an improvement to the service and a special gift. We are blessed by all of them.

We are a small congregation, but through God's Grace and the prayers and intercessions of St. Mary and St. Abraam the Church is able to meet its financial and spiritual obligations. We are proud to be in the forefront of attempting to recite the liturgy in English, not very easy to do initially. We also are the first Church to produce a full English language monthly news letter, which has all original writings. St. Mary's Message started in 1984 and stopped for a few years after 1988. We are back in circulation again.

The Church building started in 1979 as a small Chapel in a converted garage of a house which is used as priest's residence and an extension used as a social hall. We always desired to build a Church which is more appropriate. The congregation was split three ways: Some wanted to build, some wanted to buy an existing building and modify it to take a Coptic shape, and the third group preferred no change.

In 1984, God guided us to acquire three acres of land behind the property we had. Also, through God's help and the prayers and intercessions of St. Mary and Anba Abraam, the owner sold us the land at a bargain price with owner provided finance to save the Church the trouble of going through the process of obtaining a bank loan. The land was paid in three years, phenomenal achievement of 25 families.

In spite of the objections, Coptic style architectural plans were prepared in 1985. We had offers to build for about \$850,000 but could not get the project started because of lack of unity and the inability to raise even 20% of the needed funds. In early October, 1989 his Holiness Pope Shenouda made a historic 60 days visit to the USA. St. Louis, was fortunate to have his holiness in our city for a memorable 26 hours (We had it counted to the last minute). His holiness honored us and blessed us. He received the key to our city, and October 10,11 of 1989 were declared Pope Shenouda's days in St. Louis.

His holiness wanted to bless the grounds and put a cornerstone, but the plan was derailed because of strong objections from group 2. Group 3

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

did not object, but did not support either. His Holiness with the wisdom in him gave us a deadline. Find land or building by Epiphany (Jan 19, 1990) or accept the existing plans. Needless to say Jan 19, 1990 came and nothing happened. It became a decision by default to build at the location we have been using since 1979.

One of us in his private devotions challenged Anba Abraam saying: “Anba Abraam you always loved the poor, may be you don’t want a new Church building in St. Louis.” We also wondered; If it was going to take \$850,000 to build in 1985, it must cost twice that much ten years later. In 1993; 3 years after the deadline, we woke up. We called around, we were told \$1.2 Million. We were also told; banks do not lend money to non-profit organizations, especially Churches. Add to all this an ethnic Church!

The Miracle: Somehow, the construction business was weak all over the country in the late 1993. This affected both construction firms and banks. We got three bids ranging from \$850,000 to \$1.2 M, but when we went back to the \$1.2 M bidder, the vice president told our member charged with the project that the bid was a ROM (Rough Order of Magnitude). When they sat to discuss it, they found ways to reduce the bid. This they did. Final bid was ~\$650,000. If this is not a miracle, I don’t know what is!

Back to the bank and financing issues, the same bank which refused us funding in 1985, came up with a construction/mortgage loan package which was extremely competitive accepting the signatures of five members of the congregation as co-signers with the Church. It even became sweeter when another bank got on the action and offered same terms, with 1% less in interest. This made the first bidder to meet the new terms. His Grace Bishop Tadros came one more time to St. Louis, we had a vote under his direction, and in his presence. The project as proposed received majority approval.

Construction started on October 1, 1993. As the project progressed, there was some problems related to the weather (extreme cold, and heavy snow not common for St. Louis). Seems like the old devil did not want it to reach completion. But starting in March, 1994 the weather improved and we started to see the Church building taking beautiful shape with high windows, curved roof, and Coptic style (half circle) spherical domes. We got more aggressive, we asked that the basement level floor be completed with the Church and have a functional kitchen and Social Hall/Sunday School/Nursery compound user ready on opening day. WOW!

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

In June 1994, His Holiness Pope Shenouda was on a visit to the USA. Fr. Bassellious showed him photos of the building under construction. Pope Shenouda was thrilled, but was not sure it will be ready for consecration on a second visit to the USA planned for the fall of that same year.

We had October First as a tentative date for opening/consecration. The contractor promised to do all he could. Every sub-contractor involved worked extra hard to meet the date. Invitations were sent out to heads of Churches, civic groups, members and friends of the Church. We were able to finish everything except for carpeting, air-conditioning, and painting of the altar rooms. We were given a 24 hour temporary building use permit by the city of Maryland Height just to complete the consecration.

On Saturday, October 1, 1994; His Holiness accompanied by their Grace bishop Serabion and bishop Karas arrived at 7:00 PM to open the new Church Building. In attendance his holiness the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church in India, who was on an unrelated visit to St. Louis, and his eminence arch-bishop Rigalli of the Roman Catholic Arch-diocese of St. Louis among other heads of Churches, priest, lay people. The Church was overflowing with its children, friends, and honored guests. This Saturday evening service was followed with a Sunday consecration service, and we had to close the building for two more months to finish construction.

The new building is in use since that time. We are all now united on one thing: We are glad a new Church building was completed for the glory of God and we all now know the power of God and the intercession of his saints, the like of St. Mary and Anba Abraam. And, it is always better to seek knowledge and use wisdom in gaining consensus. Sometimes, guided by the Holy Spirit, we take bold steps, like going ahead with the purchase of land, and the commissioning of architectural drawings. But, the conclusion was through a long convincing process. And we all won.

Concluding Remarks

We tried to present to our dear readers a glimpse of the life, wonders and miracles of Anba Abraam, Bishop of Fayoum, Friend of the Poor. His example can be a guide to help us to change our view of things, remembering the teachings of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” (Luke 12:33-40).

There are three major boasts (columns) on which the Christian faith stands: Prayer, Fasting, and Giving. Anba Abraam reached perfection in all three areas. But Above all is LOVE. Anba Abraam knew love, because he knew God (God Is Love), better than any one in his generation.

How about tribulations, Anba Abraam suffered many. He was accused, dismissed and even thrown out, but: “The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.” (Matthew 10-:24)

Anba Abraam completed every good thing and at the end he heard the voice of our Lord saying to him: “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” (Matthew 25:23). We the believers in all generations respond Axios, Axios, Axios (Worthy, Worthy, Worthy). Ava Abraam Bi-Episcopos Ente-Fayoum (Anba Abraam Bishop of Fayoum). Glory Always be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. One God, Amen.

References:

1. Bible Quotations: King James Version.
2. “The Life of the Saint Anba Abraam Bishop of Fayoum;” Fr. Mikhail Saad, Alexandria, Egypt (Arabic)

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

(Fr. Mikhail Saad researched every single story he documented. I met him in 1978, in Denver, Colorado and he spent the night in my house at the time, in Loveland, Colorado. We spoke about many things. While he was growing up, he saw Anba Abraam, and many of the people quoted in his book were known to him personally)

3. "Abbot Abraam," Fr. Tadros Yacoub Malaty, 1971 (Arabic/English)

4. Quotations of the Book: "Modern Sons of the Pharos, S.H. Leeder, London, England 1918" Came from Fr. T.Y. Malaty.

5. "The Saint Anba Abraam;" Malak Luka, Mahaba Bookstore, 1991 (Arabic)

6. "Anba Abraam: " Special Edition Commemorating Publication of his Portrait in 1957; Mahaba Message, Monthly Magazine, Mahaba Bookstore, , June/July 1987 (Arabic)

7. Memory of My Parents, Sunday School Teachers, Coptic Heritage About Our Orthodox Saints.

*Khen Ephran., em-eviot, nemi epsheri, nemi ebnevma thouav . tetrias en omosios. Axias, Axias, Axias, te-agia maria ti parthenos.
Axios Axios, Axios, ava abraam bi-episkopos*

Meaning:

*In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God Amen.
Worthy Worthy Worthy St. Mary the Pure Virgin. Worthy Worthy Worthy St.
Abraam the Bishop.*

*This Is the Day, This Is the Day, This Is the Day The Lord Has Made, The
Lord Has Made. Let Us Rejoice, Let Us Rejoice and be Glad In It and be
Glad In It. This comes from Psalm 118 and is sang in Arabic, Coptic, or
English in Church Liturgy:*

*"Halleluia Vai Be pi. eheo itah, epshoic samiov. Maren theleel enten enouv
emoun enkhitf. Oh epshoic eak-eh nahmeen, Oh epchoic ak eh soteen
nenmoit. Evesmarout enge vi ethnio khenevran, eme-epchoic. Allelluia"*

***Glory Always be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit
Now and Forever. Amen***

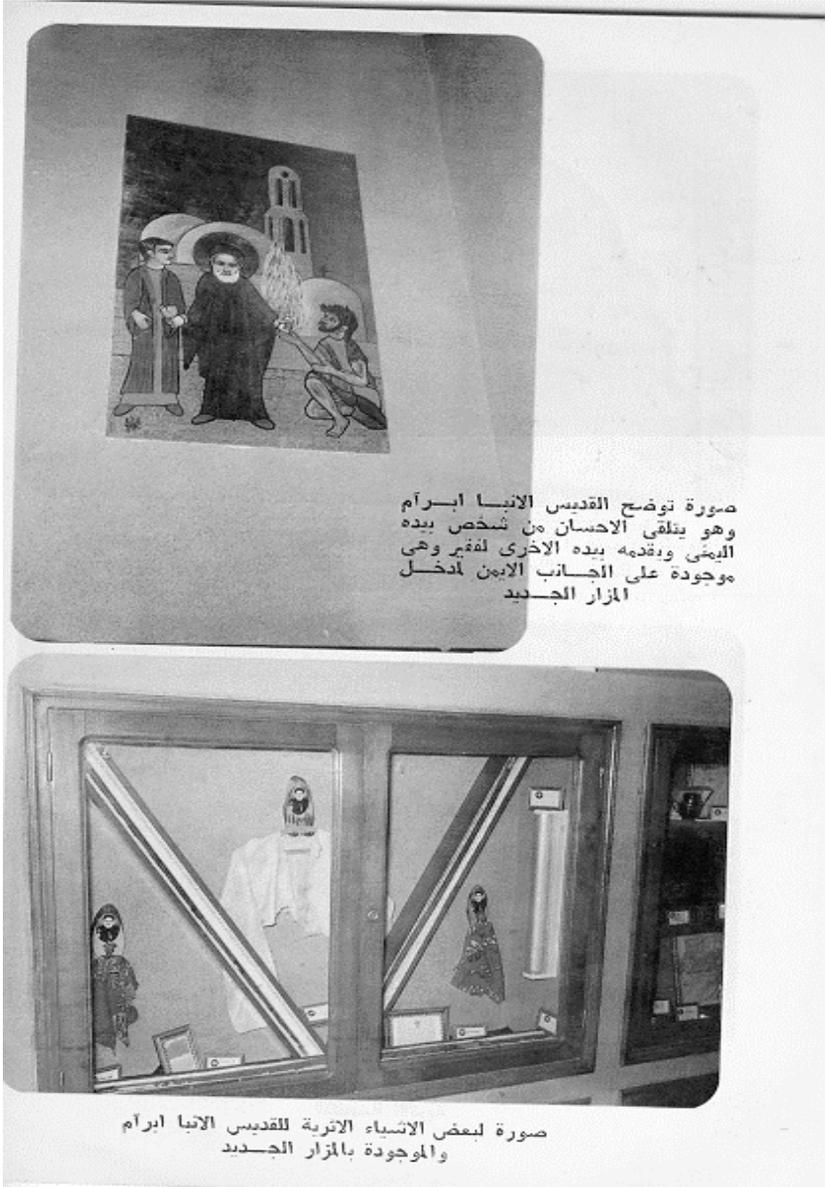
*May our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ bless us all and give us the
wisdom to take care of our church not only building but also, and most
important souls of those whom he entrusted us with. Glory always be to the
Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Now, and forever. Amen.*

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Doxology for Anba Abraam, Bishop of Fayoum:

The lamp that lights
Fayoum and all Egypt
For His wonders and miracles
and his love for Christ
 The one with crown of jewels
 The friend of the anchorites
 The friend of the righteous and prophets
 Who followed our Lord Christ
He is Anba Abraam
The Bishop of Fayoum
The true shepherd
The teacher of virtues
 David taught us in truth
 That blessed are those
 Who love the meek and poor
 The Lord will save their souls
Like our Father Abrahaam
The Father of Issac and Jacob
You loved to show mercy
And completed all commandments
 You were used to witness to the truth
 You were used to eat with the poor
 With great humility
 You loved your sheep
The lovers of material things
Sought new buildings
But you built in heaven
Heavenly new places
 How many are your wonders
 You healed the sick
 You prophecied about great things
 You cast out the Devils
You became an example
With your pure example
With love and mercy
And witness to the truth
 Ask the Lord on our behalf
 Our father anba Abraam
 The Bishop of Fayoum
 So He may forgive us our sins.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum



Upper: Photo Depicting Anba Abraam Accepting and Giving Alms
Lower: Historic Service Objects From The Time of Anba Abraam

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum



صورة للصندوق الذي كان به جسد القديس ويظهر كما هو
دون أن يفسد رغم مرور ٧٣ عامًا . .



صورة للجزء السفلى من المقصورة الجديدة ويظهر البرنس
المفوف حول الصندوق الذي وضع به القديس الانبا ابرآم
في المزار الجديد

Upper: Casket, Showing the Body of Anba Abraam Not Changed After 73 Years
Lower: New Casket In A New Entombment Installed 1987.

Anba Abraam, the Bishop of Fayoum

Please call or write. We really would like to hear from you. Also remember to **pray continuously and rejoice always**. A prayer of thanksgiving is always appropriate (In all conditions, concerning every condition, and upon all conditions). Pray for others before you pray for yourself, ask for spiritual gifts before you ask for material gifts. Follow the example of Anba Abraam and show more love for the poor. Praises are the highest level of prayer, don't miss the praise (Tasbeha) services of your Church. God Bless You and Yours.



**His Holiness Pope Shenouda III
117th Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch
of the See of St. Mark (1971-)
Church Dedication and Altar Consecration, Oct. 1, 1994
St. Mary & St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church**

**The Church Needs Your Help in Paying the Bank Loan . Please send
Tax Deductible Contributions to: Church Building Payment Fund
St. Mary & St. Abraam
Coptic Orthodox Church
1843 Ross Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63146**



**St. Mary & St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox
Church, St. Louis, MO 63146, USA
(Dedicated: 1 OCT 1994)**

This publication is the fifth in a series:

- 1) Brief Commentary on the Book of Revelation**
- 2) Essays for Orthodox Youth,**
- 3) Rituals, Signs, and Symbols**
- 4) Anba Abraam, The Bishop of Fayoum**
- 5) Anba Abraam, The Bishop of Fayoum:
Part II: Wonders and Miracles**

We are trying to cover various topics for the English speaking members of our congregations in their language. All donations go to paying a loan for church building project for the Coptic Orthodox congregation in St. Louis. Through your prayers and financial support, we were able to get the building completed but we still owe the bank \$500,000. All donations are tax deductible. And more important, "The Lord Loves a Cheerful Giver" May the Lord use this publication for the Glory of His Wonderful Name. Please call or Write if you need more help in understanding our Christian faith.

Anba Abraam, The Bishop of Fayoum

St. Mary's Message

St. Mary & St. Abraam
Coptic Orthodox Church
1843 Ross Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63146

NON PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSATAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS
Permit 5265

Fr. Bassellious Sedrak, Arch-priest
(314) 434-0531

