

COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH
DIOCESE OF QENA

Blessed *Servant*



Life & Miracles
of the Thrice Blessed His Grace Late Bishop Makarios of Qena

Introduction

It is my pleasure to present this book to all our English speaking children, about the life and miracles of the Thrice Blessed, the Late Bishop Makarios, Bishop of Qena and its tributaries in Upper Egypt who departed to heaven in 1991 while praying the Divine Liturgy. As you read this book, God's work with him and the power of the Holy Spirit that supports the saints and the church, will be evident.

The amazing video of Bishop Makarios' last Liturgy is the reason for the spread knowledge of his saintly life, almost to the entire world, although he was unknown to many during the course of his life. Since his departure, his saintly aroma has spread widely, capturing the hearts of many who never even knew him prior to his departure; therefore, we felt obligated to publish books in Arabic about his life and miracles. To date, there are a total of 8 published books in the Arabic language.

While we have been trying to produce an English translation of His Grace Bishop Makarios' saintly life for quite a while, it took some time until God arranged, through Abba Makarios' prayers, for a blessed family to take on the blessings of this work.

I wish to all of you, from the bottom of my heart, all blessings and grace. I sincerely hope you enjoy reading about the holy life of Bishop Makarios and that you follow his faith, as it is written: "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct." (Hebrews 13:7)

My heartfelt thanks to the family that worked on the translation and to all who helped produce this book. May God bless them all and grant them their heart's desires, through the prayers and

intercessions of our mother Saint Mary, all the choir of the heavenly hosts, our fathers the apostles, the martyrs and all the saints, and the blessings of the great saint Bishop Abba Makarios and the blessings of our generation's teacher, who has the golden tongue, His Holiness Pope Abba Shenouda III and all honored metropolitans and bishops.

To our LORD be due all glory and honor forever, Amen.

HG Bishop Cherubim,

Bishop of Qena and Its Tributaries

HIS GRACE BISHOP MAKARIOS

HIS LIFE AT A GLANCE

His Grace (HG) Bishop Makarios was born on Wednesday, September 10, 1923 (the 5th day of the Coptic month of El Nasii, 1639 AM)¹ in the village of Awlad Yehia, Dar El Salam, Sohag, Egypt. His name was Helmy Ayob Mikhael and was born to righteous parents, Ayob Mikhael and Rena Shenouda.

As a young lad, Helmy studied in the village's grammar school and then worked as a farmer and a shepherd. According to his brother, Aziz, when Helmy was young, he used to attend the family spiritual meeting every Sunday; he was the only child that gave up play-time with the other children in order to listen to the Bible and pray with the adults.

One day, Helmy left his village to visit one of his relatives, Tawfik Abaskhiron. During this visit, Helmy revealed his love and desire for the monastic life, however Mr. Abaskhiron did not encourage Helmy and refused such an idea. Later, Helmy went with two of his relatives, Kamal Attiatalla and Labib Meshraky, to the mountain east of the village of El Kosheh. There, they sought the guidance of a blessed monk who lived in this

¹ The Coptic year is an extension of the ancient Egyptian civil year. This calendar is still in use by farmers throughout Egypt, as it aids them in tracking the various agricultural seasons. The Coptic calendar has 13 months, 12 of which are made up of 30 days and an intercalary month at the end of the year, which is made up of either 5 or 6 days, depending on whether or not it is a leap year. The Feast of Neyrouz marks the first day of the Coptic year. The Coptic calendar started in the year 284 AC, the year in which Diocletian became the Roman Emperor; his reign was marked by torture and mass execution of Christians, especially in Egypt. Hence, the Coptic year is identified by the abbreviation AM (for Anno Martyrum or "Year of the Martyrs").

mountain. When they told him of their desire to become monks, the monk answered and said, "Kamal and Labib should go back home and get married, but Helmy should go to the monastery." And so it was, on Friday, June 7, 1946 (Pashons 30, 1662 AM), that Helmy joined the monastery of St. Mary El Baramous and was ordained a monk on November 21, 1946 (Hathor 12, 1664 AM). His new monastic name was the monk (El Raheb) Adam.

On Wednesday, March 26, 1947 (Baramhat 17, 1665AM), El Raheb Adam was ordained as a deacon by the late Bishop Thomas of Tanta, and then went on to join the Theological School of Helwan in October 1948. On Palm Sunday, April 2, 1950 (Baremoude 4, 1668 AM), he was ordained a priest by the late Bishop Makarios, the Abbot of the monastery, and was named Father Boles El Baramousy. In May 1953, Father Boles El Baramousy graduated from the Theological School and shortly after, October 1953, he was appointed to serve the church of Saint George in Bor Foad. On Sunday, March 25, 1956 (Baramhat 16, 1674 AM), Father Boles was promoted to a protopriest (Hegomen).¹

On Sunday, September 19, 1965, Father Boles El Baramousy was ordained a bishop for the diocese of Qena, Qift, Naqada, Dishna, and the Red Sea area, and was given the name Bishop (Abba) Makarios; he remained on his seat for over a quarter of a century until he rested in the LORD on Sunday, February 3, 1991 (Tobi 26, 1707 AM) as he was praying the Holy Liturgy. May his prayers and blessings be with us all, Amen.

¹ Also called "Hegumenos" meaning a "disposer," for he disposes church affairs together with his brethren, the priests.

His Monastic Life

HG Bishop Makarios joined the monastery of Saint Mary El Baramous when he was about 23 years old. At the monastery, he became a disciple of three great elders of the desert, Father Boles El Baramousy the Great, Father Faltas El Baramousy, and Father Abd Elthalouth the Ethiopian. He served them with a pure and joyful heart, washing their clothes, cleaning their cells, and filling their basins with water. They therefore loved him very much and bestowed their blessing upon him. Not only did he attend to the needs of the elders, but with an obedient, humble, and thankful heart, he took on the majority of the monastery's services.

One of the fathers who lived with Bishop Makarios in the monastery for quite some time said, "HG was very organized in his spiritual life, his countenance, his personal life, and in his cell. He held fast to his monastic canon, through *metanyias*,¹ praying the psalms, and fasting until nighttime daily; HG broke his fast by eating bread and cumin for 12 years."

As a monk, HG preferred to remain isolated, minimizing his interactions with the other monks and any monastery visitors; his time was spent within his cell, completing his chores, or in the church. He was a typical example of a silent monk who only spoke when necessary; when he did speak, he would use a few words to get his point across. His words were so simple, yet they touched the hearts of those who heard them, as it reflected the way he lived.

¹ Metanyia means prostration. There are three different reasons why we prostrate: for worship, when we enter the church and prostrate before the Holy Altar; for respect, in the presence of the Pope or bishop; for repentance, to show sorrow for our sins.

Not only was HG Bishop Makarios quiet and simple, but he was also very humble. He never engaged in any disputes nor caused pain or hardship to others. He spent most of his time in solitude within his cell, studying and completing his daily canon. He exemplified the true meaning of a monk through his lifestyle, his way of dealing with others, his countenance, and his self-discipline and control. HG rarely laughed, but when he did, he did so in the most polite manner, as deemed fit for a true monk who does not care for the earthly matters, even those that seem important.

As a monk, HG devoted his mind to his monastic duties. His ultimate goal and dedication was to live with Christ, for whom he left his family, village, and all that he had, following Saint Paul's saying, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." (Galatians 2:20)

At the beginning of his monastic life, HG himself mentioned that he saw a vision in which he was holding a cross and the Brass Serpent, and was praying the absolution. He mentioned this vision to his father of confession, who said to him "brother, you will be a bishop," and so it was.

After his graduation from the Theological School of Helwan, he was appointed to serve in Bor Foad. He was so loved by the entire congregation, and he himself said that he read an uncountable number of books during this period. Then HH Pope Kyrillos VI chose him to be his secretary. HH loved him dearly and used to call him Father Boles the Simple,¹ and always used to call him saying, "Come, O blessed."

¹ His Holiness probably called him by this name after Father Boles the Simple, the disciple of Saint Anthony the great (the father of monasticism).

Our Father Boles had a strong relationship with the LORD and this was the secret to his strength, humility, and righteousness. He was truly a man of prayers, always fleeing to God for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This was the only solution he had for any problems that he faced.

As the father of confession to the nuns of Abi Saifain Convent in Old Cairo, Father Boles used to pray before listening to any confession, asking God for His grace, that he may be able to give each nun the appropriate advice that suits her. When faced with a question or a problem that he did not know how to deal with, he would answer in humility, "I don't know, but go now my daughter to your cell and pray, and leave me here to pray that God my Savior might guide me." After praying, he would tell the nun, "As for me, I don't know anything, but God has given me this answer..." The advice given to the nuns by HG Bishop Makarios would always be the appropriate solution to the problem.

If one of the nuns forgot to confess a sin or if, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, Father Boles knew that she was in need of some guidance on a certain issue, he would kindly pretend and mention to the nun that he himself had a problem; this would trigger her to recall her own problem or sin, and she would therefore gain the opportunity to seek his guidance.

HG was great in his simplicity and righteous spirit, and so the light emitted from within him. His spirit was anointed by the Holy Spirit, and God entrusted him with the treasures of His true knowledge. And with his light spirit and pure soul, HG Bishop Makarios provided the children of God with pure and straight teachings from the well of truth.

So his words were effective; his advice penetrated the hearts of the nuns and sank to the bottom of their souls. His humility and

purity were a living example to all the nuns, encouraging them to follow his footsteps in meekness.

His Holy Inner Life

HG Bishop Makarios took his spiritual life very seriously. He was watchful, spiritually vigilant, and prudent in following his daily monastic canon, prayers and metanyias. He used to pray all his psalms and prayers during their respective times, with many tears and extreme reverence.

The beloved Tamav Eriny, the abbot of Saint Philopateer (Abi Saifain) Convent said that her convent was honored to have had Father Boles El Baramousy pray the first mass on the first altar in the convent; he also prayed his last mass there on January 19, 1991, fifteen days prior to his departure from the earth.

His Grace had a great deal of transparency and he used to feel the needs of his children. At one point, the Convent of St. Philopateer was going through financial hardship. The convent did not have any money to even buy vegetables, so Tamav Eriny went to her cell to pray and put the matter in the hands of the LORD. A few minutes later, she was told that Father Boles El Baramousy had arrived, although this was not his customary visitation time. As soon as he saw Tamav Eriny he asked her, "Does the convent need anything?" The beloved mother was surprised at the question, and she asked him how he knew of their need. He replied that the Martyr Abi Saifain told him of the convent's hardships and continued to say: "After I finished the Liturgy, I wanted to get some rest before going to the patriarchate (as he was the secretary of HH Pope Kyrillos VI). As soon as I closed my eyes, I heard a voice saying 'get up, take money and go to the Convent of Abi Saifain.' I opened my eyes, made the sign of the cross and thought to myself that this may

be one of the devil's tricks. So once more, I closed my eyes but I heard the voice again saying, 'I am the martyr Abi Saifain and I am telling you to get up, take money, and go to my convent in Old Cairo.' After this, I was sure that this was a message from God, so I took the money I had in the closet and brought it over." Tamav Eriny then told Father Boles the whole story and praised God for His mercy and thanked His martyr Abi Saifain.

One day, Father Boles met with Father Attalla of Saint Mary's monastery El Moharak, as the latter was responsible for printing the hymn books that are used by the deacons during Liturgy. During their conversation, Father Attalla mentioned that he liked Father Boles' tunic; at once, with great simplicity, Father Boles took off his tunic and gave it to him. When Father Attalla offered to pay for it, Father Boles answered that he did not need any money in return, but instead suggested that Father Attalla provide hymn books, up to the monetary value of the tunic, to the Convent of Abi Saifain. There was only one book in the entire convent that all the nuns shared and rotated amongst themselves to memorize the hymns. So Father Attalla, as agreed upon, delivered new hymn books to the convent. The number of books sent to the convent was sufficient enough to allow for each nun to have her own book, and there was an additional 10 copies remaining.

Father Boles was simple, yet wise; he used his wisdom while demonstrating great love and pity to others. The late Mother Aghapy of Abi Saifain Convent had mentioned that she used to brush her teeth every morning before going to the Liturgy and partaking of the Holy Eucharist. When she heard from the other nuns that she should not do so, she asked her father of confession, Father Boles, who answered her and said, "I will ask you a question, where does the digestive system start?" "In the mouth," Mother Aghapy answered. "Then the mouth should also fast," he replied.

After the Late Metropolitan Kyrillos of Qena departed to the heavens, His Holiness Pope Kyrillos VI performed an altar draw, where he wrote the names of Father Ekladios of the monastery of Saint Anthony, Father Antonios El Baramousy, and another blank piece of paper. Following the Divine Liturgy, HH invited one of the deacons to draw one of the three pieces of paper in the presence of the entire congregation. The deacon picked the blank paper, which meant that God wanted someone else for this diocese. So HH Pope Kyrillos chose Father Boles El Baramousy for this task. On Saturday, September 18, 1965, during the Vespers raising of incense, HH ordained Bishop Makarios over the diocese of Qena, Ous, Naqada, Qift, Dishna, and the Red Sea area.

Since the time of his enthronement, HG started to serve this far spread diocese with all his might; he used to visit his entire congregation in their homes once a year. Nothing could hinder him from visiting them, even during his last days when he became very sick. It is noteworthy to mention that his diocese was divided into 4 dioceses after his departure; this is how vast and spread his diocese was.

HG had always wished to die while serving or during the Divine Liturgy, and his wish was granted to him. He departed during the Liturgy as he prayed the "O our Master" part, which is said before the Fraction prayer of the Gregorian Liturgy. As he was saying "O You who gave to His holy disciples and saintly apostles at that time, now also give to us and to all...", he dropped on the floor and was given the eternal life.

As a good shepherd, HG Bishop Makarios gave up his rest and necessities for the service and salvation of his children. He never passed up an opportunity to serve, and he did so thankfully and happily, always asking for God's help, protection and guidance. As he loved God so much, he did all that pleases

Him prudently, whether by his words, deeds or his thoughts. His personal life was a daily sacrifice, barely giving rest to his body. He spent his nights in prayers and his days in fasting and unconditional love; he toiled earnestly to achieve pardon for himself and for his children as well. He did this in secrecy, lest anybody sees and praises him and he loses his reward. He always used to say a famous Egyptian saying, "to keep your candle lit, you must hide it from the wind."

HG had a deep feeling within him that he is falling short on all his rituals in his service. He was often seen weeping like a little child and saying, "I don't pray;" by this he meant that he does not pray as he should. However, the spiritual power that was within him was far from being hidden; the reflection of his honest personal life was manifested in his life, words, and service.

Father Samuel of Naqada tells us that HG used to spend some nights over the houses of the priests when he went out on his visits. The priests used to leave their homes for HG so that he may feel comfortable. It also happened that Father Samuel had an apartment that HG used to lodge in, and there was a man who really wanted to see HG. So Father Samuel took this person to the apartment and waited a long time, knocking on the door with no response. Father Samuel started to get worried, so he used his personal key to open the apartment door; at this point, they saw that HG's door was closed, so they waited in the living room. They started to hear HG praying so deeply, as if he was struggling with somebody. HG kept praying with great passion, to the point that the apartment started to shake fervently; so Father Samuel and the man fled from the apartment with great fear.

A similar situation happened with Mr. Milad Ghattas, as HG was staying over his house during his visit at Safaga. Mr. Ghattas

provided HG with a private room and his family stayed in another room. At night, they started to hear a great struggle, as if HG was fighting with someone with great passion. Mr. Ghattas and his family felt so unworthy to be in the same place with such a great saint, to the degree that they could not stay in the apartment and went out to the street.

HG used to spend all his nights in prayer with lots of tears, and if he would sleep, it would only be from midnight until 2 or 3 AM. It happened that a person who lived across the street from the bishopric used to see HG standing praying, praising, and reading the bible all night. This person spread the word about what he had seen, and since then, HG never prayed in this room again. And if it happened that someone asked him to rest, he would say: "People need someone to comfort them, they come from far away seeking some comfort, and I must attend to their needs in this troublesome age and give them rest." He gave himself to serve the children of God to the last breath, as our Master and LORD Jesus Christ did. He was as a candle that burns to give light and peace for his congregation, and he was a living example of what Saint Paul said: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

HG was a great saint that manifested the life of our LORD Jesus Christ in all his deeds and words. He was the aroma of Christ among us, as you were able to feel the LORD's presence in his life at all times.

His virtues were many and uncountable; no matter how knowledgeable we may be, we cannot comprehend or understand its depth. He showed us what we used to hear and

read about the early fathers of the church, in the lives of the great saints, hermits, anchorites, popes and great monks, in a clear and simple way. He was growing in virtue everyday, as we saw marvelous secrets of hidden treasures full of precious virtues and a heavenly aroma.

HG was full of Christ's love; he was able to show that same love to his children, and to hold captive those who went astray and were living in deep sin. He knew everything about them, as God granted him this gift; but with great love and a merciful heart, he was able to capture them and turn them into fiery servants, or rather, saints with a real fellowship with God. He never judged or made anyone feel like a sinner; but as a father, he gave hope to the sinner, that he might throw him into the bosom of our LORD Jesus and direct him to confession, communion, and to a knowledge of the importance and strength of praying the psalms. He always said that nobody was strong enough to withstand sin, and for this reason, he never judged; but instead, with great wisdom, he led souls to salvation with words that were few and simple, yet so deep.

HG Bishop Makarios had a great and forgiving heart. He endured all who reproached or dealt with him wrongfully, responding with great patience and a simple, accepting heart; if they would return to their senses and ask for HG to forgive them, he would accept them with great love and complete forgiveness, as if nothing had ever happened. Moreover, he would visit them, pray for them, and absolve them, asking God to care for them and their families. HG acted as a living example of Saint Paul's saying, "Love suffers long and is kind; ...does not seek its own...bears all things...endures all things." (1 Corinthians 4-7)

He was a father to everyone; he had the gift of making every person feel like he was their own father and nobody else's. He

was therefore very loved by all, because he loved all very much. He used to always recite the verse in Proverbs 27:19 that stated, "As in water face reflects face, so a man's heart reveals the man."

HG had a special love for the priests; they always said, "HG's love for us is so deep, we never feel as though he is a boss or has any control over us, but rather a loving father who is zealous over his children and always watching over them, protecting them from all kinds of evil and risks, whatever they may be. If he learned that one of us was sick, struggling financially, or in any kind of hardship, he would not cease to ask about us continuously and pray for us all the time. We were his constant concern, as he felt that we were all he had, his children and his help in service. He used to be very happy if we were happy, and he dealt lovingly and in one accord with us. He always said that a successful service was a fruit of your love to each other, adding 'May God make you successful in your service and be a helper to you, because the yoke of service is too heavy' He also said, 'I don't want to be a burden on any one of you because the burden of the bishop is so heavy on the priest, and I don't want to be like that with any priest.'

Great Humbleness

HG used to say, "A fruitful tree's branches droop towards the ground, but a bare tree seems to stand with pride; likewise the meek and humble soul that possesses the fruits of the Holy Spirit looks down upon itself with humility, but the proud soul stands upright, because it lacks the fruits of the Spirit."

His Grace's humility was apparent to anyone who merely looked at him, without even hearing him speak. He was a living example of our LORD of Glory, Jesus Christ, who said "Take My

yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29)

HG loved our Lord Jesus Christ, and he sought Him with all his heart; Christ's image was therefore imprinted in the heart of HG Bishop Makarios. The more he lifted his eyes in prayer, the more that God revealed His glory to him, thereby allowing HG to recognize the extent of his self weakness and flaws, and to realize how much of the Lord's help and guidance he was in need of. If anyone ever told him about their self-pride, he would say, "Look to the saints that won victory before us, and were so great in their struggles, ascetics, love and good deeds, and think about how lacking we are next to them." He would also never accept a word of praise about himself, responding with, "Have mercy upon me, Satan troubles me much, I am the poor."

He was humble outwardly, as well as deep within his soul, in his words and acts, in his attire and in his prayers, in his dealings with others, and in his deepest feelings towards himself and those around him. He always felt like he was the least, and he had a gift of lifting others up while bringing himself down. Anyone who sat with him would walk out of his presence believing to be much better than HG. Not too many people can exhibit such humility, but it was a way of life for HG. He was often heard saying, "I am not educated, I don't know how to give a sermon, I am poor, I am weak and need God's mercy, that He may forgive my sins." These words, coming from deep within him, reflect how he truly viewed himself. No one ever felt that his humble words or actions were insincere, or that they were a means of showing off.

He was often seen sitting on his chair, listening to priests' sermons and crying wholeheartedly at their words, like a little child in need of learning from others. He never embarrassed or cut anybody off, but would give others a complete chance to

say everything; he would always be the last to talk. He never allowed anyone to carry his bag, Faragia,¹ or his cane; nor did he allow anybody to bring his shoes to him except his own disciple or a little deacon. He also did not allow anybody to do a metanyia before him; instead, he would make a metanyia back. He often said that when someone would do a metanyia to Pope Kyrillos VI, His Holiness would say in a low voice, "To You only is due worship O my LORD Jesus Christ." HG used to add that metanyias are also due when there is a quarrel between two people or when someone sins against another; both of them should do metanyias to each other and ask for the other's forgiveness.

Because he gave himself to the LORD, the LORD filled him with His Holy Spirit and its gifts, which are only given to the meek and humble. For example, HG had the gift of knowing a person's deepest thoughts; he could read any person he saw like an open book and he even knew things about people that they did not know about themselves. He was also a loving and kind father who was filled with mercy and pity for everyone. HG would tell stories, either about parables or miracles, that the people might see themselves in the story and receive some guidance. Other times he would make up stories about himself, depicting himself as one in need of humility. For example, he would say, "I am not praying the psalms as I ought to, I have no patience and am quick to anger," or "I suffer from the sin of pride." He truly meant it when he said such things, and after the other person would leave he would say, "I really hope that this person understood what I meant."

¹ A black tunic worn by monks and priests. It is black because it symbolizes the fact that they have died completely to the world, and everything in the world, and are now devoting their life to Christ.

If he wanted to direct someone or give advice, he would do it with great humility, as if he was not worthy to speak to the person. However, he was able to see deep inside the person and to know everything about him or her.

His words were simple, yet so deep. They reached into the depths of peoples' souls, and everyone who heard him felt joy and happiness and also benefited. When he spoke about the works of God, or edification of the souls, even if he took a long time, his listeners felt attracted, nourished, and satisfied; they were lifted up and captivated by his words. As he spoke the words of the Holy Spirit and saw the looks of praise and reverence in the eyes of his audience, he would say, "I don't know anything, I am not an educated person." He did this so as to escape the audience's vain glory and praise. If he talked about the heavens and eternal life, he would say, "I wish to just be able to get past the gates of heaven, even if I am the last one there."

His Simplicity and Self Denial

Matthew 11:25 says, "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank you Father, LORD of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.'" It is well known that simplicity is superior to worldly wisdom; as St. Paul says in his second epistle to the Corinthians, "For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscious that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you." (2 Corinthians 1:12) In this manner our blessed bishop conducted himself in the world, refusing any worldly wisdom. He never counted on any human being's help, no matter his or her rank or position, but instead used to flee to Him who holds all in His

hands and would say, "I don't know anyone except the LORD Jesus Christ;" then he would pray frequent Divine Liturgies during the fasting season, and any problem would be solved.

We can see this methodology in the book of Ezra in the Old Testament. King Artaxerxes sent Ezra and all willing Jews to rebuild the house of God and leave the land of captivity. Ezra knew he would face lots of troubles; but even though he was close to the king, he did not ask for his help against his adversaries, but instead said, "Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, 'The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him.' So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer."

Bishop Makarios was very wise, strong, and straight-forward. He never feared a human being and he always witnessed to the truth in his usual humble spirit. Even his prayers were simple and yet deep, expressing what he felt inside with profound faith and love.

Like a hidden treasure, many aspects of his life were kept secret. He often reiterated the Egyptian saying, "protect your candle, that it may stay lit," or in other words, hide your virtues, lest the enemy of righteousness steal them. He did not like to be recognized or to talk about his spiritual life; he hid his life from everybody, just as our LORD said, "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven."

(Matthew 6:1) "That your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."
(Matthew 6:4)

He was very clever when it came to fulfilling this verse, always working in silence and secrecy, lest anyone should see his works and praise him. He was so secretive with his works that people even began to think of him as a simple-minded man who lacked credibility. They had no knowledge of his true inner man and high level of spirituality until after his departure from this earth. At that time, they realized his true glory and the saintly life he had lived.

During one afternoon liturgy in the Lenten season, HG was distributing the Holy Blood (because he had poor eyesight, he could only distribute the Blood, and not the Body). A strong, beautiful light appeared next to the Chalice, and was seen by one of the female servants. She thought to herself that this light meant that a Spirit Born¹ must be present, and that HG must also be one of them. As she thought this, Bishop Makarios instantly looked at her. That night she had a dream in which she saw HG sitting on his Throne in the bishopric; she went to get his blessing, but he refused. She kept trying to even kiss his feet, but he did not let her. Then she woke up and told herself never again to say that HG was one of the hermits. The second night, she dreamt of HG again in the same surroundings as the previous dream; but this time he was smiling and he extended his cross to her to take a blessing, and she was very happy. This

¹ Better known as Anchorites, the Spirit Born. They are usually called "El Souah" in Arabic. This type of monk has reached a very high level of spirituality where his spirit is heavier than his body, because he is fervent in spirit, and he rarely eats. They live in groups and can easily move from one place to another in a very short time, without anyone seeing them.

shows us the extent to which HG kept himself hidden, even in the subconscious of people.

God Answers His Prayers

As the giver of all good gifts, God granted HG Bishop Makarios all his requests. As it is written, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (James 5:16) HG himself often repeated the verse, "His ears are attentive to their cry" (Psalm 34:15), referring to those who love God from all their hearts. Over the course of his bishopric, which lasted over 25 years, HG never asked God for something (for his children) that was not granted to him. For example, HG used to ask God to give children to those who were childless; he even used to name the children before they were born or even conceived. He also used to ask that God may solve certain problems, or send a righteous spouse to his children, or to help students pass their exams. Whatever he asked, God granted, so he became as a healing ointment for his people's wounds.

His Wise Counsel

HG was full of wisdom, as he was to the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19). Occasionally, there would be differences between him and the priests regarding certain issues, but it would only be a matter of days, or even hours, until they would realize that his counsel was the best, as he, in humility, would say to the priests that the perfect solution is in the multitude of counselors. (Proverbs 24:6)

The congregation knew this about HG, so they flocked to him every day, telling him their problems and tribulations, with a profound faith that they would hear the counsel of God on his lips. Therefore, they always left his presence in joy and delight.

As for young men and women, they always sought his advice regarding marriage and their future plans, and heeded his words with joy. Those who did not follow his advice would confess later, with great agony and regret, that he or she should have listened.

In essence, the entire congregation had put their trust in HG and listened to him, knowing that he was a wise counselor who received his wisdom from heaven. His counsel was a reason for great rest and joy among his people. He depended completely on God, and God granted him His wisdom. He used to say, "there is nothing we can do greater than praying Divine Liturgies;" and so he offered all his needs, the churches needs, and the congregation's needs on the altar, before the true sacrifice of the Eucharist. The usual request HG had during the Liturgy was, "LORD, please take charge of my life and bestow your peace upon the diocese."

Therefore, the diocese lived in perfect peace during his time, and every satanic wind that blew on it used to come to nothing quickly, and even turned to the benefit of the diocese. HG had committed his life and his diocese in Jesus' hands, and looked to Him as the true director and counselor of the diocese. If anyone would come to him with a problem or sickness, he used to say to them, "May God be with you," "May God heal you," or "May God solve your problem," and then he would say to the priests, "if people only believe these simple words and take them with faith, they would get all that they want."

His Ascetics

Our beloved Bishop loved prayers so much, especially the prayers of the psalms. Mar-Isaac the Syrian had said, "The darkness of mind starts if you become lazy in completing your

psalms. And if you neglect its times, God's help departs from you, so your soul sways to evil little by little, because leaving the right direction only means drifting to the left."

When HG was a monk, he used to pray the psalms in their due times, but after becoming a bishop he used to pray them in the morning and at night. He once said, "A spiritual man has to pray the psalms" and then added, "I cannot sleep under any condition without praying my psalms. If any person neglects his psalms even once, either devils devour him or he becomes so cold spiritually and careless toward prayers, and it becomes very difficult to go back to his warm prayers." Regarding the priests HG would advise and say, "The priest must pray the psalms, even if he needs to do so at any time of the day, according to his service and responsibilities (for example, between liturgies, anointing of the sick (unction), spiritual home visits, congregation problem solving and others)." In his later years, HG Bishop Makarios' sight grew dimmer as a result of his diabetes, and his memory weakened as a result of brain atherosclerosis;¹ as a result, he was unable to read or to recite all the psalms. But this was God's will, as the LORD wanted him to reach a different spiritual level, namely, prayers with no limits, wherever the Spirit guided him. Then HG started to have heavenly visions and revelations beyond the comprehension of humans, and experienced what the skillful fathers call ecstasy or "caught up."²

¹ Atherosclerosis is hardenings of the arteries which carry the oxygenated blood from the heart to the other parts of the body.

² This is a state of amazement and ecstasy, when the activity of the senses is suspended, such as what St. Paul said about himself "...was caught up to the third heaven...whether in the body or out of the body I don't know, God knows." (2 Cor 12:2)

HG loved prayers to a degree that is difficult to comprehend; he used to pray the psalms and midnight praises in his cell, and often, as he looked upon the icon of St. Mary that hung in his cell, he would see the icon emitting light. The light would get brighter and brighter, and then St. Mary's face would redden and she would turn into a complete person, with her full height engulfed in light. Even after leaving his cell, the face of HG would still be shining and his hands would become like candles, sparkling in a way that would attract the eyes. He would find himself in a state of great joy and delight.

To HG, prayer was everything. He spoke much with God, while limiting his dialogue with people. He was filled with God's presence and love, and this love overflowed from him and poured into the people around him, nourishing them. One of the amazing stories about HG involves a visit he made to Hurghada¹. While on this visit, a priest came to him one morning, accompanied by some visitors. They saw that HG's face was extremely flushed and shiny, as though glowing with heavenly light. They all gazed at him, mesmerized by this fascinating image. Seeing their amazement, HG laughed and said, "A hot shower makes one's face so red;" however, during a more private sitting, he explained what had really happened. HG had been very troubled and anxious about a certain matter. He prayed throughout the night with many tears and great strife, pleading with the LORD and entreating Him to solve the problem. As he prayed, a fiery chariot appeared to HG and a

¹ A city in the Red Sea Governorate of Egypt, and a tourist center located on the coast of the Red Sea.

voice from heaven said, "Ride along and fear not." HG got on the chariot and found himself in the sky, above a cloud on which the LORD stood. The LORD said to HG, "What is wrong, my son Makarios? Why are you upset, when I am with you?" The Lord spoke with HG for some time, and then HG found himself back in his room with his face shining.

The Virtue of Silence

Saint John of the Ladder¹ had said, "The ears of the quiet and silent hear wonders from God." As the church fathers have taught us, we should pray without ceasing, and we should recite the following prayer: O LORD Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy upon me, a sinner. While reciting this prayer, we should be in a quiet state of mind, with our eyes closed and our hands in a position of supplication. We should draw our minds into our hearts, regulate our breathing, and imagine that we are in God's presence. We should remember our sins and iniquities. Then our souls will feel completely quieted, and we will have a profound sense of God's presence, feeling no desire to speak to anyone else, and completely satisfied with and saturated in God's presence. HG lived this ideal form of prayer in his personal life.

When HG did speak, it was with the words of the Holy Spirit, which help, nourish, and give strength. His words were

¹ In Greek, St. John Klimakos; honored by the Church as a great ascetic, and author of the renowned spiritual book, *The Ladder*, from which his name comes.

priceless. He also had the gift of spiritual discernment, knowing what each person was capable of and giving to that person accordingly. For example, if a person was not spiritual at all, HG would not set high spiritual goals for that person; instead he would say, "You have to confess and take communion." Or, he would tell the person a story or a parable, as Jesus was accustomed to doing with his disciples, saying to them, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables." (Luke 8:10) However, with those who walked in the way of Christ and valued spirituality, HG would talk about higher spiritual stages, such as those of the ascetics and hermits. He would talk to them of heaven and the heavenly secrets, of angels, and of God's way of approaching and dealing with the soul.

In silence and quietness, this spiritual giant worked and served. His legacy can be explained by what Mar-Isaac the Syrian said: "Do not expect to learn anything about the kingdom of heaven from a man who did not experience complete silence for a long time, even if he was a wise teacher or someone who accomplished many great works. Quietness makes you shine like the sun and purifies you from ignorance."

His Fasting and Charitable Deeds

His Grace Bishop Makarios was an ascetic who excelled in fasting. As one of the Church Fathers said about fasting, "Receive healing for your soul from the table of those who fast and watch, those who are working in the LORD; deliver up your soul from the pit, because among those who fast sits the Beloved, who sanctifies them and turns their bitterness into indescribable sweetness; as the heavenly dwellers comfort and guide those who fast. Receive this healing for your life." From this we learn that those who fast have the power to heal souls;

as Jesus said, "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." HG also used to see heavenly souls attending the afternoon Liturgies during the season of the fast, sharing with us and rejoicing as we fast.

In keeping with his practice of hiding his virtues, HG often said, "I have a PhD in greed;" he claimed that he never gave anything to anyone. However, those who were close to him knew that he was always giving. During his annual visits, he would say to the priests that accompanied him, "Tell me about the needy families and after I leave their houses, you give them their needs." He used to accept all of the monetary offerings of these families so as not to embarrass anyone, and later he would send money back with the priests according to each family's needs.

One of these visits involved a family who was both needy and greedy. The man did not want to come out and meet with HG or to give him any money. After an argument between the man and his wife, the wife was forced to go to her neighbor and ask for money in order to give to HG; but HG refused to take anything from her, even though he was not accustomed to rejecting offerings. Instead he told her "Go return this money to whoever you borrowed it from," as he knew exactly what had happened.

On another visit, HG met with a man who was enduring severe financial hardships; HG gave this man all of the money that he had collected on his annual visit to this village. HG also happened to hear that one of his priests was in need; HG cried a lot and called the priest and paid for all of his needs. He always asked his priests to give special care to the needy families, especially those who were too shy to ask. All of the money that HG collected during his annual visits would go to the building, beautification, and services of the church.

Bishop Makarios and the Anchorites

The Anchorites are those who grow in the spirit and forget their basic earthly needs. Their bodies become light, so that their spirits, through the name of the Holy One, may be in charge. They are so consumed with the heavenly Groom that they forget they even have a body. Therefore, their bodies are not obstacles to flying. They are granted the qualities of spirits and angels, flying without being seen and crossing oceans in a twinkle of an eye, even though they are still in their flesh. These are the Anchorites, which means the Spirit Born.

There is no doubt that our blessed bishop grew in spirituality to a degree that made him a friend of the Anchorites; he became one of them.

It is beyond our minds to comprehend those who go against earthly logic, defy all the measures of gravity, and challenge the basics of this earthly life; therefore, we will observe the life of HG in order to come up with a few points that will illustrate to us how he attained this level of spirituality:

1. His Grace was in a state of constant prayer. As St. Theophan the Recluse¹ teaches us, prayer without ceasing is a constant existence in God's presence, and can be likened to feeding the fire (The Holy Spirit) with

¹ St. Theophan the Recluse, also known as "Theophan Затворник," (1815–1894) is a well-known saint in the Russian Orthodox Church. He is especially well-known today through the many books he wrote concerning the spiritual life, especially on the subjects of the Christian life and the training of youth in the faith. He also played an important role in translating the Philokalia from Church Slavonic into Russian.

logs (words of prayer). Through his unceasing prayers, our bishop found himself constantly in God's presence. He would sit reverently, in a way that suggested that he was sitting in the presence of the Almighty, as though he was one of the 24 elders sitting around the throne of the Holy One.

2. He had a fervent love for God and his children; he cared and prayed for them, and he was very concerned about all of their needs. He used to visit them at night, whether in their dreams, through visions, or in real time apparitions; he did this both during his life and after his departure, offering them advice and solutions to their problems.
3. He was a man of great humility and self denial, as evidenced by his escape from vain glory and any earthly praise; on the contrary, he tried to show himself to be an uneducated person who was not even capable of preaching or preparing a sermon. He showed himself to be a sinner who was in need of God's mercy, and he made himself inferior to others.
4. He possessed great simplicity, mingled with heavenly wisdom; as it says in Matthew 10:16, "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves."
5. He was very honest, and had a straight heart; he despised hypocrisy and self glory, and was righteous in all aspects of his life.
6. He had a pure heart and lived in a continuous state of repentance. This raised him to a high level of holiness, so that he was made worthy of the LORD's gift of being able to see people's deepest thoughts and sins. Because of his great humility and fatherly love for those around him, he would never judge them; instead, he would respond to their iniquities with great love and pity, and would help them to abandon their sins.

7. He was an ascetic who chose to live in poverty, and he was very patient with everyone, even those who reproached him. He responded to their transgressions with patience. Some people, however, would lead others to doubt the teachings of the church, or to believe heresies. If these people insisted on their own ways, despite HG's patient and loving attempts to lead them in the orthodox path, he became very stern with them. He grew very much in his ascetics during his final years, despite having an inflamed colon and being on many medications.

Because of these virtues and many more, our beloved bishop was full of the Holy Spirit and great glory. He used to say, "To be an anchorite is to attain a very high spiritual level; but as for myself, I need an entire year to be able to repent all of my sins." He also used to say, "My son, I do not know anything, but I only repeat what I have heard; I wish to repent from my sins so that I might attain this degree of spirituality."

His Grace mentioned that there are some anchorites who are capable of disappearing completely and fleeing to their dwelling places and monasteries. No one can see them, and they rarely talk with anybody; they have their own services, prayers and praises. Sometimes, however, they go out to help those in tribulations, hardships, or various trials. They also attend the prayers of the children of God, whether offered in their rooms or in the churches and monasteries.

Most of these anchorites now live in monasteries that are located in different regions: between the monasteries of St. Paul the First Anchorite, and St. Anthony the Great; in the eastern desert; and between the monastery of St. John of the Ladder, and the Light Tower of the Ladder; in the region of

Marsa Matruh;¹ and close to St. Bakhomios Monastery, as well as in many other places. For their food, they eat grass or green plants. They live in solitude and only meet at the time of prayers and the Divine Liturgy, for which they usually choose older and ancient churches to hold the services.

His Grace also mentioned an incident in which the anchorites went to a specific church and found the Holy Bread baker inside. They asked the baker to leave so that they could pray a Liturgy. HG also told us that when the anchorites come to the bishopric, the doors open for them and then close upon their departure. In order to move from place to place, they spread their hands out to form the shape of a cross, while saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy," and they fly into the sky. They look like birds that spread their wings and become engulfed in light, but they do not move their arms. Alternatively, a divine power in the form of a fiery chariot carries them away, or the power of the Spirit that lives within them carries them to where the Holy Spirit wishes to lead them.

There are also other anchorites who live in the world among us, such as HH Pope Kyrillos. The anchorites used to come to HH and attend liturgies with him. HH used to also visit people in their homes and appear to them.

HG Bishop Makarios used to pray in the ancient, deserted churches and monasteries, as well as in the anchorites' monasteries; the anchorites would often go and pray with him.

¹ Marsa Matruh stands some 240 km (149 miles) west of Alexandria, along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, on the main highway from the Delta to the Libyan border.

There is a well-known story in the village of Faw Bahry involving a visit by HG and a priest named Father Azer Toma (who departed to the LORD on January 16, 1973). Father Azer Toma was among the anchorites. While on a visit to one of the homes in this village, HG asked Father Azer, "Do you know how many columns are in the ancient church of St. Mary in Atrib?" Father Azer answered and said "44, according to what is written in history books." HG said to Father Azer, "History books? Or were you there praying with us? I saw you behind the column." Father Azer then became very quiet and tried to change the subject.

His Grace also told us that Father Azer (a priest in the church of Archangel Michael in Rahmania) used to always pray with the anchorites in a church below the current church of St. Peter in Qena and in the church of St. Blamon (this church is in an area called The Palace and the Hunter), as well as many other churches that are not known.

Nadia, a servant at the girls' orphanage in Qena, said, "3 months before Bishop Makarios' departure, early one morning at around 4 AM, we were working to prepare food for some visitors; I noticed that the light of St. Mark's church was on (the church is very close to the orphanage, separated only by a fence). The church was so brightly lit that I became curious as to what was going on at such an early hour. I climbed a wooden ladder and tried to listen to the prayers, since I thought the fathers must be praying a liturgy. However, I could not hear anything; I could only see the intense light. The next day I went to see HG and as we were sitting, he looked at me, smiled, and said, "Do not try to listen to what is going on again. The blessing

you have received is sufficient. What if you had fallen off the ladder and could not see such things anymore?" Nadia then said to HG, 'absolve me Your Grace, I will not do this again.'

Another servant, who was responsible for the girls' dormitory, told us about a time when she was not very happy with the girls in the dormitory; she told them that she would not pray or eat with them anymore. A week later, HG Bishop Makarios came to her at night in a dream, and he was very angry with her. He said to her, "Do not ever leave the girls for a long time like that, lest they become lukewarm in their spiritual lives." The following morning, she went to see HG; he looked at her lovingly and asked her about the girls in the dormitory. She apologized and promised him that she would not leave them again.

A man named Kamal Metry also told us the following story: "HG used to ask me to take care of a few things in the bishopric. Since I felt some fear about being there by myself, I asked a man named Gawargios to send someone to stay with me; but he sent me three young men who kept wandering from room to room, so I rebuked them. One of these young men had played around with the clock on the wall. It was a Saturday afternoon and HG was in Naqada. HG came back on Monday, he told me the following: 'Kamal, I was resting on Saturday afternoon and I dreamt that I came to the bishopric. Who played with the clock on the wall? I have never seen those kids before. Even Riad Rizk was sitting on this couch and never moved.' Then a woman named Feryal, who happened to be sitting with us, said to HG, 'What about me, Your Grace? What did I do?' HG replied, 'You were not with them, but Attiat was.' And HG was right; Feryal was not there, but Attiat was."

His Grace Bishop Makarios had told one of the priests that he should wake up at 4 AM to finish praying his psalms. Then HG came to this priest (the priest was unsure whether he was awake or dreaming) and said, "You are not permitted to wake up late in the morning." The priest was so disturbed that he went directly to HG to ask him about this vision, and whether it was from God or Satan. HG replied, "Satan cannot tell you what you were told, but either way, may God absolve you."

His Grace also told a close priest that during his prayer, he was carried to see a certain Bishop and to pray for him, as this Bishop was very sick. To this day, that Bishop is still alive.

Our beloved Tamav Eriny, the head of the Abu Safain Convent in Old Cairo, told us that a part of her responsibility in the convent was to guide and lead each nun in her spiritual path. One time she gave a nun spiritual direction, but the nun did not take it well and began to cry. Tamav Eriny sent another nun after her to console her and tell her that what happened was actually for her own good, and that she should accept directions from Tamav for her own spiritual benefit. However, the nun said, "I cannot see Tamav now, it will hurt her a lot to see me like this and she is already sick; I will go to her tomorrow." At night while the nun was praying, she saw Bishop Makarios standing in front of her. He used his cross to make the sign of the cross on him and on her, and then he asked her, "Why are you upset with your mother? Believe me, she loves you and cares for you and everything she has done is for your salvation. You must listen to her and be obedient, that God may bless you. Now go, make a metanyia to her, and ask her to forgive you." With great joy, the nun ran to Tamav Eriny saying, "Bishop Makarios came to me." She made a metanyia, asked for Tamav's forgiveness, and told her everything that had happened. At this time, Bishop Makarios was actually in Qena. How did he know what

happened between Tamav Eriny and the nun? How did he come to her?

Father Samuel of Naqada told us about one of his spiritual daughters who was in great trouble. She told Father Samuel that she used to consult with HG Bishop Makarios about her problems, but she was unable to get to him; so she stood before a picture of HG and prayed wholeheartedly, shedding many tears. Then HG came out of the picture, walked into the room, and said to her, "Your problem will be solved." He then went back into the picture, and through God's grace, the girl's problem was solved.

Father Abd El-Kodos of Naqada mentioned that he was supposed to pray a Divine Liturgy in the village of El-Khatara. The night before the Liturgy, Bishop Makarios came to him in a dream and told him, "Do not go in the morning to pray the Liturgy." Father Abd El-Kodos woke up surprised, telling himself that it was not possible that HG would tell him not to pray. He thought it must be Satan trying to prevent him from praying, so he told himself that he would go and pray the Liturgy in the morning. Father Abd El-Kodos then went back to sleep and HG came to him again and told him, "Father Abd El-Kodos, I am Bishop Makarios, not the devil, and I am telling you not to go and pray in the village of El-Khatara." Father Abd El-Kodos woke up puzzled again, thinking to himself, "Is it possible that the devil would appear in the likeness of Bishop Makarios and tell me not to go to pray the Liturgy?" Father Abd El-Kodos again decided that he must go pray Liturgy in the morning. He slept for a third time, and this time Bishop Makarios came to him again and said, "Do not go to the village of El-Khatara; there are many troubles there; do not pray tomorrow." Father Abd El-Kodos woke up again, but still decided to go pray in El-Khatara the following morning. He did not believe that HG was trying to warn him about something. In the morning, when Father Abd

El-Kodos was about half way to the village of El-Khatara, some of the villagers came out to meet him, blocked his way, and told him that some people from the village were waiting to ambush and harm him; so he turned back and went to the bishopric to find HG Bishop Makarios. HG opened the door for him as if he had been waiting for him, and told him, "Dear father, you have suffered a lot and came early today." Father Abd El-Kodos said to him, "Absolve me Your Grace, I dreamt that you came to me three times last night." HG answered and said, "I was concerned about you, because this village has many troubles."

One of the anchorites (he now lives in solitude in one of the monasteries) told one of the deacons that he attended HG's last liturgy, the Liturgy in which HG departed right before the Fraction, and that HG always longed to depart during the Divine Liturgy. He also said that HG's soul stayed in the church until the Liturgy finished, and departed at the end with the Angel of the Sacrifice. He also added that HG Bishop Makarios used to visit him in his cell, although HG never visited this monastery in the flesh.

One of the women who used to host HG during his annual visit to her city, about four years before his departure, received him into her home. After HG had gone up to his room, the woman was very happy with his presence. During the night, out of curiosity, she went towards his room to see him. As she ascended the stairs, she felt great fear pour into her heart, and she felt as though she could not bring herself to go one step further. On the window of his room, she saw a feared elder standing, so she ran back down the stairs with great fear and trembling knees. In the morning, as soon as HG saw her, he said, "May God have mercy on you."

One time Bishop Makarios held a funeral prayer for one of the priests in the city of Qus, and it was an extremely hot day. After

his arrival, he prayed an afternoon Liturgy that ended at about 6 PM That night he became very feverish, and his temperature reached 107.6°F. The doctors said he had a heat stroke because he was exposed to the sun for a long time. They surrounded him, trying to bring his temperature down; but they did not get any results from 10 PM to 4 AM the following morning. Suddenly and without any reason, his temperature dropped to 97°F. He stood up, took off all of his ice packs, and went to take a shower, as if nothing had happened and he had never been sick. After many inquiries, HG told us that one of the anchorites came to him when he was feverish, exchanged greetings and blessings with him, and anointed him; his temperature then dropped instantly.

Another time, HG Bishop Makarios went to the city of El-Rahmania for his annual visit. While visiting one of the church members, he went in to take a nap, and requested that no one disturb him. In the meantime, a woman from the city came to the home seeking HG, as she had an urgent matter for which she sought his guidance. The owner of the house told her that HG was sleeping, and that he did not wish to be disturbed. The woman was not convinced, so she went to the room in which HG slept and opened the door so that she could meet with him. Much to her surprise, she found that HG was not in the room. She walked out of the room angrily, thinking that the owner of the house had lied to her. Upon hearing that HG was not there, everyone in the house rushed to the room in disbelief, and saw that he really was not there. They left the room and closed the door behind them. After a little while, HG came out of the room, and he was very angry at everyone in the house for not having listened to him. Apparently, HG was on a divine mission, like the Anchorites.

His Grace in the Divine Liturgy

HG always taught us to give due respect to the altar, bearing in mind that this is the place where the great King descends. The priest must be respectful of the altar, and move around it quietly and with reverence. He also stressed the importance of respect for the Holy Eucharist, reminding the priests not to take it lightly, as they are dealing with the LORD of Glory Himself and with the spirits of angels and saints that surround the Holy Sacrifice on the altar. HG would always say, "The Divine Liturgy, for me, is my only consolation and extreme happiness. No one knows how happy I feel while I am standing in the altar. If this magnitude of happiness is felt here while we are still on earth, how much more will our happiness be with our LORD Jesus Christ in Heaven?"

His Grace used to repeat the following prayer while standing in the altar: "Oh LORD, bestow Your peace on the diocese, take charge of my life, forgive my sins through Your precious blood, strengthen my faith and increase the love that I have for You. Deepen my fellowship with You in the Spirit, and protect me from self-dependence." Then he would mention all those who had asked him to pray for them, and would ask God to bestow mercy upon those who departed, as he used to tell us that the spirit of the saints that we mention in the Remembrance of the Dead (Tarheem) would attend the Holy Liturgy, with God's permission.

The Divine Liturgy was a source of happiness and spiritual fullness for HG and the entire congregation. HG always pleaded with God not to prevent him from the Holy Altar until his last breath, and God granted him his wish. He did not allow his severe sickness to prevent him from the blessings of the Holy Altar. During his last years, his love of the Holy Altar grew more

and more, despite his deteriorating health and consequent weakness. Prior to his departure to Heaven, he was praying the afternoon liturgies of Jonah's fast until about 7 PM. It was very difficult for a person with heart disease to have the strength to do this, but because of his great love and joy in serving the Holy Altar and praying to God, he was granted the strength that he needed to complete the Holy Liturgies.

From the time of his ordination as a bishop, and until right before he became severely sick, HG used to pray most of the Divine Liturgy (starting from the raising of incense to the end of the Divine Liturgy) by himself, leaving only the Litanies and the Commemoration of the Saints to the participating priests.

His Grace Bishop Makarios used to pray the Divine Liturgy with great spiritual power, to the degree that the words of the prayers came out of his mouth as fire, touching the hearts of the congregation; it was clear that he prayed from the bottom of his heart and with all his might. It was said about him, "Every time Bishop Makarios prays the Mass, you feel as if he is enjoying a delicious meal with great admiration. He prays fervently and thoughtfully, contemplating on each word, even on the prayers that are cited secretly (eg, during the Pauline reading)." HG used to pray the Fraction prayers with great passion, tears, a high level of spirituality, and with a heavenly voice.

His Grace often said, "whoever respects the altar and gives it its' due holiness will see amazing spiritual scenes, and God will uncover for him the hidden mysteries." HG used to deal with the Holy Altar with unusual respect and reverence. This reminds us of the angels, the Cherubim and the Seraphim, who stand with great fear before God, covering their faces and feet, and crying out saying, "Holy Holy Holy, LORD of Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Your holy glory." HG truly was standing before

God, as St. John of the Ladder said, "It is very hard to take water away from a thirsty man, but it is even harder to prevent the soul, which is full of reverence, from prayers, because prayer is so loved by it and more preferred than all other deeds." Therefore, there was nothing on earth that could prevent HG from prayer. He did not listen to the doctors or priests who tried to talk him out of praying; he used to say, "when I stand before the altar, I feel that I never want to leave it; I hope that God never prevents me from praying, even if I have to die on the altar while doing so." He also used to say, "the secret of Popes Kyrillos and the saints is in the prayers of the psalms, midnight praises, and Divine Liturgies." His love of the liturgies was manifest at those times when he was seen unable to stand while entering the church, his weak body shaking and trembling, leaning on his cane, and breathing with great difficulty; yet this never prevented him from attending on time. And to the congregation's great astonishment, it would only be a matter of seconds after he started the liturgy that his shaking body would become steady, his broken words would become strong and clear, and his breathing would be regulated, as if he was a different man. Members of the congregation would ask him after the Liturgy, "What has happened Your Grace?" and he would explain that Pope Kyrillos, Saint George, Abu Saifain, or a group of the anchorites were praying in the Liturgy with him.

During St. Mary's fast, one of the priests was praying an afternoon Divine Liturgy with HG, in St. Mary's church. During Communion, HG gave out the Holy Blood, for his sight was weak, and the priest gave out the Holy Body. They gave communion first to the men, and then to the women. As the last woman approached, there were two pieces of the Holy Body remaining; the priest gave one piece to the woman, but when he looked back he could not find the last piece. The priest was greatly disturbed and perplexed; he looked for it everywhere, but could not find this last piece. Then he looked to

HG, who smiled at him and said, "Fear not, one of the anchorites was praying with us today, and he took the last piece. It is possible that the Eucharist can move from the tray to the anchorite."

In almost all the Divine Liturgies that HG prayed in the last six years of his life, Pope Kyrillos VI came and attended with him.

His Grace also mentioned that at the beginning of his bishopric service, and during the Divine Liturgy, he used to see blood coming out of Jesus' wounds in the icon of the crucifix on the East side. And in his last year, during Holy Week, he also mentioned that he used to see blood coming from Jesus' wounds in the icon every year after the 400 metanyias of Good Friday; that year, HG took out his handkerchief and wiped the icon, then wiped his face, his eyes and his heart, and gave it to the priest standing next to him saying, "Take the blessing Father." Wanting to conceal his virtues, he used to tell us, "Because you prevented me from abstaining from food this Holy Week, I could not see the bleeding wounds; I used to see the wounds bleeding every year from the crucifix icon after the 400 metanyias (prostrations)."

On numerous occasions, HG saw the altar illuminate, and an amazing heavenly light surrounding the Eucharist, as the LORD Himself was present during the Liturgy. HG would be found praying fervently, with heavenly hymns that penetrate to the depth of hearts, render the thoughts captive, and lift up the souls to the heavens, as he would see the LORD of Glory Himself before him.

Those who witnessed him praying, either during Liturgies or other prayers, would think that he was an angel standing before the throne of the Almighty in Heaven, with all respect, fear and reverence. During these times, his face was described as that of

one who was talking to a king or a high ranking official, speaking with great respect and fear, intermingled with love.

His only wish was to die during the Liturgy, and God granted him his wish. HG Bishop Makarios died while he was praying the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 3, 1991.

His Service

His Grace Bishop Makarios' diocese was one of the largest; in fact, after his departure it was divided into 4 dioceses. But despite how large the diocese was, HG still managed to visit each member of his congregation, house by house, once a year for the 25 years that he was a bishop. He never skipped a year, but persisted in his service, even in his final year when he was sick. Up until his last breath, he regarded his service as a service to God Himself, and he did not allow himself to be anything but faithful to God and his children.

His Grace used to visit anywhere from 50 to 100 houses in one day, starting in the morning and finishing at night. In 15 days, HG would accomplish what another priest would strive to do in a year. Even in his last two months on earth, he would visit and serve his flock. Anytime he walked into a house, he would greet every person individually, ask about every person, listen to each one's problems, follow up on their needs, and pray for them. God would attend to all of his prayers and petitions; if HG prayed for a person, that person's problems would be solved or his request granted. God also enabled HG to perform many miracles, such as healing the sick, casting out demons, and other heavenly powers. He used to stress to everyone the importance of prayer, confession, communion, and fellowship with God, as this is the only way that God will intervene, solve problems, and lift tribulations. HG was a faithful servant who

used his earthly talents to gain heavenly ones, and to save many souls.

During his bishopric, many churches and altars were consecrated in Qena and throughout his diocese, and most of the existing churches were fixed and retrofitted.

He paid special care to the service of the Word and to spiritual meetings. However, he did not give sermons himself; instead, he made sure that any new priest who had the talent of teaching and a great deal of spiritual knowledge would give the sermon and lead the congregation. He was very careful when choosing new priests, and he always said that the church strongly advises the bishop not to choose a new priest in haste. He would say, "I prefer to leave a church closed than to appoint a priest who will close it."

He strove to make all his deeds acceptable to the LORD, and the LORD did indeed accept all of his deeds. The LORD granted HG that which is written in the book of Proverbs: "When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Proverbs 16:7) HG loved all, and everyone loved him back because he cared for them out of his pure love for God. He always said, "Do you know why our love for each other grows? It is because this love has one goal, which is Jesus Himself, without any other hidden goals; and this love is in Jesus' fear and for His acceptance."

His Grace longed to build a church for St. Mary, his patron saint, in Qena. He asked her to permit him to build a church for her and to hold services in it before his departure. His request was granted; the church was built in 15 years and it was one of the most beautiful churches in the diocese.

This church carries stories of many amazing miracles, which shows the glory of God and his saints. HG was on his death bed, and he was extremely ill. He had a heart attack, heart disease, and a pulmonary embolism (blockage of the main artery of the lung). As he progressively got worse and began to reach the end, he told us that he found himself standing on his bed, but he could still see his body lying down on the bed. A group of angels surrounded him, ready to take his soul, and then St. Mary came closer to him, signaled the angels to stop, and lifted up her hands to heaven and prayed saying, "Oh my Son and my LORD; glory, honor, and greatness are due unto you; if it is your will, your son Anba Makarios built a church in my name, and I would like him to consecrate it for me." Then HG heard a voice from far away saying, "It is my will." At once, the Mother of Light ordered the angels to return HG's spirit to his body. Bishop Makarios told us that it is very hard for the spirit to reenter the body, more difficult than it is to leave the body. After this, HG's health unexpectedly began to improve and he consecrated the church.

During the ceremony of the consecration, HG went up to anoint the bishop's seat, which had an engraved wooden picture of our LORD Jesus Christ, with Myron.¹ As he went to do this, he felt great fear as he drew near the wooden picture on the back of the seat; then he saw the picture turning into the person of

¹ Myron or Chrism: a consecrated oil used in two sacraments, Baptism and Chrismation, as well as in the consecration of the Church and of sacred vessels, etc. The tradition of using this sacred oil goes back to the Old Testament (Exodus 39), where God ordered Moses to prepare a compound anointing oil of myrrh, cinnamon, cassia, and sweet calamus, mixed with pure olive oil. It was used in anointing kings, priests, the tent of the tabernacle, and its furniture. It is made of specific oils mixed with the spices that were presented when the LORD was shrouded. Chrism is administered immediately after baptism; the newly baptized person joins the church and becomes one of its members through baptism, and is strengthened through the Chrism; this gives him or her the right to partake of the Holy Communion.

Jesus Christ, surrounded by a very bright light. He could not get any closer, and so he barely anointed the far edges of the seat. HG also mentioned that a large number of saints blessed the consecration ceremonies, including St. Mary, St. George, St. Philopateer Abu Safain, St. Mena, Pope Kyrillos, and some of the anchorites (Spirit Born). Also, a number of people who watched the video tapes of the consecration saw the spirits of the saints on the main altar and in the side altars as well. During the consecration ceremony, which lasted from 6:00 AM to 5:00 PM, HG had amazing strength despite of all his medical conditions.

Ready for Departure

The final years of the life of HG Bishop Makarios were full of spiritual vigilance and perseverance. His soul won its battle against the weak body, illustrating St. Paul's words, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the LORD, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not to me only but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8) On any given day, HG was ready to depart from this earth. He welcomed death with happiness and delight, like a saint who regarded the second of his departure as his happiest moment, a time when God would give him rest from his struggles and grant him a crown of victory.

Three years before Bishop Makarios' departure, he asked one of the fathers to renovate and prepare the area dedicated for bishops' burials under the northern altar in the Church of St. Mark, where his predecessors, Bishop Lukas and Bishop Kyrillos, lay. A year before his departure, he ordered a coffin to be bought; and six months before his departure, he asked for a burial license in his name, so that he could use the current

burial place to avoid any later objections that might arise from any officials. HG was then ready to depart.

He knew exactly when he would depart from this world; he even asked for his final Divine Liturgy to be video taped, which was very unlike him. One of the fathers asked him, "Your Grace, where are you praying tomorrow?" He responded, "At St. Mark's church, and Father Metias will video tape me." He also made a reference to the day he would depart. Tamav Eriny called him on Saturday morning to tell him that she would be traveling on the following day, and then he answered and said, "I am also traveling." "Did you not finish your annual trip this year, Your Grace?" she asked. "I am going on a very comfortable trip tomorrow," he explained. During Jonah's feast, someone else also asked him where he would be praying the following week. Bishop Makarios answered, "Friday at St. Mary's, Sunday at St. Mark's, and after that with Abu Safain." Someone else asked to see him on Sunday for an important matter, but HG answered and said, "I won't see anyone on Sunday."

One lady who is very well known to us told us this story: On the second day of Jonah's fast, January 29, 1991, HG called me on the phone and asked me to bring my niece to be baptized on Friday; he insisted on this. I was very surprised, and when I saw him I said, "Why did you insist on baptizing her on Friday, Your Grace?" He replied, "On Friday I will pray at St. Mary's, on Sunday I will pray at St. Mark's, then with Abu Safain." I never imagined that he meant he was departing to the heavens and would be praying there. I also happened to be with him on January 14, 1991, the day before he was traveling to Cairo to

pray the feast of the Epiphany¹ at the Abu Safain Convent in Old Cairo. I begged him not to go because he had gotten very sick on the plane the last time he went there. He said to me, "This is my last time to travel; I will travel this time and travel once again after 21 days, and then I will not travel anymore." HG departed to heaven 21 days after this conversation. I was also with HG on the morning of Thursday, January 31, and at night I had something to consult with him about. I telephoned him to ask for his advice, but he asked me to come to him; I told him that I had been with him in the morning, and he answered and said, "OK, whatever you want. There are only two days left before I travel." HG did in fact travel to the heavens on Sunday.

Another lady named Feryal, who is HG's niece, told us that on the Saturday before his departure, HG told her, "Tomorrow a certain person is coming to us; you don't need to prepare lunch, but you must attend the Liturgy." He was trying to prepare her for what was going to happen but she didn't realize what he meant. Anyone who watches the video tape of his last Liturgy will be amazed beyond measure at how HG knew his hour was coming and still prayed with steadiness and strength. This is how the saints are, always ready and never shaken.

Then the hour came for this spiritual giant to join the cloud of saints. It was on the holy day of Sunday, the day of the LORD, during the Holy prayer of the Divine Liturgy; it happened on the

¹ The Epiphany, or the Baptism of Christ on Tobah 11, AM (January 19). It is connected with Christmas and the circumcision feasts. For on Christmas, the Word of God took what is ours (our humanity) and in the "circumcision," He subjected Himself to the Law as He became one of us, but in the Epiphany, He offered us what is His own. By His incarnation, He became a true man while still being the Only-begotten Son of God; and by baptism we become children of God while we are human beings. On this feast, the Liturgy of blessing the water is conducted, and the priest blesses the people with the water on their foreheads and hands to commemorate baptism.

holy altar at a holy time, the time of Pre-Fraction prayer while HG was saying, "O You who gave to His holy disciples and saintly apostles at that time, now also give to us and to all..." As he said the word 'all,' he leaned forward toward the altar for a short period and then dropped suddenly to the floor while holding the Eucharist in his hands in 2 parts (a third and two thirds), putting them together in the form of a cross.

His Grace Bishop Moussa, the General Bishop of the Coptic Youth, watched this video on one of his visits to the United States, along with a big group of youth. They watched it in very slow motion. HG Bishop Moussa, along with many of the American and Egyptian youth, saw 5 fingers of light lift up the Holy Body as HG Bishop Makarios was falling, so that it landed safely on the paten. Many of these youth confirm that they really believe in the Eucharist's mystery and believe that it is the Body and Blood of our LORD; however, this incident had strengthened their faith.

It seems that it was God's will for HG to depart at the moment he did. The Eucharist moved miraculously back to the paten, and the whole event was recorded, that the LORD might glorify His saint, who succeeded in hiding his righteousness for many years. As it is said, "For those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." (1 Samuel 2:30)

His body remained before the altar at St. Mark's church where he departed for the whole day, February 3, 1991; then they moved him to St. Mary's church, which he built, to attend the Divine Liturgy. After the Liturgy, the procession started from St. Mary's church to St. Mark's church. It was a great procession with people on both sides the entire way between the two churches; so many people gathered that nobody would have been able to find room to place a foot. Everybody flocked to the

church, including all of the governmental representatives, a large number of our Muslim brethren, the governor, the police chief, and many more. The funeral ceremony was held by 11 bishops: Abba Mina (metropolitan of Girga), Abba Hedra (bishop of Aswan), Abba Wisa (bishop of El-Balyana), Abba Amonins (bishop of Luxor), Abba Fam (bishop of Tema), Abba Kyrillos (bishop of Nag Hammady), Abba Abraam (bishop of Fayoum), Abba Basanty (bishop of Helwan), Abba Bakhom (bishop of Sohag), Abba Antonious (bishop of Manfloat), Abba Bemoa (the abbot of St. George's Monastery in Khatatba), and a large number of priests from all denominations. After the funeral and condolence speeches, at about midday on Monday, February 4, 1991, the body was taken into a procession inside the church until it reached the bishopric burial place under the northern altar.

There rested the body of a holy man who lived a saintly life and who became like a lit lamp in the way of holiness. There rested our beloved bishop after a great journey, where he well pleased his Creator and fulfilled His will. There rested a watchful man waiting for his Master to return from the wedding banquet, so that he could open the door for him immediately. (Luke 12:35-37)

His departure caused great grief for his entire congregation, as well as in the monasteries and convents. He had a profound effect on the hearts of those he served and dealt with. Our beloved Tamav Eriny, the abbot of Abu Safain's Convent, cried a lot for him. He was her father of confession and she knew how saintly he was. She used to pray saying, "Lord, you have too many saints in heaven; we wish you kept Bishop Makarios here on earth, because in him we saw a manifestation of Your image, love, and holy life." One day Tamav Eriny was sick with a fever, and she was taking an antibiotic every six hours. But despite all her pain, she stood up to pray, and suddenly found herself in a

beautiful place, so vast, peaceful, and full of joy and green pastures; it was lit with a heavenly light that automatically lifts the soul in praises and thanksgiving to the LORD Jesus Christ. And then came Bishop Makarios in a beautiful, heavenly robe, wearing a cross full of diamonds, walking slowly and completely engulfed in praises to the Holy LORD Jesus Christ. Then he drew near to Tamav Eriny and asked her, "What do you think of this place, Mother?" She responded, "It is very beautiful, Your Grace. Is that your place?" He replied, "No, my place is more beautiful than this; this is only a vast place in which I walk, but my place is much more beautiful;" then he added, "What do you think, is this place not better than earth?" Tamav Eriny asked, "But, did I already die? Is that why I am here?" HG responded, "No, you did not die, but our LORD Jesus Christ allowed you to come here and see me so that you would be consoled and stop being sad for me." Then she found herself standing in the very same place in her cell.

During this spiritual experience, the nun that took care of Tamav's medication came to her cell, at 10 AM, but Tamav Eriny was nowhere to be found. She looked for her everywhere, but with no results; so she walked out, brought a chair and sat down before the door and said to herself, "Let me see where she will be coming from." Six hours later, at 4 PM, she looked into the cell and found Tamav Eriny inside. "Where were you Tamav?" the nun asked. "I was existent," Tamav answered. "I looked for you everywhere inside the cell!" exclaimed the nun. After much nagging, Tamav gave up and told the nun everything. She described the experience, and when she had finished she added, "I felt I was away for only 10 minutes." "You were taken for 6 hours" said the nun, confirming the earthly time. But our dear Tamav was no longer sad; she was consoled and thankful to God for giving her a chance to see her beloved father in heaven.

Since the celibate's body was laid to rest under the northern altar, to this day the room has never been closed. Unlike all other bodies that decompose and produce a stench, HG's body only produces a great smell, like that of the martyrs that are anointed with sweet spices. This body was martyred through celibacy, purity, fasting, prayers and many ascetic practices; he was a bloodless martyr.

After Departure Messages

There is a woman who dreamt consecutive dreams about the departure of HG Bishop Makarios. One day, she dreamt that HG was sitting on a great throne and he had a crown on his head; it was as if he was at a feast. She asked him, "Are you going to pray a Divine Liturgy now, Your Grace?" He answered and said, "Prayers here are continuous without ceasing," and then he added, "I want you to deliver a message to Father..... and to Om Makarios (the mother of Makarios)." "Is your mother still living, Your Grace?" she asked. "My daughter, don't you know Feryal? She is Om Makarios; her son is a very good deacon, prayed with me always in Liturgies," he answered. "Tell her that I was upset with her, but that I now have forgiven her, because she kept screaming all the way from St. Mary's Church to St. Mark's Church during my funeral procession." He then added, "Also tell her to go to church, confess, and partake of the communion all the time; that way we will not be apart. And remember me in the Commemoration of the Departed in the Divine Liturgy, and I will remember her, as if I came to visit her and she visited me. She will feel my presence next to her. But again keep on confessing and partaking in communion so you can reach where I am, because those who confess and partake of the Eucharist have a great position with the saints in heaven."

"And tell Father...., sermons became too many, in cassette tapes and books, but the most important thing that all of you are coming here soon. Stress in the sermons the importance of repentance, confession, and communion, because those who confess and partake of the Holy Eucharist have a great position with the saints in Heaven."

The same message and vision were repeated with a different person, in a different city, around the same time, and he is currently a monk in one of our monasteries.

His Miracles

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:15-18)

God the Almighty granted his servants these gifts, to perform wonders for the glory of His name, to be a sign of their holiness, and to provide help and freedom to those who are bound and sitting in darkness, according to His good will.

As children of God, our faith is dependent on the Word of Life. As we learn from the story of Lazarus and the rich man, when the rich man was being tormented, he asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his brothers to forewarn them of the consequences they would face if they remained in sin. "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest

they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'" (Luke 16: 27-31)

Therefore, as children of the LORD, we have faith in Him and in His word. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12) This is the faith that moves mountains. This is the faith that is manifested in the lives of all who surrender themselves to God's love.

Therefore, we glorify God in all His works and in all His saints, because He shows His strength and mercy towards us through His holy men, who walk according to His word.

The miracles and wonders of our beloved father, Bishop Makarios, are countless, whether they were performed during his earthly life or after his departure to the heavens. It is worth noting that there are currently eight published books in the Arabic language about the miracles performed by HG to this day, and there are additional stories and miracles that have been recorded, but are awaiting publication.

To this day, HG Bishop Makarios still performs miracles, interceding for a great number of people who seek his blessings. The remainder of this book will focus on just a few of the miracles performed by HG Bishop Makarios, serving as an example of his powerful intercessions and love for his children.

Feryal (Bishop Makarios' niece) told us that as a child, HG liked to attend the praises of St. Mary during the Month of Kiahk. To attend the service, he would walk from the village of Awlad Yehia to the village of El-Kosheh, a distance of about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles). On his way to church, there were times when he would run, and he would feel as if a certain power had carried him above the ground.

Another miracle reported was of a barren woman from Alexandria who had been married for 7 years to Dr. Fahim, a gynecologist. One day, she went to visit her sister, who lived in Qena. While there, she went with one of the priests to see HG Bishop Makarios. As soon as HG saw her, he told her, "God will give you Samuel." The lady indeed became pregnant, but after 3 months she had a miscarriage. After all tests were done, she was told that she had an immature uterus (womb); given her medical condition, it was unlikely that she would be able to conceive again. However, after some time, she did become pregnant again. Upon further examination, it was determined that the hormones from her first pregnancy worked towards enlarging her uterus, preparing her for the second pregnancy. As HG had foretold, she indeed gave birth to a boy and named him Samuel; she later also had another boy and named him Matthew.

Mr. Rafat Adib of Qena told us his story: He had a lot of problems with his fiancé, to the degree where he felt that marrying her would be impossible. He had great faith that HG could help him and so he went to visit him. Mr. Adib noted that before he even uttered a word, HG said "Come here next to me. Are you worried about the engagement? Alright, that is it, there will be no more troubles, and you will get married and have children!!" Mr. Adib stated, "I walked out of his presence as if I was in a dream...how did he know about my troubles? He is indeed a man of God and all that he predicted did happen."

Mrs. Amal Milad of Qena told the following story about her infant son: "We had already set a date for my son, Mina, to receive the sacrament of Baptism, but suddenly, he got the flu and was very feverish. I went to HG and sought his guidance, asking him whether or not we should postpone the Baptism. HG refused the idea of postponing the baptism and told us 'God willing, your son will be okay, by the blessings of my Lady Saint Mary.' The next day, my son was completely cured and HG baptized him in the church of St. Mary. All our hearts were filled with great joy."

Mrs. Shadia Helmy Farah, also from Qena, told a story about one of our current reverend fathers: "My husband's brother went to the monastery to pursue the life of monasticism; however, my mother-in-law was very sad following his departure. So I took her one day to see HG Bishop Makarios. When HG saw her, he asked, 'Why are you sad? Your son will become a bishop.'" And his prophecy was fulfilled; her son is the current bishop of Manflot, HG Bishop Antonious.

The nephew and disciple of HG Bishop Makarios, Mr. Rateb, lived and interacted with HG on a daily basis. He accompanied HG on all his visits, as he was his designated driver. Mr. Rateb told us about a time when HG was visiting one of the villages: "As we were passing by, we saw a man possessed with many evil spirits; he was naked and chained with iron chains at the bottom of a stairwell of one of the houses, screaming and wild. As HG drew near him, the man started to throw sand and dirt at HG. Despite this, Bishop Makarios asked for a cup of water, prayed on it, and sprinkled the water on the possessed man. HG then left and went on his way. Shortly after, a man came to the bishopric, asking to see HG. When he saw Bishop Makarios, he fell on his knees and said, 'Forgive me for all that I have done to you...I was not conscious.' When HG did not recognize him, the

man introduced himself saying, 'I am the person who was possessed with many evil spirits in the village. Your Grace prayed for me and the spirits were all cast out.' HG prayed the absolution for him and bid him farewell."

During one of HG's visits to Hurgada, a non-Christian woman who had seen HG visiting other homes invited him over saying, "Come Your Grace, come, visit me and bless me as you bless your children." HG heeded her request and visited her house. He asked for a cup of water, prayed on it, and sprinkled the entire house, as he was accustomed to doing. Then HG asked her, "Do you have any children?" She replied, "I have none, and I have been married for 19 years." So HG told her, "On this very day next year, you will be carrying your son Ibrahim." As he foretold, God gave the woman the fruit of the womb, namely, Ibrahim, at the same time HG had indicated.

The reverend Father Mata Marko shared this story: "A friend of mine asked HG to pray for him, that he might have children. HG kept him in his prayers constantly. On one occasion, as the man was sitting with HG, his wife walked in. As soon as HG saw her, his face lit up with a heavenly glow. HG became very joyful and told her, 'Congratulations.' She replied, with great wonder, 'May God keep Your Grace...but congratulations for what?!' HG answered her saying, 'You are pregnant, in your second day.'"

Mrs. Nadia Naguib from Alexandria went with her husband, Magdy, and her children to the Convent of Saint Abu Safain in Old Cairo. At the time, HG was visiting the Convent. Mrs. Naguib and her family sat with HG and the beloved saintly Mother Eriny, the abbot of the convent. She told us, "During this meeting, one of the reverend fathers asked HG to pray for my 5

year old son, Michael, who had a G6PD Deficiency,¹ which left him anemic. We went through numerous tests and Dr. Thoria analyzed all of them; the G6PD enzyme was very low. Two years later, I wanted to repeat the tests, but the doctor refused, saying that the enzyme level would never change, especially since it was very low to begin with. But HG put his hand on Michael, prayed for him, and said with great simplicity: 'Give him all kinds of food to eat.' I then asked HG whether we should repeat the tests, but HG told us not to." Michael's mother obeyed in great faith, giving her son everything to eat, including Fava beans and all other foods that were forbidden, given his condition. Thereafter, the child never developed anemia and was completely normal.

Mr. Kamal Metry, who served with HG for 18 years and was entrusted with many responsibilities by HG, told us this story: "HG used to give me work to finish in the bishopric. There was one time when we were in need of a sewing machine. One of the servants, Mr. Ohdy Gawargios, offered to bring his own sewing machine from home. But HG answered and said, 'God will send us a sewing machine very soon.' And at about 5 PM that same day, a lady knocked on the door of the bishopric and said, 'Here is a sewing machine. We brought it for HG.' And we still have this sewing machine until now. Besides this incident, there were many things that used to happen before my eyes that were beyond my comprehension, but I was told not to ask!"

¹Glucose-6-phosphate-dehydrogenase (abbreviated G6PD or G6PDH); individuals with the disease may exhibit non-immune hemolytic anemia in response to a number of causes, most commonly infection or exposure to certain medications or chemicals. G6PD deficiency is closely linked to favism, a disorder characterized by a hemolytic reaction to consumption of broad beans, with a name derived from the Italian name of the broad bean (fava). The name favism is sometimes used to refer to the enzyme deficiency as a whole.

Mr. Metry went on to tell another story: "One night HG called me and said, 'I love you so much Kamal; I wish you can be granted a son. I pray for you all the time.' Then after 10 minutes of utter silence, HG said, 'What would you like to name the baby girl that you will have?' But I did not know what to answer, as my wife was pregnant. Later on, HG visited us at home and told my wife, 'after 10 days, you will give birth to a girl and you will name her Lillian.' And this is exactly what happened."

Mr. Gergis Nagy of Qena told us this story: "I was suffering from a great deal of pain in my stomach, and I tried a lot of different medications, but nothing seemed to work. One of my relatives advised me to seek magicians and sorcerers, and so I heeded his advice. The sorcerer gave me a list of things to do to help ease my pain. At night, however, HG Bishop Makarios came to me in a dream and said, 'What are all those bad things that you have in the balcony?' In the morning, I woke up in haste and threw out all the materials I had in the balcony from the sorcerer. Since then I was made well, and required no medication or any other treatment."

HG Bishop Makarios was accustomed to praying for all those who did not have children, and through his prayers and supplications, God would indeed grant them children. Mrs. Magda had been married for 3 years; she was unable to conceive due to arthritis that affected her Fallopian Tubes, according to a diagnosis by Dr. Samy El-Keshtah. Magda said, "I was very sad. One day I went to see HG Bishop Makarios. I was crying bitterly and HG told me that God would give me a child in a month. The following month, as HG had predicted, I conceived. However, because of my weak faith, I was very worried about having a miscarriage. HG told me, 'Worry and sadness can make you miscarry.' And this is true; sorrow and worry can be the cause of a miscarriage, but thank God, the

pregnancy period passed in peace, and God gave me Maria, through the prayers and intercessions of HG. Later, I got pregnant again and went to HG, asking him to bless me and name the baby for me. HG answered and said, 'Not now.' I kept going back to him for the same reason and he kept giving me the same answer until I gave birth to a baby girl. However, the baby died on the second day after she was born; HG apparently knew this would happen, and this is why he did not want to name the baby for me. May his blessings be with us all."

Another amazing story happened with a man who had also been married for 3 years. After undergoing check-ups and testing, he was diagnosed with male infertility, Azoospermia. On a Lenten Friday afternoon, HG was praying a Liturgy at St. George Church. As HG was walking out of the altar, this man walked up to him and asked him to pray that he might have good offspring. HG told him, 'May God give you a boy and a girl!' A year later, his wife conceived and gave birth to a baby girl, but she had many physical abnormalities and died one day after birth. In the second year, another baby girl was born, but this time, she was born dead. However, in the third year, they had a baby boy, Gergis, and in the fourth year, they were granted a baby girl, Eriny. Therefore, all that HG said was fulfilled. Glory to Him who said: "...for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." (1 Samuel 2:30)

Another lady from Oena who preferred to remain anonymous said: "When I was in my last year of grammar school, I started to have seizure attacks. This was a catastrophe to my family, especially since we had no family history of this disorder. My mother took me to HG as he finished praying the Divine Liturgy. He prayed for me, anointed me with the holy oil, and I took the

blessings of his white tonya.¹ Instantaneously, I was made well and I never had any more seizure episodes.” “For with God nothing will be impossible,” as it is written in Luke 1:37. When we think that something is impossible or no power on the face of the earth can help, we remember that we have many promises from our Father who art in Heaven to render us a heavenly power that, with faith, can overcome the impossible.

A lady told us the following story to show the glory of God that is manifested in the lives of his saints: “One day, I noticed a spot on my left breast; it looked like black blood to me. After undergoing numerous tests and scans, I was diagnosed with a tumor in my left breast, which needed to be removed. With faith, I answered and said, ‘God will heal me with a miracle.’ But the doctors laughed at me in disbelief. I refused the mastectomy² and went to see HG. I told him about my condition and he prayed for me, made the sign of the cross on the tumor, and said, ‘God will not allow that.’ Later I dreamt of HG sitting at a desk with many sick people surrounding him, asking for his prayers, but he called me and prayed for me. I was very happy with this dream; however, I still asked God for a sign of my healing. In another dream, I saw HG Bishop Makarios standing next to the relics of Abu Safain. He opened the box containing the relics and said to me, ‘I came for you, especially.’ He then took the covering off the relics, put it on my chest, and put his cross and prayed for me. He then said, ‘That is it, you are well

¹ A white tunic worn by all monks and priests while celebrating the Holy Liturgy. It is white because it represents the joyous angels who are serving God in purity and holiness.

² Mastectomy is the medical term for the surgical removal of one or both breasts, partially or completely.

now.' And God gave me other signs as I had asked Him to do. I was made well by the prayers of HG."

This very same lady also went on to tell another story: "I was pregnant in my sixth month, but I was about to have a miscarriage due to serious complications during my pregnancy. Despite the pain I was going through, I took a cab and went to see HG Bishop Makarios. At the time of my visit, HG had a doctor sitting with him. As soon as the doctor saw me, she told HG that I was in danger, especially since I had a previous miscarriage. HG answered the doctor saying, 'I will pray for her, don't be afraid, doctor. She will not miscarry.' He asked for a cup of water, prayed on it, and gave me to drink. He then told me, 'Take these little calendars and distribute them to all the people in the room.' I heeded his word and did as he said. The amazing thing is that I was moving about as if I never had any pain in my body; through his prayers I was made well." She also added, "God gave me two daughters and in my third pregnancy, I wished that I could have a boy. So I went to HG and asked him for my wish. HG looked at me and said, 'Matthew, Matthew, Matthew,' and God indeed gave me Matthew according to the word of HG."

Mrs. Mariam Anwar Boles told us of an incident she personally had with HG: "I was 9 months pregnant, but I had passed my due date by a few days. The doctor told me that if I did not deliver naturally within one week, he would have to perform a C-section. The one week passed and I was terrified, so I went to Bishop Makarios in the bishopric on September 17, 1990. I told HG about my situation and he told me, 'Come, sit down my daughter. Do not fear.' I sat with HG and I felt a lot of peace. He went on to say, 'You still have a few days to go; you will give birth naturally on Friday.' He then stood up and anointed me with the oil from the lantern that was before the icon of St. Mary. One of the priests who was there at the time asked HG to

name the baby for me. HG answered and said, 'Congratulations, you will have Matthew.' He also asked me for some money for St. Mary. And all that he told me happened exactly as he had said."

Mr. Gergis of Qena and his wife went to meet HG Bishop Makarios, seeking his blessings. They had been married for 3 years, but God did not grant them any children. Mr. Gergis told us the following: "HG told us that God would give us David, but I asked him if we should go see a doctor; he said no, don't go. We went out of his presence in great joy, waiting for the fulfillment of the promise. However, when we went to do a scan just to make sure that everything was okay, the doctor told me that my wife had a blockage in her Fallopian Tubes and that she would never conceive. I kept that to myself and never told my wife, and I left everything in God's hands. A month later, my wife saw HG Bishop Makarios in a dream. 'Do you know what is wrong with you?' HG asked her, and my wife answered negatively. 'Your tubes are blocked. But God will open one for you and give you a child.' After my wife woke up, she told me about the dream. At this point, I had to tell her what the doctor had said and that what HG told her in the dream was true. But before a month passed, my wife became pregnant and God granted us a boy, then a girl, and finally twins."

Another person came to HG with his young son. After taking his blessings he asked, "Don't you remember me Your Grace? I came to you last night with my son who was suffering from an eye cataract. The cataract disappeared after you prayed for him." Then HG told him, "Now, of course, you will go fill the air with those words. You know that my lady St. Mary performed this miracle for your son, because we are currently in her fast. Don't tell anybody about this miracle until I die." This is an example of how HG was striving everyday to cover his virtues and complete his days in peace.

A lady who wished not to disclose her identity said, "I was shocked when I saw a huge tumor in my right breast. I went to many physicians, including Dr. Jacob and Dr. Rachel, who started talking to each other in English; this worried me. I went to different physicians—Dr. Moris, Dr. Waheed Thabet, and Dr. Ahmed El-Amir, to name just a few. They suggested a biopsy, but I strongly refused. Then I had a group of 9 doctors review my case, one of them being Dr. Gamal Abd El-Hameed, who works as a professor at The University of Asiut. He said that time was of the essence and that the biopsy was necessary in order to start treatment. It happened that we were passing by the bishopric building, and my husband suggested that I go inside and ask HG to pray for me. However, I was completely devastated and told my husband that the doctors said it was cancer. 'What will HG do?' I asked him. But my husband insisted, so we went and met with one of the servants who told us that we came after visiting hours, and that we could not see HG now. We explained the situation to her, so she went and told HG and came back with a smile on her face saying, 'HG will see you.' After we sat down, he waved at me to come to him, so I kneeled at his feet and he prayed a long prayer for me. After he finished, I went back to my seat. 'You do not have cancer or anything,' HG said; 'God will heal you, God will heal you, God will heal you. And if there is anything left, just confess and take communion and nothing will be left in your chest.' That same night, my husband suggested that I anoint myself with Abu Safain's oil and that I put the book of the miracles of Pope Kyrillos VI on my chest, and I did. The next morning I felt the tumor, which had previously been the size of an orange, with my hands. There was nothing left except for a very small piece, so I remembered the words of HG; I went to my father of confession, who I had not seen for a very long time and I partook of the Holy Communion. After I received the Eucharist, the tumor disappeared completely, as the Saint Bishop Makarios had told me. Then I returned to the same physicians

who had diagnosed my tumor before, and they were in a great awe. They were astonished that there was nothing left of the tumor. They asked me what had happened and I laughingly told them that I had gone to someone better than all of them. Then one of them answered and said, 'You indeed went to see someone who is better than all of us, because medicine is unable to treat such a case.'"

A well known man who holds a high position came to our beloved Bishop Makarios, and he was desperate. A judicial jury had sentenced him to prison. He had filed for an appeal, and it was to be held very close to the date of his meeting with HG. He complained to HG that his situation was very weak and that it would be very hard to get out of this position; if the appeal yielded the same verdict, he would lose everything. On the night of the appeal, our beloved bishop stayed up all night praying, and God accepted his prayers. The judge found him not guilty.

On one of the Lenten days, after the afternoon Liturgy, HG met with Mr. Roshdy Aziz Abd-Elsheheed. Mr. Abd-Elsheheed thought it would be a great chance to tell HG about the pain he was having in his gallbladder and to ask for his prayers. "Are you fasting this Lent?" HG asked, ignoring the main issue. Mr. Abd-Elsheheed was surprised and started giving excuses, saying "I am sick and unable to fast. My gallbladder hurts so much..." But HG said, "How could you hear that the church is fasting the Great Lent and still not fast?" So he promised HG that he would start fasting; then HG said, "Fast and you will see what God will do for you." After he started fasting, all of the pain disappeared.

His Grace was an expert on the human soul; he was able to read people's inner thoughts. Mr. Sarwat Nazer Tawfik of Nag Hammadi told us this story to show the gift that God entrusted HG with: "My wife was diagnosed with Bacteremia, or bacteria

in the blood. The doctors said there was no treatment for her case, that there was no hope, and that even if there was, she would be paralyzed. I heard about the saint Bishop Makarios, so we went to meet him at the bishopric in Qena. As we ascended the stairs, he saw us from above and said, "Come Feryal, my daughter." We were shocked, as this was our first time to see HG. We sat down with him and before we said anything HG said, "Feryal, ya baba (a word to show closeness to the heart of the speaker), do not be afraid, I will pray for you and you will be made well." I was very preoccupied at this time, thinking about how we were going to get back home, and which means of transportation we would have to take. HG asked, 'Are you in a rush?' causing me to be greatly surprised. So I told him that transportation to Nag Hammadi was difficult and that it was almost 3 PM. HG said, 'I will just pray for her.' He prayed for my wife, put his cross on her, and then said, 'May God be with you all.' On our way home, my wife told me that while HG was praying for her, she felt as if she had some electrical treatment and she felt changes in her body. My wife was healed and completely recovered, thanks to the Lord and to his great saint, Bishop Makarios."

Mr. Agib Gergis, a retired principle in Qus, was visiting his brother Aziz in the Rahmania Village. A Muslim guard (Ghafeer) was present at that time, and he approached Mr. Gergis saying: "Do you know Qena's metropolitan?" "I was so surprised at the question," said Mr. Gergis. "Do you know him?" he asked the guard. The guard answered, "Yes, of course, I used to do work for HH Pope Kyrillos; after that I worked for HG Bishop Makarios." Then the guard told the following story: "HG was visiting the west side of the Village of Rahmania. A lot of people gathered and followed HG; they almost blocked the entire road. All of a sudden HG stopped and said, 'There is a sick girl behind me in the crowd, her mother is carrying her.' We looked for the sick girl and her mother and we brought them to HG; he prayed

for her, and she was healed. I was amazed at this incident, especially because the girl was not Christian. I was sure that he was a righteous man; otherwise, how would he have known about the sick child?"

There seems to be a similarity between this story and the story of the woman who had a flow of blood lasting for twelve years. She touched the hem of Jesus' garment while the multitudes pressed Him. But Jesus knew about her and stopped and said, "Who touched me?" The disciples, amazed at the question, answered him saying, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You ask 'Who touched Me?'" (Luke 8:45) This story illustrates for us how our LORD Jesus Christ is faithful and true, and grants His little children the power to do His works, and even greater. Like He said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do" (John 14:12)

As a man whose eyes were open to the future, HG had a habit of naming babies after the saints whose feast or commemoration would be celebrated around the child's birth date. Mr. Rizk Mahrous experienced one of these incidents, and he told us the following story: "I went to HG Bishop Makarios, and I asked him to pray that God might give me children. HG answered and said, 'God will give you Zacharias.' God answered HG's request; and on the day of the delivery, my father attended the Divine Liturgy and came back saying that the Synaxarium¹ was about Zacharias the priest.

Father Hegomen Ayob of Neqada had a similar story. He asked HG to pray that God would give him a son; HG said, "May God

¹ Synaxarium is a book of the life of the saints, used by the Orthodox church. It lists the saints in the order of their anniversaries and it is read in the Divine Liturgy before the reading of the Bible.

give you Matthew.” On the day of the delivery, the reading of the Synaxarium was about the departure of Saint Matthew the Evangelist.

Mr. Zachariah Gadallah Fam also had a similar experience: “During one of HG’s visits to my house, as it was his custom, he asked me how many children I had. I told him I had four girls and that my wife was pregnant, and that I was hoping God would grant me a son. HG put his cross on my wife’s head, prayed and said, ‘Congratulations, you will have Athanasius.’¹ We were very happy to hear these words. Later, closer to the delivery, I dreamt that I was on a trip to visit the monasteries. In one of the monasteries, I saw HG Bishop Makarios, so I kneeled and made a metanya for him, and kissed his cross and his hand; but he said to me, ‘Did your wife deliver Zachariah?’ I answered negatively, so he said, ‘Zachariah, your wife is about to deliver, but there is nobody with her.’ Amazingly, on my wife’s due date, there was nobody around her except my mom, since everyone else went to attend the feast of St. George in his monastery. And when the time came to name the baby boy, everyone was hesitant about the name Athanasius; they advised me to give him another name that would be easier to call, so I thought of naming him after the saint of the day. I opened the Synaxarium to the 3rd day of the Coptic month of Hathor, my son’s birthday, and surprisingly, it was the commemoration of the departure of St. Athanasius and his sister, Irene. I then hastened to call the baby Athanasius, as Saint Makarios had told me to do.”

¹ After a great Coptic saint, Athanasius of Alexandria. He was a Christian theologian, bishop of Alexandria, Church Father, and a noted Egyptian leader of the 4th century. He is best remembered for his role in the conflict with Arius. At the First Council of Nicea, Athanasius argued against Arius and his doctrine that Christ is of a distinct substance from the Father.

“Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, ‘Be strong, do not fear!’” (Isaiah 35: 3-4) It is one of the jobs of the children of God to strengthen the weak—whether they are weak spiritually, mentally, or physically. Mrs. Demiana Fekry told us a story that shows how God’s hands work through His saints to heal, support, and make firm the feeble knees. “It was November of 1989,” she said. “I was pregnant, and I started to feel numbness in my lower body; I was not able to move easily, and I kept on getting worse, to the degree that I had to use a wheelchair. After I delivered my baby, my lower body became completely paralyzed. Physicians thought it was a psychological reaction, since I had been pregnant with my fifth child. My husband called Dr. Suzan Halwa, a neurologist and a psychiatrist who, upon seeing the scan, told us to go to Asiut immediately. I was crying a lot and praying with many tears, and I called upon God saying, ‘O Lord, I have no help or support but You. Stand by me, I am the work of your hands, and you will never leave me ... if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, do not as I will, but as You will.’ That night I dreamt that I was looking at Jesus’ picture and praying; Jesus stretched His hands toward me, and I held onto His hand and said, ‘O Jesus, help me to stand up.’ I did in fact stand up, and I was very happy. I ran down to my neighbor and told her, ‘God made me stand up and healed me.’ This dream had been like a promise from God that He would heal me.

I then went to Asiut, and was admitted to one of the hospitals (El-Mabarah Hospital), and God’s hand was with me. He arranged for me to be with another lady who was admitted on the same day as I was; she kept on serving me, even though she was sick herself. Then the orthopedic doctor decided to do surgery on my spinal cord, since the scans showed a cancerous tumor between the fourth and fifth vertebrae of my spinal column. I did not feel any improvement after the surgery, and

for three months, I was back and forth between chemotherapy and physical therapy. I remember the chemotherapy doctor telling me to get used to this lifestyle, since it would be this way for the rest of my life. However, I answered him with great faith, saying 'God is able to make me stand up...' At that time, I was corresponding with Tamav Eriny, the abbot of Abu Safain convent, and thankfully she was answering my letters and praying for me. She sent me a letter with a piece of cotton with oil from Abu Safain's lantern, and told me that they placed my name under the relics of this great martyr. She also told me to anoint my legs and the surgical wound with the oil, and I did so. One night, when I was about to sleep, I felt two people coming into the room. One of them touched my eyes and closed them; then they kept on rubbing my legs. I was terrified and I cried out for help, so one of them told me, 'Quiet down now, or you will make a big scene for us.' Then they left me. When I woke up, I felt like my legs were stretched and then I started regaining feeling in them gradually, which I never did before. I went back to Qena to send the news to HG Bishop Makarios, who used to say that I would be healed by a miracle.

One day, I was very depressed. I looked at HH Pope Kyrillos' picture and started pleading with him, saying 'I am a burden now, a heavy one, for my husband and girls; I feel as if I am neither living nor dead.' Then I went into a deep sleep and I dreamt that Pope Kyrillos was looking at me with great love, and he said, 'Wouldn't fasting and prayers do it?' So I asked him to pray for me, and he put his hand on my head and prayed. When I woke up, my big toe started to move. Then I dreamt that I went to St. Mark's Church, which was lit with a great light. HG Bishop Makarios was sitting inside and he said, 'Sit down next to me...' He asked me about my medical status and then gave me a cup of water, which he told me to drink. He then took out a small bottle of holy oil and anointed me. I also had a dream in which Tamav Eriny gave me some flour; then while

walking, I met HG who asked me again about my health. I wanted to give him the bag of flour but he laughed and said, 'Do they give out flour in monasteries nowadays?' He took the flour from me and took out his bottle of oil again and anointed my back. At that very second I felt his hands on my back.

When HG passed away, I was very sad that I could not go and take the blessings of his body like the rest of the congregation. I then dreamt that he came to me, stood over me, and wrapped me in his tunic.

With all these dreams, I started feeling gradual progress towards healing until I was fully able to walk. One day, my husband brought a magazine (Jesus' Voice magazine) and the edition was about HG. My daughter took the magazine and with great faith, she started touching HG's picture and touching my legs. After that, I started to move inside the apartment and I stopped using the wheelchair until I was completely healed. I thank my LORD Jesus Christ and all His saints, especially Saint Abba Makarios. They did not leave me at all, and I am in good health now and have returned to my duties at work and at home."

HG was also granted a great power over unclean spirits. They feared the image of Christ in him, from his simplicity to his depth and humbleness. We pray daily and say, "for it is You who has given us the authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy."¹ This is a power that God grants His honest children, to exercise it not only spiritually, but also physically.

Father Mata Marko told the following story: "One day, we were sitting with HG Bishop Makarios. At about 9 PM, I remembered

¹ A part of the Prayer of Thanksgiving of the Coptic prayer book (Agpeya).

that I had an appointment to visit a family, one of whose members was demon possessed. They asked for the cloth cover of Saint Abu Safain's relics, that God may have mercy on her through the prayers of this great martyr. So I asked HG to pray for her. He answered and said, 'God will cast it out.' Half an hour later, I excused myself to go to my appointment with the cover of the relics. The family greeted me with great joy and astonishment, telling me that she had been completely healed at exactly 9 PM. She became normal and the unclean spirit left her. This happened at the same second that Saint Abba Makarios had said 'God will cast it out.'"

Another time, they brought a demon possessed lady to Father Mata Marko at midnight. The spirit caused her to convulse greatly, so she cried out loudly and bitterly. "I told them to take her to HG, who was traveling to Qus in the morning," Father Mata told us. When they met HG, he told them to take her to the church and lay her before the altar. It was only seconds before she walked out of the church, happy and delighted. She told HG, "I saw a dove descend from above the altar curtain, and it came to me and touched me, and I was healed..." After they left, Father Mata asked HG if this dove was St. Mary, but he answered and said, "No, it was the Holy Spirit."

Two years prior to the departure of HG Bishop Makarios from this earth, during his visit to the Village of El-Rahmania, he was unable to ascend stairs due to his health situation; so he used to go in to the ground floor of each house, where everybody could gather and take his blessings. One person stopped him and asked him to go pray for a paralyzed woman who lived on the second floor of one of the houses, but HG said to him, "My son, my legs are hurting. Just bring me a cup of water and I will pray on it." But the man insisted that Abba Makarios go back with him and go upstairs to pray for the sick woman. HG told him, "I cannot go up the stairs...I am physically unable. Go with a few

people and bring her down to me." So two men went up and brought the paralyzed woman to HG; he noticed that her legs were immobile and that they kept rubbing against the rail because she was unable to lift them. HG told them to leave her, but as soon as they did, she fell to the ground, unable to keep herself up; so he ordered them to carry her again. He asked for a cup of water and put the cross on her head and prayed, and then sprinkled her with the water. She immediately stood up on her feet, and she kissed his hand and the hands of Father David and Father Gabriel who were with HG. She went up the stairs full of joy. Then Father David, overwhelmed with what he had just encountered, unconsciously clapped his hands and cried out, "Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord."

After his departure, HG appeared to a child deacon in the altar during the Divine Liturgy and had the following conversation with him:

"Where is daddy?" HG asked.

"Daddy is praying," answered the child.

"And where is mom?"

"She is at work."

"And where are your brothers?"

"At school."

"So, did you come with your dad?"

"Yes..."

The child told this story with great simplicity and innocence. He said HG was wearing a white tunic and that he prayed the entire Liturgy with the priest. He also said that HG was not using his mouth to talk, but rather he was talking to him mentally, and the child answered him in the same manner.

One of the priests told us another story which shows HG's great transparency: "HG, thankfully, had promoted me to be a Hegomen along with three other fathers. During the Liturgy, while we were in the side altar, one of us whispered saying, 'We

should write an official Thank You to HG in the newspaper of El-Ahram.' It was just an idea that nobody communicated about any further. After the Liturgy, I went to thank HG; he looked at me as one who had read my mind, and told me with an innocent smile on his lips, 'Oh brother, no El-Ahram....' I was completely shocked and said, 'How did Your Grace know?' So HG answered with great meekness and said 'I know everything...and I know what I am saying.'"

Mrs. Y. also told us the following story, which took place at her sister's house. HG was invited to her house for lunch during his visit to Naqada. They had all been working with great joy and a lot of energy since early in the morning to prepare food and clean the house. Then a lady came from outside and said, "What is all of this? You look like you are having a wedding here. All of this for a Metropolitan?" She was standing a great distance from the stove, but her clothing suddenly caught fire from the back. However, she did not feel it; another woman behind her screamed, "Fire...there is fire all over you." The lady ripped her tunic away frantically and threw it away from her. Feeling that what happened was because she belittled HG, she stayed and joined us in preparing for HG's visit.

During HG's visit to the Village of El-Khatarah, while he was walking in the street, an unbeliever started to mock and curse him. The man described what happened afterwards, saying, "He looked at me in a way that filled me with fear; I went back home blind. My neighbor begged me to go to El Mullah¹ (he meant HG Bishop Makarios) so he could ask God to heal my eyes; so I went to the bishopric and met HG and said, 'Do you remember me,

¹ The word Mullah is primarily understood in the Muslim world as a term of respect for a religiously educated man.

Mullah?’ He said ‘No my son, I do not.’ I replied, ‘I am the one that cursed at you in El-Khatarah; and look, I got what I deserved and became blind.’ So he said to me with great love, ‘Dear son...I will pray for you and anoint your eyes.’ He did this and I was able to see instantly.” He left with great joy in his heart, believing in the holiness of this *Mullah*, HG Bishop Makarios.

A woman named Mrs. Botros told us another story: “In 1988, I suffered a great ordeal while building my house. Problems were arising everywhere, so I went to HG and asked for his prayers, that God might solve the problems. He looked at me deeply and was silent for a while; then he said, ‘Go ahead and build, and God will be with you each step of the way.’ So I started the work but I encountered a big problem. After praying the nighttime prayers, I looked at HG’s picture, which hung on the wall in my room, and I said, ‘I did as you told me. Where are you now? Everything is complicated; you have to do something.’ To my astonishment, HG came out of the picture and came close to me, holding his cross in his hand; he made the sign of the cross on me and said in his usual tone, ‘Don’t be worried; everything will work out in peace.’ I had a certain feeling within me that I cannot describe. It was a mixture of amazement, joy, fear and shock, and I could not stop my tears from falling. On the very next day, some people intervened to solve the problem and everything went well, through the prayers of this Saint.”

Mr. Sameh told us the following story: “I went with my sister to visit HG Abba Makarios. He was not there, so we waited until he came. As he led us up the stairs, he stopped and looked back at my sister in anger. Then he continued to ascend the stairs. My sister whispered in my ear, ‘Why did HG look at me angrily?’ ‘Then what were you thinking about before he looked at you?’ I asked. ‘I was singing a worldly song in my mind,’ she answered.”

Doctor A. also told us a story which further supports how transparent people were in HG's eyes. "I used to visit HG to check his blood pressure and blood sugar. One day I was on my way to see him with my brother. I told my brother that I really wanted to partake of the Eucharist, but that I was hesitant to do so. As soon as we went in to see HG, he said to me, 'You have to take communion, Doctor.' It was as if he had heard what I had said to my brother when we were still a long distance away, and was responding."

One of the fathers of the city of Naqada told us this story about HG: "During the Saint Abba Makarios' visit to Naqada, he used to pray the Divine Liturgy every day. I used to go meet him, where he lived, before the Liturgy and I always found him waiting for me on the stairs. One day I went to meet him as usual, but he was not there. I knocked on the door of the apartment across the hall from HG, where one of the priests lived. The priest's wife answered the door and I went in to wait for HG to open his door. While I was there, the priest's wife told me the following story: 'Father, last night I dreamt that I was attending a Liturgy that HG was praying, and I partook of the Eucharist. In the morning, when I woke up, I knocked on HG's door and he opened for me in his home clothing. I asked him if he would go to pray the Liturgy today, but he said that he had a stomachache and that you should go and pray the Liturgy.' The priest's wife then asked if I could wait for her so she could come attend the Liturgy with me. Then, much to our dismay, HG came out and told her, 'May God have mercy on you; but did you not just take communion?'" Indeed, what this woman thought was a dream had not been. She had actually taken communion, and therefore could not take communion again in the same day.

Our beloved father Bishop Makarios has revealed to us many secrets, whether about the world of the spirits, the life of the anchorites (the Spirit Born), or life in Heaven. In the Bible and

throughout the history of the church, we hear about similar people, saints and prophets who lived a holy life and reached very high levels of spirituality; but they were nothing but mysteries to us. And here we are now, living with one of them. HG has showed us what we could not fathom; he told us about the secrets of this mysterious life, secrets which amazingly have turned out to be so simple and obvious.

The miracles of HG Bishop Makarios are ongoing, and can be seen everyday with all who ask for him and seek his help. We also ask those who have encountered the work of God in their lives, through the prayers of His Grace Abba Makarios, to contact us and send us their miracles in complete honesty, supported with documentation, reports, and any applicable x-rays or medical records.

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May the blessings of the Saint, the Thrice Blessed, His Grace Bishop Makarios, be with us all. Amen.