

Translation of a Coptic Manuscript

# VISION OF THEOPHILUS



*Source of the Holy Family's Visit to Egypt Tradition*

*In*

*the Coptic Orthodox Church*

FATIN MORRIS GUIRGUIS

# *Vision of Theophilus*

## **Translation of a Coptic Manuscript**

Fatin Morris Guirguis

---

***Source of the Holy Family's Visit to Egypt Tradition In the Coptic Orthodox Church***

***The Vision of Theophilus***

**A Translation According to the Fourth Memoir of  
Myamer Wa Aj'aib al--adhra**

**FATIN MORRIS GUIRGUIS<sup>2</sup>**

Fatin Morris Guirguis

was born in Egypt in 1963. She received her education in the American University in Cairo where she earned both her BA and MA in English and Comparative Literature. She moved to the United States and earned her Ph.D. from Florida Atlantic University. Her work and writing focus on oral literature and its role in political resistance against persecution among the Copts, of whom she is one. She is currently a professor at Polk State College

## Acknowledgment

I would like to thank Mr. Tadros Kirollus who owns a magnificent Coptic Library and who has brought it with him to his residence in New Jersey. He owns a rare copy of Myamer Wa Aj'aib al--adhra, published in 1928. He has graciously faxed me a copy of the Fourth Memoir, *The Vision of Theophilus*.

## **The Fourth Memoir The Visit of the Virgin Mary to Qusqam Mountain**

Set by

## **Pope Theophilus, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Patriarch of Alexandria**

(To be Read on the Sixth day of Hathor)<sup>1</sup>  
(May the blessing of its author be with us)  
Amen

Thank you, Lord, who opened the eyes of the faithful and who printed the mystery of His incarnation on the countenance of His chosen, who crowned with divine gifts the heads of His elect, who enlightened with wisdom the minds of His followers, who fulfilled His grace through the incarnation of His word, and who revealed the mystery of His thoughts to His select. We bless Him for His gifts and give Him due honor. We magnify Him, who said I will be with you always and until the end

of time. We glorify Him for His great mercy and thank Him for His gifts.

Glory be to God, now, at all the times and forever.

Amen.

My Beloved,

David the prophet, the father of our Lord in the flesh well--said, "Send forth Your light and Your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to Your holy mountain, to the place where You dwell"

Yes, this verse was fulfilled-- about this holy mountain, which God has chosen to reside in with His Virgin Mother.

God said that He loved the houses of Zion and its mountain and lived there forever. Yes, this rich mountain, this holy mountain, this virgin mountain He loved more than any other city of Egypt.

He refused to reside in the house of a man of wealth or of great position or of leadership but chose this holy mountain and this barren desert which no man has ever crossed.

How can we describe this virgin mountain? And how can we articulate its glory? That which has become inhabited by the Lord of hosts and His spiritual angels and became a source of joy and happiness to the Seraphim, Cherubim and all the high ranks where they served our Lord when He resided in it.

Blessed are you Holy Mountain because you have been elevated to the ranks of the mountains of Horeb and of Sinai which served as residences for our savior Jesus Christ and His prophets.

Blessed are you mountain because you have received God and His Virgin mother.

Come now, you, great prophet Isaiah, and shout in our midst today. "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel, which means, 'God with us'" (Isaiah 7:14). Yes, you have also prophesied that God will provide rest in this mountain. Kings pass away, soldiers die and nations perish, but your name never changes because the Lord of Hosts chose you over any other mount. Many people seek you from far away to receive your blessing and the forgiveness of their sins, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, "In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the

mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2--3). You are truly the mount of God and the house of the God of Jacob, because He lived in you incarnated from the Virgin. You are the road that guides to virtue. People flock to you from distant places to receive the blessing of the Virgin Mary and of this barren desert which became the refuge for the true queen and her only son.

About this St. John, the beloved, Glory be to Him, says in Apocalypse that he saw a "woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth." Then "another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days"(Revelation 12:1--7). The dragon was very angry with her and waged a war against her and her offspring who kept God's commandments and witnessed to Jesus Christ.

The woman is the Virgin of Virgins, and the sun in which she is dressed is our savior who was incarnated from her to release Adam and his offspring. The moon is John the Baptist who was dressed in the light of the Holy Spirit and the grace of the holy baptism. The twelve stars that crowned her head are the twelve pure apostles who evangelized far and near and taught us the true faith in Jesus Christ. The dragon in front of her is accursed Satan. The water that spit him is Herod's anger and the war he waged on her offspring is the massacre of the innocent and the desert that God prepared for her is this holy mountain where she came with her only son who was incarnated from her.

Let us therefore cry with Jacob, Father of the Patriarchs, saying, "This is the house of God and this is the door of heaven and the assembly of saints."

Let me tell you, I, the abject Theophilus, who put this memoir –As soon as I entered this holy place, I rejoiced and was filled with joy and

gladness. I forgot my aches, the long traveling distance and left behind the world and what's in it because the virgin had asked her beloved son to forgive the sins of those who come to this place -- where Satan has no authority upon him who visits here, as long as he follows God and the ways of virtue. What can I say? And, what honor can I do you Lord for the many graces that you bestowed upon me, the abject?

You gave me your holy flesh and blood to forgive my sins and gave me the seat of patriarchy to care for your people. You granted me a time of peace and good believing kings. You relieved my heartache and gave me what I wished for concerning visiting this place where I am now.

Truly, I am surprised that such a small humble church like this one is the house of the son of God, the word and his mother the virgin. But why should I be surprised, since it couldn't have been except to please God the Father and His Holy Spirit?  
Glory be to Him now and forever.

My Beloved,

Let me tell you about a wondrous thing that happened. One day at sunset, after I arrived to this holy place, with God's pleasure, the bishops retired to sleep, and I went up to the small room in which the Virgin resided during her stay here and started to pray fervently saying, "Dear Powerful God, I entreat You in humility, You who listen to the weak and are close to those who seek Your Holy Name with pure hearts to teach me the news about your coming with your mother the Holy Virgin to Egypt and about your stay in this arid desert, so that I can build a church in both Your names, to honor the glory of the God of Hosts and to exalt His divine powers." As soon as I uttered these words, a light many times stronger than the sun appeared and a chariot of light bearing the Virgin alighted. Her face shone with glory beyond description. She was dressed in an immense heavenly garment. The two great angels, Michael and Gabriel, flanked her on the right and the left. When I fell to my face in fear, the Virgin pointed to the angel Michael who raised me and made the sign of the cross upon me and took away my fear.

The Virgin stood up and said, "Theophilus, successor of my only son, get up and do not fear. Take heart and do not run away. Peace be upon you, great fighter. Your incense has reached heaven to the throne of

God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit with a good scent. You shining light in the church, raise your eyes to me, the mother of God the creator of Heaven and Earth. I carried Him in my belly nine months. I nursed Him who is the only provider. I am Mary daughter of Joachim, daughter of Hanna, of the tribe of Judah, of the root of David. I came to tell you about what you need to know concerning our fleeing to the land of Egypt and our choice of this holy mountain, for all of this did not happen except according to the will of my only Son and His good Father and the Holy Spirit to reveal the extent of His humility. For he did not want to take a big house or a huge building, but preferred this place so that it becomes a topic of conversation for all nations that will inhabit the earth in the time to come. I have great news for you, so be attentive to what I will say, write it down and spread it in all the parts of the world, as a commemoration to all those who believe.”

I, then, went down on my knees and knelt before her in fear and trembling and spoke to her in the voice of Elizabeth saying, “Hail to you full of glory. Who am I, an abject human, for the mother of my God to come to me?” I thank you Lord Jesus Christ because you have honored me above all people.

Let us return to explain what the Virgin Mary told me about her flight to Egypt and her visit to this holy mountain. She said, “When I gave birth to my beloved son, His light shone in the east and overshadowed all the stars. I was a stranger in a stable in Bethlehem. I had no one to help me. I have never seen a woman give birth except for the chaste, aged and barren Elizabeth whose relatives helped her with everything she needed when her time to deliver approached. As for me, I did not find a rag to wrap my beloved son in, on the day of his birth. I searched the length and the breadth of the stable seeking a worn rag until I found one. I wrapped my son and laid Him in the manger. He was born on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Kiahk.<sup>2</sup> I looked around me and the stable was full of the orders of angels, the thrones, the dominions, the Cherubim and the Seraphim. They were all worshipping, crying and saying with voices of joy, ‘This is the day of deliverance, this is the day of forgiveness, this is the day of joy, this is the day of happiness, and this is the day of halleluiah. Glory be to God in heaven, peace on earth and joy among men.

Blessed are you among women

Blessed is the fruit of your womb which brought forth a savior for all people.

Blessed are we the heavenly hosts for being deemed worthy to see and serve our Lady the pure Virgin Mary, the undefiled dove, the royal mother of the King of Kings, the savior of the world, who was visited by the angel Gabriel in joy.'

Gabriel knelt in front of the new--born baby. Then he said, "What I have already prophesied to you has been fulfilled --you would carry and deliver a savior for this world." When Joseph, the carpenter, my fiancé, came accompanied by the lady Salome, she looked at me, knelt down before me and then said, 'Blessed are you virgin because you have become the mother of the God of Hosts who created the world, to whom the prophets witnessed. From this day onwards, I will be your faithful servant all the days of my life. I will not depart from your side not even for the wink of an eye.'" After that, many shepherds came and knelt down before my only son and cried saying, "You are the savior of the world, the true son of God as we have been told." They then turned towards me and said, "Blessed are you Virgin, the best woman of this earth. Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts that nursed you because you have delivered a deliverer for this world and we heard the angels praise Him saying, "Glory be to God in the highest, peace on earth and joy among men." I was much taken by what the shepherds said.

The child was circumcised eight days from His birth and He was named Jesus according to the angel's prophecy before my conception. The Magi came from the East and worshipped Him, at which Herod became disturbed assuming that the baby would rule in his stead, missing that this is the only God, the creator of heaven and earth. For these reasons and because of his fear for his kingdom he called all those who can bind and unbind and asked them where the Messiah will be born and they answered in Bethlehem, in Judea. When he called the Magi to inquire about the time and the place of the appearance of the star, they informed him. Since his intent was evil and his conscience was corrupt, he planned to trick them, intending to kill the child. But since the place of birth of the God of Hosts was unknown to him, he instructed the Magi to go and to kneel down before Him and to come back once they find Him to tell him the exact details, so that he too can go and kneel before Him. He intended to mislead them hoping to find the boy



using their guidance. Following, his instructions the Magi came forth to us until they reached us and knelt down before my beloved son. When they saw Him quiet and humble, wrapped in a worn rag, they made their offerings of gold, incense and myrrh to Him. They glorified Him saying, 'You are the great king who came to the world to save us of accursed evil.' At the time, the angel of God appeared and said to them, 'Don't go back to Herod but go to your village in peace.'

When God reached forty days, we took Him up to the Holy Temple, where we found a god--fearing man whose name was Simeon. He carried the baby in his arms and blessed God saying, 'Dear God, Release your servant now in peace because my eyes have seen your salvation, light to the world and glory to the people of Israel.' He then placed his head near the altar and gave up the spirit. He was delivered from the burdens of this passing world. After we had completed everything according to the law, we returned to Jerusalem in peace, joy and gladness.

As for Herod the King, he awaited the return of the Magi for two years, contemplating in vain, until one night the devil appeared to him in human form and spoke to him saying, 'What's up with you and sloth? You are about to lose your kingdom.' Herod answered, 'What can I do?' The devil replied, 'Get up and kill all the children in Bethlehem in Judea and the nearby villages of two years and younger. May be you can kill Jesus.' In the same night, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him, 'Go take the boy and his mother and flee to the land of Egypt and stay there until I tell you.' Immediately, we left in haste, taking Salome along with us, until we reached the land of Egypt after great suffering because of the difficulty of the road, the long distance, the heat of the sun and the coldness of the weather, which if I describe to you, Theophilus, in detail we would stay here for a very, very long time. The first city that we tarried in after a long walk was Al--Farma, and then to Basta, the first of the villages of Egypt, then to a point called Mahama, then to Bilbays, then to Minyat Ganah close to Sammanud, then to Sammanud itself, then to El Burulus, then to al--Matla' until the bilad al--Sibakh, then to Wadi al--Natrun, and then to the borders of Cairo to a city named Heliopolis 'Ayn Shams, then to old Fustat, where we stayed for a period of time in a grotto called Abu Sarga. We, then, resumed the trip to Upper Egypt to a city

called Ashmunaym and then to Qusqam where you are now, Theophilus.”

“As for the miracles that my son performed during our trip, speak about them joyfully: for He raised the dead, drew water from rock, destroyed idols and created trees where there were none. He thwarted the plans of all those who wanted to kill Him en route to Fustat and back when they saw His divine power that made the idols fall on their faces and break into pieces, while their demons fled in front of them. The Balsam tree in Mattarya speaks of my son’s power when He blessed it saying, “You will not die and none of your leaves will fall until God inherits the earth and all that’s upon it.” In truth, many ages have passed and it did not lose any of its leaves neither in the summer, nor in the winter, nor in the spring nor in the autumn.

What is even more wondrous, Theophilus, is that when we crossed Ashmunaym, its people were worshipping an idol made of copper in which demons resided. This idol used to turn to the right and to the left and to kill the enemies of this city. When the Lord, glory be to Him, arrived, this idol could no longer stand, so it fell and the demons that resided in it fled in front of it and the idol lost its power. There were many trees and many palms that bowed their heads kneeling in front of Christ. Among them was a very tall palm to which I looked and said, “Move you palm with the power of the high one and be planted in the mount of olives where my son will go and where His work on earth will be fulfilled and He will enter Jerusalem in glory and honor and the sons of the Hebrews will come out to meet Him with olive branches and palm fronds from you. In this day, they will praise God saying, ‘Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one coming in the name of the Lord.’ It will be a great celebration known to the gentiles as Palm Sunday, and the palm obeyed me and moved.

Whenever we went into a village, we were usually very well received with the great honor that is due to my son, except in a small number of ungodly villages who refused to provide us with our needs. Whenever I reached a good point, I asked God to bless it and He said, “Mother, any place where we were not received well will be ruined, flooded in water and its people will become exiled to the farthest end of the earth. As for the places where we were well--received, a blessed church will be built in My name and yours forever.”

Let us now return to Herod, the king, after he killed the children. The devil appeared to him again and asked him, "What benefit did you gain from killing those children since the child Jesus is still alive and here He is with his mother in Upper Egypt. Hastily send your soldiers. He is in Qusqam, on the west side." As soon as he said this, he disappeared. Herod became full of wrath and sent ten of his soldiers after us and supplied them with all their needs. Promising them a big reward, he instructed them to capture us alive if they found us, so that he could kill us with his own hand.

The soldiers mounted their horses and left for the land of Egypt but a prophet named Yusa, a relative of Joseph the carpenter from the tribe of Judah, preceded them. When he heard what Herod had said, he quickly left to inform us. With the grace of God, he walked with a fast pace until he reached this mountain. During his trip, the devil appeared to him in human form and said, 'Man, what do you want with this desolate desert?' Yusa, recognizing him for what he was wouldn't tell him the reason. Intending to mislead him so that he would return and not reach us, the devil said 'Yusa, in vain you have wasted your efforts, the soldiers are ahead of you,' but Yusa did not heed him and marched ahead until he reached us. When Joseph the just saw Yusa, he recognized him. Joseph received him and kissed him and asked him why he came. Yusa, then, told him that Herod had killed 144,000 children for the sake of the child Jesus. When this wasn't enough, he sent after him ten more soldiers when he knew that He is alive. Yusa said, "Their purpose is to capture you alive and bring you to the tyrant king so that he may kill you with his own hand." When I heard these words, I was much troubled. I took the child from Salome and went up to the roof of the house, thinking that the soldiers have surrounded the house. I said, "Woe to me! My beloved son, we are now cornered on every side. Woe to me my beloved son! Look at my humility, my weakness, and the sadness of my heart. Heaven weep with me, earth mourn the sorrow of my heart, heavenly powers support me in my exile, Father David come and console me with your divine harp. Grieved Father Jacob, you who mourned your son Joseph, come today and grieve with me." Then, my beloved son looked at me and said, 'Mother do not grieve, your tears have distressed me. Know that all that moves and stops do so only with the will of my father who art in heaven. Take me now to

Joseph and Salome and console them because they are in great distress because of me.' When we reached them, he said to all, 'Do not despair of God's mercy and trust that He is in control of this situation.' Then he looked at Yusa and said, "We have exhausted you, take this stone and put it under your head and rest awhile from the pains of your long walk and know that paradise will be your home, where you will reside with your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." So, he took the stone and placed it under his head and gave up the spirit. Then, Joseph took him and buried him inside the house and sealed his grave with a stone to commemorate him up till the end of time.

After that, Theophilus, we lingered on for six months. We arrived in this holy place on the seventh of the month of Baramouda<sup>3</sup> and left on the sixth of Baba, on the day when the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and said, "Come take the boy and his mother and return to the land of Israel for Herod, the king, has died and all the soldiers that he has sent God has destroyed on the road. God did not allow them to reach this holy place. He said this and left, and Joseph came to inform us. We rejoiced to be able to return to Jerusalem. When it was time to leave this mountain, the Lord, to Him be the glory, said, "The blessings of my good Father and the Holy Spirit be upon this house where a good altar will be consecrated and pure offerings will be made. The angel of peace will come and bless all those who come to it and kneel down in faith, and I will forgive all their sins. Should they repent and refrain from sinning again, they will be counted among the saints. All those who are sick or in tribulation or in pain or in grief or in fear and come to this place and ask faithfully, their prayers will be answered in honor of your name my dear mother. It will become a refuge for strangers and a house for monks and all those who come with gifts, vows, tithes and first offerings.

My blessing and peace will be upon those who reside in it as long as no one there is against me. And as long as it stays as it is and doesn't change from what it is today and doesn't miss any of its parts, it will last till the end of time.

Know that all those who serve this house in my name and in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and your name will be blessed in this house and will be made full with heavenly blessings and

every woman who has trouble giving birth and who asks Me in your name and remembers your suffering with Me will quickly be delivered. In every place you have crossed, a church will be built in your name. The blessings and peace of my good father and the Holy Spirit will be upon those who congregate there in my name.”

When my son said these words we prepared to leave and descended this holy mountain and walked to Ashmunaym where its people met us with great joy. We spent the night there and in the morning, we sought the shore to find a ship but we couldn't find one. Jesus, however, found us a spiritual one which we boarded. After a few days' walk, we reached Nazareth in great joy where I resided with my son until He reached thirty years and where He did great miracles and wonders in the cities and villages and in the neighboring Judea and Galilee and across the Jordan. He chose disciples whom he entrusted with the gospels to preach to all humankind and sent them to all the parts of the earth. After this, Joseph the just died and my beloved son buried him with His two holy hands in a new tomb. And, to fulfill all that He came for, He accepted suffering, bitter persecutions and was finally crucified on the wood of the cross. He gave up the spirit and was buried in a new tomb and was resurrected on the third day according to His prophecies to His pure disciples. He ascended to heaven and delivered Adam and his children from the slavery of Satan. He released them through the holy baptism and through His flesh and precious blood. After His resurrection we saw Him many times, since he came to us and consoled us with His Holy words.

One day when I was at Mary's, the mother of John (also known as Mark, one of the four gospel writers) and while the disciples were discussing my beloved son and I was bitterly crying, I told them, “My children and my disciple sons, learn that since I have received the annunciation of the great angel Gabriel concerning the incarnation of God the word in my womb and up till this hour, I have been sad beyond compare, tired, struggling and persecuted by the Jews. Peter the apostle replied, “I beseech you, blessed lady, to tell us all that happened to you that we may narrate it wherever in the world we evangelize. So I started to narrate my trip in details to them and while I was doing so a light from heavens shone upon us, accompanied by my beloved son, My Lord and My God, in glory beyond compare flanked by Michael and Gabriel on His right and His left. And He sat in our midst and

said, 'Peace be upon you.' So we knelt down before Him saying, 'Glory and honor to the most high.' Then he turned towards me and said, 'Why are you weeping mother? Rejoice, be glad and of good cheer and do not grieve because my suffering, my crucifixion and my death delivered the whole creation. However, if your grief is because of what you suffered during our flight from one place to another and to the desolate desert that we inhabited for a period of time, I will consecrate it with My own hand before I consecrate any church in My name on the face of the earth.' Immediately, He ordered a heavenly cloud to carry us all and bear us to this holy house where we are now, Theophilus. It was the third hour, of the sixth day of the holy month of Hathor. The disciples prepared all things needed to consecrate a church with great joy. The two angels, Michael and Gabriel, carried a pitcher of water and my dear son sprinkled the water with His own hands in the corners of the church. I followed Him with the twelve disciples, Mary Magdalene and Salome. Each time He sprinkled some water, He would look at us and say, 'The hands that created Adam and his offspring and that were nailed to the cross sanctify and bless this great house.' After that, we found the altar built and prepared with all its utensils. Peter performed the liturgy upon Christ's orders. Jesus also ordered His disciples to remember their deceased forerunners. When those were mentioned, they were raised from the dead with God's will and His divine power and came to us in the flesh. My son blessed them with the consecration water and gave them His holy body and precious blood and asked them to remember their fathers who came before them. Then He gave us from the holy mysteries, blessed us and granted us peace. After that, a heavenly table was laid before us of which we ate in great joy and happiness while the angels waited upon us, which pleased us all especially the pure apostles who rejoiced when they saw the resurrection of their fathers from the dead and their receiving of the Holy Spirit from the God of Hosts who looked at us, and said 'Remember this day forever because in it a good church was built for you in this holy place and it will be called the church of the apostles.' The apostles said, 'Thank You for your favors with us because You have glorified us above all people. Finally, we mounted the cloud and descended till we reached the house of Mary, mother of John, in Jerusalem on the same day at sunset."

Here is everything you asked about, Theophilus. Know that what we built

in this holy place will last forever until my son comes again to judge the world. Get up and teach your people what you have seen and heard from me, write it and send it to all the parts of the earth as an eternal commemoration to my name and to my visit to this place.

Now get up quickly and perform the holy liturgy for the saintly monks who are assembled here, and now I will bless all before I leave this place since today will be celebrated in commemoration of me.”

When I, Theophilus, heard this from the Virgin Mary, I knelt down long saying, “You Virgin, Mother of God are worthy of honor with great mystery.” I kissed her precious hands, so she blessed me and went up to heaven with great glory while I was looking at her.

Let the Orthodox people rejoice and celebrate a great spiritual celebration in this place because of the visit of the God of Hosts and His Mother the pure of all pollution, the Virgin. Let us be warned not to visit this place, while we are tainted with sins. First we must leave the world behind, and then enter with pure hearts and thoughts. Any one of us who is sinful must repent and abandon all evil because God accepts the repentant, regardless of his sin. We must recall the Last Day when we will present ourselves in front of the fair judge to answer for our deeds and be purified of all sin to be made worthy of partaking of the flesh and blood of Christ. We must save our eyes from temptation, our tongues from cursing, debauchery, joking, envy, hate, false witness and injustice to accept the blessing of the Virgin Mary whose feast we are celebrating today. We must know that her intercessions are accepted with the true God who was incarnated from her and who lived with her in this barren desert.

What can we say about the honor of this holy house? It is a house of forgiveness, a house of healing, and a house of angels, saints and struggling anchorites. Blessed is he who comes here and makes an offering or fulfills a vow. The Virgin Mary will intercede on his behalf and offer it as an acceptable offering to her only son, whom we ask to forgive your sins, your errors and weaknesses, repose your deceased on good faith, raise your children, strengthen your aged, elevate your homes, and grant you the flooding of the Nile. a fruitful harvest, a fair Sultan, deliver you from the trials of devil and make you winners of good deeds before the end of time, bless your assemblies, raise your children

in virtue, keep you safe in your home country and make you able to attend such a holy day and a pure celebration for many years to come, give you a time of peace while you are healthy in body and in soul and make your works shine with the light of His divinity, and keep the doors of His church open in your faces through all times, defeat your enemies and those who resist you, accept your fasting, prayers and offerings and make you worthy to partake of the holy flesh and blood through which Adam and his offspring are saved, and confirm you in the true faith up till the last breath with the intercession of the holy Virgin Mary the seat of God, the lady of all people, mother of our savior who released us from the captivity of accursed Satan and the prayers of all the saints and the hosts of the angels, and the true prophets and chosen apostles and all those who pleased the Lord with their good deeds, now, at all times, and for ever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Third Coptic month of the year. It usually falls between November 11th and December 9<sup>th</sup>. Hathor was the ancient Egyptian Cow Goddess

Hathor was the ancient Egyptian Cow Goddess

<sup>2</sup> Fourth month of the Coptic calendar. It falls between December 10th and January 8<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Also known as Paremoude is the eighth Coptic month of the year and falls between April 9<sup>th</sup> and May 8th of the Gregorian calendar.