



When Simeon the Elder (one of the seventy chosen to translate the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek) was afraid to translate that a virgin would conceive because the king would make fun of him; he wanted to translate the virgin as a “young lady” but he was not at ease for this inaccurate translation and God revealed to him in a vision that he would not die before he would see Christ the Lord born of a virgin. This was fulfilled and Simeon the Elder lived about three hundred years. And in the Temple, Simeon’s eyes have seen God’s salvation and he carried the Lord Jesus Christ in his hands (Luke 2:29-30).

### An Important Question

“He did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son” (Matthew 1:25). Does it mean that St. Mary was married to St. Joseph neither after nor before she gave birth to Jesus Christ?

Absolutely not!!! Because the words “Till, until, to, even to” often denotes the meaning before it, not after it.” For example, the verse (2 Samuel 6:23) denotes that Michal had no children neither before nor after her death. (If you need more examples, just read Genesis 8:7& Acts 7:17-18& Psalm 110:1& Matthew 28:20).

- Although St. Joseph is called “The husband of St. Mary,” actually they were only “betrothed” but they were never married. That’s why the holy Bible always calls St. Mary as mother of Jesus not Joseph’s wife as in: (Matthew 1:18 & 2:12-13& 2:19)

\*Firstborn means, “Born first,” it does not mean the birth of others.



### Why do we call St. Mary “The Theotokos”?

- “Theotokos” is a Greek word made up of two parts. The prefix “Theo” means “God” and the word “Tokos” means “Carrier or bearer in the womb” (birth mother).
- The Ever-Virgin Mary was the carrier or bearer (birth mother) of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ, the son of God.
- The term “Theotokos” does not imply that Mary contributed anything to the divine nature of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Nestorianism was an ancient Christian heresy associated with Nestorius (c. 386–c. 451 C.E.), Patriarch of Constantinople, who taught that Christ consisted of two distinct persons (human and divine Logos), rather than a unified person. Nestorius’ view of Christ was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in 431 C.E. Nestorianism taught that the human and divine essences of Christ were separate and that there were two persons, the man Jesus Christ and the divine Logos, which dwelt in the man. Consequently, Nestorians rejected such terminology as “God suffered” or “God was crucified” because the humanity of Jesus Christ that suffered was separate from his divinity. Likewise, they rejected the term *Theotokos* (Giver of birth to God/Mother of God) as a title of the Virgin Mary, suggesting instead the title *Christotokos* (Giver of birth to Christ/Mother of Christ), because in their opinion Mary gave birth to only the human person of Jesus and not the divine.

**“If one does not acknowledge Mary as Theotokos, he is estranged from God.”**

**-St. Gregory of Nazianzus**



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The church congratulates her blessed children

**Dr. Bassam & Tina**

for their marriage. May God bless this new family.

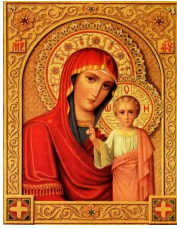
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**St. Mary’s fast: August 7 – 21**

**Assumption of St. Mary’s Body: August 22**

**August 2011 Newsletter**

**Father Mena Fam**



### What do we believe about St. Mary?

- 1- St. Mary was truly a virgin before, during, and after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ: (Isaiah 7:14& Ezekiel 44:1-2).
- 2- St. Mary is the mother of God: (Luke 1:43).
- 3- St. Mary was born with the sin: (Luke 1:46, 47).
- 4- St. Mary had a very good relation with God, she had great faith: (Luke 1:45).
- 5- St. Mary was humble: (Luke 1:48).
- 6- Our Coptic Orthodox Church believes that when St. Mary died, her body was taken away by the angels to heaven. The ascension of her body was recorded in the history of the church and no one can deny this history.

### Run For Your Life

A strong dog was boastful towards the other dogs because of his ability to run.

However, one day while he was running after a rabbit, it ran away from him and he did not catch it. The other dogs mocked him saying, "Where is your excellence in running? A weak rabbit was able to run from you." The dog was silent for a moment and said, "Do not forget! The rabbit ran for his life, but I was running for my dinner."

The rabbit ran to save its life, but the dog was running after the rabbit to eat it. One invests enormous amount of energy when running for his life so that the enemy of good will not catch and devour him. Running is strength and courage when we realize that sin kills our soul and destroys our eternal life.

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If you can't sleep, don't count sheep, talk to the Shepherd.

### The Titles of the Holy Virgin Saint Mary

- 1- The "Theotokos": This is a Greek word composed of two syllables: "Theo" meaning "God", and "tokos" meaning "bearer" (Is 7:14), (Mt 1:23).
- 2- The "Second Heaven," because God descended and dwelt within her.
- 3- The "Golden Censor": The union of charcoal and fire within the censor symbolizes the unity between the Divinity and Humanity of our Lord.
- 4- The "Burning Bush": Moses saw a burning bush that was not consumed (Ex 3:2). The fire is a symbol of God, (Deut 4:24), and the burning bush is a symbol of St. Mary, who carried the fire of the Divinity in her womb and was not consumed by it.
- 5- "Aaron's Rod": This rod sprouted, put forth buds, produced blossoms, and yielded ripe almonds, without being planted nor watered (Num 17:1-11), and for this reason, it is a symbol of St. Mary, who being virgin, gave birth to God the logos.
- 6- The "Ever-Virgin": We believe that St. Mary's virginity existed before, during and after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ezekiel prophesied regarding her virginity (Ez 44:1-2). This closed gate is a symbol of St. Mary's perpetual virginity.
- 7- "Jacob's Ladder": (Genesis 28:12) This Ladder is a symbol of St. Mary because our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven to earth by taking flesh through her, and thus she was the junction between heaven and earth.
- 8- The "Manna Pot": Our Lord Jesus Christ is the "True Manna" who descended from heaven and gave life to the world (John 6:58). Thus, St. Mary is the golden pot who carried the true Manna in her womb (Ex 16:32-33).
- 9- The "Ark of the Covenant": (Heb 9:3-5) This Ark was overlaid on all sides with gold, and this is a symbol of St. Mary's purity that is like pure gold. It contained the manna, which is a symbol of Jesus Christ, the 'Living Bread', and the tablets of the covenant, which are a symbol of Jesus Christ the Word (John 1:1). It also had placed above it the cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy seat, which is why in the icon of St. Mary, we see angels overshadowing her.



### We glorify St. Mary the Virgin for many reasons:

- 1- Her motherhood to the Lord: (Luke 1:43).
- 2- Her everlasting virginity: St. Mary remained a virgin after she gave birth to the Lord Jesus.
- 3- Her great faith and her holy life: (Luke 1: 42 & 45&48).
- 4- "For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed" (Luke 1:48).

### St. Mary's Fast

The fast of the Holy Virgin Mary, a period of 15 days, begins on the first day of the Coptic month of Mesra and ends on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the same month. Tradition accounts that this fast was pressed upon the church by the believers, due to their love for the Mother of God, the Theotokos. In origin, this fast was not part of the fasts assigned by the apostles and the early church fathers, and its addition was not until the early thirteenth century. This occurrence was first recorded in a book written by the elder Abu-Elmakarem Saad-Allah Girgis Masoud. It is documented that Abu-Elmakarem had died in the year 1209 A.D, thus, rendering the obvious conclusion that this fast was an addition to the church fasts only during the early thirteenth century.

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- A careless word may kindle strife.
- A cruel word may wreck a life.
- A timely word may level stress.
- A loving word may heal and bless.