



Summer Festival | 2023 / 2024



# REJOICE

Prep | English Edition

*“ ... the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice” (Deut 16:15)*



## His Holiness Pope Tawadros II



## 118th Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of The See of Saint Mark

## Appreciation

The summer festival central committee of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Melbourne and its affiliated regions would like to give thanks and appreciation to the **Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States** ([www.smfsus.org](http://www.smfsus.org)) for their blessed and tireless work in the translation, revision and art-work of St. Mark's Festival (Mahragan Al Keraza) books from the original Arabic version under the guidance and prayers of **H.G Bishop Youssef**.

May The Lord bless all their fruitful services and for many years to come.

**In Christ,**

**SF Melbourne Central Committee.**

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## My Joy Comes From the Lord

### The Nativity Star

Matthew 2:1-12

This story teaches us that true joy comes from our Lord Jesus Christ.

A long time ago, around the time of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, a star appeared in the sky. This star was different from the rest of the stars. 3 wise men studied the stars and when they saw this special star, they knew that a great King would be born. They followed the star until it led them to Jerusalem.



They went to King Herod's palace and asked the king, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him” (Matthew 2:2).

When King Herod heard this, he was sad and worried that this new King would take his place. The chief priests told the king that Christ would be born in Bethlehem. King Herod told the wise men to “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him” (Matthew 2:8).

# “ REJOICE ”

The 3 wise men left King Herod's palace.

**“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy” (Matthew 2:10).**

They followed the star and it led them to where the young Child was.

It was our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, who was born in Bethlehem. The 3 wise men were very happy and they worshiped Him. They offered Him their best gifts: **gold, frankincense, and myrrh.**



Then they had a dream that they should not return to Herod, so they took a different path back to their country.

**Our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven for us because He loves us very much.**

**He was born from the Virgin St. Mary to live with us on Earth.**

**His name is Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.”**

**He died on the cross and rose from the dead to save us and to take us to be with Him in heaven forever.**

**“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy”. (Matthew 2:10)**



# Color the Picture

## The Nativity Star



“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy”. (Matthew 2:10)

## My Joy is in His House

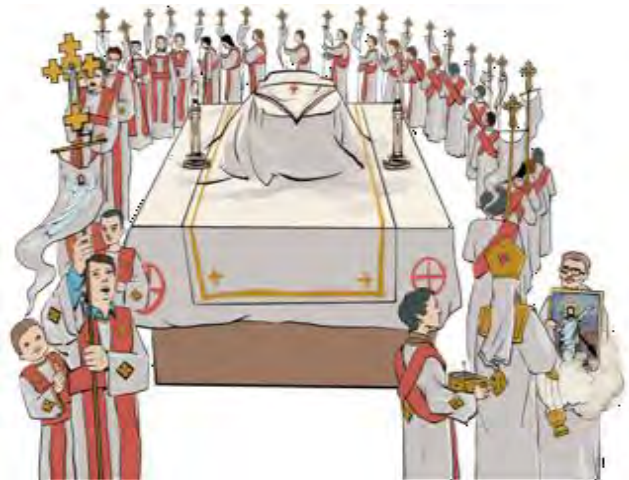
### Processions in the Church

Learning about the Rite of Processions in the church, teaches us how the church expresses joy.

When we have a feast in the church, the priests and the deacons go around the church holding crosses and an icon (a picture) of the feast we are celebrating. They sing hymns and play the cymbals and the triangle. This is called a **procession**.

**Let us learn about the order of the procession.**

A deacon leads the procession while holding a big cross with a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross on one side and His Resurrection on the other side. The other deacons follow him holding smaller crosses.



Then a deacon holds an icon of the feast and walks backwards while facing the priest. The priest offers incense in front of the icon. Another deacon follows the priest holding the box of incense.

In the church, incense means that God is with us. As the incense goes up, our prayers go up to heaven and God hears them.





# “ REJOICE ”

The procession starts in the sanctuary where the priest and deacons go around the altar 3 times. Then, they leave the sanctuary and go around the church 3 times.

The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> processions go from left to right (North to South). During the 3<sup>rd</sup> procession, the priest and the deacons go down the middle of the church, returning to the sanctuary.

There, they will have one last procession around the altar. The deacon holding the icon stands in front of the altar (facing the congregation), while the priest offers incense.



Processions in the church bring us great joy. We have many processions throughout the year. These are a few:

- On the **Feast of the Resurrection**
- During the **Holy 50 days**.
- On the **feasts of the saints**, to celebrate their lives that they lived pleasing the Lord.

**Our Church is a beautiful church filled with joy.  
It teaches us to show our joy by praising our Lord.**

**“Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.”  
(James 5:13)**



# Color the Picture

## Processions in the Church



**“Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.”  
(James 5:13)**

## My Joy is Living His Commandments

The Eunuch of the Queen of Ethiopia Believes

Acts 8:27-39

This story teaches us that the word of God (The Holy Bible) is the source of our joy.

The eunuch of the Queen of Ethiopia was a man of great authority. He was in charge of the queen's treasury. On his way back from Jerusalem, he was sitting in his chariot (a cart pulled by horses). He was reading from the Book of Isaiah the prophet in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible.

At that time, an angel of the Lord told St. Philip the Apostle to talk to the eunuch.

He asked him: "Do you understand what you are reading?"

The eunuch answered: "How can I unless someone guides me? Can you sit with me and explain it to me?"

St. Philip explained to him that what he was reading from the Old Testament was about the Lord Jesus Christ.

The eunuch rejoiced because he understood the word of God and he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.



# “ REJOICE ”

As they passed by some water, the eunuch asked St. Philip if he could be baptized. St. Philip told him that **“if you believe with all your heart, you may”** (Acts 8:37).

The eunuch said, **“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”** (Acts 8:37), and St. Philip the Apostle baptized him in the water.

The eunuch was very happy that he became Christian and he was a child of God.



When we read the word of God, it brings joy into our lives.

“I rejoice at Your word” (Psalm 119:162)



“ REJOICE ”



# Color the Picture

The Eunuch of the Queen of Ethiopia Believes



**“I rejoice at Your word” (Psalm 119:162)**

# “ REJOICE ”

## My Joy Stays with Me When I am with the Lord

### Elijah and the Widow

1 Kings 17:2-16

This story teaches us that being with our Lord Jesus Christ, through prayer, gives us joy.

Elijah the prophet was a man of God. He prayed to God all the time and knew that God was always with him. He always obeyed God and did what was asked of him.



At that time, there was no food in the land. God told Elijah to drink water from Brook Cherith (a small creek) and He sent ravens to bring him food to eat. The ravens brought him bread and meat every morning and evening.



After many days, the brook dried up, but God had plans for Elijah and never forgot him. God told Elijah to go to a town called Zarephath to stay at the house of a widow who lived with her son. She would take care of him.

When he arrived at the widow's house, he found her gathering sticks. He asked, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink... and bring me a morsel of bread in your hand" (1 Kings 17:10-11).



# “ REJOICE ”

The widow told him that she did not have any bread, and all that she had was a handful of flour and a little oil. She planned to use them to prepare bread for herself and her son. After she made this last piece of bread, they would have nothing to eat.

Elijah told her not to fear and to make him a small cake first and then to make one for herself and her son. For the Lord said: **“The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth” (1 Kings 17:14).**



This meant that the flour and oil would not finish until it rained, and the plants grow, so that they would have food again.

The widow believed Elijah, the man of God, and obeyed him. God took care of her and she had enough food for Elijah and her family. They were all joyful.



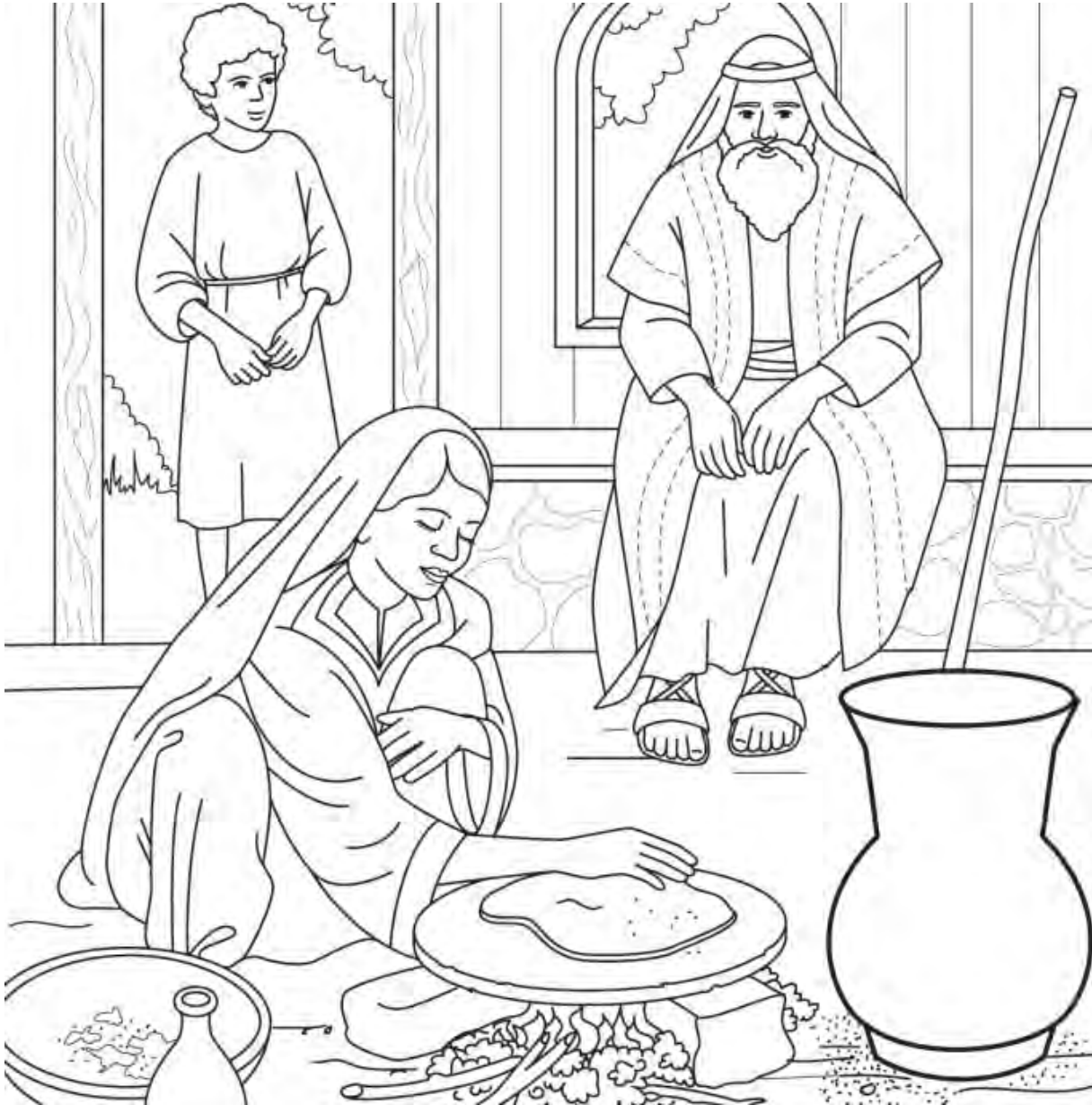
**When we obey our Lord Jesus Christ and follow His commandments, we always have joy.**

**“Let those who also love Your name be joyful in You.”  
(Psalm 5:11)**



# Color the Picture

## Elijah and the Widow



**“Let those who also love Your name be joyful in You.”  
(Psalm 5:11)**



## My Joy Shows In My Behavior

### St. Verena Made People Happy

Synaxarion of the 4th day of the Coptic month of Thoout (September 14)

This story teaches us that when we help others, we make them happy and we are also happy.

St. Verena was born in a village in Egypt. Her name means “the good fruit.” Her parents taught her to love God, to pray to Him, and to love and help others from a young age. For these reasons, everyone loved her.



St. Verena traveled with soldiers, led by St. Maurice, to a country called Switzerland (in Europe). As she lived there, she prayed, she fasted, and she did handywork. She helped all the people around her and taught young girls how to take care of themselves.



Many people loved her because she served everyone. They believed in the Lord Jesus Christ because of her.



She was able to please God by telling people about Him and spreading His word. She made people happy by helping them, teaching them about cleanliness, and taking care of themselves and their homes.

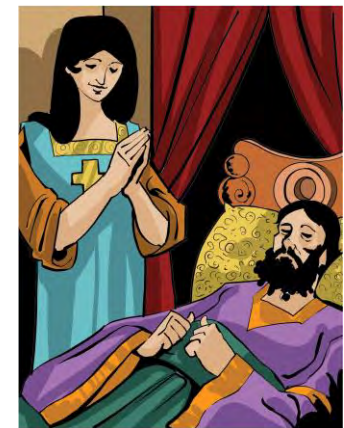
# “ REJOICE ”

When the ruler heard about St. Verena and how she told people about the Lord Jesus Christ, he was not happy. He ordered that she be put in prison.



She was not afraid or sad in prison, but was always joyful in the Lord. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of our joy.

Later, when the governor became sick, St. Verena prayed for him, and he was healed. After he became well, he released her from prison and she continued to help people.



The Coptic Church celebrates her departure to heaven on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the Coptic month of Thoout (September 14).

**We have joy when we care for others.**

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord.” (Isaiah 61:10)



# “ REJOICE ”



## Color the Picture

St. Verena



**“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord.” (Isaiah 61:10)**

## Memorization

### PSALM 117 (116)

Oh, praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him,  
all you peoples! For His merciful kindness is great  
toward us, And the truth of the LORD endures  
forever. Praise the LORD! Alleluia.

# “ REJOICE ”

A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing.

# “ REJOICE ”

A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing.

# “ REJOICE ”

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## Anthem 2023/2024

E

(By the grace of God we grow  
And give fruits a hundredfold  
And His Spirit dwells within us  
Gives us joy as the Bible told) **x 2**

J

(Rejoice in your faith and church  
Handed down to us by God  
Be firm in prayers and doctrine  
And build your life on His word) **x 2**

O

(Our Lord wants us faithful  
Glorified and joyful) **x2**  
Always joyful

I

For He has redeemed us on the cross  
And gave us eternal life  
When you're a temple for His dwelling  
Sadness will not be a choice

C

Praise and thank God every day and you...  
And you will surely rejoice!

E

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