

Lesson No. (30)

St. Mary of Zeitoun

References

Notes for Servants

- ★ May the Mother of Light be always before our sight with her holiness, and light so that we may learn from her the way to heaven and so that she may help us.
- ★ Put a picture of the Mother of Light in your private room ... This in itself reproaches us for our sins as we see her face full of holiness.

Objectives

General: God blessed Egypt by the apparition of the Virgin Mary.

Specific: The children will be able to:

- A. Learn that God honoured St. Mary because of her virtues.
- B. Know that she always intercede on our behalf.
- C. Ask for her intercession in their prayers.

Bible Verse

**“For, behold, from henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed.”**

(Luke 1:48)

Teaching Aids

A picture of St. Mary.

Instruction

- (1) Review last week's lesson.
- (2) Who remembers the verse?
- (3) Remind the children about the church occasions for the coming week.
- (4) Teacher should prepare the appropriate questions to emphasize the objectives during the lesson.

Story Time

The Church of St. Mary of Zeitoun is situated at the intersection of a street and an alley in a suburb north of Cairo. The church displays a central dome and four secondary domes at the four corners of the structure.

On the night between the 2nd and 3rd of April, 1968, the two mechanics who were working in the garage on the same street as the church, were certainly not expecting anything so sensational as an apparition. In fact, nothing could have been further from their thoughts at the moment when, raising their eyes up, they perceived a white form over the central dome of the church. Who was up there? It was certainly a human figure, its hand distinctly placed upon the cross dominating the dome. But seeking nothing other than a human explanation for this unusual sight, the two mechanics-thought it was a nun in a white habit, a victim of sudden insanity, who was making ready to commit suicide. Thus the two men ran at once to call the police to ask for aid, and also went to notify the parish priest, an Orthodox. The latter soon realized, before anyone else, that it was a question of nothing less than a heavenly apparition. This memorable night was the beginning of a long series of apparitions, in fact hundreds of them, which would take place before the marvelling gaze of hundreds of thousands of persons coming from the four corners of Egypt, men and women of all ages, all walks of life and every religion, Moslem, Protestant, Orthodox, Catholic.

The fact had become clear, without any possible doubt. The beautiful white Lady was none other than the Blessed Virgin Mary. She was life sized, majestic and kind at the same time. Her clothing was entirely white, manifesting perhaps a light tinge of blue, according to the report of certain persons. All during these hundreds of apparitions, the Most Blessed Virgin remained perfectly silent. Not a word! One might she moved from one side to the other above the church, so that all might have the chance to see her face, and inclined to greet the crowd. She seemed to float in the air. Her feet did not touch the roof of the dome and were completely hidden beneath Her long robe, which enveloped them. Her movement from one place to another did not so much resemble walking as a gliding in the air, which her floating garment made still more graceful.

From one apparition to the next, but during the same night, Mary's appearance would vary somewhat. A white halo surrounded Her head; or again, She wore a crown. Her face was often smiling, but sometimes was grave, or even reproduced the distressed expression of the Virgin of Sorrows. But it was always kind. The apparitions of the Most Blessed Virgin at Cairo were ordinarily announced by mysterious lights in the night; for it was always during the night, between 9:00 PM and 6:00 AM, that the apparitions occurred. The anticipatory signs of the apparition varied. Sometimes there came a luminous globe or luminous bird of an Immaculate whiteness.

Discussion

- 1 - Follow up the story by talking about it with the students.
- 2 - Continue the discussion while they do the activity.

Learning Activities
Activity Sheet.