

•Lesson No. 10

## The Achievements of H. H. Pope Shenouda III

### References:

El-Keraza, H. H. Pope Shenouda

### Notes For Servants:

1. Pray for the Pope and thank God for all what He did through Pope Shenouda III.
2. Teach your class to pray for those who are in a leadership position.

### Objectives:

**General:** The hand of God working through His saints and the people He appoints for the Church.

#### Specific:

1. Who is Pope Shenouda and how did he start his monastic life.
2. Describe how Pope Shenouda kept his monastic order intact even he became the pope.
3. Teach your class to pray for those who are in a leadership position

### Instructions:

1. Review last week's lesson.
2. Church occasion.
3. The lesson about Pope Shenouda: his monastic life and his achievements.
4. Teach the class to pray for their parents, shepherds, teachers and leaders.
5. Memorize the verse with the class.

### Bible Verse:

*"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."*

(Ps 110:4)

### Lesson:

## The Achievement of H. H. Pope Shenouda III

#### 42 Years of Monasticism:

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III lived monasticism before he entered a monastery. Since his youth, monasticism had lived in his heart, thoughts, writings, and poetry, long before he committed himself to it.

After his consecration as a monk in the Syrian Monastery, by the name of Father Antonius, he increased gradually in solitary life, from being a monk in the monastery, to dwelling in a cave which was about 3.5 kms away from the monastery, and then to another cave which was more than 10 kms away, in which he spent weeks without seeing a human face.

When His Holiness was unexpectedly ordained a bishop, his episcopate followed the same monastic order to which he was accustomed. He was the first bishop to spend half of his week in the city and the other half in the monastery. Moreover, 15 months after his ordination as a bishop, in January 1964, he left the episcopate and returned to the monastery, and then, for circumstances beyond his control, he was forced to return to his duty as Bishop for Christian Education.

When Bishop Shenouda became patriarch, he lived according to the same monastic order. He was also the first patriarch to spend half of his week in the monastery, having a private residence there, and living the same simple monastic life, away from the patriarchal appearances and formalities. Following this example, some of the bishops started having periods of retreat, though not of the same length of time as his.

Through Pope Shenouda's love for monasticism, he expanded in the establishment of monasteries. During his papacy, monastic life returned to many of the ancient monasteries, which were then recognised by the Holy Synod; among these are:

1. The monastery of St. Pachomius in Edfu, in the diocese of Aswan.
2. The monastery of the Virgin Saint Mary in the region of EZ-Hawawish, in Akhmim.
3. The monastery of St. George in El-Ruzadqat, Aswan.
4. The monastery of St. Anthony in California, U.S.A.
5. The nunnery of St. Demiana in El-Barrary, Damiette.

Work is still proceeding on the monastery of St. Shenoute in Sohag, and on the ancient monasteries of Akhmim, as well on our monastery of Milan, Italy. Monasteries have also been established in Australia, in Melbourne and Sydney, and in Kroefelbach, Germany; and the monastic caravan carries on. The number of monks has increased so much that Pope Shenouda, in the monastery of St. Bishoy alone, has ordained more than 170 monks and built more than 150 new cells.

In every monastery, there is now a retreat house for the youth who wish to spend a spiritual period, and the monasteries' properties and construction have increased, as well as their activities in various branches of service.

### **Some of 25 years Great Work:**

We always believe that our Lord truly provides the most suitable and appropriate shepherd for His flock at any given time. For this reason, the Coptic Church has been blessed with many great patriarchs since its foundation by Saint Mark, and the present period is no exception for this holy, Apostolic Church.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III now celebrates twenty-seven years (since November 1971) as head of the Coptic Church, and in light of this occasion, we will merely list some of the great accomplishments of this 116<sup>th</sup> successor of Saint Mark.

- Travel on pastoral visits of his children in Africa, Australia, and the United States of

America.

- Establish theological colleges in Los Angeles, New Jersey and Australia, as well as several within Egypt.
- Personally teach in the theological colleges in Egypt and abroad.
- Establish the first Coptic School outside Egypt, in Victoria, Australia.
- Conduct youth conferences and especially send bishops for the pastoral care of his children abroad.
- Ordain a bishop especially for the care and service of youth in Egypt and abroad.
- Ordain bishops for diocese outside Africa, such as France, Birmingham and the Iritrean congregations in the United Kingdom.
- Ordain many of his children in the Countries of Emigration priest and monks.
- Publish a magazine in the English language for our congregation abroad.
- Be the Editor-In-Chief of the official Arabic and English magazines of the Coptic Church, "EI-Keraza"
- Lead a major revival in Coptic monasticism with the consecration of hundreds of monks and nuns, and the development of many monasteries.
- Establish Coptic Orthodox monasteries in America, Australia, Germany and Italy.
- Spend a weekly period of retreat at the monastery, because of his love for monasticism.
- Establish Coptic Centres in New Jersey, U.S.A., Birmingham, England and New South Wales, Australia.
- Establish approximately one hundred churches outside Egypt.
- Consecrate many of our churches abroad.
- Write 70 books in the Arabic language, of which approximately 40 have been translated into English, and many into French, German and Italian.
- Receive several honorary degrees from major universities around the world.
- Initiate and stimulate official and unofficial dialogues with the Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican and Evangelical Churches.
- Be elected as one of the presidents of the World Council of Churches.
- Conduct weekly sermons.

After these few brief points, all we can say is, may God preserve the life of our beloved father, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III and keep him for the glory of His holy church in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

### **Conclusion:**

1. Praise God and thank Him for He always provides a good shepherd to His flock.
2. Pray for the Pope that God may grant him discernment, wisdom and grace, and help him carry the major responsibility that he received from the Lord.
3. Pray to all the head of the church, bishops and priests.