

SAINT MARINA

References:

Notes For Servants:

- 1.
- 2.

Objectives:

General:

Specific:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Instructions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Bible Verse:

“Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Matthew 19:28)

Lesson:

Saint Marina the Ascetic

On the 15th day of the Coptic month of Misra (21 August), the Church celebrates the departure of Saint Marina the Ascetic. Marina was the daughter of a very pious rich Christian man and she was originally named Mariam; her mother passed away when she was very young and she was brought up by her father who wished to depart and live in a monastery after he had found her a husband.

When the young girl knew of her father's plan she asked why he intended to save his own soul and not hers, but her father did not know what to do with her as she was a girl. Mariam suggested to her father that she would wear men's clothes and go with him to live in the monastery; on saying this, she immediately cut her hair and changed her clothes. When her father saw that she was serious, he distributed his wealth upon the poor, changed his daughter's name to Marina and

went to live in a monastery, sharing a cell with her. After ten years of prayer, fasting and worship her father died, leaving her alone. Marina increased in her level of asceticism and continued to conceal the fact that she was a woman. All around her assumed that the delicacy of her voice and appearance was due to her long periods of prayer and strict ascetic life.

One day, the abbot of the monastery sent her with three other monks to attend to some business for the monastery. As the journey was long, they were forced to spend the night in a hotel. At the same time, one of the king's soldiers was staying in the hotel and was fond of the hotel-owner's daughter, he sinned with the girl and told her to tell her father that it was Marina the monk who was the cause. After a few months it was discovered that the girl was pregnant and, as was agreed, she told her father that Marina was to blame.

On hearing the story, the man went furiously to the abbot of the monastery. The abbot calmed the man down and told him that he would see to the matter. The abbot called Marina and reprimanded her severely. When she heard the allegations she wept and asked forgiveness, not denying anything. The fact that there was no attempt to deny the fault made the abbot so furious that he told her to leave the monastery; she left at once and remained outside the gate of the monastery for quite a long time. When the hotel-owner's daughter gave birth, he took the child and gave him to Marina. She took the child amongst the shepherds so that she could give him milk to drink and remained caring for him outside the monastery for three years until the monks pleaded with the abbot to allow her to return. The abbot finally agreed to her return but imposed heavy penalties upon her. Marina performed hard labour in cooking, cleaning and carrying water to a level over the penalties imposed upon her.

The child grew and became a monk. When Saint Marina reached the age of forty, she became ill for three days, after which she passed away. The abbot ordered that her clothes be changed and that she be transferred to the church for the funeral prayers. While doing this, the monks discovered that she was a woman and were very distressed. The monks informed the abbot and he came and wept bitterly for what he had done. The abbot then called the hotel-owner and informed him that Marina was actually a woman; he went to where she lay and also wept for the pain and suffering which he had unjustly brought upon her. After the funeral prayers, her brothers the monks all received her blessings and one amongst them who only had one eye, after he touched the saint, received sight in the other eye. God also permitted that a devil possess the hotel-owner's daughter and her friend the soldier and bring them to the tomb so that they could confess before all.

Saint Marina's holy and pure body became the source of many great blessings. May her blessings be with us all.

Conclusion:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.