

El Nayrouz

the life of Joy is a gift

History of Coptic Calendar

- Coptic Calendar = oldest known calendar in the world
- Established by Toot (an astronomer) in 4241BC
 - 12 equal months, 30days each + 1 month of 5days
- The ancient Egyptians would pray on the 1st day of the year saying “bless the waters and the river” = “Niyaro Ezmou” (in Coptic) which overtime became known as **“Nayrouz”**



The Feast of Martyrs



- Copts have been persecuted by almost every ruler of Egypt. Being abused, tortured and martyred under the Romans, Byzantines, and the Moslems has only instilled dedication and courage to believers to remain faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1st wave of martyrdom was in the 1st century when St. Mark was martyred
- The worst wave was under Emperor Diocletian in 302AD – 800,000 were martyred (He thought if he could remove Christianity from Egypt then he could remove it from the whole world)
- In commemoration, the Coptic Church reset the Coptic Calendar (starts in 248AD - the year Diocletian became emperor) and established another name for the Coptic New Year i.e. “The Year of the Martyrs”

Martyrdom

- The word “**Martyr**” is defined as “a witness”
- Martyrdom is the story of Christianity from its inception.
- The witness of the martyr’s blood was greater than any teaching or preaching.

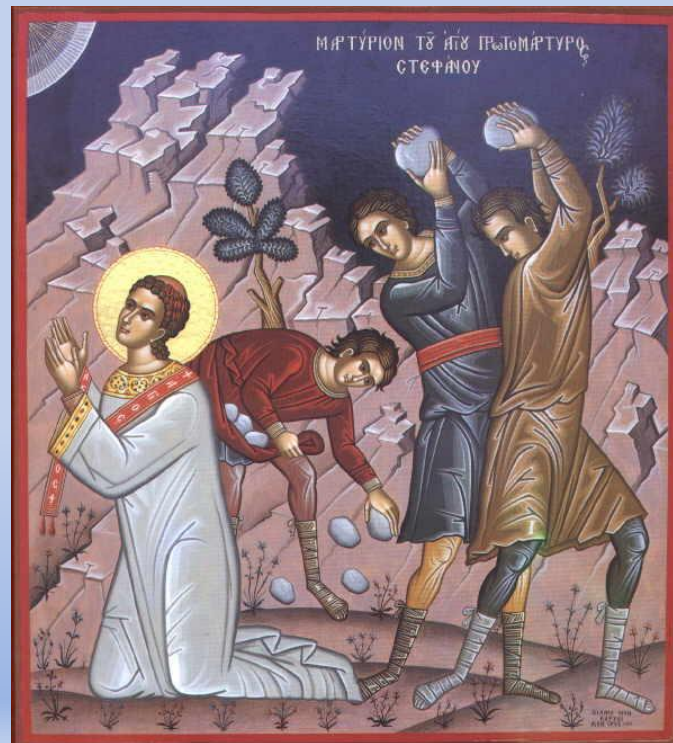


Concept of Martyrdom

- **Pain is fellowship with the suffering Lord**
 - *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [Him] that we may be also glorified together." (Romans 8:17)*
- The saint's attitude changed with the understanding that this life is short and his journey in this world is temporary. *"To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you."*

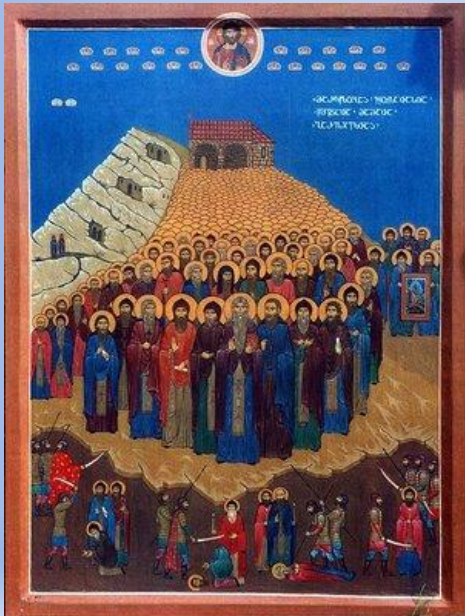
(1 Peter 1:4)

- Our martyrs went to their death with joy, calmness and meekness that caused their persecutors to wonder.
- To the believer, ***the world is limited as compared to eternity***



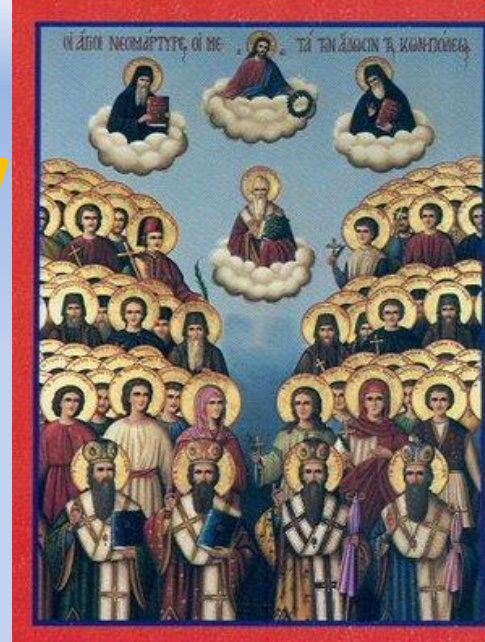
Christians are strangers to this world

- *“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; (for we walk by faith, not by sight.) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)*



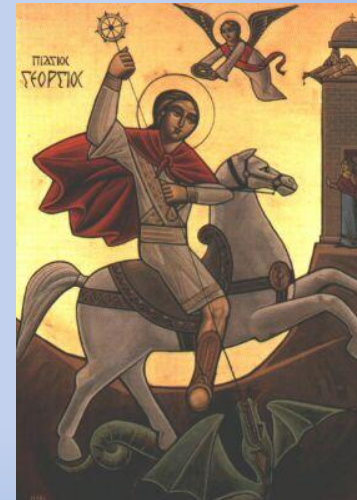
Death will lead to glory

- *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that*
- *we suffer with Him that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the*
- *sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which*
- *shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:17-18)*



Therefore they became unconcerned for anything materialistic or worldly.

- *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)*



Examples of Martyrs: St Veronica

- St. Veronica the virgin martyr. In the year 749 the soldiers of Marwan the caliph entered a monastery for virgins close to Akhmim, a city in Egypt. They wanted to assault and rape her because she was very beautiful. But she deceived them, telling them that she had oil that would protect the body from any sword. To convince them she placed this oil on her neck and told them to test her words. One soldier took out his sword and swung at her neck and she was beheaded



What is Martyrdom in the 21st Century

- The early church experienced martyrdom of BLOOD
- Christians nowadays experience martyrdom in different ways
- We, like the martyrs need to stand up to what we believe in
- Any time **YOU** make sacrifices for the Name of Christ – This is a form of martyrdom – and there are rewards waiting for **YOU** in Heaven if you persevere
- **Can you think of any examples of when this is the case???**



21st Century Martyrdom How does this affect us today?

- Eg. Being ridiculed for
 - not eating meat/dairy products during church fasting periods
 - Not drinking alcohol/smoking/taking drugs
 - Not going to parties
 - Not having girlfriend/boyfriend relationships
 - Not listening to certain types of music
 - Supporting/Helping a friend who is being picked on by the majority in your class
 - Places you go to (eg. Church, Sunday school etc)
 - Decisions we make (eg. Go to church or go to parties)

- The martyrs truly professed and declared their faith;

I BELIEVE. I BELIEVE. I BELIEVE UNTIL THE VERY LAST BREATH.

- May the blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ and all the martyrs be with us in this upcoming New Year!

