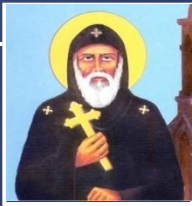


# Witnessing in every Generation



Saint Mark's Church Sunday School

Year 7 & 8



# Witnessing in every generation

## Introduction

- ❖ We all like the trip down memory lane (including family photos) – Why ? see if you can identify your Sunday School servants here ...
- ❖ It reminds us who we are ... and gives us a foundation to carry on ...
- ❖ This is also why we celebrate the saints in our Church ...
- ❖ It reminds us who we are as God's people. It reminds us that we are not alone on this journey of faith. It reminds us that we are not home just yet. We are merely passing through this world.





# Witnessing in every generation

## 1. Saint-Making 101

- *What type of characteristics Do you think make up a saint ? Lets write these on the board*
  
- *According to the Bible ... The answer is simple, Love God with all your mind, heart & Soul. A couple of the Gospels mention also the following 4 blessings that make up saints:*
  - Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven
  - Blessed are **those who mourn**, for they shall be comforted.
  - Blessed are the **meek**, for they shall inherit the earth
  - Blessed are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.
  
- If we look at the lives of all the saints, we can certainly find faults. Far from discouraging us, this can give us courage. Perfection is not what we are striving for, unless it is as perfect a love as possible.





# Witnessing in every generation

## 2. Tough act to follow – but in every generation there are Saints

### 1st Century

Holy Virgin Mary  
 St Stephen, Protomartyr  
 Saint Mark, Evangelist  
 Saint Peter, Apostle  
 Saint Paul, Apostle  
 Saint John the Baptist, Martyr

### 2nd & 3rd Century

Saint Clement of Alexandria  
 Saint Ignatius, of Antioch, Saint Gregory the Wonder - Worker  
 Saint Marcorius, Philopatyr (Abu Sayfein), Martyr

### 4th Century

Saint Abanoub Martyr  
 Saint Demiana Martyr  
 Saint George (Mar Girgis) Martyr  
 Saint Mena the Wonder-Maker Martyr  
 Saint Monica  
 Saint Marina  
 Saint Paul the Hermit  
 Saints Forty Martyrs of Sebastea  
 Saints Maximus & Domitius Martyrs

### 5th Century

Saint Augustine, Dr. of the Church  
 Saint Cyril of Alex., Dr. of the Church  
 Saint Cyril of Alex., (the Pillar)  
 Saint Mary of Egypt  
 Saint Moses The Black, Martyr

### 6th -9th Century

Saint Benedict  
 Saint Samuil The Confessor  
 Saint John Kama  
 Saint Marina

### 10th -12th Century

Saints Abraam The Syrian & Simon The Tanner (moving the mountain)  
 Saints Antony & Theodosios  
 Saint Isidore the Farmer

### 13th -15th Century

Saint Takla Haymanot, the Ethiopian  
 Saint Marina (Margaret of Antioch)  
 Saint Joan of Arc

### 20th Century

St. Abraam of Fayoum  
 St. Cyril (Kirillos the 6),  
 And Hagumen Father  
 Bishoy Kamel

### Discussion:

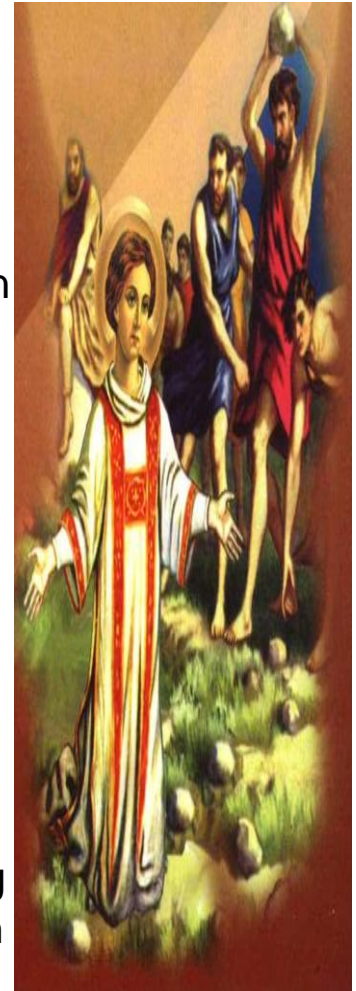
**Do you think there are any Saints Among Us ?**



## Witnessing in every generation

### 3. Famous Saints – Saint Stephen

- Stephen's name means "crown," and he was the first disciple of Jesus to receive the martyr's crown. Stephen was a deacon in the early Christian Church (1<sup>st</sup> Century). The apostles had found that they needed helpers to look after the care of the widows and the poor. So they ordained seven deacons, and Stephen is the most famous of these. His life is documented in the Acts of the Apostles:6-8
- God worked many miracles through St. Stephen and he spoke with such wisdom and grace that many of his hearers became followers of Jesus.
- The enemies of the Church of Jesus were furious to see how successful Stephen's preaching was and laid a plot for him. They couldn't answer his wise argument, so they got men to lie about him, saying that he had spoken sinfully against God. St. Stephen faced that great assembly of enemies without fear. In fact, the Holy Bible says that his face looked like the face of an angel.
- His enemies rose up in great anger and shouted at him. But Stephen looked up to Heaven and said that he saw the heavens opening and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. His hearers plugged their ears and refused to listen to another word. They dragged him outside the city of Jerusalem and stoned him to death. The saint prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Then he fell to his knees and begged God not to punish his enemies for killing him.
- After such an expression of love, the holy martyr went to his heavenly reward.





## Witnessing in every generation

### 3. Famous Saints – Saint Abanoub

- Abanoub was only twelve years old when he was martyred by the Roman ruler. On July 31 our Church celebrates his death, as the day of his birth into eternal life.
- Abanoub was born in a town called Nehisa in the Nile Delta. He was the only son of good Christian parents who died when he was a young child. At age twelve Abanoub entered the church to hear the priest asking the congregation to remain faithful during the persecutions provoked by Diocletian, the Roman emperor
- Abanoub received the Holy Sacraments, then he prayed God to guide him to where he can confess his faith in the Lord. After that Abanoub went out, and gave all his possessions to the needy. Then he set off to a city called Samanoud, on foot. While he was walking, he saw the Archangel Michael in celestial glory. The sight was so extraordinary that Abanoub fell to the ground, but the Archangel raised him up, and told him that he must suffer for three days in Samanoud and he would also witness to Jesus Christ in other places.
- Once in Samanoud, Abanoub went to the Roman ruler and declared his faith openly. He also insulted the ruler's idols. The ruler became furious, and gave orders that the child be whipped on his belly. The soldiers beat Abanoub severely until his intestines poured out of his tummy. But the Archangel Michael miraculously healed him. Then the ruler put him in jail with other Christians who were encouraged by his presence among them, and later were martyred for the name of the Lord.





## Witnessing in every generation

### 3. Famous Saints – Saint Stephen (continue ....)

- The following day, the ruler took Abanoub on a boat to a city called Atrib, and as a form of punishment, the young saint was hanged upside down from the sail of the boat. The soldiers along with their ruler started drinking and dancing and hitting Abanoub on the mouth. Abanoub's nose bled, but then unexpectedly, the soldiers became blind and the ruler became paralyzed. In their agony they cried to him and said, "Please Abanoub, pray to your God to heal us. For if we are cured, we will become Christians." St. Abanoub replied, "This will only happen in Atrib, so that everyone there should know that there's no other God but Christ."
- When they arrived in Atrib, they were all healed, and they cried with joy, "We are Christians! We believe in the God of Abanoub!" Then they took off their uniforms and threw them on the ground in front of the ruler of Atrib. The governor got very mad, and ordered that they all be killed.





## Witnessing in every generation

### 3. Famous Saints – Saint Marina

■ St. Marina was born in Antioch 230 A.D., in the city of Pyssidya in the middle of Asia Minor. She was the only daughter of 2 pagan parents (idol worshippers). Her father, Dacious, was the high priest of the idol temple. Her mother died while Marina was 5 years old. While Marina was at an early age she needed a lot of attention after her mother passed away. Her father decided to bring a teacher to look after his only daughter. The teacher was a Christian woman, who lived in a very small village next to their city. This teacher had great faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Marina felt great joy and happiness while she was with her teacher, and she realized she did not wish to follow her parents' religious lifestyle. When Marina was fifteen years old, her father passed away.

■ Marina continued loving and obeying her teacher and her teacher also considered Marina's life as one of the Lord's gifts and blessings, for Marina was a beautiful righteous youth. The teacher planted the seeds of the sound and right Christian faith in the heart of young Marina in her early age. Marina entered into a new period of her life, which she had to face severe punishment and persecutions because of her love and dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ. A new government came to the city whose name was "Wali-Farnos". This evil governor accompanied his troops looking for Christians to persecute. He spotted Marina walking out with her companions. When he saw her beauty he decided to take her as a wife if she was a free woman, but if she was a slave, he wanted to pay to free her from her master.







## Witnessing in every generation

### 3. Famous Saints – Saint Marina (continue ....)

■ When the soldiers tried to arrest her, she called on the Lord Jesus Christ her heavenly bridegroom to save her. The soldiers returned to the governor and said, "We couldn't arrest this young woman because she is Christian." The Governor started to panic after hearing this news, and he ordered his soldiers to bring Marina in chains to stand in front of him and answer his questions. When he started asking her where she came from, she said, "I am Christian and not a slave." Then the governor asked, "From which tribe do you come from?" and "What is your name?" Marina replied, "I am from the tribe of Jesus Christ," and "I am Marina." The Governor ordered Marina to be tortured he tied her up with rope and started beating her with sticks and whips. Then he ordered the soldiers to comb her body with an iron comb, saw her body with an iron saw, and cut her skin to little pieces with knives. They dragged her and hanged her and burned her body with torches.

■ Every time they tortured Marina, Archangel Michael came and healed her with the sign of the cross. Marina also overcame the devil with the sign of the cross while she was in prison. In the morning, the Governor order Marina to be placed in a tub of boiling water, but the Lord made the water warm, and she received the holy baptism. At this moment the people proclaimed their belief in Jesus Christ. The governor ordered the beheading of these believers, as well as the beheading of St Marina. St. Marina received the crown of martyrdom. Many miracles have also occurred through the prayers and intercessions of Saint Marina till this day.

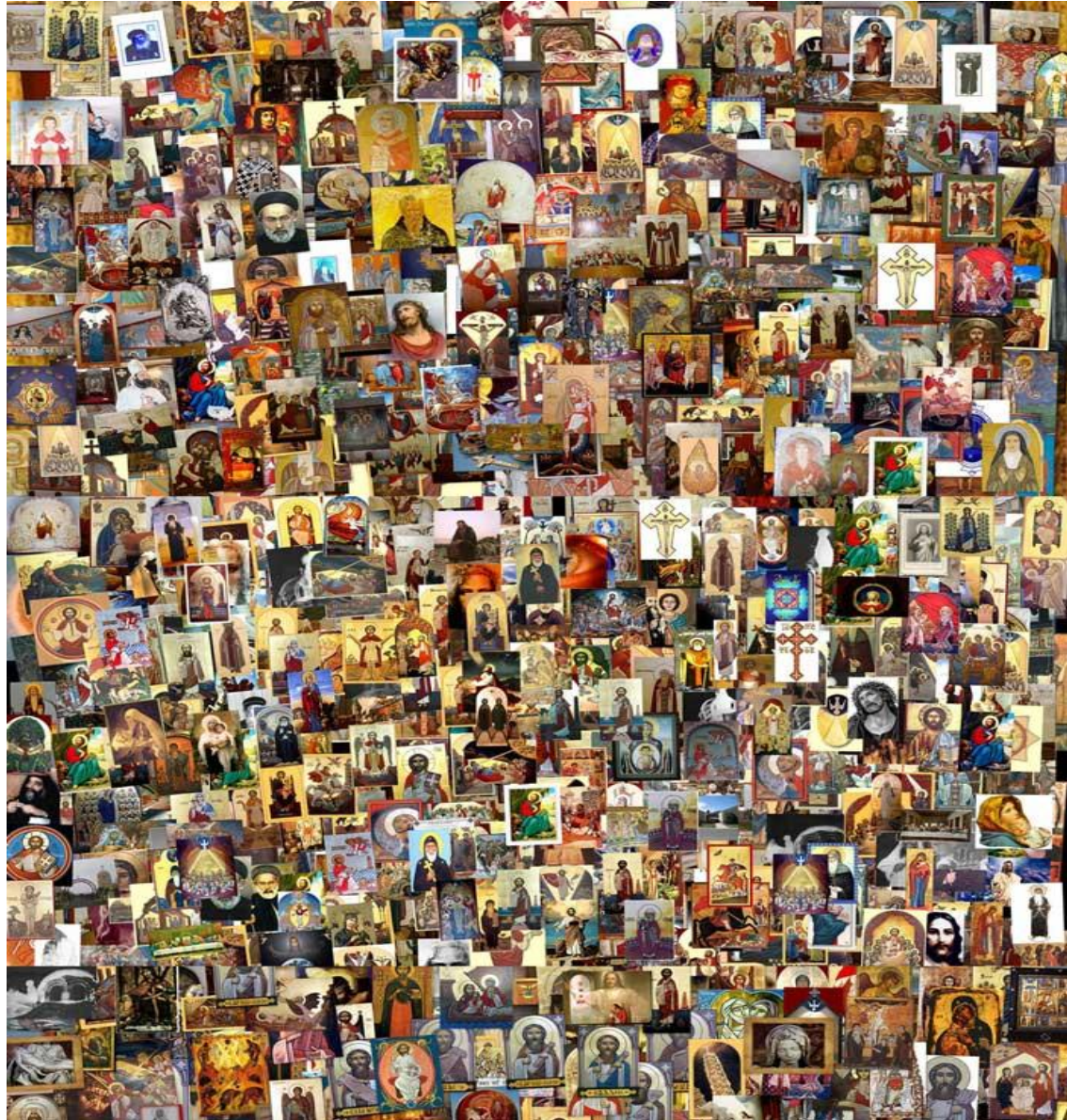




## Witnessing in every generation

### 3. Famous Saints .....

- How important are friends to you?
- Do you have a saint as a friend ?
- Lets try to recognise as many saints as possible from this collage and write them down on the Board. Are there any saints we have not heard about
- Do you have any stories about your personal relationship with any of these saints or your own saint?





## Witnessing in every generation

### 4. Appreciate the Blessings of Saints in the Church and our Lives

- Our holy Apostolic Church (Mother of Martyrs) has honored its Martyrs and Saints to the fullest extent and has commemorated their martyrdom on special memorial days.
- This is done in terms of hymns, prayers, recitals and Sermons. And as the Martyrs' blood has nourished and sustained the church to this day, we loved, respected, honored and glorified our Martyrs and Saints in terms of:
  - We called the name of the Church with their name: eg. St Mary's Church, St Mark's Church, ... etc.
  - Coptic Synaxarium
  - Commemoration
  - We called our children with the name of the Saints and Martyrs
  - We kiss the picture and icons of the Saints and Martyrs as a sort of honor and respect as well as to remember them.

