

7SA2 Pope Kyrillos

Aim

- To learn about the life of Pope Kyrillos
- To learn the importance of service and humility.
- To learn to live a life of prayer and solitude.

Lesson

The life of Pope Kyrillos the sixth

- Pope Kyrillos VI was born on August 2, 1902 and was called Azer Ata.
- After completing high school, Azer went to work for a shipping company in Alexandria. Azer was content with little food and the ground to sleep on. Then much against his family's wishes, he resigned his job with the intention of becoming a monk and entered the Monastery of El-Baramous on July 27, 1927.
- He was ordained monk on February 25, 1928 and was named Mina after the name of Saint Mina (Menas or Mena), his patron saint.
- He was ordained priest on July 18, 1931. He also attended the Helwan Theological College and was rated one of the top students.
- He pursued a life of solitude at El-Natron Valley in the western desert between Cairo and Alexandria, then he headed the Monastery of Saint Anba Samuel the Confessor
- He pursued a life of solitude living in a Windmill on the outskirts of Cairo. Satan sent robbers to the windmill. The robbers beat Father Mina and injured his head. When Father Mina regained consciousness, he noticed he was bleeding. He crawled to the icon of Saint Mina and put the icon on his head. The bleeding stopped at once. Father Mina then went to the hospital to be treated. The doctors were surprised when they found out that he walked 15 miles from the windmill.
- Father Mina was ordained Pope on Sunday May 10, 1959 and was named Kyrillos VI.
- The amount of documented miracles performed by Pope Kyrillos and his patron saint, St. Mina, is immense. It is said that nearly every person who lived in the days of Pope Kyrillos witnessed a personal miracle, whether healing from various diseases,

miraculous solving of difficult life problems, casting out of devils or just revelation of people's past.

- The miracles of Pope Kyrillos helped strengthening people's faith and they returned to God. Unveiling people's secrets often leads them to faith and changes their presumptuous thoughts.

Humility and Service

- Read Psalm 25:9 – Humility means acknowledging our proper place before the Lord. When we humbly worship Him, He will lead us and teach us the right way to live. Pope Kyrillos through his humility the Lord lead him to **revive** the church through on of the hardest times. The secret of his success was his humility and meakness.
- At the end of every liturgy, all people gathered around Pope Kyrillos and he began to bless them individually, standing for long hours with meekness and patience.
- Read Matthew 18:4 – The less we try to honour ourselves, the more God honours and blesses us. Pride builds barriers that keep God out of our lives. Humility opens the way for God to work because we are more willing to seek God's help and honour him for helping. Poe kyrillos did not seek to be the boss, he always considered himself the last, that is why the Lord gave him all this glory. Can we relate that to our relationship with our family.
- Father Mina used to clean the dormitory and the lavatories by himself without letting anybody know, and would not let anyone else do this job.
- By humiliating himself and serving others, Pope Kyrillos fulfilled our Lord's commandment: "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Prayer and solitude

- Read Psalm 145:18 – *The Lord invites us to make prayer our first response rather than our last resort. He always listens to those that are honest with Him.*

- Father Mina (Pope Kyrillos) moved to a deserted windmill in El-Moukatam mountain at the outskirts of Cairo. It was miles from the nearest city. Many dangerous animals can be found there at all times, like scorpions and snakes. Here, **Father Mina spent his time praying and contemplating because of his love for his Saviour.**
- Read 1 Peter 5:7 – *We experience freedom when we give a burden over to the Lord in prayer – even before the prayer is answered. The assurance of God’s love and concern refreshes us and renews our hope. Relate that to the worries they might have.*
- **Pope Kyrillos spent most of his days in fasting and prayer. He was a great man because of his reliance on God and that alone was food for his soul.**
- We often forget how important it is to take some time out from the world and focus on being in the presence of God. However, Pope Kyrillos’ example shows that whatever the situation is, our action should always begin with a prayer (use the tree, branch, fruit analogy to explain how we feed from Christ).

Summary

We need to change our focus from the earthly to the heavenly. God wants to help us but He needs us to seek Him at all times like Pope Kyrillos did and then, only then will we be great in the eyes of God. When our humility becomes a real humility and our prayer becomes a prayer that has deep roots in our hearts and that we long for the chance for a moment of solitude so we can speak to our Saviour.

On March 9, the Coptic Orthodox Church remembers the departure of the Great Pope (Papa, Ava) Kyrillos (Cyril) VI, the 116th Pope of Alexandria and successor of Saint Mark the Evangelist. He sat on the throne of Saint Mark for twelve years (1959-1971). Pope Kyrillos was a holy man of prayer who through full dedication to the life of prayer and fasting possessed many higher gifts which included performing wonders and miracles, the gift of knowledge, and an unusual ability to lead by example. He was undoubtedly a very spiritual man and brought the Coptic Church into a new era of spirituality. He was highly regarded by the people of Egypt from all walks of life, Christians and non-Christians alike.

