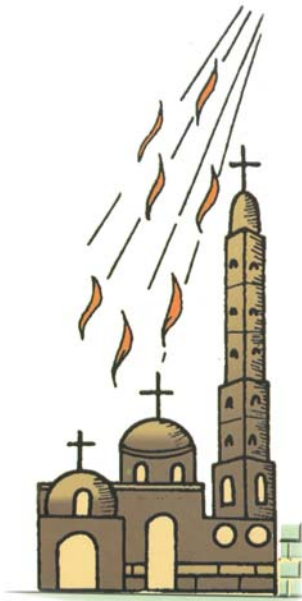




toward the east, but it was shut. And the Lord said to me, **‘This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it. Therefore, it shall be shut.’**” (Ex. 44:1,2)

At the moment St. Mary answered the archangel, **‘Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word’** (Luke 1:38), the Lord entered into her womb. She became the gate opened for the human race to become members of the Lord Jesus Christ’s Body taken from her. Therefore we address her in the Prayer of the Third Hour saying, “O Theotokos, you are the Gate of Heaven. Open for us the gate of mercy.”

“Shape of the Church”



Like a ship,

To remind us of Noah’s Ark.



Like a circle,

To remind us of Eternity that has no beginning nor end.



Like a Cross,

Topped with half-circled domes to remind us of Heaven.