



*“**Rejoice** always, **pray** without ceasing, and in everything give **thanks**; for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*
(I Thessalonians 5:16-18)

My Beloved Children,

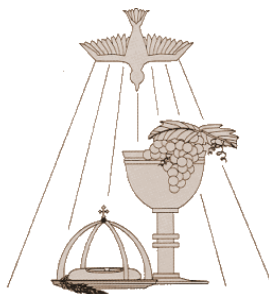
On September 11, the Church celebrates the Coptic New Year, also known as the Feast of El Nayrouz. This is a time to rejoice, pray, and give thanks. But how can we truly rejoice, pray, and give thanks on this day, if we do not know the stories of our saints who were martyred for the love of our Lord.

This is why the Church follows the Coptic Calendar, also known as the “Calendar of Martyrs”, to remember all those who were willing to suffer for their faith in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. They did not hide their belief or runaway, instead they stood up happily and joyfully to the nonbelievers who killed them. Thus when we remember all these brave people, *“We will **rejoice** in Your salvation,*

Stories of the Saints



and in the name of our God we will set up our banners!”
(Psalm 20:5).



During the Divine Liturgy the story of saint of the day is read after the reading of the Acts. As we listen to their story, we witness their act and their determination for everyone to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. *“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to **pray** for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding”* (Colossians 1:9).

As you can see the Coptic Church is truly blessed to have so many heroes throughout her history and is filled with a rich and proud tradition. Thus I ask you **Mighty Angels** to learn more about the Coptic Calendar and the stories of those who willingly and thankfully stood strong in their faith and understood the true victory of eternal salvation. *“But **thanks** be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Corinthians 15:57).

This issue will focus on the events of the Coptic months in order to remember the brave heroes who kept the faith alive for us.

May we all begin this new Coptic year **rejoicing** for the new beginning in our Lord Jesus Christ, **praying** for the true knowledge, and giving **thanks** for everything in His name.

God bless you,

Bishop Youssef

Bishop, Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States