



**Icon representing the Holy Family in Egypt, returning back to Israel. Dair Al-Muharraq.**

included in the official list. He points out that the family was at Gebel Al Tir up the road and was at sites down the road, so they must have passed through and probably stopped—why else would such a great saint as Abahor come to live here if the site hadn't already been blessed?

**Throughout the Nile Valley and even in Faiyom there** are sites with their own oral traditions claiming that the Holy Family passed through and performed miracles. When it compiled its official list in 2000, the church had to sift through the evidence to decide which places made the cut.

**They [the Holy Family] passed through Sawadah, but** no texts mention it, while other places are mentioned in the texts, explained Bishop Demetrius.

**One of the most gruesome massacres occurred in 1997** in the village of Abou Qurqas, when nine Christians were murdered inside a church by militants. While the rest of the world remembers the Luxor massacre of November

1997 a few months later, for the Copts of Minya, the great tragedy was Abou Qurqas.

**According to some estimates, more than 15 percent of** Egypt's Christians come from the governorates of Minya and Assiut, while the district of Mallawi, according to the bishop, is 25 percent Christian. ✝

Reference:

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## *Gates of Heaven*

After a long illness, a woman died and arrived at the Gates of Heaven. Saint Peter came by and the woman said to him "This is such a wonderful place! How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word," Saint Peter told her.

"Which word?" the woman asked.

"Love."

The woman correctly spelled "Love" and Saint Peter welcomed her into Heaven.

About six months later, Saint Peter asked the woman to watch the Gates of Heaven for him that day. While the woman was guarding the Gates of Heaven, her husband arrived. "I'm surprised to see you," the woman said. "How have you been?"

"Oh, I've been doing pretty well since you died," her husband told her. "I married the beautiful young nurse who took care of you while you were ill. And then I won the lottery. I sold the little house you and I lived in and bought a big mansion. And my wife and I traveled all around the world. We were on vacation and I went water skiing today. I fell, the ski hit my head, and here I am. How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word," the woman told him.

"Which word?" her husband asked.

"Czechoslovakia."

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