

Abba Sarabamoun Abu Tarha (“the veiled”) Bishop of El-Monofia

Objective

To learn about the characteristics of this saint and emulate his spiritual virtues: prayer, simplicity, humility, and simplicity.

References

- ❖ Coptic Synexarium
- ❖ www.biblegateway.com
- ❖ St. George and St. Abraham Church Video CD movie of Bishop Sarabamon Abu Tarha, 2002 distribution can be purchased at www.orthodoxbookstore.org or local church bookstore.
- ❖ God and You Person to Person: Developing a Daily Personal Relationship with Jesus; by Father A. Coniaris

Scriptural Verse

“Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion” (**Romans 12:16**)

Lecture Outline

1. Introduction: His early life

1. A Simple Oil Merchant

He was a humble and simple oil merchant, always helped his neighbors and was kind to people. Everyone that knew him called him blessed because he always left them with a peaceful feeling in their hearts after interacting with him. He was called Salib.

2. His life turning point: A Conspiracy against him.

A. In his community there was a woman who committed adultery with a man and bore a baby. She and her friends and family conspired to kill the baby so that she can save her reputation. They suffocated the baby and planned to make it look like Salib trampled over the baby with his donkey. The infant witnessed to Anba Sarabamoun’s Innocence.

B. Proverbs 3:34

“Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble.”

C. Psalm 69:8-9, 16-18

I have set the LORD always before me; Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will

rest in hope...Hear me, O LORD, for Your loving kindness *is* good; Turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. And do not hide Your face from Your servant, For I am in trouble; Hear me speedily. Draw near to my soul, *and* redeem it; Deliver me because of my enemies.

2. He offered his life up to the Lord: Monasticism

1. Gave away his room to his neighbor (who was in need of it for her son to get married)
2. Gave away his mule to the waterman who also needed it.
3. Went to the Monastery of St. Anthony in Upper Egypt to become a monk: Abouna Salib El Antony.

III. The Power of the Lord becomes more Evident in him

1. Demons knew his name (called him Salib when he would exorcise them out of people).
2. Cured the sick.
3. Always gave glory to God, and people's faith were strengthened because of him.
4. Pope Petros El-Gawly ordained him as Bishop of El-Monofia, a governate in the Nile Delta in Egypt.

IV. Wonders performed by God through Saint Sarabamoun

When Mohammed Ali Basha asked the Pope's help concerning his daughter Zahra Hanem who was possessed by evil spirit, he sent Anba Sarapamon who healed her by praying over her. Mohammed Ali offered him money, but he refused saying that God's gifts are free. When the Governor insisted he asked for supplies and clothes for the monks in the monasteries, and to reinstate the Copts to their jobs in the government. He was a very simple man; and had a strong faith. He prayed unceasingly and felt that he was closely tied to the saints; especially St. Mary whom he called "mother of light."

Every time someone called him a saint he would not acknowledge it in his heart.

Conclusion

He had a personal relationship with the Lord.

1. Faith: "In its deepest essence, a living relationship of Love with God the Father, through the Son Jesus in the Holy Spirit."

~Fr. Anthony M. Coniaris

"We cannot have trust in someone whom we know only superficially." ~Fr. Schmemmann

2. Humility: from the Wisdom of the Desert Fathers: An old man said, “Every time a thought of superiority or vanity moves you, examine your conscience to see if you have kept all the commandments, if you love your enemies and are grieved at their sins, if you consider yourself as an unprofitable servant and the greatest of sinner of all. Even then, do not pretend to great ideas as though you were perfectly right, for this thought destroys everything.

“Someone asked an old man, ‘What is humility?’ He replied, ‘Humility is a great and divine work. The road leading to humility is through bodily labors, and considering oneself a sinner, inferior to all.’ Then the brother said, ‘What does that mean, “inferior to all”?’ The old man said, ‘It is this: not paying attention to others’ sins, but always to one’s own, praying to God ceaselessly.’

3. His Departure: 1853 on the 28th day of Bashanse

Activities/Discussion Points

1. How can we practice simplicity of heart and not try to use our intellect in matters of faith?
2. Do we have or can we find a saint that we can feel close to and use them as our intercessor? What prevents us?
3. How can we develop a personal relationship with the Lord and live in His presence?