

## **Anba Abraam, Bishop of Fayoum and Giza (1829 – 1914 AD)**

### **Objectives**

To learn from the life of this great saint in his merciful deeds and love for the poor

### **References**

- ✠ Anba Abraam by father Tadros Y. Malaty
- ✠ Synexarium of the 3rd of Baounah
- ✠ The movie of Anba Abraam

### **Scriptural Verse**

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”(Matthew 5: 7-8)

### **Lesson Outlines**

“If the soul of Anba Abraam did not unite with a human body, we would have said it is one of the Angels’ appearances”. Pope Shenoudah, III

Mr. Leeder, an English writer, wrote about him saying: “Before I even thought of seeking an audience with this wonderful old man I had heard Catholic people, as far away as France, speaking of the bishop of Fayoum and Giza in Egypt as an ascetic in whose powers were confirmed all the signs which our Lord had said should follow them, meaning the believers, “In My name shall cast out devils.... shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” This old saint, whose power is known all over the Eastern world, is in the direct and unbroken succession of those early Christians.”

Mr. Leeder also said after his visit with the bishop: “We had been in the presence of Christ; we were filled with the Spirit of God”.

Indeed Anba Abraam was so merciful to the poor that he was given the title “Friend, father and beloved of the poor and the destitute”

### **His Childhood:**

- ✠ Born in Upper Egypt (Delga, Elmeniah) from righteous parents who brought him up in a Christian manner and enrolled him in the church school.
- ✠ His mother departed while he was a young child so he found shelter and a great bosom of love in His Christ whom he loved from his early age.

### **His Youth:**

- ✠ His heart longed for the monastic life. He was ordained a monk in the Moharrak (means burned) Monastery by the name of Paul Gobriel (his actual name) when he was 19 years old.
- ✠ He was meek, humble, had a pure life and prayed much in seclusion. He was exceedingly loved by the monks.

### **His Episcopate:**

As the Bishop of Fayoum and Giza for 33 years, he became famous for two attributes:

- ✝ His charity which turned his bishopric into a shelter for all the needy from all religions.
- ✝ His faithful prayers that attracted people from all over the world to see the wonders he was humbly performing and the depth of his knowledge.

### **His Departure:**

- ✝ Anba Abraam departed from our world on June 10, 1941 AD (Baounah 3, 1630 AM) at the age of 85 years old. Thousands of people (Christians and Moslems) walked in his funeral procession and his pure body was laid in the monastery of the Virgin Mary in el-Ezab (in his home town, Fayoum) where many miracles have been performed and his tomb became and still a pilgrimage for many who have special needs or infirmities.

### **Some examples of his merciful deeds:**

Generous offerings used to come to Anba Abraam but he never looked at the amount of any offering, instead he put all the money and gold under the pillow, so that when a person came to him for help, he would reach under the pillow and give whatever he found. It is said that in his time, no one was poor in Fayoum, for they all found in the bishop's house their own house from which they could get what they needed.

Once a poor lady came to Anba Abraam asking charity but he had no money under the pillow, so he gave her his new shawl which he had received as a gift. The next day the man who had given it to him came back and offered him the same shawl after purchasing it from the poor lady. His grace was worried that the man may have pressured the woman in to giving it to him. But he affirmed that he paid her the same price he paid for the new shawl.

### **Conclusion**

Being merciful is an important characteristic of the true Christian. May we learn to emulate Anba Abraam in his love and charitable deeds.

### **Activities/Discussion Points**

1. Discuss Matthew 25: 34- 40
2. What kinds of acts of charity can we do as a group or alone?
3. Some examples:

Dedicate 10 minutes a day to call someone who is under hardship and try to comfort him or her. Visit a person in need once a week. Place your tithes and offerings in a separate envelope in order to feel that this is not yours. Embrace and comfort a sad person.

Dedicate time to making people around you happy. Remember the less fortunate when you eat, avoid throwing away leftovers and don't be picky.