

Monasticism Month

Saint Shenouda the Archimandrite

This week we will be learning about the life of St Shenouda, whose feast is on the 7th of Abib.

From his early days as a young shepherd, St. Shenouda's love for a deep and intimate life with God radiated brightly (literally). In one instance, as he was lifting his heart in prayer, a fellow shepherd witnessed a remarkable sight – St. Shenouda's fingers were radiating light while a sweet aroma filled the air. He reminds us of David the Prophet, who, even while working as a shepherd, consistently found moments for prayer and contemplation.

As he grew older, his holiness became apparent to many. Coming from a godly family, St. Shenouda's loved ones sought guidance from his uncle, Abba Pigol, to bless and guide him on the path of monasticism. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Abba Pigol saw that St. Shenouda was meant to succeed him as the Abbot of the Red Monastery. Instead, he humbly asked St. Shenouda to bless him, recognizing him as a chosen vessel of Christ and a future spiritual father to many.

St. Shenouda's life was truly extraordinary, as he was not just a monk but also an advocate for the Egyptian people. He also worked to revive the Sahidic Coptic language, and, most importantly, he cared for the needy, the orphans, and the widows as a compassionate shepherd.

Additionally, among his remarkable gifts were his powerful homilies, some of which are read during Holy Pascha. Responding to a question about the devil's influence, St. Shenouda replies, "Why did you say 'which are his' and didn't you say 'which are ours and his'? For every man who commits evil participates with him. And more, it is impossible for the devil to cause a man to sin unless his will goes to meet the thought of the devil or he is joined with him."

In another homily, he encourages his listeners to use their abilities to glorify God, saying, "If we cannot observe all the laws and righteousness and are unable to do everything that is good, let us act according to our ability and give joy to the Lord through His mercies, giving fruit according to our ability so that He may rejoice about us. If we do this, we will not be distant from life, but we will be in the kingdom of Christ with all His saints and the just and the ancients who spent their long lives in a state of perfection and truly pleasing God."

Before his departure, he asked his disciples to support him so that he might worship his creator. He worshiped God and then commanded them to follow in his footsteps and told them, "I commit you to God". Then he departed in peace. May his blessings be with us all.

For Further Reading

- [St Shenouda the Archimandrite](#)
- [The Human Will And The Devil – Homily by St Shenouda the Archimandrite-](#)
- [Use Your Talents – Homily by St Shenouda the Archimandrite](#)
- [Abib 7 – The Departure of St. Shenouda \(Shenoute\), the Archimandrite](#)