

## *St. Mina's Biography*

Translation by Mina Ghobrial

### *Introduction*

*He is the most famous Egyptian martyr, receiving an honor no other Egyptian martyr received whether in Egypt or in any other country. The reason for this being the numerous miracles that God has performed in his name.*

### *His Family*

*Born around the year 285 A.D. in the town of Nyqious in Menouf city. His father, Eudouxious, was the ruler of the town, and his uncle, Plondionus, was also a ruler. Eudouxious gained great fame because of his good deeds. Eudouxious' brother, Anatolious, envied him because he was receiving because the people of the town liked Eudouxious more than him. So he told the King false things about Eudouxious. But the King wanted to please them both, and sent his guard with a command to promote Eudouxious to ruler of "Old Africa" (Algeria) instead of their ruler who had just died. He also asked the guard to accompany Eudouxious and his family and make their transition to the new country a pleasant one. The people of Nyqious were saddened by the news of Eudouxious leaving and his brother regretted what he had done.*

### *The Promised Son*

*Awfimihi, Eudouxious' wife, wished for God to grant her a son. She fasted until night and to give charities to the poor and strangers. And in one of the feasts of St. Mary on 12 Touba in the church of St. Mary in Atreeb, she raised her injured heart to Jesus Christ and asked for the intercessions of St. Mary. Then she heard a voice from the picture of Jesus Christ and St. Mary answering her saying "Amin" (Amen). She gave birth to a son just like Jesus Christ had promised her because of her prayers. She named him Mina, by placing the "A" in "Amin" at the end. The whole town was joyous of his birth and Eudouxious released many prisoners and gave lots of money to the poor.*

### *How He Began*

*His father took care of him, teaching him the way of the Coptic Church. Mina began to love Jesus Christ and the Bible. He started to follow the Lord's behavior in his home. His father died when Mina was 11 and then his mother died when he was 14. He learned from them many spiritual things. After 1 year of his mother's death, he enrolled in the Roman Army in "Old Africa" (Algeria). He was promoted to a high position because of his Father's history with the army.*

### *Becoming A Monk*

*Mina's heart was now full of Jesus' preaching and started to give all money to the poor. He left the army after 3 years (303 A.D.) and went into the desert to become a monk. Two emperors of the Roman Empire sent a declaration that everybody had to worship their*

idols or else they would die. After 5 years of becoming a monk, Mina saw all the Christians getting their heads cut off because they didn't worship the idols. He also saw angels giving them Crowns of Martyrdom and leading them up to Paradise, giving off a light greater than the sun. Mina, wanting to become a Martyr, heard God speaking to him saying: "Blessed are you, Mina, because you became a monk. I will give you 3 Crowns; one because you didn't marry, a second for becoming a monk, and the third for your martyrdom. Your name will be very famous among the Martyrs. I will make people from around the world come to pray in your church, and you will receive a great Glorification in My Everlasting Kingdom.

### *In The Parade Square*

Mina returned from the desert and saw people celebrating and worshiping the idols. He stopped the parade and told preached to them about Jesus' loving and the Christian Religion. He declared out loud to the amazed crowd and told them about Jesus' salvation: "I was found by those who don't seek me; I revealed myself to those who didn't ask for me." (Isaiah 65:1 and Romans 10:20). The crowd was astonished at the sight of this man, and he was immediately taken to the emperor. When the emperor asked what had happened and how this human could have so rudely interrupted the celebrations of the feast of the emperor, Mina preached his faith with courage. Some soldiers recognized his face and told the emperor of his former position in the army. The emperor was amazed and asked Mina: "Why did you leave the Roman Army? And how do admit that you are Christian?" Mina then answered: "I am truly a soldier, but I became a soldier for my Lord Jesus Christ to glorify his Holy Name." They placed Mina in a Hemetarim and tortured his skin until the bones. While torturing him, the commander asked Mina if he was feeling pain or not. But Mina answered, "Your torture is what I own on Earth, for it gives me a Heavenly crown in front of Jesus Christ, my King and God. They brought two large steel nails and ran them against his body until his body was torn. Then they rubbed his wounds with rough cloth. They put flames on his wounds for two complete hours, but God lifted all pain and Mina never ached. He was hit on the mouth until his teeth broke, but his heart was filled with thanks, thinking that he did this for the Name of the Lord. The commander had failed and wrote to the emperor an explanation of what had happened. He was on a ship with Mina when he heard a mighty voice from the heavens, saying, "Don't be afraid, My Beloved Mina for I will be with you until the end." The emperor placed him in a prison with many others, and Mina still preached and encouraged them. There, Jesus Christ Himself appeared to Mina, and then rose back to the Heavens. The next day, the emperor brought him to his court and tried to regain Mina on his side, but when he found no response, he promised Mina with death. He commanded them to whip him and cut him up with a steel saw if necessary. But the saw melted like candles in front of them. Lastly, the emperor ordered that his head be cut off with a knife. At the site of his martyrdom, Mina kneeled, raised his hands toward the sky, and the knife came down and he was martyred on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tout 309 A.D. and he was 24 years old. They placed his body in a flame for 3 days, but it still didn't burn. Some of the faithful held him and gave him a very glorious burial.

### *St. Mina's Body*

Commander Anasios and his army went to fight the Barbarians because they were attacking the city of Mariot, and insisted that he take St. Mina's body with them. The army took the body and put it on a boat, took it to Alexandria and then to Mariot. In the sea terrible sea creatures attacked them, so a flame went out of the coffin and went towards the beasts, scaring them away. When they got to Alexandria, they went to Mariot and fought the Barbarians. When the Barbarians found the body and tried to attack it, a great light arose from the coffin and the Barbarians fell and kneeled to St. Mina's God. The army went on to beat the Barbarians with the help of God through St. Mina. On their way home, a camel with the coffin on its back refused to get up and move. They moved the coffin to a stronger camel, but it didn't move either. So Commander Anasios decided that this was God's will that the body stay in Mariot.

### *A Man Who Couldn't Walk Finds the Body (320-325 A.D.)*

Pope John the 4<sup>th</sup> at that time reminded us that a man who couldn't walk living in village near the site of the body crawled on the ground until he saw a great light from a cave and he went to the cave and was healed. He lay and slept there and his parents found him sleeping. When they called him, he woke, got up and told the town of what he had seen. They came to the place where St. Mina's body was buried, and they saw a great light coming from it. Many people came to the coffin and God performed many miracles through St. Mina's prayers.

### *The Healing of the Emperor's Daughter*

After some years, a Sheppard was looking over his sheep outside the village, when a sick sheep went to lake close to the place of the saint's body. The Sheppard rubbed it in the sand there and then washed it in the water there. He was amazed when he found that it was totally healed. The news of the healing lake reached the Emperor of Constantinople. He had an only daughter who was struck with a fatal disease of the face. He sent her and some guards to Egypt and the lake where St. Mina's body was. In the night, St. Mina appeared to her. He healed her and told her to dig for his body here under the lake. Her father then built a church in St. Mina's name on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Baouna. Saint Anasios the Apostle continued the construction of the church and in it he placed Mina's body. (363-373 A.D.). Pope Thaouphils (390-477 A.D.) to Irkadious complaining that the place has become crowded because of the people that come to visit the Holy place. So they built another bigger and greater church next to Saint Anasios' church. In the years 1320-1330, the attacks of the Barbarians on Alexandria grew great. So St. Mina's body was moved to his church at the Mouth of the Gulf in Egypt. And in the time of Pope Kirolous the 6<sup>th</sup>, part of his body was moved back to its original place, St. Mina's Monastery in Mariot.

### *The Spiritual Work*

St. Mina became a Martyr when he was 24 years old, but his name and miracles have been and still occurring to many people. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, many youth sold what they had and went to become monks like St. Mina. Seven of those monks from his monastery went to Ireland and built the first church in St. Mina's name. Until now the church continues to function as a Coptic Orthodox Church and carry on the faith. When the

village was destroyed in the Abasia Age in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, the monastery regained its infamy in the age of Pope Shenouda the 1<sup>st</sup>. And in the time of Pope Kirolous the 6<sup>th</sup> the recent Monastery, that now stands, was built and continued the practice of Coptic monks.

### *St. Mina's Museums*

There is a whole Museum contributed to St. Mina in the city of Frankfurt in Germany. Bishop Karl Maria Koffman started this museum when he found traces of the saint in Mariot in 1906/1907. He moved 100 large boxes of ancient historical objects of the saint to the Museum in Frankfurt. Some other museums of the world tried to get there hand on the objects, but Koffman took most of them. Some German museum directors are still digging and searching for even more objects that once belonged to St. Mina. Banoub Habashy moved many of the exhibits to the Roman Greek Coptic Museum in Alexandria.

### *Worldly Love*

It seems that St. Mina's heart still loves God even after his Martyrdom. So many sick people are coming from all over the world to be healed. They were holding pictures of St. Mina's picture and name. Now there are many Coptic followers of St. Mina in Germany, Marseille in France, Yugoslavia, Milan in Italy, Sudan, Jerusalem, and England.

### *St. Mina's Painting*

The Louvre Museum in Paris has a painting from the 5<sup>th</sup> century that shows the Lord Jesus Christ placing his hands on St. Mina's shoulder. This painting, from the Church of Saints, shows the everlasting love and companionship between the Lord Jesus Christ and St. Mina.

### *Never-Ending Work*

There was a close friend of Pope Kirolous when he was in his monk years at St. Mina's monastery. One night, he and on or two monks realized that Kirolous was laughing at the altar alone. After the night prayers, the man asked Kirolous, "Since we became friends, I have not seen you laugh like you did at the altar, what did you see?" So then the pope-to-be answered him, "Do you know all the troubles we live in (in the beginning of President Gamal Nasser's rule)? I was thanking God that I was wise and could solve the problems with my brother monks because of these troubles. So St. Mina appeared to and tickled me in the stomach and said: "Are you alone? We all are working with you! So don't be sad!" so I laughed."

After more than 16 centuries from his leaving the world, St. Mina's heart still works in love to God's kingdom! He helps many of the Patriarchs, Bishops, and priests! Truly, his love is everlasting!