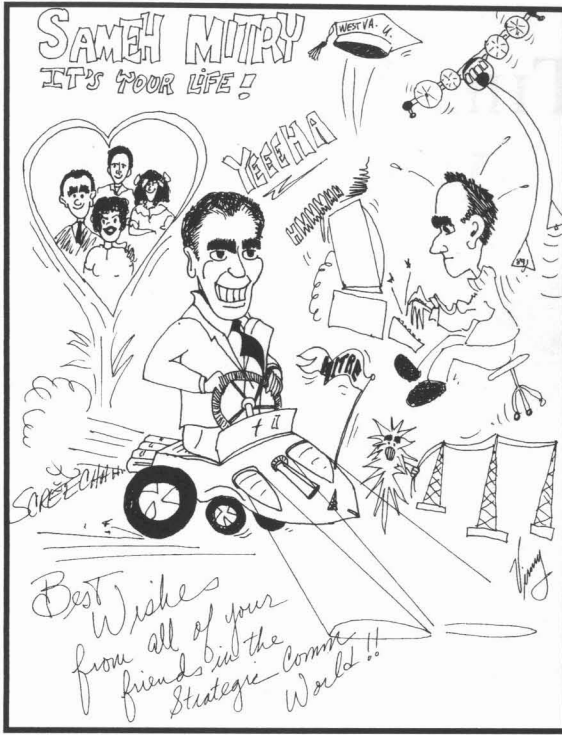


THE SAM THAT  
WE KNEW



DR. SAMEH A. MITRY

1945 - 1999



*A drawing given to Sameh by one of his colleagues at his retirement party from MITRE.*

This book represents the contributions of a few of the many people that knew Dr. Sameh A. Mitry, loved him, and were touched by him. Each passage sheds light onto one more facet of the life and personality of this extraordinary man. The contributions have been edited for spelling, grammar, and in some cases clarity.

The Mitry family wishes to thank all the contributors for the time they took to draw, in words, an icon of our beloved Sameh. As you read this book, let his memory and his prayers encourage you, strengthen you, and help to lead you along the path heavenward to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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## Introduction

“The thankful man in his sickness is better than a hermit monk.” I heard this saying from one of the old monks while he was comforting a sick person. He said that it is from the wisdom of the desert fathers. This saying came to my mind from the first time I met with Dr. Sameh Mitry. When I saw his cheering spirit and loving and caring attitude, when I found no self-pity or an attitude of misfortune, I automatically considered him one of the contemporary saints.

And this is the idea behind this book. It answers tough questions like this: can a person live joyously although he is handicapped, weak or in pain? Can we find ourselves in the middle of tribulations? Can God use our weaknesses for His glory?

To tell you the truth I have read all these answers in the Bible, but they sounded like too much perfectionism for such an era of control and power. But I have seen and touched these answers through the saintly lives of people like Dr. Sameh. It is fitting to say that disability showed the beauty of Dr. Sameh’s inner person and added to him more virtues, more respect and more crowns.

The life of Dr. Mitry is a sermon, a living Bible, a showcase of virtues. It is spiritual, encouraging, cheerful and exciting. It is an example of a true Christian, a faithful servant, a good husband and an unforgettable father.

May God strengthen his family and grant His Church with faithful servants like Dr. Mitry through the intercession of our Holy Mother St. Mary, the prayer of our intercessor St. Mark and the guidance of our honored father, H. H. Pope Shenouda III.

To Him is all glory, honor and worship from now to the end of all ages, Amen.

Fr. Bishoy Andrawes

St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church of Washington, DC

Not a man of words but always a man of action, words will never be enough to encompass all that he was, all that he is. My father was a man of many talents. He was a man who set the standards as a model husband, teacher, mentor, and guide. There wasn't much he couldn't do, but most importantly he was a true example of a man who followed in Christ's footsteps. He always did everything in honesty and goodwill and with a pure heart. Indeed it is written in Matthew 5:8: *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.* My father was a man who is revered for his kindness, strength, and wisdom. He was a man who placed his focus forward on Christ. Let us unite our hearts with his and look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the coming age. Amen.

His son,  
Andrew Mitry  
9/15/00

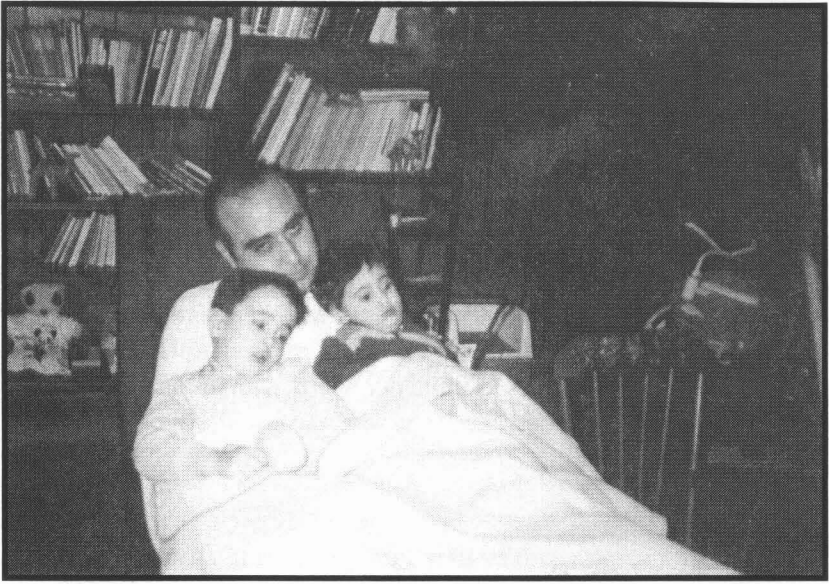
A man lost something, not recently at all. He lost his perfect vision, his rhythmic hand, the nerves in his left leg, his strong back, his racquetball skills, and his walking ability, although not totally.

I lost sitting on his shoulders so high, riding bikes with him, going to the pool with him, going on long outings, and going on extremely hot or cold vacations. He has Multiple Sclerosis, a disease that affects the nerves. This disease has no cure yet and rarely occurs in Egyptians, which is his nationality.

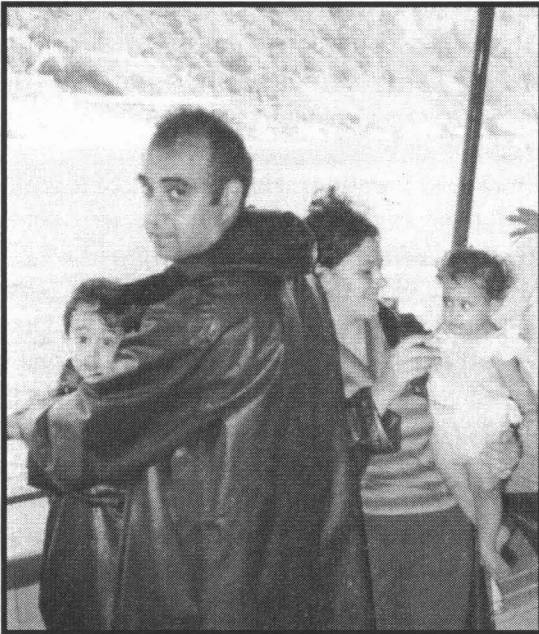
Yet I try to look at the side that's still there ... his caring, kind, advisable, stubborn, strict, old-fashioned, knowledgeable mind, and his wide—ear to ear—pearl white grin, how he makes people laugh, his teaching ability, and his spirit. Best of all is his loving heart.

He has gained beautifully carved canes, and metal crutches, and a maroon scooter that he races down the street with me when I roller blade. This person is my extraordinary dad, an absolutely great person who will never leave my heart ...

Your #1 daughter,  
Mariam Mitry  
12/25/93



*Andrew and Mariam napping on Dad's lap, January 1983.*



*Sameh, Andrew, Mona, and Mariam getting wet at  
Niagra Falls, 1981.*

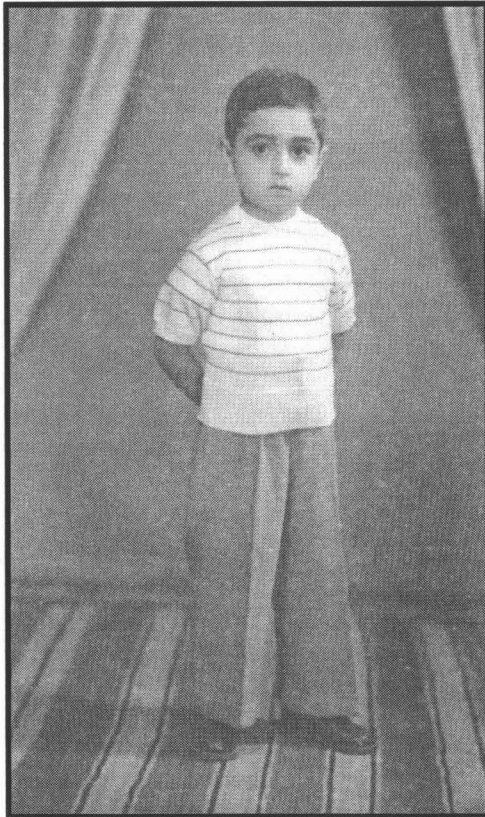
# The Life and Times of Sameh Mitry

## *Sameh Was There*

By Sahar Mikhail  
Sister, New Bern, North Carolina

I remember my brother as a child, his first day of school and how I felt responsible for him. I also remember him as an adult

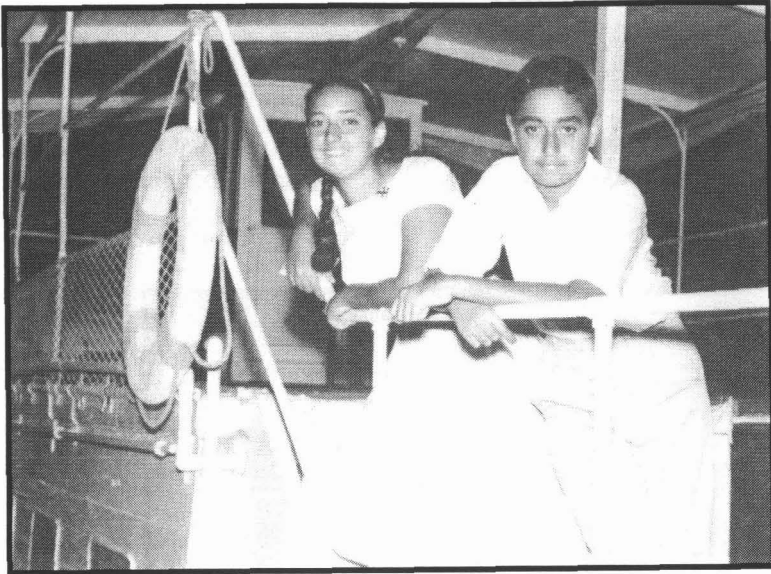
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*Sameh at four years old. He looks ready for preschool!*

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and how he felt responsible for us when we first arrived in the U.S. in 1975. He was working in Ohio then, but he made the time to be with us in Chicago, helping us to settle down, finding an apartment, furniture. It was such a good feeling knowing that he was there for us.



*Sameh and his older sister Sahar, 1950s.*

## ***The Big Brother***

By Etab Mitry El-Masry  
Sister, Cairo, Egypt

He was older than I am by four years and yet, even as kids he acted as the big brother. I used to be afraid to sleep alone in my bed, and he used to come and tell me stories until I fell asleep. I have to admit that I used to annoy him a lot, but instead of retaliating, he used to take everything that was precious to him, especially his Meccanno games, and climb on top of the bedroom cupboard and play there. Of course I couldn't reach him there. We were always able to get along together. We used to go out together and

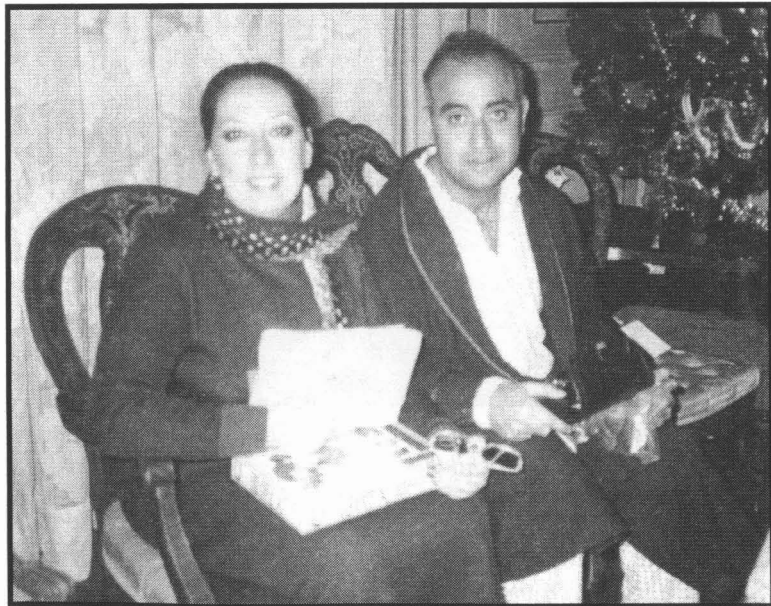
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I knew most of his friends, who became my friends as well, and even after he left for the States, I used to see many of them.

When he started working, he gave me a gold pearl earring as a gift, it was very pretty and I still have it. His leaving for the States did not affect our relationship. He was always concerned about everything that was going on back home. He was concerned about my marriage and my children (the eldest was born during his wedding) and when they grew up, they were in almost daily contact with him by the e-mail. They asked his opinion about their studies, about their activities in church and in Sunday school.

I think that we all felt that he was there for us, with love and care. He was someone that you could talk to, and believe me there are very few people you can talk to.



*Sameh with his younger sister, Etab Mitry El-Masry, unwrapping gifts on Christmas day, January 1986.*

## *Memories of a Good Friend*

By Wafik Iskander

Morgantown, West Virginia

It was very hard for me to accept the fact that my “brother” and lifetime friend, Sameh Aziz Mitry, is not with us any more. There are countless stories and memories that we have shared to-



*Sameh with Wafik Iskander, April 1970. They were best friends from childhood.*

gether, but still it was not easy to admit that he is not around and to write a little about some of these memories. Our group of friends (Sameh, Youssef, Mina, Emil B., Emil M., and Wafik) were almost inseparable since the early and mid fifties when we were all little boys spending most of our time in the playground of St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church of Shoubrah. We were blessed to grow under the

watchful eyes of two great saints: Abouna Mikhail Ibrahim and Abouna Morcos Daoud, who were later joined by an equally great priest, Abouna Yohanna Guirguis. We were mainly little mischievous guys, but the love and prayers of our great priests and other great teachers (e.g. Dr. Georges Attalla who is now Father Gawargious A. Kolta) at Saint Mark Church were so abundant and helped in transforming us into deacons and Sunday School servants. This partly explains why Sameh was the good man that we all knew.

Many pictures of young Sameh cannot leave my mind. I can see him in the mid sixties, sitting at home in the hot summer of Cairo, in his undershirt, and building a miniature church that took him and two other friends the entire summer to finish. They ended with a beautiful masterpiece that his mother (the beloved “Tante Hoda”) valued as a little treasure in her house. I can also picture him in the mid sixties, as a Sunday School Servant, shouting with his loud voice at the young boy scouts at the church whom he served, along with Emil M., with utmost enthusiasm and diligence.

In 1969, Sameh came to the United States and he managed to help me join him at the same place a few months later. The Good Lord took good care of us there and provided us with great guidance in the person of Dr. Samy Elias, to whom we both owe a lot, and with great friendship and true love in the person of Adel Armanious, who quickly became our third brother. Sameh’s dedication to God and to the church continued. At that time there were only four churches in the entire North American Continent. I remember us driving to Toronto to pray there during the Holy Week and Sameh fighting with us in the car and insisting that we don’t eat in Adel’s car in order to keep it clean. And who can forget Sameh as a deacon, shouting with his off-beat tune, or as a Sunday school teacher working hard to get the Sunday school program in Pittsburgh on its feet? The Good Lord did not let his efforts go in vain, and a large number of young adults, who were once his students, can attest to how fruitful his hard work was.

God compensated his devoted servant Sameh generously by providing him with a wonderful wife, Mona, and two great children, Andrew and Mariam. It was always good to see a family that has God in its foundation.

Like our great teacher, St. Paul, Sameh was given a thorn

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in his body. But with every problem, God provides us with the proper support and solution. God has surely provided Sameh with His support and help, as we have never heard him complaining about his sickness. We all knew that there was no cure, except for Sameh, who always hoped that God will some time provide cure for his disease. He never lost hope, and his faith was never weakened.

When we attended Sameh's funeral at St. Mark Church in Northern Virginia, everybody was too sad. I could not believe that Sameh was no longer with us. It is extremely hard to lose a brother. In the middle of the service, I looked to the side, and there I saw a life-size picture of Abouna Mikhail Ibrahim superimposed over one of his own black "tunias." I felt that Abouna Mikhail was present with us, and only then I felt some sort of relief. I knew that Abouna Mikhail was waiting for Sameh and that Sameh must be happy to go in Abouna Mikhail's bosom where they will be joined by a multitude of angels and saints, and they will stay forever in the presence of God. Sameh, you are a lucky man. I hope you will be waiting for us with Abouna Mikhail and Abouna Morcos when we later join you.

## ***Classmates***

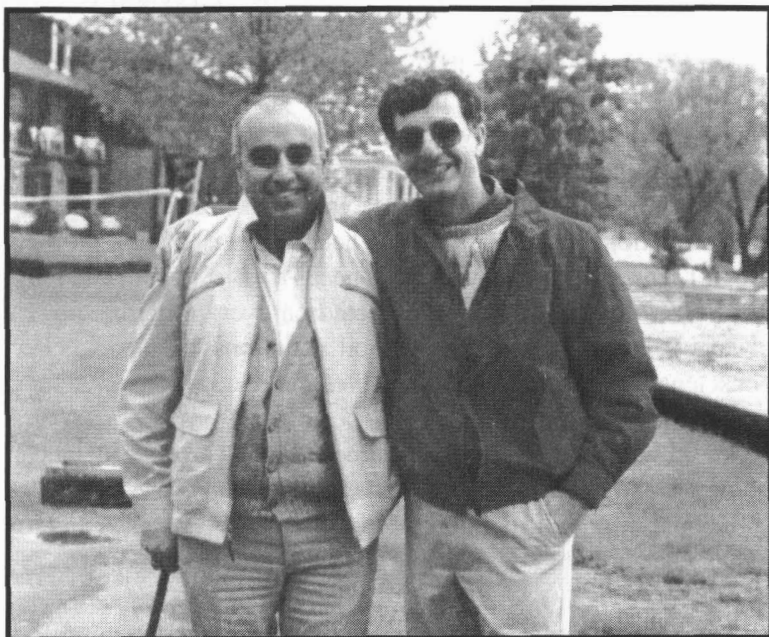
By Samir ElAssal  
Toronto, Canada

We first met around 1957/1958 at the English Mission College in Cairo where we shared the same classroom. It didn't take us long before we became good friends, especially when Sameh and family moved closer to my apartment building, whereby I could virtually see Sameh's villa from my own balcony. We also were members of the same sports club located steps away from both of our residences.

Later in 1964 we were studying in the same university; Sameh was studying electrical engineering and I was studying mechanical engineering.

As the years passed by, we developed a very strong friendship that remained that way even during the years when both of us were leading separate lives in two different countries. We always kept in touch and we always cherished that strong friendship and relationship.

Sameh has always been a very kind and conscientious person by nature. He was the type of person that could sit down and listen to your problems and deal with them as if they were his own. He would put aside his own agenda so he could spend the necessary time to that end. Sameh used to offer his help in explaining and



*Sameh with Samir ElAssal, during the English Mission high school reunion, Canada, 1980s.*

tutoring engineering material to family, friends, and neighbors. He used to do that during the examination periods when he needed this valuable time to study for himself. Sameh never turned away anyone who sought his help.

Sameh was a very focused person and always took his responsibilities and goals very seriously. Typically, at the end of each academic year (during the summer vacation), Sameh would take an engineering/construction training job locally in Cairo or in England because he wanted to enhance his engineering experience. When Sameh graduated from engineering, he immediately enrolled in com-

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puter night courses that started after the end of the normal working day. He always wanted to get the best education there is; so he pursued postgraduate studies and obtained his M.Sc. and Ph.D.

While Sameh was very active on the academic front, he was also very involved in the church activities, especially the Sunday School. St. Mark's Church in Shoubra, Cairo was extremely close to his heart, because that is where he was raised and attended the church for years since he was very young. He was part and parcel of that church. I was privileged to get to know some of Sameh's friends, all of whom belonged to the same church.

Sameh was always at peace with himself and this reflected on his relationships with others. Whenever an issue or a problem arose, I remember him saying "this needs a lot of fasting and praying." His faith as a Christian reflected on every thing he did. He always believed in hard work, good intentions and deeds, clean conscience, and most of all he believed that God will always stand by you.

I will always remember Sameh as being a very special part of my life and I know that this privileged relationship is very hard to come by. I miss him so much, I think about him everyday and my only solace is that I know that he is with Jesus.

## ***Arch Sameh***

By Ernest Zaky

Friend, Cairo, Egypt

It is too painful to speak about the dear friend Dr. Sameh. My name is Ernest Zaky from Cairo, Egypt. I knew Dr. Sameh since the year 1967. He was the leader of our Boy Scouts in St. Mark's Church, Shoubra, Cairo. We used to call him "Arch Sameh," which means "Leader Sameh" in the Coptic language.

Despite the fact that he was from a rich family living in a rich district called Heliopolis, he didn't forget his friends and his boys in the poor district called Shoubra. All that I remember about those days was that he was too kind, too pure, and too honest a person. Besides that, he enjoyed a very loud voice and was very useful in the scout life. It was a great shock to me when I found out that he would leave to the States, but his love in all our hearts

when we were just young boys was so deep.

After so many years, he came to Cairo for a visit. When we visited him at his family's house, he was searching for a wife, and it was so hard to find one during a very short holiday in Egypt. But God never forgot his children, because with the help of our Father Morcos he met a very decent person who was so pure like him and immediately she became his wife. All what I remember about her now is just a short vision, like I saw Cinderella.

My relationship with Sameh was never broken. I always remembered his loud voice full of love for everybody, and his innocent jokes about us and how much we became fat. Suddenly we heard about his strange illness. It was a shock to all of us but his voice, which was full of faith, gave us a feeling that he will manage it. Year after year the case became harder but he remained the same person: full of love to everybody and full of faith in the internet age. I used to receive his emails. I was surprised at how a person in his case could still be strong, still believe in his principals, still have a huge amount of strength. When I compared him in his situation to me, when I have no problems or some small problems, then I knew how much I am weak even though I am healthy and how much he is strong even though he is so ill!

During all our contacts and rare meetings he used to talk about his family, his son and daughter, telling me their news while he was so proud. But his talking about his wife was something different, she has had a great amount of love in his heart. I think because he was too good he deserved a good wife like her and also because she is too good she spent a great life with him. She will get a great gift from God because of her love and care given to him.

Just few days before his last trip, I phoned him and for the first time I felt that he knew the end would be soon. He said, "Let it be as God's wish. Please pray for me." And soon I received Andrew's message. Later I went to the Church in Heliopolis to meet his family and give my consolations. No one knew me but I told one of his family that I am from his boys since 30 years ...

God bless him and his family.

From boy scouts Awny, Waheed, Nader, Meena, Magdy, Essam, Michael, Ernest and so many others from St. Mark's Church, Shoubra, Cairo, Egypt.

## *Old Friends*

By Dan Mooney

Friend, New Lexington, Ohio

The attached reply from Sam to our email (which I can't find) back in 1998—after about a 30 year interval—reflects our encounters with Sam over the years. He was a friend of our nephew Ron, and we helped Sam and Ron and his parents CELEBRATE Sam's notification that he was awarded his U.S. citizenship. We both, Barb and I, well remember the occasion as we were routed from bed well after midnight and directed—not invited, but ordered—to stop whatever we were doing (which was sleeping, of course), and get up to the CELEBRATION—dress optional!

We did, and we had a BALL! The memory of the latter part of that evening (morning) was—and is—a bit hazy, but the intent and purpose was fulfilled!

Later, Sameh sent to us a black embossed brass plate with the profile of an Egyptian Princess engraved on the black background to commemorate the occasion. The plate has held a prominent place in our living room ever since it was received and, needless to say, it has always reminded us of Sam through the years. Though we did not meet again, we had contact vicariously via Ron through the years until the email contact in December of '98.

The plate IS from Egypt—it is so marked—and also has some Egyptian characters on the back. Our kids were all quite young and their remembrance of Sam is nil to dim, but they are all familiar with the story—if not the debauchery involved—of 'The Egyptian Plate'—we call it 'Sam's Citizenship Plate.' It is marked in our memory, as is Sam.

We feel that our lives have been bettered by knowing Sam—even so briefly and so long ago.

Peace and Love to Sam's family and friends.

Dan and Barb Mooney and Tom, Mike, Lisa, Diane, Marty and Jan

To: Dan Mooney  
Date: Thu, 24 Dec 1998 18:43:17 -0500  
Subject: Re: OLD friends  
From: Sameh A. Mitry

Dear Dan and Barb,

Greetings to all.

Of course I remember you, I actually remember the entire great family.

First, Thanks for writing.

Second, I am so happy you wrote, and I hope you stay in touch. What is a big surprise to me is that you still remember me. I will talk about myself later.

Third: The celebration was for me getting my citizenship. It was around 1975. The drink was Ozoo. It has a high alcohol content. One is expected to drink one (1 oz or less) shot of it. You know that did not happen with us, we had to finish the bottle. I remember we had Styrofoam cups and we left some of the drink in the bottom. The second day the drink ate the bottom of the cup!!

Fourth, I met you again in Ron's wedding.

Fifth, Ron and Tobi come and visit us often. Tobi's brothers live in Baltimore which is about an hour drive from here. I really wish you can come and visit. That will be great and I guarantee you that you and Barb will enjoy it. You might see President Clinton. That is exciting!!

Sixth, I also remember that you had a company that designed traffic light switching boxes and other products.

Seventh, I am impressed that you are using email. Not too

many people like it.

Eighth, I am impressed how your entire family turned out to be. May the Lord Jesus Christ Bless you all.

Ninth, before I forget, our address is ...

Tenth, briefly about us. I finished my graduate studies at West Virginia University in 1977. I also got married the same year to Mona, a wonderful Egyptian girl. In 1978 we got a son, Andrew. Andrew is in his third year (junior) in Industrial Engineering. In 1981 God blessed us with Mariam. She just got accepted at the University of Virginia.

Eleventh, I worked in several jobs, the last one was for ten years at MITRE corporation, a research company instituted by the government to work for the government.

Twelfth, in 1985 I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). I worked for 10 years until I deteriorated to the point that I can no longer work. I am now on disability using a wheel chair. But my hands are still in good shape and my talking is in good shape.

I hope I did not talk or write too much.

Again we would love to see you if you are ever in this area.

Take care of you and every one in the family.

Please write when you can.

"and pray for one another, that you may be healed."

James 5:16

May the Lord Jesus Christ Bless you.

Sameh & Mona

## *The Sam That I Knew*

By Russell Rex Haynes, Ph.D., P.E.  
Friend, Summerville, West Virginia

I met Sameh Mitry (I did not know what the A. stood for until many years later), when we were both in graduate school at West Virginia University. This would put our meeting in the early to mid sixties. Sam was a quite impressive, swarthy, well spoken person. I know that he was of foreign birth, but did not know the location of his birth, nor did I care.

I believe our first technical encounter was in the development and building of a device that measured the pressure generated by panty hose over the length of an adult female leg. Sounds like a rather racy undertaking, but all that we had to work with was a fiberglass model of a leg. Sam and I designed a sensor and mounted twelve or thirteen of these devices along the length of the leg. Sam then designed the electronics that would cause a series of small lights to outline the pressure profile that the stocking would generate along the length of the leg. Nothing of this nature had ever been designed or used in the textile industry previous to this machine that we were aware of. Sam's design worked without flaw, and probably his greatest achievement was to teach and train a mechanical engineer to build and calibrate the entire device. That mechanical engineer would be me. During and after this association, Sam and I became friends, not just associates.

If my memory serves me correctly, Sam finished his degree and left the University. He worked for a power company in Ohio for a while. But he had been bitten by the teaching or education bug, and returned to the university. Sam was teaching at this time and my sharpest memory of this activity was his competence in the classroom. He was highly thought of by his students and fellow faculty. One outstanding trait he had at that time was the method in which he processed the never-ending faculty recommendation forms. Most or all of us teaching at that time would fill in the blanks, give our impressions and sign the form. Not Sam. He went to the dean's office and got a copy of that student's entire collegiate record. His recommendations came not only from "his" impression of the stu-

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dent, but that students entire college record. I always considered this to be above and beyond the call of duty and told Sam as much. He was undeterred, and always gave any student who asked him for a recommendation all of the time it took to complete his idea of a complete evaluation. Many students owe Sam a great debt of gratitude for his willingness to go that extra mile in their behalf.

At about this time, I took Sam to Cheat Lake Jr. High School where I had been requested to help with a study of Egypt. I had an ace in the hole in that I knew Sam. No one at the school knew what my presentation was going to be. Imagine their surprise when I introduced "Dr. Samah A. Mitry" as my presentation. Sam took the class and ran with them. He covered ancient to modern times, and fielded any and all questions. We were to take about forty minutes of class time. The teacher ushered us out of the class after running twenty minutes into the next period, with most of the students hands still in the air with more questions. Sam was an instant hero and his genuine friendliness and willingness to give of himself was talked about at that school for quite a time.

Then Sam went off to Egypt and came back with a beautiful young lady named Mona. What a beautiful couple. They moved into a house in Star City, not far from our place in Morgantown. Along came Andrew and then Mariam. Like all graduate students or newly appointed assistant professors, money was not all that plentiful. When the children were brought home from the hospital, they needed a cradle. Our children had been given such a bed by their paternal grandfather. That cradle was transported to the Mitry household and as far as I know, both Andrew and Mariam slept in the cradle. We still have that cradle, which has a list of the names of all the babies that have used it. Andrew and Mariam appear near the top of the list.

The next adventure with Sam was to acquire a U.S. patent. Beginning with an idea from a physician and a device that I had used in experimental stress analysis, Sam took the information that I could provide and electronically made the system read blood pressure. While at it, he also made it read out pulse rate. With a device to calibrate the whole system that I dreamed up, we had the essentials of a patent. Many lawyers' fees, letters and years later, we

were awarded a U.S. patent. The patent never went anywhere, never made a dime, but be it known by all, that Sameh Mitry had a very large hand in acquiring that patent.

Sam then went off to the East Coast and began working for MITRE. What he did there, I do not know. Sam would never say what his job was or what he did. I had been exposed to enough government work to know not to ask what he did. We did get to visit the family once, many years ago, when the children were still small. In writing, then later emailing Sam, I realized that he had become more deeply involved in the his church by teaching Sunday School. No church could have a better man in such a position. Not only was he a true and honest man, but I never knew of a better teacher.

I have a few withering pages of notes and letters from the patent endeavor, somewhere I have a picture of a large board full of lights alongside a form of a female leg, and I have a business card given me by Dr. Sameh A. Mitry when he worked for MITRE. Time or being misplaced will make all of the material things disappear. The things that I have that can never be misplaced or disintegrate regarding Sam are the memories. He was quite a fellow; one of the most competent and functional engineers that I have ever known, one of the best husbands and fathers that I have ever come in contact with, one of the easiest persons to get along with that I have ever known as a friend, and probably one of the most religious persons that I have ever met. The passing of my friend Sam is sad, but thank God that he was with us for a while.

## *Remembering Sam*

By Ron Mills

Friend, Baltimore, Ohio

My friendship with Dr. Sameh Aziz Mitry began many years ago at West Virginia University. Although I had an enormous re-



*Ron Mills, center, with his wife, Tobi, Mariam, right, and his mom, left. Ron was Sameh's college roommate, 1983.*

spect for his intelligence and stature in life, this is the last time I will use the title of "Dr." as I write these memories. To me, he was, and always will be, Sam or Sammy.

The first time I met Sam, he was hanging over the upper berth of a bunk bed in a student apartment we were sharing. There were three of us looking for a fourth roommate, and he was it. My other two friends had already arrived for the beginning of the school year and had met Sam. They pulled me immediately into the room, and introduced me to our new acquaintance. I will never forget the razzing that began from the very moment he looked over the bunk. I attempted a stab at politeness at our introduction, but Sam would have nothing of that. Anyone who spent time with Sam knew his

sense of humor and how he loved to kid you. Well, that night he was getting it back, and I would say that his friendship with all of us was instantaneous. But, I think anyone who met Sam felt the same way.

Sam used his Arabic heritage not as a difference, but as a “handshake.” That first day we met, we—actually, I think it was he—coined the phrase “Quink” as a colloquial term as he made us guess his nationality. We used that term with good-natured teasing many times after that, and he came up with a few nicknames for us as well.

His teasing, though often given with a most serious delivery, was as transparent as cellophane. I remember one evening when we took a break from studying and went to a local ice cream store. I think it was a Friday night, and the place was packed with people impatiently waiting in line. When it was finally our turn, the girl at the counter was obviously rushed. As she asked Sam what he wanted, he stopped her in mid-phrase. As if he had all the time in the world, he looked at her so seriously and said, “You know, you have the most beautiful eyes!” With the crowd still backed up behind us, I murmured under my breath, “Sammy, you’re going to get us killed!” In that serious but teasing voice of his, he just looked at me and said, “But see Millsy; she has truly beautiful eyes!” By that time, the girl’s face had turned from frazzled to blushing. She seemed more intent on hiding behind the freezer than dipping the ice cream as she nervously stabbed away at it. Try as she might to hide the infectious grin that kept spreading across her face, it would just not go away. Soon, it seemed everyone in the shop was relaxed and laughing as if suddenly they had forgotten why they might have been in a hurry.

Sam just had that talent with people. They liked being around him because he made them feel good. He was also one of the kindest people I have ever known.

My mother recalls a weekend before Christmas when Sam came home with me to visit. It was not long after my grandma had passed away. Mom did not feel like putting up the normal holiday decorations that year and nothing had been done. With Sam leading the way, he and I put up the Christmas tree. That seemed to be the spark that helped to rekindle the spirit of the season. My mom will

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never forget Sam for that act of kindness.

Throughout our college days, Sam had a Volkswagen “bug” which we all knew as the Mitry Bus. Never having learned to drive a standard transmission, I was a challenge that Sam could not turn down. One night, very late, even he had had his fill of studying and coaxed me out to the parking lot for a lesson. He was determined that I would learn to drive a stick shift, and the Mitry Bus was my schoolhouse. As his demonstration and tutoring of “just how easy it was” came to an end, it was my turn behind the wheel. We jolted ... and died, jolted ... and died, jolted ... and died! As unkind sounds came from the floorboards, my roommates thought it was hilarious; I was rather mortified; and Sam was beginning to show signs of nervous concern for his beloved automobile. He hadn’t given up, but with a few more toad-like lunges and grinding sounds, I think he feared that the little car’s teeth might be shed. We ended the lesson shortly thereafter.

Our roommate Brad Fuller liked to drive the Mitry Bus and I recall one occasion that I’m certainly glad he did. There was a neighborhood carnival going on in a nearby suburb of Morgantown. Sam had never been to one of these, and Brad and I thought that it was an experience that he just had to savor. We did a fine job of convincing Sam just how much fun the rides were, and he finally consented to trying one with us. We chose a contraption that was like a ferris wheel with cages that spun around instead of seats.

I don’t remember Sam saying much as the ride spun through its wild gyrations. I think he muttered something like, “This is just not designed right.” When the ride stopped, Sam stumbled out and immediately fell belly-up on a bench by the exit. As he lay there moaning with his forearm over his eyes, a policeman came over to see what kind of derelict person had passed out in this position. Brad and I assured the officer that all was well and, supporting Sam on either side, we hustled him to the car.

Being in no condition to drive, we loaded him as gently as possible into the back seat of the Mitry Bus. Brad drove that day, and we rushed poor Sameh home to bed where he spent the rest of the evening. With his engineering rationale still working (and not much else), Sam said little but kept repeating all the way home and later that night, “This ride is just not designed right! It’s just not

designed right!” We never went to the carnival again.

As I look back at some of the most important times in my life, I can recall Sam being there. After college our visits were rare as happens when other commitments and distance separate friends. But, our reunions were always special and the friendship never weakened.

I am very poor at keeping in touch, and I had not seen Sam for a long time. I had a birthday coming up and my wife, mom and dad all decided they would surprise me by a trip to Morgantown where Sam was at the time. They literally kidnapped me by car and took off for parts unknown. It was a milestone year of some sort for me, but I don't have a clue how old I was. I do remember it to be one of the best surprises of my life.

On another occasion when Sammy came to visit us in Ohio, he went with me and a girl named Tobi to a Greek festival in a local restaurant. We had a great time at dinner, and I danced with Tobi for the first time. I remember Sam and I sitting up that night and talking. My dance with Tobi and feelings for her figured somehow into the conversation. Sam was apparently in approval, and I can remember him saying something like, “So, Ron Mills, marry this girl.” He would later be in our wedding.

I also remember visiting him when he lived in Stowe, Ohio. That time, we sat up most of the night sipping an Egyptian beverage and talking about Sam's prospects for marriage. It was always important to Sam that he travel back home and honor traditional ways; it was also important to him that he find someone special that he could truly love. Of course, he did both in finding Mona. He was so proud of Mona, Andrew and Mariam. What a wonderful family and a living testament to Sameh's life!

Sam had to be one of the most exemplary people I have ever known. Although he left us much too soon, the time that he did spend was a gift to all that knew him. Sam was certainly successful in the traditional sense, but he was one of the richest men I have ever known in character, compassion and godliness. If there were just more Sameh's in the world today, suspicion could be turned to understanding, selfishness to charity, and malice to love for all beings. It was a privilege to have called Sameh Mitry my friend, and I shall miss him dearly.

## *Memories of Sameh Aziz Mitry*

By Dave Claes

Friend, Akron, Ohio

I first met Sameh when he came to work with us at Ohio Edison. We were in the throes of a major expansion of our micro-



*The Claes Family visiting the Mitry's in Morgantown, W.VA, 1980*

wave system and our group was expanding. Sameh was the racket ball ace and he and Steve Lux played together quite a bit. Sameh and Steve also took private pilot lessons in a single engine plane. As I recall, all went reasonably well until Sameh soloed. Soloing was a very traumatic experience for Sameh and he never piloted a plane again.

I remember when Sameh went home to Egypt for a visit and came back with Mona. This seemed pretty bizarre to us Americans. Poor Mona got dragged across the ocean and thrown into the American culture with no preparation. My wife, Connie, shepherded Mona to her first doctor appointments and explained what was going on.

When Sameh and Mona moved to Morgantown, we would stop and visit them when we went to Fairmont to visit Connie's grandmother. We would spend an afternoon and/or evening and the visits were always enjoyable. Our girls always enjoyed visiting Sameh and Mona, as they were always made to feel very welcome.

As long as I knew Sameh, the thing I remember the most was his laugh. How anyone could not at least smile when Sameh would laugh is beyond me. Sameh kind was a good and kind man who worshipped and walked humbly with his Lord. He was richly blessed while on this earth. First, having Mona as his wife is a wonderful blessing. Second, family and friends were always stopping by the “Mitry hotel and motor lodge.” Third, Sameh and Mona both have strong, loving families. Fourth, Andrew and Mariam are good children who love their father.

Sameh will certainly be missed. But we are all so much richer for knowing Sameh and I feel very blessed that he was my friend.

And that laugh ...

### *A Man of Service*

By Guirguis Guirguis

Fellow servant, Reston, Virginia

My acquaintance with Dr. Sameh Mitry started in October 1983 after I moved to the Washington area from New Jersey. Sameh’s cousin, Dr. Wafik Habib, asked me to contact and meet with Sameh and this is what I did right after attending the first liturgy at St. Mark’s Coptic Orthodox Church of Washington, DC. He was in his car ready to go back to his house. When I introduced myself to him, he asked me to follow him to his house and we had breakfast together. It was the start of a friendship and brotherhood that grew deeper day after day. Right after that, he invited me to serve with him in the youth Sunday School class.

I have felt the great love and devotion he had in the service of the youth group and how he was concerned for all aspects of their activities and their spiritual, social and academic needs to the point that he would fill their college applications for them. As the youth built their trust in him they chose him as an advisor in their various problems. As the number of youth grew there was no room for them in the old church building, we tried to find a solution to the problem. We went (Sameh, Ibrahim and I) to negotiate with the neighboring Episcopal Church to rent some classrooms for Sunday

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School for our Church. We also rented a gymnasium from a neighborhood school to have athletic activities for our youth on the first Saturday of the month.

Sameh organized trips for the youth that included lectures and discussions for several days in a spiritual as well as a recreational environment. He also organized trips to a college (Virginia Tech) to acquaint the youth with university life.

Sameh was in charge of preparing the youth program for the Family Convention at the Antiochian Village from the first convention in May 1988 to the last convention in his life. The spirit of



*First trip to Ocean City with the Sunday School class, 1987. Chaperons, L-R: Dr. Norma El-Shamaa, Nabila Guirguis, Sameh, Guirguis Guirguis. Front: Mervat Mansour.*

loving and dedicated service has never departed him even when he was in great pain from his sickness. He always contacted the youth by phone or e-mail to ask about them, to answer their questions. He was very active in serving the church in translating many spiritual

articles, as well as preparing the Bible readings in English for the liturgy, which helped the youth in following the Bible readings during the liturgy. He was regularly sending me these readings to the last month of his earthly life.

On a personal basis, Sameh was always ready to help in any way possible, particularly when he found out that someone needed help. I remember that one time my wife and I were traveling, and we left my mother-in-law alone in the house. Sameh and Mona called her and found out that she needed some help with the washing machine, as it had stopped abruptly. At once Sameh, in spite of his sickness (he used a cane for walking at that time), went to the house and started working on the washing machine to fix it.

It would be impossible to write in detail about the unique personality of Sameh Mitry. He gathered in his personality both science and faith, a successful engineer and an orthodox Christian; a true love to whom he serves both with sincerity. He was successful as a husband and a father in giving of his time, effort and support to his service to the Lord. He worshipped God to the last breath and was always thankful even in the hardest time of suffering from his sickness.

We ask from his spirit that is now comforted in the paradise of delight with the cloud of witnesses that surrounds us, to remember us in front of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ so that He forgives our sins and trespasses and to help us to complete our days on earth in God's fear as he did our beloved brother Sameh.

### ***His Life for the Gospel***

By Dr. Ramzy Labib

Fellow servant, Baltimore, Maryland

“For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it” (Mark 8:35).

One of the few people in our world who kept these blessed words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and followed them well throughout his life with us, was Dr. Sameh Mitry. For this reason alone, he should be a great example for the present young generation. But surely there are many other reasons as well, such as his dedication

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to his family, his friends and his work, regarding which, others will talk much better.

I knew Dr. Sameh since 1983 only, and I wish I knew him much earlier. He was then the Sunday school youth leader in St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church of Washington, DC, and we had recently arrived in the Washington/Baltimore metropolitan area and started to go to this church. Our two children were in his class, and this gave us the opportunity to know him more closely. He was more than a usual Sunday school teacher. He cared for them, and actually for every youth in his class, as a father would care for his children. He talked to me many times about them, their needs and their difficulties, some of which I knew much less than he did. I was glad that they found the right amount of care in him, and therefore trusted him that much. Despite all his other responsibilities, and the increasing problems with his health, his dedication to his class did not diminish, and his care for the youth that he knew did not change until his last days. He was “faithful until death” and we have confidence in the Lord that He will give him “the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).

In the early nineties, the need for other churches in this region became apparent to many. The Coptic congregation in Baltimore and the neighboring areas of Maryland started to think of a church building for St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church of MD. Whereas few Coptic people looked at this as a division, many saw it in its spiritual reality, natural growth of the Church and multiplication of members of the One Body, “and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they (churches) were multiplied” (Acts 9:31). At that time, Dr. Sameh was a pioneer in supporting this project, and he encouraged people to look at it in this spiritual sense. Not only by words, but also by all available means. Although he lived much closer to St. Mark Church, and despite the difficulties he had to confront to travel to distant places, and the lack of handicapped facilities in St. Mary Church, he used to attend the liturgies and receive communion there frequently. The heroic support of his family in this respect cannot be overlooked. His son Andrew also used to come early and serve as a deacon in these liturgies. We ask the Theotokos, Saint Mary, to remember for them all these efforts and to ask her Holy Son to reward them all, the heavenly reward.

Dr. Sameh's broad and far-sighted views, were not only manifested in this issue, but the truth is that he was an enthusiastic supporter of every project for the service of the Lord, the preaching of His Gospel and the help of His brothers and sisters (those in need). I cannot count the diverse societies he supported, or even those in which he was an active Board Member. I knew of his activities more closely in one of these societies, Saint Mark's Orthodox Fellowship (SMOF). This Fellowship was founded in 1992 in Maryland to promote the teaching and preaching of the Orthodox Christian Faith in the Diaspora (mainly USA and Canada). Dr. Sameh, again was one of its first supporters. The Fellowship publishes introductions to the Books of the Bible in English and Arabic languages. Most of the Fellowship writers preferred to write in Arabic and English translations were needed. Dr. Sameh offered his much needed help in these translations and did it very willingly and in timely fashion, although this was the time when his illness became so incapacitating that he had to stop his official work and go into full disability. The Fellowship held annual conferences at different places in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Again Dr. Sameh attended every annual meeting for the first 4 years. The fifth annual meeting, in 1999 was the only meeting he missed and that was because of a surgical procedure that he had to undergo in a hospital. His service to the Fellowship was and will be appreciated by all members. In its December 1999 Newsletter, which is distributed to about one thousand families, the Fellowship wrote the following:

“In the hope of resurrection, **Dr. Sameh Mitry**, a faithful servant of the Lord, a member of St. Mark's Orthodox Fellowship, and one of its first advocates, has reposed in the Lord. He was a Sunday School youth leader at St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church of Washington, DC, and has been a servant of the Lord in many other Coptic Churches in USA and Egypt. He was involved in the translation of SMOF publications till the last moment, and attended all SMOF Annual Conferences (1996-98) despite his

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suffering. The Fellowship asks rest for his soul in the bosom of the saints, and heavenly comfort for his dear wife, son and daughter.

We ask the Theorimos (Seer of God), Saint Mark, the apostle and martyr, to remember for him and his family all these efforts and to ask her Holy Son to reward them all with the heavenly reward.

Finally, I cannot forget how patient and thankful was Dr. Sameh despite all his afflictions. As a physician, I used to ask him about his illness, and he was very reluctant to complain of any of his afflictions, and he used to find every occasion to thank the Lord for the miraculous improvement he is feeling. We ask him to pray for us, so that the Lord may help us in our afflictions and in our troubles, giving us this same spirit He gave to Dr. Sameh.

### ***Dr. Sameh Mitry's Career at the MITRE Corporation, 1984-1994***

By Bruce Noll

Colleague, Reston, Virginia

Dr. Sameh Mitry's 10-year career at The MITRE Corporation started with a chance encounter, at the Tyson's Corner Mall in May 1983 with a former West Virginia University (WVU) graduate student that he had not seen for several years. Among Sam's many duties at WVU was to supervise a group of graduate students who were teaching the basic Electrical Circuits laboratories. Many of the experiments were dated and in need of some major rewriting. Sam decided that he, with the help of his graduate students, would take on this time consuming effort. Now the last thing that his graduate students wanted to do was to spend their free time rewriting laboratory experiments. But, as they were soon to learn, Dr. Mitry was a very persistent professor. He set a schedule, checked progress, and gave advice, and a sympathetic ear when needed. One of his graduate students, Bruce Noll, a former Navy officer, would go to work in 1981 for the Department of Defense's Federally

Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence(C3I) - The MITRE Corporation.

When Bruce saw Sam and Mona that day in 1983 at Tyson's Corner Mall, the first thing that he noticed that there was a new addition to the Mitry family since he last saw Mona, Sam, and Andrew – Mariam. In March of 1980 Sam had been kind enough to give Bruce a place to stay for the night at his Star City home on the day before Bruce left Morgantown to start work in Washington. Mona cooked a wonderful meal, and made some of her famous and outstanding pita bread.

Sam, Mona, Andrew, and Mariam had moved from Morgantown to McLean, Virginia in 1982 when Sam accepted a position with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. For the next year, Bruce would try to convince Sam to join him at The MITRE Corporation to help develop new systems to enable communications with submerged submarines.

In February 1984, Sam interviewed for a position with MITRE. He talked with MITRE managers and senior staff in the Navy Systems Division about his extensive knowledge of spread spectrum communications and its application to military communications systems. Three people that talked with him that day, Bruce Noll, Jim Lawler, and Dr. Norval Broome (the Navy Communications Department Head), would become Sam's lifelong friends and colleagues. MITRE's Vice President, Dr. Richard Harris, wrote in his interview summary, "Dr. Mitry would bring a maturity of outlook to the Submarine Communications Group that would greatly help its junior engineers." Over the next 10+ years at The MITRE Corporation, Sam would go on to far exceed the expectations of all of those that had interviewed him that day.

Sam accepted a position with MITRE in May 1984 as a Member of Technical Staff in the Navy Communications Department. He worked at MITRE's McLean, Virginia, Westpark facility with a small group of five engineers, many of who were young ex-Navy officers who had served on board submarines. They faced some difficult technical challenges in the design of the new submarine communications network, and in establishing a role with the

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Navy sponsor at the Naval Electronics Systems Command (NAVELEX) at Crystal City, Virginia, as excellent submarine communications system engineers.

Sam had two assignments during his first year at MITRE. The first was to evaluate the feasibility of incorporating an Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) receive capability into the then conceptual Compact Very Low Frequency (CVLF) Receiver that, with Sam's help over the next 10 years, would become a reality as the primary communications receiver used by the entire submerged U.S. submarine fleet. With the dedication and unwavering determination that would become Sam's hallmark, he worked closely with Jim Lawler and Dr. Yan-Shek Hoh to accomplish this complex technical task, and to provide complete and timely advice to the Navy. He quickly earned the trust and respect of all those who worked with him. For example, after the major design review at the Airborne Instruments Laboratory in New York, the Navy Program Manager called Sam the major force behind the design and testing phase of the CVLF Program.

His second task was to work with the Submarine Communications Group Leader, his friend Bruce Noll, to establish a role as the NAVEXLEX Systems Engineer for Submarine Communications. Sam brought many ideas to the table on how to accomplish this. Among them was to develop a strategic plan to hire outstanding young people, and have Sam work closely with them to help them mature and contribute in a coordinated effort. Sam would take on many of the hard problems himself, and do a lot of sponsor interface to better establish our reputation in this new area of work. Sam had helped to set our course - over the next few years Sam would work with Norval, Bruce, Jim, Yan-Shek, newcomer ex-submarine officers Mike Monaco, and Brian Shriner, and many others, to achieve our goal both at NAVEXLEX and later, with Sam at the lead, at the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR).

In his second year at MITRE, Sam led a study on communications options for the Navy in the Arctic region. This broad effort would expand Sam's practical knowledge of navy operations. He would also make professional contacts with colleges at the Naval Ocean Systems Center in San Diego, the Naval Underwater



*Sameh receiving his 10 year anniversary award from the MITRE Corporation.*

Systems Center in Newport RI, Sandia National Laboratory, and the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Maryland that would last throughout Sam's career at MITRE and would help to solidify the Submarine Communications System Engineering Role that Sam would be instrumental in building.

This second year would also prove to be a turning point in Sam's career when he was asked to lead a small effort for a new MITRE sponsor at NAVAIR – the TACAMO Program Office. The TACAMO, at that time, was a fleet of modified C-130 Hercules aircraft that were airborne 24 hours per day to provide emergency communications to our submerged submarine fleet. The primary communications system was its Very Low Frequency (VLF) transmitter and long trailing wire antenna. Sam was asked to investigate the propagation characteristics of the installed TACAMO VLF system, and to make recommendations for improvements. Sam's outstanding analytical work, innovative recommendations for improvement, and, most importantly, the professional mutual respect and friendship that he established with our new Navy spon-

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sors, would lead to Sam to a leadership role in the TACAMO program that would last throughout his career.

The first challenge that Sam faced on the TACAMO program was to characterize the propagation of the VLF signal from an airborne platform through the air-water interface down to the submerged submarine. Sam led a small MITRE team to accomplish this effort. Then with the results of the analysis and a plan in hand to verify them in actual flight test, he formed a TACAMO VLF Test Working Group with government representatives from the Naval Ocean Systems Center, in San Diego, the Naval Air Development Center in Philadelphia and the Naval Air Test Center at Pax River MD. Sam was asked to chair this group. Sam organized the entire effort, getting test equipment, lining up people to perform the test, even developing test data sheets that would prove critical to success during the long test flights. Just before the test started, Sam was asked to become the government Test Director, responsible for the success of the entire multimillion-dollar test program.

As part of the test program, Sam and his test team needed to become flight qualified. They were even issued their own flight suites for the many long hours that they would spend onboard the TACAMO test aircraft flying out of Pax River MD. Sam logged in 61 flight hours onboard TACAMO during the first test phase. There is a famous picture that hung in the hallway near Sam's office at MITRE for many years that shows Sam, Brad Lytle and Roger Kilgore of the GRD Corp. and the Navy TACAMO Test Pilot, LT John Keilty, in their flight suites standing in front of the TACAMO Test Aircraft. Sam would later recruit Brad and Roger to join MITRE to work with him on the TACAMO program. He also worked closely with LT Keilty in the day-to-day mission planning and flight execution. John would become Sam's lifelong friend, and today is now Commodore Keilty, the Commanding Officer of the entire TACAMO fleet.

The testing, analyses, report writing, and briefings would go on more than a year. The impact on the design of the TACAMO primary mission systems continues today. At the close of the effort, Sam received Letters of Commendations from both NAVAIR and

NATC. The following is an excerpt of one of those letters: “Dr. Mitry is the heart of the TACAMO VLF Test Project. The plans that he initiated and drafted formed the basis of all of the testing. His remarkable spirit and high standards made the project possible.”

In October 1986, Sam became the MITRE technical lead for the Primary TACAMO Transmitter system upgrade. The Navy quickly appointed him to the source selection board. Over the next several months, Sam traveled a great deal to competing contractor facilities to evaluate their designs. Just before the selection panel was to meet to chose the winner, the government program manager suddenly retired. In an unusual request, the Navy asked that Sam fill the vacant government position to manage this major acquisition. Sam moved his office to the Navy’s Crystal City office to manage the program. Sam acceptance of this large responsibility, and subsequent outstanding execution of his duties, solidified his reputation in the TACAMO community. Over the next eight years, until his retirement in January 1995, Sam would play a major role in every TACAMO related effort, both in the mission avionics system and in the transition to the new E-6 (a modified Boeing 707) airframe.

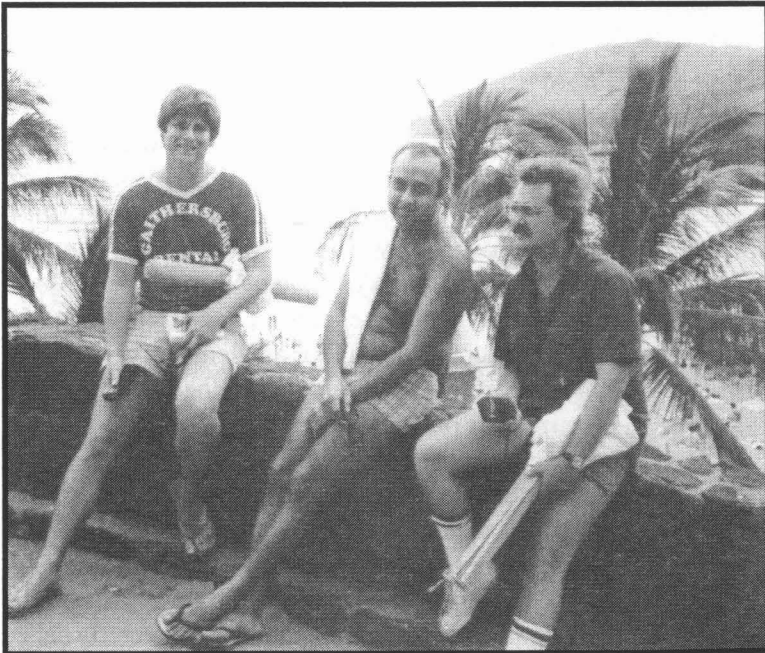
Sam’s career at MITRE progressed from individual contributor at MITRE, to TACAMO Task Leader, to NAVAIR Project Leader. In September 1987, Sam was recognized for his technical contributions, and his leadership within the MITRE Navy Communications Department, when he was promoted to the position of Lead Engineer. Most of the 3000 engineers and scientists at MITRE spend their entire careers at MITRE as Members of the Technical Staff. Only a very few are promoted to the Lead Engineer Position to recognize truly outstanding technical Leadership.

During the next seven years, until his retirement in January 1995, Sam led, contributed to, or consulted, reviewed and advised on every major project within the Navy Communications Department. Among those were the Fixed VLF Transmitter Upgrade for all Navy VLF shore stations. Sam led this effort for the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command in Crystal City (formerly called NAVEX). The government sponsor asked for Sam by name,

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based on his reputation from leading the TACAMO transmitter effort. He had become a leading expert in this area of solid state technology. Sam continued to lead the NAVAIR TACAMO work that had expanded to cover the aircraft avionics upgrade and the combination UHF/VHF radio development that are now used in all Navy fighters. During his work on the avionics upgrade in the early 1990s, Sam would work closely with two Navy Commanders, both of whom would become Sam's lifelong friends. CDR Vern Lochausen was the TACAMO Project Officer. He would eventually become Commodore Lochhausen, the Commanding Officer of the TACAMO Fleet, and would send Sam a personal invitation to attend the exclusive change of command ceremony in Colorado. Sam of course found a way to get to the ceremony to support his old friend. CDR Bill Lankford worked with Sam on the TACAMO as the E-6 Class Desk Officer. Bill and Sam would remain close



*Sameh working hard with the MITRE group in Hawaii, 1986.*

friends for the rest of his life. Bill had the honor of serving as a pall bearer at Sam's funeral.

Sam believed strongly in continuing education for himself and for the members of the department team. Over the years, he took many professional, technical writing, and leadership skills courses through the MITRE Institute. He was also an avid participant in the yearly MILCOM conferences, contributing several papers to the conferences over the years. One year Sam and his friend and fellow Lead Engineer, Dr. Bakri El-Erini, developed and presented a paper at MILCOM of the project TACAMO that Sam had worked so hard on during his entire career. Sam worked with Dr. Dan Sharp to develop a continuing series of weekly lunchtime lectures for the Department on all aspects of communications, both in theory and in practical terms, based on actual Navy programs. Sam gave many of the lectures.

During his career at MITRE, Sam received numerous letters of appreciation from our Navy sponsors, as well as internal MITRE awards, both for team and individual efforts. An excerpt from one of the NAVAIR sponsor letters says: "Dr. Mityr is a vital team member of our TACAMO Team. His keen foresight, constant attention to detail, and positive team attitude has been invaluable in managing the TACAMO project." Another excerpt from a letter that Sam received from the Commanding Officer, Fleet Air Reconnaissance Three, San Francisco, CA: "It has been a very distinct honor to be associated with a truly brilliant professional. You taught me a great deal, and I profited greatly from your constant advice."

Sam's efforts did not go unrecognized at the MITRE Navy Division level. In August 1991, Sam was the first person who ever received the highest award that the Navy Division can give – the Director's Distinguished Accomplishment Award. With the entire 100 plus person Division assembled in the Hayes building auditorium, the Division Director, David Anderson, described, without mentioning the person's name or project, the person's professional accomplishments, and what the person had done to help others in the division, from offering technical guidance, to mentoring many of our young engineers, to helping people with the problems that they face in life outside of work. Everyone, except for Sam, recognized who Mr. Anderson was describing. Sam was so surprised

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when Dr. Sam Mitry was called to come forward to the stage to receive his award. As Sam walked forward to the stage, with the help of a cane, his colleagues and friends gave him a standing ovation. The award was engraved with these words: To Dr. Sameh A. Mitry, for sustained outstanding systems engineering leadership to the Navy, coupled with the utmost in professional commitment.”

Dr. Sameh Mitry accomplished much during his career at MITRE. His professional efforts had, and continue to have, significant impact on the Navy, the MITRE Corporation, the Navy Division, and the Navy Communications Department. But his most important and longest-lived legacy is the personal impact that Sam had on lives of everyone that he worked with. When you met with Sam, whether it was to ask a technical question or to enter into a long planning session on future direction, he would always inquire about how you were doing or how is a family member doing that had been ill or had some other problem. Despite his own deteriorating health, Sam never complained, and had to be asked directly before he would even mention his own condition, which was always upbeat, no matter how bad it really was. In fact, Sam’s health problems had started early in his career at MITRE, with the indeterminate loss of feeling in his hands. This did not stop him from playing racquetball at lunchtime for several years with his close friend, Jim Lawler. Sam had acquired a reputation while he was a Professor at WVU as an expert player who would take on and defeat all challengers at the WVU Colosseum at 0630 each weekday morning. Now Sam would just smile and encourage this legend, and as a result not many people besides Jim would dare challenge him to a game!

There was one subject however that Sam would freely and proudly talk about – the accomplishments of his beloved family: Mona, Andrew, and Mariam. Sam would often talk with great pride about Mona’s work with the children at her school, and of her running of the Mitry household [there was no need for Sam to discuss Mona’s outstanding culinary skills—everyone in the department looked forward to eating some of her famous Baklava at our picnics]; about Andrew and Mariam’s scholastic achievements, of Andrew’s woodworking expertise, and about Mariam’s business

skills learned from working at the local bakery. The great love and affection for his family was obvious to everyone who knew Sam.

As Sam's long struggle with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) continued to take an increasing toll on his strength and stamina, he found ways to work around his illness. His attitude was that he would not let MS stand in the way of getting the job done. Until the very end of his career, the only apparent impact was the need to decrease his hectic travel schedule, especially his trips to Texas to help with the Fixed VLF System development at Rockwell International. Sam went from needing an occasional crutch, to needing a walker, to using his motorized cart [that he sometimes used with great pleasure to clear a path up the hallway]. None of this seemed to slow him down or to cause his positive outlook on life to change. His courage and determination served as a shining example to everyone around him. For Sam led not by just words of advice, but by his unwavering courageous actions in the face of adversity.

One final example typifies the day-to-day influence that Dr. Sameh Mitry had on the work and lives of the 40+ members of the Navy Communications Department (W-92). Each week, during Sam's 10-year career at MITRE, the department held an all-hands staff meeting to pass information from management to the staff, to exchange ideas with each other, and to generally keep up with what was happening in the department. Sam always attended. Even in his later years at MITRE, as his mobility decreased, the meetings would not start until Sam had arrived. During the meetings, Sam would listen intently to what each manager and staff member had to say. He would then offer words of advice and encouragement to all that was always appreciated and often followed. When things were not going as well as they should, Sam would give us positive words of encouragement, and offer to help us to get the problem fixed. When things were going well, Sam would congratulate us but remind us all [in the way that only a sage Professor can] that we need to strive to do even better. As the years went by, it became common practice for department managers, at the end of the staff meeting, to ask Dr. Mitry if he would like to say some closing remarks. Sometimes he would, but more often Sam would just give us that knowing Professor smile that we had come to love—and tell us all to get to work!

Date: Sat, 23 Oct 1999 11:59:13 -0400  
To: MITRE  
From: Michael Monaco  
Subject: Dr. Sameh Mitry Passed Away

On Friday at 1600, Dr. Sameh Mitry passed away after a long fight with Multiple Sclerosis.

After a long tenure as a professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of West Virginia, Sam joined MITRE W90 during the summer of 1984. Sam worked at MITRE for over a decade on a wide range of highly technical topics before his MS forced him into early retirement.

Sam will be remembered as a loving father, a devoted member of his church and a valued friend and mentor to his professional associates.

Sam is survived by his wife Mona and his two college-age children, Andrew and Mariam.

Sam's funeral will be held on Monday, October 25, 1999, at 11 AM and condolences will be held from Monday 7-8 PM. Both events will be held at the St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church on Braddock Road.

Further details can be provided upon request.

## Personal Encounters with Sameh

### *Like a Father Helps His Son Ride a Bike*

By Jim Lawler

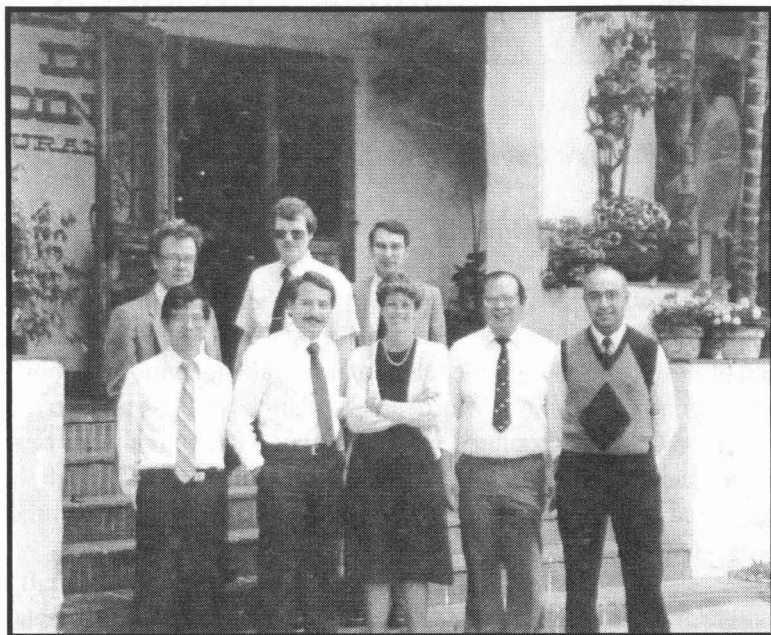
Friend, San Diego, California

It was over a morning cup of tea when that infectious, all-knowing smile nailed me. From that point on I knew Sam knew about me. He supported me, chided me, challenged me and above all, was a friend to me. We dreamed, planned and commiserated together. Our talks spanned work and play (He could always beat me in racquetball). Our talks spanned family and God. Our beliefs appeared outwardly different but Sam showed me just how similar we were.

Among the myriad of things I learned from Sam, he really taught me the meaning of the one basic, all-important principle. We've all heard it before, we've been taught it, we've all probably said it. But with Sam, he lived it. That's the difference. Yes choices are never black and white but Sam always helped me find the path that enabled me to do the right thing. He was unbelievable! Sam spoke from an intense conviction that gave me the confidence to find the right way no matter how hard. In fact, when sometimes the obstacles appeared overwhelming, Sam would help me sit back and put things into perspective. He'd often say, "Most people in the world wish they could have our problems." It's unbelievable that we let ourselves get caught up in situations.

Sam and I talked about starting a company together. Based on Sam's conviction of how things can be, an outline of how we could do it better emerged. We knew we didn't need to accumulate much money. It's a way of life, not a way to grow rich at another's expense. We would always treat our staff or employees with respect. This also applied to contracts, and service representations. Unfortunately, multiple sclerosis interfered. But I can't blame MS for not having Sam more involved in the company. He knew that running the company scared me. We talked about it. He knew that by supporting, encouraging and pushing me we could create a great

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*Sameh, far right, with MITRE colleagues, 1988. Jim Lawler is back, left.*

*Continued from page 43*

company. Looking back I remember being angry at Sam for pushing me the way he did. Always telling Sam back, “It’s just not that easy.” Then there was usually a measured silence. I knew I disappointed him. I knew he was right. I knew he didn’t need to reply. He allowed me the small momentary comfort of the silence, but he knew in the end any excuse would evaporate, and I’d still be left with just one choice. Do the right thing.

I have looked back many times over the last several years thinking how unfair it was for Sam to be stricken with MS. I needed him, because I was starting to do those things we talked about. Only recently have I come to realize that Sam was helping me build a company just as a father helps the son to ride a bike. The father is not going to continue to run after you as you gradually become more steady. After that final push you are on your own. And so it should be. Sam was truly a great man with whom I was unbelievably privileged to have known and worked with. His reach has been to all of Predicate Logic and, in particular, to the Lawler family.

## ***In Memory of Dr. Sameh Aziz Mitry, Board of Directors at Predicate Logic***

By Jim Lawler

This article appeared in the company newsletter.

Dr. Sameh Aziz Mitry, member of the Board of Directors of Predicate Logic, passed away Friday, October 22, 1999 after a long and courageous battle against multiple sclerosis.

Many of Predicate Logic's earliest employees were introduced to Dr. Mitry during his annual visit to Predicate Logic. However, due to the progression of MS, he was unable to visit us last year. He was to have met with us this November.

Sam was an unbelievably smart and religious man. He was always concerned about how you and your family were doing and how he could help. Much of the spirit and vision of Predicate Logic was cast by Sam. Sam pushed hard to see that Predicate Logic would be a company that was always fair in its business relations, compassionate with its employees and competitively successful.

Sam was viewed by many as unwaveringly tough in sticking to the standard of "doing the right thing." He was also incredibly supportive in helping you find the path to follow to do the right thing.

Sam received his doctorate in electrical engineering from West Virginia University in Morgantown, WVA and was a professor there for several years.

In 1983 Sam joined the MITRE Corporation in McLean, Virginia where I worked with him until 1987, when I moved to San Diego. It was in 1991 that I shared with Sam my desire to start my own company and wanted him to join me. However, the progression of MS made it impractical for Sam to join me full time in this venture. In 1995, Sam left the MITRE Corporation and was on disability. Sam agreed to help guide the company in spite of his disability.

As you look around Predicate Logic, you will see Sam's legacy everywhere. We strive to have the best benefit package while providing stability not typically seen in small companies. We go out of our way to avoid ethical conflicts of interest. Predicate Logic employees are known for their loyalty to their sponsors and

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the high technical caliber of their work.

In honor of the life and work of Dr. Sameh Mitry, his family requests donations be sent to the fund for the new Sunday School building at St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church in Washington, D.C., where Sam was a devoted Sunday School teacher. Predicate Logic will be making a generous gift to this building fund in the name of all Predicate Logic employees.

Sam leaves behind his wife, Mona, son Andrew and daughter Mariam.



*Sameh, age 10, the victor of musical chairs, at the beach in Egypt.*



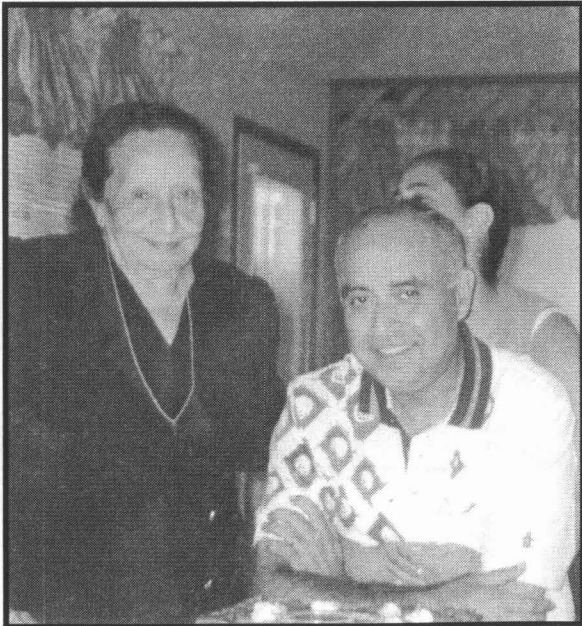
*Brad Fuller  
and Ron  
Mills,  
Sameh's  
college  
roommates,  
West Virginia  
University,  
1975.*



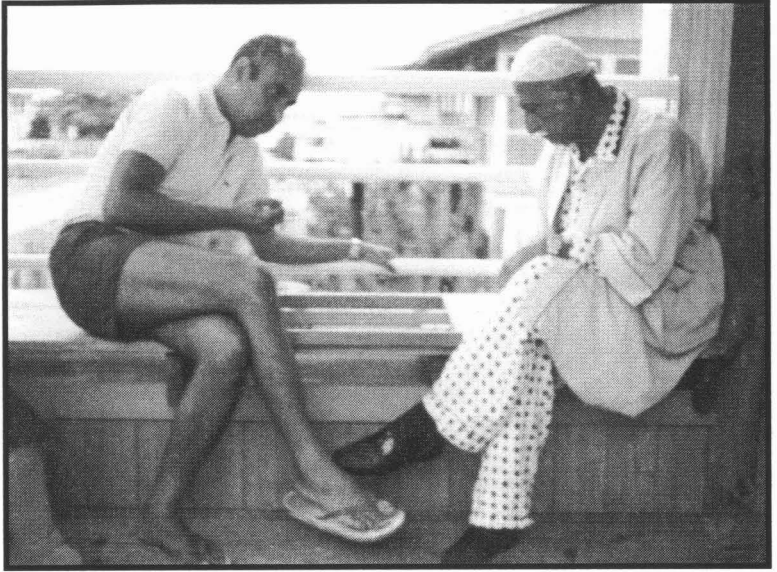
*Sahar (Sameh's sister), Jan Elias, Mona (awaiting Mariam's arrival)  
and Sameh, Mom and Dad Mitry, Mike (Sahar's husband), Tamar, Cici,  
and Andrew, December 1980.*



*Mariam, Sameh and Andrew at Sesame Place PA, 1985*



*Sameh  
with his  
aunt  
Susa at  
Bethany  
Beach in  
July, 1992*

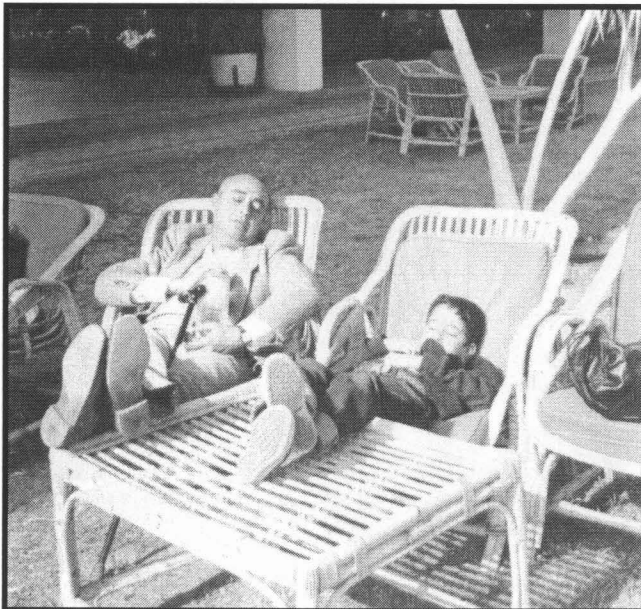


*Sameh loved Backgammon--especially when he won! Above, playing with his father at Bethany Beach, August 1986. Below, playing with his cousins Wafik Habib and Samy Elias, July 1997.*





*Sameh and Mona with Sameh's West Virginia professor and raquetball partner, Dr. Swartwont and his wife, Jean.*



*Like father,  
like son.  
Sameh and  
Andrew  
snoozing in  
Egypt Dec,  
1985*



*Fun with the family! Above, In front of Mona is Sonia, her sister, and behind Sonia is Foad, her husband. Below are the Habib and Mitry families celebrating Thanksgiving in November 1992 in Ocean City, MD.*





*Reunion with his college friends in San Francisco, Grant Habib, Guirguis, Nohda Salides, Nadine and Christine El Assal, Aug 1997*

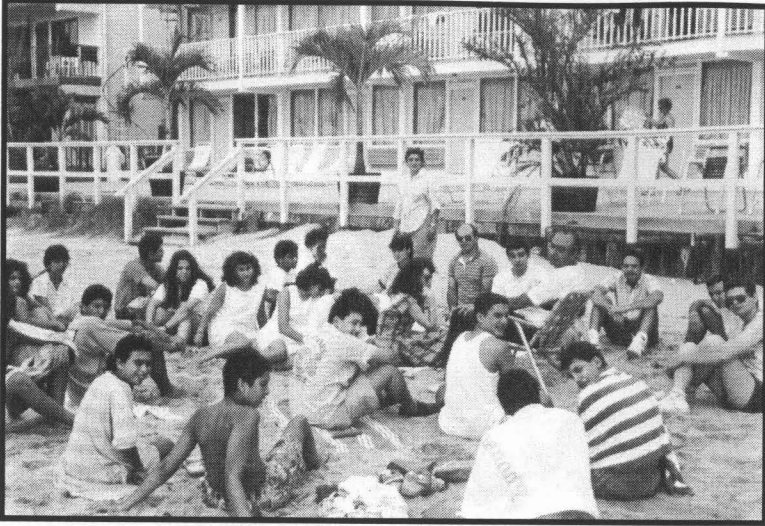


*Mark Armanious, Wafik Iskander, Adel Armanious, Mona, Fouad Basiliou, and Sameh, April 1999. They came every year from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to visit him.*

*Sameh was committed to serving his Sunday School classes. Below are photographs of their first trip to Ocean City, Maryland, in 1987.*



*The next Ocean City trip, 1989*





*Sameh with his 1992 Sunday School class, celebrating (against his will) his 45th birthday*



*Sameh with his Sunday School Class, July 1990*

*“When I first met Uncle Sameh, I knew that he was a special person, someone who would touch my life and make me better for it. If you were to take all the best traits you most prize in others and put them all in one person, that person would have to be Uncle Sameh. He gave a college student, new to city life, and far away from home a place in his home and his family, for that I am eternally grateful. One trait I most admired about Uncle Sameh was his sincerity. I felt that when he asked me ordinary everyday questions, (that people always ask, but don’t really wait for an answer or don’t care about the answer) like ‘How are You?’ and ‘How is school?’ that he really cared and wanted to hear my answers. My only regret is that I didn’t meet Uncle Sameh sooner in my life and that I didn’t take as much benefit as I could from the time I had.”*



*Sameh trying to conduct Sunday School while everyone is singing “Happy Birthday”*

## *Memories with Sam Mitry*

By Commander Bill Lankford  
Friend, Saint Leonard, Maryland

Mona,

These shared experiences with Sam are certainly not complete. Time and memory blur things. The most important thing I remember is the respect and love I have for Sam as a friend ... Bill

### **Background.**

I met Sam while working for the Navy in Crystal City sometime in early 1988. Sam worked for Mitre Corporation that was providing support to Commander Vern Lochausen on the Navy's Strategic Airborne Communication Program. Vern introduced me to the Mitre team in hopes that Sam could support my area after Vern departed for his new assignment. My first recollections of Sam were that of a quiet and polite individual. Sam was so quiet that I remember worrying if Sam would speak his own mind amid the bullheads that ran the Navy's Aviation Programs. As I learned later, that was an unnecessary concern.

For the next four years, Sam and I worked together on a daily basis either in Crystal City, at the Mitre Corporation or at some manufacturing/support site that was part of the Navy's Airborne Communication Program. Sam and I traveled primarily to San Diego, California and Dallas, Texas during these four years. During our busiest travel periods, we were away from home as much as two weeks out of the month. Though I can remember specific incidents and locations with Sam, their chronological order escapes me. I will recall specific situations by location. I can only hope that I can capture some of Sam's wonderful personality in my recollections.

### **Location #1: Crystal City. (Naval Air Systems Command Headquarters)**

Navy Captain Ernie Lewis, the Program Manager and our big boss, called a meeting one day with Jay McCormick (his Deputy), Tony Wayne (my boss), Sam and myself to explain how he wanted

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to conduct business with Rockwell International of Dallas, Texas. Captain Lewis wanted to emphasize that the contract risk to develop the High Power Transmit Set (HPTS) belonged entirely to Rockwell. To keep the risk on the contractor, Captain Lewis did not want us (the government) to give any kind of direction to Rockwell. Tony attempted to explain to the Captain that we would have to talk to the contractor and at least advise them of what we considered as an acceptable plan. Tony was right, but the Captain immediately tore him up for questioning his desires. Sam recognized that Tony was correct in his assertions and that it would be futile to argue with the Captain. I whispered to Sam, "Don't interfere Sam. The Captain is making a point and you do not need to get into his field of fire." Sam couldn't restrain himself and jumped in to defend Tony with his logic. Unfortunately, the Captain was not interested in logic and tore into Sam also. After the meeting, Sam asked, "Why didn't you stop me from jumping into the middle of that argument?" He then smiled at me. I knew then that Sam was not afraid of confrontation when he felt he was in the right.

### **Location #2: Dallas, Texas (Rockwell).**

Sam and I spent a lot of time in Dallas working with the Rockwell International contractor team. They were long days. Our primary relaxation was going to dinner with our government team members. Dinner planning would normally begin on our return to the Hawthorne Suites where Sam and I normally shared a room. Our navy group was somewhat adventurous when it came to trying new eating locations. Dinner could be anything from a hot dog at the State Fair to a sit down seven-course meal. As I recall, the hot dogs were more normal than the seven-course variety. There was one place that we frequented more than others, not for the food, but for a satellite game called Trivia Pursuit.

The Rusty Pelican was a restaurant where I would drag Sam to play Trivia Pursuit in Dallas. Tony Wayne, Andy Miller, Sam and I frequented this place because we enjoyed the game and the food was okay. We would sometimes play two or three nights a week when in town. At times we would have as many as fifteen or twenty players from our navy group playing the game. I think Sam enjoyed the wide range of questions and his interaction with the

people playing the game. Sam could act quite stern if someone missed a question. Then he would smile and say something like, "What does it really matter- it's a game." There was a group of schoolteachers that played as a group almost every night. We came to know them and that they were very good but serious players. We use to shout wrong answers to the teachers so in order to beat them with our individual scores. We usually were not able to distract them. They were too good. This caused a friendly rivalry that I think Sam enjoyed. Though Sam was not as avid a player as the rest of us, he was good at the physical sciences, history and geography categories.

The schoolteachers soon learned that we could also be serious and score as well as them. Together it was not unusual for us to place in the top ten out of three thousand restaurants sponsoring Trivia Pursuit that night. The Rusty Pelican is where I observed Sam's keen sense of humor and even some of his competitiveness.

We were invited to dinner at a Rockwell's employee's home. He and his wife were from India and wanted to host an authentic Indian meal for the Rockwell and government team members on this program. The dinner was excellent and the host made us all feel very comfortable. As the evening drew to a close, we realized that some of our navy team had left earlier and had taken all but one of the cars to get us back to the hotel. We had about ten or twelve people to transport in a car designed for five. Initially the driver decided to make two trips. Since it was late and we did not want to inconvenience our host further, the decision was made to load everyone in the car for the short trip back to the hotel. Well, getting that many guys into that car was quite an effort. Sam and I were probably the smaller persons in that car. As you know, Sam and I are not small. Sam sat on the front console stick shift while I sat next to him. I was sharing the seat with someone else while the people in back were stacking up like lumber. That car must have only had a ground clearance of a few inches. Sam, of course, did not complain. He acted amazed and thankful that he was not in the back seat. We all arrived safely and exited the car at the hotel entrance to the astonishment of the hotel staff and guest.

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Sam and I spent a lot of time at Rockwell on this navy program working with them on software development issues. Sam recruited a young lady, named Julie, from the Mitre Software Center. Sam and Julie brought the expertise that our team needed to understand and direct Rockwell with their software development. Sam had no hesitation to point out when Rockwell was not doing an adequate job. He was just as quick to compliment them for good work. Sam and Julie earned a name for themselves on the project as even-handed professionals. After one of our many software meetings at Rockwell, I noticed Sam and Julie in the office of a Rockwell VP. I thought nothing of it. Later that day, Sam told me that both he and Julie had been offered a job with Rockwell. Sam said that he was surprised by the offer, which he refused. I told Sam (kidding) that Rockwell probably offered him the job to keep him from asking questions during our reviews. Sam's reply was that he only asks the questions that need answering.

There were many other memories from our travels to Dallas. There was the Egyptian Exhibit in Dallas where Sam kidded with me about introducing me to his ancestors. There was the Magic Time Machine restaurant where Sam said to the waitress, "Make sure you give me a big portion of pot roast." She placed a portion on Sam's plate that was as large as a cantaloupe. I thought Sam's eyes were going to pop out of their sockets. Sam could not believe his eyes and had to show his prize portion to all of us. He then exclaimed, "How does she expect me to eat all that?" We all then kidded Sam for getting what he asked for. There also was the time that Sam and I were at Chili's restaurant ordering dessert. They had great homemade fruit pies that came in their own small crock-pots. Sam knew I wouldn't order dessert unless he did also. So Sam ordered the pie stating, "He wanted a lot of whipped cream on top." The pies came and Sam took one teaspoon of the whipped cream and said, "I am done." They were fun times that I will always cherish remembering.

### **Location #3: San Diego, CA.**

Sam and I also did a lot of traveling to the Naval Ocean Systems Command in Point Loma, California. This navy group did software development for our program. Sam and I would represent the Program Office at their periodic reviews. Going to San Diego was like home week for Sam as he was able to visit with friends Jim Lawler and Ben Barlin. I remember eating lunch with Sam at Point Loma Seafood restaurant, which was a casual place on the water. We typically would get a seafood sandwich and eat lunch while watching the fishing boats come and go in the harbor. The food was good, the sun was warm and the company couldn't get any better.

### ***You Know When You Have Met a Gentleman***

By Rod and Martha Mohan  
Friends, Concord, California

Several years ago, through a business acquaintance, I had the great fortune of meeting Sameh Mistry. My misfortune was that I had not known him longer. Sameh was in the later stages of his struggle with MS.

His faith in God, family, and friends made you instantly want to be in league with him. After we met several times, on trips to his home and on vacations, it became clear to me that most men will never be able to ascend to Sameh's league.

His inner strength, not only supported him but, radiated to all his family and friends. It was once said, "That we are part of all we have known" and I know he made me a better person for having been considered a friend of his for the short period we had.

God has a special place for people of this making and one of those is the minds and hearts of everyone that knew him. We miss you Gentle Friend.

31 October 99

Mona, Andrew and Mariam,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is John Keilty, a U.S. Navy captain, presently a Wing Commander for the U.S. Navy that flies communications airplanes, many of which Sam worked on.

I met Sam in 1985 while I was a test pilot testing many of these systems and Sam was a technical consultant. Sam and I developed a very special friendship. I was a young 30 year old Naval Aviator just beginning to learn my profession, and Sam was a pro, technically competent contractor who "knew it all." I'll always remember his calm, relaxed, forthright advice he gave to our programs. When I transferred in 1986, Sam gave me an autographed (his) book on Egypt. I have it till this day. I will forever cherish it.

I know these times are difficult for you. My thoughts and prayers go out to you.

But I thought you should know that Sam played a role in my life. His kindness, thoughtfulness, cheery outlook on life, I greatly admired and I know it made an impression on me.

Last year, I was able to talk to Sam by phone after three years overseas and I learned of his illness. I thank God that we were able to talk then and share so many memories. I shall miss Sam as well. God bless you all.

Sincerely,  
John Keilty  
Commodore, Airborne Communications

September 10, 2000

Dear Mona,

How well I remember the blessing Sam was to Jim, my husband. Jim considered knowing Sam as a fellow professional and Christian, one of the most important blessings during the last years of his life. Sam's competence as a professional and his love for Christ both contributed to Jim's considerable respect for Sam. During those last difficult years of Jim's life, he treasured the conversations he had with Sam as they shared their faith and prayed for one another.

Mona, may God richly bless your family in the years ahead as you continue to recall the loving father and husband whose life you were privileged to share.

Glenna Hendricks  
Fairfax, Virginia

### *Pure Joy*

By Jeffrey A. Lindeman  
October 24, 1999

Mona asked that I say a few words about Sameh, Uncle Sameh, which is how I knew him. I don't know if a few words could adequately express who Uncle Sameh was or what he has meant to each of us. Uncle Sameh touched so many lives, each of us has memory upon memory, story upon story, of happy times with Uncle Sameh and his family. Uncle Sameh was truly a rich man; rich in his relationship with God, and rich in his relationships with family and friends. These are the only riches that you can take with you and, at the same time, leave behind when you die. Uncle Sameh did both abundantly.

The Psalms tell us that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15). This is a precious time before God as we gather together to remember Uncle Sameh. Many of us think of Uncle Sameh as being saintly in the way he lived with multiple sclerosis. MS is not an easy disease. It is devastating. It

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is unrelenting. MS, however, did not devastate Uncle Sameh. Uncle Sameh's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ was firmly established. Just in the past few weeks, with some new medicine, Uncle Sameh began again to take a few steps with his walker. He was determined to push back at MS harder than it pushed on him. He approached each day thankful to God for the day, thankful to God for his family, and thankful to God for every aspect of life. He became stronger in faith as the MS progressed. But to simply say that Uncle Sameh lived courageously and gracefully as a man afflicted with MS and to leave it at that would be falling so short of the Uncle Sameh you and I knew.



*Jeff and Mona Lindeman, having Easter dinner at the Mitry's, April 1992*

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). If anyone's light has shone brightly it is Uncle Sameh's. And, we can praise our Father in heaven for Uncle Sameh. He was a gift to us.

Think for a minute of one word that you might use to describe Uncle Sameh. For me that word is joyful. Uncle Sameh was full of joy and shared that joy, God's joy, with everyone he came in contact with. I remember the way he would shake your hand, swinging his hand into yours and the happiness that shone in his face just because you were there. I think of having dinner with Sameh, Mona, Andrew, and Mariam. I remember laughter, the kind of

laughter that makes your eyes tear and your face hurt because you're laughing so hard. I remember Saidi jokes and teasing Andrew about the amount of laundry he brought home from college. I remember eating pickled lemons with Mariam. It was pure joy!

You may not know it, but Mona Mitry is the best cook in the world unless you want to talk about Mariam's desserts. At least that was Uncle Sameh's opinion. For Uncle Sameh, everything was always superb! I wish I could say it the way he did—superb!

Have you ever thought about all the people that you have met through Uncle Sameh? I have met his parents, his sisters, Mona's brother and sisters, his college friends, his co-workers, his Sunday school students—people from all over the world; through Uncle Sameh! Often times my wife Mona and I would walk down from our house to meet so and so who is here for a day or a week, or we'd just see another out of town car in the driveway. And there were always stories and laughter, friendships built and maintained regardless of time and distance.

Uncle Sameh always took time to be interested in everyone. "How are you doing?" was not a question from Uncle Sameh; it was a conversation. And you know what? It was always wonderful to be the center of his attention. Mona told me that on Friday morning Uncle Sameh received an e-mail from a young mother telling him about a beach trip with her family and happily remembering from years ago that Uncle Sameh was the first person to take her to the beach on a Church trip. That, in a snapshot, was Uncle Sameh. He gave us all memories like that.

But more importantly, in all those memories there is Uncle Sameh's faith in Jesus Christ. This is what he really gave to us. Can't you hear him saying "Praise God" and clapping his hands together over some bit of good news. I can. And, I can praise God for Uncle Sameh.

One last thing, before I close. It almost needs no comment. Uncle Sameh loved his family. The love he and Mona shared as husband and wife was so apparent to all of us. Their unwavering devotion to each other testifies to what God can create in a marriage. I have always thought that Uncle Sameh loved Mona out of the love and joy he himself received from God. He loved Andrew

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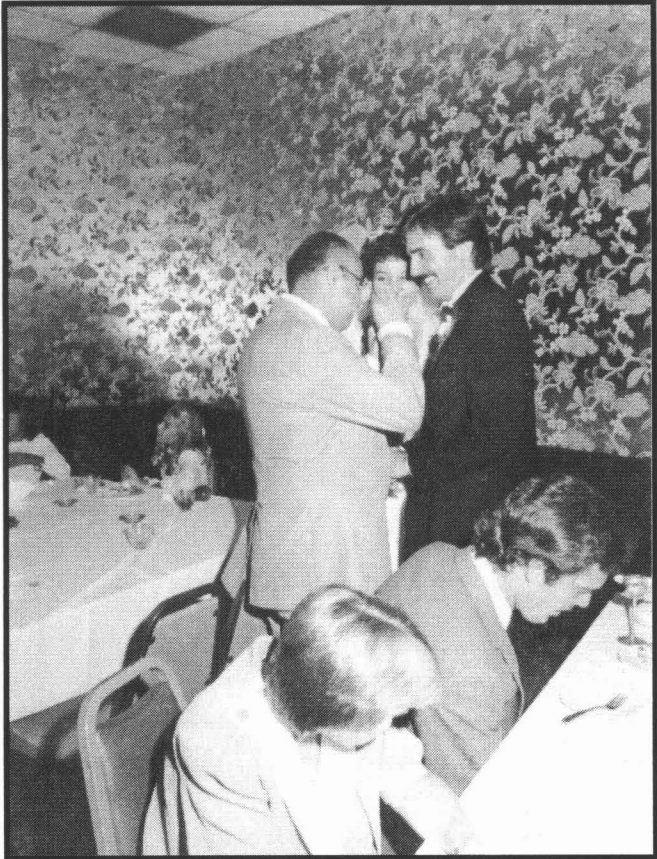
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and Mariam with the same love. He was proud of them and always loved them unconditionally.

The Lord Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Uncle Sameh’s light shone brightly and still shines in each of us who knew him and love him. We shared the joy he received from God. Last Friday, I know without a shadow of doubt, Uncle Sameh heard the Lord Jesus say “Well done good and faithful servant, enter into your rest.” I thank and praise God for Uncle Sameh, for his life, for his faithfulness and for the joy he shared with each of us. It is hard to say good-bye, but he has only gone home before us. As Uncle Sameh would say, “May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you.”



*Sameh with Tresa Krukowski at the annual family vacation at Bethany Beach in 1997.*



*Sameh at Tresa and Chad Krukowski's wedding, threatening to cut Chad into "itsy bitsy tiny pieces" if he didn't take good care of Tresa.*

### ***Itsy Bitsy Tiny Pieces***

By Tresa Krukowski  
Niece, Reston, Virginia

I've always had very happy memories of Uncle Sameh. My first recollection of him was when he came to the U.S. I was about 5 years old and had gone to the airport with my family (I believe in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) to greet him. We all lived in Morgantown, West Virginia and Uncle Sameh would come most Sundays after

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church to eat with us. Aside from the times he was asleep on the couch, we always loved playing with him.

About 16 years later, when Mariam was 5 years old, she would be the flower girl at our wedding. Taunt Mona tells the story that she had to bribe Mariam with bubble gum to get her to walk down the aisle. At our wedding reception, Uncle Sameh pulled my new husband aside and offered him a warning. He told Chad that if he didn't treat me well and take good care of me, he and my other Uncles would cut Chad into itsy bitsy tiny pieces. He said all Egyptians have very sharp, long swords that are used for this purpose. Our photographer happened to get this shot of Uncle Sameh talking with Chad. If you look closely, you can see him making this "itsy bitsy tiny pieces" gesture to Chad.

With Love,  
Chad, Tresa, Zack, Annalea & Jake

## ***Marvelous, Tremendous, Outstanding, and Superb!***

By Cici Child  
Niece, Lynchburg, Virginia

Sameh Mitry was my father's first cousin; I always called him Uncle Sameh, and he was a wonderful uncle. I grew up with Uncle Sameh close by, first in Morgantown, WV, and then in McLean, VA. I remember when Uncle Sameh brought his beautiful bride back from Egypt, and Taunt Mona became part of our family. I remember Uncle Sameh's pride and joy when Andrew and Mariam were born. I remember the Volkswagon bug that Uncle Sameh used to drive. I remember countless meals together; it seems like in all of our Thanksgiving Day pictures Uncle Sameh was caught taking an after dinner nap! I remember that it was never long before my dad and Uncle Sameh were wrapped up in a game of backgammon, with the dice and fingers flying so fast that I could hardly see them!

Uncle Sameh was always there, and I'm so glad he was. He always asked me how my grades were, how my soccer team was

doing, if I'd learned to do a cartwheel yet. He was proudly there when I graduated from high school, and though he couldn't be at my college graduation, I knew his love and thoughts were with me. Uncle Sameh was at my wedding, and he was also there, via email, when I was expecting our first child. I would write to tell him how



*Sameh with the Elias, Krukowski and Child family at Bethany Beach, July 1999.*

big the baby was getting, how fast its heart was beating, etc., and he would write back with excitement and encouragement; it meant a lot to me that when I signed my emails "Love Cici, Jeff and Baby," Uncle Sameh would respond "Dear Cici, Jeff and Baby."

After our baby was born, we spent a couple of months in northern VA. We had the privilege of taking our seven week old son, Joshua, to meet Uncle Sameh. Uncle Sameh was very proud, and he happily held Joshua with great care and love. During those weeks, I often took Joshua and went to visit Uncle Sameh and Taunt Mona. One funny memory is of the time that we'd forgotten our diaper bag and were going to have to go home to get a clean diaper; always wanting to be helpful, Uncle Sameh turned to Taunt Mona and very seriously said, "Mona, don't we have a diaper around here?" I guess it didn't occur to him that they hadn't needed a

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diaper in many, many years! At the end of each visit, as we left, Uncle Sameh always cautioned me not to drop the baby; at first this seemed funny, but I came to realize that because of his Multiple Sclerosis it was difficult for Uncle Sameh to hold a wiggly baby.

I remember when Uncle Sameh first started having Multiple Sclerosis symptoms, when the disease was diagnosed, and how it progressively took away his ability to walk. I remember that he was often in great pain, and that he couldn't always laugh during these times. But although the MS affected his life significantly, when I think of Uncle Sameh, I don't think of the MS. MS couldn't change his heart or his soul. Uncle Sameh lived for others and for the Lord.

Most of all, I remember what a wonderful man Uncle Sameh was. He was so incredibly positive and optimistic. In Uncle Sameh's words, things were "marvelous, tremendous, outstanding, and superb!" Uncle Sameh was also one of the best listeners I have ever known, always interested in anything someone had to say. When we were together, he would ask me questions and really listen to my answers. When we were apart and I sent him emails, he was still a great listener, responding to every single point I made, whether or not it was an important one; in fact, Uncle Sameh's email responses were so thorough that when I read them I could tell exactly what I had written to him. And his emails to me always ended with a reminder to pray for each other, and with the words "May the Lord Jesus Christ Bless You."

The Lord Jesus Christ has blessed me greatly, and Uncle Sameh was one of those blessings. I miss him very much. I will always remember him fondly, and will tell my children about their wonderful Uncle Sameh.



*Sameh, Mona, Mariam and Christine, Summer 1990.*

## ***A Profound Love***

By Christine Maurice  
Niece, Toronto, Canada

Uncle Sameh, although strong and paternal, always had a warm smile for me during my stays in Virginia. Not only was he exemplary in his treatment of others (I remember that he always commanded respect, despite his constant gentleness of character) but he also taught me a valuable lesson about love and relationships. Everyday at noon, he would telephone my Aunt Mona, regardless that he would be seeing her again in only a few hours, and every evening at the supper table, they would exchange a brief but tender kiss.

This kiss communicated to all present a very profound love for one another. In a world where I was constantly reminded of the divorce rate and failed marriages, Uncle Sameh's love gave me hope that one day I could have a long-lasting and beautiful relationship, just like his.

## *College Advice from Uncle Sameh*

By Denise Malek  
Niece, New Jersey

I have cherished the following letter since it was sent to me in March of 1991. This was about six months into my freshman year of college. Uncle Sameh gave very valuable advice on how to succeed in college. I wanted to pass this on because it is valuable advice that maybe other students could benefit from. I also wanted to share it because it is another example of Uncle Sameh's very caring and understanding approach while offering valuable advice. This letter was carefully written to me after a long discussion with Uncle Sameh at one of our family gatherings. I wish I had really followed the advice closer. Uncle Sameh in this letter outlines how my time needs to be spent and does not hesitate to mention my prayers and Bible reading first.

Balance in life is important and if we don't make time for our spiritual life it will never have time. Uncle Sameh knew that, followed that and taught it to all of us no matter what the discus-



*Sameh, Mona, and Denise at Denise and George's engagement in Sussex, New Jersey, 1992.*

sion. I don't think I can describe how special this letter is to me—that my uncle took the time to type and send it. He always had the time for us his family and so many others. He continues to be missed; I have so many wonderful memories of Uncle Sameh. I am so happy for all that I have learned and I know he is in our Lord's care praying for us to be strong in our life on earth and be found worthy to join him soon.

I have to laugh at one thing. Uncle Sameh used to spell my name a different way every letter, but I loved his letters.

1 March 1991

Miss Dennis Habib  
SIT  
P.O. Box S-176  
Castle Point on the Hudson  
Hoboken, NJ 07030

Dear Dennis,

I finally got around to writing you a letter. The first item is that it was great talking to you when you visited. I hope we can do that more often. I can't remember all what we talked about, but I will try to summarize it here, the little I remember:

- 1) Prayers and reading the Bible: That is important and the benefits are limitless. Please do not spend hours praying. If it comes down to it (and you do not have the time) the Lord's Prayer is enough, please say (or pray) it at least two times a day. Bible reading, at the extreme minimum one verse a day. But it will be great if you can read a chapter. Do NOT miss any days if you can. That is important (NOT to miss a day).
- 2) Exercise: That is also important. At a minimum 15 minutes a day. Walking to and from classes is part of the exercise. Take the stairs whenever you can instead of the elevator.

- 3) Diet: Watch your diet. Some food makes a person feel heavy and can not walk or feel sleepy. Eat less whenever you can.
- 4) Sleep: Do not sleep more than seven hours a day. Sleeping more than that makes a person want to sleep more. Take a walk in the open whenever you feel sleepy.
- 5) Studying: For every contact hour (that is time you spend in class or lab) you need to study four hours. That is quite a lot of studying time. As we discussed if you have 15 contact hours a week you need to study 60 hours a week! That is a lot?
- 6) Sororities: I do not recommend sororities, they take quite a lot of time.
- 7) Time: Come up with a schedule and adhere to it. Do not forget the amount of studying you have to do in that schedule.
- 8) Discipline: If you find how time is disappearing the next step is to eliminate the waste. Adhere to your schedule during the week as much as you can.
- 9) Parents: They have to be comfortable with what you are doing. If they are not that is a major problem. Your dad and mom feel that you are not studying enough! That needs to be addressed. Since now you have a measure to compare to (60 hours a week), you need to ask yourself if you are studying enough!
- 10) Grades: Strive for A's and not B's or C's. That is important. Once you find out how to get good grades the rest will be easy.
- 11) Engineering Discipline: Electrical, Mechanical, Civil or Industrial are areas you would like to major in, and

later take a Masters in Business Administration (MBA), if you are interested.

12) Service to the Church: With all of the above in mind, find time to serve your church! I know your response, Uncle Sameh that is too much. But we need to talk about that later.

May the Lord Jesus Christ Bless you at all times.

Sincerely,  
Sameh A. Mitry

From: Sameh A. Mitry  
To: Mariam Sam Mitry  
Date: Mon, 23 Aug 1999 12:28:52  
Subject: Some Good Habits.

Mariam,

I am very concerned about your performance at UVA, on one hand. On the other hand, somehow I know you will do well. Do not ask me to explain this.

When I saw some good habits listed in 'Megiddo Message' I thought I will use them, of course add/elaborate on each.

- 1) PRAYER are a must. The Lord's Prayer takes a few seconds. The results are guaranteed. I can talk from experience.
- 2) BIBLE reading is required. If it comes down to it, one verse a day is enough.
- 3) All that I am writing can be supported by verses from the Bible but I will delay that to another time.
- 4) The habit of HONESTY. This one is very important to me.

First, be honest to yourself, I repeat YOURSELF. Second, be honest to everyone else. Set a certain criteria to yourself and do not cross it no matter what. This to me is equal to the habit of telling the exact TRUTH.

- 5) The habit of CLEANLINESS. I think this is self-evident. To me and Mom that is important. Above all we apply it to ourselves first before advising others. ORGANIZATION (filing) is a major part of this habit.
- 6) The habit of CORRECT speaking. Mean what you say and say what you mean. Easier said than done. This should be said to me first. Be brief, get to the point. Details are great but others might not be interested. Boy, I need to hear that over and over.
- 7) RESPECT others so they respect you. No comments.
- 8) STUDYING is essential. Dedicate a certain time for studying and do not divert from it.
- 9) LIMITS should be set and nobody cross them. They should be loud and clear.
- 10) TIME cannot be replaced. I like this, 'You can delay, but time will not.'

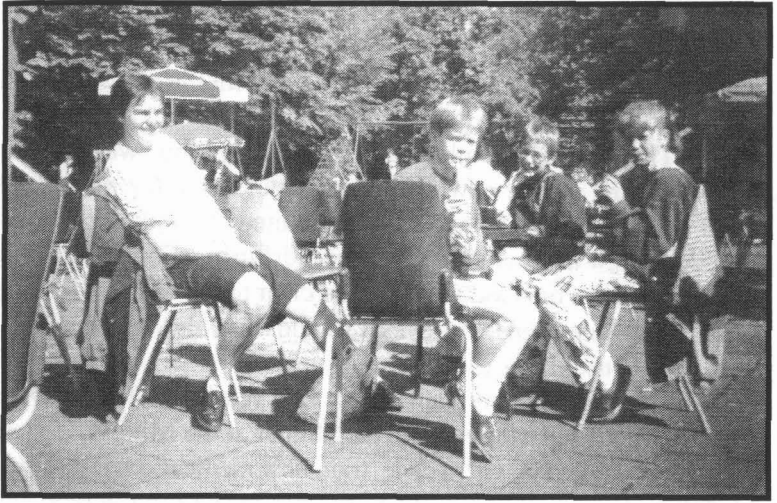
More to come.

May the Lord Jesus Christ Bless you.  
Sameh

## ***Trust in God***

By Jenny Glastra  
Bilthoven, The Netherlands

One year Andrew and our son Jorrit were in the same pre-school. Carpooling was practical for the mothers, Mona and me. We both had another "baby" at home and not taking her/him along



*Jenny Glastra and her children in Holland, 1990s.*

every time made life easier. Carpooling was also fun, because once in a while we took time to drink a cup of tea and talk at the kitchen table, after the drop-off. Newcomers to the McLean area, born on other continents, we sometimes felt like strangers in the New World and were much at ease with each other's company. That's how our friendship started over 15 years ago.

That's how I met Sam, because from time to time he would take the kids to school, being a loving husband and a caring parent. Through the years that we lived in McLean, Mona and I became very close friends, with our husbands in the background. We shared our pleasures and our worries, laughs and tears.

In the spring of 1987, my husband Michael found a new job in the Netherlands, so that summer we would leave. I was not at all happy about this move, to say the least. In May of that year we planned a trip to our home country to go house hunting. Michael was already in Europe, the kids were staying in Virginia, and Sam offered me a ride to the airport in Washington, DC.

That car ride made a big impression on me and comes to my mind quite frequently ever since. It was on a Friday afternoon, traffic was heavy, I was depressed and nervous for the flight. Sam talked to me.

Sam had a very positive view on life and he was sure that we all had "tasks" to accomplish. His Christian faith made it clear

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to him what God's intentions were and are with the years we have on this earth.

That day, Sam explained to me that my "job" was done on that side of the ocean, new challenges would wait for me on this side. I never looked at it that way. He pointed out to me that Mona and I both grew and matured in our friendship and now it was time to split and move on. God would make clear to me what to do. And he was right. Sam opened my eyes: I should trust "the road to travel," trust in God, just like he did.

The way I picture Sam is Sam five years ago. That was the last time we visited McLean and had dinner at the Mitry's. He had just retired, walked in with a cane, tried new medication, felt miserable but had maintained his old spirit. His strong faith in God and view on life, the purpose of it all, had not changed a bit since we left.

Sam is on the "other side." His job is done. I am very happy that I met him as a messenger of the Good News, my eye-opener. He enriched my life.

### ***Sameh's Faith***

By Sonia Boctor

Friend, London, England

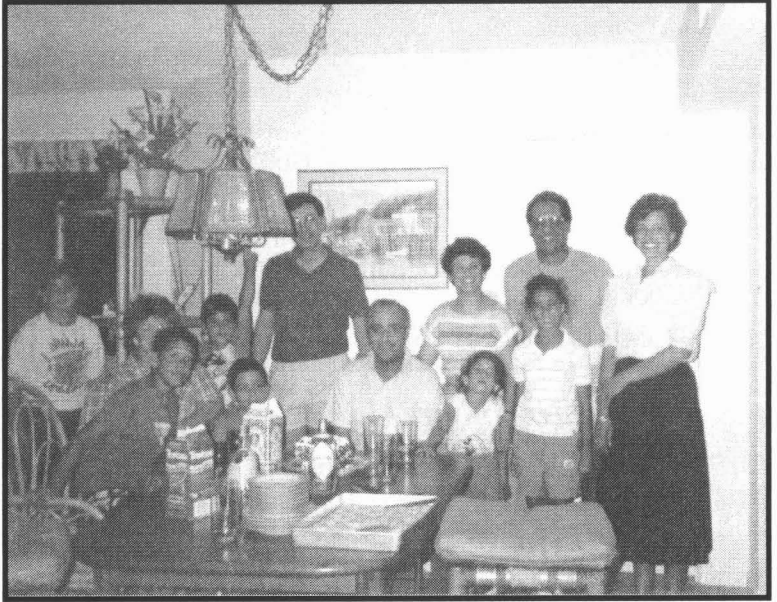
Sameh is a wonderful person. He always put the Lord God first in his life.

He suffered a lot physically yet he never complained. If you asked him, "How are you?" His answer was always, "I am fine thanks be to God."

When we spent our holidays in the Summer 1999 with Sameh and his family, we used to pray together every night. It was wonderful. And in the morning, he always had his Bible near him. What a beautiful example to follow.

His wife Mona is a wonderful person too. Both of them have increased our faith in the Lord. Looking at both of their behavior towards life with all that they suffer is enough to increase your faith. Mona looked after Sameh very well. She never grumbled, all she did was have a happy smile on her face although she was suffering in her heart as she always worried about Sameh's health.

I know how it is hard not to see Sameh again, but he is with our Lord. May the Lord give us Sameh's faith.



*Sameh with his friends from the English Mission high school and their families, vacationing at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, August 1990. Far left is Sonia Boctor.*

## ***My Neighbor Sam***

By Phyllis Kurle

Neighbor, Mclean, Virginia

I have such wonderful memories of my neighbor Sam! I miss his earthly presence, however, I know he is watching over me, ever interceding for me, and I find great comfort in this knowledge.

Sam was a role model for all of us left behind. He was ever optimistic. In his deep spirituality he found meaning and acceptance for everything, including his own long and tedious suffering.

He always greeted me with his shy smile and was ready to listen to my problems, which I found easy to discuss with him. His assurance that he would keep me and my needs and the needs of my family in his prayers was comforting and encouraging. We had so many interesting conversations.

Sam was one who could converse on a multitude of sub-

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jects. In our discussions about life, family, religion, the neighborhood and the world in general—endless topics— his outlook and attitude portrayed a wise and kind man who never failed to acknowledge his great faith in a loving God and Father whom he totally relied on and turned to constantly. Sam lived out his faith on a daily basis and it was obvious that he approached his life from day to day through the eyes of faith and hope.

He was truly an inspiration to all who knew him. It was a privilege and a blessing to be Sam's neighbor.

## ***Friends and Neighbors***

by John Evans

Neighbor, Mclean, Virginia

Debra and I both remember fondly how Sam and the entire Mitry family welcomed us to the neighborhood. We all became good friends and not just neighbors. Debra and I always called him Sam. Sam and his family came over for our first neighborhood and family BBQ. My Mom still talks about how nice and funny Sam was that day.

Sam was a great conversationalist. He was always ready with a quick witticism or joke. He was well known for his self-deprecating humor and earned the reputation as quite a comedian. Sam was also a good storyteller and I enjoyed his talks about his homeland and life in Egypt.

I really enjoyed our talks about sports and politics. We were both big Florida State fans and could talk hours about their football team and coach Bobby Bowden. I'll never forget the national championship game we watched together even though Florida State lost to Tennessee that year. Sam was a very gracious host and helped ease our disappointment that evening.

We both laughed about much of the political developments over the last few years. The Clinton administration gave us plenty to talk, wonder and lament about on many occasions. Sam could also be serious and passionate as well. His strong religious faith and love of this country and his homeland Egypt were always evident. Although we never talked about it much I always sensed his pride and admired his determination to honor his fellow Coptic Chris-

tians who were unfortunately often oppressed in Egypt.

Sam also gave great advice on just about any topic ranging from landscaping ideas for the yard to car repair/maintenance to computers. He impressed me with his intelligence, ingenuity and well-rounded experience. I'll never forget when he insisted on looking at Debra's car himself and then diagnosing the problem. It was an expensive repair but at least we knew exactly what to expect when we brought the car in to be fixed!

Sam loved to talk about the details of my trips and travel. I believe he kept all the postcards I sent to his family. He and Mona also checked on Debra in my absence and kept me in their prayers while I was away.

I was most inspired by Sam's positive outlook on life at all times. He never let his health problems affect his attitude or disposition. We miss him very much and he'll always be in our thoughts and prayers.

## ***I Remember Sam***

By Mike Monaco  
Colleague, Reston, Virginia

The Day We Met – I remember the day I met Sam. It was a hot day in July 1984. I was starting my job at MITRE after leaving the Navy. I was sitting nervously in a conference room waiting to receive my 'welcome aboard' orientation when a handsome older man sat down next me. He introduced himself with a confidence, "Hi, I am Sameh Mitry. You can call me Sam. What is your name? What are you going to do at MITRE?" He spoke to me in such a pleasant manner that I thought he was our instructor. Sam always had an air of professorial leadership and a welcoming, calming demeanor. I felt relaxed talking to him...so much so that I forgot my own jitters about starting my first 'real job'. And I was surprised and pleased when I discovered that we were going to and same place to work for the same person, Bruce Noll. It wasn't until later that I learned that Sam was Bruce's grad school teacher and that Sam had his PhD. I think that had I known this bit of trivia from the beginning I might have been further intimidated, since I had an impression that MITRE was very, very technical. I was

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young, insecure and fearful that I couldn't make it at MITRE. I think I must have said something to this effect because I remember being soothed by Sam's easy charm and good manners.

At that time, I was the far and away the youngest guy in our department, just in my mid-twenties with no graduate degree and somewhat immature. I remember feeling insecure around so many senior, well-educated people. It was months later, and we were moving from one dilapidated building to a nicer one. Bruce was assigning rooms based on tenure and there was one window office left. I was a bit bothered that Sam got the window seat and I did not. I didn't begrudge Sam's good fortune but I wondered if Sam was getting better treatment because he had his doctorate or was a friend of Bruce's. I remember coming to his office as we were all unpacking and saying "My start date is July 6, the same as yours Sam, how come you got assigned to this room and I didn't?" Sam said with a twinkle in his eye, "Mike, my start date was July 3 so I beat you by a weekend." Turns out we had the same orientation date but a different start date. I grinned sheepishly at my immaturity and envy. Sam saw my discomfort and said in all seriousness, "If this is important to you, Mike, you can have the window office ... I'll tell Bruce I don't like the light." Rather than be offended or annoyed, he was kind and understanding of a young man with some growing up to do. I am glad I had the sense to refuse his kind offer. Rather than getting a window to look out at the world, I got a window into how to act in the office with maturity and grace. Through this simple interaction I learned a valuable lesson in maturity. And I remember spending time in Sam's office, looking out of his window while we worked on important issues for our government.

TACAMO – When I think of Sam, my mind quickly goes back to a photo of Sam, Brad Lytle, Roger Kilgore and others in flight suits posed in front of a TACAMO aircraft. They were preparing to go up for a flight to test some new equipment that MITRE and others had helped develop. Sam looked so happy, so strong in his flight suit. I love that picture.

While at MITRE, Sam worked on many things that were important to our nation's defense, things that led to global stability

and to the end of the Cold War. It is because of people like Sam that the West won the Cold War. A lot of Sam's task areas were classified. But suffice to say that he brought an engineering expertise, a work ethic and an enthusiasm to some very important work. One area that became synonymous with Sam was TACAMO. TACAMO stood for Take Charge and Move Out. TACAMO was, and is, a special type of airplane that would fly for 10-18 hours in a circle, trailing a mile long wire out the back in a helix. This wire was a transmission antenna to relay important instructions to our submarines in case of a nuclear attack from the Soviet Union. Among many things, we had the job of improving the communications equipment and capability in the airplane so that our government could communicate better to submarines. Until the end of the Cold War, TACAMO aircraft were on station over the Atlantic and Pacific for 24 hours a day for decades to ensure that the President could command our submarine-based nuclear weapons arsenal no matter what happened. TACAMO was important part of our readi-

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*Sam with Brad Lytle, Roger Kilgore and others in their flight suits in front of a TACAMO aircraft.*

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ness, our nuclear deterrence and our determination in the Cold War. And Sam was an important part of TACAMO.

Kids – I remember Sam’s incredible love for his children, Andrew and Mariam. They were little kids when we started working together, so cute and well behaved. Sam always had photos of them on his desk and when asked, would beam ear-to-ear at the chance to talk about them. As Andrew and Mariam got older they might call the office when they came home from school. Whenever they called, Sam would answer the phone “What’s the problem?” He and Mona taught them work was important and they shouldn’t call for trivial things. They also taught them that no problem was too small for their parents. There were occasions over the years that my family would visit Sam and Mona. Andrew and Mariam were always so well behaved, demonstrating good phone manners, good table manners and good sense. My wife, Nadine, and I would always walk away from these encounters saying that when we had kids we wished they were as sweet and well-behaved as Andrew and Mariam.

I remember Sam and Mona’s love for their children. Andrew and his academics, his University experience and his wood-working. Sam was so proud of Andrew’s talent for working with his hands. I remember the pride in which Sam talked about the deck Andrew built along with the table in the living room. And then there is Mariam. Sam would always smile at her friendly chattiness. She was a lot like my wife Nadine. When we would visit, the two of them would start to chatter and we would all sit back and listen. One of Sam’s great pleasures was the trip he and Mariam took to Egypt. Mariam was a wonderful companion and caretaker, and a wonderful representative of Sam and Mona with the family back home. I remember going through the photo album from that trip and watching Sam and Mariam laugh as they recalled various adventures and mishaps associated with their trip. How wonderful for them both to have had that time together.

Sam would occasionally needle me, “Mike, when are you and Nadine going to have kids?” I’d say “Someday” and then shift the topic to talk about something we had done over the weekend. Sam would listen to our DINK (double income, no kids) adventures and live vicariously through whatever story I told. Then he would

describe his weekend with Andrew and Mariam. He would speak softly, wistfully about reading books, doing homework and going to church with the kids. He loved being their Daddy. He still is their Daddy. He would look up at me and say, sometimes gravely and sometimes with a little grin, “Mike, you know when kids come, you are no longer the boss. Your kids will rule your life.” I would always say, “Yeah, I know Sam.” And I thought I did know—it made sense to me. But I really had no idea till we had our children, Daniel and Ryan. Now I know first hand the love Sam felt for Andrew and Mariam.

Mona and Baklava – Sam loved Mona so very much. It showed so many ways—in how he placed her picture in the office, how he called her Mommy, how he told stories about their introduction and their first days in the U.S. Mona was always so gentle, sweet and gracious with Sam, with the children and with us. And such a beauty as well. On the occasions of work parties or other events, we all would gather around to decide who would bring what dish. For Sam, it was always the same.. We would ask, “Can Mona make baklava?” Her baklava is legendary and Sam would delight in sharing it with us. When new employees would be present, they would wonder what we were all talking about. Some didn’t know what baklava was, some had had it before but could not see what the fuss was about. But when they had Mona’s baklava, they became converts—all wanted some. There were some events that even Sam couldn’t attend due to travel conflicts or other events. Yet he made sure we had a plate of Mona’s baklava. And my favorite memories are when Sam and Mona had guests visiting and he would bring in a small plate for Nadine and I. Sam would say, “We had some friends visit and Mona made baklava.I asked Mona to save some for you.” Yum yum. Whenever I see baklava on the menu or we get some, we always say “Not as good as Mona’s.” I would always make a point of telling Sam this and he would smile.

As Sam’s illness progressed, he became more bedridden. He despised the thought that he was a burden to Mona and to the kids. They all assured him that no burden was too great, no chore too awkward for them. I recall them laughingly remembering the time Sam took his motorized wheelchair to the bookstore and didn’t return for hours. Mona was so worried so they went looking for

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him. They found him later taking a nap under a tree alongside of the road. Mona and Sam loved each other and loved life even in times of adversity.

After Sam retired with a medical disability, we would talk every few months about work, family and other events. He would listen carefully to my stories and give me good advice about work. When I asked how he felt, Sam would say either good or bad, depending on the day. But then he would tell me in a serious way how much Mona did to make him comfortable and how they all helped him stay active, alert and engaged. He would talk about the kids, about church about his duties on the Board of Directors for Jim Lawler's company, Predicate Logic. It seemed like Andrew was always working on fixing Sam's computer environment. And Mariam would entertain him for hours with her stories about school, rowing and bread shop. And how he told the stories you could tell they were in his mind's eye, and behind them was the image of Mona. He told me numerous times how much he loved her, how she was a wonderful mother and a wonderful wife. He told me how he knew she would miss him but he knew she would be okay, that the kids were going to be okay because she was there for them, and they were there for her. Sam would often tell me about how much he loved Mona and the kids. I can only hope that I can enjoy the kind of marriage and parenting experience that Sam had with Mona and the kids.

Church – Sam loved his church. He was a fervent believer in a loving and forgiving God. He was very active in the church and frequently would tell stories. Early in our friendship I had expressed curiosity about the Coptic Church. In response, Sam invited Nadine and I to a service at the old wooden church on Leesburg Pike. We were delighted but uncertain what to expect. We got there at the appointed hour and were greeted by a young but stalwart Andrew. He walked us to where Sam was sitting and we quickly sat down. Mona and Mariam came and quietly sat by Nadine and we soaked in the experience of the Mass, the incense, the chanting and liturgy. As the ceremony moved on we noticed that Nadine, Mona and Mariam were the only women on the left side of the church, all the other women were on the right side. Some people were staring at us and I felt like we had done some-

thing wrong. At a juncture in the service I apologized for not recognizing the protocol and for perhaps making them and the other participants uncomfortable. Sam and Mona soothed our fears by thanking us for our concerns and saying that the people knew we were guests. Sam said he didn't think God cared so much where we sat, rather that we had come to share in his service. They helped us to relax and enjoy the service.

Sam always marked his papers with a small Coptic cross. For a long time we didn't know what these marks were for. One day, after we asked he explained that the mark was his way of noting that without God's providence he wouldn't have been able to do the things he did, whether they be technical or not. I sometimes find myself making these little crosses on my papers too. When I do I smile and think of Sam in his office working hard.

Graduate School and Work – I always felt that Sam loved me as a person. Whenever I felt like quitting or felt demoralized, he always encouraged me to strive hard. This was particularly true regarding my graduate program. I was going to school at night, working weekends in the Naval Reserve and working long hours in our department. I enjoyed graduate school but sometimes felt overwhelmed by it. Some of the concepts were difficult to grasp, particularly so many years after my undergraduate degree. But Sam always pushed, encouraged and challenged me to work hard and to persevere. He was an inspiration on the subjects at hand, since he taught them at West Virginia University. He also told me how my career would benefit from the accomplishment. Most important he said, however, was how my mind would benefit from the discipline associated with the mathematics involved in graduate school. He was, of course, correct. I did complete my degree program and I have benefited. And now I try to mentor young people working for me in the manner that Sam mentored me.

My career thrived at MITRE for many years. But after awhile, some issues arose that led to some rocky times. Sam was often a gentle presence during these times. Encouraging me, guiding me, consoling me on various topics. My career is now back on track, thanks in small measure to Sam's presence. I always felt loved by Sam.

Racquetball – I remember playing racquetball with Sam.

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We had heard that he was good player at WVU. But when a bunch of the young turks started playing racquetball we didn't think to invite Sam. He was older and probably wouldn't want to hang out with us youngsters. We were again wrong. Sam expressed interest so we invited him along. During our first time together we were just goofing around with the ball and Sam did an okay job fielding some of our volleys. But then we began to play. Out of respect, we let Sam serve first. Wham! Slam! Whiz! Point to Mityr! The ball defied gravity. He would serve the ball just inches above the court and it was impossible to return his serve. One point, two points, three points...no one could break his serve. He would skunk us. All of us younger guys just looked at each other in amazement. After awhile he tired and we were able to return a few serves but then he would match our volley and have us running all over the court. He spanked us! We couldn't believe it. After 40 or so minutes, he eased up and we played various teams. The next day at the office, Sam didn't say anything but we were all around the secretarial bay talking about the drubbing Sam gave us. Incredible! We worked hard that year to get better, to learn how to serve like Sam. But we never learned how to return his power serves. I still smile when I think of the twinkle in his eyes when we talked about playing racquetball. He loved that sport and taught how to play.

Sadly, it was during racquetball that Sam learned he had MS. He noticed his leg wouldn't move like he wanted it to. He was less and less able to move around the court when we played. He went to the doctor, had a series of tests only to discover he had MS. I wasn't sure what MS was. I knew another guy at MITRE, Dr. Leon Pocinki, who had MS and was always riding in a motorized wheel chair. We were sad for Sam for so long.

Throughout most of his illness Sam kept his spirits up. He kept on working while walking slow, then with a cane, then with a walker and then with a wheel chair. He kept going to sponsor meetings as long as he could. When he couldn't go to meetings, the sponsor came to him. When we had fire drills in the building, we always made sure to look out for Sam. There was a special stretcher on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and we were on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Brad Lytle was the

biggest guy in our department and he loved Sam as much as I did. He was the one who was responsible for carrying Sam while we would get the stretcher to help him down the stairs during a fire drill. We all loved Sam. And I never played racquetball since the day Sam found out he had MS. I kind of just lost interest in the sport.

When I Think of Sam – I think of our last conversation. As usual he opened with an apology for calling, saying he knew I was busy. But I was never too busy to talk to Sam. He asked all about work, Nadine, the kids. He was so happy to hear things were well. Earlier in the year, Nadine had received a potential diagnosis of MS. We were devastated. We called Sam right away for guidance. He leaped into action forwarding us articles and web sites and consulting with us on how to interact with the doctors. I felt guilty somewhat now that the disease seems to have passed Nadine by. But Sam didn't begrudge her apparent good fortune. He was so genuinely happy for her good health. Sam was a man of grace and kindness. I miss him very much. I cried the hardest of my adult life when I heard about his passing. I still choke up when I think of it. Sam loved me. And I love Sam.

## ***My Mentor in Every Way***

By Peri Farag

Sunday School student, Fairfax, Virginia

I have been postponing writing this for a long time because I was not sure how I could put what Uncle Sameh did for my family and me in words. Last night, something woke me up at 3:00 a.m. I started thinking about Uncle Sameh and I could not go back to sleep for 2 hours. I felt that I should give this a try and pray to God that it will make you see how saintly Uncle Sameh was. Uncle Sameh was my Sunday school servant through high school and college. He managed to impact my spiritual, educational, social,

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*Sameh, Peri & Hesham at their engagement at church May 1991.*

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and marital life in many different ways. To sum up what is very unique about Uncle Sameh's memorable service, I can say that I could truly see Christ in him. I could see Christ's love, care, compassion, humbleness, and joy in him.

One of the many things Uncle Sameh helped me with was preparing for college. He spent many hours helping me with college applications, giving me valuable advice and making sure that I am prepared to excel in college. Do you see how wonderful this is? It was not even expected as part of his services, yet he did it with enthusiasm and care. Just recently it hit me how big of a sacrifice that was, now that I have my own two children. I now see how difficult it is to have time to do basic things in life, let alone help others for many hours at a time. I do not know how he managed to be such a successful man, wonderful husband and father and also the most giving and caring Sunday school servant. I can sum up Uncle Sameh's abilities in one verse: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

He always cared about our spiritual growth and well-being. I will never forget, one very stormy night when someone knocked on our door and it was Uncle Sameh with his cane. He

just stopped by to ask about us and to see why we had not shown up to church that day. Isn't this amazing?

Even though my father passed away when I was very young, Uncle Sameh managed to fulfill this role. When it was time for me to get married, he asked me so many questions about my husband-to-be and made sure to meet him and to get to know him also. He became my husband's spiritual and social advisor as time went on. In spite of his sickness, he attended my engagement and my graduation. Do you know how boring it is to sit through a graduation ceremony? It was especially hard for him because of his sickness, but that did not stop him.

I used to call him on the phone a lot to ask him for advice. There was not a single time that he made me feel rushed or that I was taking too much of his time. It was as if he would rather do nothing else but talk to me. Even when he became very ill and I could tell that he was not feeling well, he made sure that he comforted me and answered all my questions before ending the conversation.

He took the service very seriously and humbly. I remember asking him to speak to my Sunday school kids one time, and to my surprise he insisted that he was not sure if he is good enough to do that. He really meant it and he was not just saying that fishing for a compliment. After a lot of begging, he asked for at least a month's notice to be able to truly study the topic of discussion and to try to live the advice that he was to give these kids. Are you as amazed as I am?

Uncle Sameh truly lived a life of thanksgiving. In the middle of his pain and suffering with his disease, anytime I asked him, "How are you doing Uncle Sameh?" He would reply, "Fine thanks, but what is important is, how are YOU doing?" And he would really mean it because he really cared about my well being and always wanted to make sure that I was doing OK.

I know that he is now enjoying being in Christ's arms and praising God continuously. I miss his presence among us and miss his comforting advice. Uncle Sameh and Taunt Mona, I can never thank you enough for everything you have done for my family and me. Uncle Sameh: THANK YOU for being you. I feel that I had a modern saint as my Sunday school servant.

## ***Guiding My Kids to Do Right***

By Nessim Meawad

Friend, Mclean, Virginia

Dr. Sameh Mitry was a very good and caring friend. He would say jokingly a lot of times, "Send me Mina and I will finish him off," when I would go talk to Dr. Sameh to talk to him about Mina. He helped me a lot in guiding my kids to do right. He was always thankful for what he had. When I would ask him how he was doing he would always say "I am very very very good." And thanking God, he never complained. For example he used to fall a lot and he would always say, "I fall a lot but thanks be to God I never once got hurt."

## ***Like A Father***

By Mina Meawad

Sunday school student, Mclean, Virginia

I don't know how to talk about or describe Uncle Sameh Mitry in words. Neither can I describe what he meant to me or what he did for me. Uncle Sameh was truly a great man, and he was very unique in many ways. For example, a lot of people tell me "you are like a son to me" and so on, but no one made me feel like one of his own kids like Uncle Sameh. He did so much with me, just like a father would do with his son, everything from helping me with my homework to sitting with me and filling out college applications, to advising me. And of course I can never forget the times when we would just sit there, him and me, and just chitchat about what was happening and joke around. Uncle Sameh always made me feel comfortable around him, and I truly enjoyed seeing him. Sometimes I would feel down and have a lot on my chest, and by just going to see him I would feel energized again and that I am back on track.

It is said that God created man in His image and His likeness that he may praise Him. It seemed to me that uncle Sameh did this to the letter. And I feel like he did not have to try to do it, his actions showed that in themselves. I cannot remember once sitting with him and him not thanking God, or him complaining of his con-

dition, or anything of that nature. No matter how he was feeling he would always thank God. He was also in the image of Christ because he loved everyone around him so much, no matter who the person was or what he had done to him. He taught me so much about loving people and loving God just by his normal everyday actions, not by preaching or anything.

Uncle Sameh was extremely unselfish and always put himself last and others first. I remember going to see him right after he had his last operation. On my way into the door, he heard me, and before I got the chance to say hi to him, even before I walked in the door of their house, I heard him saying "Mr. Mina Meawad, how are you, come on in." He did not even give me a chance to ask how he was doing until he had asked about me, my family, my friends, and of course school. Even that day, though he was in so much pain, I could still see his face lit up and feel Christ in him. And that is just one out of the many times that he touched me when I was with him. I cannot think of a time that I was with him and I was not touched by him.

Uncle Sameh was also a really good friend and role model for me. I could always talk to him about anything and everything at anytime. He never once made me feel uncomfortable in any way. I would talk to him about things that were bothering me personally, anything from feeling down about grades to problems at home and with other people. No matter when it was or what it was he was always available to listen to it. And after talking to him and letting everything off my mind and my chest, we would stay and joke and just hang out.

I remember the one thing that he would always tell me jokingly, especially if I told him that I was slacking on my school work, was "Mina Meawad, I am going to hang you sideways and upside down and believe me I asked your parents, they don't mind." Uncle Sameh was also a role model to me and to many because he was so successful in everything he did in his education, at work, and at home with his family. And he always gave all the credit to God. He is truly a saint. I guess if I had to describe Uncle Sameh in a couple of lines I would say that Uncle Sameh loved me and treated me like his own kids. And he was truly in the image of

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Christ. All that I wrote does not even begin to really describe him—I don't think that I can describe such a great man in words. Until now I still imagine him sitting in his chair thinking, and I can still hear his voice encouraging me and guiding me. And I am sure that he is up in Paradise now, praying for all of us.

I would also like to say a couple of words about the rest of the Mitry family, because they also make me feel like part of the family, especially Taunt Mona Mitry. She is truly a strong and great woman. She stood by Uncle Sameh through everything, and also kept her faith. I could only imagine how she felt seeing him go through everything that he went through, and yet she was able to keep sitting with him and keep thanking God. I admire them both very much.

### ***Definition of Service***

By Mimi Geerges

I met Uncle Sameh when I was 12 or 13 when he first came to St. Mark's Church of Washington, DC. He immediately wanted to start teaching Sunday School. I didn't pay much attention to him because so many before him had come and gone, giving up hope on our almost non-existent youth group. For the first year or two, I was his only student. After the liturgy, we would go and sit in the basement of the church, and he would teach me. Anyone else would have given up, but Uncle Sameh never did. He was truly a model of the faithful servant who persevered. Uncle Sameh remained my Sunday School teacher for about nine years.

When I was leaving for college to Virginia Tech, he and Taunt Mona came to visit. He gave me an alarm clock, to make sure I got up for class, and a piece of advice. He told me to read my Bible every day and to not read it just before I went to bed when I was tired. Uncle Sameh was always both practical and spiritual. We wrote to each other while I was away in college and he always gave such good advice on all subjects.

But what I learned the most from him wasn't anything he said, it was what he did. His life was in serving others, and he put all his energy into it. In fact, I believe that Uncle Sameh defined service for an entire generation.

Dear Meme,

It is great you finally decided to write! I received your letter about 10-days ago, and this is my first slot of time that I can sit down and write you a letter.

By the way, no mention in your letter about reading the Bible. I am assuming that you read it on a daily basis. I read this verse today and it stuck in my mind. "Preach the word; be ready in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" II Timothy 4:2. I was going to write my feelings about it but it is self explanatory.

Have you done any Bible studies? Do not let time run by without writing your daily thoughts on one of the verses of the Bible.

From your letter I was happy that you are attending Bible meetings. I think it is great. I think a person needs to see, understand and react to other views. By the way a good study is to prove to yourself that the Bread and Wine is actually changed to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. I am happy you didn't say anything since these people could take a very offensive attitude.

I will try to see you when you come out here, the least I can do is give you some hard time. Make sure to attend Sunday School.

You did not mention anything about your trip to VPI. If you remember you said you will look into it and get back to me.

How about the trip to Egypt! You can form a little group between all who are interested and everyone can take a small piece and work on it. I was thinking too, that we can go with the church in N.Y. since they have done it once.

Finally, please work hard to stay above 3.0, anything below that people from industry frown on it.

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you always.

God Bless You.

Sameh

11/18/87

P.S. I think I will see you before you get this letter!!

## ***A Lesson in Humility***

By Dr. Maguid Mansour

Fellow servant, Columbia, Maryland

Several years ago I had a strong desire to teach Sunday School. Since I always loved teenagers, I thought I should teach a teen Sunday School. The problem was at that time teen Sunday School did have a teacher already—the beloved Sameh Mitry. I did not want to infringe on him and the work he was doing.

Nevertheless I spoke about that with a friend in the church, I can't recall right now who he was. I said to him it might bother Sameh if I imposed my self on his class. My friend said to me if you think that something like that would bother Sameh, then you don't know Sameh.

My friend was right. From the moment I set foot in his class Sameh did every thing in his power to make me feel at ease. Realizing that I was feeling somewhat ill at ease, he took every opportunity to refer the kid's questions to me.

Unselfishly, and in great humility he kept deferring to me to answer the questions, even though we both knew that his answers were by far much better than mine, and in spite of the great popularity he had achieved with these kids.

Undoubtedly it was a great lesson in humility, humbleness, and self denial! Thank you, Sameh for being who you are. And please pray for me, so God may grant me some of your humility and self denial.

## ***A Cherished Friend Forever***

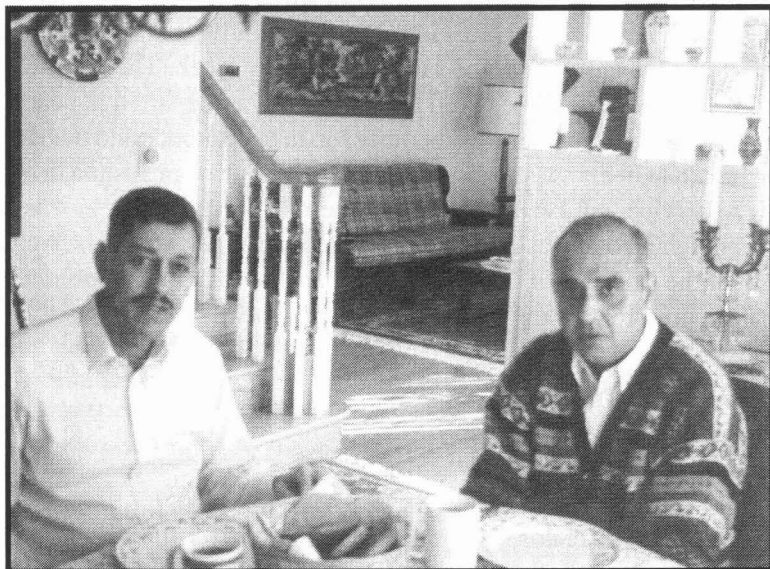
By Emil Akhnoukh

Friend, Queens, New York

"I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother! Most dear have you been to me; more precious have I held love for you than love for women. How the warriors have fallen, the weapons of war have perished!" (2 Samuel 1:26-27). David chanted this elegy for Saul and his best friend Jonathan.

I have known Sameh for forty years now; we were together in Sunday School preparation class. We were always to-

gether in the church. When we started boy scouts, we were together. On all the trips, camps, and spiritual days, we were serving with one spirit. The characteristics that distinguished Sameh from the beginning were his dedication to service, his honesty, his faithfulness, his care and the great love he had for everyone. When he disagreed with anyone about his/her non-Christian behavior, he spoke firmly to him/her, but never hated the person in his heart.



*Emil Akhnoukh and Sameh, February 1995*

God rewarded him with a great wife, Mona, who was ready to share with him his suffering and pain for many years while always smiling without complaining. The last years when he became disabled and always stayed at home, he did not surrender, but he kept all his weapons – his mind and senses – ready to utilize for the service. He was always calling the people, encouraging them in their struggle in life, supporting everyone with Bible verses and good advice.

He did not care about his severe pain and suffering, but he cared about everyone else. He was giving hope to everyone in his suffering, even though he had no hope for himself, of being healed from his disease. He continued to go to church to receive the Holy Communion, went to the

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conventions, and wrote reports for the retreats, sending messages to every one of his friends and to children in Sunday School in the USA and Egypt. He was living the life of thanksgiving.

In the last thirty years, we lived far from each other, either in different countries or different states, but we always felt that we never separated. I was always waiting for the time to talk to him, to hear his voice and to discuss with him all my thoughts. He was not willing to spend any time to talk about his pain but was always asking about my family and the service in the church. I used to call him at the same time, every week. Then, on that day, his son, Andrew, called me to tell me that his father departed in peace.

I did not know whether to remember Job in his patience and thanksgiving, or Jonathan in his sweetness, or Joseph in his purity, or Joshua in his dedication to service, but I remember all of them in Sameh. I lost him as a best friend but I gained him as an intercessor. He is an angel, now in heaven, freed from all the sickness of the flesh and is capable to help us more than before. Please pray for me my beloved brother Sameh.

## ***An Exemplary Servant***

by Zakaria Z. Wahba

Fellow servant, Gaithersburg, Maryland

“Blessed is the man You choose, and cause to approach You, that he may dwell in Your courts” (Psalm 65:4).

Many stories in the Holy Bible teach us that the history of man does not end by his death, as David the prophet said, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23:6). When a person looks at the life of our beloved, the late Dr. Mitry, one can see several virtues: his strong faith, his love for the church and people, and his endurance of suffering. He was a Sunday School servant for many years in different churches in Egypt and the USA. He endured his physical pains with thanks and patience. This is a real example for all of us, of the strong faith that he had. “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him” (James 1:12).

On May 1988, My wife and I moved to Maryland to work at the National Institute of Health. Once we arrived, we started attending the Sunday Worship service at the old church Saint Mark Coptic Orthodox Church which was located in Vienna, Virginia. In the first few Sundays after our arrival at the Church, Dr. Mitry introduced himself to us and gave us a hearty welcome. Soon afterwards, I joined the Sunday School program. I served in the Saint Anthony the Great's class for the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades with Mr. Makary Salib. At that time my wife Laura G. Wahba served in the Angels class for preschool to second grade with Mrs. Salwa Salib for several years. During that period Dr. Mitry was very active and instrumental in providing material and advice to all Sunday school servants with the Sunday School coordinators Dr. Ibrahim Barsoum and Mr. Guirgius F. Guirgius.

By the middle of 1993, I joined Saint Peter's class for the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades. The servants of that class were Dr. Sameh Mitry, Mrs. Fifi Tadross, and I. Starting from that time I started to know Dr. Mitry better. He was in charge of organizing the activities in the class, as well as participating in teaching with both Fifi and I. He was a very loving and caring person. He had the desire to reach each student in the class. He was well respected by the students when he spoke. He was very strong in his voice and his faith, as he was saying with the Apostle Paul "And He (The Lord) said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9). His way of teaching was to emphasize on learning from the Holy Bible, building good character, and instilling moral values. Although the age of that group was basically adolescents, the positive outcome outweighed the negative by far. He had a way of asking the students in the class about what they wanted to learn about, and which subjects interested them.

One of the many things that he did in that class was that he used to summarize the lessons and the discussions and type them and bring them the following Sunday or mail them to us. He encouraged us to speak about subjects that faced the students at school, home and church. With his help we made data sheets to track the attendance of all students and we divided the students according to their geographical areas for calling them or visiting. Several months later, Mr. Mark Girgius joined the class as the fourth servant. We have learned a lot from his dedication, love and methods of teaching.

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Near the end of 1995, I was assigned to the High School class, 10th, 11th and 12th grades. After a period of time Mr. Sami Ibrahim joined our class as a servant. Approximately a year later Mr. Amgad Antonius joined the class. All of us, Mr. Ibrahim and Mr. Antonius, and I benefited from Dr. Mitry's contribution to the Sunday School program and the Preparation of Servant class. One of his favorite verses is "For if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:8).

During that period I wrote and published several articles on different subjects about the history of the Coptic Church and Coptic people. He always encouraged me to continue. He asked me if he could send my articles to his friends in other churches. It was interesting to mention here that in the middle of 1994, on two different occasions, I received very surprising and interesting phone calls. One was from an American Seventh Day Adventist who lived in Gainesville, Florida, and the other, an American Baptist who lived in Boston, Massachusetts asking me for information about Coptic and other Orthodox Icons. When I asked each one why he called me personally, their answers were that they found my article on the Internet. They searched the subject and found my article. I told Dr. Mitry later about it, then he told me he put my articles on the Coptic Orthodox web site because he liked them and wanted people to benefit from them. Truly, I was moved by his loving and encouraging attitude.

By the end of 1996, I was assigned to serve in the college group with Dr. Nabil Andrawes and Ms. Mimi Geerges. Although Dr. Mitry's activities started to be limited due to the deterioration of his health, his smile never went away. When I used to ask him, "How are you?" His answer was always, "Thank God, for every thing!" Sometimes, I did not get chances to call him to ask about how things were with him, and when I saw him at church, and apologized for not calling him for a period of time, his answer to me was, "Do not apologize. I know you are busy. Just keep me in your prayers."

He always had a smile and a kind word for everyone, especially for children. He always made a point of talking to our daugh-

ters with kindness and love whenever he saw them. The story of his life is a song of joy as the Apostle Paul said to Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have lived His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8). Truly, he was a godly man, mentor, big brother, and a true friend. We miss him.

### *Quietness and Peace*

Dr. Noshy Abdel Shahid Botros

St. Anthony Institute - The Orthodox Center for Patristic Studies  
Heliopolis , Cairo, Egypt.

The first time I met with Sameh was at St. Mark Orthodox Fellowship (SMOF) convention in August 1998 at the Antiochian Village in Pennsylvania. He was sitting on his wheelchair that he operates by himself, his face was all smiling. I spent an hour and a half with him and other colleagues who attended the same convention with us. I was very impressed with my encounter with Sameh because he radiates a sensation of quietness and peace to all those surrounding him. I realized from this first meeting that I am in front of a simple, pure, and patient soul that is bearing the suffering of sickness with thankfulness, acceptance, and surrender. Several months later, I was very impressed when I learned that he is doing a tireless effort, while he is sick, to complete all the requirements for the registration of St. Athanasious Society for Patristic Studies. I knew that he was very happy that he was able to complete all the necessary legal requirements before his last sickness.

I met with Dr. Sameh Mitry, for the last time, on the evening of Monday August 30, 1999 at the hospital in Virginia. He was in his bed receiving his treatment. He was in full awareness and as I have seen him in previous times, his smile and quietness revealed the peace that was filling his heart in spite of the severe pain that he was enduring. As I was telling him farewell, he radiated his peace on my soul, and I was not aware that this was my last encounter with Dr. Sameh. In truth, this will not be the last, because surely we will meet again when Jesus Christ comes again in His glory with His saints.

## *A Day with Uncle Sameh*

By Phoebe Farag

Family friend, New York, NY

The last time I had the opportunity to spend time with Uncle Sameh was in August 1999. During that month I was going through an extremely difficult time in my life, but Uncle Sameh did not know this. All he knew was that I was in Washington, D.C. and he wanted me to spend some time at his house. This was always the way of Uncle Sameh and Taunt Mona—they are always welcoming, always hospitable to the point of insistence. I was more than happy to spend one day of my visit with them.

I had a choice that day of visiting him or accompanying some friends to an amusement park. Now, I have to admit, the main reason I chose to stay with Uncle Sameh instead of go to the amusement park was because I hate amusement parks. Hanging out with Uncle Sameh was infinitely more appealing to me than vomiting on one of those crazy rides. I much preferred the peacefulness of talking to him than the physical and mental turmoil of a roller coaster.

Everyone who knows Uncle Sameh knows four things: he has a lot to say, he is always honest, he is always encouraging, and he is a good listener. We spent the day talking about everything ranging from politics to school to my missions trip to Africa, which I had recently returned from. His mind was open—he was a learned man, and he loved to learn more. When we talked about Africa he was full of questions. As usual, he was very encouraging about my decision to major in English in college rather than the Egyptian norm of medicine or some other science. He was the one that convinced my parents that studying English literature was a valuable thing.

What struck me most about that day's conversation, however, was the way Uncle Sameh talked about people. He had a way of seeing the most positive aspects of people and emphasizing them. He had an open mind, but even more than that, he had an open heart. Later Taunt Mona told me that the time I spent with Uncle Sameh had lifted his spirits. "Not as much as he lifted mine," I remember thinking.

When I left that evening, Uncle Sameh asked me when I was coming back. I told him I was not sure, not knowing that the next

time I returned to visit Virginia, his and Taunt Mona's house would, as usual, be open for me, but he would not be physically there. The sadness I felt was a selfish sadness, I know, but I also felt some joy. Uncle Sameh's life was the embodiment of those verses we often hear in church but do not always understand: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me though he may die, he shall live" (John 11:25).



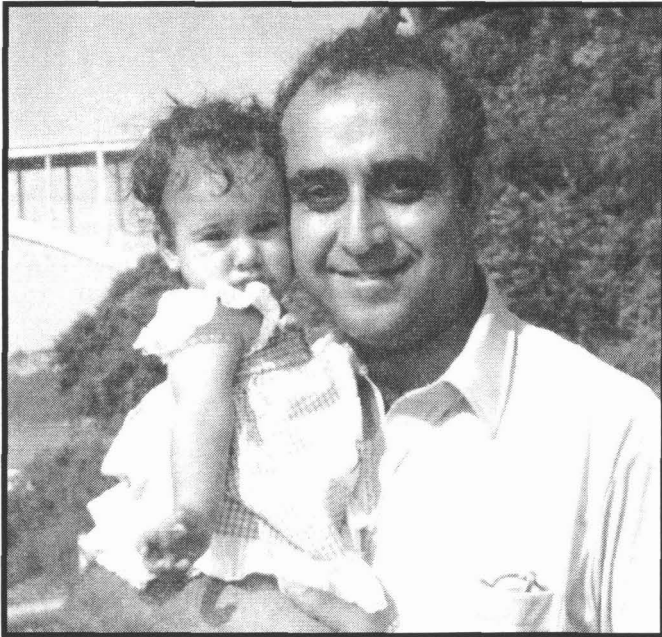
*Fr. Athanasius Farag and family visiting the Mitry's in June, 1996.  
Front, L-R: Mariam, Sameh, Dimiana; Back, L-R: Phoebe, Mary,  
Tasoni Soher, Martha, Mona, Fr. Athanasius, Andrew, Antony.*

# Lasting Impressions

## *My Miracle*

By Mariam Sam Mitry

When I was five years old, my daddy took me everywhere with him. I rode with my chubby legs dangling over his shoulders; I was on top of the world and I was daddy's girl. When he returned from business trips I embraced him, always giving him a big, slobbery kiss on the cheek as he handed me a new toy. I cherished each moment we had together. As the months wore on, I realized that my dad was slowing down. The business trips weren't so frequent, he complained of seeing double, and his hands trembled. One day as I was riding between him and the handlebars on the bike we often shared, he lost his balance and we fell. We never rode bikes together again.

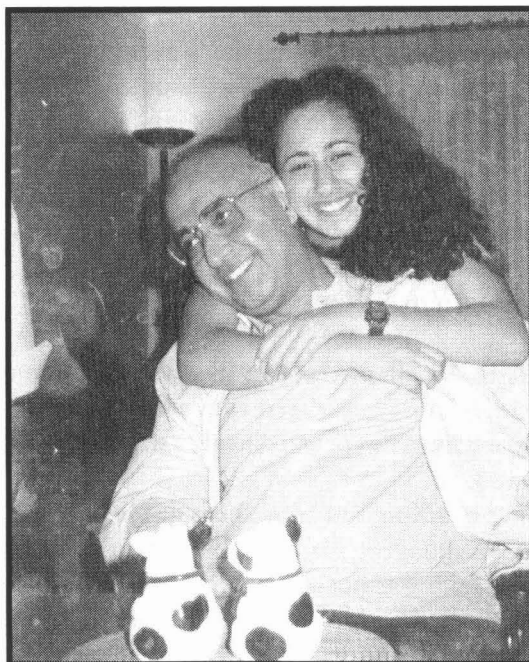


*That was then ... Sameh carrying six month-old Mariam, summer 1981.*

Multiple Sclerosis affected his left leg and gradually seemed to take over his whole body. But when I picture him, I don't see him in his wheelchair, I see his soul. Although he couldn't physically pick me up when I fell, he still managed to dust me off and send me on my way. He let me know in his gentle manner what I should do and how to move on. He calmed me when I felt that the world had turned against me. Wiping my tears, he inevitably understood my distress and comforted me—saying just what I needed to hear. I don't understand how through all his pain and suffering he could stand to endure mine as well. I would hear him cry out in pain or ask "why me?" at times, but never did he place blame or take his frustrations out on others around him. He was able to keep going because faith, hope and compassion compelled him. And God enabled him.

After going on disability retirement, he devoted his time to reading and mentoring many of his former Sunday school students. I know, from experience, that each teen who came to him for guidance always walked away with a little piece of my dad. He was an optimist when providing

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*And 17 years later ... Mariam giving her dad a big hug, 1998.*

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advice and he spoke his words to encourage others. However, my dad was a realist and his words were never impractical. His heart was humble and his body was frail, but his demeanor demanded respect. He was, and still remains to be, a light in the darkness, a star in the sky. The thought of his lighthearted, witty disposition always brings a smile to my face. I am once again, riding atop his shoulders. He believed in me and what do I have to believe in but him?

When my problems with school, work, and crew were too much for me to bear, I would inevitably hear, “You can do it Mai, just relax and put your mind to it.” I think my problems were so petty compared to his, but he handled each of them delicately, encouraging me to find a solution. He thought what he did for my family was nothing because he couldn’t physically help us out, but the truth was that we valued his time and knowledge above all. And so, when I did achieve my goals, whether it is advancing to the Varsity boat in crew or the supervising position at work, he shared my joy and found the words to compel me to shoot higher. When I arrived home each day, he awaited me with open arms and inquired about my day, class by class. Because he was truly interested in what I had to say, I would describe to him each detail of that day’s events.

He couldn’t stand or walk without assistance, but I was blind to that because he is my miracle and he is my father.

### ***Sam is Always Right***

“He is the one who wants always to do the thing in the right way”

By Dr. Joseph Maurice Faltas

Brother-in-law, Cairo, Egypt

This is Sameh, my brother in law, whom I know and acquainted with, whom I have lived with and loved. This is Sameh whom everyone from Egypt and America who knew him and dealt with him, loved.

I have heard myself from them this testimony on Sameh, and this was not strange to me. Sameh lived to do what he believed in. His strong faith was not only words, but deeds that comes out from a person gifted with many gifts and qualities that we rarely found all gathered in one person. All those who knew him or met with him can easily remember many situations that reflect these

qualities. He was a responsible person, very precise and firm, a humble scientist, joyful, meek, loved, with a mature open mind, and above all he was a prayerful and thankful person.

“He wants to do the right thing in the right way.”

He was doing the right thing not because of moral reason, nor because of the requirements and great responsibilities that he had as a university professor or in the American Navy, although he did all that in an excel-



*Joseph Faltas and Sameh in Sameh's parents' house in Cairo, Egypt, January 1987*

lent way that resulted in many awards and patent rights, but mostly because of his strong faith and trust in Jesus Christ who is “The Way, The Truth, and The Life.” His inward success was the true reason of his outward success in his job and in all that he did. Sameh loved Christ, the Church, and everyone, and was faithful in his love to God, to the Church and to everyone he knew and dealt with.

Sameh loved the church since his childhood, and he was known to the church. He knew that the one who does not have the Church as his Mother, does not have Christ as his Father. That is why he was very keen to establish Sunday school classes every place he went to. How many souls God attracted through Sameh as he was loved by all, the youth before the adults. He was a source of trust and a compassionate heart for the youth.

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He did not spare any time or effort, in spite of his illness, to counsel them in various aspects of their lives, as God gifted him with a vast spiritual, social, and scholastic experience.

When the Lord allowed for his sickness trial, He gave him the virtue of thanksgiving and patience. Sameh was able to invest his sickness time to the benefit of the Kingdom of Heaven, putting every tired soul on the altar of prayer.

Sameh loved the truth, and defended it with all his power, and that is why God in His love willed that the Holy Liturgy on the 40 day memorial of the departure of Sameh to be the same day of the commemoration of St. John Chrysostom, one of the greatest fathers of the Church, who defended the truth. St. John defended the rights of the widow when the Emperor's wife stole her field. St. John rebuked her and prevented her from entering the Church. Truly, the reading of the life of the Saints in the Synexarium is not only for historic purposes, but it gives us models to follow.

Blessed are you Sameh, because you have heard, done, and taught others. Truly, we have learned a lot from you and we will never forget you because you are in our hearts, always remembering your giving and your love. May your pure soul repose in peace in the bosom of the saints whom you loved with all your heart.

## ***In Celebration of the Life and Memory***

By Bob Turner

Friend, Falls Church, Virginia

Simply stated, Sam Mitry was a true friend and brother in Christ. Our association began circa 1984 through a Multiple Sclerosis (MS) self help group. MS is a disease we shared in common, albeit it took a far greater toll on Sam than me.

For the better part of 15 years, Sam and I talked on the telephone every few days. In this context, the most recurring theme Sam talked about was his work for the young people of his church. On more than a few occasions, he shared some of his "youth writings" with me. They shared a common motif with his life: everything about them, as with Sam's life, was Bible based and Christ centered.

On his personal computer, Sam had a software program that, when fed Bible verse references, would print the selected verses in any one of several Bible translations (e.g. KJV, NKJ, NIV, etc.). On one occasion, I had a list of over 20 Bible references I needed printed for a Christian healing group with which I met and studied.

I fed the list to Sam. After several days, he responded with a neatly printed copy of all selected passages. I simply had them reproduced and distributed at a meeting of my Christian healing group. In short, I got all the credit, but Sam did all the work. This was both typical and illustrative of him—always thinking of others.

Shortly after his death, I unknowingly called his house and asked to speak with Sam. His gracious wife, Mona, now a widow, had to explain to me that Sam had died. I was virtually stunned. In trying to regain my composure, I incredulously stammered that Sam was like a blood brother to me. Mona, the new widow, responded that if Sam was like a blood brother to me, she hoped I would consider her my sister-in-law.

God's grace abounds.

Even though Sam had died, I knew he died in the Lord. Thus, I know for certain where he is.

### ***Dedicated to the Truth***

By Steve Bravy

Friend, Montgomery Village, Maryland

I don't have any particularly outstanding stories to tell—no one event stands out particularly. I just remember Sam as a warm, concerned, kind, and immensely resilient man. Sam was also absolutely dedicated to the truth, and would pursue it independently of the consequences.

I am far from a religious person, so I refrained from talking much about religion in order not to offend them. Sam and Mona, however, always impressed me as living the tenets of their religion rather than merely mouthing them. To the extent that I, a Jew, can understand these things, Sam was a Christian in the best and most meaningful way. Sam was also deeply concerned about the well-

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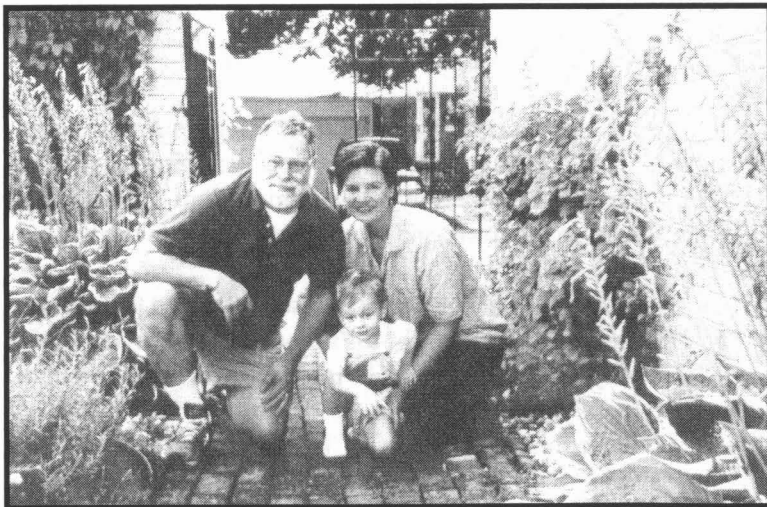
being of his fellow Copts in Egypt and about mankind and wickedness in general.

Sam and Mona both, after a hard week's work, seemed to enjoy nothing better than spending all of their waking hours working on their house. Their place gleamed and glistened. I couldn't help thinking that this work ethic came partly from Mona's farming background.

Sam was very concerned that his children grow up "right" (my words, not his). Sam and Mona paid their children a lot of attention and were somewhat strict, but in a concerned, understanding, respectful and loving manner. I used to spend quite a lot of time on the phone listening to Sam about his kids. Speaking of kids, Andrew and Mariam appear to be a tribute to their parents. They both are hard working, intelligent, and nice.

I am an Israeli by birth, and Sam was Egyptian. Nevertheless, I always found Sam to be someone with whom I could discuss the Middle East without fear of nationalism or cant. Again, I think his search for the truth allowed him to transcend national boundaries.

Sam was a humble man. He wore his doctorate loosely, and pontification was totally foreign to him. In spite of being highly



*Steve, Kathy, and Samuel Bravy, December 1996*

intelligent, he never trotted out his intelligence as something to be displayed, but rather made his points in a gentle and non-confrontational way, remarking often that he's far from infallible.

Sam could always listen, and would discuss problems in a sympathetic and diffident way. This ability remained throughout his life, even though his personal tragedy dwarfed any trivial complaint I might have had.

How Sam bore his misfortune without cursing his deity or fate, and without the slightest bit of whining, is totally beyond me. He remained the same wonderful person with the same qualities to the end. Whenever I had not spoken to him for some time, I could always find some degeneration in his condition. Nevertheless, he never faltered. His strength and faith must have been immense in order to sustain him through his sad and lengthy decline in health.

Sam was a bright candle, glowing quietly in the breeze, showing us by example what we could hope to be, without the slightest awareness that this was so. I don't expect to meet his like again.

### *A Faithful Servant in the School of Suffering*

By Fouad Naguib Youssef

Fellow servant, Washington, D.C.

It is very hard for us to write a eulogy for you. You were in our midst a beloved brother, a faithful servant who was zealous on the service with a rare zeal, energized with a deep love of God, and a zeal for the salvation of souls.

Our Lord who has seen your love for Him, has prepared and chosen you for another level of His service: serving Him through the school of suffering. This kind of service no man can attain with his own effort, understanding, or knowledge. This service is the service of love, and the service of those who are loved by the Lord. It is the service of the fellowship of the Lord's sufferings, the fellowship of His Cross.

Our brother Sameh was a teacher in the Church, in his silence, his smile that was comforting to many souls, in his regular attendance at Church. He became a sermon that no words can

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achieve, a sermon revealed to the human soul in unspeakable words. Meeting our brother Sameh was a joy to the soul, an uplifting of the spirit in spite of all the pain that he endured. I tried to avoid asking him about his health so as not to offend him, however, sometime asking him was unintentional. He will always answer “I am doing very well, praise God.” He was saying this very firmly, confirming his gratitude to God on his health.

The grace of enduring with thankfulness is a gift from God that is beyond the means of a normal person. This gift is given by the Holy Spirit to God’s select not only for themselves but also for the building of the church. The Holy Spirit distributes various gifts to each man according to his capability, to build the body of Christ to complete the service according to God’s pleasure. Every member in the Church has his or her work but the greatest gift of the Spirit is the gift of suffering with thanks “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him” (Philippians 1: 29).

Sameh’s sufferings were not his alone, but were shared by all the family. God has selected this family to be a beautiful icon of the Christian family that the Holy Spirit has elevated on the iconostasis through this trial. It is a beautiful picture of love, endurance and unlimited giving of self. “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” This trial became a practical lesson to all the Church families. A lesson stronger than any words or sermons can give to those who see and hear.

Our brother Sameh had all his mind in the ministry. His spiritual endeavors and his conversation full of sanctified zeal made his listener expand their conversation with him, forgetting the pain that he is enduring. Sameh was very keen to complete any task asked from him. He was a great contributor to the work of St. Mark Orthodox Fellowship and many tasks were accomplished because of his efforts.

When the time of departure came, and the Lord has seen that Christ image has been fulfilled in him, He raised him to His rest in the bosom of the Saints. Our beloved brother Sameh, while heaven is joyful of your arrival, many of us are missing you. Pray for us.

## *My Spiritual Brother*

By Ibrahim Barsoum

Friend, Vienna, Virginia

I first met with Sameh in the late 1980's when we came from Nashville to visit our relatives in the Washington area and pray at St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church of Washington, DC, during Easter and in the summer vacation. Sameh appeared to be a very firm person with strict convictions on how things need to be done. A closer look at Sameh showed me that he is a man with a great compassionate heart that could encompass all the youth he was serving in Sunday school and the whole church congregation.

Later on, when I moved with my family to the Washington area in the early 1990's, I came to know more and more of Dr. Sameh Mitry. I attended Sunday school classes with him. I have seen how firm he was with the youth in his class, yet everybody loved him, respected and obeyed him. As his disease progressed (he told me that he was first diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 1985) I could notice that he started to use a cane for walking but would always keep straight and stand on his feet as long as he could. Gradually, his physical condition deteriorated and had to use a wheelchair to come to church. I was always amazed that his physical condition never was a deterrent for him to skip church or Sunday school service. He would always smile and when I asked him "how are you doing?" he would reply with a smile, "Oh, I can always complain, but I am doing just fine." He was truly an inspiration to me on how to overcome the difficulties you have and keep on going.

When he had to stay at home and not be able to go to work, I started talking with him over the phone to ask about him and chat with him, and whenever it was convenient for him, I would visit him at home. Every time I felt burdened with my own problems, I would remember Sameh and how he could keep on going with the devastating disability he had. Whenever I felt heavy with my own burden, this was the time to call him over the phone. Talking with him gave me a big relief and a spiritual boost that I really needed. I believe that I got more support and encouragement from him than I would support and encourage him in his suffering. He will always

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start to ask about my family and me. I always shared my burden with him, and he always gave me great advice that I would use later on. I would try always not to forget to ask about how he was doing. He would hesitate first to talk about his problems but I would insist that he tell me how is he doing. I could feel that in spite of all the pains he was going through he was in good spirits, always struggling with his condition and never giving up. He had great hope and faith in God. He would keep on struggling with his disease till his last breath. He always did his part and left the rest to God.

As to the memories I have of my encounters with him at home, they were part of the greatest time of comfort in my spiritual life. Just sitting in front of him, I watched him involved in so many things with the computer using his hands (the only parts of his body he could still use with some strength). I would be amazed at all he accomplished, just sitting in his chair working on the computer: Forms that the church needed to apply for tax exemption, English translations of Arabic spiritual books to be published, Bible readings that were needed for the English liturgy at church, articles for the church magazine—and the list goes on and on. He was always busy, always doing something for God and for His church.

When he got tired from sitting on the computer, he would start a hard journey to go to the next door room (a few yards away) to sit down to rest and have a chance to chat with me. Chatting with Sameh was a true blessing to me. It was a time of spiritual enrichment and growth. We talked about our daily Bible readings and what we had learned from them. We discussed many topics that were enlightening to our souls. I still recall vividly talking about trials in our life, those that are allowed by God to bring us closer to Him and those that are not from God but we fall in them by our own free will (James 1:3-4, 13-15). We emphasized that trials and sufferings that God sends in our way to glorify Him, get us closer to God to know Him better, and also enable us to comfort others in their trials “by the same comfort we are comforted from God” (2 Corinthians 1:4-6). We also talked about hope, that if we did not have hope in Christ and His promises we would not be able to keep on living. He mentioned to me that a nurse that comes to him for physical therapy, who was not a believer, had no hope and was a negative influence to him. He asked to replace the nurse because

he needed someone to encourage him to keep on living and not to die. He told me that one time he told the nurse that it is not up to us to decide when to go but it is up to God, and as long as we have a breath we have to keep on living and struggling.

One time I told him that I had been sick and in bed for three days and that I could appreciate how difficult it is to be shut in the house. He replied to me that we have to remember that we are not alone when we are closed inside the house, but God's presence is always with us and that there is a blessing when we are alone because we can feel God is closer to us more than when we are distracted by other activities. He also told me that it is God who strengthens and sustains us in our infirmities. I recall also that one time when we talked about sickness that he told me that even some Christians have a misconception about sickness that it is from the devil and that if we pray faithfully God will heal us. Although God can heal us if He wills, many times He leaves it for a purpose and that sickness in itself could be a blessing, not a curse, because it brings us closer to God in a way that those who are not sick cannot know.

These are some of the many beautiful memories I had with Sameh. I was truly blessed and privileged to have spent a great time with him the morning hours of the same day that he departed from this earthly life to his eternal abiding on Friday October 22, 1999. I wish I could remember everything we talked about this day. One thing I will always remember is that every time I left Sameh, I felt revived and filled with the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Dear Sameh, I miss you very much. Your departure has left a spiritual emptiness in my life. Every time I wish that you were still around to talk with you, I remind myself that this is a selfish wish. I know for sure that you are in a better place of rest and joy, that you have truly "fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith. Now there is in store for you the crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4: 7-8) and that truly it applies to you what God has promised, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on, Yes, says the Spirit, they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them" (Revelation 14:13). Rest in the Lord my beloved spiritual brother and pray for me that I will also complete my pilgrimage on earth and join you with all the saints in the Heavenly Kingdom.

## *Not “Why,” But “How”*

By Olga Kuroshepova

Friend, Europe

My parents met Sameh Mitry in 1968 in Egypt, where my father was working as an engineer on one of the industrial facilities. I was very little but I can remember the times when we were together, visiting his family in Cairo, Sameh trying to learn some Russian so he could communicate with me. He was a very dear friend, and being with him was always so uplifting and fun to all of us.

Many years later I came to Washington, DC. I was all alone in a very different culture, in a totally new environment for me which was exciting, but also often confusing and emotionally dry. At that time Sameh and Mona became my second family. The very first time I went out to a restaurant in the U.S. was with them. They took me to church. They gave me advice on everything: from driving directions (which Mona is very good at) to car loans and the use of the Metro. I felt so totally loved and accepted in their home, as if I was their third child. Every time I was at their home I was learning something new.

The most important lesson I learned, was the lesson of dedication and commitment to each other, to their children, to the community, to the church. It was a lesson of joy to so many people that they embraced with their warmth and welcome. That was a lesson of boundless love and goodness that had no need to be verbalized, it was so apparent and flowing, and so contagious.

It was very dramatic and challenging when Sameh started feeling worse. He had always been an extremely fun-loving and active person, and it took me a long time to get over the question “Why is one of the best humans I have ever known being so brutally punished? Why is God so unfair?”

And only years later I got to understand that “why” as never a relevant question when it comes to God and Destiny. The only relevant question is “How?” And how he dealt with his disease mentally, spiritually and emotionally was his quest and another lesson to all of us, through his love and support to not only his family and friends, but to the community. All beings that were blessed to come in contact with him will treasure this memory as an inspira-

tion for years to come.

I do not think there are enough words in my or anyone's vocabulary to say enough about Mona, and what she was to Sameh, and how much her love and care, the enormous amount of hard work on her side contributed to everything they created together. She is an inspiration and a dear friend, and her courage is overwhelming.

It is hard to suffer. It is ten times as hard to see your loved one suffer. It is easy to be a hero for a moment. It is enlightenment when it is done every moment of every day of every year.

The loss is enormous, but the gift is immeasurable. The memories of Sameh, the feeling of the energy and light that he brought into the world made the Universe a better place.

We will always, always love you Sameh, and you will live forever in the most sacred place in our hearts.



*Mariam, Olga Kuroshepova, and Andrew, celebrating Christmas 1994.*

## ***An Angel***

By Ossama Stafanous Yousef  
Sunday school students, Reston, Virginia

I was on a trip to Egypt recently and I was there only for a few days when I heard of the news of Uncle Sameh Mitry's passing. Shock and disbelief quickly filled me. I felt a daze with my knees being very heavy as I was having a hard time standing up. I

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had just spoken to him a few days earlier before I left for my trip and we had decided to meet when I returned. I couldn't and I wouldn't believe it for some time. I had always had the hope, as all of us did, that Jesus Christ will perform His miracles on Uncle Sameh, perform His miracles on one of his righteous and noble sons. I had a strong belief that I would see the day when Uncle Sameh would be totally cured; I had great confidence in that, but the sorrowful news didn't turn out to be that way, and very soon my shock turned to grief and sorrow.

Uncle Sameh was one of the best human beings I have ever met or ever will meet as long as I am on this earth. He was a very special human being. He was kind to everyone, always wanted to help others every chance he got, any way he could. Even in facing his grave illness, he never complained, never said "why me" or never wished for anything more, but rather continuously thanking God for what he had. Uncle Sameh had an incredibly strong faith and he lived his life as our Bible has taught us all as Christians to live, he was the best example of how a Christian person can live and carry about his/her day to day life in the hands of God.

I have learned a lot from Uncle Sameh, learned how to be patient, how to face our worldly struggles with the utmost courage and faith. I believe that Uncle Sameh was an angel among us and that an angel's place does not belong on earth, but rather in Heaven with our Lord Jesus Christ. Every once in a while God sends us an angel to show us again how we all should live our lives, how we should live as Christians, how to love and care for one another. Uncle Sameh was one of those messengers sent to us. In order for us to best keep his good memory, each of us must try to remember every day some of these qualities; ask for God's help in giving us strength, remembering Uncle Sameh's struggles and the courage it took to face them on a daily basis. If we do this, that angel that was sent from God will be looking down on us now with a smile, knowing his good memory will never be forgotten.

Uncle Sameh was my friend, my mentor and my inspiration in life. I enjoyed spending time and speaking with him a lot. We always chatted together about everything, he always was a great listener. Whenever I had something on my mind, I would ask for his opinion and he would listen to me very carefully so he can give me



*Sameh with his Sunday School class with Fr. Shenouda El-Baramousy on a retreat in Maryland, June 1987.*

the best possible advice. He never wanted anything from me or anyone; his happiness and enjoyment in life was in helping people in any way he can and always steering them in God's path.

I met Uncle Sameh when I first moved to the United States about 19 years ago; he was my Sunday School teacher in the youth group and over the years we got to be good friends. Our friendship continued till the end. I feel that I was very fortunate to have known him these few years, at the same time I feel sad that I will not see him on earth again. I guess I do feel selfish that I will not spend any more time with Uncle Sameh but I do understand that it is God's will that angels cannot live among us for long. They must come down to show us the right way and leave just as quickly as they came. They do not belong here with us but with God; their spirits must keep heaven full of love, happiness and joy always.

I will never forget Uncle Sameh as long as I am alive. His memory will always be with me; his words, strong faith and wisdom will be in my heart forever. Yes heaven is lucky—they have their angel back again. May God rest his soul and be with us all.

## *Our Friend Sameh Sleepeth*

By Magdy Boulis Ibrahim

Friend, Silver Spring, Maryland

Our friend Sam Mitry sleepeth, however, we trust that our Lord Jesus Christ will awaken him to eternal life.

I knew Sam in 1968-1969 as a leader and teacher in the boys scout's team of "The Friends of the Holy Book," in St. Mark's Church in Shoubra, Cairo, Egypt. I was in my first year in junior high school.

Sam immigrated to the U.S.A., and I did not know then that I would follow him about 13 years later. I did not know then that I would meet him again in the U.S.A., and that our friendship would extend. I did not know that I would serve in the same Sunday school with my former teacher, and that I would enjoy his care for me until his departure to Heaven. I did not know then that Sam would be, for me, an extension to the family, church, and all that is precious to me that I left back in Egypt.

These are my thoughts about Sam's departure to Heaven:

1 – He was an unordained minister. Sam worked hard and consistently cared about the well-being of the Church.

2 – His unlimited and unconditional love. He did not de-



*Magdy and Angela's engagement at Sameh's house in Mclean, Virginia, August 1984.*

prive anyone of his care and sincere love following the footsteps of his Master Jesus Christ. He touched so many people with his love and attracted them to his big heart.

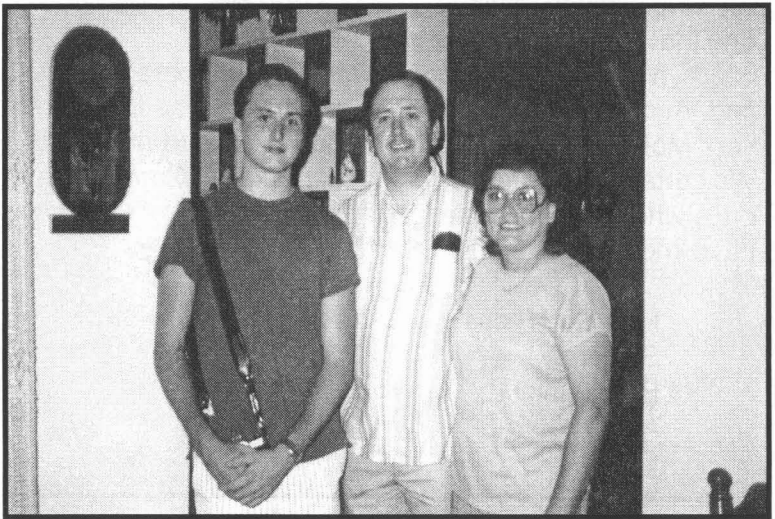
3 – With Sam I am always right. With the gift of seeing all that is good and forgetting what is not, he always encouraged and made me feel that I am always right. This he did with all firmness and without partiality or bias.

4 – Fatherless again. Many will agree with me, that Sam's departure to heaven has left vacant the father and the big brother's role that Sam was able to occupy. Our Father Jesus Christ is the comfort in such a loss that is hard for any man to experience twice.

5 – No vainglory. He lived with humbleness, not seeking compliments nor vainglory. Only God will reward him as deemed proper.

6 – Missing part. With Sam's departure to heaven, he took part of me with him. My comfort is that this part is now in Heaven.

“No death to your servant, but it is a transfer.”



*Ruth, Gary, and Lance Lanier, at the Mitry's, August 1998.*

Dear Mona:

It was so nice to hear from you. I'm sure you miss Sam so much. I can't even imagine how much. I don't think I could be as strong as you. Gary is my soul mate as Sam was surely yours.

I do wish I could write something for the book, which would be a small honor for such a wonderful person. I am just not good at putting my thoughts into words. I do know I miss corresponding with him on the email. He wrote me some very inspiring notes. He also had a prayer for us and his concern and love for our family always came through. He was always so concerned for everyone else and never once complained about any of his illness. He had more faith than anyone I know. I wish I was that strong in my faith. He always praised you as his wonderful wife and asked that we pray for you. He certainly loved his family also.

I can remember when we first met him about 25 years ago. He was such a happy person and always smiled. You just could not help from being his friend because moments after meeting him you realized he was a rare kind of person, "Someone that would forever be your friend."

We always felt so welcome in your home when we visited. And I can remember how excited he was for us to meet you, Mona. He was so proud, and very proud of his children. We certainly have some happy memories of Sam. We are the ones who have been blessed for being a part of God's plan to have known Sameh Mitry.

May God Bless you and your family.

Sincerely,  
Ruth Lanier  
Akron, Ohio

*The following sermons, preached during the funeral of Dr. Sameh Mitry, were transcribed by Dimiana Farag.*

### ***Introduction***

By Fr. Bishoy Andrawes

In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

We have visitors, Reverend Fathers from everywhere in the States and family members and friends from everywhere as well. We had so many speakers yesterday in the funeral home, and I'm sure that if I would ask, "who wants to speak," so many people will speak about Dr. Sameh Mitry. I myself can speak forever without stopping, but for your time we're going to have four speakers: the very Reverend Father Mikhail Mikhail from Ohio, and the very Reverend Father Athanasius Farag from New Jersey, and Dr. Emil El-Shamaa, who is one of Dr. Sameh's Sunday School members, and Mr. Yevgeny Kuroshchepov, who knew Dr. Sameh since 1968.

### ***Willing to Compromise for the Sake of Other People—But Not for the Sake of the Truth***

By Fr. Mikhail Mikhail  
Cleveland, Ohio

In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said that, "Where I am going to be, my servant will be there also." Also, our Lord Jesus Christ said, "There is no greater love than this, if someone sacrifices himself for the sake of the other." Today, when we say farewell and see you again, Dr. Sameh Mitry, we feel that we are in front of a pioneer person who served the Lord all his life.

I knew Dr. Sameh 25 years ago when I came to the Cleveland church. I was a young priest and I was very reluctant and inexperienced. A few months later God sent me Dr. Sameh and I found a good person to entrust the Sunday school. We had, at the time, five Sunday school classes, he was in charge of all the Sunday school activities. He also took care of the oldest class. Many of his students now have become Sunday school teachers and many of

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them have gotten married and have children who became deacons and altar boys in the church.

He was a pioneer in his personality, he knew the English language very well since the beginning, at that time for most of us immigrants it was very difficult for us, and then I knew why because he was a graduate from the English mission in Egypt. He was raised in St. Marks's Church in Shubra and later on he moved to Heliopolis, he was a student of great priests in Egypt, Fr. Mikhail Ibrahim and Fr. Morcos Dawood. We were very lucky to have Dr. Sameh with us in Cleveland. He was a pioneer because in his personality you can see things that are very difficult to be in one person. He is very nice and very firm, very active and very calm, he is straightforward. He is willing to compromise for the sake of other people but not for the sake of the truth.

In 1976 we came to Washington together. They asked us during the Bicentennial celebration of the United States of America to represent the Coptic Church—Dr. Sameh, two other deacons, and myself. We came and we spent one week in a George Washington University dorm and they asked us to have some Vespers, Divine Liturgies, some prayers and to share with the American people about the Coptic Church, during the big celebration of the Bicentennial. Amazingly, Dr. Sameh was very energetic between the prayers and he walked around the American people who wanted to see who the Copts are and what they are doing. It was not the matter of whether to say some prayers and some hymns, but to share with them our history, our inheritance, our treasure, our church, our doctrine, and our dogma. He never wasted any moment to witness for the Lord.

He is a unique person because he somehow made some great connections. I think, due to Dr. Mitry, he made a connection between me and the people in Pittsburgh and I have many of them here today, and also the people in Morgantown. After he moved from Cleveland, Ohio, he lived in a town close to Cleveland, Ohio, then he moved again to Morgantown and that is why I started to serve in Pittsburgh. Just as in Morgantown, he made a good connection. All of them used to come to Cleveland to serve with us and to spend with us the feast days and Dr. Mitry was a pioneer in this.

I think also he was a pioneer when he made a connection between Morgantown, Pittsburgh, and Washington after he moved



*Fr. Shenouda Anba Bishoy, Bishop Ignatius, Andrew, Mona, Sameh, Fr. Mikhail Mikhail, and Fr. Shenouda, April 1985*

to Washington, through the activities of the family retreat in Antiochian Village. You know who put Pittsburgh and Washington together—they are too far from one another. Some of his friends who still are in Pittsburgh and Morgantown and some of the other people here, they lead the idea of family retreat for many years. We heard about it in Cleveland later and then we joined them—wonderful activities.

He was a unique person because he served the Lord in his health and in his illness. In his dictionary there is no such word as “impossible.” If he wanted to do something he would do it, by the grace of God and he encouraged us to do so. He was successful in his spiritual life, in his service to the Lord, in his ministry to the Lord, in his academic career, in his relationships with everyone, in his family, as a good husband, and a good father. Many of the youth and younger adults say “Uncle Sameh treated us as his own children.” I wish that we learned something and we can learn a lot from his life.

As I said, the Lord said, “Where I am going to be, my servant will be.” This is our great hope, that through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ who had victory over death and he gave us victory over death and he switched death to transition from here to there and this is why we have a great hope. In fact

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we are sure that he is with the Lord now and forever and the Lord will reward him. We ask his prayers on behalf of us and we promise to pray for him. This is a great connection of the church on earth to the church in heaven.

On behalf of the church of St. Mark's in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Morgantown, and all the places he served before, we offer our sympathy to Mona, Andrew, and Mariam, and to all the members of his family, all his friends, all his students. And we ask the Lord to make us ready for this important moment. Glory be to God forever and ever.

### ***Christ is Risen!***

By Fr. Athanasius Farag  
New Jersey

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
One God. Amen.

Ikhristos Anesti, Christ is Risen.

According to our beliefs, according to what we declare every time we stand in front of God in our private prayers and in the liturgy, we confess, we believe, and we declare that the Lord is Risen. And because He is risen, we are with Him, because we went through His death and resurrection when we were baptized in His name.

Our Christian life begins by death, and continues by death, and ends by death. What do I mean by that? When we went down to be baptized, we experienced with the Lord His death. With this death, we take away our fallen nature, which we took from Adam, then we receive the new one in Christ. So it begins by death, but when we die in baptism we receive the new life in Christ, our new life. And then during our daily life, we have to experience the death by will. I mean by that what St. Paul said—we have to practice mortification, to struggle against yourself and against any trace of deadness and parts that have not become new or holy in Christ.

We have to experience this everyday—to take away our sins and receive new life everyday, don't wait until the last minute. Because if you wait until the last minute, you will not be ready to see the Lord because the Bible said only the pure and the holy can inherit the kingdom of God. Only the one who everyday dies for Christ and receives new life in Christ, this is the one that can be

resurrected at the end of time. To experience everyday death is the advice of the Holy Scriptures and our Fathers of the Church.

St. Antony the Great has great advice to all of us. Once one of his disciples came to him and told him “Father, tell me a word to live by, to be saved by your word through the Holy Spirit.” He gave him very good short advice. He told him, “Every new day when you wake up, stand in front of God and thank God and say it is by God’s mercy that I stand now anew in front of God. This is the beginning of the day, try to do the will of God, try to carry your cross during the day, try to have a feeling of his presence. And at the end of the day, before and after your prayer tell yourself “Maybe tonight is the last night of my life” and turn to your bed or what you sleep on and say “Maybe you will be my grave tonight.” And St. Antony said “The one who remembers his death will never sin.” Why? Because if I know that I am going to die after five minutes, if God reveals to me or you that you are going to die today at 5 P.M., what you are going to do? If you are serious Christians and you know and you believe that there is life after death and there is reward and punishment, there is heavenly glory and damnation, I think you will repent, I think you will ask God’s forgiveness, I think you will look at your life carefully because when you think about your own death it is very important.

We see now our brother, Sameh, in his body in front of us, but his soul is in the hands of God because he trained himself to die for Christ everyday. In our Liturgy today we pray for him, because even if we do every righteousness we are still very far away from the holiness of God. We ask forgiveness for him, we ask God’s help for him because no human can be ready completely to see the face of God, so we have to practice this remembrance of our own death, my death, not others deaths because this can wake my heart, can open my eyes, can set everything in my life in its place and we will end of course by our physical death.

The church does not call this death, death. He departed because this is not his citizenship: his citizenship is in heaven. As St. Paul said in his letter to the Ephesians, “our citizenship in heaven,” we are traveling here, we are visitors here. Like today all of you, the majority of you will not be here because this is not your home, your home is in the town you live. If you are a true Christian your

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home is not here at all. Your home is in the heavenly Jerusalem.

This liturgy for his departure we celebrate every Divine Liturgy. Can I remind you that the next Divine Liturgy you will attend you will sing, you will hear the church saying, "Those, Oh Lord, whose souls you have taken repose them in the paradise of joy in the region of the living forever in the heavenly Jerusalem, in that place." That place is our real home, yes, we will pray for him and we will ask him to pray for us. And what about us? "And we too who are traveling in this place keep us in your faith and grant us your peace until the end." So we pray for him and we ask God to help us to continue in the faith the Orthodox faith the Christian faith, because if you fail from being in the body of Christ you will not die in peace, peace here means unity with the body of Christ, in unity with the Church of God, and we ask that this faith and unity will stand with us until the end.

May the Lord help him and accept his service to the church and to so many as you have heard. May the Lord help us all to remember our own death and live every day remembering this moment when God will call us to stand in front of Him. But we ask His mercy, we ask Him to accept his soul and prepare us for the same moment when he calls us. Let us ask ourselves, are we ready now to be taken to my Lord? If not, why? What is taking us away from our real needs? Your real need is to look to your eternal life, your real need is to go to your own home, your real home, your real satisfaction is to be with the Lord. If you believe in that, you have to live it. If not I doubt that you have a very good idea about life and I doubt and can say to you, like other early fathers, the one that does not know his death does not know his life. If you don't know that you are dying, that there is the short time, you don't know how to live life as God planned it and prepared it for us.

On behalf of his friends in Egypt and here in East Rutherford, St. Antony and St. Mina and many who wanted to come and share with us, we pray for him and we ask peace and consolation and joy. Of course, joy. I was glad when I saw Mariam wearing white garments and by accident, this morning when I was coming by train I was reading some of the Early Fathers' writings about death and I found one Latin father in the Third Century encouraging his people not to wear black robes during the funeral because

our beloved one now is wearing white garments in the heavenly Jerusalem. How can we wear black ones? I was very glad when I read it at 4 o'clock in the morning and I saw Mariam wearing this. Christ is Risen, Mariam. Christ is Risen, all of you.

Let us be joyful because the death of the one who loved God and the death for the one who lives a Christian life is joyful. St. Cyprian, whom I was also reading in the morning, tells us, "Why are you weeping? Aren't you waiting for this moment? Aren't we praying 'Let your will be done'? If His will be done that He call us now, why are you angry? Why don't you want to go quickly?" If you are really praying "Let your will be done," let us be joyful. Yes, really I ask him to pray for me. He is a very good friend to me and I will pray for him every time I offer the Divine Liturgy and his family. God help all of us to be ready. Glory to God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit now and forever, Amen.

### ***Teacher, Mentor, and Friend***

By Emil El-Shamaa  
Friend, Columbus, Ohio

My heart broke when I heard the news. Dr. Sameh Mitry was my teacher and my mentor, but most of all he was a dear friend. His warm smile and genuine love always lifted me up, as well as lifted up the spirits of all those he came in contact with. He was the most positive and determined man I've ever known. His priorities were with the well-being and service of others.

Preparing these few words was very difficult; very emotional. But it gave me a chance to meditate on our relationship. It gave me a chance to reflect on the life of a great man. It gave me a chance to remember the times we spent together. It gave me a chance to remember our many conversations—everything from deep theology to school and sports.

Thinking about Sameh reminded me of a passage from the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5 (37-48). It is short but beautiful:

"But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one. You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you

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*Sameh with his Sunday School; Emile is resting his chin on his hand.  
September 1987.*

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not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have [your] cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more [than] [others]? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Truly Sameh lived this word. Many of you knew that Sameh lived with a devastating neurological illness called MS, or multiple sclerosis. Many of you didn't know; not because it was some kind of secret or something. No, it was because he never complained, never was bitter, and always maintained his priorities of serving

God and his fellow man. And serve he did! Whether it was in Sunday School, where he built up a youth group with a population of one to a class bursting at the seams, or in Church, or even one on one outside the Church. He dedicated his time and energy to the spiritual welfare of his fellow man. I always have and always will respect him and love him for this.

As it always is, Dr. Sameh Mitry's departure was much too soon. We wanted and needed more time with him on this earth. And although our sadness is overwhelming, we must remember that Sameh is not gone. Sameh, with all his love and kindness and selflessness is still with us. True, he has left the weak mortal body; but he has left it to assume a glorified body, a body without weakness or disease or suffering. A body that continues in the image of God, as he has been all his life. And I have no doubt that Sameh is continuing to intercede for us before Christ our Lord.

I am extremely honored to have this opportunity to speak these few words about our dear friend and brother in Christ. Sameh, please continue to pray for us all as you always have, and we will see you again soon in Christ's glory in the paradise.

And Glory be to God Forever.

### ***Sincere Friendship***

By Mr. Yevgeny Kuroshchepov  
New York

My English is not so good enough to express the depth of my and my family's sorrow. We used to work with Sameh Aziz Mitry at Helwan Ironworks in 1968-1970 when he was a young engineer just graduated from the Cairo University.

We made adjustments to the electronic equipment, which was delivered by the Soviet Union to Egypt. And since then, over 30 years of sincere friendship connected us regardless of time and distance.

We lost not only a treasured longtime friend, but a person of high intelligence, exceptional courage and unique kindness. We share the grief and sorrow of the family and we know that even in

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the depth of his sufferings he was blessed as much love and care as was humanly possible.

He will sadly missed and always remembered. Let his soul rest in peace.



*Yevgeny, Olga, and Valya Kuroschepov, 1971, Cairo, Egypt.*

## *A Distinctive Saint*

By Fr. Bishop Andrawes

Finally, and not to make it long, and as I told you if I would ask who would speak, a lot of people would speak about Dr. Sameh, and would speak forever. I myself could take hours and hours speaking about him. And as I said yesterday, we consider him one of the saints of the twentieth century. The church is going to publish a book on his life, and we're going to ask all the friends and family members to contribute to this book that we are issuing.

At the end, I would say that this funeral is distinctive because of two things: first, the travelers from everywhere—all over the States and even abroad—and second, the youth. This is one of the very few funerals where I have seen a lot of youth that are not related to Dr. Sameh but are here because he was one of the greatest hearts we've ever known.

Finally I would like to thank all the attendants. First of all the Very Rev. Fr. Mikhail Mikhail from Cleveland, Ohio, the Very Rev. Fr. Athanasius Farag from East Rutherford, New Jersey, Rev. Fr. Rafael Yousef from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Rev. Fr. Gurigus Ghoubrial from Baltimore, Maryland, and Rev. Fr. Zakaria Yousef from El-Menya, Egypt.

And I would like to thank, on behalf of the family, all the friends that are coming from everywhere, from California, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and up to Canada. A special thanks to the MITRE Corporation, where Dr. Sameh used to work, and all the colleagues. And also a special thanks to the principal and the members of Claremont Early Childhood School where Mrs. Mona Mitry works.

Finally, after we talked about Dr. Sameh, I would admire and recognize the effort of the soldier who was behind the scenes, and behind the illness, and behind all this work. She is Mrs. Mona Mitry and we pray for her and Andrew and Mariam, that God will support them.

Also on behalf of the Board of Deacons, the deacons, the servants, and all of the members of St. Mark's Church, we express our condolences to the family and all of you. And glory be to God forever, Amen.

# Conclusion

## *Sameh & Mona*

By Mona Mitry

*Sameh Mitry, on December 31, 1976 at midnight, wrote the following New Year's resolutions in his journal. "I want to finish my Ph.D., learn to forgive people, pray for my parents, family and friends, find a good job for my good friend, find a good job for me, and now that I'm getting older, I want to find the perfect wife."*

When I first met Sameh, twenty-three years ago in Assuit, Egypt, he didn't waste time with technicalities. In English, to the point and in an official manner, he stated the standards under which we could be married:

1. You know that the only commandment in the Bible with a promise is to honor your father and mother so that you can have everlasting life (Exodus 20:12). So if we agree on everything, but our parents do not grant us their blessings, we cannot go through with our marriage.
2. Once we are married, it's a lifetime commitment, which means no divorce.

I was in shock. We hadn't even spoken about an engagement and he was talking about divorce! But that's what I also believed so I agreed with him. He went on.

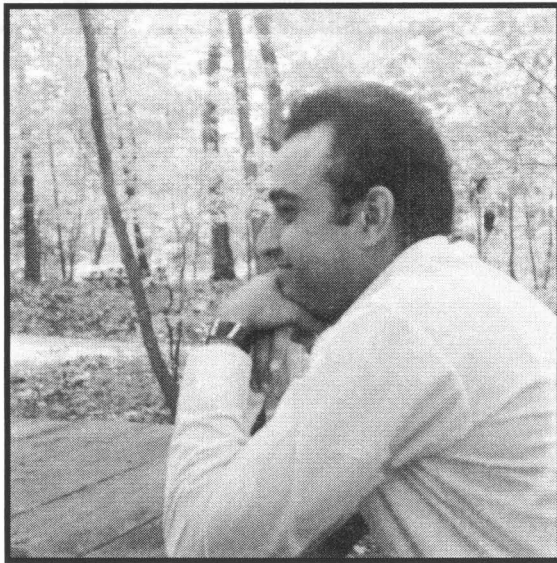
3. My friends in the States are my family, like my brothers and sisters, and I would like to keep those friendships.
4. I would like it if my wife would stay home with my children until they start school.
5. We will go to church together on a regular basis and I will keep serving in Sunday School.
6. Life in the States is very difficult. Realize that it takes time to adjust. However I have confidence that we will make it together.
7. If everything goes as planned, you will have to leave with me in 30 days.

I agreed with what he was saying and it made me comfortable to know that he was being honest with me and that his beliefs were in concurrence with mine. After one hour of talking, he realized that he had spent the whole time speaking in English. We laughed and that became our joke—that I didn't understand "Sameh's Commandments" and that's why I agreed to marry him.

The second day we fasted and prayed about our future together. From that point on, everything went smoothly and God showed us his approval every step of the way and we knew we were meant for each other.

Sameh had come from the States after living there for seven years and had gone to visit his cousin in Upper Egypt, 300 miles away from Cairo where his family lived, so that we could meet. I ended up going back with him to the United States 45 days after his arrival in Egypt to start a very happy life together.

Each of his "commandments" were kept and we lived by them all of our lives. Sameh always kept his promises to his family and friends, served in the church all his life and believed in God's blessing over us as a family by giving us two beautiful children. I will try to continue Sameh's message until I join him with the Heavenly Father.



*Sameh, in West Virginia, contemplating his New Year's resolutions.*



*Mona and Sameh during their wedding ceremony, July 30, 1977.*