

## **MONASTERY OF AL-BARAMOUS**

It is the northernmost of the monasteries in **Wadi al-Natrun**. It occupies the place where the oldest **monastic** community in Wadi al-Natrun stood. The [Arabic](#) name Baramous is a transliteration of the Coptic [Pa-Romeos](#), “that of the Romans,” referring probably to the two Roman **saints** and children of the Roman Emperor [Valentinian](#) I (364-357), Maximus and Domitius, whom St. **Macarius** received and consecrated their cell by building a chapel after their death. The monastery is significant for its oldest church in Wadi al-Natrun that originates from the late sixth century or the beginning of the seventh century.

It is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Its nave features scenes of the Great **Feasts**: the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Baptism of Christ, and the Entry into Jerusalem, as well as the Pentecost. The sanctuary is decorated with the scenes of the sacrifice of [Isaac](#) and the meeting of Abraham and **Melchizedek**. They date to about 1200. The sanctuary’s [apse](#) is occupied by [Christ](#) enthroned in the upper register, and below is the Holy Virgin flanked by two angels. There is a feretory against the north wall of the **khurus** that contains the [relics](#) of Sts. Maximus and Domitius. The monastery’s keep is the oldest extant keep in Wadi al-Natrun and probably dates from the ninth century.

*See also* MONASTICISM, EGYPTIAN.

**GAWDAT GABRA**

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