

The Church of the Holy Virgin Mary (SAKHA)

The TOWN OF SAKHA lies about 130 kilometers north of Cairo in the [Nile](#) Delta. Sakha is known as one of the Delta sites that was blessed by the Holy Family: when [Jesus](#) touched a stone with his foot, water sprouted forth, and his foot left an imprint. According to Abu al-Makarim/ Abu Salih, people came and put oil on the footprint and considered themselves blessed. Due to fear that Muslims might take the stone, it was hidden in a monastery called 'Bekha Isus.' Some scholars believe that 'Bekha' could be a corrupted word for 'Sakha.'

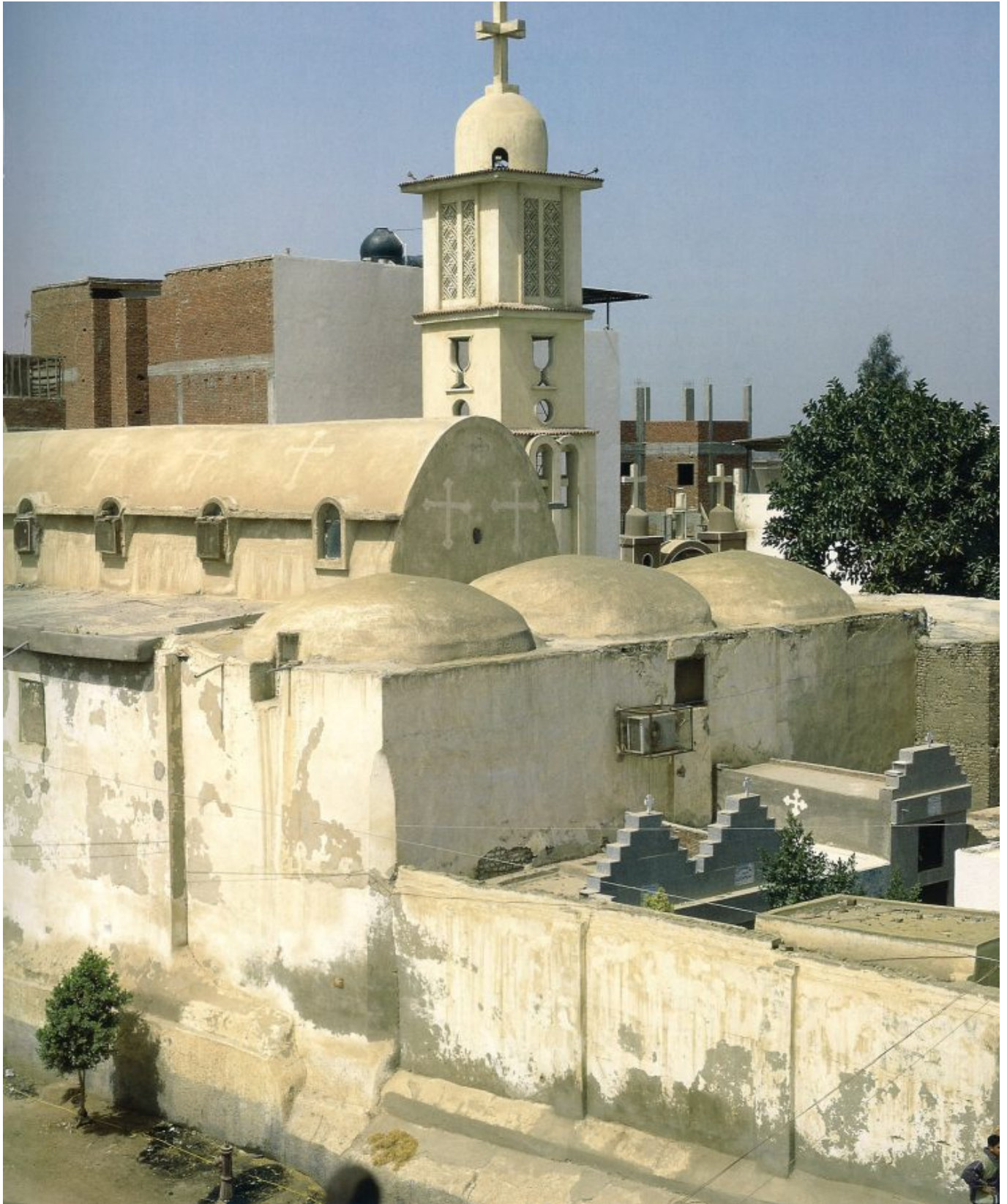
In April 1984, workers were digging a hole for sewage near the Church of the Holy Virgin and found a stone with the footprint of a child. Copts of Sakha believe that it is the footprint of Jesus. The stone is now on display in the church in a glass case that [pilgrims](#) touch to be blessed. On the 24th day of the Coptic month Bashons, corresponding to the June 1, the commemoration of the Entry of the [Holy Family](#) into Egypt, the stone is carried by the [clergy](#) in a liturgical procession around the church. The church is modern and has three domes which cover the sanctuaries at its eastern part. The wooden screen of the central sanctuary, which is dedicated to the Virgin, features an inlaid panel dating back to am 1587/ad 1872.



Stone with footprint believed to be of child Jesus. This photograph was taken on a rare occasion ivhen the glass case was open.



Interior view of the Church of the Holy Virgin Mary.



Exterior view with the belfry and domes.



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