

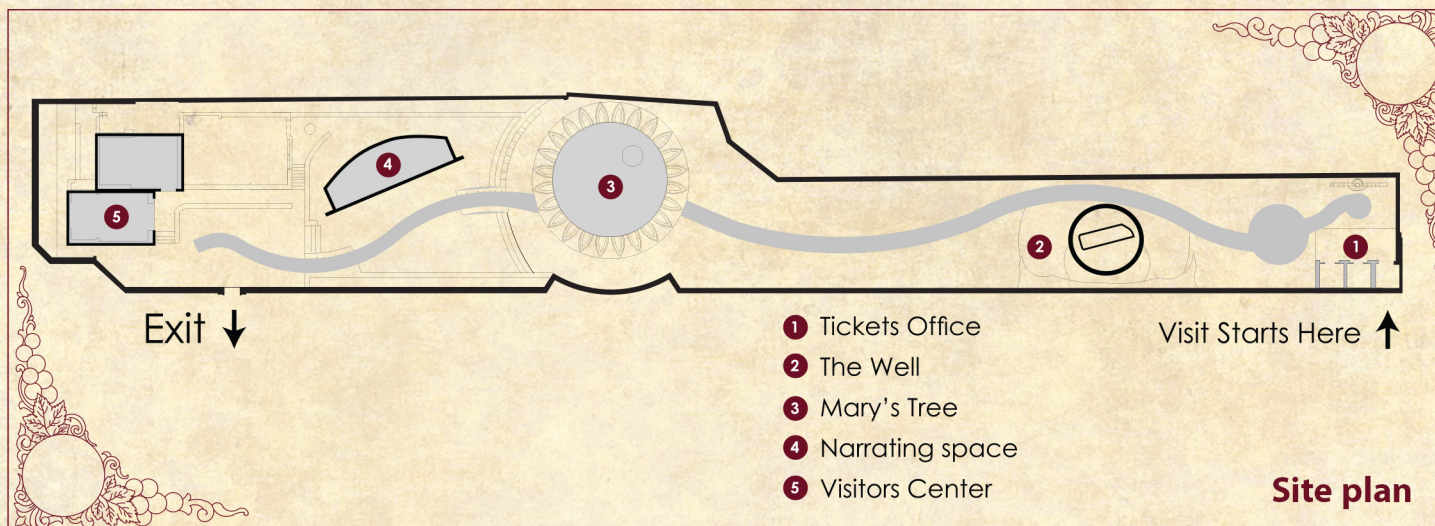


MARY'S TREE

in al-Matareyyah

On the route of the Holy Family
journey in Egypt

Πατρια της Μαρίας



After Development

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities paid great attention to all sites included in the Holy Family's route through Egypt. The most famous of these is Mary's Tree in Matariyya. The tree and the well were restored, the site cleaned, and the waterfalls restarted.

After equipping it with necessary services and facilities, the site has been prepared to receive guests. The preparations include a travelator for the elderly and information plaques. The visitor's center displays photographs and films that relate the site's history as well as the Holy Family's travels in Egypt.

A large portrait of the Virgin Mary is placed in the oratory hall. It shows the Virgin resting under the shade of the tree, carrying baby Jesus, while Joseph passes her a fig. Two modern icons flank the hall. One depicts the Holy Family's trail through Egypt while the other is an illustration of the Virgin Mary carrying baby Jesus.



Tickets

Visitor	40 EGP
Student	20 EGP



Opening hours:

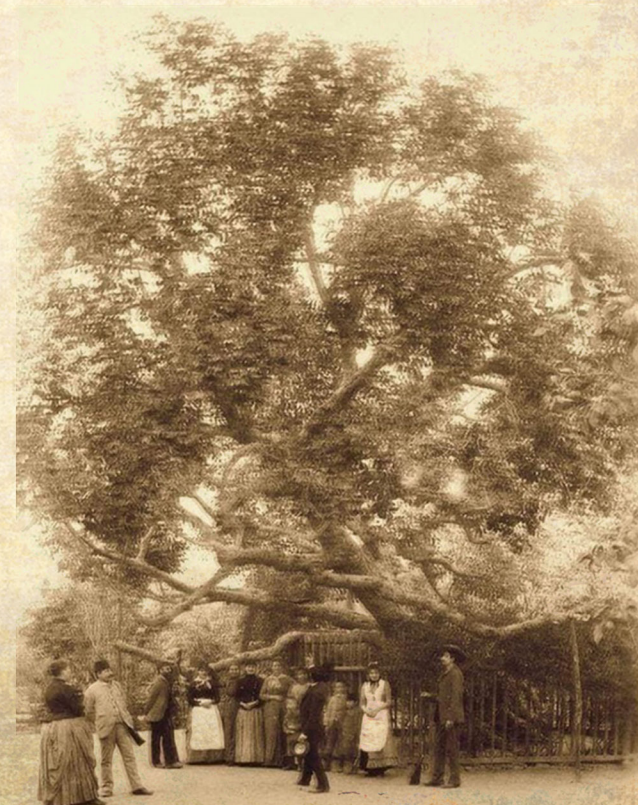
Everyday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Ticket office closes at 4:30 pm



Hotline for complaints &
suggestion **19654**



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The Holy Family's journey in Egypt

Historical and religious sources relate the passage of the Holy Family (Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and Joseph the Carpenter) through Egypt. They journeyed for approximately four years, beginning their journey in the Sinai desert and passing through the Nile Delta and Upper Egypt. The Holy Family was able to escape the persecution of King Herod, by escaping through Tell al-Farma in Sinai. From there they moved to Tell al-Basta in al-Sharqiyya and on to the Church of the Virgin Mary in Sakha and the monasteries of Wadi Natrun. Mary and her child were on the run until they reached Matariyya.



Mary's Tree

The Holy Family sought refuge under a tree in Matariyya (the ancient city of Heliopolis), today known as "Mary's Tree." It became a popular religious site visited by many people from all over the world throughout the ages. The original tree eventually grew weak and fell in 1656 AD. A group of Franciscan priests gathered its branches and replanted it.

The tree drew the attention of medieval historians such as al-Maqrizi and Imam al-Suyuti, both of whom paid it a visit. Orientalists travellers such as Stanley Lin also visited the site, as did the French Empress Eugene during the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869, during the reign of Khedive Ismail.

Some French soldiers passed by the tree in 1800, during the battle of Ain Shams between the French and Ottoman armies. The soldiers carved their names with their swords into the tree's branches.



Mary's Well

A Roman well near Mary's Tree is believed to have provided water to the Holy Family during their stay in Matariyya. The Virgin Mary is thought to have washed Christ's clothes in it. The drops that splashed onto the floor grew fragrant blossoms now used to make perfume and sacred oil (Myron).

