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*Verse
of the Month*



**"He testified the sufferings of
Christ and the glories that follow"**
(1 Peter 1:11).

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**SCHEDULE of MEETINGS and EVENTS
for the MONTH of NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2014**

SUNDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
+ English Liturgy 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	+ Liturgy 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	+ Liturgy 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.	+ Liturgy from 8-10 am
***	+ Thursday Morning + Senior Citizen Club 11:00 - 4:00 a.m.	(During Lent)	+ Vespers; Bible Study 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
+ Arabic Liturgy 8:00 - 11:15 a.m.			+ Beginners' Deacons- Meeting 5:00-6:00 p.m.
			+ Elementary Meeting 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Servants' Meeting 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. 2 nd & 4 th Sunday.	+ THURSDAY Family Meeting 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. (Fr. Augustinos)	+ Arabic Youth Meeting 8:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Fr. Gawargious)	+ College Youth Meeting 7:00-8:00 p.m.
			+ Catechumens' meeting by Fr. Daniel 7-8 p.m.
TUESDAY English- Bible Study 7:30 pm			High School & J. High Meetings 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

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NEWS of

March & April 2015



1. The Holy Lent:

The Holy Lent started on Monday, February 16, and continues until the Feast of the Resurrection on Sunday, April 12, 2015.

Daily Liturgies during the Lent (except Monday) are:

+ **Wednesday & Thursday:** 9:00 am – 12:00 noon.

+ **Tuesday & Friday:** 12:00– 3:00 p.m.

+ **Saturday** from 8: 10 a.m.

2. Appearance of the Holy Cross:

On Thursday, March 19, the church celebrates the Feast of the Appearance of the Holy Cross. The Liturgy will be in festal tunes of Palm Sunday. Procession of the cross takes place during matins 7:30 a.m. Vespers, Wednesday, 7 pm.



3. March & April Famous' Saints:

(1) March 8: Martyrdom of St. Policarp (Rev. 2:8).

(2) March 9: Departure of Pope Kyrellos 6.

(3) March 17: Martyrdom of the Apostle Matthias.

(4) Tuesday, March 17 Departure of Pope Shenouda III

(5) Saturday March 21: Departure of Fr. Bishoy Kamel.

(6) March 28: Departure of Fr. Mikhail Ibrahim.

(7) April 1, Departure of Daniel the Prophet.



4. The 34th. Anniversary of Fr. Gawargious Kolta:

St. John church priests, congregation and the Board of Deacons congratulate the very Rev. Fr. Gawargious on his 34th anniversary of ordination (on March 15, 1981) wishing him health, strength, fruitful service and long life.



5. Second Anniversary of Fr. George Aziz & Arch-deacons Thomas and Antonious' Ordination:

St. John church congratulates Fr. George and Archdeacons Thomas and Antonious on their second anniversary, praying the Lord Jesus Christ to grant them every blessing in their lives and ministry.



6. Baptism Sunday & Lenten Luncheon:

On Sunday, March 29, St. John church celebrates Baptism- Sunday; then the Annual Lenten Luncheon will follow right after the Liturgy. Tickets will be available in the Book Store on behalf of the needy.



7. H.H. Pope Tawadros II:

+ Pope Tawadros received His Excellency El-Sisi, the President of Egypt in Christmas Eve at St. Mark Cathedral.

+ On February 3, the Pope also received the families of the Christian victims.

+ On February 15, he received again, the President El-Sisi, who came to extend his condolences for the Coptic victims of Libya.



8. H.G. Bishop Serapion:

Bishop Serapion travelled to Atlanta with Los Angeles' clergy to attend the Annual Clergy Convention combined with the Clergy of South U.S., about 80 priests attended. He and Bishop Youssef, Bishop Zosima and Fr. Athanasius El-Makary delivered lectures.



9. The 3rd Annual Commemoration of H.H. Pope Shenouda III:

St. John Church in Covina will hold a special celebration in commemoration of the third year of the departure of our beloved father the Thrice Blessed H. H. Pope Shenouda on Sunday, March 15, 2015 at the church hall after the Liturgy. All are invited to have the blessing of the occasion.



News of April 2014

1) Apparition of St. Mary at her church in Zytoom, Egypt:

Wednesday, April 2nd. Liturgy is from 9 a.m



2) Feast of Annunciation (April 7):

On Tuesday, April 7, the church will not celebrate this Feast as usual, because it comes during the Pascha week



3) Palm Sunday: April 5:

St. John Church celebrates this Major Lord's Feast in one Liturgy. The service starts from 7:30 a.m.to 12:00 noon, followed by the general funeral until 2:00 p.m.



4) Covenant Thursday: (April 9)

Pascha prayers start at 8:00 a.m., followed by the rite of washing the feet, then the Liturgy of the Eucharist until 2:00 p.m. The evening Pascha is from 5:00-9:00 pm.



5) Good Friday: (April 10)

The church celebrates this great Day of Redemption and Salvation from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.



6) Feast of the Resurrection (April 12):

The Easter Liturgy will be celebrated on Saturday, April 19 from 7:30 p.m. until mid-night, followed by the Agape meal in the Church Hall.



7) The Easter Picnic: St. John Church celebrates Easter-day in the usual picnic at Bonnelly Park in St. Dimas from 11:00 am. To 6:00 pm. The food will be Pot-luck.

8) St. John's 26th Annual Family Convention:

St. John Church in Covina holds her Annual Family Conference during the Memorial Day long-weekend. Details will be announced next issue. Reservation is in the church book-store.

Pope Francis Calls for Unity after Coptic Christians Beheaded By ISIS

Pope Francis urged Christians to find strength through unity, calling the 21 Coptic Christians beheaded by ISIS “martyrs” who belong to the entire Christian world. The appeal echoes the outrage that has galvanized Egyptian air forces. Threats to “sack Rome” are also causing Italian forces to consider action. In an **impromptu appeal** at the Church of Scotland, Pope Francis called for all Christians to hear the cries of the recently executed Coptic Christians. “The blood of our Christian brothers is a testimony which cries out to be heard. It makes no difference whether they be Catholics, Orthodox, Copts or Protestants. They are Christians. Their blood is one and the same.”

The Pope added, “as we recall these brothers who died only because they confessed Christ, I ask that we encourage each another to go forward with this ecumenism which is giving us strength, the ecumenism of blood.” “The martyrs belong to all Christians.”

Ecumenism describes the initiative to promote unity among the world’s Christian churches. The Argentinean Pope Francis notably switched to his native Spanish to talk about the executions; leaving behind the Italian he uses at most formal events. **The Pope also mentioned the victims last words, “Jesus help me.”**

Pope Francis was responding to ISIS’ video, showing the group’s members beheading 21 Coptic Christians on the shores Tripoli.

As previously reported by the *Inquisitr*, Coptic Christians are an ancient religious sect that can trace its language and culture back to the first century A.D. Islamist groups have already murdered large numbers of the religious minority, including victims of late night kidnappings.

According to the **Huffington Post**, Pope Francis met with the group’s patriarch, Tawadros II, in May of 2013 to promote unity. The ancient religious sect was already complaining about religious oppression and violence, saying it had been on the rise since the ousting of Egyptian ruler Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Pope Francis and his Coptic counterpart



prayed together for the future of the Christians in the Middle East. At the time, Francis said, “From shared suffering can blossom forth forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, with God’s help.” Now, almost two years later, Copts and other Christian groups face even more danger, and if ISIS has its way, the peril will come to one of the centers of the Catholic world.

According to the *New York Post*, an ISIS member in the execution video vowed the group would eventually sack Rome, about 600 miles from Tripoli. Italy’s Foreign Minister, Roberta Pinotti, is ready to answer the threat immediately if necessary, telling the newspaper *Il Messaggero* that 5,000 troops are ready for action. Egypt is **already responding** to the execution. Reuters reports they’ve hit militant camps and training centers in pre-dawn airstrikes.

The Deutsche Presse- Pope Francis called Patriarch Tawadros to give his condolences.

Congratulations

TO THE BLESSED AND SILENT CHOIR OF MARTYRS IN LIBYA



By Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty



PRECIOUS TEARS!

As many people watched the video revealing the last moments before your martyrdom, many shed tears.

1. These tears were shed in grief for the level of violence and vicious ways that those people reached, and how they surpassed the brutality of wild animals. Nevertheless, we pray for them (the persecutors) and weep for their sake that God might unveil their vision to the truth and that they may return to Him as He revealed Himself to Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9).

2. We also weep for your families who are deeply hurting for your departure from the world.

3. Our tears are also of joy that you are now members of the Victorious Church in paradise as they receive you with open arms. The heavenly hosts lift you up on their wings praising together the Savior of the world who raised from the dust those who resemble the angels sharing with them the heavenly life.

We could only picture how the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles and the fathers of the church and all those who are in Paradise expressing their joy in receiving you that day.

4. Our tears are of repentance, which every believer in the whole world presents asking to be cleansed from sins and linked to our God and Savior Jesus Christ, hoping to have a portion with you in His Divine bosom.

5. Is it the tears of the church from all corners of the earth that she may be devoting her concerns only with the salvation of all humankind, and of the eternal glory leaving the vainglory of the worldly praises and the love of richly appearance?

A BEAUTIFUL VOICE I WISH TO HEAR

The moments prior to your martyrdom as you were kneeling waiting to be executed, you have drawn our

hearts to almost hear your heart-felt praises and thanksgiving to God for His love and His highest award given in heaven. We could almost hear some of you calling on the Lord Jesus Christ!

The voices of your hearts were not heard by anyone but it reached the hearing of God Himself, who overlooks the hearts of people. You had no fear of pain or death.

You didn't try to negotiate or change the outcome.

Your silence and your strong faith was a wonderful lesson taught that surpassed many lectures and sermons. This reminded us with the children of Bethlehem who were only babes and were murdered and were also lifted up in a glorious reception by the heavenly hosts.

Your silence was heard louder than voices of the hermits and the fathers of the deserts; you recorded it with your blood and your obedience to what God had allowed for you.

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU WHO ARE BLESSED MARTYRS

What we are congratulating you for is the winning of the greatest gift of all; your eternal life. In the quickest way, you entered the Paradise. What you won in a few hours leading to moments is matched with a life time of struggle for all of us. You stole Paradise like (Demas), the thief on the right hand of Christ on the cross.

Blessed are you who are killed for sake of His name for yours is the kingdom of heaven and you are now the intercessors to all of us believers and non-believers.

Remember all mankind and the peace of the whole world at the throne of God. Until we meet, pray for our weakness as we one day cross over from this world to you through the divine grace.

Meriam Ibrahim

Is Role Model of A Courageous Christian Woman



Terry Jeffrey | Dec 24, 2014 In a year when some of the most exalted public figures in the United States distinguished themselves by advancing unjust causes or cowardly refusing to seriously resist them, a pregnant mother imprisoned in Sudan with her 18-month-old American son set a standard for saintly courage.

Meriam Ibrahim is the role model of the year 2014

When a Sudanese court told Meriam she must renounce her Christian faith and convert to Islam or be hung by the neck until dead, she gave a non-negotiable answer: NO.

Meriam was born in Sudan to a Christian mother and a Muslim father -- who abandoned the family when Meriam was 6. Her mother raised her Christian.

In December 2011, in a Catholic church in Khartoum, Meriam married U.S. citizen Daniel Wani. Daniel had emigrated from Sudan to New Hampshire in 1998 and was naturalized in 2005. In November 2012, 11 months after she and Daniel were married, Meriam gave birth to their first child, Martin.

By law, because he was the son of a U.S. citizen, Martin was a U.S. citizen.

In February, Sudan threw Meriam and Martin in the Omdurman women's prison. Meriam was then five months pregnant with her and Daniel's second child.

In Sudan's view, Meriam had allegedly committed two crimes. The first was apostasy. Because the father who had abandoned her was a Muslim, she had no choice but to be a Muslim, too!

Her second alleged crime was adultery. As a Muslim woman, she had no right to marry a Christian man. Thus, her marriage to Daniel was not a marriage, and their relationship was illicit.

In March, as reported by the Christian news site Morning Star News, Sudan formally charged Meriam with these crimes.

On May 15, when her case came to trial, the judge gave her an ultimatum: Embrace Islam or die.

Meriam refused. The judge sentenced her to be flogged for adultery and hanged for apostasy!

After her trial, Daniel Wani described his wife's remarkable heroism to the Daily Mail. When he visited her in prison she told him: ***"I refuse to change. I am not giving up Christianity just so that I can live.***

"I know I could stay alive by becoming a Muslim and I would be able to look after our family, but I need to be true to myself," she said.

"My wife is very, very strong," Wani told the Daily Mail. "She is stronger than me."

"When they sentenced her to death I broke down and tears were streaming down my eyes," he said. "Our lawyers were passing me tissues. But she stayed strong. She did not flinch when she was sentenced."

The public posture the Obama administration adopted toward Meriam's case intensified the family's ordeal.

In a story published more than two weeks before Meriam was sentenced to death, the Morning Star News quoted Daniel saying that the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum wanted DNA evidence to prove his imprisoned son, Martin, was his in fact his son.

"I will have to take a DNA sample in Khartoum, then send it to the USA for testing," Wani said. "I have provided wedding documents and the baby's birth certificate, and doors were closed on his face."

"I have tried to apply for papers to travel to the USA with my wife and child, but the American Embassy in Sudan did not help me," he said.

On May 27, less than two weeks after she was sentenced to death -- and while literally in chains in Omdurman prison -- Meriam gave birth to a baby girl. She and Daniel named the baby Maya.

The U.S. State Department initially refused to acknowledge that Daniel himself was a U.S. citizen. Then, when he signed a Privacy Act waiver, the department conceded he was a citizen, but would not concede that his two imprisoned children were citizens.

As the U.S. government refused to acknowledge the citizenship of her children, and the Sudanese government insisted that she become a Muslim or die, Meriam remained steadfast in her Christian faith.

On June 23, a Sudanese appeals court ordered Meriam and her babies released from prison. But the next day, she and Daniel and the children were stopped at the airport as they tried to leave the country.

A month later, after taking sanctuary at the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, the family flew to Italy -- and freedom.

"I trusted God from the first instant," Meriam was quoted as saying in the Daily Mail. ***"I knew that He would not abandon me."***

"When I was asked to renounce my religion I knew what I was risking," she said.

Meriam now lives with Daniel, Martin and Maya in New Hampshire, where the state's motto is ***"Live Free or Die."***

She has shown the world what that truly means.

The Islamic Terrorists (Isis) Burns their Captive Pilot Al-Kasasbeh Alive



The Islamic State held al-Kasasbeh captive before killing him in early January 2015. It then conducted negotiations with the Jordanian government, claiming it would spare al-Kasasbeh's life and free Japanese journalist Kenji Goto in exchange for Sajida al-Rishawi, a convicted failed-suicide-bomber terrorist being held in Jordan under a death sentence.[5] After the Jordanian government insisted on freeing al-Kasasbeh as part of the deal and showing proof that he was alive before it would exchange al-Rishawi, the Islamic State released a video on 3 February 2015 showing al-Kasasbeh being burned to death while trapped inside a cage.

Al-Kasasbeh was burned to death by ISIS terrorists in January 2015. His killing was recorded on video and shown near the end of a 22-minute "snuff film" entitled Healing the Believers' Chests, credited to the Islamic State's official Al Furqan Media Foundation and distributed via a Twitter account known as a source for ISIL propaganda, and on video-sharing sites

Looking Unto Jesus



Rejoicing in the Crosses of Life While on the Way to Glory

Endurance to the Finish

Just as the Lord Jesus struggled during the days of His flesh, so too must we take up our cross and follow in His path. He is called "The author and finisher of our faith" and "the author of eternal salvation", may be because He defined what it means to suffer in order benefit others.

That is what the Lord told the Rich Young Ruler that inquired of Him how he can attain eternal life,

"Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross and follow Me' (Mar10:21).

I imagine this rich young man not only having trouble with the idea of selling all possessions and giving to the poor, but even more troubling to him was the idea of taking up the cross. Treasure in heaven was not worth carrying a cross. The cross was the most shameful method of tormenting a convicted criminal, not to mention how agonizing it was. This young man had fulfilled the commandments and was not by any means a convicted criminal worthy of the cross. But he was completely offended by the notion of carrying a cross. What he didn't realize was that if he really wanted to attain eternal life then he had to attain the crucified Lord Himself, for the Lord said, "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). This young man knew the commandments and therefore he felt that this whole cross-thing was not worth it.

As you continue to run the race, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus" (Phil.2:5), dear reader. Christ came for one reason and one reason only, to give us a much better life (John 10:10), and for this reason He hurried to the cross because He knew it meant our freedom from the bondage of Satan. Christ Jesus came to die in our stead: and it is specifically for this reason that we run too. We run, as St. Paul says beautifully to share in Christ's suffering for me:

"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death... but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus had made me his own...but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us, as many as are mature, have this mind" (Phil. 3:10, 12, 13-15).

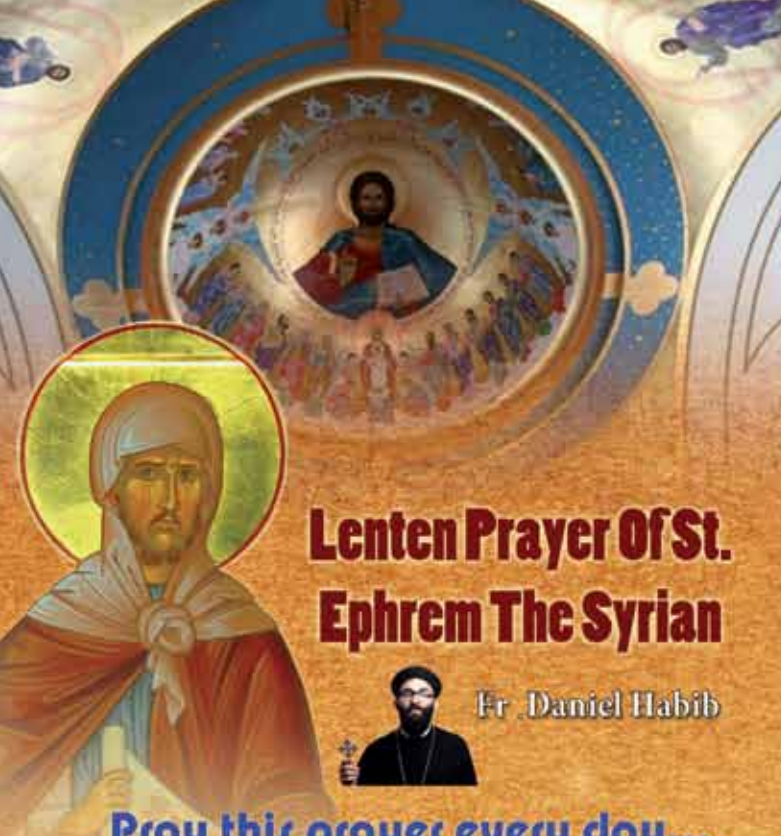
Rejoicing to Carry the Cross

In Galatians 6:14, St. Paul wrote of his pride in sharing in the cross of Jesus Christ: "But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." You see St. Paul had looked to the Lord Jesus and the cross did not offend him but was the source of boast and glory to him. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians explaining: "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:18, 22-24). The disciples all saw this so called "foolishness" when the Lord -the author of our faith- hurried to Jerusalem where He and they all knew He would be arrested because He had told them so. He told them three times that He would be captured (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33), nevertheless, He hurried and this hurry to His arrest is what they found amazing. His example of hurrying to the cross was frightening to them: "Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them [He hurried]; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid" (See Mark 10:32). Perhaps the disciples were afraid because they thought the Lord was mistaken by walking and hurrying into the hands of those who wanted to kill Him, but He said, "for this purpose I came to this hour" (Jn. 12:27).

The Glory of Carrying the Cross

The Apostle Paul did not just speak eloquently about the cross, but he lived his Christian life carrying the cross and learned to rejoice in carrying it. He was afflicted with some sort of illness which in 2 Corinthians 12:7 he called "a thorn in the flesh." He wrote about it:

"Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (12:8-10). St. Paul learned to love the cross, afflictions and struggles from his master, whom he had seen and tasted. This is why he tells us all to **"look unto Jesus", and learn how He perceived the cross, "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame"** (Heb. 12:2).



Lenten Prayer Of St. Ephrem The Syrian

Fr. Daniel Habib

Pray this prayer every day...

*O Lord and Master of my
life!
Take from me the spirit of
sloth,
faint-heartedness, lust of
power, and idle talk.
But give rather the spirit of
chastity,
humility, patience, and love
to Thy servant.
Yea, Lord and King!
Grant me to see my own
errors and not to judge my
brother, for Thou art
blessed unto ages of ages.
Amen.*

Mediation (from a Journey in the Desert)

Lord, I am always so busy and never seem to have enough time to sit alone with You. Help me Lord to have some quiet time each day, to reflect on my sins and to hear Your still, small voice.

This story was told... There were three friends, serious men, who became monks. One of them chose to make peace between men who were at odds, as it is written, 'Blessed are the peacemakers' (Matt. 5:9). The second chose to visit the sick. The third chose to go away to be quiet in solitude. Now the first, toiling among contentions, was not able to settle all quarrels and, overcome with weariness, he went to him who tended the sick, and found him also failing in spirit and unable to carry out his purpose. So the two went away to see him who had withdrawn into the desert, and they told him their troubles. They asked him to tell them how he himself had fared. He was silent for a while, and then poured water into a vessel and said, 'Look at the water,' and it was murky. After a little while he said again, 'See now, how clear the water has become.' As they looked into the water they saw their own faces, as in a mirror. Then he said to them, 'So it is with anyone who lives in a crowd; because of the turbulence, he does not see his sins: but when he has been quiet, above all in solitude, then he recognizes his own faults.'

An old desert father once said, 'Every morning and every evening a monk ought to make a reckoning with himself over his actions and ask himself: 'Have I perhaps done what God does not want me to do? Or have I not done what God wants me to do?''

Abba Nilus said, 'The arrows of the enemy cannot touch someone who loves quiet. But those who wander about among crowds will often be wounded by them.'

'Then He said, 'Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD.' And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a small still voice" (1 Kings 19:11-12).

Pearls of Wisdom: Abba Anthony said, 'He who sits alone and is quiet has escaped from three wars: hearing, speaking, seeing: but there is one thing against which he must continually fight: that is, his own heart.'



Courage

By Fr. Augustinos Hanna



Our Christian, life and death, require courage, especially, in the following fields....

1. Courage in the fight against evil:

We have to fight against evil wherever it exists, in ourselves, in others and in the whole world. St. Paul writes to his disciple Timothy, ***"You my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus...you must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier"*** (2 Tim. 2:1-4).

In his letter to the Ephesians, he addresses all Christians to ***"Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the full armor of God so that you may be able to take your stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places"*** (Eph.6:10-18).

In the book of "Song of Solomon", the Lord likens His bride with a brave horse in war saying, "I have compared you, my love, to my filly among Pharaoh's chariots" (1:9). Although the book of Song of Solomon is a book of love, it depicts the church of Christ a third time, twice, in military attire, saying ***"Who is she who looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun. Awesome as an army with banners"*** (Song 6:4 & 6:10). Therefore, be courageous and "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21).

2. Courage to fulfill your unique destiny:

"You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13). For both, salt and light, to practice its role, it should melt and burn. ***Sacrifice in Christian life is a MUST.*** Both do their job silently without words. Both are essential to the world to bring forth taste and light. Both sacrifice for the good of others without objection or price in return or waiting any thanks. Both

have a message and need courage to practice its message and sacrifice and deny itself.

3. Courage in suffering:

Even though each person's suffering is individual experience, it is possible to find comfort or gain courage from the words of another sufferer. In situations where human weakness and frailty are most exposed, God's love is often also most clearly seen. "Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Cor. 12:9, 10 & Joel 3:10). "We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us" (Rom.5:3-5).

4. Courage when fear strikes:

No one can truthfully claim to be a stranger to fear, though some are more vulnerable than others to its attacks. We may even lay awake, imagining possible disasters. We have many promises in the Bible concerning God's care for us and protection of us. It is good to keep a list of these promises handy, so that we can read them through, prayerfully and thankfully, every time fears and worries begin to fill our minds. ***"Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"*** So, do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat or what shall we drink? Or 'what shall we wear?'" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matt. 6:27-33). We do not know what the future holds, but we know Who holds the future. So, be courageous when fear strikes.

5. Courage to be honest:

It takes great courage to be honest with oneself; facing up of one's strengths and weaknesses, responsibilities and conflicts. We need sometimes to take a good, long honest look at ourselves to find out why we are not progressing to wholeness and maturity. "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? *Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck of your brother's eye.*" (Matt. 7: 3-5). We are asked to be honest and "*faithful until death to get the crown of life*" (Rev. 2:10); and honesty needs courage, patience and sacrifice.

6. Courage in persecution:

St, Paul set the general rule when he said, "*All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*" (2 Tim.3:12). The Lord Jesus Christ confirmed that by saying, "*If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you*" (John 15:20). Look at the Author and Finisher of our faith, when they insulted Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23). "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:6, 10).

We have just seen, before this magazine go to the print shop, the pictures and videos of the 21 Coptic Christian martyrs who were brutally murdered in Libya on February 14, 2015 on the hands of the Islamic state terrorists named Isis. It was very easy for them to escape cutting their throats if anyone of them denied Christ, but they refused proudly and would rather to get tortured and die courageously with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and a smile on their lips. Those modern heroes of faith preached Christ to the entire world and got the admiration of millions much more than any sermon or lecture could do.

7. Courage to love:

The greatest two commandments according to Christ are to "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength*" and to "*Love your neighbor as yourself*" (Matt. 22:37-39). "*God is love.* Whoever lives in love lives in God, and vice versa. *There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear*" (1 John 4:16-18). It does take courage to love, because loving makes one more forgiving, tolerable, patient and sacrificing. Life without love is a life without meaning or joy.

8. Courage to overcome painful memories:

It can require great courage to face the ghosts of the past, but unless we do so, those phantoms may continue to haunt and terrify us. Perhaps we keep remembering a sin or failure or mistake which we have never really put right, or painful experience which we haven't altogether come to terms with. If we truly want to overcome bad memories, God will help us to lay all those sad or guilty ghosts of the past through confession of guidance. God said, "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more" (Heb. 8:12). "*For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, 'In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength'*" (Isa. 30:15). *St. Paul also says in this regard, "One thing I do, forgetting what is behind and looking forward towards what is ahead. I press towards the goal"* (Phil. 3:13, 14).

9. Courage in the dark:

Since our early childhood, we used to fear darkness. Yet, now also after we grew up, we still have times in our lives when we seem to be in the dark'. We can't see where we have been, where we are now or where we are going. Joy and peace seem to have fled, along with hope and strength. At such times we need to cry to God for courage to go on living, forward, trusting that God is there in the shadows though we may neither hear his voice nor feel his hand.

10. Courage to face death:

If death meant annihilation, nothingness, then it would be true to say that many people suffer fates far worse than death; those whose minds or bodies are racked with pain or horribly impaired through disease or man's inhumanity to man.

But the Christian does not see death as the end. Physical death is the end of the time in which we are free to change roads or destinations. And so what one makes of life determines what one makes of death. Jesus said to Martha, "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die....For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive*" (John 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:22).

Therefore, after the death of Christ and His resurrection, death lost its sting and the grave lost its victory. Death, to the believer, became gain and the desire to be with Christ is far better than living in the flesh (Phil. 1:21; 23).

BREATHING FIRE

(By: st. john chrysostom)

SPIRITUAL WARFARE, FOR THE EARLY CHRISTIANS, was unthinkable without the Holy Eucharist. For the devil is terrified of the presence of Jesus, who has already conquered our adversary and bruised his head (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:14,15). In times of martyrdom, believers saw the Blessed Sacrament as their inexhaustible source of courage and strength.

“The Eucharist is a safeguard to those who receive,” said St. Cyprian of Carthage. “We need it in order to arm, with the protection of the Lord’s abundance, those whom we wish to keep safe against the adversary.”

The martyrs of Abitina put it most memorable: “We cannot survive without the Eucharist.” The body of Christ makes our weak bodies and souls strong for the inevitable combat. Said St. John Chrysostom: *“Leaving this table we are like lions, breathing flames, and are made a terror to the demons.”*



FREUDIAN VIEW OF DREAMS

(By: Dr. Behnam)

In the late 19th century, psychotherapist Sigmund Freud developed a theory that the content of dreams is driven by unconscious wish fulfillment.

Freud called dreams the “royal road to the unconscious.”[31] He theorized that the content of dreams reflects the dreamer’s unconscious mind and specifically that dream content is shaped by unconscious wish fulfillment. He argued that important unconscious desires often relate to early childhood memories and experiences.

Freud’s theory describes dreams as having both manifest and latent content. Latent content relates to deep unconscious wishes or fantasies while manifest content is superficial and meaningless. Manifest content often masks or obscures latent content.

In his early work, Freud argued that the vast majority of latent dream content is sexual in nature, but he later moved away from this categorical position. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* he considered how trauma or aggression could influence dream content. He also discussed supernatural origins in *Dreams and Occultism*, a lecture published in *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*. [32]



REFUSE TO LISTEN TO GOSSIP



(By: Rick Warren)

Gossip is passing on information when you are neither part of the problem nor part of the solution.

You know spreading gossip is wrong, but you should not listen to it, either, if you want to protect your Church. Listening to gossip is like accepting stolen property and it makes you just as guilty of the crime.

When someone begins to gossip to you, have the courage to say, “Please stop. I don’t need to know this. Have you talked directly to that person?”

People who gossip to you will also gossip about you.

They cannot be trusted.

If you listen to gossip, God says you are a Trouble-maker (Prov.17:4,16:28,26:20,25:9, 20:19) “Troublemakers listen to troublemakers.” (Proverb 17:4) “These are the ones who split churches, thinking only of themselves.” (Jude 1:19)

It is sad that in God’s flock, the greatest wounds usually come from other sheep, not wolves. St. Paul warned about “cannibal Christians” who “devour one another” and destroy the fellowship (Galatians 5: 15). The Bible says these kind of troublemakers should be avoided.”A gossip reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a babblers.” (Proverb 20:19).

The fastest way to end a church or small group conflict is to livingly confront those who are gossiping and insist they stop it. Solomon pointed out, “Fire goes out for lack of fuel, and tensions disappear when gossip stops” (Prov. 26: 20).



BY FR. AUGUSTINOS HANNA

Public, Private and Emergency Fasts

The Coptic Orthodox Church, well known as the “Church of Alexandria” Egypt, is the most church in the world that has the biggest number and longest and strictest fasts.

Once when Pope Shenouda visited the Roman Catholic Pope, he said to him that the Catholic Church kept facilitating the fasts for her people until she lost fasting! And the Roman Pope agreed and said “You are right and we are thinking seriously to return to our roots again.”

May be there are some special reasons for the Copts to increase fasts throughout the ages, which were prolonged to contain 2/3 two thirds of the year!

AMONG THESE REASONS:

(1) The Coptic Church is originally an apostolic and Biblical Church founded by St. Mark the Evangelist and Apostle.

(2) It is an ascetic church and the one which initiated monasticism and spread it all over the world.

(3) It is a traditional and conservative church that kept the ancient doctrines, rites and traditions intact.

(4) It is the most persecuted church from the time of the Romans, to the time of the Islamic invasion of Egypt and all the Middle East in the 7th century and until present (the time of Isis)! Every day the church suffers severe persecution and martyrs of faith to the point that the name of the church is called the “The Church of the Martyrs” or the “Mother of Martyrs”!

On the contrary of that, the modern churches and Protestant churches almost do not practice fasting and all their knowledge about it is some Bible and historical stories! One of their leaders said, “In a large city I inquired of all the Christian book-stores for some publication on the subject of fasting. They could not suggest a single title! Fasting has been out of vogue, in the churches of the West. The very idea of someone actually fasting today seems strange to most 20th and 21st Christians. They associate it with medieval Christianity!”

WHY FAST? WE FAST FOR MANY REASONS:

1. Fasting is a Biblical teaching in both Old and New Testaments.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Perfect One, fasted to teach us to fast for our own spiritual benefit.

3. The Lord Jesus also taught us that there are three pillars of worship and ministry which are, prayer, fasting and giving alms (Matt. 6). Through fast, we worship God with our bodies; while in prayer we worship God

with our spirit, and by almsgiving we worship God with our money.

4. Fasting also is one of the powerful means of service (Acts 13:2).

5. Fasting, combined with prayer, is a powerful weapon to cast out demons (Matt. 17:22).

6. Fasting is a self-discipline way, helps us to gain many virtues such as self control, self denial, humility, content and charity.

7. Fasting is an expression of repentance (Jonah 3).

THE MAIN THREE SORTS OF FASTING:

1. PUBLIC FAST: The Bible spoke of public fasts as in Joel when said, “Sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly” (Joel 2:15). It showed us public fasts that performed miracles. *In the book of Esther fasting* of God’s people saved them from the horrible plot of Haman (4:16).

The book of Jonah tells us that the fast of the Ninevites saved them from destruction (Jonah 3:5).

The book of Acts tells us that the fast of St. Paul and all the travelers with him on the ship saved 276 persons from drowning (Acts 27: 18-38). The Coptic Church arranged public fasts like Advent and Lent, Wednesdays and Fridays, for the faithful spiritual growth.

In our recent time, when Sadat wanted to issue the law of apostasy, which harms Christians; Pope Shenouda opposed that law and declared 3 day public fast which resulted that this ugly, unfair law had never appeared.

2. PRIVATE FAST: In addition to the church public fasts, we have the option to fast any time we need whenever we have a problem or trouble or desire to seek God’s will. Isaiah 58:3 says, *“In the day of your fast you find pleasure”*. Jeremiah 36:6, says, “On the day of fasting.... you shall read the words of the Lord.”

3. EMERGENCY FAST: Besides the two mentioned kinds of fast, there is an emergency fast, which arises in cases of emergency such as in some of the previous examples of Nineveh, Esther, Paul or Sadat and moving the Mount of Mokkatum in Egypt in the ten’s century.

In some cases, emergency may lead to a public fast or to a private fast. May God accept our fasts and prayers for the safety and peace of Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan, Nigeria and the entire world, as well as for our salvation and spiritual growth. Amen.



How to build a lasting and successful marriage (9)

by Fr. Gawargious Kolta



20- The Definite Responsibilities of Spouses in Marital life:

In successful marriages, husbands and wives know their definite responsibilities, and they do not take the tasks and responsibilities of their spouse. They know well the role of each of them in the family. They understand each other's sexuality. According to God's plan, **the strength of man's body, made him the protector**. In successful marriages, wives do not deny the role of the protector, despite what happened in the society in the last hundred years. This was a part of God's original and ideal plan for Adam and his sons for managing the earth resources (Gen. 2:15). In successful marriage, every couple believes that each one of them completes the other and carries out his/her natural role for the happiness and the welfare of the family.

Nowadays, many wives try to take the responsibilities of their husbands and vice versa. Their roles at home are neither defined nor understood. **Some wives do not accept that their husbands take the leading role** in their marital life. They consider that they are more efficient than their husbands. Trying to make the roles of males and females in the family structure interchangeable is a contributing factor to the family problems, and the loss of oneness of heart and affection. It has become natural to hear the common saying: **"If you do not know how to lead our life, and meet my needs and those of my children, I will manage that myself"**. It has become a belief of many of today's wives: **"Be independent and self sufficient"**. If the roles are reversed home unbalance happens, and **the children surely get affected** and confused, and may rebel against the parents, or disrespect them, considering that their behavior is abnormal.

Reasons of reversed responsibilities in the family:

1- Some Husbands are passive or uncertain about their leadership role. This happens in many recent families. Consequently, wives will unavoidably take over all the responsibilities which their husbands could not bear. Passive husbands might have been subjected to some kind of guilt in their childhood, or might have failed competition in school. This makes them feel a deep sense of inferiority. Some passive husbands **may be successful in their jobs, but feel inferior in** front of their wives, especially if their wives are smarter.

In successful marriages, when the wives find that their husbands are passive, they try to build their husband's self-esteem. **They remember the instructions, said to them in the wedding ceremony**, when the priest asked the bride to submit to her husband and obey him as she had obeyed her parents. In

the Coptic wedding, the priest, who officiates the ceremony puts a robe on the groom and asks him to take the leadership of the family as its priest.

2- Some husbands accept willingly the leadership of their wives to minimize their toil and the burden of leadership, because of lack of time, different other pressures, and the **style of modern life, that has eroded their energy, attention and patience**. Those factors are vital for sustaining healthy successful marriage. The result would be resentment and an emotional distancing that entirely destroys the family system.

This will be clearer in creating bad relations between those husbands and their kids. Of course, **husbands get disappointed by the bad attitude of their children towards them**, but they will be helpless and cannot solve these problems. A passive father living with an overprotective and dominating mother will produce unhealthy children.

3- Some husbands or wives try to prove that they are tough enough to make it alone. Confrontation which would happen causes loneliness and despair and a big gap in the family. The pride of both could be the main cause of this situation. Sometimes one of them would be so stubborn and refuses submission. **In successful marriages**, both husbands and wives obey the instructions of the priest who had advised them in the wedding ceremony to submit to one another and to live in harmony, in order to avoid family problems.

4- Some wives today do not accept the word "helper", that was said by God (Gen. 2:18). They ask: "How can someone be a helper and at the same time be equal in function and value?" They think that helper is merely an assistant to someone, who is competent. Of course this is wrong, because if a man was sufficient for himself, God would not have created Eve to complete him. The Lord said: **"It is not good that a man should be alone"** (Gen. 2:18). The man needs the woman as much as she needs him. Both of them help each other through the course of life. **In successful marriages, no friction occurs** between husbands and their wives, because there is Christian love and mutual respect. There is no aggression or fight between them, because both husbands and wives carry out their responsibilities efficiently.

5- There are some husbands who withdraw from their aggressive wives, but when they cannot bear their aggression anymore, they will fight them. Problems happen when they want to regain their position as men, and their responsibilities in their families. Fights usually start, but usually it would be

too late, as their wives refuse to surrender. Such husbands blame themselves and live under a self-imposed guilt. **A Story of a husband who left his home for five years** to work in an Arab country alone, and when he returned home friction and problems happened with his controlling wife, as she wanted to continue to lead the family, and refused to surrender or to follow his lead.

James Walker in his book: **“Husbands who won’t to lead & wives who want to follow”** said that a husband who suffers from his controlling wife, may say to himself:

- + God must be punishing me for something I did wrong.
- + I will escape from arguing with my wife.
- + What I have done to make my wife disrespect me?
- + I know that I am too weak for such confrontation.
- + Why many couples can argue and the wives submit to their husbands? I am unfortunate.
- + I feel that I am a second class citizen in my home.
- + I tried to use many tactics with her, and I was defeated.
- + I am afraid that my children will not respect me, for my wife is a manipulating woman.
- + It is a shame that I who am greatly respected in my work, is treated badly from my wife.
- + Is it going to be like this all my life with her? I am a miserable husband.

6- Some husbands feel most comfortable emotionally when they have absolute control over their wives. An unsecured husband has been usually affected by the image of his father. It is most likely that such husband had lived in a **female-dominated home**, where the father was missing or distant. He may deeply love his father and sympathize with him, but yet cannot respect him. It is impossible for him to allow his wife to make a decision, especially when it affects him. Usually **such husband refuses to change**; and thus he pushes his wife to defend herself and be aggressive to him, as she refuses his absolute control. In such cases, disputes and problems will continue for the rest of their marital life.

In successful marriages, husbands apply the Biblical role of leadership at home. It will be the leadership that is mandated to us by **the example of Christ, who washed the feet of His disciples** (Jn. 13:4-17), and by the instructions of the Scriptures (1 Pet. 3:12, 5:3).

7- Some husbands escape from their homes to avoid their over-controlling wives. Those who are **religious** escape either by going for heavy work (becoming workaholic), or by cleaving to their friends, going to Starbucks or any coffee shop. Those who are **not religious**, leave their homes, and escape to bad habits; by addicting drugs or gambling, for many hours in order to forget the pressure of their wives and camouflage their sadness. Others may escape from their controlling wives looking for other women, who appreciate them and raise their self-esteem. Many wives, who are married to such suffering husbands, soon notice that their husbands are no longer interested in them, but they usually do not realize that they had done anything wrong.

In successful marriages, the couples live with the Biblical teachings that tell us that the man is head of the woman, and that the man is not created for the woman, but the woman for the man (1 Cor. 11:3-10). Wives know that husbands do not like irritable wives, who do not try to live in harmony with their husbands (Prov. 21:9). They also remember their mother Sarah, who respected her husband Abraham and called him ‘my lord’.

It was found that many problems that happen due to controlling wives can be due to the wrong choice of men, who like to marry rich girls with shallow spirituality. Such wives may treat their husbands in superiority, especially if they have higher income than their husbands. The same problem may happen to those who get married to highly educated girls, or those who are from highly eminent families.

Example: When **King David** married **Michal**, the daughter of King Saul, she loved him for his braveness, although he was a poor and lightly esteemed young man (1 Sam. 18:20-28). When King David brought up the Ark of the Lord into his city, he was dancing, leaping whirling before the Lord’s Ark. When Michal saw him doing that, **she despised him and mocked him**. She insulted him in front of the servants. There was a **debate between them**, and King David abandoned her, and she did not have children till she died (2 Sam.6:14-23).

Proper responsibilities of each spouse in the family:

In successful marriages, each spouse has a defined and clear responsibility in the family. Reversed responsibilities do not yield good for the family. From the Christian point of view, and according to the Coptic Orthodox Church rites, the **husband knows that his role will be:**

- 1- The spiritual leader of the family (the priest of the family), and the one responsible of all spiritual achievements at home.
- 2- The only one who should take care of his wife in love and humility, have compassion on her hastens to do everything good for her, and that which gladdens her heart.
- 3- He should share with his wife the responsibility of raising their children according to Christian morals, and Orthodox faith, in order to offer saints to the church.
- 4- He should share with his wife the house-keeping and the heavy duties; such as laundry, ironing, purchasing groceries, home repairs, yard works, automobile maintenance, and house cleaning.
- 5- He should share with his wife the responsibility of taking the children to school, bringing them back home, and watching them while doing their home-works.
- 6- He should share with his wife the different family plans, social financial and recreational.

The wife should know that her role will be:

- 1- Respect her husband, honor him, receive him with joy and cheer, observe all her obligations to him, and do not frown in his face.
- 2- She must consider him as the leader of the family and obey him in mutual love, and humbleness.
- 3- If she and her husband are the providers of the family, she must share with him all the expenses, not my money or your money, but our money.

(To be continued)



By Fr.
Augustinos Hanna

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

The Story of the fall of
Satan and his Animosity



Do Christians have enemies?

To answer this question we need to distinguish between two types of enemies. The first type is Satan and the second are the followers of Satan from men. And this is what we refer to in the Thanksgiving Prayer when we say, “All envy, all temptation, *all the work of Satan, the counsel of wicked men and the rising up of enemies, hidden and manifest*, take them away from u” The hidden enemy is Satan. And the manifest, are Satan’s followers who are referred to as ‘wicked men’. This animosity of the ‘wicked men’, is supposed to come from their side. It is a one-sided animosity, because the Christian is not supposed to resent, hate, contend, avenge or be enemy with anyone. But rather to love ones enemies, bless those who curse him and do good and pray for those who use and persecute him (2 Tim. 2:24, Matt. 5:44).

As for the animosity with Satan, it started when he fell and rebelled against God. And it started against man, when he envied man and used the serpent to make him fall in the Garden of Eden. The judgment against the serpent came from God when He said, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” (Gen. 3:15). And from there Satan was called, “the great dragon...that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.” (Rev. 12:9; 20:2). So Satan’s name was synonymous with serpent as Jesus Christ said, “*I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*” (Lk. 10:18).

And for this hostility between the devil and man, St. Peter says, “*Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*” (1 Pet. 5:8). And St. Paul says, “*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against powers, against*

the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:11-12).

But the devil is not the only spiritual enemy for the Christian. There are other enemies who befriend the devil such as the world and its desires summed up in these three, “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” (1 Jn. 2:16). Even also the human body, if it is not sanctified by the Spirit of God, becomes a temple for Him and submits to the spirit, “for the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another...the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal 5:17-21). There is no doubt that being acquainted with our main enemy, Satan or the devil, helps us to guard ourselves and also triumph over him. It is necessary to know his nature, character, thoughts, works, armor, temptations and tricks.

It is better to know the story of Satan from the beginning – and what does the Bible say about it – here are the 10 most important verses about this:

The fall of Satan: (Isaiah 14:12)

1. The Divine inspiration says on the mouth of Isaiah the prophet about the King of Babylon, who was a symbol of the devil in his pride, harshness and selfishness, “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.... *I will be like the Most High.*’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol...” (Isa. 14:12-15).

2. **Ezekiel 28:14:** The Divine inspiration presents more details in the book of Ezekiel the prophet saying, “Thus says the Lord God: ‘You were the seal of perfection, full

of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: The Sardis, topaz and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.... *You were the anointed cherub; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you....therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering Cherub...Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground... You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities....therefore I brought fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth...* You have become a horror, and shall be no more forever.”(Ezek. 28; 12-19).

3. In the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke chap. 4, we find Satan tempting the Lord Jesus Christ during his fast with three temptations; bread, vain glory, and pride of life. Christ triumphed over him by rejecting the temptations and showing us the primary, spiritual, triumphant weapons which are the word of God, fasting and prayer (Matt. 4 & Luke 4). We saw our Lord Jesus casting out demons from the sick, and He said, that in the last day *the wicked will be sent into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels* (Matt. 25:41).

4. In the gospel of St. Luke, the Lord Jesus informed us, *“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven”* (Lk. 10:18) Compare this with Isaiah 14:12 where he says, “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning.”

5. In the gospel of St. John our Lord convicts the Jews of their evil ways and pride in being the children of Abraham, “You are of *your father the devil* and the desires of your father you want to do. *He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*” (Jn. 8:44)

6. St. Peter writes, “*God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment*” (I Pet. 2:4)

7. St. Jude writes, “And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day...” (Jude 6).

8. St. John also writes in Revelation, “*And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but*

they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”(Rev 12:7-9).

9. St. John writes further, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that *serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him...and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him...*” (Rev 20:1-3).

10. The last mention of the devil in the book of Revelation talks to us about the end of Satan and says, “*The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever*” (Rev. 20:10).

The Names of the devil in the Holy Bible:

1. The enemy (Matt. 13:39)
2. The wicked one (Matt 13:19; I John 2:13, 5:18).
3. Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons – the literal meaning of the word is the lord of refuse or rubbish (Matt 12:24).
4. The murderer.
5. The liar (John 8:44).
6. The ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30)
7. The god of this age (II Cor. 4:4)
8. The prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2).
9. The ruler of the darkness (Eph 6:12)
10. The tempter (I Thess. 3:5).
11. The power of death (Heb 2:14).
12. A roaring lion seeking to devour the believers (I Pet. 5)
13. The adversary (I Pet 5:8).
14. The angel of the bottomless pit (Rev 9:11).
15. “Abaddon” a Hebrew word meaning ‘destruction’ or ‘devastation’ (Rev 9:11).
16. “Apollyon” a Greek word meaning ‘destroyer’ (Rev. 9)
17. The dragon (Rev 12:7).
18. The accuser of our brethren, who accused them day and night (Rev 12:10).
19. The serpent of old (Rev. 20:2).
20. The deceiver (Rev 20:10).
21. The devil (Matt 13:39, 25:41; John 8:44).
22. Satan, meaning the one who resists (Zech 3:2).
23. Lucifer, son of the morning, which was the name of Satan before his fall (Is 14:12).
24. Legion – a group of devils (Mk 5:9).
25. Belial, a Hebrew name meaning “hurtful, deceiver, corrupt, malignant, and evil.” (I Cor. 6:15; I Sam. 2:12).

(to be continued)

How to Benefit Spiritually from



Pascha Week

BY H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III



How do we enjoy the most spiritual week of the year?

1. Our behavior inside and outside church:

It is very noticeable that many people during Passion Week act very differently inside church than they do outside church. Inside church... black curtains, sad hymns, solemn readings, and complete concentration on the suffering of Christ. However, outside of church, we often laugh, joke around, socialize, think and talk about many worldly issues. We lose all the spiritual depth that we gained inside church. Let us concentrate our thoughts, conversations, and meditations around the events of this Holy Week and the passion of our Savior.

2. Retreat:

During our regular fasting days, we put the words of the Bible before us, "Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly" (Joel 1: 14). How much more then should we apply this commandment during Holy Week? This week should be characterized by solitude and retreat with God by staying away from idle discussions, various means of entertainment and pleasures. Reserve your time for God and to spiritual activities worthy of this week.

3. Follow the steps of Christ:

Meditate on the events of the week one by one, from Palm Sunday when Christ refused His worldly kingdom and the Jews gave up their hopes in Him, until they crucified and buried Him. On Palm Sunday, ask yourself: Is Christ King and Lord over everything in my life? Do I, like Christ, turn down worldly glory for spiritual and eternal glory? And during the "general funeral" afterwards, consider yourself attending your own funeral (because during this week the church will not hold funeral services).

Also, when the church denounces Judas' betrayal with a kiss on the eve of Wednesday's Pascha, ask yourself in prayer, "How often, O Lord, have I betrayed You?" "How many times have I told You words of love in prayers, while my actions show the opposite and my heart is far away from You?"

4. Share in the fellowship of His suffering:

St. Paul said "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, being conformed to His death" (Philippians 3:10). Can we give ourselves an exercise this week to share in the fellowship of His suffering and be conformed to His death? (source of this article: St-Takla.org) Can we follow Him in His suffering and ascend with Him to the cross? Can we say with St. Paul "With Christ I have been crucified; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Therefore, in order for Christ to live in us, we have to carry our cross and follow Him. If you have a cross in your life, don't complain about it, but rather rejoice in it and bear it for Christ's sake. "For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him but to suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29).

5. Asceticism:

Whoever puts the suffering of Christ before Him will not take any pleasure in eating, drinking or pampering the body. But in order to succeed in pursuing asceticism, we must satisfy our souls with spiritual food so that it may thrive and overcome physical hunger.

6. Spiritual readings:

Spiritual readings are also food for the soul. The church has organized for us a treasure of appropriate readings for every day of Holy Week. This consists of

Gospel readings, Old Testament prophecies that correspond to the events of each day, spiritual explanations and sermons of the church fathers and on Holy Saturday (Apocalypse night) the church reads the entire book of Revelation.

7. Hymns:

The hymns of Passion Week are moving and full of spiritual depth. Also, Hymns, like reading, preserve thoughts from wandering and guides them in a spiritual direction.

8. Prayer:

Since the prayers of the Agpeya are not used during Holy Week, we are to substitute personal prayers in their place. This is in addition to the intensive prayers of the church asking the Lord, who bore the sins of the world and died for us, to forgive and have mercy upon us according to His great mercy.

9. Confession and Communion

During this week, each person must sit with himself and remember his sins and put them on Christ's shoulders and tell Him in shame, "Carry O Lord my sins too, with the sins of the rest of humanity. Take my sins and nail them to the Cross with You, so that Your Blood may wipe them away!"

Look carefully at your sins and know that they are the cause of His crucifixion. Many people cry out of their sorrow for Christ's suffering while they crucify Him every day with their sins. We should not feel sorry for Christ during this week, but should be sorry for our sins that caused Him these pains. As Jesus told the women that were crying over Him, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not cry for Me, but cry for yourselves and your children." (Luke 23:28).

Before the Cross, we all stand as sinners, all under the condemnation. "no one is righteous, not even one." (Psalm 14:3). We confess our sins and prepare ourselves for communion. There are three liturgies during Holy Week: on Passover Thursday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday (Preceded, of course, by the Liturgy of Palm Sunday).

10. Spiritual Storage

Pascha Week is not an opportunity to benefit for a week only, but a time to store up spiritual nourishment enough to last the whole year, particularly needed during the 50 days after the Resurrection when there is no fasting.

Rumsfeld: ISIS 'Brings Back to Mind the Period before WWII'



As seen on On the Record with Greta Van Susteren

Former Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld went "On the Record" tonight, where he said much of the country seems to be in denial about ISIS terrorism.

His interview came in the wake of reports that ISIS has burned 45 people to death in Iraq, in addition to the news that ISIS beheaded 21 Christians in Libya.

"It brings back to mind the period before World War II where people said 'I didn't know' or 'I was just following orders' or 'it's random,' *but when you kill – systematically kill – Jews and kill Christians and say that's what you're doing, it's not random, it's purposeful.*"

Rumsfeld said this country must look at this problem honestly and deal with it. He said that the only way to deal with ISIS is to go after it.

"It is important that we not have a leadership vacuum," he added.

Rumsfeld also weighed in on the new Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, calling him a good man who will do well.

Women in the Coptic Church

In the Era of H.H. Pope Shenouda III



By Dr. Marcelle Hanna & Dr. Gigi Barsoum

Excerpts from celebrating his Silver Jubilee on Nov. 1996

There is a growing debate in Catholic and Protestant churches in the west regarding the role of women in the church. As societal and cultural gender roles have changed, there has been increasing demand for the church to also keep in step with the changing society and allow more rights and responsibilities to women in the church. This is exemplified in the debate over the ordination of women into the priesthood.

Amidst this debate, the Coptic Orthodox Church has remained steadfast in its beliefs and tradition. This tradition is perceived by some as restrictive and antiquated. But this is a superficial judgment. The Coptic Church's beliefs are founded on the teachings of Christ as He passed them down to His followers. Christ's teachings and His ministry were based on love and acceptance not exclusion and segregation based on gender. It was on these principles that the Church was founded and still exists. Women's role in the Coptic Church has remained unchanged and uninfluenced by culture of society, but there is no doubt that the era of Pope Shenouda III is considered a golden age for women because he has revived many of the sanctioned and traditional roles for women as well as encouraged women to take an active role in the Church. **How so?**

We will attempt to highlight in this small space some of Pope Shenouda's efforts to promote a more active role of women in the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Academically:

1. Under H.H. Pope Shenouda for the first time, women were allowed to enroll in the Coptic Orthodox Seminary and to receive a degree. There are currently over 100 women enrolled in Coptic Orthodox Seminaries around the world.

2. The Pope has also assigned women to the position of professor in the Coptic Seminaries.

Ecumenically:

1. H.H. Pope Shdnouda has assigned women to attend most of the ecumenical conventions.

2. He headed a delegation of eleven members of the Coptic Orthodox Church to the 7th Assembly of the

World Council of Churches. Among the delegates in attendance were representatives for women and youth.

3. He also hosted a conference in Cairo on **Women in Church and Society**, in which representatives from around the world attended.

Administratively:

1- For the first time in the Church, the Pope has encouraged women to become elected members of the Coptic Council to represent millions of the Coptic people. 2. His Holiness has also encouraged the participation of women on local church boards.

Publishing:

H.H. the Pope has encouraged the participation of women in the development and publishing of spiritual books and magazines as is demonstrated by the regular contribution of writers to the El-Keraza Magazine, the official publication of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Service:

There are many avenues in which women in the church are encouraged to serve such as: Sunday school teaching, youth leadership, Bible studies, administrative services. His Holiness also restored the early rites of the ordination of the deaconess assists the priest in non-liturgical services to the congregation.

Quotes from Pope Shenouda on Women:

• When God created woman, everything changed from "good" to very good". It was through the creation of the woman that creation reached perfection and completion.

• Before the fall from Paradise, the woman was given the same authority over creation as the man.

• Eve was not solely responsible for the fall from Paradise. The fault was equally shared between Adam and Eve.

• Christ in His service had many women helpers and followers.

• Women were faithful and courageous enough to follow Christ to the cross while many man fled.

• No physiological changes can hinder a woman from attending the Liturgy and participating in worship.

Weddings, Baptisms & Graduation Congratulations



St. John church Congratulates

Daniel Shehata and his bride Jennifer

On their wedding, wishing them every blessing, love, joy, peace, health, prosperous life, bright future and a Christian home built on Christ the Rock of Ages. Congratulations also to their two families.



St. John Church congratulates the bride

Lydia Louis and her bridegroom Dr. Maged

On their marriage, praying the Lord Jesus Christ to bless their life together and grant them harmony, success, joy, fruitful future and long life in God's love and protection.

The church also congratulates their two blessed families, Maged Louis, Eva, Peter, Nadia and Samia, and the groom's family.

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Fr. Augustinos, Tasony Marcelle, Dr. Lotfy and Lucy, Raouf Hanna and family congratulate Lydia & Dr. Maged

For their marriage wishing them every heavenly and earthly blessing and gift. Congratulations also to their parents and grandparents.



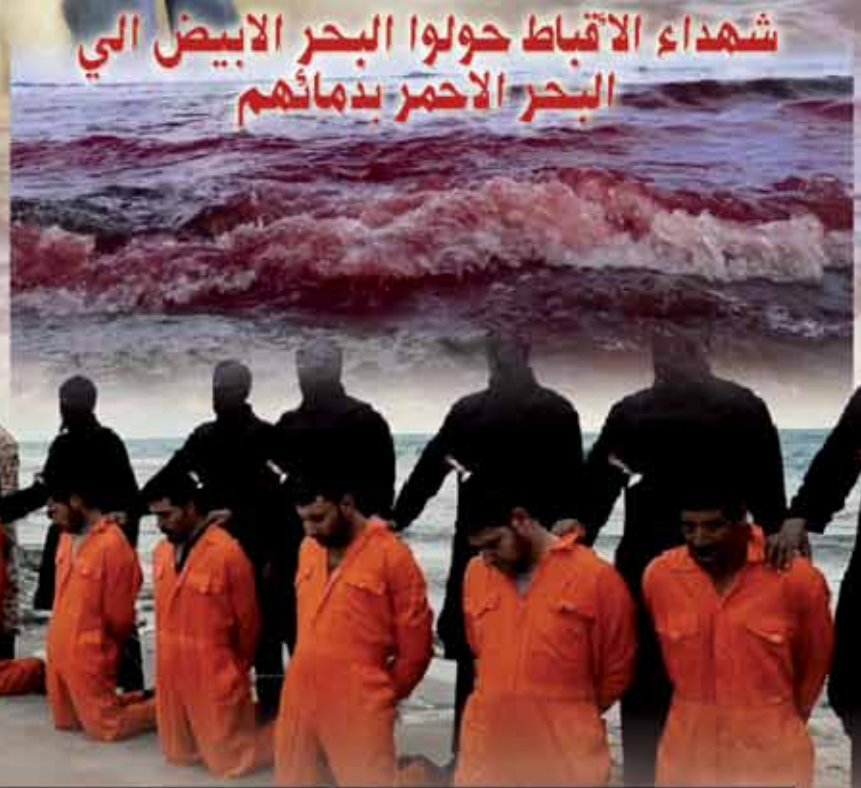
St. John Church congratulates,
AMIR BEKHIT AND EMILY
for the baptism of their child
GEORGE (SHENOUDA)

May the Lord Jesus bless his life and grant him health strength, and long life.



Congratulations to
KHALIL SAWIRAS & RANYA FARED
on the baptism of their daughter
RITA (MARIAM)

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless her life and grant her health, strength, grace and long life.



1. MILAD MAKEEN ZAKY
2. ABANUB AYAD ATIYA
3. MAGED SOLAIMAN SHEHATA
4. YUSUF SHUKRY YUNAN
5. KIROLLOS SHOKRY FAWZY
6. BISHOY ASTAFANUS KAMEL
7. SOMAILY ASTAFANUS KAMEL
8. MALAK IBRAHIM SINWEET
9. TAWADROS YUSUF TAWADROS
10. GIRGIS MILAD SINWEET
11. MINA FAYEZ AZIZ
12. HANY ABDELMESIH SALIB
13. BISHOY ADEL KHALAF
14. SAMUEL ALHAM WILSON
15. WORKER FROM AWR VILLAGE
16. EZAT BISHRI NASEEF
17. LOQA NAGATY
18. GABER MUNIR ADLY
19. ESAM BADIR SAMIR
20. MALAK FARAG ABRAM
21. SAMEH SALAH FARUQ



What Could We Have Done to Save the 21

By Nermien Riad (Coptic Orphans)



What I'm about to say is not going to be popular, but it needs to be said. The 21 martyrs died of malice, of murderousness. *But they also died of neglect.* What do I mean by that?

I mean that the 21 are not the first, and far from the last. A million martyrs are marching, in desperation, in search of bread for their children. What keeps them on the move is our indifference. Somewhere, as you read this, in a village in Egypt, someone is packing a tattered bag with threadbare clothes. He is preparing to kiss his wife and mother goodbye for the last time. With calloused hands, he's caressing the faces of his children as he looks on them for a final moment. He is not alone. Egyptians are going abroad in legions because they can't find the means to survive in their poverty-hammered villages. This new Exodus is driven not by a command from God, but by a lack of the food to put in a hungry child's stomach. Now let us look at ourselves, so proud of our achievements as Copts living abroad. We have the material goods that (we're told) equal status and happiness. We have the house and car. Money to store up, money to invest.

Have we — all of us in the diaspora — yet found a way to honestly translate our success and God's gifts into a meaningful effort to prevent these martyrdoms?

Tell me, what could all of these millions — the wealth that is indisputably controlled by our Coptic diaspora — do if invested wisely in Egypt's development? In for-profit enterprises that create jobs, keeping fathers and sons from desperately migrating in search of work? In non-profit projects that improve education? In service trips to Egypt that not only help transform communities, but also reconnect our children with our Church?

In every village, in every neighborhood of Egypt, there is more that we in the diaspora can do. There are people eager to join hands with us. There are capable, hard-working Egyptians who need only a slender lifeline — one that does not lead to execution in Libya.

The killing of the 21 is a wake-up call to the Coptic diaspora to change our ways. Where, too often, we have left our brothers and sisters in Christ to die of neglect, God is opening for us a new way. We need only courage to seize it. *May history remember the Feb. 15 massacre* as the crowning futility of the Islamic State's vain efforts to weaken the Church. May it also stand as a day on which we honor these martyrs for their incredible faith and sacrifice. Most importantly, may the martyrdom of the 21 mark a turning point — the moment when we in the diaspora fully face our responsibilities to our brothers and sisters in Christ. Before another 21 Copts are martyred, So what are you going to do? "If one member suffers, all suffer together" (I Cor. 12: 26, 27).

١ - أعضاء جدد بلجنة كنيسة ماريوحنا:

تهنيء كنيسة ماريوحنا بكوفينا الاعضاء الجدد وهم:

١ - الدكتور رشاد واصف.

٢ - الدكتور سامي متياس.

٣ - بيتر إسكندر (عن الشباب).

٤ - الدكتورة ماجي عطية (عن السيدات).

٥ - أمير تادرس (عن الشباب).

وتدعوا لهم بالبركة والتوفيق.

٢- مؤتمر الأسرة السنوى السادس والعشرين لكنيسة ماريوحنا لسنة ٢٠١٥

ينعقد مؤتمر الأسرة السنوى رقم ٢٦

لكنيسة ماريوحنا الحبيب (كوفينا) هذا

العام فى اجازة الـ Memorial Day

بفندق **Hyatt New Port Beach**

من يوم السبت ٢٣ - الاثنين ٢٥ مايو ٢٠١٥

وذلك تحت رعاية نيافة الحبر الجليل

الأنبا سراييون

ويخدم به الأب الموقر

القمص بولس جورج

والدكتور ماجد شكرى



من خدام كنيسة مارمرقس مصر الجديدة.

وسوف يعلن عن مزيد من التفاصيل بالعدد

القادم بادروا بحجز أماكنكم بمكتبة الكنيسة.

٣ - كتب ونبذات جديدة

ينتظر خلال شهرى مارس وأبريل ٢٠١٥ صدور

كتب جديدة للقس أغسطينوس حنا أهمها :

١ - المرأة فى مرآة مسيحية.

٢ - الأسفار التاريخية باللغة الإنجليزية (من

يشوع إلى أستير).