

May the Lord send his blessing on you and keep you, the light of the Lord's face be shining on you in grace, the Lord's approval be resting on you and he give you peace (NUMBERS 6:24)

In This Issue

Schedule & News	2
Pictures of the Silver Jubilee, Festival and Halloween of 2013	4
Excerpts from Fasting.....	By H.H. Pope Tawadros II 5
Verses of Thanksgiving to Memorize by Heart	5
At the End of the Year.....	By Pope Shenouda 6
Why Not Now?	6
Readers' Corner / Vladimir Putin's Shortest Speech	7
What is a Sober Mind?.....	Translated by Late Fr. Morcos Dawood 8
&How to Build Successful Marriage (2).....	By Fr. Gawargious Kolta 10
The Sin of the Pharisees.....	By Jonathan Hakim 12
From the Heart of an Honest Muslim.....	By Tawfik Hami 13
Egypt's Mina Danial (The Untold Story of a revolutionary).....	14
Short Stories: While I was Busy! / Two Pictures / Our Church is.....	18
Congratulations	19

SCHEDULE of MEETINGS and EVENTS
for the MONTH of » November-December 2013

Sunday	Wednesday	Friday	Saturday
+ English Liturgy 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. * * *	+ Liturgy 8:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m..	+ Liturgy 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	+ Liturgy from 8- 10 am
+ Arabic Liturgy 8:00 – 11:15 a.m.	+ Thursday Morning	+Arabic Youth Meeting 8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	+ Vespers; Bible Study 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
+ Servants' Meeting 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. 2nd & 4th	+ Senior Citizen Club 11:00 – 4:00 a.m.		+ Beginners' Deacons- Meeting 5:00 - 6: 00 p.m.
	Thursday		+ Elementary Meeting 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
	Family Meeting 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.		+ College Youth Meeting 7:00- 8:00 p.m.
Teusday			+ High School & J. High Meetings 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
English-Bible Study 7:30 pm			

Email your articles/comments/requests to Frhanna @mystjohn.org
Or visit us online @ www.mystjohn.org
Fax : (909) 592 -5088 / (909) 305 – 1025 Church Tel: (909) 592- 8847

News of November-December

1. The Nativity Fast (November 25):



The Nativity fast starts on Monday, Nov. 25, and ends on Christmas Eve, Monday, January 6, 2014. It depicts the 40-day-fast of Moses before receiving the word of God; The Ten Commandments, plus 3 days, which the church fasted in the ten's century and moved the Moquattam Mountain in Cairo, Egypt. May the Lord grant us a blessed fast according to Isaiah 58 and Matthew 6. We need to pray much during this fast, for the salvation of America, Egypt and Syria and to re-move the mountains of evil and persecution.



2. Thanksgiving Day (November 28):
On Thursday, Nov. 28, America celebrates Thanks-giving Day. St. John Church celebrates this day with a Liturgy (which is called the sacrament of Thanks-giving) from 8:0010:00-a.m. followed by breakfast, spiritual words and songs of thanksgiving.

3. Kiahk's Vigil

The four week-vigil of the Coptic month of Kiahk, starts on Saturday, December 14, 2013. In this month of Kiahk, we celebrate the Virginal Birth of Christ and praise St. Mary. The prayers, praises and vigil start every Saturday right after the vespers.



4. Celebrating New Year's Eve (2013/ 2014)
St. John Church celebrates New Year's Eve on Tuesday, December 31, 2013, from 8:00 p.m. and the program contains spiritual talks, praises and hymns (choir), candle-light-prayers, Santa's gifts for children, and ends on the first of January 2014th with a Liturgy.

5. St. John Senior's Cruise to Mexico:

St. John Church Senior citizens' Fellowship holds its spring cruise to Mexico, from May 12 to May 16, 2014. Price is \$ 590.00. For early reservation and more details call: Maher Saleh: (626) 222- 6558 or Hoda Ghazar: (626) 905- 4705.

7.H.H. Pope Tawadros II:

+ On November 18, 2013 the Coptic Church was supposed to celebrate the first Anniversary of Pope Tawadros' Enthronement, but His Holiness cancelled the celebration due to the troubled circomestaces especially the massacre of warrak church. May the Lord Jesus grant him health, strength and divine support.



+ He appointed the General Bishop David to be a Bishop of New York, and appointed Fr. Saraphim Al-Souriany as the Papal representative for North America. He will be situated in Cedar Grove, NJ.

+ On October 23, Pope Tawadros visited the injured victims of the massacre of St. Mary Church in Warraq, Egypt in which fanatic Muslims attacked the church during a wedding service and killed four Christians and one Muslim and wounded dozens of Christians.

+ Pope Tawadros issued a Papal decree appointing Fr. Saraphim Al-Souriany as the Papal representative for North America. He will be situated in Cedar Grove, NJ.

8. H.G. Bishop Serapion:

+ Bishop Serapion visited Moscow and Georgia.

+ H.G. Bishop Serapion ordains four new priests during November 2013 for the Diocese of Los Angeles. And H.G. Bishop Youssef will join him in the ordination ceremony.



9. The 24th Anniversary of Fr. Augustinos- Ordination:



On November 14, Fr. Augustinos Hanna completes 24 years in priesthood, serving St. John Church in Covina, as well of St. John Magazine. Your prayers for him are greatly needed.

10. The 5th Anniversary of Fr. Daniel's ordination:

St. John Church, the priests, Board of Deacons and congregation, congratulate Fr. Daniel Habib on his fifth Anniversary of his ordination in priesthood and serving St. John church. May the Lord Jesus Christ grant him health, fruitful ministry and long life.



Fasting

(Excerpts from Pope Tawadros' Lecture)



The Coptic Orthodox Church is a church of fast and asceticism. We fast 196 days in the year. That shows the importance of fasting in the church, in the family and in life.

Fasting is an ancient commandment from the beginning of creation when God ordered Adam and Eve not to eat of one certain tree or else they would surely die (Gen. 2:17). But unfortunately they broke the commandment and fell in disobedience and death.

There is a commandment repeated in both the Old and the New Testaments, which says: "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Deut. 8:3 & Matt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4). Therefore, to fast means to train yourself to resist sin and lust and to say NO to every evil deed or word or thought.

If we spoke about fast or the law of one wife; we are doing that out of love. St. Paul said, "If I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:3).

Fasting is a means and not a goal. In fasting we want to subject the body to the spirit and not the opposite, and by that we get the spiritual life.

Fasting is an opportunity to liberate yourself from the ego and selfishness.

Also, fasting is a spiritual worship that accompanies man all his life long. In Mathew 6, the Lord Jesus talked about the three pillars of Christianity, which are giving alms, prayer and fasting and they refer to our relationship with others, with God and with our bodies.

Fast brings joy, resists anger and enlarges the heart. It should be practiced in secret and it lifts up saints to heaven.

Thanksgiving Verses to Memorize

It is nice to memorize by heart many thanksgiving verses from the Bible and meditate in them day and night to give God the glory for all His benefits to us since we were born until now. So, let us start with the short and easy ones:



1. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks" (1 Thes. 5:18).
2. "Giving thanks always for all things to God" (Eph. 5:20).
3. "Be thankful" (Col. 3:15).
4. "Let us have thanks (grace), by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb.12:28).
5. "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me" (John 11:41).
6. "First, I thank my God..." (Rom. 1:8).
7. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful" (1 Tim. 1:12).
8. "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place" (2 Cor. 2:14).
9. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).
10. "For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4:4).
11. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6,7).
12. Memorize Psalm 103:1-5 "Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all His benefits...).

WHY NOT NOW?!



John 13:33-38

I have a dear friend who served as a missionary in Indonesia for many years, but in his final years he was stricken with an illness that paralyzed him. At times he wondered why God allowed him to linger. He longed to depart and to be with his Lord.

Perhaps life is very hard for you or a loved one, and you are wondering why God has allowed you or your loved one to linger. When the Lord Jesus said He was going to heaven, Peter asked, “Lord, why can I not follow You now?” (Jn. 13:37). You, like Peter, may wonder why entry into heaven has been postponed: “Why not now?”

God has a wise and loving purpose in leaving us behind. There is work to be done in us that can only be accomplished here on earth. Our afflictions, which are for the moment, are working for us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17). And there is work to be done for others-if only to love and to pray. Our presence may also be for the purpose of giving others an opportunity to learn love and compassion.

So, though you may desire release for yourself or a loved one, to live on in the flesh can mean fruitfulness (Phil. 1:21). Though heaven may be delayed, God has His reasons. No doubt about it!

At the End of the YEAR

By Pope Shenouda III

God has done too much for us during this passing year. We cannot forget His benefits but remember then all with thanksgiving. But what did we do for the Lord and how did we act?



Every one of us should sit down with himself and examine himself or herself. Are we growing in the grand or deteriorating? Ask yourself, “Who am I now?” Am I the same as usual with the same attitudes, temper and bad habits? Have I changed as the Bible says, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2).

Did I correct my previous faults and errors, or rather, I added to them new ones? Is there any growth in my life, in thinking, grace, knowledge, in spiritual matters and in my relation with God and His love?

How I won new friends and enlarged the circle of my love to people? Did I add to the Kingdom of god some people who the Lord put in my way?

Is my life active or stagnant? Is it moving to the better or worse? Do I stand firm like the rock for my faith, values and principles?

If I have some shortcomings, did I attack my lack? Did I make my weak points the goal of my struggle in prayers and fasting? Do I feel free from the bondage of sin and bad habits or still a slave to evil thought, words, passion and wrong desires?

Is the New Year, which you are going to receive, will pass the same style as the one before? Do you have a good program to follow up and a good goal to achieve? Examine my dear brother, your life in the light of God’s will and commandments, and ask for His help to offer repentance and to welcome the New Year with a new hope, new heart and mind and enthusiasm.

Vladimir Putin’s Shortest Speech

Putin’s Speech August 04, 2013



This is one time our elected leaders should pay attention to the advice of Vladimir Putin....

On August 04, 2013, Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, addressed the Duma, (Russian- Parliament), and gave a speech about the tensions with minorities in Russia:

“In Russia live like Russians. Any minority, from anywhere, if it wants to live in Russia, to work and eat in Russia, should speak Russian, and should respect the Russian laws. If they prefer Sharia Law, and live the life of Muslim’s then we advise them to go to those places where that’s the state law.

Russia does not need Muslim minorities. Minorities need Russia and we will not grant them special privileges or try to change our laws to fit their desires, no matter how loud they yell ‘discrimination’. We will not tolerate disrespect of our Russian culture. We better learn from the suicides of America, England, Holland and France, if we are to survive as a nation. The Muslims are taking over those countries and they will not take over Russia.

The Russian customs and traditions are not compatible with the lack of culture or the primitive ways Sharia Law and Muslims.

When this honorable legislative body thinks of creating new laws, it should have in mind the Russian national interest first, observing that the Muslims Minorities Are Not Russians.

The politicians in the Duma gave Putin a five minute standing ovation. It is a sad day when an Ex-Communist makes more sense than the rest of the world..... but here it is!!!!

Fr. Hanna,

Readers’ Corner

Beloved Fr. Augustinos, I was deeply touched when I read your note in the last issue titled “Why the change in St. John Magazine?”

St. John Magazine is a monumental outlet to spread the word of God and preserve the Christian Orthodox faith for myriads of souls throughout the Universe. St. John Magazine is revered and appreciated by everyone who had the benefit of receiving it constantly over a period of 25 years. It is published in a refined and highest quality ever yet to be seen in a Coptic Magazine. The spiritual, educational, social and stimulating subjects are so valuable and minister to all ages and levels. The gains reaped from these topics are certainly so positively influential in the family life, manners, church & religion education, faith and social integration of the Christian community.

Cutting the issuance to one every other month will be a bitter setback in this most appreciated and valuable publication.

I hope all congregation and recipients of this great publication take a proactive role and support maintaining the regular monthly issuance of this priceless, precious and blessed offering that comes straight to their homes. Even though it is a fact of life and sign of time that the new generation doesn’t read, I believe it is the duty and obligation of the parents to convey the precious aspects of this magazine to their children and incorporate these features through the social media that the younger generation is attached to. This magazine will be a valuable tool to help the parents raise their children in the proper Christian environment.

Also, I think the magazine should keep the English part as a tool to better help the parents communicate the proper intent of the articles to the children and to the foreigners.

Our beloved father Augustinos, we are profoundly grateful to your dedication, tireless and resolute effort in editing this cherished magazine. Also, we appreciate your devotion to keep it coming to our homes for a quarter of a century to support and elevate our faith and spirit and for being an advocate for the religious and social freedom in the land of immigration and back home.

Sincerely,
Eng. Nader Samaan

T. PAUL SAYS, “FOR GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

What Is A Sober Mind?

“Exhort the young men to be sober-minded” (Titus 2:6)St. Peter also 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). The ingredients of the word “sober” are: considerate- cautious- humble- self-denying- chaste-serious.

1. Considerate

You must be considerate and thoughtful, and not rash and heedless. To be sober-minded, is to make use of our reason, in reasoning with ourselves and in communing with our own hearts- to employ those noble powers and capacities, by which we are distinguished from, and dignified above the beasts, that we may not receive the grace of God in them in vain, but being rational creatures. You learned to talk when you were children, when will you learn to think seriously-to think to the purpose?

Floating thoughts your heads are full of, foreign and impertinent ones, when will you be brought to close and fixed thoughts, to think with concern and application of the great things that belong to your everlasting peace and welfare?

Learn to think not only of what is just before you, which strikes the senses, and affects the imagination, but of the cause and consequences, and reasons of things, to discover truths, to compare them with one another, to argue upon them and apply them to yourselves, and think which deserves to be first considered.

Inconsideration is the ruin of thousands, and many precious souls perish through mere carelessness. “Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways”. Take time to think, desire to be alone now and then, and let not solitude and retirement be uneasiness to you, for you have a heart of your own that you may find talk with, and a God nigh unto you, with whom you may have a pleasing communion.

Learn to think freely; God invites you to do so: “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isa.1:18). We desire not you should take things upon trust, but inquire impartially into them, as the noble Bereans, who searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so which the apostles told them (Acts 17:10, 11).

Learn to think what you are, and what you are capable of; think who made you, and what you were made for; for what end you were endowed with the powers of reason, and at-

tended by the inferior creatures; think what you have been doing since you came into the world- of the great work you were sent into the world about- of the vanity of childhood and youth- and how unavoidable the years of them are past away as a tale that is told- and whether therefore it be not time for you to begin to be religious and to enter in at the strait gate. Do nothing rashly, but always speak and act under the government of the great law of consideration. Ponder the path of your feet, that it may be a straight path. Some people take a pride in being careless, and so they glory in their shame. But be not you thus negligent....

2. Cautious

You must be cautious, and prudent, and not willful and heady. The word in the text is the same that is rendered, ver. 5, to be discreet. You must not only think rationally, but when you have done so, you must act wisely, and so as will be most for your true interest; look before you, look under your feet, and pick your way, not as fools, but as wise. Those that govern themselves, God will guide, but will justly leave those that love to wander endlessly.

Put away childish follies with other childish things, and do not all your days think and speak as children. Therefore, in every case of moment and difficulty, be willing to be advised by wise friends, and depend more upon their judgment who have had longer experience of the world, than upon your own. Consult with those who are wise and good; ask them what they would do if they were in your case, ask your spiritual father and you will find safely, or if it should not prove well, it will be a satisfaction to you, that you did not do it without advice and deliberation.

What brighter character can be given of a young man, than to say, he is wise? Or what blacker, than to say, he is willful? See the former in Solomon, who calls himself a child (1 Kings 3:7), and yet his father calls him a wise man, that knows what he is to do. See the later in the character of the rebellious son, that was to be stoned to death, against whom the indictment runs thus, “He is stubborn, he will not obey the voice of his father and mother’ (Deut.21:18-20). Those are the fools whom there is little hope of, that despise wisdom and instruction (Prov.1:7). He that will not be counseled, cannot be helpful. If you want to be sober and wise, study the Scriptures, by them you will get more understanding than the ancients, than all your teachers (Ps. 119:99,100).

Be earnest with God in prayer for wisdom, as Solomon was; and the prayer was both pleasing and prevailing in heaven. “If any-one lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

It is not a promise with a perhaps, but with assurance, ‘it shall be given him’. To all true believers, Christ himself is,

and shall be made of God, wisdom” (1 Cor.1:30).

3. Humble

You must be humble and modest, and not proud and conceited. It is recommended to the younger to be clothed with humility (1 Pet.5:5), that is, to be sober-minded.

“Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but think soberly” (Rom.12:3). Keep up low thoughts of your-self both outward and inward; of your attainments and improvements, and all your performances, and all the things you call merits and excellencies. Boast not of a false gift, of what you have not; nor be puffed up with what you have. Does your face shine? Be as Moses was, he did not know that the skin of his face shone, remember your defects and infirmities. Learn from your Master who was lowly in heart (Matt.11:29).

4. Self-denying

You must be temperate and self-denying, and not indulgent of your appetites. It is the same word in the text (sober), that in ver. 2 is translated temperate, and some think it properly signifies a moderate use of meat and drink, to save our mind from being clouded, and our wisdom from being corrupted, that is our hearts from being overcharged with drunkenness. We usually put a sober man in opposition to one that is drunk, or addicted to drunkenness. So, let us then warn young men to dread the sin of drunkenness; keep at a distance from it; avoid all appearances of it, and approach towards it. It has slain its thousands, its ten thousands, of young people; has ruined their health, brought diseases and shame upon them, and cut them off in the flower of their days. Take heed of the beginning of this sin, for the way of it is downhill; and many, under pretense of an innocent entertainment, and passing the evening in a pleasant conversation, are drown in to drink to excess, and make beasts of themselves, and you should tremble to think how fatal the consequences of it are, it extinguishes convictions and sparks of devotion and provokes the Spirit of grace to withdraw, and it will be the sinner’s eternal ruin, if it be not repented of, because it is written “the drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:10).

5. Chaste

You must be chaste and not wanton and impure. “The lusts of the flesh which are manifest, adultery, fornication, uncleanness...” are called youthful lusts. “Flee youthful lusts” (2 Tim.2:22). For God’s sake, and for your own precious soul’s sake, flee these youthful lusts; dread them as you would a devouring fire, or a destroying plague, and keep at a distance from them; ‘Abstain from all appearances of these sins; “hating even the garment defiled by the flesh” (Jude: 23).

+ Covet not to know these depths of Satan, but take a pride in being ignorant of the way of the adulterous woman. See

all temptations to uncleanness coming from the unclean spirit, that roaring lion who goes about seeking to devour you.

+ Remember what the apostle prescribes, as that which ought to be the constant care of the unmarried, to be holy both in body and spirit, and so to please the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:34). Solomon warns the youth of entangling in the snares of the evil woman! (See Proverbs 6, 7).

+ Pray earnestly to God for His grace to keep you from this sin, and that the temptation never be sudden, but find you awake, and aware of it, and armed against it with the whole armor of God.

+ Get your heart purified by the word of God, and sanctified by divine love.

6. Serious

You must be serious, and not frothy and vain. This meaning we commonly give to the word here used. Him that is serious, we call a sober man; and put this last of the ingredients of this sober-mindedness, because it will have a very great influence upon all the rest.

Not that we would oblige young people never to be merry, or had any ill-natured design upon them to make them melancholy; no, religion allows them to be cheerful; it is your time, make your best of it, evil days will come, of which you will say you have no pleasure in them, when the cares and sorrows of this world increase upon you and we would not have you to anticipate those evil days.

It is mentioned as an instance of the promised prosperity and flourishing state of Jerusalem, that the streets of the city shall be full of boys, and girls playing in the streets thereof (Zech.8:5). Solomon says, “Go your way, eat with joy, and drink with a merry heart, for God now accepts your work” (Eccl.9:7).

God expects to be served by us with “joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things” (Deut.28:47).

The merry heart does good like a medicine. The holy heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with Him, is without doubt the most pleasant, comfortable, fruitful, powerful and secure life any one can live in this world.

HOW TO BUILD A LASTING SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE (3)

By Fr. Gawargious Kolta



In order to have a successful marriage I must never deliberately do anything to cause my spouse pain or discomfort.

9- Achieving Home Privacy:

Both Husband and wife must keep the privacy of their mutual home and personal lives. This should start from the first day of their marital life. All their future plans must be kept in secret. Their style of life and their financial matters must be only discussed between them. Also their disputes and their problems must be solved between them in secret, without the interference of family members, relatives or friends. Family members and relatives are usually bias to the spouse related to them, and the problems will be intensified. The priest or the father of confession only can share with them the problems, if they cannot solve them by themselves.

For successful marriage, the couples must not do everything with their parents, or visit them whenever they have free time. If one of the spouses, usually the wife, spends all her free time with her parents, Dr. Harley considered that this is a symptom of separation anxiety. The husband will not agree that they do everything with her parents, or spend every weekend or every other night with them. He will not be happy to do that, and will consider it wearing, and he will plan to break away from her parents, because their privacy is not existent. She must schedule time to be alone with her husband. Some wives who are too dependent on their parents, and feel that they cannot be separated from them, would not give undivided attention to their husbands.

When the husbands feel that their privacy is always violated by their wives' parents, they may react unwisely and attack their in-laws. Others may be frustrated and plan to move to another city or state, against the will of their wives.

A husband suffered from the interference of his in-laws in the privacy of his home, to the extent that they wrecked his marriage, he complained several times, but there was no response from his wife. He found that he was swallowed into the family of his wife, so he looked for a job in an-

other state in order to have privacy and quality time with his wife. The wife got disappointed, because she would not be able to see her parents. But, for the sake of protecting their marriage, she exigently obeyed, especially when he told her that there will be an increase in his salary. Although the wife violated the policy for successful marriage, despite the complains and the annoyance of her husband, he also made two mistakes. He violated the policy of honesty, as he did not explain to his wife what he was planning. He also violated the policy of protection by demanding that they move to another state; i.e. he manipulated his wife, and this usually causes lasting resentment, because she was forced to do something against her will. It is not right for a spouse, to violate any policy, in order to resolve a problem, created by a policy being violated by the other spouse.

10- Conflicts caused by relatives and friends:

For successful marriage, the couples must consider the problems that may happen by the interference of relatives and friends. Your spouse is your most important friend and relative. The conflicts may happen for the following reasons:

- 1- The interference of relatives or friends uncovers the privacy of the family.
- 2- Dictator parents try to control the newly married couple. One of the spouses may not be in harmony with the in-laws, but for the sake of peace, hides his/her feelings. This causes pressure and stress.
- 3- Some spouses believe that there is nothing wrong with continuing a friendship with a former lover after marriage. It is not right, and it may lead to several problems.
- 4- Having some close friends, disliked by the spouse. This will cause a serious marital conflict and will cause great hurt to the spouse.
- 5- Liking his/her spouse's friend too much, without keeping a distance in relations; such as uncovering the mistakes of his/her spouse, or complaining from some problems or abuses. This may lead to fall in love with that friend, especially if he/she shows sympathy for her/him.
- 6- Financially helping my family secretly without telling my

spouse. This is violation against the policy of honesty.

7- Inviting one of the relatives to live with the couple at home without the approval of the spouse. Sometimes the spouse does not tolerate the situation, and does not show hospitality to that relative, and so problems start.

8- Talking on the phone with a relative or a friend for a long time, while the spouse is at home. This is violation against the policies of protection and care.

A wife met her girlfriend after a long time and she discovered that she had become a widow. She invited her friend to live in an apartment near her home, and in order to give her pleasant company, she invited her several times to share dinner with them at home. The husband helped that widow with some house repairs, and he enjoyed her company. After some months, he fell in love with her. He did not tell his wife, but he told the friend. After a short time, he was doing more than enjoying her company. This went on for over a year before his wife caught them. Both were ashamed and begged her forgiveness, but she could not be consoled. He shared with the friend a disaster that ruined their marriage. The following marital policies were broken:

- 1- Honesty; and the result of disloyalty was a marital disaster.
- 2- Protection; as his affair with his wife's friend inflicted unbearable pain for his wife, because of selfish behavior.
- 3- Care; as he did not care to please his wife and give her quality time and undivided attention.

11- Knowing the Nature of My Spouse:

There are many spouses who do not know the nature of their partners, but they love each other. In order to build a lasting and successful marriage, each spouse should know the nature of his/her spouse. God created Eve from Adam's rib (near his heart), as a human being, but with a different nature than man in many aspects. Many psychologists and socialists investigated these differences and summed them as follows:

- 1- Man is mono directed, while woman is stereo directed.

Man cannot do many things in the same time, while woman can do many things efficiently in the same time. She can speak on the phone, watch her kids, and cook the food in the same time efficiently. If her husband tries to do these three jobs, the food will be burnt and the kids will harm themselves.

Because of this difference, man has a small wallet in his

pocket, while woman carries a purse (hand bag) containing different items; such as telephone number book, makeup tools, first aid kit, and other special things, besides money and credit cards.

Thus in marital life, she has a wide scope, and she is more efficient in doing certain jobs than her husband. When the two spouses plan to go on a trip, the wife is more efficient in preparing the luggage, without forgetting any item may be needed by every person in the family. If her husband interferes and asks his wife to do this job, he will prepare one luggage and may forget some items, even his shaving machine

2- Statically women normally speak more than double the words men speak per day.

This nature is clearer in the infants. Usually girls start to speak earlier than boys, and their vocabulary is much more. In marital life, the wife normally speaks more than double the amount of words her husband speaks. This difference has an impact on their daily relations.

In successful marriage, the two spouses must always consider this nature, especially in discussing their problems and disputes. The husband must not be annoyed or offended when his wife speaks much or argues for a long time. As good communication is the key of successful marriage, the wife has to minimize her speech as much as possible in discussing problems, and stop repeating the same words; otherwise her husband will not stand the conversation, and he will withdraw gradually. He will feel uncomfortable during that discussion. Wives must choose the proper time for speaking with their husbands, and they should do it briefly. In marital life, problems usually happen when wives are very talkative and husbands are short tempered.

In successful marriage, husbands should consider the nature of their wives. They practice patience and listen seriously, without showing any discomfort or weariness. When they find their wives repeating the same words, or the same thing in different wording, they should listen and pay attention showing their concern. If they feel that they are tired from long discussion, they kindly ask their wives to postpone the matter to a more convenient time; a better time to think seriously about that matter. One of the greatest gifts a person can have is the gift of listening. It is an act of love and caring. Listening will appear in the eyes and the smiles of the husband. Many men do not have sufficient vocabulary to express their emotions. Some husbands think that expressing these feelings in words is weakness, and they keep silent at home, like the Sphinx. Others keep quiet to avoid confrontation, when there is difference in opinion.

(To be continued)

The Sins of the Pharisees

By Jonathan Hakim (from India)



Jesus’s most frequent opponents were the Pharisees. The Pharisees were early rabbis who called Israel to follow God’s law, so that the Lord would return to Jerusalem and defeat Israel’s enemies. They were considered to be stricter and more passionate about following God’s law than anyone else. So why did they clash so much with Jesus?

There are four major reasons that Jesus and the Pharisees clashed. First is that the Pharisees were hypocrites. They followed the details of the law, but they failed to be true to God in their hearts, especially when it came to money and possessions. Second, the Pharisees trusted in their religious and ceremonial laws more than in the root of God’s law, which is to love others and to do good for them. Third, the Pharisees judged others based on what groups they were associated with, which caused them to avoid people from other religious groups (like Samaritans and Gentiles) and those they considered sinners (like tax collectors and prostitutes). And finally, the Pharisees failed to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in the things that Jesus and his followers were doing. Let’s take a closer look at each of these controversies. The Pharisees were hypocrites, especially regarding money Jesus calls the Pharisees “hypocrites” over a dozen times. But what are they hypocritical about?

More than anything else, the Pharisees were hypocritical in how they used their money. Though they followed the laws for giving, they were still “lovers of money” (Luke 16:14). They tithed the smallest things, but they neglected the justice and mercy that matter most to God. (Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42-44) They gave alms to be seen by others instead of in secret where only God would know (Matthew 6:2-4). They did the right religious things to do look good, but their personal lives were full of greed and self-indulgence (Matthew 23:25, Luke 11:37-41).

After Jesus warned his disciples about “the hypocrites” three times in Matthew 6, he told them not to store up treasures on earth, but to focus on heavenly treasures instead (Matthew 6:19-21). When Jesus warned his disciples of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in Luke 12, he followed it by explaining that they needed to beware of greed, and instead

trust God to take care of them. Rather than trying to be rich and store up many possessions, we need to be rich towards God (Luke 12:15-21). Rather than striving to make more money, we need to sell our things and give the money to the poor (Luke 12:22-34).

The need to get rid of the possessions that can take our hearts in mentioned eleven times in the gospels (Matthew 6:19-21, 19:21, 19:29; Mark 10:21, 10:29; Luke 12:15-21, 12:33, 14:33, 18:22, 18:29, 19:8-10). The community of Acts obeyed Jesus by selling their possessions and giving the proceeds to those in need (Acts 2:45, 4:32) John told his fellow Christians that “If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?” (1 John 3:17).

The Pharisees were very good at following the “rules” of religion, even the rules of giving, but their hearts and their actions still showed that their own money was a greater priority. If they cared about keeping their possessions more than about having mercy on the people in need, how could the love of God be in them?

Unfortunately, St. John Chrysostom pointed out that this hypocrisy can be found within the church:

“We who are disciples of Christ claim that our purpose on earth is to lay up treasures in heaven. But our actions often believe our words. Many Christians build for themselves fine houses, lay out splendid gardens, construct bathhouses, and buy fields. It is small wonder, then, that many pagans refuse to believe what we say. ‘If their eyes are set on mansions in heaven,’ they ask, ‘why are they building mansions on earth? If they put their words into practice, they would give away their riches and live in simple huts.’

....When the pagans accuse us of hypocrisy, many of us should plead guilty.”

- St. John Chrysostom, from “On Living Simply”.

And St. Basil the Great attested:

“I know many who fast, pray, sigh, and demonstrate every manner of piety, so long as it costs them nothing, yet would not part with a penny to help those in distress. Of what profit to them is the remainder of their virtue? The Kingdom of Heaven does not receive such people, for ‘it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God.’”

-Basil the Great, Homily 7 “To The Rich”.

Pray that God may help us to avoid the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, especially when it comes to the place of possessions in our heart.

To be continued....

From the Heart of an Honest Muslim

By Dr. Tawfik Hamid

“I am a Muslim by faith, a Christian by spirit, a Jew by heart, and above all I am a human being.”



Dr. Hamid is an Egyptian scholar and author of the following article.

The world needs more people like him, ones who have the courage to face-up to reality, and not fear those who oppose honesty.

I was born a Muslim and lived all my life as a follower of Islam.

After the barbaric terrorist attacks done by the hands of my fellow Muslims everywhere on this globe, and after the too many violent acts by Islamists in many parts of the world, I feel responsible as a Muslim and as a human being to speak out and tell the truth to prevent catastrophe and war of civilizations.

I have to admit that our current Islamic teaching creates violence and hatred toward non-Muslims.

We Muslims are the ones who need to change.

Until now we have accepted polygamy, the beating of women by men, and killing those who convert from Islam to other religions.

We have never had a clear and strong stand against the concept of slavery or wars, to spread our religion and to subjugate others to Islam and force them to pay a humiliating tax called jizia.

We ask others to respect our religion while all the time, we curse non-Muslims loudly (in Arabic)

in our Friday prayers in the mosques.

What message do we convey to our children when we call the Jews “descendants of the pigs and monkeys”? [Yet, both Arabs and Jews are descendants of Ibrahim (Abraham)!]

Is this a message of love and peace, or a message of hate? I have been into [Christian] churches and [Jewish] synagogues where they were praying for Muslims.

While all the time, we curse them, and teach our generations to call them “infidels”, and to hate them. We immediately jump in a ‘knee jerk reflex’ to defend Prophet Mohammad when someone accuses him of being a pedophile while, at the same time, we are proud with the story in our Islamic books that he married a young girl seven years old [Aisha] when he was above 50 years old.

I am sad to say that many, if not most of us, rejoiced in happiness after September 11th and after many other terror attacks. Muslims denounce these attacks to look good in front of the media, but we condone the Islamic terrorists and sympathize with their cause.

Until now our ‘reputable’ top religious authorities have never issued a fatwa or religious statement to proclaim Bin Laden as an apostate, while an author, like Rushdie, was declared an apostate who should be killed according to Islamic Shari’a law just for writing a book criticizing Islam

(To be continued in page 17)

Egypt's Mina Danial

The untold story of a revolutionary



One year after the Maspero massacre, where 27 protesters were killed during clashes with Egypt's army,

Ahram Online pays tribute to the Egyptian activist slain at the age of 20

Yasmine Fathi , Tuesday 9 Oct 2012

Mina Danial in Tahrir square sit in (Photo by: Eduardo Castaldo)

Tarek El-Tayeb, 25, had always hated Christians. He was known among his friends as Tarek "El-Salafi" as he followed the ultraorthodox school of Islam. "I joined the Salafist school of Islam when I was 13 years old," remembers El-Tayeb. "According to my ideology, Christians were heretics and being a friend with any of them was a grave sin." All of this changed when he met Coptic Christian activist Mina Danial. The two bumped into each other in Cairo's iconic Tahrir Square during last year's 18-day uprising. They met the morning after the 28 January "Friday of Rage", when Hosni Mubarak's security forces fired tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition at protesters. Danial had been shot in the leg.

"Are you injured?" asked El-Tayeb. "Yes," laughed Mina. "But it's not a big deal." "No, it's not ok," responded El-Tayeb. "You need to clean that

wound."

El-Tayeb insisted and took Mina to the nearby Qasr Al-Eini Hospital. After that, the two, became inseparable. "Mina and I didn't go through the normal stages of friendship," remembers El-Tayeb. "After the first few minutes we became like brothers." Despite the closeness of the two, El-Tayeb still struggled to overcome his discomfort at having a Christian friend. "I never told him how I felt about Christians," says El-Tayeb. "He would sometimes tell me that he loved me and I would respond by saying that I hate him. It was just hard for me to get rid of these fanatical ideas all at once. It took time."

Since becoming a Salafist, El-Tayeb made sure he was civil to his Christian neighbors and colleagues, however, being friends with a Christian was simply out of the question. Danial was different. "I just could not hate him. For the first time in my life, I found that I could not hate a Christian. I could not put this barrier of religion between me and him," El-Tayeb explains, "I didn't understand what is it about Danial that made him have this impact on people?" Mina was special, his friends say, unique, charismatic and impossible to hate. He was a cheerful young man, who was always smiling and had the uncanny ability to win people over.

Mina Danial at a downtown Cairo protest after the 18 days.

Mina, the youngest of seven, was born in the town of Sanabo in the Upper Egyptian governorate of Assiut. He was raised mainly by his sister Mary, 21 years his senior. He was so close to Mary that he called her "mum." "He was born at ten in the morning," recalls Mary, who looks strikingly similar to her brother, smiling at the memory. "He was such a beautiful child. For me, he was a son and not a brother." The Danials were the only Christian family in a street of Muslims. Life was good initially, Muslims and Christians got along well, says Mary. However things changed in the mid-1980s when sectarian tension began to spread throughout Egypt, as ultraorthodox Islamic groups gained influence. Life for Christians changed forever. Fundamentalist groups had succeeded in filling people's minds with hate."

Slowly, the gap between Muslims and Christians increased, Mary says. Attacks on Christian homes became common. The Daniels were not spared: several members of the Daniel family were attacked. Mary recalls stones being hurled at her when she walked to church. One day, a member of the Danial family got into a fight with an Islamist, after the latter demanded that he turn off the Christian Mass that was playing on the radio. The fight escalated and the family went to lodge a complaint at the local police station. They were shocked when the police responded by arresting nine members of the Danial family instead. "The fact that they arrested us just because we complained opened my eyes and made me realize that the regime was collaborating with these fanatics," explains Mary. By the time Mina was born in 1991, the damage to Muslim and Christian relations had already been done.

The Christians now lived in what Mary called "Church isolation." "The church became a state within a state," says Mary. "It ran supermarkets, hospitals, clubs, picnics, lectures, everything. Our whole life became centered around the church." The violence continued. When Mina was two years old, the family decided to pack up and head to Cairo. They settled in the suburb of Ez-zbet El-Nakhl, where Mina lived until his death. A quiet child, he spent most of his time with his sister Mary, who used to take him, along with his other sister Sherry, who was four years older than him, to church. "Everyone at church envied me for having him. He was so quiet and sensitive. He never whined and would not ask me to buy him anything because he would worry that I would not have enough money."

Proud of his Pharaonic heritage, Mina dreamed of studying archeology one day, and then he opted for a Bachelor of Commerce instead. "In his teens, Mina slowly began to get involved in politics.



Coptic Christian rally against discrimination in Egypt (Photo: Reuters) He started frequenting downtown Cairo, the popular haunt of Egypt's political activists. He developed an interest in Argentine Marxist revolutionary Chey Guevara.

Physically, he copied Guevara; the hair and clothes were styled after his hero. Politically, he leaned towards the left. However, it was Guevara's quest for social justice that gripped Mina the most. His close friend, Ramez Sobhy, says that Mina was impressed by the revolutionary leader's struggle to help the poor. "People always think of Mina as a Christian martyr but that is not true. Mina was a martyr of the poor.

It is not difficult to understand why. The misery in Ez-zbet El-Nakhl, where Mina lived, Cairo is devastating. Roads that lead to Mina's house are dusty and broken; the buildings are rundown. A few roads away from his house, young children play on a swing, precariously balanced over a titanic pile of rubbish and rubble. Mina was not looking for a way out for himself only, he wanted a collective solution that would benefit all of Egypt's poor. He began encouraging his friends to go on trips to Egypt's underprivileged areas to talk to the people and discuss possible solutions for their problems. He attended meetings held by various political movements in Egypt but none satisfied him. "Mina did not trust these political groups. He felt that Egypt's poor should unite and help each other and fight for their rights." After the 2010 Nagaa-Hamadi attack, during which armed gunmen killed eight Christian worshippers as they were emerging from a Christmas Mass, Mina's activism amplified. He joined the Justice and Freedom Movement, a youth group that was calling for change. Despite being heartbroken over the deteriorating situation for Christians in Egypt, friends say, Mina did not have sectarian tendencies. He always believed that the Christian problem was part of the bigger Egyptian problem.

"Whenever sectarian problems take place, he would ask

me, why do they always happen in poor places, why do we never hear of Muslims and Christians fighting in rich areas like Zamalek?” Sobhy adds.

Mina resented Christian-only protests and sit-ins. He would tell his friends that carrying crosses and chanting Christian slogans might discourage Muslims from participating. He believed that unity was the key. In one incident that Sobhy recalls, the residents of Cairo’s working-class district Bulak clashed with Christians who were protesting against discrimination. Mina went to talk to them. “He told them, why are you fighting each other? Both Muslims and Christians are poor, both can’t find proper housing, both are suffering,” says Sobhy. “In the end, the Muslims joined the Christians in the protest. Mina had that kind of charisma. His effect on people was monumental. When he talked, people listened.”

Military vehicles charge at protesters in front of Maspero TV headquarters (Photo: Reuters) Tragedy struck again on New Year’s Eve in 2011, when a bomb exploded in the Two Saints Church, Sts. Peter and Paul, in Alexandria minutes after midnight, killing 25 Coptic civilians. That night Mina drove to Alexandria.”He saw the shredded bodies; he saw a human scalp hanging on an iron rod,” remembers Mary. “He was in shock. He refused to eat for a week after that.”

When the January 25 Revolution took off, Mina and his friends joined the mass sit-in on Tahrir Square. Mina was renowned for being fearless: he would often be seen fighting the security forces on the front lines. As a result, he was repeatedly wounded. He was shot in the leg with a live bullet and suffered countless other injuries across his body. When Mubarak stepped down on 11 February, Mina, who had gone home to change his clothes, rushed to the flashpoint square and danced with his sister. However, the situation in Egypt did not improve. On 9 March, just weeks after the military council assumed power, the army forcibly dispersed a Tahrir Square sit-in. Churches were attacked and torched. Egypt’s political dialogue began to change. Islamists, denouncing Christians as heretics, gathered support. However, Mina



was an eternal optimist, his friends said. “Whenever we felt demoralized or sad, we would call him,” says Sobhy. “He would give us an energy boost.” He continued to attend all the post-uprising protests, which demanded the fulfillment of the revolution’s demands. Early April, he joined a mass protest calling for ousted president Mubarak, who at the time was still free and living in the Red Sea resort Sharm El-Sheikh, to be put on trial. This is where Mina met the love of his life, Katherine. Katherine, like Mina, came from a conservative Upper Egyptian Christian family. She works as a tour guide and lives in Cairo. A few months after they met, Mina told Katherine of a nightmare he had. He dreamed that black dogs were attacking him, trying to kill him. The dream occurred on 9 October, 2010. Mina died on 9 October, 2011. “I knew that Mina was going to die and so he did,” says Katherine. “We both felt it.” Attacks on Copts escalated and several sit-ins protesting the increased discrimination towards the Christian community were violently dispersed. Finally, on 9 October last year, activists decided to hold a peaceful protest. The march was to begin in the central Cairo’s Shubra Square and would then head to Egyptian state media headquarters, Maspero. There was no plan for an open sit-in that day. The goal was to reach the radio and television building, make their demands heard and then leave. People began gathering in Shubra at 4pm. There were many activists but just as many women, children and elderly people. That day, Mina had lunch with his sister and Katherine, before heading to the protest. He and Katherine walked at the front, while Mary remained at the back. The march continued peacefully for an hour until unknown assailants began hurling stones at the protesters. At that point, a panicked Mary tried to call her brother repeatedly. Finally, after several attempts, he picked up. “He told me that he was ok and not to worry,” says Mary, “that was the last conversation we had.” Katherine, who was with Mina at the frontline, says that he was in a really good mood. “The closer we got to Maspero, the better his mood became,” Katherine recalls. However, once the march reached Maspero, the army attacked the demonstrators, using an unprecedented level of force. Tear gas and live ammunition were fired. Army trucks ran over protesters, mutilating and killing those in the way. Mary, who had also reached Maspero, described the horror scene. “To say they were brutal would be an understatement,” she says. “I remember that an army truck was trying to run us over. We ran onto the pavement in

an attempt to escape them, so the truck driver drove over the pavement in order to get us.” The injured and the dead began to fill up the nearby Coptic hospital. Katherine, still with Mina, could no longer control her terror. “My legs began to shake with fear,” she says. “So Mina told me that if I was that scared then I better leave. He carried me out of the Maspero area and took me to my father. He told us to take care of each other and left.” Fifteen minutes later Mina was gunned down. He was shot in the shoulder with a single bullet. He was just 20 years old. His friends informed his sister and fiancé of his death. Mary visited her brother’s body at the Coptic hospital where the dead were laid out and was surprised that even in death, he was still smiling. “The fact that he was still smiling made me believe that Mina is not dead. That his dreams will never die.”She kissed him, soaked a cloth in some of his blood and left.

Coptic woman mourns her dead at Coptic Hospital after Maspero (Photo: Reuters) It was El-Tayeb who refused to leave Mina’s body. “I sat beside him for two hours and held his hands,” his Muslim friend, El-Tayeb says. “I wouldn’t leave until a mutual friend of ours dragged me out.” After his death, Mina became one of the icons of the revolution. His face has become a common feature in most revolutionary murals. Demonstrators wear masks of his face or hold aloft placards of his image during marches. Both President Mohamed Morsi and his rival regime-figure Ahmed Shafik used Mina’s image as part of their presidential electoral campaigns. To date, no one has been found responsible for the deaths of the 27 protesters, killed on 9 October. “The Muslim Brotherhood, for one, are all hypocrites,” fumes El-Tayeb. “On a personal level they call Mina a heretic, but publicly, they claim that he is a martyr.” El-Tayeb has abandoned Salafism since Mina’s death. He now considers himself a “moderate Egyptian Muslim.” He is proud that he now has many Christian friends. “Mina opened the door for me. He taught me what humanity meant,” says El-Tayeb. “He opened my eyes and I finally saw Christians as they really are: good people, kind, charitable and not corrupt as the extremists claimed.” As for Mina, everyone loved him. “How can a man win so many hearts, unless God loves him?” asks El-Tayeb. “There is only one Mina.”

A protester wears a mask depicting Mina Daniel at 25 January 2012 march to Tahrir Square.

(The rest of P. 13, From a Heart of Honest Muslim)

Muslims demonstrated to get more religious rights as we did in France to stop the ban on the hijab (head scarf), while we did not demonstrate with such passion and in such numbers against the terrorist murders. It is our absolute silence against the terrorists that gives the energy to these terrorists to continue doing their evil acts. We Muslims need to stop blaming our problems on others or on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

As a matter of honesty, Israel is the only light of democracy, civilization, and human rights in the whole Middle East.

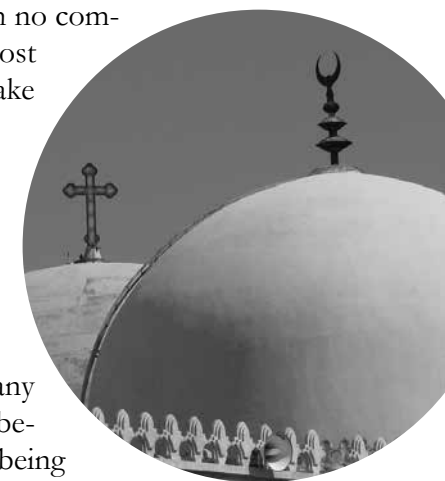
We kicked out the Jews with no compensation or mercy from most of the Arab countries to make them “Jews-free countries” while Israel accepted more than a million Arabs to live there, have their own nationality, and enjoy their rights as human beings. In Israel, women cannot be beaten legally by men, and any person can change his/her belief system with no fear of being killed by the Islamic law of ‘apostasy,’ while in our Islamic world people do not enjoy any of these rights.

I agree that the ‘Palestinians’ suffer, but they suffer because of their corrupt leaders and not because of Israel .

It is not common to see Arabs who live in Israel leaving to live in the Arab world. On the other hand, we used to see thousands of Palestinians going to work with happiness in Israel, its ‘enemy.’ If Israel treats Arabs badly as some people claim, surely we would have seen the opposite happening.

We Muslims need to admit our problems and face them. Only then we can treat them and start a new era to live in harmony with human mankind. Our religious leaders have to show a clear, and very strong stand against polygamy, pedophilia, slavery, killing those who convert from Islam to other religion, beating of women by men, and declaring wars on non-Muslims to spread Islam.

Then, and only then, do we have the right to ask others to respect our religion. The time has come to stop our hypocrisy and say it openly: ‘We Muslims have to change!



Short Stories

While I Was Busy...!

“While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone” (1 Kings 20:40)

A SOLDIER HAD BEEN GIVEN A DUTY. HE had been charged to guard one prisoner. That’s all he had been asked to do. But the prisoner escaped. When asked for an explanation, the guard could only answer: “While I was busy here and there, he was gone.”

We have all been assigned by God to guard a priceless treasure: our soul. “What shall it profit a man,” asked Jesus, “if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?” (Matt. 16:26). One day we shall be called upon to return our soul to God. Our eternal destiny shall depend on the condition of our soul when we return it to God. It is not at all difficult to lose one’s soul. All one has to do is to be busy about the wrong things. “While I was busy here and there, it was gone.” A seventy-year-old man was dying in the hospital. The priest was summoned to administer last rites. He began to talk to him about his soul. The dying man replied, “I’ve been too busy. I haven’t had time for my soul.” Then the pastor figured that in his 70 years God had given this man 3,640 Sundays- 3,640 opportunities! “While I was busy here and there, it was gone!”

2. Two Pictures

By Fr. Augustinos

A CHRISTIAN ARTIST WANTED TO DEPICT the above fact by drawing two pictures. In the first one, he drew a very busy business man sitting in his office and on his desk there were tons of files. The Lord Jesus was standing at his door knocking gently. But the man said to him, “Sorry Lord, I am so busy now, I have no time for You, please come later.” In the second picture, he drew the same person sitting at the same desk, seems very busy as before, and this time the angel of death intruding into his office without knocking. When he saw him, he said with a trembling voice, “O, no, please sir, give me another chance, I am not ready yet”. But the angel of death replied and said, “Sorry, I am very busy, I have no time, come with me right now!”

Our Church Is

By Lucy Hanna

1. A Place for Worship:

The primary reason we meet together in Church is to focus our attention on God, giving Him our worship and receiving His blessing and inspiration. Each of our services is an occasion of spiritual refreshment in which we worship God in many different forms: With prayers and supplications, hymns, praise, singing psalms, spiritual songs and by lifting our hands with expressions of thanksgiving. In gathering together around the Holy Communion, we worship the Lord as one body, renewing our vows of love, faithfulness and gratitude for His great salvation and abide in Him. We invite you to join us in the Sunday and weekdays’ services.

2. A Place for Learning:

To us, studying the Bible, the lives of the saints, Church history, teachings, rituals, canons and dogma is vital because it, not only sharpens our intellect, but it is also a spiritual guide. We accept the Bible as God’s Word, a Book that is alive and relevant to our life today. We accept the lives of the saints as role models to emulate. We invite you to join us on Saturday evening vespers, raising of the incense and Biblical Studies.

3. Place for Fellowship and Friendship:

Nothing quite compares with the joy of Christian friendship. St. John the beloved made it the sign of the true spiritual life to love one another. He said, “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.” (1 Jn 3:14). We invite you to join us in the social hour following the Sunday Divine Liturgy and in other social gatherings and activities, family conferences, picnics, festivals and Summer Club.

4. A Place for Service:

The Church is the best place to practice the practical love and charity. There are so many kinds of services available to everyone according to his talents, time and circumstances. In Romans 12, you can find at least 10 kinds of services, choose for yourself one or two of them to build the Church of Christ and invest your talents for eternal life (Matt.25:14-39).

Congratulations



St. John Church congratulates Dr. Bishop Said and his wife Dr. Engy on the baptism of their first baby- boy

Nicholas Bishop Said

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless his life and grant him health, strength, spiritual and physical growth in the love of God and His Bible and Church. Congratulations also to his grandparents Dr. Onsy and Dr. Magda Said, Nabil and Gigi Tadros.



St. John Church congratulates Peter and Marvet Fawzy for the baptism of their baby

Timothy Bishara

Praying God to bless his life and future and grant him health and spiritual growth in the grace and love of Christ and the church.

The Church also congratulates,

Lisa and John Niedzwiedz for the baptism of their baby

Adrian

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless her life and grant her health, happiness and success in her physical and spiritual life.



St. John Church congratulates the blessed mother and Grandmother and great great grandmother

Elvina Karas

on her 90’th birthday. May the Lord Jesus Christ bless her life and grant her health, strength and long life.



St. John Church in Covina congratulates

Christine Bishay and Akram Boghdady

on their marriage, praying that Christ our Savior bless their future life and grant them a happy Christian home built on the ROCK of AGES. Also, the church congratulates their two families.

