

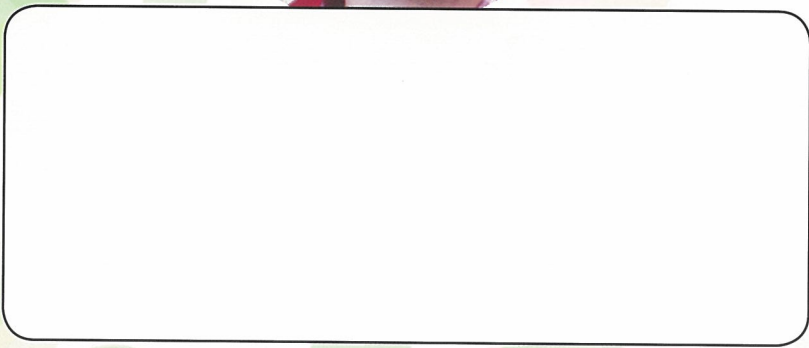
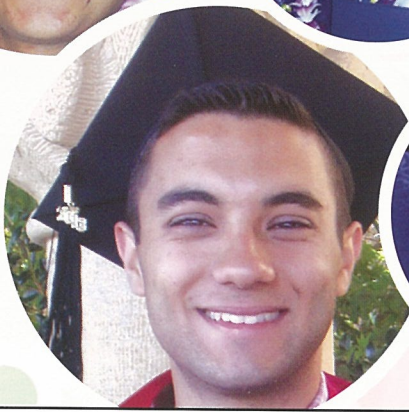
St John

A coptic christian magazine
Vol 26 No. 275 July/August 2013



Congratulations

Graduates of 2013



Verse of the month:

“As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind.” (Rom. 1:28)(Eph. 4:8).

In This Issue

Schedule & News		3
7 Ways to Love your enemies	By Pope Shenouda	4
The American and Egyptian 4th of July.....	By ROS	5
Blessed is he who Considers the Poor/ Fasting	By Fr. A. Hanna	6
The Ladder (3) on Remembrance of Death.....	By John Awad	7
How to Build Successful Marriage.....	By Fr. Gawargious Kolta	8 - 9
Confession.....	By Bishop Youannis	10 - 11
Be Filled with the Holy Spirit.....	By Fr. Augustinos Hanna	12
Can Prayer Heal?		13
Contest / Coptic Priest Killed in Sinai / Gambling		14 - 15
Biblical Verses to Memorize by Heart this Summer		16
Congratulations Graduates		17

SAINT JOHN

(ISSN # 1530-5600)

A Christian Coptic Orthodox Monthly Magazine published by St. John Coptic Orthodox Church, 21329 Cienega Ave. Covina, California 91724, a parish of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Egypt under the Papacy of

H.H. Pope Tawadros II,

The 118 Patriarch of Alexandria and 116th successor to the See of St. Mark the Evangelist and the Diocese of Southern California and Hawaii under

H.G. Bishop Serapion.

St. John reflects the Biblical, doctrinal, and spiritual views of the early Church in English and Arabic.

Editor in Chief:

Fr. Augustinos Hanna

Customer Service:

(909) 592-8847

Annual Subscription:

\$50.00 in U.S.A.

\$70.00 in foreign countries

(as a suggested donation).

“Periodicals Postage paid at Covina, Ca. and additional mailing offices”

Postmaster:

Send address changes to

St. John

P.O. Box 2144

Covina, CA 91722-8144

DESIGNED & PRINTED BY

714.285.0095
The Print Shop

SCHEDULE of MEETINGS and EVENTS for the MONTH of July-August 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 – 11:00 a.m.	+ <u>Thursday Morning</u>	+Arabic Youth Meeting 8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	+ Vespers; Bible Study 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
+ Servants’ Meeting 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	+ Senior Citizen Club 11:00 – 4:00 a.m.		+ Beginners’ Deacons- Meeting 6: 30 p.m.
	Thursday		+ Elementary Meeting 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
	Family Meeting 8:00 – 10::00 p.m.		+ College Youth Meeting 7:30- 9:00 p.m.
Teusday			+ High School & J. High Meetings 7:30 – 9:00 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

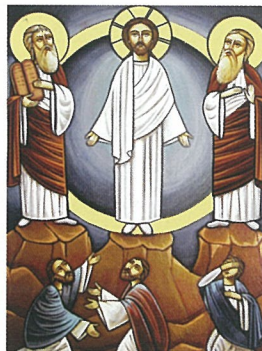
The Apostles' Feast



On Friday, July 12 the church celebrated the Apostles' Feast, commemorating the martyrdom of the two great apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.

Feast of Transfiguration:

On Monday, August 19, 2013, the church celebrates the Feast of Transfiguration, one of the Lord's Minor Feasts. It proves the Divinity of Christ, His Redemption, and the testimony of the Heavenly Father to the Beloved Son Jesus, and the testimony of the Old Testament to all these facts represented in the appearance of Moses and Elijah, besides the reality of Heaven and eternal life. The Liturgy is from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.



Feasts of July & August famous Saints:

- 1) July 1, martyrdom of St. Moses the Black.
- 2) July 10, departure of St. Cyril Pope of Alexandria 24.
- 3) July 14, departure of St. Shenouda the Archimandrite.
- 4) July 15, the departure of St. Bishoy.
- 5) July 25, Martyrdom of Apostle James.
- 6) July 31, martyrdom of St. Abanoub.
- 7) Thursday. August 22, the Feast of St. Mary.

The Annual Youth Competition (YSC):

It takes place on Saturday, August 10, 2013 at St. Athanasius Coptic Church in the Valley. The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist will be followed by breakfast. Lunch will be served throughout the day. Finally, awards and prizes will be distributed.

5. H.H. Pope Tawadros II

+ Pope Tawadros was invited with Shikh Ahmed El-Tayeb of Azhar to attend the historic event, in which the Defense Minister "El-Sisi" declared the great news of ending the rule of Muslim Brotherhood and standing with the revolution of June 30 when 33 millions of the Egyptian people stayed for one entire week in Tahrir Square asking the military to interfere and save them from the horrible Islamic terrorist regime of Morsi and his "Morshed/spiritual leader". The Pope delivered nice words praising the army, the youth and the people who strived for freedom, justice and national unity. + Also, Pope Tawadros composed a legal committee that recorded some essential objections on the temporary constitution which neglected the rights of the Christian Egyptians.



6. H.G. Bishop Serapion

His Grace Bishop Serapion is planning to visit Bolivia in Latin America during July, upon the invitation of H.G. Bishop Youssef.



7. Rev. Fr. Makary Younan:

Fr. Makary Younan delivered four sermons at St. John Church, Covina, on the occasion of the Apostles' Feast; from 11 to 14th of July 2013.



8. Kids' Camp:

St. John summer kids' camp was held in the Coptic Village from July 19 to 21. (Pics. page 19-Arabic)

9. Youth Summer Conventions:

The youth summer conventions for High School and Junior High for boys and girls were held from July 8 to 19.

7 Ways to Love your Enemies

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Many people ask, “What did the Lord Jesus mean by His words, ‘Love your enemies?’” (Matt. 5:44) Loving one’s friends is something ordinary and found even among pagans and unbelievers. But loving one’s enemy is the highest and noblest moral virtue which the Lord desires of us. He wants us to hate evil, but not those who do it. We are to hate sin, but not the sinner. Sinners are only the victims of misunderstanding, or of the Devil. We must love them and pray for them, so that they would stop acting like that.

How to love our enemy? Follow these 7 points:

1 Not bearing hatred in our hearts towards anyone, however much wrong he has done us. For no hatred can dwell in the heart which houses love.

2 Do not rejoice at all, at any misfortune that may strike one who has done you harm, for the Bible itself tells us that “Love does not delight in evil...” (1 Cor. 13:6). We should rather feel sorry that some harm has befallen our enemy.

3 We should counter evil with love and goodness, and by doing so, change the feelings of the one who wants to do us wrong. As St. John Chrysostom said, “There is a way of being rid of your enemy, and that is to turn him into a friend.”

4 Confronting hostility with hostility only serves to enflame it, while keeping silent in the face of hostility, will simply cause it to stay as it is. But confronting hostility with love heals it and makes it disappear.



5 Do not speak evil against your enemy in case the hostility of his heart increases. But instead, do the opposite. If you find in him anything good, praise him for it. For this will help to change his feelings towards you.

6 If your enemy falls into difficulties, go to help him, for the Bible says: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.” (Rom. 12:20).

7 The Bible also says, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Rom. 12:21). If you confront hostility with hostility, evil will have overcome you...Whereas if you confront it with love, then you will have overcome evil with Good.

ROADS OF SUCCESS

CONGRATULATE THE EGYPTIAN PEOPLE!



The American and Egyptian 4th of July!

On America's day of Independence, we reflect on yesterday's historical and momentous occasion of Egypt gaining its own independence. Egypt has now spread a seed of hope for oppressed people across our globe. Congratulations to the young people who turned a nation's dream into a reality.

33 million people congregated to create the world's largest protest in history in the name of human dignity and freedom. As we see the Egyptian people unify to defend freedom and overthrow the Islamist Leader, Mohamed Morsy, we know that all is possible through solidarity and perseverance.

As you may recall from our Evening Gala that was held last May, Roads of Success (ROS) is a non-profit humanitarian organization in Southern California founded by an Egyptian-American Christian family with a heart for those facing inequality in the Middle East. After immigrating to the United States, the Isaac family returned to Egypt 30 years later. Upon their arrival, they were

convicted as to how fellow Egyptians did not have

basic, social and political rights.

In 2011, the overthrow of Former President Hosni Mubarak displayed the power in unifying the Egyptian people. Since then, ROS has dedicated its efforts towards building a new Egypt by focusing on (1) unity among religious leaders. (2)

A justice system of transparency and accountability. (3) Equality for all citizens including marginalized Christians; and (4) Freedom raised to the highest standards.

ROS launched a movement called «God Created All» supported by members of Al-Azhar Islamic Institution, various political parties, churches, lawyers and diplomats who have stood together to protect, respect and defend the universal recognition of human dignity. This has been a powerful tool to empower the silent majority of Egyptians to fight for their rights and challenge the oppressive authority of the ruling extremists holding the Presidential Cabinet.

BLESSED IS HE WHO CONSIDERS THE POOR

By Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna

“Blessed is he who considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble” (Ps.41:1).

TO THINK ABOUT THE POOR AND LET

them lie on our hearts is a Christian man’s duty; for Jesus put them with us and near us when He said, “You have the poor with you always” (Matt.26:11).

Many give their money to the poor in a hurry without thought; and many more give nothing at all. This precious promise belongs to those which “CONSIDER” the poor, look into their case, devise plans for their benefit, and considerately carry them out.

We can do more by care than by cash and most with the two together. To those who consider the poor, the Lord promises His own consideration in times of distress. He will bring us out of trouble if we help others when they are in trouble. We shall receive very singular providential help if the Lord sees that we try to provide for others.

We shall have a time of trouble, however generous we may be; but if we are charitable, we may put in a claim for peculiar deliverance, and the Lord will not deny His own word and bond.

As you have done unto others, so will the Lord do unto you.

Empty your pockets, for there are much more wonderful promises in the psalm. Some of them are:

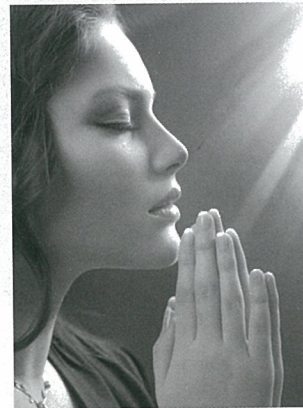
- + “The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive”
- + “He will be blessed on the earth”
- + “You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies”
- + “The Lord will strengthen him on his bed of illness”
- + “You will sustain him on his sick-bed” (v.3).

On the other hand, it is written, “Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor; will also cry himself and not be heard” (Proverbs 21:13).

FASTING

1. The Orthodox Churches, in general, have always placed great emphasis on fasting. The Coptic Orthodox Church specifically, fasts more than any other Church in the world.

2. We fast on Wednesdays because on this day the decision was made to arrest the Lord Jesus and we fast on Fridays because it is the day on which Christ was crucified. Fasting helps us remember that these are special days in the history of salvation.



3. Lent, Advent, Apostles’ fast, St. Mary and Nineveh etc., make us feel and live in these holy events.

4. Note that the beasts which eat meat are vicious and wild, but those which feed on grass are quiet and harmless.

5. Fasting helps us concentrate more on prayer and reading the word of God, because “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4).

6. It strengthens our will power. When we say NO to delicious food; that teaches us to have self-control and to say NO to SIN, temptations and resist carnal lusts.

7. Fasting is a way of helping us remember the hungry and provide food for the needy.

8. The Lord Jesus, the Holy, Perfect One, fasted. He expected us to fast when He told us, “When you fast...” (Matt. 6).

9. We also fast, not only as a means of worship but also as a powerful weapon in ministry, serving God and people.

10. By praying we worship God with our spirit; by fasting we worship God with our bodies and by giving alms we worship God with our money.

From the writings of our youth

The Ladder of Divine Ascent

“On the Remembrance of Death” (3)



By John Awad

In the last edition, we discussed the importance of obedience and its relevance in our lives. Obedience not just to God, but to all people, in combination with humility, is essential for one to grow closer to Christ. Following this, I would like to shift our attention to the importance of realizing the end of our journey on earth and remembering that our passing from this world is always before us. This article will thus cover the sixth chapter of our novel, titled: “On the Remembrance of Death”.



At first, hearing “the remembrance of death” draws up an image of mourning for the passing of another. However, John Climacus is not speaking of this weeping for others, but rather at our own loss of life. He declares “to be reminded of death each day is to die each day; to remember one’s departure from life is to provoke tears by the hour”. Nevertheless, we are not mourning for fear of our physical death, rather we are to be reminded of death so as to be reminded of our daily sins and shortcomings. “The remembrance of death brings labors and meditations”, for through realizing we can die at any moment, we are pushed to repent for our sins and the error of our ways. Nothing drives one to change his or her life more than the feeling of imminent danger. In fact, comfort and pleasure are the number one method through which the devil is able to hinder a Christian. For when we get comfortable with the way we are living our lives, it is easiest to stumble. This is clearly seen in the example of David sinning with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:1-27). At this time, David was supposed to go to war with the rest of his army, but he chose to send his generals instead and stayed in the city himself, breaking tradition. While he was in his kingdom, he happened to see Bathsheba bathing, leading him to lust after her. This lust led to murder, and the final consequence was far more dire than the

original sin. Although this instance in David’s life was a lapse in judgment, it actually led him to repent and mourn for his sins, leading to the creation of some of the most beautiful and repentant psalms in the Bible. Nevertheless, the lesson we are all to gain from this story is to prevent growing comfortable in our life by always looking at the possibility of death and eternal condemnation. In being reminded of our sins and the death incurred by it, we are awoken to our need for Christ and the light and salvation He brings to our souls.

In practical terms, Climacus writes that “if your remembrance of death is clear and specific, you will cut down on your eating; and if, in your humility, you reduce the

amount you eat, your passions will be correspondingly reduced”. Thus, we are called to use the remembrance of death to battle our gluttony, which leads to comfort, pleasure, and ultimately laziness. We combat this evil of overeating and sensuality through humility, which is strengthened through physical means of fasting, subduing our bodies, and extending our prayers and Bible reading. Furthermore, we can practice humility with the qualities discussed in former chapters of this novel, namely through obedience to others and detaching ourselves from the materialism and cares of this world.

Climacus concludes this short chapter by recalling a saying that “one cannot pass a day devoutly unless you think of it as your last”. While death in itself is mournful, reminding ourselves of the reality that our lives can end at any moment pushes us to act and abide always in a Christian manner. It is quite fitting thus that Climacus finishes this chapter with Scripture that reads: “Remember your last end, and you will never sin” (Wisdom of Sirach 7:36).

HOW TO BUILD A LASTING SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE (1)

By Fr. Gawargious Kolta

Many couples desire a happy marriage, and they work hard to make it successful. We find that the husband and wife are both whole heartedly committed to their marriage and they make every sacrifice to keep their relationship healthy, progressing and improving to be after God's heart. They try to build their marriage to last, and to overcome the challenges that face them during the life-long journey of marriage. Both know that they have to live with intimacy all their life together with total commitment for the total person to the total life. They also know that marriage is permanent and they became united as one flesh (Gen. 2:24) and that there is no division after unity. Each of them renders the affection due to his/her spouse and has no authority on his/her own body (1 Cor. 7:3, 4).



these are, there Christ is. Where Christ is, there is no place for the evil one”.

St. John Chrysostom, in the fifth century, mentioned in his book: “Marriage and family life” the following: “Marriage like monasticism, is a sign of God's kingdom, because it begins to restore the unity of mankind, which has been broken by sin. Thus marriage is a mystery in itself, the unity of redeemed mankind in Christ's. When two become one in Christ, their love can enable them to transcend any limitations imposed by the world”. He added that depending on their spiritual gifts, either one may teach the other or both together may fill their common life with much holiness as any monk. St. John Chrysostom, dealing with the role of sexual relations in marriage, he emphasizes first of all the equality of wives and husbands in this regard.

Tertullian in the third century said: “How I am able to tell of the happiness of that marriage which the church unites and strengthens with the Eucharist Sacrifice and seals with a blessing, which the angels announce and which the Father considers valid? What a beautiful couple two believers make, who share one faith, one way of life, one promise and the same service of the Lord! Both are children of the same Father and both are fellow servants. There is no division of spirit or body, but they are truly two in one flesh. They instruct one another, encourage one another, and sustain one another. They are together in the church, at the Lord's Table, in difficulties, in hardships, and in refreshment. They freely visit the sick and help the needy. They give alms without need of persuasion, make sacrifices without hesitation and attend their daily work without hindrance. When Christ sees and hears these things, He rejoices and sends His peace to these spouses. Where



In order to achieve successful marriage, we must consider the following important issues:

- 1- Christian marriage is a covenant between a couple (one man and one woman) and God; it is not a contract. Each spouse should know that the other is a gift from God and they both must work together to keep the holy covenant of marriage for life for the same person.
- 2- Couples must show each other sacrifice, romantic love, affection and care as long as they live. Spouses should love and accept their partners as they are, without trying to change their identity. Love should be unconditional and does not depend on what the other spouse does. Love must not fade after having children, as the years pass, in sickness or in any other emotional distress. They must not let the relationship start downward slide, even when one

of them gets angry or unhappy.

3- The secret of happy marriage is achieved when one of the spouses is tired, sick, or in a bad mood for any reason, and the other spouse shows care, respect and some romantic deeds, such as words of affection, sending love cards, flowers, or a surprising gift. Dr. Harley in his book "Marriage insurance" introduced a concept called "Bank of Love", in order to help married couples to know more about the feeling of love. He explained why good marriage works. In a good marriage, each spouse deposits love units into his/her partner's account in the bank of love, and tries to avoid withdrawals from the account. When a spouse shows bad feelings towards the other, withdrawal of love units will occur. This may happen due to frequent criticism, verbal violence or any type of rude behavior. Painful experiences can push a person's account into a negative balance.

4- Honesty is a basic requirement of a successful marriage. Every spouse must reveal all his/her emotional reactions to the other. Honesty gives married couples the information that they need to solve problems and to enrich their relationship. Every spouse must reveal to the other as much information as he/she could about himself/herself. These are their thoughts, their feelings, their habits, their personal history, their daily activity, their plans for the future, and their likes and dislikes. Honesty should be achieved in the following sides of life. Emotional honesty: Every spouse should reveal all his/her emotional reactions to the other spouse, both

and positive. If a wife treats her husband badly, he must tell her kindly about his feelings. If he does not tell her his feelings, she might think that he is happy. He may think that it is wrong to complain, and so he gets silently frustrated. The same will happen if a husband treats his wife badly. Honesty enables a couple to learn to make appropriate adjustments to each other, in order to become a happy couple.

A life-long happy marriage requires a considerable number of adjustments on the part of both husband and wife. Those adjustments cannot be made unless both honestly express their feelings to one another. Any complain needs to be taken seriously.

For example if the husband is workaholic and spends too much time at work, the wife has to tell him that she feels lonely. When the wife is tired and cannot achieve successful sexual relation, she must tell her husband. Honesty is the first step of healing. In successful marriage couples must try to share in the daily activities

which their life together needs.

Honesty can be achieved if one spouse does not leave the other with false impression about his/her thoughts, feelings, and habits. The couples must discuss the future plans together. Everyone must discuss with the other the motives of marriage, apart from being in love. There are some issues that are not healthy for successful marriage, such as:

+ I got married just because I want to have children. + Just because I want to escape from loneliness.

+ Just to escape from the control of my parents or from my unhappy home.

+ Just to have an economic security in the future.

+ Just to have more respectable status and to escape from social pressure.

+ Just to have sexual union in a lawful way and to escape from sexual immorality.

+ Some bad intentions will surely cause frustration, such as I got married to get a legal state in USA, or to have someone to help me financially in order to study and get a degree, or to get a job in my in-laws' firm or company.

+ I have many objectives for marriage.

My spouse must know the true reasons for my marriage and the whole truth about all my objectives. Honesty is a necessary step in solving marital problems and disputes.

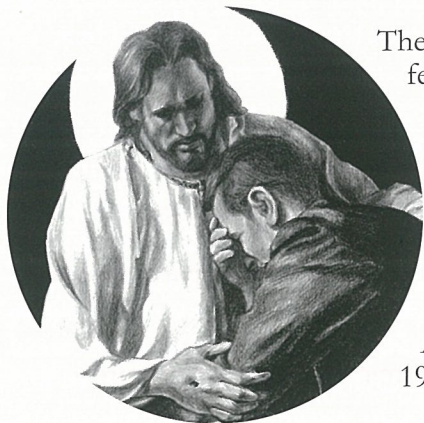
5- I must not demand anything from my spouse that would cause pain or discomfort: If I request a favor from my spouse, and I find that my spouse responds negatively, I have to withdraw the request. In marriage, demands are common, but if I find reluctance in my spouse, I must not get disappointed. The reluctant spouse has a good reason for being reluctant. I must not insist or justify my request, otherwise I will cause discomfort for my spouse. I must not force him/her to meet all my needs, by threatening or punishing my spouse. I must know that this forcing hurts my spouse. I can minimize confrontation with my spouse if I change in order to accommodate my spouse's feelings. I must protect my spouse from my annoying habits. When I come home from work, take my dinner and slouch in a chair to watch TV, while my wife is cleaning the dishes, and helping my children in doing their homework, she will be bothered and irritated. I must share in all family needs.

CONFESSION

"And many that believed came and confessed and showed their deeds."

(Acts 19:18)

By Late Bishop Yoaness



The Sacrament of Confession has many blessings and is of great importance in building the spiritual life. Our Holy Church has been performing it faithfully and accurately since the Apostolic Age (Acts 19:18). In addition to

all Biblical evidence that the early church had practiced it, it is also mentioned in the writings of the early fathers like Deyonasios (St. Paul's disciple), Erianaos, Athanasius, Basilious, and St. John Chrysostom. Also, famous theologians such as Tertilian and Oregon spoke of the importance of confession.

In this article, we are going to discuss the spiritual rather than the dogmatic aspect of confession - its blessings and usefulness to the faithful. If the church was performing the precious Sacrament of Confession in its early stages when faith was at its peak and life was simple and free of all complications, how much more can the need be in this day and age where life is so complex!

When we speak of the significance of the Sacrament of Confession, we are not being theoretical. All those who practice confession faithfully and correctly, experience its practical benefits - spiritually and physically.

THE ADVANTAGES OF CONFESSION

1. From the Psychological Point of View:

Human nature has a need for expressing its shortcomings and it finds rest in confessing its faults. The conscience pushes us to confess our sins and we obtain relaxation and comfort only when we do so. Confession helps us in ridding ourselves of psychological worries. Through confession, the soul becomes clear - it sheds all its burdens like a cloud that clears after a heavy rainfall. Our world is full of problems and confession helps us in dealing with them. These problems may have deep psychological effects on individuals, such as deep hatred for society, developing hysteria or even committing suicide.

2. From the Spiritual Point of View:

a. When we confess, we receive through Jesus Christ, the gift of forgiveness of sins. We cannot get this gift through any other way, not for all the money we have.

b. Through confession, we are made worthy of receiving Communion and of dwelling in Jesus Christ, "The one who eats My Body and drinks My Blood abides in Me and I in him." (Jn. 6:56) Without confession, we are not worthy of this gift (1 Cor. 11:28).

c. In confessing, we examine and purify our soul. Thus, we improve our spiritual life. Careful self-examination as well as the spiritual remedies offered by the priest, guides the confessor step by step in his spiritual life.

d. When you reveal all your thoughts to the priest, this helps in getting rid of them. There is nothing the devil would like better than for us not to reveal our thoughts to the priest, because this is an indication that we have no help and the devil can then intensify his war. The wise Solomon said, "For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow, but woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up." (Ecc. 4:10).

St. John Kasian said, "The one who admits his thoughts cannot be deceived." And he also said, "Sin will stay as long as it is hidden in the heart." Once sin is admitted, it is erased even before the priest gives an answer. When a serpent hiding in a hole is found, it escapes immediately. So do evil thoughts, when revealed, escape instantly.

St. Makarios the great once met the devil and asked him how well he was doing with the monks in the desert. The devil answered, "Very bad, every evil thought I tell them, they admit to their priests, except one monk, who is my friend because he never confesses his thoughts to the priest." St. Makarios went straight to advice the monk to confess all his thoughts to the priest. The monk obeyed. Later, St. Makarios met the devil and asked him, "How well are you doing?" The devil answered, "Very bad, even that friend of mine is no longer my friend. He is now my enemy."

e. Through confession, we find solutions to our problems. An Egyptian monk once had a problem and he prayed and fasted for a solution. But it was useless, so he decided to ask an elder. On his way, an angel met him and gave him an answer to his problem and told him, "God gave you an answer to your problem because of your humble heart when you decided to ask that elder." This is evident in the Bible when Jesus healed the ten lepers. He told them, "Go and show yourselves to the priest, and as they went, they were cleansed." (Luke 17:11-14) So, God wants to teach us that He is pleased when we submit to other human beings appointed by God to be

His representatives. So, let us hurry and confess all our thoughts to our priest. In other words, let us complain about our enemy, the devil, to our father exactly like the little child, who, when bothered by someone, would say, "I will complain to my father."

f. Another great spiritual benefit is the discipleship:

Christian life is based on discipleship. The last commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ was: "Go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19-20) Our Lord Jesus taught us this principle in a practical way when He chose His twelve disciples and the commandment was for us to follow. Discipleship has many blessings because spiritual virtue cannot be attained through reading books or by listening to a speaker, but by being a disciple to a spiritual father who can guide and train, like an apprenticeship.

St. John Kasian said, "When we look at the physical sciences and the subjects that require skill we find that it cannot be attained without the training of the apprentices by their masters." Therefore, spiritual aspects of soul salvation and its growth till perfection, needs a spiritual father to guide, teach and train.

3. From the Social Point of View:

Since confession relieves the individual psychologically and saves him from all complexes and spiritual mistakes that might make him inadaptable to society, the individual will, therefore adjust better, will be more cheerful toward life, doing his best at work and therefore his production in society will multiply.

4. From the Physical Point of View:

Confession also has many blessings for our body, for we know from the Bible that the cause of some diseases was sin, as in the case of the sick man of Bethesda. (Jn. 5:14) Therefore, our church teaches that the sick person, to whom the priest will perform the Sacrament of unction, has to confess his sins first before he is cured of his disease. Also, modern science confirms the deleterious effects of psychological problems on the general health. Hence, a new branch in medicine called "Psychosomatic Medicine" has been established and taught in medical schools.

Therefore, confession cures the body as well as the spirit, frees those who are tied with bad habits, and cures those who have psychological problems and those who cannot adjust well to the society. In brief, it frees the individual from the consequences of sin.

Some governmental agencies now appoint social workers in schools and other institutions to cure any deviation in the behavior of youth. Also, the numbers of psychi-

atrists have increased tremendously to cure those who are psychologically sick. Our church has known and performed what modern science now realizes. Our church has known and performed the Sacrament of Confession eighteen centuries before psychoanalysis was discovered. The knowledge of the church concerning the Sacrament of Confession was not based on research, but based on obeying the commandments of God who created man and knows his inner soul and how to cure it.

Confession is not only a psychological treatment, or else it would have been compared to a psychological clinic where psychiatrists who may even be unbelievers, work. But confession is an important church sacrament and psychological treatment is one of its advantages. Forgiveness of sins accompanies this sacrament. This gift cannot be offered by any psychological clinic in the world, even if its doctors are experts and believers.

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH:

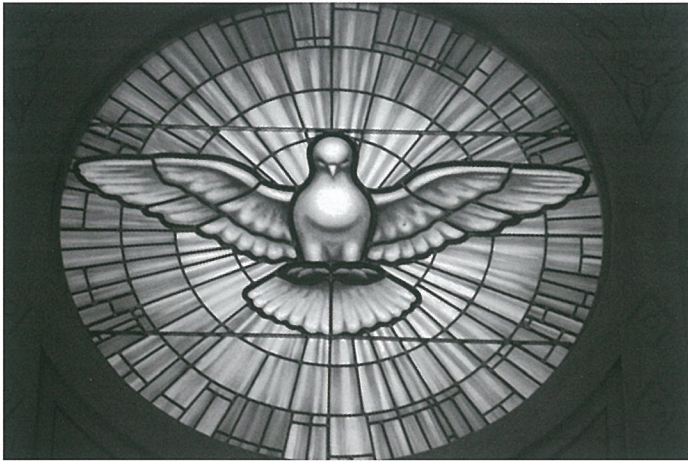
Since confession is of such great importance, tremendous responsibilities face the church today concerning the problems of its children, especially the teenagers and youth.

Tradition in our church does not allow any priest to implement the Sacrament of Confession, but only those who have certain characteristics that qualify them to lead and guide others. When the bishop feels that a certain priest has reached that state where he can listen to confessions and give advice, he gives him permission. Not every priest becomes a father for confession. Certainly, age is one of the factors that affect the personality of the spiritual father, since he will be more experienced and spiritually knowledgeable. Moreover, Abba Isaiah (of the fourth century) in his teachings to the beginners said, "If an elder asks you about your thoughts, reveal them to him very frankly, when you are assured that he is faithful and keeps your words. Do not look only at his age but depend on his spiritual knowledge and experience, lest he multiplies your sickness instead of curing you." St. John Kasian also said, "Anba Moses commanded us not to hide our thoughts but reveal them to spiritual elders who have knowledge and discrimination and not only to those who are old. Many have gone to the old priests who had no spiritual knowledge and fell in despair instead of being cured."

It is by time that the church restores to the sacrament its importance and holiness. Special studies should be offered in the seminaries to equip the spiritual fathers with the needed knowledge and spiritual experience. There should be centers for confessions in big cities where the priest is completely devoted to confessions and relieved from other responsibilities. Confession during the liturgy loses many of its advantages.

“Be Filled With the Holy Spirit”

By Fr. Augustinos Hanna



In Ephesians 5:18, St. Paul orders the believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This is an imperative commandment. Being filled with the Spirit is the secret of the victorious Christian life.

So, what does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? This is an expression that is used to describe the way in which God's Holy Spirit has worked in an individual. This filling leaves a permanent spiritual mark on our souls.

In the sacrament of baptism, we were born again spiritually of the Spirit and water (John 3:3, 5). And in the sacrament of confirmation, the anointment of Myron oil, the Holy Spirit descended upon us and we were confirmed in Lord Jesus Christ as the branch abides in the vine. But these two vital sacraments happen only once a lifetime and cannot be repeated.

Therefore, when we get filled with the Holy Spirit, we call the Holy Spirit through prayer asking Him to come and fulfill everything that was initially given to us at our baptism. Being filled of the Spirit means that we are somewhat familiar with His action in us, His gifts to us, and His fruits and instructions for us.

We read in the Book of Acts that St. Paul and the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit several times according to the needs of their ministry (Acts 2:4; 4:31; 13:9; 19:6).

Through your devotional and fervent prayers, studying the Bible, practicing the sacraments and serving Christ, you can be filled with the Spirit.

No one can gather together between being filled with the Holy Spirit and living in sin. We have to repent first and purify our hearts, through confession, in order to be worthy to receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of holiness, justice, meekness and righteousness, and thus He can't find rest in a defiled life.

Pride, anger, wrath, selfishness, laziness, greed, lust, lying, drinking, stealing, gambling, smoking, judging and hating others and divorcing unfairly are among the obstacles of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Some servants described the experience of being filled with the Spirit saying they have become so sensitive and allergic to sin. Others experienced a sense of deep joy and peace. Others said they felt a greater love for Christ was poured out into their heart and they wanted to pray more and more (Rom.5:5). And some said they felt a spiritual strength and their words became fiery and touching the lives of others.

Due to the extreme importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, the Orthodox Churches arranged a daily prayer, the third hour prayer (the time of Pentecost) in which we say:

“O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth who are in all places and fills all things the treasury of goodness and the giver of life, graciously come, O Good One, and dwell within us, fill us and cleanse us of all defilement and save our souls.”

I wish that all the believers can memorize this short prayer and pray it with all their hearts every day between the time of 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon according to their convenience.

On the contrary, the New Testament warns us of committing certain sins against the Holy Spirit such as:

“Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Thess. 5:19).

“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 5:30).

“Do not resist the Holy Spirit”; and “if you heard His voice, do not harden your hearts”

(Acts 7:51 & Heb. 3:7 & 15).

4. Insulting the Spirit of Grace and blaspheming against the Holy Spirit (Heb. 10:29; Matt. 12:31).

Can Prayer Heal?

Science Looks at Prayer

More than 90 percent of Americans believe

in God, and about half of them pray. But modern medicine has largely kept health and healing separate from spirituality. This may be changing, however, as scientists are accumulating empirical evidence that God is truly at work in our world. God's role in today's high-tech medical world is being increasingly explored, and the results have been astounding. A growing number of medical schools are even beginning to include courses on spirituality's role in health and healing.

At Duke University Medical Center in North Carolina, cardiologist Dr. Mitch Krucoff is conducting experiments on heart patients.

"Is there a measurable incremental benefit [to prayer]?" he asks. The new global study he's conducting, to be completed next year, will attempt to answer that question.

Nearly two hundred studies on prayer and healing have already been conducted. One of them, at the Mid-America Heart Institute in Kansas City, was directed by cardiologists William Harris and James O'Keefe.

Both men were skeptical. "From a purely scientific standpoint," said O'Keefe, "I thought it was illogical." Harris agreed, "We were even doubtful that the phenomena itself was real, that prayer could do anything."

The one thousand heart patients in their study didn't know that half the group was being prayed for by the hospital chaplain and a group of volunteers. The other half weren't prayed for. The results? Patients who were prayed for had 11 percent fewer heart attacks, strokes, and life-threatening complications than those not prayed for.

Admitting that he can't explain it, O'Keefe says, "This study offers an interesting insight into the possibility that maybe God is influencing our lives on Earth." No kidding!

When Dr. Elizabeth Targ, a psychiatrist at the Pacific College of Medicine in San Francisco, tested prayer on seriously-ill AIDS patients, she found that "ten of the prayed-for patients lived, while four who had not been prayed for died."

In a larger follow-up study, Targ found that the people who received prayer "had six times fewer hospitalizations, and



those hospitalizations were significantly shorter than the people who received no prayer."

"I was sort of shocked," she says. "In a way it's like witnessing a miracle. There was no way to understand this from my experience and from my basic understanding of science."

Such studies have plenty of critics, but the new research has left many scratching their heads. Is prayer something that can be put under a microscope and examined? Probably not, but one thing's for sure: prayer works, and prayer is real.

Ultimately, answered prayer requires a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It's a mysterious and unexplainable gift that God gives to those who come to him. We don't need scientists or researchers to tell us that.

Furthermore, "prayer" doesn't heal AIDS or failing hearts. It's God who heals, by honoring the intervention of prayer. God can always heal through prayer, but He doesn't always choose to do so.

Nonetheless, we rejoice when he uses our intercessory prayers to work healing miracles here on Earth, something even the scientific community is now discovering.

Summer Contest 2013

By Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna

Famous Women of the Bible

I. Complete their names:

M.....deserved to be called blessed from all generations.

E.....was a beautiful Jewish girl who became Queen of Persia.

Ly.....was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira.

E.....was the mother of John the Baptist.

R.....had only two sons, Joseph and Benjamin.

II. Matching: Place the correct letter in the blank at the left:

- ____ 1. Widow of Zarephath ____ 2. Deborah
B. Visited King Solomon.
____ 3. Rachel C. was converted in the city of Philippi.
____ 4. Hannah D. Jacob only daughter.
____ 5. Queen of Sheba E. Mother of Samuel.
____ 6. Lydia F. Elijah raised her son from the dead.
G. The only O. T. woman Judge.

III. True or False:

1. St. Peter raised the dead son of Nain's widow.
 2. Mary (Lazarus' sister) dried Jesus' feet with her hair.
 3. After Sarah died Abraham married Keturah.
 4. Jezebel was trampled by horses.
 5. Hagar was the Egyptian mother of Ishmael.
 6. The "Virtuous Woman" is found in Proverbs.

IV. Name the woman:

- ____ 1. She became an old woman but was never a little girl.
____ 2.. St. John saw her in heaven as a woman closed with the sun, with moon under her feet.
____ 3. This woman was responsible for Samson's blindness.
____ 4. A Moabitess who accompanied her mother-in-law back to Bethlehem after her husband's death.
____ 5. St. Peter raised this godly woman from the dead at Joppa.
____ 6. She and her husband fell dead at Peter's feet.
____ 7. She was the sister of Moses and Aaron.

V. Multiple Choice:

Draw a line around the correct answer:

There are (A) 66 (B) 40 (C) 72 books in the Bible.



The New Testament contains

- (A) 30 (B) 27 (C) 39 books.

The Bible was written by about

- (A) 20 (B) 30 (C) 40 authors.

"Testament" means

- (A) "a covenant" (B) book (C) story.

The New Testament age began with

- (A) Christ's birth (B) death (C) resurrection.

St. John was martyred by

- (A) sword (B) cross (C) neither.

8. Who said "Whatever He says to you do it?"

- (A) David (B) Martha (C) Virgin Mary.

St. Luke was (A) fisherman (B) physician (C) tax-collector.

Who was the last judge of Israel? (A) Eli (B) Samson (C) Samuel.

St. Paul wrote (A) 10 (B) 21 (C) 14 letters

We believe in St. Mary's powerful

- (A) writings (B) preaching (C) intercession.

VI. Church History:

Who is the mother whom her children were martyred on her lap and she was encouraging them?

Who was the first bishop sent by the church to Ethiopia, Africa, and who was the Pope who sent him?

Who wrote the most famous book on the life of St. Anthony the great?

Who wrote the Synaxarium?

Who is the Patriarch whom in his time Mountain Moquattam was moved in Egypt?

What is the church (out of Egypt) which was turned into mosque then became a museum now?

On what city St. Augustine was ordained a bishop?

Who was the Dean of the School of Alexandria in the second century while he was 18 years?

Who is the saint who used to pray from sunset to sunrise?

10. Mention the names of the most famous five commentators on the Bible in Church history?

+ Send your answers to the magazine before the end of September 2013. There will be prizes for the best three answers.

Coptic Christian Priest Killed In Egypt

Muslim Brotherhood, Coptic Christians, Mina Aboud Sharween, Anti-Christian Violence Egypt, Coptic Priest Killed In Egypt, Inter-Religious Violence Egypt, Priest Killed Northern Si-



CAIRO, July 6 (Reuters) - Gunmen shot dead a Coptic Christian priest in Egypt's lawless Northern Sinai on Saturday in what could be the first sectarian attack since the military overthrow of Islamist President Mohamed Mursi, security sources said.



The priest, Fr. Mina Aboud Sharobeem, was attacked in the early afternoon while walking in El Arish.

The shooting in the coastal city was one of several attacks by Islamist insurgents that included firing at four military checkpoints in the region, the sources said.

Saturday's attacks on checkpoints took place in al-Mahajer and al-Safaa in Rafah, as well as Sheikh Zuwaïd and al-Kharouba.

The violence follows attacks in which five police officers were killed in El Arish on Friday.

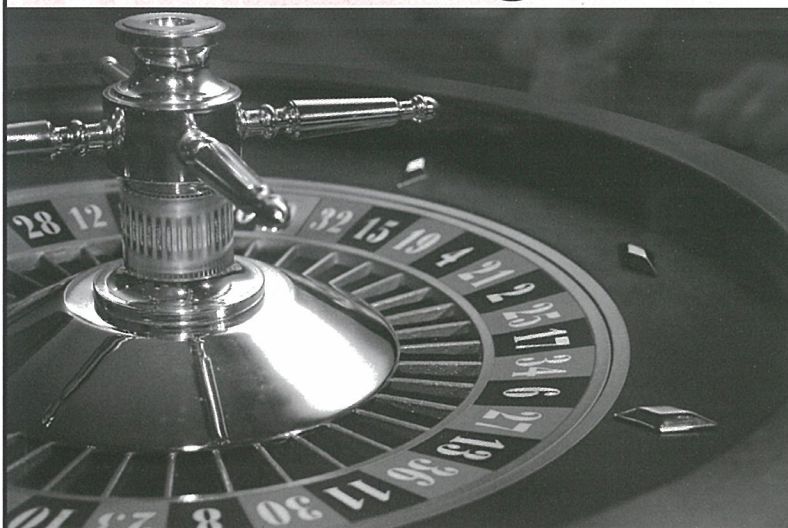
Mursi's Muslim Brotherhood has fiercely criticized Coptic Pope Tawadros, spiritual leader of Egypt's 10 million Christians, for giving his blessing to the removal of the president and attending the announcement by armed forces commander General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

Those Muslim Brotherhood terrorists also attacked Coptic in Port-Said, Monifia and Luxor and killed 23 Christians in Luxor and chased them on the roofs of their houses and forced them to jump to the street and them brutally killed them!

(Note that those terrorists who kill the Christians and burn them alive, bomb their churches in Egypt, Iraq and Syria, and call Christians and Jews "the descendants of apes and pigs", are those whom Mr. Obama supports! Believe it or not!)



Is Gambling Sin?



By Raafat Youssef

The youth ask this question. Simply, the answer is YES:

It is against God's word that says, "In toil you shall eat all the days of your life...In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread" (Genesis 3:17-19).

It is the sin of greed: You gamble to win money the easy way, and usually you lose but keep gamb-ling to compensate the loss. The possibility of loss is much more than winning and this is a snare to motivate you to go on playing till you lose all your money. And assume you may win; it is not a gain but totally loss because it is a cursed money against God's commandment (1 Cor. 6:10; Eph.5:3; Col. 3)

You lose time, which is more important than money: Someone once said, "If you have lost gold or silver, you can find something in place of what you have lost. However, if you lose time you can-not replace what you lost." Time is a part of your life. You cannot roll the clock backward because you will ruin it.

Gambling creates contentions: Everyone wants the highest profit while playing. Gamblers enter into emotional roller coasters, they cheat and steal.

It is an addictive game: The Bible says, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor. 6:12).

The gambler is always contentious and does not want to work while God says, "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thes.3:10).

It leads to depression and sometimes to suicide.

Biblical Verses to Memorize by Heart this Summer

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:16).

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” (Matt.4:4)

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17).

“Unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3 &5).

“His name will be called Jesus because He saves His people from their sins” (Matt.1:21).

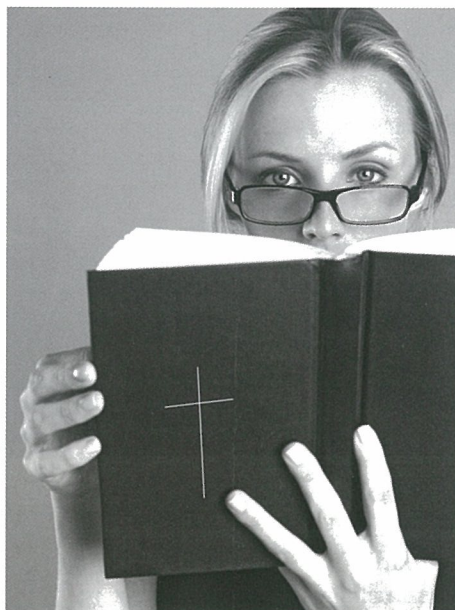
“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life” (Romans 6:23).

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7).

“Most assuredly I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” (Jn.5:24).

“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say rejoice” (Philippians 4:4).



“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4: 6-7).

The Lord Jesus said, “I am the bread of life, he who comes to Me shall never hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (Jn. 6:35).

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world, he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (Jn. 8:12).

“I am the Way, the Truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me” (Jn. 14:6).

“I am the resurrection and the life” (Jn.11: 25).

“Rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20).

“Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:7).

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My commandments” (Jn. 14:21, 23).

The Conditions of the Legal Baptism

“To be performed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28: 19).

To be by water and the Holy Spirit” (John 3:3, 5 & Titus 3:5).

By emersion in the water and not by sprinkling, unless in case of emergency (Romans 6:4).

Practiced by a priest from a church that has Apostolic Succession.

Congratulations

Graduates of Class 2013

Meena



Meena Halaka

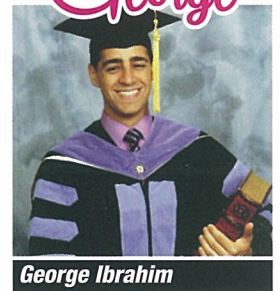
Congratulations Meena on your graduation from Lipscomb University with a double major of classical biology and molecular biology. We are very proud of your hard work through school and making god a major part of your life. My god bless you and lead you through your future education. **Love Mom: Meryam, Dad:Adel, and brother Aresaneuse.**



Kathy Mehany & Mark Messiha

for their engagement, praying that the Lord Jesus may complete their marriage in joy and peace. Congratulations to their two beloved families.

George



George Ibrahim

Congratulations George on attaining the degree of Doctor of Medical Dentistry. We are all proud of your achievement. May the Lord bless your career and your life

Mom, Dad, Mira and Ramez

Fady



Fady Hanna

Congratulations Fady for graduating with a BS in mechanical engineering from Stanford University. We are very proud of you. «For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future» (Jerm 29:11).

Love- Dad, mom, and Lauren

Andrew



Andrew Soliman

Andrew, we are very proud to have seen you graduate and grow into a great man over these past years. May God continue to bless you in all of your work and future endeavors. Love, Mom & Dad

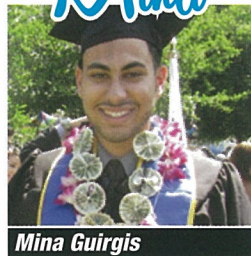
Mark



Mark Girgis

Congratulations Mark! We are proud of you!
- Love, Mom, Dad,
Teta, Mina and Marina

Mina



Mina Guirgis

We are so proud of all your accomplishments and may God continue to bless the plan that lies ahead of you. We love you!

Andreh

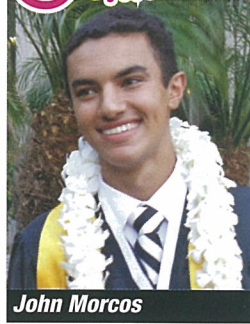


Andreh Karas

Congratulations Andreh on your graduation from high school. We are so proud of you. We wish you the best in college. ---Love Mom, Dad and Rogeh.

أخبار في صور

John



John Morcos

Dearest John,

We are so proud of all your accomplishments and the man you have become! Remember to "commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans" Proverbs 16:3. Love, Mom, Dad, Maria, and Teta.

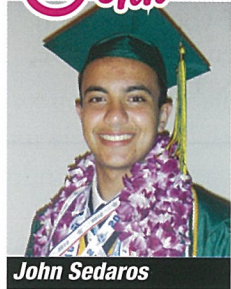
Nancy



Nancy Saweris

Dearest daughter Nancy, Congratulations Dr. Nancy Saweris Pharm D. There are not enough words to thank the LORD for your graduation and receiving your Doctorate of Pharmacy degree from Touro University, California College of Pharmacy. Your achievement has made us proud, happy and acknowledging the hand of God in our lives. Love, Refaat, Elham, Nardine, Dr. Waleed, Teta, Fr. Gawargious and Dr. Nancy Kolta, Dr. Ebram and family

John



John Sedaros

Dear Beloved John,

Congratulations on your graduation from South Hills High School with Highest Honors and medals of achievement in music, swimming, Seal of Biliteracy in French and Chinese, earning Eagle Scout and acceptance to UC Irvine in Biology, you are God's goodness, the Garden of Gladness and the Paradise of Joy. Obey and trust God's words as Abraham to light your path in life to the gates of invisible world with wisdom, blessing and guidance. We are very proud of you.

Love Mom, Dad, Peter & Paul Sedaros

