

News of May - June

1. St. George Feast: Thursday, May 1

2. Feast of St. Mark: Thursday, May 8

On Thursday, May 8, the church celebrates the feast of the Evangelist St. Mark who preached Christianity to Egypt and the founder of the Coptic Orthodox church (Isaiah 19:19).



3. Feast of St. Athanasius the Apostolic:

On Thursday, May 15, the church celebrates the Feast of St. Athanasius, the Defender of Faith, author of the Christian Creed and 20th Patriarch.

4. Feast of St. Demiana: (Tuesday, May 20).

5. Feast of St. John the Evangelist (May 24)

6. Feast of Christ's Ascension: (May 29)

The Church celebrates the Feast of Ascension on Thursday, May 29. The Liturgy from 8–10 am.



7. Feast of Christ's Entry into Egypt: (June 1)

On Sunday, June 1, the church celebrates this Lord's Feast of the flight into Egypt. This Feast has a great special value to Copts and Egyptians.



8. Feast of Pentecost: (June 8)

The church celebrates the Pentecost on Sunday, June 8. It is the Feast of the Holy Spirit and considered the birthday of the Christian church. The Liturgy will be followed by the Sagda (worship) prayer.



9.H.H. Pope Tawadros II:

+ Pope Tawadros delegated H.G. Bishop Raphael to travel to Russia to arrange for his visit to the Patriarch of Russia in the near future.

+ His Holiness travelled to Lebanon to attend the funeral of H. H. Mar Ignatius Zakka the Patriarch of Antioch.

+ Pope Tawadros delivered a sermon on his weekly meeting, Wednesday, April 2 explaining the new method of making the Myroun Oil, which was made on Tuesday 8, and Wednesday, 9 of April at St. Bishoy Monastery.



10. H.G. Bishop Serapion:

+ Bishop Serapion travelled to Egypt to share in making the Mayroun oil, at St. Beshoy Monastery.



11. The 27th Anniversary of Fr. Shenouda:

St. John church priests and congregation congratulates Fr. Shenouda Ghattas for his twenty seven anniversary of his ordination wishing him health, and fruitful ministry.



12.St. John's 8th Annual Book Fair:

St. John's 8th Annual Book Fair starts from Thursday, May 29 until the Feast of Christ's entry into Egypt on Sunday, June 1.

13. Mother's Day: (Monday, May 12)

America celebrates Mother's Day on May 12; but we will celebrate it one day earlier, on Sunday, May 11, in the church hall. Happy Mother's Day.



14. St. John's 25th Annual Family Convention:

St. John Church holds her 25th Annual Family Convention during the Memorial-Day long week-end from Saturday, May 24 to Monday, 26 at Marriott Marquis Hotel in San Diego Marina. The Guest speakers will be H.G. Bishop Abakir of Denmark and H.G. Bishop Raphael.



Celebrating
a sign bears Pope Shenouda's
name on the church vStreet



The Ascension of Christ

By H. H. Pope Shenouda



In the Feast of Ascension, we celebrate Christ's ascension to heaven and His sitting at the Right Hand of God. He ascended to heaven defying the gravity of the earth. The Lord Jesus gave us the possibility to ascend like Him and to defy the earthly gravity, as He said, "If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all peoples to Myself" (Jn. 12:32). A cloud received Him out of their sight, and two angels stood by them in white apparel and declared to His disciples: "This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11). He will come again on the clouds of heaven with His angels and saints to lift us up to meet with Him on the clouds, and thus we will be always with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). And as Christ had sat down at the right hand of the Father, so He will make us sit together in the heavenly places" (Eph.2:6). This Christ whom the Jews crucified between two thieves, and mocked Him, was risen in glory and ascended to heaven sat down at the right hand of God, Then Calvary was not a sad end to His life, but a new beginning to His glory. Therefore, everyone who suffers with Him, will indeed be glorified with Him (Rom. 8:17). The last scene the disciples saw Jesus was His ascension to heaven; He raised up their eyes to heaven, "He was "received up in glory" (1 Tim.3:16). Then the suffering of Christianity is no longer separated from its glory. The Lord manifested Himself to Stephen while they stoned him to death to comfort and encourage him, that he said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55, 56).

We cannot ascend, unless we descend first. We should empty ourselves from pride and be ready to suffer and bear our cross before our ascension. And when the Lord Jesus comes to take us to Himself in His second coming, then we will ascend with Him forever without descending any more. Amen.

Supervisors Vote to Restore Cross To LA County Seal

January 7, 2014

LOS ANGELES (CB-SLA.com) — The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Tuesday approved a motion to add a cross back to the LA County seal after a nearly 10-year absence.



The 3-2 vote in the 9:30 a.m. meeting approved the change to the seal after the cross was removed during a redesign in 2004, when the American Civil Liberties Union threatened legal action.

Part of the seal, which featured a small cross over the Hollywood Bowl, was replaced by a picture of the San Gabriel Mission.

At the time of the redesign, the mission's cross was not mounted on the building due to retrofitting. It was later reattached in 2009, making the seal inaccurate, according to Supervisors Mike Antonovich and Don Knabe.

"To accurately reflect the role of the San Gabriel Mission in the historical and cultural development of Los Angeles County, today's action corrects the current rendering of the mission on the county seal which is artistically and architecturally inaccurate," Antonovich said. "We appreciate the input and participation from the community whose strong support for the mission, its significance to our county and the need to ensure the architectural accuracy of the county seal, resulted in today's action."

The two supervisors introduced the motion, ensuring the change was not about promoting Christianity, but about making the depiction of the mission accurate.

<http://losangeles.cbslocal.com>

The Holy Spirit and Salvation



by Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna



In the occasion of celebrating the Feast of Pentecost on Sunday, June 8, 2014; it is appropriate to discuss the works of the Holy Spirit in our salvation. What does the Bible say in this regard?

1. The Holy Spirit leads us to believe in Christ: St. Paul says, “No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:3). Therefore, we cannot believe in Christ as Lord and Savior without the Holy Spirit. He also said, “If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9). For instance, Muslims believe that Christ is only a prophet and not Lord and God incarnate, because they do not have the Holy Spirit and accordingly they cannot be saved.

2. The Holy Spirit baptizes and gives us the second birth: The Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he

cannot enter the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:5). In Mark’s gospel 16:16, He said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.” So, baptism is the second condition for our salvation. In baptism, we are born of the Holy Spirit, and in the confirmation by the holy anointment of Myroun oil (which became a substitute to the laying of the hands of the apostles), we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and become temples for the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16).

3. Repentance and conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit without which we cannot get saved: The Lord Jesus said, “When the Holy Spirit has come, He will convict the world of sin” (Jn. 16:8). And He put repentance as a Third condition for our salvation when He said, “Unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5). Also, in the Day of Pentecost, St. Peter said to the multitudes, “Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

4. The Holy Spirit Renews and regenerates us: In his letter to Titus, St. Paul says, “According to the mercy of our Savior He saved us, through the

washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). And that is why he says, “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). The Holy Spirit molds us to be like Christ and to be conformed according to the image of His Son” (Rom.8:29).

5. The Holy Spirit leads and Guides us: In Romans 8:14, it is written, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” The Lord Jesus said, “When He, the Spirit of Truth has come, He will guide you into all truth” (Jn. 16:13). As an application to that, we find in the Book of Acts when Sts. Paul and Silas wanted “to preach the word in Asia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit” and again “they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Holy Spirit did not permit them” (Acts 16:6 & 7). In these two incidents it is clear how the Holy Spirit guides, leads and has control over God’s children and servants.

6. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power who strengthens us: The famous prophecy of Isaiah about the descent of the Holy Spirit on Christ, says, “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom, of counsel and MIGHT...” (Isa. 11:2). That was the last commandment of Christ to His disciples before His ascension to heaven, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49 see also Zech.4:6).

7. The Holy Spirit washes and sanctifies us: There are many verses here, but I will choose only three of them: (1) He saved us, through the washing of regeneration of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5) (2) “You were washed ...sanctified by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11).

(3) Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus, “Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins”; and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17 & 22:16, see 1 Cor. 3:16).

8. The Holy Spirit recreates, revives us and makes

us fruitful: “The Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life” (Job 33:4).

+ “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22). Without these fruits we can’t be Christians or get saved.

9. The Holy Spirit witnesses and glorifies Christ through us: The Lord Jesus said, “When the Helper comes, the Spirit of truth, He will testify of Me, and you also will bear witness” (Jn.15:26). “He will glorify Me” (Jn. 16:14).

10. The Holy Spirit recruits servants for the kingdom of God: “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord...But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all; for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the Spirit...faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit” (1Cor. 12: 4-11).

11. The Holy Spirit adopts us, helps us, and makes intercession for us: “The Spirit helps in our weaknesses, for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26). He is called “the Spirit of adoption” (Gal. 4:5, 6)

12. The Holy Spirit will raise our bodies from the dead: “If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the Spirit who dwells in you” (Rom.8:11).

HOW TO BUILD A LASTING AND SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE (4)

11- Knowing the nature of my spouse:

In successful marriage, husbands and wives prepare themselves to change. This readiness for change should start before marriage. Change of behavior and habits will build positive relationship. They must cope with the differences of each other, develop great flexibility in their daily life, and make adjustments for successful relations. In the previous issue we mentioned two differences between man and woman. Knowing these differences helps to understand the nature of my spouse, and accordingly avoid problems. In this issue we are going to mention other eight differences related to the importance of knowing the nature of my spouse.

3- Stimulus of attraction:

There is an important difference between man and woman concerning their stimulus of attraction and frustration. The eyes of the man are the source of that stimulus, as the beauty of the woman charms him. That is why our Lord said: "Who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mat. 5:28). This is not applied for women. The stimulus for women is their ears. They like to hear nice compliments and praises. They need to hear love expressions.

In successful marriage, the husbands acknowledge the everyday values of their wives; in words, in a look, a smile, a touch of the hands, and in sacrifice. Husbands appreciate a meal, a dress, or a new hairstyle. Wives show their beauty to their husbands at home as they do outside.

Both husbands and wives do not get offended when their expectations are not fulfilled as they imagine but by patience, they attain peace at home.

4- The Physical structure of the body:

The physical structure of men and women differs greatly. Men are usually muscular and can help their wives in works which need physical strength. Women are more emotional and romantic, and less physically strong.

In successful marriage, husbands and wives complement each other in their daily needs, trying to make their lives as perfect as possible. Husbands are patient and passionate when their wives get agitated or tired. St. Peter called the women 'the weaker vessels, and asked the husbands to dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to them, that their prayers might not be hindered (1 Pet. 3:7).



By Fr. Gawargious Kolta

5- Sexual ability and satisfaction:

It is different in men and women. The roles and the secretion of sexual hormones are not the same for males and females. While testosterone hormone is secreted daily in the body of a man, the woman has the estrogen hormone secreted once every month.

In successful marriage, sexual relations satisfy both husband and wife equally and properly. If there is a defect, the couples take it seriously, and discuss this matter with a sex therapist. In happy marriage, husbands show romantic affection towards their wives always, and not only when they need sexual relations. They also know that performing sexual relations without love, affection and tenderness will not be satisfactory, especially for their wives.

6- External looks:

Usually women like to take care of their appearance and external looks, declaring and expressing their beauty. They like to use cosmetics, makeup, hair dressing materials and other beautifying tools. On the other hand, men do not care much about their beauty. They may like to be well dressed and tidy, but they do not care to buy cosmetics, and sometimes they are even messy.

In successful marriage, when the budget is tight, and the wives are not able to buy their beautifying needs, they do not fight to spend an unaffordable amount of money on their cosmetics or new ware.

7- Mothers show more affection to their children than fathers do:

Usually mothers are more patient and can communicate better with their children. They give them more care, and they become very emotional when their children get harmed or sick. For this reason, the Lord said: "Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb?" (Isa. 49:15). Motherhood is much stronger than fatherhood.

In successful marriage, husbands understand the nature of their wives concerning their children. Both speak one language and share in raising the kids with wisdom and the fear of God.

8- Wives are more attached to their parents:

As girls are more emotional than boys, their relation with their parents after marriage is stronger than boys with their

parents.

In successful marriage, husbands consider that nature, and they do not get offended or disappointed when their wives need to call their parents every day, or when they like to visit them often, especially when their parents get sick or old. Husbands consider their in-laws exactly as their parents, and wives do the same to their husband's parents.

9- Women are created to bear children:

(The behavior of husbands when their wives get pregnant) Women can stand and tolerate the burden and the sufferings of pregnancy and labor. During pregnancy, many wives get nervous and psychologically unbalanced.

In successful marriage, husbands know well that their wives need more care, more compassion, and more help during pregnancy. They minimize the daily burden of the home needs and house-keeping, which is requested from their wives, by sharing and caring.

10- Mothers can do hard and dirty jobs for the children without being disappointed:

Wives can tolerate the burden of nursing and cleaning their children without discomfort, and they enjoy doing difficult jobs for the children than the husbands do. Wives change the dippers of their children without discomfort, while husbands escape from doing these jobs, and they feel discomfort when they are obliged to do it.

In successful marriage, wives consider the nature of their husbands and respect their feelings. On the other hand, husbands try to help their nursing wives, by doing with joy other house-keeping work to help their wives and give them relief and support.

12- Living according to Christian Morals:

We must not ignore that people have different spiritual levels and Christian knowledge, which greatly affect their daily life and their relations with each other. The deeper the relationship with the Lord and the church is, the more spiritual discipline exists.

In successful marriages, the couples have spiritual participation in the church services and meetings. This helps them to grow spiritually, avoid disputes, and give them clear picture of the holiness of Christian marriage and its goals. Each couple has a family altar in their home, so that they can say to the Lord: "But as for me and my house, we serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15). We are going to mention the most important policy that follow religious and spiritually fervent couples:

1- When the two spouses are religious, having the love of God, and practicing regular spiritual activities (fasting, praying, and taking Holy Communion), they do not have considerable disputes. If it happens, they instantly reconcile and never go to sleep before reconciling, so that they never have wrath in their hearts (Eph. 4:26).

2- Religious spouses yield and submit to each other in love, avoiding any confrontation.

3- Religious spouses easily forgive each other when any mistake is committed. They also forget the past mistakes that usually cause problems.

4- Religious spouses seek and accept the advice of the priest, when they have challenges during their life.

5- Religious couples will have Christian virtues and morals, such as humbleness, meekness, quietness, flexibility, compassion, and affection to each other, that help them to live a peaceful and happy life.

6- Religious spouses do not enjoy or approve to live in worldly lusts, or give any preference to these lusts over obeying God's commandments.

7- Religious couples live together peacefully and they are good example for their children, who are raised spiritually and psychologically healthy. They know well that they will give account of their children in the judgment day, and can say: "Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me" (Isa. 8:18, Heb. 2:18). They offer them saints to the church.

13- Knowing their roles at home:

In successful marriage, both husband and wife know their roles and responsibilities in the family in daily life. The wives accept that their husbands take the leading role in their marital life, even if they know that their husbands are less efficient.

In successful Christian marriages, the wives will not feel satisfied or happy to be independent or self-sufficient. According to God's plans, both wives and husbands understand their sexuality. Wives accept the role of the protector. The depth of a man's sexuality is affirmed when he is allowed to lead. Likewise, the inner most yearnings of a woman's nature are touched when she responds to her husband's leadership.

The strength of man's body makes him the protector. This was a part of God's original and ideal plan for Adam and his sons for managing the earth resources (Gen. 2:15). On the other hand, God created women to be physically, emotionally and spiritually fit for the central task of nurturing.

Trying to make the roles of males and females interchangeable in the family structure is a contributing factor to the family problems and the loss of oneness of heart, and affection. As Christians, we believe that although God has assigned different roles and tasks for husband and wife in the family, matching his and her natures and abilities, yet we emphasize the biblical truth: "Never the less neither is man independent of a woman, nor woman independent of a man in the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:11). Both are equal in front of God. Each of them completes the other, and carries out their natural role for the welfare and the happiness of the family.

If the role is reserved, home unbalance happens, and families will begin to face problems. The children will surely get affected and confused, and may rebel against their parents, or disrespect them.

(To be continued)

THE SIN OF INDIFFERENCE

(Luke 16:19-31)

By Fr. Anthony Coniaris



A sign in a subway station read: The trouble with this world is apathy.” Someone had scribbled below it: “Who cares!”

A CERTAIN RICH Man

“There was a certain rich man that was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a beggar named Lazarus that was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.”

Jesus forces us to look at the story of Lazarus and the rich man. Physically they are close together. In every other way they are far apart. The one is sick; the other is well. The one is rich; the other is poor. The one fares luxuriously every day; the other feeds on crumbs. The one has friends; the other is friendless.

AND THERE WAS A BEGGAR

“There was a certain rich man.” Rich man – it stands for power, capacity and ability to serve. “And there was a beggar that lay at his gate full of sores” - That means need. And so we have here the ability to serve and a need for service brought close together. The poor man was at the rich man’s gate. That means that the poor man was the rich man’s responsibility. He was the rich man’s opportunity. I do not know what responsibility lay at the gate of the man across the street, but the responsibility of this rich man is very plain. The call for help is

loud and insistent. Lazarus was the rich man’s opportunity to gain heaven.

When Dr. Martin Luther King brought the poor to Washington, D.C., he was asked why he did this. He replied, “We have brought Lazarus to the rich man’s gate in order to save the rich man.”

But the rich man never saw Lazarus lying at his gate. He was too busy with his own affairs. Not that he was unkind to the beggar – he did not have him stoned or thrown into prison. He was not a cruel man, that rich man. Otherwise, he would have driven the old beggar away and not even allowed him to gather up the crumbs. He just ignored him; the terrible sin of apathy, indifference. The rich man ignored Lazarus because he did not see him. And he did not see him because he did not love. Herein lays the great sin of indifference: lack of love. Love is what gives eyes to see the wounds which need to be bound; love is what gives ears to hear the silent call for help; love is what gives hands to support, and a mouth to console where the burdens of life become too heavy for someone.

MORE THINGS ARE LOST BY INDIFFERENCE

In only one of his many parables does Jesus speak of an individual going to hell. And that individual is the rich man in today’s parable who never noticed the beggar starving to death on his very doorstep. This

is how serious the sin of indifference is according to the Lord Jesus.

More good things in life are lost by indifference than by anything else. The rich man lost heaven because of it.

The greatest of all evils is indifference; indifference to people and indifference toward evil. The opposite of love is not hatred but indifference. To be indifferent to a person is to say to him, “For me you do not exist.” It has been said that Communism is the product of the apathy, the indifference of many to the suffering of the poor, and the audacity of the few who stepped in and took over in the name of equality.

THE WORST SIN The greatest sin is to be indifferent. This is the evil most of us condone and are even guilty of: indifference to people and indifference to evil. We are not moved by the sufferings of others or by the wrongs done to other people. “The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them; that is the essence of inhumanity,” said George Bernard Shaw.

Mother Teresa wrote, “The biggest disease today is not leprosy or cancer, but rather the feeling of being unwanted, uncared for and deserted by everybody. The greatest evil is the lack of love and charity, the terrible indifference towards one’s neighbor who lives on the roadside assaulted by exploitation, corruption, poverty and disease.” “The indifference of believers is something far more dreadful than the fact that unbelievers exist.”

How indifferent we are to the millions of people in our world today who are dying of starvation. How much we need to increase our awareness of the plight of the desperately hungry millions in underdeveloped countries. Every little bit we can give helps. In the words of Mother Teresa, “We can do no great things, only little ones with great love.” Consider how indifferent we are to those who have lost loved ones. One pastor wrote: “I need not tell you that death is no stranger to me. I see it far too often. I try, as best as I can, to bring some comfort, some strength, some understanding to the bereaved, as you does too. But as the days pass, we go our respective ways.

We have our own families, our work, our homes, our day-to-day activities. And for those who have most acutely suffered the loss that death brings, loneliness sets in. “So I try my very best to keep in touch with them. But that certainly is not enough. How many of you, their friends, have picked up the phone just to call - if nothing more. Don’t expect them to call you. Their lives have changed. They may be apprehensive about a new kind of relationship. They do not want to impose themselves upon you. It is for you to make the gesture, for you to reach out – you who are so much more fortunate, whose husband or wife is still with you.”

How terribly indifferent also we are to those who suffer other tragedies – for example the tragedy of divorce. One person writes, “Some time ago, a friend of mine went through a divorce. When I heard the news I was surprised and sorry, but I did nothing. Then one day we happened to meet. ‘You know,’ he said to me, ‘not one of my friends called me when I was divorced. No one said a word.’

‘But what was there to say?’ I asked. ‘We all knew you both, we all were your friends. What was there to say?’

‘It isn’t what you could say,’ he countered. ‘All you had to do was call. All you had to do was say, ‘I hope everything is all right. Is there anything I can do?’ We who are hurt want to know our friends are still there.’

May the Lord deliver us from the terrible sin of indifference by filling us with His love which alone can make us sensitive to the needs of those who suffer.

I close with these words entitled “The Television”: Here before my electronic window on life.

I traverse the world in a short fifteen minutes.

Wars are waged . . . And I dwell secure in peace.

Disaster strikes . . . And I sit comfortably in my chair.

Famine runs rampant . . . And I gorge myself with food.

Disease Kills . . . And I rest confidently in health.

Mankind cries out . . . And I tell jokes with my friends!

It is so easy, Lord, to be outspoken but yet inactive.

Help me, Lord, to see life through the window of Thy Holy Spirit. Make it difficult for me to stand idle. Help me, Lord, to be electrified by Thy Love.

Prodigal Parents?!

By Fr. Augustinos Hanna

MANY TEENAGERS ARE SPIRITUALLY LONELY AND feel deprived of parental guidance in matters of Faith, Bible, Dogma, Church History, and Life of the Saints and Life Problems.

Mark Yaconelli, a youth expert at San Francisco Theological Seminary that involves 17 denominations and encountered with thousands of youth over the last five years says:

“They are not interested in words, they keep saying, ‘Show me.’ And by that they mean, ‘Show me that you have a spiritual life worth passing on.’”

calling the parents of today’s teenagers a lost generation.

He contends: “To these teenagers, their fathers and mothers are the lenses through which they see God. If they are trustworthy and upright, then God is trustworthy and upright. If they are fickle, God is fickle. It’s always been that way and it always will be.”

Many parents think that since they provide for their children shelter, food, clothing and some education, then, they have done all their duty. Teens lack a role model, a good example to follow, supervision and a parental spiritual guidance. They also need friendship with their parents and encouragement.

Love and sharing ideas with the teens are required, along with being strict when necessary. Parents need to pray daily for their teens and to pray with them whenever possible.

Bible study from the early days of childhood would spare much headache and heartache in the future. Choosing good friends is a matter of life and death, because “Evil company corrupts good manners” (1 Cor. 15:33).

Parents have to discover their children’s talents and hobbies. They should spend with them enough time, and fill their schedule with good and beneficial hobbies such as sports, fine arts, and good music.

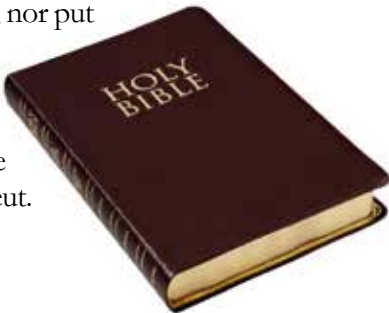
Give your teens good books and magazines to read and let their appetite for reading grow day after day. Reading should contain their own Bibles, easy commentaries, stories of the saints and the heroes of faith, Biblical ethics, major dogmas and church history. Unless parents do all that, they would better not have children, or else they need repentance and counseling as prodigal parents!



Biblical Ethics and Moralities

The Holy Bible contains great treasures of doctrines, wisdom, psychology, ethics and moralities. Here are some examples:

- 1.The golden rule: “Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them” (Matt. 7:12).
- 2.“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17).
- 3.“Let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’, and your ‘No,’ be ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one” (Matt. 5:37).
- 4.“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15).
- 5.“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another” (Rom.12:10).
- 6.“If your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head” (Rom. 12:20).
- 7.“Be angry, and do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your wrath” (Eph. 4:26).
- 8.“If your brother sins against you go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.” (Matt. 18:15).
- 9.“Do not disclose the secret to another; lest he who hears it expose your shame, and your reputation be ruined” (Prov. 25:9, 10).
- 10.“He who loves purity of heart and has grace on his lips, the king will be his friend” (Prov. 22:11)
- 11.“He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord” (Prov. 17:15).
- 12.“Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so. Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it,’ when you have it with you” (Prov. 3:27).
- 13.“The eye of he who mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it” (Prov. 30:17).
- 14.“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34).
- 15.“You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God” (Lev. 19:32).
- 16.“You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shall fear your God” (Lev. 19:14).
- 17.“Do not appear before the Lord empty-handed” (Deut. 16:16).



Wedding ETIQUETTE



By Connie Werner Reichert

Guests’Attire:

Women can really wear white as long as it doesn’t look like a wedding dress: it’s the bride’s day. If you wear black, it should look like you are attending a wedding, not a funeral. Also consider time of day, location and any rules of attire specified by religion (for example, bare shoulders or too much cleavage or leg showing.

The Location:

The couple must be considerate of the guests. The reception area should be close to the wedding location so that the guests and the couple won’t be too tired when they get there. Don’t forget about transportation. Apart from the bridal car, it’s proper wedding etiquette to provide for those who have no access to vehicles from the wedding location to the reception area. The couple can ask guests beforehand on who will bring their own transportation so they can estimate how many vehicles they will have to provide for the group, be it a fancy car or limousine.

Time, Time, Time:

Don’t be late to your own wedding. It shows a lack of regard for the groom, your guests as well as your vendors (think melted ice sculptures and other bookings). To avoid being late, give yourself plenty of time just in case something goes wrong. Pulling off a fabulous wedding is no easy task. But following proper wedding rules can actually make your wedding day that less stressful and make it that much more enjoyable for you, your groom and your special guests.

Puzzle with prizes for the winners Can You Find 16 Books of the Bible?

Circle sixteen books of the Bible as they appear in the paragraph below. Watch out, this could be tricky!!!

I ONCE MADE A REMARK ABOUT THE HIDDEN BOOKS OF THE BIBLE. IT WAS A LULU KEPT PEOPLE LOOKING SO HARD FOR FACTS AND FOR OTHERS IT WAS A REVELATION. WHILE SOME WERE IN A JAM SPECIALLY SINCE THE NAMES OF THE BOOKS WERE NOT CAPITALIZED BUT, THE TRUTH FINALLY STRUCK HOME TO NUMBERS OF READERS.

TO OTHERS, IT WAS A REAL JOB, WE WANT IT TO BE A MOST FASCINATING FEW MOMENTS FOR YOU. YES, THERE WILL BE SOME REALLY EASY ONES TO SPOT. BUT OTHERS MAY REQUIRE JUDGES TO HELP THEM. I WANT TO QUICKLY ADMIT IT USUALLY TAKES A MINISTER OR A BIBLE SCHOLAR TO FIND ONE OF THEM, AND THERE WILL BE LOUD LAMENTATIONSS WHEN IT IS FOUND. A LITTLE LADY SAYS THAT SHE BREWS A CUP OF TEA SO THAT SHE CAN CONCENTRATE BETTER. SEE HOW WELL YOU CAN COMPETE RELAX FOR A WHILE THERE REALLY ARE SIXTEEN BOOKS OF THE BIBLE NAMED IN THIS STORY.

(One preacher found fifteen books in twenty minutes, but it took him three weeks to find the sixteenth one!!!)

The Writings of Christ

By Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna



“But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear” (Jn. 8:6).

History did not report that the Lord Jesus Christ wrote anything. Only one incident in St. John’s Gospel, in the story of defending the adulteress, says that Jesus “wrote on the ground with His finger...” but didn’t tell us what message did Jesus write? It is the only recorded instance of its type. People everywhere have speculated as to the nature of His words. It appears that a foul plot had been planned to incriminate not only the adulteress, but also Jesus. Possibly a crafty lawyer had schemed a way of trapping the Savior. The sinful woman who had been taken in adultery was publicly accused before Christ. There are many suggestions regarding these writings...

Suggestion 1

“And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what do You say?” We must realize the subtlety of this evil trick. If Jesus had answered, “All right, stone her,” the common people would probably have accused Him of preaching what He did not practice. He taught that God loved sinners. On the other hand, if He forbade the stoning, His enemies could order His arrest for contempt of the law. The Lord was never hurried. He calmly stooped down and wrote on the ground. Did He write the true saying of Moses or its right interpretation or application? (Lev. 20:10). The lawgiver had declared that if people were taken in adultery, both guilty parties should be stoned to death.

The accusation stated that the woman had been taken in the act. Why, then, had the captors allowed the man to escape? Obviously this was a premeditated plan- not to clean a city, but to trap Jesus.

Suggestion 2

It might have been that Jesus wrote some of the sins and secrets of the accusers’ own past life. If this be the case, how easy it is to understand why, when He said, “He that

is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,” they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even to the last. The eldest probably had most to hide. If Jesus had indicated that He was aware of their secret sins, they would be afraid to commence the stoning lest He denounce them as hypocrites. They were unprepared to face such a denunciation, and seized the opportunity to slip away.

Suggestion 3

Perhaps He wrote some of the great passages from their own Scriptures stating that God was full of compassion and overflowing in mercy. He may have reminded them of David, and other important leaders, whose sins were magnified by the greatness of their office. Yet God had mercy on the guilty. If He could be gracious, His people should follow the example. Perhaps Christ wrote all three of these suggestions; and while He wrote, slowly a sinful woman awakened to the realization that He was completely different from any she had ever known. Her life-story might be written under six headings: Her fall, fear, friend, faith, forgiveness, and future. And in the outworking of these we find another problem. Why did Christ say to her, “Neither do I condemn you”? This is the spirit of the New Testament, God does not judge anyone before the day of judgment. He gives everyone many chances to repent and correct his way.

Suggestion 4

“When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned your?” She said, “No one Lord.” LORD! We are told that no one can say that Jesus is LORD except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:3). The work of enlightenment had been progressing in her soul and she realized that He was not an ordinary man- He was the LORD, the just judge Himself. Jesus added, “Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more”. “There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

If Your Child Smokes



“My son was 13 when I suspected he was smoking. I could smell it on his clothes. I asked him if he was smoking and he said ‘yes,’ says Kathryn, a

midwestern mother of three. I couldn’t believe he would smoke. When he was younger he was so against it. He’s a smart kid and he clearly understands the risks. I was shocked that he’d try it.”

Some wake-up calls are more subtle than Kathryn’s. Maybe some of our daughter’s friends are smoking or your son’s hair smells of tobacco. These are signs that your child may have tried smoking. What do you do?

1. Stay calm. Start by asking questions about what’s going on. How long has she been smoking? Do her friends smoke?
2. Enforce the consequences of the rules you have set about not smoking.
3. Without lecturing, remind him or her of the negative effects of smoking, such as the expense, how it causes wrinkles, bad breath, and diseases like cancer.
4. Discuss the signs of addiction:
 - Having strong urges to smoke
 - Feeling anxious or irritable when you’re not smoking
 - Having tried unsuccessfully to quit
 - Tell her it’s possible for teens to become addicted after only a few weeks of smoking.

If you think she is addicted, take her to your family doctor to help her find a cessation program that has been successful with teens. Programs like N-O-T (Not-On-Tobacco), developed by the American Lung Association, and E.N.D. (Ending Nicotine Dependence) developed by the Utah Department of Health, are specifically designed for teens.

Happy Mother’s Day!

A large hospital in New York City made a very simple but unusual discovery. They were having a problem in the nursery. The crying of some of the little ones disturbed other little ones. The result was that many babies in the nursery would be crying and restless. What could they do that would give these newborn babies a sense of security and rest?

Perhaps they might have tried soft music. But these newborn babies had never heard music before. What would Bach or Beethoven mean to them? Silence itself seemed to be the most disturbing.

Then someone suggested that the heartbeat of a mother be recorded and played over the sound system of the nursery. It was like a miracle. The little ones who were restless grew still and went peacefully to sleep.. For this was a familiar sound to them, the heartbeat of a mother. They had listened to this even before they were born.

It was the sound of security and love.



Why Bad Things Happen To Good People?

By Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna

The Old and Modern Puzzle:

This is a tough question, which puzzled and perplexed philosophers, prophets and theologians throughout the ages from the dawn of history. No one can claim that he or she knows a perfect answer to this question.

The recent acts of violence and terrorism, which choked America, Europe, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Libya, all the Middle-East and the whole world, renewed the old question and made some wonder how the Almighty, merciful God permit such incomprehensible means to take place? Why does God leave the wicked live and prosper and destroy every good thing? Why God allows bad things happen to good people?

Many people now are raising the same question, wrestling with “HOW and WHY?”

The Holy Bible, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, tells us about this complicated problem. Four thousand years ago, Job asked, “Why do the wicked live and become old; yes become mighty in power?” (Job 21:7) The life of Job himself proves this fact that bad things may happen to good people. And the whole book of Job discusses this problem.

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, who lived in 627 BC, also asked and protested, “Righteous are You, O Lord, when I plead with You; yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper?” (Jer. 12:1) David, the king and prophet, 1000 BC said, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous...” (Psalm 34:19). Also, listen to Solomon the wise king saying, “All things come alike to all: One event happens to the righteous and the wicked; to the good, the clean, and the unclean...as is the good, so is the sinner” (Eccl. 9:2). Asaph in his psalm 73 discussed the same problem in length.

In the New Testament, St. Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit said, “For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.... until the creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom.8:21,22).

Some Clues from the Bible:

1. God gave man free will:

God in His great love, created us according to His image. He designed creatures with the ability to make choices,

to choose either good or evil. The original humans, Adam and Eve, exercised that choice- and chose to disobey God. In doing so, they rejected God’s good, thus creating sin and opening the door to evil, curse and death. What happened on September 11, was raw, naked evil committed by men who made evil choices. But it was something else as well: It was merely a consequence of the fact that there is sin in the world. God could erase the consequences of sin immediately. But then we’d no longer be free moral agents; we would be pre-programmed robots. For without consequences, there is no real choice. God cannot simultaneously offer us free choice and then compel one choice over another-which is what would happen if he stopped all evil. So, God gave us free will and respects our free will to the point that He leaves the atheists deny His presence and “makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45).

2. Features of the Last Days:

The Bible tells us beforehand about what will happen to the world in the last days, and mentioned many facts in prophetic way such as preaching the gospel of Christ in all the world, false prophets will come and deceive many, the fig tree will flourish (symbolizes the return of the Jews to Israel), a general apostasy will take place, lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold, perilous times will come when the majority will follow deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons and be inventors of evil things. Besides, wars and rumors of wars, famines, great earthquakes, pestilences and knowledge shall increase (Matt. 24; Luke 21; 2 Thessalonians 2, 2 Peter 3 and Revelation 20 and Daniel 12:4). It is not only Muslim terrorists who are responsible for these tragedies, but also American nominal Christians or backsliders who sought secularism and cast God out of schools, encouraged abortion, homosexuality and same sex marriage, are equally responsible for that because the Bible says, “It is time for judgment to begin with the family of God” (1 Peter 4:17).

3. Eternity in their Hearts:

Solomon the wise said, “God has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end” (Ecclesiastes 3:11). This divine revelation teaches us that in the light of eternity we

shall understand the answers of all the secrets, mysterious questions and puzzles of life. But if we wanted to interpret everything by our own minds and limited knowledge, we will never reach the truth. Here, we live in the world only the first part of the play, so it is unfinished story. But in eternity we will find the completion and final scene of life and we will discover God’s wisdom in full. The innocent victims will be greatly rewarded forever, and the wicked will be terribly pay eternal price and punishment forever in hell, even those who could escape the worldly justice (1 Tim. 5:24).

4. A Hard Lesson to be always ready:

None of the 6,000 victims who lost their lives in World Trade Center, Pentagon and the four high-jacked flights in that black Tuesday, September 11, 2001 or millions in Egypt and Syria could ever imagine that their lives would end that day and that way. Therefore, every wise person should be always ready for such sudden end and does not gamble with his precious life and risk his/her eternal life.

5. No Guarantee in this Life:

Good people, like Job, John the Baptist, James and Steven, millions of martyrs, may be vulnerable to tragic accidents. Jesus Christ Himself was once asked the same question about many who were killed in a crime and in an accident, and He answered repeatedly and said, “Do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5). We have no warranty in this life, but we do have a great guarantee in Christ’s salvation, providence and eternal life in heaven.

6. Out of Evil, something Good comes:

We live in a fallen world, to the point that St. John says, “The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one” (1 Jn. 5:19). Despite these terrible accidents, God turned millions to their first faith, love and salvation.

The churches were packed, all people served humanitarian work, donated money and blood, candle light vigils held everywhere, the whole nation was unified and the free world declared war against terrorists to save and clean up the world from their evils that they would not be repeated anymore.

7. You will know Later:

The Lord Jesus said to St. Peter, “What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will know after this” (Jn.13:7). Many puzzles in life we do not understand now, but later on, one day in this life or in the life to come, we will understand everything well. St. Paul once said, “Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (1 Cor. 13:12).

Quotable – Wisdom – Short Stories

By Fr. Augustinos

- Mahatma Gandhi confessed, “If I had no sense of humor, I should long ago have committed suicide.”
- Anne Wilson said, “I realize that humor isn’t for everyone. It’s only for people who want to have fun, enjoy life, and feel alive.”
- An editorial writer for the Chicago Tribune declared about the therapeutic power of humor: Jokes are no laughing matter to the brain. They are a type of release valve that enables us to think the unthinkable, accept the unacceptable, adjust better and maintain our mental health. Without them we probably would be a dull, dimwitted society, trapped in a harsh world too serious to bear.”
- Advertising reads: “Complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica, 45 volumes, excellent condition, \$1000.00 or best offer. No longer needed. Got married last weekend. Wife knows everything.
- Two quick ways to disaster:
 - 1) Take nobody’s advice.
 - 2) Take everybody’s advice.
- Aging: During his presidency, Ronald Regan told the following story at a White House reception. “It seems that an 80-year-old man’s golf game was hampered by poor eyesight. He could hit the ball well but he couldn’t see where it went. So his doctor teamed him up with a 90-year-old man who had perfect eyesight and was willing to go along to serve as a spotter. The 80-year-old man hit the first ball and asked his companion if he saw where it landed. “Yep,” said the 90-year-old. “Where did it go?” the 80-year-old demanded. The 90-year-old replied, “I don’t remember.”
- Forty is the old age of youth; fifty is the youth of old age. -Victor Hugo
- When Sherlock Holmes, the great detective, arrived in heaven, St. Peter said to him: “Can you help us solve a mystery? You see, Adam and Eve have been missing for the past several thousand years. Can you find them for us?” Sherlock began his investigation, and after several days, he returned and told St. Peter: “You will find Adam and Eve over there beyond the gate.” He pointed them out “How did you find them?” St. Peter asked, “Elementary, my dear St. Peter,” Sherlock replied. “They are the only two up here who have no navels.”

Senator Boxer:
Preparing for Earthquakes



Dear Friend:

The recent earthquakes in Orange, Los Angeles and Napa Counties remind us all of the importance of being fully prepared for natural disasters.

The Department of Homeland Security and FEMA have put together some helpful tips on what to do before, during and after an earthquake to help protect you and your family.

Before an earthquake:

- Build an emergency kit and make a family communications plan.
- Secure items in your home that could fall during a quake, especially heavy objects and overhead light fixtures.
- Make sure water heaters, refrigerators, furnaces and gas appliances are strapped to the wall studs or bolted to the floor.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations, and be sure your residence is firmly anchored to its foundation.
- Identify safe spots to take cover in each room, such as under a sturdy table or against an inside wall.
- Hold earthquake drills with your family to practice «drop, cover, and hold on.»
- During an earthquake:

- If indoors, drop to the floor; take cover under a sturdy table, desk or other piece of furniture; and hold on until the shaking stops.
- If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Do not use a doorway unless you know it is load-bearing - many inside doorways are lightly constructed and do not offer protection.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall.
- If you are in bed, hold on and protect your head with a pillow, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall. In that case, move to the nearest safe place.
- Do not exit a building during the shaking. Research has

- shown that most injuries occur when people attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.
- If outdoors, move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires to avoid falling debris.
- If driving, stop as quickly as safety permits; avoid stopping under or near buildings, overpasses, and utility wires. Proceed cautiously after the shaking stops - roads, bridges or ramps may have been damaged.
- After an earthquake:

- When the shaking stops, look around to make sure it is safe to move. Then exit the building.
- Help injured or trapped persons. Give first aid where appropriate. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in danger of further injury.
- Expect aftershocks as well as power outages. If you live in a coastal area, be aware of possible tsunamis and be ready to move to higher ground.
- Listen to a battery-operated radio or television for the latest emergency information.
- Authorities recommend using your telephone only for emergency calls. For further information on how to communicate after a disaster, click here.
- Stay away from damaged areas unless your assistance has been requested by emergency personnel.
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe. Check for gas leaks and damage to electrical systems and water lines. Leave the area if you smell gas or fumes from other chemicals.
- For more information on how you and your family can be ready for a major earthquake, please go to Ready.gov or click here to visit the earthquake page on my website.
- To take part in California's annual earthquake practice drill, the Great California ShakeOut, click here.

Sincerely,
Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

News in Pictures



أخبار في صور



Logos TV Need Help