



Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria

St. Mary and St. Moses Coptic Orthodox Church

Diocese of Mississauga and West of Canada

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Babah / Hatour

| Issue 119 |

November 2025

Under the auspices and guidance of H.G. Bishop Mina bishop of Mississauga, Vancouver and west of Canada



DELIGHT IN THE LORD

By: H.H. Pope Tawadros II

There are three keys to delight in the Lord:

Time: We live in a fast-paced world, and life goes by quickly, so make sure to steal some time for yourself with God in any way you can. Do you give spiritual time to God? Are you committed to it? In chemistry, there is what is called “reaction time.” In your relationship with God, you need similar time. In the first Psalm, the psalmist says the righteous person is like a tree planted by streams of water. Imagine how much time a tree needs to deepen its roots into the ground and bear its fruit in due season. One of the harsh realities of our time is that modern devices steal our time. Therefore, it’s important to use such devices wisely. The element of time and balance in it is of utmost importance. We may differ in form, language, or ability, but we share time. We all have 24 hours in a day, so wisdom is needed in how to use time.



Repentance: This is the process of emptying the heart of any sin. At the end of the year, it is natural for a person to make an account of their gains and losses in life. Is there anything more precious than your life? You will stand before God and give an account of your stewardship. Therefore, repentance is one of the keys to experiencing joy with God, for there is no fellowship between light and darkness. Sin brings sorrow, depression, sighing, fear, and shame, while repentance lifts all these feelings and opens the doors for you to delight in God.

Repentance only comes with genuine feelings in a person. If someone sees themselves as righteous, how will they offer repentance? How will you justify yourself before God? We pray every day and say: “We thank you for protecting us, helping us, and preserving us...” A person cannot delight in God as long as they are in sin. Many complain about the absence of the feeling of God’s presence. We tell them: repent to feel God’s presence.

Through acts of Love: You will not feel and will not delight in God unless you practice love with everyone. The commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself. The neighbor here refers to human kinship. If someone lacks the capacity for love, how will they delight in God? Imagine you have a sealed bottle and you put it under the tap to fill it with water. Can it be filled? Open your heart to be filled with God’s love so that you can love everyone. Whenever you are upset with someone, look at the cross and look at Christ who loved everyone. Live in an atmosphere of love, for a person without God’s love in their heart cannot delight in God.

WHY MONASTICISM?

Fr Anthony St Shenouda

“Acquire a peaceful spirit, and around you thousands will be saved.” Saint Seraphim of Sarov

Visitors to our monastery, usually from non-orthodox background, sometimes have a burning question to ask. “Why monasticism? isn’t better if the monks use their energy to go out and make disciples of all nations (Mat 28:19)?” “The monastic life is just a cop out from real life in the world,” monks go to monasteries to laze around and get out of work?” Once a non-orthodox visitor came with his Orthodox friend who brought him for a retreat, and after spending some time with the monks and learning that they mostly had University degrees and had good jobs prior to coming to the monastery, told his Orthodox friend this flattering remark, “these monks can actually make it out there”



While these comments are usually said with great love yet they show a lot of ignorance of the Bible and its commandments. The monastic life from its inception was a life according to the commandments of the Gospels. St Anthony the first monk went out to the desert following the Gospel commandment “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” (Mat 19:21), therefore the monastic life is a life of perfection.

The monastic life by its mere existence is the greatest witness to the Christian life. Mission work is usually associated with going out and building hospitals, schools, and churches, which are all great works of the missionaries, yet a prerequisite to all this missionary work are knees bowed down in prayer for the service and the spread of the Word of God. In the story of Mary and Martha, Jesus praised not the “active life” but the prayer life;”

Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”(Luke 10:42). This pure and inner prayer life is more than enough for mission and evangelism. In fact in our Orthodox tradition, monks are considered to be the number one evangelists.

In the life of St Mary, we never hear of any “active service” of preaching or any kind of philanthropic work, yet in our Praise to her we say: “you have brought, unto God your Son, many people, through your purity” (Sunday Theotokia). It was not her words of wisdom or her active service that brought people to Christ but it was her purity.

In a sermon by Bishop Raphael, he once said that the servants were once trying very hard to bring one of the youth who lived two blocks away from church to attend the liturgy, but without any success. One day this young man went to St Anthony monastery in a church-organised trip, and to the servants surprise the young man after hearing the life of the saint during the bus trip, he eagerly went all the way up the steep mountain that leads to the cave of St Anthony, which took at least 40 minutes of uphill walking on the hot desert sand. The servants were amazed at how despite their sincere efforts to bring this young man to church, they were not as effective as the life of this great evangelist who lived alone in the desert away from any kind of civilization, and as it seems to us, he refused to “actively” serve others, yet his virtuous way of life has been a magnet to all who have heard of him for the last 1700 years.

Therefore, to say that monasticism is not important to the church and Christian living, is to say that prayer life is not important, because monasticism is a life of prayer. If we think that building hospitals and homes for the poor are the aim of a Christian life then we certainly are not attuned to the meaning of the Christian life, but we have made the church into a mere humanist organisation. That is not to say that these activities are wrong, after all the first hospital started in a monastery. Monasteries for many centuries have also become a center of learning (i.e. Universities). The same emphasis on the contemplative or “inactive” life not in the monastery but in the life of service in the world is embodied in the life of a contemporary saint, Pope Kyrillos VI, who’s answer to many of the church problems was not according to some strategic administrative skills, but it was simply “it is better not to speak but rather to pray.” This does not in any sense undermine the great achievements of this great patriarch. One only needs to read recent history (rather than his numerous miracle books) to realize the revival that the church went through during his time. Pope Kyrillos’s attitude echoes St Gregory Nazianzus’s (who was also a Patriarch) answer to St Basil expressing his great regard of contemplative life, saying: “for me the greatest action is inaction... so proud am I of my inactivity that I think I might even be a standard for all of magnanimity in this regard.”

The Other argument is that monks are egoistically escaping the “real world” and are not contributing to the society they live in. Such accusations have no solid ground. Monks do not leave the world to escape the world but they leave the world for the world. This is very clear in the life of St Paul the first hermit who lived for 70 years in the desert without seeing a man. St Jerome records that when St Anthony visited him, his first questions to St Anthony were “Tell me, I pray you, how is the human race? Are new houses rising in the ancient cities? By what emperor is the world governed? Whether there are any left who are led captive by the deceits of the devil (idol worshipers)?” These questions are not of someone who hates the world and not contributing to it but it is of someone whose subject of prayer during these 70 years is the prosperity of the world. St Anthony himself when needed he went down to Alexandria to support St Athanasius in his fight against the Arian heresy.

Monasticism, therefore, is a way of first and foremost saving once self for the world. When one is successful in working out his own salvation, St Seraphim of Sarov tells us, thousands around him will be saved.

Rites:

THE FIVE MINOR LITANIES

by H.G. Bishop Mettaous

Having put one spoonful of incense in the censer, the priest stands before the door of the sanctuary and prays the Five Minor Litanies concerning Safety, the Church Fathers, the Holy Places, the Weather and Vegetation, and the Congregations.

THE ABSOLUTIONS

The priest then takes the cross from the deacon and recites the three absolutions; two of them are prayed in silence while facing the East, and the third is said audibly while facing the congregation (West). While the priest is saying the third absolution, the congregation bow their heads, asking for absolution and forgiveness. These three absolutions are the same prayers that our spiritual father prays on us after confession.

The First Absolution:

This prayer is called a Prayer of Submission to the Son, as stated below with its Biblical references: “

O Lord, Who has given authority unto us to tread upon serpents and scorpions and upon all the power of the enemy...”, as Christ gave to His disciples when He told them, “Behold I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you” (Luke10:19). “

...Crush its heads beneath our feet speedily...”, as the Apostle prayed on behalf of the Romans (16:20) when he said, “***And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.***” “

May You destroy all his evil thoughts that are against us...”, as such evil thoughts, vicious fights and deceptive sights are planted in our minds by the devil in an attempt to occupy our thoughts. The priest prays to the Lord that He disperse these away from himself, and from us all, saying, “...For You are our King....”

The Second Absolution:

This is also a Prayer of Submission to the Son: “ For You O Lord who descended from the heavens...”, as the Lord of Glory said about Himself, “***For I have come down from heaven not to do My will but the will of Him who sent Me***” (John 6:38). “ ..You became man...”, as the Apostle stated, “***But He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant and coming in the likeness of men, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross***” (Phil.2:7-8).

AUDIO SERMONS

HOW DO I KNOW GOD'S WILL?

HG Bishop Angaelos - UK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQEik0KjKGI>



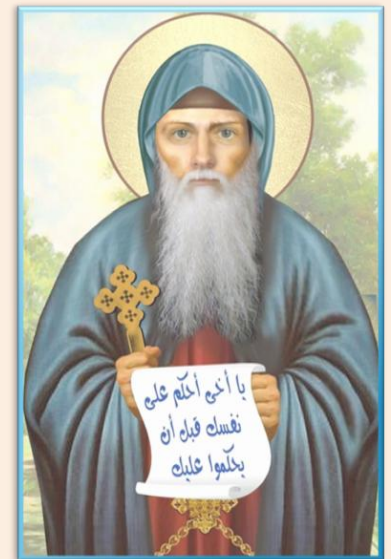
SAINT OF THE MONTH:

“Whose faiths follow, considering the outcome of their conversation?”

Heb 13:7

ST. MACARIUS, BISHOP OF EDKOW

St. Macarius, Bishop of Edkow, was martyred. In this holy man, the words of David the Prophet were fulfilled saying, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law he meditates day and night." (Psalms 1:1-2) This saint kept the commandments of His Master; traded with his talents and gained. Many were the signs and wonders God did through his hands. In the city of Edkow, every time he went up on the pulpit to preach to the people, he wept. When one of his disciples asked him the reason for his weeping, he answered that he saw the sins of the people and their ungodly works. On another occasion he saw our Lord Christ at the altar, and the angels bringing unto Him the works of the people, one after the other. Anba Macarius heard a voice saying, "Why, bishop, are you slack in preaching to your people?" He replied, "My Lord, they do not accept my words." So the Lord said to him, "It is meet for the bishop to preach to the people and if they do not accept his words, their blood be upon their own heads." He was invited to go to the council of Chalcedon with Abba Dioscorus. On arriving at the royal palace, the guards



prevented him from entering because of his modest clothes, until Abba Dioscorus told them that he was the bishop of Edkow. When he had gone in and heard what the infidels were saying about the Lord Christ, he excommunicated the Emperor in the council. He was ready to deliver himself to death for the sake of keeping the Orthodox faith. They exiled him with Abba Dioscorus to the island of Gagra. From there Abba Dioscorus sent him with a believing merchant to Alexandria saying to him, "There you have a crown of martyrdom awaiting you."

Shortly after, he arrived in the city of Alexandria, the messenger of the Emperor arrived with the new Chalcedonian creed which stated the two natures of Christ. The Emperor had commanded him saying that, "He who writes his name first on this creed will be the Patriarch of the city." In the city, the head of the priests was Brotarios. He took the paper to write his name first but St. Macarius the Bishop reminded him of what Abba Dioscorus had told him before he went to the council saying, "You shall possess my church after me." Brotarios remembered that and refrained from writing. When the Emperor's messenger knew that the Bishop disagreed with the creed of the Emperor and did not write his name also, he jumped over the Bishop and kicked him. St. Macarius died on the spot and thus received the crown of martyrdom. The believers took his holy body and buried it with the bodies of St. John the Baptist and Elisha the Prophet. That fulfilled what these two saints had told this father, the Bishop, in a vision, that his body would be with their bodies. He departed to the Lord Christ winning the crown of glory.

May the blessings of his prayers be with us all, and Glory be to God forever Amen.

Sayings of the Fathers:

❖ Our hearts will remain restless until they find rest in You, O God.

Saint Augustine

❖ The great heart is not affected by people's offenses, nor does it repay evil with evil.

Pope Shenouda III

❖ The love of God insures the love of our neighbor, and the love of our neighbor serves to keep alive the love of God

St Gregory the great

- ❖ The soul finds no peace except in relying on Allah, for He is the disposer of all affairs.

St John Saba

Question and Answer:

By: *H. H. Pope Shenouda III*



What be thankful for tribulations?



We give thanks by faith, believing that "all things work together for good to those who love God" (Rom. 8:28). Tribulations strengthen our spiritual life and deepen our prayer and relationship with God. They offer a fellowship in Christ's sufferings, which the apostles considered a gift to be rejoiced over, as seen in Acts 5:41.

A whisper in your ear

- ❖ Courage doesn't mean you won't feel fear; it means you won't let fear stop you.
- ❖ In arguments between lovers, the one who loves more is the one who yields, not the one with the weaker argument.
- ❖ Love does not fall... does not fail... and does not die.
- ❖ Love something? Protect it. Want something? Work hard for it.

VERSE OF THE MONTH

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Matt 25:13

THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES THIS MONTH “SYNAXARIUM

- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Luke the Evangelist (22 Babah)1 November
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Dionysius the Bishop (22 Babah) 2 November
- ❖ Departure of the Saints Apollo and Abib (25 Babah)4 November
- ❖ Commemoration of the Seven Martyrs on the Mountain of St. Antonius
(26 Babah)5 November
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Demetrius the Thessalonican (29 Babah)8 November
- ❖ Departure of St. Ibrahim the Anchorite (30 Babah) 9 November
- ❖ The martyrdom of Saint Athanasius and his sister Irene from the
2nd century AD. (4 Hatour)13 November
- ❖ Commemoration of the transfer of the body of St Prince Theodore
to the town of Shotb (5 Hatour) 14 November
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. George the Alexandrian (7 Hatour)16 November
- ❖ Departure of the Holy Father Anba Isaac, the Forty-First Pope
of Alexandria (9 Hatour)18 November
- ❖ Martyrdom of the Fifty Virgins and their Mother from different
countries in El-Raha city (10 Hatour)19 November
- ❖ Departure of St. Hannah, St virgin Mary’s mother (11 Hatour)20 November
- ❖ Commemorative Feast of Michael the Archangel (12 Hatour)21 November
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Mari-Mina the Wonder Worker (15 Hatour) 24 November
- ❖ Beginning of the Advent Fasting in the Coptic Church (16 Hatour) 25 November
- ❖ Martyrdom of St. Philip the Apostle (18 Hatour)27 November
- ❖ Consecration of the Churches of Prince Theodore, the Son of John,
and Prince Theodore El-Mishreke (20 Hatour)29 November
- ❖ Commemoration of the Virgin St. Mary, the Mother of God (21 Hatour)30 November

CHURCH SERVICES SCHEDULE:

Please check church website in the first page

YOUTUBE SERVICE STREAMING ADDRESS:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_MI2B3NKLi1Y8P3nQR5Amw/video