



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of
the Southern United States

The Monthly Message
to the Priests' Wives
December 2014

The War of Glass House (2)

The wise elder continued and said, "Why did you, my daughter, accept the serpent's counsel?" You started rightly when you decided with all your heart to sacrifice yourself for the sake of the people. Yet, as you felt stressed under the burden of this cross, you found in the serpent's counsel an exit from your suffering and pain. You actually hewed for yourself broken cisterns that can hold no water. Aren't the feelings of tension, boredom and weariness that overwhelm you the strongest proof of the failure of **"The Strategy of the Masks"** in hiding you from the people's eyes, comments and criticisms? I dare saying that these masks increase your burdens as they make you living a fake life amounting to the degree of hypocrisy in order to flee from the glass house in

which you are living. You thought, wrongly, that pretence, falsification and living in the **"King's Wife Template"** would make the spectators, the observers, the critics and the commentators leave you in peace, you and your family. But the fact that you did not take heed of is that all these people have a sensitive radar they use to discern well between what is fake and what is true. They recognize well when you behave as if playing a role in a scene. If your position, as a king's wife, imposes on you and all your family to live on the stage under the spotlight and under the sight of the spectators then you have to know that this is a great gift that you must thank God about. Do not wonder when I say to you that it is a great gift that merits thanksgiving. This is God's Economy that His all wise divine providence planned for your salvation as well as the salvation of your family.

O my daughter, understand well what I want to say. God wants for all those who are forced to live inside the glass palace to lead a true exemplary life and not as a fake model. As they understand that people look at them craving to see in them a vivid

practical evangelical image, they feel obliged to be vigil and watchful over their salvation all the time. They show great zeal to be able, when asked to give an account of their stewardship, to surely answer, "*Here am I and the children whom God has given me*" (*Hebrews 2:13*). This narrow gate inside which the grace of God confines them is the sole reason of their salvation. What you have done is that you sought a wide gate to avoid the toil of the struggle and the sufferings of the way. You sought a refuge in fake masks that resemble the fig leaves behind which Adam and Eve hid themselves. But unfortunately you did not realize that these masks did nothing except showing more and more the shame of your nakedness before others. The worst thing is that after a while you started to ignore the falsity of these masks and to be convinced that they are real and that they constitute a genuine part of you!!

No my daughter, it shall not be so among you. Remember the fate of Cain who offered a fake hypocrite sacrifice (*Genesis 4:3-16*), the scribes and Pharisees who were the only ones who gained to

themselves the woe of Jesus Christ (*Matthew 23*), where ended Ananias and Sapphira who thought that masks would hide them from the eyes of the Holy Spirit (*Acts 5:1-10*) and how St. Paul withstood to the face St. Peter, Barnabas and the Jews who played the hypocrite and were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel (*Galatians 2:11-14*). Listen carefully to St. Paul's commandment, "*Let love be without hypocrisy*" (*Romans 12:9*) and to St. Peter advice, "*Therefore laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking...*" (*1Peter 2:1*)

Why are you embarrassed from living in a glass palace under the sight of people? Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy: All of us share with you the life behind the glass walls!! Aren't we all considered to be living in a glass palace under the sight of God, His angels and His saints? Why are you annoyed by the eyes of the inhabitants of the earth while we are all in fact under the eyes of the inhabitants of heavens? In fact, all those who realize that the inhabitants of the heavens see them and behave accordingly do not take heed at all to what the

inhabitants of the earth see in them. When **David** realized this fact with a deep spiritual existential awareness he shouted to God saying, "*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high I cannot attain it. Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me*" (Psalm 139: 6-10). As for **St. Paul**, he clearly proclaimed, "*And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account*" (Hebrew 4:13). **St. Cyril the great** says, "*Hypocrisy is hated by God and men; it never pays a reward and never saves a soul, but actually ends in its destruction. If somebody uses hypocrisy to get away with something he has done, that would be only for a limited time, after which he would be surely exposed and defamed. He would be likened to an ugly woman, after the superficial make-up is removed from her face. Hypocrisy, thus, is not the way of saints. Nothing done or said is hidden from the divine eyes; as is written: "There is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor*

hidden that will not be known" (Luke 12:2). So if our talks and actions will be revealed on the day of judgment, hypocrisy would then be in vain".

Now my daughter, I counsel you to repent the times of ignorance and to cast away the bad counsel of the serpent. Take off all the fake masks. Take your cross and bear it proudly with all love realizing that there is no salvation outside the way planned for you by the divine providence.

Let us all repeat this prayer constantly:

"The hypocrites seem to be fruitful and greenish in the eyes of their colleagues.

But in the eyes of the Great Judge they manifest themselves to be unfruitful and withered.

Who protects me from the frost of hypocrisy?

Who keeps my depths from the love of praise?

Who cares for me away from the vainglory?

You, alone, are my glory and honor.

Your love inflames my heart with a divine fire.

Hence the frost of hypocrisy is dissolved!"

(St. Gregory the Great)