



**Coptic Orthodox Diocese of
the Southern United States**

**The Monthly Message
to the Priests' Wives
December 2015**

The Flutterer Prowl On Every Side

Tasonry Folla came back home from church very exhausted after a very long day. Today was Sunday which is a very hard day in service. The tasks required from her are double fold as she is not a mere ordinary servant but the wife of the priest of the church!!

She fell down on the couch to get some rest before she would proceed in her duties. She had to prepare dinner as soon as possible before Abouna would return home. He would be very exhausted and hungry!! As soon as she sat down on the couch she fell into very deep sleep...

All of a sudden, Tasony Folla felt a strong hand awakening her. At the beginning, she thought it would be Abouna coming back home from the church. She jumped up quickly as she didn't prepare dinner yet wondering why Abouna came back early. But after a while, she felt something strange. She realized suddenly that she became very light and all the pains she was feeling in her feet and head disappeared. She wondered: "What is going on?!! Why am I lifted up from the ground like this?!! Who is this lady lying down on the couch?!! Isn't it me?!! O my God how comes that I became two persons??!!

Tasonry realized suddenly that the one lying down on the couch was nobody except her body which she just quitted!! In a twinkle of an eye, she found herself standing before a huge gate made of light she never saw before and she heard very sweet voices singing hymns behind that door. She then said to herself: "What sweet hymns are these!! This must be the gate of the Paradise!!" She then got ready to enter through

the gate with great trust that its door would no doubt fully open to her. Why not especially that she suffered a lot in her service to Abouna and the church and everybody would testify her piety and righteousness?

While Tasony stepped forward toward the gate, a luminous angel came in her way saying:

- I am sorry Mme. Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life are allowed to enter here.
- (With astonishment and objection) Of course my name is written in the Book of Life. Just look into your documents and you will find it. My name is Tasony Folla, the wife of Abouna Barsenophius the priest of the great church of St. Apakragon. Don't you know me?! Don't you know my husband?! He is actually a saint and his sanctity is well known to many people. Don't you know the very famous church in which I serve?!!
- I am sorry Mme!! I cannot find your name written down here.

- (With anger) How comes Mr. Angel?!! There must be something wrong!! Look sir, I serve the Lord with great toil since more than thirty years which is the duration of my saint husband's priesthood and during which I suffered a lot. How comes that you tell me now that I cannot enter?!! Didn't the Lord Himself say that whoever gives only a cup of cold water shall by no means lose his reward in heaven?!!
- Yes Mme, the Lord actually said so but He also said through His apostle that whoever bestows all his goods to feed the poor, and gives his body to be burned, but has not love, it profits him nothing. Actually, a cup of cold water offered with love and humility is more precious in the sight of the Lord than thirty years of hard service void of love.

At this point, Tasony felt very drowsy and confused. She meditated on what she heard from the angel with astonishment. She started to recall her memories

about her service and how all her toil was in vain!! How can she simply surrender now while she never got used to surrender along her life?! All of a sudden she got a smart idea.

- Listen Mr. Angel, I can bring you the testimony of tens of my friends in the church. They are the ladies I was the coordinator of their service. I am sure they will give you a good testimony that I served with love.
- Well, let us see. You need only ten people to testify.
- (With great joy) Thank you Mr. Angel. It seems that you are so kind. This is so easy. I will prove it to you in a second. You will see that everything is ok.
- Well offer me a list of ten names to see how these people will testify about you.
- Ha ha ha!! Here are fifty names and I can give you a hundred if you want.

The angel remained listening to Tasonry Folla while she was listing the name of people who knew her well and could testify about her sanctity and toil in service. After she finished, she looked at him saying:

- Can you see Mr. Angel how it was so easy?! If you want, I can list you more other names but I think these names already mentioned are more than enough ... But why are you silent sir? It seems you are now convinced with the proofs of my worthiness to enter the Paradise I offered to you.
- Listen Mme, there is no among the names you offered a single person who can testify your worthiness to enter the Paradise.
- (Shouting) How comes Sir?! All of them love me so much and in every occasion they praise my toil and service!!!
- (Calmly) Unfortunately, you are deceived. I will show you now the heart of every person you just mentioned their names to let you know how they saw you in their hearts and how they thought

about you. Here in the Paradise, we do not accept testimonies of tongues but those of hearts only.

Suddenly, Tasony Folla found every one of these persons passing before her and his heart was like an open book. She started to focus on reading what was written: *Tasony Folla is arrogant ... Tasony Folla is a very controlling personality in service ... I don't like her as she believes she is a saint ... whoever opposes her will be faced with anger ... she is showy ... she has a cruel heart ... she does not bear anyone who excels above her in service ...etc*

At this point, Tasony Folla was so stupefied to the degree she could not utter a single word. All these people were just fluttering her with the sweetest words. They were even prescribing her with what was totally opposite to what they were thinking about her in their hearts. The bitter truth that was just uncovered before her was that all of them were hypocrites fluttering her in order to please her, to get

a personal benefit from her or to avoid her wrath. She believed them and was deceived by their praise to her to the degree that she became blind to her own sins and weaknesses. She thought she did not need repentance as long she is pious in the sight of all people. All of a sudden, she found herself yelling and screaming: “ *Woe to me O Lord, the flutterer prowl on every side!!! Woe to me O Lord, the flutterer prowl on every side!!! Woe to me O Lord, the flutterer prowl on every side!!! Woe to me O...*

All of a sudden, while she was shouting and screaming she regained her consciousness and found herself lying on the couch at her home. She was feeling great fatigue and a lot of tears were pouring out of her eyes. She was hardly able to get up to prepare the dinner for Abouna while she was still repeating bitterly: “ *Woe to me O Lord, the flutterer prowl on every side!!!*