



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

**The Monthly Message
to the Priests' Wives**
August 2016

Virgin Mary the Mother of the High Priest

As we celebrate this month the fast and feast of Virgin Mary, I would like to contemplate with you in her role, not as just a priest's wife, but as the mother of the Great High Priest, and how she would react in various situations. This is actually a good model and example to every priest's wife.

(1) When St. Mary accepted the Annunciation of the angel and said "Yes" to the heavenly call to become the mother of God, she completely surrendered her life into God's hand since that

moment and showed complete readiness to accept all the prerequisites of the task required from her including all pain and suffering. Likewise, a priest's wife, who has put her hand to the plow and said "Yes" to her husband's call to priesthood, must let her "Yes" be "Yes". She must not look back, but she must rather hand her life to the hands of a faithful Creator and a wise Counselor.

(2) St. Mary did not disdain going to serve Elizabeth and did not consider herself classified in a special rank due to the Annunciation. Likewise, a humble priest's wife should serve everyone considering herself counted among them without seeking a special treatment as a priest's wife.

(3) St. Mary did not occupy herself with negative thoughts and worries about how she would face the suffering, pain and doubt she was about to

encounter, but she started praising and glorifying God. Likewise, a positive priest's wife resists the bad spirit of grumbling by constant praise and glorification of God.

(4) When St. Mary gave birth to her Son and heard the marvelous things told her by the shepherds, Anna the prophetess and Simeon the elder, she did not become proud of being a mother of an unusual Child, but she kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Likewise, a wife of a multi-talented priest, who gets the praise of everyone, must not be proud but she must rather pray in her heart day and night asking God to protect her husband priest from Satan's snares and tricks.

(5) St. Mary did not think that being a mother of God would exempt her from fulfilling the law, but she was careful to perform all things

according to the law of the Lord. Likewise, a priest's wife must be watchful over her spiritual canon fulfilling it accurately knowing well that her husband's priesthood will not give her any special spiritual privileges or grant her an unconditional entry to the heavenly kingdom.

(6) When St. Mary reproached Jesus when He lingered behind in the temple in Jerusalem and He replied saying that He must be about His Father's business, she did not consider His reply to her as a sign of lack of love and care for her but she kept all these things in her heart with all meekness and calmness. Likewise, a wise priest's wife must understand well that the first concern of her husband priest is to be about God's business fulfilling His will without accusing him of not taking care of her and their family.

(7) When St. Mary went with Jesus Christ to the wedding in Cana of Galilee, she noticed with her quick understanding that they ran out of wine, brought this to her Son's attention, and let Him react. Likewise, a priest's wife must meekly bring her husband's attention to some shortages in service that he misses. She presents the needs to him and gives him space to handle the situation without dictating him how he must react.

(8) When St. Mary and Jesus brothers sent to Him calling Him and He pointed to those who sat about Him saying, "*Here are My mother and My brothers*" (Mark 3:34), the Bible did not mention that she got jealous from giving priority to the multitude, that she was mad at Him or blamed Him. Likewise, a priest's wife must understand well that her husband does not belong exclusively to her but he is also a father, a son and a sibling to all.

(9) When Jesus was crucified, St. Mary was standing by His cross and sharing His sufferings moment by moment. She never incited Him to renounce the cross skipping the costs of fulfilling His redemptive mission which amounted up to shedding blood. Likewise, a priest's wife must bear the cross behind her husband and must share his suffering without annoying him with pushy invitations to come down from the cross saving his efforts, health and time.

(10) When Jesus Christ was glorified through His resurrection, St. Mary shared Him the joys and glories of resurrection. Likewise, a priest's wife shares his husband's sufferings and pain hoping to share the joys of the harvest of his service and the delight of the moment of handing the talents multiplied for the sake of the heavenly kingdom.