



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

**The Monthly Message  
to the Priests' Wives  
April 2017**

## **You Are Worried And Troubled About Many Things**

*“Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed”* (Luke 10:41-42). This is how Jesus Christ reproached Martha and how He still reproaches us, the servants, today. Our service turned to be a source of worry, trouble and loss of inner peace not only because of one thing but because of many things. A lot of things are able to drag us away from the way and the purpose so that it applies on us the words of the Scripture saying, *“He will surely turn violently and toss you like a*

*ball”* (Isaiah 22:18). We employ all our thoughts, emotions and powers to achieve a lot of goals in the service: administrations, regulations, accounts, projects, expansions, trips, camps, festivals and committees with conflicts, divisions, partiality, control and pride. Unfortunately, all these achievements became void of this One, who must be all in all. It was said about Jesus that He, *“hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed away”* (John 8:59). Yes, behold Jesus going through the midst of His temple observing the hundreds of activities and services we filled His house with. But as He does not find in them a place to rest, He passes away. Owe to us if the Lord Jesus Christ passes away from us and from the midst of our service!! Owe to us if it applies on us the words saying, *“My beloved had turned away and was gone”* (Songs 5:6)!!

Jeremiah wondered with bitterness of heart crying, “ *Why should You be like a stranger in the land, and like a traveler who turns aside to tarry for a night?*” (Jeremiah 14:8). Yes, O Lord, why you became like a stranger in Your temple? Why the service became for You as a transient place for a traveler while You are in fact the Master of the house and the Owner of the vineyard? How do we keep you at the door begging us saying, “ *Open for me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; For my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of the night*” (Songs 5:2) while You are the only One we need in our service and all our life?!

The multitudes of concerns and charges put on the shoulder of a priest's wife can be a source of grumbling for some of the priests' wives or a source of pride and honor to some others. Anyway, many times, the service turns to

become a god to be worshiped!! We made a big mistake in putting priorities into their right order while we serve. “ *The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath*” (Mark 2:27). Likewise, the service was made for the servant and not the servant for the service. I mean that when we are captured by the service to a degree that make us lose the direction and the way, and withdraw us from the original purpose of our service, we are then in delusion. When there is conflict, confusion, anger, wrath, cruelty of heart, control and pride in service, then the Lord Jesus Christ disappears and goes away from its midst. When we are concerned, and troubled the most with systems, regulations, and bylaws giving them the priority over man who is “the brightness of Jesus glory”, as Jesus is for the Father, we are then in need to that One. What benefit we can get from being confused with a lot

of work in service on the expense of clanging to the Lord through prayers, readings and fasts? What is the benefit of a service full of achievements yet void of love? What benefit a servant can gain from competing in service yet he loses his brethren? What benefit can one gains from holding on his own opinion and from defeating his brethren in the battle of mental argument while love is hurt and humility is defeated? *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but*

*have not love, it profits me nothing”* (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

Let us mimic St. Paul who, when defending himself before the Corinthians, was not aiming at all to justify himself but to keep the love between him and then untouched. He was concerned with defending himself just for the sake of an ultimate goal, which was keeping his relationship with them pure and without any confusion, *“Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one. I do not say this to condemn; **for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together...** Therefore, although I wrote to you, I did not do it for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, **but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you”*** (2 Corinthians 7: 2-3,12)