



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of  
the Southern United States

The Monthly Message  
to the Priests' Wives  
May 2018

## **How to Deal with a Neglecting Husband**

Many priests' wives complain of being ignored by their husbands. They are usually unable to discern the real reason lying behind this negligence. Most of the times, a priest justifies his negligence of his wife and children by being very busy in his ministry. Nevertheless, many of priests' wives are unable to accept this excuse and they consider it a mere pretext. Anyway, whether the priest's negligence of his wife is real or

imagined by her, it wounds her deeply and causes a great harm to their marital relationship.

### **Forms of a husband's neglect of his wife**

- (1) Little talk with the wife, complete silence in her presence, or hastening to end any conversation with her.
- (2) In case his wife calls him, he avoids answering her calls or answers her with very short words trying to end the call rapidly under the excuse of being very busy.
- (3) He avoids expressing his feelings towards her or his appreciation of all what she does. He withholds words of encouragement and even belittles what she does considering this a duty of her.

(4) Constantly blaming and criticizing his wife with bitter words.

(5) Reducing the amount of time he spends at home under the excuse of being busy. He may even invent additional activities and services during the time dedicated to his family.

(6) During the short time he spends at home, he is busy with answering phone calls, replying to emails, reading books, preparing sermons, or even sleeping without putting in consideration his wife's need to communicate with him.

(7) Reduction of the shared activities between the priest and his wife like outings, traveling, participating in family activities, or even praying and reading the Bible together.

(8) Troubles in intimate relationship as the priest may not approach his wife except for

fulfilling his own physical needs then he neglects her again in all other things, he may lose his desire towards her, or he may perform in a cold way void of emotional fulfillment.

### **How a wife can deal with a neglecting husband**

(1) Always pray for this matter.

(2) In the light of prayer and your confessor father's guidance examine yourself well lest your feeling that your husband priest's neglect of you is a mere subjective feeling that has no objective grounds.

(3) Do not focus on his weaknesses and do not criticize him all the time. This would make him ignore you. You would rather focus on his strengths and praise him. This would encourage him to care for you.

(4) Nagging and talking about a lot of details would make your husband feel bored and lose interest in listening to you especially that he has a tight schedule being a priest. Therefore, you need to avoid being needy and demanding in order to keep him fully present and focusing with you.

(5) Do not smother him by continuously tracking him and showing exaggerated care for him. You would rather give him some space to feel missing you.

(6) Try to communicate with your husband priest in a warm gentle way. Express clearly and openly your emotional needs and how much you miss him without accusing him.

(7) Do not be ashamed from discussing your needs and expectations from your intimate relationship. How can he be aware of these

needs unless you open up and express them by yourself?

(8) Create shared activities with him. It is not necessary for a shared activity to take a lot of time in order to achieve the goal of getting close to each other. Good quality of time is better than its amount.

(9) Be involved in your own activities whether in work or service. This would help you fulfill your need for creativity, achievement and socialization and would reduce your negative feelings towards your husband.

(10) It is beneficial to have joint sessions with a spiritual father full of the Holy Spirit. He would pray for you and guide you in what concern your marital relationship.