



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

### **Monthly Message for the Priests Wives**

**April 2023**

#### **Positive Thinking**

#### **Volume 1**

Positive thinking and dealing with stress are crucial for any successful marriage. As a priest's wife, it is important to take proactive steps to ensure that our thoughts and actions towards our husbands are positive and constructive. In those coming articles, we will discuss four important steps that a priest's wife can take to promote positive thinking towards their husbands and deal with stress positively. Each step will include quotes from fathers in the Coptic Orthodox Church, biblical verses to reinforce its importance. We will also include a humorous anecdote at the end of each step to add a light-hearted touch to the discussion followed by academic definition, and then biblical application.

#### **Step 1: Recognize Your Husband's Positive Qualities**

Fathers in the Coptic Orthodox Church emphasize the importance of recognizing the positive qualities of our spouses. As Father Tadros Yacoub Malaty states, "One of the beautiful things about love is that it sees only the positive in its object." This means that when we love someone, we tend to focus on their positive qualities and ignore their flaws.

Biblical Verse: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

Funny Stories: A woman once complained to her friend about her husband's forgetfulness. She said, "He forgets everything! Last week, he went to the supermarket to buy some eggs and came back with a puppy!" Her friend replied, "Well, that's not so bad. At least he remembered to bring back something alive."

A priest's wife was helping her husband prepare for a church event when she noticed that he had put on mismatched socks. Instead of criticizing him, she simply smiled and said, "It's a good thing we're not judging your fashion sense today!"

Academic definition: Positive thinking is a psychological construct that refers to the cognitive and emotional processes that lead to optimistic and hopeful thoughts and attitudes towards the future, despite challenging circumstances or setbacks (Carver & Scheier, 2014;

Seligman, 2011). Positive thinking has been found to have numerous benefits, including improved mental health, physical health, social relationships, and job performance (Cohen et al., 2006; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

Biblical application: Joseph and his coat of many colors: In the book of Genesis, Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers and is taken to Egypt. Despite the hardships he faces, he maintains a positive attitude and is eventually promoted to a high position in Pharaoh's court, where he can save his family and the people of Egypt from famine.

"<sup>4</sup> And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I *am* Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. <sup>5</sup> But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:4-5)

Finally:

The Holy Pascha week is a highly significant and busy time for the Coptic Orthodox Church. It is a time of prayer, fasting, and reflection leading up to the celebration of Christ's resurrection. The week is filled with numerous church services and activities, which can be stressful for priests and their families.

As the wife of a priest, it is essential to be supportive and understanding during this time. Here are a few tips on how to deal with your husband during the stressful period of the Holy Pascha week:

1. Be understanding: Your husband will be busy with church services and activities throughout the week. Understand that he may not be able to spend as much time with you or the family as usual.
2. Offer practical support: Offer to help your husband in any way possible. This can be anything from preparing meals for him to packing his belongings for the week.
3. Be prayerful: Pray for your husband and the church during this time. Ask God to give your husband the strength to endure the busy week and to bless the services and activities.
4. Attend church services: Attend the church services with your husband, if possible. This will show your support and help you both to stay focused on the meaning of the week.
5. Be positive: Maintain a positive attitude and try to keep the household atmosphere peaceful and joyful. This will help to reduce stress for your husband and the entire family.

Remember, the Holy Pascha week is a time of spiritual renewal and growth. By being supportive of your husband, you can help him to fulfill his duties as a priest and lead the congregation in a meaningful celebration of Christ's resurrection.