



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

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

**March 2024**

## **Lack of Support**

### **Volume 2**

- **Academic Definition:** The lack of support within religious communities refers to a deficiency in providing emotional, spiritual, or practical assistance to individuals in need. In academic literature, this concept is often discussed in the context of social support theory, which encompasses emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and appraisal support.

- **References and Studies:**

**1- "Social Support: An Interactionist View" by Sheldon Cohen and Lynn G. Underwood:**

This paper explores the different dimensions of social support and their impact on well-being, emphasizing the importance of supportive relationships.

**2- "Social Support and Health" by Tara L. Gruenewald, Bert N. Uchino, and Kathleen C. Light:**

A comprehensive review discussing the links between social support and health outcomes, emphasizing the role of supportive networks.

**3- "The Role of Social Support in Coping and Adjustment to Bereavement" by Margaret S. Stroebe and Henk Schut:**

This study delves into the role of social support in coping with bereavement, illustrating how supportive relationships contribute to emotional well-being.

- **Avoidance:** Foster a culture of support within the community and encourage mutual assistance.
- **Biblical Reference:** Galatians 6:2 - "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ."
- **Biblical Stories:**

### **1- Moses and Aaron Supporting Each Other (Exodus 17:10-13):**

In the battle against the Amalekites, Moses needed support to keep his arms raised. Aaron and Hur provided the needed support, illustrating the importance of mutual support in facing challenges.

### **2- Job's Friends (Job 2:11-13):**

Initially, Job's friends provide support by silently sitting with him during his suffering. However, their attempt to explain his suffering later becomes unsupportive. This story highlights the complexity of providing meaningful support.

### **3- The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37):**

The parable of the Good Samaritan emphasizes the importance of offering support to those in need, regardless of social or religious differences.

- **Implications for Pastoral Care, Leadership, and Interpersonal Relationships:**

- 1- **Emotional Well-being:** Lack of support can lead to emotional distress and hinder individuals' ability to cope with challenges.

- 2- **Community Cohesion:** Supportive relationships contribute to a sense of community and cohesion within a religious group.

- 3- **Leadership Effectiveness:** Leaders who cultivate a supportive environment enhance their effectiveness in providing pastoral care and guidance.

- **Conclusion:** Academic literature and biblical stories underscore the significance of support in fostering a healthy and thriving religious community. Pastoral care and leadership should prioritize building supportive networks, recognizing the diverse needs of individuals, and creating an environment where everyone feels valued and cared for.

- **Funny Stories:**

- 1- **The Mystery of the Missing Hymn Books:**

In a small church community, the choir members were gearing up for a special Sunday service. However, when they arrived at the church on Saturday for rehearsal, they discovered that all the hymn books had mysteriously vanished. Instead of panicking, the choir members decided to get creative. They turned the missing hymns into a hilarious game, each member making up their own

lyrics to well-known tunes. The congregation found themselves singing about missing socks and lost car keys, turning what could have been a stressful situation into a joyous, laughter-filled rehearsal. When Sunday came, the congregation joined in on the fun, and the missing hymn books became a cherished memory.

- Moral: Sometimes, unexpected challenges can lead to moments of laughter and creativity within a supportive community.

## 2- The Tale of the Potluck Fiasco:

In a close-knit religious community known for their potluck dinners, a mishap occurred one evening. Sister Sarah, known for her delicious apple pie, accidentally dropped the entire dessert on the floor just before the event. Rather than letting the disappointment set the tone, the community rallied together. They turned the potluck into a "Make-Your-Own-Dessert" party, where everyone brought ingredients, and they had a blast creating impromptu desserts on the spot. Laughter echoed through the fellowship hall as people crafted unique treats, and the evening turned out to be one of the most memorable potlucks in the community's history.

- Moral: A supportive community can turn setbacks into opportunities for shared laughter and creativity.
- These stories aim to inject humor into situations that could otherwise be challenging, emphasizing the resilience and camaraderie that can emerge within a close religious community.