



## Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

### Monthly Message for the Priests Wives

July 2025

### **Priest's Wife Public Confession**

#### The Life of Prayer of Priest's Wife

Beloved sisters,

I am the least to be writing this letter, but moved by the Holy Spirit to share publicly my confessions that affected Abouna's ministry and my spiritual life. Whether your Abouna was ordained 6 months ago or 40 years ago, I pray that you would thank God that you didn't fall in my mistakes and I pray that He would protect you from falling.

I am sharing my shortcomings whether they occurred in the beginning of Abouna's ministry or later in the years. I will be sharing also other priest's wives' experiences for a broader benefit.

***“Blessed is the husband of a good wife. For the number of his years is doubled. A good wife delights her husband, and she will fill up the years of his life with peace. A good wife is a good portion. She will be given the portion of those who fear God, like a man who has done good deeds. But, rich or poor, with a good heart, his countenance will be cheerful at all times.”*** Sirach 26:1-4

Being overwhelmed with Abouna's ordination, figuring our new lifestyle, being a public figure, looking after our children who are also trying to adapt to the change...etc. I heard many advices, but lacking wisdom and in arrogance, I ignored them. I wasn't faithful in the most important advice given to me that I should be Abouna's backbone by being faithful in praying for him and for the ministry!

When we all got married, we desired to have a God-fearing family and being blessed with the greatest gift of priesthood in the family puts on us to be not only the backbone of Abouna but of the whole family, the biological and the spiritual family. One thing that always gets my attention in the saint's lives, is their upbringing. How they were affected by either both or one pious parent. However, in arrogance, my eyes shifted from the goal...suddenly, I became busy with seeking approval and

attention from others. Many look at a priests' wife that she must be within a certain criterion, and I was amongst them! I suddenly found myself not being "myself" anymore but what I thought people are expecting of me. Trying to fit in these criteria, I neglected the fact that I am a wife and a mother before being a priests' wife. I neglected the fact that I needed to stay faithful in my canon and watchful for the little foxes that crept in my life. For sure, being a public figure put on restrictions and duties, but in all of this I wasn't my old self, I wasn't circumspect, I wasn't anymore the praying wife and mother! I disconnected from my spiritual father, walking with no guidance. I was exactly like the fig tree, from inside there are no fruit, being a hypocrite before everyone!

Trying to fit within these criteria didn't work for me because the Holy Spirit is not limited to certain criteria, but He works in variant ways. Some priests' wives are prominent; others aren't, yet the Holy Spirit works in both. Works with the 5 talents and works with the 10 talents. Works with the 2 mites and works with Lydia the rich disciple of St. Paul. Works in Samson's mother whom we don't know even her name and works in Samuel's mother, Hannah, whom we know her name. Works in St. Elizabeth, the elderly and works in St. Mary, the young humble girl.

I might be an active servant in the church or I might be hiding behind Abouna supporting him by raising up our little children but in both roles, mostly I am supporting him and supporting the ministry in my inner room by constant prayers. God looks at those prayers coming from the heart and He listens. Being faithful in praying for the church, in the whole world, in our diocese and the local church, I think it's very important. One of the prayers that Christ asked us to pray for, is the ministry. "Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. Therefore, **pray** the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." Matthew 9:37-38

Don't underestimate your prayers. Praying faithfully for our clergy and all the servants and the spread of His kingdom is a sweet aroma before Him. The Scripture highlight to us many godly women traits and their strength lies in their inner life of prayer and believing in the power of prayers. Judith before carrying over her plot to kill the great commander Holofernes, she asked the elders to pray for her and God gave her victory through their prayers and hers.

Esther asked the same in fasting and prayers and salvation came from the Lord, through the communal fasting and prayers and through hers.

Susanna was saved from not only disgrace but death, by a humble prayer.

Hannah's fervent prayer with a humble heart, made God gave her the great prophet Samuel.

In the life of the saints, Euphemia prayed in tears before the icon of the Theotokos for a child and heard the voice "Amen". Here after, was the birth of the great St. Mina. And many more....

These started with a single request of prayer... how about if we unceasingly and faithfully pray for the ministry?! How about we, in one accord, storm the heavens with our prayers for our clergy, husbands and the ministry. Sometimes, we either overlook or underestimate the power of prayers or underestimate our role .... that can move the mountains. Our humble prayer pierces the clouds until it reaches the Lord.

What hindered this spirit of prayer in my life when I wanted to increase, be the center of attention, controlling the service through Abouna, when sadly it was all about Me, Myself & I. But God Who is merciful and does not wish the death of the sinner but my repentance, changed my stoney heart and gave me a heart that seek not my "own" interest but the others. Surrendering to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of my spiritual father is the key to everything in our lives and in our families. My prayer for the whole church is to be inflamed with His Fiery Spirit, and our hearts be inflamed with His Divine love for Him and for everyone.