



Coptic Orthodox

Diocese of the Southern

United States

Monthly Message for the Monastic

December 2018

I miss You, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Please forgive me, my Lord. Forgive me for having neglected the grace You once bestowed upon me. When I was little in my own eyes (1 Sam. 15:17) I was enflamed with Your love and sensitive to Your voice and Your will, but looking back, I now see that I trusted in my own strength and ability and did not understand that it was only You who worked in me both to will and to do (Phil. 2:13). My soul now suffers and is weighed down by the flesh (Matt. 26:41). I desire, like the lost son, to stand up and return to You, but what seemed so easy before has become a heavy load on me now.

I heard Your voice telling me that I have left my first love (Rev. 2:4) but in my self-love, I could not repent and come back to You. I again heard Your voice telling me: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28) and I desired to come to You, but blinded by my slothfulness and pride, I could not let go of all the distractions that have obstructed my way to You.

Call me to You Lord, like You called St. Peter onto the water. Call me back to You and when I sink again, hear my cry, "Lord, save me!" (Matt. 14:30) and reach out Your hand to me and pull me out. I know now Lord what it feels to be in darkness (1 John 1:5) and how neglect has easily guided me astray (Eph. 6:10-13). I used to think that I was strong but now I know my own weakness — "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am!" (Rom. 7:23-24).

I am nothing without You, Lord (John 15:5). I see now that I am but dust and I can see the greatness in others. I no longer desire to justify my ways before You — my procrastination has led to the idle and lukewarm state of my soul.

I will wait on You Lord. Humble the exalted (Luke 18:14) and return me to You.

Amen.