



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

Monthly Message for the Monastic

June 2019

Today, as most days, we have been really busy in the monastery but I'm so thankful for this hidden moment.

My Lord, when I woke up this morning in the quiet serenity of my cell, I signed myself and thanked You for granting me rest and a new day to praise You. When I entered the church, I joyfully bowed before You and kissed Your altar as though kissing the feet of my Master before being sent out for the work assigned to me in His house.

But as the praises ended and the day began, my soul thirsted for You, my Lord. In the midst of the responsibilities, You have trusted me with, I have forgotten You. I tried to recite my psalms but too much talking distracted me. I tried to keep the Jesus Prayer in my heart but thoughts of pride battled with me.

Where is that brother that once wanted nothing but You alone? Where is he underneath the warfare of ranks and honor and subtle distractions? I, the lowly monk, look for you my brother, in the depths of my heart. I have put you aside with the white clothing and have forgotten you in the glory of my vain confidence.

My soul thirsts for You. Here I am, Lord, Your monk, Your servant, Your son. Search my heart and strip away from me all honor, all pride, all self-pity, bitterness and distractions from the present moment in which You have placed me in.

Remove from me the passions of being upset when dishonored and the passion of being content when praised. Remove from me the curious mind that desires to know what is not my business and the envy of seeking what is not my own. Unless the pillar moves, grant that I may remain exactly where I am.

Just as we do not notice the dust underneath our shoes when we walk, grant that I also may go unnoticed and thankfully receive the blessing of being under the feet of my brothers and there I shall be with You alone.