



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

### **Monthly Message for the Monastic**

**August 2019**

What really is true love?

It is something more than just words, feelings and even acts of love; love must be something that gives — a denial of ourselves for the sake of others. There can be no selfishness in true love but only sacrifice.

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down’s one’s life for his friends.” (John 15:13).

This beautiful verse calls us to a love without reservation, a truly freeing love. One that frees us from the shackles that binds us to the passions of our flesh. If I truly willed to give my whole being to my brother, then there would be no room in my heart for bitterness or distress, jealousy or resentment, selfish ambitions or expectations; for how can a heart given still be controlled by the limitations of the ego?

Our lives which are made up of many ambitions, plans and desires give us the opportunity to offer this true love to our brothers every single day —

For you, my dear brother, I die to my selfish desires and sacrifice my comfort for yours. I may not ever be given the chance to give my life to you in the flesh, but if it is possible, as far as it depends on me, I will to sacrifice my carnal desires of pride, honor and justice for you. I will give up my conveniences and time for you. I will forgo my opinion and resistance for you. I will sacrifice and keep sacrificing until God removes from me every ego driven passion that takes up room in my heart, so that I may freely love, whole and pure. So that I may be completely free of that anguish that prevents me from offering you no greater love than this.

May the peace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Glory be to God forever. Amen.