

The Living Servant

H.G Bishop Moussa

The theme of this meeting is about spirit and life as the Lord said to his disciples in John 6, "It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing, the words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life". We can concentrate on 2 topics:

(1) The living servant

(2) The living service.

The living servant, I think he is the one who:

(1) Is alive in Christ, indeed he is living thus he must be alive in Christ and

(2) Is a functioning member in the church, he is not passive he is not an appendix he is a functioning member.

(3) Must be a person of prayer having a life of prayer because prayer is the spirit of service like the spirit being the life of the body and this is mentioned in the fathers; as the body is not alive except through the spirit the Christian is not alive except through prayer. And they say that if you see somebody who doesn't like prayer he has nothing good inside him at all. Because simply; prayer is the relation with the Lord.

(4) Is educated, he has to know because he is going to edify others, he must be educated, he must know a lot, learn a lot in order to teach.

(5) Must be contemporary otherwise he will be considered to belong to another age, to the past then his teachings are not contemporary are not suitable to the age that we are living. Must know what is around me what is around my student what's going on in their schools in the mass media in order to give the proper instruction and the proper answers to all their questions and their needs. Therefore I must be a contemporary servant.

(6) He must be from the type we call the "we leader" and not the "I leader" he must not be individualistic he must like the teamwork methodology,

At least these can be the 6 features of a living service:

1. Living in Christ

2. Membership a functioning membership in the body of Christ

3. Prayer because this gets the Holy Spirit to work with us
4. He must be educated
5. Must be contemporary
6. "We" leader not "I"--must believe in team work

(1) Living in Christ

This means that he must know the lord, know by his intellect and know every thing about the Lord or else who is he going to talk about, he is going to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ is that so talking about someone I don't know and have no information about him should I talk about someone I don't know? I should have good knowledge about the lord, who is He. And also he must nourish him self spiritually through the Lord, not only do I know him but I eat him, I nourish myself through him spiritually, it is an experience then not only knowledge therefore St Peter instructs us, "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus". Grace is then number two it spirituality and grace of God but also knowledge then knowledge and spirituality and the third he is trying all the time to unify himself to Christ or with Christ he must always be longing to be one in Christ to unify himself as you know in the Eucharist the Lord is saying he who eats My body and drinks my blood will abide "in"-- this "in" in a lot of verses in the Bible speaks about this being in Christ, sometimes literarily inside Christ which is having Christ all over, Christ covering us, Christ embracing us and we are inside Him this means that you are going to have the Christ-like image then when I put light in our hand and the light shines, this is the same as when the Lord is inside us we are going to give off the light that he gives; of course not the same light or the same power. He said I am the light of the world and he turned to us and said you are the light of the world therefore we need to have a rich experience knowing the Lord nourishing ourselves through the Lord unifying ourselves with the Lord.

I know I read a lot there is no servant that does not read about Jesus Christ I know that he is one of the holy trinity, that he is incarnate and became man, that he taught us the gospel, I know his sermon on the mount, what about his parables, what about his miracles, what about his personality; how he deals with the different situations of life, how he dealt with the Pharisees, how he dealt with the priest, how he dealt with the needy people, how he had power all over; the plants, the sea, the winds, the materials, the devils, the animals, the human, the sick people the dead. I must know everything about Christ you I'll teach; this is my topic that I teach. We are not teaching Christianity; actually we are teaching Christ, because Christ is the spirit of Christianity, is the essence of Christianity, through Christ I can know Christianity and I can understand Christianity. Therefore the servant must read a lot about Christ especially about Christ and also he must nourish himself through Christ, that he gets this data to be

living inside his heart as an experience, a living experience; through prayer through faith through interaction through different situations of life because Christianity is not just knowledge mere knowledge mere data I can get that from the computer very easily but what I can not get from the computer is the life the life means the data became life, became actions, became relation, became interaction with God in different situations, I remember when in Giza they started to have some schools then a Moslem came and introduced himself to Fr. Salib Sourial from el-Giza and said to him I want to be a teacher in your school may I? Fr found him an nice polite young man and answered him "actually we don't only teach Arabic, and mathematics etc but also religion" the young man replied "honestly Fr I teach the Christian religion very precisely and in a very honest way" but what kind of teaching would this be data just plain data of course Fr. Salib rejected the offer because it is not enough to know the data but to have the light inside the exp the spiritual and the third step in knowing the lord is to be unified to him through the Eucharist and through prayers. We want to have the Lord inside us.

There is none so unique in religions all over the world - other leaders after teaching their religion they all left - the only leader who dwelt inside his followers is Jesus Christ; the only one that unifies himself to his followers is our Lord Jesus Christ through the Eucharist. Therefore we need, as living servants, to know the Lord, nourish ourselves spiritually through the Lord, unify ourselves to the Lord through the holy Eucharist. Thus a servant without the Eucharist is a servant without Christ; his Christ will be the Christ of data or the Christ of emotions and feelings no we want Christ inside, Christ to be unified with us.

This is the first requirement of the living servant.

(2) Functioning Membership

Meaning the servant must know Orthodoxy and live the Orthodox life. Same thing as with Christ; I know by my intellect but I live by my heart and my every day life the ort life this is the Orthodox servant. he knows; that means he studied almost everything about the church doctrine the church rituals the church saints as much as he can the sayings of the fathers even just catching the spirit of the fathers. Therefore he knows Orthodoxy this is also by intellect - no this is not enough he must live it must live the Orthodox life we have the Orthodox day the Orthodox week the Orthodox month and the Orthodox year so he lives these:

- Orthodox day is Agbia
- The readings of the daily liturgy even when not attending a liturgy - some servants read the Katamarus
- The Sinexarium as the above readings match the daily Sinexarium;

whether they be a patriarch or a martyr or a virgin the gospel of the liturgy matches with the remembrance of the Sinexarium. With the exception of Sunday which is devoted to readings on Jesus Christ the savior and salvation.

So I have the Agbia, the Katamarus, the Sinexarium, and:

- The Matanoia which is changing the mind in spirit of repentance
- Also the Tasbeha.

I don't know if I have told you this story previously about the late bishop Athanasius. He went to comfort one of the ladies in the diocese who was above 70, 75 or so, as her son passed away, so he went to comfort her. And asked her how she was doing in which she responded by thanking God he wished her through God's will that she be comforted and again she replied by thanking God. He asked her if she prays in which the frail old lady replied yes when I can so he persisted with his question so what do you pray daily? The Agbia, the Epsalmodia and the Katamarus! He responded all this and I see you are not totally comforted to which she explained it's not with great passion! See how she is after the quality not only the quantity not with passion so he said to her what are you used to these prayers? She responded positively and explained that in her father's house she was accustomed to these prayers and when she married with her marriage preparation her father placed an Agbia, an Epsalmodia, and a Katamarus and instructed me that as I had been practicing at my father's home so also in my new marriage home and so I have been till now however she asked Anba Athanasius for absolution. To which he asked what is concerning her and she informed him that she can no longer stand rigid in prayers and must always lean on the Bible stand she has at home. Certainly different from some of us who pray under the quilts! She is standing 75 years old and repentant for leaning on the Bible stand and yet some of us stand restless for prayer. Notice also the Bible stand she has at home; dedicated to her books of prayer on which she leans and completes her prayers with dedication.

Also we had a priest about 80 years and he was a very holy person he was also "a library" he used to read everything and was a very good preacher. And I remember a visit by Rev. Fr Tadros Yacoub in Bani Sweif he was old and didn't walk much and needed a cane for support, and I said to the old priest, "Fr. Botros meet Fr. Tadros do you know him?" He answered in a frail humble voice, "Yes, yes, 'The Divine Love'", which was the book title of one of Fr. Tadros' latest releases, that Fr. Botros had read. Tell me do any of you know this book it is as thick as a government constitution book yes we know the title and you have flipped through some of the pages but have you read it? But this old priest had read it, his eyes old and tired. He also asked for absolution from his grace as he was accustomed to 300 Matanoias per day and now he needs the support of the bed post as he makes them. 300 and above 80!?

This is the Orthodox life; humility of the Matanoia and repentance, the readings and prayers. This is the orthodox life we need, the orthodox life that we will surely not arrive at these levels mentioned but we practice this orthodox life even a title of it. So we have the Orthodox knowledge and Orthodox life at the same time.

(1) Living in Christ

(2) Membership, functioning membership

Living is living and giving the church something a service he does in the church. Must have an activity in the church - being part of the body else the member that does no work is an appendix; that doesn't work so that even you can do with out it. Bu the function member then never can you get rid of it if you were to remove a kidney you would be in great distress although you had another yet a functioning member is so precious. So each member has a function and

(3) Life of Prayer

You will have a servant who is limited in knowledge in power, in spirit, in talents is limited then how he will serve this number of people with different requirements and different needs different problems he will not be able to. Then he must add to his limited power the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit and this comes through prayer. They call prayer the secret cord and the umbilical cord. What's the difference? The secret cord is hidden in secrecy you are speaking to the Lord and no one is feeling that. You may be amongst the multitudes but your heart is talking to our Lord, when you speak to your children when you serve Sunday-school, before, during and after the lesson, when you visit them at home when you return and so on. Always praying secretly; the secret cord. And the umbilical cord, then, meaning always taking my nutrition from this like the fetus in the womb of his mother taking his nutrition through the umbilical cord.

Thus through prayer I am nourished and I can nourish others, and if am not a man of prayer then what can I give? "I am going to give myself!?" What is your self? So what? Give your capacity? So what? I am always happy when I find that when someone is disturbed even psychologically he goes to a psychiatrist who is one of the children of God. A huge difference for certainly this psychiatrist does not only give him therapy from intellectual studies of course he always inserts some of his spiritual tenet which is more important; for his psychology and the psychology of the patient a limited human helping a limited human so where is the gain but when you from the spirituality of Godliness and you mix it with the psychology you are able to present something integrated; this therapy can now get the patient a life of peace and so on. I have read in the past that one of the psychologists, one William James said that, "In my clinic, a third of my patients were healed through a leap of faith not by medication". Many cases are stress related

depression or some sort of high tension and a leap of faith will refresh and make one content - that is one third of a clinic's clientele. Of course there are others who need medication. In service we differentiate between whether there is a real psychological disease we turn to the doctor and I personally have referred many to psychologists. But I recognize the truly sick not referring every one the point of turning the well into sick. One comes to me and says I am in need of assistance then I convince him and put him on medication. I then have nurtured his feeling of being dependent. I had a case where I was helping a young youth and found him on medication. After chatting with him I found that he is perfectly fine and I helped him truly stop his dependency on medication as he did not need it and has now till today being fine. Not all I find in trouble I refer them to medication. Therefore the spiritual element is beautiful because it keeps equips psychiatrists with an infinite unlimited tool that is God and this is help with his therapy if he is truly not in need of medication

We need this life of prayer. The life of prayer that prepares yourself, and prepare the words you are going to utter prepares the people that are going to listen. So if you do not go with the spirit of prayer, you will not be ready and the word will not be effective and the audience will not be concentrating or affected by the teachings of the Lord Jesus. The spirit of prayer without it you can not. We consider the person who does not love prayer is dead has no life inside because prayer means the spiritual life or the life of the spirit inside us. You are going to have the Holy Spirit with you; working with you affecting the people with you giving the right guidance and the influential words that can affect the people and help them to be peaceful and spiritual

(4) He is Educated

Educated here meaning as much as I can imagine educated concerning the Bible, educated concerning the church topics, educated concerning general knowledge. He cannot be a servant and he has not studied the Bible and has not studied the Church topics and ignorant of the current events and the general knowledge. Not general knowledge about plantation or cars, but about what is going on in the mentality of the people nowadays and what are the current thoughts, what are the dominating ideologies of these days. You can see for yourselves you have a lot of distortion in these ideas. Every sect or cult has its own thinking and its own understanding and its own philosophy. So too do I have my Christian philosophy and Christian religion I must know what is going on what every one is saying.

I was happy when I heard about the courses here at the college especially the comparative theology which explains the views and teachings of the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses and the Adventists etc. The Adventists are increasing in Egypt, we are surprised to see a huge financial support for these Adventists in Egypt. Millions of dollars and books upon books free of charge to all Christians in Egypt are being distributed. They find the

Christian family home address in telephone-directories and send them free books by post. In one city alone, the Esmaa'lya, a priest had collected 1000 books from families of his small parish. And upon discussing this issue with another priest from New Cairo, he too informed me that his servants have collected over 1000 copies of this book the Adventists are shipping out freely.

Mind you the book was in full colour and high quality, but full of deadly poison inside. It contained a timeline of the church history falsifying all churches and Christianity as we know it and acquiring all truth to the Adventists and their teaching that Christ was born as normal birth etc. Also I was giving a lecture in Alexandria and a servant informed me that he had collected 5000 copies from his village they were given to shops in the street in boxes and asked them to give them out to the public freely and this servant who had municipal authority collected them off the shops. It is all antichrist

Upon studying the reason behind this enormous effort and huge funding I found that it's due to an unnamed alliance. Now we have an attack from Christian denominations especially the Protestants who are also well funded, and attacks from the Adventists they have formed an unofficial alliance springing up in America. This is one of my major studies with His Holiness concerning the American movement named WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) who also reject Catholics. One of whom is Timothy McBay who was responsible for government building bombings in Okalahoma, as the government accepts non-white people and the WASP's aim is for a white government and a white people.

Also another movement is that of the evangelists they say that Christ will come to Israel and thus support Israel with huge financial backings.

We must be aware of how the world around us is forming so that we may be able to protect our children and keep them in the right Orthodox way. Because there are different attacks against Christianity to pollute Christianity inject it with a poison.

So the servant must be educated biblically and in church topics and general knowledge.

(5) The Servant Must Be Contemporary

Meaning he can utilize the tools of the age. There are technologies and I use them. There is the pc the information the internet the mobile etc all these I must use in my service. So that my service will not be rigid to the methods of the past - no Service has the same essence but its methods differ. Today we use the projector the power point and PC etc. Who can prepare something with out the PC who can research without the internet. They name the 20th Century the information century, the flow of information,

information has become available everywhere. But the new century we are commencing they call the century of dominance of information you cannot give up or cancel info on the internet. Imagine you are going to translate a book for example on the Holy Spirit for Embrosios. No one today can just say come on let's translate the book; first you see if the book has been already translated before expending such a huge effort in duplication. So how do I know? Let's ask Fr Tadros Yaacoub. Maybe Fr Morcos Dawood? But he has passed away. Let us ask at his parish or maybe in another diocese. These are the ways of the past. Today you just connect to the internet and look up for the book title and you have all the information there about its translation and may even find the book online. You cannot get rid of the technology or ignore it, it has become time saving and very helpful in service. You just searching on a single word you get many results and hence your preparation and so on.

You must be contemporary not only with technology but also feeling the new cultures around me what are my children learning - smoking drugs alcohol sex things as dangerous as premarital sex and is considered normal yes but this begets sex addiction. One statistic I have read is that the average American teenager from the age of 15-18 changes his partner or her partner 12 times, in three years! So by the time they finish with their teenage years and they marry they are addicted.

They excuse with the word adultery saying its literal meaning is to join to another hence meaning after marriage so that before marriage is not adultery!? It is adultery against God that you join your self to the devil. But these crafty meanings are evil. You saw with Bill Clinton incident how behind it was an evil, devilish plan to broadcast the trial. Whoever saw such trials broadcast allover the world on all TV channels. Why so? To treat him as a normal citizen? Even so do we broadcast such trials for any normal citizen? But it was a brainwashing plan to brainwash all youth to portray that this is life this is what you have to be. And in truth the response of the youth is compliant; they say: if the president who is married and in this position falls and commits such and such then who am I not to fall. Poor youth receiving a wicked translation.

These talks and standards of premarital sex is turning youth into sex addicts, and when he marries he can not stop he has become addicted. You should know about this sex addiction as your psychologists can also confirm it. A consequence of sex addiction is drug addiction. A person cannot withstand such addiction without drugs or alcohol. Then this also leads to crime inevitably.

Therefore we have to be contemporary and know what our children are meeting in schools--violence around them. We must understand what is around them to help them. Dialog is a great assistance to me; the more I dialog with my children then the more I will understand what they are seeing and living.

Question:

The internet has its benefits and downs

Answer:

Of course, as is in everything in life, our church teaches us that "those with out guide as autumn leaves will fall" I am using the internet but with the guidance of my spiritual father. Or if someone feels that he has found a special article on the internet about theology and then reviews it with his spiritual guide, he will then know if it belongs to Jehovah's Witnesses or what. This is an important advice that we use these

(6) The "WE" leader

We need servants that believe in team work. Have I told you the word TEAM from management lessons is compiled as Together Each Achieves More; so if we work together each one of us will achieve more and this is true but if each of us works from his own head?

Team work:

(1) Spreads the service, instead of working alone now I have 10 persons helping me so we have become spread.

(2) The service has become more stable if the individual is absent then the team will carry on and the service will pursue.

(3) Even if he completely disappears for any unforeseen reason still the service will tarry. So we recognize it as spreading and stabilization and consistency. When there is teamwork, it spreads stabilizes and continues even if a particular servant move on or travels for any reason there are others that take up post. This is the "WE" leader not the "I" leader he serves through the team.

I think that I mentioned the types of the leaders. Leaders who are dictators, leaders who sell ideas, leaders who are chaotic and leaders who commune-- who is better of the rest.

- The dictator who approaches and the decision is made up in his mind and he enforces it. He walks in to Sunday school class and proclaims: "Children we are going on a picnic next Saturday at this certain place". And when the students protest "No that's not what we want". He stresses "there is no other way and I will not accept any protests". They ask for negotiation and he orders "silence. Whatever happened to obedience" and begs the question of obedience wondering as if amazed at the protest of his subjects and concludes "the obedient is blessed". That is the dictator leader.

- The next leader is the one who sells ideas, he is also a dictator but craftily he sell the idea. Again he might jubilantly explain "Children we are going on a picnic next Saturday at this certain place". "No" the children protest "we have been there before". "Ah" he begins to take charge "But this time you will enjoy it much more, you won't believe yourselves! I am certain that you will be over the moon if you go again" then one of the students might negotiate how about if we picnic at this other place. To which this leader with negatively respond "Nooo that place is outdated its quite unsuitable". This leader is always trying to convince the people by the same idea that he has in mind.

- The third is the chaotic leader. He too might suggest an outing one of the children protest, another tells the protestor to keep quite, and a third start on the one who told the protestor to be quite that he had no right to tell him to be quite and that he should mind his own business; thus an upheaval befalls the class and this chaotic leader is sitting quietly in his seat as if he were an angel yet his children are in chaos fighting without control

- The last then is the commune leader: he listens negotiates and places his suggestions ready to change them. He listens to all opinions of all the group and communicates with them till they reach an agreement of on an idea that could be totally different to his as long as everyone is happy.

We need this we leader.

Have you forgotten? Let's review :

- We need a Living servant in Christ - alive in Christ
- A functioning member
- A person of prayer
- Educated
- Contemporary
- We leader believes in the teamwork

And Glory be to God forever

If you have any comments or questions - oral would be appreciated

Question:

I have a comment regarding the "WE" leader; one of the good advantages of a "WE" leader also is that we invest in skills, if I work alone my skills disappear for I become overloaded, when we work together skills appear for

skills come together and build up.

Answer:

Definitely: for you have many persons, many sources of energies, many skills, and many opinions so you achieve the best results.

Question:

And skills build and cultivate each-other, for example one might have the skill of drawing, another engineering and another of photography; when they find the chance to work together they produce something significant.

Another comment I would like to make is regarding being up-to-date and contemporary; I think one of the challenges we face here in Australia maybe in Melbourne that in universities there is a big wave of Islamic fund they are very strong and if there are millions joining the Adventist there are billion joining Islam.

Answer:

Do you know the sheikh you have here? I was mentioning to His Grace (Bishop Suriel) I was listening to the radio transistor. I carry it often when traveling to keep me informed of the current affairs and world news, and is very useful when I have jetlag and when for example in America I listen to advertisement: "1-800-DEPRESSION if you have depression ring 1-800-DEPRESSION and another 1-800-ANXIETY another 1-800-FOCUSFACTOR, for those who have mental fatigue take this focus factor and you will improve your focus. So I was listening and here in Australia yesterday being Christmas I was listening and there was a celebration of all religions, either here in Melbourne or Sydney and I was surprised to hear a sheikh giving a word so I attended to what he was saying on behalf of the Muslims. Really devious. After all had their speech; Hindus, Buddhists, Christian, Jews etc, this sheikh was speaking on behalf of Islam and he said: "When I entered this hall, I found that every one had eyes, ears, noses, hands and legs; I then realized that God is the creator of all and he is the creator and we all descended from one father" very well thus far. Then he continued: "and when I turned to the ladies, I found some of them had covered their heads and others haven't, so I asked those who are covering their heads why they had done so? They responded because we love saint Mary and so we do as she does and cover our heads." See the confidence in such a celebration of many people. And by the way we have this problem in Egypt, people approach our girls and show them a picture of Saint Mary asking why she covers her hair and they don't. And we respond to this by saying that Saint Mary was a Nun she was devoted to God and was a virgin. But see the craftiness of this man, he is saying if you are really Christians then go and wear the veils as Muslims do. Then he told them: "I ask you all to look at your hand, on your right you will find the Arabic number 18 and on your left

the Arabic number 81, if any of you don't have these engraved in your hand come to me and I will give you \$10,000" the people broke out in laughter and clapped. He continued: "if you add 18 plus 81 you get 99 the number of the good names assigned to Allah."

But to stress this point; Islam is spreading at alarming rate in the west and in France for example. And I don't wish to say it but in truth they are enthusiastic, violent yes, but enthusiastic.