

# The Living Service

H.G Bishop Moussa

In the name of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, One God Amen,

In the morning we were with the living servant and now we try to be with the living service. A living service would only come from a living servant. In our lecture this morning we said that it is very important:

- 1) To be alive in the Lord
- 2) To be a functioning member in the church
- 3) To have the life of prayer, because prayer have the unlimited power of the Lord
- 4) To be educated in the three areas
  - a. The Bible
  - b. The church topics
  - c. General knowledge, and then the fifth sign of a living servant is
- 5) to be contemporary, living his age and getting the students or the believers to live with him this age, but to select and reject, select the good things and reject the bad things. The last sign for a living servant, as we said this morning, is to be a "WE" leader, and not an "I" leader. The "I" leader does not want anybody to work with him, but the "WE" leader gives the opportunity of all the energies, the talents, the persons around him to work with him. Of this living servant, we expect that we can derive from him a living service. I would like now to quickly put some indicators for the living service:

(1) To reach to everybody

(2) To reach to every aspect in the life of everybody, it is not enough to serve the person, but it is important to reach every aspect of their life

(3) To reach to every place. We can see how HH is now reaching his children in the 6 continents of the world. I said to HH once, "Isn't it great your holiness, that our church has now reached all continents of the world", HH replied and said "not yet, we still have no church in South America". I said "I don't think there are any Egyptians in South America", and HH replied by saying "we can't be sure of this". And to be sure he sent HG Bishop Sarabium to Latin America. HG has visited the Egyptian Ambassador in Brazil

and Argentina, and asked them whether or not they have any registered Copts. The list had some names, HG contacted these people and gathered them and passed HH regards to them and said to them that HH would like to open a church for you. Now we have a church in Brazil, one in Argentine, and we have also surprisingly discovered that there are Copts in Bolivia, and also there are Copts in Mexico, which we have also reached to them. This proves that the service has to reach all the Geography.

(4) To reach to every age group. Nowadays, the service is different than the past. We now have a special service and a different curriculum for every age group, kindergarten, primary, high school etc.....

(5) To reach different categories. A service to Lawyers, Physicians, Engineers, Teachers, as everybody could have his own needs dealing with people.

(6) To have a spiritual effect or the influence on the people served. They started to be committed to the commandments of the Lord.

(7) To be growing in numbers. If the number is growing, this is a good indication of an effective service.

(8) The service can change the listeners to become participants, and the ordinary believers to be servants. This is the living service.

(9) The service develops consecrated persons. Monks, priests, nuns, consecrated deacons. The proof of success for HH's service is the number of various servants that he has consecrated.

(10) To outreach to the society.

### 1) To Reach Everyone:

St Paul's said "Jesus was crucified for my sake", everybody by himself, or by herself. The service has to reach for everybody. If I have a meeting where I don't know who attended and who hasn't, it is not successful, as it is not reaching to everybody. There should be a regular index, to be used every week. The index has to be existing, available at all times, and complete. Complete means, it includes the names of the ones attending regularly, the ones not attending regularly and the ones not attending at all. The index also has to be functional, people that did not attend, I should ask about them, by either reminding them, a priest in Egypt has a method of sending daily SMS messages with a verse of the day and a reminder of the day of the meeting. Reminders are very important nowadays. The reminders should not delete the individual service and visitation.

## 2) To Reach Every Aspect in the Life of Everybody:

When we serve the human beings we serve in 5 areas, spiritually, intellectually, psychologically, physically, and socially. The church now is servicing all these aspects.

## 3) To Reach Every Place:

We have already covered this point when we talked about the fact that we have churches everywhere.

## 4) To Reach Every Age Group:

### AGE GROUPS:

#### Years 1 to 2 - Still in the manger:

For those that age between 1 and 2 they are classified as being still in a manger. They feel confident when people pamper and love them. If he or she is given to just anyone they might feel neglected or unwanted which turns to violence. It is known that people with violent natures lacked affection when they were as young as 1 and 2. When the Mother is lactating the baby on her breast, they hear their mothers' heart beat just as if he/she were in the uterus. Every age group has their key.

#### Years 3 to 5 - Period of independence:

The child now has teeth, a tongue and legs. With his teeth he eats, with the tongue he communicates with other people and with his legs he moves around. If he is not given this independence at a young age the person grows up to be dependent even as an adult becoming "a mummy's boy".

#### Primary School - period of Achievement:

The person is learning now and succeeds by moving from one year to another being applauded for their achievements but if the child is suppressed and depression he will never learn.

#### Year 7, 8 and 9 - period of Faith:

All the things told during these three years build the beliefs they will live by for the rest of their lives. These are the foundation years. They should be given psalms, memorise, faith, saints and be given Christian stories.

In Los Angeles a boy from the 7 to 9 age group went to a servant crying and the servant asked "why are you crying?" "my role model died", the servant enquired "who is this role model that died?" Thinking possibly a servant in the church or something, he told him "Tupac Shakur", he was a rap star who

got involved with drugs a was shot and killed. The young boy continued and asked the servant if he could put Tupac's name on the altar. The clever servant replied by asking "I think the names of people we put on the altar are people baptized in the church" the servant asked further "is he baptized in the church?", the boy replied "no", "that's a shame we can't put his mane on the altar then" noted the servant.

This is the age of faith, role models and heroes. We should be glad at this and work hard to give the elements of faith in this age.

#### Year 10 to 12 - Period of Ego:

They have grown big and tall. Sexual tendencies are there to prove their ego more than the tendency to be sexually pure. The ego is everything; one needs to encourage their personality rather than ego, to be integrated in all aspects of life.

#### University - Period of Sincere Friendship:

It's very good to bring people to conventions like these to select their friends in this age otherwise he may select bad friends that may destroy their life.

#### Graduated Till Age 40 -Period of Fertility:

They may get married and God brings them children or may get higher degrees, Masters, Doctorates or become involved in service or even become priests, monks and nuns. It is the age of giving up to the age of 40 or they could be successful at their work.

#### After 40 - Period of Being Experienced:

This is the settlement stage where there is not much of a change in our personalities, which gives experience to others.

When I serve these different age groups I have a curriculum specific to the different age groups, in the past one may have served all these groups together.

#### (5) Categories:

We can have special service towards different professions. I was glad to hear the title of these youth "Young Professionals" we use to call them "graduated youth" now they have started in specific professions, physicians, accountants, etc.

### (6) Spiritual Effect:

I felt the young people started to know the Lord, to know the Bible, answer questions, know the church topics, start confession, take Holy Communion and struggle against sin, come to service and so on.

Once a man went to be ordained a monk, he thought to himself. I am going to the monastery and I may not see my father again...I need to talk with my father about God and confession so that he can have confession and communion before he dies. His father was an old man. He took his father on tram 30. This tram 30 usually takes over an hour and half travel time in Cairo. So he took his dad next to him and spoke to him saying, "We should go to church, confess and have communion. No one can guarantee their life. We should meet with the priest tomorrow God-willing". Then his father replied "this tram makes a lot". His son replied in surprise "makes what dad?" The father continued "from the first stop, it picked up so many passengers and dropped off so many passengers. At the second stop, again it picked up so many passengers and dropped off so many passengers and again at the third stop. The total was x amount of passengers. If you multiply that amount by such...the tram made this much." The son was astonished and thought to himself all his service had no effect.

### (7)(8)(9)(10) Outreach:

We need to have our service giving some spiritual results. After this spiritual result this should hopefully bring out some spiritual life in people and servants. This is why we have discipleship classes so that people aren't just listeners but participants in the service. Progressively we will gain not just servants but also consecrated individuals (mokaraseen). We are happy that in Melbourne since the church started, we have been ordaining priests and servants. The last thing, we should do more outreach to people outside. We don't want you to isolate from society but we want to you to be witnessing for Christ in the society, like the salt and the light, like the ambassadors of Christ.

### Summary:

- 1: to reach to everybody
- 2: to each aspect in everybody
- 3: to all the places
- 4: to all the age groups
- 5: to all the categories

6: to have spiritual effect

7: to have growth in numbers

8: to have some of them serving

9: to have some of them consecrated for God

10: to have outreach to the people around us, non-orthodox, non Egyptian, non Christians telling them about our Lord and church

### Discussion / Questions:

I heard from a protestant friend of that it is easier for a non-Christian to join the Catholic or Protestant churches rather than the Orthodox Church. Are there any innovative things or changes we need to do to make it easier for non-Christians to join our Coptic Orthodox Church? What changes do we need to the local Egyptian church to the international church?

For Sure any religion needs rituals even the Protestants now feel they need rituals, even now in Egypt they are wearing robes and crosses, considering its normally against their beliefs. And that the religion needs hymns/ music, even in Islam they have these things, where as the protestant have songs which are like normal songs, our hymns give good support. 3rd Also Protestants are more emotional than spiritual, if you enter through the door of spiritual you will be stable and fixed in the church. I remember Ghandi was asked by an English missionary "How can India become Christian?"

1) You yourselves must be Christians, 2) when you preach Christianity in its depth not in its superficial things 3) Don't attack us, build what is positive in our religion and build upon it. These were the 3 responses of Ghandi, he was also called Christ-like he used live in peace poverty and love, when they used to kill each other he use to tell them this is not the way, he took Christ as his role model/example, in the end he was killed by his people, like Jesus Christ, And he use to say if the Gospel is the crown, the Sermon on the Mount is the most precious pearl on that crown. Therefore we keep our depth, and offer them in a wise way and a holy way, in a pleasant one, then they are going to come.

As servants we are struggling even with those things we are teaching our children, how can we be able to stand in front of those people and be an example and tell them this is what you need to do when we are struggling ourselves, and how can we be accountable for that?

Whenever I am preaching to others, I am preaching to myself. This doesn't ever mean we are sinless, we are all struggling, and our kids have to notice this, I myself are having the same needs, that's why I preach myself while preaching others, that's why it says in the Bible, preach to yourself

everyday. Jacqui - but even on judgement day how much are we accountable before God? Response: this doesn't mean we remain the same, as long as we are struggling, God is pleased. It is written in the sayings of the Fathers, it is better to die while we a struggling against sin than to die while we are sinning, therefore as long as we are struggling its okay.