

WHAT IS MY COPTIC ORTHODOX FAITH ?

Bishop Moussa

"...Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God...for as we have many members in one body...so we, being many, are one body in Christ...having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy...or ministry, let us use it in our ministering...or he who exhorts, in exhortation...and live peaceably with all men...if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink...do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good..." (Romans 12:2-21)

According to this chapter, we find four pillars of Orthodox faith and life:

V Transformation

As the Apostle is saying, we must not be conformed to those outside of the church. In the life of a Christian, transformation consists of four stages in order to become a member of God's Kingdom: the first is baptism in which we receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit; it is the stage in which we become 'regenerated'. The second stage is 'consecration' - the anointing of the holy oil Myron, after baptism. The priest anoints the baptised with the sign of the cross in 36 places: the brain, nostrils, mouth, ears and eyes - 'Lord consecrate my senses'; 2 on the heart - 'Lord consecrate my heart'; 2 on the back - 'Lord consecrate my will'; 6 crosses on both arms, on the three joints, back and front - 'Lord consecrate my deeds'; and 6 crosses on both legs, on the three joints, back and front - 'Lord consecrate my way'. Once this baby has been regenerated through baptism, and consecrated through Myron, he is now Christian and can be 'unified' with Christ through the Holy Communion. This child when he grows up will inevitably sin, so he must return to the Lord through 'repentance'; which is like a second baptism.

V Membership

After being transformed, you become a member in the body of Christ, and a member of the Kingdom of Heaven. This body consists of the Head which is Jesus Christ, the Heavenly Members which are the saints and angels and host of heavenly powers, and the Earthly Members which are the believers on earth. You must not think you are an individual, but rather, you are an organ in a body, and all these members must work together. Not only do we pray to our Lord, but we also ask for the intercessions of our saints, and they pray for us.

V Service

Being a member of God's family, you have a responsibility to serve; whether it is as a deacon, Sunday School servant, visiting the sick and distressed, and sowing the seed of Christ's love to those outside the church; this can be done by example alone. Thus, this person must work for the benefit of the whole body of Christ.

V Witnessing

This does not necessarily mean standing up and preaching to people; as God has not given the gift of preaching to everyone, but when we deal with those outside the church in principles, purity and love, we will be Orthodox witnesses.

ORTHO = Straight

DOX = Glorify

Therefore, Orthodox means the straight way of glorifying God. You must be straight in your faith, in your understanding of Christianity, and straight in your life - your actions, thoughts and conduct