



# ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate  
Archangel Michael Church  
P.O. BOX 256 Howell, NJ 07731

MONTHLY  
NEWSLETTER

**ADDRESS CORRECTION  
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“And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. **37** But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. **38** And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? **39** Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. **40** And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. **41** And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? **42** And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. **43** And he took it, and did eat before them. **44** And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. **45** Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, **46** And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: **47** And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **48** And ye are witnesses of these things. **49** And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. **50** And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. **51** And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. **52** And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: **53** And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. ”  
( Luk 24: 36-53)

**This Newsletter is a free monthly publication of the Archangel Michael Coptic Orthodox Church, PO Box 256 Howell, NJ 07731, under the supervision of the priests of St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church, East Brunswick, N.J.**

**The committee welcomes your participation in the form of articles, reviews, news or comments. Please mail your articles, comments...etc. to the church or e-mail them to [newsletter@archangelmichaelchurch.net](mailto:newsletter@archangelmichaelchurch.net)**

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## Characteristics of Acceptable Repentance

**By: His Grace Bishop Moussa**

**1. Arrow-like:** Just as one flees from imminent danger, a stifling atmosphere or a burning fire, so must our repentance be. It is a quick and arrow-like escape from the land of sin and a quick and arrow-like running to the bosom of God.

Just as launching a rocket with astounding speed is the only way it can get away from the force of gravity and conquer space, so is the launching of the soul towards the bosom of Christ. With speed and without hesitation or bargaining, is the only way to get rid of the attraction of sin and the flesh.

The speed at which a rocket is launched is our repentance: "I will arise and go to my father ..... And he arose and came to his father's house" (Lk. 15: 18).

"Follow me.... and he left all, rose, and followed Him " (Lk. 5: 27, 28). As for those who look behind or hesitate to forsake the death of sin, their repentance will be difficult until they have a firm intention and are totally persuaded to forsake sin completely.

**2. Comprehensive:** Just as repentance has to be quick, "redeeming the time for the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16), so should it be comprehensive, embracing the whole being. I have to offer my thoughts and all the attitudes in my life to Christ withholding nothing from Him. I must put before Him my habits so He sanctifies them and replaces them with better ones. I must also offer Him my emotions, giving up any that may hinder my spiritual growth and forsaking any evil tendency, envy or jealousy.

Above all, I should give Him my senses and my 'self' on the altar of consecration where He completes its sacrifice. For it is the most deceitful of all and is capable of changing color like the chameleon, so that it appears holy while in reality it is centered around itself and is hatefully egoistical.

Would that I could now pray:

'O Lord Jesus Christ, here is my life which I lay before You as an open page, full of many tendencies, habits, emotions and wrong attitudes. My heart cries, O Lord, here is my life which I now consecrate to You. Work in it, in all its corners; I will not withhold anything in it from You."

**3. Continuous:** Repentance, in the Orthodox concept, is life accompanied by strong, spiritual and serious emotions and an awakening of the conscience to sin. It is a way of life and a constant, profound and continuous attitude.

The apostle said: "My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin (this is the intention of the children of God and the goal of their daily struggle). And if anyone should sin, we have an advocate with the father" (this is evidence of the continuity of repentance and renewal by putting off the old and putting on the new) (1 Jn. 2: 1).

Two fundamental pivots in the life of repentance are:

- a. The intention not to commit sin and a serious fight to achieve this aim.
- b. A speedy rising after any fall and transforming it into an occasion for prayer, humility and for experiencing God's glorious action. Therefore, it is necessary to overcome our weaknesses daily and move forward. The most dangerous thing a person may fall into is to stop wrestling with sin. 'The best thing he should do is to always forget those things which are past and reach towards to those things which lie ahead' (Phil. 3: 13).

Repentance is not a human device to worship an idol called 'self', but it is the continuous gift from a heart that has the humility of the poor to Christ who is able to save to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25). Hence, the concentration of young people on themselves and on their weaknesses and constant morbid groaning at sin does not serve the cause of repentance as much as fleeing to Christ in love, to the Bible in fulfillment and to the Church in incorporation. The negatives are superseded by the positives.

**4. Fruitful:** This is the last characteristic of acceptable repentance. Its fruitfulness is in a life of holiness and in love and service to others. It is impossible to claim that our repentance is true if it is still barren, an outcome of selfishness and a prisoner of the 'self'. The soul's knowledge of Christ will drive it quickly towards other souls: "Come, see a man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" (Jn. 4: 29).

True repentance is fruitful and effective with others, and is able to attract souls to the fold in three ways:

- a. an example that is not a stumbling block
- b. intercessory prayer
- c. a spiritual and rational call

These are the ways of service that we should practice.

Dear fathers and mothers, you are responsible for your children in a society that is quick to change for the worst. Before the priests and your prayers at home are the best guidance for your sons and daughters.

And you, dear young man, You are responsible for your younger brothers and sisters for they will behave exactly as you do. You will have to give an account of them. Do not stray in the path of sin for your siblings will follow in your footsteps without your being aware of it and you will bear the burden of their sin on the day of judgment. Dearly beloved, let us repent from all our hearts, quickly, comprehensively and continuously so that are repentance may be effective in attracting souls to Christ.

May the Lord bless struggle for the glory of His Name.

## **The Most Honored Layman “Moalem “ Ibrahim El-Gohari**

Ibrahim was born to a poor family who taught him writing and arithmetic, and he excelled in them. . He was born in the small village of Kaloob, where he learned how to transcribe books. He transcribed religious books and sent them to the 107<sup>th</sup> pope (Pope Youannis). The pope was very pleased with his works and told him “The Lord will exalt your name, bless your work and your name will be remembered forever.”

His first job was as a scribe to one of the Mamaleek’s prince. The Mamaleek were Turkish slaves that came to Egypt with their Turkish masters who ruled Egypt during the Ottoman Empire. Later the slaves gained power and they were able to overthrow their Master and they ruled Egypt. When “Moalem “ Ibrahim left his job with the Prince, the Pope helped him to get a job with “Moalem “ Rezk, who was the chief scribe of Ali Bek the Great. Ali Bek was the ruler of Egypt at that time. When “Moalem “ Rezk died everyone nominated Ibrahim to take his place because of his hard work and honesty. Later Ali Bek took him as his personal scribe. “Moalem “ Ibrahim found this to be a good chance to help the Church and the Christians. Along with the great position came great wealth. He renovated many churches and built many new churches. He was promoted until he reached the modern day equivalent of a “prime minister.” The wealthier “Moalem “ Ibrahim got, the more humble and generous he was to the poor. The Coptic Patriarchate of Cairo has record of 238 properties which were bought by “Moalem “ Ibrahim and given by him to the church.

One day Father Abraham El Alasfour was serving and “Moalem “ Ibrahim wanted to go to work, so he sent one to Father Abraham to tell him the “Moalem “ said speed up the Liturgy. The Priest answered the “Moalem “ is in Heaven and the church is for God and if “Moalem “ Ibrahim doesn’t like it, let him build another church. “Moalem “ Ibrahim felt that this was a message from God to him to build a new church and he did.

It was said that he never sent anyone away empty handed no matter how many times this persona asked. So one day a poor man wanted to see if it was true or not. He followed him and asked for money 18 times and in all 18 times he was given money.

He departed to his eternal home on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of Bashans , 1511 A.M. (May 31<sup>st</sup> , 1795 A.D.). Everyone grieved his departure including the governor Ibrahim Bek who walked in his funeral procession to honor him as he had honored him before his death. Pope Youannis eulogized him for his great love to him. He was buried in the private tomb that he built for himself beside the Church of St. George in Old Cairo which had an oil lamp that is lit day and night. He died without leaving any possessions but his memory lives forever. . There was a poor man that used to get money from him, and when he learned that Abraham died, he was so worried about who was going to give him money and to take care of him that he went to his tomb. He was crying, and from crying he fell asleep. Abraham appeared to him and told him to go to a certain oil merchant and tell him that the money you owe to “Moalem “ Abraham, he is ordering you to give to me. So when the man woke up, he hesitated about doing it. Abraham appeared to him three times telling him to do the same. Finally, Abraham told him to go to the merchant and that he would take care of it. I will tell him to give u the money. So he went to the merchant and he couldn’t ask for the money. The merchant looked at his puzzled face and told him you’re the one that “Moalem “ Abraham sent to take his money. The man replied “yes” and he was given the money. He is most known for repairing, renovating and building the most churches in Egypt.

*May his prayers be with us, and glory be to God forever. Amen.*

## Short Story

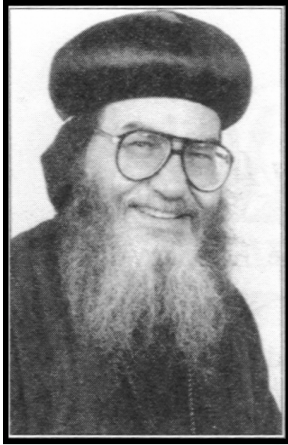


## The Cross

A young man was at the end of his rope. Seeing no way out, he dropped to his knees in prayer. "Lord, I can't go on," he said. "I have too heavy a cross to bear." The Lord replied, "My son, if you can't bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then open that other door and pick out any cross you wish." The man was filled with relief. "Thank you, Lord," he sighed and he did as he was told. Upon entering the other door he saw many crosses, some so large the tops were not visible. Then he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall. "I'd like that one, Lord," he whispered. And the Lord replied, "My son, that is the cross you just brought in."

When life's problems seem overwhelming, it helps to look around and see what other people are coping with. You may consider yourself far more fortunate than you imagined. **YOUR CROSS** whatever your cross, whatever your pain, there will always be sunshine after the rain. Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall, But God's always there for you.

**From : St. Antonious Coptic Orthodox Church, of the San Francisco Bay Area web site**



**Coptic youth ask**  
**His Grace Bishop Moussa**

*“ From the youth Bishopric web site”*

**Question:** *Is there anything wrong with dating?*

**His Grace Bishop Moussa**

**Answer:** Dating is acceptable during the engagement process but outside of this process, dating may lead to sexual practices. Do not deceive yourselves by the culture around you, for it is a culture that has resulted in broken families, broken marriages and many distraught children who have lost their parents through the malpractice of family life.

**Question:** *How can we choose our partner in life?*

**His Grace Bishop Moussa Answer:** Pray a lot, Think a lot, Feel a bit, Ask for spiritual guidance. We are asking you to 'feel a bit' because the sound of the emotions can be very loud, they can dominate the spirit and the mind. For example, because of emotions, one may enter into a relationship with a non-Christian person because they are intelligent, good-looking, and so on, but they do not think about the future of living with and raising a family with a non-Christian partner. Therefore if we rely on our emotions, it may cause our thinking to stop and our spiritual life to be minimum.

**Question:** *What is the preferred age difference between married couples?*

**His Grace Bishop Moussa Answer:** The younger the couple, the narrower the gap. The older the couple, the wider the gap in age. We do recommend that the age difference should be a minimum of one year and maximum of 15.

**While ye have light, believe in the light,  
that ye may be the children of light.**

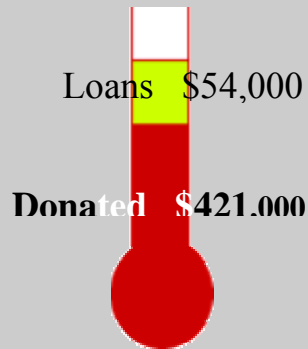
(-John 12:36)

With the grace of God and your generous contributions, the Church now has \$475,000 of the \$500,000 total amount for the purchase of the land. The remaining \$25,000 should be paid by

**June 12, 2002.**

**Progress Chart**

**Goal \$500,000**



### **CHURCH SERVICES**

#### **Fridays**

-7:30 PM-8:30 PM

Hymns Lesson

-8:30PM-10:00PM

Arabic Bible Study

Arabic Prayer Meeting

-8:30PM-11:00PM

Midnight Praises

Midnight Prayers

#### **SATURDAYS**

-8:30AM-11:30AM:

Divine Liturgy

-11:30AM-1:00PM:

Sunday School &

Youth group meeting



**Fr. Mikhail Ayad**  
During Ester's Liturgy





**The First Baptism  
of a baby girl in  
our church**  
**Fr. Rewies Morcous, baby Ann Marie  
and her mother Mrs. Fiby Ghaly.**

## COPTIC FEASTS

June 1	Entry of the Lord to Egypt
June 10	Commemoration of Anba Abraam
June 13	The Feast of Ascension
June 23	The Holy Pentecost Feast