



# PERFECTION OF LOVE

A B L E S S U S A N E W S L E T T E R Vol. 7 No. 3

## Sayings of the Fathers



We Ought to Serve God, Trusting in His Promises. Let us therefore serve God with a pure heart, and we shall be righteous; but if we do not serve Him, because we believe not the promise of God, we shall be miserable. For the prophetic word also declares, "Wretched are those of a double mind, and who doubt in their heart, who say, All these things have we heard even in the times of our fathers; but though we have waited day by day, we have seen none of them accomplished. Ye fools! compare yourselves to a tree; take, for instance, the vine. First of all it sheds its leaves, then the bud appears; after that the sour grape, and then the fully-ripened fruit. So, likewise, my people have borne disturbances and afflictions, but afterwards shall they receive their good things."<sup>76</sup> Wherefore, my brethren, let us not be of a double mind, but let us hope and endure, that we also may obtain the reward. For He is faithful who has promised that He will bestow on every one a reward according to his works. If, therefore, we shall do righteousness in the sight of God, we shall enter into His kingdom, and shall receive the promises, "which ear hath not heard, nor eye seen, neither have entered into the heart of man."<sup>77</sup>

Therefore in the Gospel, the Lord, the Teacher of our life and Master of eternal salvation, quickening the assembly of believers, and providing for them for ever when quickened, among His divine commands and precepts of heaven, commands and prescribes nothing more frequently than that we should devote ourselves to almsgiving and not depend on earthly possessions, but rather lay up heavenly treasures. "Sell," says He, "your goods, and give alms." And again "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth,

where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." And when He wished to set forth a man perfect and complete by the observation of the law, He said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me."

### Clement of Alexandria, the Homily Chapter XI

## Kid's CORNER

### Go with Anthony as he learns about the Brethren of the Lord and some people who took care of them.

"Mommy, guess what? I made a new friend in school today. His name is Cornelius. I've never heard that name before. I wonder who he was named after."

"Oh, he is named after a saint from the New Testament. His story is in the book of Acts, lets read it."

As she read the story, Anthony began to dream of what it would be like to meet St. Cornelius and suddenly he found himself talking to him.

"Can you tell me your story, please?"

"Definitely. You know at first I did not believe in God, I used to worship idols. Then I heard the Apostles preaching and saw the miracles they performed. I opened my heart to the Lord.

"I love God very much and I spent a lot of time praying to Him and fasting. I wanted to show Him my love for Him by serving those in need whom He called His brothers and sisters, so I helped everyone that I could. God saw that I was trying my best and accepted my prayer, fasting and alms (gifts to those in need). He sent me St. Peter to preach to me

and my household. That day we were baptized and received the Holy Spirit. Later St. Peter ordained me bishop of Caesarea, a town in Palestine."

"Because you helped out the brethren of the Lord, God heard your prayers and accepted your gifts, wow that's cool."

"Helping the people that are in need is a great way to show God how much you love Him! Next time we meet I am going to show you more of the Lord's saints that showed how much they love God by helping those in need."



## Did You Know?

According to the 2003 United Nations Human Development Report, the number of people in the Middle East and North Africa living on less than a \$1 dollar a day increased from 5 million people in 1990 to 6 million people in 1999.

Living on \$1 a day does not mean being able to afford what \$1 would buy when converted into Egyptian pounds. Rather, it represents the equivalent of what \$1 would buy in the United States.

**Human Development Report 2003, page 41**

## Spiritual Message

### Reverend Fathers and beloved brethren, friends of BLESS USA

The peace, love and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. I would like to express my gratitude for the generosity and kindness of heart that you have shown towards your less fortunate brothers and sisters in Egypt.

My beloved brethren, we will continue to contemplate on:

### "The Blessings of Mercy to the Merciful"

The Divine Inspiration mentions that many blessings are bestowed upon those who are merciful to others. In the previous newsletters, we contemplated on over twenty different blessings. We continue, my beloved, to elaborate on the twenty-second blessing bestowed upon the merciful:

#### The Twenty Second Blessing:

*"The Lord answers the merciful prayer, and when they cry, He will say 'Here I am'"*

First, we remind ourselves of what the Divine Inspiration says: "Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?... Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am'" (Is. 58:7, 9). We see that not only shall our Lord answer when we call, but He will also say, "Here I am," when we cry. This, my beloved, is a blessing experienced in the lives of those who are merciful. We saw examples of this blessing in the last newsletter:

- 1.) our teacher David the Prophet;
- 2.) the Apostle St. Paul;
- 3.) H.H. the Late Pope Matthaos I.
- 4.) The Family St. Takla Hemanout the Ethiopian
- 5.) St. Abraam Bishop of Fayoum and Giza

Now, my beloved, we further reflect on the lives of those who are merciful:

### Bishop Sarabamon Abutarha, The late Bishop of Elbehera and Elmenoufeya:

"The Veiled Bishop," was famous for his purity, simplicity, and his love for the Brethren of the Lord. A love he was known to demonstrate throughout his life.

One night as he was walking through the neighborhoods of Cairo carrying a heavy basket, a servant of bishopric named John the Carpenter mistook him for a thief.

John followed him and watched as Anba Sarabamon knocked on the door of a house.

Anba Sarabamon gave the elderly woman who opened the door the basket which he was carrying. AS

he began his return trip, John the Carpenter ran after him shouting, "Stop you thief." When John caught up to Anba Sarabamon, he tore off the Bishop's veil. Seeing Anba Sarabamon John was . He looked toward the ground and began to apologize. Anba Sarabamon explained that when he heard about an elderly woman who was in need of flour and too embarrassed to ask for it, he put a veil on his face as a disguise and went to the old lady's house to give her the big basket full of flour.

Anba Sarabamon always served the Brethren of the Lord without discrimination and with generosity. God always answered his prayers and gave him the gift of healing the sick and exorcism. During his lifetime Mohammed Ali Basha was the ruler of Egypt. His daughter Zohra Hanem (Lady Zohra), the wife of Ahmed El Deftradar, was possessed by a demon. All the doctors of Egypt at the time could not treat her, so Mohammed Ali asked Pope Boutros the Seventh to pray for his daughter. In turn, Pope Boutros the Seventh asked Anba Sarabamon Abu Tarha to go to the palace and pray for Zohra. As soon as Anba Sarabamon started

praying, the demon started to shake. It fell to the floor and shook the palace with its screams. Anba Sarabamon persisted in praying and crying for Lady Zohra. When he had finished he blessed a pot of water and threw it at her face. The demon screamed and left Zohra. The

palace began to celebrate the Lady Zohra's recovery of with joyful music. Mohammed Ali thanked Anba Sarabamon and tried to give him 4000 pounds. Anba Sarabamon refused to accept the money and said to the king, "I cannot accept money for what God has given me."

**"I cannot  
accept money  
for what God  
has given me."**

This, my beloved, shows us how the Lord blesses and answers the prayers of the merciful. May our Lord fill your lives with these great blessings and compensate you with the incorruptible instead of the corruptible, the heavenly instead of the earthly and the eternal instead of the temporal.

Bishop Youannes

General Bishop and Secretary of H.H. Pope Shenouda III