



# PERFECTION OF LOVE

A B L E S S U S A N E W S L E T T E R

Vol. 8 No. 7

## Emergency Assistance Program

As we have seen lately, in the blink of an eye, a disaster can wreak havoc on so many lives. Starting over with nothing can be a daunting task. The Emergency Assistance Program provides immediate short-term assistance to individuals/families who suffer from natural disasters, accidents and other types of crises.

BLESS servants distribute emergency relief to the Brethren of the Lord according to each one's needs. Relief efforts include: housing restoration, rent payment as well as transportation costs for medical treatment and for seeking employment.

The Program aims to provide relief, while promoting self-sufficiency by helping people stand up on their own two feet.

## Wedding Dresses Needed!!!

Dear Member,

Last year, through your generosity, BLESS USA was able to send several wedding dresses to BLESS in Egypt for brides-to-be. BLESS USA is once again calling upon our members to help us collect and send wedding dresses to our sisters and daughters in Egypt.

Anyone who has been involved in planning a wedding understands that the wedding dress is one of the most important things to the bride. Even though your wedding dress may hold sentimental value, you can help make someone's wedding day as memorable as your own by sharing your wedding dress.

If you have a wedding dress that you would like to contribute to the brethren of the Lord in Egypt, please contact us at 973-857-4299. Spread the word to others so that together we may continue to serve the Lord through His brethren.

## Coming to your Mailboxes!

His Grace Bishop Youannes has recently sent a video CD of the Kiahk Praises prayed in St Mary's Church in Zeitun, Egypt. We look forward to sharing them with you, in the coming weeks. Please look for this great blessing in your mailboxes soon!!!

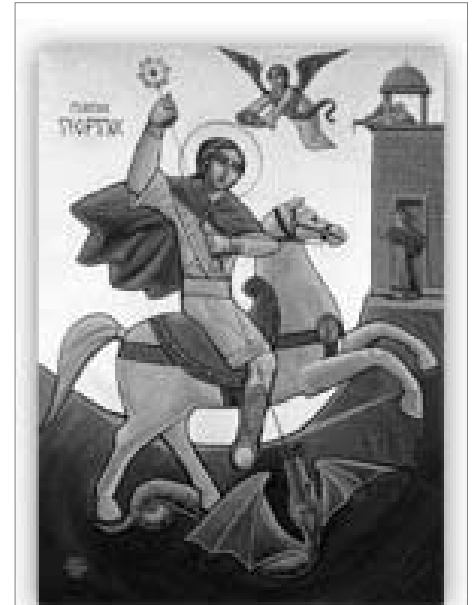
## Service Updates...

Periodically, BLESS USA shares information about the services of BLESS in Egypt through presentations in churches throughout the country. On Sunday, November 6th, 2005, BLESS USA was invited to present at St. Mark's Church in Washington, D.C.

Presentations were given in both Arabic and English in the adult and youth meetings, respectively.

These presentations enable BLESS USA to carry out its service goal of building a community in the United States that supports the programs of the Agape Charity Department of BLESS in Egypt. They also make it possible for us to share the blessings of this precious service with the Coptic community nationwide.

Please continue to pray for the brethren of the Lord and the service.



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## Sayings of the Fathers

### EMBRACE THE YOKE OF CHRIST (Matt. 11:28-29)

Consider, then, the exceeding greatness of this gift of a kindly God, and make yourselves ready beforehand to abstain from evil deeds and to do good. The prophet urges us to do this when he says: Decline from evil and do good. And Christ Himself, addressing the whole human race, said: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Did you see the abundance of His goodness? Did you see the munificence of His invitation? Come to me, He says, all you who labor and are burdened. His invitation is one of kindness. His goodness is beyond description. Come to me all, not only rulers but also their subjects, not only the rich but also the poor, not only the free but also slaves, not only men but women, not only the young but also the old, not only those of sound body but also the maimed and those with mutilated limbs, all of you, He says, come! For such are the Master's gifts; He knows no distinction of slave and free, nor of rich and poor, but all such inequality is cast aside. Come, He says, all you who labor and are burdened.

St. John Chrysostom

# 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 - the brethren of the Lord.

## The Blessings of Mercy to the Merciful

The Divine Inspiration mentions many blessings that are bestowed upon the lives of the merciful. We have contemplated on twenty-four blessing, and in the last four newsletters we started contemplating on the the twenty-fifth blessing:

### The Lord Preserves the Life of the Merciful

Our teacher David the Prophet and King, the sweet chanter of Israel, chanted and said, "Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will protect him and preserve his life." (Ps. 41: 1,2). This blessing ("The Lord will Preserve His Life"), which is experienced by those who are merciful, carries two meanings:

#### The First Meaning:

*"The Lord will fill his heart with life"...* As Archangel Raphael said to Tobias and Tobit, "Those who give alms will enjoy a full life"(Tob. 12:9)

#### The Second Meaning:

"The Lord will save him from death"... that is what Archangel Raphael said to Tobias and Tobit, "For almsgiving saves from death"(Tob. 12:9.) and we mentioned several examples;

We have mentioned several examples:

1. The Lord saved Tobit the righteous from the trap of death which was prepared for him.
2. The Lord preserved the life of our teacher David the Prophet and delivered him many times from death.
3. The Lord preserved the life of our teacher St. Paul the Apostle many times.
4. The Lord saved Bishop Sarabamon (Abu -Tarha) from the man who wanted to kill him.
5. The Lord saved a secluded merciful elder from hunger and by his prayers, God lifted the famine from all the land.

We can also mention the following examples, my beloved:

#### 6. Bebawy and the Merciful Family:

Bebawy was modest in his appearance, but very rich in his heart. When he grew old, he sold the little possessions that he had and gave alms to the Brethren of the Lord. Because of his saintly life, the late Pope Kyrollos the Fifth {1831-1927} brought him into the old Patriarchate and gave him a small room. He became known as Bebawy the Simple. One night, Bebawy hurried to a house of one of the rich Christian nobleman, who was known for his compassion towards the brethren of the Lord. Bebawy was on close terms with this merciful family. Bebawy came to their door and began knocking hysterically, disturbing the guards, servants and the lady of the house. The guards hastened to open the door to find Bebawy standing in front of them. The lady of the house greeted him with her

usual smile saying, "Welcome, Bebawy. Come in." He entered the home and made a request of her by stating, "I am hungry." She nodded to the servants to offer him one of the fish dinners that they had prepared. They did so, but Bebawy simply said, "This is not enough for me." She smiled and told the servants to go and get everything they had prepared for dinner and offer it to Bebawy. They begrudgingly did as she asked. Bebawy further requested, with simplicity, to eat alone. Everyone went outside and closed the dining room door. Once he was by himself, Bebawy opened the window and threw all the dishes with fish to the street. Upon hearing the noise of the broken dishes, the lady and the servants opened the dining room door to find Bebawy running away very quickly. The servants could not hold their anger and began to speak evil things against Bebawy. The lady of the house wisely tried to calm them saying, "Everything happens for good." Early in the morning, the servants went outside to clean the mess that Bebawy had made

**"Those who give alms will enjoy a full life"**

-Tobit 12:9

from the night before. They were astonished to find a number of dead cats lying around the fish. They quickly ran to the merciful lady to tell her what they had found. The fish that Bebawy had thrown out the window the night before was poisoned, as proven by the dead cats which had eaten from them. The lady raised her heart up to the Lord, thanking Him for His act of saving her family.

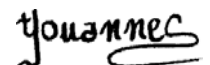
Blessed are you, O Lord, Who used your righteous and simple man to save the life of the merciful family.

#### 7. Brother E. G. from Zagazig:

Brother E.G. is a person filled with wonderful kindness and mercy towards the brethren of the Lord, giving them generously from what was given to him by God. Five years ago, on his way back to Zagazig from the Monastery of St. Paul in the Red Sea, he was passing a railroad intersection when suddenly a speeding train fiercely struck his car. The Divine Providence arranged for the train to strike only the back half of his car and split the car into two halves. If the crash had been only one second earlier, the train would have struck the front side of the car. Thankfully, this was the blessing of mercy. The blessed brother came out of this accident astonished and amazed at what had happened. After he took a breath, he heard a spiritual voice in his heart saying, "Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will protect him and preserve his life."

Believe me, my beloved, for as much as we consider the poor, the Lord will preserve our lives. In the next message, God willing, we will start our contemplation on the 26th blessing of mercy in the life of the merciful, which is, "The Lord will bless them in the land" (Ps.41: 2). May our Lord 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