



Pope Kyrillos VI

Life of Prayer & Asceticism

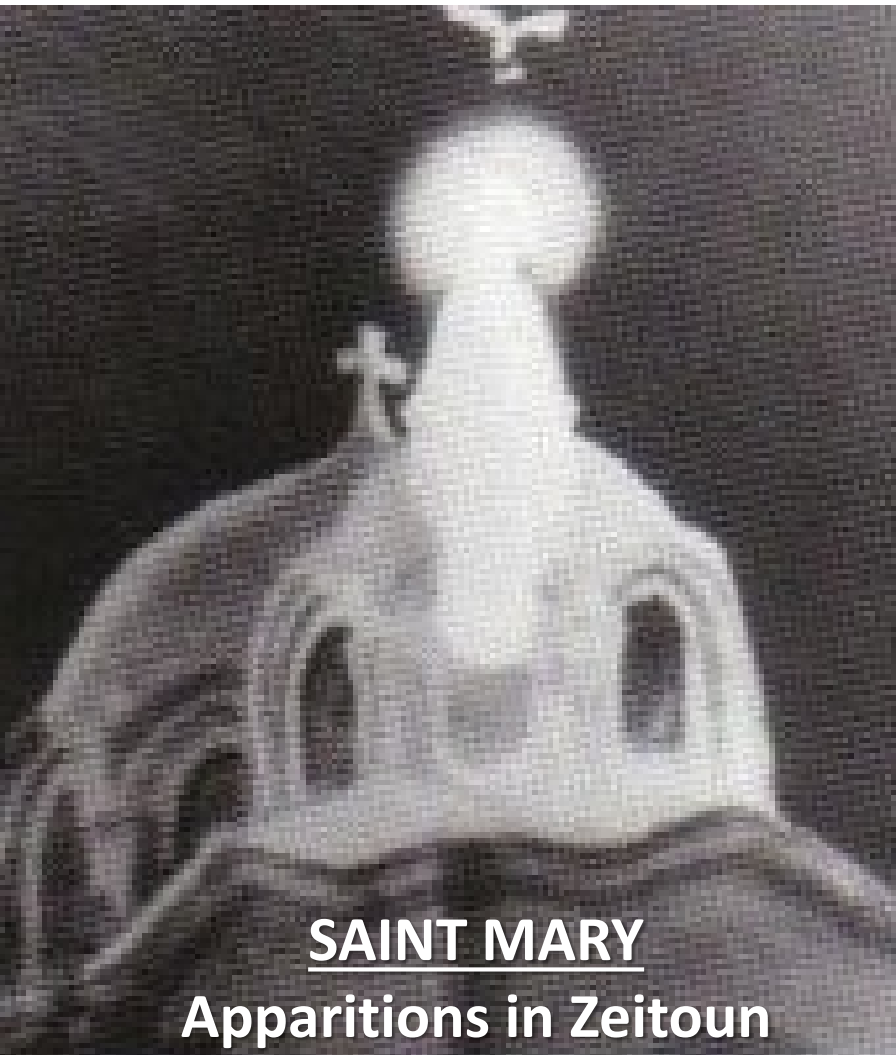


H.H. Pope Kyrillos (Cyril) VI

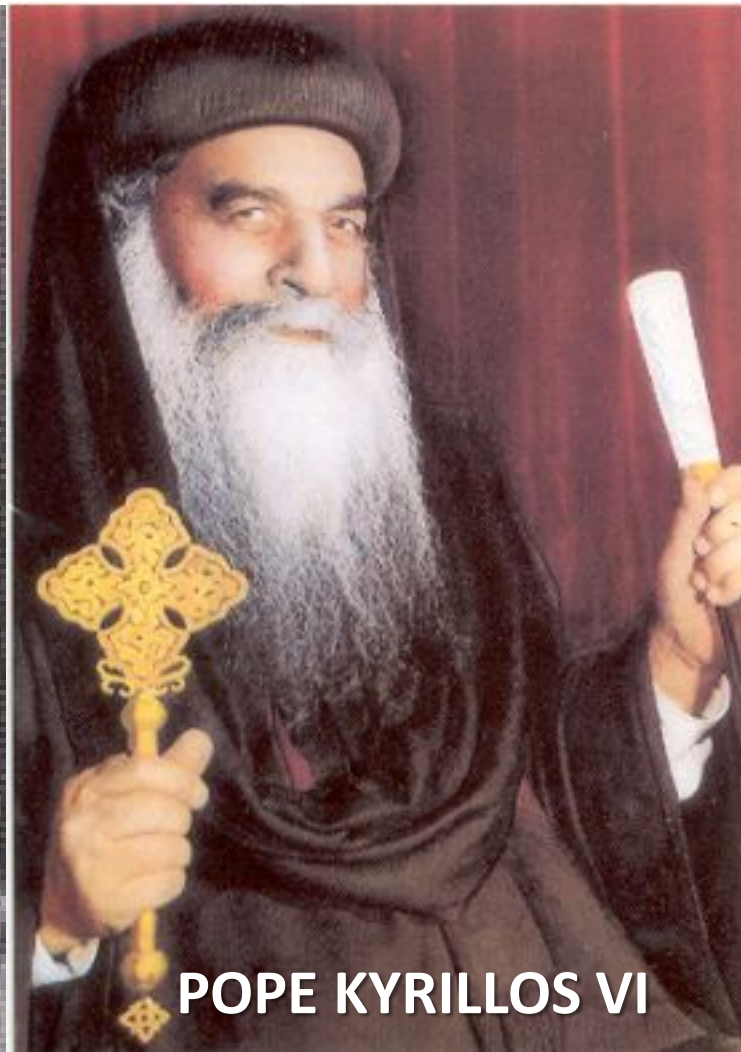
- 116th **Patriarch** of Coptic Orthodox Church (1959-1971)
- Led the Coptic Church into a **new era of spirituality**
- Lived life of **prayer, asceticism**, unshakable **faith** in God
- Known as **wonder-worker** like his patron **St Mina**
 - Performed an immense number of miracles: *healing diseases, miraculously solving difficult life problems, casting out devils, foretelling events.*
 - At least 18 printed volumes documenting the miracles of Pope Kyrillos VI.
 - H.H. continues to work miracles to this day.
- Feast Day is **March 9th**
- Amazing personality, full of **love** for his children, patience, self-sacrifice, forgiveness, simplicity, depth, kindness, gentleness, meekness, wisdom ... and a sense of humour



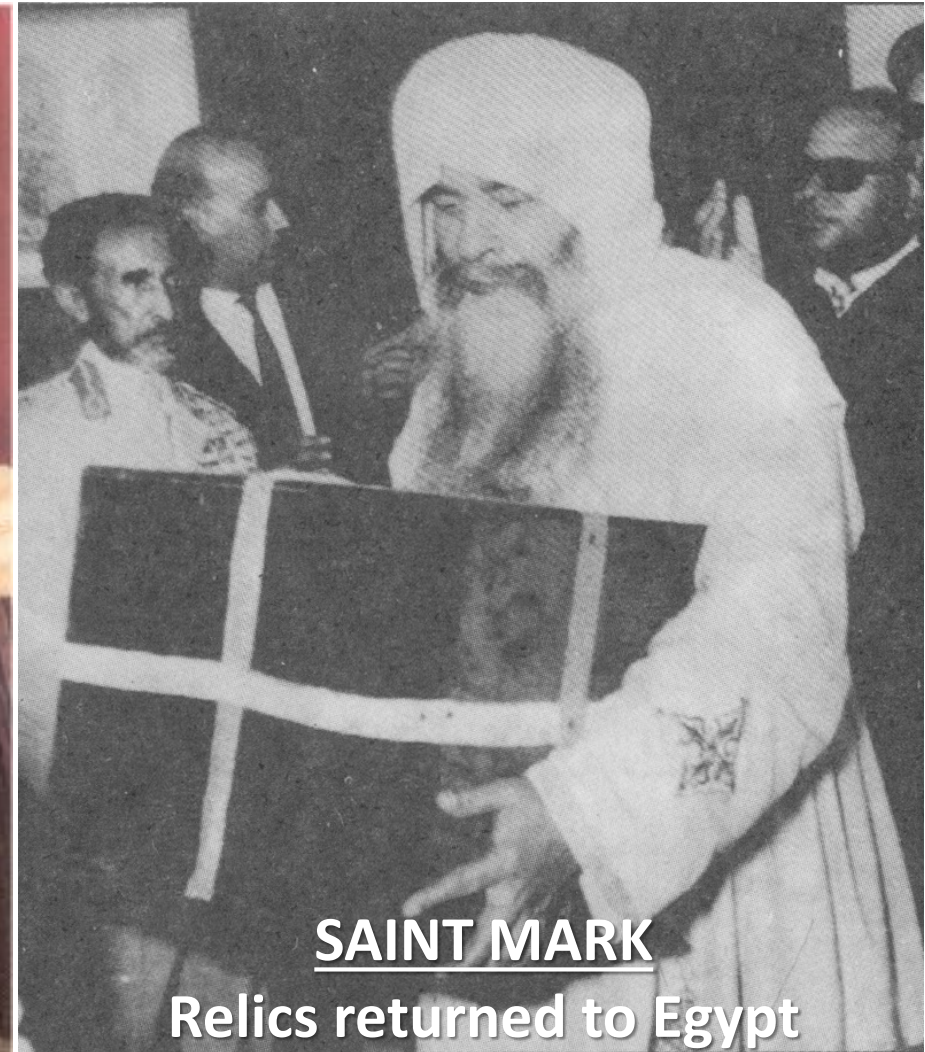
In 1968, during H.H. Papacy ...



SAINT MARY
Apparitions in Zeitoun
April 2, 1968



POPE KYRILLOS VI



SAINT MARK
Relics returned to Egypt
June 22, 1968

Timeline



- Born on **August 2, 1902** and named **Azer Ata**
- Entered **Monastery** of El-Baramous on **July 27, 1927**
- Ordained **Monk** (named **Mina**) on **February 25, 1928**
- Ordained **Priest** on **July 18, 1931**
- Ordained **Patriarch** on **May 10, 1959** as **Pope Kyrillos VI**
- During His Holiness' papacy ...
 - **Saint Mary** began appearing in Zeitoun, Cairo, on **April 2, 1968**
 - **Saint Mark's** relics were returned to Egypt on **June 22, 1968**
- **Departed** on **March 9, 1971** (12 yrs as Patriarch)
- **Canonised** as saint by the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church on **June 20, 2013**, only 42 years after his departure

25
years
old

28
years
old

56
years
old

68
years
old

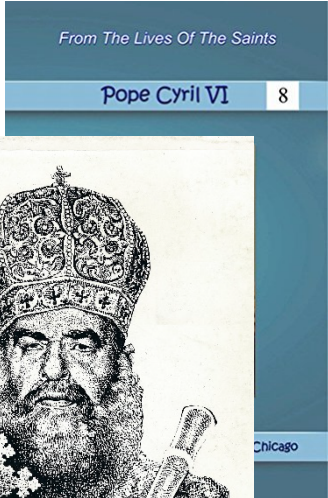
Saint Pope Kyrillos VI, the Wonder-Worker

- Thousands of recorded miracles; thousands more stories
- Volumes of books written, translated into many languages
- Miracles during his life
- Miracles continue to this day

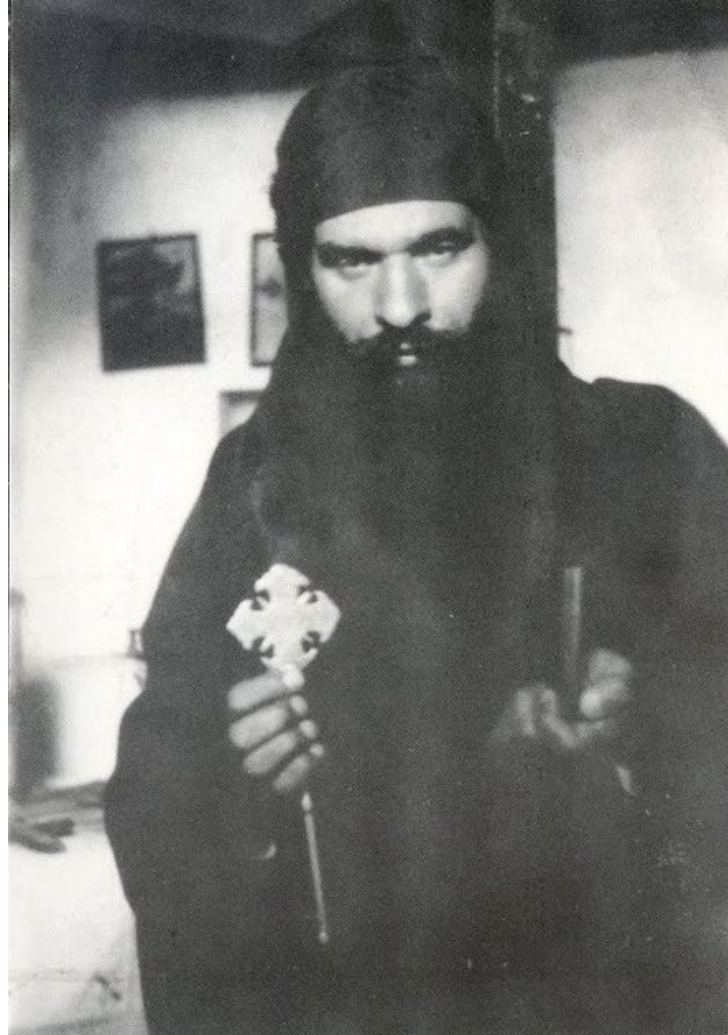


Advice from Father Kyrillos Ibrahim:

- *When you read & hear about these miracles ... focus more on the **virtues** of the saints more than the supernatural aspects*
- *Because, you may not be able to imitate the miracles, but we can all **aim to imitate the virtues** of Pope Kyrillos VI.*



LIFE OF ASCETICISM



Picture of the Father Mina the Monk (who would later become Pope Kyrillos VI)

Life of Asceticism

Father Mina the Monk (Pope Kyrillos VI) lived an Ascetic life

Why do monks & nuns embrace Asceticism (Voluntary Poverty)?

- They want to **meet with God** face-to-face, to feel the **attention & care** from God, to have the **victory that Christ promised** when He conquered Satan.
- Facing great perils (hunger, thirst, loneliness, physical danger), these saints don't lean on the crutches of the world, but **lean only on the Lord**.
- They are great spiritual athletes or warriors (St Paul analogy of running a race).
- They partake in an intense spiritual struggle, **leading to greater spiritual strength**; many go to the secluded wilderness as an arena to fight the devil (like Jesus who went to desert after fasting 40 days to battle & conquer Satan).
- They are like a man walking on a tight rope with no safety harness or nets, because **they know the Lord Himself will hold their hands & catch them**.
- When they go out on a limb for the Lord, the Lord is there for them (like Jesus said, when a man loses his life for the Lord's sake, he will find it).

What is Monasticism?

Monachos

- Originally, it stood for the ascetic who was not married and lived alone (the root word "Monachos" means "alone" or "solitary")
- It quickly acquired a deeper meaning:
a person who is one in their inmost being
- It means a person united within himself, with a single desire ...

Monos = monk, one, single-minded

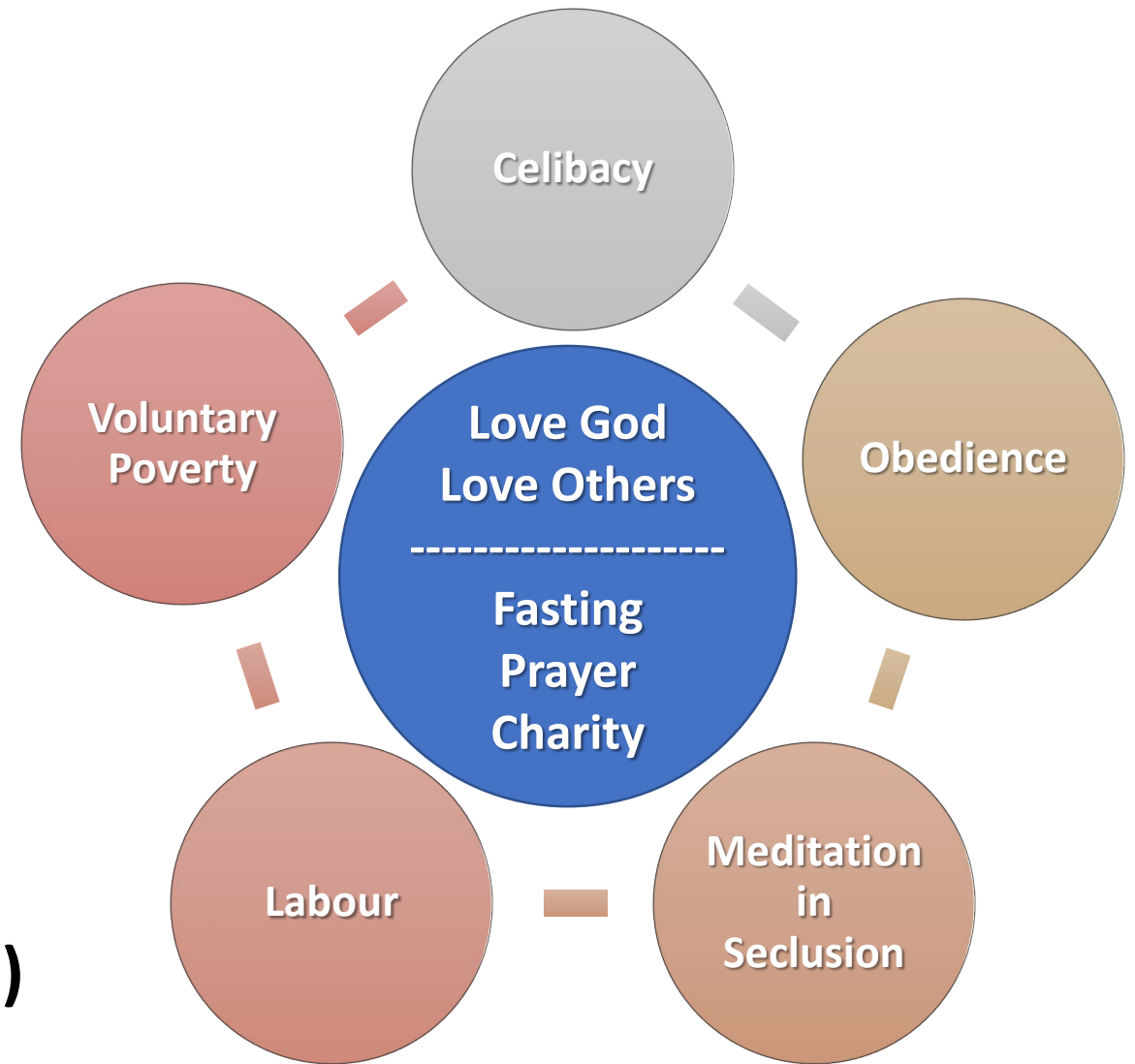
- A single-minded focus on the mystery of God in *Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life*
- A monk (or an ascetic) has a continual commitment to a single desire:
To continually seek God in repentance (carrying the Cross, in constant confrontation with one's self, with sin, with the wrong of the world)

Note that we don't have to live isolated in a cell, in the desert far from the world, in order to practice asceticism in our hearts and minds.

Coptic Monastic Rule

Coptic monastic regulations observe the following principles:

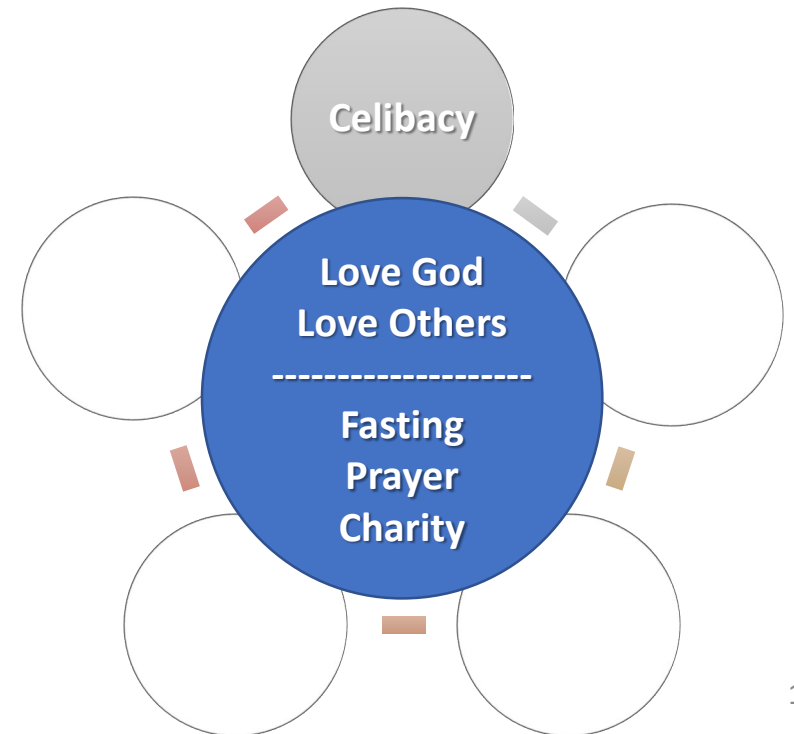
- (a) Celibacy**
- (b) Obedience**
- (c) Meditation in Seclusion**
- (d) Physical Labour (Work)**
- (e) Voluntary Poverty (Asceticism)**



These principles are derived from the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God (the Holy Bible).

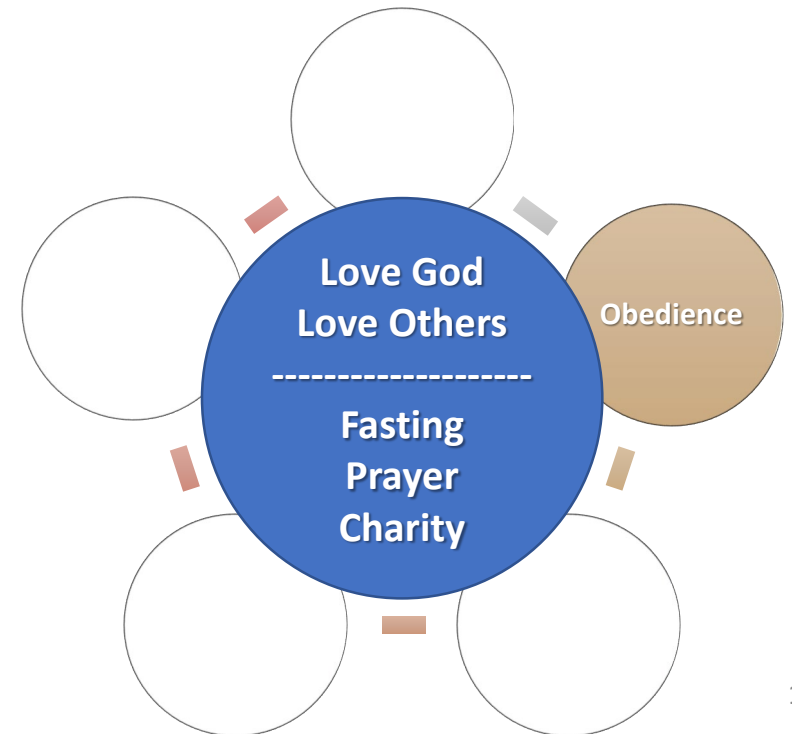
Monastic Rule of Celibacy

- Our Lord Jesus Christ lived a life of celibacy
- The Lord also spoke about
“... **those who made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God** ...” (Matthew 19:11)
- Saint Paul the Apostle also spoke about celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7



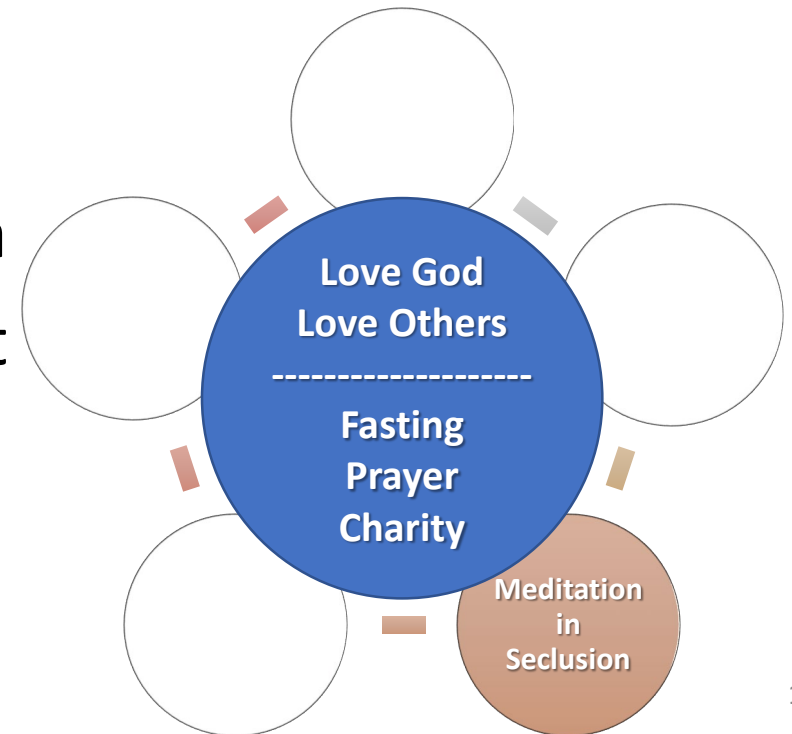
Monastic Rule of Obedience

- Submission to God
- Obedience to God's Word
- Obedience to God's Ministers
- The Bible said about Jesus,
“**though He was a Son,
yet He learned obedience
by the things which He suffered**”
(Hebrews 5:8)



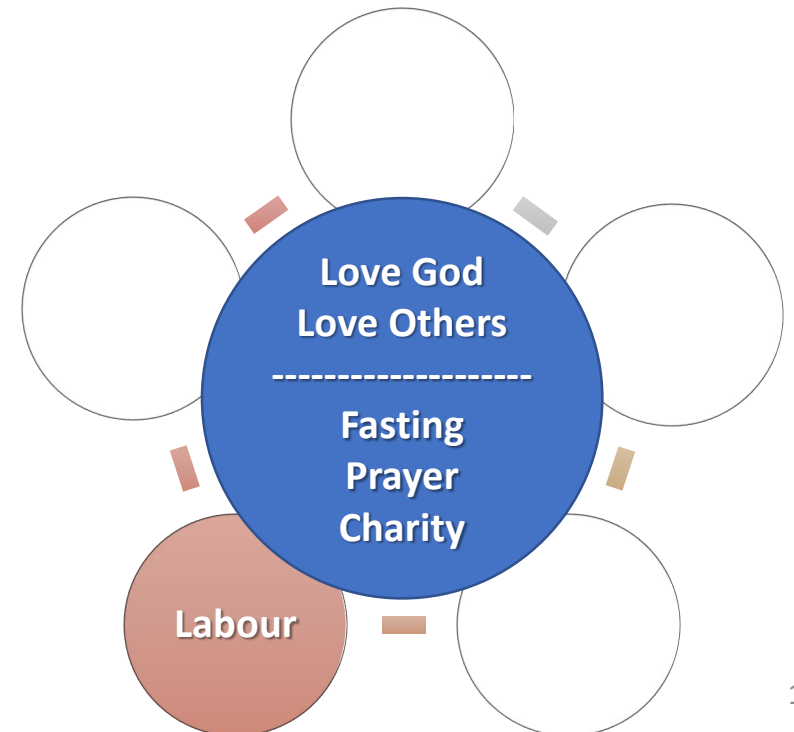
Monastic Rule of Meditation in Seclusion

- Our Lord said about Himself,
“... **the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head** ...”
(Luke 21:37)
- Meditation in Seclusion
- Meditation in the Wilderness
- In this way lived the prophets Elijah and Elisha
- Thus also was the life of Saint John the Baptist
- We live as strangers (sojourners) in this world because our true citizenship and permanent home is in Heaven



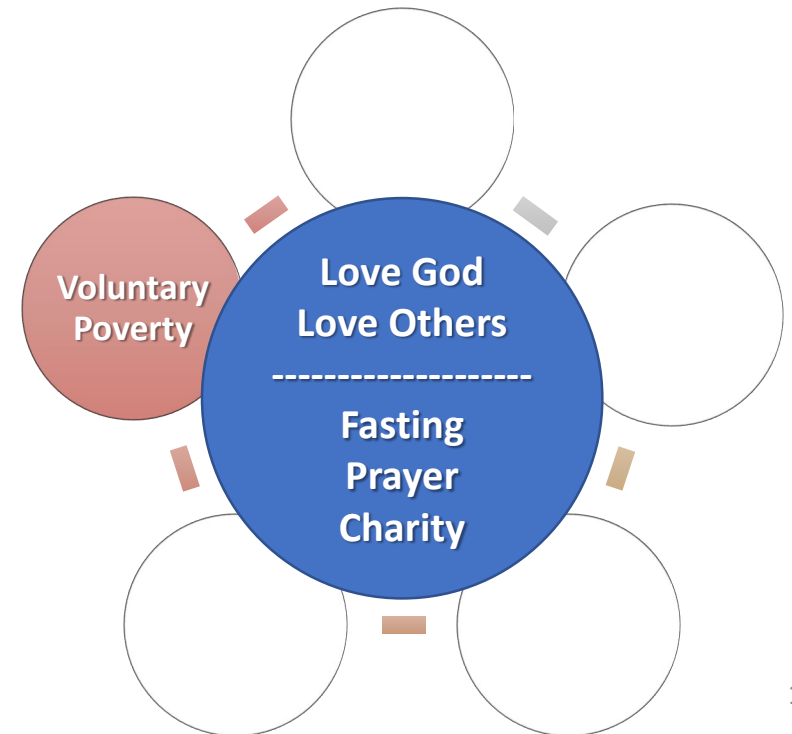
Monastic Rule of Labour

- Our Lord said about Himself,
“... **the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve ...**”
(Matthew 20:28)
- God called His prophets & disciples while performing their work
- Balanced life of both meditation & labour:
Learning from the sisters of Lazarus:
As Martha cannot live without Mary;
Mary also cannot live without Martha
(**Mary = meditation; Martha = labour**)



Monastic Rule of Voluntary Poverty

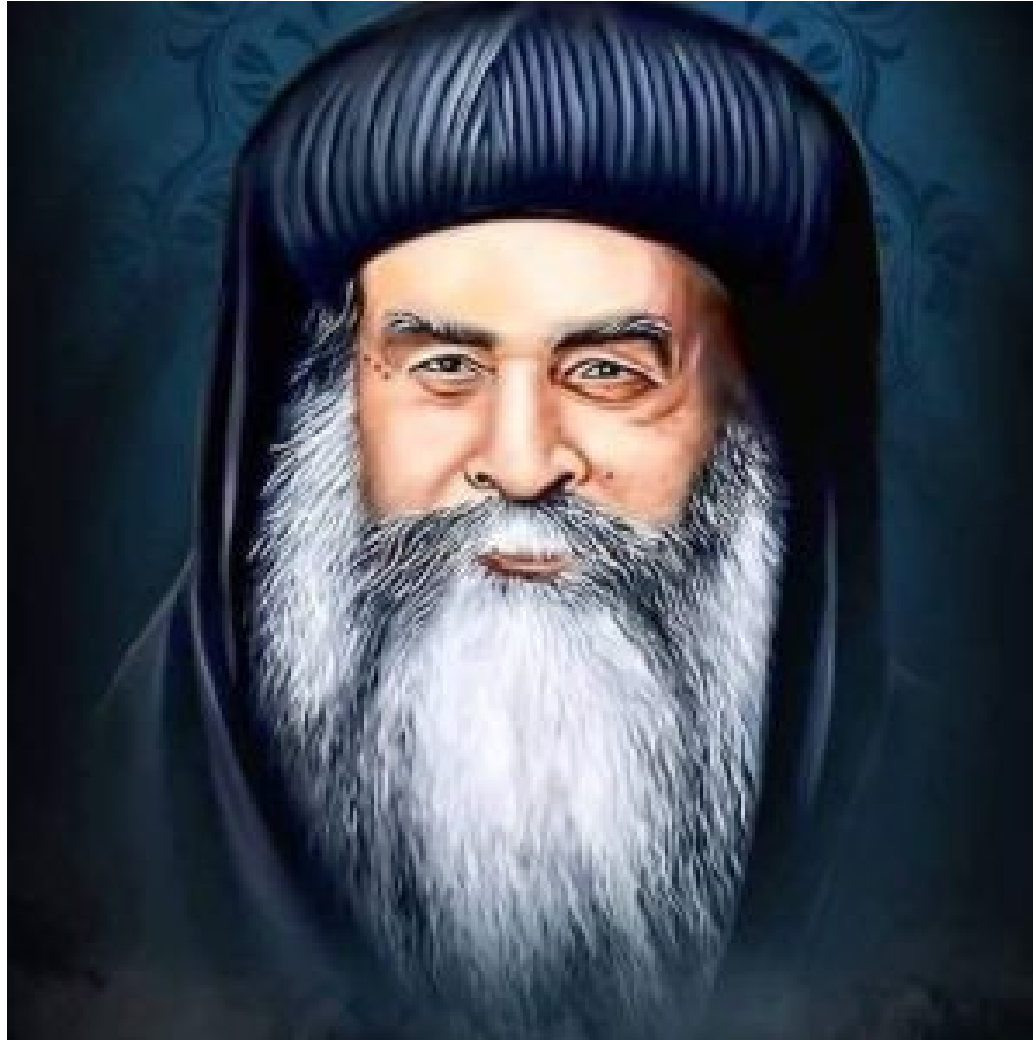
- About voluntary poverty, asceticism and hermetic life, Jesus said, **“If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”** (Matthew 19:21)
- Saint Anthony, upon hearing the above verse read out at church, left all earthly possessions behind.
- **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”** (Luke 12:33)



We can all learn from the Monastics



LIFE OF PRAYER



Pope Shenouda III commented about his predecessor, **Pope Kyrillos VI**, saying that “**he was wondrous in prayer.**”

Loved to Pray the Divine Liturgy

The Liturgy was the source of his strength.
It is estimated that Pope Kyrillos VI prayed more than **12,000 liturgies** during his lifetime.

“I love them that love me; and those that seek Me early shall find me.” (Proverbs 8:17 KJV).

His Holiness would start the day spiritually at 3-4am with the Psalmody, then hold an early liturgy so that the congregation can still make it to school or work. This continued for 35 years since he was a hermit.

“I rise before the dawning of the morning, and cry for help; I hope in Your word. My eyes are awake through the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word.” (Ps 119:147-148 NKJV).





“Prayer transforms God’s anger into **blessings** and there is nothing it cannot overcome. Prayer is the **key to heaven.**”

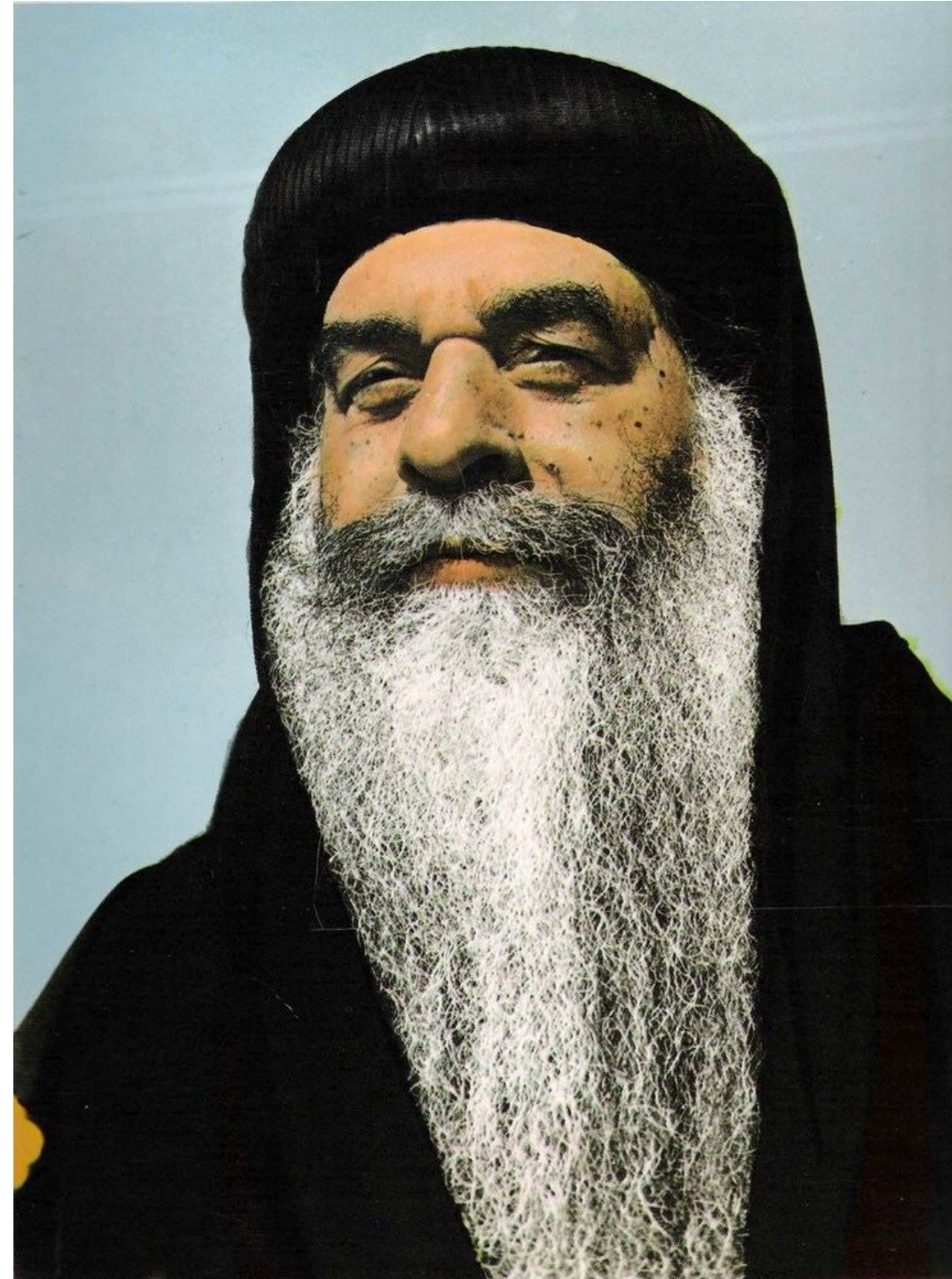
“Prayer can do all things, for it moves the Hand that manages the whole universe.”

Pope Kyrillos VI on Prayer

*“When **fasting**, you should fast both in body and heart; abstaining from **meat, gossip and slander.**”*

*“The **fasting tongue** is better than the fasting stomach, and when the **heart** abstains from wrath, that is better than both.”*

Pope Kyrillos VI on Fasting





*“If you happen to fall into temptation, do **not** let the **guilt** of sin be an **obstacle** to **prayer**. If you cease praying till you repent, you will never repent, for **prayer** is the **door** to **genuine repentance**.”*

Pope Kyrillos VI on Repentance

*“I prayed for a pure heart, it took me a long time and a hard struggle to discover that **prayer itself** is the only road to a pure heart.”*

*“Prayer is the storage of **grace** and backbone of **blessings**, it controls anger and conquers the spirit.”*

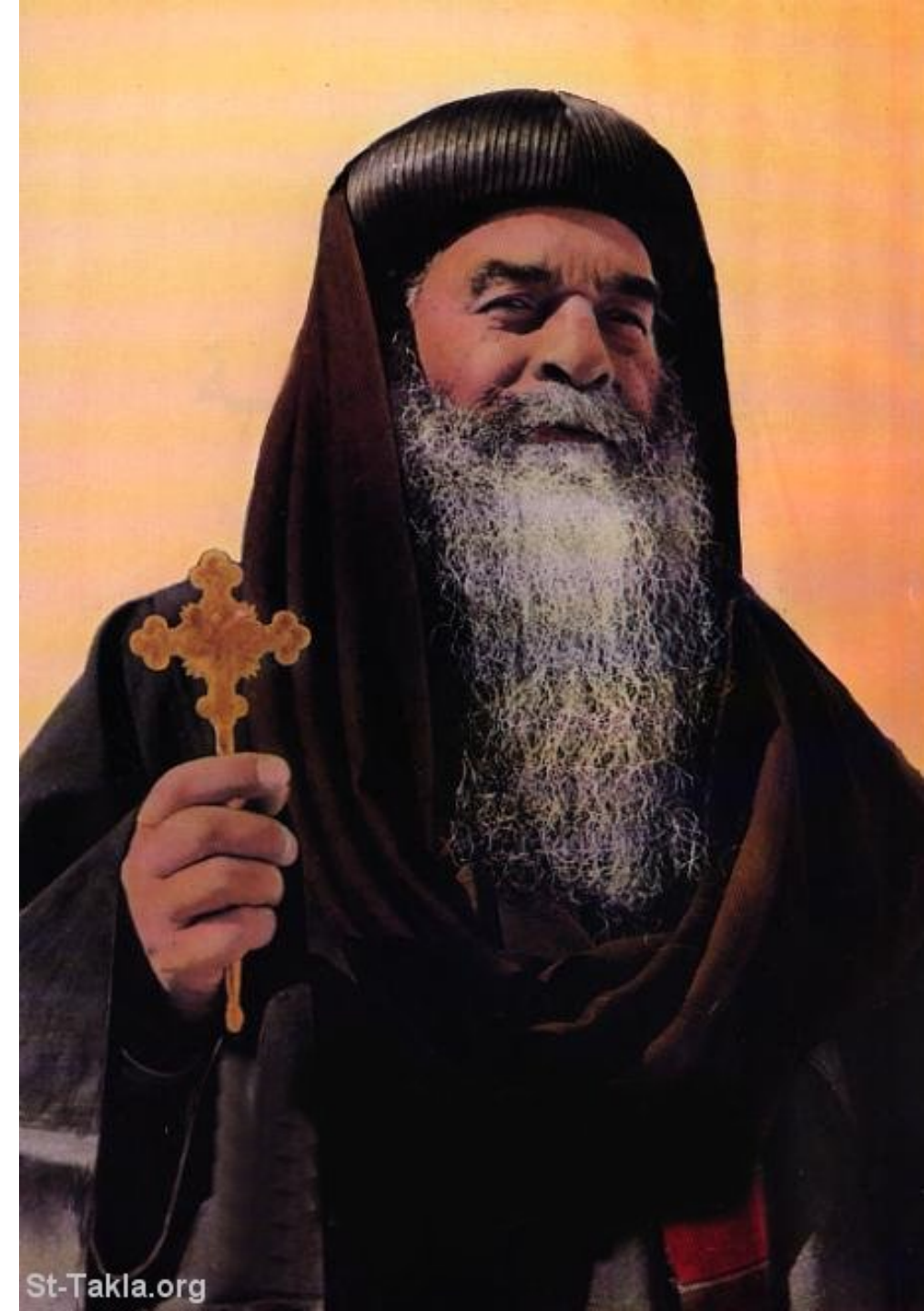
*“Prayer is a safe road you walk on so **no darkness** will catch up with you, but rather leads you to a place of **comfort**.”*

Pope Kyrillos VI on Prayer leading to Purity, Grace, Blessings & Comfort

*“Everything in your life should have **order & discipline** because our God is a God of order and discipline. When this is so, there will be **blessings and grace.**”*

*“Have order in your life while **eating, drinking**, as you **sit**, in your **clothing**, in your **behavior**, in your **laughter**, in your **prayer**, while **fasting**, in your **hymns**, in your **speech**, and in **all** your **dealings.**”*

Pope Kyrillos VI on Order





“The path leading to heaven is both wide and narrow.

*It is **wide** because it can accommodate the worst sinners of this world.*

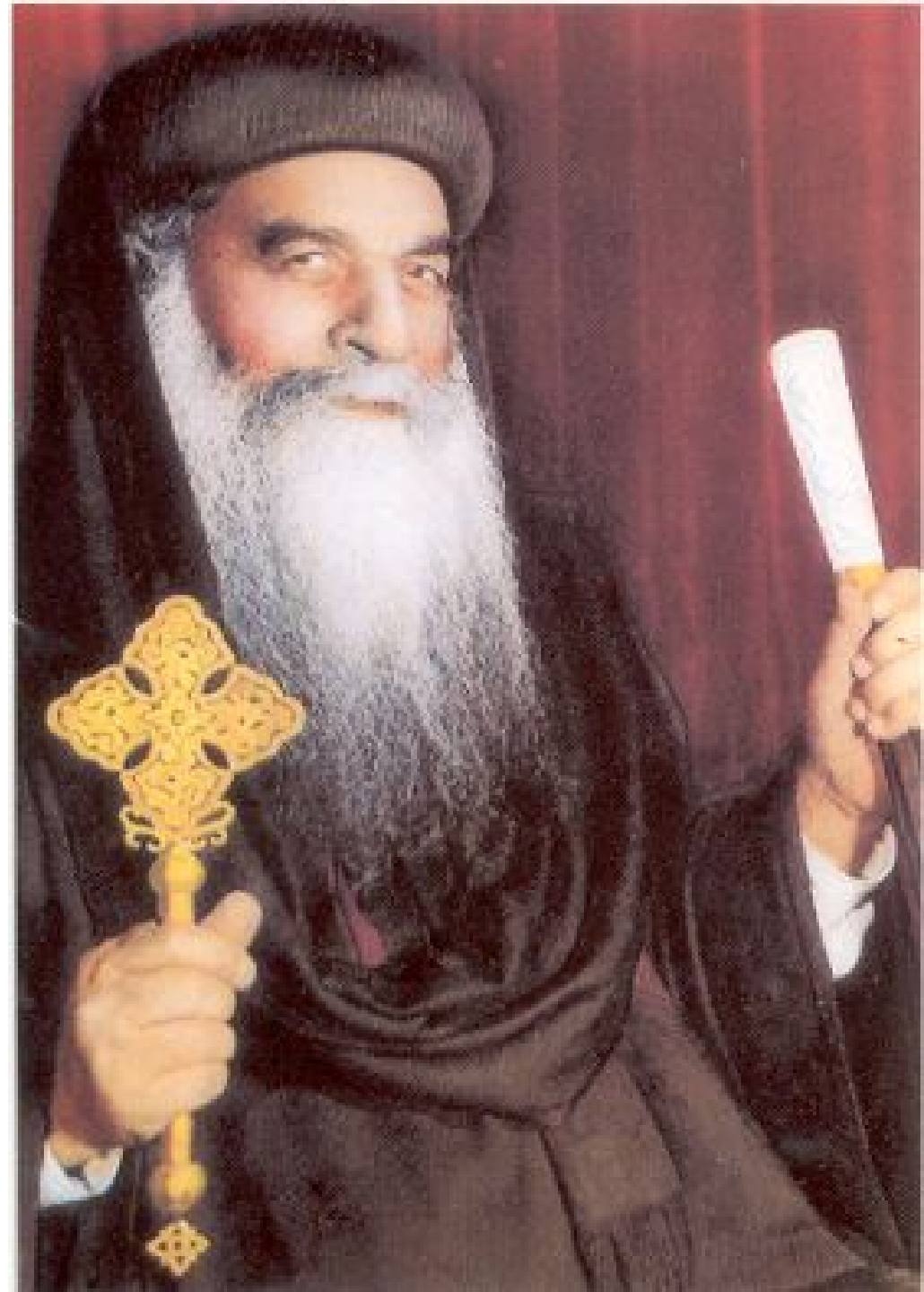
*However, it is **narrow** because if you desire to walk in it you cannot bear to carry even one sin.”*

Pope Kyrillos VI on Christian Behaviour

“Virtues are analogous to separate individual pearls in need of being bound together with string.

Love is the string that binds all virtues. Without love there is no cohesiveness or consistency amongst the various virtues.”

Pope Kyrillos VI on Love





Learning from Pope Kyrillos VI

PRAYER LIFE

- The **Power of Prayer** – try it, live it!
- Leads to **Repentance, Purity, Blessings, Grace, Comfort**

ASCETIC LIFE

- Asceticism is NOT just for monks & nuns ...
- We can all learn to Not leaning on the world, but instead **leaning on the Creator** of the world
- Being Content and **Thankful to God**, and **Helpful to Others**

Wisdom, Simplicity, Depth, Love, Care, Forgiveness

*Axios. Axios. Axios. Ava Kyrillos pi-mah-sooh.
Worthy. Worthy. Worthy. Pope Kyrillos the Sixth.*

On Forgiveness ...

- An anonymous Coptic person was writing slanderous articles in the newspaper about His Holiness, claiming that he was a simple monk, not fit to be Pope.
- This man was hiding himself under the name “son of Demetrius” to keep his identity hidden (Demetrius being an earlier Coptic Pope)
- One day, this man joined a large crowd of people in the Cathedral who were going up to get the blessings of Pope Kyrillos
- When the Pope greeted him, he said to him, “did you know that you and I are brothers?”
- Confused, the man asked the Pope to explain.
- His Holiness said, “well since you are the son of Pope Demetrius, then you are my brother as I am also his successor and son”
- Exposed, the man apologized to His Holiness and went on to become a disciple to his loving father.

Also on Forgiveness ...

- 12 priests from Cairo were opposing the Pope
- These priests would stay up late (past 1:30 AM) publishing & distributing pamphlets to complain about the Pope
- This continued for over a year
- One night, their printing machine broke; all attempts to fix it failed
- One priest thought within himself that this may be the will of God
- That priest went to apologize to Pope Kyrillos VI

The dialogue went something like this ...

- ***Your Holiness, please forgive me for I have said bad things about you.***
- ***I forgive you, my son***
- ***Do you not want to know what I have done?***

- ***You have been staying up past 1:30 AM to publish pamphlets and distribute them throughout all of Egypt, but now your printing machine has broken down, and none of the 12 of you can fix it.***
- ***You knew all this!***
- H.H. continues to mention the names of the other 12 clergy.
- ***Why didn't you do anything before?***
- ***I was praying for you, my son***
- ***Please absolve me, father***
- ***With all my heart, I absolve you, my son***
- ***What about the other 11, can they come to see you, and will you absolve them?***
- ***With all my heart, I absolve them, my son***

Those 12 came back to His Holiness and went on to become beloved disciples of the Pope.

On Care for His Children ...

- A young lady by the name of Samira had graduated from Teacher's College but was unable to find employment
- One of her friend suggested that she go meet the Saintly Pope Kyrillos VI
- Reluctant at first, she later decided to attend Liturgy at the Cathedral
- After the Liturgy, a large crowd was gathered around the Pope to get his blessings
- Samira thought within herself that this would take too long, and was about to leave without meeting the Pope
- As she was pondering on this, she suddenly saw the crowd parting to the left & right, and found herself staring directly at the Pope who was motioning her to come closer
- As she approached, he led her by the hand, away from the crowds, to a seating area
- He told her, "don't worry my daughter ... tomorrow, you will receive an important phone call at such-and-such a time ... stay home until you receive the call"
- The next day, she received a call from a school that was asking her to come in for an interview
- At the interview, the principal was trying to sell the job to her, without asking for her qualifications
- Having brought her dossier, she asked if he wanted to see her file
- The principal said that he had already reviewed her file ... her relative, the soldier had dropped it off
- In shock, she asked if she could see the material, and was amazed to see an exact copy of the file that she had brought
- She accepted the job, then ran back to thank Pope Kyrillos
- He was laughing and congratulated the young Samira

The now late Mrs. Samira Doherty would visit His Holiness regularly and was blessed by many more miracles through his loving care and prayers.

Recommended Listening



St Pope Kyrillos VI's Life & Virtues

International Orthodox Voices, 5 Mar 16

March 5, 2016 • Fr Kyrillos Ibrahim

One can learn of the man who, by God's grace, was a spiritual father to all and a faithful steward to his role as patriarch.

Join Fr Kyrillos Ibrahim as he reflects deeply on the life and virtues of St. Pope Kyrillos VI.



Available via the Upper Room Media app, or the following link:

<http://subspla.sh/9zsdgpm>