

Longsuffering

This virtue is fundamental to the spiritual life and without man cannot be saved. This is clear from the words of Jesus to us:

- + *“By your patience possess your souls.”* (Luke 21:19).
- + *“But he who endures to the end shall be saved”* (Matthew 24:13).
- + *“...and bear fruit with patience”* (Luke 8:15).
- + *“Here is the patience of the saints”* (Revelation 14:12).

- If we want to succeed in any endeavor, we must have patience and longsuffering because every effort needs time to be completed.

- When we cook something, we wait for the food to cook. Food doesn't cook in a minute, but rather takes time.



- When the farmer plants his fields, he must be patient for so long, and has to administer the irrigation and fertilization of his crops. He needs to follow-up with spraying pesticides for many months, and finally comes the time of harvest when he celebrate the fruits of his labor. These are the fruits patience.

- The student who wishes to have a prominent place in the society, toils and labors in long nights for long months and years with patience to succeed and reach his goal.

- It is the same in our spiritual lives as we seek heaven. We must be adorned with patience and longsuffering in our conduct with others. Longsuffering for our brothers and sisters is a sign of the love, care, and genuine kindness and this is one of the most distinct characteristics of the children of God.

- Additionally, we adorn ourselves with patience and longsuffering in our spiritual strife in order to attain the purity of heart and to deepen our fellowship with God. Without patience, we cannot reap any good fruit, neither in our relationship with others nor with God.

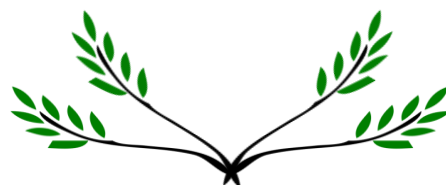
Finally, let us hear the words of St. Macarius the great that he said regarding patience and longsuffering for it encourages us to acquire this precious virtue:

[Longsuffering is patience, patience is triumph, triumph is life, life is the Kingdom, and the Kingdom is God. The well is deep, but its water is fresh. The gate is narrow and the road is full of trouble, but the city is filled with joy and happiness. The tower is high and fortified, but inside are great treasures. Fasting is hard and difficult, but it takes us to the kingdom of heaven. Good deeds are difficult and arduous to do, but they save oneself from Hades through the mercy of our Lord, to whom glory is due.]

Fr. Yohanna Naseef

fryohanna@hotmail.com

St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church, Palatine, IL



<http://www.stmarychicago.com>