

Sunday, March 31, 2013

Coptic Missionary Churches (3)

In the last two articles, we talked about the beginning of the missionary churches and how important they are to the growth of the Coptic Church. In this article, we will talk about why they are called “Missionary” churches. We will also discuss the guidelines that must be taken into consideration to maximize the benefit of these churches.

☆ Why these churches are named “Missionary”?

1- The name “Missionary Churches” motivates the youths to serve in missions enthusiastically and always reminds them with their evangelistic responsibilities.



2- This name also encourages many people outside the church to come and explore the church meetings, services, and prayers. After they join the church they recognize that they have become part of the ministry and the mission work so they share this precious faith with their friends and families.

3- The name carries the meaning of loving and caring for others. It also asserts that we, the Coptic Church, are not confined in a cocoon or isolated from the world. Rather, we are open to the society around us and share with everyone our precious faith and the spiritual treasures that we enjoy in our holy church. We are zealous for the salvation of every soul, not only in words but in deeds, and we try by all means, as St. Paul teaches us, to become all things to all *men*, that we might save some (1 Corinthians 9:22).

4- Of course we can debate the name, and change it if there is value in doing so.

☆ Guidelines to be considered to maximize the benefit of these churches:

1- Strictly adhering to the Coptic Orthodox liturgical tradition. This includes liturgies, psalmody, rites, fasting, and feasts. However, all liturgical worship would be in the language of the country where the church is located. It would be permissible to add contemporary songs in the local language in the youth meetings of the church 2- These churches must be lead by priests who are deeply rooted in the love of the Coptic Church and its liturgical prayers. They must take pride in the premise and practice of the Orthodox patristic tradition. Meanwhile, they should have an open heart, an enlightened mind, and possess the ability to communicate with the youth.

3- **The priest and servants of these churches must have a clear vision as to the missionary work.** This means being open-minded and respectful to different cultures and studying the evangelistic work and its various approaches. They should highly regard the upright Orthodox doctrine and in the same time, they have various communication styles to communicate with different factions in the appropriate language that they understand.

Not to be isolated from the neighboring Coptic churches, but rather to strengthen the fellowship with them in serving the youth and youth activities. We are all members of the same body, it is important to mutually benefit from the experiences of the servants, fathers of confession, various talents in each church. Therefore, there should be strong ties among all churches in the area at all levels, Priests, servants, and youth activities.

In fact, **the missionary churches can be a true investment in the future of the Coptic Church in the land of immigration.**

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