



Coptic Orthodox Church الكنيسة القبطية الأرثوذكسية
Diocese of Los Angeles,
Southern California, and Hawaii
إيبارشية لوس انجلوس

October 22, 2018

Clarification

We received questions regarding a flyer distributed in some of our churches' parking lots by unknown people. The flyer was entitled, "A Chance for Spiritual Meetings with Fr. Makary Younan in California" and featured a picture of a known priest who serves in Downtown Cairo. The flyer also indicated a non-Orthodox organization, which is announcing these meetings in an Orange County area hotel.

I wish to clarify the following:

- I communicated with H.H. Pope Tawadrous II and H.G. Bishop Rofail, the General Bishop overseeing the Churches of Downtown Cairo, and asked questions regarding these events. Bishop Rofail responded, "Fr. Makary does not verbally communicate with me and only deals with me via text messaging. I don't know anything about him. He has stopped communicating with me." Furthermore, Pope Tawadrous II responded, "I will look into this matter with this priest, whose actions have become unacceptable."
- The Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Los Angeles did not extend an invitation to Fr. Makary Younan to hold meetings in the Diocese as required by the Statement of Bishops of North America. Further, we didn't receive any information regarding the honoring of Fr. Makary Younan.
- It is clear that these meetings are organized without the Orthodox Church's acquiescence and are advertised by groups, satellite channels, and individuals outside the Orthodox Church.
- If Fr. Makary Younan still considers himself a priest in the Coptic Orthodox Church, he is disobeying the following church canons:
 - Canon 15 of the Apostolic Canons, which forbids a priest from leaving his assigned place to serve in another without the permission of his bishop.

- Canon of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church, which was handed down on June 14, 1997 and confirmed at a second Holy Synod meeting on June 6, 1998. It forbids Orthodox priests from attending meetings organized by Protestant organizations except with the express permission of His Holiness the Pope.
- The system put in place by Pope Tawadrous II regarding the travel of Coptic Orthodox priests outside Egypt.
- Numerous church canons and settled tradition: The service of any priest in a diocese must have the permission of the diocesan bishop.
- We are confident in the Lord that He will protect His Church and people from all stumbling and confusions.
- We are confident of the awareness of our great Coptic congregations who reject all deceiving attempts to cause division or confusion inside the Church, and has a keen eye to preserve the faith of the beloved Coptic Orthodox Church and Her canons.
- I am personally saddened over the clear change of Fr. Makary Younan's service in recent years regarding the pure Orthodox teachings and commitment to proper church etiquette. I pray that the Grace of God leads him to reject the conversion of his long history and service to become a tool in the hands of non-Orthodox organizations and satellite channels, which will cause division in our beloved Church. I also wish he will remember the teachings of St. Paul, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Co 14:40). These things do not give glory to our Lord Jesus Christ, as St. Paul said, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Co 14:33). Remember the teaching of St. James, "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (Jas 3:18). May the Lord give you to return and serve in peace, so that you may have the fruit of righteousness.

We pray that the Lord our God preserves His Holy Church and Her congregations, and protect Her with His powerful right hand through the intercession of the Holy Theotokos St. Mary, all the saints, the cloud of saints surrounding us, and the prayers of our beloved Pope Tawadrous II.

Metropolitan Serapion