



**Queen Mary & Prince Tadros
Coptic Orthodox Church
Pope Shenouda III Center
283 DAVIDSONS MILL ROAD
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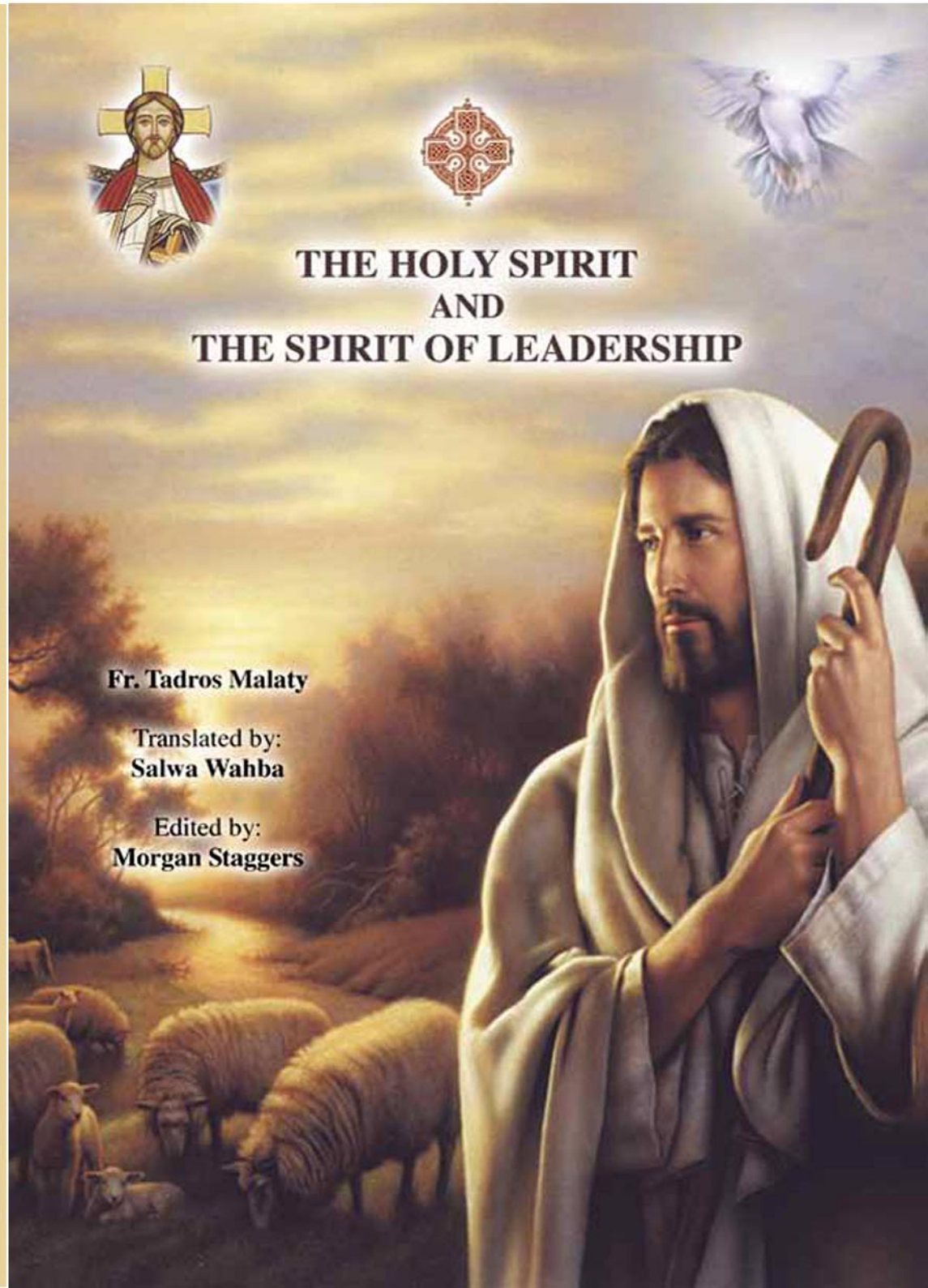


THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP

Fr. Tadros Malaty

Translated by:
Salwa Wahba

Edited by:
Morgan Stagers



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THE SPIRIT OF AUTHORITY AND LEADERSHIP, NOT CONTROL

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to give you back your dignity and authority, to make a son of God out of you, a sacred member of His body, and a temple for His Holy Spirit, and not to make you a weak person. He wants to give you the spirit of strength, not failure (2 Timothy 1:7), but not through vanity or haughtiness! Each success in your life is a gift from God! Through your practical experience you would feel inside you what the true believer has enjoyed - that God has lifted him up out of the dunghill and made him sit with the princes of His people (1 Sam 2: 8). He wants you to ascend and sit together with Him in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6), so as to share with the heavenly beings in their joy and nonstop praises.

To reach that, God has given you His Holy Spirit so that you would enjoy health, not illness, and humbleness with which you discover the reality of your weakness. You would realize the great potency of divine Grace and the work of the valuable blood in your life. Accordingly, you would face life and all its troubles through the Crucified. Even the world with all its temptations and the devil with all his powers and tricks do not daunt you, for you are carried as if on the wings of eagles. Thus, what could ever happen to you? By the Holy Spirit, you enjoy the partnership with the Father in His Son.

Jesus Christ has given His disciples power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy (Luke 10:19). He has also promised them: “You shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8). Every day in the Terce Prayer, we cry unto God not to take away from us the Holy Spirit that dwelt with the disciples. He is “the Spirit of Authority,” that is, the Spirit of Leadership.

Prepared by: **Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty**

Translated by: **Salwa Wahba**

Edited by: **Morgan Stagers**

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LEADERSHIP FOR ALL PEOPLE

The work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church is to reshape her into the icon of Christ, the Leader that gives the spirit of leadership to all that unite with Him. This Leader met with a Samaritan woman who was a fanatic for her people, crazed with lust and living with a man who was not her husband. When she met Him, she left her water-jar to lead the whole city of Sychar to greet the Savior of the world.

When the man who was born blind met Him, he received the gift of the creation of his eyes. His inner vision was opened to acknowledge the person of Christ, the Savior of the world, while his eyes were opened to realize that he was a leader who is capable of witnessing for his Christ even among his opponents.

The Holy Spirit works in the hearts of the young children so that they would carry the spirit of young Jesus, who sat in the midst of the elder masters and astonished them and who boldly told His mother: "I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49).

In this way, the Holy Spirit makes strong leaders out of men, women, young people, handicaps and even children. This is what St. John the Beloved experienced when he said: "He has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Revelation 1:6). He speaks not in the name of the disciples and the apostles alone, nor in the name of the bishops, the priests, the deacons or the deaconesses, but in the name of all people. In the baptism water, the Holy Spirit makes whoever is baptized a king with authority who is capable of penetrating the hearts of others to carry them to heaven along with him. He is a priest who does not cease praying and offering thanksgivings in the name of all mankind.

The divine promise was fulfilled as the disciples received strength from above on the Day of the Pentecost. It is remarkable, as St. Peter pointed in his first speech at Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16); the role of sons and daughters was announced, as the Holy Spirit will make them prophets.



THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE LEADING SPIRIT OF LOVE

God longs to make you a person carrying the spirit of authority, not control, so that you would enjoy authority in the strength of the Spirit through love and not harshness or haughtiness.

The first fruit of the Holy Spirit is "Love" (Galatians 5:22). This love opens up the hearts of the leader and his listeners so that the speech of the leader would become a speech in the heart that is full of authority. Thus, love would spark the hearts of listeners to grasp the apostle's saying unto his people: "To die and live with you" (2 Corinthians 7:3).

With this love, the Church would turn into a place where everyone seeks to spend and be spent for the sake of others. The Church would become a love group where all are leaders, not with the spirit of arrogance, but with the spirit of humbleness and giving for the sake of building souls.

St. Isaac the Syrian realized this authority when he called the monk (or the Christian person) a king full of authority, for he can order this thought to go and it would go, or that thought to enter and it would enter! To us, authority is not about orders that we give unto others; rather, it is the possibility of a new life and great inner work. The Spirit of God gives us authority unto ourselves by sanctifying our thoughts, feelings and intentions. It gives us strength to enjoy the openness of heaven inside our hearts and to prevail over the devil and all his tricks.

The person that is filled with spiritual authority knows how to practice love with the Spirit of God even with his opponents, and without asking for a reward.



PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

1. Jephthah was the son of a harlot and he was ousted by his brothers so that he would not share their inheritance (Judges 11). He enjoyed the Spirit of God that was upon him (Judges 11:29) and thus he became a vibrant leader, serving all the people. Wondrous is the Spirit of God that wants to work with all of us, even with those who are banished from the camp! Who would read the story of Jephthah and feel anguish of spirit? When everybody considered him worthless and wanted him expelled, God's Spirit used him to become everything for the people in God. When St. Paul felt as if he was evicted from the camp, he rejoiced. As he saw his Christ crucified outside of Jerusalem, he thus said: "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Hebrews 13:13).

2. St. John Chrysostom gave us a practical example of the true spirit of leadership when he told his people: "You are the bishop." He realized that children are more capable than he to lead their fellow children to the road of salvation. The same goes for women and young people. St. John Chrysostom does not know a loafer among his people; rather, all are spiritual leaders in God. He heard of a monk who fell in love with a beautiful Jewish woman named Hermione and sinned with her. Not only did he work on bringing him back to his monastery and his spiritual life, but he also supported him until he became a bishop. When he got to know a devastated young widow, he sent her a letter and cared for her until she devoted herself to serving sick girls and women.

3. In our era, we know of Fr. Bishoy Kamel, who excelled in directing all energies to work toward spiritual leadership. I remember that in one of the attendants' meetings, one who came from another city continuously attacked him. After the meeting, I asked him about his opinion of that young man who turned many attendants against him by resisting him, yet he said: "This attendant is very useful, because he is capable



of dealing with young people. His opposition means that he recognizes their resistance and arguments. He is a unique person fit to lead young people!" Fr. Bishoy had a unique sweet smile and met everyone with his pure embraces, transforming the energies of those who are destroyed by sin into leader spirits who work for the Kingdom of God. This quality in him was obvious even to non-Christians. Once, when he was driving his car in El-Raml Station in Alexandria, the Security Department appointed several secondary-school students as traffic officers. He greeted one of them as he passed by him. Fr. Luke asked him, "Why did you do that?" Fr. Bishoy answered him by saying, "See how happy he looked!" In this way, Fr. Bishoy wanted every person in society to have the spirit of leadership.

THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP AND OBEDIENCE

Some may think that spreading the spirit of leadership generates some sort of pride and arrogance and takes away the spirit of obedience and humbleness from people, especially the youth.

The leader that generates the spirit of leadership in his children directs their hearts to love more and appreciate him. Through him, they come to realize the constructive, not the destructive, qualities of leadership. From their leader they learn to do the same with others, longing with love and benevolence that makes them leaders as well.

The depths of the person who practices leadership with the Holy Spirit is gradually transformed to become an icon of Christ, the Divine Leader Who subdued heavenly and earthly creation and Who longed for all people to become authoritative masters and leaders. At the same time, He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2). Even though He is the Son Who is one with His Father in essence, He learned how to obey through what He had suffered (Hebrews 5). While He is the Leader and



Creator, He obeyed His mother St. Mary and St. Joseph and was subject unto them (Luke 2:51).

Whoever unites with the divine Leader understands the living leadership that longs to establish leaders, while obeying and subduing his free will.

St. Pachomius was the leader of tens of thousands of monks and his monasteries were as busy as a beehive where no one knew weakness. Yet he was able to build many leaders while in charge of all his monasteries. When asked by Tadros - then a student who was in charge of wardrobe - to change his clothes with better ones to meet with some hermits, St. Pachomius refused. Afterward he returned and cried bitterly for not heeding his disciple. This incident gives a practical lesson in the great bond between the spirit of leadership and the spirit of obedience and humbleness, even unto those who are younger than us.

THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP AND THE PASTORAL WORK

The pastoral work is a gift from the highest Archpriest, the Bishop of our souls Jesus the Lord, who chooses from among His believers those who He grants the blessing of this work. They receive the gift of priesthood and He works with them and through them.

Some sabotage the honor of the pastoral work when they consider it authority, as if the priest alone is led by the Holy Spirit, or as if he is impeccable. The honor of the pastoral work is in the washing of feet with the aim of building leaders to work in the Church of Christ, just as He washed the feet of His disciples to make spiritual leaders out of them. The disciples would later do the same through the work of His Holy Spirit in them.

Some priests are mistaken when they think that they alone are the keepers of the laws and rituals of the Church. Fr. Michael Ibrahim told a story that happened to him. He



baptized a child, washed his hands and left for a moment to dry them. When he came back he found a woman putting her hand in the baptism water and drinking from it. He rebuked her for touching the baptism water, for the Chrism should not be touched by anyone but the priest. With a broken heart she answered him: "I heard that the woman who drinks from the baptism water becomes pregnant. It has been many years now that I have been without child, and I yearn for God to give me one." Deeply moved, the father regretted his behavior with her, asking her to forgive him. Then he started praying for her that God would give her a child. Fr. Michael asked me, "What is better: my dismay at the woman by defending some ritual or the faith of this woman in the work of God?"

THE HOLY TRINITY IS AN EXEMPLAR FOR THE CHURCH

Believing in the absolute unity stimulates the believers to aspire to the one God, the unique Leader, who has complete divine capacities. He is perfect in His leadership, greatness and arrangements. No one shares with Him, disputes with Him or knows His thoughts. This concept may fuel some people to become like Him, as they believe that the successful leader should practice the one authority and the one leadership. They may think that he orders and is obeyed and that he rules with no opposition. The greatness of his leadership is based on his capability of unilaterally exercising it without any serious heartfelt or inner participation with others.

Our faith in the one God with three hypostasis is a living example of true Church leadership. The unique leadership of the Father - the Leader, the Conductor of the world and the Keeper of His Church who works for her growth - is realized and proclaimed through the leadership of the Only-Begotten Son. This is the wisdom of God; one with Him in essence. As the Creator, "all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). The



leadership of the Son is in harmony with that of the Father and They cannot be separated from each Other. The leadership of the Father works with that of the Son. Creation and salvation cannot be isolated from the leadership of the Holy Spirit that is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. He is the One that guides the Church and leads her to truth, giving it enlightenment. He leads the Church towards the embrace of the Father by reforming her to become an icon of the Son. Thus, the leadership of the Holy Trinity is One, where every hypostasis has His own integrated role with the other two hypostases.

The successful leader is the one who experiences the work of the Holy Trinity in his life, finding his strength in that of others and the success of his leadership in generating the spirit of leadership in all people around him. The spiritual leader is not one that orders and rebukes and to whom all submit but rather urges every little child to realize that God has created him to become a living leader and to find his pleasure in the leadership of others around him.

THE INCARNATED SON HAS REVEALED THIS INTEGRATED DIVINE WORK OF LEADERSHIP IN HIS WORDS

- The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand [John 3:35].
- For as the Father raises up the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to whom He will [John 5:21].
- For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son [John 5:22].
- For as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself [John 5:26].
- No one can come to Me unless drawn by the Father who sent Me; and I will raise that person up on the last day [John 6:44].



- And He that sent Me is with Me, the Father has not left Me alone, for I do always those things that please Him [John 8:29].
- He that has seen Me has seen the Father and how say you then show us the Father? [John 14:9]
- But the Comforter Who is the Holy Ghost Whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you [John 14:26].
- But when the Comforter comes, Whom I shall send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, Who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me [John 15:26].

Thus, it becomes unto the Church, as it is in unity with the Father in His Son through the Holy Spirit, to realize the concept of leadership. This defines the successful leader as one who makes leaders out of all people around him. Without doing so, he is not considered a leader but a dictator.

I DO NOT FEEL THE SPIRIT OF POWER AND AUTHORITY!

Many times man moans from within, for at times he feels the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the strength of love, the possibility of worship with spirit and truth, the sweetness of fulfilling the commandments and true yearning to sit at the feet of the Savior. Soon enough however a dry wind would cross inside him, making him feel severely weak and cold and unable to enjoy the new life. Did spirit of strength leave him? Did he lose what God has granted him in the merit of the blood of Christ?

My beloved, do not be surprised at this. The great St. Anthony gave us his practical experiences in this matter when he declared that he sometimes suffered the same feelings as you. However, he considered these episodes as the most valuable in his life, through which he announced his faith in God's work and realized that grace had not left him. These



experiences are a test for the soul regarding its sincerity and loyalty unto the One that loved it, in which it remains struggling and crying unto God for help and support by His grace. He prayed even when he did not feel any comfort; he would read the word of God, asking for enjoyment from within. He would practice his worship so the Lord would open the doors of heaven before him. Only then would it be said about him what was said about Jacob: “He struggled with God and people, and won.”

The most beautiful example of this could be what happened to the people in the Old Testament. For if Joshua’s time was considered the greatest era of the Promised Land when it enjoyed continuous victories and its division among the tribes, then it was followed by the darkest times known as ‘the Judges Era.’ “In those days there was no king in Israel,

God on him” and fought against Chush, the king of Aram who humiliated the people. Othniel prevailed and the land rested for forty years. When all people feel humiliated and have lost hope in salvation and victory, do not consider yourself as the youngest; rather, look at the Spirit of God, the Granter of authority and victory. “God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are” (1 Corinthians 1:27-28). "Do not tremble, beloved, over the circumstances surrounding you or over your severe weaknesses, for the Holy Spirit takes what is of Christ and shall tell you or give you" (John 16:15), so that Christ himself would become your righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30).

2. There was a time when no one was capable of leadership, and then Deborah took over the leadership of the battle through her faith in the work of God inside her (Judges

4:4-5). God works with the priest and with the people, the man and the woman, the old and the young, the poor and the rich and with the talented and the one who thinks that he is not. The Spirit of God uses every soul who responds to Him and leans on Him. Do not go after status, even in the Church, for it is not your position that will give you spiritual success, but your enjoyment of the Spirit of God Who dwells in you and your response unto Him.

O SPIRIT OF STRENGTH, SUPPORT ME!

- ❖ You are wondrous my Lord in the work of Your love; You grant me Your Spirit, the spirit of strength, to give me back my dignity and authority! You grant me Your Spirit, so that I would fear no army, nor tremble if the whole world stood against me; I would not be confounded if the devil declared war against me, for You are my strength, my fortress and my victory!
- ❖ With Your Spirit You have destroyed my weakness and granted me Your strength; You eliminated me as an orphan and gave me Yourself as a Father; You removed my sins and gave me Yourself as righteousness, sanctification and redemption!
- ❖ When the world is dark in my eyes, I feel anguish of spirit due to my weaknesses; When I am in a war of despair due to the lack of my capabilities, You shine with Your Spirit inside me, carrying me as with the wings of a dove to Your heavens, and granting me Your grace so that I can do all things through Jesus Christ!
- ❖ I confess all my weaknesses and sins before You my Lord, and I thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit, the spirit of holiness and authority; Yours is every glory, O Holy One!