

## **The Power of the Spirit in the Life of Fr. Bishoy Kamel**

Many people would stand in amazement before the personality of our Fr. Bishoy Kamel and how he was able to have such effectiveness in the life of many while he was still a young man, before being appointed a priest and even after his appointment. He was successful in everything his hands touched and wherever he was, inside Egypt or in the land of immigration.

It is rare to meet someone that was in contact with him without having him tell you a story that he has experienced with him and that still has its effects on his life.

What could be behind this personality but his practical faith in the strength of the Spirit?

### **The Flesh is Weak, but the Spirit is Willing!**

Our beloved father was known for his slim figure and the different diseases he was suffering from, yet for his smiling face, his fiery heart and flaming spirit. Master Christ has told his disciples on his way to the cross: "The spirit truly is ready but the flesh is weak" [Mark 14:38].

His faith in the power of the cross, the destroyer of the devil and the opener of the doors of heaven, along with his realization of the strength of God's Holy Spirit made him like a quiet breeze that is filled with internal peace, attracting many to enjoy the glories of the salvation.

While he was still a young man, a monk once said of him: "Samy Kamel is like a quiet breeze... You can feel him, but once you look at him, you wouldn't find him". We can continue this statement by saying: "You won't find him, but you will smell Christ's sweet scent that would attract you to the heavenly life".

Despite the weakness of his body, it applies to him what St. Antonius had said when he kissed the hands of St. Macarius: "Some great power comes out of these little hands."

He was not occupied with huge projects, luxurious buildings or attractive appearances, rather his hands have graduated servants of the word of God and leaders of thought that have spread in many locations, teaching in turn

other servants of the word. He was also occupied with the establishment of simple churches for the spiritual care.

### **The Power of the Spirit and the Clear Goal!**

The most distinct feature in the personality of Fr. Bishoy since his early youth is taking the conclusive decision regarding his life. He did not care to occupy a certain position, join a certain monastery, or being appointed a priest, but rather he took a decision to become an ambassador of Christ wherever he dwells and under all circumstances. He never deviated from this decision. He was appointed a priest and has offered his life as a love offering for the sake of the church of Christ. He cajoled no man, considering every moment of his life to be for the service of the Kingdom of God. He was a jealous man of the church man, respecting its rituals with all his might and caring to hand them over to the next generation without any diversion. Yet, he was not enslaved to the killing letter, but rather practiced it with the spirit. He found the worshipping of the church, with all its prayers, fasting, kneeling and rituals, as a treasure that he kept in his heart, experiencing in it the continuously renewed spirit.

In the beginning of his service in the land of immigration some people tried to dissuade him from adhering to the rites of the church, but he insisted on keeping them and presented them with the attracting spirit of strength. Many immigrants testified that they have experienced the sweetness of many of the church rituals and discovered their secrets in the land of immigration during his service, despite not knowing much about them prior to their immigration.

His church life was in harmony with his biblical life. In his practicing of the church rituals, you would feel that he is adhering to Bible of the church; in his studying and meditating in the Holy Book, you would realize that he is indeed a man of the church.

### **The Power of the Spirit and the Victorious Church:**

Our beloved father has lived in hard times, but he believed in the strength of the Holy Spirit, the Granter of victory and triumph. He believed that the distress generates a true and successful testimony and that the church, with its Christ, is able to challenge evil without fear. It is not proper for the believer to live with a spirit of servility and fear, but rather trusting in God's honest promises.

One of the historical narratives that he has often cited was the one he called "The Faith of the Jester":

On the day of celebrating the birth of Julian the Apostate a great ceremony was put in place. All the acrobatic teams have attended this party to commemorate this great day. Prophorius, a pagan jester, volunteered to cynically perform the rituals of the Christians. However, when he started to imitate the rite of the holy baptism and made the sign of the cross on the water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, God enlightened his mind and he beheld a divine grace dwelling upon the water, covering it with a great light. Prophorius ducked himself in the water three times and then came out of the water, put on his clothes, and admitted that he was a Christian. As the attendants thought that he was just making fun of the Christians, he assured them that he has accepted the Christian faith. He was awarded the crown of martyrdom with joy on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Thout, on the second day of the glorious Feast of the Cross!

Fr. Bishoy wrote this story in a separate booklet and used repeated it with a powerful spirit in many meetings, confirming the strength of the cross and the baptism.

Make the sign of the cross over yourselves with courage and let those devils make fun of themselves.

### **St. Antonius**

#### **The Power of the Spirit and Preaching:**

The heart of Fr. Bishoy was inflamed with the spirit. In his visits and meetings with his people, he cared not to talk about the policies or the projects of the church, but rather he used to encourage everyone -one way or the other to enjoy the partnership with Master Christ in the eternal glories. He felt the commitment to encourage every believer to preach with the Bible of Christ. Regarding how to do that, he wrote in one of his booklets: "The mere name Youstina is the strongest preaching". He wrote about how Cybrian, one of the world's famous sorcerers, has tried to use all the power of the devils to seduce that simple girl, Youstina, and how they have failed and have returned with fear. When this sorcerer threatened them that he will believe in Christ if they were unable to bring her to him, one of the devils took the form of Youstina and went to him, but when the sorcerer welcomed her and called her name, the devil could not bear to hear her name and dissipated into smoke. Then, the sorcerer publicly announced: "I am the servant of Jesus Christ, the true God of Youstina".

"God is willing to preach with merely your name, my dear brother and sister reader, if you endure in Christ."

“Youstina showed us the secret of the divine strength in preaching: Every man or woman that endures in Christ through continuous prayers and the different means of grace, the mere mention of his name would become a strength that cannot be reckoned. The name of the Christian boy or girl becomes a light and his mere name a preaching”.

What Father Bishoy has recorded in his booklet reveals his realization of the spirit of power in preaching with the mere name of the true believer. This kind of thought comes from his daily experience of the work of the Holy Spirit in his life and from his love unto the spirit of preaching and the testimony for the Biblical truth.

### **The Power of the Spirit and the Word of God:**

Our beloved priest believed that the secret of the strength resides in the word of God that is spirit and life, sweet and attractive. The word of God never departed his lips.

Despite his joviality and the inner peace and joy that he poured unto everyone he met, I have never seen him laughing or joking in church or in his spiritual talks with the youth or the servants.

The word of God poured a spirit of seriousness and hope upon him that he did not know grumpiness or depression. In dealing with the social matters, he used to share in with the others with all his heart, yet the word of God was his constitution, clearly revealing Master Christ in all his actions and words.

### **The Power of the Spirit and the Challenge:**

The words and instructions of Fr. Bishoy were filled with the spirit of challenge, for he believed in and has experienced the work of the fiery Holy Spirit inside him and thus feared no sin, devil or the circumstances that oppose and resist the believer.

Do not let the power of this fire be taken away from you, because many wars from the devil are waged upon you to take away this fire that was given to you from the LORD, for he knows that he has no power over you as long as God’s fire is inside you.

### **St. Antonius**

If the soul dwelled in the partnership of the Holy Spirit, the fire of the spirit and its divine light would keep it from any harm of any evil spirit, for as it approaches the soul, it would be burned by the fire of the heavenly Spirit.

If the soul was granted this heavenly fire and the love of the spirit, it would be set free from the love of the world and from all corruption of the lusts, and its nature would change from the dryness of the sin.

**St. Macarius**

### **The Power of the Spirit and the Little Flock:**

Under the title of "The Largeness of the Little Flock", our beloved Fr. Bishoy recorded what has occupied his mind and heart, namely the church. It is the little flock that lives with honesty and who the evil people accuse of being an odd small flock, for it adheres unto chasteness in the midst of a generation that pleasures sin, abstains the materialistic matters in the midst of a society that fights over them, and lives by Christ and His Bible in the midst of a world that runs away from the cross and the sweet yoke of Christ. As this flock gets smaller, the world considers it odd and helpless. However, Fr. Bishoy looks upon the strength of the Spirit that guides this generation and works in it, enjoying the divine promise: "Fear not little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" [Luke 12:32].

He said: [It is the flock of the Day of the Pentecost that was carried and guided by the fiery power of the Holy Spirit. The little flock lived and still lives by the great power of the Spirit of God wherever it dwelled in the world. In brief: "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" [1 John 4:4]. The little flock does not need anything but the faith and to discover the great power residing inside it. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith" [1 John 5:4]. Praying is the only way to receive this strength in our lives].

Furthermore, he said: [If the lambs of the flock entered with their physical strength into a fight with the wolves, it would definitely lead to their defeat; rather they ought to depend on the faith in God's strength inside them that alone is capable of defeating the wolves and turning them into lambs].

### **The Power of the Spirit and the Heavenly Wedding:**

Under the title of "The Spirit and the Bride", our beloved Fr. Bishoy has recorded in brief and with the spirit of power the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the heavenly bride:

1. The Holy Spirit is the One that chose the bride and presented her to Christ, the heavenly Groom, for no man could know Christ but by the Holy Spirit [1 Corinthians 12:3]. He calls unto the loyal souls that desire the truth and prepares them for the wedding, like He did with

Cornelius, for it was said about him: "And they which believed were astonished... because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost" [Acts 10:45]. This was the only time in which the Holy Spirit was received even before the baptism as an announcement for the invitation of the nations unto the faith. It is an invitation to the engagement of the nations unto the heavenly Groom. During the speech of St. Peter, the Holy Spirit has pricked in the hearts for repentance and faith [Acts 2:37]. We, who were born from Christian parents, were given this invitation for free. The Apostle tells us to make our calling and election sure [2 Peter 1:10].

2. Out of the great love of the Spirit unto the bride and because of the greatness of the Groom to which it will be wedded, He accepted to make her soul and her body His own temple [1 Corinthians 6:19] by anointing her with the holy oil.
3. The Holy Spirit ornaments the bride with heavenly gifts and suitable fruits unto the bride of Christ [Galatians 5:22] so that she would become a pure and beautiful bride that is perfumed with all powders of the merchant [Songs 3:6].
4. The Holy Spirit leads the bride to move in perfect harmony with the advancement of the Spirit; whither the Spirit was to go, she goes [Ezekiel 1:12] until she becomes one with the Spirit [1 Corinthians 12:13].
5. The Holy Spirit gives the bride all her needs during her journey; He grants her the flesh and the blood of the Son of God for her eternal life and the open Bible that pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul, the spirit, and of the joints and marrow [Hebrews 4:12]. He takes what is of Christ and tells her [John 16:14] so that she would have the mind of Christ [1 Corinthians 2:16] and carry His icon.
6. The Holy Spirit weds the bride to the heavenly Groom.
7. Finally, our beloved Fr. Bishoy tells us about the protectiveness of the Spirit over the bride and His grief over her diversion. He wrote: [I attended a sacrament of marriage at St. Mark church in Alexandria – that sacred place where his blood was shed, then I knew that the wedded couple was heading from St. Mark, where they received the Holy Spirit, to a hotel, where they spent their night in a party with an almost-naked dancer where the spirit of the devil dwelled! God despises this twisted halting, for it is a betrayal unto the Holy Spirit].

He cried out, saying: [Oh, how many times did I also stand before the altar, carrying the body of the LORD in my hands, yet my heart was not pure and filled with the love unto every man?! Isn't this also a corrugation?!].

[What about me, the priest that serves the altar? How can I not have one spirit with my fellow priests, my bishop and the committee of my church? It is one church with one Holy Spirit!].

### **Christ corrects the Concept of Power:**

St. Jacob of Serog wrote us an article to correct the concept of power. This article was published by Philopatron House in 1995 under the title: "The Other Cheek and the Second Mile". The following came in this article:

#### ***1. The Power and the Cross:***

The powerful Almighty has come to put His power on the cross in order to save, renew and revive, so as to turn the power of death from being a destruction and loss to being a life, salvation and resurrection. Isn't this a power as well? The cross used to be a symbol of torture and death, but God has turned it to a crown of salvation, a sign for life, and a seal for the inheritance of the Kingdom. He died on the cross, turning it through His resurrection into a source of salvation. He turned death, the death of the criminals, from a scary end to a light and salvation.

#### ***2. The Power to do Good:***

The power is the ability to do good, be kind, compassionate, humble, helpful and giving. Thus, do you accept the law of life, O fruit of dust, so that you would become a plant of heaven in the only Son!

#### ***3. The Power and turning the other Cheek:***

One of the students of the Greek philosophers has once asked me about the feasibility of turning the other cheek and said: How could this teaching accord with the system of the universe? He even added: This teaching would make the righteous obey the evil, giving the opportunity for all kinds of evil to spread and destroy all what is sacred in the society. I asked him about the view of forgiveness in the Greek philosophy. He kept quiet for a while as if he did not understand my question. When I repeated the question one more time, he still kept silent. Here, I told him: "You did not think about forgiveness in a philosophical manner, because the philosophy does not care about the curing, the renewal or the salvation of the soul. Only the Bible teaches the renewal and the curing of the soul.

#### ***4. The Power and the Second Mile:***

He that trusts in the power of love would take the risk and walk the extra mile so as to destroy with his humbleness the authority of the unjust. Love extinguishes the fire of wars and the water of peace alone can separate the volcanoes of quarrels. How many times did a tender word heal the anger of an ignorant or did a true humble word keep an angry king from destruction? How many times did a sweet honest smile save lives from the destructive pain? Do not make fun of the peace, because it is like the water; can you make fun of the water in the times of thirst? Do not despair of love, because it is like the air; would you despair of the air that you breathe all the time?

***5. The Power of Anger:***

Do not let the evil surreptitiously sneak into your heart through anger, because this power can move the dragon of pride; and this dragon can kill all who do not pay attention to it or who do not realize that he is hiding within the folds of the soul.