

St. Theodore of Shotep (St. Tadros El-Shatby)

Objective

To become familiar with St. Theodore's life and to practically apply his example to our lives

Scriptural Verse

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." 1 Timothy 6:12

References

1. Coptic Synaxerium – www.copticchurch.net
2. Holy Bible
3. "St. Theodore of Shotep" Convent of St. Theodore, Egypt.
4. Movie with English subtitles (**St. Tadros El-Shatby**)

Lesson Guidelines

It may be helpful to read part or all of St. Theodore's story out loud during class.

1. Fighting the good fight of faith – there are many things in the world today that contradict our faith. Our culture's belief on how we should dress and behave to impress, how we should be politically correct, how to make easy money, how to backstab, lie and cheat to get further in life. Our struggle is to maintain our purity in the midst of this world and to be watchful at all times. Never letting our guard down. This is a difficult battle as St. Paul says – Ephesians 6:12.
2. Theodore came from a rough environment – an idol worshipping mother who forced his father to leave home. He lost his Christian role model at home, his father. This did not stop him from searching for the truth and knowing God. Sometimes we let our home environment, and our past prevent us from knowing God. We victimize ourselves and we use these circumstances as excuses for our actions. However, we need to let go of these strings that hamper us and pull us down, we need to forgive and forget, and we need to be responsible for our actions. Once we let go of these restraints we will be able to have a true relationship with God.
3. Genuine care for others – he quenched the thirst of his soldiers and saved the woman's children. How many times do we put our desires aside to help someone else and make someone happy?. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives – the joy that we have within us from the Holy Spirit will bring joy to others (Isaiah 61:1). This is the confession that we make in the presence of witnesses.
4. The aim of the confession that we make is not to bring glory to ourselves but to God. Through all of St. Theodore's great works, people believed in Christ. The aim of our work is not to gain popularity, or fame but to bring glory to God and to let others know about Him.
5. He did not fear death – we fear death because we are not sure of our destination after death. However, if we live our lives in readiness for the moment that we face God, we will not fear death. We will actually look forward to the moment that we unite with Him.

6. The reward is that we, like Theodore, will lay hold of eternal life.

Conclusion

St. Theodore's life is an example of how we need to struggle and fight all odds in our life in order to gain eternal life. We must struggle against the issues we face in society and at home through the work of the Holy Spirit. Not only are we required to struggle but we are also required to witness to others by doing acts of kindness to others.

Activities/Workshop

1. What aspect of Theodore's life touched you the most?
2. What did you learn from it?
3. What are other ways to fight the good fight of faith?
4. What promises does God give to those who fight the good faith?