

The Tradition
The Church's Heartbeat Through the Ages

Written by **Reverend Angelos Gerges Shenouda**

Translated by:



True coptic orthodoxy

"the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"

Jude 1:3

Book: Tradition

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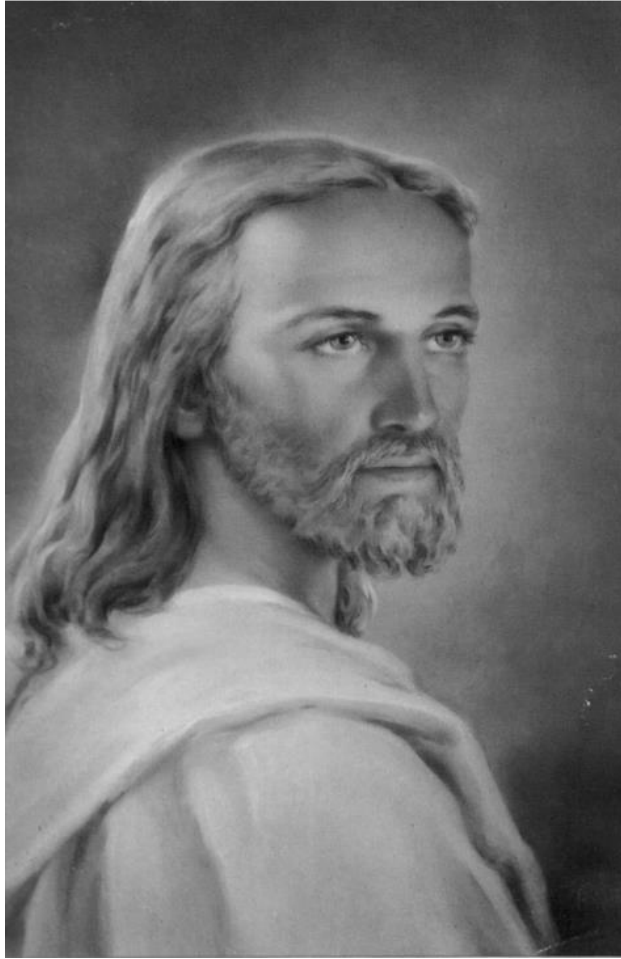
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His holiness

Pope shenouda III

Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark

Introduction

Third edition

Dear reader, in our world there is a lot of doubt and little truth. But in the church, you find all the truth.

In our personal life there are many differences and few agreements, but in the Church, there must be no differences, but rather we find the unity of light, the unity of truth, and the unity of salvation. Because the Church is not an institution subject to doubt, criticism, or interpretations. But it is the body of Christ given for our salvation and the salvation of the whole world.

Therefore, our faith must be firm, and our Christ is one, and our Church is above all the currents of the world, its wars, arrows, and weaknesses because it is Christ who brings us all together in a salvific membership towards eternity.

The Lord can enlighten your mind through the prayers of the Virgin, the intercessor of humanity and all the martyrs and saints, and through the prayers of His Holiness, our beloved father, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III.

Reverend Father:

Angelos Gerges Shenouda

The Church through time is a single unit that has not undergone change or development by deletion or addition, but rather its depths. We see it in the Old Testament, established by the thought of God, realized in the Church of the New Testament, and shining in eternity, because it is not a human institution subject to change, but rather it is a divine work for the salvation of mankind.

May and the Church, according to the apostolic expression, is a group of believers united in the body and blood of the Lord. This definition is called by the fathers the definition of "Eucharist" as if we do not know a church without the Eucharist because in the body of Christ on the altar the persons are dissolved so that they all become one unit. As the Apostle Paul said about the Church:

"To gather all things in Christ"

(Eph 1:10)

And in the mass prayers in which the fathers the apostles prayed, they used to say: "Just as this broken bread was scattered on the mountains and became one when its parts were completed, so let your church be a group of ends of the earth to enter into your kingdom" (Didache *9:4).

So, the church is not walls, not separate rites, not an abstract thought of a rational philosophy. When we describe Church, we describe the body of Christ, and when we describe church's life, we describe life with Christ, and when we describe church's rituals, we describe a life lived with Christ. Therefore, all the attributes of Christ are also given to the Church by exalted grace, which is the body of Christ...

One body, inseparable, immutable, and indivisible, and the church that Christ delivered to the apostles after the resurrection must be the same church that we live in today in our time. As lived by all the fathers in all previous times. .

When we preserve the image of the Church that we received from the fathers... we preserve the body of Christ delivered to us. Therefore, we see Pope Dioscorus, the

patriarch, who was the hero of the Council of Chalcedon when he refused to sign a document saying that Christ had two natures and two wills. He said that he did not accept this faith despite the empress's insistence on torturing him to accept this contrary faith. But he refused and said: "I do not innovate; I preserve the faith of the fathers." They beat him, plucked his chin hair, and broke his teeth, so he took his chin hairs and teeth and put them with a message to the church in the church. Egypt and said to them, "This is the fruit of faith, so hold on to it and preserve it." On this basis, the Church of Egypt rejected the royalist doctrine (that is, coming from the king).

Because the king imposed a new doctrine. This is the Church, the unity of life and faith delivered to us by Christ to the apostles and fathers.

So... it is not only the written Gospel, but it is Christ incarnate, it is not the faith formulated in rigid molds, but it is the faith lived through rituals and thought, and the life of the fathers and the patristic writings.

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem says:

"O you who kindle the torches of faith... keep them in your hands, unquenched."

Therefore, we must see that the approach of the one church over time does not change, and the handed down life of the apostles and fathers does not change. But whoever preserves this church for us, and this faith is not only written in the Bible, but it is preserved in what is called tradition or patristic submission.

This preserves true faith. Because Satan is trying to change what we have received so that we lose the strength of our faith, and he creates it through people who sneak into the herd to distort the handed down faith. Whoever does not adhere to the ecclesiastical faith will fall into the net of Satan. That is why St. John Al-Darji says: This is from *"the wolves trying to rob the strong sheep through the weak sheep."*

First: the concept of tradition:

This word in English comes with the meaning of “Tradition” and in Greek Parades (paradosis), the direct and literal meaning is hand-to-hand delivery, and the ecclesiastical terminology means handing over the teaching from the apostles to the church. And handing over faith, organizational matters, and ecclesiastical arrangements for collective worship and the salvation of believers, and from them to us, in a way that achieves our salvation and union with Christ.

The Arabic word. The word imitation is derived from the necklace, and this word is said when someone hands over something or a job, so we say: “So-and-so imitates his job or imitates his sword.”

There is confusion in the minds of some between imitation and imitation, as imitation does not mean imitation of a person or thing, but it means that a person surrenders another person, and this is the Church’s idea of salvation.



Tradition is divided into two types:

1. A faith tradition:

This has not and will not change through time or evolve with human thought, and nothing can be added or deleted from it, and we find it in the early church represented in the one thought of preaching, as it is in Egypt, Jerusalem, Europe and Asia one without change. This is what the Lord Jesus commanded them, when he said:

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

(Mark 16:15)

And when he also said:

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. And behold, I am with you always until the end of the age"

(Matt. 28:19).



noticed with me, my dear, that he sends them to all nations with one thought, which he commanded and taught them, and asked them to deliver him and teach him to all nations, and he is with us all. days, that means

Ruffins of Akilia, around 400 AD, says the following:

"Our ancestors tell us that the Holy Spirit, after the ascension of the Master, when he settled on each of the apostles in the form of the Sunnah of fire to understand them in all languages. They received an order from the Master to disperse and go to all nations to preach the word of God. to proclaim it, so that, when they are separated, they should not be in danger of teaching a different doctrine to those who draw them to faith in the rosary. So, when they were all gathered and filled with the Holy Spirit, they wrote this brief summary of their future good tidings, sharing what each one had of one belief, and affirming that this rule is what they should hand over to the believers, and for various and just reasons they wanted to call this rule a law.



2. Expressive tradition:

It is the image in which faith is expressed, and this expression can vary according to time, place, and civilization, but it does not differ in concepts and effects. We see this, for example, in art, rituals, icons, and melodies. In iconography, it is said that the thought of the ancient Coptic artist was drawing the head large because it is the center of thought and faith, and the body is short because it does not care about the desires of the body, and the hands are large for use in prayer, and the eyes are large as a sign of enlightenment. Western art, but this difference does not prejudice faith.

We also find that there are types of liturgies “Basile, Gregory, Cyril,” and this difference is an expressive difference for one meaning, which is the work of the sacrament of the Eucharist. Because the liturgy is like a ritual with a tradition of faith, and it is the part that we received from the Lord Christ, through which the work of sanctification and the transformation from bread and wine to the body and blood takes place. And expressive imitation, such as some of the following: Mass to another, according to the image of each people's special expression. For example, there is a difference in rituals between us and Syria despite the complete union and communion in everything in my faith. We even mention the Syriac Patriarch and they mention the Pope of Alexandria in us and we can eat together, and practice church life together. Because we are one church by faith, but the expressive traditions are different.

However, this difference in the expressive tradition between the churches does not make us ever doubt for a moment that there is a difference in the apostolic tradition. We find that all churches until the fifth century taught a single theological education.

The salvation that was accomplished by the death of Christ on the cross is obtained in all churches by faith and the practice of the salvific sacraments, namely baptism, chrism, the Eucharist, repentance, and confession combined. **Church tradition**: It is the ecclesiastical faith, ecclesiastical life, and the systems through which what the apostles taught is done according to the commandment of Christ, as he said before the ascension:

“Teach them to keep all that I commanded you”

(Matthew 28:19).

We can also follow this method, the patristic tradition, to see the correctness of what we live by now from the writings of the fathers in the early centuries, and through their interpretations of the Holy Bible, they presented us with the Holy Bible in the Church, rather, the church was the way they lived the Bible. We preserve these writings that testify to the authenticity of the life of the Orthodox Church. The sacred tradition that we have received and handed over to you is the ecclesiastical organizations and the method of obtaining salvation through the practice of the sacraments and even the life of faith within Christian homes.



Second: Sources of Tradition:

1. Tradition is the unwritten teachings of Christ:

The Bible has made it very clear to us that there are teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ that were not written. He says:

“And he appears to them for forty days and speaks of matters concerning the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3)..

after His resurrection during the forty days, was speaking to them about the preaching of the new kingdom, which is the Church. Therefore, when the apostles went out to preach in the world after the day of Pentecost, we found them teaching the same belief in the same one. And the image of the Church was one despite their differences in culture, thought, and different societies. But none of them thought or thought a different way. We did not find any of the churches that did not hold a mass, did not pray with psalms, were not baptized by immersion, and had taught about salvation without the sacraments. This confirms their handing over these matters from Christ Himself. That is, there is only one source, as St. Paul the Apostle said:

“For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and said, Take, eat. This is my broken body, likewise the cup, saying, this cup is for the new covenant in my blood” (1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

And we will see in it afterward that the oral teaching (tradition) is the teaching that was the most general of the early church, not the written one.

2. Teachings and life of our fathers the apostles:

The teachings of the Fathers and the Apostles were preserved orally in the Church through the rites and ecclesiastical organizations that are preserved for us by multiple manuscripts, such as the Doctrines and the Laws of the Apostles, as it is also handed down for generations, from the fathers to their children 100 AD.

Origen says:

“We must know that the holy apostles, in their preaching of the faith in Christ, conveyed in clear expressions the faith which they deemed necessary to convey.”

Saint Jerome says:

“The law of our faith and our hope was passed down to us by the apostles.”

3. The Apostolic Fathers:

They are the ones who received the church from the apostles in the second century, including Mar Ignatius, Polycarp, Pentinos, and Clement. And they wrote, taught, and preserved for us the oral teachings of the forefathers, and the apostles, and wrote them down, and we will see their words about what they memorized later.

Mar Ignatius of the Apostolic Fathers says:

"Christians are God-bearers, Christ-bearers, and temple-bearers. The Christian is not seen individually with Christ, but in union with the multitude of believers and the practice of the Church's sacraments."

So, this is the Christian life, not a book, papers, and ink, but a harmonious life within the church, all of its members bearing the features of Christ and carrying the power of the Holy Spirit through the ecclesiastical mysteries.



4. Councils:

In the third century, heresies began to appear, and ecumenical councils were held (that is, which includes all the churches of the world). The church used to meet in the council to discuss the ideas of heretics or heresies, and the council continued for days and nights until all the bishops reached the formulation of the handed down faith from the fathers. This is so that no one will go astray in the ages that will come after them, and until they deliver the one and true deposit of faith, through thought, education, life, worship, and collective fellowship. From

This is what happened in all the heresies that the Church faced with all strength and decisiveness. The councils also discussed some ritual matters, such as the celebration of the Feast of Resurrection, as in the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, or the problem of conversion, as in the Council of the Apostles in Jerusalem in the year 48 AD.



5- The Thoughts and the lives of the Fathers was Supported by the Holy Spirit:

After the end of the age of councils in the fifth century, Chaldean and Intention split, in which those who agreed with the Nestorian faith or Leon's publication, which was proclaiming that Jesus had two natures and two wills, left the church. But the Orthodox Church continued to carry the thought and life of the fathers, untainted by any wrong thoughts. And so, with the churches that rejected these changes, we preserved the thought and writings of the Fathers.

Their holiness testifies to the correctness of their approach. Over twenty centuries, the uninterrupted holiness of the Church was important evidence of the correctness of the Orthodox faith, and the lives of the fathers in which the work of our Lord Jesus Christ appears was a witness to the sincerity of the Orthodox path. We still have before us these writings and these bios exist. We must behave as they did in their rituals, thoughts, and lives.

Also, teachings. Tradition is the unwritten teachings of the Lord Christ, who is the Holy Spirit, and his guidance to the church, which cannot be written but delivered in church life. This is what our Lord Jesus said about the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which was not written in the Gospels when he said with his blessed mouth:

"I also have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear it now. But when that Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you to all truth, because he does not speak on his own, but whatever he hears he speaks and tells you of things to come. He glorifies me, because he takes from what he tells you" (John 16: 12-14)

This means that there is a teaching that the Holy Spirit will later proclaim to the church. This is what the fathers handed over to us, and this teaching was not written in the Bible but was preserved through church tradition in all ages...

This is what we have received from them and we teach it to you through rituals, ideas, the handed down approach to life from them, the interpretations of the Holy Bible, and the various teachings of the fathers, which all agreed that they were handed down from the messengers through time.

6. Art:

Among the sources that conveyed to us the tradition and confirmed the validity of what we learned from the apostles are the Christian arts that expressed the spirit in which the fathers lived. Art is an idea formulated in a painting, a book, or a melody. But this wording remains Vivid through the church's experience of these

artistic images through generations. When we go to the monasteries or churches built in the first centuries and see the icons, we cannot see any difference between the churches built in our time or the icons painted in our time.

Even if the style is different, we see the soul as one and the faith one, just as the melodies that we chant now are the same tunes that the early church used to carry our faith, and we repeat in the praise everyday melodies and words called the Theotokos, which were written by the fathers in the early centuries to confront the heresies of Nestorius and others. The Church has kept from entering any strange thought or spirit alien to the Church of the Fathers.



Third: Tradition is not written in the Bible:

The apostolic tradition that we live as an Orthodox Church is the teachings of Christ. It is the purity of the apostolic teaching that is not written in the Bible, and someone might say what is the evidence that there are teachings of the Lord Christ that were not written? How do we know that God can give life and commandments outside the scriptures...?

Come with me, dear reader, to see the Bible itself assures us that there are other teachings preserved by handing over fathers to children outside of what is written in the Bible.

1. The unwritten teaching in the Old Testament:

The Torah was written by Moses, the Prophet, and the prophets, beginning in the 14th and 15th centuries BC. AD, but humanity lived thousands of years before this without a written law, but it lived by the law of tradition, as the grandparents handed it over to the grandchildren of Adam, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, and Jacob. Moses began writing the law and wrote down the tradition that preceded it. By tradition, the natural law was transmitted first within the souls and in the homes, before it was written down in books. Here is the evidence from the Old Testament:

- **Abel's sacrifice:**

"Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord looked at Abel and his offering" (Genesis 4:4).

From where did Abel receive the ritual sacrifice that he offered with faith, as mentioned by the Apostle Paul in (Heb. 11:4).

- **The offerings and sacrifices of the fathers before the written law:**

Like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Those advances were handed down by tradition.

- **Building altars:**

Before he explained to Moses how to build the altar and anoint it with oil, we find Noah, Abraham and the rest of the fathers setting up altars to offer sacrifices (Genesis 8:20, Genesis 12:7) From where did they learn this? And how did they know the idea of offering sacrifices on the altar? And by the handing down and tradition knew all this. And from where did Noah know the clean and impure animals before the revelation of the law and pass them on to his grandchildren and from him to the whole world... It was by tradition.

"And Noah built an altar to the Lord. And he took of all the pure beasts, and of the pure birds, and he offered burnt offerings upon the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet aroma" (Genesis 8:20-21).

And from whence did all mankind know the idea of the priesthood, tithes, and blessing, before God spoke to Moses about it, so that Melchizedek says about Abraham that he is a priest of the Most High:

"And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought bread and wine, and was a priest to the Most High God..." (Genesis 14:18-22).

And the Apostle Paul considers it an image of the priesthood greater than the Levitical priesthood:

"But he who has no genealogy among them gave a tithe to Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without all quarrel the lesser is blessed than the greater" (Hebrews 7:6,7)

How can this be excepted with the teaching transmitted from God to the fathers by tradition? The idea of the priesthood before the priesthood of Aaron was present through tradition. And God says that education and the law are transmitted by handing over from the father to his son, and not by what the father writes, so he says:

"Only take heed, and take very good care of yourself, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they pass away from your heart all the days of your life, and teach them to your children, and to your children's children" (Deuteronomy 4:9).

Do not forget what your eyes saw, not what you read in books. He also says in the Book of Exodus about the Passover lamb:

**“And you shall keep this ordinance for you and your children forever”
(Exodus 12:24).**

And the Hebrew word for memorizing what is written in the Torah is (Sh.m.r.y.m), which means the one who watches over me and makes sure to achieve it. Memorizing is not for letters and words, but for the meaning of the livelihood.

And now, my dear...

You can realize that oral education is the most common tradition, because the subject of reading and writing has spread only in recent times. If education is only books and papers, then this means that only educated people will learn the word of God, and these are few in many eras. Therefore, the focus had to be on imitation (handing over from one person to another and from one generation to the next) to spread the teaching and commandments of God.



2. Unwritten teaching in the New Testament:

In the New Testament, we see the living Church in Christ based more on the lived life than on the written. Here we do not underestimate the written, but the Church in the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ is wider than the written and larger than the papers. Rather, the teachings of the Lord Christ to the apostles, and what he wrote of it are very few and not mentioned what he delivered to them orally. If what is written in the Bible is only what we must believe and live. Thus, we have missed many teachings that are required of us, and we did not know them because they were not written as we will see.

As Saint Gregory of Nyssa says:

"God's various wisdom has now been revealed through the church, how he became flesh, and how death was united to life, so we were healed by his wounds and his crucifixion... All this or other work of divine wisdom which the friends of the bridegroom learn through the church and gives them a new heart so that they may perceive divine wisdom."

→ Now come with me to see what the Lord Christ taught and did not write in the Bible:

- The Lord Christ has been learning all day long in the Sermon on the Mount, and what he wrote from it, in three chapters of the Gospel of Matthew (5, 6, 7) and this does not take more than half an hour to read it, so there are rest of the teachings that were not said! Where did you go??
- I tell you that it is the apostolic tradition that is not written. • He spoke to them about the kingdom of heaven in (Luke 1109). What did he say to them...? And where is this talk with its utmost importance? Because he was teaching them about the kingdom of God. Is it lost? Of course not, but he is a handed down by tradition.
- He was preaching to everyone in Peter's ship (Luke 5:3).

- He preached in the synagogue and in the houses every day (Luke 6:16, 5:9)
- He taught in many cities and villages (Luke 13:32).
- He was teaching every day in Jerusalem in the last days (Luke 9:27).
Imagine with me if the teachings of Christ in the last week were lost because they were not written, we would have missed the important teachings of Christ for salvation.
- He used to appear to his disciples for forty days talking to them about matters about the kingdom of God (Acts 1-3). Also, imagine with me that the Lord Christ said to them, “Teach them all that I commanded you,” and this is lost because it was not written. How do you imagine this? But I assure you not to lose it because it is preserved by tradition.
- This is in addition to the miracles and signs that Jesus performed and were not written to us. As Saint John the Evangelist says:

“And there are many things that Jesus did that, if they were written one by one, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that were written” (John 21:25).

Perhaps someone says, why then did he write the Gospel, if not all the words and life of the Lord Christ? So, we answer him with what St John also said in his gospel to explain to us the purpose of writing the glad tidings:

“But these things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (John 20:30).

That is, the Bible was written for a person to believe in Christ, to him be glory, then enter the church to live and unite with Christ and preserve the teachings delivered to us through the fathers and know how to live as a Christian, as happened to Saul. What happened (Acts 9:3-19)

Dear reader...

Come with me, we examine another story and important evidence of tradition. Do you know when the Bible was written? It was written about thirty years after the preaching.

The Annunciation began in the year 34 AD, and the first book was written in the year 64 AD. During this period, Christianity spread to most parts of the world, including Europe, Jerusalem, Asia, and South Africa. Was this written? No, but by oral tradition. As the Apostle Paul said:

“The gospel that I preached” (Galatians 1:11).

And if you still do not believe, see what the Apostle Paul said:

“As the Lord says, it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:25).

And please, search in all the Gospels. This saying is... You will not find it. Do we feel that there are things that were not written, so we never get upset, because they are oral and not written teachings? And Christ declared the power of tradition and unwritten teachings with force and clarity, as he said:

"I also have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when that Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you to all truth, because he does not speak on his own, but whatever he hears he speaks. And he tells you things to come. He glorifies me because he takes what is mine and tells you."

(John 16:12-14)

But dear reader... We must also know an important rule, so where is this?

The teachings that the Holy Spirit taught and are related to important teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he did not say them. Where did you write? Is it lost and faith also incomplete? Of course not. Rather, they are preserved in the Church. These teachings intended by our Lord Jesus are the ecclesiastical renunciation of the Christian life. Tradition must be compatible with the Bible. There can be nothing in Tradition against any letter in the Bible. The Gospel lives in tradition, and tradition is confirmed by the Gospel.

Perhaps someone rejects tradition based on the verse that says:

“Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?” (Matthew 15:3)

To these we say that this verse was said by the Lord Christ, not about church tradition, because there was no church tradition, but he said it about the tradition of the Pharisees, which was against the commandment of God, and this does not happen in church tradition. All the tradition of the Fathers is by the commandments of the Gospel. Despite this, Christ said about the teachings of the Pharisees, which also contain their traditions.

“Whatever they told you to keep, keep it and do it; but according to their works you shall not do, for they say, and they do not”

(Matthew 23:23).



3. Tradition in the Thought of the Apostles: -

- Oral delivery was the method of teaching and preaching among the Apostles that is still preserved by our Orthodox Church.

As our fathers the apostles say:

“We have sent Judas and Silas, and they will tell you the same things orally.”

(Acts 15:27)

As we know that the first Gospel was written in about the year 64 AD, the apostolic teaching was oral, that is, by the handed down tradition, from persons who are the apostles to the Church under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, as Saint John the Apostle says:

“What we have seen and heard we will declare to you”

(1 John:3).

The teaching of the apostles to the churches was transmitted by tradition:

“For we were all also baptized by one spirit into one body, whether we were Jews or Greeks” (Colossians 12:13).

Saint John says in his second letter:

“As I had much to write to you, I did not want it to be on paper and ink, for I hope to come to you and speak mouth to mouth, that our joy may be complete.”

Personal interaction and oral speech were preferred by the apostles, and the Apostle Paul says:

“As for the rest, when I come, I will arrange them.”

(1 Corinthians 11:34)

Corinth is a church that received the Christian faith, so what is the need for the coming of the Apostle Paul? What are those matters that he arranges except for the rituals and traditions of life in the Church? The Apostle Paul also says to Titus:

“For this reason, I left you in Crete, that you might complete what was lacking, and appoint elders in every city, as I commanded you.”

(Titus 1:5)

And elders in the Greek translation are Abros Vitaros, meaning priests, and the Lord Christ did not write about him that he spoke of setting up priests, but he taught the apostles the importance of this, so they preached in many places and built churches and established bishops, priests and deacons to shepherd the church of God that he purchased with his blood.

- We also find in the ancient Jewish tradition the story of the disappearance of the body of the prophet Moses and the quarrel that took place between the angel Michael and Satan over the body (Jude 9), while in the Old Testament only the mourning and disappearance of the body of the prophet Moses (Deuteronomy 34:6). But this is quoted from the tradition in the Old Testament, and St. Jude mentions it as a handed down fact.
- And St. Paul the Apostle says:

And they all drank the same spiritual drink, because they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

(1 Corinthians 10:4)

But in the Book of Numbers and the Book of Exodus, he did not say that the rock followed the people while they were in the wilderness.

And the apostle Paul mentions the names of the two who resisted Moses the prophet, namely Jannes and Jambres (2 Timothy 3:8), although their names were not mentioned in the Book of Exodus, he knew them by oral tradition. St Judah says:

" The faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. "

(Judas 3)

We notice the handed down and not the written, and no one thinks that this is a devaluation of the value of the written, but the written has a role and imitation has another role. Saint Paul the Apostle says:

“Stand therefore, brothers, and hold fast to the teaching which you have been taught, whether by word or by our message” (2 Thessalonians 2:5).

The word “education” here in the Greek text comes with the meaning of “tradition” (paradosis), which means that oral speech is in the same position as written speech. So, he recommends that they also stick to it.

- He says to his disciple Timothy that it is a tradition that guarantees the continuity of the Church's work, so he must entrust trustworthy and competent people to teach it. He says:

“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).

Dear reader...

Allow me to pause for a moment at this verse because it is very important in the church tradition, as in this verse St. Paul the Apostle teaches that teaching is

transmitted orally from generation to generation to preserve the apostolic tradition.

In this verse there are four generations:

- 1) What you heard from me by many witnesses (I).
- 2) You leave it (II).
- 3) Honest people will be competent (III).
- 4) To teach others (IV).

Although Saint Paul the Apostle was the one who had the idea of accepting all nations in the Church and opening embraces to all, he warned against people who do not behave according to tradition, saying:

“Then we advise you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid every brother who behaves disorderly and not according to the teaching that he received from us.”

(2 Timothy 3:6)

As we mentioned, the teaching here in the Greek text is tradition. The word “arrangement” means order, and the order in the church is the ritual through which the collective prayers are performed, and all the things of the church are organized. No one thinks that the apostles taught the faith in a dry or sterile way, but the faith that the apostles presented is the church itself, so the laws of the apostles organizing the church were also the subject of preaching to the apostles, as the book of Acts says

“As they passed through the cities, they would deliver to them the cases which the apostles and the priests (the elders) who were in Jerusalem had judged, to keep them.”

(Acts 16:4)

So, these which the apostles were handing over are ecclesiastical issues and rulings. So where are these postulates that are what the church preserves as laws and regulations, and this is the apostolic tradition?

Tradition has been transmitted orally from generation to generation through the bishops and priests responsible for education until it reached us honest and trustworthy. As we saw from the Lord Christ to the apostles who cared for him and recommended that he be taught by honest and competent people, these are the fathers of the Church.



4. Tradition in the Thought of the Fathers and History:

And now, dear reader, let us go around the thought of the fathers through the ages, to see and know from them the value of tradition.

- **St. Clement, director of the Theological School of Alexandria in the second century,** says: “These people preserved the handed down tradition directly from the saints Peter, James, John, and Paul, just as the son was receiving from his father until he reached us by God’s will to preserve these apostolic seeds.”
- **And St. Irenaeus (150-210 AD) says:** “The Church is scattered throughout the world, but it has one faith, which was delivered from the apostles and then to the disciples of the apostles, and even though human languages differ, the essence of tradition is the same everywhere.”
- **St. Augustine says:** "All the traditions in the Church are received from the apostles or the councils, and they are the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit."

- **St Chrysostom says:** "The apostles did not write everything in their letters, but rather they taught many things that were not written."

Dear reader...

Do you know the importance of the Bible? Of course, we all know how important it is, but the tradition in the thought of the fathers was broader and more comprehensive than the Bible itself, as the tradition contains everything in the Bible and does not contradict it, but rather makes it live words and real life in the church, **St. Augustine says:** "I did not believe in the Bible Unless the voice of the universal Church persuades me."

- **One of the fathers says:** "If the Bible is lost, you can gather it from the sayings of the fathers."
- **And St. Basil the Great says:** "If we try to omit the unwritten tradition, we abuse the preaching and make the Gospel without a name."

And we have a book of Saint Martyr Hippolytus called (The Apostolic Tradition) ... This book contains the rules of worship and service in the church, and it also contains the rite and system of the three priesthood ordinations, which is the rite of ordination of the bishop, the priest and the deacon. There is also a rite of mass and rite of baptism. And Saint Hippolytus was martyred in the year (235 AD), meaning that this was a ritual that was lived in his time and this cannot be new.

And if he was martyred in the year 235 AD, that is, he received this rite at least between (150-180 AD), and this period is the period that follows the preaching of the apostles exactly, then Saint John departed in about 100 AD, and thus the period between these rites and Saint John fifty years. And when this book is called the apostolic tradition, then this is what he received from the apostles dozens of years ago at most...

→ **Now... let me tell you the opinion of the founders of Protestant thought, those who reject the ecclesiastical tradition of the Fathers:**

- **Martin Luther (Book Descriptions of the Reformers Beirut - the Jesuits)**
says: How much grief and confusion overwhelms me, because I learned this against the Fathers of the Church, who are the famous men and the elite of the world, and among them are many venerable saints such as Ambrose, Athanasius, and Ieronimos. What makes me sad is that turning away from their words distances a person from the Church itself.”
- Historians of our Coptic Church also testify that it has preserved the apostolic tradition, **so it says (Encyclopedia Britannica):** "The Coptic Church is the greatest icon of early Christianity" because it preserved education.
- **Miss Butcher also says in her book in the first volume page 85:** "St Mark handed over the church from the hand of the Lord Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and a church that still preserves this image." **She also says:** "The Coptic Church has preserved, since the time of its founding, the seven sacraments of ecclesiastical Egypt."
- **Butler the historian says:** "Give me a child sings a Coptic melody, and I will tear down the walls of Jericho with it again."
- **All this, my dear...** It confirms to you the extent of the sincerity of the teachings of our Church and its preservation of the image of the Holy Apostolic Patristic Orthodox Church.



Fourth: The Importance of Tradition:

1. By tradition, we can know our Bible and confirm its authenticity when some abuse it, and that is from the writings of the Fathers and what the Church has received from era to era through manuscripts of the early centuries until the modern fathers. In this way, we can guarantee the unity of faith and not compromise any of the forms of the Church delivered to us
2. The tradition was the one who formulated matters of faith and theological concepts, and did not leave anyone to formulate his thought and the faith which was handed down from the apostles. Rather, it is revealed under the patristic formulations of faith. This appeared when Pope Athanasius stuck before Arius in his theological dialogue with formulations received from the apostles, as he wanted Arius to say about Christ that he is similar to the Father and not equal, and this means that they are two different entities. And if this tradition had not been preserved for us, the faith that was handed down to us would have been distorted. That is why Pope Athanasius stuck to the term equivalent and not the term similar to.
3. By tradition, the unity of the Church is preserved in the image of the one body, the worshiper with one rite and one system, and the unity of thought and faith, and the unity of the image that the Lord Christ drew for us, is preserved. Tradition is what made us pray one Mass at certain hours, fast together, and live together in one church.
4. By tradition, the Church preserved the teaching for us from change under the conditions of society, and the Church was able, through its adherence to tradition and the teaching of the fathers, to confront the currents of the age that are trying to split the Church, and it is he who preserved the Church against ideas alien to the spirit of the Church, such as gay and homosexual marriage or the priesthood of women accepted by the groups. Christianity that did not adhere to tradition. He who takes refuge in the Church is kept out of the destructive flood of the world.

my dears...

It is the continuation of the work of the Holy Spirit that guarantees the purification of the Church's teachings, but is it conceivable that the work of the Holy Spirit contradicts the Church's initial thought delivered to us by the apostles...? It is the continued leadership of God's Spirit that unifies the teachings through time. It reveals our mistakes, preserves our faith, and unites us across time and space. We do not find anything in the tradition that contradicts the Bible or the teachings of the apostles, and perhaps someone objects to the establishment of rituals and fasting because they are made by humans like us and say why are they added to the tradition.

She says to them...God specified in the Old Testament the feasts in which the Jews and all the ritual images were restored, but with this also the Jews added new feasts that represented to them the celebrations and occasions they lived with God, such as the Feast of Purim (Esther 9:26-32), and the Feast of Renewal. (1 Maccabees 4:52-59).

And now my dear...

Do you think they got it wrong...? So, what do you think that the Lord Christ celebrated with the Jews on these feasts (John 10:22), meaning that he did not break them or reject them.

Saint Augustine says:

"By the Holy Spirit the soul is purified and nourished. This is the Spirit of God, which cannot be for heretics and dissenters from the Church. Likewise, for those who did not openly separate from it, but separated from it by disobeying it, these have become straw and not wheat despite their presence in it."

Do you understand, my dear, what St. Augustine said, for those who disobey the Church while they are inside it are like heretics who are separated from it, and the Holy Spirit cannot work in them.

Finally, after all I've read...

Gospel According to what you see, we can ignore the tradition and be content with what is written...? My friend, if we leave the church without surrender, we will see it as weak individuals, as each one explains what he sees, and invents ways of life. With God as he wants. People who disagree with it are separated from the Church and become denominations. This is what we see in the Church that does not believe in tradition. It split into 3,600 sects, the last of whom do not believe in the

divinity of the Lord Christ and proclaim misleading teachings, they are Jehovah's Witnesses.

My loved ones...

I want to conclude with testimony by Pope Athanasius about the great Anba Anthony and how much he respected the Church and its laws, despite his great degree of holiness. But the higher a person rises in his spiritual life, the greater his union with the Church, and whoever separates from it cannot find real life. Pope Athanasius says about St Anthony:

"Although he had attained this degree of loftiness, he kept the law of the Church with scrupulousness, and was inclined to honor all the clergy more than he did, because he was not ashamed to bow his head before the bishops and presbyters. He was not ashamed to learn himself, for he often asked his questions, and desired to listen to those who were with him, and if anyone said something useful, he would admit that he had benefited."

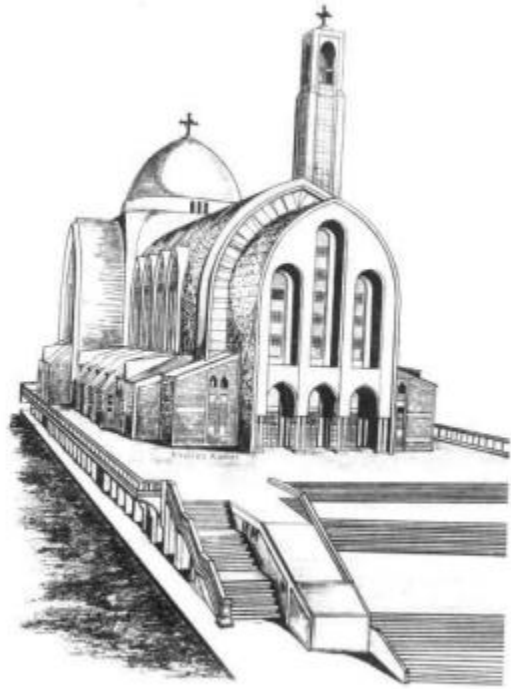
my dears...

How wonderful is our church that fixes its eyes on the Lord Christ, wrapped in the thought and teachings of the apostles. She did not deviate in her journey through time and history from the orthodox straight line, so hold on to your church so that you may become a member in it that extends to eternity.



Prayer

My God
You even loved me
When you wanted me to be your son
You made me your church and your home
I saw you there and I loved you
Because all in it is you
Everything inside is made by you
Its glories and secrets are from your soul
O my father, grant me to live in
your church
I will never be separated from you
Even when you come
You find me a constant watch
And with all your people I praise you
Amen...



Author's books

First: Bible Collection:

1. Diary with the word of life:
2. Genesis
3. Exodus
4. the book of Ezra
5. Hosea's journey
6. Song of Songs "Symphony of Divine Love"
7. Gospel of Luke
8. Salvation management
9. Whoever stabs the light

Second: The group of churches:

1. Existence of God and images of atheism
2. We live by his death
3. Your mind and spirituality of prayer
4. The Tradition

Third: A group of spiritual books:

- Be serious with God
 - You have my heart dedicated
 - I am the way
 - To be for Christ or not to be
 - Life philosophy...
1. With God

2. with self

- Part One: Soul, Body, and Spirit
 - Part Two: Character and Composition
 - Part Three: The Self and its Diseases
1. With the other

Fourth: A group of psychological and social books:

- Life in a turbulent world:
1. the fear
 2. worry
 3. Alienation
 4. life and death

Fifthly: a group of stories:

- When the king got married
- Dawn rises despite the night sometimes

Sixth English Translated Books:

- By His Death We Live
- Planning Of Salvation (Published with CD)