

The Online Evangelism Class

The Need:

Over the years we felt the need to establish an evangelism class to help those who would like to serve the Lord in the fields of evangelism and missionary work. The class deals with the fear we feel and the other issues we usually face when we start thinking about getting involved in evangelism or missionary work. It also deals with obstacles we face in our communities and sometimes in our churches too. In addition, it arms-with the grace of God-the evangelism workers with the knowledge and skills they need to evangelize.

As we know from the Bible and the Tradition, evangelism is the work of every Christian. The book of Acts mentions: “Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). St. Paul-through inspiration of the Holy Spirit established evangelism as the work of every Christian when he said, “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” (1Corinthians 11:26). This is why during celebrating the Divine Liturgy, we all promise God, “Amen. Amen. Amen. Your death O Lord, we proclaim.”

Since evangelism is the committed work of each Christian, then we need to prepare ourselves for this glorified work. This preparation includes prayer, fasting, reading the Bible and spiritual books, devotion of the heart, just to mention a few. Then this class comes as a direct way to get instructions on how to evangelize. Therefore, the class is just a starting point.

The Curriculum:

The class curriculum is a combination of many categories we feel are important for evangelism workers to comprehend. Currently, we have the following categories:

1- **Faith:** To talk or to write to others about Christ and Christianity, you need to have an understanding of the Christian beliefs, such as God’s existence, the Holy Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, just to mention a few. Therefore, we included a few lessons about faith. We present them in a simple, yet powerful way. We avoided hard technical theological or scientific terminology.

2- **The Bible:** There are a few topics to introduce you to the Bible and instruct you on how to use the Bible in evangelism.

3- **The Church:** The Church is an important aspect of evangelism, because Christ left behind not a book but a live Church that was entrusted with all the mysteries of the kingdom of God. The Church kept these mysteries received from Christ until today as the main channels for spirituality and for union with Christ. Consequently, the curriculum includes a few topics about the Church, its mysteries, its liturgical life and liturgical year, and how to live her spirituality.

4- **History of Evangelism:** The history of evangelism is a great manifestation of God’s work. It shows how the Holy Spirit worked through the Church to spread the word of God. It also shows how human behaviors and thoughts were obstacles of spreading

the word of God, and how the word of God spread like a fire when evangelism workers and the Church were willing to think over their thoughts and behaviors. As the old wise saying, ‘History repeats itself,’ the evangelism obstacles sometimes are the same through out history.

5- **How to Evangelize:** This is the main core of the curriculum which explains how to evangelize and to conduct missionary work. There are lessons that explain in great detail the following kinds of evangelism: Individual Evangelism, Evangelism Using the Media, Evangelism using Tourism, Evangelism of International Students, Evangelism through the Church, Evangelism Through Writing, Evangelism through merciful deeds (such as introducing Christ to prisoners, homeless, and the like).

6- **Spiritual Life:** Since spiritual growth is an important ingredient in the life of evangelism workers, the curriculum presented a few lessons to help evangelism workers in their day-to-day spiritual life

7- **The Fathers of the Church:** To introduce people to Christ, you need to introduce them to the Church that was entrusted, by Christ, with the faith, worship, and the mysteries of His kingdom. There is one Church that was started by Christ and continued and will continue to exist until the end of the world, as St. Paul explained, “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, **one faith, one baptism**, One God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:4-6) This Church is the Church which kept the once for all delivered faith, as St. Jude said, “I felt the necessity to write to you **appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints**” (Jude 1:3). The Fathers of the Church are the keepers of this handed down faith. Therefore, it is important to know the Fathers and to start reading the Fathers.

Conducting the Class:

- 1- The class is an online class, which means there is no place to meet or lectures to attend and there is no specific time to listen to instructions.
- 2- There is a new posted lesson every other Friday. You have two weeks to study the lesson and then answer the questions or do the assignment (Usually it needs a maximum of two hours bi-weekly)
- 3- Lesson is posted on the “Coptic Orthodox Evangelism Fellowship of North America” web page,” <http://evangelismcopticorthodox.org/>
- 4- To make you aware of a new lesson, there is a message sent to the “Coptic **Evangelism in North America**” group.
- 5- Most lessons have questions or assignments. These are parts of the class requirements. Please answer them before the following class and send the answers to the personal e-mail of the instructor

Class Requirement:

- 1- The main requirement is a heart full of love of Christ and salvation of others
- 2- Commitment to complete lessons and its questions or assignments
- 3- Age: Senior high school and up
- 4- An active member of an Orthodox Church and attends the Divine Liturgy and partakes of the Holy Communion
- 5- Fill out the Registration Form.

Group Services:

1- Have questions? As you go through the lessons in this class, you may have some questions that you would like to have answered, either related or unrelated to the curriculum. There is a Question and Answer Session every other week, currently on Sunday nights at 8:30 PM using an online forum. There will be regular updates about this posted to the group.

2- There is a weekly prayer meeting on Tuesday nights at 10:00 PM. If you have any requests, you can post them to the group. If not, please participate in this prayer meeting as we unite as one heart through God in prayer.