

# His Holiness Pope Tawadros II speech at the celebration of the tenth anniversary of His Holiness's sitting on Saturday, 19-11-2022

The celebration "from generation to generation" shows that God is the leader of the church, and that the Lord Christ is the owner of the church, and he is the one who leads it with his grace and his holy spirit. He leads the church without looking at people. He works in all generations, in all situations, with all people; Man lives while he enjoys the work of God at his hand.

**First:** I would like to thank those in charge of this evening since the beginning of our entry into the hall with the beautiful choir and the hymns and chants that they presented in a sweet way. The nice thing is that they said old hymns that have passed 60 years or more, and modern hymns that were recently composed, and so on "from generation to generation." And as you saw in the booklet that was distributed to you: Pictures of the great patriarchs Pope Kyrillos and Pope Shenouda, and we are their children, and God works in us, even in some situations you find the same behavior and the same method... It is the spirit of God that works in us.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat of the Holy Synod, and all the venerable Fathers of the Holy Synod, for their love, service, support, interdependence, work, toil, and interest in the Church, both internally and externally, in every form.

In addition, I thank the Secretariat of the Holy Synod and the beloved Fathers who have organized this evening. I offer special thanks to our beloved father, Abouna Boulous Halim, and Abuna Raphael Tharwat, for the general management of the success of this session. I thank the choir team that started with us here from the diocese of Banha and Quesna. I thank His Eminence Bishop Daniel, Bishop of Maadi and Secretary General of the Holy Synod, for the words of love he said. I thank the three fathers-priests who spoke about their contemporaneity with the patriarchs: our father Elijah, our father John and our father Theophilus, and the beautiful memories they presented to us. I thank the video films that were shown and the beautiful presentations. I thank the youth, Andrew Ramzi, for their kind dialogue and questions, and the presenter, Nancy Magdy, for presenting it... I deeply thank everyone...

One day we – I mean the bishops - entered our monasteries as monks asking for monasticism. We entered the monastery and did not look for anything else. We loved the monastic life for many reasons, and we entered the monastery after abandoning many things, each one according to his circumstances. We had no desire in our mind or within us except to live and enjoy the dust of the saints, the father of the monastery, and my brothers the monks. Life became part of paradise, and the program for the day was waking up to praise, then mass, and each of us would go to work, then we would meet at one o'clock at the dining table, at four o'clock in the afternoon, sunset and sleep, then time for those who wanted to walk in the wilderness or pray, whether alone or with their brothers. And at night we return to our cells, and each

one has a spiritual program according to the arrangement of his confessor. We sleep for a few hours, then we do the rosary, and nothing else distracts us.

When we were serving in the world, we were raised in the service, and we learned a lot in it, but the most important thing I learned in the service is the word "present (7ader)". I remember that some of our servants used to give us a lecture called "Now". How sweet is this word, it includes human faith, surrendering life, and safety of the way. Personally, I love the word "present" and use it a lot, and I say it with my feelings. Our life in the monastery revolved around two words: the word "present," which I learned in the service and found in the monastery, and the second word I learned in the monastery was the word "I was mistaken, (I have sinned)" and life became between these two words. "Present" and we obey without thinking because we put trust in the father teacher and the word "I have sinned" that we say from our heart, because I may have made a mistake without realizing it.

The few years that I spent in the monastery planted out in me these strong meanings, and they instilled in me these meanings even when I went down to serve. church family or even in the community. I lived serving this concept and enjoying it, and one day I was told that I would be a secretary of service, so I said "present" and it was not until I graduated. Then I entered the monastery, and after a while, I was told to go down to the world to serve, so I said: "Now." And I was told to serve in the desert area, and I worked hard in service and work. Then God chose our weakness to lead the church, and it was a surprise to me, something I hadn't thought of at all. I remember my very hurt feelings. The great service that we used to hear about Pope Shenouda and hear directly from him, how will I do it? A few days before the casting, I went to the father of my retiring confessor, Anba Sarabamon, the bishop and abbot of the Anba Bishoy Monastery, and I told him about my indescribable fears, and I kept talking while he was silent, listening attentively to me. And repeat it a second time and a third time. And although I memorize this verse that we pray every day in an early prayer, when it came out of the mouth of the father of confession while I was seeking his advice and guidance, it came out carrying its strength or showing its strength in front of me, as if it opened my consciousness to something new, and I began to repeat it in my life every day in many situations, and I admit before you that these words have become like a balm in my life.

If I were asked about the experience that I have come out with over the past few years, it is this verse. Everything was in Him: all our life on the homeland and our relationship with others, and our life in the administration of the Church with all its dimensions and activities. Without Him, nothing would have been; God's hand is working and active, do not look at people, for people are tools in God's hand. Look at the working hand of God, and he who looks at the working hand of God is always positive. We say in prayer: "Let us give thanks

to the doer of good deeds..." He does nothing but good. I remember that at the time of the attacks on the churches on August 13 and 14, 2013, and it was a difficult day, and I only had nine or ten months in the Patriarchate, and I did not know what to do or say, and I was in the Monastery of St. Mina, and I was receiving calls informing me of what was happening. I prayed a little and answered the phone, and opened the Bible, but I read without concentration. About 100 churches, schools, buildings, and shelters were burned, but there was peace in my heart even though the accident was heartbreaking. I was sure that what was destroyed would be built again. What was preoccupying me was the safety of the land: the safety of the homeland and the safety of people, Muslims and Christians. I was thinking about how to protect the safety of the homeland. And if a person does not protect the safety of his homeland, then what is left for him?! And it was the matter - despite its bitterness - that originated in me the phrase that I said: "A homeland without churches is better than churches without a homeland." When I said it, I had in mind what was happening in Syria, where monasteries, monks, and churches were attacked because the homeland was lost. After these events, a good committee was formed in which His Grace Bishop Bayman and the loved ones, and began to communicate with the Engineering Authority of the Armed Forces, and the churches and buildings that were destroyed were rebuilt. Who stepped on the feet of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and Saint Joseph the carpenter.

We thank God that He gave our country honest people, led by the President, to preserve the safety of the country and to enjoy it. Who would have ever said that we would have a law to build churches on the land of Egypt? We have lived generations after generations, and there is no law for building churches, and had it not been for the insistence of the President and the Council of Ministers and those assisting them, the law would not have been issued, and this is a great gain.

We should think about everything positively. I will not tell you that the whole picture is beautiful, we are still on the ground and there are still weaknesses, but there are many positive things that are achieved little by little. And I repeat: the safety of the homeland means the safety of the Church, the safety of persons, and the safety of all life. The safety of the homeland is in the first place. We thank God that these obstacles have crossed, and we have emerged from crises stronger.

All the achievements that are being made and the positives that we see are all in the hands of God, and we are in this evening when we remember the work of Pope Kyrillos and the work of Pope Shenouda and the work that is being done in our days, all of this is done in the hands of God, it is the hand of our Lord that works; Everything was made by him, and without him, nothing was made that was.