

“And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it”. (1 Cor 12:26)

The Coptic Mission sent three servants to Liberia under the leadership of H.G. Bishop Paul to assist with the Ebola outbreak crisis for 10 days in September. The Coptic Church has a rich history of caring for those who need it the most, despite undesirable circumstances. Just as Christ, the Good Shepherd cares for His flock, the church makes it a point to extend help, care and love to all those who are in need. We strive to follow the examples of our fathers, such as St. Shenouda who, when there was a great famine in the land, opened the doors of the monastery's food storage to distribute to the starving community. Also, St. Anthony who, without regard for his own safety, would visit the communities effected by the plague.

In the spirit of Christ and our church fathers, the Coptic Mission continues to demonstrate compassion, medical support and spiritual encouragement in the Ebola stricken regions of Liberia. This Mission entailed visiting and working at hospitals, distributing encouraging verses, literature and gospels in the markets, slums and streets as well as the quarantined areas of the hospital. The response of the people was great. Several patients and members of the community commented that they were greatly effected and moved by the spiritual outreach that the Mission provided. In addition to distributing materials, the Mission also showed movies in the marketplace daily in the evening, showing Christ's love and care for His flock.

H.G. Bishop Paul was met by the Minister of Health in Liberia who said he was “...moved by the love and efforts to help the people of Liberia in their time of need”. The Minister thanked them and encouraged them to continue doing the Lord's work. The servants also met the Medical Director at the University Hospital who stated that he was familiar with the Coptic Church from his mother who had taught him about the deep spirituality of the Coptic Church. He went on to say that he was grateful and blessed to have the Coptic Mission there working with the people of Liberia, and asked that they would pray for his protection.

Additionally, several church communities invited the Bishop and servants to come speak and spiritually encourage their congregations. The Bishop made it a point to pray for those who were both sick and healthy. The hospitals permitted the Bishop to go to the quarantined areas to pray with the people who were infected. To those who were suffering and dying, they also distributed gifts, crosses, showed movies to encourage them, spiritually.

Overall, it was a beautiful mission of love and hope. On the last day of their visit the Chairman of a church they had visited said, with tears in his eyes, “I can not believe, that at this time, the brothers and sisters of the Coptic Orthodox Church care for us

this much". The Mission is grateful to the Lord that He allowed our servants to return safely from Liberia, leaving a great impact on a community which has been in despair.

Our prayer at this time is to return to Liberia with another group of servants that can be spiritually encouraging and help medically. The Mission would like to build an isolated Ebola unit which is in great need, as a gift from the Coptic Church. In addition, it is our desire to provide the necessary medications and protective equipment for this cause. Please pray for this and if you are willing to support or be a part of this mission of compassion, please contact us at Ebolahelp@copticmission.org.