

What We Can Learn From Egypt

Those facing troubled times half a world away can teach us much about our own faith

The chaos facing Christians in Egypt underscores the common ground of all Christ's followers, says Fazil Khalil, assistant pastor of Kasr El Dohara Church in Cairo—that there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism that unites Christians worldwide. "I think the body of Christ needs one another so much," Khalil says. "When we see what's been going on and how Egyptian believers are now working with one another, it shows how we can work together as one, from different backgrounds and different languages."

Father Joseph Boules, presbyter of St. Mary & St. Verena Coptic Orthodox Church in Anaheim, Calif., thinks the church in Egypt has much to teach other believers, including how to cross the divide between Christians and Muslims. In fact, the attacks on the church in Egypt have prompted unprecedented cooperation between the two groups, with the latter guarding the gates of churches so Christians can pray in peace. Sometimes they scatter sentries around a church to ensure no bad elements are lurking there or planning despicable acts.

"The lesson that can be learned is how difficult it can be to be a Christian in some parts of the world, and how people struggle and fight for a simple thing," he says.

Shaddy Soliman, pastor of Every Nation Church in Lake Mary, Fla., says Egyptian Christians can teach others the truth that hard times produce revival and that tough political times help break down idols and humanistic mind-sets.

"If we could learn one thing from the Christians in Egypt right now, it's to seek God, cry out to Him and live according to His Word," Soliman says. "Our hope needs to be in the kingdom of God, not political systems or loyalty to the

nation. God's kingdom needs to become the driving force of our hope."