

Pray with Egypt Sunday, October 4, 2020

BY [SEAN AMATO](#) ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

Lectionary Selection: Ex 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Prayers for Egypt:

For a millennium, the people of Egypt have witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking – but they have thrived, embodying the ideal that that hardship from God is meant to sharpen and refine us. Although struck by the harsh currents of time, again and again, Egypt’s Coptic Christian population still stands. We pray that you illuminate them, oh Lord.

God, hold in your loving palm the works of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the United Church of Christ’s partner through Global Ministries, based in Cairo. We pray that you strengthen your children as they engage in inter-religious dialogue and local community development, as they work to build a world that embodies that most important value: to love your neighbor as you should love yourself. God, we pray that our Coptic Christian partners are able to see the fruits of their righteous labor – Christians and Muslims working together to strengthen their nation and act as a counterbalance to the dangerous tilt experienced by our world today.

As the people of Egypt continue to batten down against the health and economic effects of COVID-19, let us pray for their continued strength and dedication to your Commandments and your grand love. Nourish them, oh God. Divinely guide those responsible for negotiating the state of the Nile River, oh God, and ensure that our Egyptian kin have the sustenance they need to survive. Holy one, please protect them from those who would do them grave harm.

Inspire our church to embody the Coptic model of resilience, to remain stalwart in the face of calamities and idols both natural and man-made. Let us be led by the example of our Egyptian partners, and help them lead us to you, oh God. Give us the strength to hold our neighbor in this storm.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Egypt:

The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) is one of the largest non-profits in the Middle East & North Africa region, providing a wide range of development services customized to each target community. Its services are rendered “regardless of gender, race, religion, or beliefs” - meaning that all Egyptians can benefit from their assistance. Empowerment of small farmers, advocacy regarding the education of Egyptian women, the conducting of essential inter-religious and anti-hate dialogue, the providing of essential medical care, the publishing of Coptic Christian religious texts, and the advancement of social justice are some of the many threads woven together by the efforts of CEOSS. As someone who worked in the American non-profit field for a decade, I can honestly say that I’ve never been exposed to an organization as unique and multi-faceted as CEOSS: their work affects so very many aspects of Egyptian society, and the agency’s myriad efforts are undertaken throughout the country.

The effects of COVID-19 have led to a shift in the agency’s activities. COVID-19’s prevalence in Egypt led to the cancellation of the agency’s traditional in-person conferences, and office based-work was made much more difficult due to social distancing requirements. CEOSS had to adapt and adapt it did!

Staff teams were dispatched to provide members of the public with masks, hand sanitizer, and safety information to those in highly-affected areas; public information campaigns were held in both rural and urban areas by local representatives, who provided health documentation door-to-door to their fellow Egyptians. Additionally, the agency has successfully combated disinformation related to COVID-19 on social media and has engaged in a wide-spanning online health advocacy campaign that has reached thousands of Egyptians. As someone with the privilege to have assisted with the redevelopment of CEOSS’s website and the proofing of documents distributed to partners during this time, I am honored to have represented the Disciples and the UCC in contributing to the impressive efforts of our Egyptian partners.

