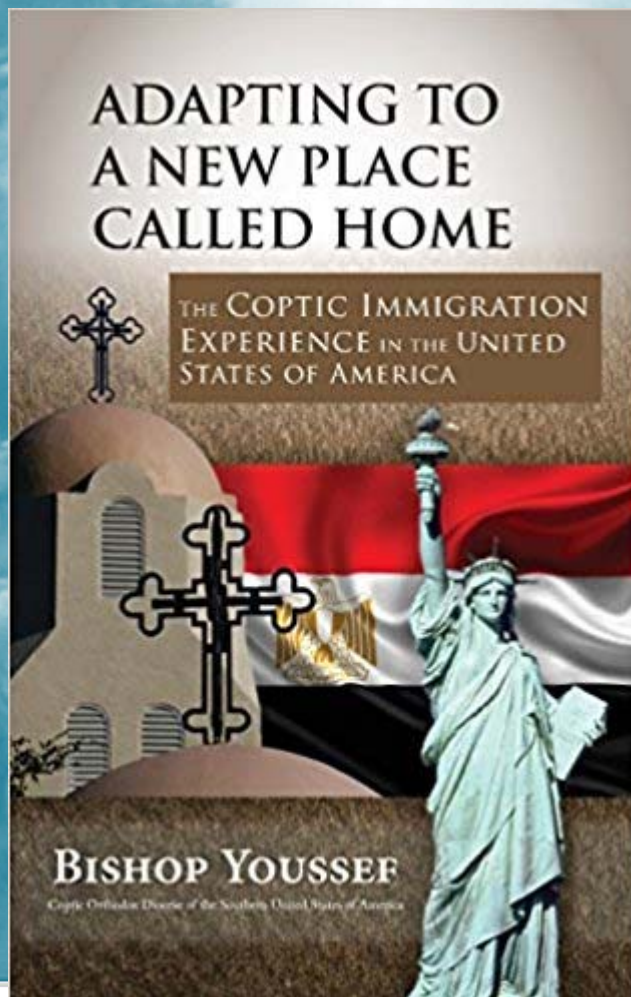


# Adapting To A New Place Called Home



## Fr. Marcos A. Marcos

- First Coptic priest to US and Canada
- Challenges in the Service!
  - P. 39-41



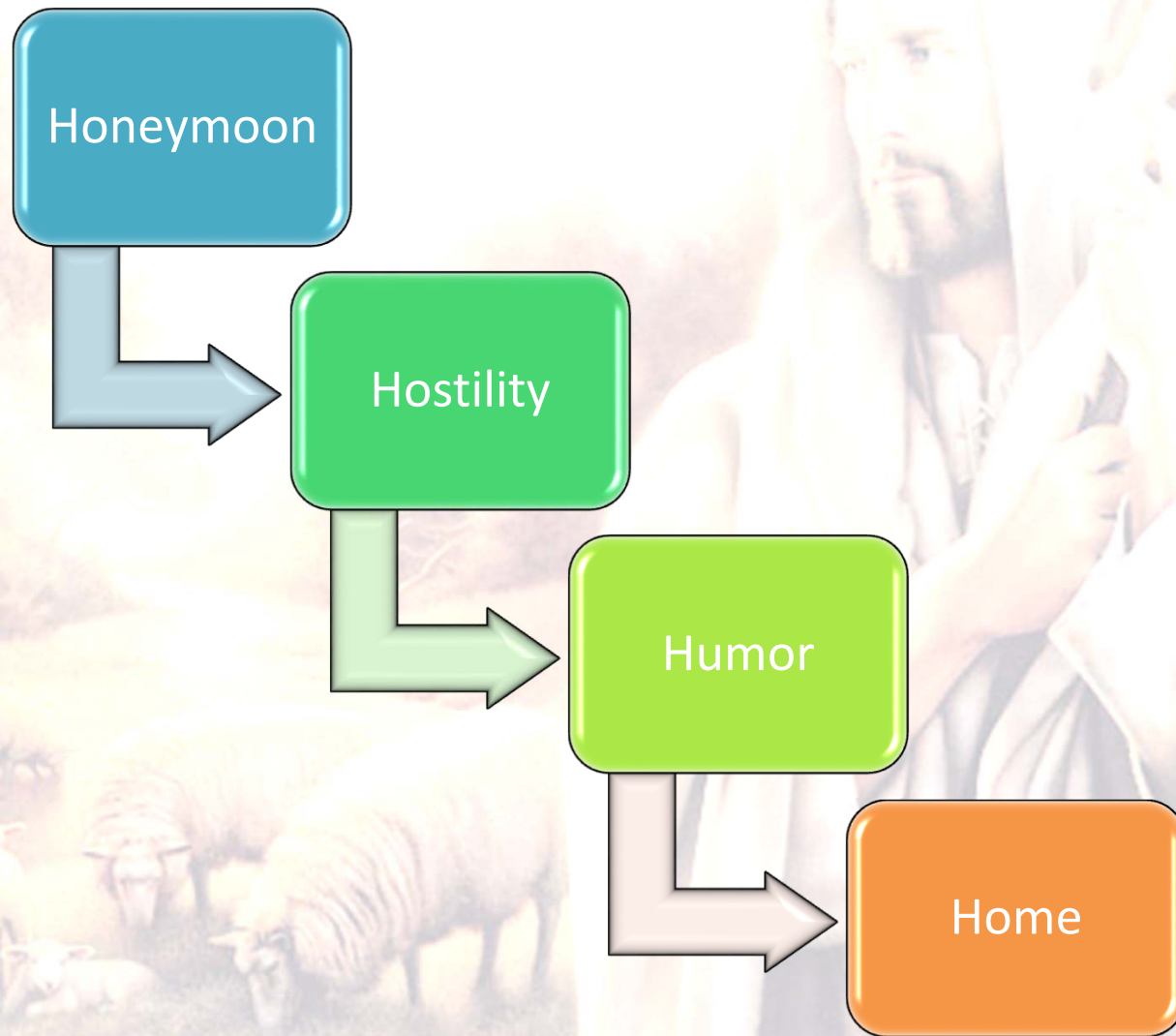
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# Adaptation

- Adaptation: part of human culture
- Adapt in everything in life:
  - *Culture, people, work, school, ...*
- If too rigid, can't adapt, will break.
- Adapting to a new home country may be one of the biggest challenges



# *4 Stages of Adaptation*



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# Honeymoon Stage

- Immigration: A dream
  - *Better life*
  - *“Land flowing with milk and honey”*
- Visa: beginning of the honeymoon
  - *All problems will be solved*
  - *Live happily ever after*



## Hostility Stage

- Reality of challenges:
- Language
- Homesickness
- Career:
  - *Doctor not qualified even as a technician*
  - *Company manager working as a dishwasher*
- Financial
  - *Reality of costs: rent, utilities, car, education*
  - *Inability to spend wisely, save*
  - *Working two jobs just to cover expenses*



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# Hostility Stage

- Family conflicts:
  - *Divided on decisions: stay or return*
- Identity struggle
  - *Egyptian vs. American : parents vs. children*
  - *Who's the foreigner?*
- This stage takes a long time to resolve
  - *Some remain stuck for the rest of their lives*
  - *Some refuse to move on to next stage*



## *Humor Stage*

Arab Problems #30

P does not exist.

- **Settling down**
  - *Career stability; Secured a Job*
  - *Better understanding of oneself*
  - *More comfortable with the culture; Place of worship*
- **No longer embarrassed about culture/language mistakes**
  - *Finds humor in mistakes*
  - *“When I first came to America, I did/said...”*
- **Believe completely adapted/adjusted**
  - *Most Egyptian immigrants remain and don't move on to most critical stage: Home*

## Home Stage

- Home: host culture, and home culture
  - *American and Egyptian*
  - *Sense of belonging*
  - *Not just a “host country”, but “my country”*
  - *Egypt is also “my country”*
  - *Coptic-American*



## Home Stage

- **Unity in Diversity**

- *“There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.” (Col 3:11)*
- *Sense of patriotism for the new country*
- *Participates in voting*
- *Interested in the affairs of this country*

- **Many people have been here for 20-30 years, still stuck in humor stage, never make it to home stage**

- *Why?*





# *Attitude towards Host Country and Home Country*

ATTITUDE	Positive → Egypt	Negative → Egypt
Positive → USA	Integration	Assimilation
Negative → USA	Separation	Marginalization

# Assimilationists

ATTITUDE	Positive → Egypt	Negative → Egypt
Positive → USA	Integration	Assimilation
Negative → USA	Separation	Marginalization

- Do not wish to maintain Egyptian identity
  - *American only*
  - *More American than Americans*
  - *Absorb everything, including the negatives*
  - *Common amongst children of immigrants*
    - *“We’re Americans, but you’re Egyptian”*
  - *Very critical of Egyptian culture*



# Separationists

ATTITUDE	Positive → Egypt	Negative → Egypt
Positive → USA	Integration	Assimilation
Negative → USA	Separation	Marginalization

- Opposite of assimilationists
  - *Egyptian only; typically parents*
  - *“We are Egyptians and we will raise you Egyptian”*
  - *Avoid interaction with “the foreigners”*
  - *Critical of host culture: speak negative, skeptical*
  - *How to resolve tension:*
    - *“We are Christians!”*
    - *Integrate best of American and Egyptian cultures*
    - *Guided by Christian culture*



# Marginalists

ATTITUDE	Positive → Egypt	Negative → Egypt
Positive → USA	Integration	Assimilation
Negative → USA	Separation	Marginalization

- Little interest in either culture
  - Common among dissatisfied immigrants stuck in “hostility”
  - Dream: all problems solved; found more problems here
  - “I don’t want to deal with (Egyptians/Americans)”
  - Very confused identity
  - Drugs; break the law
  - How servants help:
    - Intervene: show how to integrate the best of both cultures
    - Help them progress from one stage to the next



# Integrationists

ATTITUDE	Positive → Egypt	Negative → Egypt
Positive → USA	Integration	Assimilation
Negative → USA	Separation	Marginalization

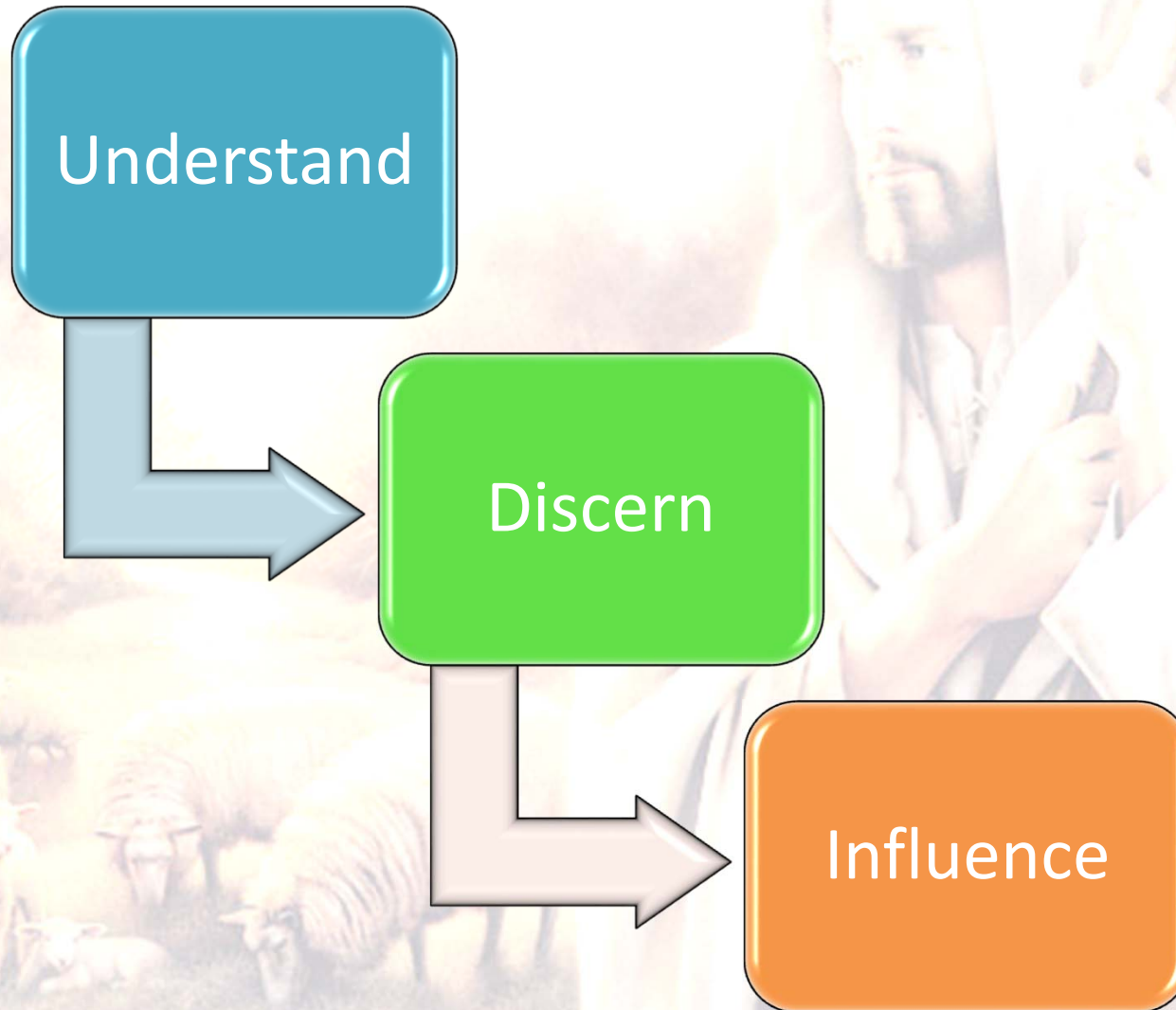
- Interest in maintaining both cultures
  - Common among those in “home” stage
  - Very successful in their career
  - Contribute to transformation of host and home cultures (to better states)



# *Responding to Challenges*

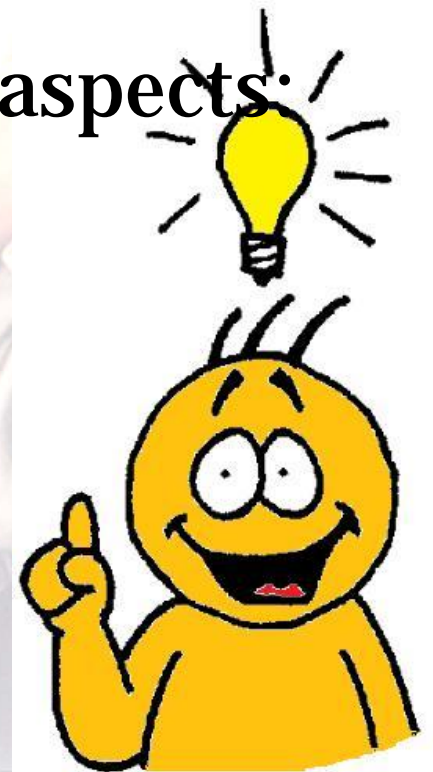
- **Many challenges face immigrants**
  - *Religion: different denominations, sects, churches*
  - *Diversity and tolerance: what's accepted/not accepted*
  - *Politics: political ideologies, governments*
- **Four Responses:**
  - *Isolate from American culture*
  - *Assimilate completely into American culture*
  - *Marginalize and attack the culture*
  - *Integrate and transform the culture – best response*

# *How to Transform the Culture*



# Understand

- Understand the culture
  - *Many good things about it; that's why we immigrated*
  - *Understand the strengths and weaknesses*
- How well do we understand these aspects:
  - *Personal responsibility/accountability*
  - *Time Management/Control*
  - *Equality/Fairness*
  - *Individualism/Independence*
  - *Competition*



# Discern

- What's right/wrong

- *Helpful for spiritual growth and nourishment*
- *“I can take these things, adapt and assimilate them, but leave others”*
- *The more spiritually mature, the better I can discern*
- *“Solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Heb 5:14)*



# Influence

- **Responsibility to transform the culture**
  - *“You are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men” (Matt 5:14-16)*
  - *“I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Act 13:47)*
  - *Daniel, Moses, Noah, Joseph*
- **Our tools to transform:**
  - *Holy Scriptures, the church, writings of the fathers, ...*
  - *“Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2Cor 10:5)*

# *St. Mark Coptic Church, Toronto*

- *First Coptic Church in North America*  
— P. 39-41



Simon Dewey