



St. Athanasius Theological Seminary

A Program Under the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



Pastoral Theology II – (Counseling)

Young Adulthood, Relationships, Intercultural Marriages (ICMs)

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**Remember your Creator in the days of
your youth (Ecclesiastes 12:1)**

Young Adulthood

Characteristics and Challenges

- **College. Grad school.**
- **Career decisions**
- **Relationships. Love. Having a ‘family’**
- **Commitments: work, marriage, church**
- **Child birth and rearing**
- **Moving, adjusting, culture shock**
- **Dealing with failures: early divorce, loss of employment, family crises**

Young Adulthood

Plan & Contents: focus on culture, denominations, and relationships – deeply influence approach to counseling.

- Copts in North America**
- Cultural aspects and differences**
- Intercultural marriages**

Coptic: Faith and Culture

- **Orthodox faith is as ancient as Christianity**
- **“Copt” - connotations: (compare to “Jew”)**
 - **Race: native Egyptian**
 - **Culture: northeast Africa/Middle East, some Arab influence**
 - **Faith: predominantly Christian Orthodox**

Coptic: Faith and Culture

The Coptic Orthodox Church: has strong cultural elements

- **Music/chanting**
 - Modal, not tonal
 - Chanting
 - Monophonic: horizontal melody – no harmony (chords) or multiple parts.
- **Language – characteristic of our Coptic heritage**
- **Style: behavior, ethnic features**
- **Adaptive change: multicultural missionary Coptic Orthodox Church (e.g. St. Maurice & St. Verena, Toronto), and the American Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria (e.g. St. Paul, Houston)**

Coptic Influx to the US

- In 2011, a census by the American Coptic Association reported that there are approximately 450,000 Copts in the U. S.
- However, many Copts listed themselves in the 2011 U.S. Census mistakenly as either Egyptians, Sudanese, Libyans
- Actual estimates for the number of ethnic Copts in the US: more than 1 million
- Immigration of Copts to the U.S. started as early as the late 1940s. After 1952, the rate of Coptic immigration significantly increased.
- There are over 200 Coptic Orthodox parishes in the U.S.
- There are several Protestant parishes with predominantly Coptic members, often mixed with Arabs.

Coptic Diaspora

- **“Copt” (Αἰγύπτιος “Egyptian”):** the native population of Egypt, as opposed to the various settlers (Arabs, Greeks, Romans, etc.) who came to Egypt from other countries. Copts are the descendants of the Pharaohs.
- **“Diaspora”:** population living outside the area in which they had lived for a long time or in which their ancestors lived
- **Coptic population in Egypt** is at about 9 - 10 million or 10% of Egyptian population – *or more!*
- **Coptic population in Sudan** is at about half a million or 1% of Sudanese population. There are about 60,000 Copts in Libya, making up the majority of that country's Christian community.
- **Outside of the traditional Coptic areas in Egypt, Sudan and Libya,** the largest Coptic diaspora populations are in the United States, Canada and in Australia.

Coptic Immigration to U.S.

- **Primary causes are economic, political, religious persecution**
- **From 1967 to 1977, tens of thousands of Copts immigrated to the United States alone.**
- **The first waves of Egyptian immigrants to the United States were mostly educated professionals and skilled workers. As a result, most Egyptian Americans of the first and second generation are generally well educated relative to mainstream society**
- **The largest concentration of Egyptians live in New Jersey, New York, California, Illinois, Florida, and Texas.**
- **The majority of Egyptian Americans are Coptic Orthodox Christians**

Trans-Cultural Studies

- The area of study that focuses on migration, acculturation, assimilation, and the resulting mental health challenges
- “Acculturation”: cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture; a merging of cultures as a result of prolonged contact, while maintaining features of both
- “Assimilation”: integration of members of an ethno-cultural community (immigrants) and their absorption into the larger, mainstream (American) culture.
- From 1870’s to 1970’s, the predominant sentiment in this country is that immigrants should acculturate to the normative behaviors and values of the majority or mainstream culture of the host. Many immigrants had the wish to assimilate, to become part of the *melting pot*.

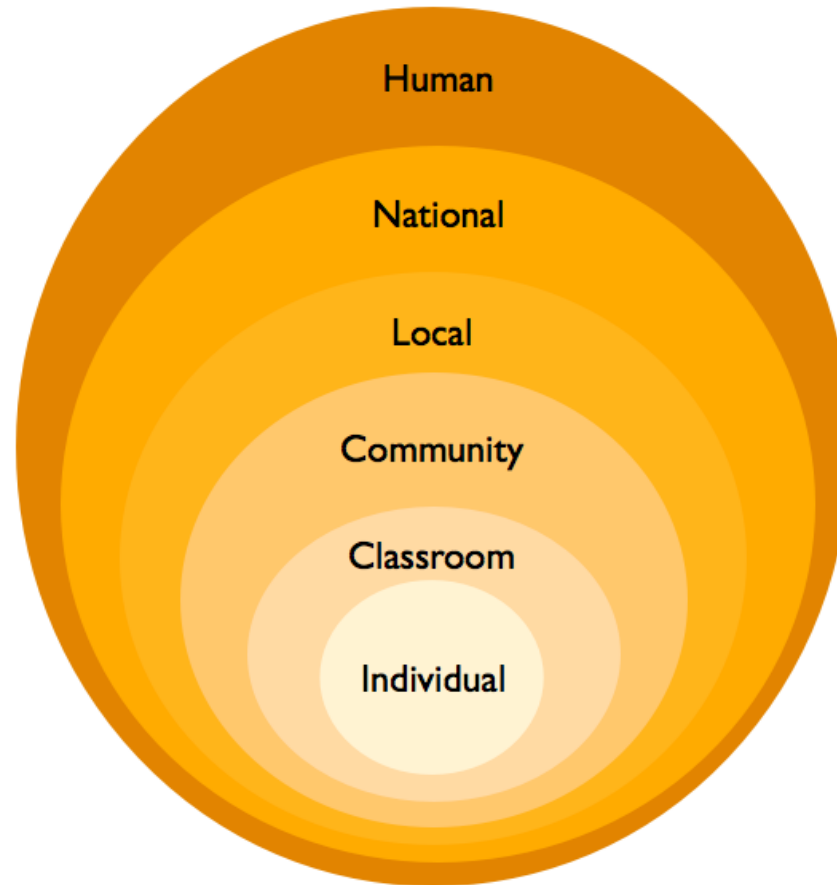
Culture, Race, and Ethnicity

- ***Culture*** is defined as a set of meanings, norms, beliefs, values, thought and behavior patterns shared by a group of people.
- It can include social relationships, language, nonverbal expression of thoughts and emotions, moral and religious beliefs
- It can be learned, modified, passed on to the next generation. Culture often undergoes constant change
- ***Race*** has physical, biological, cultural, and genetic underpinnings
- ***Ethnicity*** refers to the subjective sense of belonging to a group of people with a common national or regional origin and shared beliefs, values, and practices

Personal Aspects of Culture

- **Cultural identity emerges throughout the individual's life and in social context. An individual may have several cultural reference groups.**
- **A culture can have numerous subcultures, each with its distinct features, based on ethnicity, race, religion within the same society**
- **American culture, while maintaining some of its roots, has undergone enormous changes in the last few decades, especially in larger cities and states**
- **Culture of an individual can have several "layers" (seen next slide), involving a person's family culture, neighborhood, city, work environment, and the society at large**

Nested Layers of Culture



Culture and Communication

- **Culture affects every area of communication – verbal (language, accent, idioms) and nonverbal (gestures, emotional expression, behavioral reactions)**
- **Misunderstandings, misinterpretations are extremely common, with obvious consequences**
- **Cultural gaps/conflicts occur in various contexts:**
 - **Work environment: employee-boss interaction**
 - **Doctor/nurse-patient interaction**
 - **Church and social communities**
 - **Home, e.g. inter-cultural marriages, family roles, generational gap**
 - **Many others (vendor-customer, services, politics, etc.)**

Cultural Aspects of Stress

- **Adjustment difficulties**: making changes to accommodate for new values and ‘norms’, relational issues, characteristics of society, etc.
- **Identity struggles**: assimilation into vs. separation from cultural groups, trying to ‘fit’
- **Stereotyping**: “to believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same” [Webster’s Dictionary] – generalizing an assumption, e.g. all church goers are hypocrites; all blondes are stupid
- **Discrimination and negative attitudes** - the unjust or prejudiced treatment of different categories of people on the grounds of race, age, religion, gender, etc.
- **Communication problems** resulting in conflicts
- **Marginalization**: being alienated from both the culture of origin, and the new society, resulting in feelings of rejection.

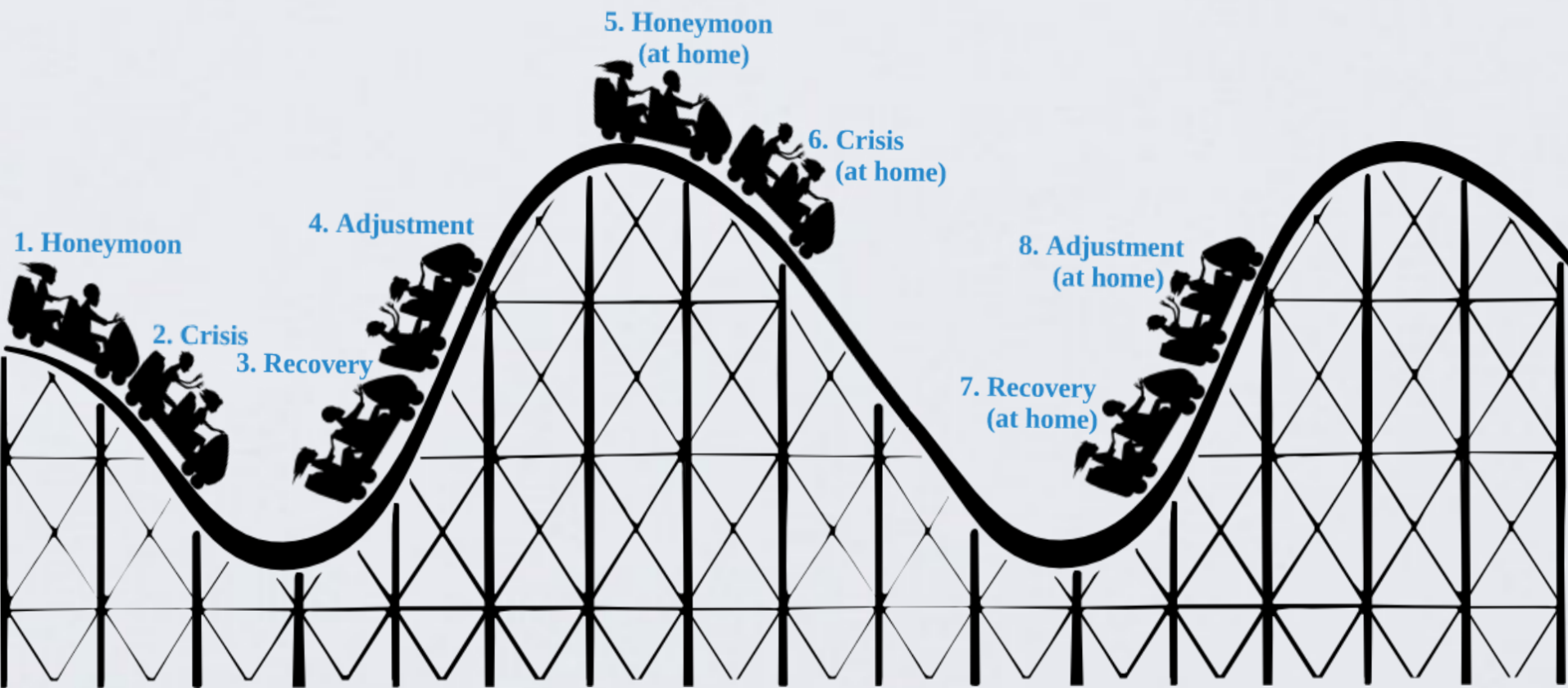
Racial and Ethnic Psychiatric Differences

- It is a large area of research. Federal and state levels offer resources to accommodate for societal diversity
- Epidemiological Catchment Area study, and the National Comorbidity Survey showed ethnic differences in mental illness in the U.S.
 - Prevalence of depression: Whites 5.1%; Hispanics, 4.4%; Blacks 3.1 %
 - All mood disorders: Whites 19.8%, Hispanics 17.9%, and Blacks 13.7%
 - One-year prevalence of alcohol related conditions: Whites 8.9%, Hispanics 8.9%, Blacks 6.9%, Asian Americans 4.5%, and Native Americans 12.2%
- Copts are a smaller minority (not included in major surveys), but cultural stress increases the likelihood of mental illness

“Culture Shock”

Feeling of confusion or disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes.





1. Love the new culture
This stage equals happiness
It's a novelty

2. Hate the new culture
This stage leaves you angry, sad
For you it's torture

3. You learn how to live
again in this new setting
This stage is okay

4. Great accomplishment
This stage brings understanding
You will be okay

5. You are back home now
The food! Family! Your friends!
Lovin' life once more

6. Home is not the same
Your loved ones are not the same
Culture shock ensues

7. You start to adapt
Baby steps to recover
You feel confident

8. Life is good again
You adapt to the changes
Your loved ones do too

Select differences between American and Coptic Culture (exceptions apply!)

American

1. Individualism, independence
2. Risk taking
3. Commitment
4. Skepticism
5. Blunt, bold
6. Law and order
7. Personal space
8. Punctuality
9. Secularism
10. Pluralism
11. Materialism, fun
12. Pride, sense of superiority

Coptic

1. Belonging, collective sense
2. Less risk taking, protective
3. Bargaining initial terms
4. Dogmatism - that's the way it is
5. Rather timid, reticent
6. Laws/rules - flexible application
7. Less distant
8. Approximate time
9. Religious-mindedness
10. Separatism
11. Endurance – with humor!
12. Sense of heritage, ancestral identity

Coptic Immigrants with U.S.-Born Children

Challenges:

- Style of parenting and discipline
- Child looks down on or is ashamed of parent (e.g. accent, simplicity); Coptic is “old”, “backward”
- Parent sees child and defiant (real or imagined)
- Child is assimilated, parent is acculturated
- Generational plus cultural gap
- The uninvolved parent (too busy) – esp. father
- Family fragmentation
- Relationships, dating

Coptic Immigrant Families

Egyptian-born Children - Challenges

- **Language barrier, accent**
- **Parents' quick shift (or decline) of values, with child's disorientation & confusion. Poor understanding of freedom (see Galatians 5:13)**
- **Child's rapid change, with a conservative parent**
- **Adoption of cultural aspects without understanding or examination – ignorance of the dark side**
- **Cultural isolation – rejection of good and bad**
- **Family fragmentation**
- **Attraction of secularism, independence**
- **Coptic children trying to fit**

Youth and Young Adults

- Much stronger pursuit of independence than in the Middle-East
- Identity and “fitting with the crowd”, peer pressure
- Attraction to a pleasure-oriented society
- Conflict with parent’s style and values
- 80% of American youth drop out of church by college age (Protestant church statistics)*
- Dating, driving, parties, proms, etc
- College culture and ‘rite of passage’; fraternities and sororities
- Choices, drugs, pregnancy

Handling Cultural Conflicts

- Understand and study the new culture (U.S.) - the values, land, history, politics, laws, tradition, and pitfalls. Each culture has a down side.
- Formal orientation classes for new comers
- Discussion rather than argument. Use wisdom in discipline.
- For parents and leaders: being a role model is more effective than overzealous aggressive discipline
- Talking to your priest and church leaders is a must, not a choice – best chance of guidance
- Stubbornness is not a virtue (1 Sam 15:23)! Humility is.
- Parenting guidance and counseling. In some cases, seeing a counselor or doctor
- Role models – the Coptic church has countless examples.
- Prayer/intercession works.

Intercultural Relationships – Hints

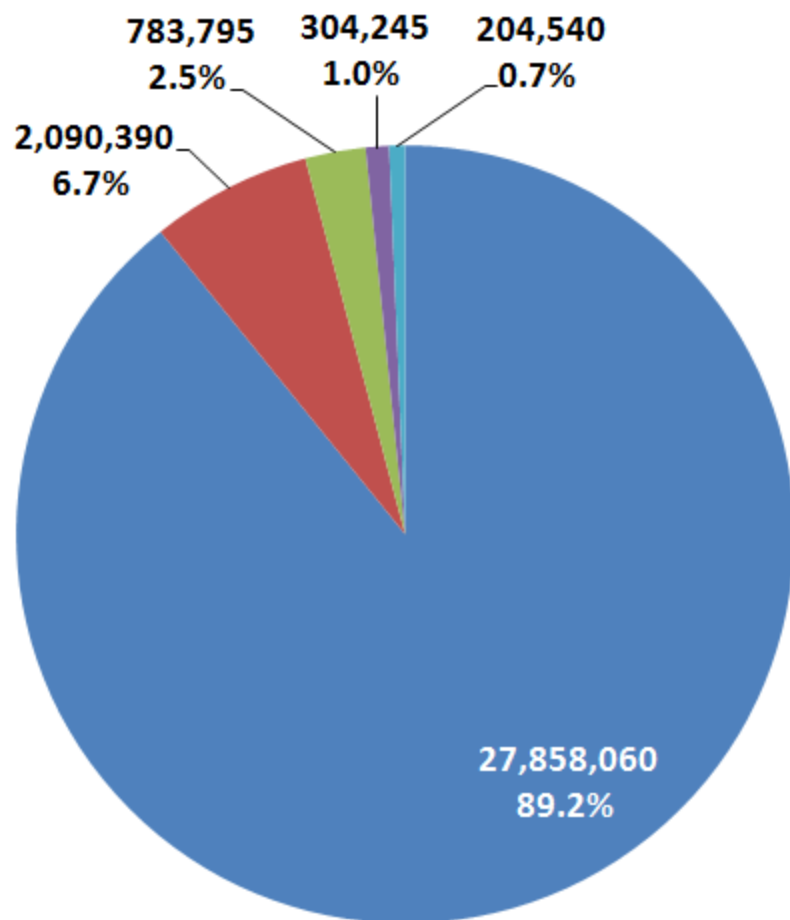
- Choose a true Christian believer – consequences can be disastrous and destructive. Remember, “Christian” in this society has various meanings
- Counseling is paramount. Discussing with your priest and spiritual leader is a must, not a choice. Listen to advice.
- Holiness. Agape above phileo. True love waits.
- Do not isolate. Stay visible
- Pray and read God’s word together. Discuss role models.
- Denominational considerations matter. Many denominations have departed from biblical faith.

Ethnic Climate in the U.S.

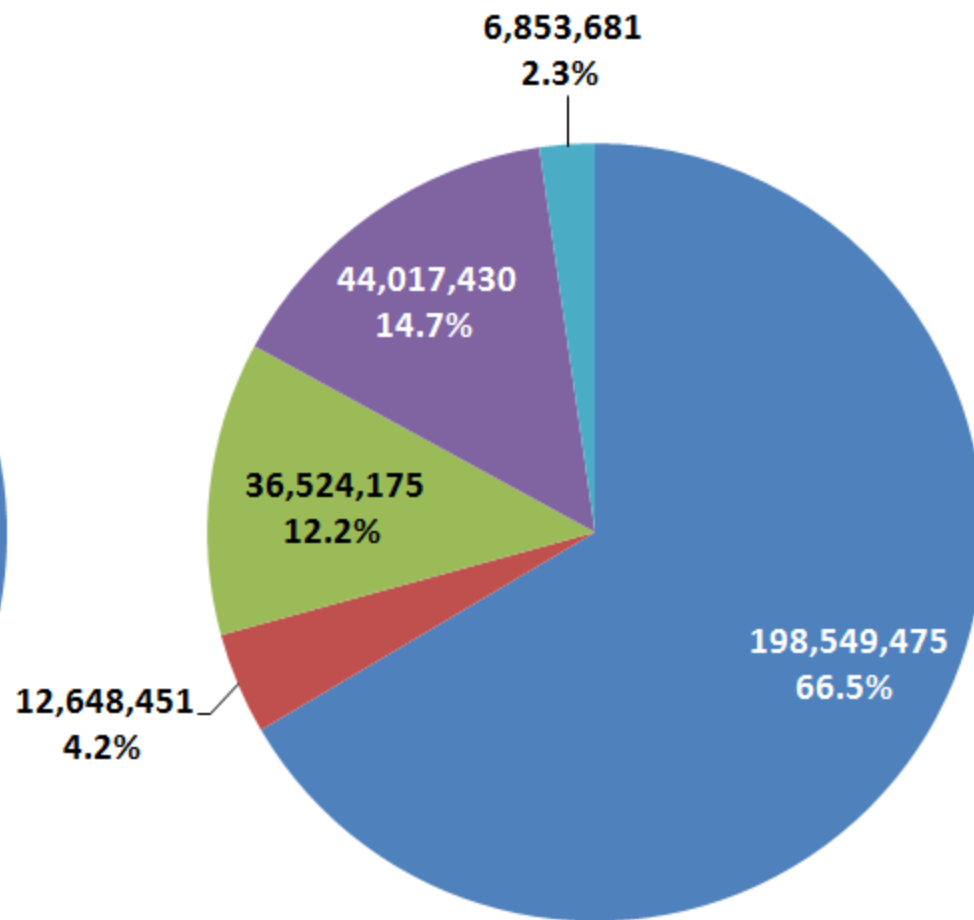
- **Very wide diversity; accommodating**
- **Constantly changing – increasing pace**
- **Varies from geographic area to another**
- **More diversity in large cities**
- **Whites are still a majority – this is changing**
- **High concentration of Hispanics in the Southwest, Orientals in the West.**
- **“Hispanic” is the fastest growing segment**

Canada and United States Populations by Approximate U.S. Race/ Ethnicity Category, 2006

■ White ■ Asian ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ Other

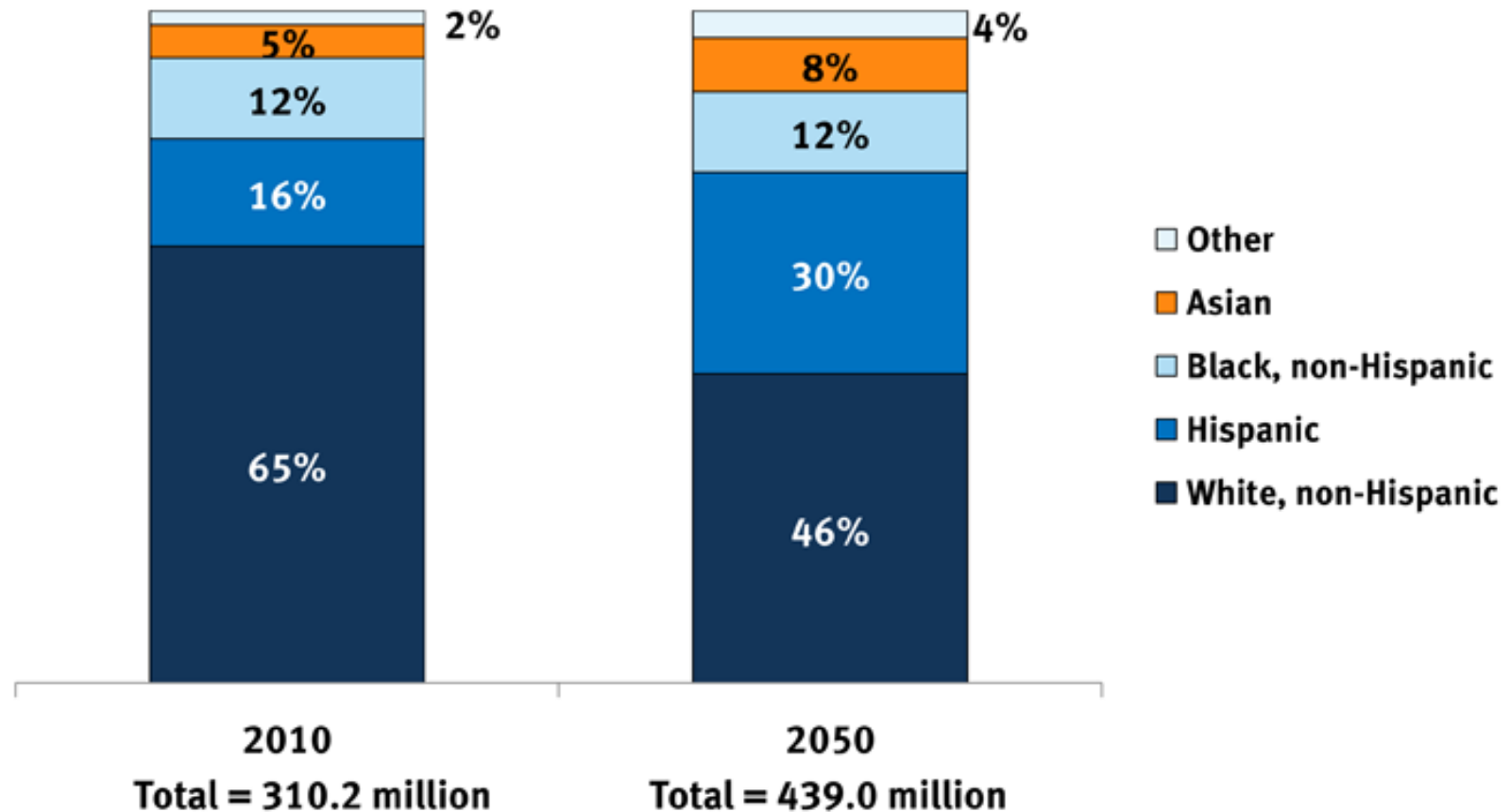


Canada



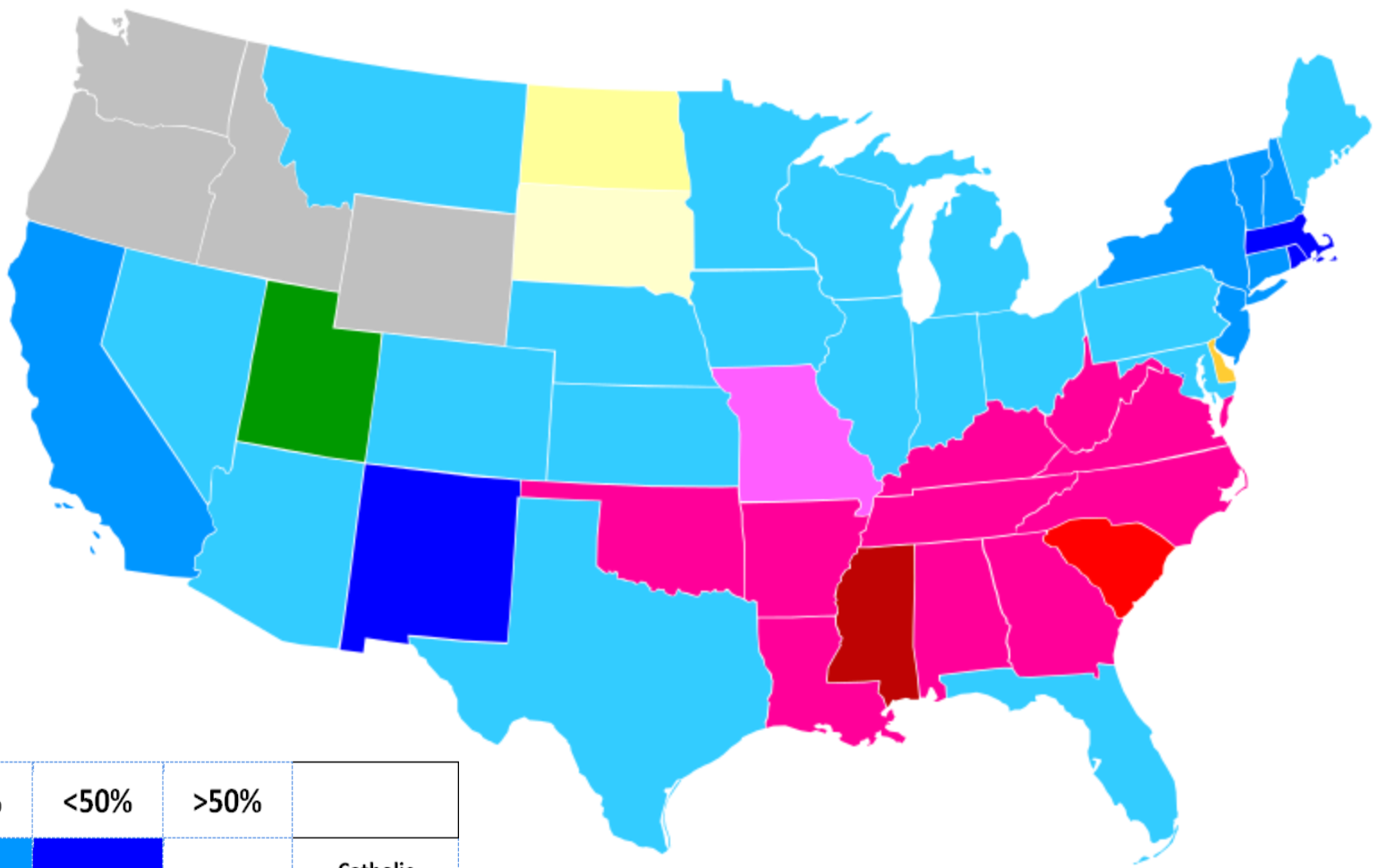
United States

Distribution of U.S. Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010 and 2050



NOTES: All racial groups non-Hispanic. Other includes Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans/Alaska Natives, and individuals with two or more races. Data do not include residents of Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or the Northern Marina Islands.

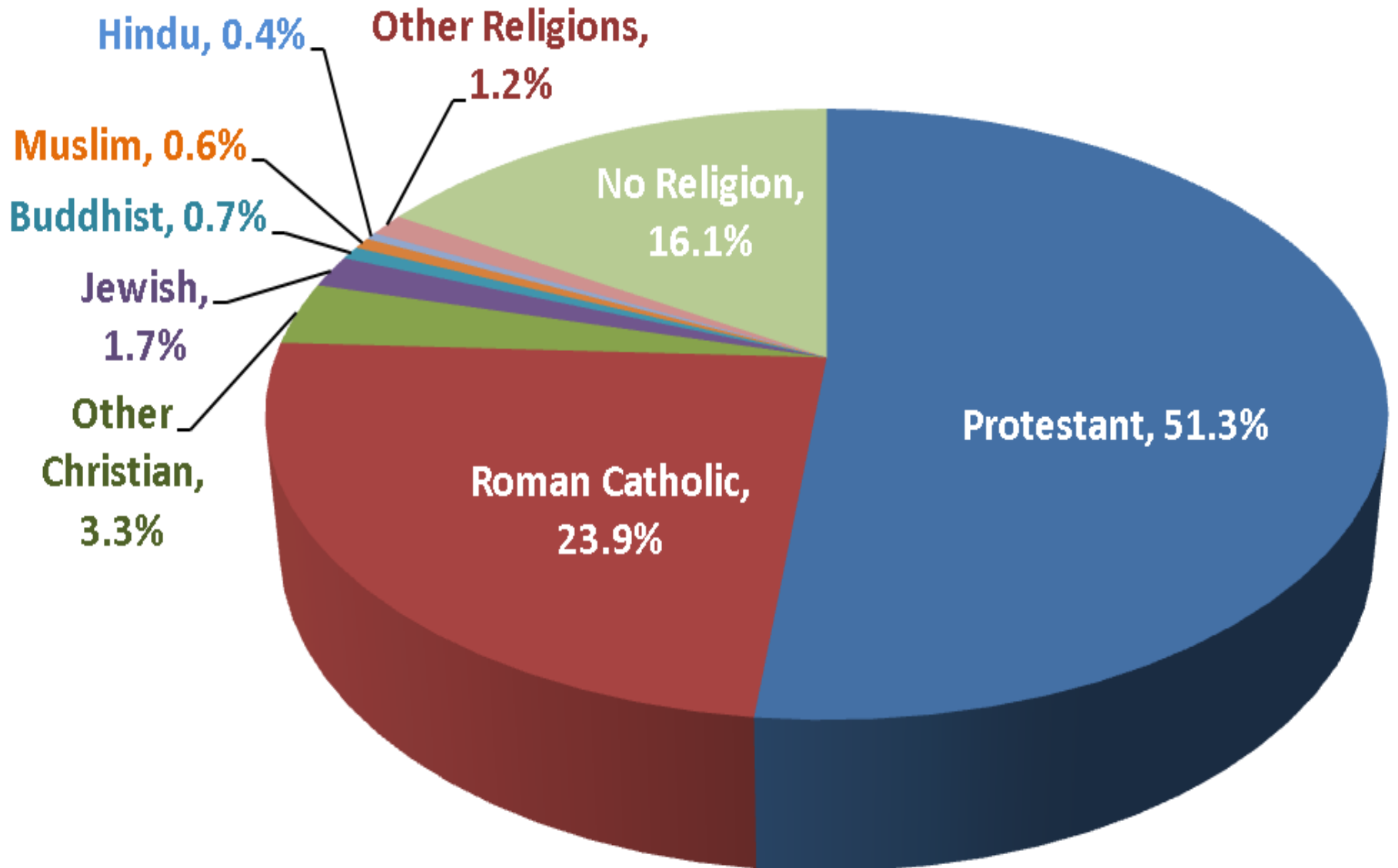
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Projected Population by Single Year of Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2050. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/downloadablefiles.html>.



<30%	<40%	<50%	>50%	
				Catholic
				Baptist
				Methodist
				Lutheran
				Mormon
				No religion

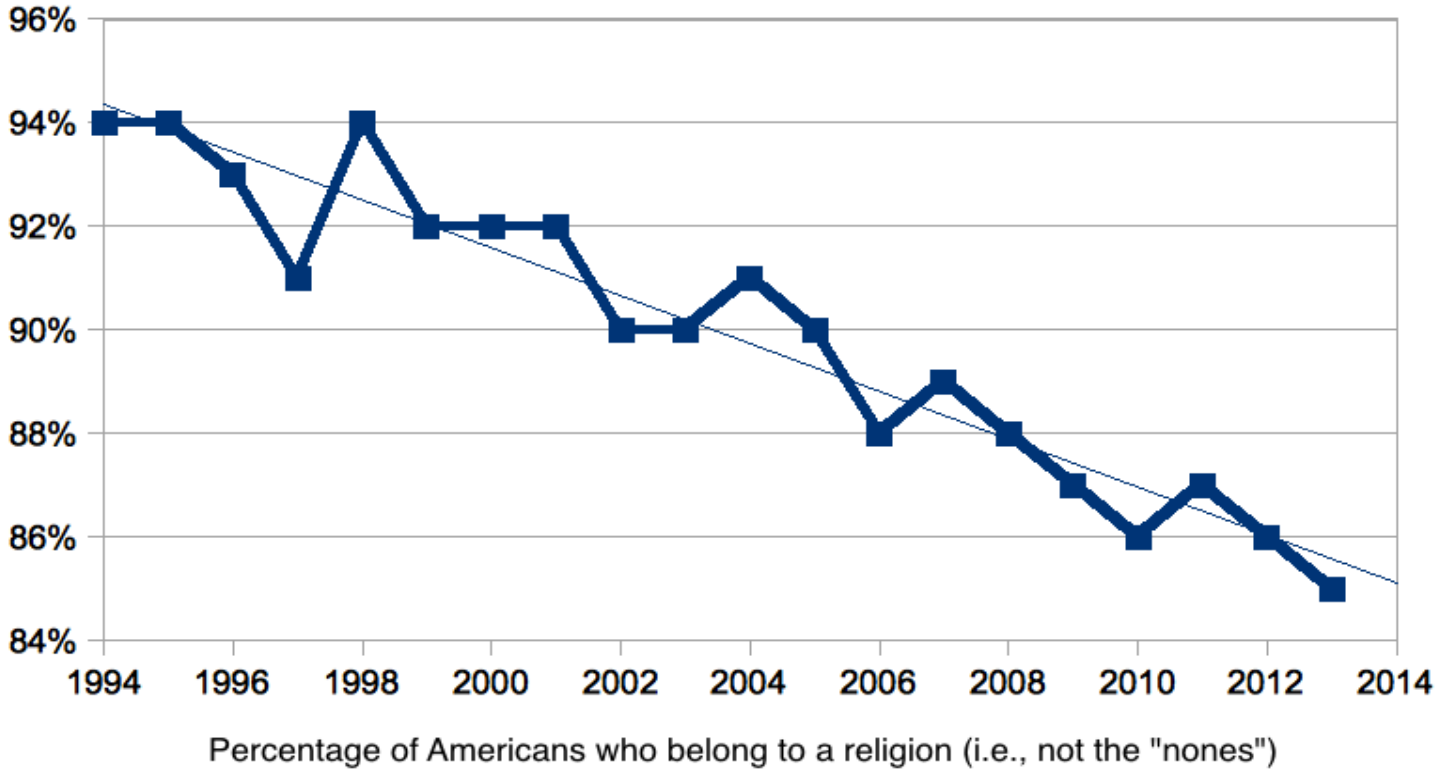
Religion in the U.S. (2007)

US Religions



Religion in the United States

Decline of Religious Identity



Graph by Corner of Church & State, an RNS blog
Source: Gallup

“Christian”

- **In Egypt: means Coptic, usually Orthodox, with a small chance of being Protestant or Catholic**
- **In the U.S. – depends who you ask!**
 - **In mainstream culture: could mean “good person”, “bigot”, “fanatic”, or “someone who holds the beliefs of traditional Christianity” (the Bible)**
 - **Usually either Protestant or Roman Catholic**
 - **Most beliefs are given by word of mouth rather than the Bible (preaching, teaching, or the media)**
 - **Countless denominations in the Protestant church**

Roman Catholicism in the U.S.

Has some similarities to Orthodoxy (sacraments, hierarchy, liturgy, etc.), but there are important differences:

- Purgatory**
- Infallibility of the Pope**
- Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin**
- Primacy of St. Peter**
- The Filioque Controversy (the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son)**
- Celibacy of priests**
- Growing liberal trend: today, many Catholics believe that Christ is not the only Way to heaven.**

Protestantism

- **Started in the 1600's. Martin Luther himself did not intend to start a new "denomination"**
- **"Reformation" in Europe is considered to have started with the posting of the 95 thesis by Luther on October 31st, 1517**
- **Earliest movements: Lutherans, Anabaptists, Anglicans, Presbyterians**
- **Foundation of Protestant Beliefs: Five "Only"**
 - **Solus Christus: Christ Alone**
 - **Sola Scriptura: Scripture Alone**
 - **Sola Fide: Faith Alone**
 - **Sola Gratia: Grace Alone**
 - **Soli Deo gloria: Glory to God Alone**

The Various Faces of Protestantism

- **Today: an extremely wide variety of denominations (Baptists alone have over 70 sub-denominations) and wide beliefs**
- **Rapid change: the changes in church doctrine in the Protestant church in the past 100 years are more than the changes in the previous 1800 years**
- **Main trend – the liberal movement vs. Evangelical (conservative) movement**

Liberal Movement in Christianity

- **Liberal theology:**
 - Christianity is not the only way to ‘salvation’, and Christ is not the only way to heaven
 - Controversy about Hell: most don’t believe in it
 - The Bible is a good book, but not all of it, and is certainly NOT infallible. May use it “for wisdom”
 - Human mind above the Scripture
 - Tradition is OK to learn from, but now we are “enlightened”
 - Agreeable to modern trends of homosexuality and same-sex “marriage”
 - Very skeptical of the supernatural
 - Skeptical about Christ’s resurrection, His Virgin birth
 - The crucifixion of Christ is only an unfortunate example of miscarriage of justice. Has no value for “redemption” or “salvation”
 - Examples of liberal denominations: Episcopal, Congregational, ELCA, United Methodist (varies by location), Presbyterian U.S.A. (not PCA)

Evangelical Conservatives

- **Overwhelmingly Protestant. Strong emphasis:**
 - The Bible is the infallible, inerrant Word of God
 - Emphasis on Christ (e.g. Baptists), the Father (Presbyterians), or the Holy Spirit (Pentecostals)
 - Strong on evangelism, church programs, missions
 - Many are “non-denominational”
 - The concept of salvation: e.g. “in a moment”, “once saved always saved”, all you need is to confess and believe (many miss Christian living)
 - Most do not have sacraments (e.g. Baptists)

Calvinism

- **Strong historical background in the Western church – especially Presbyterians, and today among conservatives**
- **Five elements of “traditional” Calvinism (has the acronym TULIP):**
 - **Total depravity**
 - **Unconditional election**
 - **Limited salvation**
 - **Irresistible grace**
 - **Perseverance of the believers**

Trans-Denominational Considerations

- **Wide area of discussion, with diverse opinions and attitudes.**
- **Should be considered case-by-case.**
- **Note that most divisions have taken place in the last 5 centuries, especially in Western Protestantism (e.g. there are over 70 Baptist sub-denominations). This is not a reason to take a *hostile* attitude.**
- **Orthodox = traditional, authentic, accepted as correct.**
- **As a principle, “in essentials – unity, and in non-essentials – diversity”. Variations apply. Consult priest or bishop.**
- **Introduce them to the Orthodox Church:**
 - **Catholics: start with the liturgy**
 - **Protestants: start with Bible study**
 - **Everyone: social functions, help to those in need.**
- **Cults are totally rejected (e.g. Mormonism, Jehovah’s W.)**

Cults and Other Movements

- **They are an important aspect of American culture and society. Most importantly Mormonism (LDS), Jehovah Witnesses, and Christian Science**
- **Secularism: don't necessarily believe in religion. The secular order rules.**
- **Agnosticism: "don't know", no clear belief or doctrine, but there probably is a "higher power"**
- **Atheism: no God, or rather anti-God**
- **Pagan, Satanic, others**

Societal Impacts on the Church

- **Secularism – authority of humankind. Church is a commodity with its “benefits”**
- **Consumerism. Business. Prosperity theology.**
- **Social movement – diverting the church from its core mission**
- **Political influences, left/right conflicts**
- **“Alternative” lifestyles**
- **Media and entertainment industry**
- **Sense of entitlement. God wants **me** to be happy**

Approaching other “Lifestyles”

- This is the symptom, not the disease. It is not the place to start. E.g. Fr. Bishoy Kamel’s approach.
- Start: invoking a relationship with God.
- Avoid heated arguments – no positive results
- Prayer. Humility. Beware of self-righteousness.
- Ultimate persuasion is by the Holy Spirit – He is the One who convicts
- Authority of the Scripture is basic – not just a “good book”. Discounted by liberal theology, and *surprisingly, by some Coptic Orthodox lay members...*
- God’s time is the best time.
- Examples of repentance are plentiful

Culture: The Trend of Relativity

- **Concept of “truth”, “good/bad” is disappearing**
- **Man is the center, not God**
- **Modern churches are trapped – “enlightenment”**
- **You will encounter examples in your congregations**
- **Spiritual blindness is real. Our goal as Christians is NOT to argue but to present the gospel and God’s love – “Taste and see that the LORD is good!” (Ps 34:8). Prayer works.**
- **The Holy Spirit does the rest: “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44)**

2 Corinthians 4:4


The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.



Man's Alternatives to God's Truth

Rev. Joe Right's Prayer (Kansas State Senate): Lord forgive us:

- We have worshipped other gods and called it multi-culturalism.
- We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle.
- We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem.
- We have abused power and called it politically savvy.
- We have coveted our neighbors' possessions and called it ambition.
- We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.
- We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.
- We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.



WOE TO THOSE WHO CALL
EVIL GOOD AND GOOD EVIL,
WHO PUT DARKNESS FOR LIGHT
AND LIGHT FOR DARKNESS,
WHO PUT BITTER FOR SWEET
AND SWEET FOR BITTER!

ISAIAH 5:20

Rosaria Butterfield: From LGBT Activist to Christian Wife and Mother

- Former tenured professor of English at Syracuse University.
- In her late twenties, allured by feminist philosophy and LGBT advocacy, she adopted a lesbian identity
- She advised the LGBT student group, wrote Syracuse University's policy for same-sex couples, and actively lobbied for LGBT aims alongside her lesbian partner.
- In 1999, after repeatedly reading the Bible in large chunks for her research, Rosaria converted to Christianity. Her first book is, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*.
- Not about “conversion to hetero”, or “ex-gay”, but new creation in Christ.
- Married a pastor. Home schooled their children



Good Resources: Taste and See!

- **The Release of the Spirit (by H.H. Pope Shenouda)**
- **The Life of Repentance and Purity (H.H. Pope Shenouda)**
- **Paradise of the Spirit (Anba Youannas)**
- **Overcoming Sin and Temptation (John Owen)**

Study – Intercultural Marriages (ICMs)

Slides to follow by Fr. Pishoy Salama, PhD
(Used by written permission)

Of All Nations: Exploring Intercultural Marriages in the Coptic Church of the GTA

By Fr. Pishoy Salama, PhD



- » 30 Couples involved in study all in an intercultural marriage
- » 4 Focus groups conducted (12 couples)
- » 18 one-on-one interviews
- » One spouse is of Coptic Egyptian descent, spouse of any other ethnicity.
- » Couples are still married.

Pool of Participants



- » Polish, Jamaican, German, Greek, Romanian, Dutch, British, Japanese, Indian, Italian, American (of Swedish descent), and Canadian (of European descent), Chinese, Haitian, Irish, Scottish, and Serbian.
- » Second and third generation Copts are intermarrying from a variety of ethnicities.
- » Copts are seeking compatibility rather than ethnicity.

Ethnic Background >

- » Traditionally Copts have met in church which continued to be a common meeting place.
- » Now, Copts are meeting spouses at Work, school, through mutual friends, travel, online, and socially.
- » Assimilation and comfort in North American culture.

Where Couples Met



- » Originally: Hindu, Catholic, Baptist, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Mennonite, Christian Reformed, Anglican, Romanian Orthodox, and Christian non-denominational.
- » Nine out of the eighteen couples interviewed were married in the Coptic Orthodox Church, and they all identified themselves as currently being Coptic.
- » 4 couples returned, 3 happy in their new denomination, 2 are split.

Religious & Denominational Affiliation



- » Moderate to weak
- » Had to fight stereotypes – Failure, divorce, confused children, communication (between couples & families)
- » Some cultures were not accepted
- » Worry about social status “What will people think?”

Reaction of Family >

- » Only few churches & priests were ready to accept & nurture ICMs
- » Majority of Coptic community isolated IC couples and were not able to integrate them.
- » Language was a great challenge
- » Rituals, images were mostly foreign
- » Rules expected to be known but rarely explained
- » Lack of distinction between faith & culture.

Reaction of Church >

- » Promoting Multiculturalism and Cultural Diversity
- » English Liturgy
- » Building Community
- » Do Not Segregate
- » Explaining Traditions and Rituals
- » Marriage Preparation
- » Get Involved



Enhancing Church Ministry to ICMs



- » Clergy & Counselors Who Can Relate
- » Clarity and Consistency
- » Remaining Current and Relevant
- » Outreach and Home Visits
- » Ecumenism
- » Education and Awareness
- » Do Not Give Up

Enhancing Church Ministry to ICMs >

- » Christianity seemed to be part of every couple but not necessarily denomination?
Is our Church ready?
- » Influence of background culture on marriage
- » Language, gender expectations, raising children, career, priorities, finances
- » Infidelity, addictions, peers

Challenges of ICMs >

- » Orthodox Concept of Marriage
- » Intercultural Marriage – Promises & Challenges
- » Love Languages, Communication, Conflict Resolution
- » Intimacy from a Christian Perspective
- » Finances, Financial Planning, Healthy Living
- » Marriage Ceremony, Reception, Honeymoon
- » Marriage License, Lack of Impediments certificate

Marriage Preparation >

- » Existence of God
- » Holy Trinity
- » Divinity of Christ
- » Holy Scriptures
- » Church as Bride of Christ
- » Holy Mysteries – Means of Grace
- » Holy Tradition
- » Prayer of the Saints, Fasting
- » Spiritual Growth

Catechism Classes



- » Color Blind – Impartial in giving love to all without distinction
- » Aware of North American culture, habits, and traditions
- » Strong in the Coptic Orthodox faith, spirituality, traditions
- » Prayerfully & wisely able to bridge the gap between cultures under spiritual direction.

The Cross-cultural Servant



- » Divorced Couples & Children of ICMs
 - > Not considered in this study
- » Intercultural versus Same-Culture Marriages
 - > Many marriages are still same-culture
- » Changing Trends in ICM
 - > ICMs not glamorized but there are changing trends.
- » Interdenominational Marriages
 - > What's the future of IDMs?
- » Effect of Multiculturalism on the Coptic Church
 - > Immigration trends, language, culture

**Outside the Scope of this
Study**



- » ICM is a growing phenomenon in North America
- » It has its challenges just like every other marriage
- » Many wonderful servants have been consecrated who are in ICM
- » Any planning should be done under guidance of hierarchy



Conclusion



- » More discussions at parish level have to happen to discuss stereotypes & misconceptions of ICM
- » Awareness with congregations to make extra effort to reach out & include North American spouses (and converts) in life of church
- » Focus on prayer & spirituality to build all members of congregation
- » Moderate (less) focus on culture & more on Orthodox Christian identity.

Conclusion

