



In the name of The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God Amen.

**Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate
St. Mary and St. Joseph
COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH**

Deacon Meeting's Minutes (Sunday April 07-2013)

+ All deacons are encouraged to attend the deacons meeting; Deacons' meetings take place on the first Sunday of each month.

+ Church will announce Abouna Shenouda's arrival and welcoming ceremony times.

+ Abouna Shenouda Welcoming schedule (Deacon Service and the rites) have been sent to the deacons,

To download the welcoming presentation follow this link <http://stgeorgejc.org/multimedia/all-downloads-mainmenu-90/viewdownload/11-powerpoint-presentations/1123-the-rites-of-welcoming-a-new-priest> , a copy of the presentation is on the church's laptop.

+ There will be a sheet of paper (a list for the departed) at the back of the church for the people who would like to write the names of their beloved ones who departed, to be mentioned in the liturgy after the commemoration of saints. It is the responsibility of the Altar deacon leader to bring this list to the Altar before the commemoration of saints. Please do not bring the list too early or too late-after the commemoration of saints. The leader can bring it himself or send another deacon to bring it for him. Appropriate time is to get it at the begging of the commemoration of saints or during the litany of the oblations.

+ At the back of the church beside the departed paper, there is a prayers box. Around the time of reconciliation prayer the Altar deacon should pick up these prayers from the box and put them on the Altar.

+ We agreed that the deacons shouldn't open the prayer papers on the altar. Abouna will open them and if the paper is for a departed person, he will put it under the incense box, for other prayers Abouna will put it in a different box on the Altar. The altar deacon is responsible to take the departed names from under the incense box and write them on the "departed people sheet".

+ The Altar has to be clean, as an Altar deacon you have to organize and clean the Altar during and after the service. For example; try to move the books off the altar at the end of the Divine Liturgy. Use only one book per side of the Altar. Watching the kids inside the Altar is very important, if a child doesn't respect the Altar and does not obey advices and instructions of the leader then take him out.

+ It has been noticed that the deacons are mixing up the great lent weekend tunes and the great lent weekdays tune, please review and use the proper tunes. Deacons are encouraged to practice especially if you are the leader.

+ Altar deacon needs to be more alert; most deacons are focusing on the hymns only. Everything around the Altar is your responsibility (For example; closing the closet door after Abouna washes his hands, washing towels from time to time, folding towels properly, cleaning the censor area). Look around, notice and react accordingly.

+ Another example is to tidy up the books on the deacon benches outside the Altar, and cleaning the sanctuary after the service is also the deacon's responsibility.

+ Church is not trying to be picky but in the Bible you can see how much God cares for little details. (Building the tabernacle, building the temple, and even details within His creation), therefore we should also care about His Altar with much detail and precision. That shows the level of respect to God and His house.

+ There is another problem at communion time, Altar deacons have to help Abouna during communion time. At least 2 deacons (not including the deacon who is holding the candle\cross) have to stand in front of Abouna to line up the kids properly, bring them to Abouna carefully to take communion, organize the people, taking leffafas from people before taking the blood. Deacons have to be pro-active (do the action ahead of time before the person arrives to Abouna).

Here are some hints for Altar deacons during communion:

- Bring the table for the body
- Line up the kids\people
- Candle deacon watches the body and the blood.
- At least 2 deacons around Abouna to help him
- A deacon can announce quietly at the altar door for anyone who has not partaken of communion to proceed to partake of communion

+ Regarding the readings; there is a purpose why the church has arranged the readings and called it the liturgy of the word. During this part of the Divine Liturgy, the church teaches the congregation the Word of God. Deacons have a responsibility to read clearly with a loud and clear voice.

+ Regarding responses in the altar; it is the Altar group leader's responsibility to make sure that the younger deacons can respond properly with clear voice and in the proper tune. Deacons are urged to learn the hymns properly then say it (respect the hymn).

+ The deacon who is responsible for the overhead projector presentation should be trained well on how to use it. Don't display the seneksarian readings (the live of the saints book), Abouna sometimes cut it short.

+ Regarding Pascha Schedules (Passion Week); there will be 4 Paschas :

- Complete early morning Pascha (6:30 AM – 9:30 AM)
- Complete second morning Pascha (10:00 AM – 1:00 PM)
- 2 complete evening Paschas, one Arabic-English and one English. (Place TBD)