



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

**Deacons Meeting – Saturday, March 05, 2011**

**(Revised in February 2012)**

**Deacons Responsibilities**

**Deacons serving in the altar:**

+ All deacons are requested to review the **guidelines of serving in the altar**; the youth and kids deacons (up to Grade 12) are requested to complete the test which requires understanding the following:

- + When to present the tonyia for blessing.
- + Demonstration of incense circuit, gospel circuit, entering and exiting the altar.
- + Rules of handling the shoria, candles and microphones.
- + Arrangements in the altar before the Divine Liturgy and during offertory and communion.

+ There are 8 altar service groups rotating the service in the altar on Saturdays and Sundays Divine Liturgies, each group include 3-4 adult deacons, 3-4 youth deacons and 3-4 kids deacons; and each altar group has a head deacon.

**The following deacons are scheduled for the head deacon service:**

- + Ihab Ghabour ... (St. Stephen's Group)
- + Maged Metias ... (St. Severus's Group)
- + Amir Girgis Boktor ... (St. Athansius's Group)
- + Basteur Yousef ... (St. Cyril's Group)
- + Sadek Elzawy ... (St. Joseph's Group)
- + Mina Yousif ... (St. Discorous's Group)
- + Shereen Meleka ... (St. Mark's Group)
- + Nagy Zaki-Azat ... (St. Shenouda's Group)

**The responsibilities of the head deacon:**

- + Contact the deacons in his group and remind them with their service; in case of his absence, he should ask an adult deacon in his group to look after the service in the altar.
- + Review the notes/guidelines of serving in the altar with the kids deacons in his group. Most of the kids deacons have reviewed these notes and were tested on them (The notes are all posted on the church website, deacons corner)
- + Distribute the responses/tasks during the vespers on Saturday and during the matins and Divine Liturgy.

- + Look after the altar at the end of the service; him and other deacons in the altar, are responsible for organizing the altar and returning it to its original state (e.g. wrapping the vessels, disposing of the water and the contents of the censer, the candles, etc...)
- + Look after the baptism service if it's scheduled on his service day, by coming early and preparing the baptism font in the beginning, assisting abouna during the baptism and drain the water of the baptism font at the end of the service.
- + The arrangement of the deacons in the altar during the Divine Liturgy can be distributed as follow:
  - One deacon prepares the Wine and Water before the beginning of the service.
  - One deacon prepares the Eprospheeren on the altar.
  - One deacon stands on the left hand side of abouna, to assist him with the pages of the service book (He doesn't have to be the head deacon who distributes the responses in the altar).
  - One deacon stands on the right hand side of abouna, to take care of the shoria (from preparing it in the beginning of the service, till cleaning it at the end).
  - One deacon follows abouna during the communion of the Holy Body.
  - Two deacons follow abouna during the communion of the Holy Blood.
  - One deacon holds the candle in front of the Holy Body when abouna gives communion to the seniors/handicap outside.
  - Two deacons follow abouna with the water and towel at the end of the service.
  - Two deacons help abouna with distributing the Ologia.

### **+ Chorus Lead during the Vespers and Midnight Prayers:**

#### **The following deacons are scheduled for this service:**

- + Abanoub Zaki
- + Michael Aziz
- + Amir Girgis Boktor
- + Paul Saad
- + Basteur Yousef
- + Michael Boutros
- + Andrew Tadrouss
- + Philopateer Zaki-Azat

#### **The responsibilities:**

- + One deacon is scheduled every Saturday to lead the following services on Saturday:
  - + The vespers praises (6:30 to 7:00 PM)
  - + The vespers raising of incense (7:00 to 7:40 PM)
  - + The midnight prayer (7:40 to 7:50 PM – before Christ in our house meeting)
  - + The midnight praises (9:00 to 10:30 PM – after Christ in our house meeting)
- + Make sure the katamares is open on the right reading.

## **+ Chorus Lead during the Matins & Divine Liturgy:**

The following deacons are scheduled for this service:

- + Sadek Elzawy
- + Maged Metias
- + Mina Yousif
- + Sherif Nessim
- + Shereen Meleka

### The responsibilities:

- + Make sure the Agpyia psalms and gospels are distributed.
  - + Lead the congregation responses during the Divine Liturgy.
  - + Arrange the occasional/seasonal hymns like (Aspasmos Watos/Adam, Litanies responses, Pi-Nishti, Gregorian endings ... etc.) with abouna and the head deacon in the altar.
  - + Manage the time schedule of the service (posted under "Service Time Schedule" on Deacons Corner). For Sundays Divine Liturgy, it's as follow:
    - Matins Prayer ... From 8:00 to 8:30 AM
    - Agpiya and Offertory till Hitens ... From 8:30 to 9:00 AM
    - Readings (including Gospels) ... From 9:00 to 9:30 AM
    - Sermons ... From 9:30 to 10:00 AM
    - The Creed till the Litanies ... From 10:00 to 10:30 AM
    - Commemoration till Confession ... From 10:30 to 11:00 AM
    - Communion ... From 11:00 to 11:30 AM
  - + Two deacons are responsible for the communion songs every Sunday's Divine Liturgy:
    - Sadek Elzawy (or Sherif Nessim in his absence) for the Arabic songs.
    - Philopateer Zaki-Azat (or Michael Aziz in his absence) for the English songs.
- Preparing a list of songs ahead of time, scheduling and practicing them monthly is recommended; the songs can be listed on the service schedule as well.

## **+ Ushers of the South Chorus:**

Two deacons (from the youth – grade 9 and up) are scheduled every Saturday/Sunday to look after the south chorus young deacons during the Vespers on Saturday and Matins & Divine Liturgy on Sunday; and to encourage them to sing hymns as one chorus.

## **+ Ushers of Overhead Presentation and Service Books**

Two deacons (from the youth – grade 9 and up) are scheduled every Saturday/Sunday for this service.

The responsibilities:

- + Maintain the presentation slides during the vespers on Saturday and the Divine Liturgy on Sunday.
- + Look after the service books (like: katamares/agpyias/kholagies) and prepare the right Sunday's readings (verifying the right reading with the chorus lead deacon is recommended).
- + Store the service books (including: katamares/agpyias/kholagies) in their places at the end of the service.
- + Prepare the microphones before the service and turning them off at the end of the service.

**+ Readers**

Five deacons are scheduled every Saturday/Sunday for the following readings – English & Arabic readings are alternated weekly:

- + Vespers Gospel
- + Matins Gospel
- + Pauline
- + Catholic Epistles
- + Praxis

The responsibilities:

- + Prepare the reading ahead of time by practicing it using the reading reference on the schedule posted on the deacons corner (the reading reference is linked to online reading); or by practicing the reading by using the Katamars itself.

**General Notes:**

- + All deacons are urged to check the service schedule weekly; a weekly reminder is usually sent out by e-mail to the deacons who are scheduled for services (Altar Group Head Deacon / Chorus Lead / Ushers / Readers); the altar group head deacon is still responsible to contact his group, remind them and perhaps arrange the service/responses ahead of time for the vespers, matins and Divine Liturgy.
- + Scheduling the special events every month (like Holy Lent Divine Liturgies during the week days, or St Mary revival services, or weddings, or funerals ...etc) is a bit of challenge; deacons may need to send their availability for the pre-scheduled monthly services.
- + Oghnostos deacons sometimes serve in the altar without patrachel/patracheen; they are requested to wear it during the service.
- + Deacons who are scheduled for readings or assigned a task should not delegate that to another deacon.
- + Attending the Coptic & Hymns Classes as well as Deacons Meetings is very important:

- My Coptic Church Meeting (Adult Class) ... Fridays 8:00 to 9:00 PM.
- Coptic & Hymns Classes (For Youth and Children up to Grade 12) ... Saturdays 5:30 to 6:30 PM.
- Advanced Hymns Class (For Adult & Youth) ... Occasionally scheduled.
- Deacons Meetings:  
 For Children up to Grade 8 ... 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month 3:00 to 5:00 PM  
 For Youth (Grade 9 & up) and Adults ... 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month 2:15 to 3:15 PM

***Note: Deacons who are responsible for the Coptic & Hymns classes are requested to be committed and be on time for their classes. Absences should be notified ahead of time to arrange for a replacement.***

+ All deacons (Adult, Youth and Kids) are requested to review the altar deacon's responses posted on the church website, deacons corner and practice them in the right tone; PDF files including all responses during Vespers, Matins and Divine Liturgy are linked [here](#) for the List of responses of Vespers & Matins and Divine Liturgy, and linked [here](#) for Coptic, Arabic & English responses in Text & Audio.

+ For absences notices:

- Regarding the altar service: deacons should contact the altar service head deacon ahead of time.
- Regarding the readings or usher service: deacons should contact uncle Raef.

**Glory be to God forever, Amen**

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