



## St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society

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Dear friends and colleagues:

The peace and love of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all. Preserving, Reviving, and Promoting the Christian Heritage of Egypt for our current generations and those that will follow were and will continue to be our goal and cause for existence. This 39th year witnessed more phenomenal growth for the Society. Phenomenal because it defied logic of how a tiny seed can produce a fruitful tree that keeps on growing even if its surroundings are not particularly conducive for such growth. Iron into gold was always the holy grail of Alchemy, I dare to speak of the Society growth in these terms. The first tried to defy the laws of physics, while the second defied the fundamentals of academic and community organizations. The first failed as it was powered of human greed, and the second continued to succeed because of clear vision and Divine intervention! Those we serve were and will always be the Coptic Christians, especially those outside of Egypt. Creating and strengthening a heritage link is what we aim to do without nationalistic, political, or theological agendas to follow. In pursuing this we establish a significant physical presence. Some, if not many, would question the wisdom of doing so, which defies conventional wisdom especially in an age where virtual presence is becoming the norm in the minds of the people. As one of the pioneers among Coptic organization in establishing virtual presence in the mid-nineties, we would simply answer that both approaches work together but neither can exist exclusive of the other in performing our work. It is easy to label an electronic entity as fake, but it is much harder when a physical object is there to testify to its presence.

Our heritage has four corners: Language, Literature, Art, and History. Our activities are always centered on rebuilding and strengthening this heritage with education, publishing, and making resources needed to accomplish the work. This includes individual as well as collaborative efforts with those that can help our cause. This includes any person or organization that is interested in whatever capacity in our Coptic Heritage. The focus of all of our goal-oriented activities is concentrated within our growing 26-year old *St. Shenouda Center for Coptic Studies* in Los Angeles along with our work with other collaborating organizations. As faithful stewards of this honorable and worthy organization, we will present to you, the following accomplishments and future endeavors that you have made possible with your prayers and financial support.

1. **19<sup>th</sup> St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference of Coptic Studies:** We have continued our annual celebration of Coptic Studies at UCLA with the 19<sup>th</sup> conference on July 20-21. Once and again, it preserved its usual success both in attendance and quality of scholarship work with 19 participants from 13 different academic institutions from the US, Australia, and France.
2. ***The St. Shenouda Coptic Cultural Museum:*** Over the past year we continued to develop our new museum. In April 2018, we were blessed by the addition of a 2-room suite in the same building as the Center. This new addition allowed and afforded us the chance to keep the original 300 sf. open space of the Museum devoted to the permanent *Bible in Egypt* exhibit. The new place gave us storage space for the growing manuscript collection that numbers now 242 in addition to more display space for non-Biblical manuscripts and Coptic textiles in addition to a working space for consulting these manuscripts. The rare books collection was moved to another new suite on the first floor. Our signature exhibit, Bible in Egypt, continued to develop with the addition of three large standing glass display cases in addition to the existing display classes and several rare facsimile volumes of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. The purpose of this exhibit is to showcase Egypt's great

contribution to our knowledge of the Bible, Greek, Coptic, Hebrew, and Arabic. In the process we were able to acquire facsimiles of Greek papyri, Hebrew codices, and the of the original 1611 King James Bible as well as a 15<sup>th</sup> Gutenberg Bible. A special viewing was held for attendees of the 2018, 19th St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference of Coptic Studies as well as Sunday school groups and University students.

3. ***The Society Library System:*** the formation of an extensive library resources is one of the cornerstones of promoting research and understanding our Egyptian (Coptic) Christian Heritage. In addition to the hundreds of volumes of books and scholarly periodicals, the Society added two donated personal libraries of Mrs. Norma Gurba, an old classmate from the Coptic class at UCLA, and Mr. Michael J. Galiouby totaling over 1400 volumes. These libraries contain important Egyptological resources, Bible editions, and books from Egypt. The first library is housed in the Special Libraries on the second floor. The second one is currently on the first floor in the Collections and Periodicals suite. We are very grateful for these generous contributions that are conservatively worth over \$20,000. Currently the library has about \$16,500 items spread over the multiple suites that the Society leases.
4. ***Support of Coptic Studies at Claremont Graduate University (CGU):*** This year was marked by the end of a very successful tenure of the clinical professorship of Prof. Gawdat Gabra at CGU. With the many sacrifices of Professor Gabra and our members' generosity, a special, successful, and unique brand of Coptology was introduced in an American university for the first time. Their bountiful fruits have been enumerated in the past progress reports of the Society. However, his efforts in promoting Coptology does not cease with his retirement from teaching. He is still overseeing the progress of the further development of the *Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia*, the other major contribution of his tenure at CGU, which promoted Coptology worldwide and for generations to come. He is also continuing to supervise the PhD students that are at an advance stage of their dissertation-writing. We are in continuous discussion with CGU to continue and build on the success of the past 10 years. The Coptic Council of CGU, chaired by Dr. Saad Michael Saad, is the lead arm of the Society supporting these activities. Again, we want to express our deep gratitude to Prof. Gabra for all his dedication and sacrifices and celebrate the plentiful fruits of his work.
5. ***The Continued Collaboration with St. Mark Foundation for Coptic History (SMF):*** The technical reviews of the proceedings of the Eighth Symposium of Christianity and Monasticism in Alexandria, Red Sea Monasteries, and the Western Oases are near completion. The Society assisted SMF in acquiring and securing copies and publication permissions for important images to be included in the comprehensive Arabic volume on St. Mark, commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Building of St. Mark Cathedral in Cairo, that has just appeared. This entailed contacting six different museums and libraries in five different countries. SMF also contributed generously to our electronic acquisitions from Hamburg University Library as well as the Institut Catholique de Paris.
6. ***The Canadian Society For Coptic Studies (CSCS) :*** This sister organization is continuing its 5-year campaign with the University of Toronto that was launched for a Coptology Chair plus student fellowships. We applaud their achievements and wish them success in their noble endeavors. The proceedings from their 10<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Coptic Studies are about to be published including an article contributed by the Society on the Bohairic homilies of St. Shenouda in the Pascha Book.
7. ***Coptic Digital Library (CDL):*** The Society has continued to expand its electronic research library for the benefit of the Society and other designated affiliate organizations. It now includes over one million pages of manuscripts and research material in the field of Coptic Studies.
8. ***The Society on Web:*** The Society's website, launched in 1996, was completely overhauled and redesigned, thanks to the efforts of Ms. Marina Kamel, an aspiring young web content designer (www.marinakamel.com). The new site features the many activities and accomplishments of the Society over the decades. It is presented in an user-friendly navigable interface with many features

that were not available in the past version. This includes a new electronic bookstore, <https://ssacs.ecrater.com/>. We are also in the process of redesigning the other website of the Society with the same interface. This includes the Society's continually developing subscription website, *Coptic Heritage*. The test site is accessible through the main site of the Society.

9. **Expansion St. Shenouda Center:** This past reporting period we have added two more leased suites to the existing six that we already have. This allowed us to better arrange the vast resources that the Society has amassed in support of our efforts to preserve our beloved heritage. We now lease the entire first floor of the building plus half of the larger second floor, a total of about 2400 square feet.
10. **Coptic Microform/Digital Manuscript Collection:** The Society gave a \$3,000 grant to the Institut Catholique de Paris (ICP) to digitize three important Coptic manuscripts acquired in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. ICP had agreed to provide the Society with the high-resolution scanned images to be hosted at the Center server. We also purchased high resolution copies of 24 manuscripts from St. Macarius Monastery, that were digitized by the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library with prior agreement with the late Bishop Epiphanius, the monastery's Abbot, at a cost of about \$2,000.
11. **Bishop Epiphanius al-Maqari Memorial Award:** This tragic death of our beloved Anba Epiphanius on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 left us with deep sadness but with a determination to memorialize his name as the most prolific proponent of Coptic education in our generation, in addition to his own status as a prominent Coptic scholar. Accordingly, one of our members, Dr. Essam T. Keddis of New Jersey took the initiative to lead the Society's effort in establishing a memorial award in his name in an appropriate academic institution. Through his tireless efforts, and the great help of Dr. Mary Farag of the Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS), we have established an annual award of \$5000 at PTS. This award will be competitively applied for by students of PTS in the form of a submitted research paper on an aspect of the Coptic Heritage. A review board of PTS faculty and the Society will evaluate the submittals. The financial commitment was paid in advance and we encourage others to contribute toward this endeavor, <http://www.stshenouda.org/bishopepiphaniusaward>.
12. **Education & Publications:** The Society completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> online summer course of Bohairic Coptic for ACTS. We also started a new expanded one with Agora University in September. The Society has published volume 16, 2017 of *Coptica*, our joint publication with SMF.

**In this upcoming fiscal year, we have set the following main goals:**

**The St. Shenouda Center of Coptic Studies:** Our fixed expenses are primarily the rent and the maintenance of the now eight-suite Center and Society office that we have been leasing in our present location since 1992. This is the hub of the Society's activities and its physical presence that has gained the Society its worldwide respect over the decades. It is operated with the least overhead expenses possible and with maximum efficiency. The estimated cost in the budget is \$64,400.

**Society Websites:** We will be working on further developing the other existing websites like the Coptic Heritage, Coptic Conferences, Coptic Manuscripts, and other websites with a new interface in line with what was done for the main website. This will include integrating important multimedia resources from the Society's collections with the current site, and adding more manuscripts. The estimated cost is at least \$2,000 drawn from different budget items.

**Funding the 2018-19 Coptic Studies Clinical Professorship at CGU and other Academic Activities:** Our unending support of academic programs for the 2019 calendar year requires \$20,000 during this upcoming fiscal year. This includes allocations to the offering of classes by visiting professors in support of the Coptic Studies Track, student financial assistance, scholarly activities there and in other academic institutions. It also includes *Bishop Epiphanius al-Maqari Memorial Award*. We are also contemplating the offering of online comprehensive curriculum of survey courses of the different aspects of the Coptic Heritage. These will either be eventually offered through our online



institute, SSEICS, or via Society collaborations with other Coptic online educations institutions such as ACTS or Agora University.

**Coptology at UCLA:** The Society will continue its Coptic Studies conference series next year. We have scheduled the 20th St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference of Coptic Studies for July 19-20, 2019. The estimated cost is \$10,000 for covering housing and travel grants. This being the Society’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the conference will be dedicated to the Life and Times of St. Shenouda the Archimandrite. Other possibilities of cooperation will be covered in budgeting for the academic programs.

**Publications:** Volume 17 of *Coptica* is in preparation. It will be published and sent to the members and subscribers in early 2019. The estimated cost is \$5,000, covering printing cost, printing equipment lease and mailing cost.

**Expansion of the Coptic Book and Microfilm Libraries and St. Shenouda Coptic Cultural Museum:** We are negotiating with the authorities of the Hamburg University Library to obtain high resolution digital images of their collections of fragments from St. Macarius monastery. Also, we will be continually acquiring the necessary library resources of books, rare and new, and archival scanning of the books to further support our preservation and revival efforts. Estimated cost is \$20,000.

Financially, our General Fund income was about \$132,027 (including \$3,000 direct contribution to CGU) with expenditures of about \$121,465. The surplus was primarily due to deferring of academic and library expenses. To continue maintaining and expanding our work as we pursue the avenues that the Lord saw fit to open for us, we would need about \$132,000 for the projected activities. The expenditures for last year as well as the projected ones for the upcoming year are as follows:

Category	17-18 Expenditure \$ (% Of 121,500 K)	18-19 Proj. Expenditure \$ (% Of 132,000K)
Fixed Office Expenses	\$58,200 (47.90%)	\$64,400 (48.79%)
Annual Conference/Honoraria	\$ 3,700 ( 3.05%)	\$10,000 ( 7.58%)
Scholarships/Financial Asst.	\$ 400 ( 0.33%)	\$ 6,000 ( 4.54%)
Computers /Software/Equipment/Internet	\$ 2,100 ( 1.73%)	\$ 2,500 ( 1.89%)
Printing & Mailing Costs	\$ 4,700 ( 3.87%)	\$ 5,000 ( 3.79%)
Books/Manuscripts/Microfilms/Museum	\$25,200 (20.74%)	\$20,000 (15.15%)
SSEICS/Academic Programs	\$21,800 (17.94%)	\$20,000 (15.15%)
Office Furniture/Supplies/Misc.	\$ 2,400 ( 1.97%)	\$ 1,100 ( 0.83%)
Items for redistribution	\$ 3,000 ( 2.47%)	\$ 3,000 ( 2.28%)

For 39 years, we have faithfully served our ultimate goal of safeguarding and preserving our beloved heritage. We are doing it as stewards for the rightful owners, the present and future generation of Copts worldwide and especially in the diaspora. The proper preservation of our heritage in a systematic and scientific way is our sacred duty to be honorably presented and left for this and future generations . We are constantly striving to act, not only as true and efficient conduits passing on the past to the future, but more importantly, to present this past in the best plausible manner that befits its originators, benefits its future utilizers, and rebuild what was lost of it for the sake of us all! **WE INVITE THE NEW GENERATION TO STEP UP AND SUPPORT THE WORK THAT YOUR PARENTS HAVE FAITHFULLY PRESERVED FOR YOU.** May our Lord guide this work and its workers for His glory and bless you all.

Sincerely on behalf of the Society,

Hany N. Takla, President