



## St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society

1701 S. Wooster St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90035-4332  
USA

October 14, 2020

Dear friends and colleagues:

The peace and love of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all. This year was the 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of our long journey to ***Preserving, Reviving, and Promoting the Christian Heritage of Egypt***. As we all have experienced, more than the second half of the year has been challenging worldwide because of the Pandemic. However, with every challenge we faced there were blessings along the way too. Nonetheless, we continued steadfast in the journey toward our ultimate goal, mentioned above, that we originally set back in 1979. The abundance of blessings as well as challenges were a common occurrence throughout our long history. The blessings we are grateful for and the challenges were the growing pain, which we were also grateful for. Our members that were inspired to help us, made the phenomenal growth and accomplishments that the Society has achieved possible. Despite the long road ahead, staying the course will lead to our future success. It is the responsibility of every generation to hand down its heritage in a better shape than received.

Our heritage stands on four pillars: Language, Literature, Art, and History. There are multiple languages and cultures that shaped these pillars in the past. However, moving into the future, the revival of the Egyptian (Coptic) language is an essential and indispensable tool that we must promote and develop. For in it lies the essence of our identity and subsequently its survival! It is the genuine link that binds us Copts in the Diaspora together with our brethren in Egypt! Throughout our journey, our activities focused on understanding and studying the past and rebuilding the future to re-establish our true identity that would accurately connect the past with the present to shape the future. Such activities included education, publishing, and gathering resources needed to accomplish such work. We were pioneers of reviving the Coptic Heritage among the Diaspora Copts, and subsequently inspired many throughout the lands of immigrations to follow suit and become our collaborative partners. *St. Shenouda Center for Coptic Studies* in Los Angeles, founded in September 1992, represents the focal point of all our activities. Now I would like to share with you the activities and accomplishments that you have generously supported this past fiscal year.

1. ***The St. Shenouda Center Annex:*** As the situation with the physical location of the Center still in flux, in the meantime we successfully built a 200-sf Annex at the 1701 S. Wooster location. It became ready by the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society this last December. Currently it houses the periodicals, the microfilms, the manuscripts, the rare book collection, and the multi-volume series. Also moved there was the microfilm scanning workstation. The administration, the office scanner, and portions of the special Book collections were transferred to the 1701 S. Wooster location. The space reallocation of the remaining assets at the 1494 S. Robertson location will be done when the sale-of-the-building issue is resolved. We are certain that the will of God will prevail over that of men as we have experienced over the past 41 years. Please remember this in your prayers!
2. ***The Northridge Regional Coptic Center:*** This new branch is continuing to develop especially among the youth of the neighboring Coptic church, St. Mary and St. Athanasius Coptic Orthodox Church. During the year it served as a secondary campus for the online Coptic Language course that the Society started in the previous fiscal year and extended into our reporting period. More book assets were transferred during the year. A full inventory will appear soon on the Society's website. A group of volunteers has been organized by the co-director there, Mr. Joseph Fahim.
3. ***Coptology @UCLA:*** The Society continued its Coptic Studies Lecture series this year with one on November 21st, by Prof. Nelly Van Doorn-Harder. We continued our annual celebration of Coptic Studies at UCLA with the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference. We had to adjust our format from physical to virtual this year. So, it was held on August 28-29. There were 15 presentations, all online from different time zones with scholars from 15 different cities in five different countries spread over four continents. It was primarily monitored from the Center new Annex.

About 60 people attended parts or all the sessions. More information about the conference and audio recordings of all the presentations is available at <http://www.stshenouda.org/21conferencereg>. Video recordings of the presentations will be available to those that registered for the conference earlier.

4. ***The St. Shenouda Coptic Cultural Museum:*** Over the past year we continued to maintain the *Bible in Egypt* exhibit. The manuscript collection grew by the addition of 18 manuscripts, including a group of fragments from three manuscripts, grouped under ML.MS.256. These fragments once belonged to the private collection of the late Prof. James Robinson, bequeathed to the Society by his widow, Prof. Anne Moore of the University of Calgary. The exhibit was viewed by a number of students from the Eastern Christianity class at the Loyola-Marymount University with their professor, Archimandrite Dr. Cyril Hovrun, where they also held their class at the Coptic Library. The Pandemic situation curtailed visitors to both the Library and the Museum except for visits by few individuals.
5. ***The Society Library System:*** Regardless of the difficult circumstances we were dealing with, we continued the development of our collections, albeit conservatively. We acquired several volumes thanks to suggestions by our members,
6. ***Support of Coptic Studies at Claremont Graduate University (CGU):*** The collaboration with CGU continued in multiple avenues. First, we provided financial and academic support for six students or graduates at various stages of their doctoral work: Dr. Tamara Siuda for work on CCE; Dr. Botros Sidrak who was awarded his doctoral dissertation this summer, titled: *The Auricular Confession in the Coptic Tradition: A Theological and Historical Study in the Book of Confession by Kryillus III, Patriarch of Alexandria (+1243 AD)*; Ms. Maggie Atef Tawadros; Ms Terry Topete, Ms. Eunice Villaneda, and Ms. Marmar Zakher for enrollment in the Sahidic Coptic class at ACTS. Rev. Dr. Edens Elvéus was awarded his doctorate on Gen 1:1-5, in November 2019. Dr. Trevena Hanna was also awarded her doctoral dissertation in September, titled: *The Power of Coptic Women Saints as Spiritual Models for Coptic Women in the USA and Egypt*. Ms. Mary Ghattas is progressing in her dissertation writing. Prof. Gawdat Gabra was on the advisory Board for most of these students. Ms. Tawadros is continuing her part-time work as a Research Assistant at the St. Shenouda Center to catalog the digital manuscripts collection of the Society. The Society also gave the organizing committee of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Coptic Studies in Brussels a 3,000 Euro grant to help finance Egyptian scholars' participation at the Congress, however due to the Pandemic the Congress was pushed back to July 2021. Last but not least we are continuing our support of the *Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia (CCE)*, one of the major contributions of Prof. Gabra during his tenure at CGU and until the present time. The Coptic Council of CGU, chaired by Dr. Saad Michael Saad, is the lead arm of the Society in support of these activities. He is also the managing editor of CCE and its continuing development, with the assistance of Dr. Siuda, Dr. Sidrak, and Ms. Ghattas. The new site for the CCE is:  
<https://ccd.ccl.claremont.edu/digital/collection/cce>.
7. ***The Continued Collaboration with St. Mark Foundation for Coptic History (SMF):*** The proceedings of the Eighth Symposium of Christianity and Monasticism in Alexandria and the Egyptian Deserts is now in print. Due to the Pandemic, upcoming Symposium on the Coptic Bible was also pushed to February 2022 by request of the presenters. The Society is also providing support for the new Digital section of the new Patriarchal Library that H.H. Pope Tawadros II has recently established in Wadi al-Natrun.
8. ***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. The relocation of the large office scanner to 1701 S. Wooster location allowed for more efficient scanning of the library resources. Over 300 volumes were scanned during this reporting period. We also completed the scanning of the rest of the Society's manuscript collection. It now includes well over one million pages of manuscripts and research material in the field of Coptic Studies.
9. ***The Society on Web:*** The Society's new website is continuing to expand. We have recently added a complete introductory course for the Bohairic Coptic with video and sound recordings. This course is currently used by new Center research volunteers as well as the Nashville's Clerical School, see below.

10. **Coptic Microform/Digital Manuscript Collection:** This fiscal year, the Society completed digitizing 97 manuscripts in our collection.
11. **Bishop Epiphanius al-Maqari Memorial Award:** Based on the recommendation of the review board, headed by Dr. Mary Farag of the Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS), this academic year award was given to Mr. Andrew Michael of PTS. His winning research paper was titled, *The Seal of All the Fathers: Alexandria, Antioch, and St. Cyril on Micah 6:8*. The third-year installment of this \$5,000 at PTS was paid in October 2020. The award will continue to be competitively applied for by students of PTS in the form of a submitted research paper on an aspect of the Coptic Heritage, and judged by the review board of PTS faculty and the Society as before. We encourage all to contribute toward this endeavor on the special webpage set at <http://www.stshenouda.org/bishopepiphaniusaward>.
12. **Education & Publications:** The Society in collaboration with ACTS completed two Coptic language classes: The 5<sup>th</sup> online summer course of Bohairic Coptic, in parallel with the 2<sup>nd</sup> online summer Sahidic. The total enrollment in both courses was 61 students from North America and Egypt. The enrollment numbers are steadily breaking all records for academic Coptic Language classes outside of Egypt. We completed the first online edition of our Introduction to Bohairic Coptic at the Center and online in January 2020 with over 20 enrolled students. Through the efforts of Fr. Daniel Ebrahim of Nashville TN with permission of H.G. Bishop Youssef of the Southern States Diocese, this online course was approved as the curriculum of the Nashville English Ekklerikia this semester. The publication of volume 18, 2019 of Coptica was delayed by the Pandemic.
13. **Staff at the Center/Society:** We added one non-local volunteer as Research Assistant, Mr. John Habib of Queen's University, Toronto. Mr. Habib is working on computerizing Bohairic texts as well as going through the Introduction to Bohairic Coptic as part of a History Internship with his University. There is a number of volunteers working at the Regional Center with Mr. Joseph W. Fahim: Joseph Abdelmalek, Matthew Adraous, Stephen Bastawros, Neil Beshay, Shenouty Hanna. The full administrative staff is listed at <http://www.stshenouda.org/administration>.
14. **Hardware/Software Resources:** The Society purchased a cloud storage physical drive that is accessible from anywhere in the world with internet access. In it we moved and re-arranged the important digital assets of the Society, including scanned books and digital manuscripts, many of them are only available in our collection. In addition, we procured a 300 dpi digital manuscript/book scanner that is being used to scan our collection for our own use. Also, we obtained from Microsoft multiple licenses of the Business edition of Microsoft Office 365 and volume licenses for Windows 10 for the use of our staff.

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

**The St. Shenouda Center of Coptic Studies and the Northridge Regional Center:** Our fixed expenses are primarily the rent and the maintenance of the now consolidated Los Angeles main Center and the new Regional Center in Northridge, in addition to the possible projected rent increase if the building is sold. This is the hub of the Society's activities and its physical presence that has gained the Society in particular and the Copts in general, worldwide respect over the decades. The estimated cost in the budget is \$70,000.

**Society Electronic Activities:** Cloud storage and web-based programs are becoming indispensable tools in carrying out our efforts in the preservation and promotion of our Heritage, the secure display of our vast resources of primary and secondary resources, as well as our educational activities. The estimated cost is at least \$3,500 drawn from different budget items.

**Funding the 2020-21 Coptic Studies at CGU and Other Academic Activities:** Our projected support for CGU includes students' scholarships, compensation for CCE editing activities, Coptic Studies lectures, and offered courses by visiting professors in support of the Coptic Studies Track. Also included is the annual allocation for the PTS' *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 offered through our online institute, SSEICS, or via the Society's collaborations with other Coptic online institutions such as ACTS or Agora University. Estimated costs \$25,000



**Coptology at UCLA:** We have tentatively scheduled the 22<sup>nd</sup> St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference of Coptic Studies for August 27-28, 2021, so it will not conflict with the International Congress in Brussels in mid-July 2021. The estimated cost is \$5,000 for covering housing and travel grants. Other possibilities of cooperation will be covered in budgeting for the academic programs.

**Publications:** Volumes 18 & 19 of *Coptica* are in the planning. They will include the proceedings from the 20<sup>th</sup> St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference. The estimated cost is \$4,000, 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 continuing to develop the collections at the Coptic Library and the Museum as prudent and wise as we can. We are also planning to procure digital copies of at least 45 manuscripts that are of Egyptian origin in addition to the payment for received manuscripts in September. Estimated cost is \$20,000.

**Cooperation with HMML:** The Society is negotiating with HMML organization in Collegeville MN, to scan our Society Manuscripts and have them securely viewed in their sophisticated vHMML web portal. HMML would provide the equipment and the training and the Center staff will perform the scanning and posting the images on their server. The cost for the Society will be from the Academic Program Budget.

Financially, our General Fund income was about \$128,180 (including \$5,000 direct contribution to PTS) with expenditures of about \$104,270. The surplus was primarily due to deferring of academic and library expenses as well as the delay in the sale of the Center’s building. 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 \$134,000 for the projected activities. The expenditures for last year as well as the projected ones for the upcoming year are as follows:

Category	19-20 Expenditure \$ (% Of 104,270 K)	20-21 Proj. Expenditure \$ (% Of 134,000K)
Fixed Office Expenses	\$54,430 (52.20%)	\$70,000 (52.24%)
Annual Conference/Honoraria	\$ 1,500 ( 1.44%)	\$ 5,000 ( 3.74%)
Scholarships/Financial Asst.	\$ 6,500 ( 6.23%)	\$10,000 ( 7.46%)
Computers /Software/Equipment/Internet	\$ 3,200 ( 3.07%)	\$ 3,500 ( 2.61%)
Printing & Mailing Costs	\$ 3,800 ( 3.64%)	\$ 4,000 ( 2.99%)
Books/Manuscripts/Microfilms/Museum	\$15,700 (15.08%)	\$20,000 (14.92%)
SSEICS/Academic Programs	\$14,800 (14.19%)	\$20,000 (14.92%)
Office Furniture/Supplies/Misc.	\$ 500 ( 0.48%)	\$ 500 ( 0.37%)
Items for redistribution	\$ 3,840 ( 3.67%)	\$ 1,000 ( 0.75%)

In our 41 years of stewardship of this work, much was accomplished but much more awaits us to do. Through your continuing prayers and support what was a dream will become a reality. Keeping the future generation in our minds, we have toiled and continued our work for their sake. Our continuing success has always been a fruit of this labor that is exerted out of love for the One who entrusted us with this work. **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