



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. This year marked the 42nd Anniversary of our long journey of ***Preserving, Reviving, and Promoting the Christian Heritage of Egypt***. Throughout the year we all lived under the cloud of a once-in-a-century pandemic, with all its fears, restrictions and challenges to our way of life worldwide. Throughout our long history we learned to adapt and learn to function under all circumstances. This of course was made possible by the Divine help that has sustained us for all these decades and moved the hearts of many to help us continue with our mission. Still, the lack of physical interactions imposed by the pandemic and the uncertainties that it created, led to many challenges that we are all well aware of. The continuing existence of this work can only strengthen our faith that it is Divinely inspired and thus worthy to continue regardless of the challenges faced. We need to always remember that our heritage is a gift, and we are all called to preserve it for the future generations and present it in a better shape than we received it.

As we have learned over the many years of our existence, that our heritage stands on four distinct pillars: Language, Literature, Art, and History. Although multiple languages and cultures shaped these pillars over the many centuries of our past, 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 not mere words and grammar! Though an essential tool, it is not all we thrive to preserve. Along this path, 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 of resources needed to accomplish such work. We were, and still are, the pioneers of reviving the Coptic Heritage among the Diaspora Copts, an endeavor that continues to inspire many throughout the lands of immigration 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 such activities. Now I would like to share with you the activities and accomplishments that you have generously supported this past fiscal year.

1. ***The Relocation of the Main St. Shenouda Center:*** Finally, the office building that houses the St. Shenouda Center was sold. Accordingly, we were asked to vacate all four office suites which we were leasing on the first floor and move into a space that has a little more than half the space we used to have. This mammoth task was accomplished early this September. We are still permitted to keep the suite holding the St. Shenouda Museum. The new lease is for about 20% extra overall rent for the smaller space, and it is monthly with no long-term guarantee. We are still hopeful for a more permanent place, which, God willing, we will have by the end of this upcoming fiscal year.
2. ***The Northridge Regional Coptic Center Relocation:*** Our lease for this location came to an end on June 30, 2021. The Board opted not to renew it and instead to move the contents into private storage in Phoenix Arizona with the intention of opening a regional center there. This will be run by Mr. Joseph Fahim who now resides in that area. More details will be forthcoming.
3. ***Coptic Bible App:*** Since the inception of the Society in 1979 and even before, a major goal was to produce a complete Bible in Coptic. Much work has been done over the decades to make this happen. In the 1990s we were able to produce an electronic version of New Testament. In 2007 a monograph for the state and history of research on the Coptic Old Testament was produced by the Society (*Coptica* v.6). In the summer of 2020, I came in contact with Mr. Mina Makar from New Jersey that happened to be a professional App developer for handheld devices as well as an avid student of Coptic. Thanks to the initiative of Dr. Joseph Sedrak on Facebook to attempt to translate the missing parts of the Coptic Old Testament, the Society contracted with Mr. Makar to produce a App for iOS and galaxy operating systems to display and search the electronic Bible files prepared

by the Society. The fruit of such a monumental task was not only historic but also a realization of a 43-year-old vision. The App which is compatible with all handheld devices, is a testimony to Mina's computer knowledge and the Society's efforts in digitizing these Divine texts. The project is still a work in-progress, but the July 14th released version has the entire surviving Coptic Bohairic texts of the Old and the New Testaments. The future releases will include all the known texts from the other dialects as well as a literal English translation. As it stands now, a Greek and English versions are provided from published public domain sources as a reference only. The App can display from a single column text to up to three parallel columns that the user can select for comparison. The App was a costly project not only in the development but in the preparation of the texts and the books and manuscripts that the Society has acquired over the years for this work. To maximize the benefit the first released version is provided for free. The future modules, that are solely intended for academic purposes, may be provided with a nominal charge to cover the further development cost. More details are available at our website: <http://www.stshenouda.org/coptic-bible-app>.

4. **Coptology @UCLA:** The Society continued our annual celebration of Coptic Studies at UCLA with the 21st Conference. We had to adjust our format from physical to virtual this year again but kept the usual July time frame and the 2-day format. So, it was held on July 16-17, 2021. There were 23 participants associated with over 20 academic institutions. The two-day program included 21 online presentations 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's Annex. About 80 people attended parts or all of the sessions. More information about the conference along with audio and video recordings of all the presentations are available at <http://www.stshenouda.org/22conferencereg>.
5. **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 20 manuscripts, including the first copy of the collection of a Synaxarium, an Arabic Pascha Book, a Copto-Arabic Pascha Book, and the private Psalmody of Metropolitan Markarios of Asyut who later became the 113 Pope of Alexandria along with several liturgical and literary works. The Copto-Arabic Pascha manuscript is the largest size Coptic manuscript preserved outside of Egypt and one of the largest few that were ever produced! We also acquired an 1811 Arabic Bible that was printed in England, which is housed in the Center's Annex among the rare-books collection. The Pandemic situation has impacted the number of visitors to both the Library and the Museum.
6. **The Society Library System:** In spite of the difficult circumstances that we encountered, we continued developing our collections, albeit conservatively. We acquired several volumes thanks to suggestions by our members including the two published volumes of the cataloging of the Library of Deir al-Surian by Prof. Stephen Davis and his team.
7. **Support of Coptic Studies at Claremont Graduate University (CGU):** The collaboration with CGU continued in multiple facets. First, we provided financial and academic support to four students or graduates at various stages of their doctoral work. 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 and other activities. The other avenue of support was in the form of a grant to sponsor a history course titled, *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Conflict and Cooperation in Medieval Egypt*, taught by Prof. Maged Mikhail. 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.claremont.edu/digital/collection/cce>. Grants were also provided to five scholars involved in the contributing or editing work of new entries in the encyclopedia.
8. **The Continued Collaboration with St. Mark Foundation for Coptic History (SMF):** On August 18, we were very saddened to hear of the sudden passing of Dr. Fawzy G. Estafanous, the founding president of SMF following a short illness. His legacy in the medical field as well as his contribution to Coptic Studies especially in Egypt is one that will be remembered and celebrated for generations. It was a great loss for us but his dedication to the Coptic Heritage was an exemplar for us all. Both of our organizations have collaborated on the publication of the *Coptica* annual periodical as well as organizing several international symposia that studied

and published an important series on the study of Christianity and Monasticism in Egypt. The eighth and last of the volumes was appropriately dedicated to him. Due to the pandemic, upcoming Symposium on the Coptic Bible is being postponed to February 2023 by request of the presenters and organizers. The Society is also continuing to provide support for the new Digital section of the new Patriarchal Library that H.H. Pope Tawadros II has recently established in Wadi al-Natrun.

9. **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. Over 110 volumes were scanned during this reporting period. We also completed the scanning of most of the Society's manuscript collection that was acquired during the same period.
10. **The Society on Web:** The Society's new website is continuing to expand with addition of new pages. The online Coptic Introductory course is continuing to be used for the Coptic Language curriculum at the St. Athanasius Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee.
11. **Coptic Microform/Digital Manuscript Collection:** This fiscal year, the Society completed the digitizing of 18 newly acquired manuscripts in our collection.
12. **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. Mark Sadrak of PTS. His winning research paper was titled, *Nursing Mother in the Eyes of a Monk Attending the Midnight Praises*. The Fourth-year installment of this \$5,000 at PTS is scheduled to be paid in October 2021. 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 usual. We encourage all to contribute toward this endeavor on the special webpage set at <http://www.stshenouda.org/bishopepiphaniusaward>.
13. **Education & Publications:** The Society in collaboration with ACTS completed two Coptic language classes: The 6th online summer course of Bohairic Coptic, in parallel with the 2nd online summer Sahidic. The total enrollment in both courses was 31 students from several parts of the US, Canada, Egypt, UK, and the Republic of Georgia. Volume 18, 2019 of *Coptica* was published and sent to the members and subscribers. Preparation of volume 19, 2020 is ongoing. We welcome Dr. Lisa Agaiby as a co-managing editor of the journal.
14. **The European Academy for Coptic Heritage (TEACH):** The Society has collaborated this year with this newly formed online Coptic theological institution in the UK. The cooperation was two-fold. First, we sponsored a class titled, *the Introduction to the Coptic Old Testament*, taught by Mr. Hany N. Takla. Second, some of our members are part of the editorial board of its new Journal of Christian Studies (JCS), including Dr. Gawdat Gabra, and Dr. Saad Michael Saad. For more information go to <https://teach.eu.com/>.
15. **Hardware/Software Resources:** The Society purchased a second 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 this upcoming fiscal year, we have set the following main goals in addition to those mentioned above:

The St. Shenouda Center of Coptic Studies and New Regional Center: Our fixed expenses are primarily the rent and the maintenance of the now consolidated Los Angeles main Center and the perspective Regional Center in Phoenix. 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 \$62,000.

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 \$4,000 drawn from different budget items.

Funding the 2021-22 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 on offering an 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 collaboration with other Coptic online institutions such as ACTS or Agora University. Estimated costs \$32,000

Coptology at UCLA: We have tentatively scheduled the 23rd St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference of Coptic Studies for August 26-27, 2022, so it will not conflict with the International Congress in Brussels that has been tentatively scheduled to mid-July 2022. 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: Volume 19 of *Coptica* is in the planning. It will include the second volume of proceedings from the 20th St. Shenouda-UCLA Conference. We are also planning to sponsor the publication of the Proceedings of the 11th International Congress after the excessive delay we encountered from the IACS. 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 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.

Enhancement of the Coptic Bible App: The Society is contemplating new development enhancement of the current system with more texts and possibly a critical apparatus module. The cost for the Society will be from the computer budget.

Financially, our General Fund income was about \$157,880 (including \$5,000 direct contribution to PTS and \$2,000 direct contribution to CGU) with expenditures of about \$149,340. 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 for most of the fiscal year. To continue maintaining and expanding our work as we pursue the avenues that the Lord sees fit to open for us, we would need about \$139,000 for the projected activities. The expenditures for last year as well as the projected ones for the upcoming year are as follows:

Category	20-21 Expenditure \$ (% Of 149,340 K)	21-22 Proj. Expenditure \$ (% Of 139,000K)
Fixed Office Expenses	\$52,510 (35.16%)	\$62,000 (44.60%)
Annual Conference/Honoraria	\$ 0 (0%)	\$ 5,000 (3.60%)
Scholarships/Financial Asst.	\$ 7,500 (5.02%)	\$ 5,000 (3.60%)
Computers /Software/Equipment/Internet	\$ 7,600 (5.09%)	\$ 4,000 (2.88%)
Printing & Mailing Costs	\$ 4,490 (3.00 %)	\$ 5,000 (3.60%)
Books/Manuscripts/Microfilms/Museum	\$44,640 (29.89%)	\$25,000 (17.98%)
SSEICS/Academic Programs	\$31,420 (21.04%)	\$32,000 (23.02%)
Office Furniture/Supplies/Misc.	\$ 590 (0.40%)	\$ 500 (0.36%)
Items for redistribution	\$ 590 (0.40%)	\$ 500 (0.36%)

In our nearly 42 years of stewardship of this work, we have taken great strides toward our ultimate goal. However, maintaining the progress and continuing to expand our efforts is still needed. Through your continuing prayers and support, we will be able to continue with our mission. From our inception, this work was for the benefit of not just this generation but for those who will follow us. We see this work as both Divinely inspired as well as mandated. **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



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScPJ-y04pLlkbkHai7ecWHHUKUhmY2FpiACxtOLUTen0YABcQ/viewform>

Contribution: <http://www.stshenouda.org/society/donation>

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