

# The Duties of the Reader

## The Rank of the *Anaghnostos* in the Coptic Orthodox Church



St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church  
St. Mary and St. Philopater Coptic Orthodox Church

Troy, Michigan

First Edition  
May 2009



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INTRODUCTION TO EVERY HOUR OF THE AGPEYA

**Βεν φραν ἰφιωτ νεμ Πωηρι νεμ Πίπνευμα εθοταβ οηνοτῆ ἵνοτωτ ἄμην.**  
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God. Amen.

**Κυριε ἐλεῆσον Κυριε ἐλεῆσον Κυριε εὐλοσησον ἄμην.**  
[Kyrie eleison] Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless us. Amen.

**Δοξα Πατρι κε Ὑιω κε ἄσιω Πνευματι κε νηη κε ἀι κε ις τοις ἐωνας των ἐωνων ἄμην.**  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the age of all ages. Amen.

**Αριτεν ἡμῶα ἵχος δην οτωεῖρωμοτ χε:**  
[O Lord] Make us worthy to pray with thanksgiving:

**+ Πενιωτ ετδεν νιφηοῦι μαρεττορβο ἵχε πεκραν**  
Our Father Who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name.

**+ μαρεσι ἵχε τεκμετορρο**  
Thy kingdom come.

**+ πετερνακ μαρεττωπι ἰφρητ δην ἑφε νεμ ριχεν πικαρι**  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

**+ πενωικ ἵτε ραστῆ μηιϋ ναν ἰφροοτ**  
Give us this day our daily bread.

**+ οτορ χα μηετερον ναν ἐβολ**  
And forgive us our trespasses,

**+ ἰφρητ ρων ἵτενχω ἐβολ ἵνηετε οτοη ἵταν ερωοτ**  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

**+ οτορ ἰπερεντεν ἐδορην ἐπιρασμοσ**  
And lead us not into temptation,

**+ ἀλλα ναρμεν ἐβολρα πιπετρωοτ δην Π̄χς Ῑης πενοσ**  
but deliver us from the evil one, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

**+ χε θωκ τε τῆμετορρο νεμ τῆου νεμ πῖωοτ ὡα ἐμερ ἄμην.**  
For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever Amen.



## Introduction

The rank of a deacon is very important in our Coptic Orthodox Church; it forms one side of the priesthood triangle which is: Deacons - Priests - Bishops

It is the rank of the service and spiritual struggle, which St. Paul praised by saying, “For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim 3:13)

“Deacon” is a Syrian word that means servant. In Greek, it is called “*Deyakon*.” The deacon’s main job is to help the priest or bishop in his religious service. The first church appointed seven deacons to serve tables, who were filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom, “Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said... therefore brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.” (Acts 6:2-3) “whom they set before the apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.” (Acts 6:6)

Therefore, there are three qualifications in a deacon:

- 1- to must be filled with the Holy Spirit and wise
- 2- to be ordained deacons, through the laying of hands and praying
- 3- to carry out specific responsibilities

Our teacher St. Paul mentioned some other qualifications in his first epistle to his disciple Timothy, chapter 3:

Likewise deacons must be:

- 1- reverent
- 2- not double tongued
- 3- not given to much wine
- 4- not greedy for money
- 5- holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience
- 6- ruling their children and their own houses well
- 7- they should be tested first, and then, if they pass the test, they are to serve.

Being a deacon is the first and least rank in the priesthood ranks, St. Peter praises it saying, “For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1Tim 3:13)

There are 5 ranks for deacons:

1. *Epsaltos* (hymnist/chanter)
2. *Anaghanostos* (reader)
3. *Epidiakon* (assistant deacon)
4. Deacon (full deacon)
5. Archdeacon (head of deacons)

### *Epsaltos* (Chanter)

His name is derived from the Coptic word “*Psalmos*” i.e. Psalm or hymn.

His job is clear from his name, learning hymns and tunes, and singing them in church. This rank was mentioned in some laws of the first church. The *Epsaltos* wears the *Tunia* without the *Patrachel*.

### *Anaghnostos* (Reader)

“*Anaghnostos*” is a Greek word formed of two parts: “*Anaghnos*” which means “chapter”, and “*tos*” which means “related to him.” So it means the chapter related to the reader, or the reader of chapters.

The *Anaghnostos* wears the *Tunia* with the *Patrachel* in the form of a cross on his back, with it wrapped around the front as a belt, and with both ends hanging from over his shoulders.

“*Patrachel*” is a Greek word which means a grace or deaconship grade, that is, it is a grace taken by a person and carried on his shoulders. The *Patrachel* is worn in the shape of a cross because he is sharing in carrying the cross with Christ, as the Lord says: “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.” (St. Matthew 16:24)

The *Patrachel* is worn in the shape of a belt from the front, as a sign of getting ready for service, like St. John the Baptist, who used to gird his waist with a leather belt.

As minimum requirements, a candidate for the rank of *Anaghnostos* should:

1. Be at least a junior in high school
2. Be recommended by the priest (father of confession), Hymns Class servant(s), and Sunday School servant(s)
3. Be partaking of the Holy Sacraments on a regular basis (e.g. Confession and Repentance, Holy Communion)
4. Be serving regularly as an *Epsaltos* during the Divine Liturgy
5. Be tested in good reading (including Coptic), chanting of the hymns and responses of the deacon, and liturgical duties of the deacon

Some of the duties of the *Anaghnostos* include:

1. The Liturgical Readings (see p.21)
2. Reciting the names of the departed patriarchs (see p.25)
3. Learning and chanting the hymns; learning the Coptic Language (see p.28)

## On the way to Church

- ❖ The deacon should plan to arrive at Church about a half hour before the beginning of Matins Raising of Incense in order to pray the Matins Prayer and Praise (see section below)
- ❖ The following Psalms\* should be prayed on the way to Church (in the following order):

- ❖ Psalm 121

I was glad when they said to me,

“Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!

Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together,

where the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,

to the testimony of Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

For thrones are set there for judgment,

the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you.

Peace be within your walls, prosperity within your palaces.”

For the sake of my brethren and companions,

I will now say, “Peace be within you.”

Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek your good.

Alleluia

\*The numbering of the Psalms is according to the Coptic Prayer of the Hours (the *Agpeya*) and is from the Coptic version of the Old Testament, which is based on the Septuagint.

❖ Psalm 26:4-5

One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek:  
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,  
To behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.  
For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion;  
In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me;  
He shall set me high upon a rock. Alleluia

❖ Psalm 64:4

Blessed is the man You choose, and cause to approach You,  
That he may dwell in Your courts.  
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house,  
Of Your holy temple. Alleluia

❖ Upon entering the church and while walking towards the sanctuary, the following Psalm should be prayed:

❖ Psalm 83

How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts!

My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD;

My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself,

Where she may lay her young—Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will still be praising You.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage.

As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a spring;

The rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength; Each one appears before God in Zion.

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;

Give ear, O God of Jacob! O God, behold our shield,

And look upon the face of Your anointed.

For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God

Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

For the LORD God is a sun and shield;

The LORD will give grace and glory;

No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in You! Alleluia

❖ Upon arriving at the sanctuary, the following Psalm is to be prayed while prostrating in front of the sanctuary:

❖ Psalm 5:7

But as for me,

I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy;

In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

Alleluia

❖ Afterwards, three prostrations are to be done in front of the sanctuary while saying:

❖ “I bow down to You my Lord Jesus Christ” (in the first prostration)

❖ “to Your Good Father” (in the second prostration)

❖ “and to the Holy Spirit for You have (come) and saved us.” (in the third prostration)

❖ After the three prostrations, the following Psalm is to be prayed while standing in front of the sanctuary:

❖ Psalm 122

Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens.

Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters,

As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,

So our eyes look to the LORD our God, until He has mercy on us.

Have mercy on us, O LORD, have mercy on us!

For we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorn of those who are at ease,

With the contempt of the proud. Alleluia

❖ This is then followed by the Matins Prayer and Praise.

## Matins (Morning) Prayer and Praise

This begins with the morning service (Prime or First Hour of the Agpeya) which is instituted to commemorate the hour at which our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on Sunday morning. We thank the Lord who let us pass the night in peace and kept us safe until morning. The church teaches us to pray persistently and fervently, and this is evident when we begin our prayer by saying:

❖ *O come , let us worship:*

❖ *O come, let us ask Christ our God* (we are requesting)

❖ *O come, let us worship:*

❖ *O come, let us beseech Christ our King* (our request becomes stronger)

❖ *O come, let us worship:*

❖ *O come, let us entreat Christ our Savior* (imploring Christ means we are pleading to Him for help)

After completing the Morning Prayer, the congregation prays the Morning Doxology. This is a wonderful prayer, rich in meaning. We sing it with joyful hearts and we may liken it to a brilliant piece of symphony. Its rich meaning compliments the Morning Prayer.

Afterwards, the deacon is to light the candles on the altar and prepare the censer for the Raising of Incense. The deacon is also to prepare (fill) the wine and water vessels in preparation for the Liturgy.

## Matins (Morning) Raising of Incense

After completing the Morning Doxology, the priest begins the raising of the morning incense, which resembles the evening incense, except for minor differences. The Matins begins with the Thanksgiving Prayer. After the Thanksgiving Prayer is completed, the Verses of Cymbals are chanted. During the Adam days (Sunday – Tuesday), the Verses of Cymbals begins with the introductory verse *Ten-oo-osht*. During the Batos days (Wednesday – Saturday), the Verses of Cymbals begins with the introductory verse *Amoini Maren-oo-osht*. The general order for the Verses of Cymbals is as follows: Introduction, St. Mary, the Heavenly Hosts, the Apostles, the Martyrs, the Conclusion. This generic order also applies to the Doxologies. During a fast or a feast, the Verses of Cymbals specific to the fast or the feast is chanted after the introductory verses and before the verses for St. Mary.

The litanies of the Sick, Travelers, and Oblations are prayed on weekdays. The litanies of the Sick, Travelers, Oblations, and Departed are prayed on Saturday. The litanies of the Sick and Oblations are prayed on Sunday. In the evening incense, the priest prays the litany for the departed, while in the morning incense of Matins, he prays two litanies:

- i. Litany for the sick** - According to St. John Chrysostom, the Church is considered like a hospital, and usually it is in the morning when the hospital opens its doors to welcome the sick and heal them. During the litany for the sick, we should pray for anyone we know who may be

sick, whether they are relatives, friends or neighbors. We should remember them by name and ask for them to be relieved of their sickness. We should then pray with the congregation in the response, ***“Lord have mercy”*** fervently and with humility so that God may accept our prayers for those we have mentioned and will have mercy on them and heal them.

**ii. Litany for the travelers** - this is said in the morning, for in the past, people travelled during the daytime for reasons of good visibility and less risk of encountering criminals along the way. Of course that was well before travel became possible during night time. King David the Psalmist said, ***“When the sun rises man goes out to his work and to his labor until evening”*** (Psalm 104:22,23).

While reciting the litany for travelers, we should remember not only those we know who are travelling, but also those who may have migrated to a foreign country. We should ask the Lord to keep them safe and accompany them throughout their journeys, so that they may return to their homes joyful and safe. We should then pray with the congregation in the response, ***“Lord have mercy.”***

On Sundays and feast days, we replace the litany for travelers with the litany for the oblations, as the church assumes that during these days, all of its children attend the church for prayer and celebration bringing their oblations and offerings. The Church lifts up these oblations, offerings and prayers to God so that He may accept them and reward each person with

the heavenly instead of the earthly, and the eternal instead of the temporal.

While reciting the prayer for the oblations, we plead with the Lord to accept all our offerings, whether they be money, time, effort, love, or anything we may sacrifice for the sake of God, ***“hidden or manifest, those in abundance and those in scarcity, to the needy brothers of Christ. May God accept their offerings and bestow on them the grace of happy life in this age, and eternal life in His Kingdom.”***

Afterwards, the Praise of the Angels (“Let us praise with the angels saying...”) and the Trisagion (“Holy God...”) are recited. Then, the Introduction to the Doxologies is chanted, *Shéré né tenti-ho éro* (“Hail to you, we ask you...”) followed by the doxologies in the same order as the Verses of Cymbals (see above). During a fast or a feast, the doxology specific to the fast or the feast is chanted after the introduction and before the doxology of St. Mary.

Then the morning incense prayer follows in the manner of the evening incense with the Creed and the prayer of *Efnooti-nai-nan* (O God have mercy upon us). During the Creed a deacon should light three candles for the priest for the prayer of *Efnooti-nai-nan*. This is followed by the litany of the Gospel, the five short litanies, the absolution and finally, the blessing.

*May God open our minds and our hearts to contemplate on what the Spirit says to the churches.*

## The Agpeya Prayers

- ❖ After Matins is completed the celebrant priest blesses the deacons' garments. As the priest(s) and deacons are putting on the liturgical garments, Psalms 29 ("I will exalt You O Lord for You lifted me out of the depths...") and 92 ("The Lord reigns...") are to be prayed. Also, while the priest(s) and deacons are putting on the liturgical garments, the hymn *Ten-oo-osht* is to be chanted, followed by the hymn *Shéré Maria* (time permitting).
- ❖ Once completing the donning of the vestments for the Liturgy service, the prayer of the Canonical hours are prayed from the Agpeya.
- ❖ Each Saturday/Sunday throughout the year that falls on non-fasting days, the third and sixth hour prayers are prayed.
- ❖ During the weekdays of all fasts (besides Great Lent and Jonah's Fast), the third, sixth and ninth hour prayers are prayed.
- ❖ The deacon passing out the Psalms is to assign the first and last Psalm of the hour to the celebrant priest. If there are two priests, the first two Psalms and the last two Psalms of the hour are to be assigned to the priests. It is noted that the celebrant priest also reads a Psalm from the middle of the hour.

- ❖ When all of the Psalms of the hour have been read except the last Psalm, the deacon passing out the Psalms should recite the first few words of the last Psalm to the priest. This action gives notice to the priest that the Psalms of the hour have been completed.
- ❖ After reading the Gospel of the hour, the deacon is to prostrate in front of the sanctuary (*metanoia*) and receive the blessing from the celebrant priest, kiss the cross, and kiss his hand.
- ❖ After the Gospel is read, the celebrant priest is to recite the first half of the litanies of the hour. If a partner priest is present, he will recite the second half of the litanies of the hour.

## The Liturgy of the Word: The Offering of the Oblation

Choosing the 'LAMB' presents the agreement of the Divine Trinity to the hypostasis of the 'SON'. This happened to redeem the falling race of Adam. Adam angered God by breaking His commandments to obey the deceit of Satan.

- ❖ Before the Offertory, the deacon is to wash the hands of the celebrant priest.
- ❖ During the Offertory the congregation chants “**Lord Have Mercy**” forty-one times, fervently until the celebrant priest chooses the ‘Lamb.’
- ❖ The basket carrying the “Lamb” should be carried by the partner priest or the eldest deacon.
- ❖ The wine and water should be carried by the elder deacons in the right hand, with the right hand over the left hand - the candle is held with the left hand.
- ❖ When the celebrant priest presents the wine to the deacons who are carrying the “Lamb” and the wine and water, the deacons are supposed to smell it to and ensure that the wine is not bad. As such, after the deacons smell the wine, “Good and pure” should be recited. After the celebrant priest completes the “Choice of the Lamb,” the deacons holding the wine and water are to uncross their hands

upon entering the sanctuary on the right side with their right foot first.

- ❖ The celebrant priest then ‘baptizes’ the ‘LAMB’ with some water given to him by the deacon carrying the water. This is symbolic of the Baptism of Christ. And then the priest recites the names of those whom he wishes to mention, particularly those on whose behalf the offering is raised; whether they be living, departed, sick or in distress. The ‘LAMB’ of God takes away the sins of the world to deliver them from their troubles and pressures.
- ❖ We should come reverently, and give our names to the priest. We should ask him to remember us in his prayers. We should even write the names of our dear ones who are in times of trouble, or who are sick, distressed, or sitting exams. The priest will place these papers on the altar, and will ask God to answer peoples’ prayers according to His will. We often hear from the priests, about the power of the prayer of the Liturgy and how miraculously fast problems are solved.
- ❖ The priest holds the ‘Lamb’ wrapped in the silk corporal, above his head while standing at the Royal door facing westward and says: **“Glory and Honor, Honor and Glory to the Holy Trinity...”** We should then prostrate with our heads to the ground before the ‘Lamb’ of GOD until the Procession of the Lamb is completed.

- ❖ During the Procession of the Lamb the deacon holding the wine should be directly behind the celebrant priest, followed by the deacon holding the water. If there are enough deacons, one should be walking backwards holding a candle in front of the celebrant priest. The deacon carrying the wine should recite the response for the Oblations.
  
- ❖ After the procession, the celebrant priest holds the bread, then the wine, and then the water in a close proximity. The celebrant priest starts the Liturgy by doing the three signs of the cross, with all the deacons chanting “Amen” after each sign. Following this is the Prayer of Thanksgiving, and prior to this the priest blesses the congregation with the sign of the cross saying, **“Peace be with you all.”** We should bow in reverence at every sign of the cross, and make the sign of the cross on ourselves so the peace of God is bestowed upon us and sanctifies our bodies.

*It is important to understand that the more we participate in the prayers, the more we will be praying in spirit, and therefore feelings of monotony will flee.*

- ❖ During the “Thanksgiving Prayer,” after the celebrant priest pours the wine into the wine vessel, the deacon holding the water is to pour water into the wine vessel. When the celebrant priest finishes pouring the wine and water into the chalice and hands the wine vessel to the deacon, the candles are to be blown out.

- ❖ After the “Thanksgiving Prayer,” the celebrant priest inaudibly prays the prayers of blessing the oblations (before covering the altar). As the celebrant priest prays “bless them, purify them, sanctify them,” the deacons are to respond with “Amen.”
  
- ❖ After completing the “Prayer of Thanksgiving,” the priest covers the Lamb with a clean corporal and likewise the Chalice, then covers the entire altar with the *Prosférin* – which is a large altar covering. The *Prosférin* should be presented by the partner priest or the eldest deacon. The *Prosférin* symbolizes the rock that was placed over the Lord’s tomb. An additional corporal is placed on the *Prosférin*, symbolizing the Roman seal that was placed on the rock that was placed over the Lord’s tomb.
  
- ❖ After the altar is covered with the *Prosférin*, the deacons are to stand on the left side of the altar. When the priest is finished, the deacons are to do a *metanoia* in front of the celebrant priest, and then exit the sanctuary. The priest then exits the sanctuary with the deacons to pray the Absolution of Ministers. Everyone exits the sanctuary as a reminder that Christ was alone in the tomb. It is noted that as the deacons exit the sanctuary, they should first face the altar and exit with their left foot first (from the North side). When the celebrant/partner priest completes the Absolution, the celebrant/partner priest enters the sanctuary first followed by the deacons. It is also noted

that as the deacons enter the sanctuary, they should enter facing the altar with their right foot first kissing the floor of the sanctuary.

- ❖ After the Absolution of the Ministers is completed, the celebrant priest raises incense. The celebrant priest begins raising incense around the altar three times. As the priest raises incense, the elder deacon (in ordination) holds a cross and the other deacon holds the Bible (when facing the altar, the cross is to the right, and the bible is to the left. This symbolizes how the gospel was spread throughout the world. As the deacons are standing in front of the altar, the following three litany prayers should be chanted inaudibly - prayer for peace of the Church, prayer for the Fathers the Pope and the Bishops, prayer for the assemblies (in this order).
  
- ❖ While the celebrant priest is raising incense, the deacons chant “Saved Amen” followed by the Hymn of the Censer. On Sundays *Tai-shoori* is chanted. On fasting weekdays, *Ti-shoori* is chanted. Following the Hymn of the Censer, the Hymn of the Intercessions is chanted (*Hiten*). The generic order for the *Hitens* is as follows: St. Mary, the Heavenly Hosts, the Apostles, the Martyrs, all the saints of the day, the Pope (if there is a bishop, the verse for the bishop comes after the verse for the Pope), then *Ten-oo-osht* (which is the response to the Pauline Epistle).

❖ It is noted that the ending of *Ten-oo-osht* (along with many other hymns) contains a modifying ending phrase: “for you have come/risen and saved us (*Jé ak-tonk/Jé ak-ee aksoti emmon nai nan*).” Generally, “for You have come and saved us” is said during weekdays and Saturdays, and “for You have risen and saved us” is said on Sundays. “For You have risen” is said on Sundays because this is the day in which the Lord rose from the dead. There are also other phrases that are said depending on the liturgical season. For example, during the Feast of Nativity “for You were born (*Jé av-mask*) and saved us” is said.

## The Liturgy of the Word: The Liturgical Readings

- ❖ When reading the liturgical readings, the *Anaghnostos* should read correctly without mistakes, so that the congregation may understand. The Reader should also be careful not to add, skip over (even words or phrases in parentheses), or change the order of the words of the reading. While reading, he should project his voice and read with a slow, steady pace.
- ❖ The *Anaghnostos* should learn to recite the Gospel reading in the correct tune.
- ❖ The *Anaghnostos* should become familiar with the introductions and the conclusions of the liturgical readings:

### ❖ The Pauline Epistle

*Introduction:*

Paul, the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, called to be the apostle appointed to the Gospel of God. A reading from the (first/second) Epistle of our teacher St. Paul to the \_\_\_\_\_. May his holy blessings be with us all. Amen.

*Conclusion:*

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

### ❖ The Catholic Epistle

*Introduction:*

The catholic Epistle. A reading from the

(first/second/third) Epistle of our teacher St.\_\_\_\_\_. May his holy blessings be with us all. Amen.

*Conclusion:*

Do not love the world or the things in the world. The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. Amen.

❖ The Praxis (Acts)

*Introduction:*

A reading from the Acts of our fathers the pure apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May their holy blessings be with us all. Amen.

*Conclusion:*

The word of the Lord shall grow, multiply, be mighty, and be confirmed in the holy Church of God. Amen.

❖ The Gospel Reading

*Reader:*

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint \_\_\_\_\_ the Evangelist. May his blessings

*People:*

be with us. Amen.

*Priest:*

*Pen-chois* (Our Lord)...

*People:*

*Zoksasi Kyrié* (Glory to You, O Lord)

*The Psalm is recited with the following introduction:*

From the Psalms of our teacher David the prophet. May his blessings be with us all. Amen.

*Then the Psalm is recited. At its conclusion, the people respond:*

Alleluia.

*Afterwards, if the pope, a metropolitan, or a bishop is present, the Reader recites the following:*

Let them exalt Him in the church of His people, and praise Him in the seat of the elders, for He has made the family like a flock of sheep, the upright shall see and rejoice. The Lord has sworn and will have no regret, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

The Lord is at your right hand, our saintly father, the patriarch, Pope Abba \_\_\_\_\_, and our father the bishop (metropolitan), Abba \_\_\_\_\_.

May the Lord keep your lives.

*People:*

Amen. Alleluia.

*Then the introduction to the Gospel is recited:*

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord God of hosts. Our Lord, God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God to whom be the glory forever

*People:*

and ever. Amen.

*Then the Gospel is recited. At its conclusion, the people respond:*

Glory be to God forever.

## The Liturgy of the Faithful

This is the most important part of the Liturgy. It is considered the holiest of the holy, for which we prepare from the Vespers (Evening) Raising of Incense in order to make us worthy to be prepared physically, psychologically and spiritually, so that we may benefit and feel consoled.

The Liturgy of the Faithful begins with the Orthodox Creed recited by the whole church, audibly and in one voice, in a powerful and effective manner.

Reciting the Orthodox Creed at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Faithful is of utmost importance to ensure that we please God, ***“Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”*** (Hebrews 11:6). By reciting the Orthodox Creed we declare our faith in one God in the Holy Trinity, the work of redemption fulfilled by His only begotten Son, and the work of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification and purification.

Recite the Orthodox Creed with the whole church carefully. Believe every word as it is the fruit of the work of great Ecumenical Councils instituted by great church fathers who were guided by the Holy Spirit.

Just prior to the creed a deacon is to wash the hands of the celebrant priest. The Creed begins after the deacon inside the sanctuary holds the cross and recites *Ensofia*. After the Creed,

the deacon again holds the cross during the Prayer of Reconciliation. This prayer is called the Prayer of Reconciliation as the priest mentions the wonderful work of our Lord Jesus Christ to reconcile man with his Creator. The Prayer of Reconciliation refers to the reconciliation between us and God. The Prayer of Reconciliation concludes with the deacon holding the cross and reciting “Greet one another with a holy kiss...” When we kiss each other, the peace of God reigns immediately in our hearts.

After the Prayer of Reconciliation and after the congregation chants the response “The Cherubim worship You,” the altar deacon is to present the censer to the priest in order to put incense into the censer upon reciting, “was incarnate and became a man...” Then, the altar deacon presents the censer again to the priest, standing next to the priest and holding open the censer in close proximity. This is so that the priest censures his hands three times and then censes the bread, followed by the wine while reciting, “He instituted for us...”

Commemoration of the Departed: After the Commemoration of the Saints, when the altar deacon recites: “Let those who read (the *Anaghnostos*) recite the names of our holy fathers, the patriarchs who have fallen asleep. O Lord, repose their souls, and forgive us our sins,” a Reader is to inaudibly recite the list of names of the departed patriarchs. In the old days, the names of the patriarchs were written on many tablets, and after hearing this response, each *Anaghnostos* used to call out some of the names.

The Fraction: Before the Fraction begins, the altar deacon who is responsible for turning the pages of the liturgy book for the priest is to open the correct page for the Fraction (that is specific to a fast or feast, or the common days Fraction). Then, when the Fraction is completed and the Lord's Prayer is recited, the altar deacon is to open the page that follows the common days Fraction, which contains the inaudible prayers of the priest after the Lord's Prayer.

## The Distribution of the Holy Mysteries

- ❖ The Distribution of the Holy Mysteries begins after the Final Confession, which is to be recited by the eldest deacon.
- ❖ During the distribution a candle should be lit at all times next to the Body and Blood. It is noted that candles should be lit whenever the celebrant priest is blessing the bread and wine and when holding the Body.
- ❖ Whenever the celebrant/partner priest leaves the sanctuary with the Body or Blood, there should always be an altar deacon in front of and behind the priest holding a candle.
- ❖ While the celebrant priest is distributing Communion the altar deacon should say “This is True. Amen.”
- ❖ Deacons (both altar deacons and non-altar deacons) should not give their backs at any time to the priest(s) carrying the Body and the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ After the celebrant priest finishes cleaning the vessels, the altar deacons should recite “*Shéré Pi-Stavros*” (Hail to the Cross) upon examination of the vessels.
- ❖ After the celebrant priest washes/cleans the vessels, the altar deacon (with at least the rank of a Reader) is allowed to handle the vessels with a towel.

## The Coptic Language and Hymns

- ❖ The *Anaghnostos* has a duty to learn the Church's hymns and praises, and recite them during the Divine Liturgy. Therefore, the *Anaghnostos* also has a duty to learn the Coptic Language.
- ❖ As a minimum, the *Anaghnostos* should be able to recite the following common-day congregational responses and hymns as well as altar responses of the Divine Liturgy:
- ❖ Common-day Responses and Hymns
  - ❖ Verses of Cymbals (Adam and Batos)
  - ❖ Doxologies (at least the first verse and last two verses in Coptic)
  - ❖ End of the Orthodox Creed (both Raising of Incense and the Liturgy)
  - ❖ *Ten-oo-osht – Shéré Maria*
  - ❖ Gospel Responses (Raising of Incense and the Liturgy)
  - ❖ Procession of the Lamb Responses (*Fai pé pi / Já ef-mev-ee*)
  - ❖ Hymns of the Censer (*Tai-shoori / Ti-shoori*)
  - ❖ Hymn of the Intercession (*Hitens*)
  - ❖ *Pi-ehmot ghar* (before the Pauline Epistle)
  - ❖ *Agios*
  - ❖ Acts Response
  - ❖ *Hiten Ni-epresvia* (before the Anaphora)
  - ❖ *Ni-shérubim* (The Cherubim)
  - ❖ *Ton thanaton soo Kyrié* (Your death O Lord)

- ❖ *Vol évol* (from the Liturgy of St. Gregory)
- ❖ *Eré p̄oo-esmoo* (May their holy blessings)
- ❖ *Os p̄érin* (As it was)
- ❖ *Khen Pi-ekbristos – En opion*
- ❖ Last three Amens (before the Distribution)
- ❖ Distribution Hymns:
  - Alleluia for Ps.150,
  - Ps.150 (Coptic),
  - Ek-es-maroooot*,
  - Pi-Oik* (English/Coptic)
- ❖ Glorification Hymns:
  - O Kyrios*,
  - Shasf en-sop*,
  - Khen Efran*
- ❖ Altar Responses
  - ❖ Procession of the Lamb (*Proseveksaste ee-perton* – Pray for these)
  - ❖ Thanksgiving Prayer (*Tobb hina* – Pray that God)
  - ❖ *Stathite méta fo-voo* (Stand in the fear of God)
  - ❖ *Taské falas eemon – Proskhomen*
  - ❖ *Amen. Amen. Proseveksaste.* (Amen. Amen. Pray.) – before the Fraction
  - ❖ *Sothis Amen ké to epnevmati soo* (Saved. Amen. And with your spirit.) – after the Prayers of Absolution and before the Confession)

- ❖ As a minimum, the *Anaghnostos* should know the following Coptic vocabulary words. The Reader should therefore know the Coptic Alphabet (including names, sounds, and pronunciation rules).

Πῖπνευμα (Πῖνα) εθοταβ (εθῶ)	the Holy Spirit
Πβοις (Πος)	the Lord
Κρυιὲ ἐλεῆσον	Lord have mercy
Πωηρι	the Son
†βρομπι	the dove
εθνεσως	beautiful
Πενιωτ	our Father
Φνοϣ† (Φ†) ναι ναν	(O) God have mercy upon us
δεη	in
πεκραη	Your Name
ἐφραη	the Name
Παβοις	my Lord
ἔφιωτ	of the Father
νεη	and
οϣνοϣ† ἕνοϣωτ	one God
ἀμην	Amen

**The Coptic Alphabet**

<b>Letter</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>	<b>Letter</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>
<b>Α α</b> <b>Αλφα</b> Alpha	- “a” as in father	<b>Υ υ</b> <b>Επσυλον</b> Epsilon	- “ee” as in <b>bee</b> or “i” as in <b>pin</b> when preceded and followed a consonant - <b>ΟΥ</b> is pronounced “oo” as in <b>room</b> - “v” when preceded by <b>α</b> or <b>ε</b> ( <b>αυ, ευ</b> )
<b>Β β</b> <b>Βητα</b> Veeta	- “v” when followed by a vowel - “b” in proper nouns (names, titles) - “b” in all other cases	<b>Φ φ</b> <b>Φι</b> Fey	- “f” as in <b>phase</b>
<b>Γ γ</b> <b>Γαμμα</b> Gamma	- “g” as in <b>go</b> when followed by <b>ι, υ, Η, or ε</b> - “n” when followed by another <b>γ</b> or <b>κ</b> - “gh” as in “ <b>ghareeb</b> ” (Arabic for strange) in all other cases	<b>Χ χ</b> <b>Κι</b> Key	- “k” as in <b>cat</b> in Coptic words - “sh” as in <b>share</b> when followed by <b>ι, υ, Η, or ε</b> in some Greek words - “kh” as in “ <b>khlar</b> ” (Arabic for cucumber)
<b>Δ δ</b> <b>Δελτα</b> Delta	- “th” as in <b>this</b> - “d” as in <b>dog</b> in proper nouns (names, titles)	<b>Ψ ψ</b> <b>Εψι</b> Epsi	- “ps” as in <b>oops</b>
<b>Ε ε</b> <b>Ει</b> Eyy	- “e” as in <b>pen</b> - “é” as in <b>share</b> or <b>dare</b>	<b>Ω ω</b> <b>Ω</b> Oo	- “o” as in <b>boat</b> or <b>toe</b> (long o sound)
Ϝ	<b>Ϝοοϣ</b> So-oo “so-oo” (Coptic Number 6)	Ϥ ϥ	<b>Ϥαι</b> Shai “sh”
<b>Ζ ζ</b> <b>Ζητα</b> Zeeta “z”		Ϧ ϧ	<b>Ϧαι</b> Fai “f”
<b>Η η</b> <b>Ητα</b> Eeta “ee” as in <b>bee</b>		Ϩ ϩ	<b>Ϩαι</b> Khai “kh” as in “ <b>khlar</b> ”
<b>Θ θ</b> <b>Θητα</b> Theeta	- “th” as in <b>think</b> - “t” as in <b>top</b> when preceded by <b>μ, ϣ, or Ϟ</b>	Ϫ ϫ	- “h” as in <b>hat</b>
<b>Ι ι</b> <b>Ιωτα</b> Yota	- “ee” as in <b>bee</b> - “i” as in <b>pin</b>	Ϭ ϭ	- “j” as in <b>job</b> when followed by <b>ι, υ, Η, or ε</b> - “g” as in <b>go</b> in all other cases
<b>Κ κ</b> <b>Καππα</b> Kappa “k”		Ϯ ϯ	<b>Ϯια</b> Cheema “ch” as in <b>church</b>
<b>Λ λ</b> <b>Λαυλα</b> Lavla “l”		ϰ ϱ	<b>ϰι</b> Ti “tee” as in <b>tea</b>
<b>Μ μ</b> <b>Μι</b> Mey “m”		<b>ϲενκεμ</b> Jenkem	(a vowel point)
<b>Ν ν</b> <b>Νι</b> Ney “n”			- “e” as in <b>pen</b> when above a consonant, Example: <b>ϲμοϣ</b> “es-moo”
<b>Ξ ξ</b> <b>Ξι</b> Eksi “ks” as in <b>explain</b>			- when above a vowel, Jenkem separates the vowel from the rest of the word, Example: <b>αϲϩι</b> “af-o-hi”, instead of “a-fohi”
<b>Ο ο</b> <b>Ο</b> O “o” (short o sound)			
<b>Π π</b> <b>Πι</b> Pi “p”			
<b>Ρ ρ</b> <b>Ρο</b> Ro “r”			
<b>Ϟ ϟ</b> <b>Ϟια</b> Seema “s”			
<b>Ϡ ϡ</b> <b>Ϡαυ</b> Tav	- “t” as in <b>top</b> - “d” when preceded by <b>ν</b> in Greek words, Example: <b>Παντωκρατορ</b> “Pan-do-kra-tor” (Almighty)	Coptic Vowels <b>α ε Η ι ο υ ω</b>	
		Coptic Numbers 1) <b>α-οϣαι</b> 2) <b>β-Ϟναυ</b> 3) <b>γ-ϣομτ</b>	

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