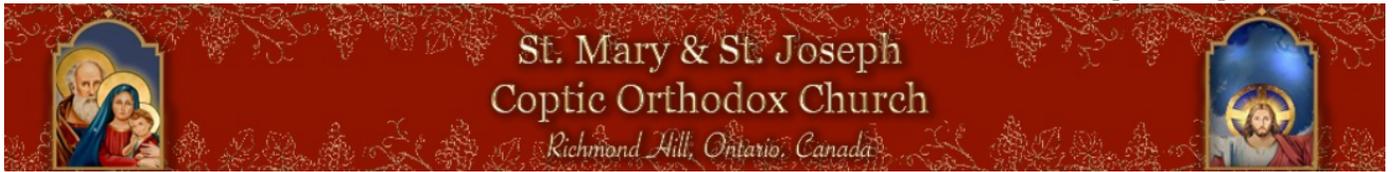




In the name of The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God Amen.

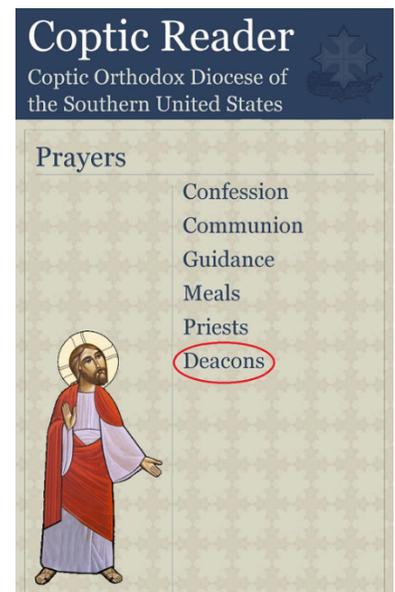
Updated September 2025



**“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)**

### 1) General Guidelines for Deacons and Church Attendance Discipline

- ❖ That he prays the following Psalms, as indicated in the 'Deacons' section (under Agpia) on the Coptic Reader App.
- ❖ That he feels that he is entering heaven as he is entering the church.
- ❖ That he walks quietly and slowly towards the sanctuary while saying, “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” (Psalm 5:7).
- ❖ That he bows before the sanctuary three (3) times while saying, “I worship You O Christ...with Your good Father... and the Holy Spirit for You have come and saved us.”
- ❖ All deacons should arrive as early as possible before the prayer starts. Wearing of the deacon vestments will be allowed until the “Absolution of the Servants” **and not after**.
- ❖ During the liturgy, he must keep himself from excessive movement, from entering and exiting the sanctuary needlessly and to keep his conversation only to matters regarding the service with as quiet a voice as possible.
- ❖ That he bows down in the known times for bowing during the liturgy and does not sit down during prayer except for the times when sitting is allowed or by exemption from the priest.
- ❖ That the deacon enters and exits the sanctuary through the side Altar except while responding to the Litany of the Gospel and the Processions of the Feasts.
- ❖ Movement in the sanctuary proceeds counter-clockwise around the altar (from the right to the left).
- ❖ After every reading, the reader shall bow down before the right-hand side of the main sanctuary entrance then proceed to the priest to receive his blessing while making sure to follow the proper discipline of entering and exiting the sanctuary (see previous points).
- ❖ That he participates in all the responses and hymns for the congregation and deacons in



one spirit and one voice.

- ❖ That he should not raise his voice in prayers, except specifically the prayers of the congregation and the deacons. However, it is not wrong that his heart should rise (and not his voice) and that he participates in every prayer.
- ❖ That he follows the deacon in charge in all the responses and that he does not raise his voice above him even if his intention is to correct.
- ❖ That all deacons, **without exception**, receive the Holy Communion.
- ❖ That he not uses the cymbals or the triangle except by permission from the deacon in charge of the service and that he be aware that the cymbals and triangle are meant to keep the beat in a quiet manner and **away from the microphone**.
- ❖ **The readings during liturgy are very important spiritual message from God** to each worshipper (remember St. Antony story). If the reader did not deliver the word of God clearly & precisely then he might be stumbling stone for the congregation, and it is getting worth when we read the word of God wrongly, as it can deliver completely different meaning to the worshippers “But woe to that man by whom the offense comes!” Matthew 18: 7

## 2) Guidelines to Deacons Serving inside the Altar

- ❖ That he recognizes his role as serving God and the congregation by assisting the priest who is praying the liturgy. This is the main service of the altar deacon.
- ❖ He should keep a keen eye on the priest and try to anticipate any needs that may arise. This principal applies to many of the guidelines below, from retrieving the Korban before the liturgy to ensuring the Censer will be ready when it is needed.
- ❖ He should be present in the church from the beginning of the Matins Raising of Incense and assist in organizing the altar and prepare for the service of the liturgy with the priest.
- ❖ He is responsible for arranging the *Eprosphareen* upon the altar – carrying the wine (during the Offertory) – laying the *Eprosphareen* after the Prayer of Thanksgiving (except in the presence of another priest or a full deacon rank) – rounding the altar during the Pauline, help the priest in removing the *Eprosphareen* after the Prayer of Reconciliation (except in the presence of another priest or a full deacon rank).
- ❖ He should arrive to the church at least 15 minutes early, to bring the Korban from Korban room, locate the Korban in the plate on the right way, and help Abouna in preparing the Altar.
- ❖ He should be knowledgeable & knowing all the standard deacons' Altar responses for Vespers, Matins & Liturgy.

- ❖ He should ensure that all tablets are charged and opened to Coptic Reader and assist the priest with scrolling the tablet screen during the liturgy.
- ❖ The lead Altar deacon is responsible for discreetly distributing the responses amongst the deacons of the sanctuary who are prepared to say them correctly.
- ❖ Should be knowledgeable in the manner of presenting the censor in a ready state, emptying it of ashes and presenting it to the priest in the appropriate manner. This is important for the service of the censor from the beginning of the liturgy. **Also, after the end of the liturgy the deacon should empty the censor into the correct dedicated bin for charcoal & clean the censor from any ashes.**
- ❖ During times of bowing down, he should be bowing down (with humility in his heart) to observe the Body and Blood, shielding them from anything that may fall into or upon them (if necessary).
- ❖ That he maintains silence and conservation of movement in the main sanctuary and the side sanctuaries.
- ❖ After the end of the liturgy, he and the other deacons of the sanctuary are responsible for reorganizing the altar and returning it to its original state (e.g. wrapping the vessels, disposing of the water and the contents of the censor, turn the lights off, etc. – please refer to below Altar service guidelines)
- ❖ That he focuses only on the sanctuary deacons' responses and that he does not raise his voice for responses outside the sanctuary.
- ❖ That he abstains from excessive movement, laughing, talking, or signaling and that all his movements should be performed in silence and meekness. Additionally, all his movements should only pertain to the service of the sanctuary and always with the knowledge of the lead sanctuary deacon.
- ❖ That he assists the lead sanctuary deacon in arranging the altar before and after the liturgy.

### **3) Guidelines to the Lead Deacon serving outside the Sanctuary**

- ❖ That he is responsible for leading the congregation to participate in the beautiful hymns of the Divine Liturgy in accordance with the language and start/end time posted on the Service Schedule.
- ❖ That he be present early to the liturgy (20 minutes before the start of the Raising of Incense) and that he prays the Morning Praises / or the Vesper Praises.
- ❖ He oversees assigning the readings outside the sanctuary and ensuring the Readings Tablet (at the reading Mangalia) is charged and open to the first reading before the service begins.

- ❖ He leads the deacons in all the responses **in a group manner, and his goal should be the participation of all the deacons and the entire congregation in all responses and hymns.**
- ❖ That all responses be in accordance and following the language in which the priest is praying.
- ❖ That he agrees with the priest and Altar Deacons regarding the long hymns (either congregation or deacon responses) ahead of time for the Divine Liturgy in general and especially during Feasts.
- ❖ That he observes the behavior of the deacons and maintains silence in the church using the help of the other deacons.
- ❖ He and those deacons around him should look towards the sanctuary during prayer except during the times of the group chanted long hymns, or the readings which everyone should look towards the *Katameros Mangalia*.
- ❖ That he is in charge of assigning responsibility for the cymbals and triangle.
- ❖ Deacons who are chanting the communion songs should take turns in taking communion so that the communion songs don't stop. It was noticed that sometimes they wait till the end then all of them take communion at the same time resulting a long pause in the communion songs.
- ❖ Please slow down when singing the last part of the liturgy "Amin alleluia...." While Abouna is sprinkling the water to give him enough time to come back to the alter for the final dismissal blessing "Go in peace ...."