**Rules for Deacons**

  ***The deacon is an Icon of an Angel praising the LORD all the time and to reflect His Glory.***

**Before the Liturgy:**

  The deacon should have a quite time to look at his own deeds, thoughts and words. He should read the Bible daily, attend Vespers and midnight praises. Also, he should have no conflicts with anybody.

  He should get up early on the day of the liturgy, and read Psalms 26, 46, and 121. He should listen to spiritual hymns or songs on the way to church.

  He should review the hymns and attend deacons’ classes.

  The role of the deacon is a servant and not just a chanter, so he should be ready spiritually.

  He should come to church early before the offering of the morning incense, to prepare the church and the altar for the liturgy (prepare the censer, fill the candles with oil, prepare the wine and the water, and turn on the computer and the sound system.

  He should be ready to meet the Lord by showering the night before the liturgy; clothes should be clean and ironed, wearing long pants and long sleeves. It is preferable to have special attire for the church.

  The vestment (tonia) should be clean and ironed and he should be dressed according to his rank (Epsaltos wears vestments (tonia) only and Oghnostos/epthdeacon wears vestment (tonia) and Badrashin at the shape of a cross from the back).

**During the Liturgy:**

  He should not move during the liturgy unless there is a compelling reason.

  Deacon should stand in humbleness and quietly without talking to other deacons particularly in the altar.

  Altar deacon should know the hymns well in either Arabic or English (preferably in both languages); and also he should learn the Coptic language.

  No deacon should interrupt other deacon during singing of the hymns even if he is not singing it correctly.

  One of the old deacons should take care of young deacons in the deacon’s room or Abouna’s office. He should teach them to stand quietly and in meekness and to show them the rituals and the hymns in the book of Kholagy.

  Cell phones and pagers should be turned off.

  Water cups should not be filled before or during the liturgy, but will be filled by the person who will drink it, so we don’t waste many unused cups.

**After the Liturgy:**

  At the end of the liturgy, the altar deacons need to clean up the censer, the altar and prepare the plate and the cup properly and put them in their place. The altar should be covered after the liturgy.

  All deacons are responsible of collecting the water cups, putting the books back in their original place, and turning off candles, computer, sound system and lights.

Basically the church should be perfectly prepared for the next liturgy.

  The deacon should pray Psalm  46 while he is taking off his Tonia.

  During the week, deacon should keep his bodily and spiritual purity, read the Bible daily, read his spiritual books and practice and recite Coptic Hymns.