

Responsibility as a Deacon

Introduction

- Deaconship is a RESPONSIBILITY
 - We typically take being a deacon for granted
 - We might treat it like a costume that we wear on Sunday morning, or a privilege to do certain things (e.g. enter the Sanctuary, say certain responses, stand in a chorus, etc.)
 - We might think it's "a blessing on Sunday"
 - It is certainly a privilege and a blessing... but more than that, it is a RESPONSIBILITY
- The idea of a deacon is present in the Scripture in the New Testament, but it is also in the Old Testament with the concept of the Levites. The Levites played the role that we would now call "Deacon"
- The word Deacon means "Servant" in Greek
- We will examine the Responsibilities of the Deacon from three angles
 - The Responsibilities and Duties defined in Scripture
 - The Responsibilities and Duties assigned to you at your ordination
 - The Responsibilities and Duties in the history of the Church as recorded in the Canons

Activity

- Split into three groups
- One will examine the Scripture, one will examine the rites of ordination, the third will examine the Canons
- Each group needs to arrive at a list of responsibilities that are entrusted to us as deacons
- Share with the rest of the group
- Each individual can rate himself 1-10 on his responsibility as a deacon

Scripture

- Sources (Coptic Reader/Bible)
 - Acts 6:1-7
 - 1 Timothy 3:8-13
 - Nehemiah 8:5-8
- Responsibilities of the Deacon
 - To maintain a good reputation (Acts 6:3)
 - To be filled with the Holy Spirit and Wisdom (Acts 6:3)
 - To be reverent and watch our tongue (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - To refrain from alcohol and money and the lusts of the world (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - To keep the faith with a pure conscience (1 Timothy 3:9)
 - Be found blameless (1 Timothy 3:10)

- Reading in a way that "gives the sense" and "helps the people to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:8)

Rites of Ordination

- Sources (Coptic Reader)
 - Special --> Consecrations --> Ordinations --> Chanter --> Litanies
 - Special --> Consecrations --> Ordinations --> Reader --> Litanies
- Responsibilities of the Deacon
 - To sing the hymns, chants and spiritual songs
 - To chant from the heart
 - To chant with understanding
 - To refrain from pride and boasting
 - To read and meditate on the Scripture
 - To proclaim the words of the Old and New Testament
 - To expound to the people the right precepts
 - To learn each one of the readings of the Scriptures

Church Canons

- Sources (To be printed)
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/s/q1i66ewg6fozmyb/Canons%20of%20Diaconate.pdf?dl=0>
- Responsibilities of the Deacon
 - To care for the spiritual life
 - To receive the Eucharist in the Liturgy
 - To guard oneself from sins but especially public sins that are stumbling blocks
 - To accept the repentant sinner
 - To avoid sinful places
 - To speak good of the Clergy
 - To speak good of those who have disabilities (e.g. don't make fun of "autism")
 - To fast the Great Fast and Wednesdays and Fridays
 - To chant with intelligence and constancy (faithfulness)

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