



§ God let us grow to be Christ-like when in the fullness of time we will have the likeness of Christ.

4) Stable: Stability about the doctrine (Ephesians 4:14)

Those who move back and forth from one denomination to another are unstable. The members of the Church of God are stable and confirmed in the Orthodox Faith.

5) Balance between truth and love (Ephesians 4:15)

§ Truth without love is brutality and cruelty

§ Love without truth is hypocrisy

§ The truth is not your own personal opinion

§ The truth is the truth of the Gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “I am the truth” (John 14:6).

§ Speaking the truth should be done in a loving spirit.

6) The Organic Cooperation (Ephesians 4:16)

Every member’s growth and survival depend on their unity in the body. Organic cooperation means a member that cannot function on its own. I cannot have a relationship with God if I am not in one body with the church.

**COPTIC ORTHODOX DIOCESE
OF THE
SOUTHERN UNITED STATES**

**SERVANTS’ PREPARATION PROGRAM
2002**

Welcome Message

My Beloved Students,

May the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ abide in your heart.

The Southern Diocese is firmly committed to the advanced preparation of its Sunday School servants, beginner and experienced. It is with this commitment, that the Servants' Retreat curriculum has been expanded.

The newly developed curriculum set forth in this catalog includes religious education such as Holy Bible study, church dogma, rituals, church history, as well as spiritual studies. A servant should be capable of serving at various different levels; therefore it is essential that a servant have advanced religious preparation.

A servant must be adaptable and well versed in religious studies to answer those whom are taught and be capable of researching questions with complex or unknown answers.

The early church was strong because it followed the Lord Jesus Christ's command, "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). The society of believers grew in number, virtue and knowledge. We must keep this same spirit based on discipleship and teaching.

This curriculum is the starting point for the advanced preparation of the servant. Knowledge of the Holy Bible is the first foundation in the building of souls. Through knowledge and wisdom many are led to a stronger faith.

Finally, the goal of this curriculum is that through service built upon advanced religious education, the student will discover true joy. True joy in the service is found when the souls of those served, know God and have fellowship with Him.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather, because your names are written in Heaven" (Luke 10:20).

May God bless your service with true joy,

His Grace Bishop Youssef
Bishop, Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

teachers, they are not building the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church of God (Eph 4:13-16)

St. Paul gave us six characteristics of the church of God. As servants we should put these six characteristics in front of us to examine ourselves, are we building the right church?

These characteristics are:

- 1) The unity of faith
- 2) Knowledge of the Son of God
- 3) Spiritual maturity/full growth
- 4) Stability
- 5) Balance between truth and love
- 6) Organic cooperation (e.g. the body) vs. mechanical cooperation (e.g., the car)

1) The unity of faith (Ephesians 4:13)

- § Church must have the right foundation, the sound teachings, and the sound doctrines with the same mind; the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- § If the members of the church have different doctrines and beliefs, then the church lost the unity of faith and cannot be called a church.
- § Can we call the non-denominationalists, who accept people from different denominations with different beliefs and dogmas, a church? Or it is the denomination of the non-denominationalists.

2) Knowledge of the Son of God (Ephesians 4:13)

- § To be one with Christ is the knowledge of Him
- § We need to understand our relationship with the Holy Trinity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- § In order to inherit the kingdom of God we have to be the Father's children. The Father has only One Son, Jesus Christ. So in order to be His children, we have to be one with the Only Begotten Son (the Knowledge of the Son of God).
- § We can be one with the Son through the action of the Holy Spirit who is working in the church and uniting us with the Son.
- § "We are children of God the Father, in His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ, through the action of the Holy Spirit in the Church and the Sacraments"

3) Spiritual Maturity- to be perfect (Ephesians 4:13)

- § If you are one with Christ you need to be Christ-like
- § We are created in God's image having the free will, the thinking, and the virtue of discernment.

The plan of God in the ministry is to build His church to edify the Body of Christ. God gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Each one of us has received a gift to use in the ministry. This gift could be

- § A gift of encouraging other
- § Praying for others
- § Visiting
- § Teaching etc.

Every gift is needed in the body of Christ

St Paul talked about five gifts in the church of Christ.

These five categories or gifts are used for the three missions of the church:

- 1) **Apostles** (actual meaning) - the condition to be an apostle is to be an eyewitness to the Lord. (Acts 1:21) St. Paul is called an Apostle because our Lord Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus (1Cor 9:1).
- 2) **Prophets** - the ones who carry the message of God to the people
 - § The work of the prophet is different from the work of the priest who takes the request of the people and offers them to God.
 - § In the Old Testament, God spoke to the people through mediators, which were the prophets because of the enmity between God and man. (Heb 1:1)
 - § After the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ there is no prophets (in the actual meaning of the word) because God is speaking to us by His Son (Heb 1:2)

The apostles and the prophets' role was to establish the church in the first century on the foundation of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:20).

- 3) **The Evangelists** - those who carry the good news of the gospel to everyone in the world.

God gave some to be evangelists to fulfill the mission of the church to be evangelical. If the church is not evangelizing there is something missing in it because evangelism should be one third of the church ministry.

Everyone of us could be an evangelist in charge of preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the whole world (Mark 16:15).

- 4) **Pastors** – are the shepherds who nurture their flock.

Their ministry is devoted to the spiritual care of the flock and to bring back the lost sheep. In (Ezek 34:4) we read about five categories of the Lost Sheep, (the weak, the sick, the broken, the strayed, and the lost).

- 5) **Teachers** - to keep the doctrine true and sound, in order to edify and build the church of God in sound faith (1 Tim 3:15) and to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.

Many people are evangelizing bringing lost sheep and taking care of their people but if they do not have the right doctrine they are not true

Mission Statement

The mission of the Servants' Preparation Retreat is to provide the participants with a solid Orthodox Christian education, which enables them to grow in faith, to search for knowledge and truth, and continue building the Kingdom of God on earth. By active involvement in the learning process, individuals are prepared to "serve the Lord with gladness" (Psalm 100:2) and for lives of Christian leadership. They are also prepared to pass their love to God and the right Christian teachings to the new generations.

Admission Procedures

Application

This program is open for High School candidates who have completed Grade 9 or above, and for all college students. In order to attend and participate in the Servants' Preparation Program an application for admission, including the following items, must be submitted:

1. A complete **Application** form
2. A signed **consent form** of the rules and regulations
3. A **personal statement** of approximately 750 words outlining any services you are currently performing in your church and your reasons for wanting to attend the Servants' Preparation Program. A typewritten statement is preferred.
4. A **recommendation letter**. Forms are available at your church and should be filled **CONFIDENTIALLY** by your church's priest and sent by him directly to the registration officer

This application process will determine whether or not the candidate is accepted into the program. Applications acceptance will be determined by service coordinator.

Registration

Once the application is evaluated and accepted, applicants will receive an acceptance letter and a registration form to register for the courses they would like to attend this particular year..

Registration Fees. All applicants registering for the servants' retreat must submit \$200 for the four course minimum requirement. Any additional courses will require the applicant to submit an extra \$50 per course. This fee includes room and board as well as all the books that may be required for the courses selected.

Please submit all forms, personal statement and recommendation letters to:

Dr. Samir B. Billatos
5809 Westmont Dr.
Plano, TX 75093

God's Plan in the Service

By H.G. Bishop Youssef

The idea of having preparation classes for the servants is Biblical. We read in Ephesians "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11-12)

The church's role is to change the non-believer to a believer, the believer into a saint, and a saint into a servant. Servants should be chosen from among the saints.

What is the difference between the believer and the saint?

The saint is a spiritually mature believer. Servants must be spiritually mature.

Saints who are to be servants become equipped by:

- 1) Teaching them through sermons and lectures
- 2) Teaching them through example
- 3) Participating in the service under direct supervision
- 4) Participating in the service under indirect supervision
- 5) Spiritual Retreats to help them growing more in the spiritual life

The church has three main missions:

- 1) Ministry of the lost sheep
- 2) Spiritual care
- 3) Evangelism

People in the world are either believers or non-believers.

There are two kinds of believers:

- 1) Active: those who are inside the church
 - 2) Non-active: those who are outside the church
- § Those inside the church need spiritual care to grow in their spiritual life with the Lord Jesus Christ and to prevent them from going astray
- § For those outside the church, the mission of the church is to bring them back to the church then start with them the ministry of healing
- § For the non-believers, the church should evangelize to them through missionary work to be converted into believers.

SPIRITUALITY

SPR 101 Spirituality of the Servant

How to grow spiritually? The importance of prayer, confession and communion in the life of a servant. How to walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ and follow his example of service.

SPR 102 Serving Sunday school, Visitation and Biblical Application

How to read the Bible and apply it to your daily life? How to prepare a Sunday school lesson? What is visitation? The meaning of Service, the motivation, the mentality, the mission and the mistakes of a servant.

COPTIC LANGUAGE

CPT 100 Introduction to the Coptic Language

Elementary training in the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing Coptic. Introduction to the basic vocabulary and fundamental structure.

HYMNS AND PRAISES

HMN 101 Liturgy Responses: (Prerequisite: CPT 100)

HMN 102 Midnight Praises: (Prerequisite: CPT 100)

Program Calendar

The Servants' Preparation Retreat is a six-years program. Applicants will register for four courses per year.

Servants' Preparation Retreat

2002 Schedule

High school boys	Jul 22 – Jul 26, 2002
High school girls	Jul 26 – Jul 30, 2002
College	Aug 6 – Aug 10, 2002

2003 Schedule

High school boys	Jul 28 – Aug 1, 2003
High school girls	Aug 1 – Aug 5, 2003
College	Aug 5 – Aug 9, 2003

2004 Schedule

High school boys	Jul 26 – Jul 30, 2004
High school girls	Jul 30 – Aug 3, 2004
College	Aug 3 – Aug 7, 2004

2005 Schedule

High school boys	Jul 25 – Jul 29, 2005
High school girls	Jul 29 – Aug 2, 2005
College	Aug 2 – Aug 6, 2005

2006 Schedule

High school boys	Jul 31 – Aug 4, 2006
High school girls	Aug 4 – Aug 8, 2006
College	Aug 8 – Aug 12, 2006

2007 Schedule

High school boys	Jul 30 – Aug 3, 2007
High school girls	Aug 3 – Aug 7, 2007
College	Aug 7 – Aug 11, 2007

Course requirements

- § **Lectures:** Each course is six lectures hours. Lectures for these courses will be given in a four-days retreat setting.
- § **Reports:** Candidates may register for a minimum of 4 courses and a maximum of 6 courses. **One** report per course must be submitted throughout the year. Due dates for these reports will be given by the course instructor. The topics of these reports will be given to the applicants in the course syllabus.
- § **Exam:** All applicants will be required to take **one** written exam on the first Sunday of April.
- § **Church service:** All applicants must complete 100 hours of church service each year. This can be done within the church or outside under the supervision of a spiritual director. The spiritual director must be the church's priest or confessions father. Each applicant must meet with his or her spiritual director 10 times per year to receive spiritual direction related to these hours of service. All service hours must be logged into the service log with a signature from the applicant's spiritual director. (The forms of the Log Hours are available in every church).

Attendance of all lectures, submission of reports, passing the exam and the church service are a must for successful completion of the course and are prerequisite for registering for the following year.

Grade Report Key

The following grade report key will be used in determining grades for the courses. All students must receive at least a "B" in order to pass the course. Any grade lower than a B- will be considered failing.

Grade	Range	GPA	Grade	Range
A	95-100	4	C+	77-79
	2.33			
A-	90-94	3.67	C	70-76
	2.00			
B+	87-89	3.33	D	60-69
	1.00			
B	84-86	3.00	F	below 60
B-	80-83	2.67		

RIT 102 Church architecture, Priests vestments and Rituals of the Sacraments

Overview of the different structures of the churches and their spiritual significance. The rituals followed in the sacraments and the meaning of their symbolism.

PATROLOGY

PAT 101 Ante Nicene Fathers

The writings of the church fathers represent the first primary sources of Christian history following the canon of the New Testament, and as such are invaluable resources for the serious student of the early Christian history, doctrine, and ethics. The Ante-Nicene fathers include the Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Hermas, Clement of Alexandria and others.

PAT102 Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers

The historical writings of the Fathers, and the works of eminent figures in early Christian history, such as St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, and St. Ambrose. Also Eusebius: Church History, Life of Constantine the Great. Jerome: Letters and Select Works. Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose: Select Works and Letters.

COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY

CMP 101 World Religions and Cults

Comparison between the religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and their doctrinal, institutional and ritual systems. Learn about the history, leadership, and theological views of various popular sects, cults, and religious movements today like Jehovah's Witness, Mormonism, Christian Science, etc.

CMP 102 Christian Denominations

Study of the original churches and the history of their split. Comparison between the beliefs of the different denominations with an emphasis on the difference between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches.

NT 103 Catholic Letters and Revelation

Study of the Catholic letters, their authors and their messages. A look at the Holy Book of Revelation and the message of hope it presents. The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Day of Judgment, and the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

DGM 101 Sacraments

Understanding the Sacraments and their importance in the church. The origin and history of each sacrament, and how to commend them for Christian living today.

DGM 102 Trinity, Incarnation, Salvation

Biblical foundation, logic, and importance of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation and the Salvation.

HISTORY

HIS 101 Apostolic Era, Martyrdom and Monasticism

The role of martyrdom in the success of the early church. Understanding the evolution of monasticism.

HIS 102 Ecumenical councils

A historical overview of each of the three councils. An examination of the canons and decrees of these councils, what they say and mean. What was the intention of their authors, the fathers of those councils?

HIS 103 Post Chalcedon and the Islamic Era

The East after the council of Chalcedon, the Arab invasion into Egypt and the Coptic Church at the time of the Ottoman Empire.

RITUALS

RIT 101 Liturgy, Agpeya and Praises

A journey through the Divine Liturgy prayer by explaining its meaning and structure. Symbols and symbolism in the Coptic Divine Liturgy and praises. The prayers of the hours, their arrangements and importance.

Suggested church services

1. Assist in Sunday school service
2. Assist in kids conventions and activities
3. Assisting in teaching the hymns class or the church choir.
4. Gardening on church premises
5. Mowing the church lawn
6. Decorate the church on feasts days
7. Prepare Agape meals
8. Drive children to Sunday school
9. Drive someone to the church, not from the same household.
10. Visit a sick person
11. Visit an elderly
12. Help in a Food bank
13. Help in a Homeless shelter
14. Visit senior centers
15. Organize church spiritual and activity days
16. Write articles for church newsletter or magazine.
17. Clean church kitchen
18. Vacuum the church
19. Clean church restrooms
20. Any other service, but it has to be approved first by the program.

Program Study Typical Six-Year Sequence

First Year

CPT 100	Coptic Language
OT 101	Books of Moses
DGM 101	Sacraments
SPR 101	Spirituality of the servant

Second Year

OT 102	History Books
DGM 102	Trinity, Incarnation, Salvation
HIS 101	Apostolic Era, Martyrdom and Monasticism
HMN 101	Liturgy Responses: (Prerequisite: CPT 100)

Third Year

OT 103	Major Prophets
HIS 102	Ecumenical councils
CMP 101	World Religions and Cults
HMN 102	Midnight Praises: (Prerequisite: CPT 100)

Fourth Year

OT 104	Minor Prophets
NT 101	Gospels and Acts
RTL 101	Rituals of the Liturgy, Agpeya and Praises
CMP 102	Christian Denominations

Fifth Year

NT 102	Pauline Letters
RTL 102	Church Structure, Rituals of the Sacraments
PAT 101	Ante Nicene Fathers
SPR 102	Serving Sunday School

Sixth Year

OT 105	Poetry and So-called Apocrypha
NT 103	Catholic Letters and Revelation
HIS 103	Post Chalcedon and the Islamic Era
PAT 102	Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers

Please note that this plan provided is just a recommended plan and that applicants can join the program at any year and can sign up for any classes

Courses Description

OLD TESTAMENT

OT 101 Books of Moses

Introduction to the history of the Patriarchs of Israel, the life of Moses, Exodus, the laws and the covenants, and the symbols of Christ.

OT 102 History Books

The history of the children of Israel in the Promised Land, the judges and the kings who ruled over Israel, the division of the kingdom, and the exile of the Israelites.

OT 103 Major Prophets

The role of the prophets, their confrontation with the national leaders, and the messages they brought and the hope to come.

OT 104 Minor Prophets

The role of the prophets, their confrontation with the national leaders, the messages they delivered and the attributes of God.

OT 105 Poetry and So-called Apocrypha

Explore the greatness of God and the beauty of His creation, advice on how to live the life that pleases God. An overview of the So-called Apocrypha books and their importance in our Orthodox Church.

NEW TESTAMENT

NT 101 Gospels and Acts

The Lord Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, His teachings, miracles, death and resurrection. The similarities between the synoptic Holy Gospels and the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Holy Gospel of St. John. The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles, and the missionary journeys of St. Paul

NT 102 Pauline Letters

Brief outline of the fourteen letters of St. Paul. When, where and to whom they were written. The circumstances that led St. Paul to write each letter. The theme of each letter and the doctrines, ethics and church conflicts mentioned in the letters.