

SHENOUDA THE ARCHIMANDRITE COPTIC SOCIETY

It was founded in December 1979 by Hany [Takla](#) and a small group of educated Copts in Los Angeles. The primary goal is to preserve, revive, and promote Coptic heritage. It was officially incorporated in the United States in 1983. Its membership base of over 200 members is spread all over the world with a concentration in the greater Los Angeles area. The society's activities emphasize the accumulation of study resources, education, and promotion of research in the field. Most of these activities are carried through the St. Shenouda Center for [Coptic Studies](#) in Los Angeles, established in 1992.

The accumulation of study resources included the establishment of a research library that covers all known aspects of Coptic studies. The libraries currently have about 4,300 volumes of monographs and periodicals. The Coptic Microform Library (CML), which started in 1980, contains copies of manuscripts and study material collected from all over the world, and is composed of over 335,000 frames. The manuscript collection, established in 2003, now has 33 [items](#) with about 3,900 folios. It is primarily a **liturgical** collection.

The society also has a modest Coptic textile collection of about 10 items, established in 2002. The electronic [sources](#) are arranged under the Coptic Digital Library, which includes electronic Coptic texts and digital images of manuscripts and study material. It began as early as 1987 and now has about 300,000 images plus hundreds of electronic pages of Coptic [biblical](#) and literary texts. The society also has had a strong presence on the Internet since 1995.

It has conducted multilevel classes, workshops, and public lectures in the **Coptic language** and other aspects of Coptic studies. It is currently organizing a comprehensive online study curriculum in the field to academically introduce students to the different aspects of the heritage of Coptic Christianity. In the area of promoting research in the field of

Coptic studies, the society has published the *Bulletin of St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society* (1984-2001), *St. Shenouda Coptic Newsletter* (1994-2004), *Coptica* (published in cooperation with **St. Mark Foundation for Coptic History Studies** [SMF], 2002-present), and *St. Shenouda Coptic Quarterly* (2004-present).

In addition, it has awarded scholarships to graduate students [pursuing](#) Coptic studies, financed Coptic studies classes and visiting scholars, and cosponsored a Coptic lectures series at American universities. This was carried out in addition to organizing annual academic conferences, symposia in the field in Los Angeles since 1997, as well as cosponsoring with SMF four major symposia on [Christianity](#) and **monasticism** in Egypt.

GAWDAT GABRA

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