

14 April 2011 eho/amd

**CONFIRMATION**  
**of**  
**REGULATIONS**  
**for**  
**The Coptic Orthodox Church**  
**and**  
**the Congregations of the Church in Scandinavia**

The Coptic Orthodox Church in Sweden is part of the Coptic Orthodox Church, which was founded of St Mark the Apostle and the Evangelist in Alexandria, Egypt in the first century after the birth of Christ.

The undersigned bishop Abakir, the Scandinavian Diocese of the Coptic Orthodox Church, affirms this statute, which then applies to the Coptic Orthodox Churches in Scandinavia.

The regulations are confirmed on the basis of the statute applying to the Coptic Orthodox Church in Scandinavia defined on the 8 November 2009 with the Pope in Alexandria's approval and blessing, see Appendix A and B.

For the Coptic Orthodox Church in Denmark should apply the following

## REGULATIONS

### **Name, domicile and basis.**

1. The name of the Church is: The Coptic Orthodox Church.
2. The Church is registered with the address at the church building
3. The Church and its congregations are an inseparable part of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese in Scandinavia, which is an inseparable part of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria in Egypt. The Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria is headed by the Pope of Alexandria who holds the power to act as Pope through the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt.

### **Purpose.**

4. A. The Church and its congregations must work for a Christian life in accordance with the belief and doctrines of the Coptic Orthodox Church through
  - Holding of fairs, religious rituals and observance of the Church's seven sacraments
  - Priesthood pastoral work
  - Christian education, missions, Sunday schools and youth meetings
  - Prayer meetings and biblical studies
  - Group work such as cultural gatherings, sports, religious theater, markets, social gatherings, trips and others
  - Social service for Church members and others without limitation.
- B. Cooperation with and assistance to other Coptic Orthodox congregations,
- C. Continued evangelical and missionary activities
- D. Promoting a Christian Unity throughout the world through the Holy Synod's work in this area
- E. Other activities which may promote the Church's goal.

### **Bishop and Consistory.**

5. According to the evangelical injunctions and the teachings of the Apostolic Church the Bishop has the responsibility for all churches and congregations within the diocese. The responsibility includes both the economic, administrative and pastoral care responsibility. Nothing can be decided or realised by an appointed consistory to a local congregation

without the approval of the Bishop. The Bishop may, in accordance with the rules of the Coptic Orthodox Church rules, delegate certain tasks to priests or deacons.

6. The Consistory consists of the congregation's pastor - or priests and the members of the Consistory elected in accordance with these Regulations.
7. The Consistory sits for three years at a time after which it is dissolved and members for a new church council are appointed in accordance with procedures established by the Bishop. Members of the Consistory can not be elected for more than two periods. However, the Bishop may exceptionally dispense with this time limit.
8. The Bishop or his designated representative shall attend the meetings that will organize elections to the Consistory. Assuming that the person is not secularized, any person who has the qualifications, respectively, as agnostos or epideacon, may stand as a candidate. The members of the Consistory must possess the necessary professional skills, which will be described prior to the presentation of the candidates. The congregation delivers its recommendation to the Bishop and any objections to the candidature. The Bishop or his appointed alternate shall personally review the recommendation of the candidate.
9. A special committee within the Church, appointed by the Bishop and consisting of five persons, will on basis of the nominated candidates then make a recommendation of the candidates for the Consistory. The Bishop then appoints the members of the Consistory among those nominated candidates.
10. The Consistory consisting of 4 members and the church pastor (s) elects Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The Bishop lays down procedures and rules of procedure for the Consistory.
11. If a member of the Consistory wants to retire or due to death or serious illness becomes incapacitated, the Bishop or his deputy starts an election process in accordance with the above rules.
12. If the Bishop dies, the Consistory continues its work until the Pope or the Holy Synod communicates otherwise.

### **Members.**

13. The Church is open to any member residing in Denmark, who is baptized in the Coptic Orthodox faith, and who professes thereto. The membership ends with death or at a church

resolution after consultation with the Bishop or his deputy, the local priest and a conversation with the member concerned.

14. In order that a member of the congregation or the Church may be regarded as a spiritual member he must have participated in the Communion at least once each month. He must have one of the Bishop acknowledged confessor and meet certain conditions set out in the existing rules of the diocese.

### **The Property of the Church.**

15. The property and the possessions of the Church belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church as a legal person. The Church is liable with its belongings for fulfilling the obligations of the Church. The members or congregations of the Church have no ownership interest in the assets of the Church.

### **Congregational Meeting.**

16. The annual general meeting of the Church is held annually by the end of April. The President of the Consistory and the secretary shall convene all registered members of the congregation with three weeks notice and with information on the agenda, time and place of meeting.

An extraordinary general meeting will be held if the Consistory deems it necessary or in case the Bishop submits a request. Notification shall be made with three weeks notice and stating the reason for the meeting, agenda, time and place.

All registered members of the local congregation of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Denmark or carriers of member evidence of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate in Egypt, have, if they are 18 years old, admission to general meetings. Only registered members who are not in arrears contingent of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Denmark have votes at general meetings.

General Assembly decisions are taken by a simple majority of the participants of the General Assembly. There is no voting by proxy.

The General Assembly may if prior approval is obtained from the Bishop adopt rules of procedure applicable to ordinary and extraordinary general meetings

17. Agenda of the Ordinary General Meeting shall include:
  - Election of chairman.

- The Annual Report of the Consistory.
- The Consistory's submission of audited financial statements for the congregation.
- Presentation of the budget.
- Presentation of the election of members to the Consistory.
- Appointment of auditor.
- Proposals received.
- Any other business.

### **Protocol of the Congregation.**

18. A protocol registering the negotiations of the General Meeting is conducted to show the decisions taken. The protocol must be available to congregation members and is approved by the Chairman of the Meeting and the Chairman of the Consistory.

### **Authorised to Sign.**

19. A congregation is bound by the joint signatures of all members of the Consistory or by the joint signatures among the Bishop, the Bishop's deputy, the chairman and treasurer. The Congregation's treasurer may receive power of procuration to understand each daily financial transactions of the Congregation.
20. The Bishop signs for the Church or his deputy, or jointly by three persons who are appointed by the Bishop.

### **Accounting and Auditing.**

21. Congregation's financial year is the calendar year. The accounts are kept by one of the Consistory elected treasurer and audited by an auditor appointed by the General Meeting. Accounts with status must be revised before the end of March.

### **Amendments to the Regulations.**

22. The Church's regulations can be changed by the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church or by the Diocesan Bishop.

**Dissolution and Merger.**

23. Resolution on the Church's dissolution or merging of the church congregations can be done by the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church or the diocesan Bishop. If a congregation is dissolved without merging with another Coptic Orthodox congregation, the remaining assets are transferred to the Coptic Orthodox Church or related church community activities appointed by the Bishop.

**Date and Signature.**

Stockholm,                      2011