



The Canadian Society for Coptic Studies	CSCS
La société canadienne pour les études coptes	SCEC

TRIBUTE TO A VISIONARY

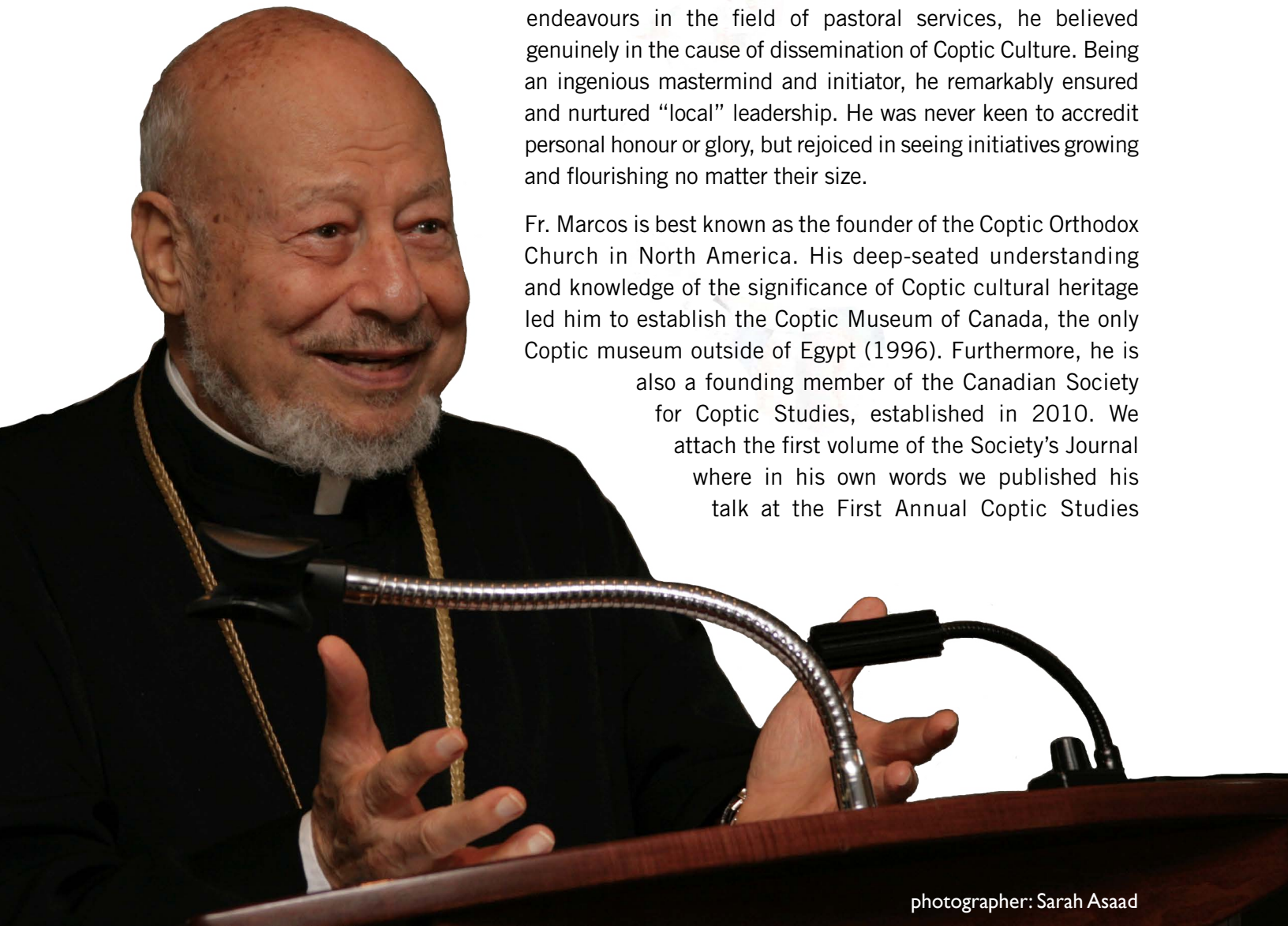
*“It takes a noble man to plant a seed for a tree that will
some day give shade to people he may never meet.”*

David E. Trueblood, Theologian & Writer

The Board of Directors and Members of The Canadian Society for Coptic Studies (CSCS) join hundreds of people around the world to mourn with grief and sadness the loss of a man with a great vision. Father Marcos A. Marcos departed from our world on December 9, 2020 after a long tireless life of service. This note is not enough to serve his memory rightly, nevertheless we wish hereby to pay tribute to the breadth and scope of his vision and accomplishments in the field of Coptic Heritage.

Fr. Marcos was a pioneer *par excellence*. Beside his fastidious endeavours in the field of pastoral services, he believed genuinely in the cause of dissemination of Coptic Culture. Being an ingenious mastermind and initiator, he remarkably ensured and nurtured “local” leadership. He was never keen to accredit personal honour or glory, but rejoiced in seeing initiatives growing and flourishing no matter their size.

Fr. Marcos is best known as the founder of the Coptic Orthodox Church in North America. His deep-seated understanding and knowledge of the significance of Coptic cultural heritage led him to establish the Coptic Museum of Canada, the only Coptic museum outside of Egypt (1996). Furthermore, he is also a founding member of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies, established in 2010. We attach the first volume of the Society’s Journal where in his own words we published his talk at the First Annual Coptic Studies



Symposium at the University of Toronto (2008) <http://cscopticstudies.weebly.com/tribute-to-fr-marcos-marcos.html>. In 2020, thirteen years later, CSCS mounted the 13th Annual Coptic Studies Symposium and twelve journals have been published representing the papers presented at each symposium!

At the First Annual CSCS Symposium Fr. Marcos expressed his desire to see Coptic Studies flourish.

“The response [from students being interested in Coptic Studies at University of Toronto and future annual Symposiums are...] significant stepping stones towards a long-term vision, we can perhaps allow ourselves to envision that in the next 10 years we will have young Canadian scholars presenting their research, not only in Canadian academic setting but also [internationally].”

Fr. Marcos’ vision has been actualized with a number of young Canadian scholars pursuing graduate degrees and holding university positions across many disciplines such as anthropology, ethnomusicology, history, patristics, religious studies, and theology, all of whom engage with Coptic Studies.

Indeed Fr. Marcos played an active role in supporting the cause of dissemination of Coptic Heritage many years before the foundation of the CSCS. Under his leadership the Coptic Museum of Canada initiated discussions at the University of Toronto that led to the offering of Coptic Studies courses in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the same university. In addition, he was able to secure funding from St. Mark’s Coptic Orthodox Church to allow the university to offer Coptic Studies courses from 2006 to 2012, at which point the university took over the financial responsibility. In 2012, the University of Toronto also launched an Endowment campaign for a permanent Coptic Studies faculty position with an initial funding support from St. Mark’s Coptic Orthodox Church, again with Fr. Marcos’ stamp of approval.

Fr. Marcos, the sower, and noble man who planted the seeds of Coptic Studies in Canada will be missed for his humble spirit, his humour, his love and profound dedication to serve a cause he deeply believed in. He left our world, but the tree he planted will always bear fruits.

Board of Directors
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