Bishop Daniel St Shenouda the Archimandrite

Church News

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Posted on : 2009/8/11 21:33:17

Last weekend, St Shenouda's monastery recieved a new bishop and new names for its monks.

On Saturday 8th August the monastery of St Shenouda the Archimandrite at Putty, north of Sydney, received its first ever resident bishop. This day was the culmination of the efforts of many people over nearly two decades, and marks the â€œcoming of ageâ€• of the young monastery.Coptic monasteries tend to be old â€“ very old. The active monasteries in Egypt such as St Anthonyâ€™s by the Red Sea and St Bishoyâ€™s at Wadi Natroun date back to the fourth and fifth centuries AD, when Egypt was the cradle of Christian monasticism. The original St Shenouda the Archimandrite flourished in the far south of Egypt in the fourth and fifth centuries. In contrast, our own Monastery of St Shenouda was founded in the mid 1990s through the efforts of Fr Tadros El Bakhoumy and a group of dedicated laymen. Soon after, HH Pope Shenouda III sent out three monks to establish the monastic life at the monastery. They were Fr Pavlos, Fr Bishoy, Fr Filopatir. Each of these Fathers served for a period of time before moving on to other services. Perhaps most influential was the service of Fr Pavlos El Anba Bishoy whose unique mixture of humour, commitment and sincere practical Christian love has left an indelible mark on the hearts of many Sydney Copts. Indeed, during this growth period, the monastery developed its precious tradition of hospitality for all comers and became a refuge for many in times of trouble or confusion.In total, four of Sydneyâ€™s young men have joined the monastery over the years and taken on the garb of monasticism. Fr Wissa was the pioneer in this, and remains the senior of the monks consecrated specifically for the monastery. He has been joined by Fr Shenouda, Fr Theodore and most recently, Fr Anthony. With the departure of Fr Pavlos for Egypt, Fr Daniel El Antoni was appointed abbot by His Holiness. Fr Daniel, consecrated HG Bishop Daniel last Pentecost, was born in Sudan but grew up in Sydney. He become a monk in 1980 and has since served in an astounding variety of capacities throughout Australia over three decades. In June of this year, the Standing Committee of the Holy Synod that is responsible for the affairs of the monasteries granted our monastery the full status of a working monastery. This means that the monastery lacks nothing that a fully functioning monastery should have. Thus the Monastery of St Shenouda the Archimandrite was added to the roll of the formally recognised monasteries of the Coptic Orthodox Church. Two consequences have followed from this decision. The first was that the monastery now qualifies to have its own bishop as its head, and accordingly, HG Bishop Daniel was consecrated last Pentecost to become its first bishop and enthroned last Saturday at the monastery by HG Bishop Isaiah, HG Bishop Botros, HG Bishop Yustus, HG Bishop Bimen and HG Bishop Suriel.The second consequence occurred on Sunday, when HG Bishop Daniel performed the ceremony that officially changed the name and affiliation of the monks. At his ordination, a monk relinquishes his family name as sign of his death to this world, and takes on the name of his monastery. However, a monk may only take on the name of a formally recognised monastery, so our monks took on the name of St Bishoyâ€™s monastery in Egypt, since they were under the spiritual direction of HG Bishop Sarapamon, the head of that monastery. But now that St Shenoudaâ€™s Monastery is formally recognised, the monks affiliation was formally transferred, and henceforth they shall bear the â€˜surnameâ€™: â€œSt Shenoudaâ€•.Â The Monasteryâ€™s website is https://www.stshenoudamonastery.org.au/