

# BOLIVIA MISSION GUIDEBOOK

MATTHEW 28: 18-20

*"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go [a]therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

LOGISTICAL  
PREPARATION



SPIRITUAL  
PREPARATION

## MISSION STATEMENT

### CONTACT

WITH ANY QUESTIONS



[missions@stsa.church](mailto:missions@stsa.church)  
STSA missions



#### SIT

*Sit alone with God daily. Learn to embrace tribulation as an opportunity to transform our hearts through a profound reliance on God.*



#### STAND

*Stand together in the community and grow. Integrate into new cultures as a means of extending our hands in camaraderie and fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ in the local area.*



#### SERVE

*Serve inside and outside the walls of the Church. Use our newfound spirit of mission to be light in our local communities back home.*



**STSA**  
**MISSION**

STSA CHURCH



# ABOUT THE MISSION BASE

In 1997, Fr. Aghathon Amba Boula heard of and began to visit a few Copts who were living in Bolivia. He continued to serve them for four years until they requested a permanent priest. His Holiness sent Fr. Youssef Amba Boula to serve them. Fr. Youssef had minor courses in Spanish prior to coming to Bolivia. He arrived on December 14th, 2000. Fr. Youssef started services in a rented flat located in a poor area. However, only one Copt remained in Bolivia. The other families returned to Egypt or immigrated to the U.S.A. He prayed his first Liturgy in the hall of his flat three days after his arrival. At this time, there weren't any Liturgical books in Spanish but within 6 months, he translated them. He continued to pray in the hall for two years.

Fr. Youssef began teaching Coptic Hymns to children and youth in Coptic and Spanish. He arranged trips. He started to communicate regularly with many Bolivians. Frequently they asked him about his clothing, his beard, and the cross he wears. When they knew that he was a Christian, they started to ask him about his beliefs and the Coptic Orthodox Church. He explained Orthodoxy and showed them the love of Christ. Fr. Youssef loved them and they loved him back. He spent time with them, listened to their problems, aided them with solutions, and gave them spiritual advice. He started various spiritual and social services. They learned about the Coptic Church, embraced it, and were baptized. Fr. Youssef performed the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, marriage, and unction of the sick multiple times. He wrote a book about the Coptic Church in Spanish and published the Coptic Spanish Liturgy Book. With the guidance of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, the help of Fr. Michael Edward priest of St. Mark Church in Cleveland, and the determination of Fr. Youssef, the service continued to grow.

The Coptic Orthodox Churches in Bolivia include St. Mary and St. Mark Cathedral in Santa Cruz, Bolivia - Headquarters of Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Bolivia, St. Verina Church in Santa Rosa, Bolivia, Archangel Michael Church in Paquio, Bolivia, St. Philopateer and St. Mehraïl Church in Montero, Bolivia, St. Mary and St. Joseph in Valle Sánchez, Bolivia, St. George Church in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, and New church project in El Torno, Bolivia.





# COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Bolivia is bordered to the north and east by Brazil, to the southeast by Paraguay, to the south by Argentina, to the southwest and west by Chile, and to the northwest by Peru. Bolivia shares Lake Titicaca, the second largest lake in South America (after Lake Maracaibo), with Peru. The country has been landlocked since it lost its Pacific coast territory to Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879–84), but agreements with neighboring countries have granted it indirect access to the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The constitutional capital is the historic city of Sucre, where the Supreme Court is established, but the administrative capital is La Paz, where the executive and legislative branches of government function.

Bolivia is traditionally regarded as a highland country. Although only one-third of its territory lies in the Andes Mountains, most of the nation's largest cities are located there, and for centuries the highlands have attracted the nation's largest amount of mining, commercial, and business investment. In the late 20th century, however, the demographic and economic landscape began to change as the eastern lowlands—particularly the department of Santa Cruz—developed rapidly.

The country has a rich history. It was once the center of the ancient Tiwanaku (Tiahuanaco) empire, and from the 15th to the early 16th century it was a part of the Inca empire. After the arrival of the conquistadores, Bolivia was subsumed within the Viceroyalty of Peru, and it provided Spain with immense wealth in silver.



# WHAT TO EXPECT

- The Coptic Church in Bolivia will provide a mission trip schedule.
- We will serve in Santa Cruz and the surrounding towns.
- The church in Bolivia will throw a welcome and goodbye party for us upon arrival and departure.
- We will have long days of service, typically from 8:00 AM - 10:30 PM.
- Have a faithful adherence to the schedule that the church provides. They take punctuality seriously.
- Expect much love from the people in Bolivia. Be patient and obedient with them.
- Pack snacks for long days of service.
- You do not need to know Spanish to serve in Bolivia, but it would help to learn some key phrases.
- We are visiting an established Coptic Orthodox church in Bolivia.
- About 98% of the congregants are native Bolivians, not Egyptians.
- We will *continue* the services that the Diocese has established in Bolivia.



## MISSION JOURNEY

# MISSION TRIP

### 01 MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Manage your expectations. Expect God to do big things, but also remember that a trip doesn't have to be groundbreaking in order to be successful and effective. God can work in small ways, too.

### 02 REST

Your trip will likely include long days that require lots of energy to pour out to others. Make sure you are physically and mentally rested before going into a very busy week. Eat healthy, get a good night's sleep and make sure you get proper spiritual mindset before you leave.

### 03 BE FLEXIBLE

Plans will inevitably change on your trip. Be adaptable and willing to learn. Don't get stuck in your own ways, but be willing to try new things. The only way to grow is to be stretched.

### 04 PRAY

"And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." (1 John 5:14-15)

### 05 READ YOUR BIBLE

Without Christ working in and through us, we are useless. His is the power that changes, so spend time cultivating your relationship with him. Glorify him, commit your plans to him and ask him to prepare you to be used by Him with those you meet on your trip.

### 06 GET OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Try something new. Practice doing something out of your comfort zone like eating at an ethnic restaurant or starting conversation with a stranger. Your trip will be full of opportunities for new experiences!

### 07 GET TO KNOW YOUR TEAMMATES

Your relationship with your teammates will determine the atmosphere of your trip. You'll be sharing a lot of experiences and emotions with your group, so get to know your teammates before the trip to build unity and friendship.



# Let's Go Travel to Bolivia



Transportation will be provided by the local team in Bolivia upon arrival to the airport



The cost of airfare to Bolivia may vary depending on the season of travel. The local airport is Viru Viru International Airport (VVI). Copa Airlines is the ideal airline to use.








Living accommodations will be located at St. Mary & St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Cathedral in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Ahead of the trip, a rooming list will be created by your coordinator and the local team in coordination with Bishop Youssef. Each room has 1-3 bunkbeds and an individual bathroom. Married couples will have separate bedrooms with a single full-size bed. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be prepared by the local servants at the church. If any group members have dietary restrictions, this should be provided to the local team ahead of travel.

MISSION AS  
**a way**  
OF LIFE

## GET YOUR VISA *you must have...*

- Valid U.S. passport with at least 6 months validity remaining.
- International Certificate of Yellow Fever Vaccination.
- A Bolivian visitor visa costs \$160 US and can be paid in U.S. or local currency upon arrival.
- Visitors must show proof of a round-trip ticket or confirmation of plans to depart Bolivia.
- Visitors must also show proof of lodging in Bolivia, such as a hotel reservation.
- If staying with Bolivian friends or family, authorities may require a letter of invitation from the host.
- Foreign travelers to Bolivia must complete the web-based registration process (SIGEMIG) prior to arriving in Bolivia.
- If arriving passengers have not completed the electronic registration prior to arriving in Bolivia, immigration inspectors at the port of entry will register them and instruct them to update their registration information as appropriate. The registration must include lodging information for the registrant.
- If visitors to Bolivia do not comply with these requirements, they will be subject to a fine of UFV 100 (about 250 Bolivianos, but this varies from day to day) when they exit the country. No other penalties will be imposed.
- Make sure you get entry and exit stamps from the Bolivian authorities every time you enter or leave Bolivia.
- If you received the Bolivian visa at a land border or at an entry port and you lose your passport, you will need to get a new visa and pay the visa fee - \$160 US - in order to leave the country.
- If you obtained your Bolivian visa at the Bolivian Embassy/Consulate in the United States and you lose your passport, you will need to get an exit stamp but will not be required to pay the visa fee.
- Minors traveling alone or with only one parent who also have Bolivian citizenship and have remained in Bolivia for over 90 days need to obtain authorization from the non-traveling parent or both parents to leave Bolivia.



-  Legal First and Last Name
-  Date of Birth
-  Passport Number
-  Passport Issue & Expiration Date
-  Arrival/Departure Date and Time
-  Dietary/Medical Restrictions

# THE LOGISTICS ARE EASY

The coordinator should create a spreadsheet ahead of your travel with the following information pertaining to each group member to keep on hand in the event it is needed.

**PLAN YOUR TRIP**



# EXPLORE

## *The World*

### TRAINING SESSIONS

A series of four spiritual training sessions should be conducted ahead of the trip, under the facilitation of the trip coordinator. The training sessions are intended to prepare each missionary spiritually and practically for their journey while fostering fellowship among the group. Each training session should follow the below agenda.



*Social Time*



*Prayer*



*Icebreaker Activity*



*Spiritual Word*



*Logistical Updates*



*Practicing Songs, etc.*



*Questions and Answers*







**STSA MISSION**

# Mission Services Preparation

...You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works

*"Go in Peace..."*



## VILLAGE VISITATION/HOMELESS OUTREACH

For Visitations, Prepare to Share Quiet Time Verses and Pray with People in their House-to-House Visits. If Possible, Invite them to the Local Church. Seyidna will Guide You In Preparing Food to Deliver to the Homeless.



## PRISON

There is Both a Boy's Prison and a Girl's Prison. Prepare to Sing Songs, Give Biblical Sermons, and Provide Gifts to Each of Them (Bibles, Feminine Products, Toiletries, etc.).



## SUNDAY SCHOOL/YOUTH MEETINGS

Prepare Skits, Bible Lessons, Activities, and Songs, and Come with Games and Outdoor Activities (Sports Balls, Jump Rope, etc.). It Is a Good Rule of Thumb to Have Candy and Gifts to Pass Out Everywhere You Go.



## CHILDREN PROGRAM

Develop Programs for Kids at Schools, Daycares, and Churches. Prepare Sunday School Stories for Kids, Prepare 4 or 5 Biblical Skits, Prepare Games & Activities for Kids, Prepare Arts and Crafts, Teach Kids Songs with Movements.



## PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Prepare to Teach and Sing Songs In Spanish with the Local People. Learn Songs Ahead of the Trip. It Is best If You Have a Good Mix of Both Mellow Spiritual Songs and Interactive-Fun Songs.



## ADULT PROGRAM

Prepare to Talk on Topics of Hope and Joy Because they, Face Adversity, Prepare Talks on Marriage., Prepare Fun Games and Activities for Adults.

## EMAIL

[missions@stsa.church](mailto:missions@stsa.church)

## STSA WEBSITE

[stsa.church](http://stsa.church)

## MISSION TRAINING

[stsamministries.org](http://stsamministries.org)



STSA CHURCH

# BOLIVIA

## *Fundraising*

CONTACT BISHOP  
YOUSSEF AND  
LOCAL TEAM TO  
IDENTIFY CURRENT  
NEEDS

ORGANIZE AN  
AMAZON  
WISHLIST AND/OR  
FUNDRAISING  
EVENT FOR THE  
ENTIRE CHURCH  
TO PARTICIPATE IN

ONCE YOU HAVE  
COLLECTED YOUR  
DONATIONS, PLAN A  
PACKING PARTY TO  
PACK THE ITEMS IN A  
SECOND LUGGAGE  
THAT EACH  
MISSIONARY WILL  
TAKE WITH THEM

UPON ARRIVAL, PLAN  
TO UNPACK THE  
DONATIONS AND  
NOTIFY THE LOCAL  
TEAM OF YOUR  
DONATIONS



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