

Christopher Holwey, Chairman  
175 Saenz Ln  
Joliet, IL 60436-1054  
(815) 931-8268 cell  
caholwey@att.net



Michael Farrow, Vice-Chairman  
2940 Waterford Court  
Vienna, VA 22181  
(202) 285-2626 cell  
farrow002@yahoo.com

**The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese**  
OF NORTH AMERICA  
**DEPARTMENT OF SACRED MUSIC**  
[www.antiochian.org/music](http://www.antiochian.org/music)

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**July 23-24, 2009**

**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese Convention, Palm Springs, CA**

Your Eminence and Your Graces, Reverend Clergy, Members of the Board of Trustees, My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Department of Sacred Music is your department of choice for all your liturgical musical needs. We continue to work very diligently to provide you with quality music for you to use in your parishes and workshops to help you understand that music. Our purpose is not only to provide you with the music itself, but also to bring about some consistency in what we are singing, and the text that we are using, for all of our parishes and missions in this Archdiocese. Since music is the means by which we pray, our goal is that by singing and chanting the hymns and prayers of the Church in a most harmonious way, we might lift up the hearts and minds of our parishioners, and be able to offer the absolute very best to our God in all our liturgical services.

Now, in order for us to do this, we need to follow a process that will insure some sort of professionalism as well as consistency in our music. We certainly do not want to discourage anyone who has the talent and ability to compose or arrange music for our services. But at the same time, even though some may say that variety is the spice of life, we certainly do not want to encourage the extreme of having each parish writing their own music, using their own texts, and doing their own thing for their own purpose. Therefore, I would like to share with you one of the processes we have within our Sacred Music Department, and that is the process which involves our Editorial Board. The Editorial Board is composed of professional, Orthodox Christian musicians who are there to help insure that our music maintains a sense of professionalism, that it is properly written, and spiritually motivating. With that in mind, I would encourage anyone who has composed or arranged music for use in our liturgical services, who would like this music to be used in our parishes, to submit it first in written form to me, as chairman, for consideration. Once this music is accepted, it will be sent to our Editorial Board by an Administrator to be evaluated, and their comments and suggestions will be forwarded on to the composer. The composer then has the opportunity to revise any part of the music before resubmitting it for final consideration. As I said, we are your department of choice for all your liturgical musical needs. Please use us a such!

The following is a list of what we have accomplished since our gathering two years ago in Montreal:

- ❖ We **standardized the music** for the Troparia of Pascha, Pentecost, and the Elevation of the Cross, as well as the Kontakion of Annunciation, and Gladsome Light from Great Vespers. This music is available on our internet site: [www.antiochian.org/sacredmusic](http://www.antiochian.org/sacredmusic).
- ❖ The music from **Kazan's Orthros Byzantine Music Project** has been computerized and is now being evaluated and corrected as needed before being sent to the printer. Our "computerizers," Mike Kargatis and Deborah Abraham, are now working on the Triodion. Many thanks to them!

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*The mission of the Department of Sacred Music is to provide leadership to the parishes of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, drawing from the talents of the faithful in order to serve as a resource for the publication of music, to organize workshops and seminars, to build strong ties of communication throughout the Archdiocese, to support the work of missions, and to be a positive influence in the creation of new works of liturgical music for the glory of God and the Holy Orthodox Faith.*

- ❖ The music for our **Children's Music Book** for ages 2-6 has been done, and we hope to have the music for ages 7-12 done soon and put into book form for publication.
- ❖ My apologies for not getting the **Akathist Service book with music** published in time this year. We hope to have it printed this year, as well as the music for the **Lesser Sanctification of Water**.
- ❖ Our **Sacred Music Institute** continues to be a success both at the Antiochian Village and on the West Coast, providing many opportunities for our church musicians to come together and gather much needed knowledge in chanting, singing, and directing, as well as to obtain new music approved by our Editorial Board for use in our parishes. Two new features of this year's SMI (under the new leadership of Paul Jabara) will include a specialized **Chamber Choir** of our own people who will perform on Friday evening, as well as a **Mentor Program**, where participants can seek out specialists in various fields of study for advice and help in their parishes. SPECIAL NOTE: Next year, July 28-August 1, 2010, will be the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our SMI, and we hope to have quite a special program for you all. So please, join us for this special event.
- ❖ I was pleased to visit Boston in November, 2008, and Indianapolis in March, 2009 for **Sacred Music Workshops**. They both were very well received. My trip to Boston had an extra special blessing, with the opportunity to see His Beatitude, Patriarch IGNATIUS, and direct the choir on Sunday for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Michael Farrow, our Vice-Chairman, also did a workshop in the New York area in March, which also went very well.
- ❖ We completed a collection of music of all of our Antiochian **20<sup>th</sup> century composers**: Frederick Karam, V.Rev. James C. Meena, Peter Michaelides, Prof. Michael Hilko, Rev. Antony Bassoline, and Ivan Voronkoff. Their music will be deposited in the archives at the A. Village Library.
- ❖ We also hope to **honor all of the choir directors** in this Archdiocese who have given over **twenty years of service** to their parish. (There is a list of about 40 of them.)
- ❖ In our Dioceses, **New England** not only had the workshop and weekend with the Patriarch, but they also alternate each year with a Christmas Concert and Choir Festival at the Diocesan Conference. **Mid-America** provided workshops at their Parish Life Conferences, their Deanery and Fall Gatherings, and did a special choir workshop in Sioux City, Iowa. **Ottawa** combined a workshop on singing techniques with their rehearsal time last year (2008) in Montreal, since time was tight. **Miami** had their PLC workshop cut last year, but this year they are doing one on the Hierarchical Liturgy, and growing in choir members. **Los Angeles** has full choir participation at the PLC, and used the Standard Music for the Troparion of Pascha this year, which worked out very nicely. They combine the Oratorical & Choir Festivals at the PLC, and help facilitate the *West Coast SMI*. **Midwest** has done workshops at the PLC on the Sacraments and Conference themes, also combining their Choir Festival with the oratorical. Their full reports may be viewed on our website by clicking on "Diocesan Reports" in the right column.

Finally, I would again like to thank His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP for allowing me the opportunity to serve you all as chairman of this department. I thank His Grace, Bishop BASIL, our overseer, for the love, support, and wisdom he gives us throughout the year. I thank Michael Farrow as our Vice-Chairman for all his encouragement, direction, and advice; our Diocesan Directors, and our Sacred Music Committee for the work they do in their Dioceses and throughout the year.

May God grant you all many years of singing His praises and "making melody to the Lord with all your heart" (Eph. 5:19), as we worship, honor and glorify the God who has given us this life.

Yours in Christ,



Christopher A. Holwey  
Chairman