

**Fellowship of St. John the Divine  
Minutes of the Mid-Winter Meeting  
Antiochian Village  
February 3-5, 2006**

The Meeting was called to order by the President, Joan Farha, at 7:35 PM. Fr. John Nosal and Fr. Paul Hodges led us in prayer.

Jane Tadros presented the Ice Breaker as a means of meeting each other.

Copies of the Agenda were passed out by Joan.

Minutes from the Summer Meeting: Mark Morrow moved to accept the Minutes. Judy Stanley seconded the motion. All in favor.

Joan welcomed everyone and spoke about the Mission, Vision & Purpose of NAC Fellowship. These are tools to guide us and help us to do God's work.

Constitution: Joan asked everyone to read over and have a working knowledge of the governing and expectations of our organization. Joan stated that we can debate, we can quibble, respectfully argue, but once we vote, we speak with one voice. When we leave the room we speak with one voice as a cohesive unit.

Joan read an e-mail from Bishop ALEXANDER, our overseer, asking for honest feedback on where do we envision the Fellowship and each of our Diocese going. He asked, "What can we do for you?" Joan asked us to give this some thought and we would discuss it under new business.

Bishop THOMAS arrived for a visit stating it was a pleasure to see everyone. This organization has a very important place in my heart being a former President and Spiritual Advisor. Bishop Thomas stated "My desire for you is that you keep in the forefront your salvation – other people will follow." He thanked us for the work the Fellowship does to support Missions and Scripture.

Department of Youth Report: Fr. Joseph Purpura would like to see the same rules across the Archdiocese for Festivals and the Bible Bowl. Fr. Joseph and Esther Simbol will look into this and submit one set of rules.

Creative Festivals

Leslie Abud, representing the Department of Christian Education, joined us in a discussion about Christian Education Department taking over the Festivals. The department is meeting here this weekend and will discuss it and report back to us.

**Conference & Convention Planning:** Fr. Michael Elias asks “That all regional and or diocesan presidents, conference coordinators and host parishes to submit their proposed contracts both to me and George Darany prior to signing anything.”

George Darany asked that we discuss the matter of declining income. Fr. Joe Abud suggested that the Host Parish could add a \$2 per night, per room charge to help cover expenses. After discussion, general feedback was that it was more important to keep the room rate down than to make extra money on the PLC. Not all Diocese have this problem.

Fr. Joe stated we used to have Convention Coordinator come to our meetings and they would bring any concerns they had to us for discussion.

Joan will check and see if Diocese has a Conference coordinator. The coordinator could report any problems to the committee.

**St. Philip Prayer Discipline:** V. Rev. Fr. James Kenna reported they are in the process of preparing a mailing to members, updating records and will inform members of their activities and future plans.

**Food for Hungry People:** Robin Nicholas’ report was presented. She asked that each Diocese President e-mail her the name of the Coordinator for the program.

**Oratorical:** Joan asked Steve Barber if link could be put on the Website to Festivals.

#### **DIOCESE REPORTS:**

**Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada & Upstate New York: Nicholas Ellaham, President**

The Diocese is working on establishing good communications between the Diocesan Fellowship and local parishes in their Diocese. They have established a Website and launched a newsletter. They plan to host an annual retreat. Camp Transfiguration had a successful camping season. They hosted a very successful Diocesan Soccer Tournament for the Teens and Fellowship.

**Diocese of New York & Washington DC; Oakland, PA and the East: Michael Kabbash, President**

The Eastern Dioceses have established an e-mail List and have a Web Site to further communications. They support two Mission communities; have three Mission stations with regular parishioner attendance and have more stations under development. They are working on bridging the gap between the old and the young. At their Delegates meeting the Youth & Teens organize a Humanitarian Project and the Fellowship joins in.

**Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest: Joe Zogaib, President**

Fr. Joe Abud, Spiritual Advisor, reported that the Diocese is establishing a Fellowship of congregations, rather than individuals, following the model of the Southwest. Nicole Dahdal has offered to develop and post information for the Midwest website. A Mission Retreat Weekend is planned for the weekend of March 11<sup>th</sup> with a visit to Peoria, IL. We reached our original goal of \$250,000.00 for the Missions Endowment Fund and have now raised our goal to \$750,000.00.

Diocese of Worcester & New England: Jamil Samara, President

The Fellowship plans to begin visiting parishes in their Diocese in the Spring. The Footlamps Monthly Workshop Series is a very successful part of their Diocese. The Diocese currently has 150 members on their Online Mailing List and hope the number will continue to grow.

Diocese of Miami and the Southwest: Dan Kevorkian President

Dan has asked each priest to appoint a contact person in every church. He hopes to be able to work directly with each of these persons on different activities geared towards fellowship, humanitarian acts and general projects.

Camp Thekla will be held on a Greek Orthodox site in South Carolina.

Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America: Judy Stanley, President

The Fall Gathering and Retreat had approximately 125 people in attendance plus a large number of teens. Their attendance keeps growing each year.

The diocese supports 7 active Missions.

Camp Raphael is gearing up for its sixth session.

Diocese of Los Angeles and the West: Kyra Pelechik, President

The focus of the Fellowship has been on re-connecting the Young Adults with the church and promoting the work of the Fellowship.

They are working on a Yahoo List serve of members as a means of communications.

There are five deaneries in the Diocese and the goal is to have each deanery establish two yearly events (Spring & Fall) for discussions, Vespers and dinner.

They will hold their first Young Adult Conference in San Francisco over Labor Day Weekend. They hope to move these conferences around the Diocese in future years.

Broke for the night at 10:15 pm.

Reconvened Saturday morning at 10 AM

## New Business: Proposed Projects

Joan suggested a project idea for the NAC to develop, produce and distribute a Bulletin Insert Project highlighting a different organization or program of the Archdiocese so people will understand what the church does for us.

It was suggested that this be done as a quarterly insert. Suggested title: "The Works of the Church". Michael Kabbash suggested a flow chart showing organizations and departments and highlight the organization or department being featured. Fr. Joe Abud suggested highlighting lesser known programs first (i.e. OYO). Joan asked that the committee develop a template insert and list of programs/departments to begin highlighting.

*Fr. Michael Abdelahad moved that we pursue this project with a sub-committee and present the findings at the Summer Meeting. Fr. Paul Hodge seconded. Motion passed.*

The committee will consist of Chairperson Julie Abboud, Jane Tadros, Michael Kabbash and Fr. John Nosal.

Joan spoke about a telephone meeting she had with the Metropolitan. He has asked us to raise funds for a Charitable Organization in Lebanon and serves a wide variety of people – Al-Kafaat. Jane passed out books describing what the Al-Kaafat Organization does. Discussion held.

The council discussed raising money for Al-Kafaat in honor of the Metropolitan's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Bishop ALEXANDER (in an e-mail to Joan) suggested there might be other causes on this continent, such as raising money to assist the Diocesan Bishops.

Julie Abboud suggested that Joan talk with the Metropolitan and confirm the information on Al-Kafaat and if this is still his wish.

Members in favor of gift card as a way to raise funds on his name day this year in honor of his 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the Metropolitan's favorite project or charity. A committee was assigned to gather information, create budget. This will be the Fellowship's gift to the Metropolitan. Joan said she will get approval from Bishop ALEXANDER and ask him to discuss with the Metropolitan who he would like the money to go to. The committee is: Jane Tadros and Judy Standley and they will make their report for subsequent action to the body in July. Joan will contact Bishop ALEXANDER.

Further discussion was held regarding NAC's role in fundraising. Fr. John said we are a Council. Mark Morrow stated we are a "think tank", an implementer, not a fund raising group.

Elaina Matook, President of the NASB spoke about sending the newsletters via e-mail to college students. She explained that the NASB was a pre-cursor to OCF, a group on campuses. She thanked the Fellowship for the gifts sent each year to the college students. Elaina suggested that the Fellowship organize events for young adults at Parish Life Conferences and asked for more communication between the groups.

Fr. Michael Nasser spoke about bridging the gap between SOYO and the Fellowship. Keep in touch with them. Two weeks ago there were 280 college students at the Village.

Fr. Joseph Purpura spoke about OYO – Orthodox Youth Outreach – it is a dream of Teen SOYO – They are doing wonderful outreach ministries. The Ministry is growing so fast, and through a generous \$45,000.00 grant from the Farah Fund they will be able to facilitate and expand their ministry program.

Fr. Joseph Purpura introduced Jordan Henderson who has been hired as Program Director for the OYO. Jordan spoke about the program for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Contact Jordan so students can get involved on a local level. Their goal is to enable and equip people for these ministries.

### Conference & Conventions

At the convention in Detroit, concerns were raised about activities of the young adults. The following suggestions were made:

- Hospitality Room or location in the hotel be provided so they can get together.
- Fr. Michael Nasser suggested that events be planned for the Young Adults.
- Limited or no alcohol at our functions.
- Activities scheduled later in the night.

One concern brought up was that our 2007 convention in Montreal the drinking age is 18 years. Fr. Joseph Purpura noted that our Archdiocese rules dictate that drinking age at our events is 21 years. Joan will discuss how to handle this with the Department of Conference & Convention Planning.

### Treasurer's Report: Robert Bayouk

Robert reported total income in the amount of \$15,605.00; Expenses totaled \$4,171.91. Reserve Account balance is \$39,142.55. Discussion about computerized records. There should be one hard copy of records in the event of a computer problem.

Jamil Samara asked if there is a manual passed down from one treasurer to another. Joan said this had been discussed at an Executive Board meeting. Jane is putting together packets for each Coordinator listing responsibilities and we will add packets for the Officers also.

*Jane Tadros moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Seconded and passed.*

### Christian Education/Creative Festivals

Leslie Abud reported back that the Christian Education Department's goal is to take over and administer the Festivals by 2008. The Christian Education coordinators will

work with the current Festivals coordinators in each diocese on the details. The Fellowship will continue to pay for the awards and judges gifts.

Fr. John asked that the NAC Fellowship begin a Liturgical Worship Revival in our parishes and asked that this be put on the Agenda for a future discussion.

#### Parish Ministry Handbook

Joan asked members to look over the Parish Ministry Handbook. She proposed that it be updated and put on the Web Site as a source of information. Fr. Michael Abdelahed will work with Joan on updating this project.

2009 Archdiocese Convention will be held in Palm Springs, California

#### OCCM Trip to Alaska: Jordan Henderson

Jordan passed out Mission brochures on the trip to Kodiak, Alaska. Dates are July 31 to August 11, 2006. Each year the teams teach the Faith, offer retreats, catechism, ministry and encouragement throughout the Diocese. The Fellowship team will host youth camps in the village of Woody Island. They will also help with the annual St. Herman Pilgrimage at Spruce Island.

Joan reminded the Council that when the Alaska mission trip was first approved, part of the discussion was to have money available from the NAC to help offset the cost of those wanting to participate in the trip but unable to afford it or raise the funds.

*Jane Tadros moved the Fellowship dedicate \$5,000.00 from our Reserve Account for the purpose of support for the Alaska Mission Trip of Fellowship Members. Second by Michael Kabbash. Passed.*

Joan spoke about importance of having a Fellowship Contact in each parish. If there is not Fellowship then the contact would be the Parish Council President.

Joan reminded members of the grant of \$500.00 per Diocese for Speaker Fund. There is also a \$500.00 Special Needs Grant for each Diocese. Grants can help with camps or a project in a Diocese. Guidelines on the Special Needs Grant and applications for both Grants will be posted on the web or available from Jane Tadros. You must submit form four weeks prior to event.

#### Special Projects: Julie Abboud

Julie showed a sample of the banner. Cost to produce is \$400.00 per banner. Each Diocese would have one. Diocesan Presidents were asked to submit 3 to 5 photos to appear on banner. Fr. Paul Hodge suggested that the Vision, Purpose & Mission be included:

- Vision: Worship, Witness, Service, Fellowship
- Purpose: Inspiration, motivation, works of the church, raising up leaders
- Mission: Develop and coordinate Ministries.

#### Video Project: Chuck Nassif

Chuck has not had much luck so far in getting pictures for the video of past history of the Fellowship. In July we will decide if we want to continue this project.

Young Adult Coordinator

Jamil Samara reported for Sonia (Daly) Belcher that the September Pan Orthodox Young Adult Retreat was a great success. It will be held again the third weekend in September in Boston. No retreat is scheduled for the western half of the country. Joan will ask Sonia to look into holding one there in the future and finding an “assistant” if needed to oversee a retreat in that area.

Tech Training: Steve Barber

Discussion about the Archdiocese Website. Members expressed frustration with finding things, posting items. Joan will contact Fr. George Kevorkian and discuss the problems with him.

Joan received a request from Bishop ALEXANDER. His question is “What do you see Fellowship doing?” Overall the consensus was that our current “Vision, Mission and Purpose” for the NAC clearly states what we are and what we do. Each Diocese has their own goals and takes care of their own projects. NAC is a “Think tank” – support each other – dialog

Our Summer Meeting will be July 21-23 at the Village.

Meeting adjourned with a prayer by Fr. John at 5 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda A. Simon, NAC Secretary