

**Fellowship of St. John the Divine
Minutes of the Mid-Winter Meeting
Antiochian Village
February 1-3 2008**

The meeting was called to order by the Vice President, Jane Tadros, at 7:30 PM. Fr. Michael Abdelhad led us in prayer.

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

Many people were unable to be in attendance because of the weather conditions.

The Minutes were sent to everyone, along with all the reports, prior to the meeting. Fr. Jeremy Davis spoke about a typographical error on the last page, first sentence. "If someone wants an item put on the Agenda they should communicate with the President AT least one month in advance of the meeting." Kyra Pelachik moved to accept the Minutes as corrected. Second by Michael Marge. Passed.

NASB: Leigh Cohlma, Chairman, stated they are working with the Bishops on compiling a list, with mailing addresses, of high school seniors.

ORATORICAL: Peter was unable to attend. Report attached. Jane reminded all Presidents to get winner's names to Peter Samore as soon as they are available.

SPECIAL PROJECTS: Julie Abboud stated the OYO bulletin insert has been completed and will be sent out soon in time to appear in February bulletins.

Julie stated she and Joan have been in discussion and are making plans to put the abbreviated version of the Parish Ministry Manual on the Website. Fr. Joe Abud stated this manual has inspired many churches. Discussion about using it as a resource. Members in attendance felt we should put it on our Website.

Jane spoke about the Young Adult Retreat in Chicago. The flyer is missing information – who to send registration to. Fr. Joe Abud stated there should have been a letter accompanying the flyer. More complete information should go out as soon as possible.

MISSIONS OUTREACH EVANGELISM: Charles Abdelahad spoke about the upcoming Pan-Orthodox Missions trip to Alaska in August. It is urgent that anyone thinking of making this trip make a firm commitment within the next two weeks. Please contact Charles at abdelahad.c@gmail.com. Charles also spoke about smaller, local Monastery trips, i.e., Ellwood City, PA; Rives Junction, MI; and Calistoga, CA, are being planned in conjunction with the St. Herman's Pilgrimage. Jane thanked Charles for all his work.

Bishop THOMAS arrived at 8:45 PM. Bishop THOMAS stated the work we do here is important. "It is my hope that you will perform miracles. You carry the name of St. John the Divine. Whenever I get an e-mail about the Fellowship, I find that what you are doing corresponds with the work of our Lord in his vineyard. With God all things are possible." Please thank Joan for me. Emphasize that the Ministry of St. John the Divine is very important. Ask your Bishop's to ask their Priests to do everything they can to establish groups in all their parishes.

UNITY: Fr. Paul Hodge: Report attached. Discussion centered around having an "Orthodox Unity Event" at the various Diocese PLC's. Kyra Pelachik stated they have potential – they are presently in talks with the Greek Archdiocese. There are also plans underway on the West Coast for Orthodox Sunday Services in which all Bishops will be serving together.

Fr. David Sommer spoke about a Pan-Orthodox camp they had.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL: Fr. Michael Abdelahad spoke about the "Saints Alive" spiritual renewal program. He stated they will be doing one book a week during Lent.

OLD BUSINESS: Coordinators stipends- Jane explained Coordinators Stipends and explained the need to raise it to \$500.00. for year of Archdiocese Convention. Judy Stanley moved we raise the Coordinators Stipend to \$500.00 on year of Archdiocese Convention. Second by Julie Abboud. Discussion followed. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Robert Bayouk presented the Treasurer's Report. Income \$20,418.56; Expenses \$16,481.64 – Net Income \$3,936.92.

Short discussion about Coordinators Stipend - Fr. Jeremy Davis asked that amount showing under Mid-Winter Meeting be designated as "Officers" and list amount for Coordinators Stipend.

Fr. Andrew Moore moved to accept the report. Second by Timothy Phillips. Motion Passed.

Jane welcomed our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Christopher Salamy who was delayed by the weather.

FELLOWSHIP CONTACTS: Numerous presidents stated they are working on this project. If a parish does not have a Fellowship group the information has been sent to the Parish Council President.

WORD MAGAZINE ROTATION: Linda spoke about current rotation system. An e-mail is sent at the beginning of the month to remind President of the deadline for the article being sent to her. President's asked that the reminder be sent one month

in advance and a follow-up 2 weeks prior to deadline. Nicholas Ellaham stated the articles are very helpful.

WEBSITE: There are still problems with the Website and getting information posted. Jane asked do we want to continue having the Website managed or do we want to have our own website. Nicholas explained that we are better off remaining as we are unless there is a dedicated person who would have the time to take it over. This is a big job. Nicholas stated he is willing to continue posting information for the Fellowship.

He will contact Joan Farha, Jamil Samara, and Fr. Joseph Huneycutt and discuss the matter with them and report back to fellowship at the Summer meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10 PM.

Jane called the Meeting to order at 10:30 AM. Father Christopher led us in prayer. Jane asked members who were not in attendance last ight to introduce themselves.

DIOCESE REPORTS: All reports attached.

(Toledo Diocese) Fr. Joe Abud stated Corinne Cassis is the new Fellowship Leader. We are re-invigorating ourselves. We will be moving forward.

(Wichita Diocese) Judy Stanley spoke about their new “Sister Diocese Project,” with a church in Syria. Goal is to have a working relationship with the church.

(Worcester & NE Diocese) Michael Marge spoke about their “Footlamps” program.

(Diocese of LA & the West) Kyra Pelachik spoke about numerous Retreats and Conferences planned.

(Eastern Diocese) Michael Kabbash stated their Diocese is doing well – they are maintaining their momentum. They will be doing a Bible Study on 1 Corinthians. There are Deanery Retreats planned with Fr. Joseph Butts.

(Miami Diocese) Tim Phillips spoke about the huge success of Camp St. Thekla. They are presently working on the 25th Anniversary celebration for Bishop ANTOUN. The Diocese is currently supporting 6 Missions.

(Ottawa Diocese) Nicholas Ellaham stated things are “stagnant” at the present time. Many conflicting opinions.

Jane suggested that the Presidents sit together at lunch and have conversation.

Jane spoke about Parish Life Conferences and the fantastic things that are being done.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Carol Buleza, Kh. Leslee Abud, Kh. Betty Randolph Sandy Mitchell and Billie Oldziej were welcomed to our meeting by Jane Tadros.

Carol introduced Members of the Christian Education Department. Khourieh Leslee thanked the Fellowship for having them. She stated the goal of the Festivals is to give an opportunity for our children to witness our faith. They provide lessons for the Sunday School Teachers and suggestions for using the theme all year – They are working on getting the theme earlier. There is a Christian Education Coordinator for each Diocese and they will make sure there is a coordinator for each parish.

They are going over Guidelines and will update and streamline them.. The new Guidelines will take effect August 1st for next year.

Khourieh Leslee presented a slide presentation showing the information that is available on the Christian Ed Website for the Festivals. There are also links for the Oratorical Festival and the Bible Bowl. The Fellowship will be responsible for both the Oratorical and Bible Bowl.

They hope to have a Power Point Presentation on the Website so children will be able to see their entries.

Carol stated the Fellowship and Christian Education Department need to work together. She will be compiling “Job Descriptions” for the coordinators so each new individual will be aware of their responsibilities.

Father Joseph Butts expressed his concern about this year’s topic. Carol explained the Metropolitan’s concerns.

Break for Joint Session and lunch.

Meeting resumed at 2 PM.

Fr. Michael Abdelahad introduced the “Ncense” singing group. They sang 2 songs. The group has completed a CD and has asked the Fellowship for monetary support to produce this CD. The opinion was that this is a perfect opportunity for the Fellowship to reach out to the next generation. All proceeds from the sale of the CD will go to the OCF.

Fr. Christopher Salamy moved the Fellowship sponsor the CD by Ncense at a cost of \$2,500.00. Second by Robert Bayouk. Discussion. Fr. Joe Abud stated an insert should be made that this CD is sponsored by the Fellowship. Motion passed.

Jane introduced Jordan Henderson who spoke about the OYO. He stated they did 12 or 13 trips last year. Response among the kids has been great. Many children are learning to transform their lives. Discussion about safety of children on the trips. Fr. Joseph Purpura stated that they make sure the children are safe.

Fr. Joseph Abud thanked Fr. Kevin Scherer who was with the organization from the beginning.

Jane then introduced Fr. Joseph Purpura and Fr. Anthony Yazge to discuss the Survey presented at the PLC's last summer.

Fr. Joseph explained how the Survey came about and the concerns of the Metropolitan. The report on the Surveys will be made at the next Archdiocese Convention. Fr. Joseph stated 2000 Surveys were completed. 1,100 were from adults. The Archdiocese hopes to have programs that will address any issues.

Jane stated parents were upset because they were not informed ahead of time about this Survey. Fr. Anthony apologized for the way it was handled.

Fr. Joseph asked that in the future if we have any concerns to please let him know right away.

RESERVE ACCOUNT: Treasurer, Robert Bayouk, asked for a proposal to determine how much money we should keep in our Reserve Account. We presently have \$49,836.14. The Executive Committee is asking for a set amount that should remain in the account. Ralph Nava said we should not keep a certain amount but a percentage should be used because of inflation.

Fr. Jeremy Davis moved that we maintain 100% of the current year's budget. Second by Fr. Joseph Abud. On our Budget (for reporting purposes) our time deposit should be divided into two lines – one for Reserve and the other as Temporary Savings that can be used if needed. Motion passed.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY: Jane asked for suggestions for an official name for the Young Adult Ministry. Discussion followed. Matter tabled until the Summer Meeting which will be held at the Antiochian Village, July 25-27th, 2008.

Robin Nicholas asked all presidents to contact their Food for Hungry chairpersons and have them contact their churches and see what activities are being done throughout the year, other than FFHP during Lent. She asked that this information be sent to her.

Father Joseph Abud asked that the Minutes reflect our thanks to Jane Tadros and state what a wonderful job she did conducting our Mid-Winter Meeting in the absence of our President, Joan Farha, who was unable to be with us.

Kyra Pelachik moved to adjourn the meeting and to send our activity clocks to Joan, to be delivered by Judy Stanley. Second by Fr. Michael Abdelahad. Passed.