



The Torch

The official publication of the Midwest Antiochian Women

October 2011

Antiochian Women Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest

*The Most Reverend
Metropolitan PHILIP
Founder*



From The Torch Editor... Kh. Jeanette Gallaway

Dear Sisters in Christ: In this Newsletter you are receiving valuable information to keep you up to date

Dates to remember:

Fall Meeting will be held October 29th in Flint, MI.

Please send the 2011-12 Dues of \$150.00 by Dec.1 to
Barbara Thomas,
3122 Kalamazoo SE,
Grand Rapids MI 49508

May 1, 2012: NAB project monies are due to:
Barbara Thomas, 3122 Kalamazoo SE, Grand Rapids MI 49508

Pray for the health of:

Fr. Alexander Atty, Dean of St. Tikhon Seminary

Elaine Shaneen, Karen Mann, Libbie Kohl, and Kh. Joanne Bitar

From Sheryl VanderWagen, President, Midwest Antiochian Women:

Christ is in our midst! He is and always shall be!

I am looking forward to the coming year for the Midwest Antiochian Women. We have a lot to accomplish this year. We had a good meeting at the Parish Life Conference in Cleveland in June. And in July, I was privileged to attend the NAB meeting in Chicago. We also had a successful luncheon in Cleveland and I would like to express my appreciation to the Linda Simon and the ladies of St. George, Cleveland who worked so hard to make it a success. At the luncheon which was attended by His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, Kh. Ruth Meena was awarded the 2011 Metropolitan PHILIP Award. Special congratulations to Kh. Ruth!

I am happy to report that by the time the books had to be closed by the NAB for the year, we had received most of the replacement checks, both dues and NAB Project monies. We have had some dues and project monies come in after the closing of the NAB books and those monies will be noted at late 2011 monies and submitted and reported by the NAB in 2012. We were able to submit \$8,402.25 to the NAB for the Convent of St. Thekla. All replacement checks received have been deposited. I would like to express my appreciation to all of the local parishes for their quick response in getting replacement checks to me after my letter just before the June Parish Life Conference. In addition, we elected new officers for 2011-2013. I will continue to serve you as president. Dianne O'Regan will serve as Vice-President/NAB Project. Kh. Michelle Dresdow will serve as Recording Secretary. Barbara Thomas will serve as Treasurer. Jeanette Gallaway will continue as Public Relations Coordinator. V. Rev. Fr. Dan Daly continues as our Spiritual Advisor. Suzanne Perry has been appointed Humanitarian Coordinator. Libbie Kohl has been appointed Finance Chair. Dianne continues to hold the Archives/Historian Coordinator position. Suzanne Perry has volunteered to work with the 2012 Parish Life Committee on the Antiochian Women Tea. We need to fill the Spiritual Coordinator and Membership Coordinator positions. The details of those positions are in this newsletter. If you are interested in serving in either of these positions, please contact me directly.

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At our Fall meeting on October 29, we will be discussing and reviewing the Metropolitan PHILIP Award criteria and appointing a committee to work on that in the coming year. We will also discuss the annual Midwest Antiochian Women Retreat, review some proposed changes to our Midwest Constitution and Bylaws and talk about ideas for a new Midwest Project. The Fall Gathering is hosted by St. George, Flint MI October 28-30, 2011. Plan to be there.

And since this is a new year, it is time to submit 2011-2012 dues. Dues remain the same for local parishes, \$150.00. All parishes are required to pay dues with the exception of our mission parishes. Dues payments for 2011-2012 are due in to the Midwest Treasurer by December 1, 2011.

The 2012 NAB Project will continue to be the Convent of St. Thekla at the Antiochian Village. In 2011, the NAB presented Metropolitan PHILIP with a check for \$104,830.79. So far the Antiochian Women have raised \$217,862.76 for the building project and the fund raising will continue. Begin to make plans now for your local NAB Project fundraiser. Chapter funds will be due to the Midwest Treasurer by May 1, 2012.

I pray that all of you have a successful year! May God bless you all!

Sheryl VanderWagen
Midwest Antiochian Women President
5164 Leonard
Coopersville MI 49404
gvwagen@charter.net or 616-677-5242



Present and Past Metropolitan Philip Award Recipients



Women's Luncheon at Midwest Conference



Women's Luncheon at Midwest Conference



Sheryl VanderWagen at National Conference

DIOCESE OF TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST

MINUTES ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

June 16, 2011

Cleveland, Ohio

A roll call and signup sheet was passed. There were 38 women from 14 different parishes at the meeting.

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 11:15 by Sheryl VanderWagen in the Cypress meeting room at Holiday Inn, Strongsville, Ohio.

2. **Opening Prayer:** Spiritual Advisor Fr. Daniel Daly opened the meeting with the Antiochian Women's prayer.

3. **Approval of October 2, 2010 minutes.** The minutes from our last meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan were read silently by all present.

Motion by Margaret Simon and supported by Elaine Shaheen to approve the minutes as written.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** In lieu of a treasurer's report an update on Libble Kohl's health was given. President Sheryl Vanderwagen explained that a report was unavailable at this time and reassured everyone that she is reconstructing the financial records and will have an official report very soon. A letter explaining the current situation about outstanding checks was sent to each parish with a memo attached detailing how to resubmit outstanding funds.

5. **Vice President/ KH. Elfriede Daly:** Elfriede was unable to be at the meeting but a written report was submitted (attached). At this time it is not certain whether the "Convent of St. Thekla" project will be carried through for another year.

6. **Public Relations/ KH. Jeanette Gallaway:** Copies of the latest edition to The Torch were distributed. Jeanette encouraged all present to submit pictures of any activities their group was involved with for use in future editions. The Torch is published 2 /3 times a year and Jeanette inquired from all present if they were receiving their copy. E-mails will be sent to all women's groups soliciting information. In addition, Jeanette will investigate the possibility of putting each edition on the diocese website.

7. **Spiritual Advisor/ Fr. Daniel Daly:** Fr. Daniel gave an inspirational talk on the importance of being a *person* and how this related to the Holy Theotokos. He related a story of a couple that didn't tell the gender of their child to anyone. They soon learned that prejudices exist for each sex and no one is without gender. We are all persons created in the likeness of God. He reminded us that the beliefs about Mary were challenged by Nestorius. Nestorius questioned how Mary could be the Mother of both God and Man. Today the Theotokos is honored in all our lives and prayers.

8. **President's remarks/ Sheryl Vanderwagen:** Sheryl presented her report (attached) at the luncheon.

COORDINATOR'S REPORTS

A. Membership: --This position is vacant at this time and Sheryl encouraged someone in the group to volunteer..

B. Historian/Archives: Dianne O'Regan presented her report (attached).

She encouraged all present to send her any information/articles/ reports that could be useful in the collection of historic data. Ramona Darmour has materials from the past that will be given to Dianne for the archives.

C. Humanitarian: Margaret Simon presented her report (attached). She encouraged each chapter to do "*outreach activities*". An example of a project from Grand Rapids group was shared. The women's group had monthly luncheons for the parish and passed a tray for contributions toward the convent project.

D. Met. Philip Award: The winner of this year's award was announced at the luncheon. Daisy Isaac, recipient in 2010, assisted Dianne O'Regan in presenting the award to Ruth Meena, from Cleveland, Ohio (St. Matthew's, North Royalton).

E. Religious: Roberta Royhab was unable to attend the meeting. She submitted her conference letter (attached). Sheryl commented on Roberta's generous sharing and the positive contributions she had made to the Antiochian Women's group.

F. Finance: Marie Bojrab was not present.

G. Midwest Project: Elaine Shaheen gave an updated report (attached) on the *Bib* project. At this time she presented a net profit of \$502.20.

10. Old Business:

A. RETREAT: The 2011 Antiochian Women's retreat was held the 2nd weekend of May at the Dormition of God Monastery in Rives Junction, Michigan. There were 30 women in attendance and the guest speaker "Maggie Hoch" spoke on the "Myrrh Bearing Women". The retreat was enjoyed by all who attended.

B. BYLAWS & CONSTITUTION: At the fall meeting it was suggested that each chapter examine their bylaws and constitution and see if any changes or amendments are needed. A sample constitution/bylaws, based on the North American Board constitution, was distributed. In addition, a chapter survey on these documents was given out.

C. The Midwest constitution still needs to be revised and this will be done at the fall meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. PLC SOUVENIR JOURNAL: Discussion ensued on the logistics and practicality of the Midwest Antiochian Women's group placing an ad in the conference souvenir journal. Since this had not been done in time for this year's conference the following motions were made:

Midwest Antiochian Women's group will make a \$300 retroactive donation (equivalent to a 1/2 page ad) to the Cleveland PLC souvenir book. Motion by Jeanette Gallaway and supported by Jeri Farris was passed.
The Midwest Antiochian Women's group will place a 1/2 page ad in all future Midwest PLC souvenir journals. Motion by Camille Patrick and supported by Jeanette Gallaway was passed.

B. ELECTION OF 2001-13 OFFICERS: Dianne O'Regan presented the slate of officers:

President: *Sheryl Vanderwagen*
Vice-President: *Dianne O'Regan*
Secretary: *Kh. Michele Dresdow*
Treasurer: *Barbara A. Thomas*
Public Relations: *Kh. Jeanette Gallaway*

Officers were elected by the women present.

C. COORDINATOR POSITIONS -- Looking for women to fill these positions.

D. ARCHDIOCESE CONVENTION: The Midwest women's group can have six representatives at the convention. AT this time the following women will represent us:

Sheryl Vanderwagen , Sue Perry, Jeanette Gallaway, and Dottie Malooley

E. MET. PHILIP AWARD: Dianne O'Regan reminded us that this award has been given for twenty years and it may be time for the criteria to be reviewed and possibly updated. This process will begin at the fall meeting.

BISHOP THOMAS commented on the women's involvement in church activity and how much their love, kindness and generosity toward the clergy is appreciated. He encouraged us to continue this support and kindness.

Bishop Thomas closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Mann
Recording Secretary

THE SEPTEMBER SONG
By Fr. Daniel Daly
MIDWEST SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

About one month before I was born, a song appeared in a New York Musical. The song was “The September Song”. You may remember the opening lyrics. “Well, it’s a long long time from May to December, but the days grow short when you reach September. And the autumn weather turns the leaves to gray, and I haven’t got time for the waiting game”. Frank Sinatra made the song memorable and famous. And although the September Song has remained popular over the years, it is one song that I have never enjoyed hearing. It all started when I realized that summer was over and school began in the month of September. Even after I became an adult, I could never hear the song without a twinge of sadness. It is not only the days which have grown short, the year itself has grown short when we reach September. Not only the leaves are gray, the sky is gray. The September song is sad. It is sad because it reminds us of the shortness of life itself. It is we whose time has grown short. It is we who have grown gray.

About three years ago, I attended the 50th anniversary of the Naval Preparatory School. I was part of the class of 1958. This school was to prepare men to attend the U.S. Naval Academy. I had the opportunity to attend the full program and possibly have a career in the Navy. I had already served on the USS Iowa and I knew a little bit about the Navy. This was the chance to make the Navy a career. It did look glorious. I chose not to take that path. I returned to civilian life and entered the seminary several years later. People sometimes speak of “the path not taken” in their lives. For me, this was the path I did not take. And for fifty years I have often wondered what I missed. Should I have taken that path?

My attendance at the fiftieth anniversary of the class answered some of my questions. About 60 men met in Bainbridge, Maryland to celebrate the class of 1958. One member of the class received the Medal of Honor posthumously. Another was a highly decorated Marine who life was portrayed on TV. At least two men who were present, commanded nuclear submarines. There were no uniforms at the reunion. There was no brass. The naval base, which once had at least 500 buildings, was literally gone with the wind. Not a building remained. The members of the class of 1958 now seemed shorter than they did a half-century ago. Most were now a bit portly. One was in a wheelchair. Even the man who was a true military hero told us that although he fought many battles in his life, his greatest trial was the fact that his wife had Alzheimer’s disease and was in a nursing home. The reunion reminded me of the final line in Gray’s *Elegy In A Country Chuchyard*, “The paths of glory lead but to the grave.” As we stood at attention listening to the names of the deceased members of the class, I looked around at my aging classmates. I looked up and saw the flag of the State of Maryland. It has two brilliant Greek Crosses. Here I was, probably the only Orthodox man in the group. One other man had eventually decided to become a priest. I guess it was September for me. I believe that the choice I made fifty years ago was the right one.

In the yearly calendar, the days, weeks and months can be measured. In the calendar on the wall, there is a month of September. And the days do indeed grow short. But in my life and in the life of ever person, we don’t have a clue about what month we may be in. Maybe I am in June, maybe I am in December. None of us really know. What we do know is that by living in the church we are already living in God’s Kingdom; and his Kingdom is without end. September 1st brings the Byzantine New Year. No matter what month of life we find ourselves in, our faith always allow us to begin anew the journey to the Kingdom of God.

Introducing our 2011-13 Humanitarian Coordinator:

I am Suzanne Abrass Perry, the Humanitarian Coordinator of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest. I am a member of St. George Church in West St. Paul, MN. Tom is my husband and we have 2 children, TJ and Francine. Growing up at St. George Church, I received the Sacraments of Holy Baptism, First Confession, Holy Matrimony, and our children are baptized Orthodox Christians. My husband converted to Christian Orthodoxy when our first child was born. My grandparents came from Lebanon and settled in Minnesota. Our Church was established in 1913. Parents are the foundation of a home with Christ being the center of our lives. Life is a struggle yet we continue to pass on the traditions and religion to our children. I am a Registered Nurse in a Christian Hospital called St. Joseph's. I serve in various capacities at St. George Church: Teach Sunday School, Antiochian Women Vice-President at our Parish, Liaison Contact person for FOCUS Minnesota, Chaired a few of our Church dinners/bazaar/festival fundraisers and restarted our St. George Dance Group in 2007, when I started chairing events. To know your culture, grow in your religion by attending Church, Feast Days, etc., helps build a solid foundation for each individual that God created. It is important to reach out to carry on the works of the Church which is to serve others. Outreach projects are what we are called to do. Everyone has a voice, ideas, and talents to share. We need to listen and encourage each other especially the younger generations so they will be productive and encouraged to do the works of the church. We are called to serve and reach out to those in need. Glory be to God. Suzanne

Suzanne will be providing information to our parish chapters that she receives from the NAB Humanitarian Coordinator. She would also like to hear from Midwest Parishes about your local humanitarian projects that she can share with other Midwest parishes. Contact Sue at 562 77th Street West, Eagan, MN 55121. (651)905-0123 (Home). suefperry@comcast.net

Note from Sheryl VanderWagen:

As we appoint the remaining coordinators for 2011-13, we will introduce each of them in a similar fashion in future editions of the Torch.

APPOINTMENTS TO BE MADE FOR 2011-13

RELIGIOUS COORDINATOR

It shall be the responsibility of the regional coordinator for the Religious Committee of the Antiochian Women to transmit to the member chapters of the Antiochian Women, materials and programs initiated by the North American chair of this committee. The regional coordinator shall also promote and encourage participation in spiritual activities throughout the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest within the member chapters, including but not limited to, retreats, special programs for women and with the assistance and guidance of the spiritual advisor and local parish priests, special programs observing the feasts and fasts of the liturgical calendar of the Orthodox Church.

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

It shall be the responsibility of the regional coordinator for the Membership Committee of the Antiochian Women to transmit to member chapters of the Antiochian Women materials and programs initiated by the North American Chair of this committee and to help devise and implement programs aimed at the growth of the membership in the Antiochian Women, including an increase in the number of women belonging to the local member chapter and an increase in the number of parishes in the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest having a member chapter of the Antiochian Women.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

The corresponding secretary shall conduct all correspondence delegated to her by the president. She shall send out all notices for meetings and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the president. The corresponding secretary shall send sympathy cards to current officers and past presidents who have lost family members

**ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OF THE DIOCESE OF TOLEDO & THE MIDWEST
COORDINATOR NOMINATION FORM**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ (Home) _____ (Work)

Parish (Please Include City and State): _____

Your Priest's Signature (**REQUIRED**): _____

Coordinators (appointed)

Finance* Humanitarian*

Historian/Archives* Membership/Missions

Parliamentarian Religious

Midwest Project Antiochian Women's Tea*

Corresponding Secretary

*Position has been filled

***Please return this form no later than October 16, 2011 to:
Sheryl VanderWagen
5164 Leonard
Coopersville, MI 49404
(616)677-5242***

Antiochian Women, Diocese of Toledo & the Midwest
ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN DUES & PROJECT MONIES
2011 - 2012

It is time to renew your Antiochian Women dues for the 2011-2012 year period. *Dues must be submitted by December 1, 2011.* All parishes are obligated to pay \$150.00 of which \$75.00 will go to the North American Board Treasury. All churches are required to pay dues, even if you do not have an active Antiochian Women Chapter. Missions are not required to pay dues.

Our 2011-2012 Antiochian Women Project is the Convent of St. Thekla at Antiochian Village. Together, let's have 100% participation in this project which will help build the monastery at the Antiochian Village. *Please send Project monies no later than May 1, 2012.* All parishes and missions are kindly asked to contribute to the Project.

Please make your check payable to the Midwest Antiochian Women and indicate whether your payment is for DUES or for the Convent of St. Thekla.

PLEASE TEAR OFF FORM BELOW & RETURN WITH MONIES TO:

Barbara Thomas, 3122 Kalamazoo SE, Grand Rapids MI 49508

Contact Name: _____

Name of Church: _____

Church Address/City/Sate/Zip:

Phone: _____ **E-Mail (church or contact)** _____

MIDWEST ANTIOCHIAN PROJECT ORDER FORM

INFANT BIBS FOR GRANDMA & GRANDPA

PRINTED IN 10 LANGUAGES

Church _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

No. of Bibs ordered at \$7 ea. _____

(Make checks payable to: Midwest Antiochian Women)

Send orders to:

Elaine Shaheen
2049 Crystal Wood Trail
Flushing, MI 48433- 3511

Phone: 810-733-8114