

DIAKONIA

Fall 2011 and Winter 2012



Incoming and outgoing NAB officers and Coordinators wasted no time after the general assembly at the 2011 Archdiocese Convention in Chicago to get together and plan their work for the 2011- 2013 term.

Shown here:

STANDING - L to R: Kh, Suzanne Murphy, Kh. Helene Hajal, Jamie Isaac,
Violet Robbat, Winona Nava, Laila Ferris, Sue Perry

SEATED - L TO R: Susanne Zeidan, Marilyn Robbat,
Fadia Juzdan, Cindy Nimey, Sherry Abraham-Morrow

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NORTH AMERICA

✠ A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS ✠

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women Of North America

The Most Reverend
Metropolitan PHILIP
Founder

The Most Reverend
Archbishop JOSEPH
Overseeing Hierarch

NAB Board

His Grace Bishop. JOHN, Spiritual Advisor

Officers:

Violet Robbat President
Dianne O'Regan Vice-president
Laila Ferris Recording Secretary
Sherry Abraham Morrow Treasurer
Lucy Hanna Public Relations
Cindy Nimey Immediate Past President

Coordinators:

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Cindy Nimey Parliamentarian/Scholarship
Kh. Dannie Moore Humanitarian
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Marilyn Robbat Religious
Deanna Nasser Finance
Kh. Barbara Baz Widowed Clergy Wives Program

Antiochian Women's Prayer

*In the Name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
O Christ our God, we are all pledged to
serve Thee with our whole being.
Help us to continue to work for Thee
through our Church, without seeking praise,
without seeking personal gain,
without judging others, without a feeling that
we have worked hard enough
and now must allow ourselves rest.
Give us strength to do what is right and
help us to go on striving and to remember
that activities are not the main thing in life.
The most important thing is to have
our hearts directed and attuned to Thee.
Amen.*

DIAKONIA is a Newsletter of the North American Board of the Antiochian Women, an organization of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, and is published quarterly in the months of September, December, March and June.

PUBLICATION GUIDELINES:

Deadlines

- Please submit your articles by the first of the month prior to the month of publication so we can be sure they are included.

To submit articles, e-mail as an attachment to:

lucy.hanna@sbcglobal.net

Submission Details

- Please include your name and the phone number where you can be contacted for questions.

Content

- All articles must be of interest to or regarding NAB, Diocesan or local Antiochian Women.
- All articles may be edited for length and clarity.

In this issue of the DIAKONIA we highlight the
North American Board.
And
The Diocese of New York
and the Archdiocesan District,
And the Diocese of Oakland, PA and the East

In each of the next seven issues, we will highlight one of the Dioceses. We encourage everyone however, to submit news and articles from all Antiochian parishes of North America for publication in every issue so we may keep in touch with each other.

What is DIAKONIA

The word **DIAKONIA** is a Greek word meaning *Service*, usually pertaining to service in the Church. The purpose of the Antiochian Women's organization is primarily spirituality and humanitarian service. In the words of our beloved Metropolitan PHILIP it is **"Theology in Action"**.

Letter from the Editor:

Your Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, Your Eminence Archbishop JOSEPH, Your Grace Bishop JOHN, Reverend Fathers the Diocesan Spiritual Advisors, and Sisters in Christ,

I would like to introduce myself to those of you who do not know me. My name is Lucy Hanna and I am honored to once again serve you as NAB Public Relations Director. Thank you for your confidence in me. It is my job to promote the works of our Sisterhood of Charity, the Antiochian Women throughout the Archdiocese and to assist the diocesan Public Relations Directors in their efforts to do the same.

To that end, I will be continuing the publication "DIAKONIA". As we did in the past, we will be introducing the boards and bringing you news and articles from each diocese and their parishes. Each issue will highlight one diocese, or in a couple of cases, two combined dioceses. As always we will begin by introducing the North American Board. In this issue we are also highlighting the Diocese of New York and the Archdiocesan District, and the Diocese of Oakland, PA and the East, in order to make up for the delay in the schedule. As you can see from the schedule below we are behind in publishing the first two issues. The Public Relations office remained vacant for a few months and I just recently accepted the office again, so I am trying to catch up by combining the first two issues into one. I left the due dates as they should have been for reference in future years.

Because of this delay, the next issue may be delayed a week or two. It is the responsibility of the diocesan Public Relations Director to solicit and gather the articles, bios and photos from the members of her board and send them to me by the date indicated below.

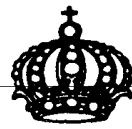
I look forward to hearing from all of you. Please send me articles, news, and information from your parishes and communities for publishing in any future issue regardless of which diocese you belong to (the schedule below is only for the introduction of the boards of each diocese). To be a true sisterhood, we need to stay in touch with each other, rejoice with each other over our successes and triumphs and learn from each other's mistakes.

All articles are due the first of the month PRIOR to the month of publication.

Sincerely,
Lucy Hanna

	Diocese	Date of Publication	Date Due
1	NAB Board	September 2011	Done ✓
2	Diocese of New York and Washington, D.C., Diocese of Charleston, Oakland and the Mid-Atlantic	December 2011	Done ✓
3	Diocese of Los Angeles and the West and the Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest	March 2012	February 1, 2012
4	Diocese of Miami and the Southeast	June 2012	May 1, 2012
5	Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate NY	September 2012	August 1, 2012
6	Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest	December 2012	November 1, 2012
7	Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America	March 2013	February 1, 2013
8	Diocese of Worcester and New England	June 2013	May 1, 2013

To ensure publication in the next issue, please submit your news and articles by this date.



His Eminence Archbishop JOSEPH has always given much of his time and effort to the children and youth of our parishes. In the last year he has launched a campaign for youth, giving them even more of his attention and time. When asked at the Fall Gathering last October to speak about family and children, he responded with the following message which is worth publishing here:



“Let no one despise your youth.”

1 Timothy 4:12

Our holy Mother Church teaches us and nourishes us spiritual children with the food of eternal life, even the flesh and blood of the Son of God Who loved us and gave Himself for us. All of us are “children of God” and little brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father adopted us in the Son through holy Baptism and constantly feeds us with “the good things of Jerusalem,” His sweet divine Grace. As those born again from the baptismal font and who live in Christ, we know the sweetness of spiritual youth, learning and growing. Even though our bodies grow old with age, our hearts and minds within become ever young in renewed faith, hope, and love. Truly in the holy Orthodox Church, in the company with the Mother of God and all the saints, we are ever growing, ever young.

Our discussion here is about youth. The Church’s youth! Your sons and daughters who will one day, sooner than you realize, become parents of yet another generation, God granting continuance to the race of men. But talk about our youth is meaningless unless we ourselves are also under the magnifying glass. So what can we learn, just as our youth are learning? It is easy to forget that the passage through adolescence for the child-becoming-adult is not only a challenge for the child, since he has never done it before; but it is also a challenge for the parents as well, for the same reason—they, too, have not yet done this, at least for this child, ever before. What challenges do youth have before them? In addition to all the usual things; namely, learning how to make adult decisions, governing their bodily appetites and impulses, and discerning between good and evil, there are special problems today: social websites which project an inflated sense of self-importance, texting and talking on cell phones at all times, the ever-present electronic screen (TV, computer, smart phone) instead of the living human face, worldly philosophy about sex, drugs, sports, romance, fashion, even superficial religious pietism. What a welter of confusion our young people are exposed to! What can parents do? What can the Church do? A lot.

Most importantly, when our young people leave home for college, or work, frequently they face temptations to lose restraint. Many times they stop going to church and have moral falls, sometimes of a very grievous nature. The reason for this is that we parents have failed to prepare them for life. Parents can be too severe and place their

maturing children in a pressure cooker atmosphere. They count the days until they get out of it! There is also the problem of parental laxity; in the name of love, the parents can utterly fail to offer their children much needed guidance and active, loving involvement with their challenging problems. In this latter case, the parent mistakes love for license! Children want to know the boundaries; the issue is how to guide them respectfully and lovingly in identifying those boundaries.

First of all, you parents and your young people are not alone. You are in the Church, just as your children are. The Church offers a living atmosphere of godly, patient love, through the other faithful who are friends with much wisdom, as well as the spiritual father himself, the pastor-priest. Nothing is sweeter to young people than a community to which they belong, and a trusted spiritual father whom they call their own. It is true that all young people must of necessity learn to suffer like a Christian, bearing their crosses, just like all believers. But the encouragement of the holy Church provides the right climate for this cross-bearing which actually saves them. Everyone bears crosses; but in Christ, those crosses become transfiguring and a way to life. So, on the way with the cross, you parents can learn how to work with God in the salvation of your maturing children.

Remember, adolescent human persons are at the stage of human development in which they must face the question: “who am I?” Identity issues are everything for a young person! This explains why the young man or woman experiments so much with his or her physical appearance, hair, face, clothing, and so on. As parents, we are wise to allow our youth to have room to experiment, and to provide a loving perspective for them in a climate of basic respect. We may like or dislike what they try on: weird clothes, dyed hair, certain odd kinds of facial make-up, and so on. Is it worth a battle of wills as to whether your young son or daughter is going off to school with purple dye in his hair or strange looking bangles on her wrist? As loving and patient parents, it is better to help our youth to see consequences which issue from certain courses of action they may be wanting to undertake. It was said about Archbishop Christodoulos, of blessed memory, the predecessor to the current presiding hierarch of the Church of Greece, that he

welcomed back so many alienated youth by getting across the message, “God does not care about your earrings; there is a place in the Church for you.” He was voted the most popular man in Greece, just before he passed from this life.

God Himself lets all of us experience consequences in the natural order of things. So it should be with our children: guidance with choices, not power struggles with a show-down! We parents should control our own anxieties and fears and not transfer them on to our children. Give them a little credit; the adolescent has a firm sense of fairness. If you can let him see the issues, he will usually make a good choice. Where choices are very serious, we plan ahead and help them by giving them information. For that, our young people need to benefit from a dialogue of love.

Dialogue, not monologue. Remember, you have been preaching to your sons and daughters for 15 years or so! Now, listen to them! If you listen carefully, you will notice what is really going on inside. To listen effectively, you must arrange for activities with your youth which THEY enjoy, so that you can hear them open up to you. I know one father in the Pacific Northwest who wanted to listen to his son, but nothing worked. For example, after coming home from work, he said to his son, “so how are you doing?” The young man said, “I don’t know.” (You may laugh from experience, since this is so common a response among young people!) Then, he thought, “my son loves the snow; I will take him for a day of skiing with me.” The young man and his dad went skiing and later on during that day, the son poured out his heart with all of his burdens. His father listened carefully and loved him; he said very little—he only communicated by his love that he cared. The son made the right choice in the problems which beset him; the father’s wisdom had been there for years. He only needed to feel his dad’s love!

Parents, do not be afraid of your child’s questions! Some questions may be hard for you, even embarrassing. But if you do not take them seriously, who will? Do you want your sons and daughters to learn about sexuality from the streets? Do you want your youth to face life’s heavy challenges without preparation? Listen, the time when your young people will be ready to learn varies greatly, from one person to another. You must be always ready, keeping a loving hand on the pulse of their young and precious lives.

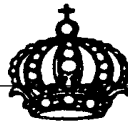
Remember, let young people experience consequences, not punishments. If your daughter gets in trouble with credit-card debt, make sure she pays it back. Don’t you do it yourself! If your son gets a speeding ticket, make sure he takes the responsibility of dealing with the penalty! In this way, you allow them to truly feel adult responsibilities. Do you want to still be a parent of an irresponsible man when he hits 30? Parents need to be far more concerned with what their children are suffering than how they are behaving. If you know your sons and daughters at a deeper level, you will be less anxious about their behavior. And, in return, your children will feel your trust and love, and will

desire to live up to your noble ideals. There are times when the consequence of a planned course of action could be life-changing and irreversible. If such a state of affairs is impending, bring your priest and other trusted advisors into your son’s or daughter’s life to help you to orient the adolescent to the dangers lying ahead. For example, many young people unwisely choose to get tattoos and piercings of body parts. These are disfigurements of the body and are contrary to our Orthodox faith which teaches us to treat the body in a sacred manner. It can be very difficult, if not impossible, to reverse a tattoo, and the piercing of certain body parts, like the tongue, introduce infection and cause chronic physical illness. Parents are under an obligation to teach these truths to their children.

To summarize this point, try to find yourself saying in any discussion with youth, “What do you think about ____?” This invites collegial discussion and lends importance to their point of view. Adolescents are very sensitive about being rejected. Avoid saying things like, “What a dumb idea!” or, “You need to ____” These statements diminish or even take away power from youth. That is a recipe for a loss of respect—the biggest element of a young person’s self-aspect. Try to keep the power in their hands, while you subtly and lovingly guide and model the good path.

Nowadays, young people lack a deep sense of connection with nature, the environment, and beauty, especially of quiet and solitude. Their lives, and ours, are so noisy. Try to provide for wholesome times together as a family in the beauty of nature and with no electronic noise. When you are together as a family, do not think only of what you like to do, but think of the developmental needs of your adolescent children. You are not done raising them yet. What and whom does your child love? What does he find humorous? What does she find troubling? It is true that troubled behavior is almost always a NORMAL process of dealing with an ABNORMAL circumstance. What pain and suffering is confronting your son or daughter? Focus on the deep stuff; forget and overlook the little stuff. Too often parents fight harsh battles with their children over things which do not matter, while they are completely ignorant of the huge issues which caused the bad behavior in the first place. How can parents expect their children to “honor” them, according to the holy commandment of Moses, if the parents do not do their part—the greater part—of raising them “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Our children must learn to bear burdens, to suffer, to work, to experience the beauty and the crosses of life with strength of character. As parents, we can greatly help them on the way, or we can trip them up. If you have painted yourself into a corner with your maturing children, be a Christian and admit it. Language like this never hurt a parent-child relationship, “dear daughter (name!), I am sorry.” Children love their parents and need them far longer than we are aware of. Make these later years of their childhood sweet and rewarding.□



The World Needs the Antiochian Women Now More than Ever!



One of the greatest frustrations I experience as a priest came from wanting more for the parishioners than they knew to want for themselves. Perhaps, no for sure, this is also the greatest frustration I had as a parent. So, if I am frustrated by a parishioner's or child's inability to get excited about the empty tomb of Christ and to respond to God with thanksgiving and love, how much more frustrated must the mothers, sisters and daughters of our Church be? After all, we know how much more sensitive and empathetic women are than men. Fr. Alexander Schmemmann would have his students try to imagine what our modern fallen world would look like to the Theotokos. How would the Virgin Mary see our sitcoms or reality shows? How would she respond to "facebook" and the evening news? Fr. Alexander imagined that she would weep. She would weep for our ignorance, our suffering, our waste of time and our lack of a meaningful relationship with God.

The world needs strong leadership of our women today more than ever. We need the Antiochian Women to lead our youth as well as our men and women into right relationships with God and each other. We need the Antiochian Women to be examples of love and thankfulness. We need the Antiochian Women to bring the world back to God. This can only be done with the patience, forbearance, grace and joy that the Antiochian Women have had since the first days of the Church. The Women came to the tomb early in the morning. They were the first to witness the Resurrection, so they were the first to share in the joy and to share that joy with a frightened and disappointed world. The world has become only more confusing and complex. We need you now. We need to empower you and send you off to work because your love and teaching is what is necessary to call our children, and all God's people home. Calling them patiently, witnessing by example, and with gentle words and deeds.

Metropolitan PHILIP, Archbishop JOSEPH, your Spiritual Advisors and I stand ready to help you in your mission, because this is our mission as well. We thank God for what you do and appreciate you. May this New Year be filled with God's blessings and may you allow God to bless the world through you.

The Antiochian Women of the East Announce the

2012 Lenten Retreat

March 30-April 1, 2012

Speaker: Father Paul Tarazi

Theme: The Prototypes of Christ in the Old Testament

Location: Antiochian Village



THE MOST REVEREND
METROPOLITAN PHILIP (SALIBA)
FOUNDER
358 MOUNTAIN ROAD
ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY 07631

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

❖ NORTH AMERICAN BOARD ❖



PRESIDENT



Dear Sisters in Christ,

Christ is in our midst!

Congratulations to our Spiritual Advisor, Bishop JOHN on his Consecration and to our Overseer, Archbishop JOSEPH on his Elevation. AXIOS!! AXIOS!! AXIOS!!

It is indeed an honor and a pleasure to serve as President of the Antiochian Women North American Board. Thank you so much for having faith in me, and electing me as your President.

First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Officers and Coordinators who willingly accepted to serve the Antiochian Women in their respective positions. A special thank you goes to our Past President, Cindy Nimey, who did an outstanding job over the past four years. May God Bless you Cindy for your commitment, hard work, devotion, and service to the Antiochian Women.

Over the course of the next two years, I would like us to focus on reaching out to all of our chapters and missions by way of the “personal touch”. It is so important that we do this. To contact a chapter president and have her hear a voice on the phone, asking if her chapter needed anything, if she had any questions regarding the Antiochian Women, and how we can be of service to them. That “personal touch” means so much more than receiving a letter in the mail or an e-mail. It sends a message that we really care about our Sisters in Christ and the success of their organizations. Our new promotional DVD, “Yes We Do”, has been sent to each of our chapters and missions to serve as a wonderful Public Relations tool to encourage young women to join their parish’s Antiochian Women’s organization, and, to get involved not only on a Local, but also on the Diocesan and Archdiocesan levels.

Our Antiochian Women’s Project for this year is once again, “The Convent of St. Thekla” at Antiochian Village. I pray that we meet or surpass last year’s totals which will bring us that much closer to seeing this dream become a reality. Thank you for all of your hard work as you continue to strive to raise funds for such a worthwhile Project.

I wish you all a most successful and fruitful year as you continue to serve Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the church.

I look forward to seeing you all in Naples for our Mid-Winter Meetings!

Your Sister in Christ,

Violet Robbat

Introducing The 2011 - 2013 North American Board

The Most Reverend Archbishop JOSEPH - Hierarchical Overseer



Joseph G. Al-Zehlaoui was born on November 2, 1950 in Damascus, Syria to Georgi and Mathil (Baghdan) Al Zehlaoui. He received his elementary education at the St. John of Damascus and Al Assiyeh schools in Damascus, and his secondary education at Our Lady of Balamand Monastery in Koura, Northern Lebanon. He then studied

philosophy at Lebanese University in Beirut and theology, languages and music at Salonika University in Greece. He is fluent in Arabic, English and Greek.

Joseph was ordained to the Holy Diaconate while a student in Salonica, in December, 1976. Subsequently, Deacon Joseph was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by His Beatitude, Patriarch IGNATIUS IV, at St. Mary Cathedral in Damascus in December, 1980. Father Joseph's election to the holy Episcopate was on May 5, 1991, and the consecration was on June 30, 1991 in the Holy Cathedral of the Patriarchate in Damascus with the title "Bishop of Katana, Syria". While a Deacon, he served parishes in Salonica. As a Priest, he was Dean of St. Mary Cathedral of Damascus, and overseer of the Holy Cross Church and other parishes in the suburbs of Damascus. In 1983, he pastored the Arab Orthodox faithful living in London, England, and in 1986 was sent to Cyprus to minister to the Arab Orthodox living on the island.

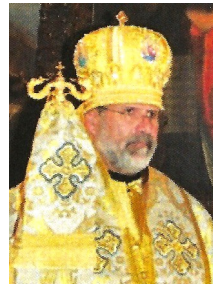
During his clerical ministry, he served as General Supervisor and Professor of Religious Education at the Al Assiyeh Orthodox College and supervised the Patriarchal headquarters in Damascus. Besides being the Patriarchal Assistant during the previous several years, His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH served as the secretary to the Holy Synod of Antioch, Editor-in-Chief of the Patriarchal Bulletin and participated in several theological conferences in Greece, Texas and Australia.

At the request of His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, His Grace was selected by the Holy Synod of Antioch on January 24, 1995, to be an Auxiliary Bishop for the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of N America.

On September 12, 2004, His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH, was enthroned as the first Bishop of the Holy Diocese of Los Angeles and the West by His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate, and the Local Holy Synod of the Holy Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of N America.

On December 11, 2011, His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH was elevated to the dignity of Archbishop by His Beatitude, IGNATIUS IV, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East at the Balamand Monastery in Northern Lebanon

The Rt. Rev. Bishop JOHN - Spiritual Advisor



Bishop John (Abdalah) holds a Doctor of Ministry degree in Pastoral Care from Pittsburgh Theological School, a Master of Divinity from St. Vladimir's Seminary, a Master's equivalency certificate in Pastoral Counseling from Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Suffolk University

in Boston, Massachusetts. He is a clinical member of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. He taught Pastoral Counseling in the graduate program at the St. John of Damascus Institute at the Balamand in Lebanon. Bishop John served as a priest of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America for 33 years and has been Dean of St. George Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the past 16 of those years. Before that, he served 16 years in New Kensington, and one year in Little Falls.

Bishop John has also served as Editor of The WORD for the past 14 years, the Spiritual Advisor for the Antiochian Women for the past 14 years, and Dean of the Western Pennsylvania clergy and churches the past 24 years. Fr. John also served for 7 years as NAC Spiritual Advisor for the Fellowship of St. John the Divine. Fr. John teaches Priestly Formation for the Antiochian House of Studies and mentors our full-time seminarians for the Antiochian House of Studies programs. Bishop JOHN was consecrated to the Holy Episcopacy by His Beatitude Patriarch IGNATIUS IV on December 11, 2011.

Violet Robbat - President



I was born in Boston, MA and am a former member of St. John of Damascus Church, Dedham, MA, where I was active as a Sunday School teacher, Teen SOYO Advisor and President of Senior SOYO (known today as St. John the Divine). I graduated from Northeastern University with a Degree in Cytology, and became a member of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists. Cytology is the study of cells, and my job at Massachusetts General Hospital entailed diagnosing Cancer. In 1973, I married my husband Richard (38 years) and we are members of St. Mary Orthodox Church, Cambridge, MA.

We have two wonderful children, Michael and Andrea, who is married to Steve Plasko, a terrific young man.

At St. Mary's, I am active in our Women's Club and as a Bible Bowl Coach, and have been a Sunday School Superintendent and Teen SOYO Advisor. I have been active in the Antiochian Women since its inception holding many positions on the Regional/Diocesan Level, including President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Public Relations, Cultural Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator. On the NAB Level I have served as Public Relations, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Vice President.

For the past sixteen years, I have worked with high school students who have learning disabilities, as a Special Education Instructional Assistant and, am also a Teaching Assistant in Biology. I am a member of the Lexington Education Association, the Massachusetts Teaching Association and the National Education Association. I enjoy reading, traveling, gardening, cooking and embroidery, among other things.

Dianne O'Regan - V. President/NAB Project Coordinator



I am a convert to Orthodoxy, having been raised in the Roman Catholic Church, and have attended St. Michael the Archangel Church in Louisville, Kentucky for over 16 years. I graduated with my Associate of Arts in Political Science from Bellarmine University, and my Bachelor of Arts (Summa Cum Laude) from the University of Louisville in Political Science with an emphasis in Soviet/Russian Studies. Having been employed as a Legal Assistant for over 30 years, I have worked in the criminal prosecution, criminal defense, civil and corporate law fields. Since 1996, I have been employed at the law offices of Stites & Harbison. I also work on a part-time basis to index and copy edit academic books for national publishing houses.

On the local level, I serve as a church school teacher, choir member, and editor of the monthly newsletter, in addition to serving the local women's organization in various capacities. On the Diocesan level, I have held the offices of President, Recording Secretary, and Public Relations Coordinator, as well as currently holding the positions of Vice President, and Archivist/Historian. In the summer of 2009 at the Midwest Parish Life Conference, I was honored and blessed to be presented the Metropolitan PHILIP Award in recognition of outstanding leadership qualities and contributions to the diocese.

On the NAB level, I served as Recording Secretary from 2003-2007 and 2009-2011. I also served as NAB Religious Coordinator from 2007-2009. During that period, I compiled and edited "Orthodox Women Saints" for the Antiochian Archdiocesan website, which later was

recreated into a CD-ROM entitled "Holy Women of the Orthodox Christian Church" in honor of the Antiochian Women's 35th anniversary. I also published religious programs every other month, entitled, "Sophia!," which were distributed throughout the Archdiocese.

In my "spare" time, I love to read (with a fondness towards history), needlepoint, and serve on the Boards of the Kentuckiana Shetland Sheepdog Club and the Louisville Kennel Club. I also help to organize the annual five-day Kentuckiana Cluster of Dog Shows in mid-March, the largest event of its kind in the United States, and was recently honored with the American Kennel Club's Good Sportsmanship Award.

Laila Ferris - Recording Secretary



I have held several local, regional and NAB positions in the past, including President, Vice President and Recording Secretary on the local level; President, Vice President and Cultural Coordinator on the Regional level; and on the NAB level I have held the positions of Treasurer, Vice President and President.

Along with having a great time working in the above positions, I am married to Paul Ferris. We have three children - Paul, Jr. (PJ), Christopher and Lauren. I was born and bred in El-Paso, TX and absolutely love the desert life (no humidity). My home parish is St. George, El-Paso, TX, and with my family, am very active in all events and organizations. I work in the world of education and am presently Principal at Mesita Elementary School, El-Paso Independent School District. I truly love working with children and those adults dedicated to teaching and learning.

Sherry Abraham Morrow - Treasurer



I belong to St. George Cathedral in Wichita, KS. I have held several positions for the Antiochian Women throughout the years. I served as President, Vice President, and Secretary of the St. George Cathedral Guild. In the Southwest Region (now the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America), I served as Vice President, President for two terms, Treasurer for two terms, and Secretary. I am currently the DOWAMA Special Projects Coordinator. On the North American Board, I have served as Secretary, Humanitarian for two terms, and am currently serving my third term as NAB Treasurer.

In addition to my church activities, I am also a member of the Bona Dea Club, a ladies' social club in Wichita, and have served as President, Vice President, and Secretary of that group. I am currently the Corresponding Secretary. I also volunteer at Music Theatre of Wichita and am a

member of the Music Theatre Guild. I have served as Assistant Treasurer and Treasurer on the Music Theatre Guild Board, and am currently Chairman of the Social Committee.

I was born and raised in Woodward, OK. I graduated from Oklahoma State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. Shortly after I graduated from OSU, I married Don Abraham and moved to Wichita. We had two beautiful daughters. Don and I owned and operated Ali Baba Bakery for 19 years. We specialized in pita bread, but eventually made over 100 different varieties of breads. I worked full time at the bakery with Don until he was diagnosed with cancer in 1994. At that time, we sold the bakery. We also worked on the weekends with Don's family in their steak house for many years. Don passed away February 28, 1995.

In November, 2003, I married Mark Morrow. Mark belongs to St. Elijah Church in Oklahoma City, OK. His late wife, Susu, was also a very active member of the Antiochian Women, and served as NAB President. Our wonderful blended family consists of two sons, three daughters, two son-in-laws, two daughter-in-laws, five beautiful granddaughters, and two adorable grandsons. We are looking forward to the arrival of our eighth grandbaby in March, 2012. Mark and I maintained both of our homes when we got married, and we split our time between Wichita and Oklahoma City. So I have now become active at St. Elijah Church, as well as St. George Cathedral.

I have enjoyed serving the Antiochian Women very much, and feel very blessed to be a part of this wonderful organization. I will always cherish the many friends I have made throughout the Antiochian Archdiocese.

Lucy Hanna - Public Relations Director



I was born in Cairo, Egypt and grew up in Alexandria where my family moved when I was one year old. I attended and graduated from the Sacred Heart School, a British Catholic school, except for my sophomore year of high school when I attended James Allen Girls' School in London, England where my father was a visiting professor at the University of London for one year.

I married Dr. Lotfy Hanna right after high school and we have three children: a son, Fr. Nabil, pastor of St. George Antiochian Church of Indianapolis, IN and two daughters, Suzy Hadeed and Mary Thompson. Both our daughters live in Portland, Oregon. All our children are married and between them, they gave us nine grandchildren (hence my email address: teta.of.9).

In 1968 when our children were still small, we emigrated to the USA and settled in Portland, where we joined St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church. During the 19 years we lived in Portland, I was active in the Antiochian

Women, taught Sunday School, chanted and sang in the choir, chaired the annual festival, and served on the parish council. In 1972, as soon as my youngest child started kindergarten, I went to college and studied fine arts. In 1976, I studied Real Estate, was licensed, and worked in that field (as salesperson and loan officer) for the next 30 years until I retired in 2006.

In 1986 we moved to California where we settled in Corona and attended St. Mark Church in Irvine. In 1989, I received a blessing from Metropolitan Philip to start a mission in the Riverside area. With the help of many of our wonderful clergy in Southern California and the dedication of a handful of families, our mission was established and in 1992 received the name St. Andrew Orthodox Church. This last December, 2011, our beautiful new temple was consecrated.

On the local level of the Antiochian Women, I have served as President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. On the Diocesan level, I have served as President, Vice President, Secretary, Religious Coordinator, Retreat Coordinator and Cultural Coordinator. On the NAB level I have served as PR Director and Religious Coordinator. I am currently the NAB PR Director again and publisher of this newsletter.

Cindy Nimey - Immediate Past President, Parliamentarian and Scholarship



My home parish is St. George Antiochian Church in New Hartford, New York. It is a small parish but one that I love with all my heart and do my best to support not only for my faith but for the parish. My membership in the Antiochian Women began in my home parish where I have served numerous positions over the past thirty years, then to the Diocese level and onto the Nab level serving as treasurer, vice president and president. I have made many friends from as far as the northeast corner of Canada to the southern shores of California. As outgoing president I look forward to giving support to our newly elected president and all of the current officers. I encourage more women to get involved with their local Antiochian Women's group and benefit from the sisterhood and friendship.

My husband Richard and I have three sons, a daughter-in-law and our first grandchild, Amelia Rose. I am already encouraging her to be an Antiochian Woman! I spend much of my spare time trying new recipes, cooking and baking for family and friends as well as many, many trays of Baklava for a church fundraiser.

We thank God every day for all the wonderful blessings he has bestowed on us and ask him to bless the work of the Antiochian Women.

Kh. Dannie Moore - Humanitarian Coordinator



To serve the Holy Church through the Antiochian Women organization is an honor. Through the love and guidance of Ernestine Ede, Jean Sam and Jean Arcos, I became involved in the work of the Antiochian Women in 1993.

My husband, Father Andrew, and I with our children and several other families were received into the Antiochian Archdiocese by his Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, in 1987. That was the beginning of our parish, St. Stephen Orthodox Church. Before we entered the Antiochian Archdiocese, we were a part of the Evangelical Orthodox Church (EOC) and working in the inner city of Atlanta. Previous to being a part of the EOC, we were in the Presbyterian Church for 18 years. I grew up in the Methodist Church and Father in the Baptist.

Fr. Andrew and I have been married 50 years and have six children and fourteen grandchildren.

St. Stephen is located on 25 acres with some of our parishioners living on the land. We thank God for the beauty of the land and for having our own cemetery. We help serve the poor in our county by having a food pantry. Many single mothers and grandmothers raising grandchildren come for assistance. The food is provided by our parishioners. Many come and are blessed by the beauty of the Orthodox Church and the quietness of the land.

Having graduated from Crawford W. Long School of Nursing many years ago, I chose to stay home with my children. A cherished treasure in my heart! Now I help with these beautiful grandchildren.

Working with the Antiochian Women, I have served in the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast as Humanitarian Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, Vice-President and President. The last two years I have served as Humanitarian Coordinator for the North American Board, and am presently serving this second term. It is a joy to serve with the Antiochian Women!

"One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." Psalm 27:4

Kh. Suzanne Murphy - Membership Coordinator



Kh. Suzanne Murphy is the wife of Fr. Gregory-Lazarus Murphy. They serve as the clergy family of St. Michael's Parish in Geneva, which is in the Finger Lakes area of Upstate New York. Fr. Gregory says that Kh. Suzanne and he have a true "team ministry" at St. Michael's -- she is the director of the choir and the sole chanter of the parish, so she is at every service, either

chanting or leading the choir (or both). She also serves as his liaison with the Church School faculty, and with the Antiochian Women. She also looks forward to accompanying Father when he visits the elderly and homebound, especially when he brings the Holy Mysteries, as he values her help in singing the service with him.

In the secular world, Kh. Suzanne also has a full-time job as an elementary music teacher in the Geneva Public Schools. She also teaches in the Academic Intervention/Reading Recovery Program of the Geneva school system, where she helps "at risk" children to keep pace with grade-level reading. When they lived in the Boston area before coming to Geneva, Suzanne was named a "Teacher of Distinction" as one of the faculty members of a "National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence." She was also named as one of the "40 Outstanding Teachers in the Arts" by the Boston Symphony Orchestra Education Outreach Committee and the Massachusetts State Department of Education's Massachusetts Cultural Council. Since moving to Geneva, Suzanne has also been an Adjunct Faculty member in the Music Department of Hobart & William Smith Colleges, where she teaches voice. Additionally, she is a faculty member of the St. Peter's Arts Academy, which is a private arts school serving the greater Finger Lakes area. Last summer, Suzanne was invited to teach at the Sacred Music Institute at the Antiochian Village. Suzanne also sings in local and regional ensembles, including the Hobart and William Smith Colleges Chorale, the Syracuse Vocal Ensemble, and as the alto soloist in several productions sponsored by The American Landmarks Concerts Series. Suzanne has also been grateful to be a long-time member of the Boston Byzantine Choir.

Kh. Suzanne and Fr. Gregory have been blessed with four children: David, Aaron, Adam, and Moriah, all of whom are now in college or graduate school. In her spare time (whenever she can find any), Suzanne loves to knit and make handmade gifts for her family and friends. She feels blessed to be able to serve as the NAB Membership Coordinator, and as the Vice-President for the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada, and Upstate New York.

Marilyn Robbat - Religious Coordinator



I am a cradle Orthodox and have been a member of St. Mary Orthodox Church in Cambridge MA for some 38+ years since my marriage to Michael in November of 1973. My home parish was St. John of Damascus Church, now in Dedham, MA, where I attended Church School, was active as a teen, sang in the Choir for many years and ultimately became Choir Director and was president of New England Region SOYO, prior to my marriage.

Marrying Michael brought me to a special place: St. Mary Church in Cambridge, where I again sang in the Choir, brought up our three daughters, now all grown and ages 36, 34 and 28 (two of whom are married), served as Choir Director, President of the PTA & Women's Club, served on the Parish Council and have been employed as the Church Secretary/Administrator for the past 22+ years.

I have been a part of Antiochian Women for a number of years holding offices on a local, regional/diocesan level as well as serving on the North American Board as previous Regional/Diocesan President, Vice President, Treasurer and NAB Public Relations, Vice President and President from 2001-2003. I am presently Immediate Past President of the Diocese of Worcester & New England, as well as current NAB Religious Coordinator. These experiences have afforded me an opportunity to pray, work, laugh and enjoy the friendship and love of many wonderful women throughout the country.

My interests OUTSIDE the Church include cooking, movies and reading—with not a great deal of time left for those endeavors!!

Kh. Barbara Baz - Clergy Widows Program



I am married to Fr. Terence Baz who is originally from Sydney, Australia. I am originally from Paterson, New Jersey. In 1995 we moved to Albany, NY and in 2000 we were transferred to St. Elias Church in Syracuse, NY. We have 2 wonderful children, Charles and Nicole. I am presently a substitute teacher. I have served as officer and coordinator on the local, regional and NAB levels including President of the Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Ottawa and Upstate New York. Aside from being involved in many of our church activities, I am very involved in our children's school and of course the one thing I love the most is taking care of my family.

Ann Bourjaily-Thomas - Constitution and By-Laws

No biography or photo available

Deanna Nasser - Finance

No biography or photo available

Once again, for the third year in row, the Antiochian Women have adopted the Convent of St. Thekla which is to be built at the Antiochian Village, as their Project. The women of our beloved Archdiocese – through their hard work and abundant blessings – have raised \$217,659.33 since 2009 when Metropolitan PHILIP first asked us to raise funds to assist with the building of a monastic community.

Over the past two years, we have seen events move quickly – from the implementation of Metropolitan PHILIP's early vision of a monastery for the Antiochian Archdiocese, to Mother Alexandra being asked to serve as the abbess, to the selection of a site, to the retention of an architect, Doug Shoop, and, most recently, Doug's magnificent renderings of the Convent. Additional information and photographs are located on the Convent's website at: www.antiochian.org/node/25858. Be sure to take the virtual tour of the monastery, a video walk-through of every corner of the monastery design as well as the grounds.

Every parish in the Archdiocese is asked to have a fund-raising event and send the proceeds to your diocesan treasurer no later than May 1st, 2012, so that she can send one check from the diocese to the NAB treasurer, Sherry Abraham Morrow by the deadline of May 15, 2012. Sherry's address is: 4738 Cobblestone, Wichita, KS 67204.

As we have seen from the 2,000-plus year history of our beloved Orthodox Church, monasteries are centers of prayer that play an important role in our spiritual lives, as well as in our societies. They are common-place in other parts of the Orthodox world, but it has only been recently that they have "caught hold" in America. Monasteries are places where God looks to find spiritual life among his children on earth, and where we – as God's children – may be transformed for the life that is to come. A spiritual oasis, the Convent of St. Thekla will be a place where all Orthodox Christians are welcomed on their spiritual path in life, finding within its walls prayer and hospitality.

If you have any questions, please contact Dianne O'Regan, Vice President/NAB Project Coordinator at doregan@stites.com.





The Orthodox Church proclaims equality between men and women. However, they have different roles to perform within the context of the Church. Women, as the Church emphasizes, are the backbone of the Church in that they are the backbone in their own respective parishes and homes. It is well known that the churches cannot continue to

be strong units in the Church unless their families and children, the nucleus of any given parish, is raised and cared for in a Christian manner and according to Christ's teachings. Chrysostom asserts that the home is "the little church" where all Christian education starts and ends. Nowadays, more than ever, women play an essential and indispensable role in the family. They are caring wives, nurturing mothers, valuable parish leaders and workers, and productive contributors in the workplace of our modern society. One might note that men play very similar roles in all mentioned segments! That would be absolutely true. Nevertheless, roles vary in different fields according to the gifts granted by God to either gender. Whether one likes it or not, whether one admits it or not, whether one accepts it or not, the hands-on role in raising children and keeping the sense of family strong belongs to the wife and mother more than to the husband and father. This is not to say that the husband/father has a zero or low percentage worth of work in this field. To the contrary, the husband/father has a crucial portion of the pie in this responsibility. Yet, the wife/mother has a bigger role. God has equipped the female with more qualities than the male in this aspect of humanity. A mother's nurturing abilities are not matched by the father in most cases. An example of the mother's nurturing abilities is that it is almost always true that a child runs crying to his/her mother when he/she falls and has a scratch on the knee. This innate ability to comfort and be a resource to the child is unique to the mother, in most cases. It is noteworthy that, in general, the mother spends more time with the children than the father. Children, being impressionable especially in the first five years of their lives, receive invaluable education not only through the direct teachings from the mother

but also through her actions, behavior, and words. The children absorb like sponges the mother's influence on them even if it is not directly apparent at first. If the mother carries herself properly, adheres to the rules she sets for her children in the house, is polite, and is genuine, then the children will follow suit. If the mother, on the other hand, is on drugs, drinks, and does not pay attention to her children, then the children will learn that behavior and eventually practice it since it seems to them as the norm because their mother lived it and she is the prime example for them. Therefore, the following proverb in Arabic is paramount. It is translated roughly to English as:

"A mother is a school, if you have prepared her well, you have prepared good people"

What does this have to do with being the backbone of the Church, one might ask? Well! When a child grows up in a home full of Christian values, witnesses and experiences sacrificial love, which is the highest virtue according to St. Paul, he/she will imitate those behavior patterns and will become a virtuous and productive member of the Church and, by extension, society. It is widely known that children learn best by imitation at first. This is a psychological and behavioral view of the important role a woman plays in the Church.

On the other hand, a historical glance at Church history yields much fruits with respect to the same topic. The New Testament is a good place to start. We see in John 19:25 that "there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." Nevertheless, all His disciples; who followed Him, learned from Him, were very close to Him for three years, were conspicuously absent at the foot of the Cross, with the exception of John the Beloved. The loyalty to the Son of God that these women exhibited was second to none. This alone qualifies them to be the Church's backbone.

Another example from the New Testament is in order. The story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10 demonstrates to us several important virtues to acquire. First of all, Mary was eager to learn from the Master so she sat at His feet in humility while Martha served Him with love. She complained a little about her sister, but nevertheless, she served Him well with love. The

(Continued on page 14)

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virtue of knowledge through learning that Mary exhibited the thirst for, strengthens the virtue of faith. Since the more one learns the more he/she realizes that faith is further needed to accept that which is not understandable, and hence unknowable, like the substantial constitution of the Holy Trinity. At the same time, the virtue of humility, which again Mary exhibited by sitting at the feet of someone, is the beginning of the virtue of wisdom, which is necessary to obtain on the narrow road of salvation. On the one hand, faith and wisdom are two of the most important virtues that further one (along with their other sister virtues) on the narrow road of deification. On the other hand, the virtue of love, which is the greatest of virtues according to St. Paul, is evidently present in Martha's behavior as she served Him in her house. Despite the fact that she complained about her sister's lack of service, she had obediently served her Master. A Church father remarked that the beginning of love is obedience. If someone is not obedient to anyone, he/she does not love anyone.

The prototype of faith, love, service, humility, and knowledge, among other virtues, is the Virgin Mary herself. She managed to combine the virtues that both Mary and Martha had, especially faith, love, and service. She served Christ, her Son, and cared for His needs as would any good mother. She learned from Him every opportunity she had despite the fact that she did not understand what He said in every instance such

as Luke 2:49-51: "And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. ...but His mother kept all these things in her heart." Let us not neglect the fact that she had such love for the Master, her Son, that she was at the foot of the Cross (John 19:25), feeling His pain on the road to Golgotha and at the Place of the Skull. Conversely, her faith in His Resurrection, which was continually strengthened by acquired knowledge about Him and His teachings, was unwavering. And therefore, she did not go with the other women to the tomb to anoint Him, where she should have been the first one there as His mother had she not have her steadfast faith in His Resurrection: "Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him." (Mark 16:1)

Well! There are many more stories that we can reference in the Old and New Testaments but a practical example from the lives of parishioners is more demonstrative. Consequently, I leave you with the obvious living examples of the Ladies Societies in every parish that carry the burden, cheerfully I might add, of raising funds for many good causes, of serving on parish councils, of cooking for almost every event in every parish, of leading Sunday Schools and teaching most classes, and of singing in choirs and at Chanters' Stands. Without their efforts, parishes may not function properly!

THE MID-WINTER MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 17 - 19, 2012

Hosted by St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church Naples, Florida
in conjunction with the consecration of their new temple.

Whether you are a delegate from your Diocese or not, ALL women from parishes across the Archdiocese are encouraged to attend. Your input is very important to the success of our organization.

The meetings will begin as usual on Friday evening and continue through Saturday.

For more information and registration for the event go to www.stpaulnaples.org
Make your checks payable to: St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church and mail to the church at the following address: 2425 Rivers Road, Naples, FL 34120-2560

Introducing The 2011 - 2013 Board of Antiochian Women Of the Diocese of New York and the Archdiocesan District And the Diocese of Oakland, PA and the East

***The Rt. Reverend Bishop Nicholas - Bishop of Brooklyn
and Assistant to the Metropolitan in Englewood, NJ***



Bishop NICHOLAS was born into an Orthodox Christian family (the son of William and Nadia Ozone) in Damascus, Syria in January, 1963. Bishop NICHOLAS attended the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Damascus as a child. He attended the French Lycée Laique elementary and middle school and

the Omia High School while growing up in Damascus. Bishop NICHOLAS immigrated to the United States in February, 1981. He earned his B.S. degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering with honors from Northeastern University, Boston, MA in June of 1985. He then went on to receive his Master of Science degree in Computer Engineering at the same school in 1988 and finally he received a specialization certificate in Object Oriented Design, Architecture and Coding in 1995. After working in his field for almost 20 years, he decided to go to seminary in 2002. Bishop NICHOLAS also lectured on Electrical and Computer engineering topics to Electrical Engineering Bachelor of Science students for many years at Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston, MA. He graduated from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology with a Master of Divinity, Highest Distinction, in Brooklyn, MA, in May 2005. He has also attended many professional engineering conferences and courses and conferences on psychology and human behavior. Bishop NICHOLAS speaks Arabic and English fluently. His second language in Syria was French, which he has used, along with Hebrew, Ancient Greek, New Testament Greek, and Modern Greek, to conduct research on theological subjects.

Bishop NICHOLAS was ordained a deacon on the Feast of St. George, April 23, 2004 by His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP. He was ordained a priest by His Grace, Bishop ANTOUN on January 9, 2005. After graduation from seminary in June 2005, he served as the pastor of St. Philip Church, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and until the end of 2011. It was at his parish in Ft. Lauderdale that he was elevated to the dignity of Archimandrite by Metropolitan PHILIP on February 14, 2010. Bishop NICHOLAS was nominated by the General Assembly of the 2011 Archdiocese Convention and elected by the Archdiocese Holy Synod on July 27, 2011 as Bishop of Brooklyn and Assistant to the

Metropolitan. Bishop NICHOLAS was consecrated to the Holy Episcopacy by His Beatitude Patriarch IGNATIUS IV on December 11, 2011.

Very Rev. Don Shadid - Spiritual Advisor



Fr. Don was born & raised in Peoria, IL, being baptized & chrismated at All Saints Greek Orthodox Church. He has been active in Church all of his life, beginning in the Altar, Church School, Jr. Choir & GOYA at All Saints. While working on his Bachelor's Degree in the Biological Sciences at Illinois State University (ISU), Fr. Don started an Orthodox Campus Ministry, under the guidance of Fr. Mark Stevens (OCA) and worked as a "Campus Ministry Associate." After graduation at ISU, with the Blessings of His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, he began his M.Div. Studies at St. Vladimir's Seminary (SVS) in the Fall of 1981. The next summer found Fr. Don at the Antiochian Village as a Seminarian, Cabin Counselor & Nature/Ecology Director. It was there that Janet Abdalah (sister of His Grace, Bishop JOHN – Diocese of Worcester & New England and editor of The Word Magazine) was assigned to Fr. Don's Nature Hikes for "crowd control" and the two met; and as they say, "the rest is history" (they are honored to say that they are Antiochian Village Marriage #3)! After graduation from SVS in May 1984, Fr. Don worked full-time at the Antiochian Village as Assistant Camp Director and Program Director at the newly constructed Heritage & Learning Center, under the mentorship of the late Fr. John Namie. Fr. Don was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in April 1986 and in June of that year was assigned to the Pastorate at St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church in Johnstown, PA, where he serves until this day.

Fr. Don & Kh. Janet have been blessed with two wonderful sons, Christopher (24), an Antiochian Seminarian at Holy Cross in Boston (Class of 2013) and Stephen (22), a Fourth Year Pharmacy (2nd Year Professional) Student at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA (Class of 2014), who have been active in the Church all of their lives as well! They have also been Blessed with 2 Mixed-Breed Pooches (Habeeb & Wjjh) that serve as Therapy Dogs, going to visit adolescents & adults who are hospitalized or residents of Senior Care Centers. (they even have their own Security Badges & Name Tags!).

In addition to his ministry with the AWE and the 107 Yr. old Parish Family of Johnstown, Fr. Don has been

involved in numerous ministries & organizations (e.g. past spiritual advisor for Eastern Region Fellowship of St. John the Divine; Treasurer of the Council for St. Sophia Orthodox Christian Academy [a Pan-Orthodox Pre & Elementary School housed at his parish], Treasurer for the local Orthodox Clergy Association for many years, Assistant Scoutmaster, Assistant Advisor – Venture Scouts [BSA], Board Member & Secretary for a Professional Counseling Ministry (which is based on the Christian Values of Caring, Compassion & Healing for those seeking emotional & relational wholeness) for many years, OCF Regional Chaplain for the Mid-Atlantic Region). Fr. Don has also earned his Doctor of Ministry Degree through the Antiochian House of Studies and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Lastly, Fr. Don loves his Family, his doggies, the Outdoors, Movies, Bagpipes, Classic Country Music, Water-Skiing, and talking about the Orthodox Christian Faith (he used to dream about discussing Orthodoxy with Elvis, Johnny Cash & Mel Gibson!) He is so very thankful to God for all of his Blessings and all of his Crosses too! Nish-qor Alla (Thanks be to God)!

Fadia Juzdan - President



My name is Fadia Juzdan. I live in Woodland Park, NJ and belong to Saint George Church in Little Falls. I have been married to my wonderful husband Ziad for 24 years, and we have four wonderful Children. Paul is 22, and is attending Seton Hall Law School, George is 21 and is a junior at Montclair State University, Nicholas 19 is a freshman at Montclair State and our princess Janine is 14 and a freshman in high school.

I was born in Yaffa, Israel and moved to this country in 1987; I have been a member of Saint George church ever since. I have been very active at my local parish and have held several different positions in the church. I was the first woman Parish council chairperson at St. George and now hold the position of the president of the Ladies Society. My family is also very involved in church activities; my husband is the parish council chairman and my children are active members of SOYO. I work as a senior accountant at Ricoh Americas Corporation. I enjoy cooking Arabic food and reading novels with a good cup of coffee by my side.

Samar Sakakini - V. President



I was born in Jerusalem and raised in Ramallah, Palestine. I immigrated to the U.S. in 1982 to join my husband Khalil in Kingston NY. In 1984, IBM moved us to Austin, TX where we became active members of St. Elias. I held several positions locally, including President, Vice president and secretary of the Antiochian

Women of St. Elias, and as the Membership and Heritage coordinator of the Southwest region. In 2003, my husband and our two children John and Haneen moved to CT, where we became active members at St. Nicholas in Bridgeport. I was blessed to work with the youth and served as the Teen Soyo co-advisor for several years. I also served as the president of St. Nicholas Ladies Auxiliary for 2 years. In addition, I coordinate the creative poetry festival for our region. My family enjoys local, regional, and national events and participates as much as we can.

I am an educator, and received my masters from TX State University. For the past nine years I have been teaching social studies at Trumbull middle and high schools. I am involved in many activities after school and enjoy working with the children in my community. My mission in life is to make a difference, I'm blessed with so many family members and friends throughout the archdiocese and around the world that made a great difference in my life.

Carmen Elsabee - Recording Secretary

No photo available

My husband, Ramez and I were born in Egypt and we grew up in the Orthodox faith. We are members of St. Stephen Orthodox Church in South Plainfield, NJ. We are blessed with two wonderful children, Joseph and Amanda.

St. Stephen is a small parish, but one that contains love and fellowship. I do my best to support my parish whenever help is needed. I have been active with Antiochian Women since 2001. At my home parish, I served as Secretary and for the last four years, President of the Women's Group; on the regional level I served as the AWE Religious Coordinator.

In my spare time, I enjoy cooking and spending time with my family and I thank God for all the blessings He has bestowed on me and my family.

Marlene Ayoub - Treasurer



My name is Marlene Ayoub from Totowa, New Jersey and I am a member of St. George Church in Little Falls. I'm very honored to represent the Antiochian Women of the East (AWE) as the Treasurer. I've been married for 14 years to my husband Faraj and we are blessed with two beautiful daughters, Victoria and Sophia. I work as Medical Biller, my husband is a jeweler. Victoria (13) is in 7th Grade and aspires to be a dentist, and Sophia (soon to be 11) is in 5th Grade and aspires to be an architect. I was born in Beirut, Lebanon and came to the US in 1976. I grew up in the Melkite Catholic Church, but when I met Faraj in 1996 I became hooked on Orthodoxy. I'm a member of the St. George Choir, the Sunday School

PTA, and the Ladies' Society. My husband has recently been appointed to the Parish Council. We, along with our girls, are always eager to lend a hand when it comes to the betterment of our church.

Kh. Pam Pier - Immediate Past Co-President, Web Page and Project Coordinator

No photo available

I was born and raised in Pennsylvania. I attended Penn State University and graduated with a BS in Biophysics. At college I was an active member of the Lutheran Student Fellowship where I met my future husband, Fr. Peter Pier. We have been married for over 30 years and have 3 children, Mary, Michael & Nicholas.

I am a convert to Orthodoxy, over 20 years ago, having followed my husband's journey from the Lutheran tradition into Orthodoxy. Currently, my husband serves at St. John Chrysostom Antiochian Orthodox Church, York, PA.

My interests include reading, singing, cooking and wine! I am currently employed by Ames True Temper, a manufacturer of landscape equipment (wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, etc.)

Kh. Helen Waggener - Immediate Past Co-President, Web Page and Project Coordinator



My husband is Fr. Alban from Holy Trinity, Lynchburg, VA. We are recent converts, so I have almost no clue what I am doing AWE-wise, but a lot of free time in which to do it. Kh. Pam Pier knows what she's doing, but her time is at a premium.

Father and I have four sons: the older two are married and one has two little boys. Arranging to see them all at the same time is a project in itself, but a rollicking good time when it happens. Joshua, 34, is an air traffic controller in the Denver area. Seth, 30, is a news producer in Birmingham. Matthias, 28, works for an arborist here in Lynchburg. Paul, 26, does landscaping and renovation projects here in town...and oh, yes, he's in a band.

I am a volunteer counselor at our pregnancy center one day a week. During the school year I teach three art classes at one of the home school co-ops. Two afternoons a week I help Father at his secular job as the manager of the used book department at the local independent bookstore.

At church I share Sunday School responsibilities and head up our Antiochian Women of the East book club. I have started a little bookstore at church too.

In our vast spare time, I garden (sunflowers are my favorite), knit (lots of friends are having babies), read (huge Jane Austen fan) and hike (which means trying to keep up with Father in the woods).

Public Relations Director - TBD

Samia Aburdeineh - Religious Coordinator

No photo or biography available

NAB Project - TBD

Humanitarian Coordinator - TBD

Membership Coordinator - TBD

Dear Sisters in Christ!

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

"Give us strength to do what is right and help us to go on striving and to remember that activities are not the main thing in life. The most important thing is to have our hearts directed and attuned to Thee". Amen.

Every time I say the Antiochian women prayer I stop and think about all the activities the Antiochian women do in their parishes. It reminds me of the story of Mary and Martha. Sometimes I feel like a Martha and wonder what I should do to be more of a Mary. "But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things.'" Luke 10:41 How often are we anxious and troubled about our everyday activities? Whether we are working, cooking, cleaning, or caring for our children; we tend to become overwhelmed and at times discouraged. This is why it is important to take time out of our days to pray and reflect on the many blessings God has bestowed upon us and our family. Before commencing a task we should take time to direct our will and our hearts towards the Lord. Once we realize that it is only with God's help that we can rise above our everyday struggles, we will find joy in our lives. This realization will open our eyes to a clearer understanding of God's will for us; we accept God's will and in turn we become better mothers, sisters, wives, and friends. Every Sunday we sing the Cherubic Hymn and remind ourselves that we must "lay aside all earthly cares" and dedicate our lives to Christ rather than our daily activities or possessions. Once we learn to free ourselves from the strains of everyday life and go about our tasks with a prayerful, humble and joyful attitude, we will find that our hearts become more "directed and attuned to Thee".

In Christ

Fadia Juzdan



AXIOS! AXIOS! AXIOS!

Congratulations and Many years
to our Father in Christ and
Hierarchical Overseer

His Eminence Archbishop JOSEPH

On his elevation to Archbishop

and to our three newly-consecrated bishops

His Grace Bishop JOHN (Abdalah)

Auxiliary Bishop of Worcester & New England
(and our NAB Spiritual Advisor)

His Grace Bishop ANTHONY (Michaels)

Auxiliary Bishop of Toledo and the Midwest

His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS (Ozone)

Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn
and Assistant to the Metropolitan
In Englewood, NJ

Before you speak ask yourself
if what you are going to say is...

T RUE?

H ELPFUL?

I NSPIRING?

N ECESSARY?

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If the answer is NO,
Maybe what you are about to
say should be left unsaid.

Thank you to the friend who posted this on Facebook.



ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NORTH AMERICA

Lucy Hanna
1853 Kensington Road
Corona, CA 92880

