

AWE

Antiochian Women of the East

*In awe of our Creator
and His work in us and through us.*

May - June 2007



'New' Ties to Early Church Discovered

Amazing new discoveries have just recently been made concerning our Antiochian Heritage. As you may know our own "Patriarch of all the East," based primarily in Lebanon and Syria, once served Christian communities as far as Arabia, India and China. But through centuries of invasions, vast amounts of recorded history had been presumed lost. However in the last few years the Lebanese monk Elia has undertaken the task of researching libraries of antiquities throughout the world searching for church documents written in our historic languages of Aramaic (Syriac), Greek, and Arabic. What he has discovered has stunned all.

Since only a handful of scholars can read the ancient dialects, the libraries that held them had no idea what most of the documents were. The monk Elia started translating materials that he found by Ephrem the Syrian, Isaac the Syriac, and St. John Damascene to name a few. But his search began to uncover tens of thousands of documents and he soon realized that he must first catalog all the materials and then enlist the help of more translators to tackle the monumental task. Thus "Antioch: A Centre for Antiochian Orthodox Christian Studies and Research" was

developed at Oxford University in England. From his humble room aided only by a couple of volunteers, boxes of materials, and a 100 pound sack of lentils to last for the year, Elia has uncovered materials on our Antiochian Fathers & Mothers such as: St. John Chrysostom, St. Sergius & Bacchus, St. Thekla, St. Quartos the Apostle, founder of the Archdiocese of Beirut; St. Margaret, Sts. Romanos & Cosmas the Melodists, St. John Mark the Evangelist, the founder of the Archdiocese of Byblos, St. Ignatius, St. Nino, and more.

Our hierarchs in America and in the Middle East have been thrilled to learn of 'new' homilies by some of our most beloved early Fathers, as well as the lives of forgotten Saints, aspects of early iconography, aspects of the development of Christian worship, new perspectives on Christian-Muslim relations, and the discovery of new medieval sites and remains that have been uncovered due to these documents.

To read details about some of the amazing discoveries or to make an online donation to help the Monk Elia in researching our heritage, visit the Antioch Center website: www.antiochcenter.net.

DID YOU KNOW ... The Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter & Paul is celebrated on June 29th. The Apostles Fast begins June 4th and continues until the Feast.

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of the East

Diocese of New York and the Archdiocesan District - Diocese of Charleston, Oakland, and the Mid-Atlantic

Calendar:



- July 4-8 - Parish Life Conference, near Baltimore, MD. Visit www.parishlife07.org for more information.
- September 21-23 - Sts. Thekla & Raphael Pilgrimage, Antiochian Village. Mark your calendar now and check the website (in right column) this summer for registration info.

Wisdom of the Saints

Nothing is my own; all belongs to God.
- St. Gabriel of Imereti (+1896)

He who has based his life on the study of the Gospel and the practice of the commandments of the Gospel has based it on solid rock.
- St. Ignatius Brianchaninov (Russia, + 1867)

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN'S PROJECT:

The Antiochian Women continue to support the RETIRED CLERGY FUND Project. Last year, AWE raised more than any other Diocese—\$28,592! Joining with the other dioceses over the last two years, the AW have now raised over half of our goal of \$500,000 in five years. Keep up the good work! It is crucially important, since 25% of our clergy will reach possible retirement age in the next five years!

REMINDER! Your Annual Project Funds are now past due. We have a number of parishes that have normally given and are missing from our list of donors for this year. Please be sure your parish has sent in the funds raised for this important project. Please contact Treasurer Kh. Yvonne Butts at holyascension@comcast.net if you have questions, or send in any outstanding funds ASAP. Thank you for your support!

We Need YOU ... To give us your thoughts, ideas & information. Send us anything you think would be encouraging or of interest to others. Your submission doesn't have to be long—a few lines or a short paragraph will do. (Articles will be edited to fit our space.)

Send all submissions to: Vera Acker 1576 Salford St. Harleysville, PA 19438 vab_acker@yahoo.com

Remember: Every woman in our Archdiocese is an 'Antiochian Woman'

An AWESome New Era

Well, maybe not an 'era,' but this summer all the AWESome positions on the AWE Board will be looking for a place in the hearts of women who want to serve Christ and His Holy Church. There are 4 *elected* positions (Pres., VP, Secy., Treas.), and 5 *appointed* Coordinator positions, for one of which you might want to volunteer (Newsletter, Project, Webmaster, Religious, Membership). For more information contact Kh. Joanne Bitar - JNBitar@aol.com An application form and written signature of blessing by your local priest is required for elected positions.

TIDBITS...

- If the church wants a better pastor, it only needs to pray for the one it has.
- Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.
- The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.
- Quit griping about your church; if it were perfect, you couldn't belong.
- It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.
- When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.
- Opportunity may knock once, but temptation bangs on your front door forever.
- The Will of God never takes you to where the Grace of God will not protect you.

Websites and Resources

www.antiochianvillage.org/upcomingevents.html - Calendar of upcoming events at Antiochian Village Conference Center.

www.antiochian.org/articles - On our Archdiocese website - Articles and resources on many topics.

www.orthodoxinfo.com - A collection of articles and resources about Orthodox issues, primarily for Orthodox Christians.

www.nwrnetwork.com/radiostations/TheArk/player/index.php (Or click the link from www.receive.org.) The Ark - Orthodox Christian Radio on the Web. NEW!