

**Western Region Joint Organizations Meeting  
October 25, 2003  
Van Nuys, California**

President Irene Saigh called the meeting to order at 1:52 PM.

The Reverend Father Kevin Scherer led us in opening prayer.

His Grace Bishop JOSEPH addressed the assembly. He started by welcoming the Reverend Father Kevin Scherer as spiritual advisor of the Fellowship of St. John the Divine and introduced the Very Reverend Father Jon Braun as Dean of the Southern California Deanery effective as of August 15, 2003. He said that on Thursday, October 9, 2003, the Holy Synod voted unanimously to grant self-rule to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. His Eminence is pleased to see us take on the responsibility of making important decisions. The power of God and synergy with God's energy is needed for the transformation of the Archdiocese into a beacon of hope. According to secular culture, man is the ultimate value. This belief leads to the worship of man, which is human paganism. Human paganism does not believe in need for Incarnate God. His Grace stated that the remedy for this is repenting and believing in the one Lord. Sometimes faith is not wrong at church but the practice is, and that we need education and everyone to be involved. He said that through the Incarnate God we reach humanity, and we regain the image of God we had before the fall. We can reach true humanity in the sacramental life. People say that the liturgy is boring because they do not understand it, but it is key for every transformation. He said that we must liberate ourselves from mundane secular approaches by taking the liturgy home and implementing it in our lives.

We cannot become a beacon of hope if we do not play an active role in missionary acts of the church. He told us that Orthodox outreach programs open the doors to outreach, which enable us to touch others, and that the doors were opened in 1987 to the EOC.

At Pentecost disciples spoke in tongues, and ended up bringing 5,000 new members to the church. His Grace told us that likewise our mission is to bring hope to those living in darkness, to those who have never known God. Our gifts all contribute to the upholding of the Body of Christ. All are called to cultivate the Holy Spirit in themselves. He finished by asking us what are we doing to prepare our children to be Beacons of Hope.

Teen SOYO president Krystal Saigh gave the Teen SOYO report. They are starting a church Teen SOYO buddy system, classifying chapters as starter, non-active, and active. They have Friends-in-Deed, which is peer counseling via email, they just came out with their first newsletter, and they are excited about the upcoming Orthodox Youth Outreach event in January in Los Angeles.

AOCWNA president Widad Tarazi gave the AOCWNA report. They will have retreats in Northern California and Southern California, and will donate money to orphanages.

Fellowship of St. John the Divine president Irene Saigh gave the Fellowship report. The Fellowship is refocusing, the college board is growing, the new membership committee is

working and deanery retreats are upcoming.

Lew Malouf gave the results from motions in the organizational meetings. The \$5 registration fee for the Annual Fall Delegates Meeting is approved. Also, the organizations approved to create a fund that will be managed by the Fellowship treasurer. Each organization will contribute \$250 each year to the fund to help churches cover the cost of the Delegates Meeting, and the Fellowship will increase its donation up to \$350.

Lew Malouf gave the Conference Planning and Coordination Committee (CPCC) report. The CPCC was created in January, and since has created a Parish Life Conference planning manual in order to maintain continuity between conferences. The conference assignments will be made at least five years in advance, and all the conferences will be in July around the Independence Day holiday. The conference assignments are as follows:

- 2004 St. Luke; Garden Grove, CA
- 2005 St. Nicholas; San Francisco, CA
- 2006 St. George; San Diego, CA
- 2007 St. George; Portland, OR
- 2008 St. Nicholas; Los Angeles, CA

Michael Srour reported on the Parish Life Conference held in Phoenix, AZ. The souvenir journal grossed \$47,459.99, 380 ticket books were sold, and the conference netted \$32,806.54. \$8,201.63 will be paid to the Fellowship of St. John the Divine; \$3,208.65 will be paid each to Teen SOYO and AOCWNA; \$18,093.60 will go to the host parish.

The Very Reverend Father Michael Lewis, Judy Pappoff, and Anna Nassar gave the report on the upcoming 2004 Parish Life Conference in Anaheim, CA. Room rates will be \$99 per night, and there will be a barbeque at the church on the Sunday of the conference.

Ed Malouf moved to accept the schedule of the 2004 Parish Life Conference as submitted. Seconded by Krystal Saigh. There was discussion about the schedule, with the suggestion made to move the choir festival to Sunday afternoon with the awards brunch to increase the choir rehearsal Thursday, making it from 4:00 to 5:00 PM now. Ed Malouf amended his motion. Lew Malouf called for the question. MOTION PASSED.

Maram Quomsieh moved to accept the souvenir journal rates as it is submitted. Seconded by Grace Mary Paramovich. There was discussion, with the suggestion made to create an adult list of names for \$25 each. Maram Quomsieh amended her motion. MOTION PASSED.

Walter Paramovich moved to accept event prices as amended: the July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic at St. Luke's will be \$10 for adults and clergy. Seconded by Subhi Tarazi. MOTION PASSED.

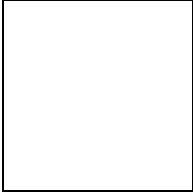
Tony Karami reported on the 2005 Parish Life Conference in San Francisco. It will be

the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Western Region Parish Life Conference. Room rates will be \$109 per night. His presentation concluded the CPCC report.

His Grace Bishop Joseph led us in closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Matthew Howell  
Secretary, Western Region Fellowship of St. John the Divine