

Most Reverend
Metropolitan PHILIP
Founder
358 Mountain Road
Englewood, New Jersey 07631

Right Reverend
Bishop JOSEPH
Bishop of Los Angeles and the West
454 South Lorraine Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90020

Antiochian Women

Diocese of Los Angeles and the West



Fall/Winter

Newsletter 2007

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.*

**Please copy and distribute or otherwise make this
newsletter available to the women in your parish.**

A Sisterhood Serving Christ Through Serving Others

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“Faith and knowledge must go together. Faith alone leads to superstition and knowledge alone is limited to facts. The process is called Transformation which means transfiguring ourselves to a better understanding of faith and a better life in light of the Holy Cross.”

~ His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH

A message from our President: Lucy Hanna

Dear Sisters in Christ,

I greet you in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Last month, October 19 to 21 to be precise, clergy and laity from all over our diocese came together at the Fall Gathering in Sacramento, California. Delegates from each organization, together with their spiritual advisor, met to discuss the issues that affect their respective organization, but most of all they came together in brotherly love to learn and to grow together in spirituality. We met new people and renewed old friendships.

At our Antiochian Women meeting, our focus was on finding ways to support each other and our beloved clergy. Fr. David spoke to us about the importance of getting along and forgiving one another. His Grace Bishop JOSEPH was there to support us and remind us that the reason we are there is to conduct our ministry for the glory of God and to find ways to be more effective in our communities and for the good of our Diocese, the Archdiocese and the Church in general.

When addressing the whole assembly following the Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning, His Grace Bishop JOSEPH spoke about the priesthood stating that it should be blameless and the men who serve in it must be blameless as well. They must be like the saints in the icons in the church around us. We need to listen to them and they need our love and our support in their very demanding and difficult ministry.

The Antiochian Women have taken up the support of our clergy as their annual project for the last three years. In the three years we raised over \$404,000 of the \$500,000 goal we set out to accomplish over 5 years. Our clergy deserve our support. They are there for us from birth to death. They are our "Fathers" who take care of us spiritually. They leave behind good paying jobs, with retirement benefits to serve God through serving us. It is therefore incumbent on us to care for them in their golden years.

The clergy retirement fund was started by Metropolitan PHILIP in 1968 with \$25,000. Without contributions to this fund, it will soon be depleted. Until recently, a retired priest in our Archdiocese received a maximum of \$700 a month for service of 30 years or more. A widowed Khouriyah receives 75% of what her husband would have received, but only when she reaches age 65. Through the fund-raising efforts of the Antiochian Women, contributions from the Order of St. Ignatius and many individuals and a very large donation from His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, this amount was increased to \$800 per month if the retired priest has served for 30 years. If the retired priest retires before having served the full 30 years, the amount of his retirement is computed accordingly.

This is how the formula works: For every year the priest served, he receives \$26.67 per month times the number of years to a maximum of 30 years. So \$26.67 times 30 years comes to \$800. If a retired priest served for 20 years, he receives \$533.30 per month, and so on. We all know that even the maximum is very little to live on and with our combined support, this amount can be increased.

I appeal to every Antiochian Women chapter in the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West to hold a fund raising event to raise funds for this worthwhile project. You can plan something during

the month of March which is Antiochian Women Month in our Archdiocese, or any other time you choose. The deadline for the Project Money to the Diocesan Treasurer is May 15, 2008. Please send your checks to our treasurer, Judy Pappoff: 16627 Sequoia Street, Fountain Valley, CA 92708.

Through our joint efforts, this fund will give our active priests peace of mind for the future for themselves and their Khouriyahs', while insuring our retired priests' ability to live out their golden years more comfortably. With this peace of mind, more of our very pious and able young men will be more inclined to dedicate their lives and talents to the service of the Lord and His Church. Our slogan is: "CARE FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR US".

Your sister in Christ,

Lucy Hanna, President
Antiochian Women, Diocese of the Los Angeles and the West



Dear Orthodox Faithful,

Christ is in our midst. He is and ever shall be.

I hope you are all in good health as we approach the beginning of the Advent Season next week. It's hard to believe Christmas is coming again so soon.

On Sunday, December 2, 2007, St. Nicholas Cathedral will have its patronal feast day. Matins is 9:30 a.m., followed by Hierarchical Liturgy at 10:30, with His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH, presiding. Dn. George Ajalat will be ordained to the priesthood, and a celebration banquet will be held in the hall after church. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for children 12 and under. We will honor Dn. George as he becomes Fr. George Ajalat.

If you would like to make reservations, I would be happy to coordinate that for you. Please spread the word around. Checks should be made payable to St. Nicholas Cathedral, and you can mail them to me, the sooner the better, as tables are going fast.

Looking forward to seeing many of you there on this special day.

In Christ,
Samia Habib
852 Maple St.
Burbank, CA. 91505

Treasurer: Judy Pappoff

From: Judy Pappoff, Diocesan Treasurer, Antiochian Women
To: Chapter Presidents or Representatives

Re: Local Chapter Dues Reminder

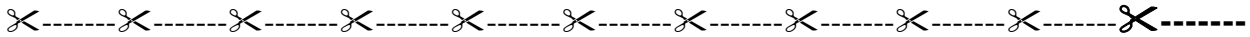
Dues for 2008 were due November 1st, 2007. Annual dues for each parish are \$200.00 of which \$75.00 go to the North American Board Treasury. *All churches are required to pay dues, even if you do not have an active Antiochian Women Chapter.* Missions are not required to pay dues, but any donation by missions will be appreciated as it will help offset our expenses and allow us to be more generous in our charitable works.

“Thank you” to all the churches and missions who have already paid your 2008 dues!

Please make your checks payable to: ***Antiochian Women-Diocese of Los Angeles and the West***

Please complete and detach and return the form below along with your check to:

Judy Pappoff, Treasurer
16627 Sequoia St.
Fountain Valley, CA 92708



Parish _____

City _____

Parish
Contact _____

Contact’s e-mail _____

Contact’s Phone # _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Public Relations Director: Melinda Bentz

Dear Sisters in Christ,

It is a joy to again serve as the Public Relations Director for our Diocese.

The goal I have for both the Fall/Winter and our Spring/Summer newsletters is to have an article or item to include in the newsletter from at least 20% of the chapters. Our newsletters are a time to share with each other things that are working within our chapters, fundraising ideas, blessings the Ladies have been a part of due to their labors as well as an opportunity to share poems, uplifting quotes and stories or even a favorite recipe!

In addition to the scheduled newsletters, the other area I would like to focus is the sharing of events, highlights and fundraisers electronically with our Sisters across the Diocese through email. To this end, email me anything you would like to be shared across the Diocese to my personal email: melbentz@yahoo.com.

I look forward to serving each of you through the Public Relations office. Your suggestions, ideas and thoughts are always welcome!

Serving through Christ,

Melinda Bentz

Holy Cross, Palmdale CA
Antiochian Women Public Relations Director

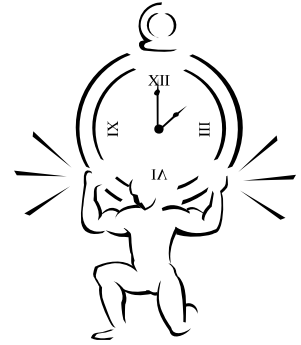
“Do everything you can to take some wisdom for your soul from what you read, and emulate it.” ~ His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH



Holiday Stress?

Dr. Steve Heffelfinger, D.C.

I find it interesting that the flu season hits about the same time as Halloween and goes through New Years. In my practice, I see blood sugar imbalances and sicknesses correlate. We know that the immune system is weakened with sugar. (<http://rheumatic.org/sugar.htm>) Let me also mention, beware of high fructose corn syrup too for this is worse than sugar and the fastest way I know to get diabetes. Some of the stress factors this time of year are increased tasks, decreased sleep, increased family dynamics, and decreased nutrition. What do we do about it?



The Orthodox Church has a great remedy for all this, fasting and praying.

Our family dynamics play a role in the stresses many of us experience throughout the holiday season. Recently, one of my patients came in already stressed about decorating for Christmas. She knew that her husband was going to start a fight about it. As we talked we concluded that this pattern throughout 20 years of marriage was something that he learned during his childhood. Beware of patterns. Will there be a fight about decorating the tree? Will Uncle Charlie get aggressive after a few drinks? Let's face it, not everyone comes from families with joyous celebrating. There is anger, jealousy, abuses, loneliness, etc. Many of us hit a wall of depression and anxiety. These can be serious issues.

During this Nativity season take an inventory of our own patterns when preparing for confession. Some times, the Church is our hospital. We have God, Bishops, Priests, Nuns, and Monks; those gifted with discernment and other spiritual talents, saints, angels, and our brothers and sisters in Christ, ask for prayer and be open for wisdom.

There is always more to do at this time of year and we all stretch ourselves thin. Here are some practical suggestions to help us through this season:

Delegate: Look for others who can share in the extra tasks. Getting others involved includes them and gives them a sense of appreciation. Make "to-do" lists. Those who make lists get 5 times more done. Allow the children to be involved in setting up, baking the Holy Bread, etc.

Sleep: DO NOT sacrifice sleep; it is how our bodies recover from the stresses of the day.

Fasting and Prayer: Make time to be still. Spend time alone, just you and God. He is that still small voice. Prayer is not always talking, but listening. Let your head and heart meet.

Confession: This is a cleansing medicine and can help change destructive patterns.

In conclusion, use the tools of the Orthodox Church. The Sabbath was made for man, man was not made for the Sabbath. The Nativity fast comes at a great time of year. It calls for restraint when the world is indulging. We have such a wonderful God to provide us with all that we need, when we need it!

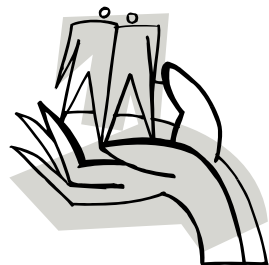


Happy Nativity!

Dr. Steve Heffelfinger, D.C. ~ Holy Cross, Palmdale, CA

Christmas gift idea: Holy Cross Church, Palmdale is selling a CD of Orthodox Hymns (many hymns are previously unrecorded) for only \$20.

Antiochian Women of St. Andrew the First Called
"Myrrhbearers"



Riverside CA

It is a great pleasure for us to share with you the activities of the women of our parish and to see God's great mercy in our lives. On our patronal feast day, November 30, 2007, we will be celebrating our 15th year since being established as a mission. St. Andrew has moved from meeting in a store front property to a "holy warehouse" to our current location, a beautiful hall built 6 years ago intended to temporarily double as church and hall. We have now made an audacious commitment to build a temple for the glory of God. The annual patronal feast serves as one of our main fund-raising activities for our building fund. Many of the women of our parish bring their talents together to make this event a truly special celebration.

We have seen the participation in our Antiochian Women's group steadily grow over the past few years. One of our ongoing challenges is the far flung geographic distribution of our parish membership and the southern California freeways. Even so, we are striving to find ways to meet some of the needs of our congregation. Last year we began preparation of Lenten foods for sale during the fasting periods, not only as a fundraiser, but also to help our newer members and catechumens with the challenge of a new way of eating. We are continuing this project this year and will be including weekly cooking classes on Lenten food preparation on Wednesday evenings. The annual phosphora baking class, always an appreciated event, is scheduled for the spring.

The Myrrhbearers are hosting a dinner for the OCF chapter of our church. We want our young people to know that we love them and value them – they are the future of our church! We are also developing a program to support the young mothers of our church with fellowship, sharing of ideas and for education (we are blessed with having 2 pediatricians in our parish!) We know that mothers of young children serve the church in a special way by raising their children to love God, a task that at times seems overwhelming. In the spring we can give an update on the development of this project.

During the summer we started a reading group that met after Great Vespers. We read homilies of St. John of Damascus on the Dormition of the Theotokos. A trip to Saint Barbara Monastery in Santa Paula prior to the Feast of the Dormition provided a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and spiritual refreshment. We hope to continue similar activities for our women.

These are some of the highlights of the Antiochian Women "Myrrhbearers" of St. Andrew. We have been richly blessed with many talented and dedicated women all striving to fulfill our mission to serve God and each other. We pray that we may continue to grow in our love for God, for our fellow man and for each other.

In Christ,
Marquelle Anderson

Church of the Redeemer

The women of the Church of the Redeemer have had a busy schedule this fall season. In September the women and men of the parish joined efforts to prepare for our biggest fund raiser, the Food Festival where delicious traditional food and cultural entertainment attracts the surrounding community. In addition to attending the Diocesan Fall Gathering during the month of October, the Antiochian women of the Redeemer attended a Friendship Luncheon hosted by Orthodox Serbian Church of St. Archangel Michael. It is an event where the women meet and share ideas and information about their churches. At the event we heard guest speaker, Father Michael Prevas, give a presentation on the role of women in the church.

On November 3rd, the women hosted a Luncheon in honor of the senior citizens in our parish. We had a guest speaker for the event that talked about nutrition and health. The event was a great success. We had almost 50 attendees and the seniors enjoyed the fall theme decoration and the home prepared food donated by the women. On November 9th, the women go to the fall spiritual retreat in San Damiano where Father Tom Hopko is a keynote speaker.

The women have also scheduled a guest speaker for our parish and surrounding Orthodox sister churches, Father James Corazza, to give a presentation on Divine Liturgy and the Real World on November 30th. We continue to have our Bible Study classes directed by Father Samer. The study will be open this month to include men and women.

The women of the Redeemer are sponsoring a charity project, adopt-a-family program that is run by Raphael House, an Orthodox shelter in San Francisco. Thanks to the generous donations of our parish - we raised \$1350. The funds will be used to purchase gifts for the needy families. The women of our church will wrap and deliver the gifts before Christmas.

The women are in the process of forming a book club to enhance our knowledge of our Orthodox Faith and to create fellowship amongst the women. In December, we plan to have our annual potluck Christmas Party with karaoke music for our parishioners. God willing, this concludes our events for this year.

Love in Christ,

Basma Batmani



St. George, Phoenix

Greetings to the Antiochian Women of the Western Region

I want to thank the women of St George, Phoenix, for placing their confidence in me as their new president. I will be working hard to make this a successful year, not only with our fund raising activities, but more important, with service to the Church.

In response to women who cannot attend our luncheon potluck meetings during the day, we held our first monthly *evening* meeting on Thursday, October 18th, at 7:00 pm in the Church hall. We were blessed with 27 women in attendance. We had a brief social period, followed by a productive meeting. Now, with both luncheon and evening meetings we have a great opportunity to open the doors to all the ladies of St. George. Our November 1st luncheon potluck meeting was a beautiful Thanksgiving Feast. We will be holding a Cookie Exchange on December 12th where both the day and evening groups will join together for a fun (and delicious) evening.

As a service to the members of our Church who have lost loved ones, we have decided to begin preparing and selling Memorial Wheat. We anticipate that this will become a good fundraiser for our group. We will also be working on fundraisers to purchase much needed equipment for our kitchen.

Each of our ladies has their own special talent and skill to offer in service to the Church and I know they will all work to make this the greatest year for the Antiochian Women of St. George Phoenix.

Your sister in Christ,
Mary Karadsheh, President
Antiochian Women of St. George Phoenix



Holy Cross – Palmdale, CA

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the name of our Lord! This past year the Ladies of Holy Cross in Palmdale have continued in the tradition of doing good works. We continue to orchestrate feeding of the homeless on the 4th Saturday of each month in coordination with the youth of our parish. Thanks to the hard work of Tony Nakonechnyj and Vasily Konovolov along with the approval of funds by our Parish Council, we now have a real kitchen! This has enabled the ladies to take turns serving and greeting each person as they come through the coffee hour line. It has been a joy to great each person individually and personally be able to welcome guests as they enjoy our hospitality. All funds raised through our coffee hour meals are donated to the youth of our Parish to support those who wish to attend Camp St. Nicholas summer camp and winter retreat.

The ladies plan to have our annual cookie exchange in December as our social gathering. Last year we began selling ornaments to raise funds for the Retired Clergy Fund. We will again be selling ornaments to decorate our Parish Christmas tree with the funds from the ornament sales going to the Retired Clergy Fund. We also are assisting in the selling of a CD of Orthodox Hymns sung in English. Each CD is only \$20 and contains several hymns that have never before been recorded! The funds from our CD sales benefit our building fund.

We wish each of you many blessings as you continue in your efforts to support your local parishes and the Antiochian Women of our Diocese.

In Christ,

Melinda Bentz

President

Holy Cross, Palmdale CA

melbentz@yahoo.com



Ss. Peter and Paul ~ Ben Lomond, CA

This year the women of our Parish decided to rebuild our Women's Group. We have had bumps along the way, as will happen at the beginning of any great journey, but we are optimistic and have been very blessed by what has been accomplished so far.

We started off with elections in January, under the tutelage of Kathy Johnstone of St. Stephen in Campbell, CA. Since we are building from the ground up we have worked to put some organizational processes into place in order to ease the path for those officers who will follow in the years to come. Just to give you a little idea of what The Antiochian Women of Ss. Peter and Paul have done so far this year:

- Purchased 8 new beautiful acolyte robes
- Had a chili cook-off fundraiser for the Clergy Retirement Fund
- Sent all the officers to the Delegate's Meeting in October
- Are in the process of completely revamping the Parish playground
- Have done a complete remodel of the Church nursery
- Are working on developing a new Church website
- We are currently hosting an eBay fundraiser

We ask for your prayers for our fledgling group and thank you for your good example.

Continuing in God's mercy, we remain the Antiochian Women of Ss. Peter and Paul, Ben Lomond, CA.



Honey to the Soul

“Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.” Proverbs 16:24 NLT

One of the great blessings of the Christian life is a kind word, spoken just when you need to hear it.

Look at the unbelieving world, and how often will you find kindness? Once in a while, in a rare human being. More often, you'll experience criticism and condemnation.

One thing that should set Christians apart from unbelievers is a caring kindness. When you don't find kindness in the church, something has gone wrong. A critical spirit isn't from God and can't help the soul and body.

But we also can't expect the church always to agree with all we do. When we've fallen into wrongdoing, it is the responsibility of caring Christians to confront us lovingly and set us on the right track. (It is also our responsibility to be honest with our Father confessor during our confessions and to accept his wisdom and guidance for our spiritual life.) When we respond to that correction, we can again feel the kindness of those who have loved us well enough to tell us we've been wrong. We might have missed it when we were wrong, but wise Christians will still have used it to draw us back to the right path.

People have a hard time hearing critics, unless they know care is also there. A combination of correction and kindness often makes the difference in whether or not those words are really heard. Honey spreads easily on the soul, while criticism feels like sand in an open wound.

Whether you need to encourage or redirect another Christian, are you speaking kind words? If so, their sweetness may bring just the healing God has in mind.



Taken from *'Daily Wisdom to Satisfy the Soul'*

Spring Retreat

2008 Southern California Diocesan Antiochian Women's Retreat
April 11-13, 2008

Keep your eyes open for more information!
www.antiochianladiocese.org

*****Our Diocese will be highlighted in the March “Diakonia”. Please have submissions to Melinda Bentz by January 25, 2008. melbentz@yahoo.com**

The Mid-winter Meeting is scheduled for February 1 - 3, 2008 at the Antiochian Village. The meetings will begin as usual on Friday evening and continue through Saturday.

Spring Newsletter submission deadline: March 25, 2008

Two Recipes by Marge Bentz, St. Luke's

BANANA BREAD for People who Hate bananas but LOVE bread.

Beat 2 eggs

Cream together ½ cup shortening, 1 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla, and ½ teaspoon cinnamon. Add to the beaten eggs.

Sift together:

2 ½ cups flour, 1 teaspoon soda, pinch of salt.

Add the sifted dry ingredients alternately with ½ cup water to the egg mixture. Mash 3 large, fairly ripe bananas and add to the above mixture. Mix all together thoroughly. Bake in loaf pan at 300 degrees for 1 hour 15 minutes or until toothpick comes out barely clean.

COLD RICE SALAD

2 pkgs Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice cooked as directed on pkg. When cool add:

1 cup diced fresh mushrooms

1 box cherry tomatoes

½ to ¾ bottle Bernstein's Italian Dressing

1 cup water packed artichoke hearts, diced

1 finely chopped green onion

Mix together, refrigerate to bring out the flavor. Serves 8-12