

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



Spring Newsletter

2007

A recipe for a smiling face

**“For the lips, truth;
For the voice, prayer;
For the eyes, compassion;
For the hand, helpfulness;
For the figure, uprightness;
And for the heart, love – the love of Jesus”**

~ Holy Joy: The Heartbeat of Faith by Anthony M. Coniaris

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

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America
A Sisterhood Serving Christ Through Serving Others

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Widad Tarazi
Church of the Redeemer – Los Altos, CA

“When from a young age, a child becomes filled with Christ, goes to church with his parents, communes, chants, prays – later on when he gets older, leaves home and possibly ends up in an unfavorable environment, it’s not difficult for him. It’s like wood, which has been drenched with linseed oil. Afterwards it doesn’t absorb rain, as it is protected by the oil; it won’t take in water, it repels it.”

~ Father Paisios Eznepides (+1994)
From Daily Lives, Miracles and Wisdom of the Saints.

A message from our Spiritual Advisor the Very Reverend Fr. David Hovik

My Beloved Sisters in Christ:

Christ is Risen! Truly, He is Risen!

Each of you received the "Light of Christ" on Holy Pascha as you lit your Paschal candle. As Orthodox Christians and, in particular, as Antiochian Women- we are compelled to extend that light through reflecting Christ in our lives. Pascha is not simply an event on the Church calendar; it is a way of life. Over the years I have seen Christ reflected in many of your lives and for that, I thank you. But it is time that we all take this responsibility to live Resurrectionally even more seriously. How does this monumental event impact our day to day decision-making and activities? How is Holy Pascha fulfilled in and through us? If it is only about Pascha baskets, lighted candles, cracking red eggs and feasting - we have missed the essence of our faith. If, however, the joy of this celebration infects our life with God's grace, challenges us to active, personal transformation and the intentional reaching out to those in need - Pascha will truly be fulfilled in us.

May God help our light to shine a little brighter in 2007.

In Christ's love,
Fr. David
Spiritual Advisor

A message from our Diocese President Samia Habib

April 2007

Dear Sisters in Christ,
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

Welcome to Camp St. Nicholas for our Annual Spring Retreat. I hope you all had a joyous Pascha, and may the spirit of this season be with you throughout the year. It is wonderful to be together again on the "Holy Mountain" as we share in our teachings, our fellowship and our time away from our busy lives.

A special welcome to His Grace, Bishop JOSEPH, who is here with ArchDeacon George Shishim for Friday evening only. We look forward to hearing the words of our Shepherd. We also welcome our Spiritual Advisor, Very Rev. Fr. David Hovik, from Arlington, Washington, who was recently elevated to Archpriest. **AXIOS, MUSTAHE, HE IS WORTHY!**

We are very happy to have Fr. David with us for the entire weekend. And we welcome our Retreat Speaker, Very Rev. Josiah Trenham, from Riverside, California, who has planned a very special topic for us.

I would like to recognize our new Retreat Coordinator, Laurie Olson, from Orange County, CA, who has worked very hard for 7 months to put together a quality retreat for us. We look forward to the fruits of her labor this weekend. I also thank our new Public Relations Coordinator, Melinda Bentz, from Lancaster, CA, who worked very hard to publicize this first newsletter of this new year. We look forward to reading all of the articles and learning about our sister churches and what they are doing in their areas. Thank you, Laurie and Melinda, for saying yes when I asked for help. These ladies stepped up to the plate and took on their jobs with great enthusiasm.

Whether you are a veteran retreat attendee or here for your first time, we hope you will enjoy this weekend together and come back again. We women have much responsibility, especially in this current world we live in, and we need this time away from our families, our homes and our jobs to refresh ourselves and to build and renew our friendships with women from around the Diocese. If we can do anything to make your stay here more comfortable, please let any of us know.

Many women tell me they can't get away for a retreat because their husbands won't be able to handle the family and the home, or because the accommodations are not comfortable. Our husbands are more capable than we realize, and they need special time with our children. As for the cabins, this is a retreat, and that means getting away from the distractions and luxuries of home and communing with nature amongst these beautiful pine trees. May you find the great benefit of a retreat here, and take that knowledge home with you to share in your parishes.

We look forward to seeing all of you in Portland in June for our Parish Life Conference. This will be a chance once again to meet people from the west coast and build new friendships, which is a very important part of our faith in Orthodoxy. It is also a time for your needs and wishes to be heard at our meeting, so please make your plans now to join us.

God bless you with peace, health and joy, and safe traveling mercies back to your homes.

In the Risen Lord,

Samia Habib

President

Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

JOY

“Joy is prayer. Joy is strength. Joy is love. Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls. God loves a cheerful giver. One gives most who gives with joy. The best way to show our gratitude to God and people is to accept everything with joy. A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of Christ risen.

This I tell my sisters. This I tell to you.”

~Mother Teresa of Calcutta



He who gives to no one is truly poor. ~St. Clement

Project 2007
Antiochian Women Project – Retired Clergy Fund

“Care for those who care for us”

Our challenge: \$150,000

This will be our third year of our *Retired Clergy Fund* Project. Our goal is to raise at least \$500,000 over 5 years. Thanks to the efforts of all our ladies, we were able to contribute over half this amount in the first two years.

The *Retired Clergy Fund* was established to help subsidize the original fund established by Metropolitan PHILIP to support our retired priests or widowed Khouriyas. The present formula used to calculate the amount the retired clergy is able to collect is minimal, \$23.33 per month times the years of service in this Archdiocese to a maximum of 30 years. That adds up to a maximum allowance of \$700.00 per month. A widowed Khouriya receives only 75% of the allowance that her husband would have received, and only when she reaches age 65.

We know that this amount is very difficult to live on in today’s world, but it is all that can be afforded at this time. Additionally, this fund will go broke in a few years if it is not substantially supported through increasing the principle, which is what the *Antiochian Women’s Project: The Retired Clergy Fund* is intended to do.

We the Antiochian Women, a Sisterhood of Charity serving Christ through serving others, ask that you continue to work with our local chapters in all that they do, and particularly in supporting this project with your whole hearts, remembering the clergy that have been there for all of us in times of illness, sorrow, celebrations, etc. Through our joint efforts, this Fund will give our active priests peace of mind for the future for themselves and their Khouriyas, while insuring our retired priests’ ability to live out their golden years more comfortably. Please give generously.

~NAB Newsletter

“Care for those who care for us”

GOAL \$500,000.00

2005 \$115,000.00

2006 \$141,000.00

2007 \$ _____

2008 \$ _____

2009 \$ _____

Publicity Relations Coordinator, Melinda Bentz

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Thank you for your emails and letters for this Spring Newsletter! Without each of you there is no newsletter for us to be encouraged by.

Little did I know that when I volunteered for this position at the Fall Delegates meeting that I would soon be off to Antiochian Village for the Mid-winter meeting and then pushing deadlines to get this newsletter ready for our Spring Retreat. Thank you Samia for every single word of encouragement!

Since many of us have never had the privilege to visit Antiochian Village, here is a taste from a first time visitor (in the winter). COLD! SNOW! BEAUTIFUL! PEACEFUL!

From our red-eye flight out of LAX into Pittsburgh to our flight back the weekend was packed with business, laughter and prayer. We started our journey with one member having her luggage stolen before even arriving at LAX. This of course prompted a shopping spree in the Pittsburgh airport where some of the necessities were gathered and the rest obtained in route to Antiochian Village or generously provided by the very hospitable staff of Antiochian Village. Upon our arrival, in the snow, we were greeted by a most beautiful Icon of St. Thekla welcoming us to this Holy Mountain. Her quiet beauty and raised cross challenging us to lay aside the stresses of the journey and seek refuge in the peace that envelopes this special mountain.

Each meeting was conducted with a purpose of furthering the efforts of the Antiochian Women of North America. Items discussed and voted upon were each met with the same approach of sisterhood united. Not every vote was unanimous but every vote considered the discussion presented, the goal of the organization and unity remained after the vote. Church business handled in a very Christian manner.

Oh how to describe the services? The voices of youth and adults weaving together in worship of our One True God, singing praises to the Most Holy Theotokos and encouraging us each in our daily walk. How to describe the beauty of the Iconography in the Chapel? Saints I had yet to meet entreating me to study them and thereby challenge my thoughts, words and deeds. How to describe why this is a Holy Mountain, a treasure of North America? The joy of, after a soul searching afternoon walking in the snow to quietly reflect upon my spiritual life while standing at the grave of St. Raphael, having Priests willing and waiting to hear my confession and then offer absolution with words of encouragement. These are the joys and treasures of Antiochian Village.

A thousand deadlines and newsletters can not begin to repay the blessing of being able to visit Antiochian Village in the peaceful quiet of the winter.

In Christ,

Melinda Bentz, Publicity Relations Coordinator.

The Sisterhood of St. Peter the Apostle Antiochian Orthodox Church, San Dimas

The Women's Group of St. Peter the Apostle Antiochian Orthodox Church in San Dimas CA raised funds to support Fr. Duane Peterson's project of providing hygiene kits, sweatshirts and toys for children to the homeless in Lancaster CA at Christmas. Contributions of money and products from our parishioners made it possible for us to provide 200 hygiene kits including shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, comb, lip balm, towel and washcloth. Sunday school children helped pack the kits in ziplock bags and ladies transported the kits and toys to Lancaster and helped distribute them.

Our Women's Group has also committed to feed the hungry in Pomona CA on the fifth Saturday of any month that has a fifth Saturday, in conjunction with another ministry which provides this service on other Saturdays. In December, we provided a "chili feed" and another one is planned for March 31st.

At our parish the Women's group coordinates the coffee hour meal and the baking of prosphora for the Divine Liturgy. We are in the planning stages for expanding our ministry and fund raising efforts.

In Christ,

Pam Drennan
President, St. Peter the Apostle Women's Group



Sisterhood of Holy Cross, Palmdale

Many projects have come and gone this year, here is a highlight of some of them:

We have continued to have a women's social meeting monthly.

We have continued to serve with Fr. Duane and Helping Hands Ministry once a month at Our Lady of Charity in Lancaster. We have planned potlucks around major Feast Days to help involve the parish with participation of celebration of these important days.

In December, our 2nd annual cookie exchange was held for the Women's Social meeting. Everyone enjoyed filling a plate (or two) with delicious homemade cookies!

St. Nicholas Day was celebrated with a potluck and a parish talent show. We also held a fundraiser of selling poinsettias and angel ornaments to help purchase altar robes and clothes.

His Servant,
Madeline Heffelfinger
Immediate Past-President

Sisterhood of Sts. Mary and Martha St. John the Baptist Antiochian Orthodox Church

St. John's Sisterhood has continued to try meeting monthly for either a business meeting or gather for a time of fellowship in our homes.

We took on as a Christmas charity this last year, support for the North Idaho Behavioral Health Center at our local hospital, Kootenai Medical Center, and received many thank you letters from those young people. This Behavioral Health Center is a facility for troubled youth who need much, and receiving some gift at Christmas means a lot to them. We also have continued to do Christmas Tree tags for the Women's Center. The Women's Center provides temporary refuge for women and their children who are in need of a safe place to stay. St. John's fills the requests from these women and their children for Christmas gifts.

We joined our sister church, Christ the Savior of Spokane Valley, in March for their 1st annual Annunciation Tea which was well received. And again, the Sisterhood coordinated the Presanctified Lenten meals, donating the money collected from these meals and those on Sundays throughout Great Lent to the Retired Clergy Fund. Our annual bake sale was again very successful, raising \$2,800 in support of the building fund. We have continued sending throughout the year cards of sympathy, get well and congratulations as well as sponsoring diapers for the Hogar Orphanage in Guatemala.

This past year we have taken on a new project of providing meals for Project Safe Place, which is a shelter for Jr high and high school age children---a place for them to go after school for fellowship and to receive a hot meal. Our ladies have generously volunteered to provide a meal the 4th Wednesday of each month to feed approximately 15 people. For most of these kids, this is the only hot meal they receive, and they are very appreciative of what is done for them. We have also provided occasional meals for the families with newborn babies, and have given baby showers for our numerous growing families.

Money has been donated to help pay for the sub deacon cassocks, as well as provide baptismal robes for the catechumens on the occasion of their baptisms. In addition, we have now ordered new altar server robes, which have been badly needed-----all paid for by donations! Glory to God! A cookbook project has been started, where we are collecting recipes from any and all people of the parish to publish our own St. John's Cookbook.

It has been a somewhat busy year, and as a first time president, many thanks go to all of the ladies of our wonderful parish who have come to my aid as I have "bungled" through! And in all of these efforts, we find that as the ones who have given help and aid to those in need, it is ourselves who have been truly most blessed.

Submitted with Love in Christ,
Gayle Goodsen,
President for St. John the Baptist Sisterhood

Antiochian Women of St. Nicholas Cathedral, Los Angeles

Dear Sisters In Christ,

Christ is Risen.....Truly He is Risen!

With these words I send greetings to you all on behalf of myself and your sisters in Christ at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Los Angeles . I would love to share with you some of the activities in which we have been involved over the past year.

We have devoted much of our time and energies to organizing and presenting our biannual Sweetheart Ball. This will be the 51st presentation and will be held on April 28 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills . There are also special events preceding the Ball which provide our lovely debutantes with a once in a lifetime experience as well as wonderful memories: a Presentation Tea, a Fashion Show, a Father-Daughter Brunch, a Parent-Debutante-Escort Social. The Sweetheart Ball is a beautiful tradition which holds a special place in the hearts of many, many people throughout the diocese.

The St. Nicholas Antiochian Women have been busy and productive in many ways this year. We have traveled to Saint Barbara Monastery in Santa Barbara twice this year to commune with the nuns who reside there in a one day spiritual retreat. We also look forward to participating in our annual Women's Retreat at Camp St. Nicholas . The ladies were also very blessed to have been able to visit the very special display featuring icons and artifacts from St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai in the "Icons of the Sinai" exhibit at the Getty Museum in February. Our fundraising efforts include two luncheons during the year, as well as the very popular Palm Sunday Bake Sale.

As March is Antiochian Women's Month in the archdiocese, our ladies volunteered during the liturgy at that time by reading the Epistle in two languages, delivering the sermons, ushering during Communion and at the Dismissal, and taking the collections. We sponsored a very successful and enjoyable luncheon and dedicated its proceeds to the Retried Clergy Fund. The proceeds from each of the Coffee Hours during the month of March are also dedicated towards the Fund.

The ladies of St. Nicholas meet the first Tuesday of each month at a member's home. The hostesses every month always make us feel so welcome and the fellowship provides us spiritual nourishment and support we need to get through the rest of the month.

We ask our Risen Christ to bless you all. Keep us in your prayers.

Kh. Eva Najim

President of St. Nicholas Cathedral Antiochian Women

Certain friends have a way of setting up residence in us. They march into some barren room of our heart and hang cheerful curtains, scatter soft rugs, dot the walls with framed prints of tender and whimsical moments then set about building a cozy fire beside two sink-back-and-stay-awhile chairs. We may not always know exactly when such friends moved in, but we're so very glad they did. – Susan Lenzkes

March 2007

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

The women of St. Innocent church, (WOSIC), desire to serve our community, church and each other in ways that are given to us through the needs that continually come our way. Here are the details of the year past. This past summer of 2006 we were able to provide support for several children attending St. Mary of Egypt camp, and a group of parishioners serving at Project Mexico.

For Thanksgiving, the women organized and arranged two LARGE baskets of food and gifts for local families in need. These baskets have been received with an overwhelming appreciation from those who know the families in need and deliver the baskets for us.

Our group is meeting together on Friday mornings for a Bible Study and Prayer. The goal of this time together is to minister to woman in need, and in particular, the Akathist is prayed together as we all ache for inner and outer healing.

Our church continues to be a part of a local organization called Interfaith Coalition. This organization provides support for those less fortunate in our community through healthcare, cold weather shelters, transitional and emergency housing and home visits with seniors. We will provide funds for them this spring to help with some of these projects. We also collected coats during the cold winter months which were distributed through Interfaith Coalition.

Our annual tradition of "soup night" will continue this year. We all look forward to the delicious soups Kh. Carol prepares. We enjoy this meal together after our Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Liturgies. The money collected for these meals will be our support to the Retired Clergy Fundraising effort.

We, the woman of St Innocent find it a great privilege to "*Serve Christ by serving others!*"

Sincerely,
Susan Swanson
President

St. John Climacus on joy in prayer:

"If, while you are praying, you feel inwardly moved, a certain joy, at some word or other, then dwell on it longer. It is a sign that our angel is then praying with us."

NAIL IN THE FENCE



There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His Father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say 'I'm sorry', the wound is still there. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one."

In this season of rejoicing for Christ's Three Day Resurrection, may we forgive each other the holes left by our words; let us seek peace and love in our homes and our Parishes.

Author unknown



Spring / Summer Calendar of Events and Reminders



May 13 - Happy Mother's Day to everyone!

Remember your Moms, Grandmas, Godmothers and Khouriyees.

June 1 - Deadline for NAB College Scholarship Applications

June 17 - Happy Fathers Day –

Remember your Dads, Grandpas, Godfathers and Clergy.

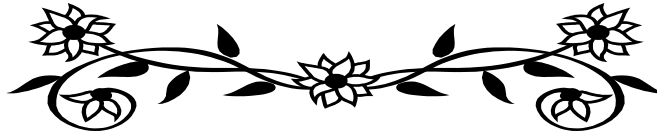
June 27 – July 1st - Family Life Conference – Portland, Oregon

- Elections for the Antiochian Women Board, contact Widad Tirazi if interested in any positions.
- Chapter dues should be paid in order to vote at this conference.

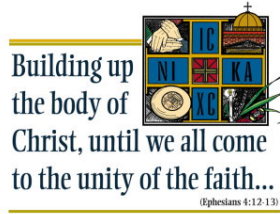
July 23 - 29 – Antiochian Archdiocese Convention – Montreal, Canada

Please remember Passports are now required to re-enter the USA!!!

November 9-11 - Northern California Diocesan Women's Retreat



Diocese of Los Angeles and the West Parish Life Conference



June 27–July 1, 2007

Keynote Speaker: Frederica Mathewes-Green

A banner with a yellow background and a dark border. On the left is a 3x3 grid of icons. To the right of the grid is the text: "The community of Saint Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church invites you to join us for the 48TH ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE CONVENTION Montreal, July 23 – 29, 2007 at Le Centre Sheraton in downtown Montreal".

The community of Saint Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church invites you to join us for the

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