

DIAKONIA



Fall 2007



Incoming and outgoing NAB officers and Coordinators and incoming Diocesan presidents wasted no time after their general assembly at the 2007 Archdiocese Convention to get together and plan their work for the 2007 - 2009 term.

*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 Right Reverend
Bishop JOSEPH
Overseeing Hierarch

NAB Board

V. Rev. John Abdalah, Spiritual Advisor

Officers:

Cindy Nimey President
Violet Robbat Vice-president
Kh. Terry Rogers Recording Secretary
Kh. Barbara Baz Treasurer
Lucy Hanna Public Relations

Laila Ferris Immediate Past President

Coordinators:

Elinor Bourjaily Parliamentarian
Samia Habib Humanitarian
Jamie Isaac Membership
Dianne O'Regan Religious
Kh. Helene Hajal Scholarship
Vera Bahbah Web Site
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.

Preferred Methods of Submission

- E-mail as an attachment to:
teta.of.9@sbcglobal.net
- Submit your article on a CD or floppy disk to Lucy Hanna, 1853 Kensington Road, Corona, CA 92880.
- FAX typed, double spaced articles to (951) 736-0800.

Submission Details

- Please include your name and the phone number where you can be contacted for questions.
- Attach a hard copy for reference.
- Keep a copy. Articles will not be returned. Photos will be returned if requested.

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.

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**".

Antiochian Women
North American Board

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



Dear 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 be elected for a second 2-year term to the office of NAB Public Relations Director at the general assembly of the Antiochian Women at the 48th Archdiocese Convention in Montreal, Canada this last July. 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. We will begin however, by introducing the North American Board in this issue.

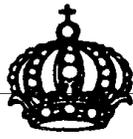
I look forward to hearing from all of you. Please send me articles, news, and information from your parishes and communities for publishing in any future issue regardless of which diocese you belong to (the schedule below is only for the introduction of the boards of each diocese). To be a true sisterhood, 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. The schedule of publication is as follows:

	Diocese	Date of Publication	Date Due
1	NAB Board	September 2007 ✓	Done ✓
2	Diocese of Charleston, Oakland, and the Mid-Atlantic and the Diocese of New York and Washington, D.C.	December 2007	November 1, 2007
3	Diocese of Los Angeles and the West and the Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest	March 2008	February 1, 2008
4	Diocese of Miami and the Southeast	June 2008	May 1, 2008
5	Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate NY	September 2008	August 1, 2008
6	Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest	December 2008	November 1, 2008
7	Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America	March 2009	February 1, 2009
8	Diocese of Worcester and New England	June 2009	May 1, 2009

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

Sincerely,
Lucy Hanna



THE CROSS IN OUR LIVES

The month of September being the month in which we celebrate the feast of the Elevation of the Precious and Life Giving Holy Cross, it is befitting to learn about the importance of the Cross in our lives.

Many heretics of our time don't believe in the cross, even if they may call themselves Christians. Some pop stars and actors wear the cross, but by the witness of their lives we can assume that they don't put much value in the cross except as an empty symbol. There is nothing new under the sun and there have always been accusation against our Church. In the second century, Christians were accused of practicing incest, of being cannibals, of being ignorant and of being bad citizens. The most dangerous accusation was that the Christian teaching was unreasonable. This idea purported that the incarnation was nonsense; God would not lower Himself to become a tiny baby or to be crucified as a common thief.

At the peak of these accusations was that Christians worshipped a crucified animal. In the excavation of the old city of Rome, a stone was discovered which pictured a crucified person, who had the head of a donkey. This picture was drawn to ridicule the Christians who worshipped someone who had been crucified.

In response to all these accusations, Christians pointed to the injustices. There were no secrets among Christians. Christians were good citizens and Christianity was a reasonable belief. The death of Christ was the supreme sacrifice! The cross is not just a symbol or piece of material in our life. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).

Without the Holy Cross of our Lord and deep understanding of our faith, we manifest the same accusations. 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.

Our prominent St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (AD 115), struggled to disprove and refute two contemporaries of the Christian faith:

1. Orthodox Judaizers, who were relapsing to the Old Testament thinking that Jesus was merely a prophet who was above passion and crucifixion. They found

the Old Testament a relaxing religion in which the cross did not exist.

2. The so-called Docetism, which asserted that Christ had not really come in the flesh and was not really crucified; He only appeared to be crucified.



These two heresies resisted Orthodoxy throughout the history of Christianity taking different forms. History reveals how foolish and scandalous the cross seemed to many religions; to Jews, Judaizers, Gentiles and Moslems.

These heretics still exist in our age because many are convinced that the prophets and the Son of God are above the punishment of crucifixion. To them, only condemned personas are affixed to the cross to await death. These tendencies were always disproved by the fact of Jesus' birth in the flesh and Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus' death on the cross marked the end of the Law of the Old Testament (Gal 3:13).

Jesus was lifted up on the cross as Moses lifted the serpent in the wilderness. What is this serpent which was lifted up by Moses? What is the meaning of the typology? If we go back to the Book of Numbers in the Old Testament, we will see that the people became impatient in the desert and that they spoke against God. Thus, the fiery serpent was sent among the people so that many of them died. These poisonous snakes were a kind of divine judgment on the people's rebellion against God. So, Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord told Moses to make a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. Everyone who was bitten when they saw it would live. This could be seen as spiritual testing; persecution, difficulty, trial. This whole process is one of self-denying.

Jesus used the symbol of the healing snake as representing His crucifixion and resurrection which heals us from death and sin. The verb "lifted up" has a double meaning. It refers to the cross of Jesus and to His glorification in His resurrection and ascension.

From His analogy, the crowd understood that Jesus spoke about His death, but for the masses of people, Messiah

and death were incompatible. When Jewish nationalism was on the rise, the expectation of a Messiah acquired political overtones. The people expected Jesus to be a national leader, a mighty king who would deliver the people from the Roman yoke and restore the earthly kingdom of Israel. The crowds and even the disciples that gladly listened to Jesus shared in the understanding of Messiah. They continued to hold these hopes until the very end. The people wanted Jesus to be a king who would not hesitate to use the sword for the realization of their nationalistic dreams.

Jesus predicted His death and He identified Himself with the suffering servant of Christ. When He predicted His death, Jesus pointed at the same time to His resurrection. The resurrection reveals what was achieved on the cross. St. Paul said: "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14).

Christ's death on the cross brought salvation (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:16) and hence, it was the basis for Christian hope. It is the sign of the supreme sacrifice and the resurrection; it signifies life rather than death.

Of course, we do not believe that the divinity of Jesus was crucified on the cross. Thus, we always make a distinction between the two questions "what?" and "who?" Who was crucified on the cross? The answer is Jesus Himself, the second person of the Trinity. What was crucified on the cross? Only the humanity of Jesus was crucified, not His divinity, because the divinity is above our reach. His divinity is unapproachable by human minds.

By His divinity He made the cross the sign of the new life. Our cross is through baptism and repentance. For this reason we become communicants of His cross by our baptism, life, struggle and suffering for the sake of Jesus. We cross ourselves all the time – before kissing an icon, when we pray, before we eat, to express the daily experience of the cross. It is the power of God! The cross to the unbelievers is foolishness, but to us believers it is the power of God. Every action of Christ, including all His working of miracles, was truly great and wonderful. But of all things the most wonderful is His honorable cross. For by nothing else, except by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, death has been brought low, death has been despoiled and resurrection bestowed. The power given us by the death of Christ, that is to say the cross has clothed us with the wisdom and power of God. This we have

been given as a sign on our forehead, just as Israel was given circumcision. For by it, we faithful are set apart from the skeptics and we are recognized apart from unbelievers.

So that honorable and most truly venerable cross, upon which Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for us, is itself to be adored because it has been sanctified by contact with His sacred body and blood. We have splinters of this most honorable wood as a relic because it touched the humanity and the sacred divinity of our Lord.

We also adore the likeness of the honorable and life giving Cross, even though it is made of another material. We do not honor the material, but the likeness as a symbol of Christ. We preach Christ crucified. Therefore, the sign of Christ in the Cross is to be adored, for wherever the sign may be, there He will be too. If the form of the cross should happen to be destroyed however, the material from which the cross was composed is not to be adored, even if it was of gold or precious stones. We honor the material as a sign of Christ, for wherever the sign is, Christ is there. We also

trace this sign upon our bodies and thereby bless ourselves. Thus we adore everything that has reference to God, although it is to Him that we direct the worship.

Deny yourself and carry your cross daily. To build a godly life you must understand the depth of carrying your cross daily. Read the Bible, but don't read the Bible by itself. Communicate with the person of Jesus! This is your life! Read the Bible slowly and carefully. Read it and pray it at the same time. The experience of Church is in the Bible! The life of the Church is in reading, living and praying altogether. Christ

remained silent when Pilot asked Him about the accusations against Him, because He presupposed that Pilot did not understand His theology. Silence has the greatest power to teach. It is the strongest defense. This kind of theology needs peace and silence. The Holy Theotokos kept silent. Protect your families by keeping silent. Carry your cross of poverty, sadness, agony, anxiety, despair or sickness. Carry your cross of the vices gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, negligence or pride. We must struggle and not give up. Give a word of encouragement. The same Grace is given to all in baptism and in communion. God can heal all. These crosses lead us to confusion, disillusion and pain, but His cross, the TRUE CROSS, leads us to joy and salvation.



Highlights from the NAB Summer Meeting and Luncheon

July 25, 2007

At the 48th Archdiocese Convention, Montreal, Canada

Le Centre Sheraton Hotel in beautiful downtown Montreal was the site of the 48th Archdiocese Convention.

The Summer Meeting of the North American Board of Antiochian Women convened on Wednesday, July 25. As always the meeting was opened with the Antiochian Women's Troparion and Prayer led by NAB Spiritual Advisor, Very Rev. Fr. John Abdalah. His Grace Bishop Antoun welcomed the ladies and thanked them for all their hard work on behalf of the Archdiocese and the Retired Clergy Fund.

NAB President Laila Ferris thanked everyone for being in attendance and for all their hard work, dedication and commitment on behalf of the Antiochian Women. She asked each diocesan president to stand and introduce herself and then announced that elections would be held later in the meeting for the 2007-2009 NAB officers.

Dianne O'Regan, NAB Secretary reported that the minutes of the 2007 NAB midwinter meeting at the Antiochian Village were previously mailed out to the Hierarchs and past NAB Presidents. All NAB officers and coordinators and Diocesan officers, coordinators and Spiritual advisors received them by email which has drastically cut down on postage expenses. The minutes were accepted unanimously.



Head tables, top row: Hierarchs and host pastor and his Khourieh
Front row: Outgoing Officers of the North American Board of the Antiochian Women 2005 - 2007

The financial report was presented by treasurer, Violet Robbat and approved unanimously. Copies of the report will be mailed or emailed to all.

Fr. John Abdalah deferred his presentation so that we could hear from a very special person who came from Greece, but is one of our own: Kh. Joanne Bitar's daughter, Sister Ignatia.

Sister Ignatia gave us a brief account of how she ended up where she is now. She had travelled to Greece in 2005 with OCF's Real Break Program to serve with a mission group for one week at a monastery. After this trip, she realized that the path she was taking in her life was not what she wanted. After a second trip to Greece she found herself opening up to the monastic way of life. Things were happening inside of her and she experienced a comfort and a sense of security that she had never felt before. It was clearly revealed to her that the monastery was a gift from God. She prays for all of us to be able to keep ourselves open and allow God to guide us and for us to be strong enough to fight pressures and



realize the power and the strength that we have inside of us that comes from our Heavenly Father. She asked for our prayers and invited all to visit her in Greece.

His Grace Bishop JOSEPH, who came in and was recognized during Sister Ignatia's presentation, then gave us his presentation. He welcomed Sister Ignatia and said that hers is the life of the Bible, the life of unity, community and Christianity. He then added, "It is a lot easier for some individuals to be in one place in a monastery, and he has lived that kind of life.



However, because we are sailing against the wind, we are choosing the life of the Cross in order to be in this society, to be among people and bring all people who praise the Lord together in one voice. It is not an easy thing to bring people from many places together, but thank God, we have been successful. We are in Montreal, from various parishes - clergy and laity and Bishops alike. This is a marvelous sign of community."

His Grace then thanked Laila Ferris, the NAB officers and coordinators, Fr. John Abdalah and the spiritual advisors of each Diocese for their hard work and ministry. "To have unity is something impossible in this very divisive life, but the Church is calling us to this type of life. To build unity, it is necessary to keep in mind that Jesus Christ is the reason for this unity. The more we stick with Him, the more we keep our eyes on Him, and the more we are the holy icons of Jesus Christ, the more we are united. We are united in the Holy Liturgy, in the Chalice. We are united in Jesus Christ. We do what He wants us to do. We raise money for the poor as a sign of love and we receive that love from our Lord." His Grace asked us as Antiochian Women to live a life of Jesus Christ and to make the right choices.

Following the luncheon, Vice President and NAB Project Coordinator Cindy Nimey thanked everyone for their hard work on the Retired Clergy Fund Project. She announced that the total for the 2007 NAB project was \$146,376.53 bringing the grand total for the last 3 years to over \$404,000 toward the \$500,000 Metropolitan PHILIP had challenged us with over a period of five years. A check for this year's amount was presented to Metropolitan PHILIP earlier during the luncheon.



Metropolitan PHILIP receives the check from outgoing president, Laila Ferris.

The complete minutes including the NAB officers and coordinators' reports and the diocesan reports will be mailed out.

After a few more discussions on several issues, Immediate Past President and Nominating Committee chairman, Marilyn Robbat conducted the election of the new officers for 2007-2009. The following women were elected:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| President | Cynthia Nimey |
| Vice-President | Violet Robbat |
| Recording Secretary | Kh. Terry Rogers |
| Treasurer: | Kh. Barbara Baz |
| Public Relations: | Lucy Hanna |



Left: Newly elected Antiochian Women president, Cindy Nimey receives the news of her election, and (below) outgoing president Laila Ferris passes the gavel to Cindy, while Metropolitan PHILIP approves with a clap and a smile.



Introducing The 2007 - 2009 North American Board

THE OFFICERS

The Rt. Rev. Bishop 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 the

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

His Grace was ordained to the Holy Diaconate while a student in Salonika, in December, 1976. Subsequently, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by His Beatitude, Patriarch IGNATIUS IV, at St. Mary Cathedral in Damascus in December, 1980. His election to the holy episcopacy 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. He served as the Patriarchal Assistant for several years, 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.

His Grace was elected by the Holy Synod of Antioch on January 24, 1995, to be an Auxiliary Bishop for the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North 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 North America.

Father John Abdalah - Spiritual Advisor



Father John Abdalah is the Dean of St. George Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh, PA, as well as the Dean of clergy of Western Pennsylvania. He is on the faculty of the Antiochian House of Studies, teaching Priestly Formation, and a founding member of the Orthodox Pastoral Counseling Institute of Pittsburgh.

Fr. John is also the editor of *The WORD* assisted by his wife, Kh. Joanne. He holds a Doctor of Ministry degree in Pastoral Care from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He has been our NAB Spiritual Advisor since 1997.

Cynthia Nimey - President



I was born and raised in Sauquoit, a little rural town outside of Utica, New York. I was a member of the local Roman Catholic church, attending Sunday school and a member of the cyo. I converted to Orthodoxy when I married my husband Richard (28 years) and have been a member of St. George

Orthodox Church since. We have three sons who are our pride and our joy, and we all work together in our family auto repair business.

My free time is spent serving on my church parish council, working with our Antiochian Women, and teaching Sunday school. I love to cook and spend time with family, and on most Sundays you will find lots of food and family at our house, all are welcome!

I am looking forward to serving as president of the Antiochian Women and want to make it an exciting term for all of the women serving as officers, and coordinators. It is a chance for us all to grow spiritually and work together for the success of our projects. Thank you to all of you for having confidence in me as your president.

Violet Robbat - Vice President



I 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 (currently St. John the Divine). My husband Richard and I are members of St. Mary Orthodox Church,

Cambridge, MA. We have two children, Michael (32) and Andrea (29).

At St. Mary's I have been an active member of the Women's Club, Bible Bowl Coach, 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 and Cultural Coordinator. I have served on the NAB level as Public Relations Director, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer.

I am a Special Education Instructional Assistant working with high school students who have learning disabilities and have also coached a Varsity Cheerleading Team for 25 years. Although not currently working in the field, I am a registered Cytologist of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists. I enjoy reading, traveling, gardening and embroidery among other things.

Kh. Barbara Baz - Treasurer/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.

Kh. Terry Rogers - Recording Secretary



I am a native Tennessean. Although I was born in Nashville we have lived approximately 25 miles south of there in beautiful, historic Franklin since 1985. Our parish is in Franklin and our current temple was built in there, in 1985 as well. I met Fr. Stephen our senior year of high school and we both graduated from

Memphis State University. We were married in 1973. My degree is in Early Childhood Education. I chose to stay at home with our three daughters until 1990, when I began teaching full-time. I currently teach second grade in a wonderful public school. I am a Master Teacher for Intel©, recognized as a SMART Technologies® Exemplary Educator and a Peer Educator for SMART®. I'm the webmaster for my school's website. I recently became a facilitator/trainer for Quantum Learning Network®. I serve as the webmaster for our parish's website and teach church

school. Our daughters have all grown up! Ashley married Dan Kevorkian from the St. George parish in Little Falls, N.J. and Katie married Adam Roberts from St. Elias in Atlanta. Rachel is an accomplished knitter and works for a cellular company. Father and I have 5 beautiful grandchildren. We are blessed!

Lucy Hanna - Public Relations Director



My family and I emigrated from Egypt in 1968. Together with my husband, Dr. Lotfy Hanna and our three children, we settled in Portland, Oregon, where we joined St. George Antiochian Church. Our son, Fr. Nabil Hanna, is the pastor of St. George Church of Indianapolis, IN; Our daughters, Suzy Hadeed and

Mary Thompson, both still live in Portland with their families. We are blessed with 9 beautiful grandchildren.

In 1986 my husband and I moved to California where we settled in Corona and attended St. Mark Church in Irvine and later, St. Luke in Garden Grove, when Fr. Nabil was assigned there as assistant pastor. In 1989, after the start of a new mission (now St. Andrew Church) closer to home in Riverside, we transferred our membership there.

On the local level, I have served as President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary of the Antiochian Women as well as on the Parish Council, Sunday School, Choir and more. On the Regional/Diocesan level, I have served as President (past and present), Vice President, Secretary, Religious Coordinator, Retreat Coordinator and Cultural Coordinator. On the NAB level I have served as PR Director (past and present) and Religious Coordinator.

Laila Ferris - Immediate Past President



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.

THE COORDINATORS

Samia Habib - Humanitarian



Born in Phoenix, Arizona, I grew up in Glendale, California. My 3 older brothers and I are first generation Lebanese-Americans. I began attending St. Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Los Angeles when I was about 7, and it has been my home parish ever since. I attended Sunday School, participated in Jr. Choir, Summer Camp and Teen SOYO. I met my husband, Greg Habib, at a church event and we were married April 28, 1974. We have two sons, Sub-Deacon Michael, a seminarian at St. Tikhon Orthodox Seminary and Episcopal Assistant to His Grace Bishop JOSEPH, and Gabriel. We have lived in Burbank since 1980, and I am now a Preschool Teacher at Laurel Hall Early Childhood Center in North Hollywood. I have been a member of our local chapter of the Antiochian Women since 1974, serving as Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Vice President of Membership, Antiochian Women Representative, and Chaplain. I started on the Diocesan Board (then Western Region) in 1994, and have served as Humanitarian and Membership Coordinator, Corresponding Secretary, Public Relations Director and President. I taught Church School for 30 years and have served on past committees for Conferences and Conventions, including our upcoming Parish Life Conference in 2008. I was a member and secretary of the S. California Deanery Committee on Marriage and Family, and I am an active Oblate of the Order of St. Benedict at St. Michael Orthodox Church, Whittier, CA. I earned a B.A. in English, a Secondary Teaching Credential at Cal. State University, L.A., and a Child Development Teacher Permit from L.A. Valley College.

Jamie Isaac - Membership

No photo or bio available

Dianne O'Regan - Religious



I am a convert to Orthodoxy, having been raised in the Roman Catholic Church. I have attended St. Michael the Archangel in Louisville, Kentucky for over ten years. I have been a Legal Assistant for over 25 years, working in the criminal, civil and corporate law fields. Since 1996 I have worked at the law offices of Stites & Harbison in Louisville. I also index and copy edit academic books for national publishing houses.

On the parish level, I have been a member of the St. Michael choir, perform both Slavic and Greek dances at the church's annual Ethnic Fair, and have served the local women's organization in various capacities. On the Diocesan level, I have held the offices of President, Recording Secretary and Public Relations Director, and as

the Historian for the Midwest Antiochian Women. On the NAB level I have served as Recording Secretary for 4 years. I love to read (with a fondness towards history), needlepoint and volunteer as a member of the Board of Directors for the Kentuckiana Shetland Sheepdog Club and for the Louisville Kennel Club. In 1991, I received my Bachelor of Arts degree (Summa Cum Laude) from the University of Louisville in Political Science with an Emphasis in Russian Studies.

Kh. Helene Hajal - Scholarship

(No photo available) My name is Helene Makhoul Hajal. I was born and raised in the most beautiful Country, Lebanon. I have been married to Archpriest Ghattas Hajal for over 41 years, and have been a Khouriyee for 30 years. We immigrated to Canada in May of 1990 to escape the vicious Lebanese war that we lived through for 16 years.

I am a proud mother of 3 children. Marlene who is a Pediatrician practicing in the United States, married to Cyril Mouaikel with 2 beautiful kids. My son Gabriel works in a financial firm and married to Nancy Gharib and they have a son. My youngest daughter Rose-Mary is a bank manager in Ottawa, married to Peter Malouf and they are the proud parents of 2 children. We are very blessed and very grateful to God for our beloved family. I work part time and help with fund raising events for our beautiful St. Elias Cathedral, Ottawa. I am a Choir Member and I attend all ladies' meetings. I have held a few offices in the Antiochian Women including president of the CAN/AM region, as well as Scholarship and Religious Coordinator. On the NAB level I served as Public Relations Director. I made many, many friends through the Antiochian Women of North America.

Elinor Bourjaily - Parliamentarian



Elinor Bourjaily was born and raised in Akron, OH. In 1950 she married Fred Bourjaily and moved to Cleveland, OH. They had two daughters and a son. Elinor is still very active her parish, St. Matthew Church in North Royalton, OH. She has held almost every office and is now a lifetime member of the Parish Council. On the Regional level she also held many offices including President and on the NAB level, Elinor also held many offices including President of NAB from 1989 to 1991. During her term, Elinor traveled the length and breadth of the Archdiocese, spreading the message of the Antiochian Women, and encouraging new chapters.

Vera Bahbah - Web Site

No photo or bio available

Message from the NAB Spiritual Advisor

The Antiochian Women organization was established by Metropolitan PHILIP to promote the ministries of women within our Archdiocese. As we look back, it is clear that the vision of our Metropolitan was planted in fertile ground. The women have ministered to God's people from both within and outside our Archdiocese in ways that only God would have been able to foresee. They have tackled women's health issues, poverty, homelessness, orphans needs, theological education and research, clergy retirement and family care, as well as promoting the spiritual and educational well being of their membership. NAB serves to keep the women informed of the activities and inspirations throughout our land. God has raised charismatic leadership open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The women of our Archdiocese are a sisterhood of faith. They share one world view, heritage and faith. They are people of commitment and action. This vine planted by Metropolitan PHILIP has shown itself to be luxurious and fruitful. My time with the Antiochian Women has been a blessing for me and I am honored to serve you as a spiritual advisor. Each year I look forward to seeing what the Holy Spirit will do with the Antiochian Women of our Archdiocese. This year is no exception. Blessings.

Fr. John Abdalah

Message from the NAB President

Dear Sisters in Christ,

It is an honor to serve as President of the North American Board Antiochian Women. I have enjoyed getting to know so many of you, and I'm excited to meet more of you as I serve for the next few years.

During the next two years I would like to focus on helping the missions and smaller parishes learn who the Antiochian Women are, and what we do. We need to reach out to them personally and help them feel that they belong to the Antiochian Women, not only in their parish organization, but in their diocese as well. We have so many resources to share with them to help organize groups if they don't have one and help strengthen the ones they have. Every chapter is important and vital to our organizations success and future. There are a lot of talented women among us who need to know that we welcome them to share those talents with us to help the Antiochian Women do what they do best; "serving Christ through serving others".

With this in mind I encourage each diocesan president and her officers to personally reach out to a parish currently not participating and see what it is that they need. Invite them to a fall delegates meeting in your diocese, bring them to a meeting at the Antiochian Village or visit them in their home parishes, let them know that as a counterpart we care about them and want their input to help us as the North American Board serve them more efficiently. We are here to help each other please let your needs and those of others be heard so we can work together to be successful.

We continue to work toward our \$500,000 goal for the Retired Clergy Housing Allowance Project. How wonderful to know that we are helping to increase the funds available to our retired clergy as they retire from lifelong vocations of commitment to serving the needs of our parishes.

I wish you all well as summer comes to an end and we return to our busy schedules and multi tasking lives. Let us 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."*

In His Service,
Cindy Nimey

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.

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE
FORTHCOMING FROM OUR
PRESIDENT CINDY NIMEY
AS SHE RECEIVES IT.

THOSE WHO NEED TO MAKE
FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS
HOWEVER, CAN BE CERTAIN OF
THOSE DATES.



*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America
North American Board*

Lucy Hanna
1853 Kensington Road
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