



THE MOST REVEREND
 METROPOLITAN JOSEPH
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ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN PHILIP – FOUNDER

✧ A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS ✧

✧ DIOCESE OF NEW YORK & WASHINGTON DC
 DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON, OAKLAND & THE MID-ATLANTIC ✧

◆ PRESIDENT ◆



November 23, 2017

Dear Reverend Fathers and Beloved Sisters in Christ,

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

I pray that you and your families are well as we continue the advent season looking forward to the birth of Christ, the only son of God, born of the Virgin Mary. May Jesus Christ bring to all of you good health and peaceful lives.

My name is Rula Osama Khoury and I attend St. George Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On June 29, 2017 at Parish Life Conference, in Morristown, New Jersey hosted by St. George Church of Little Falls, I was elected as the new president for the Antiochian Women of the East (AWE). AWE consists of the Diocese of New York and Washington, D.C., led by His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, and includes 15 churches and missions and the Diocese of Charleston, Oakland, and the Mid-Atlantic, led by His Grace Bishop THOMAS, and includes more than 30 churches and missions. Please see my attached biography.

I am honored to serve you as your new president first foremost with the help from God and with the support of our AWE Executive Board. We are also blessed to have the Very Reverend Father Don Shadid continue as our Spiritual Advisor. The AWE Executive Board members include:

- Rula Osama Khoury, President
- Angela Saliby, Vice President
- Khouria Loukia Dixon, Secretary
- Khouria Rima Zafaran, (re-elected as Treasurer)
- Maria Koropsak, Religious Coordinator
- Hope Sabbagh, Humanitarian Coordinator
- Pam Hennawi, Membership Coordinator
- Nancy Tentzeras, Social Media Coordinator

We are still in need of a Public Relations Coordinator. Please reach out to me if the Holy Spirit moves you to volunteer. Enclosed is the new Roster 2017-2019; please feel free to contact us.

I am blessed to already know many of you. One of my goals is to meet as many of the clergy and women from your parishes as possible during my term in office. We have so much to share and learn from each other while building stronger relationships among the Antiochian Women of our dioceses. One of the ways for us to build relationships is to take the opportunities we have to come together in fellowship. Another way for us to get to know more about each other is through our Diocesan Newsletter that is published twice a year – one before Advent and one before Pascha. Articles are welcomed on an endless variety of topics, from describing a special ministry team in your parish, visiting a monastery, submitting personal reflections, or sharing the activities of the women of your parish. Submissions for the spring 2018 newsletter may be sent to our Membership Coordinator, Pam Hennawi, before April 1, 2018.

Now that the new church year has arrived, it is also time for annual dues to be submitted. Our dues serve multiple purposes. A portion is sent to the Antiochian Women North American Board (NAB), and a portion

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remains in our Dioceses. In both cases these funds cover both good works of the Antiochian Women (donations for mission priests and gifts for priests' widows and for seminarians, etc) as well as administrative costs incurred. Attached is a letter from our Treasurer, Khouria Rima Zafaran, with more information and a form to return with your dues payment.

Each year the Antiochian Women of our archdiocese are given a project by our Metropolitan. The Project for 2017-2018 will focus on Vocations, strengthening the Ministries of the Church. This includes, the youth, the priesthood and monastics, teaching ministries, music ministry, service ministry and more. Khouria Suzanne Murphy, NAB Vice-President & Project Coordinator, sent a letter in October with complete packets to each parish. Additionally, a full explanation of the project, along with posters and bulletin inserts, can be found on the Archdiocese web page. AWE Vice President and Project Coordinator, Angela Saliby, will follow up with the churches within our two dioceses. Project donations are due no later than May 1, 2018. A donation check made payable to the Antiochian Women of the East and should be mailed directly to the AWE Treasurer, Khouria Rima Zafaran (see enclosed attachment). Please be aware that all the funds collected for this project will be tallied and then forwarded directly to the NAB by the AWE treasurer. A check for the total monies collected from all the dioceses is presented to Metropolitan JOSEPH at the Summer Meeting. **Please do not mail your check to the NAB or to anyone else.**

We hope the following information enables the Antiochian Women in your parishes to make plans and set goals for the coming months. Please mark your calendars:

- **2018 Mid-Winter Meeting** will be held February 16-18, 2018, at the Antiochian Village Conference Center, in Bolivar Pennsylvania. Additional information will follow in few months regarding reservations and meeting schedule.
- **Annual Lenten Retreat** will be held at the Antiochian Village Conference Center, March 23-25, 2018. Our guest speaker, Father Paul Mater, will talk about Life after Death. The retreat will be in memory of Khouria Stephanie Yazge. Please share this information with your Orthodox sisters who are all welcome to join us for this enriching and rejuvenating weekend. See enclosed attachment for reservations and Schedule.
- **Eastern Dioceses 2018 Parish Life Conference** June 27-July 1, 2018, will be held at the Antiochian Village Heritage & Learning Center, Bolivar, PA and hosted by St. Philip (Souderton, PA); St. George (Upper Darby, PA) & Holy Ascension (West Chester, PA) Churches. In addition to services and classes, you will have an opportunity to visit and venerate the resting place of St Raphael of Brooklyn.

Finally, as I mentioned at the beginning of this letter, one of my focus areas is to build stronger relationships among the Antiochian Women of our dioceses. I understand that women's groups in our parishes have different names including fellowship groups, ladies society, Martha & Mary groups, Hamelat El teeb, Myrrh Bearing Women, just to name a few, but as members of this God protected Antiochian Archdiocese, it is an important to remember, that we are all Antiochian Women.

Please email me any updates in the contact information of your organization at: aweorthodox1973@gmail.com. Please call me with questions or feedback concerning the Antiochian Women in our dioceses. I can be reached by phone at 724-799-1820 or via email. I look forward to serving you in any way I can.

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Your sister in Christ,

Rula Osama Khoury