

35
Years of Service

**Antiochian Women
Of North America**

1973 - 2008



DIAKONIA

Fall 2008



The Antiochian Women with His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP during a tour of the Museum at the Antiochian Village, Summer Meetings, July 2008.

**This issue of DIAKONIA highlights the Diocese of
Ottawa Eastern Canada and Upstate New York**

*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

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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 Word or Publisher attachment to:
teta.of.9@sbcglobal.net
NO PDF FILES PLEASE
- FAX typed, double spaced articles to (951) 736-0800.
- Mail hard copy to Lucy Hanna, 1853 Kensington Rd, Corona, CA, 92880

Submission Details

- Please include your name and the phone number where you can be contacted for questions.
- Hard 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 Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York.

In each issue we highlight ONE of the Dioceses. We encourage everyone however, to submit news, photos and articles from all Antiochian parishes of North America for publication in every issue. Please see back cover for the schedule of publication.

Remember that if YOU don't submit it, I cannot print it.



Beloved in Christ, the Antiochian Women of North America:

As the summer draws to a close, perhaps this would be a good time to consider how we spent it. For many in this day and age, summer usually means 'vacation.' I must admit, my parents never took a vacation, and so I was raised without such a concept. Yes, our family occasionally travelled, but it was either to see relatives or make a pilgrimage to a holy place.

My parents never took a vacation from their roles as parents, as farm owners or, most importantly, from Christianity. They never dreamt of not going to church for the Divine Liturgy just because they were travelling. For them, a necessary part of any happy journey would be the opportunities to worship in different places and experience God's grace even while far from home.

This is not just my family tradition, but this was the tradition of our ancestors. I believe that all of us, no matter where we came from, were we to trace our families back a few generations, would find that 'vacations' of the sort we enjoy now, were rare. Most people a few hundred years ago never journeyed more than a day's walk from their homes.

And so now we have the question: have our vacations made our lives any easier? Do we not come home to the same stress and mess that we left behind, perhaps with a bit more added to the pile, as we 'catch up' on what was neglected? Sure, a vacation offers a 'distraction' from our woes, but it brings us no closer to any solution to our suffering and stress.

Vacations ought to offer us a time to step back from our turmoil so that we can come closer to a solution. This is why the most edifying form of travel is the pilgrimage. Why? Surely, pilgrimages often are hard journeys to remote places, nothing at all like laying on a beach. Yet, they bring man closer to God, Who is the source of all blessings and peace.

When we make a pilgrimage, we undergo a process by which we see that there is more to the world than our petty concerns for wealth, prestige and comfort. We see that God is everywhere, both near and far. We also see that time is an illusion: pilgrimages bring us back into connection with the greater path of time, since places of pilgrimage remind us that we are just a brief moment in time. Our concerns and woes will soon be forgotten once we have been put to our graves.

I am not against vacations, but I am against vacations where people leave their prayer books at

home and refuse to make an effort to build themselves up spiritually. I am against vacations where people refuse to attend the Sunday liturgy because they are 'resting.' How is it that you rest from worship but not from food? Do you not go on vacation and richly dine? If part of vacationing is sumptuous dining, you should also feast even more on the Heavenly Bread of God for which you have sought. What is more important to you: a rib-eye steak or the Holy Eucharist?

I say these things out of love for you all, because I know it is hard not to be caught up in the tumult of this world and to lose sight of what is real and true. God's love and care for us are real, commercials are not. The power of eternal life in our Lord Jesus Christ is real, while even the richest man still goes to his grave naked and helpless.

My sincere hope is that all of you will think more about the spiritual journey you are on and consider your vacation plans as times to depart from daily cares and draw closer not only to your families, but also to God. Is there really anything stopping a family from gathering for a morning prayer before going about the day's recreation? Is there anything stressful or debilitating about taking the family to an Orthodox church in a place you've never been before?

You can turn your vacations into pilgrimages, taking time not only to enjoy recreational activities but also to explore the wide and diverse traditions of the Church. Many of our young people find that mission trips during their 'spring break' are far better than engaging in the hedonism and wickedness in which the world encourages them to partake. They are happier and more secure because they have drawn closer to God.

If not for your own sakes, then at least for the sake of your children, make your vacations more spiritually enriching. They will surely benefit, just as I am sure you will as well.

Yours in Christ,

+ JOSEPH

Bishop of Los Angeles and the West





September Reflections by His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER



Every year as the month of September approaches, I am reminded of an Italian song from years past that began in what is translated into English “Melancholy, in September”. Of course there was a lot to be melancholic about in September. It was the month when autumn started, leaves fell and schools reopened after the long

summer vacation. For those of us who lived in Lebanon where, in those days, schools started in October, there was no doubt that the countdown for school began in September. However, contrary to the melancholic mood that the song proclaimed, September was a beautiful month in Lebanon. The climate remained warm so we could still go to the beach. There were also several activities to look forward to, especially for those of us who spent the summer in our villages. Our neighboring town of Fi’h ushered in the month with a big festival in honor of St. Simeon (Mar Sima’an), the town’s patron saint. Then there was the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos preceded by pilgrimages to the Monastery in Saidnaya (Syria). Soon after came the Feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross which began with bonfires and fireworks and ended with the Divine Liturgy. Finally there was the wheat harvest and the festivities associated with it.

The point of all this was that our lives were filled with anticipation. Throughout the entire year, that anticipation carried us from one feast to another and the truth was for us kids, that it made the school year go faster or, perhaps, it seemed like it did.

In this day and age, many of us have lost this sense of anticipation. Our lives are not centered any more around the church or the community but instead around the countless activities that society offers. We

are always in a hurry to do this or that. The sad part is that we are raising our children in this atmosphere of constant activity and rush. Seldom do we take time out to celebrate God and family.

For us Orthodox Christians, September is the beginning of the ecclesiastical year. The church year is bedecked with the twelve great feasts of both Christ and His Mother and studded in between with the feasts of the saints. This is designed to leave us in constant anticipation. One that carries us from one feast to another throughout the entire year. It provides us with spiritual continuity and dispels emptiness.

With every feast we have church services and beautiful prayers that enrich our spiritual lives. There is no need for us to become depressed after Christmas if we look forward to Epiphany, Great Lent and Easter. With every feast we also have our traditions that we look forward to and hold very dear. From sweetened wheat for the feast of St. Barbara, to gift-giving and glorious food for Christmas, to fried dough for Epiphany, and the list goes on. However, we must be careful not to cling to the traditions and forget the real meaning behind the feast.

I would hope that this September we can make an Ecclesiastical New Year resolution to re-center our lives around the church and her Christ and to bring back to our lives this long lost sense of anticipation which will not only carry us through the year but ultimately to the Kingdom of God.

May God bless the Antiochian women for their thirty-five years of service for our church in North America. We, in the Diocese of Eastern Canada and Upstate New York, are especially proud to have Cindy Nimey, Kh. Barbara Baz and Kh. Helen Hajal on the North American Board. I wish to take this opportunity to thank them for their contribution on the NAB level and to thank all our ladies on the local level who work tirelessly to support their churches. Many years to all!

Dear Sisters and Spiritual Fathers,

This year's Parish Life Conference, Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York was a record success. We have 11 Canadian churches, and 8 U.S. Churches that comprise our diocese. We had a record turn-out for the Ladies Meetings. What a great time we had -- in and out of the meetings, really connecting on a number of key issues, and socializing as well. We sincerely thank the NAB President Cindy Nimey, for her support and for coming from Utica for the day. We are very proud of Cindy, and that she heralds from our Diocese. As well, Barbara Baz, NAB Treasurer from Syracuse, was on hand to lend us her knowledge and experience, and seasoned Kh. Helene Hajal, NAB Scholarship.....all three ladies past presidents of the Antiochian Women of our Diocese.

Here are some highlights of our meetings:

1. Our Diocese will contribute \$500 to the North American Board Scholarship fund this year, to award an additional NAB scholarship, on behalf of our Region.
2. Kh. Suzanne Murphy, thank you for making time to represent our Diocese at the summer meetings.
3. Our Religious Coordinator Faye Thomas told us about the book The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren and how it can be used as a base for stimulating discussions. We would like to talk about this book at our Fall Delegates Meeting in Brockville, Oct. 24, 2008.). The Ottawa gals have organized and invited everyone to an evening with Khouria Frederica Mathews Green, the following Saturday in Ottawa. She is speaking on the Virgin Mary, followed by Vespers and Dinner
4. Three new Missions are St. Ignatius (Fr. David Scott) in St. Catherine's, and St. John the Baptist in Laval (Fr. Elie Touma), and Christ the Savior in Kitchener/Waterloo with Fr. Christopher Rigden Briscall who moves to Waterloo from Vancouver, BC. Welcome!!!
5. After lunch, a stimulating discussion led by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Alexander centered on:
 - a) How we can attract new members

b) How we can become more spiritual and less fundraising

c) How to unite the *entire parish* in fundraising

All three of these topics overlapped. A lively discussion ensued with Bishop Alexander leading, and various priests inputting. The Ladies present were really candid about how difficult it is to attract new members if there is too much focus on cooking and fundraising. Kh. Donna Smith pointed out that it is a balance, like the Scales of Justice, the story of Mary sitting at Jesus' feet and Martha busy in the kitchen - both are needed, to be prayerful, yet resourceful. Bishop Alexander suggested a Festival or Bazaar as a way of uniting all the organizations to work together. Fr. Antony Gabriel said it would be very helpful to have all heads of the organizations meet in Sept. and for the Parish Council to present the Budget. Each organization can work together to meet the needs of the Parish, not only the Ladies should be responsible, but for everyone to work together as a community. It was a heart to heart talk and from the positive emails I received, I think everyone was really encouraged to see they are not alone in trying to recruit new members or the feeling of being tired of fundraising. This is precisely the purpose of these Conferences, to share our problems and come up with creative solutions. I think we all left with a feeling of solidarity and encouragement.

It is a great idea to have that meeting in the fall with the Heads of all the Organizations....outlining the financial goals and how they will be met, and then to concentrate on spiritual enrichment. Our Spiritual Advisor Fr. Iskandar spoke of how important it is to be fed spiritually. He reflected that, at the river yesterday at the Monastery, he saw the small pebbles being tossed about, but the big rocks stood firm. We should all try to be strong like the big rocks in this river of life. It was such a beautiful Conference. The Church Services and heavenly music by the combined choirs, were so melodious and peaceful.

Fall greetings to all.

Thank you to Lucy Hanna for the phenomenal job on the Diakonia.

Love,

Janice Saba

President of Ottawa Diocese

THE ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN CELEBRATE 35 YEARS OF SERVICE



At a special luncheon held at the Antiochian Village on Saturday, July 26, the Antiochian Women of North America celebrated 35 years of service to this blessed Archdiocese. During the luncheon, all the past presidents of the Antiochian Women, including those who are no longer with us, were honored. Pictured left with His Eminence are Past Presidents Laila Ferris, Marilyn Robbat, Laraine Mahshie and Eleanor Kinan, as well as ruling president, Cindy Nimey.

During the luncheon, President Cindy Nimey presented His Eminence with a check for \$147,551.52 representing the amount raised this last year for the Retired Clergy Fund Project. More monies were still coming in and were to be sent to the Metropolitan as soon as they came in.

Cindy also presented His Eminence with a check for \$500 as a gift on the occasion of the anniversary of the Antiochian Women Organization which he founded 35 years ago. His Eminence then graciously donated the amount to the Retired Clergy Fund Project. Thus, in four years we have exceeded the goal (which was to raise \$500,000 in five years), by over \$53,000.

In light of that, the Antiochian Women, with the blessing of His Eminence, have adopted a new project: to raise \$150,000 over the next year for the "Al-Kafa'at" Foundation. More on the new project in the next issue of DIAKONIA - December, 2008.

Metropolitan PHILIP thanked the women and said, "In all my travels to the parishes from around the Archdiocese, the women were the most dedicated among all the membership. If anyone wants to write the history of my Episcopacy, I would be satisfied if all they write is 'Metropolitan PHILIP established the Antiochian Women Organization'. You are my legacy". You are my legacy. There is synergy between you and God. You are an extension of the work of God. I thank God for you. May the souls of our departed sisters who are no longer with us rest in peace, and may God grant long life and blessings to all the Antiochian Women throughout the Archdiocese".

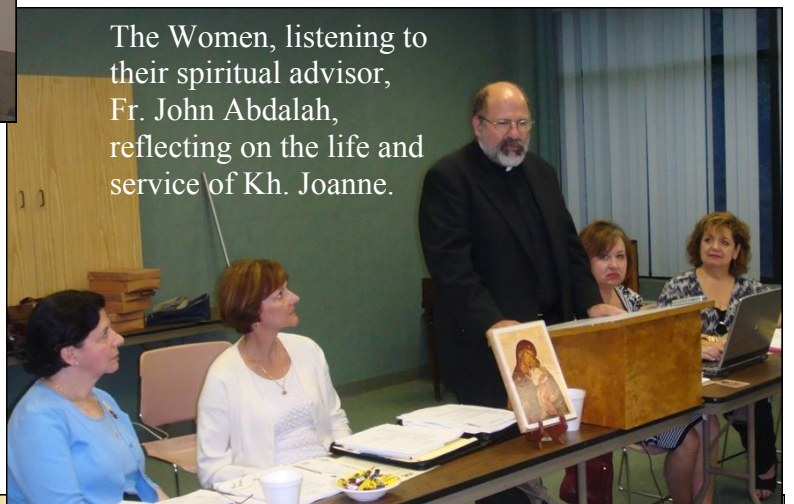


*Metropolitan PHILIP receiving the Project check from
Cindy Nimey at the AW 35th Anniversary Luncheon*

Antiochian Women listening attentively to Museum Curator, Julia, during a guided tour. They were later joined by H.E. Met. PHILIP, Bp. ANTOUN and Archdeacon David Nimer.



The Women, listening to their spiritual advisor, Fr. John Abdalah, reflecting on the life and service of Kh. Joanne.



Bible Bowl winning team from Holy Myrrhbearing Mission, Bonners Ferry, Idaho, with their pastor and coach, Fr. Gregory Horton.



"And the winner is: Participant number 7, Cameron Close".
(who happened to be the only boy!!)



2008 NAC Oratorical participants in a group photo with the Hierarchs and Peter Samore, Festival organizer. They are listed in order of presentation.

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Diocese</u>
1. Jordan Schaefer	St. John, Post Falls, ID	Los Angeles
2. Karol Samman	St. Mary, Montreal, PQ	Ottawa/Upstate NY
3. Sarah Saba	St. George, Little Falls, NJ	NY/Charleston
4. Annie Bashara	St. Mary, Livonia, MI	Toledo
5. Eugenia Malioukova	St. Philip, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Miami
6. Raquel Haddad	St. Michael, Beaumont, TX	Wichita
7. Cameron Close	St. John, Dedham, MA	Worcester

**Introducing
The 2007 - 2009
Board of the Antiochian Women of the
Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York**

OFFICERS AND COORDINATORS

The Rt. Rev. Bishop ALEXANDER - Diocesan Bishop



His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER was consecrated to the Holy Episcopacy on December 5, 2004. His consecrating bishops included His Beatitude IGNATIUS IV at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Damascus, Syria. He was enthroned as the first Diocesan Bishop of Ottawa, Eastern Canada, and Upstate New York at St. Elias Cathedral in Ottawa on June 12, 2005.

Bishop ALEXANDER served as priest of St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church in Hunt Valley, Maryland from 2000-2004.

Bishop ALEXANDER was born into an Orthodox Christian family in north Lebanon in 1956. He attended Tripoli Boys' School and after passing the Lebanese Baccalaureates I and II, he enrolled in the American University in Beirut. Due to fighting in Lebanon, he was unable to continue his education there and instead moved to the U.S. to attend the University of North Texas. He graduated with a B.A. in 1978 and an MBA in 1980. He returned to Lebanon, where he worked from 1981 to 1985 for a company that imported raw materials for factories.

In October 1985, he returned to the U.S. and found work as a supply manager at Prince George's Hospital in the Washington, D.C. area. After eight years in that job, he worked for a local company that exported medical supplies to the Middle East and then in 1995 was hired by Federated Stores to work as a sales associate for Bloomingdale's in Rockville, Maryland. While there, he wrote to Metropolitan PHILIP requesting his blessing to enter seminary. He was directed to attend St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York, from which he graduated in 2000.

Bishop ALEXANDER was ordained to the Diaconate on January 9, 2000 and to the priesthood on April 9, 2000. He was elevated to the Archimandrite on July 4, 2004. Bishop ALEXANDER's name day is August 30 (St. Alexander, Archbishop of Constantinople).

V. Rev. Iskander Younes - Spiritual Advisor

No photo or bio submitted.

Janice Saba - President



I grew up in Los Angeles, California at St. Nicholas Cathedral, and was involved in the church all my life. I won the First National Oratorical Contest in 1970 at the Chicago Convention, and my son Tom won the National Contest about 30 years later at the Village!

I met my husband George Saba at the 1972 Archdiocese Convention in Los

Angeles, and we wrote for 2 years (no email then). The next convention in 1974 was in Montreal and I really loved the city! We were married in 1976 after I finished Law School at Pepperdine University. We have four wonderful kids – Marie is married to Joe Zogaib whom she met at the College Conferences, and they make their home in Ann Arbor Michigan with their precious son Luke, 1 year old. Joy married Elias Hajjar (met also at College Conferences) and they make their home with 1 year old Rosie, in Perrysburg, Ohio. The Hajjars are known all over the Midwest for their great Arabic restaurants!

Yep, 2 weddings in one summer and 2 babies in one summer! Since we do everything in 2's – my twins Tom and Kathy (26 years old) are both in the medical profession. Tom is a Pediatric Resident at Montreal Children's Hospital, and Kathy is an Oncology Nurse at the Jewish General in Montreal. The kids have been my whole life - following them up the chain as a Church School Teacher, Teen Soyo local then regional Advisor, and I have been proud to be affiliated with the Ladies in various NAB and Diocesan positions over the years. We are very active at St. George, Montreal. I work in the world of high school education, and have been supply teaching for 20 years. It's always an adventure. My husband George is very supportive, patient, long-suffering and kind. He has to be, to be married to me, I never sit still. I love people, especially love my Antiochian Women sisters all over the continent. I love to entertain, cook, swim, play piano, and spoil my grandkids.

Saloma Tannis- Vice President/NAB Project

No Photo submitted. Saloma Tannis was born in Sayda, Lebanon and attended the American Anglican School in Sayda. She moved to Beirut with her family in 1969 where she attended El Nahda Protestant School, then finished her education in French and immigrated to Canada after the passing away of her father, in August 1976. She was raised Catholic but converted to Orthodoxy when she married her husband Theodore Tannis. They have four children, Christine, Bernadette, Matthew, and Theodore Jr. She is a member of St. Elias Cathedral in Ottawa, a stay home mother, member of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch, volunteer at the Church Office and the summer camp and loves to bake Holy Bread for Communion.

Susanne Zeidan - Treasurer/Scholarship



As a long time parishioner of St. Elias Cathedral in Ottawa, I grew up in a strong Orthodox environment. At 15, my father arrived in Canada and brought with him a strong Orthodox base. As we grew up in Ottawa, I remember so clearly attending Sunday School, picnics, and many Feast Day celebrations, especially for our patron Saint Elias. My mother converted to Orthodoxy when she married, and I believe because she was not Lebanese, my father ensured we, as children, knew our heritage. Because of this, we traveled to Lebanon many times as children.

I met my husband in Ottawa about 6 months after he graduated in Engineering from Ottawa University. He had moved to Ottawa from Lebanon, and my parents were in the process of retiring in Lebanon, therefore, it only made sense for us to go to Lebanon to get married. We were married by an Archbishop and upon our return to Canada, we continued to attend St. Elias Church where my husband, Dimitri and I have been involved in the operations of the Church and Organizations. We were on the committee to consecrate our Cathedral in 2000, and to welcome our New Bishop to the Diocese.

I have been an active member of the Antiochian women for many years, and have held many offices. As a family, we have attended many of the Parish Life and Archdiocese Conferences. Our 3 children, two in University, Krista and Marcus, and our eldest Katya, another graduate of Engineering at Ottawa University, are all involved in Church life. They are Camp Counselors at Camp Transfiguration, and belong to many of the Church organizations. Katya is the coordinator of the Evening Program for the Summer Camp at the Antiochian Village this year, 2008.

It has been an honor to serve as Treasurer, and getting to know the women of our Archdiocese. It feels natural to be part of this wonderful Parish, we receive so much encouragement and love from Abouna Hajal and Kh. Helene. We have been Blessed.

Faye Thomas - Recording Secretary/Religious



I am a parishioner of St. Elias Cathedral in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. I am a convert to Orthodoxy. I was married in the Orthodox Church in 1976 and after six years of learning about Orthodoxy I decided to convert. My Roman Catholic background had taught me about Christianity, but what impressed me the most about the Orthodox faith was how I learned about the LOVE OF GOD—it still amazes me to this day. I am a Church School teacher and a member of the Antiochian Women. I am constantly learning about our one true Orthodox faith and feel privileged to belong to it. I am the mother of four children and 2 grandchildren. I never realized how much joy grandchildren could bring into one's life. For those of you who have not yet experienced this joy—it truly is wonderful!

Kh. Tracey Allen - Public Relations Director/Website/ Immediate Past President



I've had my profile published in the Diakonia previously so instead, let me share with you a little about my trip to Lebanon and Syria. It was a trip of a lifetime. Father and I went for the wedding of Mary Bassett to Fahd El Kouri and stayed for a visit. We toured and stayed at a number of churches and monasteries including Sinai and experienced the wonders of the icon painted by St. Luke, as sung in the Parakelis service. We visited St. Thecla and drank the holy water. And we climbed the long and steep mountain to visit the monks of Hamatoura – we were praying all the way that we would make it to the top then sang all the way down. Spiritually it was wonderful but the beauty of the countries was more than we ever expected, the food was beyond delicious, simple but very fresh. Finally, it is the people of Lebanon and Syria that made our trip so wonderful. The villages were so welcoming and showed true community.

Kh. Jane Solberg - Membership (No info submitted)

Taylor Lafromboise - Humanitarian (No info submitted)

The following article was originally published by Orthodox **DYNAMIS** on August 15, 2008 and reprinted here with permission. **DYNAMIS** is a daily Bible meditation based upon the lectionary of the Holy Orthodox Church. **DYNAMIS** is a project of the Educational Committee of St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral in Wichita, Kansas. **DYNAMIS'** Web-site is free: To obtain any of their meditations for the current month or for the last twelve months, or for questions concerning Orthodoxy or editorial comments, contact their editorial address: dynamis@dynamispublishings.org Web Site: www.dynamispublishings.org

DISTRACTIONS

Distractions: St. Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28, especially vs. 40: "...Martha was distracted with much serving...." The Evangelist Luke describes the Lord Jesus enjoying hospitality from His friends Martha and Mary: Martha is busy serving her guests, but becomes exasperated with Mary who is not helping her. Our Lord then teaches about the pitfall of losing focus while serving - this from Him Who exalted service to His future Apostles: "whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all." He points out that "...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mk. 10:43-45). How easy it is to be "distracted with much serving," fall prey to the tyranny of the urgent, forget one's purpose, and shift focus from the Lord to one's self.

The fact is that Martha, in welcoming the Lord into her home, fulfilled the royal law of hospitality, a practice highly valued as a worthy act of piety among the peoples of the Middle East. The great Patriarch Abraham entertained the Lord God Himself in the theophany of the three Angels (Gen. 18:1-8). Extending welcome to travelers and strangers remains an esteemed act of piety (Ex. 2:20; Jdgs. 6:18). And the Lord Jesus honored hospitality by blessing those who offered Him the comfort of their homes (Mt. 9:10; Lk. 19:7; Jn. 2:2).

Martha's problem was not serving, but being "distracted by much serving" (Lk. 10:40). A danger in worthwhile activity is letting that which seems to be urgent crowd out the truly important matters of life. The telephone, email, fax machines, and other means of rapid communication breach the walls of our homes with constant and sometimes imperious demands. Who does not know the reality of piles of unanswered mail, unread books, prayerless days, and sleepless nights - all because of allowing oneself to become a slave to the urgent?

Martha's shift in priorities became evident by the manner in which she appealed to the Lord Jesus. She scolds: "Don't You care?....tell her to help me!" (Lk.

10:40). The pressure of "the urgent" transformed Martha's service into self-service. Was she most concerned about the Lord and His teaching or herself as a hostess? What motivated Martha? Was it the chance to be "a slave to all," or her own concerns with the tasks of providing hospitality singlehandedly? St. Theophan the Recluse points out how easily we can succumb to pleasing ourselves: the self "seeks its own comfort and pleasure in all its doing, even the most righteous and spiritual, and secretly and lustfully feeds on it as though it were food."



Our gracious Savior and Lord corrects Martha, but also He warns us. He indicates the best way in the situation. He calls attention to Mary's choice of "...that good part, which will not be taken away from her" (Lk. 10:42). Notice in the Lord's comment that Mary "chose" to sit at His feet and to hear His word (Lk. 10:39, 42). If we are too quick to heed the urgent, we are apt to succumb to its insistent voice! Be watchful of little momentary demands that pester you for attention. When we allow the urgent to tyrannize, we void our freedom in the Lord and give away the power He graciously bestows upon us to live for His glory.

Always, to choose the living word of the Lord is the "best part," because in so doing, He remains our highest priority. He continues to be the center of life, and the One we actually serve - no matter the task at hand. St. Theophan offers a suggestion: to keep peace in our hearts when affliction and urgency would disturb us, incline the will toward "God's will itself, then wish it and do it, but only because God wishes it...only for His glory alone."

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doing with Thy most gracious favor, that in all our works, begun, continued and ended in Thee, we may, by Thine aid, serve and glorify Thee alone.

A pastor had been on a long flight between church conferences. The first warning of the approaching problems came when the sign on the airplane flashed on: **Fasten Your Seat Belts.**



Then, after a while, a calm voice said, 'We shall not be serving the beverages at this time as we are expecting a little turbulence. Please be sure your seat belt is fastened.'

As the pastor looked around the aircraft, it became obvious that many of the passengers were becoming apprehensive.

Later, the voice on the intercom said, 'We are so sorry that we are unable to serve the meal at this time. The turbulence is still ahead of us.'

And then the storm broke .

The ominous cracks of thunder could be heard even above the roar of the engines. Lightning! lit up the darkening skies, and within moments that great plane was like a cork tossed around on a celestial ocean. One moment the airplane was lifted on terrific currents of air; the next, it dropped as if it were about to crash.

The pastor confessed that he shared the discomfort and fear of those around him. He said, 'As I looked around the plane, I could see that nearly all the passengers were upset and alarmed. Some were praying. The future seemed ominous and many were wondering if they would make it through the storm.'

'Then, I suddenly saw a little girl. Apparently the storm meant nothing to her. She had tucked her feet beneath her as she sat on her seat; she was reading a book and everything within her small world was calm and orderly.

'Sometimes she closed her eyes, then she would read again; then she would straighten her legs, but worry and fear were not in her world.

When the plane was being buffeted by the terrible storm when it lurched this way and that, as it rose and fell with frightening severity, when all the adults were scared half to death, that marvelous child was completely composed and unafraid.' The minister could hardly believe his eyes.

It was not surprising therefore, that when the plane finally reached its destination and all the passengers were hurrying to disembark, our pastor lingered to speak to the girl whom he had watched for such a long time.

Having commented about the storm and the behavior of the plane, he asked why she had not been afraid.

The child replied, "Cause my Daddy's the pilot, and he's taking me home".

There are many kinds of storms that buffet us. Physical, mental, financial, domestic, and many other storms can easily and quickly darken our skies and throw our plane into apparently uncontrollable movement. We have all known such times, and let us be honest and confess, it is much easier to be at rest when our feet are on the ground than when we are being tossed about a darkened sky.

Let's remember: Our Father is the Pilot. He is in control and taking us home. Don't worry!

Author Unknown

Antiochian Women are:

A Witness for Christ....

A Worker for the Church....

A Wonder-worker and potential Saint...

A Worshipper of God and an image of the Ever Blessed Virgin Mary...

A Wife, widow, mother, daughter, aunt...

A Wellspring of knowledge of the faith...

A Woman who loves, shares, and gives of herself to all as a tribute to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the glory of God.

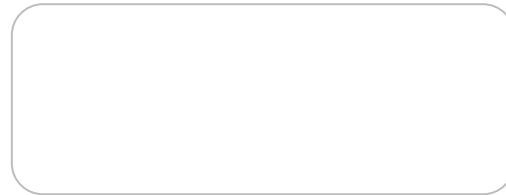
YOU ARE AN ANTIOCHIAN WOMAN

By Kh. Tracey Allen



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All articles for the DIAKONIA 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 ✓ <input type="checkbox"/>
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.