

35
Years of Service

Antiochian Women
Of North America

1973 - 2008



DIAKONIA

Spring 2009



2008 - 2009 Antiochian Women Project: **Children with Special Needs**

This issue of DIAKONIA highlights the Diocese of
Wichita and Mid-America

*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 Wichita and Mid-America.

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 include it.



Caring for Children with Special Needs



“Why does God allow children to suffer?”

I do not know anyone who has not asked such a question. In fact, some people refuse to believe in God because of the pain and suffering they have seen innocent children bear. They would rather deny that God exists than to see the Creator of the Universe as one who stands back and permits the helpless to undergo pain and anguish.

We, as Christians who know the Truth of God, understand that suffering is not what He intended for us. Yet, each day, millions of people choose to suffer. They refuse to repent of their evils, and they bring more suffering into the world. They start wars, they murder and steal and rape, they rejoice at the downfall of others and they disregard those they could help.

Yet, we do not hate humanity for worsening its own situation, do we? No, because we all sense that mankind is really the one with the problem, and our frustration comes from our own laziness. We refuse to heal the world. We want God, or at least someone else, to do the hard work for us.

So, why does God allow children to suffer? Why does He not save them from lives of pain and inconvenience? If we look at this life as the only life we have, it seems cruel. But, we know that this life is but the beginning of an eternal journey, and that the trials and struggles of this life are but a brief moment. God will give those who suffer His justice and blessings in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Even in this life, children who are handicapped or have special needs still find reasons to smile. The greatest consolation they have is not in wholeness, but rather in our love for them. They rely more heavily on us, and so they are far more appreciative of what we

give them. They know they cannot do what other children do, but they receive their joy from how much we are willing to aid them in their accomplishments.

The question then becomes: who suffers more, the special needs or handicapped child, or the parents and relatives who know they are helpless to bring wholeness to those children? The real suffering is in our own guilt, our acknowledgement that mankind's fall in the Garden led to such suffering.

As Orthodox Christians, we know the joy of ministering to others. This is a cornerstone of our Faith: almsgiving and acts of mercy as seen in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. We must all be good neighbors to those overtaken by the brokenness of the world.

The Antiochian Women have a special ministry to those in need within our parishes, and so it is no surprise that our beloved Metropolitan Philip speaks to you as a prophet, calling the Antiochian Women to take up the cause of children with special needs.

Yet, by taking up this act of mercy, you will not only help countless disabled and needy children, you will also heal yourselves by participating in God's mercy through your actions. You will alleviate some of your own suffering by bringing hope and joy. Yes, you will discover the healing and spiritual happiness in sharing your material blessings with those truly in need.

In the end, you will discover that those children we call ‘disabled’ or ‘needy’ have the ability to bless us. After all, they provide us with the opportunity to do good works.

Help us reach our goal of **\$150,000**

Project
2008-2009

Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Down Syndrome, Autism, Multiple Sclerosis, Asperger's Syndrome and more



THE DIOCESE OF WICHITA AND MID-AMERICA (DOWAMA) – encompassing much of the former “Southwest Region” and several of the westernmost parishes of the former “Midwest Region” – currently consists of fifty (50) congregations, ranging in size from large parishes like St George Cathedral in Wichita, Kansas to

the tiny (and our Diocese’s newest) mission dedicated to the Three Hierarchs in Garden City, Kansas, and it counts in its Clergy Brotherhood ninety-four priests and deacons, ranging in age from our eldest priest – Father Donald Lloyd (97) – to our youngest priest – Father Aaron Warwick (28).

Holy Orthodoxy has certainly put down deep roots in the Heartland since it was first organized here by St Raphael of Brooklyn in the late 1890s (when he was still an Archimandrite), and since the mid-1950s when the “Southwest Region” was established with eight parishes by the late Metropolitan Antony (Bashir) of thrice-blessed memory. In addition to being deeply rooted, Holy Orthodoxy has also put out broad branches – encompassing the eleven “Great Plain States” which stretch from the Canadian border in the north to the Mexican border in the south, and from the Missouri River in the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west – beneath which thousands of Christ-lovers – both “cradles” and “converts” – of every race, nationality and ethnic background have found refreshment of soul and salvific shelter.

And, glory to God, our Holy Faith continues to grow in this part of nation! Most recently, on Sunday, February 8th, 2009, a former clergyman of the so-called “Charismatic Episcopal Church” and over forty of his parishioners (most of Hispanic ancestry) were created a “congregation of catechumens” in preparation for a year-long period of intense formal catechesis which, God being pleased, will lead to their eventual reception into Holy Orthodoxy. And where is this most recent apostolic work taking place? In the little West Texas town of Muleshoe (population 4,500) which now takes its place on the roster of DOWAMA congregations which are located in places with such all-American names like Dripping Springs and Stillwater, Mesquite and Sugar Land.

Aside from the continuing physical growth of our Diocese, spiritual growth is also very evident in the Diocese thanks to the abundant blessings poured out upon us by the All-holy Trinity. The most significant event to have taken place during this Church Year was our first-ever Diocesan Pilgrimage.

To where, you might ask, does one make pilgrimage in that part of the country before which stands every TV network’s weatherman (yep, that’s DOWAMA *behind* him)? Why to St George Church in Kearney, Nebraska – the mother parish of our Diocese, having been founded by St Raphael in 1903 and assigned its first resident priest – Father Nicola Yanney – in 1904. The occasion for the Pilgrimage was

the 90th anniversary of the repose of Father Nicola (+October 29, 1918), the first man to be ordained by St Raphael (deacon on April 2nd, 1904 and priest on the next day) after his consecration to the sacred episcopacy on March 13, 1904, and the blessing of Father Nicola’s new grave marker offered by DOWAMA’s St Raphael Clergy Brotherhood. A new grave marker was also blessed for his wife Martha (+February 11, 1902). Nearly 200 – including several dozens of priests – traveled from every corner of our Diocese to the town of Kearney in south central Nebraska to enjoy a weekend of true spiritual refreshment and Christian fellowship (and no meetings!).

DOWAMA’s 2009 Parish Life Conference is being hosted by Father Peter and Khouriya Collette Smith and the congregation of St Mary Church in Wichita, Kansas, Wednesday through Saturday, June 10th through 13th. For further information on this event – our “Diocesan Family Reunion,” go to www.DOWAMAPLC.org or contact the conference chair, Helen Stitt, at hastitt@sktc.net. A warm Heartland welcome awaits you!





Pure in Heart

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” We are all familiar with our Lord’s sacred words as recorded in Matthew 5:8, delivered to the multitudes in the Sermon on the Mount.

We reflect on these words privately when we read them in the Scriptures. We listen to these words

chanted by the priest from the Holy Gospel. In some Orthodox parishes, we even hear these words sung during the Divine Liturgy. Yet, while these words may be at times both comforting and challenging, they are also very familiar to us.

Every so often, however, we hear testimony to the truth of these words proclaimed to us outside of our normal churchly routine. When that happens, these words can take on new life and touch us with their immediacy.

I recently heard one such testimony from a young parishioner, a 3 year-old little girl. She was telling me about her stay in the hospital. I knew from her parents that this little girl had been very frightened, having endured much poking and prodding with needles after many failed attempts to get an IV into her arms. Later, when the nurses had to insert a catheter, the little girl became downright frantic.

Weeks later, this little girl was recounting her story to me in simple words. Suddenly, she ended the retelling of her harrowing experience with the exclamation, “Then the angel came.” For the little girl, this was the obvious conclusion and no more needed to be said or explained. I, however, was not ready to let the subject go and responded, “Do you see angels often?” The little girl answered, simply and matter-of-factly, “Yes.” “What do they do,” I asked. “They sing.”

Knowing that I was way out of my league, I allowed the conversation to end there. Later, the little girl’s mother approached me and asked about what she had overheard her daughter say. My parishioner had never heard her daughter talk about angels before, nor had she ever heard the supernatural conclusion to the hospital story. However, the mother went on to relate that during that particular incident, her daughter had indeed been quite frantic, surrounded by nurses holding her down and trying to insert the catheter. Then, all of a sudden, in the midst of the struggle and chaos, the little girl became completely still. Even the nurses were astounded by this and commented to the mother.

Many of us have heard such things, and absolutely

believe them. We hear of young children seeing angels ministering in the altar, or about “the bird” descending into the altar at the moment when we ask the Holy Spirit to consecrate the Gifts during the Divine Liturgy. Personally, I remember a few years ago when the mother of one of my altar servers approached me, telling me that her son had seen an angel hovering over the altar during what must have been a particularly boring sermon. Apparently, the young man was starting to doze on the front pew when he saw something very much out of the ordinary. Startled and alert, he rubbed his eyes, looked up again, and the angel was still there. When I later asked him what it had looked like, he said, “Like that,” and pointed to the icon of the Archangel Michael on far end of our iconostasis.

Many, if not all of us, could share similar accounts. Sometimes, I call these things to mind, but not because Orthodoxy is sensational or sentimental. Orthodoxy is neither. We should not seek after such experiences, nor give them too much weight even when they are authentic. Rather, I call such things to mind as both a comfort and a challenge, as a testimony to the truth of our Lord’s words about purity of heart.

Our job in the Church—as clergy, as parents and grandparents and godparents, as teachers, as brothers and sisters in Christ—is to nurture and preserve purity of heart. The purity of heart that comes by virtue of Holy Baptism is a most precious gift, given to us regardless of age, intelligence, ability, or social status. As the Church—as clergy, and especially as parents and grandparents and godparents, as teachers, and as brothers and sisters in Christ—we are all called to encourage this purity of heart in others while striving to renew it within ourselves. We do so by the words we speak and by the things we teach. Most of all, however, we do it by the Faith we live.

Such purity of heart is not only for young children. It will be required of us all. Our Lord says, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 18:3).

When I hear these challenging words, I sometimes think of the middle-aged man in our parish who helps serve in the altar every Sunday, and who has a child-like heart if ever I have seen one. One day after Liturgy, his eyes were particularly wide as we were standing next to each other taking off our vestments. “Father, at the Little Entrance, did you see *that*?”

I smiled, with the hope and prayer that someday I will be able—matter-of-factly, with much peace and joy—to simply and honestly reply, “Yes.”



Be mindful, O Lord,
of those who bear fruit
and do good works
in thy holy Churches,
and who remember
the poor.

The Anaphoras of St. Basil the Great and John Chrysostom

The theme for this year's Parish Life Conference Creative Festivals brings to my mind the work of the women of our Archdiocese who work so hard to continue on the path set for us by Metropolitan 35 years ago when he founded the Antiochian Women. I was blessed to attend the Mid-Winter Meeting at the beginning of February chaired by our North American Board President, Cindy Nimey, at the Antiochian Village. I thank God for the wonderful weather and our beautiful time of fellowship at the Village.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of Lucy Hanna, NAB Public Relations Coordinator, we receive this wonderful publication quarterly. We are thankful for all of the hard work and leadership of the officers and coordinators of the NAB. God grant you many years!

The Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America now has 50 Parishes/Missions across 11 states. Keeping in contact across this vast area continues to be a challenge. Our Deanery Coordinator program is one of the tools we have used to assist in covering our geographic area. A woman is assigned to each of our deaneries to assist with outreach to the churches/missions within that Deanery. One of the other steps we have taken is to create a "google group" to enhance the ability to efficiently communicate with all of our Chapter Contacts. We plan to setup a similar group in order to reach the Priests of our Diocese.

In the fall of 2008 rather than our normal Fall Gathering and meetings, Bishop Basil organized a Pilgrimage to Kearney, Nebraska. The focus of the pilgrimage was to properly mark the graves of Fr. Nicola Yanney and his Khouri Martha. Fr. Nicola was the first

priest ordained by St. Raphael of Brooklyn.

Through the hard work and leadership of Sherry Abraham Morrow we continue to support Camp St. Raphael. Money is raised through the sale of T-shirts, sweatshirts, aprons, bibs, holy bread cloths, religious jewelry, and cookbooks at conventions and meetings throughout the year. We appreciate her hard work and dedication to this ongoing project.

At our 2007 Parish Life Conference Bishop Basil appointed Fr. Christopher Morris as our new Spiritual Advisor. We have enjoyed working with Fr. Christopher and appreciate his time and effort. We also thankful for the hard work and support provided by Fr. Constantine Nasr during the years that he served as our advisor. Fr. Constantine was a great help to the Antiochian Women with our Holy Bread video project.

Our website Coordinator Linda Steinbrink has worked with the Archdiocese to improve our link from the Antiochian.org website. You can now find copies of our Parish Life Conference reports. This includes the reports from each Chapter. We hope this will be a helpful reference point for those looking for spiritual, fundraising, and meeting ideas.

The women of our Diocese look forward to our upcoming Parish Life Conference, June 10 to the 13th in Wichita, Kansas. It will be hosted by Saint Mary's Parish. It is always so wonderful to see each other again. We also hope that many of us will be able to travel to the Archdiocesan Convention in Palm Desert in July.

May God bless you abundantly for all of the hard work that you do on behalf of the Antiochian Women!

Antiochian Women meet.....

Antiochian Women from all over the Archdiocese came together, February 6 - 8, at the Antiochian Village, for prayer, fellowship, and yes, to discuss business - the business of helping others.

Discussions concerning this year's project were very informative to all regarding children with special needs and how we can help them through our project this year.

Another way of helping others was presented to us by a very special lady, Maria Khouri, who, along with her husband and children, left her life in the United States and moved to Taybeh, Palestine, to assist her husband, who is now the Mayor of Taybeh, to bring about relief from extreme poverty to the people there. Taybeh is the only 100% Christian Village left in Palestine. The first Taybeh church was built in the 4th century by St. Helen. Her goal is to help educate Palestinian Christians at local universities and to sustain the diminishing Christian Community in the Holy Land by helping with their basic needs for education and to foster job opportunities locally thus contributing to economic growth in that region.



The Antiochian Women joined His Grace Bishop THOMAS, other clergy and members of SOYO and Fellowship of St. John the Divine in the Auditorium to listen to the plea of Maria Khouri on behalf of children in Gaza to provide them with scholarships as well as housing for families there.



Sitting, left to right: Janice Saba, Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada & Upstate NY President; Ramona Darmour, Libbie Kohl, Diocese of Toledo & the Mid-West Treasurer; Lucy Hanna, NAB Public Relations Director and Diocese of LA & the West President; Cindy Nimey, NAB President; Kh. Terry Rogers, NAB Secretary.

Standing, left to right: Roberta Royhab, Diocese of Toledo & the Mid-West President; V. Rev. Donald Shadid, Spiritual Advisor & Kh. Joanne Bitar, President, Diocese of NY, Washington DC & the Diocese of Charleston, Oakland & the Mid-Atlantic; Mirna Shomali, Diocese of LA & the West Project Coordinator; Danna Lewis, Diocese of Miami & the SE Public Relations Director; Pam Samara, Diocese of Worcester & New England Public Relations Director; Rt. Rev. John Abdalah, NAB Spiritual Advisor; Violet Robbat, NAB Vice President/Project Coordinator; Jane Harakal, Diocese of Wichita & Mid-America Vice President/Project Coordinator, Lianne Pristera, Cindy Nimey's future daughter-in-law; Alicia Atik, NAB Constitution & By-Laws Coordinator; Jamie Isaac, NAB Membership Coordinator; and Winona Nava, Diocese of Wichita & Mid-America President.

Introducing The 2007 - 2009 Board of the Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America

OFFICERS AND COORDINATORS

The Rt. Rev. Bishop BASIL - Diocesan Bishop



Bishop BASIL was born in the southwestern Pennsylvania town of Monessen on November 26, 1948. He is the only son and eldest of three children born of William and Genevieve Essey. He was baptized on April 17, 1949, at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church in Monessen, and raised at St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Monessen. His Grace received his primary and secondary education

in the public schools of Monessen. In 1970 he received his B.A. in Psychology from California State University of Pennsylvania in California, Pennsylvania. He entered St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York, in 1970 and received his M.Div. in 1973. From 1973 until 1975 he served as pastoral assistant at St. George Church in Detroit, Michigan, and from 1975 until 1986 he served as director of the Archdiocese's Department of Youth Affairs with offices at the main chancery of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America in Englewood, New Jersey. While working in that capacity, he served as assistant pastor at St. Anthony Church in Bergenfield, New Jersey, and instructor of Contemporary Byzantine Chant at St. Vladimir's Seminary from 1980 until 1986. During 1986 and 1987 he resided at the St. John of Damascus Patriarchal Institute of Theology at the Balamand Monastery of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos in the al-Koura region of north Lebanon where he studied, taught, and did research and translations for *The Liturgikon: The Book of Divine Services for the Priest and Deacon*, which was published by the Archdiocese's Antakya Press in 1989 (reprinted in 1994).

Bishop BASIL was tonsured a reader by the late Metropolitan ANTONY (Bashir) at St. Michael Church in Monessen on October 27, 1964, and was ordained to the subdiaconate and diaconate by Metropolitan PHILIP (Saliba) at St. Ignatius of Antioch Church at the Antiochian Village in Bolivar, Pennsylvania, on September 30, 1979. On January 27, 1980, he was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan PHILIP at St. Anthony Church in Bergenfield, New Jersey, and on October 9, 1988, he was elevated to the dignity of archimandrite by Metropolitan

PHILIP at St. George Church in Wichita, Kansas. From July 1, 1987, until his consecration to the episcopacy in 1992, he served as priest at St. George Church in Wichita, Kansas. During his pastorate the new church temple was erected, consecrated and elevated to the status of Cathedral on April 21, 1991. He received monastic tonsure to the Lesser Schema at the Patriarchal Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Tolleshunt Knight by Maldon, Essex, England, during the night between January 19 and 20, 2003, at the hands of the monastery's abbot, Archimandrite KYRILL.

His Grace was nominated for bishop (auxiliary to Metropolitan PHILIP) by the General Assembly of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America on July 26, 1991, and was elected to the episcopacy (with the titular see of Enfeh al-Koura in north Lebanon) by the Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of the Great City-of-God Antioch and all the East on November 14, 1991. He was consecrated to the episcopacy on May 31, 1992, at St. George Cathedral in Wichita, Kansas, by Metropolitan PHILIP of the Archdiocese of North America, Metropolitan ELIAS (Audi) of the Archdiocese of Beirut, Bishop ANTOUN (Khoury) titular bishop of Seleucia and auxiliary of the Archdiocese of North America, and the late Archbishop MICHAEL (Shaheen) of Toledo, Ohio, auxiliary of the Archdiocese of North America. From 1992 until 1995 he resided at the Los Angeles Chancery, and in September 1995 he took up residence at the Wichita Chancery. By a decision of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate dated October 9, 2003, His Grace became a diocesan bishop and, since his enthronement on December 15, 2004, bears the title of Bishop of Wichita and the Diocese of Mid-America.

Bishop BASIL co-chaired the Joint OCA-Antiochian Canonization Commission which led to the glorification of Bishop RAPHAEL (Hawaweeny) of Brooklyn on May 29, 2000. His Grace oversaw the publication of the book containing St. Raphael's *Vita*, Akolouthia and Akathist (Antakya Press 2000), arranged the hymnography for St. Raphael to Byzantine melodies, and directed the Clergy Brotherhood Choir which recorded an audio CD of the hymns for the feast of St. Raphael (Antakya Press 2001). In November 2002 His Grace headed the delegation from the Archdiocese of North America which met in Geneva, Switzerland with the delegation from the Patriarchate of Antioch to reach agreement on the basic principles of Self-Rule for the Archdiocese of North America.

Rev. Christopher Morris - Spiritual Advisor



Fr. Christopher hails from central Kansas. His home parish is All Saints Orthodox Church in Salina, Kansas.

Fr. Christopher received a Bachelor of Arts from Bethel College in 1996, a Master of Fine Arts degree from Kansas State University in 2001, and a Master of Divinity degree from St. Tikhon's Seminary in 2006. Fr. Christopher also attended St. Herman Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska.

Fr. Christopher was ordained to the holy priesthood in February of 2006 by His Grace Bishop BASIL at St. Tikhon's Monastery during his final year of seminary. While attending seminary, he was attached to St. Mary's parish in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Following his graduation, Fr. Christopher was blessed to return to his home diocese of Wichita and Mid-America and the omophorion of His Grace Bishop BASIL. Currently, he is serving as pastor of St. George Orthodox Church in Kearney, Nebraska, our archdiocese's 5th oldest parish, founded by St. Raphael of Brooklyn in 1904.

Fr. Christopher is married to Kh. Anastasia. They have 3 young children—Gabriella, 3 ½ years old, Juliana, 2 years old, and Joseph, 4 months old.

Winona Nava - President



My home parish is Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Santa Fe, NM. I was among a group of 21 founding members of Holy Trinity who traveled to Salina, Kansas in December of 1995 to enter into communion with the Holy Orthodox Church through the sacrament of Chrismation. The following day, December 31, 1995, we traveled to Wichita to begin the process of ordination for our Priest, Fr. John Bethancourt and Deacon Basil Rives.

The first member of the Wichita congregation to welcome me was Sherry Abraham-Morrow. She shared with me the importance of being a part of the Antiochian Women's Sisterhood. She encouraged me to start an Antiochian Women's Group at our new Parish and to attend the annual Parish Life Conference. Over the years we have discussed ways of helping more of the Parishes and Missions become active. I believe that Sherry's personalized and loving outreach is a great example of how to attain that goal.

I founded our Holy Trinity Antiochian Women's group in the spring of 1996 after my encounter with Sherry in Wichita. As she suggested I began attending the Parish Life Conferences and the Antiochian Women's Meetings. Active membership in the Sisterhood of the Antiochian Women has been a blessing to me.

I have been privileged to serve over the years as President of the Holy Trinity Chapter of Antiochian Women, Treasurer of the DOWAMA (at that time Southwest Region) Antiochian Women and now as President of DOWAMA. I am honored that the women of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America elected me to lead them as President of the Antiochian Women in 2007. It is a pleasure to lead and work alongside the dedicated and hard-working women of our Diocese and the Archdiocese.

My husband, Sub-Deacon Raphael, and I have 5 children and 11 grandchildren who are our joy. We love spending time with our children and grandchildren, particularly in the mountains during the summer, and traveling, when time allows. Please pray for our oldest son Kenneth Nava, who is in the process of being deployed to Iraq.

My husband I have worshipped at Orthodox Churches throughout North America and been privileged to meet and correspond with other Antiochian Women and faithful Orthodox. We have attended many of the local and national meetings and enjoy our time at these wonderful "family reunions." Since our first service in Salina, Kansas, we have truly felt at home at all of the parishes we have visited thanks to the warmth and love shown by all.

Professionally I'm President/CEO of the Guadalupe Credit Union in Santa Fe, NM. I have been involved in the financial services industry for over 30 years. I am a graduate in business and accounting from Santa Fe College. I have served on the Holy Trinity Parish Council, currently serve as one of the 24 directors representing the 8,000 United States Credit Unions at the national level on the CUNA (Credit Union National Association) Board and serve on the Board of the Credit Union Executive Society-Rocky Mountain Chapter.

Jane Harakal - Vice President/NAB Project



I was born and grew up in Northwestern Ohio. I have a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Bowling Green State University where I met my wonderful husband, John. We married right after my graduation in 1952. I was a public school music supervisor in Kirksville, Mo. for 4 years, working John's way through medical school. I have not been gainfully employed since then, and have enjoyed being a full time Mom to 2 girls and 2 boys who have now given me 9 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. I have been a widow for 13+ years.

John and I became Orthodox Christians in 1993 when our church became St. Peter's in Ft. Worth. What a Blessing this gift from God has been. I am active in everything (it seems) at the church, currently serving my third term on the Vestry. Currently I also serve as Treasurer of our chapter of the order of St. Ignatius. I have enjoyed serving as Humanitarian Coordinator, two terms as Recording

Secretary, and this term as Vice-President of the Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America.

In addition to my work in the church, I also love the volunteer work I do at the Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens, and the Girls' Service League (an organization giving money to females for as long as it takes to earn a college degree), reading, doing anything with my family, and traveling.

Judy Stevens - Treasurer/Immediate Past President



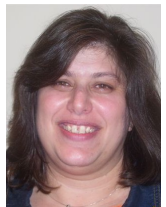
I am a member of St. Thomas in Sioux City, Iowa and current President and previous Secretary and Treasurer of my local chapter. On the diocesan level, I am the previous Diocesan President, Vice President and current Treasurer.

My husband is a cradle Orthodox which is how I became Orthodox approximately 34 years ago. We have raised our 4 sons up in the Church where they have all served as altar boys. I have been a Sunday School teacher for 30 of those years. I have also been involved in the fellowship of St. John the Divine. It is so rewarding to see the children in the Parish grow up and become involved in the Church.

St. Thomas is one of the smaller parishes which gives one the opportunity to be very involved. The ladies president is automatically on the church board. When one is involved in the Antiochian Women, one is also involved in the church dinners, fatayer sales as well as other projects the women are involved in.

We have to continue to encourage everyone to be involved. Everyone has talents that we need in our churches. God bless all of you.

Peggy Gregory - Recording Secretary



I was born in Anchorage, AK and baptized at St. Innocent Russian Orthodox Church. Mom is the daughter of Orthodox parents who immigrated from Lebanon. My Dad is Irish Catholic and retired from the US Air Force. I was 5 years old at the time and we settled in Omaha, NE. I have been a member of St. Mary Church since its early days. After relocating to Denver, CO with my job 18 years ago, I met my husband Kevin and we eventually moved back to Omaha. We have 3 children: Cole (13), Kelly (10) and Mary Kate (9) and are raising them in the neighborhood where I grew up. My husband works for a local dairy distributor, serves on the parish council and is church school treasurer. I am an accounts receivable representative at a pharmacy chain, a member of the church choir and president of the Antiochian Women of St. Mary. In my spare time I like to decorate cakes, read and spend time with my family and friends. I am honored to serve as the recording secretary for the Antiochian Women.

Carol Comp - Public Relations Director



I was born in Pennsylvania to Mae and Oliver Winter. I grew up in Horsham, PA where I graduated from Hatboro-Horsham High School in 1969. I was raised in a devout, Christian home, and attended the Methodist Church. I was always very active in the church youth group and choir. I graduated from Philadelphia General Hospital School of Nursing in 1974. In the summer of 1974, I moved to Oklahoma City with my husband, Philip. We have three children—Vanessa, Justin and Aubrie. Vanessa and her husband, Aaron Peterson, are the parents of our first grandchild, Valerie, born in July 2008. They live in Belmont, MA. Justin is in nursing school at Oklahoma City Community College. Aubrie is in her last semester at Oklahoma City University Law School.

My journey to Orthodoxy began many years ago, although I did not know at the time that I was searching for Orthodoxy. While I continued my nursing education for higher degrees, I also read about many different religions and what they believed. One day in 1988, I was at the library, and I saw a book entitled “The Orthodox Church in America” by Timothy Ware. I had no idea what an Orthodox Church was. When I read what the Orthodox Church believed, I realized that what the Orthodox Church believed is what I had felt in my heart since childhood. I was Chrismated at Pentecost in 1989.

This is my second term as Public Relations Director for the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America. I have served as president and secretary of my local chapter of Antiochian Women. I have also served on the Parish Council.

One of my favorite Bible Verses is: ...but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast. Proverbs 15:15.

Yvonne Khouri - Humanitarian



I am a member of St. Elias Church in Austin, Texas. I was born in Ramallah, Palestine and lived in Jerusalem, Hebron and Gaza. I worked with the United Nations Agency for refugee relief. I completed my university education in Florida and my graduate studies at Northwestern in Chicago as a hospital administrator. I worked in Beirut, Lebanon at the American University Medical Center and the school of public health. We emigrated to the USA in 1976 as a result of the civil war in Lebanon and I joined the faculty of Health Administration at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas until my retirement in 2001.

My activities in my church include president of St. Elias local chapter of Antiochian Women, member of the Church Council and volunteer in various church activities. On the diocesan level my activities include Coordinator of the Deanery for Central Texas Antiochian Women and my

present position as DOWAMA Humanitarian Coordinator. All these roles are fulfilling and enriching for both my body and soul.

Carol McCabe - Membership/Missions



I was born in Denver, Colorado and moved to California in the early 1960's with my family. I have three children, a daughter and two sons. We have 10 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren most of whom live close by here in Colorado. We returned to Colorado after retirement in 1997 at which time we joined St. Mark's Orthodox Church.

I am active in the Altar Guild and of course the women of St. Mark Church. In June of this year I will have completed two years serving my Diocese as "Mission and Membership " coordinator. The last two years have been quite rewarding, meeting new faces as well as old friends at the Parish Life Conferences and helping organize new groups.

I hope to see many of you in Wichita for the conference.

Linda Steinbrink - Website



I attend St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church in Omaha, Nebraska. I was born and raised Catholic living in Lincoln and Grand Island, Nebraska. I attended college in Kearney, Nebraska where I met my husband Steve. As we dated I would attend church with him at St. George Orthodox

Church in Kearney, where we were married in 1984. It wasn't until several years later when we moved to Omaha with our two children that I began to deeply appreciate the Orthodox faith. I was an assistant Church School teacher, learning right along with the children the richness of our Orthodox faith. In 2003 I received the Sacrament of Chrismation.

Since then I have continued to be involved with the Church. I just recently took the position of Church School Director and I enjoy being involved with the Antiochian Women. I am also the Chair of our Landscaping Committee. Serving the Lord in these different capacities has enabled me to not only grow spiritually in my faith, but also grow personally.

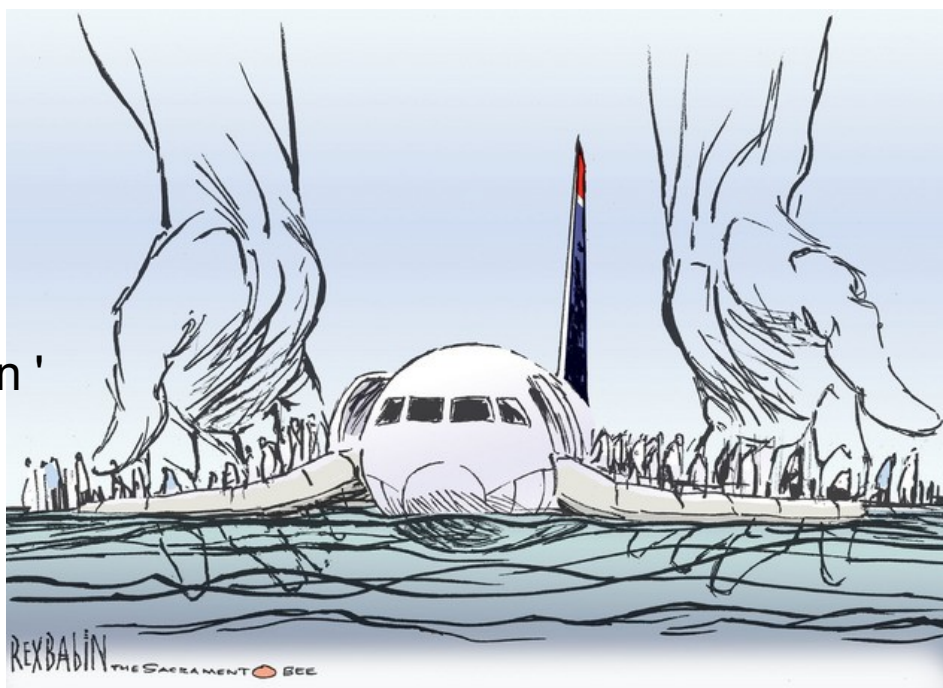
Professionally I am a meeting planner at the Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians, a membership organization of 700 active members. I have worked there for 6-1/2 years. Steve and I have two children, Kimberley (19) and Nick (21). We are blessed to have Kim in Omaha where she attends college and Nick not far away in Wichita where he is attending college.

I enjoy spending time with my family, especially when it works for all of us to be together. In the spring, summer and fall you will find me out in my yard (or at Church) tending to the flowers and plants.

Linda Mobayed - Religious

No information submitted.

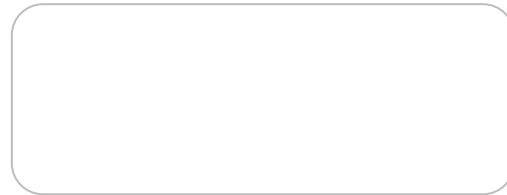
Rex Babin's best
interpretation of
'Miracle on the Hudson '





Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America
North American Board

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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.