

35

Years of Service

Antiochian Women
Of North America

1973 - 2008



DIAKONIA

Winter 2008



Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest together for
their annual Retreat at Dormition Monastery at Rives Junction, MI

This issue of **DIAKONIA** highlights the Diocese of
Toledo and the Midwest

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

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women Of North America

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Founder

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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 Toledo and the Midwest.

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.



In our daily life, we are surrounded and even experience for ourselves a great deal of pain and suffering. We invite suffering into our lives through the television, radio and telephone. We listen keenly for bad news, then spend a great deal of time thinking about it. Then, we ourselves experience our own pain, we become possessed by it.

The worst part of our own suffering is that it makes us more self-obsessed. As we feel pain, the thought and experience of it wipes out our perception of the rest of the world. For example, you may eat the finest food in the world, but if you do so with a migraine headache, you will hardly taste the goodness of the food.

The intensity of pain turns all of our concerns to it. Physical pain occupies our every thought. With a great brushstroke, it paints out world in torpid colors. Its nagging and aggravation grip our attention, so much so that we must 'shout' over the top of it. Thus, physical pain makes us bitter and angry towards people we normally love.

The most violent and fearsome of all pain, however, is the pain and suffering of the conscience. When we are tormented by a guilty conscience, there is no escaping its wrathful blows. Though physical pain makes it impossible to enjoy anything in the world, the suffering conscience twists us into enjoying what is evil.

The suffering of the conscience tormented by sins we refuse to repent of cannot be escaped. Physical pain can be relieved to some extent by medications and physical therapy. But emotional torment remains even when medications ease many of its symptoms, because the entire mind is effected by guilt.

So, why do we have pain? Tells us that that we are experiencing is not 'natural.' Pain is the indication that what is happening is not what is part of the natural order. When we experience the pain of, let's say, the cut of a knife, we know that being cut is unnatural.

We are born into an unnatural world, and so we all experience sorrow and suffering. What this should tell us is that the world is not as it should be. It is not as how it was originally created. Through mankind's separation from God, the entire world departed from its nature.

When we experience the torment of the conscience, it tells us that we were made to be good. Suffering shows us how we are to be, because when we depart from our intended way, we suffer. Man was made not to

experience sin, and so sin causes pain. Man was given the alternative to repent, and so the lack of repentance aggravates and worsens the torture of the mind.

In some way, pain is a gift. If we did not experience pain, we would not stop harming ourselves. In the Old Testament, leprosy was greatly feared. Why? Because it not only disfigured and destroyed the body, but it did so first by numbing the lepers' senses. Lepers cannot feel the pain, and so they often injured themselves because they did not know when to stop doing something that injured them.

In our age, many people suffer from afflictions of the conscience. Rather than seeking true healing, they seek the solution of the leper: they want a disease that does not hurt. They would rather continue with the afflictions of their conscience than risk asking God for healing.

God made our bodies, and can bring us healing for our afflictions. God also made our minds and consciousness, and so He can also heal them if we ask of Him forgiveness and mercy. But, just as some people ignore medical advice and prolong their physical suffering, so many people ignore spiritual advice and continue to be tortured by the memories of sins, both sins they have committed and sins committed against them.

Our Lord Jesus Christ placed the healing from sin above the healing of the body. We have seen this over and over again in the Gospel, where He forgave sins, then healed the bodies to prove His truthfulness. So we must also first seek to cleanse our consciences before we seek to have our bodies healed.

Most especially, we must be aware when our suffering is coloring our perception of the world. When we are in pain, do we lash out against others who are innocent? Do we become annoyed more easily because we are not comfortable? We must be careful that our suffering does not become a cause for sin. We must care for our bodies and our minds, so that we do not spread our suffering to others.

On the Cross, our Lord bore the sins and suffering of the world to kill it. He bore it, He did not spread it. So, we must follow Him, and make sure we do not spread our suffering by not turning to Jesus Christ in the hope of salvation, so that we may receive the peace that brings the patience to endure pain.





The Book of Psalms was the hymnal of the Synagogue and the early church. In the Psalter, i.e. the Book of Psalms, we find a variety of psalms: praise, worship, personal repentance, communal repentance, personal lament as well as communal lament, royal psalms and psalms of the wisdom genre. Given all the variety of Psalms the most prevalent type of psalm is that of lament or complaint. The various types of psalms generally follow a particular pattern, mankind being creatures of habit.

The Psalm of Lament which we will examine also falls into the category of wisdom psalm because it deals with Theodicy, i.e., trying to justify the ways of God to men. Let us take a look at Psalm 73 followed by a few remarks:



Psalm 73 (RSV)

Asaph 73

1. Truly God is good to the upright, to those who are pure in heart.
2. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had well nigh slipped.
3. For I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
4. For they have no pangs their bodies are sound and sleek.
5. They are not in trouble as other men are; they are not stricken like other men.
6. Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment;
7. Their eyes swell out with fatness, their hearts overflow with follies.
8. They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression.
9. They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth.
10. Therefore the people turn and praise them; and find no fault in them.
11. And they say, "How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?"
12. Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.
13. All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.
14. For all the day long I have been untrue to the generation of thy children.
15. But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task,
16. until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I perceived their end.
17. Truly thou dost set them in slippery places; thou dost make them fall to ruin.
18. How are they destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!
19. They are like a dream when one awaked; on awaking you despise their phantoms.
20. When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart,
21. I was stupid and ignorant, I was like a beast toward thee.
22. Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou dost hold my right hand.
23. Thou dost guide me with counsel, and afterward thou wilt receive me to glory.
24. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing upon earth that I desire besides thee.
25. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
26. For lo, those who are far from thee shall perish; thou dost put an end to those who are false to thee.
27. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all thy works.
28. In verse 1, we have a basic statement of faith, "Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure of heart." This is what he had been taught and thus what he expected. If one serves God, God will take care of him.

In verses 2 – 9 we observe that the psalmist is experiencing a crisis of faith when he beholds the prosperity and ease of the wicked. While he affirmed the faith handed down to him in v. 1, (in only one verse) in the following verses he begins to elaborate on the contradictions he is experiencing. The wicked are not only prosperous they are oppressive of others (perhaps those not wicked? Or even the faithful?) we may also observe that the ungodly even gain a following as power, wealth and position often do.

In verse 10 the wicked are emboldened to even speak blasphemous things against God Himself in their haughtiness.

Now the full crisis is becoming evident when we reach v. 12-15, I have kept guarded my heart in vain and withheld my hands from evil to no avail. Actually, for the psalmist the ungodly seem to be the ones with the advantage --- power, wealth and position, the Godly ones are the losers. The Godly face difficulties and have no perceived benefit, in fact they are chastened. Herein lays the real temptation ---- to betray his faith and his principles and become what we would call today a pragmatist! Or perhaps begin to believe the end justifies the means!

As we read v. 16ff, the psalmist begins to grasp the bigger picture. He realizes that there is something more than immediate gratification or temporal rewards. The wicked have chosen a slippery path. Destruction not only await the wicked, they are separated from the Lord Himself --- the very source of Life.

Now in v. 21 ff he chastises himself for his envious bestial, fleshly and mundane thoughts that nearly caused his own downfall. He now begins to see much more clearly realizing his true blessing. While the ungodly may prosper for a season, they have already lost

ominously more than temporal power, wealth and position; they have no communion with God. They do not possess He Who is Life itself. The psalmist not only has the promise of the future life, He has that Life which they lack, communion with God and inner peace that comes from a clean heart and a pure conscience. Let us see how he concludes, as he began, with an affirmation of Faith: 25: Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing upon earth that I desire besides thee. 26: My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. 27 For lo, those who are far from thee shall perish; thou dost put an end to those who are false to thee. 28. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all Thy works.

Let us take careful note that the psalmist does not say in verse 27 that the ungodly have already perished, but that they will. He does the Lord already put an end to those who are false but he will. Even with this reworking of thoughts he concludes, "But for me, it is good to be near God, I have made the Lord my refuge, that I may tell of all Thy works."

Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest Annual Antiochian Women Retreat

The 2008 Diocesan Women's Retreat was held at Dormition Monastery at Rives Junction, MI.

The Retreat Weekend fell this year on the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women, May 2-4.

The Setting was beautiful, since the Monastery has a beautiful guesthouse and beautiful grounds. Even the weather was sunny and mild. The Nuns at the Monastery are warm and welcoming and make the stay there pleasant.

The speaker was Fr. Steven Kostoff, an OCA priest who spoke about the Resurrection. After the talks, a lively question and answer session followed. The Monastery is an inspiring place and it was wonderful to have so many people in attendance. We have had about 40 people from around the Diocese of Toledo and Midwest in attendance the last 3 years. Some choose to stay all three days, others come just for one day or two. We encourage the women to participate in the retreat and take the time out from their busy lives to attend this annual event. Our president, Roberta Royhab, is doing a wonderful job in organizing the Retreat.

Every retreat has a special speaker and its own place in the liturgical cycle which gives each its own character. We look forward to seeing many more women at our next retreat.



Attendees going with the Nuns to the cemetery to bless the groundbreaking for a chapel.

Kh. Elfriede Daly, PR Director

THE POWER OF THE SPOON...

In 1865 a not so well known poet named William Ross Wallace raised the timeless question “What Rules the World?” His answer took the form of a poem containing the well-known line “The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world”. His poem was about the importance of motherhood. Wallace has found his place in literary history through this one sentence. The poem is on the Internet and is worth reading.

There is no doubt that a mother has a lifelong influence on her child. Every mother innately knows how important her presence is especially to her newborn child. But her influence continues long after the days of the cradle. One of the most powerful places of her influence is the family dinner table. Feeding her children is much more than matter of providing nourishment. It is an act of caring and love. It is here that the mother becomes a teacher.

If a mother brings her family together for the evening meal, she can teach her children some of the most important lessons of life. She does not have to give long lectures to her children; she just has to do what her mother and grandmother did before her.

If the family prays together before the meal, children learn that they belong to a family of believers. They give thanks to God because there is a God to give thanks to. That prayer of thanks and blessing, prayed day after day, year after year, can be a constant reminder that we are the children of God and He is our Father. At the dinner table, the family becomes a “little church”.

The family prayer also teaches the lesson of gratitude. The child learns to be thankful not only to God, but to his or her mother and father for providing the food.

If the greatest Christian virtue is Charity, it is at the family dinner table where the lesson of charity can first be learned. The child learns that he or she must be aware of the others who share the table. He must be aware that others also need to eat and that he does not have a right to everything that is on the table. The awareness of the presence of other persons who have legitimate needs is a lesson that must be carried through life.

The child learns to practice charity by being polite.

“Please” and “thank you” have to be the language of the table.

The child learns that he is part of a community, the community of the family. The father of the family usually sits in the same chair each evening, as does the mother of the family. Each child has his or her place. Here the child learns the lessons of trust. The child has a place in this world. The world is not a hostile place.

If a family consistently eats in front of the TV, these lessons are lost. We lose a certain amount of contact and interaction with the other members of our family. We probably will not pray in front of a blaring TV set. Eating ceases to be a social family affair and becomes something merely functional as we are being entertained.

The family dinner gives the mother another opportunity to teach her children. Here I am referring to the Orthodox practice of fasting and abstaining from certain foods. Our Lord did not say, “If you fast”, he said, “When you fast”. Fasting has been part of the life of the Church since its foundation. We will learn the lessons of fasting at our family table or we will never learn it. The example of the mother is critical. The fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays are not something optional in the life of an Orthodox family. They are part of life of the church. The Lenten seasons are a necessary part of our spirituality. Advent (in preparation for Christmas), the Fast before the Dormition of the Theotokos, the Great Lent (before Pascha) are very important times for all Orthodox Christians. They can be filled with Grace, Faith and Love if we do it right.

By preparing and serving her children their evening meal, every mother is in a position to teach her children some of life’s most basic and important lessons as well as the discipline of the church. It is here that we learn that we are part of a family. It is here that the lessons of faith, trust and charity are learned. No sermons need be taught. No lectures need be given. The ritual of the family meal, begun in prayer and carried on in charity is tried and true. The lessons of faith and love cannot be learned in isolation, they are only learned in community.

Indeed, the hand that rocks the cradle is very important; but the hand that “holds the spoon” is equally so.



Dear Sisters in Christ and Spiritual Fathers,

On January 4 our dear sister in Christ, Elinor Bourjaily of Seven Hills, OH, departed this life to be with the Lord. She was a wonderful friend, mentor, and mother figure to so many of us and we miss her much. She was a former president of the Antiochian Women of the North American Board and Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest; at the time of her passing she was parliamentarian for both organizations. For 20 years she was president of the Antiochian Women's chapter at St. Matthew Church in North Royalton, OH.

Our organization, Midwest Antiochian Women, serves women in 37 churches and 12 missions located in 10 states. We meet in the fall, spring, and at the Parish Life Conference in the summer. This year St. George Church in Grand Rapids, MI, hosted a wonderful conference; St. James Church in Loveland, OH, will host the 2009 conference.

A highlight of the year is our annual Midwest Antiochian Women's weekend retreat held on the first weekend in May at Dormition of the Mother of God Orthodox Monastery in Rives Junction, MI. We started the retreat at the request of His Grace, Bishop MARK, in 2006. It begins on Friday evening; some of the women stay at the monastery guest house for one or two nights; some attend only on Saturday. About 40 women from several different jurisdictions have attended the retreat each of the last three years.

This year's retreat leader was Fr. Steven Kostoff of Christ the Savior/Holy Spirit Church (Orthodox Church in America) in Cincinnati who gave his presentation on Bright Saturday, May 3, 2008. Following Divine Liturgy we made a procession to the monastery's cemetery where we had a service of blessing of the graves there while singing "Christ is Risen" in many languages." There was a real sense that those buried there in the cemetery were indeed "fallen asleep" in the Lord, Fr. Steven said later.

A brunch, a short talk by Mother Abbess Gabriella, and the retreat speaker's presentation followed. Fr. Steven gave two talks on "Living in the Light of the Resurrection." Very lively discussion, based on some good, hard questions, followed each talk. "I thought that this was an excellent theme, because we somehow lose the paschal character of this season much too quickly," Fr. Steven commented. The talks are available to listen to on Ancient Faith Radio. To access the program, go to www.ancientfaithradio.com and type "Fr. Steven Kostoff" in the search box.

We informed the women that Joy Corey's book, The Tools of Spiritual Warfare, was published by Light & Life Publishing (952-925-3888) or online at www.light-n-life.com and suggested that book groups may want to study it together. Joy Corey had spoken on this topic at our first

retreat in 2006.

Our current business includes:

1. Kh. Jeannette Gallaway, Membership Chair, is sending a Membership Questionnaire to the parishes in the Midwest. She is asking nine questions concerning participation in Antiochian Women and five questions under the title, "How can we help?" We hope the survey will better help us to assist the chapters.
2. Midwest Antiochian Women is purchasing four wheelchairs for Antiochian Village in honor of the memory of Elinor Bourjaily. Nancy George found the need for the wheelchairs at the Village while she was attending the Sacred Music Institute this summer. The Village staff had to rent a wheelchair for a friend of hers because there were not enough for visitors (there were two older model ones in use). Nancy asked Midwest Antiochian Women to provide new wheelchairs.
3. Another highlight of the year is our popular annual women's tea that is held at the Midwest Parish Life Conference in June. Regina Bojrab, Women's Tea Chair, did a great job organizing the tea that was held on Friday, the day after our meeting and luncheon on Thursday at the conference. Women from many chapters shared information about their activities. There were three topics of discussion: membership; ladies' needs; fundraising.
4. Our Midwest Fundraising Chair, Elaine Shaheen, is doing a great job of selling navy blue aprons that have names of Middle Eastern foods on the front.

Midwest Antiochian Women thank Fr. Joseph Cervo for his three years of service as Spiritual Advisor; we continue to pray for his health. At the conference His Grace Bishop MARK appointed Fr. Daniel Daly of St. Nicholas Church in Grand Rapids, MI, as the new Spiritual Advisor.

I thank all the officers and coordinators of both the Midwest Antiochian Women and the North American Board of Antiochian Women for all their work for the Church.

Recently I heard Madre Yvonne speak at a retreat in Cincinnati, OH. She coordinates the Hogar Rafael Ayau orphanage in Guatemala City and is "mother" to 100 children at the home. She said that they are raising the children in the Church and their life centers around the Church. "We pray to make them strong...the world is hard."

Madre Yvonne mentioned the concept of trust which she said "starts with the mother." She said that most of the children have experienced a lack of trust in their lives. At the end of the talk she said, "The most important thing in life is prayer...prayer will sustain us."

Introducing The 2007 - 2009 Board of the Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest

OFFICERS AND COORDINATORS

The Rt. Rev. Bishop MARK - Diocesan Bishop



His Grace Bishop MARK 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 at St. George Cathedral in Toledo, Ohio on August 25, 2005 and serves as Bishop of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest.

Bishop MARK served as priest of St. John the Evangelist church in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania from 1997 to 2000. In January of 2001, he was assigned as assistant to Father John Estephan at St. George in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Upon Father John's retirement in December of 2002, Bishop MARK assumed all the responsibilities for the pastorate of St. George.

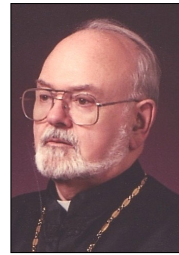
Bishop MARK was born on June 22, 1958 in New Albany, Indiana. He was baptized in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Roman Catholic Church in 1958 and confirmed when he was nine. He attended elementary school at our Lady of Perpetual Help and graduated from New Albany High School in 1976. He began undergraduate studies at Indiana University South East and completed his Bachelor of Arts degree at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1985. In 1987, he was awarded a Master of Arts degree in Biblical Literature from Oral Roberts University and accepted the position of Adjunct Professor of Old Testament at Oral Roberts University.

Having been introduced to the Orthodox Church by the V. Rev. George Eber, pastor of St. Antony in Tulsa, Oklahoma and his professors of Church History, Dr. Jerry Sandidge and his Old testament professor, Dr. Howard Ervin at Oral Roberts University, Bishop MARK was received into the Church through Holy Chrismation on Great and Holy Wednesday 1989. Soon after, he requested Metropolitan PHILIP's blessing to attend St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary. He received his Master of Divinity degree at St. Vladimir's in 1991. He worked at the Antiochian Village from 1991 to 1993, when he moved to New Kensington, Pennsylvania to assist Father John Abdalah.

Bishop MARK was ordained a deacon at the hand of

Bishop ANTOUN at St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania on August 17, 1997. On September 7, 1997, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood at St. George in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Bishop MARK's name's day is April 25.

V. Rev. Daniel Daly - Spiritual Advisor



Fr. Daniel Daly is the pastor of St. Nicholas Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He entered the Antiochian Archdiocese in 1980 with his wife. Both had served as missionaries in Rhodesia. He served parishes in Detroit, Danbury, CT, Bergenfield, New Jersey and Beaumont Texas. Father and his wife and the parents of two sons. The elder, Fr. Raphael Daly, was born in Danbury, Connecticut. He serves as the assistant pastor of St. Nicholas along with his father. Their younger son, John who was born when his father was assistant pastor at St. George in Detroit, entered Holy Cross Seminary after completing two degrees in Electrical Engineering. John graduated from Holy Cross in May of 2008. John is currently working for the Internet Ministries of the Greek Archdiocese. Fr. Raphael is married to his wife Zohreh. John is single.

Roberta Royhab - President



Roberta is serving a second two-year term as president of Midwest Antiochian Women. During her first year in office, at the request of His Grace Bishop MARK, she and other Midwest AW officers planned the first annual weekend retreat for women. It is held the first full weekend in May at Dormition of the Mother of God Orthodox Monastery in Rives Junction, MI. Roberta previously was recording secretary and public relations director of Midwest Antiochian Women. She is also chair of the Antiochian Women's chapter at her parish, St. Elias Church in Sylvania, OH. They meet once a month, for a business meeting, for a program, or for lunch. They are preparing for their 29th annual holiday bazaar (craft show and food fair) that is held the first Thursday in November. Several younger women from Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine, who love to bake, are now part of the baking crew. All proceeds from a spring bake sale support the North American project. St. Elias has started a program

called “St. Elizabeth’s House,” a ministry to the dying. Many of the women visit the sick and help the families with whatever is needed. Roberta has served with mission teams to the Hogar Rafael Ayau Orphanage in Guatemala every year since 2002. She and her husband Ron live in Perrysburg, OH, and will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary in 2009; they have two sons, two daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren.

Margaret Simon - Vice President/NAB Project



God blessed my brothers, sister, and I with God-fearing parents, Alexander and Eva Simon, who were born in Seidnaya, Syria. They both were very pious Orthodox Christians.

Our family was raised with a lot of love and was taught at a very young age that Sundays were always reserved for attending church first. Throughout our youth and adult life, we were taught that when starting to work, you first set aside a portion of your earnings to help support your church, and to do work for your church. I’m sure you heard the saying, “Whatever you give to the church, it comes back to you many times over.” How true that is!!

I have been a member of St. George Orthodox Church in Grand Rapids, MI my entire life. I served as Sunday school teacher, member of the Board of Trustees, in the choir, and on our local chapter of Antiochian Women. I have held several offices in the different organizations, as well as being president in our local chapter of the Antiochian Women for several years. I thank God that the church is a very important part of my life.

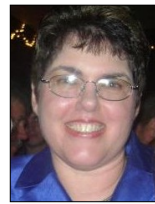
I am an Administrative Assistant to the Vice-President of Engineering at Blackmer Pump/Dover Corporation, where I have worked for the last 49 years.

Libbie Kohl - Treasurer

No Photo Available. I am a cradle Orthodox born of Russian Immigrant parents. I have been a member of St. George Church in Cedar Rapids all my life. The church has been a very important part of our life. I have taught Sunday school, been involved with the Fellowship of St John, Agape Sr. group, but most of all with the Antiochian women, because of their love, compassion, determination and all the good they have done over the years.

My husband and I travel quite a lot for the organization, which we enjoy very much. I am now directing the choir and serving on the parish council. We had two children our daughter is now in the arms of our Savior Jesus Christ and our son lives with his wife in El Sobrante, California. We have one grandchild who also lives in California. We are blessed to have two great grand children.

Sheryl VanderWagen - Recording Secretary



I am a member of St. George Orthodox Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan where I am active in the Antiochian Women chapter, serve as Co-Superintendent of the Sunday School, and sing in the choir. I’ve also been active in our Pan-Orthodox VBS program, serving as music coordinator. I play the piano and have directed children’s choir. I am in my second term as Recording Secretary for the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest. Along with my husband, Guy and two daughters, Abby and Emily, we have been members of St. George for 12 years. Guy and I were both raised in and attended various Protestant churches before becoming Orthodox 12 years ago. I have always been active in whatever church we attended but at St. George, I found meaning in working for the Church. I owe my gratitude to His Grace, Bishop MARK for encouraging me to become active in the Antiochian Women for the Diocese. It has enriched my life and has been a rewarding experience.

My day job is as System Librarian (computer system manager) for the Lakeland Library Cooperative based in Grand Rapids, a position I’ve held for 6 years; prior to that I was Library Director at the Georgetown Township Library in Jenison, Michigan for 18 years. We live in Coopersville, Michigan, a small town located midway between Grand Rapids and Muskegon. Guy and I were both raised in Coopersville and have chosen to raise our family there too. We didn’t move far, we live around the corner from where he grew up. I attended Hope College in Holland, Michigan and got my Master’s Degree in Library Science from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Khouriyeh Elfriede Daly - Public Relations Director/Humanitarian Coordinator



I am a member of St. Nicholas Church as well as the wife of the Pastor, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We have served in the parish since January 1st 2001 when my husband, Fr. Daniel Daly was transferred to the position of Parish priest.

I was born in the city of Braunau, Austria. As a child and teenager, I made a conscious decision to live a Christian way of life and take the Church seriously. This resulted in me becoming a Missionary and was sent to Africa. At the time it was called Rhodesia. I lived there from 1972 until 1979 during a scary war with Communist terrorists. It was there that I met my future husband. There I taught in the public schools Religious Education and worked for the Bishop of the Diocese of Bulawayo as Receptionist and secretary.

In 1980 Fr. Daniel and I became Orthodox, and were married at St. George Orthodox Church in Detroit. In

January 1981, my husband was ordained an orthodox priest and served in a number of churches throughout the Archdiocese. Now we are in Michigan. I have been working in the church office (part-time) and also served in various other capacities: Church school, Antiochian Women's president and Religious co-ordinator. We have two sons: Fr. Raphael and John.

During the week, I work at the church office, answer phones, receive people (we have many walk-ins who want to see the church, or the hall or a priest, or need help. I am helping with our Church school, prepare the books for the chanters. Most time consuming are the weekly bulletin and monthly Newsletter. As an Antiochian Woman, I feel we have to set examples to the young girls and women in our church, so they can carry on the work, that Our Lord has given to each one of us to do. Let us be like those women in the days of Our Lord's earthly days, "certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities and many others who provided for Him from their substance." (Luke 8: 2-3) Many of our younger women feel they cannot do what the older generation have done, and they have come up with new ideas, so they can be active and meaningful productive members of the Church. God willing, we are setting good examples.

Marie Bojrab - Immediate Past President/Finance
(No info submitted)

Kathleen Bassett-Hughes - Religious

No photo available. My parish, St. George Cathedral in Toledo, Ohio, has a very active Antiochian Women's group which goes by the name of Ladies Benevolent Society of St. George Cathedral. The ladies prepare food for their annual dinner in October, including kibble, sfeehe, grape leaves, and all the fine pastries. The ladies also prepare all the ethnic food for our festival every summer. The LBS collects gloves, mittens, and scarves which are donated to a women's shelter in the Toledo area. The ladies also think of their fellow parishioners at Christmas time when they make up cookie trays for the shut-ins. I have been active with LBS/Antiochian Women Society at St. George Cathedral for eight years. I am also the advisor for Teen SOYO in my parish and serve on the board of the Pan Orthodox Council of Toledo. I work full time outside of my home. My husband and I have two wonderful children—Emily, a senior in college, and Christopher, a senior in high school.

Kh. Jeanette Gallaway - Membership/Missions



I am presently from Lexington, KY, but born in Midland, PA northwest of Pittsburgh in a small steel mill town. I am married to Fr. Tom Gallaway for the past 26 years and have 3 wonderful boys Patrick, Michael, and Timothy who are the joy of my life. I am

also a registered nurse working in a Cardio Thoracic Intensive Care Unit for the past 20 of my 32 years as a nurse. I am a graduate of St. Vladimir's Seminary where I obtained my Masters of Divinity, and am the Choir Director in our parish. My parents were of Serbian descent and I was raised in an Orthodox home with many traditions filled with aromas of food and incense reminding us of the beauty of the Orthodox Church. Hospitality was the most important thing I remember from my youth. I have an identical twin sister who is also married to an Orthodox Priest in the Serbian Diocese. Our life centered around the Church and all its activities, so being the wife a priest and active in the Antiochian Women is just part of being the Body of Christ. We as Christian women have an obligation to do everything we can to help our Church live and grow. Here at St. Andrew we volunteer at God's Pantry as well as collect food for the needy. We organize retreats for the parish as well as take an annual pilgrimage to the Dormition Monastery during Great Lent. We also collect items for the children of women in the local prison, support a mission priest, give Bibles to each child in the Church School when they complete the 3rd grade. We make Lynus blankets for children that have cancer. Of course we also have dinners and social activities such as play bunko, and have summer barbeques and a Christmas party. Women have always been the backbone of the Christian Church as we see when they stood at the foot of the Cross of Christ. I am blessed here at St. Andrew to have women who place Christ and His Church first in their busy lives and dedicate themselves to Christ and His Church. I only regret that there isn't more time to do the things that need to be done.

Elaine Shaheen - Fundraising

No photo available. I was always active in the Midwest Region, starting with SOYO, then I took a break. I first heard of Antiochian Women in 1985 and became active in 1987 with becoming the Parliamentarian of the Region. My next office was Recording Secretary, then Vice Pres. and President. I've enjoyed this organization very much and have become friends with many people who will be my friends for a lifetime. Their projects are for great causes and I have enjoyed raising money for these projects. The Midwest project is selling aprons with Arabic Food items printed on the front. I have been able to sell them throughout the Region and in several cities in other regions. Some organizations, outside our Church Regions, have called to order some. I really enjoy fund raising for various organizations, especially the Church.

Dianne O'Regan - Historian/Archives

Please refer to the Fall 2007 for Dianne's biography at <http://www.antiochian.org/system/files/DIAKONIA-Fall+2007.pdf>

Regina Bojrab - Antiochian Women's Tea

No information submitted



*The Board and Membership of the
Antiochian Women of North America
Congratulate their Spiritual Advisor
The Right Reverend John Abdalah
On the occasion of his elevation to the
dignity of Archimandrite.*

Axios! Axios! Axios

THE MID-WINTER MEETING IS
SCHEDULED FOR

FEBRUARY 6 - 8, 2009

AT THE ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE

THE MEETINGS WILL BEGIN AS
USUAL ON FRIDAY EVENING AND
CONTINUE THROUGH SATURDAY.

LOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION
FROM YOUR DIOCESAN PRESIDENT

The New Antiochian Women Project...

“Children With Special Needs”

Having completed and exceeded the challenge to raise \$500,000 for the Retired Clergy Fund, the Antiochian Women have turned their focus back to children. This time, “Children with Special Needs”. Children with physical disabilities, mental retardation, autism, multiple handicaps, hearing/speech impairment, learning disability, cerebral palsy and other chronic diseases.

Many foundations, domestic and overseas are responding to this need by providing medical, educational and rehabilitation services to these children.

One such example is the Al Kafa’at Foundation in Beirut, Lebanon. Others include the United Cerebral Palsy Centers, the Resource Centers for Independent Living, and many more here in the United States and abroad. These Foundations and Centers are also at the forefront of new technologies being introduced to help the needs of these children.

Meeting these needs is a constant challenge. The directors of such foundations have turned to supporting organizations to fund basic equipment such as wheelchairs.

With your support, children of all ages, mostly from extremely deprived backgrounds, will be able to move around much more independently, some even without any assistance.

For these children, who face difficulties from an early age, such facilities offer the dignity and independence that are so important to their development.



This ten-year-old boy relies on his new wheelchair for mobility, and on new technology, a Tracker device attached to his forehead, to use a computer.

*A Sisterhood Serving Christ
Through Serving Others*

The Antiochian Women throughout the Archdiocese have taken upon themselves the challenge of raising Funds for this Project throughout the coming year.

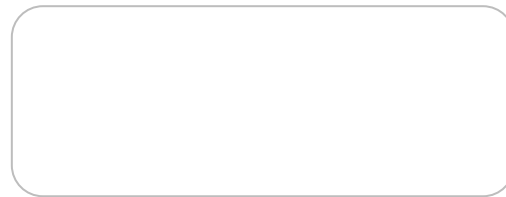
Please support the

“Children With Special Needs” Project
by your prayers and by raising funds.



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America
North American Board

Lucy Hanna
1853 Kensington Road
Corona, CA 92880



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.