

Antiochian Women

North American Board

DIAKONIA Winter 2004

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Janice Saba, NAB Chairperson



Data from Dallas:

One by one, they entered the lobby, or the restaurant of the Wyndham in Dallas, our sisters from Utica, Louisville, Wichita, Santa Barbara, Fort Wayne, Fort Worth, Houston, Dallas, Memphis, Montreal, Winchester, Annapolis, Charlottetown, a meeting of minds and hearts in fellowship and dialogue.

The weekend started with a pre-meeting tour of Texas School Book Depository in Dallas for a history recap of John Kennedy's life. The ladies re-lived the days leading up to that fateful day in Dallas, which changed the course of history. We enjoyed being together in a casual sightseeing mode, and then we gathered together in the beautiful Wyndham Galleria for a delightful lunch by the Indoor Skating Arena.

Next, we held our first executive meeting where President Laila briefed us on the Agenda and main items for discussion. We enjoyed a lovely buffet together and then started our meetings. It was great to see so many people from all over the Archdiocese get together for the Teen and Fellowship of St. John meetings also, with stirring words by Fr. John Nosal, Gigi Shadid and a briefing on the new Information Technology direction of our Archdiocese Website, which will debut in mid-March.

Many worthwhile ideas came forward some of which are that the personal touch is so important, to offer rides, be Big Sisters, encourage new people to get involved in regional and national meetings.

Ina O'Dell of the Eastern Region pointed out that many new board members in her Region were given notebooks, which contain a phone card (great idea!) to use in doing Region business and contacting parishes. This is fabulous, since a phone call still remains the best way to communicate. Additionally, Ina informed us that her Region distributes a floppy computer disk that contains all the information in electronic form, especially the mailing labels. What a super job our new friend Ina is doing in her Region. Also there is an E-Contact for every parish.

Judy Stevens, another wonderful new friend and leader, President of the Southwest Region reports that they are looking to pair missions and parishes for prayer, fellowship and communication.

Sarah Hodges, President of Southeast Region, brings her Region to life and vitality, and even her presence in our midst was a huge blessing.

Wedad Tarazi filled our hearts with love by her gentle presence; Mary Ellen Mabardy of the New England Region, Peggy King (Scholarship) and Marie Bojrab (Midwest) were all welcome new friends who added so many thoughtful and intelligent comments.

Mary Ann Khoury, Coordinator of Outreach Alaska, was a teacher and a disciple in our midst. She told us about how our brothers and sisters in Alaska struggle to preserve the Orthodox faith against a harsh subsistence lifestyle. Her courageous example of living in the bush, ministering to these people, was very touching. She told us about the Prayer Society, Sister Parish Sponsorship, Ambassador Opportunity, Spiritual Travel, Adopt a Seminarian, and Project 2010 restoration of churches.

Observing the faithful teens, the young adults, the women, the priests who oversee these groups, and visiting the beautiful Church of Saints Constantine and Helen in Dallas was truly inspiring. Rev. Antony Elbahou and his parishioners just could not have been nicer or more welcoming hosts to us all and we thank them so much. We had a wonderful, happy, and a productive weekend...we saw flowers, we saw snow, then the pansies popped out again in the sunshine to bid us farewell from the fine city of Dallas.

After this, I journeyed to Los Angeles California and had the pleasure of attending an Executive Dinner Meeting of one of the most dynamic Antiochian Women's Chapters in the Archdiocese, presided over by Co-presidents Rose Samore (sister of NAB President Laila Ferris, Texas) and Georgette Malouf (sister of Joyce Hanna, Boston). The Executive alone consists of four vice-presidents (Ways and Means, Membership, Guest Speakers, and Hostesses) and various sub-committees which cover such areas as Women's Month, Newsletter, Membership Tea, Potlucks, Pan Orthodox Vespers, Debutante Ball, and Holiday Luncheon. God bless you Ladies. Your commitment and service is exemplary.

While this Chapter is huge, many of our Chapters operate with an executive of 2, or 4, or 6. As Ina O'Dell pointed out, each of our Chapters has it's own personality to suit it's geographical and unique profile, and it is amazing to contemplate the work of our hands throughout this great and holy Archdiocese.

"Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands- O prosper the work of our hands! (Psalm 90:17)

Additionally...we shared recipes! So here they are- hot off the press and out of the oven:

Sherry Abraham-Morrow's Microwave Luban: In a glass bowl put ½ gallon of homogenized milk and heat for 28-30 minutes on high. Remove it, and let it sit at room temperature for 45 minutes (120 degrees). Mix 3 tablespoons starter ("robee") with 3 tbsps of the warm milk, and gradually add to the large pot of warm milk, stirring until the starter is thoroughly mixed together with the warm milk. Place it back in the microwave to sit for 5 hours or overnight, no cover.

Elinor Bourjaily's Spinach Pies:

2 ½ lb. all-purpose flour (about 7 ½ cups) – or half wheat, half white flour
½ tsp. salt

¼ cup canola oil

1 package regular yeast – mix with ½ cup warm water and a tsp of sugar
Pour into a well of the flour. Add 2 ½ cups more of water (about 6 cups of water to 5 pounds). Knead together till smooth and elastic.

Place in an oiled pan, make the Sign of the Cross on the dough and let it rest in a warm place with a warm damp towel on top for one hour. Form 3 large balls; let rise another ½ hour. Roll out and use a big biscuit cutter, cut about 4" rounds. Let rest 10 minutes.

Put 1 heaping tbsp. of filling in center of each round and fold up in a triangle, pinching the seams so they don't open.

Filling (place in a colander to drain) – 2- 10 oz. pkgs. of fresh spinach,
(wash, drain, towel dry, and chop up coarsely)

1 bunch green onion, or 2 white ones chopped

1 bunch parsley, washed, dried and chopped

Fresh mint – the leaves of 6 sprigs, washed, dried, chopped

Salt, pepper, allspice, nutmeg, clove, citric acid or lemon juice and ¼ cup oil

Cook in a 375-degree oven at least 20 minutes. Makes about 40-50 pies.

Janice's Montreal Cookies (Kawk or Easter Cookie)

8 cups flour

2 cups sugar

2 tsp. baking powder

3 eggs

1 lb. sweet butter

3 tablespoons mahlab (spice found in middle eastern shops- black cherry seeds crushed)

¼ to 1 cup milk

Soften butter to room temp (microwave 40 sec.) and add sugar, eggs, mahlab, and beat.

Sift dry ingredients together and add to butter mixture. Add milk slowly, feel it to a rolling consistency, not too sticky. Make a ball of dough in a circle, and brush with egg and milk wash, then dip in sesame seeds. Bake at 325 until lightly brown.

Lenten Readings:

The One Thing Needful: Meditations for the Busy Orthodox Woman by Colette D. Jonopulos. This is a book with brief chapters for example, telling how important it is to stop and appreciate the world, to have a little icon corner, to approach obedience to God's will with joy. Every chapter is a treat..

Gabriel's Dragon by Archpriest Economist Antony Gabriel,

This is an account of one priest's struggle with cancer, a spiritual memoir – a story of one whose life “continues to become transformed from the correct, external conduct of rites and ritual, form and function, to that internal, intense leap into the heart of the Divine whose tender embrace brings warmth to the very core of our being.” It can be ordered by calling St. George Church in Montreal, 514 2768533.

The Five People You Meet In Heaven by Mitch Albom is a delightful little novel that interprets heaven as a place where five people who were in your life and influenced it, appear to weave meaning into the big picture. He also wrote Tuesdays with Morrie, which were discussed by some of our lady's groups.

BLESSED LENTEN SEASON AND PASCHA TO ALL!

Reminder: PROJECT 2004 Orphanage - deadline May 15.
Checks payable to NAB Antiochian Women
mail to - Violet Robbat, Treasurer, 15 Tufts Rd, Lexington, MA. 02421