

DIAKONIA

Spring 2006



Behold the Bridegroom cometh at midnight,
And blessed is the servant whom He shall find awake!

*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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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 an attachment to:
teta.of.9@sbcglobal.net
- Submit your article on a CD or floppy disk to Lucy Hanna, 1853 Kensington Road, Corona, CA 92880.
- FAX typed, double spaced articles to (951) 736-0800.

Submission Details

- Please include your name and the phone number where you can be contacted for questions.
- Attach a hard copy for reference.
- Keep a 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 and articles from all Antiochian parishes of North America for publication in every issue so we may keep in touch with each other.

What is DIAKONIA

The word **DIAKONIA** is a Greek word meaning *Service*, usually pertaining to service in the Church. The purpose of the Antiochian Women's organization is primarily spirituality and humanitarian service. In the words of our beloved Metropolitan PHILIP it is "**Theology in Action**".

READ THE DIAKONIA ON LINE AT
<http://www.antiochian.org/AW-DIAKONIA>

North American Board

2006 Mid-Winter Meeting

Reported by NAB President, Laila Ferris

“Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” (I Timothy 6:18-19)

In reading this verse, I felt that it very much describes the ministry of the Antiochian Women of this blessed Archdiocese. This Sisterhood of Christ is rich in good works, always ready to give and share, especially with those who are in need. They are truly dedicated to glorifying God through His Son, and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Antiochian Women came from across North America to attend the annual North American Board’s Mid-Winter Meeting held at the Antiochian Village on February 3-4, 2006. It never ceases to amaze me at the positively charged energy that is felt when these women come together to share and work for the glory of God. For some women, this was their first experience in meeting with others from all Dioceses of this Archdiocese and for others, it was a return to a beloved event as they serve in their capacities for their Diocese. Veteran or new to the NAB’s Mid-Winter Meeting, the Antiochian Women found, as they always do, a tremendous sense of fellowship and love amongst each other.

During the meeting, the Antiochian Women not only discussed and worked on important business issues,



NAB officers from L to R: Cynthia Nimey, V. President, Violet Robbat, Treasurer; Laila Ferris, President; Dianne O'Regan, Secretary. Absent: Lucy Hanna, Public Relations.

but dwelt on the spirituality of who we are and our mission to our faith. This discussion was led by our Spiritual Advisor, V. Rev. Fr. John Abdalah. The highlight of the weekend’s meeting was the time spent with each other, sharing and giving in all that we do. The Antiochian Women always have the common thread in assuring that they continuously serve their Lord and willing support each other as they fulfill their duties. Whether in the dining hall or in the meeting room, all discussions centered around who we, the Antiochian Women, are and what drives us to do the good work of this Sisterhood of Charity.

Once again, I cannot state with enough words, how wonderful these women are and all that they do, as busy as they are with their own lives. They are truly unselfish with their time and efforts. They very much believe that, they, as a Sisterhood of Charity, serve Christ through serving others. I look forward to meeting with them in July, at the Antiochian Village, for our annual NAB Summer Meeting.



The Antiochian Women (top right corner) joined the SOYO and FSJD for the Joint meeting.



Greetings and best wishes during this Holy Season of Paschal Lent. I hope all the ladies will take this Holy Season as a very serious time to think of their repentance, their spiritual renewal and their lives with the Lord.

I lieu of a message, I have asked the priest Patrick O'Grady, pastor of St. Ignatius Church in Twin Falls, Idaho, who is a scholar, to summarize what took place during the recent Diocesan Clergy Seminar, February 5 to 10 of this year.

The topic was Bioethics in General and Contemporary Issues. I thought this summary will give our ladies a good Christian understanding of what Bioethics means. The speaker was Dr. Tristan Engelhardt Jr. Ph.D., M.D.



How should I order my life? Orthodox Christian Bioethics in an age of misbelief.

How to aim at remaining Christian in a post-Christian culture? This is a question we American Orthodox Christians face every day. It is most pressing when we must deal with ethical problems in our families, among our friends, around our neighborhoods, and in our schools and places of work.

Here is the situation we face: Christendom is disestablished in our legal and popular culture. Traditional Christianity is widely rejected, despised, or distorted out of any meaningful form. We are like the people at the end of the Middle Ages and at the threshold of modernity. Radical changes are occurring in science, technologies, culture, and in many religions. A pan-ecumenism of Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and New-Age spiritualists threatens to obscure the unique truth of Orthodox Christianity. In the secular, post-Christian culture, everything receives a new, misdirecting meaning; basic social structures are reshaped and distorted. This means that we Orthodox Christians must know our faith and that even down to practical ethical issues of life.

So, what does our holy faith teach us about medical ethics? About sexuality, procreation, and marriage? About elective abortion, surely a topic of momentous import for all Christians? About how to navigate the maze of end-of-life issues as they come to bear upon critically ill patients in medical care--in



short--about how to die properly? What does our holy faith teach us about advance directives, living wills, physician-assisted suicide, euthanasia? What really is death and how do we meet it and help others to meet it? All of these call for a firm and clear direction from Holy Tradition. Thanks be to God Who in His goodness and mercy has not left us ignorant, but rather offers a good word.

We face a situation in which there is moral chaos. We have replaced the transcendent with the worldly; we have made an idol of mere biological life. There is no awareness of the fundamental role asceticism plays in the discovery of what really matters in life; namely, the acquisition of the Holy Spirit and the enjoyment of the Life which is greater than that of the material body alone. In this sphere of materiality, the healers of Christ, his holy priests have been replaced with secular chaplains, bioethicists who draw their inspiration from worldly ethics. We cannot trust their unworthy insights; instead, we Orthodox Christians must draw on sacred Tradition, as we have received.

What are our values? God is fully transcendent and not merely an object of philosophical reflection: we bow before His ineffable Mystery! We gain true knowledge from spiritual illumination, and not merely rational or "schooled" learning (noetic vs. discursive knowledge). We deem that of the highest value what engenders holiness rather than moral goodness. Living a good life is not enough; goodness without holiness is perishable. Our heroes or exemplary persons are the saints and living holy

elders rather than the learned professors and scientists. We do not separate noetic (spiritual knowledge) from that which is only rational; however, we always begin with the former and bring it through to the latter. All this is a scandal to our non-Orthodox contemporaries: Our dominant secular culture tells us to act as if the truth of religion can be reduced to just its moral force. The moral ecumenical postulate holds that the universal truth of religion is found in the morality it supports so that it does not matter to what religion one belongs, as long as one lives a good life. This principle excludes mentioning in public that holiness is more important than goodness, in that any goodness that is not located in terms of holiness is perverse. In post-modernity morality and bioethics become normatively plural. Secularism says that one cannot affirm any absolute truth. All truth is relative: "beauty (or truth) is in the eye of the beholder."

In what follows, we state succinctly what our holy Tradition teaches with regard to the questions raised above. Let us begin with a short chart:

CONTRASTING MORAL VIEWS		
	CHRISTIAN VIEW	SECULAR VIEW
Cohabitation without marriage	Fornication	Expected relationship
AID*	Kind of adultery	Consent cures
Pre-natal screening & abortion	Murder	Responsible parenting
Religion	Spiritual therapy	Psychologically comforting
Death	With humility & repentance	With dignity
PAS**	Self-murder	Rational death
* Artificial insemination from donor (other than husband)		*** Physician-assisted suicide

Traditional Christians affirm the propriety of sexual activity and relations with the bonds of marriage between a man and a woman, exclusively. In the new secular culture, sex between consenting adults is no longer recognized as fornication or adultery. Consent is held to make everything all right. One's identity as a male or female is held to be socially constructed, not an ontological reality, making transsexual surgery ontologically and therefore morally plausible.

The dominant secular moral norms approve of delaying marriage, engaging in premarital sex, and

postponing having children until after it takes outside help to have a child (i.e., yuppie sex)--this is a recipe for disaster. The use of sperm and ova from outside the marriage of a man and a woman (e.g., artificial insemination) is no longer recognized as a kind of adultery. The use of surrogate mothers is no longer recognized as a form of adultery. *In vitro* fertilization with embryo wastage is not appreciated as a form of abortion, which the Church calls murder. Technologically mediated reproduction is not appreciated as often crucially undermining the intimacy appropriate to reproduction. The pursuit of human cloning is not recognized as an expression of a distorted desire to have children, acquire medical knowledge, or produce therapeutically useful materials (e.g., stem cells). Human reproduction must come from the union of husband and wife. Solitary reproduction is forbidden. "Nor did He enable woman to bear children without man; if this were the case she would be self-sufficient." (St. John Chrysostom, "Homily 20 on Ephesians 5:22-33."). The use of medical technology in the pursuit of having a child can become an all-consuming passion; also, one must not use improper means

(e.g., no embryo wastage). St. Basil the Great forbids "whatever requires an undue amount of thought or trouble or involves a large expenditure of effort and causes our whole life to revolve, as it were, around solicitude for the flesh..." (St. Basil, *Long Rules*, Rule 55).

Abortion is murder, and is always seriously wrong. But abortion is an integral element of the contemporary, secular, post-traditional, post-Christian life-style. The moral focus is on luxury: the comfortable, double-income, upper-middle-class way of life. For these people, abortion is an insurance policy against the risks of fornication (as well as adultery). In contrast, Orthodox Christianity has always understood all abortion to be equivalent to homicide. Human embryonic stem cells may not be used as a means for curing disease and postponing death. In a culture severed from a

proper orientation to God, the murder of early embryos will not be seen as inappropriate. There is a world-wide movement to make abortion integral to health care so that it must be included in the training of physicians, or at least obstetricians; so that obstetricians and pharmacists will have no right to refuse to be involved in abortion; so that health care institutions will have no right to refuse to be involved in abortion. Orthodox health care givers: doctors, nurses, etc., must refrain from participating in this scandal.

Now we must consider the ethical issues surrounding the end of life. Human finitude and its challenge to health care must be seen within an Orthodox way of thinking: All will die - nothing can allow us to avoid death, not even the best of medicine. Almost all will suffer, except those who die suddenly in their youth. Medicine can only postpone death and decrease the likelihood of suffering. We have only limited resources: if we try to save life at all costs, we will have no resources left. All medical knowledge is limited and probabilistic. The complex issues regarding the end of life, especially under medical care, should properly include one's spiritual father, in order to avoid serious mistakes.

In the traditional culture out of which Western law developed, the downside risk for serious illness was not death but dying without repentance. The worst death was one that came without warning, peacefully in one's sleep. The traditional prayer was to be preserved from a sudden death for which one may not have adequately prepared. Traditionally, Anglo-American law presupposes that innocent persons have a right not to be intentionally killed, even with consent. Within this traditional moral understanding, it can be appropriate to engage in activities one foresees may harm or even kill a patient; however, one is not to intend to kill the patient. In short, the practice of medicine in recognizing the possibility of adverse side-effects presupposes that physicians will foresee them but not want them (i.e., intend them) to happen to their patients. Traditionally, providing adequate and appropriate pain management (but not so as to kill the patient), without an intention to kill a patient even if this increases the likelihood of an earlier death, is considered morally acceptable.



Traditionally, withholding or withdrawing inappropriate medical intervention, without an intention to kill the patient, even if this increases the likelihood of an earlier death, is considered morally acceptable. Stopping artificial hydration and nutrition in order to expedite death constitutes a direct involvement in the death of another and is morally wrong. For those outside of this traditional moral framework, which recognizes the evil of intending to bring about death by withholding or withdrawing treatment, it may be difficult to fathom the importance of intention.

In contrast to this, in the emerging secular view, you only go around once; therefore, you should hold on to this life as long as possible. Within this worldview, it may be more difficult for some to set limits to life-saving treatment, when this is taken to be the only life. There has been an emergence of a concern with death with dignity, often replacing the traditional concern of death with repentance and reconciliation with God and others. Many are as unclear about what should count for them as a good death since they have been unclear as to what should have counted for them as a good life.

So, how might we view a Christian death? In the traditional moral view, it is morally appropriate to provide aggressive comfort care; to withdraw therapeutic interventions that will involve more harms (especially spiritual harms) than benefits; to withhold diagnostic and therapeutic interventions that will involve more harms (esp. spiritual harms) than benefits. But it is inappropriate to engage in any intervention with the intention of expediting death; to withhold or withdraw any treatment with the intention of expediting death. However, in the post-traditional moral view, it is morally appropriate not only to engage in the actions cited above as appropriate, but also directly to expedite the death of a patient (i.e., *via* physician-assisted suicide or voluntary active euthanasia) in the event of a terminal illness or irreversible illness and/or the loss of the ability to engage in the activities of daily living. In other words, physicians may kill.

Our Orthodox view differs substantively. Medicine is a gift of God: its appropriate use is good and is generally obligatory. "Each of the arts is

God's gift to us, remedying the deficiencies of nature ... And, when we were commanded to return to the earth whence we had been taken and were united with the pain-ridden flesh doomed to destruction because of sin and, for the same reason, also subject to disease, the medical art was given to us to relieve the sick, in some degree at least." [St. Basil, *Long Rules*, Rule 55]. The control of pain and distress can be good: "...with mandrake doctors give us sleep; with opium they lull violent pain." [St. Basil, "The Hexameron," Homily 5, 54]. Medicine should not replace faith in God. "To place the hope of one's health in the hands of the doctor is the act of an irrational animal." [St. Basil, *Long Rules*, Rule 55]. Use of medicine should not be all-encompassing for the patient or family; if one tries to save life at all costs, one will turn this life and medicine into idols. One must not make medicine or this life into a false God. Here, unlike with Roman Catholics, the focus is clearly and primarily on spiritual harms. Unlike with Roman Catholics, there is no formal casuistry: each decision must be made pastorally, one by one. This is why we need to keep our relationship with our spiritual father active.

We conclude our summary with ethics regarding death itself. Every Orthodox Christian should explain carefully to his family and close friends his desire to receive the ministry of an Orthodox priest in life-threatening circumstances, and to be buried according to Orthodox tradition in death. It is a good practice to carry a card stating that you are an Orthodox Christian and that in the event of your incapacitation, an Orthodox priest will be summoned. Medical advance directives and living wills cannot guarantee this. In fact, if death is sudden, the use of these directives can obstruct the proper burial of the person. It is important to give proper instructions and thoughtfully to appoint trustworthy agents. Most proxies have inadequate information and may not fully share the same values as the patient; families are often made up of moral and religious strangers. It can be appropriate when one is terminal and, after preparing for death with repentance and the Mysteries, to stop all treatment except comfort care, so as to avoid temptations caused by the burden of medication. It can be appropriate when a terminal patient has not prepared for death to attempt to postpone death in order to provide a chance for repentance and reception of the Mysteries.

There is no dogma as to which organ(s) is necessary for remaining alive in this world. As an empirical circumstance, it seems clear that in this world where the brain goes, there goes the person. "Non-heart-beating donors" may not be dead. Organ donation can be an act of charity. All else being equal, one should not do anything that makes a Christian funeral impossible.

Let us end on this note: Life is asceticism; namely the unflagging struggle to be free from the passions and the deceptions of the world. Life is a struggle to turn from loving oneself with all one's heart, soul, and mind to loving God with all one's heart, soul, and mind, and one's neighbor as oneself in the light of a right-believing, right-worshipping love of God. Unholy love harms. Any goodness that does not lead beyond itself to holiness is a false goodness. Holiness is not just niceness, goodness, social justice; it transforms us (see Acts 19:12). The ascetic journey from oneself to God is, as the Greek asceticism indicates, not only an exercise, practice, and training, but an all-encompassing way of life. Periods of fasting are times when we are especially aided by the Church in re-doubling our efforts to turn fully to God through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. E.g., from the age of the Apostles, Christians have fasted Wednesdays and Fridays.

Our life of asceticism sustains our Orthodox paradigm, our Orthodox life-world. Yet, the secular world aims us in the opposite direction, from God to ourselves, to self-satisfaction and self-indulgence. Consider life as displayed in television, movies, and popular music with its everyday acceptance of sinful lifestyles and immanent self-gratification. The dominant culture of the West has become fundamentally different from that of the unchanging Christianity of the Apostles and the Fathers. Christianity is one and does not change, for "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8). God is not an under-achiever and has established and maintained His Church in its fullness from the Age of the Apostles, so that as the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicea, A.D. 787) proclaimed, "To make our confession short, we keep unchanged all the ecclesiastical traditions handed down to us, whether in writing or verbally ... This is the faith of the Apostles, this is the faith of the Orthodox, this is the faith which hath made firm the whole world."

**Introducing
The 2005—2007
Board of the Antiochian Women of the
Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York**

THE OFFICERS

***The Rt. Rev. Bishop ALEXANDER - Bishop of
Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York***



All through his life Bishop Alexander has loved the church and had an affinity for the priesthood. As a young boy he converted a small room in his home into a church where he celebrated make-believe services with himself,

serving as the priest, and the neighborhood children as the congregation. Given this strong faith one would expect him to begin preparing for the priesthood upon reaching adulthood. Instead, he waited and allowed himself time to mature and his faith time to grow until God's calling became too loud to ignore.

Bishop Alexander's path to priesthood began in North Lebanon where he was born into a Christian Orthodox family. He attended Tripoli Boys' School and after completion of the Lebanese Baccalaureates I and II, he enrolled in the American University of Beirut. The havoc of war in Lebanon prevented him from continuing his education and in 1976 he left his birth country and a widowed mother to pursue his education in the United States.

He attended North Texas State University where he studied Biology with the intention of becoming a dentist. He unfortunately found that the dental schools gave priority to state residents and his chances of being accepted were slim. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in

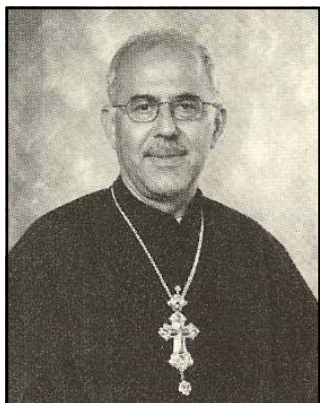
December of 1978, he switched paths and enrolled in a Master of Business Administration program. Two years later he graduated the MBA program and headed back to war-stricken Lebanon to live and work.

Between 1981 and 1985 Bishop Alexander lived in what was then West Beirut where life was a constant challenge. In October 1985, His Grace was drawn to return to the United States where he worked for several years before going to seminary. During those years his emotional and spiritual growth moved him closer to his calling to the priesthood. He wrote to His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, requesting his blessing to enter seminary and in May of 1997 he was directed to attend St. Vladimir Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York. He was ordained to the Diconate on January 9, 2000 and to the priesthood on April 9 of that year. In June of 2000 he became the pastor of St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church in Hunt Valley, Maryland, and remained there until his consecration as Bishop. On July 4, 2004, he was elevated to Archimandrite and on July 16, nominated to the episcopate during the General Assembly that took place in Pittsburgh, PA.

In an unprecedented move in the history of what had become the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, Archimandrite Rafeek Mufarrij was elected Bishop of Ottawa, East Canada and Upstate New York by the Synod of Bishops of the Archdiocese on October 29, 2004 in Naples, FL. His consecration as Bishop Alexander took place on February 15, 2004 in a jubilant celebration of the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Dormition in Damascus. Presiding at the Liturgy was His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV assisted by several metropolitans, bishops and a number of other clergy.

On June 12, 2005 Bishop Alexander was enthroned as Bishop of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York.

Father Ghattas Hajal - Spiritual Advisor



Fr. Ghattas Hajal is the Dean of St. Elias Cathedral in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the Dean of the Clergy of the Canadian Deanery and the President of the Eastern Orthodox Clergy Association in Ottawa.

On January 1, 1977 Fr. Ghattas was ordained to the diaconate and on Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 1977, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by His Eminence Metropolitan Georges Khodr of Mount Lebanon. In July 1994, Fr. Ghattas was elevated to the dignity of Archpriest by His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP.

Fr. Ghattas served two sister parishes in Lebanon St. Michael – Antelias and St. George – Baslim for 3 years. Then he started a new church, The Annunciation in Jal-El-Dib, where he served from 1980 until 1990. On May 3rd, 1990, Fr. Ghattas and his family landed in Montreal. He was immediately appointed as an Associate Pastor at St. Nicholas Church where he served for 2 years, during which he established the New St. Mary Church in Montreal and was the first appointed priest to St. Mary. In 1990 Metropolitan PHILIP appointed him the Pastor of St. Elias Church in Ottawa.

Fr. Ghattas served as the Spiritual Advisor of the Antiochian Women from 1993 to 1995, then as the Spiritual Advisor of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch from 1995 to 1997. He was re-appointed as the Spiritual Advisor of the Antiochian Women in 2000.

Fr. Ghattas was honored to be inducted by His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP a knight Commander in the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch in September 2000.

Kh. Tracey Allen - President



I've completed a number of standard profiles in the past and so I hope you don't mind that I'd rather share a story with you. The gift of love in helping others is truly a wonderful example of Christian love. When I was a little girl about six years old, I lived in an apartment complex on the third floor. My grandfather would come visit regularly and when I knew he was coming I would wait on the main floor of the building to walk him up. One day in particular I remember my grandfather arriving with two big brown paper grocery bags. I said to my grandfather, "we don't need anything Poppy." He replied, "These groceries are not for you dear." He then placed them in front of the door where another child I played with on occasion lived. He rang the bell, and ushered me up the stairs. As we were going up the stairs, I asked him, "Why aren't you waiting for the door to open." Poppy answered, "They know who left the groceries dear." At the time I didn't understand but over the years the faith in God that my grandfather displayed in his life tells me that he was doing God's work. Of course, I'm guessing my mother played a role here too since someone had to pass on the information that this lady and her children needed food. Many years later, after my grandfather had passed on, I was visiting the local library, and the mother of my childhood friend recognized me and with tears in her eyes told me how much those bags of groceries had meant to her. She had known who dropped them off and what really touched her was that someone cared. She'd had a troubled spot and those groceries had gotten her through. Her last comment sums it up nice, she said, "Your grandfather was a good man and I thanked God for his help." We live by example and the acts of kindness that I've seen my grandfather, and parents do in the name of God's love has inspired me to do good works. I hope that you will think of this story and show your children and grandchildren by example about the gift of helping others.

Matthew 25: 34-36 - "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my

Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

There are many saints who have done wonderful acts of love to help others; Grand Duchess Elizabeth or Saint Elizabeth [Ella] dedicated her life to helping children and the sick, [Her story http://www.orthodox.cn/saints/duchesselizabeth_en.htm] while Mother Maria [<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/4541/newarticle.html>] helped the Jewish victims of the Nazis before giving her life in place of another. As Orthodox we have many true examples of saintly work, but remember they were all just as we are but chose to give of themselves to help others. Let us follow the saints, live God's word, and show an example of Christian love to others.

Editor's Note: Kh. Tracey Allen is married to Fr. Stephen Allen, pastor of Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. She has held several offices on her local chapter as well as on the regional\diocesan board of the Antiochian Women. She has also served on the parish council in her church as well as in the choir and chaired various events.

Saloma Tannis - Vice President/NAB Project (No photo available)

Saloma Tannis was born in Sayda, Lebanon on May 21, 1958, attended the American Anglican School in Sayda, was moved to Beirut with her family in 1969 where she attended El Nahda Protestant School, then finished her education in French. Immigrated to Canada after the passing away of her father, on August 31, 1976. Raised Catholic, converted to Orthodoxy when married to her husband Theodore Tannis, she has four children, Christine, Bernadette, Matthew, and Theodore Jr., she attends St. Elias Cathedral services in Ottawa regularly, a stay home mother, member of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch, volunteer at the Church Office and the summer camp, loves to bake Holy Bread for Communion, favorite verse in the Bible is the general Epistle of James which inspires and concentrates the good conduct of Christianity.

Kh. Helene Hajal - Treasurer/Scholarship (No photo available)

My name is Helene Makhoul Hajal. I was born and raised in the most beautiful Country, Lebanon. I have been married to Archpriest Ghattas Hajal for 40 years, and have been a Khouriye for 29 years. We immigrated to Canada in May of 1990 to escape the vicious Lebanese war that we lived through for 16 years.

I am a proud mother of 3 children. Marlene who is a Pediatrician practicing in the United States, married to Cyril Mouaikel with 2 beautiful kids Charles Gabriel and Marialena. My son Gabriel works in a financial firm and married to Nancy Gharib and they have a son. My youngest daughter Rose-Mary is a bank manager in Ottawa, married to Peter Malouf and they are the proud parents of Katrina Maria Helena and Nicholas Peter Elias. We are very blessed and very grateful to God for our beloved family. I am a part time employee and help with fund raising events for our beautiful St. Elias Cathedral, Ottawa. I am a Choir Member and I attend all ladies' meetings. I have held a few offices in the most important organization, the Antiochian Women including president of the CAN/AM region, as well as Scholarship and Religious Coordinator. On the NAB level I served as Public Relations Director. I made many, many friends through the Antiochian Women of North America that I am very proud of.

I was honoured to be inducted by His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP a Dame in the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch in September 1994.

Kh. Jane Solberg - Recording Secretary

No photo or biography available.

Kh. Barbara Baz - Immediate Past President/Public Relations/Web Site Coordinator



My name is Barbara Baz. I am married to Fr. Terence Baz who is originally from Sydney, Australia. I am originally from Paterson, New Jersey. In 1995 we moved to Albany, NY and in 2000 we were transferred to St. Elias Church in Syracuse, NY. We have 2 wonderful children, Charles (11) and Nicole (10). I am presently a substitute teacher. I have served as officer and coordinator on the local, regional and now the NAB levels including being President of the CanAM Region when it changed to the Diocese of Ottawa and Upstate New York. I am currently the NAB coordinator of the Widowed Clergy Wives Program. You will hear more about that in the coming months.

Aside from being involved in many of our church activities, I am very involved in our children's school and of course the one thing I love the most, taking care of my family.

THE COORDINATORS

Faye Thomas - Religious (Not photo available)

My name is Faye Thomas. 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 have been happily married for 32 years and 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!

It is my honor to serve the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada & Upstate New York as Religious Coordinator.

Abla Bassett - Humanitarian Coordinator



My name is Abla Hanie Bassett, I am a mother of 7 children and I am blessed with 5 grandchildren. I was born in Lebanon but spent most of my life in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. I'm an active member of Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in PEI. I've been the Antiochian Women local chapter treasurer for the past 10 years and volunteer at the local soup kitchen. I enjoy aquasize and reading books of the Saints.

The following addition to Abla's biography was added by Kh. Tracey Allen: Abla is a mother to all in our parish and faithfully attends Church helping to sing the liturgy on Wednesday nights. She has been instrumental in developing the Soup Kitchen outreach that our Church does monthly and has always been there for the ladies in any way she can help. The parish of Sts. Peter & Paul love her and pray that God grants her many years.

Donna Savage - Membership Coordinator

No photo or biography available.

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.”(Joel 2:28)

Dear sisters in Christ:

God has spoken to His people in the old testament by His prophets, who prophesied about the coming of the Savior, about His Crucifixion and His Resurrection, and finally about His sending the Holy Spirit “the Spirit of truth, who will guide you into all the truth.”

On the day of Pentecost, all these promises were fulfilled and the disciples received the Holy Spirit. They were filled of wisdom and started preaching the good news of salvation to all the nations.

The Church was born, and the greatest renewal movement in history began, it still continues. Through baptism and chrismation, the gifts of the Holy Spirit will be given to all Christians, young and old, men and women. Sons and daughters of future generations are given the potential to become blessed and holy, and are given the power of the Spirit that they might even prophesy.

We usually think of the old seeing visions and the young as being dreamers, but by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the old will now dream and the young will be wise visionaries.

The Holy Spirit, who is in all places and fills all things, will dwell in us and fill us with peace and joy, love and goodness, righteousness and truth.

Beloved sisters, let us walk in this Spirit, let us walk as children of light, let our light shine before the others, that they may see our good work, and glorify our Father in Heaven.

May all your dreams become true, and all your visions become a reality.

*Yours in Christ,
Archpriest Ghattas Hajal - Dean*

Widowed Clergy Wives

“Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God” Philippians 4:6

During our summer meetings at our Archdiocesan Convention in Detroit, MI last summer our wonderful Antiochian Women took on something new which is very near and dear to my heart. We realized that we have a group of women who have been forgotten. These are women who have been our friend, mother, sister, co-worker and even spiritual guide. They are Khouriyehs who have lost their husbands and now we have lost touch with them. Surprisingly there is no complete record of these wonderful women. We are in the process of changing all of that. With the help of our Archdiocesan Office, Bishop Joseph and Bishop Basil, I have compiled a list. This list thus far, may or may not be complete. Our other diocesan Bishops will also be recruited to submit names as they come up. This list contains names, some addresses, no phone #'s and some email addresses. I am presently trying to expand this information.

If anyone knows a widowed Khouriyeh, please let me know by phone, fax, email or mail:

Barbara Baz:(315)488-2616 (Fax and phone) Mom2candn@aol.com
3994 W. Langerwood Lane, Syracuse, NY 13215

We truly are a “Sisterhood serving Christ through serving each other. I appreciate this opportunity to serve and please keep our widowed Khouriyeh's in your prayers.

By Kh. Barbara Baz, Syracuse, NY

Retired Clergy Fund PROJECT

2006

Care For Those...

Who Care For Us



Our clergy are there for us:
Baptism, Communion, Confession,
Marriage, Illness, Death.
Let us be there for them!

Goal: \$500,000

Due: May 15, 2006

Antiochian Orthodox
Christian Women
of
North America

Our Challenge: \$150,000

This will be the second year of our **Retired Clergy Fund** Project. Our goal is to raise at least \$500,000 over a five-year period. Thanks to the efforts of all our ladies, we were able to contribute \$115,000 the first year and hope to meet our goal in a few more short years.

The **Retired Clergy Fund** was established to help subsidize the original fund that supports our retired priests or widowed Khouriyas. The present formula used to calculate the amount the retired priest is able to collect is minimal, \$23.33 per month, times the years of service in this Archdiocese, to a maximum of 30 years. That adds up to a maximum allowance of \$700.00 per month. Widowed Khouriyas receive only 75% of the allowance that her husband would have received, and only when she reaches age 65.

Please join the North American Board of Antiochian Women in working on this worthwhile project with your whole hearts, remembering the clergy that have been there for all of us in times of illness, sorrow, celebrations, etc.

Through our joint efforts and hard work, this Fund will give our active priests peace of mind for the future for themselves and their Khouriyas, while insuring our retired priests' ability to live out their golden years more comfortably. Please give generously through your local Antiochian Women Chapter.

News from the Communities

Antiochian Woman Yvonne Shia Klancko Exhibits Christian Artifacts of Faith

The Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven, Connecticut is featuring two major exhibits of religious materials owned by one of our own Antiochian Women – Yvonne Shia Klancko (Yvie). From January 25, 2006 to April 29, 2007 over 160 crosses from throughout the world – beginning in 1000A.D. are being displayed in the exhibit titled – *Crosses and Crucifixes*. This display includes crosses from Ethiopia, Egypt, the Holy Land and Russia.

From March 22, 2006 to October 9, 2006 over 500 Easter Eggs from Mrs. Klancko's extensive collection are on display in an exhibit titled *Easter, Eggs and Art*. Included in this display are professionally executed icon eggs to folk art eggs such as pysanky. Yvie is considered to be a master pysanky artist (this is the wax batik egg decorating process made popular by the Ukrainians) having made two of them which were presented by the state of Connecticut to former Russian president Gorbachev during his 1995 visit to the state.

Both collections represent over 35 years of collecting and this is the first time such an extensive array has been put on public viewing. Yvie and her husband Bob have spent over four years preparing for this exhibit, and it has taken over a year's work to specifically create these exhibitions.

Regarding the Crosses and Crucifixes Exhibit, the Knights of Columbus say the following, *"Since the dawn of Christianity some 2000 years ago, countless faithful have expressed their belief by making the sign of the cross. Today, more than 2.1 billion people around the world firmly profess that God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross for their redemption and salvation. The cross is the universal symbol of Christianity."*

*The exhibition of **Crosses and Crucifixes** is being shown exclusively at the Knights of Columbus Museum as a celebration of the Christian faith..... We invite everyone to participate in this journey of faith, to undergo both a spiritual and an artistic experience. **Crosses and Crucifixes** has an impact that goes beyond the symbolic, to epitomize the very essence of Christianity. Bring your family to see firsthand how past generations have expressed their love of Jesus Christ crucified, He who died that we might live."*

The exhibit *Easter, Eggs and Art* is especially dear to Yvie because of her egg artistry and that both she and

her husband Bob have co-authored a coffee table book on the exhibit. The book is nearly 200 pages in length and is being published by the Knights of Columbus.

This exhibition, because of its vastness and scope, is considered to be unique and a first for a museum of the caliber of the Knights of Columbus. They say in their explanation of this exhibit, *" Since the beginning of recorded history, the egg has epitomized life. With the advent of Christianity, it has also come to symbolize faith and hope. All life begins with the egg, and as such it is a miraculous testimony to God's love and His creation."*

Christians recognize the egg as a symbol of the Resurrection of God's only begotten Son. During the Easter season, the decorating, blessing and giving of beautifully hand painted eggs have become a highly regarded tradition among peoples of many lands.....

The exhibition consists of two major egg art genres, classic and folk. Classics are those created by professional artisans. Generally,



Russian:
Ivron Mother of God

these contain icons that portray images of Jesus Christ, the Blessed Mother (the Theotokos), various saints and religious scenes. Folk eggs are painted by the faithful during the Lenten preparation for Easter. They are usually created with specific patterns, symbols and colors, that when employed together represent expressions of Christianity such as the Resurrection, the Holy Trinity and eternal life.....".



Pre-Revolutionary
Metal Egg

Yvonne, whose home parish is St. Nicholas Antiochian in Bridgeport, Connecticut, is a Reading Consultant and Director of Adult and Continuing Education for the Amity Regional School System. She holds Bachelor's, Master's and Sixth Year Administration Degrees from Southern Connecticut State University. She is a recognized master of Pysanky art and an 'eggspert'. Yvie has lectured on the subject and has had her eggs displayed at many colleges and universities. Her artistic expertise involves the blending of traditional patterns with those of her Middle Eastern heritage and Christian faith. She was honored by the Legislature of the State of Connecticut for the eggs she created on behalf of the State for presentation to former Russian President Michail Gorbachev. Yvie also made a special egg for

Patriarch Elias when he visited the U.S.A. in 1978. She is a member of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Balalaika and Domra Society, Russian Orthodox Laymen's League of Connecticut, and the Women's Council of Eastern Orthodox Christian Churches of Greater Bridgeport, St. Nicholas' Women's Organization, and Origami USA. She is also a member of Phi Delta Kappa – School Administrators Fraternity, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development – ASCD, and Omicron Tau Theta – Technology Educators Fraternity.

Yvonne's father and mother were both born in Zahle, Lebanon. Her mother's family were Abboud and Freije ; her father's family had immigrated to Zahle from the area of Mardin in the Turbadin where her great-grandfather M'Allef Ishiah Goreeah was a recognized Aramaic scholar, translator, and teacher. Yvonne has strong ties back to her middle-eastern roots and their ancient Christian heritage and faith.

An explanation of the exhibit can be accessed on the Knights of Columbus Museum web site – <http://www.koc.org/un/about/museum/detail>

Women's Pre-Christmas Fast Retreat. A weekend retreat focusing on preparing for the Nativity Feast was held by eight women from Saint Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church in Beckley, WV and the Holy Spirit Antiochian Orthodox Church in Huntington, WV. The event led by Father Samuel Haddad, of Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church was held at Pipestem Resort State Park in beautiful southern West Virginia on November 11 and 12, 2005.

The staff at Pipestem State Park provided a meeting room, which was transformed into a lovely worship space. Father Samuel led each service, with participation by all the women present.

There were a variety of interesting activities during the weekend, including a group discussion focusing on the role of women in the Orthodox Church. On Saturday the women divided into pairs of "sisters-in-Christ," and disbursed to quiet spots in the Park to actively listen to each other and provide prayerful encouragement. That afternoon each participant enjoyed an extended period of private prayer and meditation, focused on the sayings of



Pictured L to R: Kh. Loukia Dixon, Cynthia Bickey, Anna Thomas, Anita Hill, Aileen Ellison, Mary Ellison, Liz Daigle, and Father Samuel Haddad. Not pictured Kh. Loretta

the Desert Fathers. The women closed with prayer and a time for reflection on the wonderful weekend they had spent together, and expressed a determination to hold additional retreats to deepen their faith and friendship.

Submitted by Anita Hill, President of The Women of the Holy Myrrh-bearers, Beckley WV.

Antiochian Women Links

Project 2006: <http://www.antiochian.org/AW-Project2006>

DIAKONIA: <http://www.antiochian.org/AW-DIAKONIA>

Religious: <http://www.antiochian.org/AW-Religious>

Read the Bible in a Year: <http://www.antiochian.org/AW-ReadThroughBible>

Humanitarian: <http://www.antiochian.org/AW-Humanitarian>

Orthodox Women Saints: <http://www.antiochian.org/AW-WomenSaints>

REMINDER

Diocesan Boards: Please remember the following schedule for submitting your articles and profiles. One diocese is highlighted in each issue according to the following schedule. However, articles and news from all dioceses and parishes of the North American Antiochian Archdiocese are welcome in every issue.

	Diocese	Date of Publication	Date Due
1	NAB Board	September 2005 ✓	August 1, 2005 ✓
2	NY and the Archdiocesan District, and Oakland, PA and the East	December 2005 ✓	November 1, 2005 ✓
3	Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate NY	March 2006 ✓	February 1, 2006 ✓
4	Toledo and the Midwest	June 2006	May 1, 2006
5	Worcester and New England	September 2006	August 1, 2006
6	Miami and the Southeast	December 2006	November 1, 2006
7	Wichita and Mid-America	March 2007	February 1, 2007
8	Los Angeles and the West, Eagle River and the Northwest.	June 2007	May 1, 2007

To ensure publication in the next issue, please submit your news and articles by this date.